



RAMSI

BACKGROUND BRIEFS

A partnership with the government and people of Solomon Islands to build a peaceful, well-governed and prosperous nation.



What are we here for?

A Message to the people of Solomon Islands

This short speech was delivered by the first leader of RAMSI, Australian diplomat, Nick Warner, on the tarmac of Henderson Field on 24 July, 2003, the day of RAMSI's deployment.

People everywhere have a right to live their lives peacefully, to go about their daily business without threats or violence or intimidation, to have their children educated in schools, to have illnesses attended to in hospitals and clinics, to have a government that is permitted to govern for the benefit of all people, free from intimidation or coercion by armed thugs. Solomon Islands used to be such a place.

But for too long this country has suffered at the hands of a small number of militants and criminals who have terrorized Solomon Islands society, brought the country to its knees, and done a disservice to the reputation of Solomon Islanders as a good and generous people.

The men and women from around the Pacific who arrived on your shores today as part of the Regional Assistance Mission come at the invitation of the Solomon Islands Government, and as guests of the Solomon Islands people.

We are calling our involvement here Operation Helpem Fren, because that is what we are here to do. We are here as friends, to work in partnership with you, to restore promise to your country, to restore hopes for a better life to you and your children.

Our immediate purpose is to restore law and order in Solomon Islands. Our police will be working hand-in-hand with the Solomon Islands police to provide safety and security to streets and villages and to get guns out of communities. Only then will conditions exist for the revival of the economy.

The men and women in military uniform who you saw arriving today, and the ship that you see in the harbour, are here to provide support to these police efforts. But, should criminals seek to sabotage our assistance efforts, endanger public safety, or prevent the police from doing their duty, the military will not hesitate to act.

The partnership that we begin with Solomon Islands today is a long-term commitment. The problems confronting Solomon Islands will not be fixed overnight. While law and order is being restored, we will work with you to bring stability to the budget, to rebuild the machinery of government, and restore the delivery of essential government services to people. The conditions for economic growth and improved living standards will be put in place.

Those individuals who have profited – at the expense of the nation as a whole – from the disorder of the past few years will no longer be permitted to do so. We will stop the culture of extortion that has brought this country to its knees. It is an ugly distortion of Solomon Islands customs and values.

Let me emphasize again that Australia, New Zealand, and the other Pacific countries involved in the Regional Assistance Mission are here at the formal and explicit request of your government. All of us respect the fact that Solomon Islands is an independent and sovereign country. We are here to help you and your government to restore that sovereignty – to restore the capacity of government to represent its people and to act in the public good. We will ensure that the people of Solomon Islands regain control of their destiny from a minority of criminals with guns.

Solomon Islands is a young country of great promise. We, your partners in the Pacific, and with God's help, are here to help Solomon Islands fulfil that promise.

RAMSI: REBUILDING SOVEREIGNTY IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

ADDRESS BY SPECIAL COORDINATOR JAMES BATLEY
AT THE HONIARA CAMPUS OF USP
24 JULY 2006

USP Centre Director Dr Galo
Students
Ladies and gentlemen

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on the occasion of the third anniversary of RAMSI's arrival in Solomon Islands. Do you remember where you were on that day three years ago? Do you remember how you felt?

Most Solomon Islanders I speak to seem to have a very clear recollection of that day; where they were; what they were doing and how they felt. Some I am sure had mixed feelings; happy that their friends and neighbours were coming to help; sad that it had come to this.

I think there can be no doubt that Solomon Islands is a very different place compared to the nation that greeted the first RAMSI contingent three years ago. Yes, life still remains hard for many but the fear and tensions of previous times have gone. Law and order has been re-established, government finances are much stronger and better managed, government institutions are functioning better than before and the economy is much stronger. A simple comparison shows just how much stronger; government revenue in the year before RAMSI was \$258 million, this year it will be around \$700 million.

RAMSI cannot claim all the credit for this. These improvements have been the result of a joint effort – by RAMSI yes, but also by Solomon Islanders in government and outside it, by other donors, by the private sector and by the community in general. What your neighbours and friends from the region are happy to claim the credit for is helping to create a peaceful and stable environment in which all of these players – government, donors and ordinary Solomon islanders have been able to make a positive contribution to the nation's recovery.

Anniversaries like this one can be a good opportunity to stand back and to look at some of the bigger issues that are raised by RAMSI, and which increasingly confront our region.

Today I thought I'd take as my starting point a word that comes up quite often in discussions about RAMSI. That word is sovereignty.

The idea of sovereignty is understood in many different ways. To some, it is the same as freedom, the same as independence. To political scientists it has a more precise legal meaning, as the area of conduct in which according to international law a state is autonomous and not subject to control by other states or to obligations of international law. Perhaps an easy way of thinking about sovereignty is the ability of a nation to make up its own mind about matters affecting it and to direct its own affairs.

In fact in modern times a nation's sovereignty is rarely absolute. No nation on earth has the luxury – and very few actually desire – to act completely in isolation from other countries. The gradual growth of international rules and institutions, whether formal or informal, has blurred the absolutes of sovereignty. Indeed, in our own region, the movement towards regional cooperation embodied in projects like the Forum's Pacific Plan has underlined that concepts such as sovereignty are not carved in stone.

All that said, for the present the nation state remains the primary player in the international scene, and in our region.

How does RAMSI fit into this picture?

In thinking about this, I was struck by a comment made by the British football commentator, Martin Tyler, during the recent World Cup final between Italy and France. Deep into the second half of the game, Tyler said: "Possession of the ball is very important, but it's what you do with it that counts."

Although he was talking about a football game, I think what he said also contains an essential truth about the idea of sovereignty. Having it might be a good thing, but it's not the be all and end all; it's what you do with it that's important.

What do I mean by this?

I mean that sovereignty is not just about having the ability to pass laws. It's also about the capacity of a nation to enforce those laws.

Sovereignty is not just the ability to announce government policies. It's about the capacity of a nation to implement those policies and to pay for them.

Sovereignty is not just about having local personnel occupying key positions, it's ensuring they are effective in those positions.

Sovereignty is not just about being an independent country, having a flag and a national anthem. It's about winning the respect and the cooperation of other countries.

These examples underline the ways in which Solomon Islands' own national sovereignty was undermined and damaged in the tension years.

And they illustrate the ways in which RAMSI is helping to rebuild your national sovereignty – the ability to protect and enforce the rule of law; the ability to pay for and implement government policy; the capacity to lead and manage; and the regaining of respect in the international sphere.

In other words, RAMSI through its partnership with the government and people of Solomon Islands is helping to rebuild the essential infrastructure of sovereignty.

Infrastructure is commonly understood to be physical structures, such as roads and bridges and buildings. But important as these are, infrastructure can also be understood to include a country's laws and regulations and its institutions.

As international experience shows, there is a clear link between strong nations and strong institutions. These institutions – the invisible infrastructure of a nation - are important not just for the functions they carry out but their proper functioning is vital to a nation's development, or to put it more plainly, they are essential to reducing poverty.

All countries don't have to have the same set of institutions. Quite the contrary: countries have to decide for themselves what institutions and laws are best for them.

But countries where institutions don't function properly, where people don't respect institutions, where the law is not respected, where public officials bend and break the rules to benefit themselves - these are usually poor countries.

Of course, these are not the only reasons why countries are poor. Geographical isolation, lack of infrastructure, poor education – all of these can be factors. All of these need addressing.

My argument is that sound and effective state institutions give a nation the best chance of succeeding, the best chance of meeting the needs of its citizens. This is a necessary – but not always a sufficient – condition for physical and economic security.

Sometimes people argue that this is only a matter of concern to people who live in Honiara. I think this is quite wrong.

Teachers need to be paid, clinics need to be stocked, roads need to be repaired, crimes need to be investigated, elections need to be organised. These things are very important for the great majority of people in this country whether they live in a village or in town. But teachers do not get paid by themselves, crimes do not get investigated without a police force, roads do not spring up overnight, for all these things to happen there must be the sort of organisation and coordination which, in the end, only a government can provide. For all these things to happen there must be effective laws and institutions.

This is not an argument for big government. It is an argument for government which is effective, efficient and accountable. This holds true in any country in the world, big or small and it is a lesson which has been learned over several thousand years of history.

It is here at the cutting edge of rebuilding and reforming Solomon Islands' institutions that I believe RAMSI's partnership with Solomon Islands is most vital. For RAMSI represents a unique opportunity – rarely given to any nation - to rebuild your national sovereignty through rebuilding stronger, more vital institutions, stronger more stable finances and to grow the capacity not just of individual public servants or police officers but to actually grow the capacity of your nation to carry out all that the good citizens of Solomon Islands require and desire of it.

Will RAMSI be here forever? Do we want to be here forever? Certainly not.

We know that we are here by invitation. We will stay as long as we are wanted and can be useful. The idea that Australia or other participating countries are here simply to take advantage of Solomon Islands economically, or to dominate the country, is frankly ridiculous. The Australian economy is two and a half thousand times larger than the Solomon Islands one. This is not meant disrespectfully but to put some perspective into this particular issue. To be honest there are much easier ways for Australians to make money.

I would now like to spend a short time outlining how RAMSI is evolving and changing. I think the greatest shift since my arrival in Solomon Islands two years ago has been our growing emphasis on capacity building. This is now acknowledged as central to our work in a way that it was not when RAMSI first arrived.

Our work in the area of machinery of government, and economic reform, has a greater profile than it did when RAMSI first arrived. Even so, the law and order side of RAMSI remains very important. In this context I note that the results of a public opinion survey we undertook earlier this year in four provinces suggested that two-thirds of Solomon Islanders think that violent conflict would return if RAMSI departed, and another twenty percent think this is a possibility. That underlines the important role RAMSI continues to play in providing stability and confidence.

Another change is the way we have improved the process of consulting with your government. Last November we established the SIG-RAMSI Consultative Forum. This is a body that brings together RAMSI's leadership with the Permanent Secretaries of our counterpart departments to discuss cross-cutting issues which affect all of RAMSI's operations, and to give us a better insight into the government's priorities and concerns.

Of course we can always do better. How?

I think we need to intensify our consultation with the government. Of course consultation is not a one-way street - it requires commitment from both sides. I think we can both do better on this.

I think we in RAMSI need to work harder to explain our approach both to our partners in government and to ordinary Solomon Islanders. I hope this speech today makes a modest contribution to that. Also, as you may know, we launched a new website last Friday. I invite you to visit that site at www.ramsi.org. We are also implementing an improved program of community outreach both in Honiara and outside, to provide ordinary Solomon Islanders with easy access to information about RAMSI, to provide the chance for everyone to ask any questions they might want to of RAMSI about what we are doing and why but also to help all of us in RAMSI to get to know you better, in the hope that this too will strengthen the partnership between us.

We are also in the midst of developing a medium term strategy in consultation with your government which will look ahead five years and try to define more precisely where we want to get to, how we will get there and how we will measure our progress – what are the milestones along the way that will tell us if we are on track or not.

I said earlier that RAMSI represents a unique opportunity to rebuild your national sovereignty. But of course RAMSI, by itself, is not the answer. The real key will be government policies that make best use of the opportunity that RAMSI represents, and that are implemented and sustained over a long period.

Many people of your parents' generation look back nostalgically to the 1970s and the 1980s – when they were young – to the time when Solomon Islands was known as the Happy Isles. They would like those quieter, calmer, happier days to return. Unfortunately those days are not coming back any time soon. Too much damage has been done, and the world is a very different place than it was 30 or even 20 years ago. We have to be realistic about this. The key now is to look forward, not backwards.

Our world is changing fast, and it is full of new opportunities and threats. Countries like China and India are growing into economic superpowers. Their effective sovereignty – their capacity and their influence – is growing daily. This is changing power relations globally. Nuclear proliferation, terrorism and transnational crime threaten our ways of life.

Solomon Islands, like all other countries, needs to prepare itself to respond to these challenges of this age of globalization and change.

It's important to say that short cuts will not work. Looking for easy answers to economic and social development in Solomon Islands is the same as investing in the Family Charity Fund. You might as well throw your money away.

What is the alternative?

Unless Solomon Islands faces the challenges, not only will poverty and crime increase, but the country's ability to decide and shape its future - its sovereignty – will shrink, not grow; even if Solomon Islands remains an independent country, you will find that others are increasingly taking decisions for you.

It seems to me that this is the key issue facing Solomon Islands today. Compared to this, RAMSI's role and presence is a secondary issue – an important one, but not the most important.

What is your role in this? You are much better educated than most Solomon Islanders. You have access to the outside world. You are part of the intellectual infrastructure of this country. The future will be built on your shoulders and in your minds. You have a responsibility to demand more of your leaders but you also have a responsibility to think and to behave in ways that will enhance your country's sovereignty, not undermine it. For in the end it will be the commitment of ordinary Solomon Islanders to your own country and the proper running of its institutions - not RAMSI - which will most determine the future of this nation.

Thank you

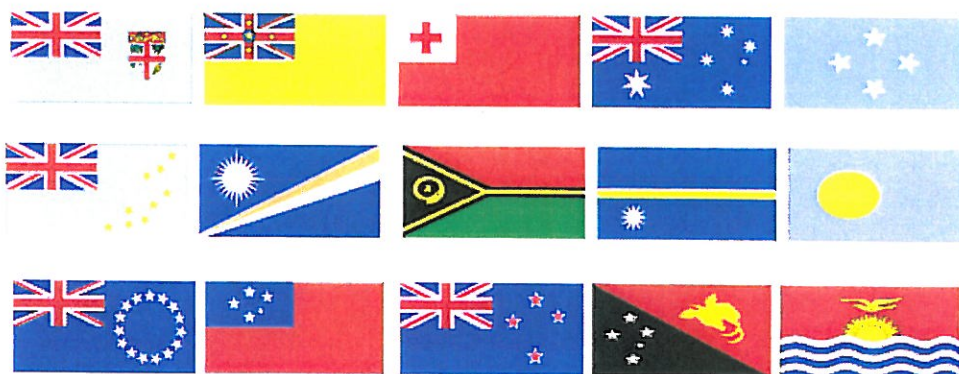
PPF



RAMSI

Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands

Participating Police Force



Introduction

In 2003, due to the breakdown of the law and order within the Solomon Islands, the RAMSI intervention took place with the stated aims of normalizing the security situation and rebuilding the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF).

The first major initiative taken by RAMSI was the complete withdrawal of firearms from all sections of the Solomon Islands community. The main presence of The PPF was established at a site known as the Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR).

Many people in the outer provinces had suffered incredible hardship throughout the years of ethnic tensions. In numerous places, no goods and services had ever reached the villages; in other instances, villagers had been subjected to raids by marauding gangs. 16 police outposts were established across all nine provinces of the Solomon Islands. 15 remain open as shown by the map below.



Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

Office of Special Coordinator

Law and Justice

Solomon Islands Police Force

Ministry of Police, National
Security, Justice & Legal
Affairs

Police Prosecutions

Case Support Unit

Public Solicitor's Office

Director of Public Prosecutions Office

Solomon Islands Prison Service

Law Reform Commission

Machinery of Government

Auditor General

Government Processes

Accountability

Media and Public Affairs

Electoral Commission

Honiara City Council

Housing Project

Economic Governance

Financial Management
Strengthening Program

RAMSI Infrastructure
& Related Services
Program

DBSI

Customs

Budgets

Economic Reform

Taxation

Donor Support

Participating Police Force



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Key Drivers

- SIG-RAMSI Partnership Framework
- RSIPF Strategic Plan
- PPF Strategic Plan



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Managing the Relationship with SIG

The relationship between RAMSI and Solomon Islands Government is set out in the

“Partnership Framework”

Goal:

A peaceful Solomon Islands where key national institutions and functions of law and justice, public administration and economic management are effective, affordable and have the capacity to be sustained without RAMSI's further assistance



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Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

Partnership Framework in Summary

The Framework includes

- Approx 150 strategies across all pillars
- 26 strategies for RSIPF in five key “themes”
- 3 strategies for the Fire Service,
- 1 strategy cutting across the Law and Justice Sector; and
- 3 cross-cutting strategies to be addressed by all pillars of RAMSI



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Law & Justice

PPF is part of the RAMSI Law and Justice Program or Pillar.

The goal for the Law and Justice Program is:

“A secure, safe, ordered and just Solomon Islands society where laws are administered fairly regardless of position or status, giving due recognition to traditional values and customs .”



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Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

RSIPF Objectives

A Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) that operates effectively and independently of RAMSI.

RAMSI will work with the **RSIPF** to assist it to:

- build community confidence in the RSIPF
- build RSIPF capability, ethics and integrity
- build broad community crime prevention and problem solving capability
- improve RSIPF infrastructure and logistics
- develop a capable and effective fire service
- maintain border security



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Cross-Cutting Issues

•Capacity Building

RAMSI will ensure that its capacity development processes are increasingly aligned with Solomon Islands needs and expectations

•Anti-Corruption

RAMSI will work in partnership with SIG to mainstream anti-corruption across RAMSI and Government programs

•Advancing Gender Equality

RAMSI will ensure that all its programs improve capacity for gender reporting aligned with SIG policy commitments and CEDAW obligations



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Monitoring and Evaluation

“For each agreed target, RAMSI programs will be responsible for identifying, in consultation with SIG partners, the information that will be used to judge whether there has been progress and where the information will come from”



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RSIPF STRATEGIC PLAN – EIGHT GOALS

- 1. Improve community confidence in the RSIPF.*
- 2. Improve RSIPF resource management, capability and leadership.*
- 3. Protect sovereignty of Solomon Islands.*
- 4. Reduce crime and the fear of crime.*
- 5. Improve road safety.*
- 6. Protect natural resources.*
- 7. Provide emergency response and management.*
- 8. Provide support to the criminal justice system.*



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PPF STRATEGIC PLAN – FOUR KEY OUTCOMES

1. Capacity Development of the RSIPF

- *To achieve RSIPF goals*

2. Maintenance of security

- *PPF retains a mandate under the Townsville Treaty for preventing and suppressing violence, intimidation and crime*
- *Focus on supporting the RSIPF*
- *Tiered response*

3. Delivering against the SIG-RAMSI Partnership

4. Mission support



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Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

STAGED CAPACITY BUILDING MODEL

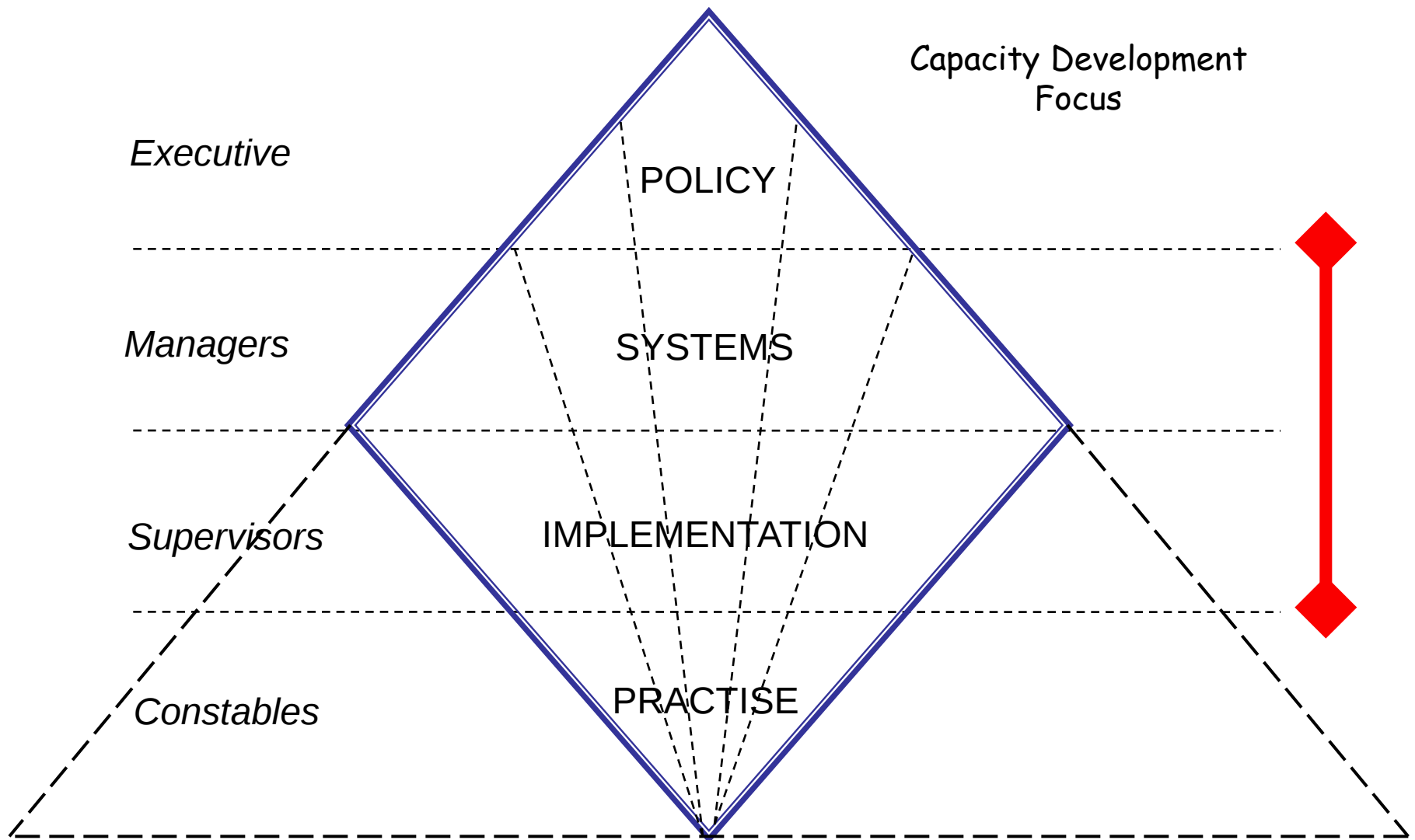
	Dependent	Guided	Assisted	Independent
Level of adviser support	High	Medium	Low	Occasional or none
	Primary ownership of work by adviser		Primary ownership of work by counterparts	
<i>Planning</i>	Planning for day to day work is done by adviser, often within the context of a wider strategic plan	Planning is done by adviser, in consultation with counterparts	Adviser assists counterparts to plan their work	Planning for day to day work is done by counterparts, within the context of a wider strategic plan
<i>Doing the work</i>	Adviser does all the complex tasks. Counterparts carry out straightforward tasks, usually under close supervision	Counterparts carry out straightforward tasks with limited guidance. Complex tasks require direction from advisers. Counterparts are not always aware of the scope of a task and may not realise when they need to ask for help	Counterparts can do most of the tasks without assistance. Counterparts know when to ask for help, but only need to do so occasionally	All tasks are done by counterparts No input is requested from adviser
<i>Quality control</i>	The adviser controls the quality of work by checking all outputs	The adviser checks most work to ensure quality	Counterparts take responsibility for work quality with sample checking by adviser	Counterparts take full responsibility for work quality. No checking is done by the adviser
<i>Responsibility for outcomes and results</i>	The adviser is responsible for achieving the outcomes, and will do whatever is necessary to achieve them	The adviser works with counterparts to help them understand their responsibility for achieving outcomes	Counterparts understand they are responsible for achieving outcomes but may sometimes need to be prompted	Counterparts are responsible for achieving the outcomes, and will do whatever is necessary to achieve them
<i>In summary ...</i>	The adviser makes things happen	The adviser works with counterparts to make things happen	Counterparts make things happen with the occasional prompt from the adviser	Counterparts make things happen



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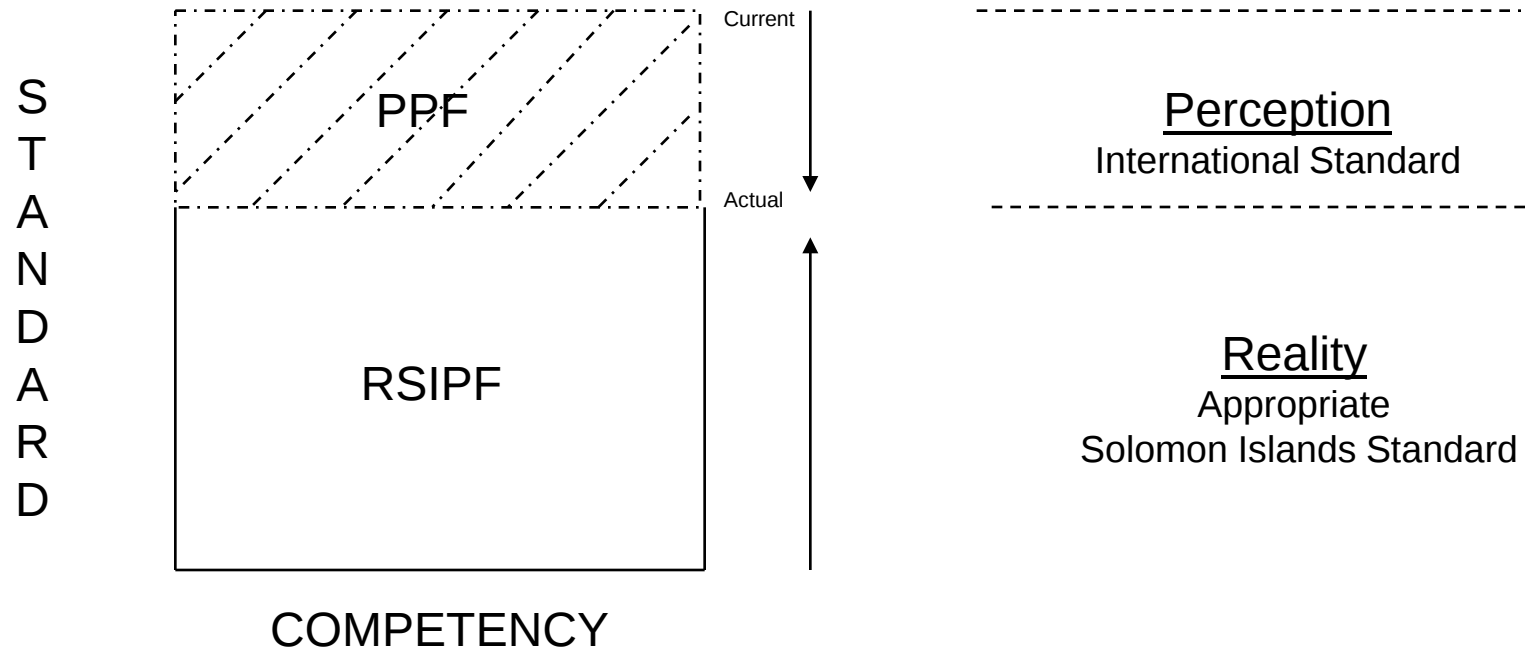


