

RAWCS Rover

Eastern Region Newsletter



Jan's Jottings Welcome to the New RAWCS Year

As I step into the role of Eastern Region RAWCS Coordinator, my vision is to:

- **Foster stronger connections**
- **Support Project Supervisors, District Chairs, and Project Managers**
- **Leverage technology**
- **Encourage a culture of collaboration,**

To read Jan's Full Report - [Click Here](#)

1

\$1 MILLION BOOST

Dick & Pip Smith have once again pledged \$1m support [Read More ...](#)

2

RAWCS PATRON

The Governor General of Australia is now the Patron of RAWCS.

[Read more....](#)

3

FUNDRAISING WEBINAR Documents

Documents from the Webinar. [Click Here to view](#)



District 9660

[Page Link](#)



District 9685

[Page Link](#)



Eastern Meeting Roster

[Page Link](#)



[Friends who like RAWCS](#)





District 9660

Disaster Flood Appeal

During May 2025, heavy rain fell on the North Coast of New South Wales, prompting the District 9660 Disaster Aid & Relief team to act quickly and begin identifying ways to help local Clubs and communities affected by rising floodwaters. Their first step was contacting the Rotary office at Norwest to speak with the Rotary Australia World Community Services (RAWCS) team about applying for a grant from the National Flood appeal. After learning they were eligible, the team submitted an application the RAWCS Head Office, which was approved; and as a result, they received \$20,000 worth of \$500 debit cards.

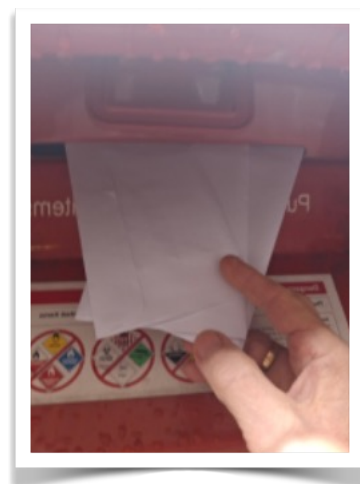
At the same time, the team reached out to then 9660 District Governor, Bruce George to discuss setting up a fund to support clubs in the impacted area, since a disaster aid allocation already existed in the district ledger. The team encouraged DG Bruce to request support from clubs through then 9660 District Governor Elect Evan Burrell, who helped broadcast an appeal to clubs throughout the district, as well as Australia and New Zealand.

As donations began arriving in both the district fund and RAWCS Grant, applications were distributed to clubs who then passed them onto those most in

“RAWCS & District funds help communities in need ”

need. With additional funding, Rotary Australia World Community Service granted another \$30,000 in debit cards, and each club with members on the ground, reviewed and approved applications.

Applications continue to come in daily, and so far, approximately 600 debit cards have been provided to families and individuals from Dora Creek in the south to Taylors



District 9685

Max Webber Library Shares the Dignity

The Max Webber Library in Blacktown provides a safe place for disadvantaged community members through a number of educational and volunteering services.

It serves a large number of females from disadvantaged backgrounds within the community with over 10,000 clients visiting the library each month, a proportion being those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent or non-English speaking backgrounds.

The Dignity Vending Machine enables free sanitary packs to be dispensed to those clients.

The Dignity Vending Machine at Max Webber Library remains a vital resource for the local community, ranking among the top vending library sites in NSW. It has dispensed 9,745 period packs so far, averaging 229 packs per month.

From January to June 2025, the machine provided 1,376 period packs. The Ponds Rotary Club supports Share the Dignity with an annual \$5,000 donation for the products.

Project 2 -202-21

Project Manager: Sharina Shanaz

“It is a vital resource for those disadvantaged members of the community.”



The vending machine is supported by Blacktown RSL, Blacktown Workers and Blacktown City Council

District 9685

Centre for Learning for Youth Dili Timor-Leste

The Centre consists of a gymnasium, English school, sewing Centre and vegetable gardens, offering a safe haven for Timorese youth and community that encourages respect, education and crime prevention assisting them in the progression of their Nation. The Centre also conducts outreach programs and emergency relief to those in need or after natural disasters.



Sanitary kits and birthing kits have been distributed by Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters who have been affiliated with our Centre since its inception. Maintenance and upkeep of the Centre has been conducted by our Centre Managers and gym members. Vegetable gardens are tended to by staff and families.

The great news is that after ten years Libby is closing the project off in late 2026 and handing the Centre over to the two managers who she has been preparing and training for the past nine years. Roasters with Altitude (Libby and Chris Bleakley's business) has sponsored those two managers to come out to Australia for 10 days in October. They will present to RAWCS staff, Rotary Clubs and the main sponsors of the project.

The Centre for Learning for Youth has been a stunning success from its inception, not only because it will be self-sustaining but for the fact that

“The Centre for learning has been a stunning success.”

Libby's efforts have changed the culture of violence and abuse to one of cooperation, respect and pride, not to mention raising the level of economic independence and education for so many.

Libby is to be congratulated on her achievements and we are all very proud of her.

