The RAMSI Decade:
A Review of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, 2003-2013

Jon Fraenkel,
Joni Madraiwiwi & Henry Okole

14th July 2014

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our appreciation to the Prime Minister, Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo, and the Government of Solomon Islands for inviting us to undertake this challenging and important mission. In particular, the Permanent Secretary for RAMSI, Jeffrey Kauha, and Pacific Islands Forum Representative in Honiara, Sakiusa Rabuka, assisted with sound planning advice, itineraries, introductions, and tracking down critical documentation. They were particularly helpful when one of our team members fell seriously ill, had to be admitted to hospital and subsequently air lifted home to Fiji.

Logistical difficulties meant that we had no secretarial support, or additional research assistance, but Lorraine Galo gallantly assisted in guiding us across perilous rusted iron bridges and through some drenched and dense rainforest in rural Guadalcanal. Gus and Ezekiel navigated the notoriously treacherous Tasimauri Sea (admittedly, in the calmer month of November) to take us to the Weather Coast. Their assistance was greatly appreciated, as was that of those many others listed in Appendix 4.

Our work was hampered by an assortment of natural disasters and administrative complications, but it was nonetheless far more intriguing than working in the comparatively dull corridors of power in metropolitan capitals. Just as we were to travel to Honiara in the first week of April to finalize our report, major floods destroyed one of Honiara's main bridges and badly damaged another, left many fatalities and many more homeless, as well as leading to the closure of the international airport. None of those interviewed, or those who otherwise assisted us, are responsible for the conclusions reached in this report.

1. Introduction **10**

2. What Was RAMSI? **12**

3. Background: From the Tensions to RAMSI **15**

4. Perspectives on RAMSI **21**

5. The Legal Authorization **27**

6. The Combined Task Force 635 **32**

7. Participating Police Force & Royal Solomon Islands Police Force **35**

8. Correctional Services of Solomon Islands **48**

9. The Public Service **51**

10. Civilian programs I: Law & Justice **53**

11. Civilian programs II: Economic Governance **63**

12. Civilian programs III: Machinery of Government **68**

13. Office of the Special Coordinator **74**

14. The RAMSI Package: Cherry-Picking and Salami-Slicing **78**

15. The Regional Dimension **79**

16. Reconciliation **82**

17. The Cost and Economic Impact of RAMSI **83**

18. Assessing the Impact of Intervention Missions **87**

19. A Return to *The Tensions*? **90**

20. An Exit or Over the Horizon Strategy? **95**

21. Conclusion: The RAMSI Decade **96**

Appendices

1. Terms of Reference **99**
2. Letter of Appointment **105**
3. Biographic Details **107**
4. List of Interviewees **108**

Figures

Figure 1	**Combined Task Force 365 Deployment**	**33**
Figure 2	**Composition of the Participating Police Force, 2003-2013**	**37**
Figure 3	**Numbers of Prisoners, Convicted and on Remand, 2003-13**	**49**
Figure 4	**Australian Declared Expenditure on RAMSI and Aid to Solomon Islands, 2003-14 (A$m)**	**84**

Tables

Table 1	**Distribution of RSIPF Established Posts, 2009**	**39**
Table 2	**Key RSIPF Questions in the RAMSI Peoples Surveys**	**42**
Table 3	**Solomon Islands Police Commissioners, 1997-2014**	**44**
Table 4	**Prison Population: Solomon Islands Compared with Rest of Oceania.**	**50**
Table 5	**RAMSI Special Coordinators, 2003-14**	**75**
Table 6	**Aggregate New Zealand Declared Expenditure on RAMSI and in Solomon Islands 2003–2013 (NZ$m)**	**85**
Table 7	**Would Violent Conflict Return if RAMSI Left?**	**91**

Boxes

Box 1	**Perspectives in a Nutshell**	**23**

Acronyms & Abbreviations

ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AFPPS	Australian Federal Police Protective Services
ASPI	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNURA	Coalition of National Unity and Rural Advancement, 2007-10
CSSI	Correctional Services of the Solomon Islands
CTF	Combined Task Force 635
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (Australia)
DFiD	Department for International Development (UK)
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
ECM	Enhanced Cooperation Mechanism
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
FIA	Facilitation of International Intervention
FMSC	Forum Ministerial Standing Committee
GBR	Guadalcanal Beach Resort
GRA	Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army
GCCG	Grand Coalition for Change Government, 2006-7
GPPOL	Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd
IPAM	The Institute of Public Administration and Management
IPMT	International Peace Monitoring Team
INTERFET	International Force for East Timor
IPTF	International Police Task Force (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
J4P	Justice for Peace Program (World Bank)
JSCC	Justice Sector Consultative Committee
JSTOG	Justice Sector Technical Operations Group
LCC	Leadership Code Commission
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (New Zealand)
MDPAC	Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination
MoG	Machinery of Government
NCRA	National Coalition for Reform and Advancement, 2010-14
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
OPM	Office of Prime Minister & Cabinet
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNTL	Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste
PSO	Public Solicitor's Office
PSP	Parliament Support Program
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RSIPF/RSIP	Royal Solomon Islands Police Force
SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust
SIEA	Solomon Islands Electricity Authority
SIEC	Solomon Islands Electoral Commission
SIG	Solomon Islands Government

SIWA	Solomon Islands Water Authority
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
TPA	Townsville Peace Agreement
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo
UNMISET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (2002-2005)
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in East Timor (2006-2012)
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (1999-2002)

Executive Summary

This report offers an assessment of RAMSI and its impact on Solomon Islands over 2003-13. We believe that it is essential both to comprehend RAMSI in the *local political context*, and to analyse the mission in *international comparison*. This leads us to examine the architecture of RAMSI in a way that differs from most other reports on the 10-year mission.

This is an *independent* report commissioned by the Solomon Islands Government and the Pacific Islands Forum. Although we were encouraged to view the mission holistically and in comparative terms, we were in no way constrained to arrive at some preconceived verdict or opinion or to alter our conclusions once reached.

The local political context was critical to both the successes and limitations of RAMSI. The mission occurred in the aftermath of five years of debilitating civil strife. That conflict had changed in shape over those pre-intervention years: from a struggle between two rival militia groups (1998-2000) to a phase of internecine conflict and more criminalized disturbances (2000-2003). In several respects, the second phase posed an even greater challenge to the integrity of the state. The less cohesive character of the conflicting militia groups over 2000-2003 frustrated efforts to forge a domestically orchestrated peace settlement, as did the absence of authoritative and credible local mediators to incline the contending parties to conclude a sustainable peace.

The arrival of RAMSI circumvented the need for a home-grown peace process, but it also highlighted the weakness of the state. The frequency of use of the term 'statebuilding' to describe the mission is itself a measure of how little RAMSI concentrated on 'peacebuilding', the other term often used to describe international humanitarian missions. The priorities were the tension trials, re-establishing the rule of law and restoring integrity to the management of government finances. The Howard Government wanted to radically 're-engineer' Solomon Islands to conform to fashionable ideas of 'good governance' and economic liberalism, but this project lacked any groundswell of support from amongst the country's elected politicians. Those ambitious objectives faded in prominence during the decade, particularly after the crisis years of 2006-7.

RAMSI was a unique type of intervention. It was the first ever mission under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum's Biketawa Declaration. It was reliant on a concert of regional states, but with Australia and New Zealand playing the predominant role, potentially providing a precedent for other interventions in Oceania with both positive and negative consequences.

This was not a United Nations mission, yet it bore some resemblance to such missions in East Timor and Kosovo. It combined a military component with a police-building and rule of law orientation, but also entailed a substantial package of foreign aid for governance and economic development programs. Unlike East Timor and Kosovo, there would be no externally imposed 'transitional' administration. The Solomon Islands government retained

executive authority. There was never any internal or regional support for either dual sovereignty or the transfer of executive power to a foreign entity.

The mission was led by a 'Special Coordinator' who was directly accountable to Canberra (with a New Zealand deputy), rather than a 'Special Representative' (as in East Timor or Kosovo) of an *international* organisation. In this respect, the legal framing of the mission was detached from its command structure. Keeping firm bilateral control enabled the Australian government to retain close supervision of a substantial package of development assistance inserted under the auspices of RAMSI. The New Zealand Government contributed to RAMSI but preferred to keep its major aid initiatives separate.

During the troubled 2006-7 period when RAMSI encountered a sustained local challenge to its legitimacy, the ready-to-hand solution was widely identified as being to enhance regional authority over the mission. This view was not only formed in Solomon Islands, and at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, but also amongst those in Canberra and Wellington who saw the potential value of making a more creative use of regionalism. With the benefit of hindsight, RAMSI might have been better constituted as a narrower regionally-controlled peacekeeping and peace-building operation, including the legal and judicial assistance, but with the governance and economic elements handled separately through bilateral or multi-lateral agencies.

Solomon Islands political leaders were mostly favourable to RAMSI, but the majority simultaneously expressed reservations. Proposals for 'shared sovereignty' garnered little support, and the focus instead – from early in the RAMSI decade – was on an *exit strategy*, and whether that should best be shaped by some arbitrary deadline or by fulfilment of the mission's ambitious objectives. Neither the Solomon Islands Government nor the Australian or New Zealand Governments nor the Pacific Islands Forum indicated support for an indefinite extension of RAMSI. In practice, RAMSI *was* dismantled in accordance with a fixed date, with the military component ended and development assistance transferred to bilateral or other multilateral agencies on 1st July 2013.

The main priority for the Solomon Islands Government in the years ahead is not solely to cement progress made during the RAMSI decade, but also to restore confidence across key state institutions. The RAMSI years have been a period of recovery, but they have also fostered a sense of dependency and demoralization, particularly evident in the police force. Watching better-paid, better-equipped, Australian Federal Police officers re-establish the rule of law is not an obvious path to self-reliance. This helps to explain the difficulties encountered in trying to achieve a greater focus on 'capacity-building' and 'sustainability' under the 2009-13 'Partnership Agreement'. A major fear of the public is the risk of a resurrection of *the tensions* in some form.

Those state institutions that experienced a lighter RAMSI touch have also fared better subsequently, and in these areas the gains are potentially more sustainable. This is particularly so in parts of the public sector where local champions were encouraged, where an institutional culture based on merit was

cultivated, and where RAMSI advisors and in-line personnel adjusted well to the local context (as many did).

We think it advisable for the Solomon Islands Government and the Pacific Islands Forum to think of the RAMSI decade in the *past tense*, rather than as merely 'transitioned'. RAMSI is no longer what it was over 2003-13. It remains only as a police assistance program, and the Participating Police Force is now half its former size. Bilateral aid programs will continue, but declared Australian aid has been shrinking since 2009 (mainly due to the decrease in the AFP deployment), and priorities will clearly shift as time goes by. Indeed, they have done so already since July 2013.

The years ahead will therefore require greater self-reliance, but that has its potential advantages. The real test of the robustness of what RAMSI has put in place will be in its aftermath.

1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2013, a three-person team, comprising Jon Fraenkel (New Zealand), Joni Madraiwiwi (Fiji), and Henry Okole (Papua New Guinea) was requested by the Solomon Islands government (SIG) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) to compile an independent report on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI)[1].

1.2 The report was commissioned at a point in time when RAMSI had reached its tenth anniversary, and was being disassembled into three separate parts. RAMSI's military component was discontinued as of 1st July 2013. On the same date, RAMSI civilian programs were transferred mostly to bilateral agencies under the Australian and New Zealand foreign affairs ministries. Only a slimmed down police-building component was to be continued under RAMSI auspices for a further four-year 2013-17 'drawdown' phase[2].

1.3 This report provides an analysis of RAMSI and its impact in Solomon Islands over the 2003-13 decade. We were requested to 'undertake a holistic and independent assessment and audit of RAMSI', to review the 'mandate of RAMSI' and to consider the implementation of the various work programs. Our task has been to consider 'the difficulties and likely challenges with the RAMSI delivery modality', and to examine lessons learned from the experience of RAMSI for other potential future similar missions elsewhere[3]. The report considers whether RAMSI entailed an appropriate mix of provisions, players, functions, objectives and assistance. It identifies challenges, opportunities and risks encountered by the Solomon Islands government as RAMSI winds down its operations, and as areas of activity are gradually placed back under domestic government control.

1.4 We are an *independent* review team. Our findings are primarily intended to assist the Solomon Islands government and the Pacific Islands Forum, but are also expected and intended to inform a broader audience. We were not constrained to shape our report to any preconceived verdict or opinion. Nor did our terms of reference oblige us solely to look at the implementation of programs, as opposed to the goals themselves, or the wider influences that shaped and informed these. On the contrary, we were encouraged to look at the RAMSI model in a comparative context, and to establish its implications for other intervention/assistance missions elsewhere in the region or across the globe. As a result, we have been free to identify and raise issues that other reviews may have felt unable to address.

---

[1] Dropping the definite article before the acronym, so that one speaks of 'RAMSI' rather than 'the RAMSI' has acquired such currency in Solomon Islands that we henceforth follow established practice.

[2] See 'Outcomes Statement', 7th Forum Ministerial Standing Committee Meeting on the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), 22nd May 2013 Honiara, Solomon Islands; see also Nicholas Coppel, 'Transition of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', SSGM Discussion Paper, 10, 2012.

[3] See appendices 1 and 2.

1.5 The 2007 Pacific Islands Forum Taskforce review of RAMSI rejected calls for an arbitrary deadline for RAMSI's exit, instead recommending the specification of a range of tasks that required completion before the work of RAMSI personnel would be discontinued in various sectors. This anticipated, or hoped for, a steady cross-the-board – albeit possibly uneven – improvement in those areas where RAMSI focused its activities, and assumed that all of RAMSI's objectives were achievable. Some sectors, particularly prisons, have conformed to this expectation of gradual improvement from a weak initial base culminating in eventual localization of control. Others have been hampered by a variety of issues, including local skill shortages, leadership turnover, internal demoralization, or lack of sufficiently strong political commitment. In several cases, the objectives themselves were unlikely to be achieved by RAMSI itself, and – if achieved at all by Solomon Islands – were likely to entail generational change or a dramatic reconfiguration of the political order.

1.6 Ultimately, the timing of RAMSI's exit has *not* been calibrated to the completion of tasks, but has been determined by political decisions on the part of Australia and New Zealand. Civilian programs were shifted from RAMSI's jurisdiction prior to the fulfilment of stated objectives on the arbitrary deadline of 1st July 2013. However, it is important to recognise that the decision to dismantle RAMSI in this way has itself been influenced by the stance assumed by the SIG, particularly in the aftermath of the 2010 election.

1.7 Although this drawdown was initially presented as entailing only a formal shift in control, rather than triggering any modification in the objectives themselves or the level of development assistance, priorities have predictably shifted over time (On the Australian side, particularly since the September 2013 election of the Liberal-National Coalition government[1]). In January 2014, the new Australian government announced that A$650 million would be cut from Australia's aid program, including A$14.2 million in assistance to Solomon Islands[2]. The prevailing conservative mood in Canberra has encouraged one prominent policy institute to ask whether the heavy cost of RAMSI was worth bearing in Canberra[3]. After an era when the Australian Government strenuously insisted on a definite and fixed set of tasks specified in a firm 'mandate', there is now considerable uncertainty in Canberra about RAMSI's objectives, its actual and intended achievements, and the future orientation of what is left of the mission.

---

[1] The New Zealand Government anticipated a declining level of development assistance from early 2010.

[2] See http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/chamber/noticer/20140327_RNP033/toc_pdf/RNP033.pdf;fileType=application/pdf#search=%22Solomon%22. Senator Fifield, Manager of Government Business in the Senate and Assistant Minister for Social Services, told the Australian Senate on 18th March that 'the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Australian government strongly refutes the assertion that the Minister for Foreign Affairs made a verbal commitment to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to not reduce Australian development assistance'. (see http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;orderBy=date-eFirst;page=5;query=Solomon;rec=9;resCount=Default).

[3] Jenny Hayward-Jones, 'Australia's Costly Intervention in Solomon Islands: the Lessons of RAMSI', Lowy Institute, May 2014.

1.8 The 2009 SIG/RAMSI partnership set out a series of goals to be achieved across the Australian government's four-year funding cycle. It aimed to achieve 'close alignment of RAMSI activities with Solomon Islands government priorities and objectives, within RAMSI's mandate', and concentrated on achieving '*sustainability* through continued focus on building the capacity of Solomon Islanders so that they can independently manage their own affairs'[1]. The intention was 'shared responsibility for results, through regular, joint reviews of progress against the objectives and targets'. The document set out objectives across the three 'pillars' of 'law and justice', 'economic governance and growth' and the 'machinery of government', but also focused on three 'cross-cutting issues', of 'capacity development', gender equity and anti-corruption. Our report was tasked with reviewing those 2009 objectives, and providing SIG with 'recommendations on how programs under this partnership can be better managed and utilised to build SIG's capacity and capability to sustain their core functions after the drawdown of relevant RAMSI support'. We were not requested to, and nor were we inclined to, follow RAMSI's own 'Performance Assessment Framework'.

1.9 In practice, the initial alignment between RAMSI and SIG in 2009 is widely reported, on both sides, to have been disappointing, with little in the way of consistent or robust engagement between permanent secretaries and senior RAMSI personnel. In part, this was a legacy of the 2006-7 crisis in relations between SIG and the Australian government (see Section 3). This shaped relations subsequently engendering some wariness on both sides; with the former becoming more open to the prospect of a RAMSI withdrawal and the latter vexed over the uneven results of intervention. Where alignment, or local ownership, subsequently became stronger, this was usually because of stability and effective leadership at the helm of ministries, departments or other government agencies, or due to the presence of particularly effective RAMSI personnel who adapted well to working in the local context. We cover the specific issues that arose in separate sections below.

2. What was RAMSI?

2.1 The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands was unique in several respects.

2.2 First, it was an unprecedented Pacific regional response to a crisis faced by a member state, entailing Oceania's first mission under the auspices of the 2000 Biketewa Declaration, which allows regional intervention to assist a member state in times of difficulty. The mission has potentially been reliant on annual renewal of a Facilitation of International Assistance Notice by the Solomon Islands parliament, and, in theory, could have been – and still could be – requested to withdraw within three months (see section 5).

[1] Partnership Framework between Solomon Islands Government and Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', April 2009, p7 (Our emphasis).

2.3 Secondly, this was the first time Australia had led a substantial intervention mission beyond its borders that was not under United Nations auspices. In other overseas missions since the end of the Cold War, Australia either played a very limited role (e.g. Bosnia, Rwanda or Iraq) or missions were highly restricted in scope (e.g. the Bougainville Peace Monitoring Group and Bougainville Transition Team, or the post-2000 IPMT in Solomon Islands) or, where more substantial, they occurred under UN auspices (e.g. UNTAET, UNMISET and UNMIT in East Timor or UNTAC in Cambodia)[1]. The RAMSI experience therefore offers important lessons not only for the Pacific Island states, but also for Australia and New Zealand.

2.4 Unlike Kosovo and East Timor, RAMSI did not assume executive authority in Solomon Islands, or establish any transitional administration[2]. The Biketawa framing ruled out such an approach, but the enduring significance of this has not been widely recognised in the literature on RAMSI (which often emphasises the similarities with 'state-building' operations in East Timor and Kosovo).

2.5 Thirdly, most international peace-building missions occur in the wake of civil wars or inter-state conflicts, whereas RAMSI was an intervention in a country with no military (though the RSIPF did have a paramilitary wing, the Police Field Force) and the preceding conflict had been largely between civilian militias, or between those militias and the police force. The fatality level (around 200) was much lower than in other most countries that have hosted substantial peacekeeping missions (such as East Timor, Iraq, Sierra Leone or Bosnia). Both factors influenced the design of the mission, and they also eased the path to success, at least as regards suppressing the armed militia groups. There was no armed resistance, and the local population mostly welcomed the intervention. RAMSI was to be a police-led mission, but with a substantial military component, with important implications for the command and control structure.

2.6 RAMSI entailed assembling an enforced peace rather than one arising from an agreement between conflicting parties. Unlike earlier initiatives aimed at a peace settlement, there would be no new amnesty for the militant leaders, and previous amnesty provisions passed into law by the Solomon Islands

---

[1] The Senate (Australia), Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Australia's Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations*, August 2008, http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/senate/committee/fadt_ctte/peacekeeping/report/report.pdf. The short-lived INTERFET Operation from September 20th 1999 until 28th February 2000 (when authority was handed to UNTAET) was also Australian-led, but INTERFET was focused on peacekeeping, not state reconstruction. The Australian military returned to East Timor in 2006, again not under UN auspices.

[2] All legislative and executive authority with respect to Kosovo, including the administration of the judiciary, is vested in UNMIK and is exercised by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. (United Nations UNMIK Regulations 1999/1,1.1. http://www.unmikonline.org/regulations/1999/re99_01.pdf). An almost identical provision can be for East Timor, but the Timorese variant adds 'In exercising these functions the Transitional Administrator shall consult and cooperate closely with representatives of the East Timorese people' (Regulation No 1999/1 on the Authority of the Transitional Administrator in East Timor', http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/etimor/untaetR/etreg1.htm).

government would be recognised in only a handful of cases by the courts[1]. Subsequent trials resulted in incarceration of militants who in many cases perceived themselves as coming under the terms of the pre-RAMSI amnesty legislation. That RAMSI nevertheless gained such widespread support was indicative of the extent to which public opinion had turned against the militants by mid-2003. In that sense, conditions were ripe for an external intervention in mid-2003 (in a way that might *not* have been true had Australia intervened in mid-2000).

2.7 RAMSI was not simply a peacekeeping mission, entailing deployment of military and police personnel tasked with restoration of the rule of law. As with peacekeeping missions to Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor, it entailed a substantial package of development assistance aimed at government reconstruction. The vast majority of RAMSI's development assistance, however, came from a single country: Australia (see Figure 4 and Table 6 below). The Australian and New Zealand governments wanted to keep fairly tight bilateral control over that expenditure. This limited the extent to which the regional architecture of the mission was allowed to shape also its internal accountability structure. The unusual preponderance of a single leading country may have enhanced the coherence of the command structure, but it also reduced the weight of critical voices, able and/or willing to consider shifts in direction.

2.8 The original 'mandate' of the mission reflected this 'integrated' package[2]. In its 'Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands', RAMSI set out not only to restore law and order, but also to 'promote longer-term economic recovery and revive business confidence' and 'rebuild the essential machinery of government to support stability and the delivery of services', including 'focused efforts to deal with corruption', 'downsizing the civil service', 'cleansing the payroll' and stopping 'extortion'[3]. Thus 'law and justice', 'economic reform' (or 'development' or 'governance') and 'machinery of government' were to become the three civilian 'pillars' of the mission (in language inherited from the Kosovo mission via East Timor[4]). They were underpinned by the initially numerically

---

[1] See the Amnesty Act, 2000, http://www.paclii.org/cgi-bin/sinodisp/sb/legis/num_act/aa2000111/aa2000111.html?stem=&synonyms=&query=solomon%20and%20amnesty, and the Amnesty Act 2001, passed by the National Parliament on 2nd April 2001. See http://www.paclii.org/sb/legis/num_act/aa2001111/. Judges frequently did not recognize criminal actions to have come under the terms of the Amnesty Acts, and thus refused applications, see, for example, Regina v Maoma - Application for Amnesty [2008] SBHC 49; HCSI-CRC 300 of 2006, 8th August 2008, http://www.paclii.org/cgi-bin/sinodisp/sb/cases/SBHC/2008/49.html. There are only two reported cases in which amnesty was granted by the courts Nokia v Regina (on appeal it was Regina v Maga and Rv Lusibaea, Bartlett, Kili and Fioga. There is no record of the latter in the High Court registry.

[2] See United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Principles and Guidelines, 2008.

[3] Australian Government's 2003 '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, Inquiry into the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 and RAMSI intervention'.

[4] Susannah Gordon. 'Evaluating Success of Peacekeeping Missions: Lessons from East Timor and Solomon Islands' in *Unraveling Internal Conflicts in East Asia and the Pacific: Incidences, Consequences & Resolution,* eds, Jacob Bercovitch, & Karl DeRouen, 2011, p249.

predominant military (the 'Combined Task Force') and a policing entity (the Participating Police Force) which was established to work alongside the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIP). Overarching control was granted to a 'Special Coordinator' (In contrast to a 'Special Representative' in East Timor or a 'High Representative' in Bosnia, both terms which emphasized the source of the mandate) required to be 'a person nominated by the Government of Australia'[1].

2.9 Over the longer term, this packaging generated some internal tension: between those working on the civilian programs and those deployed in the various security services; between the Office of the Special Coordinator and that of the Australian High Commission; and over the control of the substantial RAMSI base that grew up close to the Henderson International Airport at the Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR)[2]. In many peace-building (or 'state-building') missions, internal tensions arise from differing command and control ethics amongst personnel deploying nations. By contrast, RAMSI retained greater coherence due to its regional architecture, and its reliance on a smaller number of reasonably closely allied contributing nations[3]. As a result, the Office of the Special Coordinator spent a great deal of time and energy on public relations, and the management of public perceptions of the mission.

3. Background: From *the Tensions* to RAMSI

3.1 From 1998-2003, the Solomon Islands experienced a period of severe internal unrest, and armed conflict. An indigenous uprising on Guadalcanal in late 1998 and 1999 led to the eviction of around 25,000 settlers from rural areas of Guadalcanal, most of whom were from the neighbouring island of Malaita[4]. Many of those displaced fled into Honiara, the capital, which is also located on Guadalcanal and/or returned to Malaita.

3.2 In response to the unrest on Guadalcanal, a rival militant group, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) emerged and – together with the RSIPF's paramilitary Police Field Force – overthrew the elected government of the Solomon Islands on 5th

[1] RAMSI Treaty, Article 4.
[2] For the New Zealand frictions, see Beth Greener, 'Crossing the Green or Blue Line? Exploring the Military-Police Divide', *Small Wars and Insurgencies,* 18, (1), 2007, p104. The military and policing components were not initially co-located: 'The RAMSI approach was designed along single-agency lines, with civil, police and military planning staffs not situated together or even capable of using a common Local Area Network'. 'The PPF dictated the tempo and type of operations conducted—which for some soldiers was initially difficult to accept', and there was a 'perception that the PPF somehow "looked down" on soldiers' (Hutcheson, John. "Helping a Friend: An Australian Military Commander's Perspective on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands." *Australian Army Journal*, 2, (2), 2005, p49, p52, p53). On tensions between the PPF and civilian advisors in law and justice, see Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final report, 29th September 2009, p18.
[3] This has not been true of all regional intervention missions, see, for e.g. ECOMOG in West Africa.
[4] Jon Fraenkel, *The Manipulation of Custom: From Uprising to Intervention in the Solomon Islands,* Pandanus Books, 2004; Clive Moore, *Happy Isles in Crisis: The historical causes for a failing state,* Asia Pacific Press, 2004.

June 2000. There followed a period of intense fighting between Guadalcanal and Malaitan militia groups mainly focused on the outskirts of Honiara.

3.3 On 15th October 2000, a peace agreement was signed in Townsville, Australia, between the militia groups, and the Solomon Islands government. An Australian-led International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) was deployed to facilitate surrender of weapons. The Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) did not end the conflict, which instead entered a more criminalized phase, with rival groups of militants now focused mainly on intra-group struggles and government extortion[1].

3.4 After 2001, the situation on Guadalcanal's remote Weather Coast worsened. The Guadalcanal militants split in response to the TPA, with one faction supporting the agreement and the other – led by Harold Keke – opposed. Some of those who supported the TPA were enlisted to participate in police patrol boat raids against those who rejected the agreement. The result was the intimidation, harassment and torture of a significant portion of the Weather Coast people. In Honiara, Malaitan militants used the continued activities of Keke and his followers in rural Guadalcanal as pretext for refusing to surrender weapons. Grievances associated with this phase of the conflict still fester particularly in remote parts of Guadalcanal.

3.5 RAMSI's arrival on 24th July 2003 was accompanied by a considerable show of force, and an ultimatum to militant groups to surrender weapons or face prosecution. Much stolen property was returned, and most militants gave themselves up – including Harold Keke and many of his followers. The bulk of weapons were surrendered, but some high-powered guns were concealed. During RAMSI's ten years, there were only 11 confirmed incidents involving illegal discharge of firearms[2].

3.6 Assessment of the RAMSI decade, and of factors shaping the achievements and limitations of the mission, cannot be divorced from the political context. When RAMSI arrived, Sir Allan Kemakeza's government (2001-6) was in office. Indeed, this government became the first since independence to survive a full term. However, during its tenure there was considerable movement between government and opposition, and policy-making was often handicapped by the need to hold together fragile coalitions. This fluidity of parliamentary allegiances and consequent precariousness of governments occurred previously in the 1980s and 1990s, and it also characterises neighbouring Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea.

3.7 In February 2005, six government ministers assembled a report recommending that RAMSI be scaled back to focus solely on its law and order goals. The report alleged that RAMSI's reforms in the Ministry of Finance were causing 'undesirable and unnecessary delays to the delivery of goods and

[1] Dinnen, S, Porter, D., & Sage, C., 'Conflict in Melanesia: Themes and Lessons', World Development Report, 2011, Background Case Study, p12.
[2] Nicholas Coppell, 'RAMSI: Ten Years On', 25 June 2013, http://devpolicy.org/ramsi-ten-years-on-20130625-2/.

services', singled out the Accountant General for criticism, and called for RAMSI officials to be placed only in advisory roles, not to occupy in line positions[1]. Finance Minister Francis Zama complained that RAMSI was primarily accountable to Canberra rather than to SIG, while police minister Michael Maina was critical of the 'deepening gap' between the PPF and RSIPF. Both were sacked by Kemakeza, and both were subsequently arrested on charges of corruption[2].

3.8 The initial post-RAMSI general elections in April 2006 did not generate any clear victor (as is common for Solomon Islands elections), but Kemakeza's former deputy, Snyder Rini, was chosen as Prime Minister[3]. Serious riots subsequently commenced outside parliament, and the unrest descended into Honiara's city centre (the Point Cruz area) and the Chinatown district, targeting RAMSI personnel and vehicles. Eight days later, MPs met again in the traumatic aftermath of the disturbances. Snyder Rini stood down and politicians regrouped around a new Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare.

3.9 Mr Sogavare had also been Prime Minister during the tension years of 2000-2001, and was less favourably disposed towards RAMSI than Kemakeza. His second period in office – May 2006-December 2007 – saw the expulsion of an Australian Chief of Police and an Australian High Commissioner. Prime Minister Sogavare's cabinet included politicians alleged to have played some role in fomenting the riots.

3.10 Relations with RAMSI and the Australian government deteriorated rapidly[4]. The position of Attorney-General Primo Afeau came under threat after he objected to the terms of reference of a planned enquiry into the April riots. Australian High Commissioner Patrick Cole had earlier been exposed for intervening behind-the-scenes during the April 2006 Prime Ministerial election campaign[5]. When he signalled discontent with Sogavare's treatment of the Attorney General, Mr Cole was expelled. When Sogavare replaced Mr Afeau with

---

[1] Report of the Cabinet Committee to Review "Intervention Task Force Report on RAMSI"', December 2004.

[2] Robert Iroga, 'Kemakeza fires two Solomon Islands Ministers', *Solomon* Star, 4th February 2005; Kabutaulaka, Tarcisius, 'Solomon Islands', in Melanesia: Political Reviews, *The Contemporary Pacific*, 18, (2), 2006, p425-6; Fraenkel, J. 'The Impact of RAMSI on the 2006 Elections in the Solomon Islands', *Political Science*, 58, (2), 2006, p158. Maina was subsequently cleared of charges.

[3] In Solomon Islands, Prime Ministers are selected at a closed parliamentary meeting, not a sitting of parliament (see Schedule 2 to the 1978 Constitution, http://www.paclii.org/sb/legis/consol_act/c1978167/).

[4] Prime Minister Sogavare did not explicitly call for the termination of RAMSI, only an amendment to its legal standing. For example, in parliament in July 2008, he recommended a review of 'the legal framework with the view of removing excess powers accorded to the visiting contingent by the Facilitation Act, and effectively subjecting the operations of RAMSI under the laws of Solomon Islands' (*Hansard*, 24th July 2008). One target was the immunity granted to members of the Visiting Contingent, which Australian Government officials insisted – if removed – would anyway entail an end to the operation. When Papua New Guinea's Supreme Court ruled, on 13th May 2005, that immunities for Australian police officers were in conflict with the PNG Constitution, the mission was promptly ended.