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Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

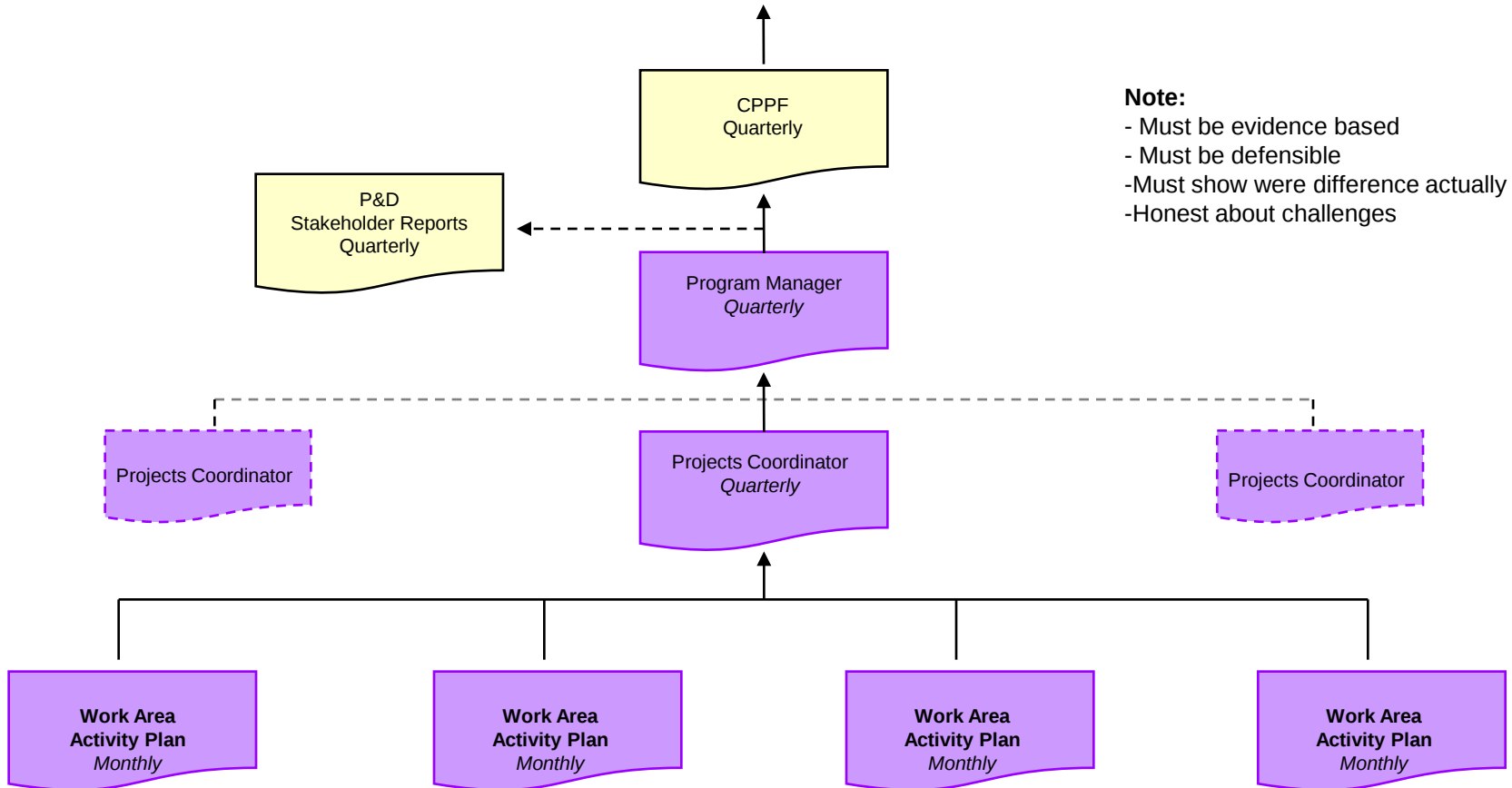
PERFORMANCE LEVELS



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Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands



Note:

- Must be evidence based
- Must be defensible
- Must show were difference actually made
- Honest about challenges

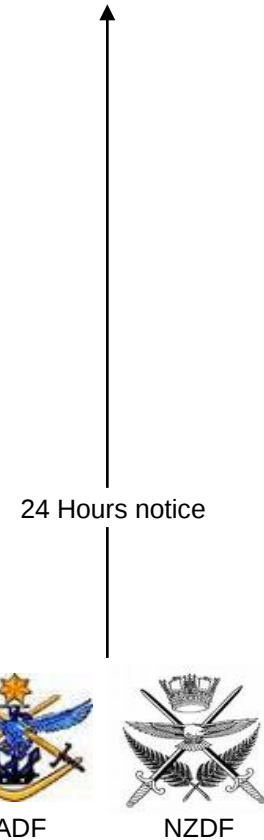
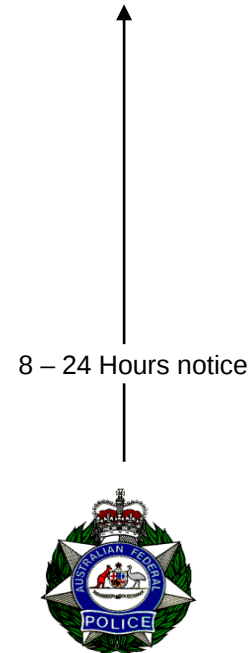
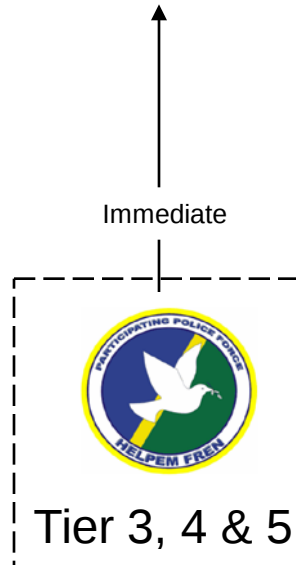
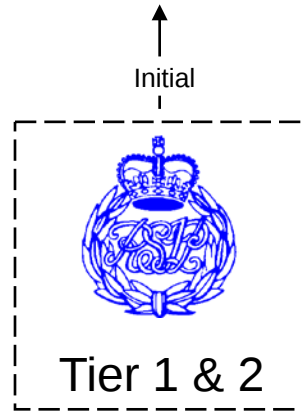
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CIVIL UNREST
SPECIAL EVENT
EMERGENCY SITUATION

RESPONSE CAPABILITY



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MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



THANK YOU!

Questions??

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Culture and Communication

Listen
or
your
tongue
will
keep
you
deaf

Solomon Islands Melanesian Communication Style in Meetings

Background

The Village

Community in the Solomon Islands context is a village. The village is made up of households and families. A family in Solomon Islands consists of the father, mother, children and grannies or some times includes uncles, aunts and cousins.

Families are the ones who make up the village. Most of these families are relatives, close or distance.

In the Solomon Islands culture relatives are relatives there is no line drawn on whether they are close or distance. This is because all of us are belong to clan or tribe. It is the clan or tribe that collectively owns the genealogy, ancestral spiritual protocols, ancestral spirits, ancestral holy sites, land and the resources. Therefore every individual person or family is par of a clan and tribe and a person or family can be part of other clans and tribes as well, this depends on his or here family genealogy.

The chief and tribe

The invisible division of sections and zones in the village is made according to clans and tribes. In each tribal section of the village there is a tribal chief. This chief usually is the custodian of the genealogy and facilitates issues or activity that concerns the overall tribe or section. He is no directly responsible for individual person or family matters. All family issues are the responsibility of the father and mother or the uncles and other cousins.

Therefore in a village you can have 2 or more than 10 chiefs, this depends on how many clans or tribes identified within the village. As mentioned previously these tribal chiefs act only on issues or activity that concerns the entire tribe.

There is no such thing as a council of chiefs in a village setting, however, from time to time chiefs can be called upon collectively to have their opinions on an overall proposed issue or development that concerns the whole village or community.

Usually, in a village about three or four tribal chiefs are identified to deal with various offences in the village and they hear the cases and make the judgment on each cases.

Normally these are criminal cases. They do not deal with civil, marriage, family affairs and land cases, separate people and chiefs attend to and hear these matters and make decisions on.

Apart from the tribal chiefs, the village chief is also a tribal chief but he holds the village chief title and the responsibility because he is the custodian of the land where the village is situated. Therefore all decisions concerning any activity or development in the village is usually made by the village chief and his tribe and his consent is important.

The village communication

Between each family in the village thee is a family space. The space between each family has a network that links these families together in the village. This network is called the corridors of engagement. These corridors provides for the daily interaction and sharing between the families and relatives.

At times a corridor between two families can be disengaged or cloudy, this might resulted from personal problems, marriage or land issues. However, to reengage this corridor and

remove the cloud between these two families reconciliation have to be made and compensation is the sanctification of this space.

Assertion 1

How is decision made in the village?

Decision making is no directly made by the community or people as many might think. This is not true.

Communal decision making is made by the influence of individual investment or the individual responsibilities. Every individual in the community has an important role and task to play to influence or make in collective decision. Individual responsibilities are the underline strength of decision making that determines the communal overall decision or the end product in decision making. It is the collective individual responsibilities that results in decision.

The important issue of decision making is the issue or nature of the matter to be addressed and not the process of finding the solution. Every communal issue or matter fro decision making has its own unwritten rules or steps. This is what I called the informal protocols. These informal protocols have been handed down by our forefathers and there are very clear unwritten guidelines or informal protocols to follow in every single case or situation.

When the nature of this issue or matter is identified, it leads us to who determines the decision making. The responsibility of decision making always rests on those who are affected by the matter.

Every communal issue or matter, it has its own informal protocols and at the end of each protocol there is also a decision. The only discussion is to agree to the decision or negotiate the parts of the decision.

There are some decisions meant not to be resolved, this will result in a person or family to immigrate to another place or non contact law is strictly made to persons involved.

Assertion 2

Discussion and decision aimed at good relationship

Avoid strong word and bad words

Eye contact depends on relationship or who is the audience

It is rude to cut in while someone is talking

Listen more and talk less

Confrontation in good spirit of respect and understanding

The only discussion is to agree to the decision or negotiate the parts of the decision

Any discussion in decision making is part of respect and cordial relationship

Every individual in the community has an important role and task to play to influence or in making collective decision.

Assertion 3

Outcome or end product

Every communal issue or matter, it has its own informal protocols and at the end of each protocol there is also a decision and end of product. The discussion is merely to agree to the decision or negotiate the parts of the end of product.

Assertion 4**Custodians of knowledge and expertise**

It is well separated in the community

Specific knowledge and experience is evenly spread through out the community

Many of these people include chiefs, big man and ordinary people in the village.

Assertion 5**Time is marked by events**

There are some cultural events that is marked by the season, moon and tide

Time is marked by annual engagements

Events depends on its importance and status

Assertion 6**Issues are determined by relevant people only**

Nature of the issue or matter determines the discussion and who to involve.

The protocol is flexible and blend to suit the situation and maintain relationship.

Solomon Islands

- Population about 500,000
- 6,000 villages
- Nation of 900 islands
- 3 main races
- 9 provinces – ethnic and language groups
- Different physical appearance

Some Local Dynamics

- Communal society
- Community obligation
- Wantok obligation
- Family obligation
- Solomon time
- Compensation
- Christianity
- 5 main churches
- Health, education and economic dev.
- Togetherness and cooperation

The Village

- 80 percent of the population
- 6,000 villages
- 2 to 100 households
- 20 to 1,000 people
- Families, extended family and wantok
- 1 out of 5 villages have a church, school or a clinic
- Situated along coastal, inland or artificial islands
- Subsistence way of life
- Rural economy – copra, cocoa, fish or marine produce

The village is the world

- **You family and extended family**
- **Leadership, chief and tribes**
- **Culture and tradition**
- **Church**
- **Education**
- **Health**
- **Changes and influence**
- **Contact to the outside world**

Village – “*Kastom*”

- Warato’o - The supreme law
- Totoraha – Our culture and traditions
- Painaha – Chief and leadership
- Too Makoha - Land ownership and the spirits
- Rioanimae - Common ancestor
- Huta - History and kinship
- Huekiniha – marriage and relationship
- Pata – traditional money
- Houra – feasts and events

The Village - The life

- Woven mat or jigsaw puzzle
 - Live together
 - Sharing
 - Respect
 - Modern world
 - Changes, influences and impact
- Education, health and others

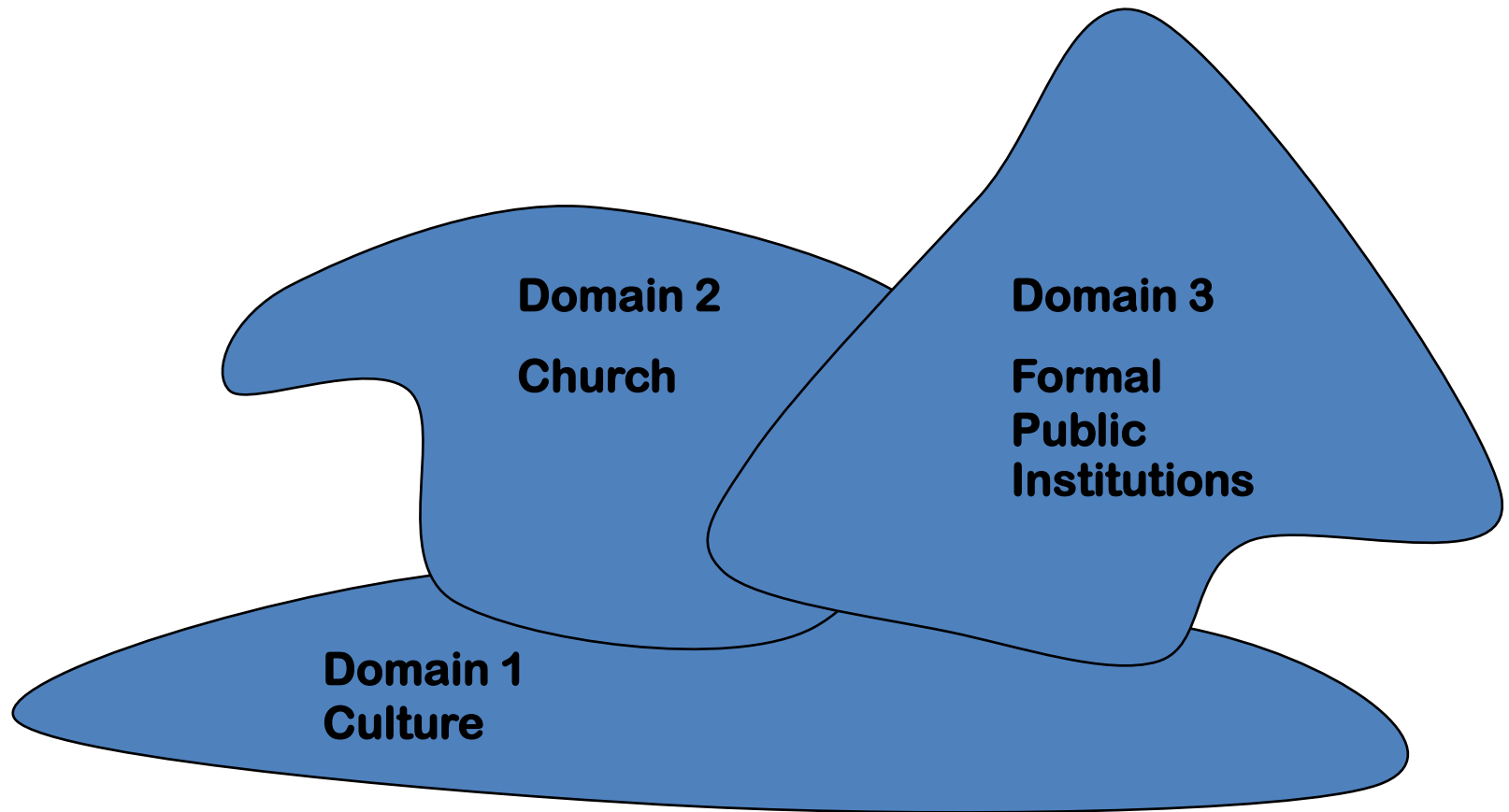
Village – communication style

- Culture of silence
- Yes - Answer
- Talk less and listen more
- Eye contact
- Body language

How to talk with local

- Use simple English, slow and average loud
- Use pinyin
- Use body language
- Repeat to stress a point
- Ask simple question to review or check
- Use demo or hands on or diagram
- Instructions in order – first, second.
- Explain a written instruction

Order of influence between & among Domains



Rather than a lack of knowledge or understanding of office/work place values, rules or regulations, a key concern is which or whose values & rules to follow :

Reasons:

- Wider context of officer/workers values & rules are the 3 broad domains of social relationships & Influence in SI/Pacific**
- 1. The Domain of Culture & Kastom**
- 2. The Domain of Religion & Church**
- 3. The Domain of Formalized Institutions**

The Change or Influence Ladder

Results/Outcomes

Where? When?

Behaviours

What?

Skills/Abilities

How?

More Conscious ↑

More Unconscious ↓

Beliefs

Why?

Values

Why?

Identity

Who



Espoused
vs
In Action

Locals and barriers towards relationship

- Language
- Colour or race
- Assumption
- Standard of living
- Appearance

How to create good relationship

- Be pleasant and good manners
- Open and be friendly
- Be fair to all
- Try to understand others
- Be patience
- Be Supportive
- Be positive
- Be respective

Locals and Business

- Hard working and reliable
- Honest and trustworthy
- Intelligence and smart
- Open and friendly
- Very willing to learn and accept changes
- Know the local situation better

Weakness of Locals

- Mix up work and other things
- Wantok or who you know
- Poor time management
- Careless and misuse of things
- Corrupt practices
- Strong family influence
- Bad habits

How locals see you

- **Boss/manager**
- **Rich, wealthy and have plenty**
- **Educated and knows everything**
- **Honest, trustworthy and reliable**
- **Expert and skilful**
- **Have all the answers**
- **Example and model**
- **Compassionate**
- **Way you behave, hold yourself and act is very important**

Employer

- **Friendly, open, approachable**
- **Competent & spend time with locals**
- **Sound relationship**
- **Understand others & culture**
- **Model and lead by example**
- **Supportive and show consideration to others**
- **Team work and impartial**
- **Mentor and good communicator**
- **Be flexible & patient**
- **Empowerment**

Other points take note

- Language not swearing
- Where – ever you go, people know who you are – so behave.
- Asking why when there is a problem usually reveals other problems – around the bush, time to talk
- Timelines – can be related to transport issues or family obligation

Community Outreach

COMMUNITY OUTREACH BRIEFING

INTRODUCTION

- Recommendation from the EPG in 2005
- Combination of all separate outreaches
- April 2006 Riot
- RAMSI image syndrome
- Outreach Strategy 2006
- Launched in September 2006
- Outreach Officer in Oct 2006
- First approach to ordinary people

OUTREACH OBJECTIVES

- RAMSI human face among the people
- Face to face personal interaction
- Bridging the relationship & gap
- First hand information about RAMSI
- Receive feedback from the ordinary people
- First touch with the life in the community
- “Partnership” – ownership by the people

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

- Communities
- Church groups
- Youth & women groups
- Primary & secondary schools
- Tertiary students
- Talking Truth
- Provincial visits
- Wakabaot toktok

ALL RAMSI OUTREACH TEAM

- CML of RAMSI military
- Community relations of PPF
- Civilian program or 3 pillars
- Law & Justice
- Machinery of Government
- Economic Governance
- Local counterparts
- Know who is within the Mission

OUTREACH MESSAGE

- Mandate and goals
- Brief on 3 pillars
- Brief on the role of PPF and Military
- Capacity Building
- Anti Corruption
- Gender
- Achievements & progress
- Partnership Framework

OUTREACH PLACE OF WORK

- Malaita province
- Weather Coast of Guadalcanal
- Honiara settlements
- Honiara High School
- East & West of Guadalcanal
- Churches
- NGOs
- Public Service
- Media Group
- Sport Clubs

MEETING VENUES

- School hall
- Community hall or church
- Open air meeting
- Playing field
- Under a tree

OUTREACH TOOLS

- Brochures
- Fact sheets
- Banners
- Post card
- *Talem* RAMSI
- Photo Gallery
- Face painting
- RAMSI Train
- RAMSI Quiz
- Auskick
- RAMSI DVD
- RAMSI Cut out
- Digital camera

OUTREACH LOGISTICS

- PPF Assets
- Vehicles
- Banana Boat
- Walk/climb
- Motel
- Meals
- Internal transport
- Briefing & security

OUTREACH EXPERIENCE

- See the country and the people
- See their culture and your culture
- Meet interesting people
- Get feedback about your work
- It is fun

RAMSI Outreach hosts briefing workshop



*Estelle Parker speaks at
RAMSI Community Outreach training*

RAMSI policy adviser Estelle Parker says getting to know Solomon Islanders and their culture has been one of the most rewarding parts of her two years living here, working in the Office of the Special Coordinator.

Ms Parker, from Melbourne in Australia, will finish her posting to Solomon Islands in September. Ms Parker talked about her experiences this week at a training session for RAMSI civilians, military and police and their Solomon Island counterparts who want to take part in RAMSI's Community Outreach Program.

The Community Outreach program, managed by Chris Tarohimae, takes RAMSI officers and their Solomon Island counterparts out into local communities in every Solomon Islands province to meet people talk about RAMSI activities, and answer questions from the community about what RAMSI is doing and how it relates to their own lives. "Before we take people out to meet the community we try to give them some understanding of Solomon Islands culture and customs and the most effective way to communicate with Solomon Islanders," Mr Tarohimae said.

Other speakers at the Community Outreach training session included Ms Parker and her fellow RAMSI policy adviser Jane Chandler, a former provincial police commander, Philip Idufo'oa, and from the Leadership Code Commission RAMSI adviser, Tony Mandarano and Chief Investigator officer Chris Mamu.

They spoke to the participants about RAMSI's partnership with Solomon Islands and its people and how each member of RAMSI and every Solomon Islander could in their own way make a contribution to making this a stronger and more prosperous country, while continuing to help with maintaining law and order.

Ms Parker, said people felt positive about RAMSI when it arrived in 2003, because law and order had deteriorated so seriously.

But now, they needed more information about RAMSI in order to understand the mission's role and activities in Solomon Islands, such as economic improvements, good governance activities and capacity development and training of Solomon Islanders.

"We need to go out to talk to people in all of the provinces to help them understand why doing things like conducting audits and helping with government budgets are just as important in the long-term as looking after law and order," Ms Parker said.

She encouraged the participants, all of whom will soon accompany Mr Tarohimae on outreach trips around Solomon Islands, to share details about their own lives with the people they meet across the country.

“Face-to-face communication is the most important thing in getting to know Solomon Islanders, and helping them to get to know you,” she said.

“So share your own stories with the people you meet in the local communities – let them know where you come from, and tell them a bit about your own families back home. They will enjoy sharing details of their lives with you, too.”

During Ms Parker’s time here she has traveled widely with the Community Outreach program, including to Isabel, Malaita, Central and Western provinces.

She especially enjoyed meeting Youth Parliament participants in Isabel, and was able to see their great hopes for their country’s future.

“I hope RAMSI’s work in partnership with the government can be continued by the next generation of Solomon Islanders,” she said.

Several times during her visit to the Florida Islands, she and her Outreach colleagues were welcomed by traditional pan pipe groups – a very special experience for a visiting Australian.

RAMSI’s Community Outreach program began in 2006. The next outreach visit will take place on August the 10th to Kolina on the Guadalcanal Weathercoast followed by one in Fiu, a village near Auki in Malaita province.

Talking straight in Mbambanakira

By CHRIS TAROHIMAE
RAMSI Public Affairs

DESPITE the flooding and bad weather in February, more than 100 village leaders were there to welcome us as the chopper landed at Mbambanakira school play ground last month.

Indeed community leaders had gathered from more than 20 surrounding villages to attend RAMSI *Wakabaot Toktok* that we had planned.

The principal of Mbambanakira Community High School, Samson Teteha welcomed our Community Outreach team on behalf of the participants.