Project 33 2014-15

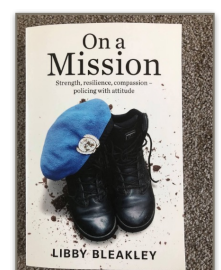
Project Manager – Elizabeth (Libby) Bleakley



Rob Uhl and Mary Brell during a visit to the Centre



Libby came up with the idea of a Youth Centre during her deployment to Timor-Leste with the Federal Police





District 9685

Aussie Bangla Smile Project

2025 Medical Container to Bangladesh

Background:

Aussie Bangla Smile started out as a voluntary medical team from Australia, providing free cleft lip and palate operations to underprivileged children in Bangladesh. Established in 2007, Aussie Bangla Smile has now expanded its operations to also provide nursing education programs, and medical aid in addition to surgical services.

MediShare is a national activity of Rotary Australia World Community Services and Bangladesh Medical Society NSW (Australia), are charity organisations, working within the guidelines of the World Health Organisation's to share sustainable Healthcare solutions for developing countries.

TMSS Hospital is a non-profit, 1000-bed hospital providing a wide range of health services. The hospital offers care for free or at low cost, especially for poor and vulnerable patients in Bangladesh.

In 2024, Aussie Bangla Smile partnered closely with MediShare NSW, Bangladesh Medical Society NSW and TMSS Hospital, Bogura, Bangladesh to send a 40' shipping container of medical supplies as aid to Bangladesh for its first time. Following its initial success, these organisations partnered again to send another 40' shipping container of medical aid to Bangladesh in 2025.

“Aussie Bangla Smile Team has a strong partnership with TMS hospital”

Project

About two thousand blankets have been distributed across districts in Bangladesh in different hospitals and orphanages boarding schools. Fabric rolls provided by SewAid has been supplied to girls orphanages and to women who earn their living through sewing in villages. This empowers women to earn money and become more independent.

Fabric rolls, blankets, and other clothing will be distributed to the Rohingya refugee camp, the largest refugee camp in the world. Children's clothes and sports equipment will also be provided. Hospital equipment, including defibrillators, ventilators, wheelchairs, walking aids, surgical instruments, and aesthetic tubes, has been supplied to TMSS and other hospitals in Bogura.

Aussie Bangla Smile Team has strong partnerships in TMSS hospital, with the Dhaka Rotary Club and senior anaesthetists running the Nursing Education Program. They actively helped with distributing and using the equipment we send from Australia and greatly appreciate our support

Project Manager: *Hasan Sarwar*

International Secretary:

Doug Vincent



Supported By

- SewAid Australia
- Medishare
- RAWCS,
- SHARE Victoria
- Rotary e- Club of Change Makers, Rotary Club of Nepean
- Rotary Club of Lower Blue Mountains
- Rotary Club of Upper Blue Mountains Castle Hill Rotary Club
- MP Matt Thistlethwaite: Labor Member for Kingsford Smith
- ANL Shipping Line

“Highlighted Sayings”

Donated Items

Description of Goods	Quantity
Hospital Grade Blankets	4,940
Face Shields	22,350
Hospital Bedspread	35
Theatre Scrubs – Assorted Size	1,200
Theatre Reusable Barrier Drape (Small)	1,000
Theatre Reusable Barrier Drape (X-Large)	810
Theatre Reusable Barrier Drape (Large)	540
Hospital Air Mattress	3
Patient Lifter	2
Wheelchairs	10
Walkers	4
Knee Scooter	1
Shower Chairs	4
Patient Commodes	5
Patient Examination Tables	2
Paired Crutches	12
Training Mannequins	2
Defibrillators	5
General Hospital Consumables (suture, anaesthetic tubes)	400
Medical Instruments	100
Hospital Apparel	60
Fabric Rolls	200



Meeting Schedule

General Meeting	Hosting District	Management Meeting	Type of Meeting
Sun 18/05/2025	D9705 - Orange	18/5/2025	Online Available
Sat 16/08/2025	D9660 - Norwest	16/08/2025	Face to Face- Online Available
Sun 16/11/2025	Online	16/11/2025	Online
Sat 14/02/2026	D9675	14/02/2026	Face to Face- Online Available
Sun 17/05/2026	Online	17/05/2026	Online
Sat 15/08/2026	D9685 - AGM	15/08/2026	Face to Face- Online Available
Sun 15/11/2026	Online	15/11/2026	Online

Eastern District RAWCS Chairs

District	Name	Email
9675	Myra Castellano-Hegarth	district.chair9675@rawcs.org.au
9685	Mina Howard	district.chair9685@rawcs.org.au
9660	David Denning	district.chair9660@rawcs.org.au
9705	Shirley Cornish	district.chair9705@rawcs.org.au

RAWCS Eastern Region Leadership Contact List

Position	Name	Email	Contact No.
Coordinator	Jan Pryor	cord.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
Secretary	Suzanne Morgan	eastern@rawcs.org.au	
Project Supervisor	Sue O'Neill	projects.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
Volunteer Supervisor	David Waterhouse	volunteers.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
Communication Supervisor	Glenda Kociszewski	comms.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
RARE Manager	PP Barry Philips	rare.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
RAM Supervisor	PP Gary Davis	aram.eastern@rawcs.org.au	
District 9660 Chair	David Denning	district.chair9660@rawcs.org.au	
District 9675 Chair	Myra Castellano-Hegarty	district.chair9675@rawcs.org.au	
District 9685 Chair	PDG Mina Howard	district.chair9685@rawcs.org.au	
District 9705 Chair	Shirley Cornish	district.chair9705@rawcs.org.au	