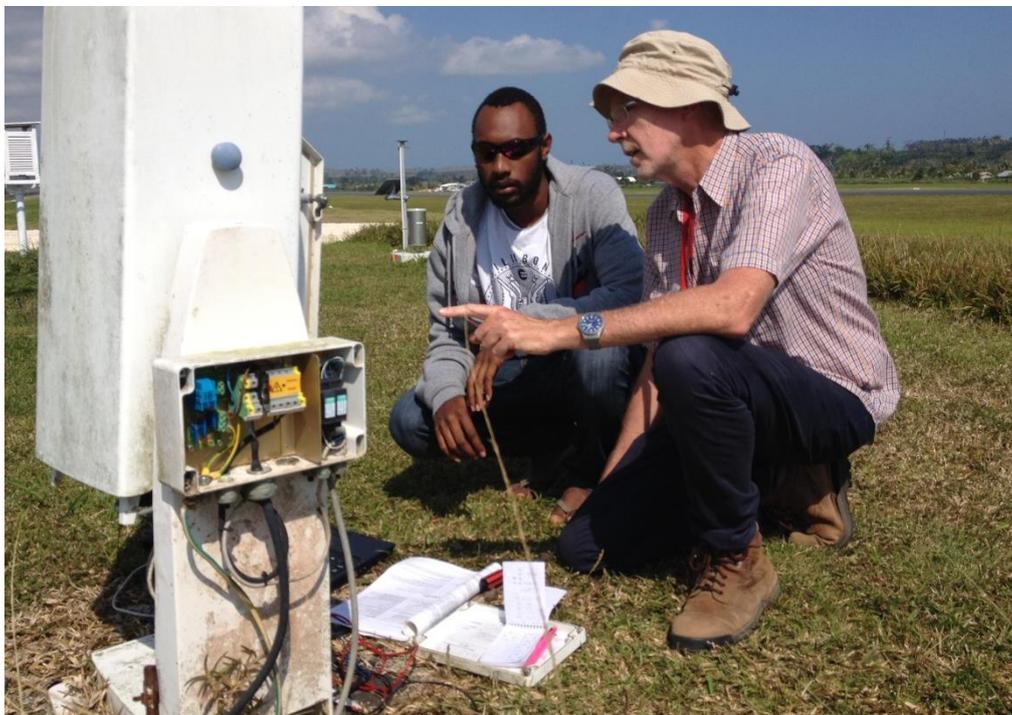


## Chris McCowage

**Australian Volunteer for International Development (AVID)  
Managed by Australian Red Cross**

Chris McCowage is an Information and Communications Technology Officer based at the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department (VMGD). Chris started his assignment in August 2014 and will be finishing in November 2015. He has been assigned to help VMGD transition to digital instruments and communication methods to ensure timely and accurate weather observations. This new technology, which includes automatic weather stations and tide gauges, will assist in mitigating the risks from hazardous weather, including cyclones and tsunamis.



*Chris McCowage and VMGD officer Joseph WorWor working on a ceilometer, an instrument used to measure the height of clouds.*

Chris enjoys working with technology to understand the natural environment and believes that we should always do our best to help, train and develop people.

Meteorology has always played an important role in Chris's life. He has worked at large astronomical observatories, has had a lifetime interest in aviation, and has lived in a fire prone rural environment.

Chris was born in Sydney, but moved to rural NSW to pursue a career in telecommunications. He later joined the Anglo Australian Observatory in Coonabarabran. Specialising in astronomical detector systems and robotics has proved a rewarding experience and provided an opportunity to work with another international observatory on the Canary Islands.

Chris has been an engineering manager for some time but has always maintained his technical skills and expertise. Volunteering has been highly valued in his family. He is a long time active fire fighter with the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Chris believes he has made a useful contribution to developing the capabilities of VMGD.

The Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program is funded and delivered by the Australian Government in partnership with the Australian Red Cross, Australian Volunteers International and Scope Global. The program is a central and valued part of Australia's aid program. Australian volunteers are highly-skilled people selected to help developing countries achieve their sustainable development goals. For more information about the program, please visit: <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/avid/pages/avid.aspx>