"It is the first time ever for such an awareness or workshop to be held here in Mbambanakira by RAMSI officers, we community leaders appreciated your coming and look forward for the discussion," he said.

The first activity we organised for the *wakabaot toktok* was finding out what these local leaders knew about RAMSI and the work we are doing in Solomon Islands.

We divided the participants into 11 groups who reported back on their discussions.

The Chief of Poisugu village, Apollos Piri told us that his group knew that RAMSI was a regional mission; RAMSI is doing a lot of work in restoration of law and order and building good governance within the Government institutions.

An SSEC church leader from Saranamate village, Alfred Ringolo, said his group knew that RAMSI is doing a lot of capacity building within the RSIP to build a good police force, and that RAMSI has been assisting the Government in social infrastructure and building confidence in our economy so that outside investors can come to invest in our country.

The Women's Fellowship leader, Grace Rina from Poisugu village said that participants believed that RAMSI had helped to bring unity among the people and communities.

She said RAMSI is assisting the government machinery to work better, providing training to local counterparts in the public service, as well as sometimes assisting people in emergencies and natural disasters.

The Village leader of Mavunina village, Edmond Kenge told the participants that he was very happy when RAMSI came to Solomon Islands.

He said RAMSI provided an environment for the private



Father Francis Lauvatu had concerns about the police response to crime - but RAMSI PPF officers said community and police need to work together to improve law and order.

sector to do business and where people can travel freely throughout the country.

He told us that RAMSI should stay on until it achieves all these goals.

A former police officer, Philip Manakako, from Marasa village said that one of the very things good about RAMSI was the disarming of the militants and making our communities' gun free.

After our tea break in the later part of the morning, serious discussions were held about the role of RAMSI Participating Police Force, PPF post in the community and the need for chiefs and village leaders to work closely with it.

Philip Manakako said from his observation the PPF and RSIP did not always work well together and that it was very important that the PPF and RSIP talk and understand each.

In his reply, PPF officer, Steward Speedie, who is in charge of Mbambanakira PPF post said they were open to talk and listen to the concerns of village leaders.

However, Mr Speedie pointed out to the participants that unlike the early days of RAMSI, the PPF are now playing a different role assisting the RSIP and it is the RSIP that is now leading the police work.

Father Francis Lauvatu mentioned that the local

people do not have confidence and trust in the RSIP, they do not do their work properly, they are very slow to report and do not work with community leaders. This is a big problem in the community.

PPF officer Emmart Tsimes from Bougainville pointed out to the village leaders that police and community must work together, policing is not police work alone, it is everybody's work.

"Chief, leaders, youth, women and villagers must work with the local police, they must trust and have confidence in the RSIP. RAMSI will not stay here forever" said Mr Tsimes.

Village leader Allan Posa

of Poisugu village asked how long is the time frame for RAMSI's assistance to Solomon Islands?

Gillian Kenny, an assistant policy advisor in the Office of the Special Coordinator explained that there is no final deadline but rather a number of goals that it is planned for RAMSI and the Solomon Islands to achieve.

Ms Kenny said the Government and RAMSI were currently working on a partnership framework agreement that outlines these jointly agreed goals.

"RAMSI is here on a specific mission and when RAMSI completes its mission they will leave," Ms Kenny said.

Chief of Poisugu village, Apollos Piri told everyone that reconciliation is one of the priority issues to the Weather Coast people.

He said reconciliation between Malaita and Guadalcanal people must not be prolonged; government must start doing serious things about this.

He mentioned that another issue is the reconciliation between Government (RSIP - Joint Operation) and the Weathercoast people.

"We want RAMSI to support the Government in the reconciliation. We are still waiting for the Government. A lot is still to be done in reconciliation," said Apollos.

Titus Tedi, chief of Kolohona village said that illegal selling of alcohol in the villages is a big concern for leaders.

He told us that it is their recommendation that Guadalcanal province consult leaders and their community and seek their consent before issuing any licenses to sell beer.

"A lot of problems in the community are associated with selling beer and kwaso in the villages.

"There needs to be a community strategy in dealing with these issues with the concerned authorities" said Mr Tedi.

A RAMSI civilian adviser, Kate Haliday who works with the Law Reform Commission, told the participants that the punishment and fines for these offences are quite low, so the Commission is now working on reviewing the law act, so that more appropriate punishments are given to offenders.

PPF officer, Mr Tsimes mentioned that it is time to bridge the gap between the community and the police, so that everyone can support each other to fight against these problems.

From the *wakabaot Toktok* in Mbambanakira, it is our observation that people still very much depend on the support of RAMSI, and that village leaders feel that RAMSI can play an active role in many important concerns and issues in the rural areas.

We try to explain that while RAMSI, especially the PPF, want to work closely with rural communities it is important not to expect RAMSI to fix everything because we can't!

And we ask the community to remember the responsibilities of every citizen to keeping the peace and building a better future for our children.

WEEKEND ★ Magazine

Tackling the issues of Dala North

Travelling along the recently restored North Road to Dala, Malaita, the RAMSI Community Outreach team found a robust village doing its best to improve the lives of its members. Here, RAMSI Culture and Community Outreach Coordinator, Chris Tarohimae, recounts the story of their visit.

IT is the Kwalefa River, running through West Kwale'ae in Malaita Province that cuts the community of Dala literally in two.

Thus two villages, Dala North and Dala South, sitting each side of the river make up a community of around 3000 people.

Dala North, the village our team visited, just over a week ago, is the smaller of the two, and is estimated to have about 500 people.

Luckily for our RAMSI Community Outreach team of civilian, police advisers, and military personnel, the heavy rain held off just long enough for us to travel by truck for about an hour along the renewed North Road - a combined project with the government, donors and RAMSI to reach Dala North.

As we approached Dala, we were surprised to see a large number of men and women, young and old, working spades, hoes and wheelbarrows along the side of the road.

We found out that they were working to dig drains along the side of their new road, to help move the water away and maintain the road for longer.

Arriving in the village, we were greeted by the chiefs and community leaders and then escorted up past the many structures built by the community - a house for the clinic nurse, a high school and finally to their new church building which is the meeting venue.

Despite an almost four hour delay in our arrival due to transport difficulties, we were delighted that all the people were still patiently waiting for us; this was amazing.

The church was filled with people including children, women, youths and village elders.

The meeting is a Wakabaot Toktok, part of RAMSI's program of outreach visits and consultations with provincial communities.

We had expected about 80 participants. However, that midday more than 200 people sat ready in front of us in the church - ready to hear about the work of RAMSI,

and ready to ask questions directly to people from their 15 regional neighbours who had come to 'Helpem Fren', to work side-by-side with their government workers to help build a better Solomon Islands.

Our hearts beat a bit faster that midday. We were behind time and we did not want to be rude to our host. What were we to do?

Davidson Tua, the chief of Dala North welcomed us on behalf of the people and acknowledged our coming to his village.

To start the workshop, all the members of the RAMSI team introduced themselves, which country they came from, and what their role was with RAMSI.

One man needing no introduction was Dudley Fugui who works for RAMSI and comes from Dala.

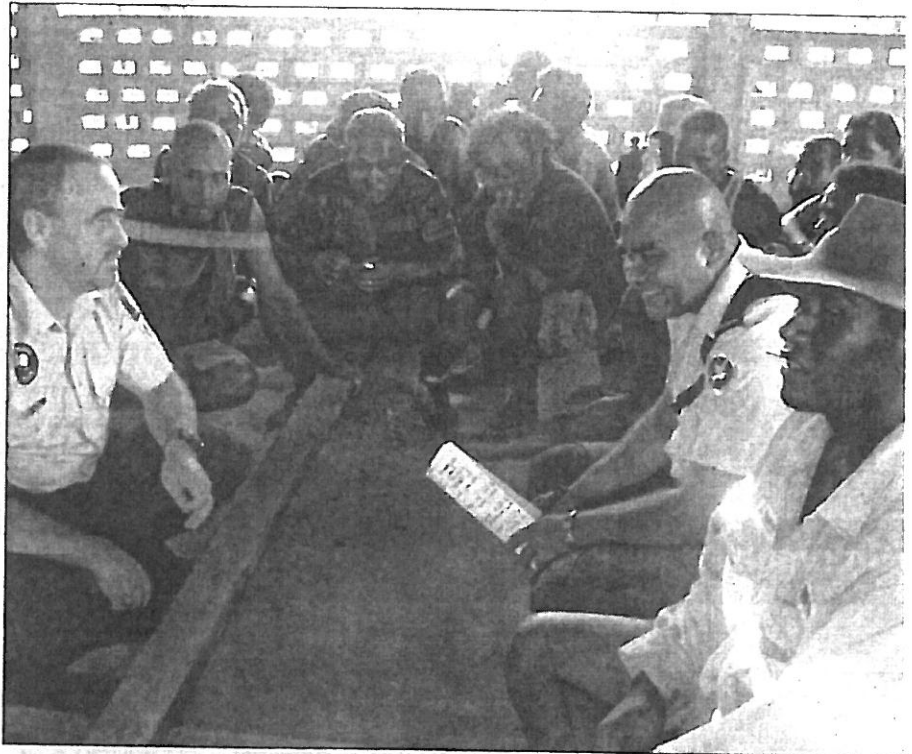
After a general talk about RAMSI, we kindly asked the children to leave so that we could start the Wakabaot-Toktok meeting.

The first activity we organized for the wakabaot toktok was finding out how much people know about RAMSI and some of the work that RAMSI is doing.

We divided the participants into seven groups and this is what the groups talked about:

They said RAMSI assists the government in the public service; RAMSI brought peace to the community; with the presence of RAMSI overseas volunteers are able to come to the Solomon Islands and assist schools and clinics; there are fewer troubles compared to the past, particularly during the tension period; RAMSI assists community leaders in their role and responsibilities; RAMSI assists in the collection of guns, RAMSI makes it safe to travel and ensures freedom of movement; RAMSI improves infrastructure; has helped improve RSIP; it contributes to economic, rural livelihoods, and rural health; and RAMSI assists the government to fight against corruption.

It was good to learn that Dala people know a fair amount about what RAMSI is doing and that they appreciate and fully support the work of RAMSI.



PPF Officers talk about law and order issues with Dala men.

After a tea break we organised the participants to go back into their seven groups to look at some of the important issues and questions they wanted to discuss with us.

Many of these issues were easily clarified, such as the perception that RAMSI is assisting the Guadalcanal province more than other provinces.

People felt it was important to spread development evenly within all the provinces.

The Outreach Team was able to explain that in fact most of RAMSI's Development work is carried out on a national scale but there had been at first a special focus on both Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces, because they were the two provinces that were most affected by the ethnic tensions.

The other associated rumour that RAMSI military are providing training for Guadalcanal ex-militants was also explained as just not true.

"RAMSI came in to help people surrender and destroy

their guns; we are not going to turn round and be handing out guns or training anyone," one of the presenters reassured the community.

People felt it was important for RAMSI officers to keep in touch with the local community and understand the local situation.

In response the Outreach teams explained the ways that RAMSI officers are prepared and educated about being sensitive to local culture and the local way of life.

This includes visits and briefings from local communities for new RAMSI personnel, pidgin lessons as well as RAMSI's Code of Conduct which provides strict guidelines for the behaviour of all members of the mission including respect for Solomon Islands people and their culture.

As the afternoon continued, both the patient audience and the RAMSI team ignored their hunger for lunch.

Harder to ignore was the thundering rain as it hammered down on the tin roof

above. Still, the discussion was too interesting and the questions all needed to be answered as they are often the questions we get on our Wakabaot Toktok meetings.

People gathered in close, leaned forward and the talking continued.

How long it will be before the local police are re-armed and who is responsible for making this decision was also a concern raised by the people of Dala North.

The Outreach team was able to explain that this would be a decision of the Solomon Islands Government when the time was right and the community had full confidence in their police force once again.

"This is the main goal of the RAMSI's Participating Police Force work with and assistance for the RSIP," one of the PPF advisers explained.

"We want to do ourselves out of our job, and we can all go home!"

Many people said they would like to see community policing strengthened within the villages, and that

the PPF do more to assist the RSIP in this respect. Community policing is an important method of law and order.

There has been a lot of talk about community policing but very little is seen in the rural villages they said.

The people of Dala North suggested that RAMSI should remain in the country until people have confidence in the government and police.

Some four hours later the questions were answered and the hunger for information satisfied. It was time to eat. As the people from North Dala and from RAMSI mixed together, there was more talk and more discussion.

While it was clear that RAMSI could not solve all their problems and was following a program set up to help the government deliver better, more effective government services, both groups appreciated the chance to meet, make friends and wakabaot toktok.

Capacity Development

Capacity Development and RAMSI

Introduction

AusAID has an active program of engagement on the theory and practice of capacity development and continues to build its own, and its partners, knowledge and skills. For example, we have held two Capacity Development Showcases which featured a variety of presentation from consultant members of the AusAID Capacity development Panel. With our partners we developed the Australian Whole of Government Approach to Public Sector Capacity Development in PNG and the Pacific, and instituted the Deployee Debriefing Program. Many deployees and their counterparts have been attending the six day course “Making a Difference, Tools and Approaches to Capacity Development” which has been run several times in PNG and the Solomon Islands.

AusAID has also sponsored research on the subject with respect to RAMSI. Together with Germany and Denmark we funded an international evaluative study on TA Personnel, which featured RAMSI as a case study. As an “offshoot” to that study we also asked one of the CD Panel members to provide some additional views. As that paper, “Morgan Reflections’ was well received and with particular interest in direct and Indirect Approaches to TA, AusAID tasked the consultant to draft a supplementary paper on this topic. AusAID Senior Performance Assessment Adviser John Winter, and CD specialist Kaye Schofield have also just completed the Annual Performance Report with a close look at capacity issues. (AusAID has also co-funded some ADB-led research on CD in PNG and the Pacific and will organize a seminar on this in mid-October.)

International TA Personnel Study, Synthesis Report

First, a few key findings of the overall study, drawn from research and two other case studies.

Critical determinants of the effectiveness of TA Personnel include.

- The extent to which the host organization exercises leadership, is clear on what it wants to achieve and can make full use of TA inputs;
- Clearly defined genuine demand, un-pressured by donor-imposed conditionalities;
- The quality of the program design, avoiding over-design and adopting flexible approaches, clear definition of respective parties’ roles and being realistic about the time needed for CD and the limitations of TA personnel influence on this;
- The quality of the personnel deployed. Process skills (facilitation etc) are regarded as important, particularly where the TA is expected to play a change agent or process facilitation role;
- Country management of TA personnel – countries should have responsibility for recruitment and TA personnel should be accountable to the host organizations they serve (but most countries are not ready to take on the procurement function for TA);
- M&E systems with performance indicators that recognize capacity development and process dimensions. Methodologies that focus on learning rather than just on accountability can help derive lessons on how change happens and how TA can contribute and they motivate stakeholders towards more productive co-operation.

- Donors being better equipped to support CD and to ensure effective use of TA personnel;
- A more informed understanding of how TA can be used to support capacity and change. CD is complex and the success of TA personnel as instruments for supporting it should not be assumed as a necessary and sufficient ingredient. Having an explicit theory of action with an understanding of how different models of change can contribute can increase the chances of success. This includes determining the mix of 'direct' and 'indirect' approaches and knowing when to shift from one to the other.

This approach is at the very direct end of the spectrum and is often used when a country has collapsed or ceased to function. External actors take direct control of a function or agency and operate with the general compliance of country authorities. The emphasis is on stabilization or rehabilitation, with an intention to help create stability and security.

Diagnosis and Prescription Model

In this approach countries and donors reach agreement about addressing the key needs or gaps or constraints. The emphasis is still more product than process focused, more on task accomplishment than on CD. There is an implicit assumption that there is a right answer and that TA personnel can help find and implement it. It is a 'tell and sell' approach. The real operational initiative and energy for change is likely to come from TA personnel and ownership passes tacitly to them. TA personnel devise a new approach and then persuade their counterparts of its merit. The assumptions are that: expert-led change can work; the organization or systems are the most important issues to address; and that lack of knowledge and expertise is the main constraint.

The operational implications of the above two approaches are:

- Incentives exist on the part of both donor and partner country to use direct approaches. From the country side, it puts less pressure and responsibility on counterparts and has the potential to fix short term problems. On the donor side, the 'action' orientation appeals – fragile states such as SI need fast fixes. It lends itself to a WofG approach whose comparative advantage is technical.
- There are however 3 major risks: (i) it is a problem solving methodology with biases towards the generic, formal, technical and functional, (ii) both parties can get locked into a relationship that does not develop country commitment and capabilities and (iii) the problem solving bias may miss the real nature of the constraints.

To avoid the above downsides, both parties have to be clear about the limits to direct action and willing to transition to indirect over time. The diagnosis and prescription model is simultaneously the most prevalent and the most difficult to make work over time.

Indirect Approaches are where: ownership and control remain with the partner country, especially in a psychological sense; TA personnel act indirectly through others; the priority is not action and delivery but capacity development and autonomy respecting outcomes; there is less diagnosis and prescription and more dialogue and joint discovery;

there more emphasis on the solution fitting the country context; more insights come from country staff who know about the hidden, informal dynamics; capacity development is an explicit goal; TA try to balance product and process.

There are two variants:

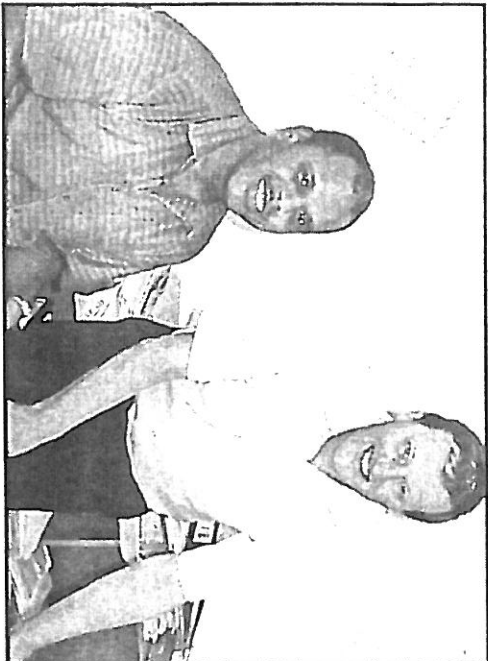
1. Combination Process Model

Unlike in the direct approaches, the commitment and motivation of the Solomon Islanders is evident in this model; while they may delegate some tasks, they remain in logistical and psychological control; they help design the TA interventions and supervise their activities. There may still be a focus on technical issues but 'tell and sell' does not predominate. The TA to the Auditor General best demonstrates the combination approach at work.

2. Pure Process Model

In this approach, TA involvement in technical issues and focus on 'product' diminishes. TA focus more on 'process', that is, conscious efforts at changing the human and social dynamics within an organization or system in an effort to make it more effective. TA personnel help counterparts to think differently, learn how to self-diagnose, and help to create the space and conditions within which the counterparts can arrive at their own solutions.

Building a strong base for providing services



Inland Revenue Division - Acting Deputy Commissioner Eric Saelea and Acting Commissioner Andrew Minto.

You can expect to hear more from the Internal Revenue Division if you are in business. Inland Revenue is putting a lot of effort into making it easier for people to comply with their tax obligations.

Since 2005 people who receive salary and wages haven't needed to file tax returns. However, businesses are still required to, and Inland Revenue is looking to increase cooperation levels through greater engagement with the community, better internal systems and processes and higher levels of enforcement activity.

understand you, the more they seem to understand the tax system and why it is important."

The Inland Revenue Division is the Government's central collection point for all taxes, licensing fees (such as vehicle licences and registration) and stamp duty.

Mr Saelea, who has been with Revenue office for 15 years, is working with RAMSI adviser Andrew Minto to encourage people to understand that the tax they pay to the Government comes back to the community in the form of essential services such as schools, hospitals and roads.

Mr Minto, from New Zealand Inland Revenue, is on a two-year posting to Solomon Islands, working as the Acting Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

He brings 30 years' experience to the job, and says having a strong Revenue office is a cornerstone of any democratic society, especially in a developing country like Solomon Islands.

During the tensions, the collection of revenue literally stalled, and Inland Revenue has, with RAMSI's support, worked hard to re-build its taxpayer base.

"We try to ensure there is good information out there to educate people about the system, but we also have been strengthening the enforcement side," Mr Minto says.

"For those who chose not to pay their tax, stronger measures will be called for. It is important that we have a level playing field where those who do pay their tax are not disadvantaged by those who simply do not comply."

Mr Minto is one of five Australian and New Zealand RAMSI advisers working

at Inland Revenue.

"We are here to help the Government, but primarily to help the people of the Solomon Islands," he says.

"While we have a relatively small number of taxpayers here, we have a lot of work to do to improve compliance levels and to get people to understand that living, working, and making money in the Solomons comes with the responsibility to pay tax, so everybody in the country will benefit."

Mr Saelea is one of five Solomon Islanders filling six senior management positions at Inland Revenue. He says the vision for the office is a self-sustaining revenue division that is completely managed by local managers.

"The Division has made great progress over the last few years but more needs to be done to bring it up to a level whereby it can sustain itself," Mr Saelea says.

To do this, RAMSI advisers have been helping to build the capacity of the office's senior and middle-level managers, who are in turn passing on skills and knowledge to their staff throughout the organisation.

Capacity development activities can range from introducing new systems to one-on-one coaching with advisers. Inland Revenue also has a strong focus on study, either part or full time, at institutions like SICHE, USP and overseas, with over 50 per cent of staff currently undertaking some form of formal study.

Mr Saelea has applied for scholarships to pursue a three-year Economics degree at the University of the South Pacific (USP), and Mr Minto says it's very important that people in

the Revenue office, including senior managers, have the opportunity to study and increase their expertise.

"While (their absence) will affect Inland Revenue in the short-term, we need to keep thinking from a capacity development perspective about the long term, so when Eric goes to start his studies there will be an opportunity for someone else to act in that role and to develop. Then when he returns, we will benefit greatly from his new knowledge and expertise."

Mr Saelea says training is another important tool to get Inland Revenue to where it wants to be.

"We are looking forward to our advisers giving us this training, and we intend to get as much as we can from their expertise while they are here."

Local staff and the RAMSI advisers have been working side by side to put in place policies and processes to help the office run smoothly, and a new computer system that was introduced in 2005 has been further fine-tuned.

This replaces a manual process with an automated one, meaning less time-consuming paperwork and more accurate record-keeping.

Mr Saelea has seen the Division come a long way since in his 15 years of service, and says it now has a more organised and disciplined approach to collecting revenue.

"The importance of having an Internal Revenue Division is like having a pillar that is stable to try and finance government initiatives," Mr Saelea says.

"Without revenue collection, it would be very hard - impossible, I think - to provide any services to people in this country."



New system means faster, smarter trade

When the Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division took steps towards modernizing the country's import/export processes to help increase economic activity, it needed a person with the skills and experience to understand the country's complex customs processes.

The right man for the job, James Lapo, had retired the year before as a national manager for Customs, but after 30 years, he was happy to return to help lead the organisation to a new level of service.

Mr Lapo is managing a major step forwards for Solomon Islands – the set-up of the new electronic Customs management system called PC/Trade.

The new computer system allows all import and export details to be lodged electronically. This will mean more accurate and efficient processing through Customs and a faster system for people bringing goods in and out of the country.

Under the old system, all records on incoming and outgoing goods were filed on paper and manually put into a computer system – this meant hours of paperwork and data entry for Customs staff, and long waiting times for local businesses and traders.

With the support of RAMSI adviser Anna Lamont, Mr Lapo now heads a team that is educating all Customs staff and customers in using the new PC/Trade system, including how to fill in the new electronic forms.

So far Customs officer Moses Tare has trained more than 160 people from 80 Solomon Islands businesses and government departments to use the new electronic forms. Customs staff at the airport, wharf and Customs House will soon be able to access customer information electronically.

Mr Lapo says the new system is a major step towards the overall modernisation of the Customs service. "A more efficient Customs service is much better for companies doing



Customs manager James Lapo and his RAMSI adviser Anna Lamont have been working together to improve the speed and efficiency of moving goods in and out of Solomon Islands – which is good news for the economy.

business in Solomon Islands. It will take less time for goods to come in and out of the country. Also the computer system can quickly and simply give us information, statistics and do automatic calculations. This makes it easier for us to check the import/export entries," Mr Lapo says.

"We can also send information to other Government departments, like statistics. We can now easily do reports for Government agencies as they are required."

Ms Anna Lamont, who recently completed her posting to the Solomon Islands, worked as an adviser to Customs for a year, helping staff to introduce the system and to build staff computer skills so they would manage the new system on their own after she left.

She said the Government had already seen positive results from the information produced by the new system, and traders should also soon benefit from faster processing times once staff adapt to

the new system and it is further improved.

"Introducing a new computer system is like sewing a new shirt," she said.

"You can make the shirt to the pattern, but you can't make the final adjustments until you try the shirt on. There is no such thing as one size fits all. This system is used in other countries in the Pacific, but every country has its own Customs service is a little bit different, so we have to adapt it to fit Solomon Islands Customs. We are also working on tailoring office procedures to gain further benefits."

Mr Lapo says developing the capacity of Customs staff to manage the new system was a joint effort led by RAMSI and Customs staff with support from Statistics New Zealand and NZAID. RAMSI has also provided other budget, infrastructure and capacity building support. For example, refurbishing the Customs office at the airport and building a new office at Nono.