[5] A leaked email by a RAMSI officer in 2006 contained revelations about High Commissioner Patrick Cole's manoeuvres behind-the-scenes aimed at preventing Snyder Rini becoming Prime Minister ('Solomons Advisor Sacked Over Email', *Solomon Star*, 3rd May 3 2006).

Fiji-born lawyer Julian Moti, this also provoked the displeasure of the Australian government[1]. Mr Moti (an Australian citizen) was said to be wanted in Australia on charges of having had sex with an underage girl in Vanuatu a decade earlier, though the Australian courts were later dismiss these charges and called the manner in which the Australian Federal Police pursued this case 'an affront to the public conscience'[2].

3.11 The Australian government made efforts to prohibit Mr Moti's entry to the Solomon Islands from Papua New Guinea, first through the actions of AFP officers stationed in the PNG capital Port Moresby (sparking a political crisis, and an inquiry, in PNG)[3]. When Mr Moti flew into Solomon Islands arriving at Munda Airport, the Australian Federal Government held that his entry into the country had been illegal. Seeking evidence to prove that illegality, Australian Federal Police officer Shane Castles, serving as Commander of the RSIPF, ordered a raid on the Prime Minister's office, an event that later triggered his exclusion (effectively a sacking). Sogavare persuaded parliament to review the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice in August 2007[4]. Owing to his disapproval of a broadly favourable Pacific Islands Forum report on RAMSI, Sogavare boycotted the PIF's annual summit in Tonga[5]. A month later, half of the cabinet resigned, raising a variety of objections to Sogavare's leadership (including non-attendance at the PIF), and triggered a successful 'no confidence' vote.

3.12 RAMSI's pursuit of Attorney General Julian Moti on behalf of the AFP was as egregious as it was harmful to the rule of law. It portrayed in stark relief the contradiction between RAMSI's declared emphasis on creating a new legal and moral order and what it was prepared to resort to in the face of a government perceived as hostile to the mission. The Court of Appeal in Vanuatu had cleared Mr Moti of those charges, and the AFPs pursuit of the matter – which included a succession of payments to the victim's family – was inappropriate even for an Australian force, let alone one operating in another jurisdiction under a regional mandate. Shane Castles had been sworn in as Solomon Islands Commissioner of Police, and his first loyalty was therefore to the Solomon Islands Government. For him to authorize a raid on the Prime Minister's office indicated a grave confusion of duties and responsibilities. While we carry no brief for Mr Moti, the events surrounding his entry into the Solomon Islands and the manner of his subsequent removal from the Solomon Islands reflected poorly on RAMSI, and left a tarnished legacy. The appointment of an Australian police chief, closely linked to a largely AFP force which was operating mostly outside the RSIPF, had ended badly, and that error was not to be repeated[6].

---

[1] 'Solomons PM dismisses fears over top post for Australian', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22nd August 2006.
[2] 'AFP under Attack after Failed Case against Moti', ABC, 'The World Today', 16th December 2009.
[3] See Hank Nelson, 'The Moti Affair in Papua New Guinea', SSGM Working Paper, 1, 2007, http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/07_01wp_Nelson.pdf.
[4] See *Hansard*, 27th August 2007.
[5] See Radio Australia, 9th October 2007; *Solomon Times* 15th October 2007; SIBC 16th October 2007.
[6] As RAMSI Public Affairs Manager Marie-Louise O'Callaghan wrote Canberra's decision to 'impose an Australian Federal Police (AFP) officer as Solomon Islands' police commissioner' was

3.13 The period 2006-7 was the most troubled in the RAMSI decade due to the riots, the diplomatic expulsions and high profile squabbles, but by year's end governments had changed in both Australia and Solomon Islands. Throughout this fraught period, RAMSI continued to command broad popular support. The politicians and senior civil servants were divided, but there was no majority in favour of a cancellation, or far-reaching amendment, of the RAMSI-enabling legislation, and there was some recognition that any amendment (particularly to the immunity clauses) would anyway likely entail an end to RAMSI. Instead, the alternative favoured by those hostile to, or ambivalent about, the mission was to allow RAMSI to continue its activities but with limited political buy-in. Both sides thus lost an opportunity to collaboratively address the severe development challenges facing the contemporary Solomon Islands.

3.14 These underlying political currents also shaped relations between RAMSI and SIG over the post-2007 years. The climate improved under the Sikua government (2007-10), but a legacy of bitterness from the Sogavare years persisted. The main priorities of successive Solomon Islands Governments were not well-aligned with those of RAMSI, although in some cases Australian aid programs were adjusted to match SIG objectives (e.g. fee free education, rural development). The Howard-Downer 'all or nothing' approach was no longer sustainable in the wake of the 2006-7 crisis, since the election of a more sympathetic post-Sogavare government could hardly be confronted with the same 'take it or leave it' approach insisted upon earlier.

3.15 The aid delivery preferences of the incoming Rudd-Gillard government – particularly as regards the Millennium Development Goals – were conveyed mainly through bilateral programs, rather than any reconfiguration (or reinterpretation) of what was described as the RAMSI mandate. Like its predecessor, the Sikua government emphasised rural development[1]. Also like its predecessor, the new government wanted parliament to review the RAMSI-enabling legislation, but now with a 'focus on more direct assistance for rural people in the area of economic development'[2]. This was rejected by RAMSI as beyond its 'mandate' (although in reality one of the three pillars had embraced 'economic development', if not explicitly of the rural type). The Australian

---

'ill-judged' (Mary-Louise O'Callaghan, 'RAMSI – The Way Ahead', in Sinclair Dinnen & Stewart Firth (eds), *The Politics of State Building in Solomon Islands*, p188-9)

[1] The Sikua government set out 'a "Rural Advancement Policy" approach similar to the "Bottom-up approach" of the previous administration. But it takes a U-turn from the former government in that it advocates strong, healthy, and co-equal partnership with regional governments and organizations, and other international bodies, in realizing this very essential developmental policy for our people. In this vein, it recognizes progressive collaborative partnership with development partners including RAMSI, as entities that have helped in restoring peace, law and order, and energized our economy – at a time when the country was at its lowest point. CNURA will, therefore, continue to have constructive periodic review of this partnership based on consensus rather than confrontation as mandated in the "2003 International Facilitation Act"'. The policy document even contemplated setting up a 'permanent military and Police presence as a Police backup support service' (CNURA Policy Statement, January 2008).

[2] CNURA Policy Statement, 2008.

government nevertheless lifted travel restrictions on MPs in January in recognition of the new government's more accommodating stance[1].

3.16 SIG also prioritized reconciliation, and facilitated the April 2009 formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but this approach had not found favour with the Australian Government in the early RAMSI years (though this stance was later modified – see Section 15). Conversely, Solomon Islands governments did not prioritize RAMSI's core concerns with police restructuring, accountability institutions and economic reform, or saw these as responsibilities that could be temporarily contracted out (without simultaneously conceding sovereignty)[2].

3.17 In 2010, general elections brought into office Danny Philip's National Coalition for Rural Advancement (NCRA), which called for a five-year exit strategy for RAMSI[3]. The 31-page NCRA strategy document barely mentioned RAMSI except to confirm that 'the nation has moved from the situation of assistance to that of partnership' (p26), to emphasise the primacy of the Pacific Islands Forum link (rather than that with Australia), and to conclude that 'RAMSI should concentrate on rebuilding of the RSIP and the implementation of the capability program including training, logistics, and police housing in Honiara, other urban centres and the rural areas' (S.86)[4]. During yet another period of great instability and floor-crossing in early 2011, an 'INTEL Report' was released, purportedly by the Prime Minister's press secretary, accusing Australia of fast-tracking prosecution of government ministers on tension-related or criminal charges, and of luring MPs to defect to the opposition[5]. These charges were vigorously denied by the Australian government, and there was subsequently an admission from SIG that they were groundless. Nevertheless, the incident indicated that the Solomon Islands government was not well disposed towards any long-term continuation of RAMSI.

3.18 After the change in Prime Minister in 2011, there was greater emphasis on caution as regards the drawdown of RAMSI's presence, but there was no indication of support for delaying that process or reversing the initial NCRA stance.

3.19 In February 2010, the New Zealand government indicated a preference that RAMSI be wound down in favour of bilateral programs[6]. In the aftermath of the August 2010 Solomon Islands general election, a 'transitional strategy' was put in

---

[1] Australia lifts visa restrictions for Solomon Islands MPs, Foreign Minister Stephen Smith, media release, 21st January 2008.
[2] Similarly, in Sierra Leone, many parliamentarians assumed that 'the British are looking after security' (Albrecht, P. & Jackson, P 'State-Building through Security Sector Reform: the UK Intervention in Sierra Leone', *Peacebuilding*, 2, (1), 2014, p96).
[3] 'Mission takes steps for Solomons exit', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27th September , 2010.
[4] Office of the Prime Minister, National Coalition for Reform and Advancement (NCRA), Policy Statement, October 2010.
[5] Intel Report, 28th January 2011. See Wale Vs Philip *et al*, 24, November 2011, http://www.paclii.org/sb/cases/SBHC/2011/144.html
[6] 'Solomonic judgment: Elections in the Solomon Islands', *The Economist*, 27th Aug 2010, http://www.economist.com/blogs/asiaview/2010/08/elections_solomon_islands.

place culminating in the withdrawal of defence personnel, and reconfiguration of RAMSI as a primarily police assistance-oriented program as of mid-2013. As preparations were put in place, there has been increasing Australian emphasis on the timeliness and appropriateness of the drawdown, on RAMSI as only ever being intended as a short-term mission and on avoiding the risk of generating a culture of 'dependency on donors'[1].

3.20 Australia's intervention in Solomon Islands was an important point of reference in Canberra's 2012 bid to acquire a seat on the United Nations Security Council[2].

4. Perspectives on RAMSI

4.1 Perspectives on RAMSI's goals, performance and achievements vary widely, and have changed considerably over time. The widely cited headline figure of 86% backing for RAMSI, from the annual Peoples Surveys[3], largely reflects support for the restoration of peace and the ending of the ascendancy of the militant factions. Even former militants often admit that this was necessary. Pockets of resistance and/or hostility to RAMSI survived in some peri-urban areas of Honiara, parts of North Malaita and in some remote locations of the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, but in all three of these areas opinion was divided, and elsewhere in the country support tended to be considerably stronger.

4.2 In most parts of the country, there exists considerable gratitude to Australia and New Zealand for assistance over the past decade. We encountered many citizens, particularly from areas where tensions persist (such as Marau Sound and the Weather Coast area), who preferred that RAMSI stay, and indicated fears about the intended drawdown. Popular support for RAMSI amongst Solomon Islanders is often closely linked to requests for additional resources or assistance whereas those more critical of the mission tend to aspire to greater self-reliance. Many locally-based expatriate business owners strongly supported foreign intervention to restore law and order, and pressed RAMSI to take a firmer hand against threats to their commercial or light manufacturing operations.

4.3 Almost all respondents commence any assessment of RAMSI by saluting achievements, but equally nearly all of those who are able or willing to express a

---

[1] Nicholas Coppel, 'Transition of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', SSGM Discussion paper, 10, 2012.

[2] See for example, Michael Fullilove, 'The case for Australia's UN Security Council bid', Lowy Institute report, 2009, available http://www.unaavictoria.org.au/files/Lowy_Institute_Report_-_The_case_for_Australia_s_candidacy.pdf. Radio Australian, Pacific Beat, 'Marles: Australia UN Security Council seat is a "win for the Pacific"', 19th October 2012, http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/program/pacific-beat/marles-australia-un-security-council-seat-is-a-win-for-the-pacific/1033000; See also http://www.unaa.org.au/security-council-campaign.html. http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/seat-or-no-seat-australia-has-security-council-status-20121018-27sjj.html, http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2012/bc_mr_121019.html.

[3] '86% of respondents supported the presence of RAMSI in Solomon Islands and 8% did not support RAMSI, which is almost the same as in previous years' (2013 People's Survey, http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/People-survey-2013---Key-Results-FINAL-1-33be46f6-c837-4a3c-b06b-108ff94827c6-0.pdf.)

broader judgment will qualify that enthusiasm, and criticize some aspects of the mission. In most cases, those criticisms reflect some hope that RAMSI might do more for a country where basic needs poverty remains widespread, or express dissatisfaction about the meagre results of the A$2.8 billion expenditure (including both Australian and New Zealand spending, see Section 17 below) absorbed by RAMSI over the decade.

4.4 The common depiction of RAMSI as entailing a clear set of goals, enunciated in 2003 and consistently followed since, neglects significant changes in focus, even if core elements – such as police and prison reform – remained central throughout the period. Indeed, the adaptability of RAMSI to the local context – both as regards the style and substance of what the mission entailed – has been one of its greatest strengths.

4.5 Although the Solomon Islands parliament endorsed RAMSI, many politicians and civil servants remained ambivalent about the mission throughout the decade[1]. That ambivalence was often expressed in offense taken at various indignities either resulting from the mission or more generally connected with bilateral relationships (e.g. reception at the Australian border by immigration authorities, pay differentials between Solomon Islanders and expatriates, AFP officers walking uninvited through villages etc.,) or as criticism of RAMSI for having delivered little in terms of raising living standards (which RAMSI spokespersons consistently reject as falling outside the mission's 'mandate'). In 2006, RAMSI Public Affairs Manager, Mary-Louise O'Callaghan described the elite resistance encountered by RAMSI:

> 'In stark contrast with the overwhelming support for the mission's quite extensive intervention into Solomon Islands' law and order, there has been

[1] Prime Minister Derek Sikua told parliament in 2008 about 'a local perception rightly or wrongly that this Assistance has been at the expense of local ownership and that the partnership has been unequal' (*Hansard* 24th July 2008. Corrected).

Perspectives in a Nutshell ….

'RAMSI's gone. We're okay, except there's no development'
(Avuavu, Weather Coast villager)

'Australia adopted an integrated, whole-of-government approach to its involvement in RAMSI …'
(Submission, DFAT, Senate inquiry into Australia's involvement in Peacekeeping Operations, 2007)

'They [RAMSI officials] should try to work *with* the culture of Solomon Islands. They think we are all corrupt'
(Solomon Islander working in Ministry of Finance)

'By universal acclaim, RAMSI has been a Success'
(RAMSI Special Coordinator, Nicholas Coppel, July 2013)

'RAMSI has drifted away from its original approach [as] a regional entity … RAMSI officials are not interested in an exit strategy … RAMSI has … not addressed the causes surrounding the [2000] coup – economic issues and disrespect for custom and culture'
(Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare, 15 November 2006)

'RAMSI needs to assist us not just with money and resources, but also to help us with our attitudes'
(Provincial politician)

'With all the political fluidity, give credit to the Solomon Islands for allowing RAMSI to stay and do its work'
(Senior Pacific Islander working for RAMSI)

'In Port Philip prison [Victoria], inmates blame me for putting them away. Here in Solomon Islands they thank me for looking after them'
(RAMSI Prisons Advisor)

'RAMSI's withdrawal is timely. It is time to give back ownership to the people'
(Civil Society activist)

> resentment, suspicion and active undermining of RAMSI's reforms and, in particular, the policy of putting key RAMSI personnel into ministries such as finance and in positions in other departments, such as that of the accountant-general. The same resistance is evident in response to the mission's efforts to reform government practices, policies and endemic corruption that so undermines much of the state's core business in Solomon Islands, particularly the delivery of services. RAMSI encounters resentment, suspicion and active undermining from the country's political and bureaucratic élite. The daily, endless and time-consuming struggle to push on with these reforms, with little or no support from all but a few of Solomon Islands' senior bureaucrats, was described by one RAMSI insider in 2005 as "trench warfare"[1].

RAMSI was pursuing a radical reform strategy which –however well-intentioned – lacked any groundswell of support amongst the country's elected politicians or senior civil servants (See Section 14).

4.6 The incoming 2010 Solomon Islands government's stated intention to oversee a drawdown of RAMSI, and RAMSI's acceptance of this course of action, has served to placate many of the most outspoken critics of RAMSI, who were much less vociferous on these issues by 2013-14. Many of the political leaders who were either opposed to, or criticized some aspects of, RAMSI in the earlier days of the mission had by 2013 either mellowed with time, or were satisfied by the impending departure of the military and the new background advisory role increasingly adopted by the Participating Police Force. During the 'drawdown' phase, public expressions of hostility to the mission seemed to be less necessary, or – given the breadth of public support – to be an electoral liability[2].

4.7 Over the decade, RAMSI officials and Australian diplomats have often dismissed domestic criticisms as reflecting views expressed by unscrupulous elites, claiming that these were motivated by a desire to escape new controls in the ministries or complicity with one or other of the former militant factions[3].

---

[1] Mary-Louise O'Callaghan, 'RAMSI – The Way Ahead', in Sinclair Dinnen & Stewart Firth (eds), *The Politics of State Building in Solomon Islands*, p187.

[2] For example, Manasseh Sogavare and Charles Dausabea, both prominent critics of RAMSI, declined to be interviewed. So did Matthew Wale, who has in the past defended Australian intervention. The perspectives of all three are in any case well-documented in media sources. A scheduled interview with Mr Dausabea was instead attended by other members of the Maasina Forum.

[3] For example, in the wake of Australian High Commissioner Patrick Cole's expulsion, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer explained the persistent hostility to the former's interventions in Solomon Islands politics as triggered by corruption: 'I think some of the politicians there see RAMSI as standing between them and the honeypot' (*The Age*, 12th December 2006). In 2007, responding to allegations of Australian heavy-handedness in the region and intrusion on sovereignty, Downer said: 'Frankly, the cry of sovereignty is occasionally used as a smokescreen meant to distract attention from corrupt and illegal behaviour' (Downer blasts corrupt Pacific leaders, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th August , 2007). A similar argument is used to contest African leaders concerns about encroachment on sovereignty in Paul Collier's book, *War, Guns and Votes; Democracy in Dangerous Places* (Harper Perennial, 2009), which criticized 'the indignant defence of sovereignty by the governments of the bottom billion' (p10). Neither acknowledges the legitimacy of concerns about sovereignty arising from a preference for self-government.

That may be accurate in some cases, but it does not explain the breadth of unease about RAMSI amongst senior government officials (including some of those Solomon Islander leaders known to be closest to RAMSI). Nor is there any close correlation between those who supported the mission and those publicly hostile to corruption. Indeed, many of those working for donor organizations in Honiara believe that the major gains of RAMSI were in its early years, and that the mission could have been ended earlier[1]. Debate about RAMSI has been an important part of the political discourse in Solomon Islands over the past decade: neither supporters nor opponents of the mission have a monopoly on truth.

4.8 The Office of the Special Coordinator has worked assiduously to counter criticisms, and misrepresentations, and to present positive images of the mission. Often criticisms were that RAMSI was encroaching on Solomon Islands sovereignty, and also simultaneously that it was not doing enough, for example to trigger economic growth, tackle poverty or capture the 'big fish' responsible for the 'tensions'. RAMSI officials regularly pointed out the contradiction in such claims, but rarely acknowledged what gave root to this ambivalence. Many Solomon Islands politicians and public figures believe, understandably, that the task of establishing or sustaining the rule of law, building the nation, and promoting economic development must be ultimately done by Solomon Islanders themselves. That conviction is often refracted through objections to the way RAMSI has approached key tasks, and criticisms of limits to its achievements.

4.9 The presence of RAMSI has entailed a decade during which many Solomon Islanders felt unable to address or resolve their own problems, a dilemma that is particularly acute in the police force (also the most sizable focus of RAMSI activity). The RAMSI decade has, for many amongst the educated elite, been seen as one of indigenous quiescence or passivity, with key tasks being left to outsiders to resolve – as conveyed in the Pijin phrase '*Weitim olketa ramsi bae kam stretem*' ('Wait for RAMSI to come and fix it'), and associated concerns about the creation of a culture of dependency[2]. On the other hand, those critical of RAMSI are often seen as articulating a nationalist sentiment, even if many of their claims seem at times questionable or dubious. When considered in this light, that criticism of RAMSI is combined with some fearfulness about the potential for renewed violence and instability after RAMSI departs is not difficult to understand.

4.10 RAMSI officials and Australian diplomats, as well as many Solomon Islanders, are often critical of Solomon Islands political leaders for having failed to grasp the opportunity afforded by the period of substantial foreign assistance to significantly transform the country[3]. Donors regularly express frustration that,

[1] For example, civil society activist John Roughan argued that RAMSI could have stayed only three years (Personal Communication, 31.7.13).
[2] Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, 'Australian Foreign Policy and the RAMSI Intervention', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 17, (2), 2008.
http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN022611.pdf.
[3] See, for example, Dr Transform Aqorau, chief executive officer of the Marshall Islands-based Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), 'Solomon Islands Post-RAMSI - Falling down in bits and pieces', *Solomon Star,* 24th October 2013.

while they pick up the tab for police infrastructure – such as boats and vehicles – government budgets entail new expenditures on constituency development funds or government scholarships[1]. Others emphasize the difficulties of working within Solomon Islands government processes, and the parliamentary vulnerability that constrains all governing coalitions. Still others criticize RAMSI for having missed opportunities to get behind reformist governments on issues like political party strengthening legislation or constitutional reform, believing these to be decisive factors constraining political and economic development within Solomon Islands (though both of these claims are much contested).

4.11 There are no simple solutions to the challenges Solomon Islands faces, and that even with the enormous aid inflows generated by the intervention the tasks facing both the SIG and donors were far more intractable than envisaged. These involved re-establishing and strengthening institutions that had never been particularly strong or effective, as well as changing patterns of governance and practice that had become embedded in the body politic.

4.12 Australian and SIG budgetary processes, practices and methods of implementation are not easily aligned. Acting in another jurisdiction, Australia and New Zealand had a reasonably free hand, and rarely faced detailed scrutiny back home (even during the notoriously tricky Australian Senate estimates hearings), particularly in the early stages of RAMSI. RAMSI was initially placed on an annual funding cycle, but from 2005/6 was arranged on a four yearly cycle. SIG budgeting entails the more common year on year budgeting cycle, often only tweaking the previous year's provisions, and in most years subsequently corrected by a 'supplementary budget' (as is the case in several other Melanesian countries). Delays in payments in SIG systems, shortages of critical materials, and personalization of decision-making make this process still more difficult. Efforts at budgetary coordination, often described as a 'partnership', were in reality often prickly, difficult and unsystematic.

4.13 Incentives for inaction are particularly acute within the Solomon Islands government where junior-level initiative and ambition can be discouraged, and where leadership performance is patchy. Extensive projected capital outlay easily remains unspent in the budget, or is diverted to other purposes, or spent but with implementation frustrated by capricious government modalities or on-the-ground restraints. Ministries often serve as personal fiefdoms, particularly if the Permanent Secretary lacks authority, and/or if the ministry has served as a political prize in the struggle to sustain a governing coalition. Mid-term changes of government are frequent, but they do not usually entail emphatic shifts in direction. Where Prime Ministers are dislodged, the decisive reason is usually a ministerial rebellion, and the government caucus quickly re-groups around an

[1] See, for example, for World Bank Senior Pacific Public Sector Specialist Doug Porter's comment that 'the functions of security, justice, central finances, education and health are now all effectively co-produced by government and international donors, in ways that it is difficult to see changing, regardless of how the so-called RAMSI "transition" plays out. The extent to which this form of co-produced provisioning by donors has created incentives for politicians to build their own, separate layer of discretion (the CDFs) at the expense (corrosion) of state needs further consideration' (David Craig & Doug Porter 'Political Settlement in Solomon Islands: A Political Economic Basis for Stability After RAMSI?', SSGM Working Paper Series, 1, 2013).

alternative leader. For this reason, new governments usually pick up the same political platforms and policy-orientation as their predecessors, with minor variations.

5. The Legal Authorization

5.1 In the 2000 Biketawa Declaration, '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' (S.2). Article 3 of the declaration underpinned the initial basis for rationalising the RAMSI initiative and states:

> '3. Any regional response to a crisis should take account of the guidelines set out in Annex A
>
> Annex A
>
> (i) Actions are discussed with the authorities in the country concerned;
> (ii) The Forum and persons involved on behalf of the Forum should have credibility i.e. must be seen as honest and impartial brokers who are genuinely interested in bringing about a fair resolution;
> (iii) There must be coherence, and consistency in the strategy followed;
> (iv) There must be continuity and conclusion of the process i.e. staying the course;
> (v) There must be co-operation with other key international and regional organisations and national actors and co-ordination of all these efforts;
> (vi) There must be sufficient degree of consensus on the resolutions by those who have to implement them and those that support them (i.e. outside organisations and governments); and
> (vi) The intervention must be cost-effective'.[1]

5.2 Direct intervention in a Forum member state is implied rather than asserted, and may occur only with the express consent of the member state. The reference to 'intervention' in Article 3 is left to the final clause (vi) and intended as a 'catch all' term to describe a raft of measures which may be taken, 'intervention' entailing deployment of security forces being one of last resort. Prior to that there are gradations of involvement involving consultation as well as fact-finding initiatives[2]. The caution is understandable in terms of the potential implications for national sovereignty.

5.3 The legal basis for RAMSI's intervention and continuing presence is the Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003 (the FIA Act[3]), the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 (the FIA Notice)[4] and the RAMSI Treaty. The FIA Act was enacted by Parliament on 17th July 2003 and provides authority for another country to make assistance available by way of a 'Visiting

---

[1] Issued on 28th October 2000 on Biketawa Atoll, Kiribati, available http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/Biketawa%20Declaration,%2028%20October%2020002.pdf.
[2] Article 2.
[3] http://www.parliament.gov.sb/files/committees/foreignrelations/facilitation.pdf.
[4] http://www.parliament.gov.sb/files/committees/foreignrelations/notice.pdf.

Contingent'. The operational details were to be prescribed in an international treaty.

5.4 The procedures for initiating that process are set out in section 3 of the FIA Act. Subsection (1) require the Governor General to publish a notice stating the SIG has requested the assistance of another country (the 'assisting country') for a public purpose and that the assistance is to be provided by a contingent of persons (the 'Visiting Contingent of police forces, armed forces and other personnel') from the assisting country or another county. Subsection (2) provides the notice may specify an agreement or arrangement between the Government and the government of the assisting country covering the operations and activities in the Solomon Islands of the visiting contingent (the 'assistance agreement'). Subsection (3) applies the provisions of the FIA Act on the making of the notice under subsection (1). On 23rd July 2003, the Governor General, Sir John Ini Lapli signed the FIA Act into law and issued the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 (Legal Notice 61 of 2003)[1].

5.5 The Agreement between the Solomon Islands and Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga was signed by government representatives on 24th July 2003.[2] It was subsequently endorsed by all the members of the PIF and is informally known as 'the RAMSI Treaty', although the acronym was coined to reflect its composition and appears nowhere in either the FIA Act or FIA notice. References in the FIA Act apply to RAMSI by sheer force of logic and practice. The RAMSI force had already begun deployment on 23rd July 2003.

5.6 The FIA Act is cast in broad terms and was not intended to be limited to the present RAMSI intervention[3]. A future government will have the option of external assistance under this law if required and members of the international community are thus inclined. The prospect of outside assistance is not a unique one: section 173 of the Police Act 2013 authorises the Prime Minister to invite other police to enter and operate in the country[4]. It reflects a similar provision contained in the Police Act 1972. During the tension, the Gizo community in the Western Province entered into informal agreements with some of the Bougainville rebels to maintain security and protect them from elements loosely

[1] In the parliamentary debate held in August 2007, Attorney General Moti in an explanation to Parliament asserted that there was no reference to RAMSI in the FIA Act and Notice and its legal basis was questionable; further that the RAMSI Treaty was subsequent to the legislative framework being put in place. The response by Tim George, Special Coordinator, at the time was that it was clear that the 'Visiting Contingent' referred to in the Notice under the FIA Act applied to RAMSI by clear implication and it mattered not that RAMSI was not a legal entity.

[2] 'The Agreement between Solomon Islands Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga concerning the Operation and Status of the Police and Armed Forces and Other Personnel Deployed to the Solomon Islands to Assist in the Restoration of Law and Order and Security', Available http://www.austlii.org/nz/other/mfat/NZTS/2003/9.pdf.

[3] The FIA Act is drafted broadly but the Notice issued under section 3 is specific and related to RAMSI or the 'Visiting Contingent'. Were the Notice not to be renewed by Parliament, the FIA Act and framework established under it would survive.

[4] Section 175 states that the provisions of Part 8 External Relations of the Police Act do not affect the Visiting Contingent present under the International Assistance Notice issued under the FIA Act.

allied with the Malaita Eagle Force. Their initial relief was temporary as those rebels within a short time turned to intimidating and terrorising the local population. There is thus some history to this external reliance.

5.7 Section 17 of the FIA Act provides for immunity from legal proceedings for RAMSI personnel as follows-

> '17. (1) Members of the visiting contingent, the assisting country, and any other country whose personnel are members of the visiting contingent, shall have immunity from legal proceedings in Solomon Island courts and tribunals in relation to actions of the visiting contingent, or its members that are taken in the course of, or incidental, to official duties.
> (2) Criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction shall not be exercised over a member of the visiting contingent arising out of an action taking place in Solomon Islands if such jurisdiction is asserted over that member in respect of that action by a country referred to in section 3 (1) (b).
> (3) Where criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction has been exercised over a member of that visiting contingent of an action taking place in Solomon Islands, that jurisdiction will be relinquished to a country referred to in section 3 (1) (b) if that country asserts jurisdiction over that member in respect of that action.
> (4) In this section "legal proceedings" include criminal, civil, disciplinary and administrative proceedings and proceedings seeking to enforce customary law.
> (5) For this section, the Minister responsible for justice shall be deemed to have directed the Director for Public Prosecutions that he is to initiate no action with respect to members of the visiting contingent for actions referred in subsections (1) and (2), unless the assisting country has expressly consented to the exercise of such jurisdiction.
> (6) The visiting country may waive immunity by this section.'

5.8 These provisions have been criticised as being unnecessarily wide and unfavourable comparisons drawn with the Enhanced Co-operation between Australia and Papua New Guinea Agreement 2004[1]. In that Agreement, Article 8 (1) provides concurrent jurisdiction over 'Designated and Related Persons with respect to offences committed within the territory of Papua New Guinea and punishable by the law of Papua New Guinea.' Article 8 (2) (a) states:

> '8. (2) (a) Australia shall have the right to exercise jurisdiction over Designated and Related Persons subject to Australian law with respect to officers punishable by Australian law but not by Papua New Guinea law.'

5.9 The scenarios are not identical. The initiative in Papua New Guinea was a bilateral agreement between two states. The RAMSI exercise is a regional one, albeit largely funded and staffed by Australia, sanctioned originally under the Biketawa Declaration prior to a bilateral agreement being reached and domestic legal structures being established. It is also a more ambitious venture seeking

[1] Joint Agreement on Enhanced Cooperation between Australia and Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, 30 June 2004.

not only to restore law and order, but also to rebuild government structures and restore a formal economy which had all but collapsed. The immunities afforded to RAMSI personnel need to be considered in that light as well as in relation to more comparable situations such as Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor.

5.10 The immunity provisions reflect international standard practice in protecting acts done in the course of official duties by foreign contingents. For example, under the US-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement 2008 Article 12 confers jurisdiction on Iraq where "members of the US Forces and of the civilian component" commit 'grave premeditated felonies … when such crimes are committed outside agreed facilities and areas outside duty status'[1]. Those "grave premeditated felonies" then had to be agreed with the US Government and safeguards equivalent to those available to US citizens back home provided[2]. For UNMIK in Kosovo, Regulation 47 of 2000 provided complete immunity for any administrative, civil or criminal acts committed by its personnel. They were subject to the jurisdiction of their own states[3]. The Secretary General could waive immunity if in his opinion it would impede justice and could be done without prejudice to UNMIK[4]. In the case of UNTAET in East Timor, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations[5] applied in the absence of rules promulgated by UNTAET. Accordingly, UNTAET officials enjoyed immunity from proceedings in local courts waived only if they were allegedly implicated in serious human rights violations or serious crimes.

