Australia ranked 10th in the HRI 2011, improving three positions from 2010. Based on the patterns of its scores, Australia is classified as a Group 3 donor, “Aspiring Actors”. Donors in this group tend to have more limited capacity to engage with the humanitarian system at the field level, but often aspire to take on a greater role in the sector. They generally focus on a few core strengths, such as in the area of prevention, preparedness and risk reduction, or on specific geographic regions. Other donors in the group include Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg and Spain.

Australia’s overall score was below the OECD/DAC average, yet above the Group 3 average. Australia scored above the OECD/DAC and Group 3 average in most pillars, with the exception of Pillars 1 and 3 (Working with humanitarian partners). In Pillar 1, Australia scored below both the OECD/DAC and Group 3 averages and in Pillar 3, Australia received its lowest score - below the OECD/DAC average, yet above the Group 3 average.

Australia did best compared to its OECD/DAC peers in indicators on Funding reconstruction and prevention, Participating in accountability initiatives, Refugee law, and Funding protection of civilians. With the exception of the latter, Australia’s relative strengths are concentrated in quantitative indicators. Its scores were relatively the lowest in the indicators on Advocacy towards local authorities, Implementing evaluation recommendations, Adapting to changing needs, Funding vulnerable and forgotten emergencies and Beneficiary participation – all qualitative indicators except for Funding vulnerable and forgotten emergencies.