

**AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS, TASMANIAN DIVISION
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DRAWING ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE
TUESDAY 5 OCTOBER 2021**

Good evening. Don and I warmly welcome you to this reception for our Australian Red Cross Tasmania.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

I will be brief in my remarks. I know that you have been fully engaged with your AGM for the past hour-and-a-half and must be ready to relax and socialise!

I would like to acknowledge among us:

- Charles Burkitt, Australian Red Cross Board Deputy President
- Rita Richards, Tasmanian Division Advisory Board Chair, and Board members
- Julie Groome, Acting State Director, and
- Alderman Heather Chong, City of Clarence Deputy Mayor.

On your website I was particularly taken with some of the comments of your ARC President, Ross Pinney. In particular, I noted four highly apposite statements which go to the heart of what the ARC organisation is all about. I quote the four:

“Red Cross is the go-to humanitarian organisation when it comes to emergencies.”

“Governments turn to us because we can respond with speed and scale.”

“People give to Red Cross because they trust us to deliver, and we do.”

“We’re inventive and pragmatic, we’re finding solutions.”

Your website has really useful, “Tips for staying happy and hopeful during lockdown.”¹ Well done to whoever drafted these.

Your President acknowledged that your full workload has been extended considerably during the past 18 months of the Covid pandemic. Your staff, members and volunteers have responded across our country, by supporting hundreds of thousands of people through phone calls, wellness checks, emergency grants, and other support. Physical distancing has meant that you are finding new ways to reach out and support people, especially in disaster zones where internet and telephone services, and road access, are often unavailable.

Australian Red Cross has provided support for people impacted by bushfires, floods, cyclones, and drought. As well as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, people who have been trafficked, and people in detention. You walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, acknowledging local cultures, and amplifying community voice and decision-making.

During much of last year, our Government House team has also provided support to our community. We have prepared meals with fresh produce from our garden, and shortbread biscuits and picked bunches of flowers. These were delivered across our island, to aged care facilities, to community groups such as the Migrant Resource Centre, Colony 47, and the Salvation Army.

Our Kitchen and Gardens staff continue to do this as a key element of our Government House community engagement program. We now run educational food preparation classes for selected school groups. These classes use produce from the garden. Our Executive Chef, Ainstie Wagner, also presents regular cooking classes at the Hobart Women’s Shelter.

In conclusion, I thank you all for engaging so positively with our community as you do, whether staff, Board members or volunteers. Don and I look forward to continue supporting and working with the Australian Red Cross in Tasmania, in whatever capacity we can contribute.

Now please relax after your meeting and enjoy your reception.

Thank you.

¹ [COVID-19 pandemic: tips for families self-isolating | Australian Red Cross](#), accessed 28 September 2021.