

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **High-tech gift protects our vulnerable Diggers**

St John Ambulance (Qld) is stepping up to protect the health of Australia's bravest men and women.

The charity, in association with partner Defibtech have donated three life-saving defibrillator machines to recovery centres in Brisbane, Townsville and Hobart run by Mates4Mates.

The Mates4Mates centres provide physical, psychological and social support for Australia's past and current servicemen and women.

Mates4Mates Chief Executive Officer Simon Sauer said the defibrillators are a vital safety measure for the military 'Mates' who rely on the recovery centres.

"We give all kinds of support to military personnel who need help," Mr Sauer said.

"That support can sometimes include intense physical activity and personal training in our gyms – so it is essential we have defibrillators on hand.

"Around 10,000 Australians die from cardiac arrest every year.<sup>i</sup> The risk is real and we are very grateful to St John Ambulance (Qld) for this valuable donation."

St John Ambulance (Qld) Chief Executive Officer Alex Hutton said the Defibtech defibrillators were highly effective in cases of cardiac arrest.

"More than half of all heart attack victims die before reaching hospital,<sup>ii</sup> but access to a defibrillator dramatically increases the chance of survival," Mr Hutton said.

St John Ambulance is also funding two cardio-pulmonary resuscitation courses to each recovery centre to ensure volunteers are trained to use the equipment. In 2015 St John Ambulance also donated vital first aid kits for all injured Defence Force Mates on the Mates4Mates October Kokoda Trek.

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#### **About Mates4Mates**

- Mates4Mates is a not for profit charity initiated by RSL (Queensland) which provides support to wounded, injured or ill current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel and their families.
- Mates4Mates is designed to complement and enhance the capability of the ADF to support their current and ex-serving personnel and their families.
- Mates4Mates is an independent, apolitical and non-religious organisation offering services like physical rehabilitation, psychological services, counselling, career coaching and adventure challenges.

**Website -** [www.mates4mates.org](http://www.mates4mates.org)  
**Facebook -** <https://www.facebook.com/Mates4Mates>  
**Twitter -** [@Mates4Mates](https://twitter.com/Mates4Mates)

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<sup>i</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of death 2011 (3303.0) March 2013.

<sup>ii</sup> Heart Foundation. HeartWatch Survey 2012.