"This has brought our image back up, unlike before where we didn't have proper offices in some locations," Mr Lapo says. "And capacity building is a big thing – I have learned quite a lot about IT systems and project management from Anna and training and design sessions conducted by staff from Statistics New Zealand, and we are passing on the knowledge and procedures that we have learned and prepared for staff to help with their future management of this project."

Ms Lamont said Customs staff could be proud of having successfully brought in the new PC/Trade system. "PC/Trade is something that Customs have been working towards for almost six years," she said, "and I think there is now a really positive feeling in Customs about moving ahead with this new system – and this is good news for the Solomon Islands' economy."

By Karen Ingram,
RAMSI Public Affairs Unit



Chairman of the Leadership Code Commission
Emmanuel Kouhota and his RAMSI Adviser Tony Mandarano are working together to strengthen the Commission, and building stronger and more accountable leadership for the Solomon Islands.

Building a Better Solomon Islands



Tugeta lumi Save Duim
www.ramsi.org

Showing Leaders the Right Direction

Chairman of the Leadership Code Commission Emmanuel Kouhota and his RAMSI Adviser, Tony Mandarano are working together to strengthen the Commission, helping build stronger and more accountable leadership for Solomon Islands.

is a really small place and you have to try and maintain some distance from your friends, and be neutral and impartial. It's not easy."

The Leadership Code is at the service of the people of Solomon Islands. Any person can lodge a complaint of misconduct against any public official, from the Governor-General to the Prime Minister and Parliament, and from the provincial governments to the Honiara City Council and all special government authorities.

Being Chairman of the Leadership Code Commission is not an easy job at the best of times. Especially, if like the current chairman, Emmanuel Kouhota, a long and varied career over 28 years in the public service means you know many of the public officials you are expected to keep in line.

The Commission is an independent body created to investigate complaints against public officials, using the Leadership Code and accompanying laws as its guide to how officials are expected to behave.

Since 2002, it has been Mr Kouhota's responsibility to oversee investigations into any public official who has been accused of misconduct.

"I know a lot of people, a lot of leaders, especially our members of parliament," he says. "Some of them were my school mates and we went to the same high school. This

Chairman of the Leadership Code Commission Emmanuel Kouhota and his RAMSI Adviser Tony Mandarano are working together to strengthen the Commission, and building stronger and more accountable leadership for the Solomon Islands.

Building a Better Solomon Islands

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Part of the Commission's work is to educate leaders about their responsibilities under the Leadership Code. Here the Chairman, Emmanuel Kouhota presents a certificate to the then Premier of Central Province, Hon. Patrick Vasuni, one of the participants in an Integrity and Anti-Corruption workshop conducted by the Leadership Code Commission in Tulagi in September last year.

lie with information about its work, powers and the role of the Leadership Code. Like other institutions, the commission suffered from a lack of resources after the tensions, and is not that well known to many Solomon Islanders.

"It is part of the role of the Leadership Code Commission to educate the public about the responsibilities of our leaders," Mr Mandarano says.

If a complaint is made against a leader and approved for investigation, that confidential investigation will be done by the Commission, usually taking about four months.

On many occasions, the leader will not be aware that he or she is being investi-

or ban them for life for further offences.

Mr Kouhota says there are always serious cases needing to be investigated, so staff are constantly wanting to improve their investigation skills.

"Capacity building is one of the main things we wanted from a RAMSI adviser," he says.

"Our biggest problem has always been that we do not have enough capacity, especially in the area of investigations, which is one of our major jobs.

"Most of our investigators are picked from the police force, because I think in the Solomon Islands there is no other place where you can find people with investigation skills, so for those who come from outside, they need strong training."

He says the Commission's team of four investigators, soon to increase to seven, is feeling more confident about looking for and finding evidence, and about managing cases and producing reports.

"Some of them have personally come to me to say that they are learning new things, and they are very happy with the support and training that they are getting."

Two female secretaries are also receiving investigations training, to help them fully understand the workings of the Commission, and to offer

them better career choices.

With two years left in his term as Chairman, Mr Kouhota says he wants to see the Commission expand to the larger provinces, to make it easier for provincial residents to seek advice and report complaints, rather than having to submit written complaints or travel to Honiara.

He will oversee the construction of a new building to house the Commission, including the investigations unit, and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Despite limited resources, Mr Mandarano says he is highly impressed by the commitment of the Commission's staff.

"The desire of the staff here to learn is very strong, and they all want to do as well as they can. They understand that they are restricted in terms of resources, but they do the very best they can with what they have, and that is something that I really admire."

A review of the Leadership Code (Further Provisions) Act 1999 is currently being finalized, and will strengthen the Commission's ability to investigate and prosecute allegations of misconduct.

- Karen Ingram,
 RAMSI Public Affairs

Helping prisoners make a new start in life

HELPING prisoners get back onto the path of good is what Mr Gibson Ado and his RAMSI adviser Mr David Sherman are working on at the Correctional Service of Solomon Islands. With their help, prisoners are making a new start in life and helping the community that they return to.

When Mr Gibson Ado, who heads up prisoner training programs at Rove recently went to Malaita, he visited two ex-prisoners who had recently returned to their community. Their story proved to Mr Ado that, with the right skills and programs, people in prison can change and be transformed into better people. He also saw that this is a good thing for the community too.

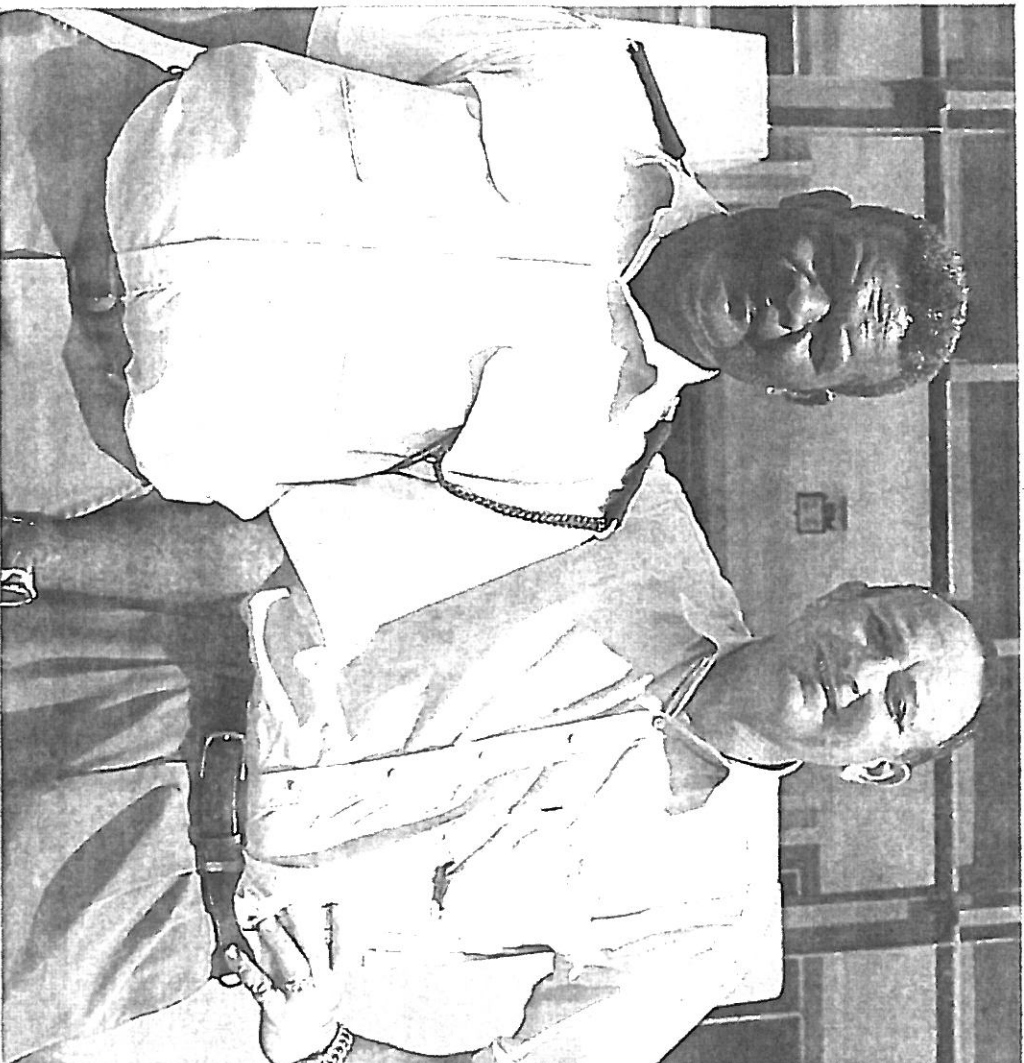
"One man I met is leading the building of church in his village. Another was working with young people in his community to help them stop drinking kwaso", Mr Ado says.

He said that both men told him that they felt that they had changed in prison. "They now want to give something back to their community. They felt they now had the right skills to do something good."

Helping prisoners change their ways and do the right thing when they go back to their community is what Mr Ado and his RAMSI adviser Mr David Sherman are doing at the Correctional Service of Solomon Islands. With their help, prisoners are receiving one-on-one help to teach them the skills they need to make a new start.

Mr Ado joined Corrections in 1999 after spending a year working with prisoners in New Zealand - an experience that opened his eyes to the problems of sending violent people back to their communities without helping them to find a new path.

He is now responsible for leading the rehabilitation of prisoners - their change and transformation - across the Solomon Islands. He says attitudes toward how to treat prisoners have changed. "If we look back 10 or 20 years, the thinking of people was that when you go



to jail you get locked up and you do your time," Mr Ado says.

"We make sure that people who come into the jail are better than when they first enter the jail, so that they can be useful in the community and so that we avoid them going back to the cycle of crime."

Mr Ado says with Mr Sherman's guidance and mentoring, he and his team are now looking at providing

meaningful programs to assist prisoners both spiritually, and in getting a job. Mr Sherman has been working in capacity building roles for more than eight years, teaching people new skills and new ways of doing things. He has also worked with young people in different countries, helping give them the chance to improve their lives.

Together Mr Ado and Mr Sherman have come up with

a program that looks at each new prisoner and creates a training program based on four areas of activity.

The first, Basic Education, sees the illiterate prisoners to read, which teaches the illiterate prisoners to read, which helps to build the confidence and the mental skills of both.

The second, the Vocational Stream, serves two purposes, making productive use of the energies of the prisoners, and teaching

them skills to aid in their long-term rehabilitation. Some prisoners are taught traditional trades such as metal work, furniture making and carpentry, while others learn new trades such as computer maintenance.

The Life Skills and Faith Based streams focus on giving prisoners the skills to lead better lives, including information on personal

health, bible studies and church and volunteer visits.

Mr Sherman shows Corrections staff how to create programs that meet each prisoners' needs.

"We find out in each prison population how many are illiterate, how many went to primary school, how many went to secondary school, how many went to tertiary school," he says.

"With that information, we can start to look at what programs we need to give to each person."

For an offender who plans to return to his village on release, a furniture making course might be good, while someone who plans to stay in Honiara construction or computing training might be better.

More than 75 per cent of the 180 or so prisoners in the Solomons were sentenced for violent crimes.

"Of those 75 per cent, more than 70 per cent say they were influenced by alcohol at the time," Mr Sherman says, "so that immediately tells you there is a need for a violent offending program," and for an alcohol program."

The focus on rehabilitation for prisoners has been strengthened by the new Correctional Services Act, which started in April this year, but resources are also an ongoing challenge. Mr Ado and Mr Sherman are working hard to bring NGOs and church groups into the rehabilitation process.

Mr Ado says this help from other organisations, who are working in areas like domestic violence, is needed if he and his team are to add something to the lives of prisoners that, in turn, helps them give something back to the community.

He is certain that God led him to this job where, despite only having gained a primary school education himself, he is able to help prisoners learn the skills they need to start a new life.

"I know that the Lord put me here to do this job," he says. "Learning these life skills, learning to have faith again, are the things that will make them better people when they leave prison than when they came in."

Building a force for good

SUPERINTENDENT
Gwen Ratu and her RAMSI

adviser Jeff McGregor are aiming to make the Solomon Islands Police Force one of the best in the Pacific. Working together at the Police Academy, they are building high quality training programs for local recruits and training local instructors, helping to build a professional, disciplined police force for the Solomon Islands.

When the experienced Australian police officer Jeff McGregor first came to Solomon Islands in 2000, to give a three-week training course on managing serious criminal investigations, he found a country and a police force in turmoil.

Many officers on the course showed great promise, despite being caught right in the middle of this uncertainty, including a young part-Guadalcanal, part-Malahatan police officer.

Eight years on, the turmoil is all but over for the Solomon Islands Police Force.

The young police officer, Gwen Ratu, has risen to become Director of Learning and Development at the Solomon Islands Police Force Academy, and Mr McGregor, who returned to the Solomon Islands three years ago as a member of RAMSI's Participating Police Force, is now Ms Ratu's fulltime adviser.

They are working side by side to make the academy at Rove into one of the best police training schools in the Pacific.

Mr McGregor, who comes from Canberra, the capital of Australia, says that he had felt there were some important changes that needed to take place to strengthen the Police Academy, and wanted to help achieve those changes.

The first issue needing attention was the physical state of the academy itself which, since being opened in 1970, had never really been properly maintained and was falling into ruin.

Recruits used to tell stories about pieces of the roof falling in as they sat in training sessions.

"We require our recruits to develop a lot of discipline in their officer training, and if you want a professional police force, you have to provide a professional environment in which recruits can learn," Mr McGregor said.

RAMSI has now upgraded the Academy with funding provided by the Australian Federal Police. Work included renovating and repainting the main building including the classrooms, building new offices, installing a new water supply and refurbishing the kitchen.

A new cook was brought in and given training to manage supplies and finances, and air conditioning was installed to make the classrooms more comfortable for the students.

Ms Ratu says the facility has really helped to improve the public image of the Academy, and the morale of the new recruits.

Having first joined the police force herself in 1984, she has been around long enough to see a lot of changes in the way police recruits are trained.

Back then, recruits were barely permitted to leave the Academy grounds - a hard transition for the many 18 and 19 year olds who were tending the outside their villages for the first time.

In 1988 she transferred to the Academy, and for many years was the only woman working there.

She became the Academy's Director a year and a half



ago, and there are now five women working under her and more than 100 female police officers working across the Solomons.

Her job is to manage the training of new recruits as well as the specialist training needed to upgrade and maintain the skills of serving police officers. To do this she has a team of 14 people who deliver the training programs.

She is also responsible for strategic planning, staffing issues and the financial management of the Academy.

It's a large job with a lot of responsibility, and Ms Ratu says she has been grateful for Mr McGregor's coaching and support.

A police officer since 1977, Mr McGregor has contributed a lot of his skills over the past three years - a long posting for a RAMSI adviser.

"Yes, it is a long placement," says Mr

McGregor, who left his wife and children back in Canberra in order to stay in this long and says he still misses them, "but this is an area where a long placement is critical, to see projects through. One of the reasons I have been happy to stay in this role for so long is that Gwen and I have such a good working relationship, and between the two of us we have been able to make a lot of good changes and progress here in the Academy."

One of the largest projects for strategic planning, staffing issues and the financial management of the Academy. It's a large job with a lot of responsibility, and Ms Ratu says she has been grateful for Mr McGregor's coaching and support.

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It's here that they learn all the basics of policing, before going on to a two-year probationary placement with a station in Honiara.

"That 17 weeks is their first introduction to policing," Mr McGregor says, "but a lot of the material being used in the past just wasn't suitable. It was all based on the Australian Diploma of Policing, and not suitable for the Solomons."

RAMSI helped transform the Australian materials into something suitable for the local recruits, which was both culturally appropriate and written in a manner that suits a police classroom in the Solomons. Mr McGregor describes it as a "100 per cent Solomon Islands training package".

The new program has been written and will be used for the first time with the next intake of new recruits.

But it's not only about the materials they use - to have the best Police Force, the Solomons also needs the best police trainers.

In the past, the trainers of new recruits have been police officers with little or no teaching experience.

"The focus has always been on the training materials rather than the trainers, but we've realised that you can't have strength from one without the other," Mr McGregor says.

He and Ms Ratu developed a "Train the Trainer" package called Methods of Instructional Techniques for their police instructors, teaching them about lesson planning and presentation skills. Three new positions have been created for RAMSI advisers, who will be posted to regional areas to raise the levels of provincial training, using this new package.

"The staff are very happy to have received this training, and with the new training package they feel confident to deliver lessons now, unlike before when they didn't know how to do a well structured presentation to a class," Ms Ratu says.

She has a vision for the Academy to become the best police training institution in the region, and had good feedback from regional peer earlier this month when she and Mr McGregor attended police training conference in Cairns, Australia, with other police academy directors from around the Pacific.

When they heard about the good results produced by Solomons' "Train the Trainer" programs, other regional trainers asked for a copy of the course materials or assistance with training, with a view to improving their own teacher training resources.

"It's good news for the SIPE, and shows that they are leading the way in a number of areas," Mr McGregor says. "If you're going to train new recruits successfully, you need the right people with the best skills to do the job."

Ms Ratu says police recruiting is also strengthened by the new focus on recruiting women to the Police Force.

"This is something we wanted to happen a long time ago, but it was only possible when RAMSI came here," she says.

"A lot of issues relating to treatment of women and children, like domestic violence and sexual assault, were never raised in communities, and I'm glad the SIPE now has a lot of women who can help to deal with these issues."

"If the women out there in the communities want help dealing with these issues, they have it now. They can come to us."



Senior Auditor Dismus Orihao and RAMSI Adviser Agnes Tuai are helping to fight corruption by rebuilding the country's financial watchdog - the Office of the Auditor General. By reporting to Parliament on how government spends its money, they are helping to make sure that instead of being misused, public funds are being spent on delivering government services like health and education.



Not a job for the faint-hearted

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Auditing isn't a job for people who want to be bookkeepers, hiding behind a desk. In fact, you will rarely find a good auditor behind his or her desk, because they will be too busy out chasing information about where government funds may have been lost, misused or disappeared into individual pockets.

Senior auditor Dismus Orihao and RAMSI adviser Agnes Tuai agree that a love of both numbers and people is the key to being a good professional auditor. That, and a detective's instinct for uncovering the facts, because an auditor's main challenge in the Solomon Islands, they say, is the country's lack of financial records.

accounts as far back as 1999, drawing the line there so they could dedicate their limited resources to completing a comprehensive audit of all government spending from 1999 until now. In less than four years they have now caught up, having almost completed their report for 2006, they are ready to take on the country's 2007 financial statements.

Mr Orihao, from East Aru in southern Malaita, says the role of the Audit Office is more important today than ever before, as the Solomon Islands tries to rebuild itself after the years of the tension and the collapse of the government's financial management that went with it.

"We all know what this country has been through," he says. "Malynesians, we don't like to speak out and point fingers in public, but we had people in leadership positions who were not being accountable for their actions, and to say it plainly, they were worried about their own pockets and didn't care whether what they were doing was right."

"So I think it is very important that the Office of the Auditor General is revived so that it can independently audit the national accounts without any political interference."

The role of the Auditor General's office is to ensure that there is financial accountability and transparency across the public sector. All audit findings are tabled in the National



Parliament, so any evidence of error, fraud or corruption is reported at the highest level.

The main hurdle for the Solomon Islands has been a lack of qualified auditors, which is why RAMSI, as part of its partnership with the Solomon Islands Government to rebuild and strengthen accountability institutions, agreed to provide five advisers. The team, including Agnes Tuai and the Deputy Auditor General, Eric Muri, has been working to help build the skills and capacity of local auditors to do their jobs effectively.

Ms Tuai says this means providing a range of continuous training, from intensive learning sessions with audit specialists, to weekly training

sessions tailored to help auditors with whatever challenges they have encountered during that week.

Because so few public offices have kept a paper trail of their past spending, the RAMSI advisers work side by side with the local auditors to help them build their investigation skills, so they know where to look to find evidence of misuse of public funds.

The Office has adapted a four-level framework developed by RAMSI to judge where capacity development is most needed within the organisation.

Staff at the first level are likely to be heavily dependent on the support of RAMSI advisers to carry out their jobs.

Levels two and three indicate growing competency, while level four means that staff can now do their job without any help from the advisers.

RAMSI measures the progress of capacity development efforts every year through the RAMSI-wide Annual Performance Reports. In this way the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI, including the 15 contributing countries from the Pacific can know whether the capacity development goals of the Government-RAMSI partnership are really working.

Individual staff assessments carried out earlier this year at the audit office showed positive progress, and one-on-one talks with staff allowed them to express their own views of their strengths and weaknesses and identify the areas where they felt they need more training or support.

"Things have changed a lot since I've been here," says Ms Tuai, a New Zealand-born Samoan living in Honiara in January 2006.

"Right at the beginning, most staff were completely dependent, meaning they couldn't do the jobs at all without the help of the RAMSI adviser."

"But they have quickly risen through the levels and we are now working towards everyone being fully independent."

"The RAMSI advisers won't be here forever, so our main aim is to pass on as much

knowledge as we can so that they can run the audits themselves, they can stand up to conflicts of interest, and can be the best Supreme Audit Institution in the Pacific."

Ms Tuai says although Mr Orihao had no auditing experience when he applied for the job of senior auditor, other qualities shone through that convinced the interview panel that, with training, he was right for the job.

Dismus had already studied the basics of accounting, but what we look for in potential auditors is people who are able to talk to other people - the communication skills are very important," she says.

We also want to see leadership potential, because we want our senior auditors to build up the skills to run those teams."

Mr Orihao says a strong audit office is not just about whipping the Government into good financial shape - it's also about teaching government staff the right procedures.

"We are there to make sure that public officers are doing the right thing. They have a responsibility to this country and its people, and we are there to assist with the findings and recommendations we make through our audit reports. They might do the wrong thing once, but we are there to help make sure that the next time, they do it the right way."

By Karen Ingram,
RAMSI, Public Affairs

There are no quick fixes in the nation – building business.

You can't talk in weeks, months or even years when you actually want to have a significant impact for our neighbours in the South Pacific.

Ben McDevitt
Founding Commander
Participating Police Force
RAMSI

Malaita faces more challenges

MALAITA Province will celebrate its 24th Second Appointed Day anniversary today. *Solomon Star* yesterday spoke with the provincial premier Richard Namono Irosaea about the province's development achievements and aspirations.

This is what Mr Irosaea has to say about Malaita Province today.

1) Development Achievements

The present Malaita Provincial Government took office at the beginning of 2007 and has been working on a simple and more practical approach to develop the island.

As a province, Malaita has not seen any major development on its shores since independence. In fact if anything we have regressed in all sectors of the local economy and the effect of this sad state of affairs is that the living standard of the people of Malaita has been lowered and it will take time to rectify the situation and bring back the economy to what it was before the tension. At the development front, the province has not witnessed any major development programmes in the main sectors of its economy.

a) Agriculture sector

No new crops were developed or introduced to the farmers.

Traditional crops such as coconut, cocoa and pigs continued to be the main stay of many family incomes in the province. While rice was introduced after independence, it has not been proven as a

source of income nor as a reliable source of staple diet.

Many cattle farmers went out of cattle in the eighties and since then, this industry has disappeared. Vegetable farmers have become well known for production of good quality vegetables but lack market support.

b) Infrastructure department

Since independence the main road network of the province has not had any new kilometre of road added to what was built by the colonial government. In fact the main road network was left unattended for so many years that some parts of the province which used to be accessible by road no longer enjoy the luxury.

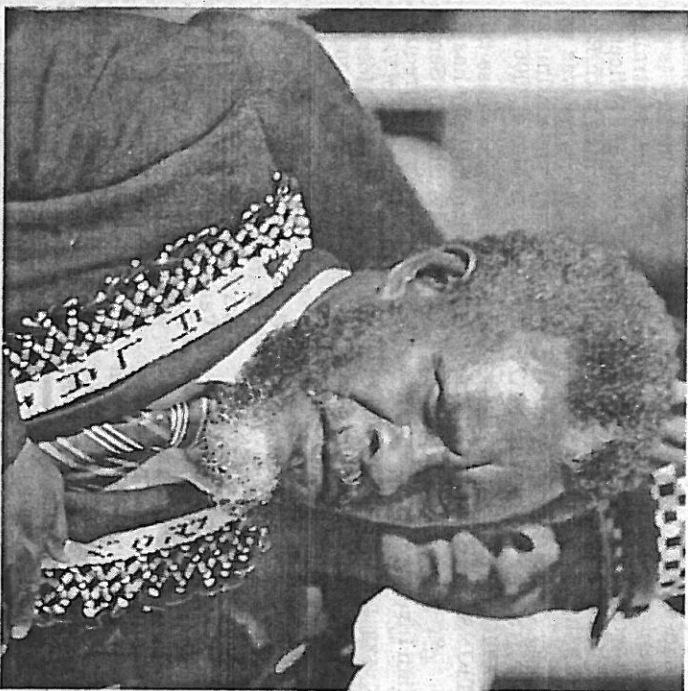
c) Fisheries sector

While the province has a very rich fisheries resource and strategically located fisheries centres, the fishermen of the province have not benefited much from this sector at all. Again the province must focus on this sector and develop it as one of its leading industries.