5.11 In a statement to the Sixty-Second Session of the UN General Assembly on 1st October 2007, Foreign Minister Patteson Oti asserted the SIG's "sovereign right to determine the terms on which the Solomon Islands will permit our continuing *occupation* by the Visiting Contingent"[6]. Since RAMSI's presence was not an illegal "occupation", but founded on the continuing endorsement of the country's Parliament, nothing in theory impeded the exercise of that 'sovereign right'[7]. The choice of language was a measure of the SIG's dissatisfaction with

---

[1] Formally 'Agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq On the Withdrawal of United States Forces in Iraq and the Organisation of Their Activities During Their Presence in Iraq". On the issue of Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) more broadly, see Henry H Peritt, 'Policing International Peace and Security: International Police Forces', Chicago-Kent College of Law, March 1999.

[2] US-Iraq Status of Forces 2008, Article 12, paragraph 8.

[3] UNMIK Regulation 2000/47 On the Status, Privileges and Immunities of KFOR and UNMIK And Their Personnel in Kosovo, section 2.4. It also applied to KFOR personnel which was the specially constituted force formed by NATO including member States, subsidiary bodies including its military Headquarters and national elements/units and non-NATO contributing countries

[4] UNMIK Regulation 2000/47, section 6.

[5] 13th February 1946, UNTS, Vol 1 No 4.

[6] Solomon Islands: Statement by Hon Patterson Oti Minister for Foreign Affairs, External Trade and Immigration Of Solomon Islands at the Sixty-Second Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 1st October 2007, http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/62/2007/pdfs/solomonislands-eng.pdf. Emphasis added.

[7] The RAMSI Treaty provides the 'Visiting Contingent' may remain 'for such a period as the Governments of the Solomon Islands and Assisting Countries mutually agree to be necessary to achieve the purpose of their deployment to the Area of Operations' (Article3), and allows the SIG to 'at any time in writing request withdrawal of the visiting contingent', and where such a request is forthcoming 'the Visiting Contingent shall withdraw prior to the expiration of 3 months.' The FIA Act provides that 'The Parliament shall be given the opportunity to review the international

RAMSI at that time, and more pointedly its main benefactor, Australia. However, it was clearly addressed by the provision for annual renewal by Parliament of the International Assistance Notice[1] (the legal basis for RAMSI's operations in the Solomon Islands), were it to utilise the mandated opportunity for it to do so.

5.12 The Solomon Islands Parliamentary Select Committee on Foreign Affairs in its 2009 report[2] accepted the validity of the RAMSI legislative scheme in accordance with the decision of the High Court in Andrew H Nori v Attorney-General, Sandy Peasley (Commander of the Participating Police Force under RAMSI) and Others[3]. It offered no comment other than to relate some of the debate about aspects of the FIA Act and Notice as well as to note that the High Court had upheld the validity of the legislation. Prominent lawyer Andrew Nori had challenged the status of the PPF on the basis that it contravened the Constitution; and that the immunity conferred by the FIA Act ousted the jurisdiction of the courts as well as interfered with the independence of the Minister of Justice and the DPP. Chief Justice Palmer dismissed the action and held that that there was provision for another force operating in the country under existing laws[4]. The immunity conferred was not unfettered because acts done outside official duties were not covered by the FIA Act. Whether an act done under the authority of a disciplinary law of a disciplinary force was to be held inconsistent with fundamental rights under section 19 (4) of the Constitution was left for the courts to decide on a case by case basis. This decision was followed in John Makasi v Commander of the Participating Police Force under RAMSI and Attorney-General and confirmed on appeal.[5]

5.13 Concerns about immunities set out in the legislative framework establishing the legal basis for RAMSI are unremarkable, but the exigencies of the situation required an expeditious means of validating the actions taken under the Biketawa Declaration. One of the most trenchant critics of the privileges and immunities conferred on RAMSI was Hon Manasseh Sogavare. In his submission to the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Relations[6], Hon Sogavare questioned the legal basis of RAMSI and the need for a review of its operations given the passage of time and improved circumstances. He alleged the support given to RAMSI was the result of a lack of knowledge and ignorance rather than any realistic interpretation of the situation. Those perspectives are understandable

---

assistance notice every year ' and 'if Parliament passes a resolution within 3 months after the review date, to the effect that international assistance is annulled, the notice ceases to have effect 21 days after the date of the resolution.' [Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003 S.23 (1) & (4)]

[1] Under section 23 of the FIA Act "Parliament shall be given the opportunity to review the international assistance notice every 1 year in accordance with this section."

[2] Inquiry into the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice 2003 and RAMSI Intervention, Foreign Relations Committee, Solomon Islands Parliament; www.parliament.gov.sb/index.php?=node/440.

[3] Unreported, High Court, Palmer CJ 4th April 2006) ; www. Paclii.org/sb/cases/SBHC/134.html.

[4] Section 6 Police Act, Part VII Police Act, section 19 (4) (g) Constitution.

[5] Unreported, High Court, Mwanesalua J, 14th December 2007; www.paclii./org/sb/cases/SBHC/2007/160.htm.l

[6] Submission referenced OPP/1/1/ of 15th September 2008.

in light of the fractious relationship the SIG had with both RAMSI and Australia during Hon Sogavare's tenure as Prime Minister[1].

5.14 The legal challenges to those particular aspects reflect the balancing of national laws with supra-national considerations. The conduct of international relations is underpinned by the principles of mutual respect and reciprocity. Since the arrival of RAMSI, there have been cases involving disciplined forces personnel from Samoa, Tonga and Australia where there was some controversy in this respect. Where states have elected to invoke immunity in cases of misconduct, it was assumed they would initiate proceedings in their own jurisdictions. Where this does not occur, the concern of certain leaders and elements of Solomon Islands society is understandable. They relate to deep-seated emotions about sovereignty and the spectre of a foreign entity seemingly above the laws of the Solomon Islands. Relatively few cases have arisen during RAMSI's presence. The only assurance offered the Solomon Islands is that it accords with well-established international practice and precedent, reflecting a median point between complete immunity and none at all.

6. The Combined Task Force 635

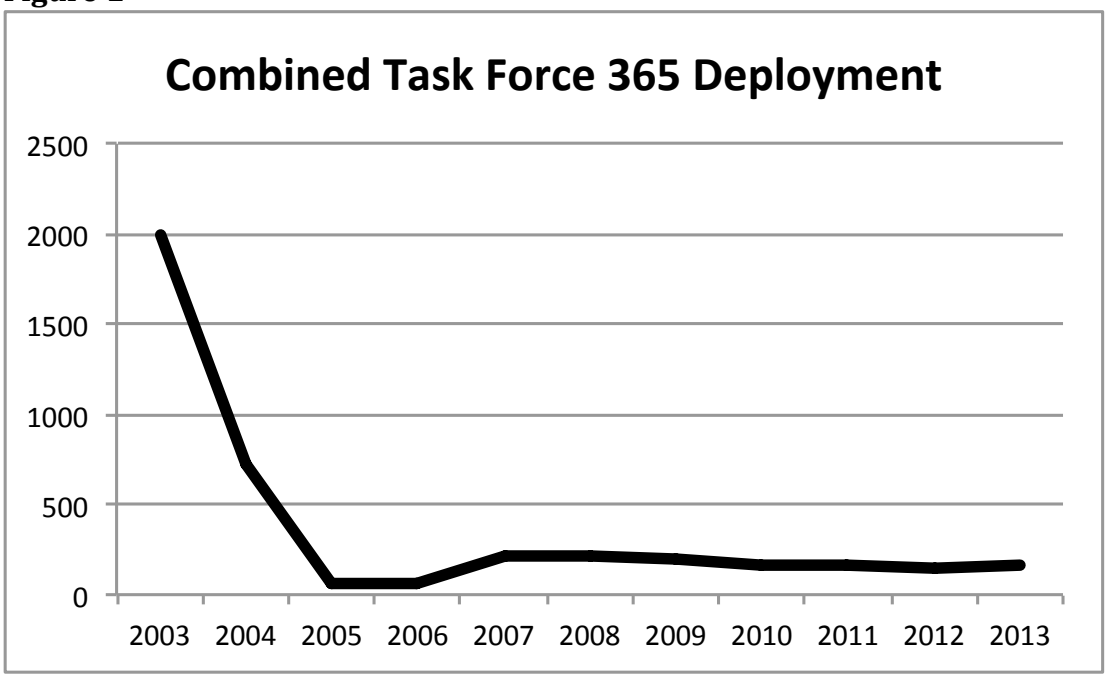
6.1 A substantial military component to RAMSI was deemed necessary by the Australian government, whereas others favoured a less heavily-handed approach. For example, the Australian Strategic Policy Unit – which produced a widely circulated pamphlet launched by Foreign Minister Alexander Downer shortly before RAMSI commenced – recommended a predominantly policing focus[2]. The New Zealand government also preferred a less muscular approach, and then sought at least to constrain military numbers[3]. The case for a military presence was that there were armed militants operating within the country who had refused to surrender weapons during the earlier unarmed IPMT operation after the Townsville Peace Agreement. An initial large-scale show of force was deemed necessary to persuade the militia groups to surrender their weapons. As Special Coordinator Nick Warner later acknowledged, the military force was 'far bigger than RAMSI was hopefully ever going to need'[4].

6.2 The RAMSI Treaty provided that the Commander CTF would 'in exercising that control' be required to 'consult with the head of the Visiting Contingent'[5].

---

[1] Hon Manasseh Sogavare was of the view that the popularity of RAMSI was the result of lack of public awareness about the issues relating to the powers and privileges of RAMSI.
[2] The report urged a 'force of 150 well-qualified and well-equipped police for a year to stabilise and pacify the Honiara area' backed up by a 'light infantry company' available on call in Townsville (Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, ASPI Policy Report, 2003, p41).
[3] Henderson, Jon. 'New Zealand and Oceania', *New Zealand and World Affairs IV, 1990-2005*, (ed) Rod Alley, Victoria University Press, p239. However, see Beth Greener, 'Crossing the green or Blue Line? Exploring the Military-Police Divide', *Small Wars and Insurgencies,* 18, (1), 2007, p99.
[4] Personal Interview, 2007, cited Jeni Whalan, 'The Power of Friends: the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', *Journal of Peace Research,* 47, (5), 2010, p631.
[5] RAMSI Treaty, Article 6.

Figure 1



Source; RAMSI Annual Reports, 'RAMSI's First Year' Report. 2005 Figure is from 1st December 2004.

The mission as a whole was to be police-led: as Lt Colonel John Hutcheson, commander of the March-August 2004 CTF635 rotation, explained:

> 'The aim of RAMSI was to ensure that PPF elements dominated, with the mission's military personnel remaining in the background. At no time did the military forces involved in RAMSI act independently in order to arrest suspected criminals or to restore law and order. The bulk of the Task Force's military activities in the Solomon Islands consisted of protection and security duties, the provision of logistic support and transport to various civilian agencies, and the maintenance of an in-theatre quick-reaction force (QRF) composed of a rifle platoon'[1].

6.3 The Combined Task Force initially comprised a task force headquarters and three infantry platoons consisting of personnel from Australia (1,379), New Zealand (240), Tonga (35), Papua New Guinea (83) and initially Fiji (121)[2]. There were 4 Royal Australian Navy vessels, 6 Caribou Aircraft and Australia and New

[1] Hutcheson, John. 'Helping a Friend: An Australian Military Commander's Perspective on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', *Australian Army Journal*, 2, (2), 2005, 47-55.
[2] RAMSI Information Update, Office of the Special Coordinator, Honiara, 16th September 2003; General David Hurley AC, DSC, Chief of the Defence Force, comments before Australian Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade Legislation Committee, *Hansard*, 28th May 2012, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/estimate/ace1ff7c-bfef-477a-8d6a-835c0b03c2cc/toc_pdf/Foreign%20Affairs,%20Defence%20and%20Trade%20Legislation%20Committee_2012_05_28_1065_Official.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22committees/estimate/ace1ff7c-bfef-477a-8d6a-835c0b03c2cc/0000%22.

Zealand each brought four Iroquois helicopters. The CTF deployment peaked at 1,989 in the early months but had already declined by December 2003. It had fallen to only around 60 soldiers in 2005-6, before rising again above 200 over 2007-9 (See Figure 1). Military personnel were withdrawn from the Weather Coast on 13th March 2004, but a continued presence was maintained at the Rove Prison and on Malaita[1]. Few Fiji troops served from August 2004, when the Fiji RAMSI contribution was scaled down ahead of the initial deployment to UNAMI in Iraq[2], and none at all were deployed to Solomon Islands after the military seized power in Suva in December 2006. Since the 2010 elections, there have only been around 170 personnel, comprising three platoons and those deployed at headquarters[3].

6.4 The CTF deployment raised some potentially important command and control issues, which stemmed from the hasty establishment of its operating framework.

> "…while New Zealand had offered its forces to the commander of CTF 635 in an OPCON [operational control] status, Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) assets were provided in "direct support." This meant that the RAN and RAAF had a greater degree of control over their forces than OPCON would have provided. In short, New Zealand had provided the CTF commander greater control than he had been given by his own air and naval services. The matter was resolved in Australia, but once again the short preparation time had resulted in less-than-desirable initial coordination and in frictions that could have had more severe consequences in a less benign environment or had patience been less forthcoming."[4]

6.5 In practice, the military soon had no real operational role, and their number consequently quickly shrank (See Figure 1). Additional deployments occurred after AFPPS officer Adam Dunning was shot in 2004, when armed patrols were stepped up to search for the perpetrators[5]. A fresh infantry company was deployed after riots in April 2006. There was also an additional deployment for the 2010 election[6]. In total, around 7,270 Australian defence personnel were deployed as part of Operation ANODE between 2003 and 2013. Of these, around 29% have been reservists. From December 2006, reservists made up the largest share of Australian Defence Force deployment.

6.6 The Pacific Islands contribution to the CTF Operation was noted by Lt Colonel John Hutcheson:

---

[1] RAMSI, 'RAMSI's first year', ND.
[2] Lt Col Jone Baledrokadroka, personal communication, 27th April 2014.
[3] Nicholas Coppel, 'Transition of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon islands', SSGM Discussion paper, 10, 2012, p12.
[4] 'Counterinsurgency in a Test Tube: Analyzing the Success of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)', Russell W. Glenn, RAND National Defense Research Institute, Monograph MG-551, 2007, p100.
[5] Whalan, *How Peace Operations Work*, p177.
[6] One hundred crack troops were flown in to Honiara soon after the death of Adam Dunning to boost the security for RAMSI officers in Solomon Islands (*The Age*, 23rd December 2004).

'... the skill and ease with which personnel from Pacific Island countries were able to establish a good rapport with the local population was noticeable. In particular, the ability to speak and understand Pidgin greatly assisted patrols conducted by Papua New Guinea troops, who were able to gather relevant and timely information. In contrast, personnel from the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and ADF personnel never achieved a rapport with the local people beyond the level of a smile and a greeting'[1].

6.7 Many argued that the military presence should have been ended, or reduced dramatically in size, much earlier[2]. RAMSI's critics often wanted an earlier termination of the military component, and the view that this had indeed been possible was also accepted by senior PPF officers in 2013[3]. The military presence was reduced very considerably only a few months after the commencement of RAMSI, and has been below 200 since 2010[4].

7. Participating Police Force and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force

7.1 The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was particularly badly affected during *the tensions* of 1998-2003. Even before the conflict commenced, the police force was demographically unbalanced (with around 70% of officers coming from Malaita), which handicapped its response to the outbreak of conflict on Guadalcanal in 1998-1999. In 2000, many officers from Guadalcanal and the Western Province returned to their homes, further exacerbating this island-of-origin imbalance. In June of that year, the PFF in a 'joint operation' with the militia group, the Malaita Eagle Forces, overthrew the government of Bartholomew Ulufa'alu. The RSIPF, together with members of the militant

[1] Hutcheson, 'Helping a Friend', p51-52.

[2] Justice Albert Palmer, Submission to the Inquiry into the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice, 23rd Sept 2008. An occasional heavily armed presence both in rural areas and in the capital, Honiara, at times distressed citizens. The December 2003 Australian Parliamentary Delegation to the Solomon Islands suggested that the military presence beyond mid-2004 needed to be 'evaluated', see 'Report of the Parliamentary Delegation to the Solomon Islands, 17-18th December 2003, http://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/house_of_representatives_committees?url=jfadt/solomon17_18dec2003/report.htm..

[3] PPF Commander Paul Osborne (Personal Communication 31.7.13) suggested that the mission could have ended two years earlier. Bishop of Malaita Terry Brown wrote in 2007 'the continued presence of fully uniformed and armed RAMSI soldiers in peaceful and quite incongruous situations (virtually doing nothing *except* being uniformed and armed) represents a level of militarization (and a waste of the Australian tax payers' dollars) beyond anything in the ethnic tension period. From the responses of many senior RAMSI officials (military, police, civilian) who have visited Auki, one sometimes has the impression that RAMSI policy for the next few years is still not really thought out very well' (Terry Brown, 'A Reflection on Solomon Islands Politics', Seminar paper for the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Queensland, Australia, May 22 2007; see also Terry Brown 'The Military Should Leave', *Solomon Star*, 27th February, 2012).

[4] Member for Savo/Russells Sir Allen Kemakeza told parliament in mid-2008 'Where are the heavy armed forces today? They have all gone. There are no army houses at Henderson. There are no armies except for a battalion. (If you are army personnel you would understand that word but if you do not understand it then just keep quiet). There is only one battalion that is left. Last time there were many of them at Henderson and you think it is an intervention. But that is not so, it is just a back up of the Regular Force' (*Hansard* 24rd July 2008).

groups, conducted patrol boat raids on Weather Coast villages during 2001-2. In its later stages, the conflict degenerated into armed criminality, with police officers at times complicit or helpless in the face of an emerging culture of impunity. This legacy still complicates efforts at the reconstruction of the RSIPF.

7.2 RAMSI was a police-led intervention *in practice*, but not explicitly in law or mandate[1]. The RAMSI Treaty and the background to the intervention clearly indicate the intervention was intended to be police-led. In August 2003, the Pacific Islands Forum described the RAMSI package as entailing a 'police-led operation to restore law and order, supported as required by armed peace-keepers and assistance to strengthen the justice system and restore the economy and basic services'[2]. The RAMSI Treaty itself mentions the military as playing a *supportive* role, but does not otherwise explicitly state the command and control implications[3]. The FIA Act outlines the role of a 'Visiting Contingent', and while it defines the phrase as meaning the police, armed forces and others, it does not prioritise the former over the armed forces. Both are treated equally. The FIA Act is the only legal foundation for determining the basis for the intervention. Therefore, one has to conclude that the police-led character of the mission was *de facto* rather *de jure* in nature.

7.3 The RAMSI Treaty provided that 'the head of the Participating Police Force shall be appointed a Deputy Commissioner of the Solomon Islands Police Force'[4]. The PPF was mainly composed of officers from the Australian Federal Police, but also from New Zealand and other Pacific Islands. On average over the decade, 70% have been AFP officers, 11.8% from New Zealand and 18.2% from the Pacific Island nations (See Figure 2). Owing to the severity of the difficulties faced by the RSIPF in mid-2003, reconstruction was facilitated by keeping the PPF as a distinct entity, though some officers – including the deputy police chief – were sworn into line positions within the RSIPF[5]. The utility of this decision is keenly debated: it was to have implications and adverse repercussions in terms of both the perception of the RSIPF by the community and of themselves. One alternative, based on the experience in Kosovo or East Timor, would have been to reconstitute the Solomon Islands police force under direct international command, but the international experience with such strategies has also proved

[1] Many commentators describe RAMSI as 'police-led. See Fullilove, M 'The Testament of Solomons: RAMSI & International State-Building'', Lowy Institute, March 2006, p16; Wainwright, *Our Failing Neighbour*; Hegarty, D., May, R, Regan, A, Dinnen, S, Nelson, H & Duncan, R 'Rebuilding State and Nation in Solomon Islands: Policy Options for the Regional Assistance Mission', SSGM Discussion paper, 2004, p1.

[2] 34th Pacific Islands Forum Communique, 16th August 2003, Auckland, paragraph 13.

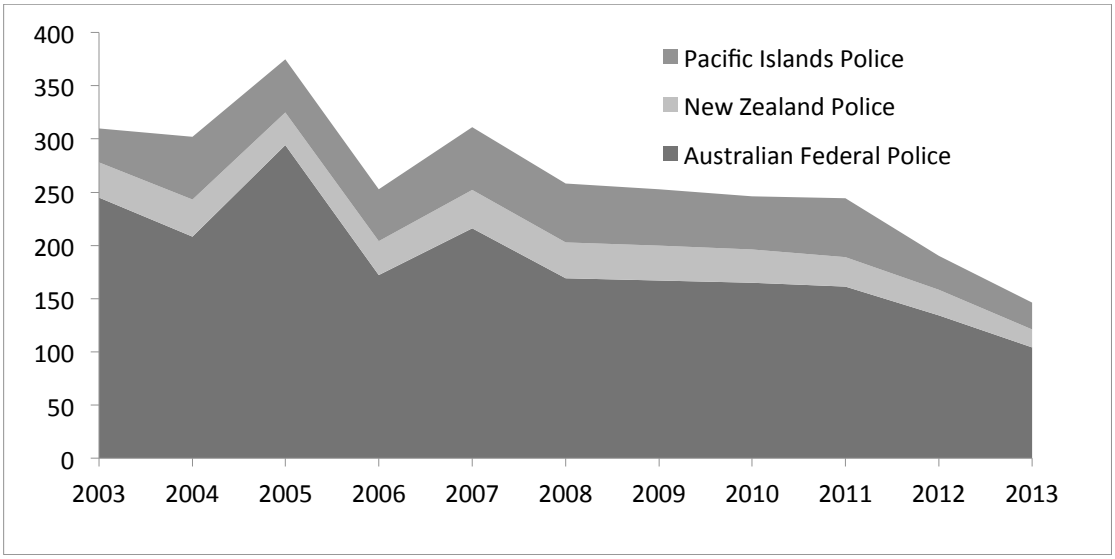
[3] 'Noting further the endorsement of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Pacific Islands Forum on 30th June 2003 pursuant to the Biketawa Declaration of the provision of a package of strengthen assistance to Solomon Islands, including a policing operation to restore law and order, supported as required by armed peace-keepers, and a program of assistance to strengthen the justice system and restore the economy and basic services' (Preamble to the RAMSI Treaty, Paragraph 4).

[4] RAMSI Treaty Article 5.

[5] Chief Justice Albert Palmer argued that the PPF should have been absorbed into the RSIP, and that having the PPF separate 'merely perpetuates the view or perception that the PPF is better and the SIPF is second class or second grade' (Justice Albert Palmer, Submission to the Inquiry into the Facilitation of International Assistance Notice, 23rd Sept 2008).

fraught. Another strategy would have entailed all international police officers assuming line positions within the RSIPF, but again with no assurance that this would have avoided the problems encountered as a result of the choice of the 'two forces' model.

Figure 2; *Composition of the Participating Police Force, 2003-2013*



Source: RAMSI Annual Reports (Various dates within years). 2009 figures interpolated.

7.4 The PPF diminished in size from 310 in 2003 to 146 in 2013 (see Figure 2). In 2013, the PPF contingent had officers from a total of 13 Pacific Island countries, including Niue, Tuvalu and the Federated States of Micronesia. The force has become more diversified over the decade, although the AFP share has remained roughly constant. PPF numbers are expected to fall to 111 in 2015-6 and 92 in 2016-17[1].

7.5 Within a year of RAMSI's arrival, 400 officers had left the RSIPF, including 94 arrested and charged after Professional Standards investigations[2]. There has subsequently been a steady trickle of dismissals, voluntary and tension-related redundancies and retirements. On average, there were 70 new recruits per annum over the period 2003-13[3]. In total, around 63% of the July 2003 RSIPF were no longer employed by the force in mid-2013. Nevertheless, the most common criticisms of the RSIPF remain that senior officers are still at the helm of the force with chequered records during the ethnic tension years, or subsequently[4]. There is much rumour and counter-rumour about which officers

[1] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'Drawdown Strategy 2013-17', p15, p23.
[2] RAMSI, 'RAMSI's first year', ND, see also McDevitt, Ben 2006 'Operation Helpem Fren: A Personal Perspective', in *Australian Army Journal*, 3, (2), 1-18, p15-16.
[3] Data from RSIPF, 23rd April 2014.
[4] 'Some RAMSI reports also mention officers whose behaviour during the tensions may undermine progress and potentially become problematic' Emmot, Sue Barcham, Manuhuia &

are the 'bad applies'. RAMSI and the PPF have preferred to look to 'generational change'. Even as of mid-2013, RAMSI still favoured 'another round of redundancies … to encourage senior officers nearing retirement to leave the force and create the space necessary to promote a younger generation of leaders'[1]. This aspiration for a clean slate is also encountered in other international policing assistance operations[2].

7.6 Determining the extent to which RSIPF officers tainted by their role in *the tensions* should be retained has been, and remains, a real challenge. In post-conflict settings, there is often a careful balance to be struck between root and branch institutional transformation, and retention of senior officers with skills who are able to train a new generation[3]. Although purists may idealize a thoroughly untainted force, the country more broadly has often had to deal somehow with political leaders and bureaucrats who played a variety of roles during *the tensions*. Too extensive an overhauling of the officer core risks undermining continuity and retention of essential skills and experience, thereby demoralizing the institutional leadership in the process. Indeed, in the Solomon Islands context, whether the 63 per cent figure cited as the turnover attributed to redundancies, dismissals and natural attrition over the RAMSI decade was excessive remains a moot point[4]. There is some need for institutional continuity, and a careful balance must be struck because the issue ultimately relates to the credibility as well as operational capacity of the RSIP.

7.7 Despite that major overhaul, the RSIPF still faces serious internal problems of ill-discipline, absenteeism, and non-performance of duties. The interface between the Ministry of Police and the RSIPF has, at times, worked poorly[5]. The RSIPF is chronically short of vehicles and marine vessels, and other logistic support, to facilitate effective policing of rural areas and remote islands. The leadership of the RSIPF hopes to respond to this dearth of resources by reorienting its policing model, including for example more emphasis on foot patrols[6]. Acting Police Commissioner Juanita Matanga has acknowledged that at times, there is only a single RSIPF vehicle available for policing Honiara. She attributes this in part to citizens throwing stones at police vehicles, thus forcing

---

Kabutaulaka, Tarcisius, 'Annual Performance Report 2010: A Report on the Performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', 21st March 2011, p3.

[1] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'The Status of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and its Capability as of 30th June 2013', 2011-13 Transition Outcome Report, p20.

[2] Caplan, *International Governance of War-Torn territories*, p51.

[3] See the discussion in Caplan, *International Governance of War-Torn Territories*, p59-60, but in this the focus is on countries facing severe ethnic cleavages.

[4] The RSIPF was unable to supply any breakdown of officers sacked, retired or made redundant over the last decade.

[5] 'In 2009, 'the chain of accountability for financial and staffing resources appears to be broken at the interface between RSIPF and the Ministry of Police: in other words the accountability of RSIPF for day-to-day policing operations is severely compromised by the lack of accountability of the Ministry for its responses to the operational needs of RSIPF' (Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final Report, 29th September 2009, p14)

[6] Juanita Matanga, Speech at Independent RAMSI Review workshop, Mendana Hotel, 16.6.14; Personal communication, Acting Police Commissioner Matanga 17.6.14

them off the road for repairs[1]. Moreover, the calls for intervention in response to forms of disorder entailing family, neighbourhood and community disputes have stretched RSIPF resources. Maintenance of infrastructure is likely to become a greater challenge also in other respects. Wear and tear on newly built housing at Lata and Henderson will soon necessitate refurbishment[2]. To focus political attention, the practicalities of achieving a sustainable police model require deliberation from Parliament's Standing Committee on policing matters, with options for public input, and if deemed appropriate a parliamentary enquiry on the topic.

7.8 PPF husbanding of resources, particularly vehicles and boats, at times has generated resentment within the RSIPF[3]. However, RAMSI officials retort that the maritime police is dysfunctional due to shortages of fuel, and that where RAMSI hands over vehicles, these are sometimes cannibalised for spare parts[4]. PPF officers are also critical of being requested to provide security services for commercial ventures, such as football matches, and believe that the costs should rather be borne by the organizers of such events[5]. RAMSI's decision to remain in Solomon Islands for a further four-year 2013-17 phase reflects recognition that the restructuring of the RSIPF is far from complete.

Table 1 ***Distribution of RSIPF Established Posts, 2009***

Provincial Operations	Number	%	Headquarters	%
Choisel	20	1.8	National Operations	16.9
Western	76	6.7	Operational Support	27.0
Isabel	23	2.0	Administration	7.5
Central	22	1.9		
Renbel	4	0.4		
Guadalcanal	70	6.2		
Malaita	74	6.5		
Makira	34	3.0		
Temotu	16	1.4		
Honiara	222	19.6		Number
Total Provincial	584	51.5	Total RSIPF Establishment	1,134

Source: *Mekim Senis: Resourcing Change 2010 – 2013*; p25, p26. Percentages do not sum to 100% because of a small error in data reported in *Mekim Senis*.

7.9 Inequities in the distribution of policing assets are commonly identified, particularly as regards the balance between rural and urban coverage and

[1] Juanita Matanga, Speech at Independent RAMSI Review workshop, Mendana Hotel, 16.6.14. Response to question from Charles Ashley, Malaita Maasina Forum.
[2] Eddie Sikua, comments at Independent RAMSI Review workshop, Mendana Hotel, 16.6.14
[3] Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final Report, 29th September 2009, p23
[4] Wayne Higgins, RAMSI Deputy Special Coordinator, 6.11.2013.
[5] PPF Commander Paul Osborne, Personal Communication, 31.7.13.

amongst provinces[1]. The RSIPF is heavily concentrated in Honiara which (combining the Honiara and national HQ totals) accounts for over two thirds of positions. Malaita is particularly poorly equipped with only one police officer for every 2,121 citizens. Out of a total serving police force of 956 officers, 644 were stationed in the capital in 2011, mostly at police headquarters (See Table 1)[2]. This in part reflects an inevitable imbalance of policing responsibility towards urban areas and the retention of a nationwide mobilization capacity in relation to serious crime or unrest[3]. Linkages with informal authorities in the village-based social order are particularly important in the Melanesian context, where around 85% of the population lives away from the urban centres[4]. The concept of community policing is of direct relevance in that regard and to the issue of access to justice, although models drawn from Japan, New Zealand or Australia's Northern Territory fit the Solomon Islands context less well than those from neighbouring Papua New Guinea or Vanuatu[5]. Such strategies offer a possible method of projecting the reach of government and the arm of the law economically and effectively. In tandem with local authority structures, they can co-operate to facilitate order and peaceable relations in the community.

7.10 Absence of police housing outside Honiara has also been identified as a reason for the crowding of officers into the capital. This was regularly given as a major reason for embarking on a program of police housing construction around the country. In the later stages of the decade, there has been increasing attention to long-term infrastructure issues, including the building of police posts and police housing. The drawdown has focused centrally on the 2014 elections, which if managed successfully, are intended to trigger PPF withdrawal from the last provincial posts, Auki and Gizo, ahead of 'potentially decommissioning the PPF on 3th June 2017'[6]. By July 2013, there were no longer any PPF officers in line positions in the RSIPF[7].

7.11 The RSIPF has assumed the major role in policing activities throughout the Solomon Islands. It is fully localised and has officers capable of providing leadership. During the 2009-13 PPF drawdown period, the RSIPF has proved able to handle several incidents of urban disorder competently, including riots in 2010[8]. The RSIPF now has relatively sophisticated riot control training. Disturbances at the time of the change of government were averted in 2011, with

[1] The RSIPF was unable to supply any data on the provincial origins of police officers.
[2] See Allen, Dinnen *et al*, 'Justice Delivered Locally', p45.
[3] *Mekim Senis-Resourcing Change, 2010-13*, RSIPF, Martin Goode, AFP, with Deanna Bombardieri, & Jim Prentice & Festus Ganiomea, p9.
[4] For details on how this works at the local level, see Matthew Allen, Sinclair Dinnen, Daniel Evans & Rebecca Monson, *Justice Delivered Locally: Systems, Challenges & Innovations in Solomon Islands*, AusAID & World Bank on the East Asia & Pacific-Justice for the Poor (EAP-J4P) Initiative, July 2013, p40.
[5] Unfortunately, the wealthier countries – such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand – can afford to fund Solomon Islands exploratory missions to examine their policing models whereas countries like Vanuatu and PNG, which may offer more appropriate examples, have previously been less able to fund such missions.
[6] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'Drawdown Strategy 2013-17'.
[7] PPF Commander Paul Osborne (Personal Communication 31.7.13).
[8] 'Solomons police arrest 37 during riots', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30th November 2010.

the PPF deliberately playing a background role[1]. As the RAMSI 2013 Transition Outcome Report makes clear:

> 'The PRT (Police Response Team) have developed a local reputation within the Solomon Islands as a unit that is highly trained, capable and fearless when deployed. There have been several incidents in Honiara during 2012 whereby crowds have formed in response to various grievances which presented a degree of threat for potential civil disobedience and a risk to the safety of civilians. In each case the visible attendance of the PRT was enough to persuade those crowds to immediately disperse'[2].

