

STATEMENT OF CLARIFICATION

I wish to clarify my comments to the Committee regarding potential deployment of healthcare workers to our region to assist in the management of an outbreak of Ebola.

Australia is prepared to respond to an outbreak in the region.

I have learnt today that 20 healthcare workers, 4 doctors and 16 nurses, have been recently trained in the care of Ebola patients and the use of high level personal protective equipment at the National Critical Care Trauma Centre (NCCTRC) in Darwin could be deployed immediately out of Darwin for a four week period.

The doctors are infectious diseases and emergency care specialists, and the nurses come from the fields of intensive care, emergency care and trauma.

They are fully vaccinated and acclimatised to work in the heat of the region.

While these people are working on the immediate emergency, through the National Incident Room, communicating with all States and Territories, and working closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Emergency Management Australia (in the Attorney-General's Department), we would assess what additional support is needed. This would include:

- assessment of the infrastructure required (for example, Australia has the ability to deploy a self sufficient field hospital and accommodation facilities);
- assessment of the security required to ensure the health care workers remain safe; and
- training of additional healthcare workers which would occur in Australia and in the country of need

Professor Chris Baggoley, Chief Medical Officer