At present the private sector is struggling to develop this industry on Malaita, although this effort is disorganised in terms of support for production and marketing.

d) Forestry sector

Reforestation took place on customary land in the seventies and was discontinued for some unknown reasons. This programme was never encouraged and therefore did not continue very long among



Richard Namono Irosaea

the land owning groups of the province. However, log extraction operations continue to increase around the province because no one, including the province has offered the landowners any alternatives to logging.

e) Commerce

Apart from the shops in Auki and Malutu, business development was not carried out effectively by government in the province. The cooperative and business advisory services were discontinued in rural areas. This industry must be strengthened to carry out an effective programme to assist Malaita develop its business community

mation. The present Malaita Provincial Government has opted not to take this traditional path because we realise that as an agent of the National Government we must interpret the present national policies for each sector and adjust to suit our situation in Malaita.

In this way, the provincial and national governments can sing the same tune when talking about development programmes for each sector in the rural areas of the province.

Malaita Provincial Government will in due course announce its Action Plan for the next four years.

The present provincial government will work closely with the national government to pursue the implementation of the three national projects which had been earmarked for the province and talked about for the last 15 to 20 years.

● Bina Harbour Project

● Auluta Oil Palm Project

● Suafa Fisheries Centre

3) Challenges Facing the Province

The challenges facing Malaita Province is not different from the rest of Solomon Islands because the country has been subjected to the same economic constraints and conditions for the last 30 years.

However, Malaita Province admittedly has a more difficult task of developing its people because of the size of its population.

Some challenges which must be addressed now and into the near future are:

● All children of school age to have access to education.

● Technical training for youths who have dropped out of school.

● Creation of employment for its people through investment by local and foreign companies and encourages family participation in economic activities in rural communities.

● Road infrastructure present network must be rehabilitated and the ring road around the island must be completed.

The following productive sector will be the focus of the new administration:

● Agriculture - major investment in this sector is Auluta project, however, focus will be on the smallholder sector to push production in copra and cocoa and small livestock. The province will embark on reviving the cattle industry in a small way for start.

● Fisheries and Marine Resources - this industry will form the main focus of the local economy, hence the pursuance of the Suafa Fisheries Centre.

● Forestry Sector - the province will focus more on controlling round log production and export and will look at reforestation.

● Tourism - the province aims to develop its tourism industry and will work closely with concerned authorities to pursue this task.

Background Reading

Chapter 2: Background to the RAMSI intervention

This chapter provides background information to the RAMSI intervention, including an examination of the ethnic conflict that led to RAMSI's deployment, together with a short discussion of the role performed by the Pacific Islands Forum.

2.1 Solomon Islands' history, government, economy and society

Solomon Islands is a country in Melanesia, east of Papua New Guinea, consisting of nearly one thousand islands. Together they cover a land mass of 28,400 square kilometres (10,965 square miles). The capital is Honiara, located on the island of Guadalcanal.

Solomon Islands is believed to have been inhabited by Melanesian people for thousands of years. The population of Solomon Islands today is over 520,000. Melanesians remain the major ethnic group (95 per cent), with smaller Polynesian and Micronesian groups, and a small population of ethnic Chinese making up the rest. Most people live in small, widely dispersed settlements along the coasts, with less than 20 per cent residing in urban areas.

In 1893, the United Kingdom established a protectorate over Solomon Islands. Self governance was attained on 2 January 1976, with independence following on 7 July 1978. The first post-independence government was elected in August 1980.

Solomon Islands is a constitutional monarchy and has a parliamentary system of government. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of State of Solomon Islands. She is represented by the Governor-General who is chosen by the Parliament for a five-year term.

The National Parliament of Solomon Islands is a unicameral parliament of 50 members, representing 50 constituencies, elected for four-year terms. Suffrage is universal for citizens over age 18. The head of government is the Prime Minister, who is elected by Parliament and who chooses the other members of the Cabinet.

Below the national government, the country is divided into 10 administrative areas, of which nine are provinces administered by elected provincial assemblies, and the 10th is the city of Honiara, administered by the Honiara City Council. The 10 administrative areas are: Central; Choiseul; Guadalcanal; Isabel; Makira-Ulawa; Malaita; Rennell and Bellona; Temotu; Western and Honiara City. Each province is in turn divided into wards.

The judicial system includes the Local Courts and the Magistrates Court (subordinate courts), the High Court (with unlimited original jurisdiction) and the Court of Appeal (the highest appellate court).

Solomon Islands society is based on kinship and communities. Ownership of land and maritime resources is based on customary use and law. Over 85 per cent of Solomon Islands land is held according to customary land ownership.

Solomon Islands economy is based on subsistence agriculture and fishing, timber exports and tourism.

Internationally, Solomon Islands is a member of the United Nations; the Commonwealth; the South Pacific Commission; the International Monetary Fund; the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of

States; and the Pacific Islands Forum (previously the South Pacific Forum). Solomon Islands' membership of the Pacific Islands Forum is discussed further later in this chapter.

2.2 The long term ethnic tensions within Solomon Islands

Since independence in 1978, and even before it, Solomon Islands has always struggled to build a strong national consciousness and sense of unity. The country's first 20 years following independence was characterised by threats of secession, demand for federalism and riots. This largely reflects the ethnic and geographic diversity of the country. Two particular long term challenges facing Solomon Islands have been the Western Breakaway Movement and the ethnic tensions between the people of Guadalcanal and Malaita.

The Western Breakaway Movement (1975 – 1979)

The Western Breakaway Movement had its origins even before independence in 1978. As early as 1975, westerners asked for a bigger share of the national budget to reflect what they felt was the western Solomon Islands' contribution to national revenue. Later this call developed into a breakaway movement which was led by a handful of prominent westerners and partly inspired by the experiences of the neighbouring Bougainville. The key demand of the movement was for a federal system of government, failing which the westerners threatened to secede from Solomon Islands. It was further fuelled by a fear and resentment of migrants from Malaita Island and Gilbertese from Kiribati whom the British colonial government had earlier re-settled in western Solomons. The westerners were also apprehensive of 1977 amendments to land laws that transferred ownership of freehold land previously held by foreigners (including companies) to the central government.⁹ At the height of the breakaway movement, a month before independence, a poem entitled 'Ode to the Westwind' was published in the government-owned newspaper which the westerners found insulting and reflective of a Malaitan perspective (unproven).

The breakaway movement was resolved by the central government through a number of concessions to western Solomons in the form of key positions in the new administration and an increased budget allocation. Anger over the poem was pacified with a \$9,000 compensation paid to the western Council by the central government.

While the central government was partly successful in defusing a potential rift within the new country, the western breakaway movement was the first example of provincial resentment against central government and perceptions that Honiara had monopolised government resources.

The *bona fide* demands of the people of Guadalcanal

The two largest central islands of Solomon Islands are Malaita and Guadalcanal. Prior to British colonial rule, the people of these islands were completely independent, reflecting their different cultures and ethnic background.

However, during colonial times, the British administration adopted the practice of moving the Malaitans off their island to work on the plantations on other islands, including Guadalcanal. Inevitably this provoked tension between the different ethnic groups, although at that time it was suppressed by the British.

⁹ These estates were previously customary land before they were acquired by the colonial government as 'wasteland' and subsequently transferred to foreigners as freehold.

After independence, the pre-existing tensions between the people of Guadalcanal and Malaita grew. Many Malaitans moved to Guadalcanal to work in business and government. Inevitably, the relative affluence of these workers drew their immediate family and other relatives and friends to the area, causing resentment among the Guadalcanal population.

As early as 1978, certain persons claiming to represent the interests of the people of Guadalcanal against those of the Malaitans put in a petition to the central government demanding in part that a federal system of government be adopted, and that Guadalcanal customs be respected by migrants. There is no clear record of how the central government handled this petition.

In 1987 the central government established a Constitutional Review Committee to re-examine the constitutional arrangements. In its report, that Committee recommended, amongst other things, that Solomon Islands adopt federalism to grant greater autonomy and independence to the provinces. This report was either not tabled in Parliament or was tabled but not debated (there is no record of either). What can be ascertained is that no further action was taken by the government on this report.

In response, in 1988, a group of senior public officers and politicians representing Guadalcanal submitted a petition to the government outlining a number of demands – now commonly referred to as the '*bona fide* demands of the indigenous people of Guadalcanal'. The petition alleged that many Guadalcanal people had been murdered by migrants living on Guadalcanal (including squatters around Honiara), most of whom were Malaitans. Accordingly, the petition demanded an immediate response to halt the killings with the first steps being adoption of federalism as recommended by the Constitutional Review Committee in 1987 and repatriation of all illegal squatters. Other demands included shifting major development projects away from Guadalcanal; return of alienated land to the Guadalcanal provincial government; relocation of prisons from Guadalcanal; reducing internal migration and the pressures caused by it; registration of customary land by tribes/clans to avoid unscrupulous individuals selling the land without tribal consent; legislation to give every province exclusive authority over its 12 mile marine zone; and the re-introduction of capital punishment to further deter murders on Guadalcanal.

Again while there is ample evidence that the 1988 petition was duly presented to the national government, there is no record of any action formally taken to address these demands.

As a result of inaction in response to the 1988 petition, the opposition of the people of Guadalcanal to the constitutional setup of the country continued. In 1996 for instance, following the enactment of the *Provincial Government Act*, purporting to establish a modified system of provincial government, the Premier of Guadalcanal Province challenged the constitutionality of the legislation in the High Court.¹⁰ The High Court ruled that the Act was unconstitutional but this decision was later quashed by the Court of Appeal.¹¹

Then in 1998, the 1988 *bona fide* demands were resubmitted to the central government after a Guadalcanal woman was allegedly raped by a Malaitan migrant at Ruavatu Secondary School, located on east Guadalcanal. Again, there is no record of any discussion or action by the government.

¹⁰ *Guadalcanal Provincial Government v Minister of Provincial Government and Rural Development* (1996) (unreported, High Court, Civil Case No. 309 of 1996, 16 December 1996).

¹¹ *Minister of Provincial Government and Rural Development v Guadalcanal Provincial Government* (1997) (unreported, High Court, Civil Case No. 003 of 1997, 11 July 1997). Note that the 1996 Act was subsequently repealed by the *Provincial Government Act 1997*.

These issues are revisited further below.

Other issues

Apart from the questions surrounding nationhood and unity posed by western Solomons and Guadalcanalese discussed above, a number of other incidents occurred in the 1980s and 1990s which indicated a weak national consciousness at best, or ethnic antagonism at worst. For instance in 1989 a large number of Malaitans staged a riot in Honiara against people from Rennell and Bellona over a letter posted at a market, which was insulting towards Malaitans and allegedly written by a Rennell or Bellona person.

Later in 1996 there was another riot in Honiara which involved groups from Malaita and Temotu Province. In both instances, the government defused the situation through negotiations and the payment of monetary compensation, but without addressing the root causes of the ethnic conflict.

The Government's failure to effectively tackle the Guadalcanal issue and to provide an effective response to the *bona fide* demands was the seed for the ethnic tension from 1998 onwards.

2.3 The ethnic tension of 1998 – 2003

Towards the end of 1998, the ethnic tensions between the people of Guadalcanal and Malaita, which the national government had failed to address for two decades, simmered over into armed conflict.

Guadalcanal youths formed the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army, later called the Isatabu Freedom Movement. They forced many Malaitan settlers from parts of rural Guadalcanal resulting in the displacement of more than 20,000 Malaitans. In response, Malaitans formed the Honiara-based Malaita Eagle Force and the Marau Eagle Force of East Guadalcanal comprising South Malaitan settlers on that part of Guadalcanal.

During the conflict, many atrocities were committed by the militias on both sides against civilians and militants alike. These included abduction, rape and murder. Mistreatment, robbery, arson, criminal damage to property and the displacement of families from their homes was also commonplace.

At the outbreak of the tensions in late 1998, Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu requested help from the Australian Government. However, on this occasion, Australia did not intervene due to the lack of an appropriate international framework for intervention.

In early 2000, at the height of the conflict, the Guadalcanal based Isatabu Freedom Movement again took up the *bona fide* demands and made similar demands. The Guadalcanal Provincial Government also submitted a set of demands on 18 February 2000 which essentially reiterated the 1998 *bona fide* demands but with further clarity. The 11 demands called for:

- the establishment of a federal system of government;
- review of fundamental rights;
- review of land laws to prevent persons owning land on another island;
- transfer of title in perpetual estates (formerly alienated land and later freehold estates) on Guadalcanal to the Guadalcanal Provincial Government for appropriate action;

- payment to the Guadalcanal Provincial Government of rent for the use of Honiara as the national capital;
- transfer of shares in the then Solomon Islands Plantation Limited on east Guadalcanal to the Guadalcanal Provincial Government;
- payment of half of investment revenue raised on Guadalcanal to the province;
- long term relocation of the national capital elsewhere;
- legislative reform to control internal migration;
- amendment to election related legislation to prevent non-indigenous persons from contesting a seat (as is currently the case); and
- proper acquisition of the foreshore of Honiara from its customary owners.

In May 2000, the conflict took a further turn when the Honiara-based Malaita Eagle Force teamed up with some factions of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and raided the Rove Armoury. They subsequently put the then Prime Minister under house arrest whilst taking control of key installations in Honiara.

The Townsville Peace Agreement

From June 1999, various attempts were made to bring about peace in Solomon Islands. They included the *Honiara Peace Accord* of 28 June 1999, the *Marau Communiqué* of 15 July 1999, the *Panatina Agreement* of 12 August 1999, the arrival and work of the Multinational Police Peace Monitoring contingent from October 1999 onwards, the *Buala Peace Communiqué* of 5 May 2000, the *Auki Communiqué* of 12 May 2000, peace talks facilitated by New Zealand on board HMAS *Tobruk* in July 2000, and the Ceasefire Agreement of 3 August 2000.

On the 9 October 2000, militants from both sides of the ethnic conflict and their representatives were flown to the Royal Australian Air Force base in Townsville for further peace negotiations. On 15 October 2000, the Townsville Peace Agreement was signed between the Isatabu Freedom Movement and Malaita Eagle Force.

The Townsville Peace Agreement called for an amnesty in order to secure the cease fire. In the spirit of the Townsville Peace Agreement, the National Parliament of Solomon Islands subsequently enacted the *Amnesty Act 2000* and the *Amnesty Act 2001* granting wide amnesty to persons involved in the conflict for both criminal activities and civil liabilities.

However, while the Townsville Peace Agreement led to the formal cessation of the ethnic conflict, the pervasive unstable security and political situation remained, and the economic and social fabric of Solomon Islands continued to decay.

The economic and social impact of the conflict

The impact of the ethnic tension on the economic and social fabric of Solomon Islands was profound. Research published by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Economic Analysis Unit estimates that:

- From 1998 through to 2002, Solomon Islands' gross domestic product decreased by an estimated 24 per cent.

- In 2002 alone, formal Government debt increased by over 40 per cent as the government lost control of finances. Increasing debt servicing costs, uncontrolled expenditure by Government ministries and extortion by militants and police led to fiscal deficits which the Government was unable to finance. The Government defaulted on interest payments on loans in 2002.
- Coupled with falling commodity prices, the value of merchandise exports fell by an average of 19 per cent per year between 1999 and 2002.
- Falling exports led to substantial trade deficits which, together with the flight of capital, severely eroded the economy's foreign exchange reserves. This resulted in substantial exchange-rate depreciation by the Central Bank. While depreciation helped stabilise foreign exchange reserves and improved the competitiveness of exports, it had a pronounced effect on the economy's already high external debt levels.

At the same time, the economic decline in Solomon Islands and the financial crisis saw the withdrawal of government services from many areas of the country. A rapidly growing population placed further demand on already stretched services.¹²

While a matter of conjecture, some commentators have argued that by early 2003, Solomon Islands had become or was well on the way to becoming a failed state. The Government could not enforce law and order, corruption and extortion drained Government resources and service provision faltered. Domestic production was collapsing and the economy's spiralling debt was becoming unmanageable.¹³

In evidence to the Committee, Sir Allan Kemakeza, who was Prime Minister of Solomon Islands at the time, summarised the situation as follows:

There was breaking into the Police armouries of Auki, the Police Headquarters, Yandina and Tulagi. Arming of unlawful society, yes! House arrest of the Prime Minister, yes! Six pay arrears of public servants. And as I said there were no services to the provinces, and even three provinces wanted to break away at that time - Makira, Temotu and Rennell and Bellona. The Police Force was highly compromised, the Prison Service was highly compromised, and there was even a breakaway at the Prison Service. Doors were broken down and every prisoner ran away, no one was left. Closure of companies, no debt servicing, and basic services like health, education were virtually none. Institutions were highly compromised; public service morale was very low because of no salary.¹⁴

In response, as is examined in the next Chapter, Sir Allan Kemakeza again sought the assistance of Australia. On this occasion, Australia and the other 14 nations of the Pacific Islands Forum responded positively through the establishment and deployment of RAMSI.

Before examining the establishment and deployment of RAMSI, however, the Committee looks at the Pacific Islands Forum and the Biketawa Declaration under which RAMSI was deployed.

¹² Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Economic Analysis Unit, 'Solomon Islands: Rebuilding an Island Economy', 2004, pp xi – xii.

¹³ *Ibid*, p xii.

¹⁴ Sir Allan Kemakeza, Former Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Evidence, 15 September 2008, p 5.

2.4 The Pacific Islands Forum

The Pacific Islands Forum (previously the South Pacific Forum) is an intergovernmental organisation for coordinating cooperation between the following Pacific Ocean countries: Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Since 2006, associate members territories are New Caledonia and French Polynesia. Fiji was suspended from membership of the Pacific Islands Forum on 2 May 2009.

The decisions of the Forum are implemented by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

As is discussed in the next chapter, the Pacific Islands Forum played a central role in the establishment and deployment of RAMSI, and continues to play a key role in oversight of RAMSI.

The Biketawa Declaration

At the 31st Summit of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, held at Kiribati in October 2000, leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum agreed on a declaration called the Biketawa Declaration.¹⁵ The Declaration provides a framework for coordinating a regional response to regional crises, and was the basis for the RAMSI intervention in Solomon Islands in 2003. The Biketawa Declaration provides in part:

Forum Leaders recognised the need in time of crisis or in response to members' request for assistance, for action to be taken on the basis of all members of the Forum being part of the Pacific Islands extended family. The Forum must constructively address difficult and sensitive issues including underlying causes of tensions and conflict (ethnic tensions, socio-economic disparities, lack of good governance, land disputes and erosion of cultural values).

RAMSI was the first regional engagement in a Pacific country by the Pacific Islands Forum under the terms of the Biketawa Declaration.

¹⁵ The Biketawa Declaration takes its name from the Kiribati islet of Biketawa, where negotiators met in order to draft the agreement.

Chapter 3: The RAMSI intervention

This chapter examines the establishment and deployment of RAMSI, its mandate, structural pillars, achievements, criticisms and reviews. It also examines the new *Partnership Framework* between the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and RAMSI which sets out the future goal and objectives of RAMSI.

3.1 The 2003 call for assistance from the Kemakeza Government

In April 2003, as general lawlessness added to the crisis facing Solomon Islands, the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Sir Allan Kemakeza, formally wrote to the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon John Howard, requesting Australian assistance.¹⁶

Subsequently, a high level meeting was held in Canberra from 4-6 June 2003 between representatives of the Australian and Solomon Islands Governments to discuss a proposed Australian led regional assistance mission to Solomon Islands.

This proposal was subsequently articulated in a document entitled *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands, 2003*. This document contained the full text of the Australian Government's 'Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands: Proposed Scope and Requirements'. Significantly, in the document, the Solomon Islands Government noted that the offer of assistance from Australia was made with due recognition of the sovereignty of Solomon Islands:

The guarantee [of sovereignty] that concerns us or which is relevant to the Australian proposal is the first one, i.e. no external force can interfere in the internal affairs of a state without the request or consent of the state concerned,¹⁷ in this case, Solomon Islands. The Australian proposal mindful of this important international principle requires Solomon Islands to provide a formal request by the Head of State, acting on the advice of Cabinet to the Australian Government before Australian assistance or intervention can proceed. The proposal also encourages wider political and community support and enabling legislation to be in place before the proposed intervention. Australia would not proceed with its offer of assistance if Solomon Islands does not accept it.¹⁸

The assistance mission – involving the deployment of police, armed forces and associated personnel as a visiting contingent to Solomon Islands – was endorsed three weeks later by the Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Affairs Ministers at their meeting on the 30th of June in Sydney in accordance with the principles set out in the Biketawa Declaration.¹⁹

¹⁶ In evidence, Sir Allan Kemakeza indicated to the Committee that he undertook sensitive behind the scenes negotiations with the militias, the Opposition and other parties in order to take this step. See Sir Allan Kemakeza, former Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Evidence, 15 September 2008, p 5.

¹⁷ This is the principle of non-intervention as provided in article 2(7) of the UN Charter.

¹⁸ *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands, 2003*, p 7.

¹⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Forum Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting, 'Outcome Statement', Sydney, 30 June 2003.

However, the Ministers agreed that an essential condition for the provision of a program of strengthening assistance by Forum members was a clear, formal request from the SIG, and the passage of legislation through the National Parliament of Solomon Islands allowing police and, as necessary, armed peace-keepers from Forum members to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force in the performance of its duties.²⁰

On 4 July 2003, the Governor-General of Solomon Islands, Sir Reverend John Ini Lapli, acting on the advice of Prime Minister Kemakeza's Cabinet, wrote to the Australian Prime Minister formally requesting assistance.

On 11 July 2003, the National Parliament of Solomon Islands agreed to a motion endorsing the proposals contained in the *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands, 2003*, (Paper No. 1 of 2003).

3.2 The establishment of the RAMSI legal framework

The RAMSI legal framework consists of three primary documents: the *Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003* (FIA Act), the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 (FIA Notice) and the RAMSI Treaty. These are examined below

The Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003

Following the passage on 11 July 2003 of the motion endorsing the program of strengthening assistance through the National Parliament, on 17 July 2003 the National Parliament of Solomon Islands passed the FIA Act to give legal basis for an intervention mission to Solomon Islands.

Fundamentally, the FIA Act provides for the provision of assistance by the government of another country through a visiting contingent and for the specification of an international agreement as an agreement that covers the operations of that visiting contingent. Section 3 of the Act specifically provides:

International Assistance notice

3. (1) The Governor-General may publish a notice that -
 - (a) states that the Government has requested assistance of the government of another country (the "assisting country") for a public purpose;
 - (b) states that the assistance will be provided by a contingent of persons (the "visiting contingent") from the assisting country or another country; and
 - (c) states that, because of subsection (3), this Act applies in relation to the visiting contingent.
- (2) The notice may specify an agreement or arrangement between the Government and the government of the assisting country that covers the operations and activities in Solomon Islands of the visiting contingent (the "assistance agreement").

²⁰ *Ibid*, para 9.

- (3) The provisions of this Act apply on the making of a notice under subsection (1).

It is notable that under the terms of section 3 above, the FIA Act allows the SIG to request and receive assistance from any visiting contingent. It is not limited to RAMSI, the current visiting contingent. In this regard, the legal framework that facilitates RAMSI's presence in Solomon Islands is more flexible than the authorisations that form the basis of many UN or other international interventions.²¹

The Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003

On 23 July 2003, the Governor-General of Solomon Islands, Sir Reverend John Ini Lapli, exercised the powers conferred under section 3 of the FIA Act to make the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 [Legal Notice 61], as published in a Supplement to Solomon Islands Gazette [SI No 20]. The full text of the Notice is as follows.

THE FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 2003 (NO. 1 OF 2003)

THE FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE NOTICE 2003 (Section 3(1))

IN exercise of the powers conferred upon me by section 3 of the Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003, I, SIR. REV. JOHN INI LAPLI, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Solomon Islands, do hereby make the following notice -

- (1) This Notice may be cited as the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003.
- (2)
 - (a) On 4th July, 2003, the Government of Solomon Islands requested the assistance of the Government of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu ('assisting countries') for a public purpose.
 - (b) The assistance will be provided by a contingent of persons ('the visiting contingent') from the assisting countries or other countries.
 - (c) The Act applies to the visiting contingent on the making of this Notice by reason of section 3(3) of the Act.

²¹ The legal basis for UN peacekeeping missions is derived from the *Charter of the United Nations*. The Charter gives the United Nations Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Security Council may adopt a range of measures, including the establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation. It is also notable that whereas RAMSI was mobilized and deployed with the consent of the Solomon Islands Government through the passage of the FIA Act and FIA Notice, the UN may take enforcement action without the consent of the main parties to the conflict, if it believes that the conflict presents a threat to international peace and security. See RAMSI, Response to issues and questions raised by the FRC, 8 June 2009, p 20.

- (3) Pursuant to section 3(2) of the Act, the Agreement concerning the Operations and Status of the Police and Armed Forces and Other Personnel Deployed to Solomon Islands to Assist in the Restoration of Law and Order and Security between the Government of the Solomon Islands and the Governments of certain Assisting Countries is specified as an agreement that covers the operations and activities in Solomon Islands of the visiting contingent.

Dated at Honiara this twenty-third day of July, 2003.

SIR. REV. JOHN INI LAPLI
Governor-General

The RAMSI Treaty

On 24 July 2003, a day after the gazettal of the FIA Notice and in accordance with the provisions of the FIA Act and FIA Notice, representatives of six member states of the Pacific Islands Forum – Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa – signed an agreement with the Solomon Islands Government to allow the deployment of police and armed forces – later to become known as RAMSI – to the Solomon Islands to assist in the restoration of law and order and security. The agreement was entitled:

AGREEMENT BETWEEN SOLOMON ISLANDS, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, FIJI, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SAMOA, AND TONGA CONCERNING THE OPERATIONS AND STATUS OF THE POLICE AND ARMED FORCES AND OTHER PERSONNEL DEPLOYED TO SOLOMON ISLANDS TO ASSIST IN THE RESTORATION OF LAW AND ORDER AND SECURITY.

