

Executive and Government Briefing Document

Strengthening Australia's Crisis Leadership Capability Through Targeted Scholarship Investment

Overview

Global Development College (GDC), an Australian government-accredited Registered Training Organisation (RTO), has successfully awarded **\$500,000 in scholarships** to professionals across Australia's resilience, crisis, and disaster management sectors. This initiative represents a significant investment in strengthening national capability, supporting workforce development, and enhancing leadership across critical sectors.

Further information about Global Development College and its programmes can be accessed via: [Global Development College \(GDC\)](#)

The scholarships have been allocated to participants undertaking the **Graduate Diploma of Crisis Leadership**, a highly specialised and internationally recognised qualification designed to equip professionals with the advanced skills required to lead effectively in high-pressure, uncertain, and complex environments.

This initiative reflects a coordinated effort between GDC and industry stakeholders, including employer-supported participation, demonstrating strong sector confidence in the value and impact of the programme.

Strategic Context and National Relevance

Australia and the world continue to face increasing exposure to complex and compounding risks, including natural disasters, public health emergencies, infrastructure disruptions, and climate-related challenges. These evolving threats require a workforce that is not only technically competent but also capable of **strategic decision-making, adaptive leadership, and cross-sector coordination**.

GDC's scholarship initiative directly addresses this need by:

- Building **advanced leadership capability** across critical sectors
- Supporting **workforce readiness and resilience**

- Enhancing **inter-agency collaboration and coordination**
- Strengthening **local and national disaster preparedness frameworks**

The programme aligns with national priorities focused on resilience, risk reduction, and sustainable development, while also supporting global frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Programme Overview: Graduate Diploma of Crisis Leadership

The **Graduate Diploma of Crisis Leadership** is an Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)-accredited vocational education and training (VET) qualification. It is uniquely positioned as the only programme of its kind delivered through GDC both coursework and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pathways.

The programme is designed and delivered by industry experts with extensive experience across emergency management, critical infrastructure, government, and leadership domains.

Key features include:

- Strategic decision-making in time-critical environments
- Crisis and disaster leadership frameworks
- Scenario-based and real-world learning methodologies
- Resilience planning and implementation
- Psychological and behavioural responses to crisis
- Research-informed approaches to crisis and disaster management
- Flexible pathways, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for experienced professionals

Graduates are equipped to operate effectively across a range of sectors, including emergency services, defence, government, corporate continuity, and humanitarian organisations.

Scholarship Impact and Sector Engagement

A total of **25 Brigadier General Eric Tan Scholarships** were awarded as part of this initiative, supporting professionals from a diverse range of sectors critical to Australia's resilience ecosystem.

Participant sectors include:

- State Emergency Services (SES)
- Local Government
- Fire and Rural Fire Services
- Forestry and land management
- Police and law enforcement
- Ambulance and emergency health services
- Education and training
- Public health
- Aviation and aerospace

Importantly, many participants received **employer-supported study arrangements**, including the ability to undertake training during work hours. This reflects a strong endorsement from organisations recognising the programme's direct operational and strategic value.

Value for Government, Universities, and Strategic Partners

This initiative delivers measurable value across multiple stakeholder groups:

For Government

- Strengthens national and local **disaster preparedness and response capability**
- Supports **workforce development strategies** aligned with resilience priorities
- Enhances **interoperability across agencies and jurisdictions**

For Universities

- Provides opportunities for **articulation pathways** and academic progression
- Supports collaboration in **research, curriculum development, and professional education**
- Enhances engagement with **practice-based, industry-relevant learning models**

For Strategic Partners and Industry

- Builds **leadership capability within organisations**
- Improves **risk management, continuity, and resilience outcomes**
- Supports **staff retention and professional development**
- Strengthens organisational capacity to operate in complex and uncertain environments

Conclusion

The allocation of \$500,000 in scholarships represents a targeted and strategic investment in Australia's resilience capability. By equipping professionals with advanced crisis leadership skills, Global Development College is contributing to the development of a highly capable, adaptive, and future-ready workforce.

This initiative demonstrates the critical importance of **collaborative, industry-aligned education** in addressing the challenges of an increasingly complex risk environment. It also highlights the value of partnerships between education providers, government, and industry in delivering meaningful and measurable outcomes.

GDC remains committed to working with government, universities, and partners to expand access to high-impact programmes and to continue strengthening resilience and leadership capacity across Australia and internationally.

To explore partnership opportunities, programme delivery, or workforce development initiatives, please visit:

www.gdc.edu.au