7.12 During the early phase of the mission, PPF officers regularly assumed front-line policing roles, effectively displacing the RSIP. The initial focus was on executive policing, and restoring the rule of law. Police posts were established under control of RAMSI in all nine provinces, with or without RSIP assistance. The PPF operated as a parallel force, with a separate command structure, as it set about arresting the militants, preparing cases, and capturing weapons. As one of the earlier PPF Commander Will Jameson acknowledged, the PPF 'pushed aside a somewhat dysfunctional SIPF', although he also acknowledged that this might have caused some 'collateral damage'[3]. This sequencing made the subsequent transition to a predominantly police-building, or training, role difficult. A 2009 review mission commissioned by RAMSI found that the PPF's success:

> 'has had an unintended consequence of creating a comparison with the RSIPF that has negative implications for capacity development. The contrast between the well-equipped, efficient, highly motivated and exceptionally visible PPF officers in their PPF vehicles – land, sea and air – with unarmed, ill-equipped and less visible RSIPF members, was obvious at its best and sharp at its worst during the team's mission, especially in the provinces. The impact which this perception of the two "forces" then had on the community was similarly stark with their perception that the RSIPF was less efficient, less competent and less trustworthy than the PPF officers'[4].

It is difficult to understand how this 'unintended consequence' could not have been foreseen. Where there are two parallel police forces and one is poorly-equipped as well as racked by internal dissension, comparisons will invariably be drawn unfavourably at the latter's expense.

7.13 Although vigorously defended by the PPF commanders on the grounds that the RSIP was in too poor a state to permit AFP officers to assume line positions (i.e. implicitly more out of concern for the impact on the *latter* as opposed to the

---

[1] 'Returning Stability to the Solomons', ABC, 4th December , 2011.
[2] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'The Status of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and its Capability as of 30th June 2013', 2011-13 Transition Outcome Report, p6.
[3] Will Jamieson, 'Rebuilding a Police Service – Restoring Law and Order: An Overview of the Activities of the PPF in the Solomon Islands', State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, Seminar, 15th November 2007.
[4] Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final report, 29th September 2009, p31.,

former), the AFP's early role in executive policing encouraged a perception among the public and, more importantly, among the RSIPF themselves that they were in some way a lesser entity. In 2003, the AFP was still relatively inexperienced in training Melanesian police officers, though regional deployment was subsequently to become a major focus[1]. A few officers had experience in East Timor, but most had not served outside Australia's borders[2]. The early experience of playing a largely separated executive policing role complicated efforts by the PPF to hand over the reins to the RSIPF, and to shift to a backroom role.

Table 2; *Key RSIPF Questions in the RAMSI Annual Peoples Survey*

Does SIPF treat people fairly and with respect?

	Yes	Sometimes	No	Don't Know
2007	43.7	28.0	15.8	12.3
2008	32.0	32.3	21.1	13.9
2009	30.8	31.4	25.7	11.7
2010	37.5	34.7	19.6	8.2
2011	30.8	35.6	27.0	6.6
2013	29.2	41.3	23.3	6.2

Was the Respondent Satisfied with Police Action?

	Yes	No
2010	54.5	45.5
2011	43.5	55.4
2013	39.6	60.4

Source; Annual RAMSI People's Surveys, 2006-13.
There was no 2012 survey.

7.14 The RAMSI Annual People's surveys reflect a consistent measure of distrust towards the RSIP in contrast to acclaim for the PPF. The surveys, conducted from 2006-13, asked a variety of questions about the force. The two critical questions, as regards broad perceptions of the police force, were about whether or not respondents were 'satisfied' with police action, and whether or not the RSIP treated people 'fairly and with respect'. The first survey in 2006 asked if respondents who had experience of reporting a crime were satisfied with police action, with 63.4% saying 'No'[3]. From 2007 onwards, the key question asked was whether the RSIP treated people with respect, and responses suggesting

[1] 'With PPF members reporting that their pre-deployment training does not specifically prepare them for capacity development in the Solomon Islands, there is a perception of "randomness" that the current selection process will hopefully produce PPF members who are both operationally strong and have good capacity development skills' (Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final report, 29th September 2009, p12).
[2] The problem of low skill-levels among deployed police officers is still more intense in most UN CIVPOL operations (Caplan, *International Governance of War-torn Territories*, p56).
[3] Unlike later surveys, the 2006 one offered 'yes' (24.8%), 'no' (63.4%), and 'partial' (10.3%) answers to this question.

increasingly negative assessments over 2007-13. Similarly, the question about satisfaction, which reappeared in the 2010-13 surveys, suggested declining confidence in the police.

7.15 The 2009 Partnership Framework set out to increase 'community confidence in the RSIPF', encourage 'community crime prevention', and 'improve RSIPF infrastructure and logistics' (p9). The ultimate objective was for 'the RSIPF [to become] fully capable of carrying out its mandated functions and [to have] no need of a permanent PPF presence' (p14). The assumption was that the PPF presence would increase the capacity of the RSIPF to fill the 'gap' that the PPF's eventual departure would entail. In reality the AFP's mobility resources, on land, in the air and by sea, were far beyond what the SIG could afford. To fill those 'gaps', there was to be careful 'succession planning' for 'senior leadership positions' (p16), and attention to 'PPF capacity development of emerging leaders within RSIPF' (p16). During the four years of the 2009 partnership, it was expected that there would be a 'shift away from rank and file [PPF] advisors in day to day policing to capacity development specialists targeting skills and systems' (p18).

7.16 Restructuring of police forces is a long-term and difficult task, not one that can be accomplished over a four-year budgetary planning cycle, or even a decade. Community confidence in the police remains low. Neighbourhood crime initiatives outside the capital have been limited by the heavy concentration of RSIPF officers in Honiara. RSIPF marine, road and air mobility is unlikely to match that of the PPF in the post-RAMSI period. The expectation that the drawdown would involve continuity in service and institutional structure, with the RSIPF and SIG picking up as the PPF withdraws, mischaracterizes the challenges faced by the RSIPF. It pitches the level of performance expected at levels not commensurate with realities on the ground. SIG is clearly unable to provide resources to the same extent as the PPF.

7.17 For example, the widely cited claim that 'the PPF provides more than 60% of the resources required for the RSIPF to be effective'[1] depends on an at-cost aggregation of the AFP and other PPF contribution together with that of the RSIPF. That estimate includes the vast costs of the PPF aviation and maritime support operations (26.2% and 17.1% of the totals) both of which are unlikely to be sustained in any domestically-funded model. This exaggerates the challenges facing the RSIPF. There is a risk that expectations are overly influenced by Australian policing standards. A similar expectation permeates the 'Drawdown Strategy' document which, for example, notes that 'current RSIPF resourcing does not align with expectations of service delivery' and clearly envisages SIG stepping in to enhance capacity to the level delivered by the PPF[2]. These underlying assumptions about what is required to ensure the capability and

[1] '"True cost" of policing in the Solomon Islands; Identifying Policing and Security Expenditures and Costs borne by External Agencies', 9th March 2011; see also Emmot, Sue Barcham, Manuhuia & Kabutaulaka, Tarcisius, 'Annual Performance Report 2010: A Report on the Performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', 21st March 2011, p3.
[2] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'Drawdown Strategy 2013-17', p16.

capacity of RSIPF to function at optimum levels suggests that some of the overly negative assessments may be exaggerated.

7.18 Similarly, the 2010 RAMSI annual report concluded that 'the RSIPF is many years, perhaps a generation, away from being capable of *independently* carrying out its mandated functions under law and order and targeting corrupt conduct'[1]. Again, this implies an exact if unlikely continuity with AFP/PPF styles of policing. It imposes unrealistic expectations on the RSIPF, which faces a very different policing context to the AFP, and should not be expected to address policing problems in an identical manner. Corruption is a serious problem, but one that affects many parts of government and one that is unlikely to be resolved without the requisite political will. Indeed, RAMSI and the PPF have themselves been unable to comprehensively 'target corrupt conduct'.

7.19 In the wake of major institutional trauma followed by a dramatic restructuring, the RSIPF has suffered from excessive turnover at the senior leadership level. There have been ten Commissioners of the RSIPF (including Acting Police Commissioners) over the past 17 years, and seven since RAMSI arrived. Continual change in the important police commissioner position threatens to undermine the gains of the last decade. In post-conflict settings, 'sustained and committed leadership by top management, especially the most senior executive, is required to produce any organizational change'[2].

Table 3; *Solomon Islands Police Commissioners, 1997-2014*

1. Frank Short	July 1997	June 1999
2. Morton Siriheti	July 2000	Dec 2002
3. Bill Morrell (UK)	Jan 2003	Mar 2005
4. Shane Castles (Aus)	April 2005	Dec 2006
5. Graham Emery (NZ) (Acting)	Dec 2006	Jan 2007
6. Jahir Khan (Fiji)	May 2007	May 2008
7. Peter Marshall (NZ)*	May 2008	Feb 2011
8. Walter Kola (Acting)	Mar 2009	May 2012
9. John Lansley (UK)	May 2012	May 2013
10. Juanita Matanga (Acting)	May 2013	Present

* Peter Marshall was Acting police commissioner from May 2008 until March 2009, and substantive police commissioner from March 2009-February 2011

7.20 The Australian government announced AFP deployments to Papua New Guinea in 2005 ('Enhanced Cooperation Program'), 2008 ('*Strongim Gavman* Program') and again in 2013 ('Expanded Papua New Guinea-Australia Policing Partnership'). Australia has funded assistance programs to the Vanuatu police force, and Mobile Squadron, over the last decade, although these have been

[1] Emmot, Sue Barcham, Manuhuia & Kabutaulaka, Tarcisius, 'Annual Performance Report 2010: A Report on the Performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', 21st March 2011, p4.
[2] David Bayley. 'Democratizing the Police Abroad: What to Do and How to Do It', US Department of Justice, 2001.

interrupted by several diplomatic squabbles[1]. During the RAMSI era, the AFP has significantly enhanced its regional mobility through establishment of an International Deployment Group[2]. The AFP is therefore likely to seek to sustain a long-term engagement with Melanesia's police forces, and given the RAMSI legacy, particularly with the RSIPF.

7.21 In practise, none of the comparable alternative models of interaction between international and local police forces suggest any simple standard of 'best practice'. In both Kosovo and East Timor, police were authorized to carry arms, and had far more extensive powers than international policing operations in Sierra Leone or Bosnia-Herzegovina. Comparability of these cases with that of Solomon Islands is impaired by the larger significance of military forces, and their primary role in establishing or maintaining civil order. In both Bosnia and Kosovo, the international military operations assumed primacy, and policing institutions were only established subsequently[3].

7.22 In two of these cases, police forces were constituted or reconstituted under the auspices of international missions, including the Kosovo Police Service. In East Timor, the police force had collapsed before the UN intervention in 1999-2000, and UNTAET initially assumed executive control (1999-2002), before being substituted by a non-executive authority bearing UN operation, UNMISET (2002-5). The CIVPOL Commissioner retained control of the East Timorese police force until 2004, with the PNTL figuring 'essentially as a sub-component of CIVPOL. A program of rapid police recruitment was implemented, but UN CIVPOL officers lacked experience in police training. The result was a Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) that lacked 'strategic vision, coherent identity and institutional loyalty'[4]. Clashes between the PNTL and the defence force broke out in Dili in May 2006, precipitating a new UN mission, UNMIT, entailing deployment of 1,600 CIVPOL Officers, lasting until 2012, with some observers reporting lack of success for a second time[5].

7.23 Sierra Leone had a dysfunctional and widely distrusted police force in 2000, but here assistance – first through the Commonwealth and then through the UK DFiD – did not entail executive policing. The separate UN CIVPOL officers, were 'relatively underused', and assumed a predominantly training role[6]. In Bosnia

[1] See Australian Network News, 'Australian Police return to Vanuatu', 13th February 1, 2013.
[2] Gordon Peake & Kaysie Studdard Brown 'Policebuilding: The International Deployment Group in the Solomon Islands', *International Peacekeeping,* 12, (4), 2005. In February 2004, the Australian Government announced the formation of an AFP International Deployment Group to 'fight terrorism, transnational organized crime and contribute to regional peacekeeping missions' (Senator Chris Ellison, Minister for Justice and Customs, Media Release, 'Australia boosts regional law enforcement capacity', 2nd February 2004).
[3] Caplan, *International Governance of War-Torn Territories*, p56.
[4] Ludovic Hood. 'Missed Opportunities: The United Nations, Police Service and Defence Force Deployment in Timor Leste, 1999-2004', *Civil Wars*, 8, (2), 2006, p145, p144, p146, p152.
[5] Bu Wilson, 'To 2012 and Beyond: International Assistance to Police and Security Sector Development in Timor-Leste', *Asian Politics and Policy*, 4, (1), 2012; Nicolas Lemay-Hébert, 'UNPOL and Police Reform in Timor-Leste': Accomplishments and Setbacks', *International Peacekeeping,* 16, (3), 2009, pp393-406.
[6] Albrecht, P. & Jackson, P 'State-Building through Security Sector reform: the UK Intervention in Sierra Leone', *Peacebuilding*, 2, (1), 2014, p89; Horn, A., Olonisakin, F., Peake, G., 'United

and Herzegovina, the Dayton Accords gave oversight responsibility for identifying problems with local policing to an unarmed International Police Task Force (IPTF) which was 'limited largely to monitoring, training, and restructuring local police forces'[1]. The IPTF entailed 1,600 police officers deployed from 34 countries as the 'visible face of the Dayton Peace Agreement', but the force was poorly resourced, and displayed 'notable lack of sensitivity to and knowledge of domestic legal culture and rules'[2]. In early 2003, the IPTF was superseded by a well-funded European Union Police Mission, but again with largely negative results[3]. As this brief survey of the international experience indicates, there are no obvious alternative 'best practice' models that have worked better than that attempted in the Solomon Islands.

Rearmament

7.24 Rearmament remains a controversial issue. In October 2013, the government decided to consult on a limited re-introduction of firearms for three police areas: close personal protection, airport policing and for the Police Response Team[4]. Limited rearmament has been earmarked as a potential activity under the RSIPF/PPF Drawdown Strategy 2013–2017 (entailing some 72 armed police)[5]. Solomon Islands is a signatory to the International Civil Aviation organisation (ICAO), an international body established to standardise safety requirements in international airports and civil aviation generally[6]. Yet arguments for introduction of weaponry that rest simply on being an ICAO signatory are weak given its ramifications. So too are claims that weapons are necessary for maritime policing of the Solomon Islands EEZ, since this rarely occurs anyway (the Maritime Police are usually unable to fuel vessels to patrol the high seas). Often, the argument for limited re-introduction of weapons is, at root, associated with 'sovereignty' and a conviction that an armed force is synonymous with true nationhood.

7.25 As it stands, it is an issue that warrants further discussion at the national level to allay fears. There already exists a non-lethal capacity, including oleoresin capsicum spray, as authorized as of July 2012, including 'use of munitions launchers … designed to propel a range of canisters which slowly release smoke,

---

Kingdom-led Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone', *Civil Wars*, 8, (2), 2006, p111; Sarah Meek, 'Policing Sierra Leone', in (Eds) Mark Malan, Sarah Meek, Thokozani Thusi, Jeremy Ginifer, Patrick Coker, *Sierra Leone: Building the Road to Recovery*, ISS Monograph No 80, 2003.

[1] Caplan, International Governance of War-Torn Territories, p46; Perrit, Henry 'Policing International Forces and Security: International Police Forces', Chicago-Kent College of Law, March 1999, p283.

[2] Fionnuala Ni Aolain. 'The Fractured Soul of the Dayton Peace Agreement: A Legal Analysis', *Michigan Journal of International Law*, 19, 1998, pp990-993.

[3] James Lyon, 'EU's Bosnia Police Mission Is "Laughing Stock"', International Crisis Group, 15th September 2005, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/balkans/bosnia-herzegovina/op-eds/eus-bosnia-police-mission-is-laughing-stock.aspx.

[4] Solomon Islands Government Press Release, Solomon Islands Approves Limited Reintroduction of Firearms, 21st October 2013.

[5] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'Transition Strategy 2011-13', 11th November 2011, p11.

[6] See remarks by Hon. Walter Folotalu, Minister for Communication and Aviation, Solomon Islands Parliament Hansard, 18th December 2013, p6.

CS gas, and direct impact munitions which are large hard foam baton rounds'. Less than lethal launchers are intended for use in the dispersal of violent crowds[1].

7.26 Discussion of arrangements for the provision arms for riot control are particularly disturbing. The Solomon Islands has had experience with serious urban riots, but usually with few or no fatalities. Potential deployment of lethal force to suppress such disturbances is a worrying development, particularly given the presence of a range of non-lethal alternatives. The PPF's Drawdown Report indicates less concern with border security, but it needs to be recalled that Solomon Islands Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni's pre-*tensions* importing of weapons to assist the National Reconnaissance and Surveillance Force activities on the border was a major reason for the proliferation of weapons in the country. Australia also assisted with that period of rearmament, but these were the very same weapons that subsequently fell into the hands of the militants. In the run up to the proposed limited rearmament, there are many reassurances that proper procedures will be put in place for keeping weapons stocks under lock and key, but the truth is that no weapons control system is 100% secure.

The Border

7.27 The border with Bougainville and the close proximity of the Shortland islands and Choiseul to Bougainville was a matter of major political attention during the 1980s and 1990s. The build up of weaponry in the hands of the RSIPF and Police Field Force was itself partly influenced by political responses to incursions during the Bougainville crisis[2]. The SIG/RAMSI partnership has undertaken to build accommodation and strengthen logistical facilities on the border. A review of the border situation in 2013 cast doubt on anecdotal reports of weapons circulating from Bougainville, and identified the key issues as illegal immigration and fishing activities[3].

Fire Service

7.28 The Solomon Islands fire service receives less attention than police and prisons. The 2009 Partnership Framework outlined the objective of creating a 'capable and effective' fire service to serve the urban centres. The 'strategy' was to 'develop the capability of the Fire Service with the provisions of Fire Sheds, Fire Engines and trained staff" (p.29). The New South Wales (Australia) Fire Brigade has assisted its Solomon Islands counterpart[4]. The fire brigade needs to

[1] Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'The Status of the Royal Solomon islands Police Force and its Capability as of 30th June 2013', 2011-13 Transition Outcome Report, p14-15.
[2] Frank Short, 'Policing a Clash of Cultures', *Solomon Times*, 30th January 2013.
[3] Cited in Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'The Status of the Royal Solomon islands Police Force and its Capability as of 30th June 2013', 2011-13 Transition Outcome Report, p9.
[4] Superintendent Tom Milburn of the Blue Mountains and Central West service served in Honiara as Solomon Islands' Chief Fire Officer from mid-2005 (NSW Parliament, *Hansard*, 5 May 2005).

be both reactive and preventative. With the growth of Honiara, demand for its services is likely to grow.

8. Correctional Services of Solomon Islands (CSSI)

8.1 The Solomon Islands prisons were in a dilapidated and poorly managed state when RAMSI arrived. A substantial number of prisoners had broken out of the Rove prison, and the prison itself had witnessed atrocities upon which the courts later deliberated. Many correctional officers had left their positions. With RAMSI's arrival, and the new emphasis on restoring law and order, a new cohort of prisoners was to be expected. New local prison officers had to be hired and facilities required prompt but extensive rehabilitation or reconstruction.

8.2 By March 2004, RAMSI had recruited and commenced training 35 new local prison officers[1]. RAMSI officers assumed the in line positions of Commissioner to Commandants of the Solomon Islands Prison Service and General Manager at Rove Prison. As with the RSIPF, there was some shake-out of officers for tension-related crimes. The Rove Prison was equipped with a new high security fence, a new block was built and another rehabilitated with British assistance[2]. Nevertheless, problems remained severe. After riots broke out in the Rove prison in August 2004, the High Court found conditions inside to be unlawful and 'similar to that of a punishment regime'[3].

8.3 RAMSI Commissioner of Prisons Barry Apsey took charge from 2005-8, and at the end of his stint successfully handed over the reins to his deputy, Francis Haisoma, the present Commissioner of Prisons. The initial 4-month rotation of RAMSI officers was extended to 12 months, enabling the forging of closer relations between foreign and local staff. The CSSI has also worked to align its facilities with United Nation's minimum standard requirements regarding the accommodation and treatment of prisoners. Gender equality programs have been pursued as regards recruitment of new officers.

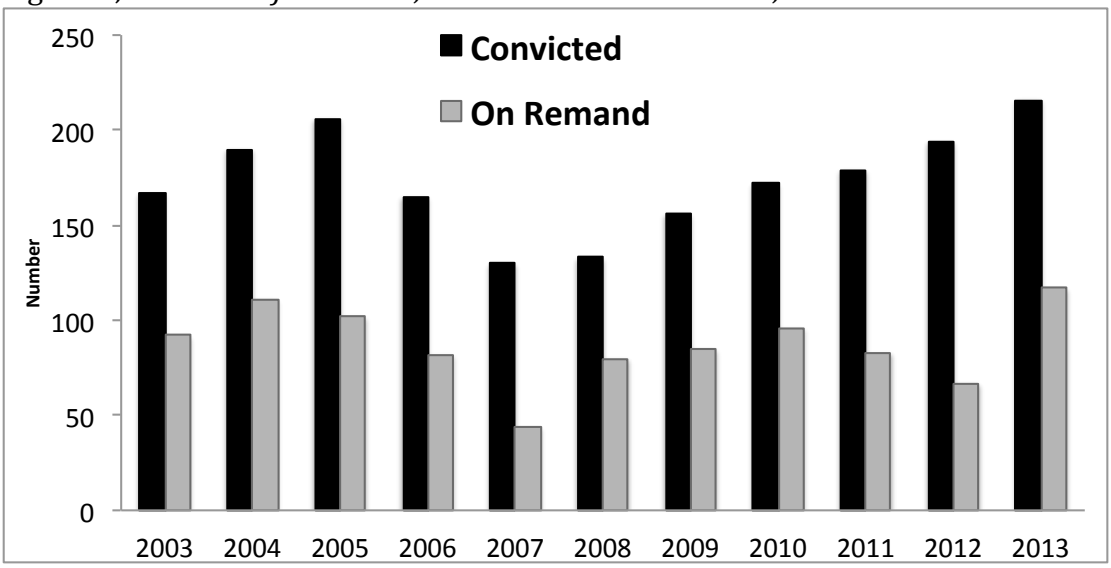
8.4 The objective under the 2009 Partnership Framework was for the CSSI leadership to be localised over a three-year 2009-12 period. The prison service was often highlighted by RAMSI as an area that demonstrated what a task-based exit strategy looked like in practice. Plans featured refurbishment of prison facilities as well as the building of new facilities. New correctional facilities were planned for Auki and Gizo. The new Gizo prison commenced construction in 2012, but remained incomplete in early 2014, and a 64-bed medium security prison was completed at Auki in 2009[4]. Prison facilities were upgraded in Kirakira (Makira) and Lata, including construction of CSSI officers'

[1] RAMSI, 'RAMSI's First Year', p3.
[2] Francis Haisoma, Commissioner of Prisons, Personal Communication, Personal Communication, 7th December 2013
[3] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12th August 2004.
[4] See http://www.cubitt.com.au/Projects/International/AukiProvincialPrison.aspx.

accommodation[1]. Rebuilding the Rove centre was necessary in part due to extensive damage by fire after a prison riot in 2012.

8.5 The 'graduated withdrawal' of 'specialist technical advisors' anticipated in the partnership document (p34) in fact commenced before 2009. Numbers had declined from 60 in 2005 to 18 in 2009, and fell further to 10 in 2012.[2] By 2014, only eight advisors remained; one at the executive level, others in the Professional Standards Unit, Programs, Infrastructure, Finance, Training, one in charge of Gizo Prison commissioning and another at the Rove Prison[3]. In April 2014, the CSSI had a total local workforce of 443, 16% female and 83% male[4].

Figure 3; *Numbers of Prisoners, Convicted and on Remand, 2003-13*



Source: Data from CSSI.

8.6 The number of convicted prisoners is not large by international standards. Solomon Islands had a prison population of only 333 in 2013, as compared with 1,530 in neighbouring Fiji (with a population roughly twice as large as that in Solomon Islands) and 3,863 in Papua New Guinea (with a population of 7.2 million). In fact, PNG, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands all have much smaller prison populations on a *per capita* than countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Samoa or Palau. The number of tension-related prisoners, mostly incarcerated at Rove Prison, was around 23 by 2014.

8.7 Ahead of the military withdrawal, the CTF withdrew from guarding the observation post above Rove prison in July 2011[5]. The number of prisoners on remand remains a major concern, fuelled by the shortage of judges and magistrates to hear cases in a timely way. Prisoner rehabilitation programs have been particularly effectively developed at the Tetere Prison farm to the east of the capital. Conditions there allow inmates greater liberties, for example

[1] Francis Haisomoa, Commissioner of Prisons, Personal Communication, 7.12.13.
[2] Data provided by CSSI.
[3] Data supplied by CSSI, 30th April 2014.
[4] Data provided by CSSI, April 2014
[5] 'Report to the Pacific Islands Forum on RAMSI Activities, 2011', p3.

regarding acquisition of beetle nut and cigarettes, which are forbidden at Rove Prison[1].

Table 4; *Prison Population: Solomon Islands Compared with Rest of Oceania*.

	Prison Population	Prisoners per 100,00 population	Data Year
Australia	30775	133	2013
New Zealand	8223	183	2013
Papua New Guinea	3863	52	2013
Vanuatu	194	76	2013
Samoa	430	227	2012
Fiji	1530	172	2013
Tonga	163	155	2013
Solomon Islands	326	56	2013
Kiribati	141	138	2013
Tuvalu	8	80	2013
Fed. States Micronesia	107	103	2013
Marshall islands	36	68	2013
Palau	51	243	2013
Nauru	14	140	2013
New Caledonia	382	144	2014

Source: International Centre for Prison Studies, http://www.prisonstudies.org.

8.8 The greater ease of drawing down RAMSI support for prisons than for the RSIPF or the law and justice civilian programs is due to several factors. First, correctional services entail fairly routine tasks dealing with the incarceration and management of inmates. A prison has a reasonably precise and indispensible command structure. The RSIPF has wider responsibilities and functions relating to law and order and has to liaise with the courts, other government departments, the private sector, civil society and the community. Similarly, the legal system comprises the courts, DPP's Office, PSO and Attorney General's Chambers which have to interact with each other as well as with government departments and other parties.

8.9 Second, CSSI is a discrete relatively self-contained unit, apart from having to deal with the courts in terms of the transfer of prisoners and more problematically, the overcrowding caused by prisoners on remand as a consequence of shortages in judges and magistrates. Third, the structure and function of CSSI facilitates firm control: a lenient approach could encourage indiscipline and instability within the system. Fourth, the nature of correctional services is such that the skill and expertise required is less complicated, focusing as it does on managing persons incarcerated for a variety of offences. As one

[1] Michael Nagu, Officer in Charge at Tetere Prison, 7.12.13.

RAMSI adviser explained, the task at hand was not to teach Solomon Islanders to lock up prisons, but to pass on tips in the area of management and forward planning. These factors have to be borne in mind when making comparisons with the other RAMSI initiatives.

9. The Public Service

9.1 The Solomon Islands public service remains beset with problems of absenteeism, ill-discipline and underperformance. These issues predated RAMSI, and were reinforced by deterioration in public finances and civil service work ethics during the *tension* years. RAMSI's assistance to key ministries was delivered by a combination of in-line and technical advisory personnel with the balance switching gradually towards the latter over the decade. Initial concerns that in-line personnel would displace Solomon Islanders from key positions were less prominent after the early months. Indeed criticism was more often focused on the short-term appointment of technical advisers, who were not answerable through Solomon Island Government channels.

9.2 RAMSI significantly improved the performance of the key ministries where it deployed, but mostly as a result of the activities of inward-placement of in-line personnel and advisors. Seconded Australian and New Zealand officials brought considerable experience, and were less constrained by the operating environment. However, achievements were often either dissipated with the departure of those expatriates or did not long survive their tenure. Pacific Islanders – particularly from Fiji – have played an increasing role during the latter stages of the RAMSI decade. Only at the most senior levels of the public service was there much sign of improvement over the RAMSI decade.

9.3 'Capacity-building' or 'capacity–development' was a core objective of RAMSI, particularly in its latter stages. It remains 'one of the most "slippery" and unsatisfactory concepts in development … There is no agreed definition, there is no formal academic body of knowledge discussing it and there are no university courses teaching it'[1]. The term 'low capacity environments' is often used as a catch-all explanation for all civil service development challenges, as if all nations could be located on some continuum between 'low' and 'high' capacity[2]. That interpretation of core difficulties in the public service as being matters of raw 'capacity' to be rectified by adding more 'capacity' overlooks critical questions of leadership, 'learning by doing', indigenous methods of accountability, and political and cultural context. All institutions benefit from enhancing skill levels, effective mentoring and designated training, but few are positively shaped where primarily driven by narrow targets to be achieved by temporary expatriate personnel. The RAMSI decade offers a chequered record in this respect, although urbanisation, improvements in educational opportunities, and an expanding middle class have increased the number both of actual and potential professionals (many of whom end up working in the private sector or for civil

[1] Graham Teskey, 'State-Building and Development: Getting Beyond Capacity', Commonwealth Good Governance, 2011/12.
[2] See, for example, Marcus Cox, Emele Duituturaga & Eric Scheye, Building on Local Strengths: Evaluation of Australian Law and Justice Assistance, December 2012, pix.

society organisations, rather than assuming government positions). During the RAMSI era, the most effective results were in those sectors entailing collaboration with and promotion of indigenous champions, and/or introduction of cohorts of young graduates into a novel meritocratic setting.

9.4 In several sectors, RAMSI funded stopgap hiring procedures, as in the Finance Ministry, with the cost subsequently assumed by SIG. Where new recruits have been brought into work contexts with little or no institutional baggage, successes have often been greatest. There has been considerable drainage of qualified graduates particularly from the Ministries of Justice and Finance, areas where private sector demand for trained public servants can be high. Skill shortages at medium and higher levels within the public service are reinforced by a retirement age of 55, rather than 60. Procedures for exemptions for public servants with particular skills exist, but methods for deliberation to retain indispensible post-holders need improvement. Careful protection of the independence of these processes is particularly important for office-holders in the accountability institutions, whose work duties may at times generate political disfavour.

9.5 In 2006, RAMSI embarked on a major 'capacity building stock take' and civilian programs refocused effort towards 'capacity building', including appointment of designated 'capacity-building' advisors, and a succession of workshops and training programs[1]. In practice, 'capacity building' has meant 'counter parting' arrangements, or training courses either overseas or offered by the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM). As a 2009 review of the PPF pointed out 'a common misconception in development circles is that the presence of a foreign 'advisor' will automatically bring about capacity development', as if through a process of symbiosis[2]. Difficulties with putting in place effective counter parting arrangements have frequently stemmed from poor organisation on the SIG side and/or absence of sufficiently qualified personnel[3]. Relations with RAMSI advisors and/or in line personnel have sometimes been prickly, although oft heard claims that advisors are often given negative reports by local counterparts are exaggerated. Salary differences also, predictably, sparked frictions since incomes, and tax exemptions, used to attract specialised professionals for stints in the Solomon Islands can way exceed local salaries. This, too, has contributed to passivity in the public service, and a preference for sitting back and allowing RAMSI officials to undertake the tasks at hand.