As previously indicated, the agreement is informally known as the RAMSI Treaty.

The Treaty was subsequently signed by all member states of the Pacific Islands Forum.

The RAMSI Treaty contains a total of 25 articles covering matters such as the duration of assistance, command and control of the visiting contingent, the carriage of weapons, the jurisdiction of the contingent, accommodation and facilities and communications.

3.3 The arrival of RAMSI

RAMSI officially commenced the mobilisation of its contingent to Solomon Islands on 24 July 2003, the same day on which the RAMSI Treaty was officially signed.

The initial contingent constituted the Participating Police Force (PPF) of 276 police officers drawn from nine member states of the Pacific Islands Forum, accompanied by the Combined Task Force (CTF), which is the military component of RAMSI providing security and support to the PPF.

3.4 The mandate of RAMSI

RAMSI's mandate on its arrival in Solomon Islands was specified in the Australian Government's 2003 'Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands: Proposed Scope and Requirements', as reproduced verbatim in *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands*,

2003. For completeness, since it arises later in this report, the Committee cites below the full text of RAMSI's mandate as set out in these two documents:

1. SCOPE

Strengthened assistance will address the most serious specific threats to security and economic recovery in Solomon Islands. It should be provided by a cooperative effort between Solomon Islands and other members of the Pacific Islands Forum, led by Australia and New Zealand, engaging donors where possible, and cover both civil order and the economy.

2. Under civil order, the main task will be to re-establish security in Honiara enabling government, business and the community to operate free of intimidation. Improved security would later be extended beyond Honiara. Key elements will be to:

- in cooperation with the Police Commissioner, reform the Royal Solomon Islands Police, introducing expatriate police personnel into line positions, and providing increased resources;
- launch a new effort to locate and confiscate illegal weapons;
- investigate and prosecute new criminal offences vigorously;
- strengthen the courts and prison system; and,
- protect key institutions, such as the finance ministry, courts and their personnel from intimidation.

In this context, Australia would be prepared to consider whether there might be a requirement for expatriate military and police assistance.

3. The first task with the economy will be to stabilize government finances and balance the budget. The Key points will be to:

- secure revenue collection and control outlays;
- strengthen administrative safeguards in government financial systems, including by deploying expatriate personnel in key positions; and,
- obtain donor and IFI financial and technical support.

4. The second economy-related task will be to promote longer-term economic recovery and revive business confidence, building on better civil order and the stabilization of government finances. It will be important to pursue economic reform policies to regain credibility with the international donor community, and to rebuild the essential machinery of government to support stability and the delivery of services. Australia will support such efforts and continue its substantial support to health, the peace process and community-level development, and will make every effort to persuade other donors likewise to increase their support. Key points will include:

- implementing economic reform, consistent with the recommendations of the recent economic governance mission;
- focused efforts to deal with corruption;
- downsizing the civil service, cleansing the payroll and stopping extortion; and
- improving debt management.

In summary of the above 'Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands: Proposed Scope and Requirements', as reproduced in *Solomon Islands Government Policy Statement on the Offer by the Australian Government for Strengthening Assistance to Solomon Islands, 2003*, RAMSI's mandate on its arrival in Solomon Islands was to:

- 1) Restore civil order in Honiara and throughout the rest of the country, including confiscating illegal weapons, investigating and prosecuting new criminal offences, strengthening the courts and prison system and protecting key government ministries;
- 2) Stabilise government finances, including securing revenue collection and controlling expenditure, strengthening financial administrative safeguards and obtaining donor and international financial institutions' support;
- 3) Promote longer-term economic recovery and revive business confidence, including implementing economic reform, dealing with corruption and improving debt management; and
- 4) Rebuild the machinery of government, including the functioning of the National Parliament, the Cabinet, the public service and the electoral process.

RAMSI's mandate is also captured in Article 2 of the RAMSI Treaty, which provides that the visiting contingent is to assist in the maintenance of law and order in Solomon Islands:

The Assisting Countries may deploy a Visiting Contingent of police forces, armed forces and other personnel to Solomon Islands to assist in the provision of security and safety to persons and property; maintain supplies and services essential to the life of the Solomon Islands community; prevent and suppress violence, intimidation and crime; support and develop Solomon Islands institutions; and generally to assist in the maintenance of law and order in Solomon Islands.

The Committee notes that in fulfilling its mandate, RAMSI's first priority upon its arrival in 2003 was the restoration of law and order and the stabilization of Government finances. Following the achievement of those objectives, RAMSI has since turned its attention to longer term challenges facing the people of Solomon Islands, notably: the restoration of the institutions of law and order such as the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force; the courts and prisons; strengthening and developing the capacity of the institutions of Government; and promoting economic growth. This is reflected in RAMSI's three program pillars, as discussed below.

3.5 RAMSI's leadership and three program pillars

RAMSI is led by the Special Coordinator of RAMSI, currently Mr Graeme Wilson, who is supported by a Deputy Special Coordinator and Assistant Special Coordinator. These three senior officers are appointed by the governments of Australia and New Zealand and the Pacific

Islands Forum respectively. Together with the Commander of the PPF, the Commander of the CTF and the Development Coordinator, these officials are RAMSI's senior executive group.

The Special Coordinator of RAMSI is responsible for the overall coordination of RAMSI's work, and for liaison and consultation with the SIG and with other parts of Solomon Islands society.

The Commander of the PPF serves as the Deputy Commissioner of the RSIPF under section 2 of the RAMSI Treaty, which states:

2. The head of the Participating Police Force shall be appointed a Deputy Commissioner of the Solomon Islands Police Force. Other members of the Participating Police Force may be appointed to the Solomon Islands Police Force.

RAMSI as an organisation is divided into three 'pillars', reflecting RAMSI's mandate, each headed up by a Program Director. The three pillars are:

- Law and justice (including policing);
- Economic governance; and
- Machinery of government.²²

3.6 Summary of RAMSI's achievements

Since its official mobilisation and deployment in July 2003, RAMSI has realised a number of significant achievements. These achievements are examined in detail throughout this report, however they may be briefly summarised as follows:

- The immediate restoration of law and order in Solomon Islands upon its arrival following the 1998 – 2003 period of ethnic tension, with weapons seized and removed permanently from the community and militant leaders arrested.
- The building of stable long term security arrangements with the rebuilding of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, the Correction Service of Solomon Islands and the courts.
- The stabilisation of government finances and the balancing of the national budget with the assistance of advisers deployed to the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. Government revenue has increased by over 50 per cent, and Solomon Islands' economy has grown by an average of 5 per cent per year since RAMSI's arrival.²³
- Machinery of government reforms such as the developing of a professional and committed Public Service, and the strengthening of formal accountability institutions such as the Office of the Auditor General and the Office of the Ombudsman.
- Rebuilding of Solomon Islands infrastructure. Table 3.2 shows the infrastructure projects that have been supported by RAMSI up to June 2009, categorised according to the RAMSI program pillars.

²² Submission 6, RAMSI, p 5.

²³ *Ibid*, pp 7-8.

Table 3.2: Infrastructure projects supported by RAMSI as at June 2009

RAMSI Pillar	Project Title	Status at June 2009
Law & justice - corrections	Rove Prison: Communications, gate lodge, roof, laundry, fuel bund, waste water and sewerage	Completed
	Rove Prison: Fire alarms & lighting	Under construction
	Rove Prison: Stormwater upgrade	Yet to commence
	National Referral Hospital: Secure ward	Completed
	Auki Prison: Site works & buildings, alternative energy source	Under construction
	Gizo Prison: Site works & buildings	On hold
	High Court Precinct: Court 4 & 6 refurbishment, holding cells refurbishment, Sheriff/Registry Office, electrical upgrade to justice precinct.	Completed
Law & justice - justice	Central Magistrates Office: Case Support Unit refurbishment	Completed
	Kalala House refurbishment	Completed
	Auki Justice buildings	Under construction
	Gizo Justice precinct	Yet to commence
Law & Justice - police	NZAID/RAMSI Police Housing Project	On hold pending resolution of land issues
Machinery of Government	Ombudsman/LCC building	Under Construction
	Cabinet Office refurbishment	Completed
	PSIP office refurbishment	Completed
Economic governance & growth	Lata water supply	Completed
	Post Conflict Emergency Rehabilitation Project: rehabilitation of approximately 160km of road and 51 bridges around Honiara and Auki	Completed
	Solomon Islands Road Improvement Project: rehabilitation of 100 km of national roads from the SIG National Transport Plan	Ongoing*
	Community Support Program - Malaita Roads Program: approximately 200km of national and provincial roads have been rehabilitated and maintained.	Ongoing*
Other	RAMSI/NZAID Police Housing Project	Pending resolution of land issues

* The Solomon Islands Road Improvement Project and the Community Support Program - Malaita Roads Program are currently being moved to the AusAID bilateral aid program.

Source: RAMSI, Response to issues and questions raised by the FRC, 8 June 2009, pp 39-40.

The Committee notes that a large number of parties throughout the inquiry cited with gratitude the achievements of RAMSI since its arrival in 2003. In particular, many stakeholders in both their submissions and evidence prefaced their remarks by acknowledging the work done by RAMSI in restoring law and order since 2003. Reflecting and representative of this common sentiment, the Committee cites the evidence of the Hon Dr Derek Sikua, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands:

... I acknowledge and pay tribute to the huge contribution that this Mission has made to the re-establishment of law and order and security in Solomon Islands. Our country cannot deny the fact that this assistance has given our country space, the environment to re-build our country and the opportunity to map out a future for our people and make decisions and implement programs that address the root causes of the ethnic tension. RAMSI has given us and our development partners that opportunity, and I say thank you for coming at a time when this country needed such help.²⁴

The Committee notes that the world is watching RAMSI as an unprecedented regional response to a regional problem from which the world can learn.²⁵

3.7 Summary of RAMSI's criticisms

While RAMSI has achieved some notable successes, it has also been the subject of some criticisms. These criticisms are again examined in detail throughout this report, however they may be briefly summarised as including:

- The legal framework establishing RAMSI is unconstitutional or at best poorly drafted;
- The legal framework establishing RAMSI provides powers and privileges to RAMSI personnel, such as a limited immunity from legal proceedings in Solomon Islands courts, which may have been necessary in 2003, but that are no longer necessary today;
- RAMSI is essentially operating as a parallel government within Solomon Islands alongside the SIG, compromising the sovereignty of the country;
- RAMSI should use its good name and reputation to expand its mandate and provide a 'peace dividend' to the people of Solomon Island, including the delivery of infrastructure currently funded under bilateral and multilateral aid arrangements;
- The opportunity has not been taken during RAMSI's presence in the country to address some of the root causes of the ethnic tensions within Solomon Islands (this is perhaps more a criticism of successive Solomon Islands Governments than it is of RAMSI); and
- The RAMSI exit strategy is unclear.

3.8 Previous reviews of RAMSI

There have been a number of previous reviews and reports, discussed below, evaluating RAMSI since the RAMSI intervention in 2003. At various times throughout this report, reference is made to these reviews and reports.

²⁴ The Hon Dr Derek Sikua, Evidence, 18 September 2008, p 3.

²⁵ Ms Allison Duncan, former Acting Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands, Evidence, 16 September 2008, pp 39-40.

The 2004 Report of the Solomon Islands Intervention Taskforce

In November 2004, the Solomon Islands Intervention Task Force²⁶ published its *Review Report on the first year performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI): 24 July 2003 to 23 July 2004*.

In its report, the Intervention Task Force found that RAMSI had been very effective in helping rebuild the nation, with a restoration of law and order and improvements in the functioning of key government agencies, notably the courts and judiciary, the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. The Task Force also highlighted the great appreciation and support that many Solomon Islanders had expressed for the RAMSI intervention.²⁷

The 2004 Report of the Foreign Relations Committee

In 2004, this Committee looked into the receipt, administration and management of RAMSI. This was on the Committee's own initiative under Standing Order 71B(e) but appears to have been considered as part of Parliament's annual review under the FIA Act. The timing, however, suggests that it was not strictly a review by Parliament under the Act. In addition, the review was conducted through private deliberations of the Committee and was thus not a full review of RAMSI.

In its report the Committee considered issues such as the military, police and prisons, civil offices and budget support. The Committee made the following observations and recommendations:

- Military: The Committee noted that RAMSI military personnel are not answerable to any local authority. And recommended that military personnel should be gradually phased-out of the country.
- Police and prisons: The Committee noted that systems need to be put in place to ensure that skills and knowledge are passed on to local officers.
- Civil officers: The Committee expressed concern about the recruitment processes for RAMSI civil officers. The Committee was concerned that these personnel were not subject to the *General Orders* and other rules that are applicable to public officers. This fact, plus the conditions under which RAMSI personnel were recruited, were perceived by the Committee as giving the wrong impression of RAMSI.
- Budget support: The Committee commented that debt servicing appeared selective in that priority was given to World Bank and Asian Development Bank loans only. Providing budget support through Price Waterhouse Accountants instead of the Government Treasury was also identified as a concern.

²⁶ The Solomon Islands Intervention Task Force was a bipartisan, broadly-based representative group established by the Prime Minister to monitor the activities and performance of RAMSI on behalf of the SIG and the people of Solomon Islands.

²⁷ Solomon Islands Intervention Task Force, *The Review Report on the first year performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI): 24 July 2003 to 23 July 2004*, forward.

- Administration: The Committee noted that having an Australian lead RAMSI and answerable to Canberra and not the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum was making RAMSI appear like a Canberra operation under the guise of a regional mission.
- Management: The Committee found the relationship between RAMSI and the Intervention Task Force was unclear. There was also no clear strategy or outcomes for the assistance. The Committee called for such strategy and outcomes to be developed with the guidance of the National Economic Recovery, Rehabilitation and Development Plan 2003-2006.²⁸

The 2005 Review by the Eminent Persons Group

In 2005, the Pacific Islands Forum, at the request of the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, dispatched an Eminent Persons' Group with the objective of assessing the impact of RAMSI and the challenges facing Solomon Islands in the future. The key findings of the report were:

- Since the arrival of RAMSI, there had been a return to law and order in Solomon Islands, the financial situation had stabilised, and there were signs of economic recovery.
- The stable environment was solely due to the ongoing presence of the PPF.
- RAMSI was perceived as a predominantly Australian exercise. Given the desirability of it being a regional exercise, the Pacific representation in both the policing and civilian components of RAMSI should be strengthened where possible.
- There is a strong need for reconciliation in Solomon Islands, with efforts on this front having lost some of their momentum.²⁹

The report of the Eminent Persons Group was subsequently considered by this Committee in July 2005. In its report tabled on 16 July 2005,³⁰ the Committee approved the recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group and urged the SIG to implement the recommendations.

The 2007 review by the RAMSI Review Task Force

In 2007, the Pacific Islands Forum conducted a major review of the operation of RAMSI through the appointment of the RAMSI Review Task Force. The report of the Task Force was entitled 'Report of the Pacific Islands Forum Review of The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands April – June 2007'. This was a significant report, referred to frequently throughout this report.

The 2007 RAMSI Review Task Force report contained significant recommendations for the future monitoring of RAMSI. While the report noted RAMSI's 'strong and widespread support throughout Solomon Islands', it also included recommendations to strengthen the mechanism by which RAMSI is monitored and reviewed, notably:

²⁸ Foreign Relations Committee's, 'Report on the Receipt, Administration and Management of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)', *National Parliament Paper No. 17 of 2004*.

²⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Eminent Persons' Group, *A Review of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands*, May 2005, pp 5-6.

³⁰ Foreign Relations Committee, 'Report on the report of the Forum Eminent Persons Group – May 2005', *National Parliament Paper No. 3 of 2005*.

- The establishment of a Forum Ministerial Standing Committee (FMSC), to comprise Foreign Members of the past, present and future Forum Chair countries, as well as the Foreign Ministers of Solomon Islands and Australia, to provide oversight and governance to RAMSI; and
- The establishment of a 'triumvirate group' of SIG, Forum and RAMSI representatives.³¹

The Task Force also supported the maintenance of the 'Enhanced Consultative Mechanism' which was an interim consultative body set up in 2006 before the Task Force review involving senior official from RAMSI and the Forum.

In response to these recommendations, the FMSC was formed and held its first meeting in Honiara on 22 February 2008. The 'triumvirate group' was also formed to provide an enhanced mechanism for dialogue between the SIG, the Forum and RAMSI. It comprises:

- the Solomon Islands Government Permanent Secretary to RAMSI appointed by the SIG (previously referred to as the Special Envoy to RAMSI);
- the Pacific Islands Forum Representative to Solomon Islands in Honiara; and
- the Special Coordinator of RAMSI.

The Committee notes that the FMSC was instrumental in the development of the SIG-RAMSI *Partnership Framework*, discussed later in this chapter.³²

The People's Surveys

In 2006 (pilot), 2007 and 2008, RAMSI commissioned an independent research body, ANU Enterprise, to conduct national surveys of Solomon Islanders' perceptions of the work of RAMSI. The survey has been used by RAMSI, the SIG and Forum countries to measure how RAMSI is performing against its objectives. The results of the surveys are on the RAMSI website at www.ramsi.org/node/262.

The key findings of the most recent 2008 survey were:

- 56 per cent of respondents said there was less general crime compared with a year ago;
- 89 per cent of respondents support the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands;
- 59 per cent of respondents said primary schools had improved in the past year; and
- 56 per cent of respondents expected services to improve.³³

At the time of tabling of this report, the People's Survey for 2009 was not publicly available, although the Committee anticipated its imminent release.

³¹ Pacific Islands Forum Task Force, 'Report of the Pacific Islands Forum Review of The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands April – June 2007', pp 4, 7.

³² Dr Lesi Korovavala, former Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Representative to Solomon Islands, Evidence, 19 September 2008, p 2. The SIG-RAMSI *Partnership Framework* was still at its negotiation stages when Dr Korovavala made this observation. He was part of the negotiations.

³³ People's Survey 2008 Summary, www.ramsi.org/files/PeoplesSurvey2008-summaryweb.pdf (accessed 19 October 2009), p 3.

The RAMSI Annual Performance Reports

RAMSI has published Annual Performance Reports for the years 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 which are available on the RAMSI website at www.ramsi.org/node/262. These reports, prepared by the RAMSI Performance Assessment Advisory Team, contain detailed assessments of RAMSI's performance for the relevant time period against RAMSI's mandate and program pillars. The key highlights identified in the most recent Annual Performance Report 2007-2008 were:

- Support among Solomon Islanders for RAMSI's presence in the country remains high at around 90%.
- There has been some increase in the public understanding that RAMSI is active in a number of areas other than law and justice.
- Gains in security, public financial management and economic growth are being maintained. However, all gains are to some extent fragile and may be reversed.
- All programs have moved away from dependence on RAMSI technical assistance. However, more effort needs to be made to ensure that judgements about transitions are shared by RAMSI and SIG and seen within the context of overall plans to leave behind reasonably effective and resilient institutions.
- Problems with recruitment and retention in the Public Service, and sustainability of levels of RAMSI financial subsidy in some areas, remain risks to the achievement of RAMSI/SIG objectives and merit closer attention in strategic discussions.
- RAMSI remains committed to the principle of gender equality. There are examples of good practice within RAMSI in reporting outcomes on the effects of programs on women and men (including the rich set of disaggregated data in the People's Survey), but practice overall needs to be strengthened.
- Performance reporting is still in some cases not giving managers the information they need. While all programs now have clear objectives, more consistent and substantive reporting is needed against them, together with greater convergence with SIG reporting systems.³⁴

At the time of tabling of this report, the Annual Performance Report for 2008-2009 was not publicly available, although the Committee anticipated its imminent release.

3.9 The Partnership Framework and the future of RAMSI

In April 2009, the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI concluded the development of its *Partnership Framework between Solomon Islands Government and Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands*. The *Partnership Framework* was endorsed by the Cabinet on 14 May 2009, and by the FMSC on 15 May 2009.

The development of the *Partnership Framework* arose out of the 2007 report of the Forum RAMSI Review Task Force. As indicated previously in this chapter, the Taskforce recommended that steps be taken to strengthen mechanisms for dialogue between RAMSI and the SIG, including the establishment of the FMSC on RAMSI. It also recommended that RAMSI's drawdown over

³⁴ Performance Assessment Advisory Team, *RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007-2008*, July 2008, key highlights.

time should not involve a blanket, arbitrary exit deadline, but rather a series of jointly agreed indicative and conditions-based timelines. These timelines would be met as key institutions across several sectors built capacity and attained sustainability.

In February 2008, at the inaugural FMSC meeting on RAMSI, it was decided that these conditions-based timelines would be achieved through the development of a Solomon Islands Government – RAMSI *Partnership Framework*, to align more closely the work of RAMSI with the priorities set by the SIG. Providing evidence in 2008 prior to the adoption of the final *Partnership Framework*, the Hon Dr Derek Sikua, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, observed:

In the preface of that document my government has emphasized that firstly we wish to continue this relationship, but as equal respectful partners; and secondly, we believe that the assistance would be most valuable if it could address the current priority needs of Solomon Islands, and the current priority needs of Solomon Islands that Solomon Islanders can claim ownership for.³⁵

The introduction to the *Partnership Framework*, as concluded in April 2009, makes the following statement in relation to the goals and objective of RAMSI's work with the SIG, together with the long-term future and withdrawal of RAMSI from Solomon Islands:

The *Partnership Framework* sets out the overall goal and objectives for RAMSI's work with the Solomon Islands Government. It also outlines aspirational goals that are aligned with Solomon Islands Government objectives and identifies specific verifiable targets and indicative timeframes for their achievement. This is intended to reduce RAMSI's engagement as Solomon Islands capacity grows. The *Partnership Framework* also provides a detailed list of the main areas of RAMSI activity.

The Committee notes that the *Partnership Framework* does not change RAMSI's mandate. However, it does provide a clear statement of RAMSI's goals and objective in fulfilling its mandate.

The goals and objectives set out in the *Partnership Framework*, which draw directly on RAMSI's mandate and program pillars, are set out below:

OVERALL GOAL

A peaceful Solomon Islands where key national institutions and functions of law and justice, public administration and economic management are effective, affordable and have the capacity to be sustained without RAMSI's further assistance.

Law and Justice Aspiration

A secure, safe, ordered and just Solomon Islands society where laws are administered fairly regardless of position or status, giving due recognition to traditional values and customs.

Economic Governance and Growth Aspiration

³⁵ The Hon Dr Derek Sikua, Evidence, 18 September 2008, p 10.

A Solomon Islands achieving broad-based economic growth and a more prosperous society (including for those living in rural areas) supported by a fiscally responsible government which promotes sound economic policies.

Machinery of Government Aspiration

A public administration that is strategic, professional, transparent and accountable in the delivery of services and priority programs of the government of the day.

A key feature of the *Partnership Framework* is the foreshadowed development of a draft performance matrix to underpin the framework. This matrix will provide a means for jointly monitoring progress towards the targets set in the framework.

A SIG/RAMSI Performance Oversight Group, assisted by a small, independent, external team of performance experts, will be responsible for overseeing the Matrix and performance issues. The Performance Oversight Group will provide interim reports every six months, and a more formal report following the end of each calendar year. This work will form the basis of performance reporting to the FMSC and Forum Leaders.³⁶

Significantly, the *Partnership Framework* does not set any specific deadlines for RAMSI's exit from Solomon Islands. Rather, the *Partnership Framework* establishes mutually-agreed, conditions-based timelines to reduce RAMSI's engagement in program areas as the SIG's capacity continues to grow.³⁷ RAMSI's exit strategy is revisited in the final chapter of this report.

³⁶ *Partnership Framework between Solomon Islands Government and Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands*, April 2009, p 12.

³⁷ Submission 6, RAMSI, p 11.

RAMSI Documents



Code of Conduct for Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Personnel

Introduction

1. The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and the Government of Solomon Islands expect the highest standards of personal behaviour and ethics from all RAMSI personnel¹.
2. The operation of RAMSI is codified in the *Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003* and the *Multilateral Agreement done in Townsville on 24 July 2003 between Solomon Islands, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga*.
3. RAMSI personnel are required to comply with the applicable laws of their home country and with all applicable regulations, policies, directions and guidelines relating to their official and personal conduct. RAMSI personnel must also comply with the various Codes of Conduct² by which they are governed. This Code does not replace other relevant Codes of Conduct.
4. RAMSI personnel, as representatives of their home countries, have a duty to act at all times in a manner that upholds the good reputation of their home country and their government.

Respect for the Laws of Solomon Islands

5. RAMSI personnel shall observe and respect the laws and regulations of Solomon Islands. This requirement is codified under Art. 10 (1) of the Multilateral Agreement.
6. Any RAMSI deployee, or their supervisor or Commander, shall inform the Special Coordinator as soon as practicable if they, or an accompanying household member, come to the notice of Solomon Islands law enforcement authorities, except in the matters of minor traffic infringements.

Cultural Sensitivity

7. RAMSI personnel shall be sensitive to, and fully respect, the culture and local customs of Solomon Islands, including local standards of modesty wherever practicable. RAMSI personnel shall respect customs that are protective of local cultural property, including war relics.

¹ For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, RAMSI personnel are members of the visiting contingent who are covered by the FIA Act and employees of associated contractors who are based in the Solomon Islands.

