Reference Number: **2015.0027**

Collection/Series Title: **ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS**

Creator	Australian Red Cross Society, National Office
Creator's Activity/Occupation	Community organisations - Charities

Creator's Historical Note

Creator	Australian Red Cross Society, National Office
Creator's Activity/Occupation	Community organisations - Charities

Creator's Historical Note

Note: University of Melbourne Archives holds records of the Australian Red Cross National Office and the Victorian Division of the Australian Red Cross. Records of other state Divisions are not held by the University of Melbourne.

Red Cross began in Australia on the 13th August 1914 in response to the start of the First World War nine days earlier. Modelled on the British Red Cross Society and initially established as a branch of that Society, it formed at the instigation of Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, wife of the Governor-General. Vice-regal patronage and a predominantly female membership continued to be features of the Red Cross throughout the twentieth century. The Australian society was recognised by the International Committee of the Red Cross as a national society in its own right in 1927 and was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1941.

In keeping with the international Red Cross movement of which it is a part, and the Geneva Conventions which govern and vest its wartime role, the Australian Red Cross primary objectives are to alleviate human suffering and protect life and health, especially during armed conflicts and other emergency situations. Principles of humanity, impartiality and voluntary service guide its programs, which have evolved over the years in response to international and domestic needs.

The organisations development throughout the twentieth century has been extensively documented (see references at the end of this note), however the following points may assist researchers wishing to use Red Cross records held by the University of Melbourne Archives.

The organisations initial structure, still largely in place in the early 21st century, included three tiers of administration and activity. Its National Headquarters (later known as National Office) has been based in Melbourne since 1914. Divisions were established in all states and territories, most of them within weeks of the formation of the national body, and these operated with substantial autonomy until at least the 1950s and continued to be the locus of much of the organisations emergency and social services program delivery beyond this date. A Papua New Guinea Division also operated between 1940 and 1973 and subsequently became an independent national society. The third tier of the Red Cross is the extensive network of local branches which also commenced during World War I. These have been particularly active in wartime and it is through these branches that large numbers of Australians engage with and support the work of the Red Cross.

The scope and dates of operation of some distinctive Red Cross programs are:

Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs, later known as Voluntary Aid Service Corps or VACs) were first formed in 1915 to provide nursing and domestic services in Australian military hospitals and convalescent homes. In peacetime this largely female volunteer labour force has assisted during natural disasters and other emergencies. As an organisational entity VACs were phased out by the 1970s, however volunteer service continues to be integral to the organisations delivery of many of its programs.

Services to trace the whereabouts of missing and wounded service personnel were also first established in 1915. These services operated during both World Wars and after World War II evolved into services for tracing civilians displaced from their homelands in the aftermath of war and civil unrest. By the 1960s, with the growth of Red Cross role in disaster management, registration and enquiry services were set up to respond to inquiries about people displaced by natural disaster. The units responsible for this work and have been variously known as the Wounded and Missing Inquiry Bureau, Tracing Bureau, and the National Registration and Inquiry System. Like many Red Cross programs, administration of tracing services has gradually been centralised from state Divisions to national management. Note that Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau records from World War I are held by the Australian War Memorial.

Blood transfusion services were first established in 1929 in the Victorian Division and soon after in other states. These continued to be primarily state based services until 1996 although during the Second World War a level of national coordination was introduced to facilitate the supply of blood to the armed forces. In 1996, largely in response to the AIDS epidemic, the divisional services were amalgamated to form the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, a separate operating division of the Australian Red Cross.

References and Further Information
Melanie Oppenheimer: The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red Cross 1914-2014 (Sydney, Harper Collins, 2014)
Australian Red Cross web site: www.redcross.org.au (accessed June 2015)
Australian Red Cross Blood Service web site: http://www.donateblood.com.au/about-us (accessed June 2015)
Australian Red Cross has donated 100 years of archives to the University of Melbourne: http://www.redcross.org.au/gift-to-the-nation.aspx (accessed June 2015)
Australian War Memorial, First World War Red Cross Wounded and Missing Files: https://www.awm.gov.au/people/roll-search/wounded_and_missing/
Australian Womens Register entry for the Australian Red Cross: http://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0715b.htm (accessed June 2015). See also Register entries for individual women prominent within the Red Cross.