[1] RAMSI, 'Special report: Update on Capacity Development and RAMSI', June 2007.
[2] Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PPF's) Capacity Development of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final report, 29th September 2009.
[3] 'A repeating concern has been raised about the effectiveness of current counterparting arrangements between RAMSI personnel and local DOF (finance) staff. Local staff members feel excluded and RAMSI personnel are not coaching/mentoring or transferring skills to national counterparts', RRRT/UNDP2004, cited in Tim Anderson, Tim Anderson, 'The Limits of RAMSI', Aid Watch, April 2008, p7.

Public Sector Improvement Program

9.6 The Public Sector Improvement Program was initially undertaken under the Ministry of the Public Service, but subsequently shifted to the Public Service Commission. A high-level Pacific Islander was appointed as a mentor in 2012. Initiatives under PSIP began only in 2009 after delays in tendering and related issues[1]. In that year, a new Code of Conduct for public servants was released. A first baseline Human Resource Management (HRM) survey was conducted across SIG. In an effort to increase SIG commitment to public sector reform, a program of 6 monthly rolling work plans was established, involving permanent secretaries and middle-level management[2]. In 2010, the *HR Management Strategy 2010-2015* was completed and a new HR Forum was established[3].

9.7 The Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM) was established shortly after RAMSI's arrival and provided basic entry level and train the trainer courses[4]. Entry requirements were raised in 2009, leading to a decrease in numbers. However, there was a simultaneous increase in the number of women being trained and a better spread of new recruits from the provinces[5]. In 2010, IPAM completed training of 1,424 public servants and put in place a new induction program[6].

10. Civilian programs I: Law and Justice

10.1 In the law and justice sector, the early gains were considerable: many militants gave up their weapons to comply with the terms of the amnesty, despite potentially later facing legal action for crimes committed during 1998-2003. The majority of high-powered weapons out in Solomon Islands communities were surrendered and destroyed. By the end of the first year, there had been 3,390 arrests, 4,900 criminal charges laid and over 400 police officers terminated[7]. Handling court cases against those charged proved a more protracted and difficult task. Successes as regards the development programs have been patchy, as aid-related projects often are.

10.2 The initial phase of RAMSI concentrated on the restoration of the law and order. With the use of overwhelming force, this was accomplished in a relatively short period. Close to 4,000 forearms were collected and destroyed, without any shots being fired. Militant leaders and their followers were in many cases arrested, charged and taken into custody. Controversy was generated by the

---

[1] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007-8, p18.
[2] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2009, p12.
[3] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010, p14; http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2010-c96de4d-dfb3-47c9-a7dd-d480109f051-0.pdf.
[4] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007-08 p 18; http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Perfomance-Report-2007-08-e31d35f8-67e2-483c-b88d-aab01cd11930-0.pdf.
[5] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2009, p12; http://ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2009-c93293d3-abc8-4de7-81fc-e97c13adda0e-O.pdf
[6] Annual Performance Report 2010, p 15.
[7] McDevitt, Ben 2006 'Operation Helpem Fren: A Personal Perspective', in *Australian Army Journal*, 3, (2), 1-18, p15-16.

number of 'big fish' that remained at large including some prominent politicians[1]. This initial phase was effectively carried out by the Police Participating Force, with the remnants of a depleted, demoralised and discredited RSIPF playing a secondary role.

10.3 The resulting trials took well over a year to commence as the justice system was not adequately equipped to deal with the complexity and the volume of the cases. Prosecutors and public solicitors had to be recruited, and the respective offices of the Director for Public Prosecution and the Office of the Public Solicitor better resourced. Judges also had to be appointed given the understandable reluctance of the local judges to preside over these cases. The trials began in 2005 with the prosecution and subsequent conviction of Harold Keke. During *the Tensions*, the courts had continued to function after a fashion (i.e. they remained formally open) but few cases were dealt with. The Solomon Islands Government had little authority, the RSIPF had taken sides with one of the militant factions, and citizens were intimidated. Those actions have continued to haunt the RSIPF and have detracted from meaningful initiatives to reform it (detailed elsewhere in this report).

10.4 The focus then shifted to the bringing to justice of the militants and criminal elements who had been responsible for killings, extortions, violence and sexual abuse of the local population, particularly in Honiara and on other parts of Guadalcanal, Malaita, the Western Province and Choiseul. Attention was devoted to returning the country to normality and re-establishing the operational efficiency of basic institutions, but this came at a price. As one evaluation of law and justice assistance pointed out, 'the purpose of expatriates assuming line functions, as it was in Kosovo and East Timor, was to stabilise the country and ensure some level of law and justice provision. The purpose was not "to develop", for example, the skills of Solomon Island citizens working within law and justice institutions, agencies and other service providers.'[2].

10.5 There was a consensus among those interviewed within the legal profession that the actions taken under the aegis of RAMSI during the initial year were both appropriate and successful[3]. That is also reflected in the assessments made of the intervention both at the time and subsequently. Most believed that the initial concentration of resources in Honiara was both necessary and appropriate for practical reasons. The centre needed to be re-established first before attention to other parts of the country. This approach seems reasonable in light of the fact Honiara and its environs bore the brunt of the trouble during 1998-2003. However, this continuing focus raises profound developmental and policy issues going forward, particularly in relation to the form in which the court system can

[1] The point is well-taken but successful prosecutions require evidence and in the absence of reliable testimony combined with the reluctance of some elements in the RSIPF to pursue investigations there was little point in charging alleged defendants.
[2] *Solomon Islands Case Study: Evaluation of Australian law and justice assistance*, December 2012 21; www.ode.ausaid.gov.au.
[3] i.e. Chief Justice Sir Albert Palmer, Rob Barry, Rodney Kingmele former President Solomon Islands Bar Association, Director of Public Prosecutions Ronald Talasasa, Public Solicitor Douglas Hou and Chief Magistrate (now Justice) Leonard Maina.

be sustained and access to justice ensured for all of the Solomon Islands post RAMSI.

10.6 The disproportionate amount of funds expended in Honiara may be partially explained by its position as the political and economic centre of the Solomon Islands, but it also underscores not only the dichotomies in levels of development between the centre and the periphery, but the wider under-resourcing of the sector as reflected in the chronic inability of the Magistrate's Courts to travel on circuit and the difficulty in filling vacancies in legal positions across the law and justice sector.

10.7 From the vantage of the present, the aftermath of *the tensions* could have allowed for more creative thinking about the challenges of providing a system of justice which was truly national in scope and more economical to sustain[1]. During *the tensions*, most of the country owed their provenance to their rural and subsistence lifestyles. These communities have not been adequately served by the large funds expended on the justice sector. Even prior to *the tensions*, those structures had not adequately catered for the rural population. These systems ultimately serve a relatively small segment of the population. It is not justifiable to assert that the restoration of the institutions of state needed to be accomplished prior to that issue being tackled. After the initial period, both objectives could have been pursued together.

10.8 The 2004-9 period represented the greatest involvement by RAMSI in its efforts to assist the Solomon Islands recover and rebuild after the destruction and devastation wrought by the Tension.

10.9 First, the objective was to build capacity to plan and budget for and implement policies, strategies, structures and infrastructures necessary to meet present and future needs of Solomon Islanders. Second, the objective was to enhance the capacity of the justice sector to introduce new laws, procedures and practices which reflect the contemporary requirements and support the freedom of access of all Solomon Islanders to laws, including statues, civil laws and legal information. Third, it was to contribute to the creation of a safe, stable, and prosperous community through the implementation of collaborative crime reduction, community safety and proactive security measures. Fourth, the aim was to improve the timelines, efficiency and effectiveness of civil and criminal court practices and procedures in the operation of government services. Fifth, it was thought necessary to introduce diversionary practices[2] sentencing options and justice sector procedures to inter alia support imprisonment as a sanction of last resort.

10.10 There was solid progress in terms of timelines and court practices and procedures. Quite apart from the disposal of *the tension* cases in this period, the

[1] Solomon Islands Case Study: Evaluation of Australian law and justice assistance, December 2012 6., 6.

[2] Diversionary practices are the sanctions courts apply as an alternative to custodial sentences particularly in the case of young or first offenders and may be some form of community service or supervised work program.

handling of both civil and criminal cases from filing to decision has been shortened considerably. This is a reflection of the resources and effort invested in proper planning, streamlining court procedures, providing adequate resources to the court registries and the training of staff. The Solomon Islands Courts (Civil Procedures) Rules drafted with adviser support were issued in March 2008 simplifying and modernising resolution of civil cases[1]. The Justice Sector Consultative Committee (JSCC) was reinvigorated in 2009 under the Chief Justice to oversee policy and strategy development, and the Justice Sector Technical Operations Group (JSTOG) was set up to co-ordinate between agencies[2].

10.11 The focus on institutional strengthening during these years has had mixed results. In terms of capacity the High Court comprised a number of expatriate judges and as did the Magistrate's Court. However, both the Offices of Director of Public Prosecutions and the Public Solicitor were localised. The number of expatriate advisers assisting these officers has been gradually reduced as more local professionals have been recruited and trained. By June 2007, expatriate staff in judicial and practitioner positions declined from 35 to 23[3]. This process has not been seamless. The conditions of service of government legal officers remain relatively low compared with opportunities elsewhere and the retention of staff is an issue. The cost of housing is also a concern, but this issue arises throughout the public service. Many legal officers live either in substandard housing or in the squatter settlements of Honiara. As more broadly in the public service, there is also some resentment at the significant gap in salaries and conditions of service between expatriates and locals. This has been sufficient to act as a disincentive to the latter in terms of work.

10.12 The resources provided to the justice system have been directed to providing the infrastructure and resources necessary for the more effective performance and efficient delivery of services. This has been most visible in the construction of courts both in Honiara and beyond, most notably in Auki. In terms of administration, the courts, DPP's Office and PSO have improved their planning capacities by developing their corporate plans and budgetary projections. What remains challenging is the extent to which there is reliance on external funding. It is clearly not sustainable. While there was recognition of this likely future shortfall, the focus was on the challenging task of re-establishing legal structures and delivering services both to other government departments and to the community.

10.13 It is apparent both from the statistics and on the basis of visible evidence that the preoccupation during this period was the *tension* trials[4]. The number of expatriate legal personnel involved in those trials during this period was significant. Apart from the judges and magistrates, there were counsel in both the DPP and PSO's Offices who comprised a significant number of legal personnel in the law and justice sector. In the period 2005-8, there were 109

[1] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007/2008, July 2008, p10.
[2] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010-Final Version 29th March 2011, p5.
[3] RAMSI Annual Performance Report, 2007/2008, p11.
[4] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007/2008, p7.

technical advisers across the sector, reducing to 60 in 2009[1]. In addition, a good portion of the Police Participating Force's expertise, resources and energies were committed to the logistics attendant upon the investigative aspects of *the tension* trials including the preparation of case files and the securing of witnesses, both preparatory activities essential for securing successful outcomes.

10.14 The 2009-13 Partnership Agreement sought to consolidate the gains made in the previous years. It emphasised infrastructure and resourcing, capability building, access to justice, a community justice system and gender. This represented a broader focus than had hitherto been followed. Some five years after the advent of RAMSI, there was more explicit recognition that Solomon Islanders had to be assisted to take charge of their own affairs. One of the objectives espoused under the Agreement was-

> '…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 subsist without RAMSI's future assistance.'

10.15 In terms of the consultative and co-ordinating process with RAMSI, there was general agreement that this was effective, efficient and productive[2]. The JSCC provided a strategic focus for engaging with RAMSI on broad policy concerns related to the law and justice sector. The JSCC ensured consistency and a degree of uniformity in approach. Useful and constructive discussions have focused on greater financial autonomy for the judicial system in controlling its own budget and being able to set its own priorities. Case management and court delays were dealt with more effectively when all sections of the legal sector were represented. Long-term external support was envisaged, enduring at least a decade[3]. There was recognition that while the delivery of services had improved, as discussed above, they were largely confined to Honiara and this needed to be looked at more closely[4].

10.16 The building of courtrooms and chambers for the High Court and refurbishment of the Magistrate's Courts in Honiara has assisted judicial officers to conduct their cases in comfortable and professional surroundings, thereby also benefitting the community. Budgetary constraints are more likely to be tightened after the withdrawal of RAMSI, creating difficulties as regards the refurbishment and maintenance of buildings and facilities.

10.17 The lack of court infrastructure in other parts of the Solomon Islands is not only due to funding issues, but also due to insufficient numbers of judicial officers and support staff willing to deploy outside the capital. The absence of adequate housing is a huge difficulty as is the hardship faced by those deployed outside Honiara. This is compounded by the unavailability of counsel for various

[1] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007/2008, p6 and reducing further to 26 in 2010.
[2] Personal communication CJ Sir Albert Palmer, 19th July 2013; DPP Ronald Talasasa, 22nd July 2013, and Public Solicitor Douglas Hou, 19th July 2013.
[3] Personal communication CJ Sir Albert Palmer, 19th July 2013.
[4] Personal communication DPP Talasasa, 22nd July 2013, and Douglas Hou, 19th July 2013.

reasons from either the DPP's Office or the PSO's Office (or both) to conduct cases. This situation cannot be resolved under the Partnership Framework alone as it touches on policy matters for the Ministry of Justice and related agencies such as the Judiciary, DPP's Office and PSO to determine. The Agreement can only consider issues which have been cooperatively discussed and upon which a consensus has been reached. However, mention has already been made of the JSCC, an initiative of the SIG, and it is acutely aware of the issues and the challenges they pose.

10.18 There have been significant improvements in judicial services. In 2009, a trial took on average nearly 18 months from the point of charging a defendant to trial in the Magistrate's Court, whereas by 2011 it took on average only two weeks. Between 2009 and 2011, 180,350 cases were finalised in the High Court and 437 in the Court of Appeal[1]. That is attributable to a number of factors including better resourcing of support mechanisms, training for judicial staff and improved facilities. Under the Partnership, the assumption is that SIG would not be able to afford the levels of expenditure for the law and justice sector provided by RAMSI. This appears to have been recognised by acceptance that the objectives under the Agreement would not be linked to timelines but would rather be oriented in terms of those goals being achieved. That approach envisaged not so much as open-ended support, but a long-term commitment predicated on the fragility of the Solomon Islands economy and more generally of the state itself. This is reflected in the Delivery Strategy of the Solomon Islands Justice Program (SIJP) July 2013-June 2017

10.19 One of the issues in this process was and remains monitoring and evaluation because progress achieved is incremental. For the expatriate professionals, without more guidance from RAMSI officialdom, it often became a matter of fulfilling set criteria for the sake of doing so – i.e. ticking boxes – rather than actively engaging those being mentored[2]. The recruitment of Pacific Islanders in the DPP and PSO offices together with the Attorney General's Chambers was a positive initiative because they were more culturally attuned in terms of belonging to small close-knit communities where kinship ties are a predominant feature of social life. Consequently, the receptiveness to guidance of their local colleagues was more likely. This Pacific presence is important for two reasons: it provided a more accessible yardstick by which Solomon Islanders could measure themselves; and it leavened the Australian profile of RAMSI. The imperative to give priority to Australians for RAMSI positions was perhaps inevitable, but as the regional power and neighbour Australia's wider interests were served by this cross-pollination of Pacific skills and expertise.

10.20 If capacity building is to remain a viable strategy, it requires proper assessment to allow for a more focused and targeted approach. Previous arrangements where that individual RAMSI personnel offered assessments which were then accepted as a means for determining local skill or capacity levels. In the period since the Partnership Agreement, the visible results of capacity building have been the reduction of RAMSI advisers in the DPP and PSO

[1] *RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report 2011*, p6.
[2] This was evident from interaction with RAMSI personnel from October 2009-2011.

Offices and a more prominent Solomon Islander presence. Both offices have been headed by locals for a number of years. The actual level of expertise is uneven. One of the persistent issues for the two offices is the retention of professional staff, also a difficulty for the Attorney General's Chambers. All offices, but particularly the DPP and PSO offices, have had several vacancies unfilled for long periods. This is related to conditions of service including salary and housing. These issues are a constant across the public service and not confined to the law and justice sect

10.21 In the judiciary, while the High Court is almost fully localised, the Magistrate's Court continues to face serious problems retaining staff Members of the legal fraternity were generally quite dispassionate about the prospect of continuing substantial external support for the law and justice sector. Present levels of assistance amount in excess of 60% of the law and justice sector budget[1]. No external entity can be expected to subsidise the Solomon Islands law and justice sector indefinitely. Such dependence blunts the ability of the local legal system to develop its own capabilities and potential. The fact that the Australian Government has been willing to continuing assistance ought not to dissuade the Solomon Islands Government and policy-makers from rethinking what will constitute 'an effective and affordable' law and justice sector.

10.22 The Magistrate's Courts face serious funding problems and the Local Courts, which once served local communities before the *tension*, have fallen into disuse and are largely defunct. The World Bank through its J4P program has funded extensive and qualitative research into developing local structures to facilitate access to justice.[2] While there is a continuing dialogue with the law and justice sector around these issues, the challenges of incorporating these hybrid and often ill-defined structures within the formal legal system appears to be daunting in its complications. The difficulties are still more severe where the cultural norms are many and varied. The emphasis continues to be on the present hierarchies. The rationale is that a modern legal system is critical for the Solomon Islands in terms of the rule of law and certainty in legal relationships. That is not disputed, but where there are continuing and prevalent issues of funding that are only soluble by external assistance (which of itself is not able to widen access to justice), more creative solutions are called for. In this regard, it is encouraging that the JSCC/JSTOG has developed a framework for incorporating the input of the Ministry of Justice, RSIPF and CSSI in relation to community justice[3]. This is looking at linkages between the formal and informal systems, and how these may be developed in a coherent and systematic way given the plethora of systems which exist at the community level, and the inherent contradictions of trying to create a hybridised structure.

10.23 Women are not visible in the upper echelons of the law and justice system, despite gender equality being a stated objective of the 2009-13 Partnership Agreement and Solomon Islands having ratified the Convention on the

[1] Personal communication Chief Justice Palmer, 19th July 2013.
[2] Allen M, Dinnen S, Evans D, & Monson R, *Justice Delivered Locally Systems, Challenges and Innovations in Solomon Islands*, J4P Research Report The World Bank, July 2013.
[3] *RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010*, p7.

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in May 2002. There are no women as yet on the bench and there is presently only one sitting in the Magistrate's Court[1]. There probably needs to be more in the way of institutional support. Gender mainstreaming only became policy within SIG in 2010-2011[2]. Affirmative measures may need to be considered to promote further female participation. The hesitance in treading on cultural sensibilities is recognised. In this regard, Cabinet initially decided to decline acceptance of the Ministry of Women's report to the UN CEDAW Committee in 2012 without comment. But in order for women to be able to vie for places on the High Court and Magistrate's Court, they need to be supported and encouraged in the judiciary, DPP's Office, PSO', AG's Chambers as well as the private sector. This can be done by enlisting credible male advocates. Further, initiatives such as forming female clusters in the work place, taking account of the additional domestic responsibilities women often have, fostering male/female collaboration and mandating gender training on a continuing basis should be considered[3]. It requires a degree of leadership by those who make decisions because gender balance is not merely an exercise in equal numbers. It is a human rights issue, a resource issue and an access to justice issue. It gives women the confidence to more readily approach and engage with the legal system. The presence of women in numbers is recognition of their ability and worth in society.

10.24 In the RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report 2012/2013, funding for the law and justice sector amounted to A$21.9 million out of a total aid budget of A$78.28 million. Expenditure is premised on the sector relying on donor support for many years and long-term sustainability is acknowledged but an issue for further consideration[4]. How does this accord with one of the stated objectives of the Agreement which envisaged the 'functions of law and justice' inter alia as being 'effective, affordable and have the capacity to be sustained without RAMSI's further assistance'? It may require further thought because the removal of that objective as an ever present and constant priority shapes the manner of policy and decision-making. In the RAMSI 2013 Annual People's Survey 61 per cent of those surveyed wished to strengthen the traditional justice system, 42 per cent wanted to improve the local justice system,[5] and 53 per cent sought better access to the Magistrate's Court[6]. They emphasise the critical importance of improving linkages between the formal and informal justice systems[7].

---

[1] The sole female sits as a Second Class Magistrate. The female Principal Magistrate left the magistracy for private practice.
[2] *RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010*, p7.
[3] A series of declarations and statements by senior Commonwealth judges have recognised and asserted the importance of gender training viz Victoria Falls Declaration of Principles for Promoting the Human Rights of Women 1994, The Georgetown Recommendations and Strategies for Action on the Human Rights of Women and the Girl-Child, Denarau Declaration on Gender Equality, June 1997 and the Pacific Island Judges Declaration on Gender Equality in the Courts July 1997.
[4] Personal communication Chief Justice Palmer 19th July 2013.
[5] *RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report, 2012/2013,* p129.
[6] RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report 2012/2013, p131.
[7] *RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report, 2012/2013,* p9.

10.25 The initial focus of the courts in the first half of the RAMSI decade was the prosecution of the militants in the 'tension' trials. Solomon Islands has since moved on and the 'tension' trials are no longer the spectre they once were as *the tension* recedes into memory. As of April 2014, the situation had not changed from the circumstances reflected in a report prepared for the DPP a year before[1]. Four cases are now before the High Court, 2 cases are off calendar[2] and 2 cases are set down for trial[3]. One case was tried in November 2011 and is awaiting judgment[4]. There are 10 ongoing High Court cases in which warrants of arrest have been issued[5]. No cases have been committed in the Magistrates Court. In addition, there are 17 police cases under investigation but yet to be filed in the Magistrate's Court. Whether these matters will proceed further is an open question. The passage of time dulls witnesses' memories and there exists a reluctance of many to come forward whether out of fear for their personal security or through some connection with the defendant. It appears likely that the 'tension' trials will be all but disposed of by the time the RAMSI drawdown ends in 2017. It will represent the end of the echoing in the courts of a dark and painful period of Solomon Islands history.

10.26 In the period July 2013 to June 2017 the Solomon Islands Justice Program (SIJP) replaces the RAMSI Law and Justice Program[6]. Technical aid and assistance has been transferred from RAMSI to bilateral agencies[7]. Inclusive of the first five years post-RAMSI, a 30 year plus engagement was envisaged by Aus AID with the overarching objective of improved delivery of justice services. Under this rubric, SIJP is working towards these outcomes:

'1. Courts and justice agencies are better able to deliver their core functions;
2. Courts and justice agencies are better able to manage their financial and human resources;
3. Delivery of a range of justice services to rural communities is expanded;
4. Strengthened laws, increased services and focus on violence against women and gender equality in the workplace; and

---

[1] Personal Communication 25th April 2014 Ms Andie Driu, /RAMSI Advisor; Memorandum referenced DPP/5/8 dated 18th February 2013 from E Hartmann, Tension Trial Coordinator/RAMSI Advisor to DPP

[2] 'Off calendar' means they have been taken off the trial list pursuant to a Practice Direction from the bench endorsed by the Chief Justice that any 'tension' trial where the defendant is already serving a term of life imprisonment will not be allocated hearing time ahead of other outstanding criminal trials.

[3] R v Keke (Ogio Pitepite-Vatuloki) CRC 406/08 and R v Keke & Cawa ('7 Novices Abductions') CRC 255/04 have been taken off calendar; R v Cawa, Pitakaka, Keke & Hence ('Prayer Murders') CRC 556/04 and R v Gitou CRC 447/06 have been set down for hearing

[4] R v Kema, Cawa, & Pitakaka tried in November 2011 is awaiting judgment

[5] Rv Samson Leketo (Attempted Murder) CRC 405/08, R v Samson Leketo (Murder) CRC 405/08,R v John Bore (Murder) 405/08, Rv William Hence (Murder) CRC 405/08, R v William Hence (Murder) CRC 556/04, R v William Hence (Abduction/ Aggravated Bodily Harm) CRC 255/05, R v Gedly Isa (Attempted Murder) CRC 407/08, R v Andrew Koria (Murder) CRC 205/09, R v James Salovi (Murder x 4) and R v Edward Sae (Murder of Sir Frank Soaki) CRC 119/03

[6] The Delivery Strategy is underpinned by a Program and Design Document for the RAMSI Law and Justice Program finalised in 2011 (Delivery Strategy Solomon Islands Justice Program July 2013 to June 2017).

[7] Assistance for the 1st year is A$19 million and A$14 million each year to 2017.

5. Improved correctional centre management and sustained focus on rehabilitation'.[1]

These are commendable outcomes but an equally important consideration is affordability and sustainability. The improved delivery of services must be eventually accomplished within the country's means. The better management of financial and human resources needs to be tailored to that end. What this will help encourage and facilitate is a readiness by SIG and its constituent agencies to better prioritise their funding commitments and use of resources. However, this is a responsibility only Solomon Islanders can assume for themselves.

10.27 In the April/May 2014 session of Parliament, the Constitutional Offices (Terms and Conditions of Service) (Judicial Reform) (Amendment) Act and the Constitution (Status of Magistrates) (Amendment) Act were passed. They create a new position of Deputy Chief Justice and include it and magistrates as Constitution office holders. The amendment benefits magistrates by improving their terms and conditions of employment, enabling them to have them adjusted under similar mechanisms which apply to judges. It is hoped that this will go some way to addressing the shortage of magistrates and the resulting problems of making access to justice difficult for people outside Honiara.

10.28 The achievements by RAMSI since the early impressive successes have been less obvious both qualitatively and quantitatively. The conduct of the 'tension' trials in the period 2004-2009 contributed positively to the restoration of confidence in the authority of the government and the rule of law. Only one expatriate remains on the High Court and the positions of DPP and Public Solicitor have been localised.. Since then gains have been modest because of the frequent turnover of technical advisers and the challenge of providing attractive conditions of work. The law and justice sector has been able to demonstrate improvements in the court processes and procedures but services are affected by the vacancies across the sector (particularly in the Magistrate's Court, the DPP's Office and PSO). These issues have in turn affected capacity building. How these issues can be dealt with in ways that allow the least disruption to the operation of the law and justice sector? In the longer term, the key issue is the structure of the law and justice sector and what alternatives are available. These issues might be delayed if SIG and aid donors are willing to contemplate continuing assistance at some level for the long term, but they cannot be put off forever.

10.29 The initial focus of the courts in the first half of the RAMSI decade was the prosecution of militants in the 'tension' trials. Solomon Islands has since moved on and the 'tension' trials are no longer the spectre they once were as the 'tensions' recede into memory. As of June 2014, the situation had changed from the circumstances reflected in a report prepared for the DPP a year earlier in April, 2013[2]. Four cases were originally before the High Court at that time: 2

[1] Delivery Strategy Solomon Islands Justice Program (SIJP) June 3013 to June 2017 DRAFT p v, www.ausaid.gov.au.

[2] Personal communication Ms Andie Driu, RAMSI Advisor DPP's Office, 25th April, 26th June 2014; Internal Memorandum referenced DPP/5/8 dated 18th February 2013 from E Hartmann, Tension Trial Coordinator to DPP.

have since been referred to the Cases Listing Committee for listing for trial[1]; in1 of the 2 other cases set down for trial, a life sentence was imposed on 17th May 2013 and the other is before the Chief Justice for mention on 1st August 2013[2] . One case was tried in November 2011 and judgment delivered on 22nd August 2013[3]. There are 10 ongoing High Court cases in which arrests have been issued[4]. No cases have been committed in the Magistrate's Court. In addition, there are 17 police cases under investigation but yet to be filed in the Magistrate's Court. Whether these matters proceed further is doubtful for the reasons adverted to earlier. It therefore appears likely that the 'tension' trials will be all but disposed of by the time the RAMSI drawdown ends in 2017. It will represent the end of the echoing in the courts of a dark and painful period of Solomon Islands history.

11. Civilian programs II: Economic Governance

11.1 During 2000-2003, the Ministry of Finance (including Treasury) operated in an environment where militant factions exerted considerable control, particularly after the overthrow of the Ulufa'alu government in June 2000. A culture of cronyism and patronage took hold that diminished government revenue, and diverted government expenditures for purposes of political patronage, including politically-triggered payoffs to the militant factions. During 2002-3, civil service salaries were sometimes badly in arrears, and a significant number of ghost names were included on the public sector payroll. In the pre-RAMSI years, the customs authorities regularly granted large exemptions and remissions on import and export duties, with damaging repercussions for government finances[5].

11.2 A major focus of RAMSI has been to restore order to government finances. Since RAMSI's arrival, there have been extensive reforms to procedures and practices at the Ministry of Finance, including Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise, often undertaken by RAMSI in-line or advisory personnel in cooperation with Solomon Islands civil servants. Seventeen overseas government officials were deployed as part of RAMSI's initial Budget Stabilisation Team, including in line positions such as Undersecretary of Finance and Accountant General[6]. A$10 million was injected into the 2004/5 budget to get the wheels of commerce moving[7]. Government accounts were investigated and controls over expenditure gradually improved. New systems were put in place, and the payroll was

[1] R v Keke(Ogio-Pitepite-Vatuloki) CRC406/08 and R v Keke & Cawa ('7 Novices Abductions') CRC 255/04; R v Cawa, Pitepite, Keke & Hence ('Praying Murders') CRC/555/04.
[2] R v Gitoa CRC447/06; R v Cawa, Pitepite & Hence CRC556/04.
[3] Rv Keke, Cawa & Pitakaka CRC 575/04 tried in November 2011 in which life sentences were given the defendants (already serving several life sentences).
[4] R v Samson Leketo (Attempted Murder) CRC 405/08; R v Samson Leketo (Murder) CRC 405/08; R v John Bore (Murder) 405/08; R v William Hence CRC 405/08; R v William Hence CER 255/05; R v Gedley Isa (Attempted Murder) 407/08; R v Andrew Koria CRC 205/07; R v James Salovi (Murder x 4) and R v Edward Sae (Murder of Sir Frank Soaki CRC 119/03.
[5] These were once recorded by Central Bank Quarterly Bulletins.
[6] Colin Johnson, Personal Communication, 10th December 2013.
[7] Colin Johnson, Personal Communication, 10th December 2013.

cleansed. By late 2013, there were still 25 expatriate advisors assisting an overall staff in the Ministry of Finance of 200[1].

11.3 Although criticized by some commentators as encouraging lax financial discipline[2], repayment of debt arrears was necessary before any new lending would be forthcoming from multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank[3]. The debt/GDP ratio has been dramatically decreased across the decade, reaching only 12% by late 2013[4]. Over the decade, there have been substantial increases in government revenue, both entailing improvements in Inland Revenue compliance and the ending of many (but not all) concessions at the Inland Revenue and Customs authority. RAMSI has been much less influential as regards controls on government expenditure and public procurement[5]. By 2014, revenue expansion had reached a plateau, and with the present closure of Gold Ridge it can be expected to fall significantly[6].

11.4 The 2009 Partnership set out to achieve 'broad-based economic growth and a more prosperous society', as well as 'fiscally responsible government which promotes sound economic policies', but it advanced no realistic strategy for achieving these goals. Nor is it obvious what exactly either RAMSI or the SIG could do to achieve at least the former goal. The two outstanding characteristics of economic growth over the decade – the round log export boom and the influx of Chinese retail outlets – were at most only indirectly influenced by RAMSI's presence. With RAMSI assistance, the Ministry of Finance did improve the operating environment, shortening the time taken to start up a business, encouraging foreign investment, and taking steps to restore financial order to pivotal state-owned enterprises, such as the Solomon Islands Electricity Authority. The Ministry of Finance's Economic Reform Unit played an important role behind-the-scenes in sorting out land trusteeship issues that permitted the Malaysian-owned Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd to restart palm oil operations on North Guadalcanal[7]. The resumption of mining at Gold Ridge required behind-the-scenes preparation, particularly as regards political risk insurance, but the St Barbara pull-out in the wake of the April 2014 floods was well known to be a reaction to negative expectations of future profitability.