² These Codes of Conduct include, inter alia, public service Codes of Conduct, Commander's Orders, contracting agency Codes of Conduct, managing contractor Codes of Conduct, and participating country Codes of Conduct. It is noted that members of the Participating Police Force and Participating Armed Forces components of RAMSI are also subject to their respective Commander's Orders. The principles in this Code reflect those Orders. To the extent of any inconsistency between the application of this Code and the application of the respective Commander's Orders, the Commander's Orders will prevail.

Acceptance of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

8. RAMSI personnel shall not accept bribes, gifts or other benefits or advantages that are offered in connection with the deployee's duties, status, power and authority. Personnel should not accept hospitality where acceptance would give rise to a real or perceived conflict of interest. Where refusal of a gift or hospitality is likely to give offence to an extent that could adversely affect RAMSI, or participating country and Solomon Islands interests, the deployee may accept the gift or hospitality, but must promptly report it to his or her Team Leader, Commander, or the Special Coordinator. RAMSI personnel or their supervisor or Commander can seek further guidance from the Office of the Special Coordinator on such issues.

9. Money ***must never*** be accepted as a gift.

Appropriate Personal Behaviour

10. RAMSI personnel shall behave honestly and with integrity, and act with care and diligence. RAMSI personnel shall not engage in behaviour at any time which is likely to affect adversely their ability to perform their duties, or which is likely to bring RAMSI, participating countries and/or home agencies, or Solomon Islands into disrepute.

11. Sexual activity and the use of alcohol or other substances are particular areas of sensitivity where conduct may easily be seen as offensive or be misinterpreted. Particular attention to appropriate personal behaviour in the local Solomon Islands context is therefore required.

12. RAMSI personnel shall not use foul, obscene or offensive language or gestures. In Solomon Islands culture swearing is a significant breach of 'kastom'.

13. RAMSI personnel shall operate vehicles in accordance with Solomon Islands legislation, other relevant regulations and with due consideration to prevailing road, traffic, weather and pedestrian conditions. RAMSI personnel may only operate vehicles for which they hold a valid and current licence in Solomon Islands or their home jurisdiction.

Household Members

14. Accompanying household members are private persons not covered directly by this Code. However, personnel are strongly encouraged to ensure that the accompanying members of their household act in accordance with this Code. As a result of their visibility and identity as part of the RAMSI 'community', the actions of accompanying household members can have an impact on the reputation of RAMSI and participating countries.

15. RAMSI personnel shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that accompanying household members are aware of, and observe Solomon Islands laws, and respect local culture and customs.

Respect for Others and Tolerance of their Opinions

16. RAMSI personnel have a duty to contribute to the effective functioning of the workplace by treating their colleagues and the public with respect and courtesy. This requires particular attention to the different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, beliefs and opinions of the people encountered in the workplace and outside it.

17. RAMSI personnel shall: respect the cultural background of colleagues in the Solomon Islands workplace; not discriminate against or harass such persons or any other persons; and respect the privacy of individuals when dealing with personal information.

Confidentiality

18. RAMSI personnel will often have access to information that is sensitive in nature. Personnel are accountable for the protection of such information and are thus required to maintain appropriate confidentiality, ensuring that information is only shared with people on a need-to-know basis and that it is not released publicly in any way without appropriate clearance.

19. Information of the type referred to in paragraph 18 is not to be used to discredit another person or for personal gain.

Conflict of Interest

20. RAMSI personnel are required to arrange their private or other official affairs in a manner that will prevent any real or perceived conflict of interest. Where a real or perceived conflict of interest does arise between the private or other official interests of the deployee and the official duties or responsibilities of the deployee, the deployee must disclose details of the conflict to the Office of the Special Coordinator or to their supervisor or Commander who will in turn advise the Office of the Special Coordinator.

Integrity and discretion

21. Arrangements made for RAMSI personnel with respect to their deployment are aimed to facilitate the operation of RAMSI, and not for any personal benefit. RAMSI personnel must act with integrity and discretion in relation to any privilege they may have as a RAMSI representative³.

Implementation

22. Behaviour that breaches the standards outlined in the Code could result in termination of employment, and if that behaviour is suspected to be in breach of Solomon Islands law or home country law, the matter may be referred to relevant law enforcement authorities.⁴ Principles of natural justice will be adhered to in any investigation of a breach and in consideration of a suspected

³ This includes, but is not restricted to, observance of the RAMSI policy on 'Duty and Tax Free Importation Privileges for Individual Member of the RAMSI Contingent'.

⁴ In the event of a breach of the Code, decisions about appropriate disciplinary action are to be made and implemented by the relevant supervisor and home agency in consultation with the Office of the Special Coordinator. In the case of ADF personnel, decisions about appropriate disciplinary actions are to be made by the Commander keeping the Office of the Special Coordinator informed in serious cases.

breach. Investigations would be undertaken by relevant supervisors⁵ who will keep the Office of the Special Coordinator informed as necessary.

23. RAMSI personnel have an obligation to report suspected breaches of this Code to their relevant supervisor or Commander who will inform the Office of the Special Coordinator.

24. RAMSI personnel in any doubt about the application of this Code or its practical implementation should seek guidance from their Team Leader/Commander/Program Director or the Office of the Special Coordinator.

⁵ Relevant supervisors could include Commander PPF or CTF, Team Leaders or Program Directors.



REGIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION TO SOLOMON ISLANDS

RAMSI Media Protocol

The RAMSI Public Affairs Unit is responsible for all local and international media engagement, enquires and communications both in and out of RAMSI. It reports directly to the Office of the Special Coordinator and works closely with the Participating Police Force, RAMSI's Military Contingent (Combined Taskforce), the Office of the Development Coordinator and all RAMSI civilian programs.

Under no circumstances are RAMSI advisors/personnel (except constitutional post holders) to give formal or informal interviews or comments to the media or issue media releases without the prior approval of the Public Affairs Unit. Please refer any media queries and draft media releases to the Public Affairs Unit in person or through your team leader or Solomon Islands program coordinator.

The Public Affairs Unit produces and disseminates a wide variety of materials including media releases, articles and print materials; provides advice and produces issues management strategies; drafts speeches and media talking points; provides background briefing to journalists and can advise and undertake event management. The Public Affairs Unit can also assist RAMSI personnel and agencies develop and promote key messages and gain media exposure for events etc. The Public Affairs Unit also manages the RAMSI website: www.ramsi.org and coordinates the whole of RAMSI Community Outreach Program as well as assisting with the induction of civilian and police personnel into the mission.

Please contact us for more detailed guidance as required.

RAMSI Public Affairs Manager

W: (677) 24703 M: (677) 94447

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www.ramsi.org

people's survey 2009

summary

ANU Enterprise



People's Survey 2009 Summary Report
Published February 2010
Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands

Cover photo: School teacher Phillip Ashley with his class, Mbambanakira Village school, Weather Coast (Bruce Edwards)

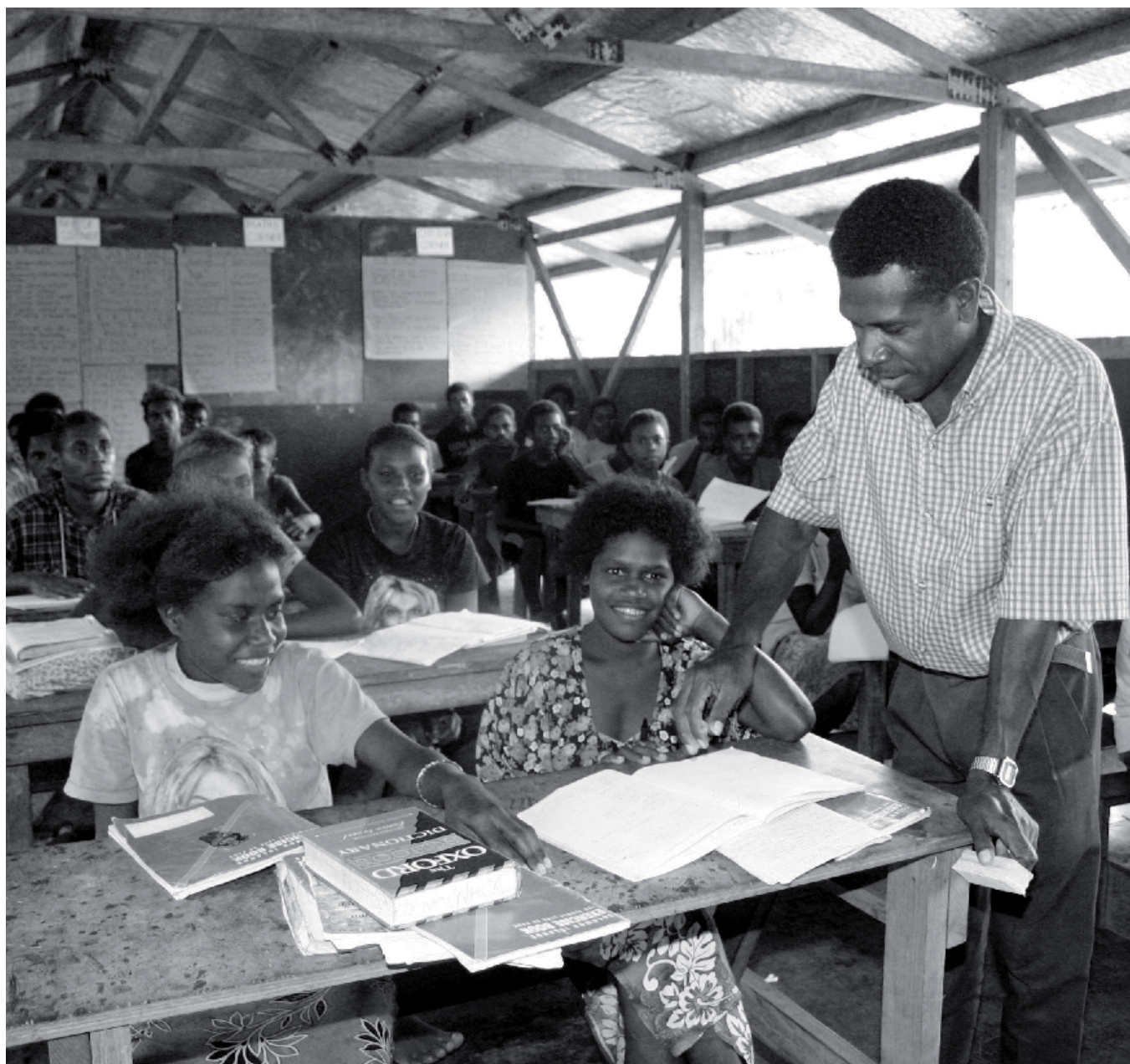
Acknowledgements

The organisers of the *People's Survey* wish to warmly thank all those who worked on the survey, especially the interviewers who diligently collected the data, the focus group facilitators, field coordinators, data entry officers and field liaison officers. The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office played an invaluable role and the expertise and support they provided is greatly appreciated. Finally, we wish to thank the 5,035 respondents in the communities and the focus group participants who generously gave up their time to express their views on these important community concerns.

people's survey 2009

summary

ANU Enterprise



7

provinces (and Honiara)

40

focus groups

64

interviewers

5035

questionnaires

32%

said law and order had improved in the past year

88%

support the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands

85%

said there should be more women in parliament

74%

said they were spending more of their income on food
than they were two years ago

overview



Photo: Bruce Edwards

The *People's Survey 2009* was the third annual survey to assess perceptions of living conditions and current issues in Solomon Islands. The 2007 *People's Survey* was a baseline survey drawn from a representative sample of selected enumeration areas (EAs) designed by the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (NSO). It was carried out in all provinces except Makira Province and Rennell and Bellona Province. The 2008 *People's Survey* drew a different selection of EAs from the same representative sample, while the 2009 *People's Survey* included a re-survey of most of the EAs visited in 2007.

The *People's Survey 2009* was commissioned by RAMSI and carried out by an independent consultancy firm, ANU Enterprise. The fieldworkers were all trained Solomon Islanders.

The 2009 survey instruments were developed in consultation with RAMSI. They were:

1) A questionnaire in Pijin and English comprising ten sections:

- Background (9 questions)
- Household Economy (13)
- Business and Employment Opportunities (8)
- Access to Basic Services (11)
- Law and Order (5)
- The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (10)
- General Questions about RAMSI (5)
- Public Accountability (14)
- Representation and Civic Awareness (15)
- Access to Justice (9)

2) Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines to explore selected topics:

- Impact of the current economic situation on living conditions.
- Nature and causes of current law and order concerns.
- Voting behaviour and perceptions of the electoral system.
- Attitudes towards women in government and senior leadership.
- Perceptions of modern and traditional justice systems and management of offenders.

Forty small group discussions were conducted in Honiara, rural Guadalcanal, Central Province, Malaita and in Gizo in Western Province.

The following document is a summary of the survey's key findings. The complete *2009 People's Survey Report* (available online at www.ramsi.org) comprises an analysis of the questionnaire data, with graphic comparisons of whole-of-survey level data for 2007, 2008 and 2009 wherever the data are comparable.

Key findings from the focus group discussions are also listed in the following summary report. Readers should bear in mind, however, that FGD methods are not based on statistically representative samples, so do not necessarily cover the full range of views and opinions. The comments included here should be treated as insights and elaborations and used only in conjunction with the statistical findings.

key findings



Photo: Thomas Perry

Background Characteristics of Respondents

- For both males and females the most common education level was primary (44%) followed by secondary (39%), while 8% had no schooling and 9% had formal post-secondary education. Overall, 14 per cent reported receiving some form of informal education, with 7% attending Rural Training Centres and slightly more attending an informal course of some kind.
- The average number of years of education was 7.1 years: 7.7 for males and 6.5 for females.
- Sixty-two per cent of all respondents said they practised subsistence cultivation or fishing, and 26% reported subsistence plus another activity that earned cash or wages. Forty per cent reported housework as a major activity, and 16% reported housework plus another activity that earned cash or wages. The other main activities were informal cash activity (26%), unpaid volunteer in a church or NGO (21%), full-time government worker (5%, part time 1%), full-time worker in the private sector (5%, part-time 4%) and self-employment or own business (8%).
- Seventy-four per cent of respondents were currently living in the province in which they were born and 26% were living in a different province.

Household Economy

- Twenty-one per cent of respondents said their current household financial situation was better than two years ago. Fifty-three per cent said it was worse than two years ago and 24% said it was the same. Nineteen per cent expected their household

financial situation to be better in two years time, 28% expected it to be worse and 29% expected it to be the same.

- Seventy-four per cent said they were spending more of their household income on food than they were two years ago, 9% said they were spending the same and 14% said they were spending less.
- Sixty-one per cent said they were spending more on fuel for transport than they were two years ago, 13% said they were spending the same and 18% said they were spending more.
- Thirty-two per cent said they were spending more on fuel for cooking and generators than two years ago, 10% said they were spending the same and 47% said they were spending less.
- Thirty per cent of respondents said they had had regular wage employment at some time, 25% had paid tax on their wages, and 21% belonged to a superannuation, provident or pension scheme. Men were significantly more likely to give affirmative answers to these questions. Respondents in Honiara were most likely to have had regular wage employment (52%) but those in Honiara Settlements were only a little more likely than those in Choiseul, Temotu, Western and Isabel Provinces.
- Twenty-five per cent of respondents said they had a bank account, and 25% said there was a bank near their home. Nine per cent said a mobile bank sometimes visited their home area, 15% said there was a bank near their workplace and 2% said a mobile bank sometimes visited the area near their workplace.

‘Thirty-one per cent said law and order had improved in the past year.’

- Twenty-eight per cent said they had a male family member working away from home and 19% had a female member working away from home. Thirty-six per cent said the absentee worker sends money to the household (remittances). Although the percentage with absentee workers is approximately the same as in 2007 and 2008, the percentage sending remittances has halved.
- The main expected source of assistance for the community in the next two years was the National Government (33%), followed by the community itself (17%).
- Thirteen per cent of respondents said work opportunities for youth were better compared with two years ago, 33% said opportunities were the same and 47% said opportunities were worse.
- National Government was seen as the most likely source of improvement (37%), followed by foreign donors (19%).

Business and Employment Opportunities

- Twenty-seven per cent said conditions for starting a business were better than two years previously. Twenty-eight per cent said conditions were the same, 29% said they were worse, and 15% did not know.
- The majority of respondents thought it was no harder for women to start a business than for men (69%), while 19% thought it was harder. Men and Young Men (21%) were more likely to say it is harder for women as compared to Women (16%) and Young Women (18%).
- Thirty per cent said they had tried to start a business in the past two years. Of this thirty per cent, 90% said they had experienced problems.
- Ten per cent of respondents had access to a government agricultural program, 12% had access to an NGO program and 72% had no access to an agricultural program.
- Twenty-five per cent said they had a health centre in their village or community. A further 44% could reach a health centre in no more than an hour. Twenty-nine per cent said it took from one to four hours to reach a health centre and 1% said it took more than half a day.
- Thirty-two per cent had a primary school in their community and 50% said they could reach a primary school in no more than an hour. Seventeen per cent said it took from one to four hours to reach a school.
- Eight per cent had a market in their community and 36% said they could reach a market in no more than an hour. Thirty-two per cent said it took from one to four hours to reach a market and 20% said it took half a day or more.
- Forty-three per cent of respondents had visited a health centre from one to three times in the preceding year, 18% had visited four to six times, and 17% had visited more than six times. Twenty-one per cent had not visited a health centre in the past year.

- Of the 81% of respondents who had visited a health centre at least once, 30% said they were always satisfied with the services received, 46% said they were sometimes satisfied and 24% said they were not satisfied.
- Forty-seven per cent of all respondents said health services had improved in the past two years, 42% said they were the same, 6% said they had deteriorated and 5% did not know.
- Fifty-five per cent expected health services to improve in the next two years, 11% did not expect improvement and 34% said they did not know.
- National Government was seen by 38% of respondents as the most likely source of improvement in health services, followed by foreign donors (15%) the community (12%) and Provincial Government (12%).
- Fifty-nine per cent said primary schools had improved in the past two years, 35% said they had stayed the same and 4% said they were worse.
- Sixteen per cent of respondents' homes were connected to mains electricity, 9% had solar power, 5% had a generator, 4% used other sources and 67% had no electricity.
- Ten per cent of respondents had access to a fixed phone line in their community, 22% had access to a mobile phone, 26% had access to a radio and 43% had no access to communications.

Law and Order

- Thirty per cent described their community as safe and peaceful, 56% said there were sometimes law and order problems and 12% said there were many problems. Men were more likely to say their community was safe and peaceful (33%, compared with 28% for women).
- Thirty-one per cent said the law and order situation in their community had improved in the past year, 53% said it was the same and 14% said it was worse.
- Sixteen per cent described the law and order situation in Solomon Islands as safe and peaceful, 46% said there were sometimes problems, 24% said there were many problems and 14% said they did not know.
- Twenty-eight per cent said the law and order situation in Solomon Islands had improved in the past year, 44% said it was the same, 13% said it was worse and 14% said they didn't know.
- The crimes respondents were most concerned about were stealing/theft/robbery (53%), followed by drunkenness and crimes related to drinking (48%), murder (30%) and violence (26%). More than twenty other concerns were mentioned, some not legally defined as crimes. There were small differences by gender.

‘Eighty-eight per cent of respondents said they support the presence of RAMSI.’

Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF)

- Eighty-five per cent of respondents had not had any formal contact with the RSIPF in the past year and 13% had had formal contact. Of the 13% who had formal contact, 57% initiated it themselves, while 37% of the contact was initiated by the RSIPF. Least likely to initiate contact were Young Men (44%) and most likely were Women (73%).
- Thirty-one per cent said that the RSIPF treat people fairly and with respect. Thirty-one per cent said the RSIPF are sometimes fair and respectful and 26% said they are not fair and respectful.
- Four per cent said there had been a theft from their household in the past year, 5% said someone in their household had been a victim of a physical attack and 3% said someone had experienced another type of crime. Eighty-seven per cent said no one in their household had been a victim of crime.
- The main victims of the above crimes were men (57%), followed by families (17%) and women (13%).
- Of the 13% who said their household had experienced a crime, 54% said it had been reported to the RSIPF. Twelve per cent said the crime was not reported and 17% said it was reported to community leaders. Fifty-six per cent said they were satisfied with the way the RSIPF had handled the report and 40% said they were not satisfied.
- The main reasons for not reporting a crime to the RSIPF were that the family sorted it out (29%) or that customary law was preferred (24%).
- Fifty-six per cent said the officer’s supervisor or a senior officer was the person who should be informed if a police officer was not doing his job properly. The second most common response was ‘don’t know’ (20%). Seventeen per cent said they would inform their chief and 6% said they would inform RAMSI.
- Sixty-four per cent of respondents said they would make a formal complaint if an RSIPF officer was not doing their job properly, 19% said they would not make a complaint and 15% said they did not know. Young Men (76%) and Men (68%) were most likely to say they would complain and Women were the least likely (54%).

General questions about RAMSI

- Within the past three months, 59% had seen a male RAMSI police officer and 41% had seen a female RAMSI police officer. Twenty-nine per cent had seen a male RAMSI army officer and 20% had seen a female RAMSI army officer. Six per cent had seen another category of male RAMSI officer and 3% had seen another category of female RAMSI officer. Thirty-six per cent had not seen anyone from RAMSI within the past three months.
- Seven per cent had spoken to a male RAMSI police officer within the past three months and 4% had spoken to a female RAMSI police officer. Three per cent had spoken to a male RAMSI army officer and 2% had spoken to a female RAMSI army officer. One per cent had spoken to another category of male or female RAMSI officer and eighty-seven per cent had not spoken to anyone from RAMSI within the past three months.

- The most commonly mentioned ways in which RAMSI helps Solomon Islands were ‘keep the peace’ (75%), ‘improve law and justice’ (48%), ‘arrest criminals’ (33%), ‘help run the country’ (22%), ‘provide technical assistance’ (15%) and ‘improve the economy’ (9%).
- Fifty-three per cent of respondents said that violence would return to Solomon Islands if RAMSI left soon. The percentage of respondents who said ‘maybe’ was 30%. Seven per cent said violence would not return and 10% did not know. These results were within five percent of those from previous years’ surveys.
- Overall, 88% of respondents said they support the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands, which was almost the same as in previous years. Five per cent did not support the presence of RAMSI and 7% did not know.
- Fourteen per cent said that performance of national MPs and senior officials in government had improved compared with the previous year, 54% said performance was the same, 17% said performance was worse and 16% did not know.
- As in previous years, levels of satisfaction with Provincial Governments were lower than with National Government. One per cent rated the performance of Provincial Government as very good, 30% said performance was satisfactory, and 53% rated it as not good.
- Two per cent said the performance of the Provincial Civil Service was very good, 24% said their performance was satisfactory, 52% said their performance was not good and 21% said they did not know.
- Eight per cent said the performance of Provincial Government Officials had improved compared with the previous year, 54% said performance was the same, 21% said performance was worse and 16% said they did not know.

Public Accountability

- Four per cent of respondents said the National Government’s performance was good with regard to improving basic services and the economy, 40% said it was satisfactory. Forty per cent said performance was not good and 15% did not know. Respondents in Central Province (15%) and Western Province (9%) were most likely to say performance was very good.
- Four per cent said the performance of the National Civil Service was very good, 32% said performance was satisfactory, 42% said performance was not good and 22% said they did not know.
- Ten per cent of respondents were able to correctly identify the role of the Leadership Code Commission. This represented a small increase from previous years. Fifty-nine per cent had never heard of the Leadership Code Commission and 29% said they had heard of it but did not know what it does.
- Twelve per cent knew that the role of the Ombudsman is to investigate official misconduct, 60% had never heard of it and 27% had heard of it but did not know what it does. This question was not asked in previous surveys.

‘Fifty-one per cent said the amount of dishonest behaviour among senior community leaders had not changed compared to a year ago.’

- Fourteen per cent correctly identified that the role of the Auditor General’s Office is to check that public money is spent for the proper purpose and 8% cent said its role is to check compliance with revenue guidelines. This is a small increase in correct knowledge compared with previous years. Fifty-four per cent had never heard of the Auditor General’s Office and 29% had heard of it but did not know what it does.
- Eighty-three per cent said there was dishonest behaviour and/or misuse of power among senior people in their community. Twelve per cent said there was none and 5% did not know.
- Twenty-five per cent said there was less dishonest behaviour and/or misuse of power among senior people in their community compared with a year ago. Fifty-one per cent said the amount was unchanged, 11% said it had increased, 7% had never had any and 6% did not know.
- Thirty-seven per cent said complaints about a poorly performing national official should be addressed to the officer’s supervisor, and 22% said complaints should be addressed to the RSIPF. Twelve per cent said complaints should be addressed to RAMSI, while 24% said they did not know.
- Thirty-seven per cent said complaints about a poorly performing provincial official should be directed to the officer’s supervisor and 30% said complaints should be directed to the RSIPF. Eleven per cent said complaints should be directed to RAMSI and 23% said they did not know.
- Forty-one per cent said they would feel safe complaining about a national official, and 43% about a provincial official. Thirty-nine per cent would not feel safe complaining about a national official and 37% would not feel safe complaining about a provincial official. Nineteen per cent did not know how they would feel about complaining about either. Women were much less likely to say they would feel safe complaining about either a national or provincial official.
- Forty-four per cent of respondents said they never read a newspaper and 35% said they read a newspaper only rarely. Six per cent read a newspaper every day, 10% weekly and 5% monthly.
- Thirty-eight per cent of respondents said they listen to the radio every day, 9% said every week, 5% said every month, 17% said rarely and 8% said never, while 31% said they did not have a radio.
- Forty-seven per cent said they could always receive Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) in their community. Thirty-one per cent said they could receive it sometimes, 3% said rarely and 8% said never, while 11% said they did not know.
- Twenty-four per cent were satisfied with the SIBC coverage of local news, 43% were sometimes satisfied, 7% were rarely satisfied and 27% did not know.
- Nineteen per cent were satisfied with SIBC’s coverage of international news, 36% were sometimes satisfied, 9% were not satisfied and 34% did not know.

