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Joint media release: Joint Aerodrome Emergency Response Exercise Strengthens Safety and Security in the Northern Territory

A large-scale joint aerodrome emergency response exercise was successfully conducted at Darwin International Airport yesterday, bringing together the Airport Development Group (ADG), Northern Territory Police, Australian Federal Police (AFP), Airnorth, as well as other key stakeholders such as St John Ambulance Australia and the Australian Red Cross to test and strengthen emergency response capabilities.

This biennial field exercise is a legislative requirement for ADG and is designed to ensure all agencies are prepared to respond swiftly and effectively to a real-life aviation emergency. Several early career professionals and those new to emergency response participated in this valuable hands-on learning experience for the first time.

ADG Executive General Manager, Airports, Rob Porter, said the collaboration was essential to maintaining the highest standards of safety and security for passengers and the community.

“Safety is at the heart of everything we do, and these exercises are critical to ensuring we meet our regulatory requirements while strengthening our operational readiness. We are very appreciative of the collaboration between key first responders – including NT Police, AFP and Airnorth. By working together with clear communication and decisive action, we build the capability to pivot quickly and respond to any situation to protect travellers and Territorians.”

Daniel Bowden, CEO of Airnorth, said the airline’s participation reflects its unwavering commitment to safety.

“At Airnorth, safety is more than a requirement – it’s embedded in our culture and guides every decision we make. Participating in exercises like this ensures our team is prepared, coordinated, and able to respond swiftly and effectively in any situation. By training alongside our emergency service partners, we strengthen not only our readiness, but the trust our passengers place in us every time they fly.”

Superintendent Shaun Gill APM said the exercise was an important opportunity to work in real-time with partner agencies.

“This scenario-based training allows our officers to test their skills in a complex environment and learn how to operate alongside other emergency response agencies. That interoperability is vital in maintaining community safety.”

AFP Superintendent Greg Davis said the AFP’s Aviation team prevents crimes and responds to emergencies at airports and on flights. This week’s emergency exercise is an example of the AFP working closely with aviation, law enforcement, and emergency services partners to ensure readiness to respond to an emergency,” Supt Davis said.



The emergency response exercise demonstrated the value of coordination, training, and teamwork, reinforcing that the safety and security of passengers, staff, and the broader community remain a top priority for all agencies involved.

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