11.5 Ten years after RAMSI's commencement, the Solomon Islands is 'more prosperous' in the sense of having witnessed positive economic growth, but this has not made up for the losses during the tension years. Nor has growth been 'broad-based', if that is taken to mean equitable or balanced growth across the

---

[1] Shadrach Fanega, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, 10.12.13.
[2] Gustav Sodhi, 'Five out of Ten: A Performance Report on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', *Issue Analysis*, 92, 31st January 2008..
[3] Colin Johnson & Katherine Tuck, 'Solomon Islands Economic Performance: 2003-2012', in *Building a Nation: Ten Years of the Solomon Islands-RAMSI* Partnership, 2013, p42.
[4] Colin Johnson, Personal Communication, 10th December 2013.
[5] Personal Communication, Paula Uluinacewa, Accountant General, 2nd December 2013.
[6] Personal communication, Shadrach Fanega, Permanent Secretary, Finance, 10.12.13; personal communication, Rick Hou, Finance Minister, 22nd June 2014.
[7] See Gilling & Hughes, 'The Economic Reform Unit (ERU)', 2005. See also
Jon Fraenkel, Harry Brock and Matthew Allen, 'The Resumption of Oil Palm Production on Guadalcanal's Northern Plains', *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 25, (1), 2010.

provinces. The results of RAMSI and SIG initiated efforts to trigger economic growth over the decade have been disappointing, but this is largely because not only have they been administratively-led, rather than politically-driven, but also because the elements in the administration pressing for reform have been foreign civil servants or advisors (see Section 14).

11.6 Nor have RAMSI's programs done a great deal to promote 'fiscally responsible government which promotes sound economic policies'. The major success has been on the revenue-raising side, particularly as regards enforcing compliance with Inland Revenue and removing customs revenue remissions and exemptions. On the government expenditure side, the RAMSI years have entailed efforts to ring-fence multilateral and some bilateral donor finance to avoid excessive transfers, in a climate where much other revenue has been expended on constituency development funds, or other similar projects. These were once methods of spending Taiwanese aid but now account for a considerable share of non-Taiwanese government revenue. RAMSI had an extensive presence at the Ministry of Finance, but a very small footprint at the Ministry of National Planning and Aid Coordination, which handles the 'development' or 'capital' budget, previously including Taiwanese aid-funded expenditures and expenditures on constituency development (now transferred to the Ministry of Rural Development)[1].

11.7 The 2009 Partnership set out to 'improve Ministry of Finance and Treasury systems', including installing new payroll and budget management systems, rewriting the financial instructions, upgrading IT systems, and introducing new public sector accounting standards. These are areas where it has been easier to make significant improvements, and make use of specialist expatriate technical advice. The associated legislation – including the 2013 Financial Management Act – has also eased the climate for business, but one Neoclassical critic scorned the result of these types of reform as being to give the country 'the best banking regulations in the world'[2]. There has been much focus on putting in place new systems across the ministry, but less attention to bedding these down, or ensuring that ministry employees are equipped with the skills to keep these functioning in future. Without that, new systems can be just one or two poor appointment decisions away from a major failure, and with such reversals systems can collapse irretrievably[3].

11.8 Efforts were to be made to 'improve performance of state owned enterprises', including Solomon Airlines; Solomon Islands Broadcasting Commission (SIBC); Solomon Islands Post; Solomon Islands Printing; Solomon

---

[1] See Peter Coventry, 'The Hidden Mechanics of Solomon Islands Budget Processes – Understanding Context to Improve Reforms', SSGM Discussion paper, 2009, https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/9928/1/Coventry_HiddenMechanics2009.pdf. Peter Coventry was the one RAMSI advisor deployed to the MDPAC for the three years ending 2008.

[2] Gustav Sodhi, 'Solomon Islands - Resurrected but not Reformed', *Canberra Times*, 4th February 2008.

[3] See, for example, the Australian-funded CSLAP program in the Lands Ministry, which no longer has the system painstakingly put in place over a decade ago (Personal communication, Nesta Maelanga, acting Commissioner of Lands, 5.12.13).

Islands Water Authority (SIWA), and Solomon Islands Electricity Authority (SIEA). The largely imported diesel-dependent SIEA was in a dysfunctional state several years ago, resulting in regular blackouts, due to non-payment of bills, but administration has improved. Losses in 2010 amounting to SI$70 million were reversed with World Bank assistance, and the enterprise showed a SI$53 million profit in 2012[1]. Plans for a hydroelectric dam on the Tina River are expected to deliver cheaper energy in the future[2]. The poor state of SIWA ensures regular urban water cuts, in part due to protracted land disputes with villagers close to the inland Kongulae water source. Urban water infrastructure was badly damaged during the floods of April 2014. Two of the state-owned enterprises – Home Finance Ltd and Sasape Marina – have been privatized, and Solomon Islands Printing has been liquidated.

11.9 The Ministry of Finance has had problems attracting and retaining skilled labour, particularly at middle and upper management levels[3]. As RAMSI's 2011 Annual Program Performance Report indicates, 'conditions of service for skilled positions are not competitive with the private sector, or with other specialised parts of government such as state-owned enterprises or the Central Bank. There is a high level of reliance on advisors to undertake work, and to design and implement reforms. This is ultimately unsustainable'[4]. Local tertiary institutions, such as USP and SICCHE, are unable to generate a sufficient stream of qualified graduates in economics or accounting to fill the gaps[5]. Local staff at the Ministry of Finance emphasise many of the positive changes during the RAMSI years, as regards improvement of processes, instructions and compliance and the halting of irregularities, but they also resent the inflexibility of expatriate advisors. Taking personal telephone calls, or mingling with the public is often frowned upon, and seen as a sign of improper intimacy, rather than being identified as a necessary aspect of a closely-knit society[6]. There has been no reduction in the number of advisors following the 1st July 2013 drawdown, and the broader change has barely been noticed by Solomon Islands Ministry of Finance Staff[7].

11.10 The Customs and Excise Division was able to collect revenues of SBD$796 million in 2013[8] reflecting a large improvement in tariff collections and valuations. This compares favourably with SBD$497million in 2010 and SBD$400 million in 2009[9]. The total revenue for import and export duty in 2006 was SBD$172 million and SBD$220 million[10]. Although Customs had

---

[1] See Solomon Islands-World Bank Group New Country Partnership Strategy Receives Board Endorsement', 13th June , 2013 http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2013/06/13/solomon-islands-world-bank-group-new-country-partnership-strategy-receives-board-endorsement.
[2] *Islands Sun*, 3rd May 2014.
[3] Personal Communication, Shadrach Fanega, PS Finance, 10th December 2013.
[4] *RAMSI Annual Program Performance*, 2011, June 2012.
[5] Shadrach Fanega, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, 10.12.13.
[6] Treasury Division, Focus Group, 30th April 2014.
[7] Treasury Division, Focus Group, 30th April 2014.
[8] Ministry of Finance and Treasury Annual Report 2013 p25
[9] .RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010; http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2010-c96ded4d-dfb3-47c9-a7dd-d48e0109f051-0.pdf p12
[10] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2006-2007; http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2006-07-589ba37c-c0d1-455a-b30e-880828705634-0.pdf p23

arrangements for technical assistance in place with Australian Customs and Border Control prior to the arrival of RAMSI[1], it was not immune to the anarchy and dysfunction which prevailed during *the tensions*. Remissions were widely abused with the result that it was not until 2008/9 that some semblance of order and functionality was restored to the Division. In the period 2013-2017 the division is finalising the drafting of the final draft of the new Customs Act together with its enactment and future implementation; and introducing the ASYCUDA (Automated Systems for Customs Data) data entry system to update its information system[2]. Both initiatives will require continued external technical support into the future.

11.11 Under section 15 of the FIA Act, RAMSI was given remissions on customs, duties and taxes or any other charge on equipment and other supplies required for a public purpose. RAMSI personnel were similarly entitled to remissions for personal effects. Initially, there was some confusion over the position of third parties who were suppliers of logistics to RAMSI. This was resolved after lengthy consultations with the Office of the Special Coordinator, where as a general rule if a particular item, equipment or vehicle was to be used exclusively or largely by RAMSI the remission would be granted. In all cases authorisation by designated staff of the Office of the Special Coordinator was required[3]

11.12 The Economic Reform unit, initially established in 2004, brought five RAMSI advisors together with five RAMSI staff, to provide government with policy advice on ways to generate economic growth, and raise incomes. It also provides a link to the multinational institutions, and plays a key role in generating legislation. For example, it played a central role in changing foreign investment regulations, and it also laid the path for the reactivation of the Gold Ridge mine on central Guadalcanal and the resumption of palm oil operations on the northern plains under the Malaysian-owned Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd (GPPOL). In 2012, the ERU had five permanent staff, six graduates under the RAMSI graduate program and five RAMSI advisors[4].

11.13 Efforts to tackle corruption in the public sector through an anti-corruption task force need to be revitalized, and consideration should be given to forming an Independent Anti-Corruption Taskforce, with powers of investigation. RAMSI's pressure in this regard barely resonated with the SIG leadership both at the political and senior government levels. While corruption is a serious impediment to advancing the public good, it has to be confronted in a way that is cognisant of, but not beholden to, local sensibilities. Such an approach calls for a degree of flexibility in relation to elements of the 'wantok' system which has some positive features.

11. 14 Responsibility for programs under the economic governance 'pillar' of RAMSI have now been transferred, and are henceforth to be handled as bilateral

[1] Personal communication Mr Nathan Kama Comptroller of Customs 17th June, 2014.
[2] Personal communication Nathan Kama, 17.6.14.
[3] Personal communication Mr Nathan Kama 17.6.14/
[4] Ministry of Finance & Treasury, *Annual Report, 2012*. p35; James Gilling & Tony Hughes, 'The Economic Reform Unit (ERU), 2005.

aid programs principally conducted by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Overseas Development Aid Group within the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (formerly NZ Aid).

12. Civilian programs III: Machinery of Government

12.1 Machinery of Government represented the third pillar of RAMSI's intervention in the Solomon Islands. Its 2009 objective was 'a government administration that is strategic, professional, transparent and accountable in the delivery of services and priority programs'[1]. The purpose was to engage in 'Nation Building' through rebuilding 'the essential machinery of government'[2].

12.2 This was potentially the most ambitious of RAMSI's overarching 'pillars', and could in theory have encompassed programs relating to almost *any aspect* of government, both at central and local level[3]. In practice, not all the originally envisaged programs were fully operationalized. For example, the intended work with the Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet was from the start restricted, and potentially raised sensitivities about sovereignty. Other areas, such as gender, PFNet and public sector housing[4], emerged or fell by the wayside in response to changing priorities in Canberra or Honiara. Throughout, there was a focus on core accountability institutions – including the Office of the Auditor General, Parliamentary Support Services, and particularly later in the decade, the Leadership Code Commission and Ombudsman. Electoral reform, and the Office of the Supervisor of Elections, were a major focus of attention particularly in the run up to the 2006 and 2010 elections, although notably the most widely urged reform (introduction of Australian-style preferential voting) did not find official Australian government favour because of cost considerations.

12.3 The results under the 'Machinery of Government' pillar are mixed with the Office of the Auditor General registering impressive performance and achievements in terms of its oversight functions, and other departments mostly having limited improvements in capacity and performance. The reasons are many and varied. Overall, the challenges of rebuilding institutions and reforming a work environment that was significantly different from the Australian context, which had functioned at low levels of efficiency prior to *the tensions*, were greater than originally envisaged.

12.4 A package of 'interim' assistance was launched in March 2004, aimed at improving effectiveness, accountability, and 'capacity' of government, with one major objective being to 'improve cabinet processes and procedures, including

[1] SIG-RAMSI Partnership Framework Agreement 2009.
[2] Office the Special Coordinator, RAMSI Factsheet, 200 days Factsheet.
[3] Until recently, for example, it included a Provincial Government Strengthening Program.
[4] The Solomon Islands Government Housing Management Project was put together in response to a request from Prime Minister Kemakeza for aid to alleviate the 'impact of scarce and poor quality housing on service delivery in the provinces', a problem believed to cause, for example, high rates of absenteeism due to malaria infection (see 'Government Housing Management and Policy', Building Post-Crisis Capacity: Cases from the Solomon Islands, ND).

through the provision of high level advice and equipment'[1]. Programs entailed areas such as the offices of parliament, the Auditor-General's office, the Public Service Commission. There was an early emphasis on efforts to tackle corruption, and an anti-corruption taskforce was established under Dr Sikua's government. Early on, there was an emphasis on getting behind 'local champions', influenced by the British aid agency DFiD's then fashionable 'drivers of change' approaches[2]: 'agendas are formed within the Solomon Islands system and then encouraged to grow and develop in an organic way'[3]. The approach lent heavily on local leaders such as Speaker Sir Peter Kenilorea and Auditor General Floyd Augustine Fatai. After some initial enthusiasm, the MOG pillar became a rather loose collection of unconnected programs that did not fit under other 'pillars' (including ICT support, provincial government strengthening, assistance to the government's housing management program, parliament, Auditor General's Office, Ombudsman, and the Public Sector Improvement program)[4].

12.5 In the later years, the MOG pillar faced criticism. For example, the 2010 annual RAMSI report mentioned 'diminishing returns on investment' in MOG, and activities under this header were defined as 'problematic' by the Prime Minister in 2008[5]. Some of this was unfair, and neglected some considerable success stories amongst the MOG programs.

Office of the Auditor General

12.6 Soon after RAMSI's commencement, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) – one of the government's critical oversight institutions – received considerable Australian assistance. In 2003, the office had only two auditors. A priority was therefore extensive training of local staff. Being a discrete unit eased that focus on training and improving local forensic and analytical skills and capacities. The two senior Solomon Islanders who headed OAG during much of the RAMSI decade were highly competent professionals[6]. Pursuant to statutory responsibilities and functions, the office was able to elicit from government ministries and departments the requisite information to encourage a more accurate accounting of government expenditure. In 2006, the OAG issued General Audit Reports for the period 2002-2006[7]. In October 2007 OAG issued 'An

[1] RAMSI, 'RAMSI's First Year', p7.
[2] ODI, 'Mapping Political Context: Drivers of Change', January 2009, http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/5399-drivers-change-dfid-doc.
[3] Peter Morgan, Reflections on RAMSI and Capacity Development', AusAID, May 2007, p23.
[4] See Dawn Casey's 'Machinery of Government' mousepad.
[5] Emmot, Sue Barcham, Manuhuia & Kabutaulaka, Tarcisius, 'Annual Performance Report 2010: A Report on the Performance of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands', 21st March 2011, pii. 'In this respect, I reiterate, Mr Speaker, that the policy statement of May 2003 specified the activities of the visiting contingent in the restoration of law and order and security through three pillars, which are law and order, economic reform and machinery of government. Mr Speaker, the first two as you know were specifically defined and identified but the third was only mentioned as peripheral support to service delivery. The assistance under this pillar has not been discussed extensively and most of what has taken place is not guided by any instrument and has been problematic in many ways. (Hansard, 24th July 2008 http://www.parliament.gov.sb/files/hansard/8th_session/8th_meeting/Hansard-24.07.08.pdf).
[6] Augustine Fatai and Edward Ronia.
[7] http://www.oag.gov.sb/files/reports/2006/OAG%20Annual%20Report%202002-2006.pdf.

Auditor General's Insights into Corruption in Solomon Islands Government'[1]. The office has also issued Annual Reports for 2007[2], 2009[3] and 2010[4]. In 2009, OAG produced audited government accounts within parliamentary timelines for the first time since independence in 1978. The same year all provincial government accounts were audited. OAG has also produced a plethora of reports in particular spheres of government activity[5].

12.7 However, this vastly improved efficacy has been blunted by the inability and/or lack of political will of Parliament to respond and act upon the OAG Reports, a point that was highlighted in the recommendations of the Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee Report on RAMSI and the FIA Notice. Measures are also required to protect the OAG from vulnerability to political pressures.

Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

12.8 RAMSI's initiatives in the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OPMC) have been limited due to political sensitivities, and because of political reluctance to allow the mission to assume a substantial role close to the heart of government. RAMSI technical advisers felt they were operating in a dual system where they were less effective, while OPMC officers distrusted RAMSI advisors believing they were primarily answerable to Canberra. There has been resistance to introduction of systems that would lessen the discretionary scope of the OPMC. In 2010, assistance was provided for the updating of policy manuals but there was little support from staff[6]. Several political advisors were appointed following the 2010 elections because of the lack of trust in the willingness of public servants to implement the new political agenda. This meant all vacant positions were to be advertised with open competition for the first time, an important factor in removing political interference in the recruitment process. The RAMSI Annual Program Performance Report 2012-13[7] omits mention of OPMC. During Nicholas Coppell's tenure as Special Coordinator, RAMSI briefings to Cabinet were halted.

Ombudsman's Office

12.9 Even after RAMSI's arrival, the Ombudsman's Office remained poorly funded and institutionally weak. The office was established in 1981, and was

---

[1] Office of the Auditor General, Solomon Islands Government, Office of the Auditor General Annual Report (2007).

[2] http://www.oag.sb/files/reports2008/OAG%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%202007%20September%202008.pdf.

[3] http://www.oag.gov/sb/files/reports/OAG%ANNUAL%20REPORT%202009.pdf

[4] http://www.oag.gov.sb/files/reports/2011/OAG_ANNUAL_REPORT_2010.pdf.

[5] http://www.oag.sb; between 2005-6 10 'special' reports were tabled in Parliament covering the period 2001-2004.

[6] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010 http://ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2010-c9bded4d4d-dfb3-47c9-a7dd-d48e0109f051-O.pd.f

[7] http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/131002-Regional-Assistance-Mission-Solomon-Islands-Annual -Program-Performance-Report-20123-2aO1177f-c45a-4726-8679-589695203b12-O.pdf

initially located in the Prime Minister's Office[1]. Activities were minimal during *the tensions*, but a single RAMSI advisor was deployed to work across the oversight institutions in 2003. Little work was completed over 2003-2008. After a hiatus of five years, it produced its first annual report in 2008[2]. RAMSI provided a technical adviser in 2008 to assist in reducing the backlog of complaints and to finalise outstanding cases. The program sought to enhance cooperation between the Office and other agencies, improve accessibility for citizens in the provinces, and assembled a three-year 'strategic ombudsplan'[3]. Since 2005, the Ombudsman's Office has forged and cultivated links with its Australian Federal counterpart, and there has been RAMSI funding for overseas training at the Commonwealth Ombudsman Office[4]. The role of advisors both in the Ombudsman's Office and in the LCC has been scaled back during the drawdown.

12.10 From an exceptionally low base in 2006, the performance of the Office has improved. Special reports for the periods July –November, August-December 2008 and January-June 2009 have been completed, and 80 per cent of backlogged cases resolved[5]. The Ombudsman issued three special reports on education and management services in 2012. In 2010 the Ombudsman moved into a new office complex built under the RAMSI program together with the Leadership Code Commission. RAMSI has also supplied equipment, such as photocopiers. Sixty per cent of the work of the Ombudsman relates to civil servants complaints about human resources questions[6]. Lack of public awareness of its role remains a concern because it inhibits the public from reporting alleged government malfeasance. Funding constraints continue to affect capacity and outreach particularly in the provinces. Other agencies are often hostile to scrutiny owing both to an unresponsive work culture and the broader political environment.

Leadership Code Commission (LCC)

12.11 Under the Leadership Code Commission (Further Provisions Act) 1999, the LCC is mandated to establish and maintain a Register of Leader's Interests and to investigate offences related to abuse of office. As with the other oversight institutions, little was achieved during *the tensions*. The Commission started meeting more regularly in 2006[7]. By the end of 2007, more than 100 cases were being actively managed, the backlog of unmanaged cases cleared and average

[1] Jo Porai, Ombudsman, Personal Communication, 55th December, 2013.
[2] Covering the period 1 September 2006 to 31 July 2008 http://www.paclii.org/sb/cases/SBOM/2008/15.pdf.
[3] http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/pges/publications-and-media/reports/annual/ar2008-09/References/Features/04_solomon.html.
[4] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2012-13.
[5] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2009 http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2009-c93293d3.abc8-4de7-81fc-c97d13cddaOe-O.pdf.
[6] Jo Porai, Ombudsman, Personal Communication, 5.12.13.
[7] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2006-07 http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2006-07589ba37c-cOd1-455a-b3oe-880828705134-O.pdf p18

investigation times were reduced from 7-8 months to around 3 months.[1] An Integrity Group Forum comprising Solomon Island officials from other oversight agencies was formed to cooperate more closely on mutual concerns[2]. A more transparent process has been introduced for hearings[3].

12.12 Although the office was functional by 2008, and politicians did often submit confidential returns more regularly, compliance in other respects was limited. In the latter part of 2009, the LCC issued over 800 letters to leaders, and the Register of Leader's Interests was used for the first time since independence in 1978[4]. In 2010, some 400 fines were imposed on leaders who had not complied with procedures for filing returns[5]. There was a setback in 2010, due to a gap between the retirement of commissioners (May 2010) and the appointment of new appointees. (November 2010). No cases were disposed of during that period. The LCC has since resumed its activities, but effectiveness is limited due to poor compliance particularly by MPs. Fines remain derisory and offer little deterrence. Custodial sentences need to be considered to enforce leader's responsibilities and the Act. The draft of a new Leadership Code was prepared in 2013, and remains under consideration.

Gender

12.13 Under the 2009-13 Partnership, gender was to be a 'cross cutting issue' affecting all of RAMSI's programs, encouraging gender mainstreaming initiatives. There has been a concerted campaign against violence against women, known to be endemic in Solomon Islands as in Papua New Guinea. In practice, programs have centred on the Ministry of Women, Social Affairs and Youth and a major focus of attention has been lobbying for temporary special measures to increase women's representation in parliament. No women were elected to the 50-member parliament in either 2006 or 2010[6]. Only a very few women have seats on the provincial councils. The 2006-10 campaign for greater equity was overly dependent on collaboration between the Ministry, RAMSI and UNDP and the National Council of Women. Efforts to persuade the Sikua government caucus to back ten reserved seats for women, one for each province, were ultimately unsuccessful. Despite evidence of broad popular support for greater women's political participation[7], the proposed reform was never brought before parliament. Nor were other effective strategies to focus political attention on the dearth of women in decision-making bodies pursued. The incoming 2010 Government was still less enthusiastic about affirmative action than its

[1] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007-08 http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/RAMSI-Annual-Performance-Report-2007-08-e31d35f8-67e2-483c-b88d-aa8801cd1193-0.pdf p19.
[2] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2007-08 p20.
[3] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2009.
[4] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010, p13.
[5] RAMSI Annual Performance Report 2010, p17
[6] Since independence in 1978, there have been only two women elected to Parliament. Hilda Kari served two terms before *the tensions* and Vika Lusibaea was elected in a 2012 by-election to fill a vacancy in the North Malaita constituency caused by the conviction, and resulting disqualification, of her husband Jimmy 'Rasta' Lusibaea.
[7] See RAMSI People's Surveys.

predecessor. Women nevertheless occupy some of the most senior positions in government, demonstrating a competence that could and should translate into participation in political decision-making.

Parliament Support Services

12.14 The RAMSI/UNDP Parliament Support Services project is widely regarded as one of the success stories. The project, which commenced in 2001, pre-dated RAMSI and had the initial advantage of strong commitment by both the Speaker and Clerk[1]. An expatriate institutional strengthening advisor, with experience working in the New South Wales parliament, adapted well to the local setting. The project was initially able to employ a new cadre of graduate staff. Many of these subsequently departed to other professional careers, but continuity was sustained by successful replacement. Offering salaries slightly above those available elsewhere in the civil service was one key to success, and another was the creation of a meritocratic environment. Hansard was made available electronically[2], and a functioning library was established and regularly used by MPs. The quality of advice to the Speaker was greatly enhanced, thus improving the conduct of parliament. The committee system – which was barely functional in the 1990s – became a regular fixture in the parliamentary calendar, with proceedings often broadcast on national television and radio.

12.15 The Offices of the Speaker and Clerk of Parliament is now largely funded by the Public Service Commission, and the need for donor support has diminished. The $1.5 million final phase of the externally funded program ends in 2015[3]. The office is exclusively staffed by indigenous personnel, including a local UNDP advisor. As with the other oversight institutions, there needs to be greater attention to ring-fencing staffing, promotion and budget decisions relating to the parliamentary support services from political interference.

Electoral System Strengthening Program

12.16 RAMSI assistance to the Electoral Commission continued activities in the pre-RAMSI era. As noted previously, many RAMSI officials saw adoption of an Australian-style preferential voting system as a desirable reform, but the Australian government was reluctant to pay for such a reform ahead of the 2006 or 2010 elections, and in both cases recommended delay. The experience in neighbouring Papua New Guinea (at the 2007 and 2012 elections) does not encourage optimism that the introduction of such a system in Solomon Islands would substantially improve electoral accountability, or diminish irregularities. This may help to explain why, since 2010, enthusiasm for the introduction of limited preferential voting has notably waned in Solomon Islands.

---

[1] Speaker Sir Peter Kenilorea retired in 2010. Clerk Taeasi Sanga has played a central role in the success of the initiatives in the parliamentary support services. See 'Parliamentary Strengthening', Building Post-Crisis Capacity: cases from the Solomon Islands, Machinery of Government, [Unpublished], ND.

[2] http://www.parliament.gov.sb/index.php?q=node/288.

[3] Personal Communication, Taeasi Sanga, 31.7.13.

12.17 The major electoral reform introduced ahead of the 2006 election was the shift from a multiple to single ballot box system. The previous multiple ballot box system was open to abuse. Voters were able to carry ballots out of the polling station, and sell them to candidates' agents. The new system was introduced satisfactorily in 2006 and employed again in 2010[1]. It is also now used at the provincial government level[2].

12.18 The most significant problem identified in election observation reports on the 2006 and 2010 elections relates to the quality of the electoral rolls and voter registration. The SIEC is presently introducing biometric voter registration ahead of the 2014 general election, entailing thumbprints and photographic neck and head shots to prevent duplication of voter registrations[3]. The technology is purchased at a cost of SI$21 million from a Canadian company, Electoral Services International which has supplied a similar system to Fiji.

13. Office of the Special Coordinator

13.1 The position of Special Coordinator was intended to bridge RAMSI's civilian and security sector programs, and draw these under unified and coordinated control. The RAMSI treaty spelt out that:

> 'The head of the Visiting Contingent shall be a person nominated by the Government of Australia, in consultation with the Government of the Solomon Islands. The head of the Visiting Contingent shall have responsibility-subject to any arrangements between Assisting Countries, for leading and managing the Visiting Contingent and for related liaising with the Government of Solomon Islands and Assisting Countries'[4].

Alexander Downer, Australian Foreign Minister at the time of the commencement of RAMSI, described the Special Coordinator's role as entailing an 'oversight' role ('overseeing the implementation of the strengthened assistance program to Solomon Islands')[5]. From 2006 onwards, Australian foreign ministers have depicted the role as providing 'overall coordination and strategic direction of RAMSI's program of assistance in Solomon Islands'[6]. This job description has continued, despite appointment at a less senior level in DFAT[7].

---

[1] See the Pacific islands Forum, report on the Solomon Islands 2006 election, available http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/Forum%20election%20observation%20report%20Solomon%20Islands%2020061.pdf.
[2] Personal communication, Phil Whelan and Walter Rigamoto, RAMSI advisors, electoral strengthening project 13th December, 2013..
[3] Personal Communication, Walter Rigamoto & Phil Whelan, 13.12.13.
[4] RAMSI Treaty.
[5] Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer, Media Release FA91, 22nd July 2003.
[6] Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer, Media Release, 19 October 2006; Foreign Minister Stephen Smith, media release, 21st October 2008. Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, Media Release, Canberra, 23rd February 2011.
[7] Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, Media Release, Canberra, Media release, 8th November 2013.

13.2 The idea of a position designated 'Special Coordinator' stemmed from Kosovo and travelled via East Timor to Solomon Islands, though in both of those countries the role was that of a 'Special Representative', emphasising the line of accountability to the United Nations[1]. In Kosovo and East Timor, what had to be coordinated were multiple contributing nations, as well as civilian, policing and military operations. In Solomon Islands, the major responsibilities entailed coordinating different aspects of the mission; civilian, military and policing, as well as managing public perceptions. The initial positioning of the Office of the Special Coordinator at Leilei, on the western side of Honiara, reinforced the focus on the civilian 'pillars'. By contrast, the PPF and CTF, after brief experiments with bases at Henderson Airport and at the Rove police HQ, were mostly accommodated at the Guadalcanal Beach Resort base. In 2009, the office of the Special Coordinator was moved to the Guadalcanal Beach Resort, where the main body of PPF and CTF personnel were located.

Table 5; *RAMSI Special Coordinators, 2003-14*

Nick Warner	July 2003 – August 2004
James Batley	August 2004 – November 2006
Tim George	November 2006 – December 2008
Graeme Wilson	January 2009 –March 2011
Nicholas Coppel	March 2011 –November 2013
Justine Braithwaite	November 2013 – present

13.3 The DFAT submission to the 2007 Senate inquiry into Australia's involvement in Peacekeeping Operations described the role as an in-country articulation of an 'integrated, whole of government approach' centred on Canberra:

> 'A strong in-country coordination mechanism, the Office of the Special Coordinator, was created at an early stage, with the position and powers of the Special Coordinator ratified by the Prime Minister. The mission head – a senior DFAT official, the Special Coordinator – has a comprehensive, overall leadership and coordination role. The Special Coordinator has responsibility for all aspects of the mission, including providing strategic direction on policing, military and development aspects of assistance. This role is supported by a Deputy Special Coordinator (a senior official from NZ), an Assistant Special Coordinator (a senior official from Fiji) and three other principals (the Development Co-coordinator, Commander Participating Police Force and Commander Combined Task Force)'[2].

[1] Chesterman, S. *You the People*, p 63; Nicolas Lemay-Hébert, 'Coerced Transitions in Timor Leste and Kosovo: Managing Competing Objectives of Institution-Building and Local Empowerment', *Democratization*, 19, (3), 2012, p469.
[2] Submission, DFAT, Senate Inquiry into Australia's involvement in Peacekeeping Operations, 2007,

13.4 Operational decisions were taken separately by the Commander PPF, and the Commander CTF without day-to-day direction from the Office of the Special Coordinator. The Special Coordinator did not have *command* of either of the two security forces[1]. Nevertheless, the military saw the Special Coordinator's office as playing an important role in controlling the 'information environment':

> 'The information environment in the Solomon Islands was controlled through the Office of the Special Coordinator of RAMSI. DFAT personnel had to approve all media contact from RAMSI, but there was no requirement for information operations to be conducted in order to support a campaign plan. From a military planning perspective, more work needs to be done to educate other government agencies about the benefits of developing a campaign plan that is supported by a communications strategy. The benefit of a communications strategy is that it can contribute to the task of influencing the perceptions of the population in the theatre of operations and, also, of the general public in Australia'[2].

13.5 RAMSI's key coordination mechanisms, once up and running, centred on Canberra. In the initial phase, under Nick Warner, there was considerable autonomy and even accountability to Canberra was limited[3]. Later, more extensive controls were put in place, but lines of accountability remained primarily bilateral throughout the decade. Even when Forum involvement increased, after establishment of the Ministerial Standing Committee and the Forum Representative to RAMSI and SIG (as part of a 'triumvirate' including the Special Coordinator and the SIG Permanent Secretary for RAMSI) in 2008, the Canberra-RAMSI axis remained the central focus as a result of Australia's predominant financial role in the venture.

13.6 The role of the Special Coordinator focussed largely on the civilian programs, and media coordination. Since the mission rested centrally on consent, devoting such substantial resources to public relations and community outreach was questionable. This triggered some objections from local politicians, church leaders and civil society activists[4]. In fairness, RAMSI officials regularly felt obliged to correct misinformation and myth-making (in a climate where rumours can spread swiftly on the coconut wireless) that might potentially have significantly undermined the security situation. However, RAMSI claims of its own unambiguous success, and relentless cultivation of a positive image of itself,

---

[1] The Australian Prime Ministers letters of appointment to the special coordinators specifies that they did not have *command* of either the PPF or the CTF (Personal Communication, James Batley, 17th June 2014).

[2] Hutcheson, John. "Helping a Friend: An Australian Military Commander's Perspective on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands." Australian Army Journal, 2, (2), 2005, p51.

[3] Personal Communication, Nick Warner, FFA. 23.7.2013.