Representation and Civic Awareness

- Forty-five per cent said one of the main jobs of a Member of Parliament (MP) was to 'represent their constituency in Parliament', 42% said it was to 'assist those who voted for him', 38% said it was to 'get better conditions for constituency', and 16% said it was to 'govern the country'.
- Thirty-four per cent of respondents said it was easy to arrange a meeting with their MP, 50% said it was not easy and 15% said they did not know.
- Twenty-seven per cent said their current MP speaks out on behalf of the electorate, 43% said the MP does not speak out, and 29% said they did not know.
- Twenty-three per cent of men said their MP does enough to assist men, compared with 20% for assisting women and 18% for assisting youth.
- Thirty-five per cent said their MP had spent Rural Constituency Development Funds (RCDF) or other government funds in their community, 43% said the MP had not and 21% did not know.
- Of those who said that RCDF or other government funds had been spent in their community, 75% said the funds had been spent on community projects, and 24% said the funds had been given to individuals or otherwise misused.
- Seventeen per cent said their current MP had met with their community in the past year to discuss needs, 71% said the MP had not and 11% did not know.
- Eighty per cent of respondents believe their vote is secret, 4% said it is not secret and 16% did not know.
- Of the 4% who said their vote is not secret, 38% thought the polling booth officer could find out, 22% did not know who can find out and 12% thought chiefs and other big men could find out. Forty-two per cent of this group couldn't say how others found out, 19% said lists and numbers can be checked, and 13% said there was no privacy at polling booths.
- Eighty-five per cent said there should be women MPs in Parliament, 9% said there should not be, and 6% did not know. Eighty-six per cent said they would vote for a woman if she seemed like a good candidate, 8% said they would not, and 6% did not know.
- The most common reason given by both males and females for why male candidates always get more votes than women candidates is that it is the custom for men to be leaders (45% for men and 33% for women, 39% overall). The next most common reason was 'male candidates bribe voters' (41% for men, 38% for women). Seventeen per cent did not know and 10% said women are not respected or are discriminated against. More than thirty other reasons suggested were mentioned by less than 10% of respondents.

‘Seventy-two per cent said the main source of dispute resolution in their community was the chief or community leaders.’

Access to Justice

- Fifty per cent of respondents said they had been told about their rights as a man, woman, boy or girl, 37% had not and 12% did not know.
- Aside from ‘no one’ (27%) and ‘don’t know’ (15%), the most frequently mentioned sources of rights education were NGO/church (20%), radio (15%) and community leader (11%).
- Ninety per cent of respondents said their community leader or chief settles disputes, and 7% said they do not. The most likely to say that the community leader or chief did not settle disputes were respondents in Honiara (27%) and Honiara Settlements (24%).
- Fifty-four per cent said their community used local courts to settle disputes, and 31% said it did not, while 14% did not know.
- Seventy-two per cent said the main source of dispute resolution in their community was the chief or community leaders, 3% said local courts, 14% said the church, 4% said police and 5% said the family and compensation.
- Eighteen per cent said they have access to a town court, 28% had access to a local court, 35% said they did not have access to a court and 22% did not know.
- Eight per cent said there was no cost for a lawyer for a criminal matter, and also 8% said no cost for a lawyer for a civil matter. Six per cent said a lawyer was affordable for criminal matters and 14% said a lawyer was affordable for civil matters. Forty per cent thought a lawyer would be very expensive for a criminal matter, and 33% said very expensive for a civil matter. Forty-one per cent said they did not know whether employing a lawyer for a criminal matter would be expensive, and 43% did not know whether it would be expensive for a civil matter.
- Sixty-three per cent said they would report a violent crime to the RSIPF (68% of men and 58% of women), 18% said they would report to their chief and 15% said they would report a violent crime to RAMSI.
- Seventy-four per cent would resolve a land dispute the custom way, 6% would resolve it via the church and prayer, 6% each would use a government court and the Ministry of Lands or Town Council and 5% would use the RSIPF.

key focus group findings



Photo: Bruce Edwards

Forty Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) on three main topics were conducted in Honiara (Guadalcanal), Gizo (Western Province) as well as in Central Province, rural Guadalcanal, and West Malaita. The average group size was five to six participants and separate discussions were held with participants from the four age/gender groups in each location.

Living conditions and the impact of the Global Economic Crisis

- Every participant perceived their financial circumstances as worse than two years ago. Most gave examples of increases in the cost of basic items, both locally produced and imported. Examples of substantial increases in the price of clothing in second-hand shops were also given.
- The cause of the deteriorating financial circumstances was generally seen as an increase in costs without a commensurate increase in income. Some gave instances of declines in purchasing power of their income. Some mentioned the presence of RAMSI as a factor driving up prices.
- Participants described increasing pressure for limited employment opportunities. This manifests in various ways including increased competition and longer periods of job seeking before employment can be found. Experienced teachers said they feared losing their posts to new trainees who had higher qualifications.
- Some commented on the increasing cost of basic services. It was pointed out that the 'Free Education Policy' had not made education free because there were still associated costs. School uniforms were once given out when fees were paid but now must be purchased separately, which can be as burdensome as the former fees.
- Free education was also criticised for slowing development programs and creating a 'dependency syndrome' and resistance to paying associated costs.
- Participants believed fees for private doctors have increased, with hospital queues and waiting times in the public health sector having also increased, compelling those with work commitments to use costly private services. Outpatient services were perceived as having a shortage of drugs and hence were obliged to reserve medication for only the most seriously ill patients.
- There was considerable awareness of inflation and the declining value of the Solomon Island dollar, and an understanding that this was contributing to higher prices.
- A few participants specifically mentioned the Global Economic Crisis, but pointed out that prices had started to increase before the Global Economic Crisis started, so it had exacerbated the situation rather than caused it.
- Some participants reported instances of the Global Economic Crisis being used as a reason for reducing staff or freezing salaries.

‘The gap between the wealthy and the poor was perceived to be widening.’

- It was generally agreed that everyone was affected by the deteriorating economic situation, whether employed or unemployed, rural or urban. However, opinions were divided as to whether the impact was greater in rural or urban areas and where it was better to live.
- The gap between the wealthy and the poor was perceived to be widening.
- Competition in the informal sector was said to be increasing, e.g. in selling home produce.
- In Western Province, the 2007 tsunami was perceived as still having a negative impact on living standards.
- Retired/aged people, the unemployed, young married couples, the disabled and school leavers were perceived as the most vulnerable groups in Solomon Islands.
- Despite accounts of personal hardship and its causes, there was still a common perception that laziness, lack of planning and substance abuse result in some people being worse off than others.
- Some said the traditional family and community safety nets are beginning to fail, and there is growing resistance and loss of capacity to support those who cannot support themselves.
- The word ‘poverty’ was commonly used, but participants distinguished ‘absolute poverty’ as found in African famines from ‘Solomon Island poverty’, where people can always find enough to eat and survive.
- Some participants were concerned by the appearance of beggars in urban areas in recent years.
- Only a few mentioned population increase and large family size as contributing to economic hardship.
- The main suggestions as to how to improve the economy related to developing agriculture and providing funds to assist small business.

Law and order issues and justice systems

- None of the participants said the law and order situation was good, but some thought it was improving because there was less serious crime while others said it is deteriorating because there was more petty crime.
- Although all agreed that law and order is better now than during *the Tensions*, some said it was better before *the Tensions*.
- As in the questionnaire-based survey, the problems mentioned most often were stealing and violence, with alcohol seen as a major cause.
- Other concerns mentioned included major organised robbery, rape and molestation, as well as dynamite fishing.
- People from other provinces were perceived by some as a source of criminal behaviour. Other contributing factors mentioned included working mothers neglecting their children, lingering animosity from *the Tensions*, population increase, weak governance, unemployment and concentration of development in Honiara.

- The impacts of crime on daily life mentioned included fear, shame, loss of confidence, insecurity, suspicion, anxiety and hunger (when crops are stolen).
- Weak policing and a poorly disciplined police force were frequently mentioned as contributing to law and order problems, especially by the Men and Young Men groups. There were many negative comments and examples of bad police behaviour and police providing poor role models.
- Favouring *wantoks* was seen as a particular concern related to the RSIPF and was heavily criticised. Some thought that the RSIPF could not be blamed for this, however, as it is a cultural expectation. Some recommended that police officers be posted to areas where they did not have *wantoks*, and then be rotated after a few years before they formed new loyalties that could limit their independence and fairness.
- Other suggestions as to how to reduce crime tended to focus on developing small business activities and employment opportunities, especially in agriculture and livestock. This was seen as tackling crime in multiple ways – reducing poverty, providing a time-filling activity and enhancing self esteem. Similar initiatives were proposed in the economic Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as ways of reducing poverty and hardship.
- Most participants thought that strengthening traditional justice would reduce crime and recommended strategies, such as displaying photographs of offenders, to revive the traditional social controls of shame and humiliation.
- Some participants said there are too many ‘rights’ in today’s society and this has weakened parental and family control.
- Some said that domestic violence had become normalised in Solomon Islands society and awareness-raising is needed so that people understand it is a crime.
- Impacts of domestic violence mentioned included teenage pregnancy, delinquency, runaway children, failure in school and family shame.
- Causes of violent crime mentioned included land disputes, immodest clothing and violent and/or pornographic movies.
- Young women explained how fear of violence restricted their movement and lifestyle choices, and caused their parents to be authoritarian.
- Most participants, both young and old, were knowledgeable about traditional justice systems and described harsh physical punishment, shaming and exile.
- Participants weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of traditional and modern justice systems and saw positives in each. Most thought that the modern use of jail terms and fines as punishment had a greater impact on families than on the offenders, and hence was not a deterrent. Some said that the prison, with its good food and opportunities to learn new skills, was even attractive to some.
- There was a common view that ‘traditional justice’ is focussed on the ideas of settlement and

‘Most participants advocated greater use of *kastom* law, traditional punishments and more restorative justice.’

reconciliation, while ‘modern justice’ is based on a winner and a loser. There was also a widespread perception that modern justice often causes victims to suffer more than offenders.

- Most participants advocated greater use of *kastom* law, traditional punishments and more restorative justice.
- Some were concerned that prisons are not secure and there are frequent escapes, with some believed to have been assisted. There were said to be numerous escapees as well as re-offending ex-prisoners at large in Solomon Islands society.
- Participants said that some ex-prisoners rehabilitate successfully, especially if they adopt a faith and find a way of building respectability and self-esteem, but for others faith is a veneer to secure early release and is discarded as soon as they are tempted to return to crime.
- There were not many suggestions as to exactly how a vote was found out, other than possible numbered lists and unsubstantiated suggestions. Many fears that votes are not secret seem to arise because candidates apply a great deal of pressure to voters, and so it is assumed they must ‘just know’ when someone does not vote for them.
- It seemed to be assumed that if someone was given an inducement they would automatically vote for that candidate. None of the participants mentioned the possibility of accepting a bribe and then not voting for that candidate, even though it appears that inducements are sometimes forced upon voters rather than offered.
- Manipulation of illiterate people and other electors by candidates at polling booths was described, and it was suggested that more police should be deployed to prevent disturbances and coercion.
- The main sources of information about government were said to be radio, newspapers and the ‘Coconut Wireless’ (gossip), but it was pointed out that many people could no longer afford to buy newspapers every day or batteries for radios.
- Almost all female and about half of male participants thought it was possible for a woman to lead Solomon Islands, but most male and female participants said it would take time before the nation was ready to accept it. Gender equity in leadership tended to be perceived in terms of a development continuum, with Solomon Islands now near the beginning, with it needing to reach the end before equity could be achieved, because it is a ‘modern’ idea.
- Some male and female participants said that female leaders would be more honest, caring, approachable and responsible than some male leaders and welcomed the idea of female leadership, mentioning the important leadership role women already take in the household. At the same time, they recognised that the culture is against women, and attitudes would need to change before women would win widespread support.
- Religion was used to support the arguments of both supporters and opponents of female leadership, with some saying female leadership is ‘unbiblical’, while others said everyone is equal in the eyes of God.

- Some participants pointed out that women often lack self-confidence, and even those who have it are likely to be subject to harsh criticisms and personal attacks when they rise to higher positions.
- A tendency for women to have well-developed organisational and management skills was mentioned by some respondents who said women could make good MPs.
- There were numerous suggestions that there should be more education on governance and representation and that this could be carried out by local NGOs and churches. One participant pointed out that people need more education as to what is required of a leader and what qualities voters should look for, as many do not know. This could be a good basis for awareness training.
- Most participants thought there were enough opportunities for women to achieve senior positions in the Civil Service, and mentioned several who had.
- The gender inequity in senior posts was attributed to women having generally poor levels of education and being unreliable employees because of their conflicting family responsibilities.
- Some thought husbands should take a greater role in domestic duties to help their wives maintain senior jobs, while others thought women did not have the confidence, or would need special protection, to undertake the solo travel that goes with some senior posts.
- A few participants thought that women already in senior positions had a responsibility to help other women attain them.
- Two participants said there should be specially designated seats for women electoral candidates, but most saw education of candidates and community as the best way of facilitating the election of women to government.
- Women were especially likely to mention that gender equity should begin in the home and primary school, and said it was the responsibility of parents and teachers to ensure that it did. Participants also said there was a need to ensure that scholarships for further studies were awarded to males and females in equal numbers.

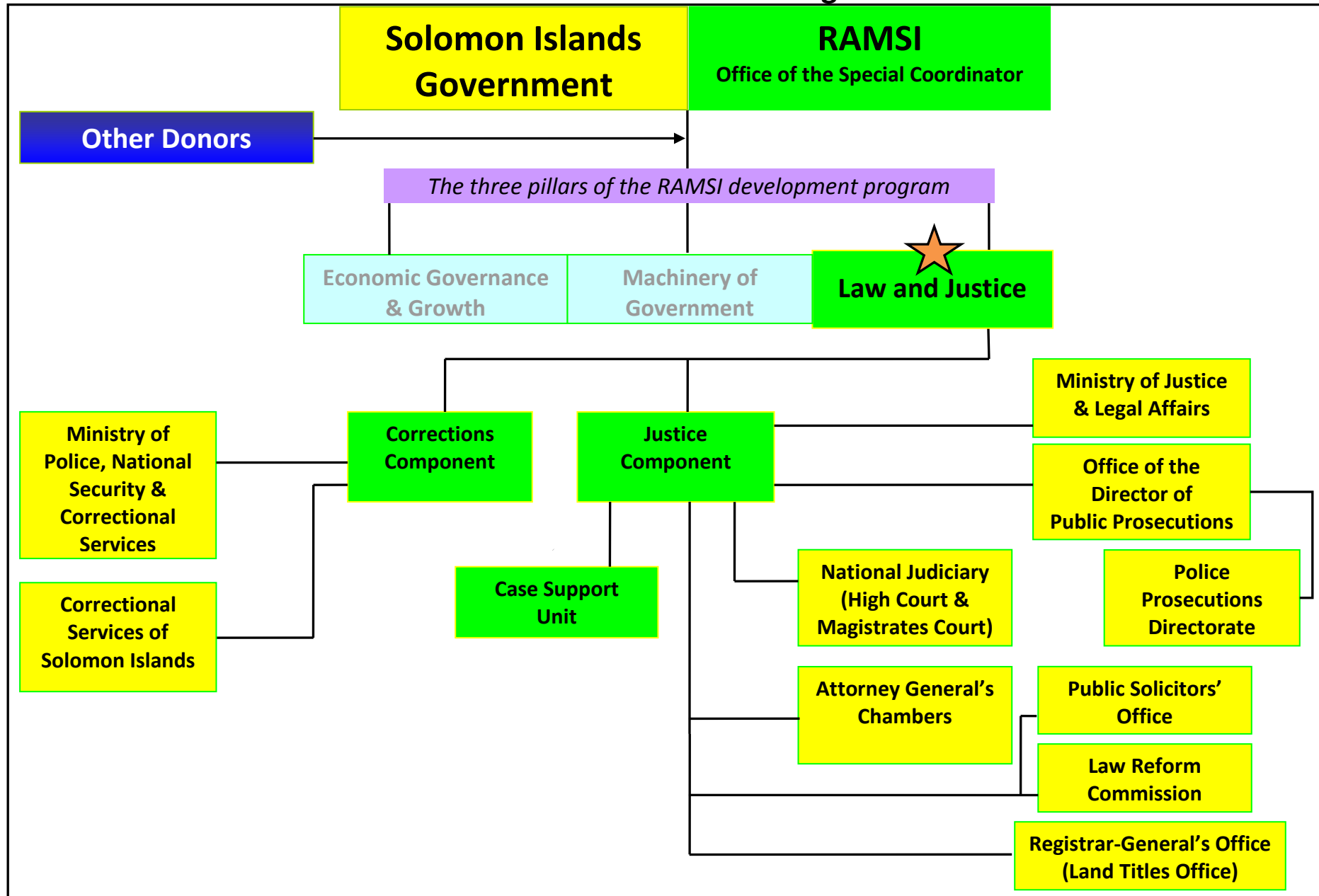
Published by:

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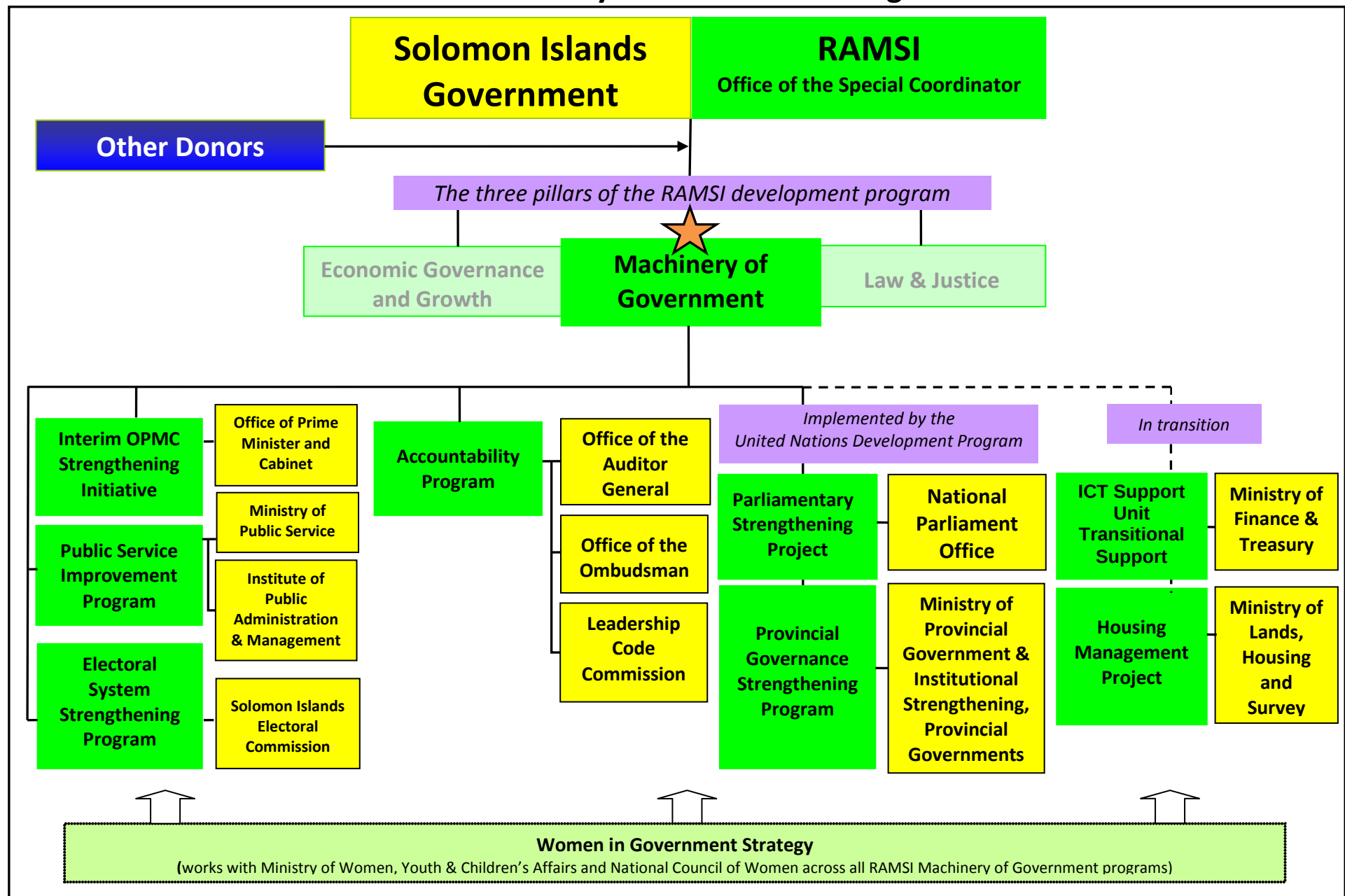


RAMSI Law and Justice Program



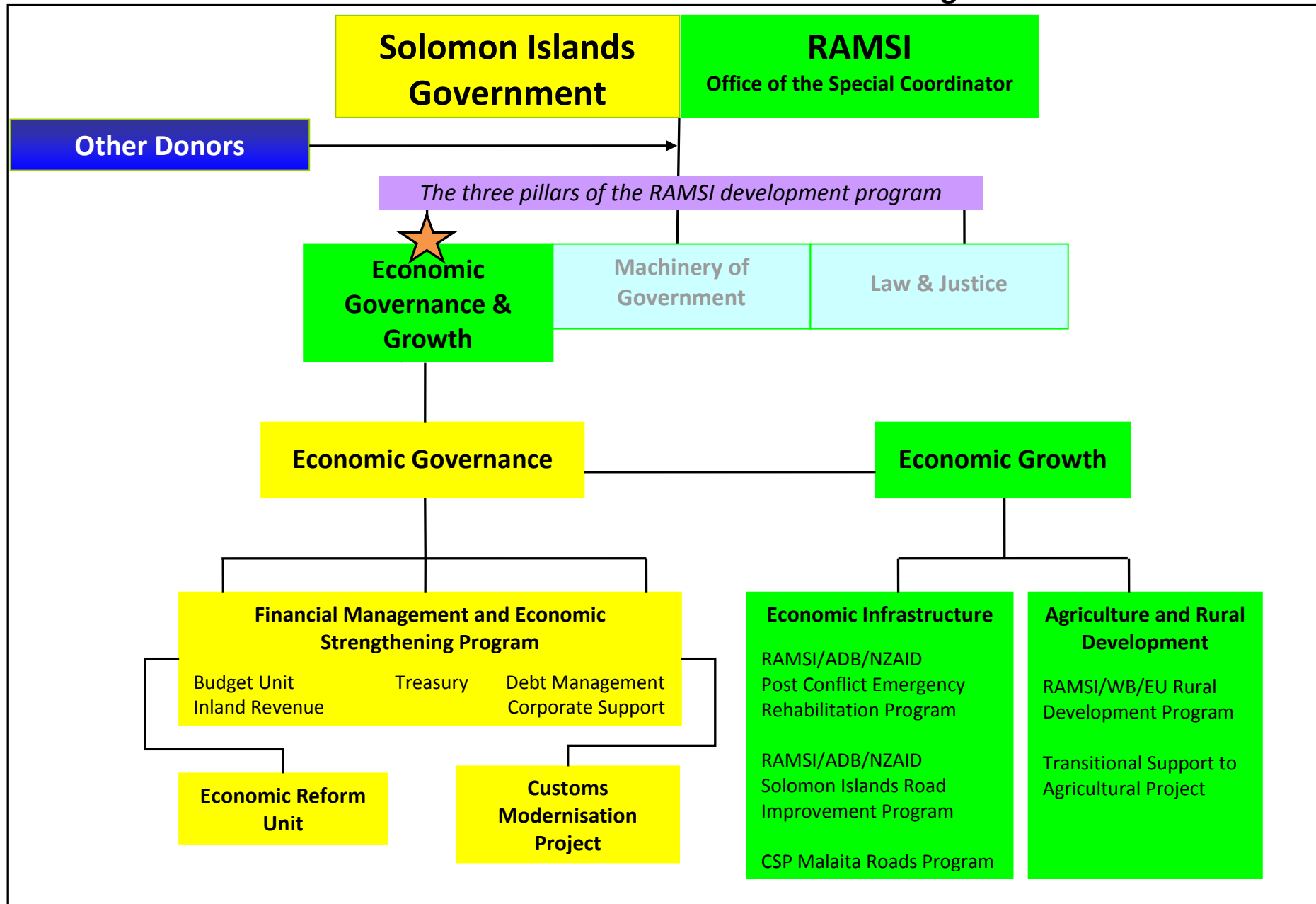


RAMSI Machinery of Government Program





RAMSI Economic Governance & Growth Program



ORGANISATION CHART
Pacific Islands Forum, Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI Triumvirate