Date Range of Collection/Series	1914-2009
Size/Extent	4 units (0.7m)
Access Conditions	Access: Open

Scope and Content of Collection/Series

[Red Cross Archives Series Reference: NO13]
Annual reports and financial statements published by the National Office (formerly known as 'Headquarters', 'Australian Headquarters' or 'National Headquarters') of the Australian Red Cross from its formation in 1914 as the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society.
For annual reports of the Red Cross Blood Service and annual reports published by State Divisions of the Red Cross see series 2015.0029.
Researchers should note that under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 protections govern the use of the Red Cross emblem. For further information see Archives staff.

Collection Category	Community and Political, organisations
This document dated	11/04/2017

Box/Unit	Item Number	Title	Date Range	Description
2015.0027 Unit 1	2015.0027.00001	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1914-1919	Red Cross Archives item control number: 124
2015.0027 Unit 1	2015.0027.00002	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1919-1924	Red Cross Archives item control number: 125
2015.0027 Unit 1	2015.0027.00003	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1924-1929	Red Cross Archives item control number: 128
2015.0027 Unit 1	2015.0027.00004	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1929-1934	Red Cross Archives item control number: 130
2015.0027 Unit 2	2015.0027.00005	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1934-1939	Red Cross Archives item control number: 131
2015.0027 Unit 2	2015.0027.00006	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, Headquarters	1939-1944	Red Cross Archives item control number: 133
2015.0027 Unit 2	2015.0027.00007	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1944-1949	Red Cross Archives item control number: 135
2015.0027 Unit 2	2015.0027.00008	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1949-1954	Red Cross Archives item control number: 140
2015.0027 Unit 3	2015.0027.00009	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1954-1957	Red Cross Archives item control number: 145
2015.0027 Unit 3	2015.0027.00010	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1957-1964	Red Cross Archives item control number: 149
2015.0027 Unit 3	2015.0027.00011	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1964-1972	Red Cross Archives item control number: 156
2015.0027 Unit 3	2015.0027.00012	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1972-1978	Red Cross Archives item control number: 164
2015.0027 Unit 3	2015.0027.00013	Book of Annual Reports of the Australian Red Cross Society, National Headquarters	1978-1990	Red Cross Archives item control number: 171
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00014	Australian Red Cross Society Annual Report	1989-1990	Red Cross Archives item control number: 183
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00015	Australian Red Cross Society Annual Report	1990-1991	Red Cross Archives item control number: 184
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00016	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1991-1992	Red Cross Archives item control number: 186
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00017	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1992-1993	Red Cross Archives item control number: 188
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00018	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1993-1994	Red Cross Archives item control number: 190
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00019	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1994-1995	Red Cross Archives item control number: 192
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00020	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1995-1996	Red Cross Archives item control number: 194
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00021	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1996-1997	Red Cross Archives item control number: 196
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00022	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1997-1998	Red Cross Archives item control number: 198
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00023	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1998-1999	Red Cross Archives item control number: 199
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00024	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	1999-2000	Red Cross Archives item control number: 200
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00025	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	2000-2001	Red Cross Archives item control number: 847
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00026	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	2001-2002	Red Cross Archives item control number: 1046
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00027	Australian Red Cross Annual Report Financial Statements	2002-2003	Red Cross Archives item control number: 2137
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00028	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	2002-2003	Red Cross Archives item control number: 2136
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00029	Australian Red Cross Annual Report	2003-2004	Red Cross Archives item control number: 2140
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00030	Australian Red Cross - Annual Report	2005-2006	Red Cross Archives item control number: 2787
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00031	Highlights, Annual Report, Financials	2006-2007	Red Cross Archives item control number: 4849
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00032	Highlights	2007-2008	Red Cross Archives item control number: 4850
2015.0027 Unit 4	2015.0027.00033	A year in review	2008-2009	Red Cross Archives item control number: 4851

END OF LIST