[4] See 'Solomon Islands Prime Minister Stops RAMSI Outreach', *Solomon Star*, 13th March, 2007. Bishop of Malaita Terry Brown reported in 2005 'A RAMSI Staff phoned me to tell me that RAMSI had written a church service for the churches in the Solomons to use to thank God for RAMSI on its third anniversary and said that he hoped I would use it. That seems to me going over the line'. The Bishop argued that 'engaging in a constant public relations campaign to try to prove to the Solomon Islands that RAMSI is the best thing since sliced bread' (seminar at SSGM, ANU, Canberra, July 2005).

was often excessive and unnecessary in light of the enormous and continuing support it enjoyed as reflected in the RAMSI Annual People's surveys.

13.7 We think it inappropriate – for example – for a RAMSI Special Coordinator to offer the verdict that 'by universal acclaim' the mission 'has been a success'[1]. This is not simply factually incorrect (there were dissenting voices). It also misrepresents the predominant view at senior levels in the Solomon Islands government, amongst civil society activists, and amongst scholars who have analysed the RAMSI experience, most of whom offer a more nuanced interpretation – recognising some genuine successes, but also pointing out some weaknesses both in the architecture of the mission and its practical implementation.

13.8 A connected point has to do with the management of information flows, and the transparency of the mission. Over the decade, a substantial share of the aid package was devoted to commissioning consultancy reports of various hues, entailing studies of social, economic and political conditions in Solomon Islands. Many of these were never publicly released, often because of protracted internal processes required by AusAID, or DFAT, before circulation could be sanctioned, or due to a desire to avoid public association with reports not officially approved, or simply because priorities changed. Nevertheless, such reports were often clandestinely circulated, entailing leaks mainly to the expatriate staffed bilateral and multilateral organisations represented in Honiara, though never reaching the public record, and therefore mostly unreported in the media. Commissioned reports were usually unreleased if deemed off message, or if critical of aspects of the mission[2]. These reports were for the most part funded by the taxpayers of Australia, and the failure to release these publicly was entirely counterproductive from the standpoint of both knowledge-based policymaking and stimulating well-informed public debate. Their funding also figured as 'aid' in the OECD aid statistics[3]. Nevertheless, the findings in such reports were widely used to inform official speeches, and to deny or critique local interpretations of the repercussions of the RAMSI operation[4].

---

[1] http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/Rebuilding-a-Nation-RAMSI-EBook-185ca1c0-4b11-4ea0-86ac-eb0110e15b66-0.pdf. This claim features right at the start of the glossy RAMSI ten-year commemoration book, and is the first line of the message from the Special Coordinator. It is far too self-congratulatory, particularly for a statement coming from a civil servant in charge of that same mission.

[2] For example, the 'True Cost of Policing' report, and the 2009 Independent Review of RSIPF were never officially released. The 'Drawdown Strategy' carries the warning that this was 'a confidential document intended for the recipient only. It should not be distributed to any third party without prior written permission of the RAMSI Commander PPF' (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, Drawdown Strategy 2013-2017). Over the decade, RAMSI officials themselves regularly leaked such documents, often with messages such as 'make sure you don't say you got it from me'.

[3] http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/. What counts as DAC-able aid is a major focus of both the Australian and New Zealand governments.

[4] For example, claims that RAMSI officials renting private accommodation were inflating local accommodation prices and squeezing out middle class Solomon Islanders were contested with reference a report that was never released publicly. We requested the report from RAMSI, and were provided with a copy, for which we are grateful. Another report, alleged to be critical of the AFP's role within the PPF was suppressed (RAMSI, Participating Police Force, 'Independent Review of the RAMSI Participating Police Force's (PDF) Capacity Development of the Royal

13.9 On the Solomon Islands government side, a report initially commissioned under the Sogavare government on the 2006 riots was never publicly released. It was only completed once the Sikua government was in office, and the official statement declined to release the full report on the grounds that it should not be read by those with 'unguided minds'[1]. Another such report was that of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a monumental five-volume report full of exceptionally-valuable detail about the history of the *tensions*, which we recommend be released to the public. Over the RAMSI decade, both Canberra and Wellington have regularly – and quite rightly – pressed the SIG to exhibit greater transparency, but the same standards have not always been applied internally.

14. The RAMSI Package: Cherry-Picking and Salami-Slicing

14.1 From the start of the mission, the Australian government insisted on combining the non-security elements of RAMSI together with its core policing and military functions. Australian Prime Minister John Howard stressed that he was offering an 'all or nothing' approach that would entail deployment of expatriate personnel to the Finance Ministry, and require access to financial records[2]. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer took the view that it would be necessary to 'completely redesign the place'[3]. There would be an effort to radically 're-engineer' the Solomon Islands Government to stamp out corruption, and trigger economic growth. Any resistance would be condemned as the self-interested response of corrupt elites eager to revert to the pre-RAMSI culture of patronage.

14.2 Resistance predictably emerged quickly, usually in the shape of claims that RAMSI was trampling upon Solomon Islands culture. There was widespread resentment across the Public Service at having to adopt external practices that had little regard for the local context and environment. The 2004 report of the 'Cabinet Committee to Review "Intervention Task Force Report on RAMSI"' claimed that RAMSI's Ministry of Finance deployment had 'caused undesirable and unnecessary delays to the delivery of goods and services', wanted RAMSI personnel out of line positions, and insisted that all reporting to Canberra be made available also to Cabinet. It argued that RAMSI should be 'confined to its original mandate of security and civic order and economic recovery', and that the Ministry of Finance deployment should be 'scale[d] down immediately' until a 'total withdrawal in mid 2005'[4].

14.3 After the Sogavare government came to office in 2006, Downer criticized efforts to 'cherry-pick' only parts of RAMSI and emphasised that this was a 'take it or leave it' package:

Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Final Report, 29th September 2009'. Honiara, Participating Police Force, RAMSI, 2009).

[1] Solomon Islands Government Statement, in 'Commission of Inquiry into the Honiara 2006 Civil Unrest in Honiara', p11.

[2] Jon Fraenkel, *The Manipulation of Custom*, p165.

[3] See Braithwaite *et al*, *Pillars and Shadows*.

[4] 'Report of the Cabinet Committee to Review "Intervention Task Force Report on RAMSI"', December 2004, p13, p16.

> 'RAMSI is an integrated package and we're not going to have RAMSI salami sliced or neutered in any way in delicate areas like improvement in the operation of public finances in the Solomon Islands … We won't have RAMSI, in other words, sliced up so that some of the more effective areas of RAMSI dealing with the fight against financial corruption, the need for integrity within the legal system, that they must remain in place, otherwise the whole program will fail.'[1].

14.4 Australian-favoured methods of public sector management, governance reform, liberalisation and de-regulation were thus offered as the price to be paid by Solomon Islanders if they wanted the policing and justice ministry assistance to restore the rule of law. It was not easy, after that insistence, to depict the subsequent post-2007 cycle of Australian programming as a 'partnership', reflecting the new priorities and moral compass of the incoming Labor government under Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. Indeed, the description of these programs as a 'partnership' entailed more wishful thinking than meaningful cooperation, for reasons that are not well understood on either side. Few Solomon Islanders noticed the difference between the Australian Labor and Coalition approaches to engagement with their country. Nor was the difference that great, despite the ideological gulf on domestic Australian affairs and on commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

14.5 As indicated in Section 4, the security aspects of the mission were immensely well-received, and the reaction against the governance and economic reforms was not a broadly popular-based resistance. Nevertheless, to force these upon the recipient nation, as the price to pay for security assistance, was doomed to an inevitable failure, and none of the later warm words about 'partnership' could rectify this. A radical reformist government of some sort may be what the Solomon Islands urgently needs, but that cannot be imposed from outside. It can only come from within, with a political commitment calibrated to deal with any associated negative repercussions. The fate of the original objective of 'downsizing the public service', as spelled out in RAMSI's 2003 'Framework for Strengthened Assistance to Solomon Islands', shows just how misguided was the strategy of externally enforcing a liberal reform package. In practice, the public sector doubled in size over the RAMSI decade, from 8,466 civil servants in 2003 to 15,933 in 2013[2]. RAMSI's control over government was inevitably restricted. It did not have executive authority, and it could not assume executive authority under the Biketawa Declaration.

15. The Regional Dimension

15.1 The regional dimension of RAMSI, and its mobilization under the Pacific Islands Forum's Biketawa Declaration, gave the mission an important source of

[1] 'The Solomon Islands facing "very difficult situation"', ABC, 21st May 2006; 'RAMSI won't be "salami sliced" says Downer', ABC, 22nd September, 2006.
[2] The civil service is defined here as including the 'total approved and budgeted establishment of public servants, teachers, health workers, police and prison officers' (Gannicot, K. 'The Size and Cost of the Public Service in Solomon Islands', Briefing Paper No 1, July 2003).

legitimacy. Where without a United Nations mandate, the Australian Senate has expressed considerable disquiet about the legality of intervention missions[1]. In our view, that regional dimension of RAMSI could have been used more creatively not only as regards the formal framing of the mission, but also in its internal organization, leadership and reporting.

15.2 This was a missed opportunity for Australia to engage more collaboratively with its island neighbours, and simultaneously strengthen Oceania's main regional political organization. However, the scale of expenditure entailed by RAMSI meant that the Australian government was reluctant to concede anything more than a nominal oversight role, and the enhanced regional security arrangements under Biketawa were as yet entirely untested in mid-2003, helping to explain the initial caution. Once the arrangements were finalized, DFAT officials tended to be very defensive about these, and to insist that they remain set in stone.

15. 3 The better approach, in our view, would have been to detach the two aspects of the mission: with the military and policing element directly under Pacific Islands Forum control; and the civilian components delivered bi-laterally, but based around closer and more careful negotiation with the Solomon Islands Government. A regional-commanded security mission, as with U.N. missions, would anyway have entailed separate command and control of policing (and military) by national forces. Hence, the Australian Government would still have had considerable leverage. Our reasoning as regards the civilian programs is that, on the one hand, these could not succeed without political consent. On the other, Australian was not likely to concede oversight of its aid package to the Pacific Islands Forum.

15.4 The fraught 2006-7 period witnessed efforts to strengthen regional accountability mechanisms, in response to recommendations of the April-June 2005 Forum RAMSI Review Task Force. The most important of these was the establishment of the Forum Ministerial Standing Committee (FMSC), which held its first meeting in July 2008. Yet the lines of authority over RAMSI remained throughout primarily bilateral, with New Zealand officials often in the loop largely by virtue of holding the Deputy Special Coordinator position (or consultation with the New Zealand High Commissioner in Canberra). In its submission to the 2007 Senate inquiry into Australia's involvement in Peacekeeping Operations, DFAT mentioned its 'Whole of Government' oversight bringing together numerous government agencies, including AFP, defence, DFAT, AusAID, the Attorney-Generals Office, Finance and Treasury, as well as the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet:

[1] http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/senate/committee/fadt_ctte/peacekeeping/report/report.pdf , p72. See also DFAT's submission to that Enquiry, in which David Ritchie noted that PIF leaders annual endorsement of RAMSI makes a major contribution to the 'spectrum of legal mechanisms and quasi-legal mechanisms' and thus provides 'a very solid underpinning for RAMSI's legitimacy' (p108–109).

> 'In Canberra, Australian Government agencies meet regularly, and consult frequently on RAMSI issues. The NZ High Commission is also represented at interdepartmental meetings. It is important not to underestimate the intensity and complexity of managing such a whole-of-government process of planning and implementation, and the need to devote sufficient resources to the coordination task'.

No mention was made of the Pacific Islands Forum[1] . For an initiative that owed much of its legitimacy to the architecture of the Biketawa Declaration, this was a glaring oversight, softened only in part by the apparent obliviousness regarding the omission.

15.5 The poor initial design of these channels of accountability was typified by the manner of following the convention that the Assistant Deputy Coordinator position be supplied by a Pacific Islander. The position was filled throughout by Fiji, an arrangement which persisted despite Fiji's suspension from the Forum and the departure of the Fiji military contingent after the December 2006 coup[2]. In practise, incumbents often played an important role in mediating local sensibilities, but the non-representative administrative structure was tokenistic. With the overwhelming preponderance of Australian personnel in senior positions, the effect was a replication of an environment akin to the Commonwealth public service.

15.6 The Office of the Special Coordinator liaised with the Forum and the SIG, but operations were primarily overseen from Canberra as were controls over key appointments. Some might argue that command and control should necessarily reflect the bearing of the financial burden, but money is not everything, as the Senate Enquiry into Australian Peacekeeping itself noted[3]. The legitimacy of the mission hung crucially on endorsement by the Pacific Island states. Though RAMSI is often seen as a stellar example of regional cooperation, the mission might have been better served by drawing more constructively on that regional element, not simply in terms of personnel, but also as regards command structure.

15.7 At the same time, the small contingent of Pacific Island police officers who were part of the PPF helped to leaven its image and gentle the Australian character of the force. There was generally more empathy between them and Solomon Islanders explicable in terms of the similar cultural backgrounds they shared of small communities where family and kinship remained important. Pacific Island personnel deployed to the civilian parts of the mission similarly

---

[1] The Pacific Islands Forum representative to RAMSI, Sakiusa Rabuka, has not been invited to attend these 'Whole of Government' inter-agency meetings in Canberra (Personal Communication, 29th April 2014).

[2] Sekove Naqiolevu served as ADC RAMSI from October 2003 to May 2005. He was appointed in July 2003 but (as his late wife was terminally ill) he only assumed the position after she died, Masi Lomaloma was initially seconded from the government of Fiji to RAMSI as Assistant Special Co-ordinator in 2005. At the time, he was Deputy PS Fijian Affairs. He has continued to serve in the position up to the present.

[3] http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/senate/committee/fadt_ctte/peacekeeping/report/report.pdf,

interacted with greater ease with Solomon Islanders and the resulting cordial relations enjoyed in the workplace with their counter parts redounded to the benefit of RAMSI.

16. Reconciliation

16.1 RAMSI has not been directly involved in the process of reconciliation, but it has lent its support to some of the focused activities. It has also intervened in relation to fatalities of Solomon Islanders in which its personnel were implicated. The issue has rightly been considered to be a matter for Solomon Islanders and their government through the Ministry of National Reconciliation, Peace and Unity [1]. There are elements in Solomon Islands who believe RAMSI ought to have been more greatly involved in reconciliation, but such sentiments misconstrue RAMSI's role[2]. However, in 2005 RAMSI participated in a series of 'Tok Storis' on the Weather Coast between August and November facilitated by the National Peace Council (NPC) and the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) of the East West Center[3]. At the time the wounds were still too raw and while the communities acknowledged the need for reconciliation, they were not ready to engage the SIG and the RSIPF[4]. Instead, communities favoured gestures between and among themselves before they reached out to others[5].

16.2 During the work of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (October 2009-December 2011), RAMSI adopted a wary but watchful stance. At the same time, Australia was one of the four entities funding the TRC[6] and Special Coordinator Graeme Wilson urged Solomon Islanders to make use of the process after the TRC held its first public hearing in Honiara on 19th March 2010[7]. Nevertheless, there was some ambivalence in certain quarters about the proceedings generated by concerns over impunity and the prosecution of militants[8]. This was reinforced by the impressions of the members of the initial group of PPF who had to investigate the more heinous acts of the militants committed during the tension[9]. This did not prevent members of the PPF, serving as technical advisers with the RSIPF, from providing valuable

---

[1] In August 2003, the Australian Senate had divided 12 in favour to 48 opposed to a motion urging Australian 'financial technical and other support for the establishment of a 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission'' httl://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p

[2] E.g. the Premier of RenBel posed that question at a recent workshop to discuss this report at the Mendana 20 June 2014, reflecting a perspective expressed in some quarters

[3] Solomon Islands Tok Stori http://talanoa.org/TDP_Solomon_Islands_Tok_Stori.html;page3=0;query=Solomon;rec=7;resCount=Default.

[4] Solomon Islands Tok Stori.

[5] Solomon Islands Tok Stori.

[6] The others being EU, New Zealand and UNDP. Interestingly, in August 2003 the Australian Senate had divided 12 in favour to 48 opposed to a motion urging Australian 'financial, technical and other support for the establishment of a 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission'. http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p:page=Solomon:rec=7;resCount=Default.

[7] http://www.ramsi.org/media/news/ramsi-urges-solomon-islanders-to-make-use-of-truth-and-reconciliation-commission.html .

[8] Personal communication, Rob Barry, former RAMSI Adviser DPP's Office, 16th July, 2013.

[9] Personal communication, Commander Stafford, PPF November, 2009.

assistance for the exhumation of bodies the TRC undertook in late 2011. The TRC Act did not provide for amnesty and it was the unanimous view of the TRC that justice should be allowed to take its course[1].

16.3 In April 2011, RAMSI and SIG conducted a *Titi Ulu* ceremony of reconciliation with the family of Harry Lolonga, who died as a result of RAMSI gunfire in the wake of the election in 2010. RAMSI agreed to provide housing and educational assistance to the family[2]. On 11th December 2013, PM Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo led the SIG in a '*solovisu*' ceremony at Peochakuri village on the Weather Coast to atone for the October 2002 outrage when the government-backed Joint Operation, comprising elements of RSIPF and members of the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) while hunting Harold Keke used a gunboat to terrorise and kill people as well as destroy houses, personal effects and livestock[3]. The Special Coordinator, Justine Braithwaite, and other RAMSI officials were present and strongly endorsed the initiative. It was a 'calling back' of the communities who had been forced to flee when the deeds were being committed[4]. A previous reconciliation ceremony had been staged there in December 2007 with Deputy Prime Minister Fred Fono and RAMSI Special Coordinator Tim George officiating [5]. At another *solovisu* ceremony at Ngalito village on 4th February 2014, the Deputy Special Coordinator, Richard Griffiths, also expressed similar sentiments [6]. The reception accorded both SIG and RAMSI was more cordial than nine years previously.

16.4 As RAMSI draws down in the period 2013-17, reconciliation remains unfinished business with the Solomon Islands TRC report, presented to SIG in February 2012, yet to be tabled and debated in Parliament as regards its content and recommendations. There is also an expectation from the victims of *the tensions*, most of whom received little or no recompense, that SIG will in some way acknowledge its inability to protect its citizens during *the tensions*. Beyond that, SIG needs to consider how to incorporate the elements of reconciliation (i.e. forgiveness, compassion, tolerance and respect) with initiatives to build a national identity which affirms diversity, is respectful of minorities and possesses an openness to inclusive dialogue.

17. The Cost and Economic Impact of RAMSI

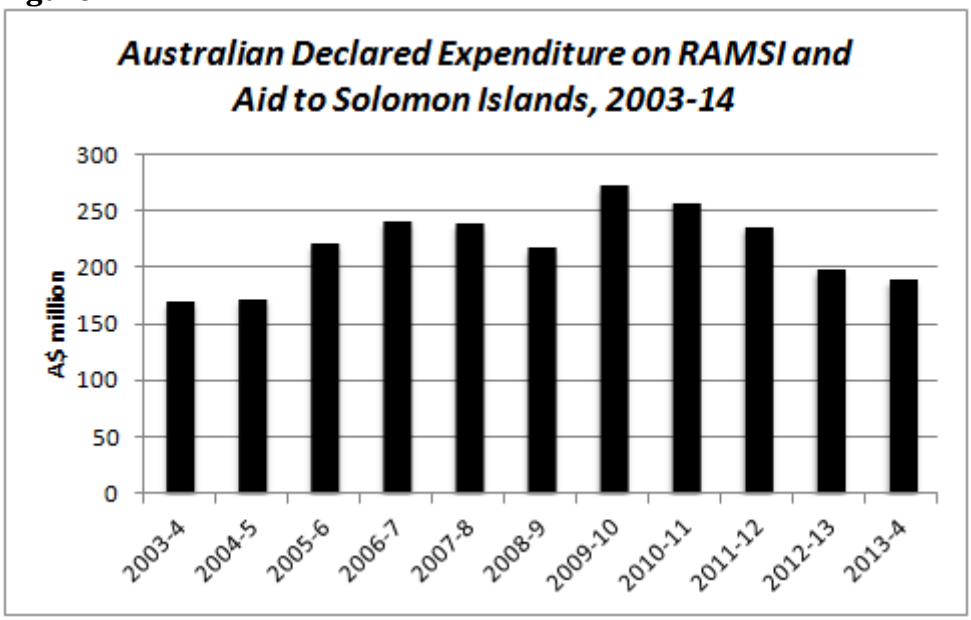
17.1 The mission was largely Australian-funded (around 86%) and comprised mainly Australian defence force personnel and federal police. New Zealand also

[1] Joni Madraiwiwi was a member of the Solomon Islands TRC.
[2] There was also an earlier *Lakasia Namate* ('sign of no retaliation') ceremony, Personal Communication, David Day Pacha, 29.7.13.
[3] http://www.pmc.gov.sb/headlines/ramsi-supports-solomon-islands-reconciliation-efforts
[4] The communities represented were from the villages in the Wanderer Bay, Vatukalau, Duidui and Talise wards.
[5] http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/871228-Special-Coordinator-Tim-George-South-Guadalcanal-Constitutency-conciliation-ceremony-in-pijin-733061c4-8df5-493e-b5ci-6384a38b0556-0.pdf
[6] http://www.pmc.gov.sb/headlines/govt-launches-reconciliation-process-guadalcanal%E2%80%99s-weathercoast

provided considerable assistance (around 12% of the total), both as regards funding and personnel. Other Pacific Islands Forum member states contributed personnel both to the military and policing components, and soldiers from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force played a particularly significant role.

17.2 The initial expectation that RAMSI would cost around $85 million per annum for a decade, only half of which would be financed by Australia, proved an underestimate on both counts[1]. In total, the RAMSI decade has entailed Australian expenditure of around A$2,400 million (See Figure 4) and New Zealand spending of around NZ$347.5 million (see Table 6), including both bilateral aid and RAMSI-associated expenditures. Taken together, this amounts to around A$2.7 billion (or SI$18 billion) at current prices over 2003-2013, but much of this income remained offshore. The Australian figures include items, such as 'imputed' tax paid by RAMSI personnel (who received their salaries tax free), whereas New Zealand personnel were taxed in their own country.

Figure 4



Notes: Figures include expenditure on Australian Federal Police and Combined Task Forces, as well as tax revenue foregone due to tax-free status of RAMSI personnel employed in Solomon Islands.
Sources: Australian Government, annual ministerial statements on overseas aid.

17.3 One calculation, based on the 2007-8 financial year, found that only 10.5% of RAMSI's expenditure remained within the country, and 16% of total donor expenditure[2]. Around 75-80% of official aid to the Solomon Islands is estimated to have been spent overseas[3]. Criticism of RAMSI for having a small economic impact on a country facing major development challenges is widespread, though in fairness intervention missions often entail predominantly offshore

[1] Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, ASPI Policy Report, 2003, p4.
[2] Peace Dividend Trust, 'The Economic Impact of Peace and Humanitarian Operations in Solomon islands', September 2010, p15.
[3] World Bank, 2010, *Solomon Islands Sources of Growth: Summary of Findings*, p8.

expenditure[1]. Such objections often reflect unrealistic expectations that RAMSI's intervention would create a more equitable society. RAMSI's rationale was a more modest one of restoring law and order together with the rebuilding some institutions of state centred on its three pillars strategy. The nature and nuances of this mandate varied in accordance with the political currents in Canberra as they played out in the relationship with Honiara. Surprisingly, there exists no publicly available study of the overall cost of RAMSI over the decade based on a careful working over the budgetary data[2]. In this section, we rely on the declared and aggregated figures.

Table 6; ***Aggregate New Zealand Declared Expenditure on RAMSI and in Solomon Islands 2003–2013 (NZ$m)***

NZ Defence Force (1)	51.5
Ministry of Social Development (2)	6.0
NZ Police (3)	26.9
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (4)	4.3
NZ Aid Program (RAMSI) (5)	52.2
NZ Aid Program Bilateral (non-RAMSI)	207.2
Total	347.5

Source: Adapted from New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, 'Ten Years of New Zealand Contribution to Peace and Development in Solomon Islands', p11.
Notes:
1. NZ Defence Force (NZDF) personnel (including costs of Deputy Special Coordinator 2003-5)
2. NZDF operation allowances until 17 March 2007 when these were funded and paid through NZDF after changes to the Income Act.
3. From 2010/2011 onwards, the majority of NZ Police costs were funded through the aid program.
4. RAMSI Deputy Special Coordinator and additional policy advisor from 2009. From 2003-2005, the costs for Deputy Special Coordinator are included in the NZDF figures.
5. NZ Police and Police Housing, Inland Revenue Department, Economic Reform Unit and Law and Justice.

17.4 By contrast, Australia is estimated to have spent just over A$1bn on its East Timor operations over 1999-2001. Over 2000-2008, the East Timor operation is estimated to have cost US$8 billion (or $A7.5 billion), but Timorese leaders have regularly protested that there has been minimal resultant economic

[1]Peace Dividend Trust, 'The Economic Impact of Peace and Humanitarian Operations in Solomon Islands', September 2010, p17.
[2] The Lowy Institute published some figures obtained from DFAT in a 2014 report, but without any analysis or careful breakdown (See Jenny Hayward-Jones, 'Australia's Costly Investment in Solomon Islands: the Lessons of RAMSI', May 2014).

development[1]. Only around 10% of UNTAET's annual US$500 million budget is estimated to have reached the East Timorese people[2].

17.5 RAMSI was initially designed so as to avoid generating economic dependency. There have been warnings of the risk of so-called '"aid trauma": an inflationary bubble economy, with failures in institution building and the relative deprivation that accompanies most such large scale foreign aid "caravans"'[3]. The GBR base was largely supplied from overseas, and remains supplied by Patrick Defence Logistics (Now Toll PDL), which initially secured contracts worth $49 million a year[4]. The company employed a considerable number of local labourers. The other major cash leakages into the domestic economy have been through rental payments for accommodation premises for RAMSI personnel living off the GBR base, and other local expenditures of the wages and salaries of RAMSI employees. The drawdown in mid-2013 was reported to have resulted in around 50 local job losses[5]. The economic repercussions of RAMSI over the decade also merit a more careful study than has hitherto been attempted.

17.6 In May 2014, the Lowy Institute produced a report entitled 'Australia's Costly Intervention in Solomon Islands: the Lessons of RAMSI' which estimated that RAMSI entailed Australian expenditure of A$2.6 billion, and argued that this was 'a massive and disproportionate investment accumulated over time largely because no one was prepared to make the difficult decision to end the mission'[6]. Was the cost of RAMSI too heavy for Australia or for Solomon Islands?

17.7 Most of the answers to those questions implicitly or explicitly entail some assessment of what would have happened if RAMSI had *not* arrived in July 2003. Would the security situation have deteriorated further? Would the rebel fighters led by Harold Keke have strengthened their hold on the Weather Coast or would the beleaguered and harassed local population eventually turned on the GRA fighters? Would the RSIPF have been able to regain control in Honiara or on Malaita unassisted? Would it have been better for the Solomon Islands, like so many of the European nations of the 16th and 17th century, to have been

---

[1] See 'Gusmao tells UN time to leave', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 20th May , 2011.
[2] Chesterman, Simon. 'East Timor', in (ed) M Bewrdal & S Economides, *United Nations Interventionism, 1991*-2004, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p192.
[3] Tim Anderson, 'The Limits of RAMSI', AidWatch, April 2008, p3. See also 'Solomon Resentment Builds', *The Age*, 28th April 2008.
[4] RAMSI 200 day Office of the Special Coordinator, factsheet, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 'War and Profit: Doing business on the battlefield', 31st march 2005.PDL Toll is a subsidiary of the transport conglomerate Toll Holdings, and advertises itself as 'Providing integrated logistics solutions in some of the toughest locations on earth.' (See www.pdltoll.com). The company claims to offer 'Remote Logistics Services including catering, accommodation, fleet management and IT, communications and administration support'; 'Remote Supply Chain Management including procurement, customs clearance and warehousing'; 'Freight Forwarding Camp & Base Support Services including Camp Construction and Camp Management'; 'engineering, construction and project services', 'Rotary Wing Support' and 'helicopter support services including night vision opera' (see http://www.tollgroup.com/sb/solomon-islands).
[5]Radio New Zealand, Dateline Pacific, 15th July 2013.
[6] Hayward-Jones, 'Australia's Costly Investment in Solomon Islands: the Lessons of RAMSI', May 2014

confronted with no other option other than to find a home-made path to social peace? Neighbouring Bougainville managed to end its decade of civil conflict in the 1990s with far less external assistance than that received by Solomon Islands. Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu have faced severe social disturbances and protracted political crises without requiring much overseas help. Even within the Solomon Islands, the crisis in the Western Province had been largely resolved *before* RAMSI's arrival.

17.8 Opinions differ on those questions, and the answers must be left for the more adventurous historians. More pressing, for the present: Is the Solomon Islands now, after a decade of RAMSI, better equipped to withstand the types of challenge faced during 1998-2003? Is there now sufficient local capacity to withstand the consequences of the RAMSI withdrawal? That is the only genuine way to judge whether RAMSI entailed a cost worth paying. Some believe that external assistance, including large-scale transfers, needs to continue over the longer-run to avoid chronic economic crises and renewed social disturbances, but that is a pessimistic verdict. Big adjustments are likely to prove necessary, both on the fiscal front and (after 2017) as regards policing. These will likely only be partially cushioned by continuing bilateral assistance. More pressure will inevitably fall on the Solomon Islands Government to ensure the political system is more responsive to those issues, together with prioritizing economic development and the effective management of the security sector.

18. Assessing the Impact of Intervention Missions

18.1 Assessments of RAMSI have varied dramatically, usually because of vastly differing expectations or aspirations. Peace-building missions can be judged in a number of distinct ways. At the minimalist end, they can be assessed by success or failure in ending the conflict that proved the catalyst for the mission. A return to normalcy may be defined as simply entailing a conclusion of hostilities or, in other settings, as marked by the restoration of democracy. The conduct of successful general elections – for example – is often taken to signal achievement of the goal of peace-building missions, and to simultaneously offer an exit strategy[1]. At the maximalist end, missions can be judged by the extent to which they tackle the underlying causes of conflict or crisis; promote economic growth or sustainable human development or build robust government institutions[2]. Most assessments of RAMSI rely explicitly or implicitly on one or several of these criteria. Many of the critics of RAMSI set out ambitious targets compared to which the mission is assessed as having fallen short.

[1] Caplan, R., 'Exit Strategies and State-Building', in (ed) Caplan, R, *Exit Strategies and Statebuilding*, Oxford University Press, 2012.
[2] See Oisín Tansey, 'Evaluating the Legacies of State-Building: Success, Failure, and the Role of Responsibility', *International Studies Quarterly*, 2013; Call, Charles T. 'Knowing Peace When You See It: Setting Standards for Peacebuilding Success', *Civil Wars,* 10, 173-94. Call argues that 'the so-called root causes, like poverty and unemployment – are risk factors that shape outcomes, but not in themselves indicators of peacebuilding success or failure' (p174).

18.2 RAMSI was established, from the start, to be much more than a short-term 'circuit-breaker' aimed at restoring peace (although the rationale was often described in these terms in 2003). It focused not only on achieving an end to conflict, but also broad economic recovery and the rebuilding of core accountability institutions. This breadth of goals was largely driven by the prevalent diagnosis in Canberra, and an initial strong commitment to facilitating a major turnaround in Solomon Islands[1]. It was also influenced by perceptions of the failure of the post-TPA International Peace Monitoring Team, which had been devised as a much narrower and less ambitious peacekeeping mission, but failed to establish police posts across the island of Guadalcanal or to remove most high-powered weapons. Most senior RAMSI officials were – from the start - hostile to pressures to address the 'root causes' of conflict, whereas most Solomon Islands politicians have seen such issues – and the process of reconciliation – as the central tasks.

18.3 The first Special Coordinators, Nick Warner and his successor James Batley, envisaged a far-reaching 'nation-building' or 'state-building' role for the mission[2]. This was in line with the 'state failure' diagnosis offered by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, in their influential pamphlet *Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the Future of the Solomon* Islands. This has triggered much academic debate about 'state-building' and 'nation-building' in the Solomon Islands[3].

18.4 In practice, even during the early stages, RAMSI had a very selective impact only on certain parts of the state – the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and the Correctional Services of Solomon Islands, the Ministry of Justice, the Finance Ministry and various accountability organisations such as

---

[1] See Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, Policy Report, 2003; see also Hegarty, D., May, R, Regan, A, Dinnen, S, Nelson, H & Duncan, R 'Rebuilding State and Nation in Solomon Islands: Policy Options for the Regional Assistance Mission', SSGM Discussion Paper, 2004, p3.

[2] Nick Warner told a press conference in February 2004: 'Nation building is what we really came here to do, laying down the foundations of law and order, a foundation to begin the process to rebuild the nation' (Warner, Nick, 'RAMSI Press Conference: RAMSI's Objectives for 2004', Lelei Resort, 16th February 2004). 'At its core, RAMSI is a state-building exercise', wrote second Special Coordinator James Batley, a task necessitated because 'prior to RAMSI's arrival in mid-2003, the Solomon islands state had ceased to function in a minimally acceptable way' (Batley, J. 'The Role of RAMSI in Solomon Islands: Rebuilding the State, Supporting Peace', Peace, Justice & Reconciliation Conference, Honiara, 3st1 March 2005). The 2005/6 RAMSI Annual Report 2005/6 calls RAMSI an 'integrated state building initiative'. 'RAMSI has been quite direct in its focus on state-building … [but] the functions which RAMSI is undertaking put it at the nexus of security and development. These two activities tend to pull in different directions – the first towards short-term activities and the latter towards the longer term' ('Case Study – Technical Assistance Personnel in Solomon Islands: What can we learn from the RAMSI Experience?').

[3] 'RAMSI was to be a comprehensive statebuilding operation' (Elsina Wainwright 'How is RAMSI faring?' ASPI, *Strategic Insights*, April 2005, p2); see also Shahar Hameiri 'The Future of RAMSI: Australian State Building Abroad and its Discontents', *Asian View*, Asia Murdoch centre, November 2007. 'RAMSI has a unique kind of authority in the world of state-building – it has substantial practical influence but it works with and inside the Solomon islands government, which remains the repository of executive, legislative and judicial authority' (Fullilove, M 'The Testament of Solomons: RAMSI & International State-Building'', Lowy Institute, March 2006, p14-15; see also Fullilove, Michael 'Strategy Sound so far: Now to Finish Shaping a Nation', *The Australian*, 10th March 2006).

Parliament, the Auditor General's Office and the Electoral Commission (under Home Affairs). Other vital ministries, such as National Planning and Aid Coordination, Agriculture, Lands, Rural Development, Commerce, Mines, Fisheries, Infrastructure Development, Forestry, and National Reconciliation witnessed very little contact with RAMSI or no contact at all[1]. Still others, such as the health and education ministries have been affected mainly by bilateral programs, rather than RAMSI itself (though few Solomon Islanders see the difference between RAMSI and bilaterally-funded initiatives).

18.5 Unlike UNTAET in East Timor, no new political structure, court system or system of law was put in place. There was no new constitution. RAMSI was, if anything hostile to pressure towards a new draft federal constitution[2]. After the initial phase, much of RAMSI's emphasis was on resisting pressures towards engagement in programs concerning other parts of the state apparatus. Later Special Coordinators Tim George, and Graeme Wilson focused on a more minimalist interpretation of RAMSI's responsibilities, and emphasised the restricted 'mandate' of the mission[3]. Ambitious expectations were thus, at least in part, encouraged by the initial design of the mission.

18.6 The character of initial operations encouraged a longer-term approach, but left RAMSI vulnerable to allegations of 'mission creep'. RAMSI was highly successful in persuading the militants to surrender their weapons, and in arresting those charged with tension-related crimes. Gathering evidence, laying charges and securing convictions entailed more protracted and more difficult legal processes. In 2003-4, the existing machinery of justice was not equipped to deal with a sudden increase in workload, and the prisons infrastructure was over-stretched and non-compliant with international standards. Most urgently, the RSIPF was in a poor state, with both senior officers and rank-and-file having cooperated with the militants during the coup of June 2000 and the troubled months thereafter. To reconstruct any of these essential institutions of state, some control over finances was necessary. One reconstruction task therefore led to another, helping to explain why Special Coordinators increasingly resisted pressures to broaden the scope of the mission.

18.7 RAMSI was successful in achieving its objectives, if these are defined in a minimalist fashion: most guns were captured and destroyed, and those that remained were concealed in such a way as to be beyond practical use. There has been some return to normalcy, with elections in 2006 and 2010. The population of Honiara had fallen dramatically in 2000-2001, but commenced re-expanding

[1] See Peter Coventry, 'The Hidden Mechanics'.
[2] See Katy Le Roy, 'Participatory Constitution Making: Lessons from Fiji and Solomon Islands', PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne.
[3] An 11-page 2009 speech by Special Coordinator Graeme Wilson, for example, uses the term 'mandate' twelve times, and the emphasis throughout is on RAMSI's restricted 'role and responsibility' (See Graeme Wilson, 'The Solomon Islands Government - RAMSI Partnership Framework: Towards a secure and sustainable Solomon Islands', Special Coordinator address to State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, 17th December 2009, http://www.ramsi.org/Media/docs/091217-Special-Coordinator-Graeme-Wilson---State-Society-and-Governance-in-Melanesia-presentation-Australian-National-University-f84d1152-c8e0-4a15-99aa-22080038badf-0.pdf).

in 2002, and this has continued during the RAMSI decade. The incarceration of militants has not generated major antagonism towards RAMSI in their home communities, even if pockets of hostility exist.

18.8 Intervention missions might, at least in theory, be judged neither by expressed minimalist nor maximalist goals, but by their unintended or indirect repercussions. With the return of peace, and a reasonably stable business climate, the logging boom resumed to a degree that was not expected by those who in mid-2003 anticipated an earlier exhaustion of natural forests. Despite the mainly offshore character of RAMSI expenditure, significant sums have filtered into the local economy through expatriate rental payments, local salaries, payments for overheads and supplies, provisioning, and via the hospitality and catering trade. Over the decade, Chinese inward migration and ownership of commercial and retail outlets has been substantial. Aid flows have been equivalent to 38% of GDP since 2003, and – despite the initial objective of 'downsizing' the civil service – public spending rose from 25% to 50% of GDP from 2003 and 2009 and the number of public servants increased by 80% over 2003-13[1]. The net result has been a sizable expansion in the Honiara-based middle class, both within the indigenous community and, still more markedly, amongst the new Chinese inward migrants[2]. In the post-RAMSI era, the prospects for stability, increased government accountability and economic growth may well depend upon these new social forces created during the RAMSI decade, and their ability to collaborate constructively.

19. A Return to 'The Tensions'?

19.1 The debate about RAMSI's impending departure, and prospects in its aftermath, has been overshadowed by fears of a return to violence, criminality and *the tensions*. RAMSI's annual Peoples Surveys have consistently reported that around 50-60% of the population fears a return to violence if RAMSI withdraws (See Table 7)[3]. Disturbances during the RAMSI years have reinforced these perceptions. In the early years, RAMSI itself did little to reassure citizens that the *tension* years had been definitively ended. There was less emphasis on the possibility of renewed violence after the announcement of the drawdown strategy, for obvious reasons. Few were prepared to explicitly and publicly reject the possibility of a return to violence. To do so would be irresponsible given the

[1] Porter, D., Haque, T., & Botrill, T, 'Solomon Islands Growth Prospects: Constraints and Policy Priorities, World Bank, 2010, (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPACIFICISLANDS/Resources/SourcesofGrowthSummary.pdf), p1. Tobias Haque 'Economic Transition in Solomon Islands', SSGM *In Brief*, 16, 2013.

[2] One sign of this may be the increase in property related crimes (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force, 'The Status of the Royal Solomon islands Police Force and its Capability as of 30th June 2013', 2011-13 Transition Outcome Report, p21).

[3] A leaked US cable in 2011 claimed that 'if RAMSI officers should leave tomorrow, the Solomons could quickly revert to the sad state before its arrival' ('Diplomatic cables claim Australia has failed to stabilise 'fragile' Solomons', *Sydney Morning Herald, 30th*August , 2011). Cautiously dispelling rumours of a revival of the Malaita Eagle Forces and Isatabu Freedom Movement, Special Coordinator Nicholas Coppel said in 2011 'what the rumours show is not so much the fragility of peace, but the fragility of confidence' (See Coppel, 'The Transition of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', p1).

continuing difficulties within the RSIPF, and the frequency of urban rioting, as well as the undercurrent of social disorder in many rural parts of the group.

19.2 The RAMSI Peoples Surveys indicate considerable fear of a return to *the tensions*. The 2007 and 2008 surveys asked 'Would Violent Conflict Return if RAMSI Left?', and responses were, respectively, 52.5% and 46.3% 'Yes'. In 2009, the question was whether violence would return if RAMSI 'left soon', still producing a 53.1% 'Yes' response. In 2010, the question was changed to 'What would happen if RAMSI Left now'? In total, 29.4% thought the country would return to *the tensions* and 49.2% thought that there would be a 'law and order breakdown'. In 2011, 65.4% said Solomon Islands was not ready for RAMSI to scale back its activities. By 2013, the question had vanished[1]. In the early years, RAMSI officials tended to encourage fears that in particular the Malaita Eagle Forces remained organized and active behind the scenes[2].

Table 7
Would Violent Conflict return if RAMSI Left? (Percentages)

	Yes	Maybe	No	Don't Know
Left				
2007	52.5	26.9	7.0	12.4
2008	46.3	27.9	10.3	12.9
Left Soon				
2009	53.1	30.2	6.5	9.8

What Would Happen if RAMSI Left Now?		
	Back to *tensions*?	Law & Oder Breakdown
2010	29.4	49.2

Is Solomon Islands ready for RAMSI to scale back its activities?		
	Yes	No
2011	19.4	65.4

Source; RAMSI, People's Surveys, 2007-11

19.3 The discussion about this risk has a certain fanciful aspect. In fact, the character of *the tensions* had already dramatically changed *before* RAMSI's arrival. The early phase, pitting the MEF against the IFM, ended with the Townsville Peace Agreement in October 2000. The three years prior to RAMSI's arrival had seen the militia groups degenerate into racketeering and other forms of criminality, particularly in Honiara and on Malaita. On the Weather Coast,

[1] There was no 2012 survey.
[2] 'It is 'my contention that the [2006] riots were motivated to ensure that a certain group, in particular the MEF, and the various subgroups, to [sic] regain power and influence within Solomon Islands' (Will Jamieson, 'Rebuilding a Police Service – Restoring Law and Order: An Overview of the Activities of the PPF in the Solomon Islands', State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, Seminar, 15th November 2007).

Guadalcanal militants held out, but there the conflict descended into a murderous fanaticism bolstered by constant fears of attack by the state (and a less fanatical defensive posture was also assumed in the Western Province, also with highly destabilising consequences). There is no particular reason for fearing a reversion to the pre-TPA type of conflict. Preventing a return to the rampant criminality of 2000-2003 obviously depends on the robustness of the state. *If* the Solomon Islands government were able to dramatically improve the performance of the RSIPF, to response swiftly and effectively to pockets of lawlessness and extend the legitimacy of the state to remote parts of the country (including the east and south of Guadalcanal), there would thus be no risk of a return of generalized violence.

19.4 Those emphasising the risk of a resumption of *the tensions* point to the failure of RAMSI to resolve the 'root causes' of the conflict. The way these 'root causes' are, or were, perceived is itself problematic[1]. The underlying triggers of unrest in 1998-9 have been variously identified as a burgeoning youth population, urban underemployment, uneven development[2], land disputes, state weakness[3], cronyism, the East Asian financial crisis[4], the opposition's behind-the-scenes manoeuvring to dislodge the 1997-2000 Ulufa'alu government[5], squatter settlements and, linked to the latter, the Honiara Town Council area encroaching on Guadalcanal customary-owned land. The failure to address the '*bona fide* demands of indigenous Guadalcanal', and the stalled constitutional deliberations on '*state government*' (often described as a demand for 'federalism'), are also often thought to inform deep-seated grievances. Summed up in generic form as the 'root causes of the tensions', this framing permits of no likely or possible solution. Posed in this way, problems that are real and pressing are configured in a manner that is too huge and amorphous as to permit of any sensible response or solution.

19.5 In reality, the problems Solomon Islands faced in 1998-99 were certainly severe, but not radically different to those in neighbouring Vanuatu or Papua New Guinea. Port Moresby has a squatter population that way exceeds that of Honiara, and no Melanesian country can match the uneven development of PNG, or its inequalities, or its Bougainville secessionist movement or its tribal fighting in the Highlands. Unregulated land acquisition has been a huge issue in Vanuatu, as has instability in government. Both of these countries have, at times, faced political crises, and serious conflict, but neither has witnessed mobilized and generalized challenges to the authority of the state of the type that the Solomon Islands experienced in 1999-2003. Both of these neighbouring Melanesian nations have similar population profiles to Solomon Islands, with a large youth population in the 18-25 age bracket. In both countries, the growth in the jobs market has been too slow to soak up the number of school leavers. Many of these

[1] The way these 'root causes' are perceived today is usually closely connected with the way they were perceived as underpinning the 1998-2003 conflict.
[2] Braithwaite, J.S, Dinnen, S, Allen, M, & Charleswoth, H. *Pillars and Shadows: Statebuilding as Peacebuilding in Solomon Islands*, ANU Press, 2010.
[3] ASPI, 'Our Failing Neighbour'.
[4] Gannicott, K, 'the Size and Cost of the Public Service in Solomon Islands', Briefing Paper No 1 for Remuneration Review, July 2013.
[5] Solomon Islands Government, *Beneath Guadalcanal.*

younger people nevertheless flock to urban centres, as in Lae (90,000 people), Mount Hagen (45,000), Port Moresby (220,000), Port Vila (44,000) or Suva (77,000). Commentators have regularly predicted political collapse and state failure in both PNG and Vanuatu[1], but they have been proved wrong. In 2011-12, Papua New Guinea survived the most severe constitutional crisis in its post-colonial history.

19.6 The challenge to the authority of the state posed by the uprising on Guadalcanal in 1998-99 was not large by international standards. It exposed the weakness of the state, and it articulated a sense of grievance that had festered behind-the-scenes for decades. Had governments, either at the national or local-level, been more adroit in regulating the growth of squatter settlements on the fringes of Guadalcanal, or controlling the extent of migration to the Guadalcanal Plains, that crisis could have been avoided. Had governments shaped a police force capable of effective but fair response and better reflecting the composition of the nation, the turmoil could have been averted. Even after the crisis had commenced, the Solomon Islands Government could have brokered an effective peace settlement, if it had not been blinded by conspiracy theories that gave no recognition to the festering sense of grievance on Guadalcanal[2]. Instead, the Solomon Islands lurched from one crisis to the next, increasingly bankrupting the state and thus further eroding its capacity to respond[3]. In the process, it both unleashed and co-opted forces that proved ever more difficult to control.

19.7 The fortunes of former militants have been mixed; some have prospered, others have not. This has itself diminished the possibility of their regrouping. Some have commenced businesses or political careers, and they now have some stake in future stability. Former Guadalcanal militants may be less in the limelight, but some of these too have grown wealthier, and in part as a result lost support on the still desperately impoverished Weather Coast. That previous generation of militants is unlikely to again acquire the authority it found at the outset of the 1998-2003 crisis. New leaders may emerge, but the probable catalyst would be another major economic reversal, or a popular reaction to perceived corruption in government (as in Papua New Guinea in 2009). There exists a widespread sense of grievance and exclusion in Honiara, rural Guadalcanal and other parts of the country that will likely be exacerbated by further growth of social inequality. It would be a grave error to now reverse the restoration of the rule of law of the RAMSI era, through new amnesty or 'forgiveness' legislation. The *tension* trials are close to completion, and most former militants have been released.

19.8 RAMSI's decade has delayed a reckoning, but it has not averted its necessity. Priorities for the government in the post-RAMSI era must be to improve the administration and reach of the Honiara City Council, and prioritize government

[1] See, for example, Manning, M & Windybank, S 'Papua New Guinea on the Brink', Centre for Independent Studies, March 2003; Benjamin Reilly, 'The Africanization of the South Pacific', Australian Journal of International Affairs, 54, (3), 2000.
[2] Ulufa'alu Government, *Beneath Guadalcanal.*
[3] The description of the poor handling of this series of crises over 200-2003 in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report shows just how many bad mistakes were made at that time.

expenditure on bringing water, sanitation, and electricity to the settlements that have mushroomed around the capital. A sign of the unregulated growth of settlements is the many houses poised on the banks of the Mataniko River that were swept away by floods in April 2014. When Cyclone Namu hit in 1986, barely any residences lay in the pathways of the inevitably raised rivers. Honiara city needs to create more urban jobs for the many unemployed youths that walk the streets, and hang around aimlessly on street corners. The problems are no less severe in PNG's Port Moresby. The most immense difficulty is the shortage of urban jobs, but donor funding will more easily be mobilized behind job-creating programs if SIG is seen to genuinely prioritise urban regeneration.

19.9 The rural Solomon Islands remains home to around 86% of the population, but offers little to a new generation with raised expectations. Nor have there been sufficient efforts to control or constrain that population growth. Labour intensive agricultural activities have not grown sufficiently to cater for the growth in population. One exception is palm oil on the northern plains, but this is easily the largest area of well-watered arable flatland in the Solomon Islands. Other such palm oil ventures have been complicated by land disputes, but are anyway less certain. Mining ventures tend not to be so labour intensive, and are potentially disruptive for downstream communities, even if they assist government finances and the balance of payments. The fisheries industry, centred on the Noro cannery, provides some employment, but is unlikely to greatly expand its operations. Many Solomon Islanders remain in subsistence agriculture. For cash incomes, many rely on market gardening, or smallholder exports of copra and cocoa, but with little or no assistance from the state. Successive governments have prioritized 'rural development', but this has often entailed little more than cash handouts for school fees or to procure political support, rather than provision for generalized local services, such as schools or clinics, or efforts to assist and encourage the export industry.

19.10 Both urban regeneration and rural increase in living standards require the assumption of a development-oriented government posture. With the discourse on a possible resumption of the *tensions*, there is some risk of endlessly fighting the last war, rather than preparing for the battles ahead. New social forces, novel opportunities and fresh dangers are continually emerging in contemporary Solomon Islands. The risk of renewed violence triggered by political events has reared its head several times across the last decade, and the chatter on social media amply demonstrates the danger that the growing Chinese community particularly in Honiara might in future prove a target during phases of urban unrest, as was in the case in 2006 (or in PNG in 2009). The Solomon Islands Government needs a greater focus on *nation-building*, and on celebrating the contribution of minority groups in the country. It needs to forge linkages with peak bodies in those communities, and encourage some expansion in the substance and profile of their contribution to national life.

19.11 In summary, the phrase 'root causes of the tension' has become an all-encompassing term for what are a whole host of developmental challenges. The ethnic dimension is only one of many ranging from a low economic base, youth unemployment, squatter settlements, lack of infrastructure, urban migration,

corruption, environmental degradation, land ownership and underdevelopment in the hinterland. The *tensions* have passed into folklore as primarily caused by the marginalisation of Guales and a reaction to perceived Malaitan dominance. Set in a broader national context, it was a combination of both the inability and failure of successive SIGs to deal effectively with these developmental issues that fuelled *the tensions*. We do not believe that troubles similar to those in 1998-2003 will return, but that left unresolved the present-day development challenges are again capable of triggering a breakdown in law and order, albeit likely in a different shape. Much depends on political responsiveness, and preparedness to address economic imbalances. If violence does return, a critical question concerns the likely stance of Solomon Islands near neighbours.

20. An Exit or Over the Horizon Strategy?

20.1 The Australian government has, from the early days of RAMSI, been reluctant to spell out any 'exit strategy', preferring that the duration of the mission be officially open-ended. Until February 2010, the timing of exit was to be determined by the completion of tasks rather than some arbitrary deadline. In early 2010, the New Zealand government was struggling financially with the legacy of the global financial crisis and the costs of the Christchurch earthquake, and was eager to see an end to what has been New Zealand's most costly mission overseas. The incoming Danny Philip NCRA government in 2010 also indicated support for a phased withdrawal of RAMSI. At the end of the current four-year funding cycle, unless otherwise agreed, the final component of RAMSI – the PPF assistance to the RSIPF – could either be terminated, or reconfigured under bilateral arrangements (such as govern the AFPs policing operations in Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu).

20.2 For this reason, ahead of the 2013 dismantling of RAMSI one defence-related Australian think-tank recommended one of two options: either Australian provision of an 'external security guarantee' together with a 'status of forces' agreement, or else:

> '… the basic framework of RAMSI's enabling architecture [remain] in place, while at the same time gradually transitioning the non-security related aspects of RAMSI's activities to the SIG, to the bilateral aid program, and to other donor programs. This will ensure that a mechanism remains to allow for the continued on-the-ground presence of regional armed security forces and their future deployment at short notice'[1].

20.3 The latter is broadly what has happened, but this was influenced by the decision to retain a PPF presence for a further four-year cycle, protected by the enabling legislation remaining in place. Consequently, continued PPF deployment remains subject to the annual reviews by Parliament of the

[1] E.g. World Bank, e.g. Matthew Allen, 'Long-Term Engagement: the Future of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Strategic Insights, March 2011, p14.

international assistance notice authorising its presence[1]. Any new military deployment unconnected with RAMSI would necessitate the issue of a new international assistance notice by the Governor General[2]. For other parts of the world, particularly Sierra Leone in West Africa, 'over the horizon' security guarantees have been recommended because they serve as a strong deterrent against those seeking to destabilise fragile states[3].

20.4 While not all interventions are well-intentioned, sensible and soundly advised, the RAMSI model as constituted under the FIA Act appears to have adequate mechanisms to ensure parliamentary endorsement and oversight. Parliament has the mandated opportunity at annual intervals to review the international assistance notice and take action accordingly. The only concerns in this regard are first whether the issue of the international assistance notice by the Governor General should specifically provide that he/she acts on the advice of cabinet. As presently worded, the provision is silent in this regard, importing by implication section 31(1) of the Constitution which obliges the Governor General to act on the advice of cabinet or ministers unless otherwise specified. Secondly, there is an issue as to whether the initial period of review ought to be six months (rather than the present annual reviews) to allow parliament an earlier opportunity to endorse the intervention for the purposes of legitimacy. Whatever the controversies about RAMSI's intervention, sovereignty has remained firmly with the SIG, the latter retaining the accompanying authority to terminate the residual RAMSI operation in accordance with the provisions of the FIA Act.

21. Conclusion: the RAMSI Decade

21.1 The RAMSI decade allowed Solomon Islands to move beyond *the tension* years of 1998-2003, a troubled half decade when the state was greatly weakened, the formal economy was devastated, and a culture of impunity emerged. The Solomon Islands had been unable to achieve a robust peace agreement either by itself (e.g. in the Honiara, Panatina, or Buala accords) or with only minimal assistance (e.g. the TPA & the IPMT), and the conflict had morphed into a more criminalized phase, which in some critical respects made the possibility of a political settlement still more complicated.

21.2 Instead, RAMSI arrived, and selectively took control of critical parts of the state apparatus, but without assuming executive authority. The clock would not be turned back to the pre-decolonization era. There would be no East Timor or Kosovo style mission allowing foreigners to assume control of government, even temporarily. Fashionable but deeply flawed doctrines of 'shared sovereignty'[4]

---

[1] Section 23 Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003.
[2] Section 3 FIA Act 2003.
[3] Paul Collier, *Wars, Guns and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places*. *War, Guns and* Votes, Harper Perennial, 2009, p85-87.
[4] See for example, Stephen Krasner, 'Sharing Sovereignty: New Institutions for Collapsed and Failing States', *International Security*, 29, (2), 2004. That some parts of the state machinery, such as Inland Revenue collection or customs, were administered by expatriates is not the same as

acquired no more support in Solomon Islands than they did in Papua New Guinea or elsewhere in Melanesia.

21.3 Nor was there to be any gradual expansion in the degree of control exerted by the RAMSI Special Coordinator, as there had been in Bosnia after the Dayton Peace Accord of 1995 when the Office of the 'High Representative' assumed increasing authority[1]. In Honiara, the legal framework that had been hastily assembled in the days leading up to, and around, July 24th 2003, remained in force throughout, though with one small amendment[2]. No effort was made to enhance *de jure* authority, even if in practice the AFP and some diplomats tested its limits in 2006-7.

21.4 In the early months of RAMSI, the temptation to take *de facto* control so as to achieve the urgent tasks of re-establishing the rule of law was considerable. Doing so achieved the mission's immediate objectives, but it came at a price. Those areas of the state that had witnessed direct bureaucratic control did not adjust easily to efforts to hand back responsibility. Expectations had arisen about how functional tasks should be carried out to such a degree that the prospects for continuity after a withdrawal of RAMSI seemed slender, particularly as regards the RSIPF. Those parts of the state that witnessed the fullest force of the intervention have also been those where handing back control has been most difficult, whereas those where there was a lighter touch have found subsequent adjustment easier (with the possible exception of prisons, for reasons explained in Section 8).

21.5 We have called this report 'The RAMSI Decade', and at least a part of our task has been to consider and assess the decade retrospectively. Our intention in choosing this title, however, was not backward-looking. At the time of writing, RAMSI has completed its 11th year. It has continued, but mainly as a backroom police support and training operation designed to draw down to a potential termination date in 2017. Yet as an integrated package, it has been terminated. It has lost both its development and military arms. Even the police deployment is

---

sharing sovereignty (see for example, Martin Loughlin, 'Ten Tenets of Sovereignty', in (ed.) Neil Walker, *Sovereignty in Transition*, Hart Publishing, Oxford, 2003.

[1]See David Chandler, *Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-Building*, Pluto Press, London, 2006.

[2] The FIA (Amendment) Act (No 21 of 2009) amended section 23 of the Act by adding section 23 A. This was in response to the point made by the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Relations in its 2009 report relating to clarifying timelines. The new section provides that if parliament is unable to sit within 3 months that end on a review date the International Assistance Notice will continue to be valid (subsection (1)). In the next sitting of Parliament following the review date the PM may move a motion for a resolution to appoint a date within that sitting for the Notice to be laid before Parliament (subs (2)). If Parliament passes a resolution under subs 2 the Notice shall be laid before Parliament on the appointed date unless earlier revoked (subs (3)). If Parliament passes a resolution within 3 months after the appointed date to annul the Notice, the Notice ceases to be valid 21 days from the date of the resolution without affecting the validity of anything done previously under the Act because of the Notice (subs (4)). If the Notice is laid before Parliament in accordance with subs (2) and (3) and no resolution is passed in accordance with subs (4) the Notice shall be laid before Parliament on the next review date in accordance with section 23 (subs (5)). If Parliament does not pass a resolution under subs (2) the Notice shall continue to be valid and next be laid before Parliament within the next 3 months that end on the next review date (subs (6)).

now slimmed down to around half its former size. The present-day scaled-down PPF operation is starting to bear more resemblance to the type of operations Australia's International Deployment Group anticipates in future in Melanesia, Samoa, Nauru and South-east Asia than to what RAMSI was a decade ago, and this resemblance is likely to increase over the next three years[1].

21.6 We think it advisable for the Solomon Islands Government, and the Pacific Islands Forum, to think of RAMSI *in the past tense*, rather than as merely 'transitioned'. If the mission survives in part now, its conclusion is clearly on the agenda, even if there is a future for bilateral police assistance in the region. There are important issues for SIG to consider about what *can* be sustained, and what *should* be sustained, which do not attract sufficient attention when framed around a possible continuation beyond 2017. Not everything that RAMSI set out to do can be resourced domestically; and not everything that RAMSI sought to do is well-suited to the Melanesian context. The task of reform, and of shaping suitable institutions, will not halt when RAMSI finally departs, but these will depend critically on the clarity of political will, and on the prospects for responsible government.

[1] See the AFP's International Deployment Group website, http://www.afp.gov.au/policing/international-deployment-group.aspx.

Appendix 1

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF REGIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION TO SOLOMON ISLANDS (RAMSI), SOLOMON ISLANDS
Terms of Reference

---

1. Background

Since the arrival of the Australian and New Zealand led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in July 2003, the country experienced a unique whole of government multinational state building approach focusing on security, economic governance, and improving the machinery of government.

RAMSI's first objective was to restore law and order by disarming the militia and criminal elements who sometimes intimidate ordinary citizens and even the government officials for illegal payments.

The initial impact of RAMSI was well received by the country with about 3,000[1] weapons were surrendered in a three week gun amnesty campaign, schools and businesses confidently reopened to full capacity, extortionists, suspected murderers including militia leaders had been. Alleged corrupt politicians, police and public servants were awaiting trials. The early success was mainly due to the heavy RAMSI's military presence supporting the RAMSI's Police Participating Force and the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.

At the same time, RAMSI's civilian component began working with Solomon Islanders to address the longer-term challenges of state reconstruction, with emphasis on law, justice, economic development and financial management. RAMSI personnel were appointed to in-line positions or as advisors within government agencies. A budgetary support program was also available to SIG.

SIG RAMSI Partnership Framework

The SIG - RAMSI Partnership Framework 2009 between the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) sets out the overall goal and objectives for RAMSI's work with the Solomon Islands Government. The overall goal was expressed in the partnership is "*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."*[2]

---

[1]Wainwright 2003, p493.
[2]SIG RAMSI Partnership Framework April 2009, p6.

With an annual expenditure of around AUD$200 million[1], RAMSI has worked in three key areas: law and justice, economic governance, and machinery of government. Progress in each has been mixed. It was planned that by 1st July 2013, the RAMSI programs supporting these three sectors will be shifted and funded bilaterally.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Review

This Review responds to:

- The call by the Solomon Islands Government that RAMSI Transition must be task bound and not time bound as agreed at several Forum Leaders' Meetings including the Enhanced Consultative Mechanism, Forum Ministerial Standing Committee,

- The need to undertake a holistic and independent assessment and audit of RAMSI (and its work programs) inclusive of the findings of the 2006 Annual Report, Report of the Solomon Islands Foreign Relations Committee Report 2009 and the Independent Experts Team Reports with the view to better inform the SIG and the contributing forum countries on the success and challenges of RAMSI,

- The issues highlighted in the Framework but has not been fully executed by the parties

- The need to consistently inform Forum Meetings including the ECM, FMSC and the Pacific Islands Leader's Forum Meeting the Performance of RAMSI as a normal evaluation requirement of the RAMSI including the SIG - RAMSI Partnership Framework.

The Review and its recommendations should inform Solomon Islands Government of how well and effective the RAMSI Partnership Agreement has been responding to the changing needs of Solomon Islands Government over the years since its operation, including the effectiveness of technical assistance provided in building up capacity in Government over the years.

The Review is also expected to inform Solomon Islands Government of the effectiveness and efficiency of the service delivery methodologies that have been undertaken by the Mission, and the level of commitment and resources the Solomon Islands Government needs to avail to sustain current achievements by RAMSI.

The Review will also provide the Government of Solomon Islands recommendations on how programs under this Partnership can be better managed and utilised to build SIG's capacity and capability to sustain their core functions after the drawdown of relevant RAMSI support.

[1] Wainwright 2005, p7. In 2011, expenditure across all three pillars was A$171.2 million, with A$113 million of that allocated to the Participating Police Force.

The Review will cover all aspects of RAMSI, including the SIG - RAMSI Partnership Framework, focusing on governance model and frameworks for resource prioritisation, strategic planning operating structures, human and financial resourcing, and operations.

The Review will provide lessons learned from the experience of RAMSI for other potential future similar missions elsewhere in the region, or more broadly internationally. It will consider whether RAMSI entailed an appropriate mix of provisions, players, functions, objectives and assistance.

3. Objectives

To review RAMSI, SIG-RAMSI Partnership Framework, mandate and make recommendations on:

- Mandate of RAMSI and RAMSI in the Partnership;
- Law and Justice Sector Programs;
- Economic Governance Sector Programs;
- Machinery of Government Sector Programs;
- Methodology of RAMSI assistance Programs;
- Time for RAMSI Transition;
- SIG preparedness for Post RAMSI Solomon Islands.

4. Governance and management

The review will be led and directed by a Team Leader.

The Review Team will report to a Steering Oversight Group comprised of Honourable Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman of the Government Caucus, Attorney General and the Minister for Development Planning and Aid Coordination.

The Steering Group will:

- Finalise the TOR in consultation with the members of the Review Team,
- provide feedback to the Team Leader on the review plan, timelines and expected outcomes;
- be consulted by the review team at various points during the review;
- provide written comment on the draft report;
- be presented with the final report.

The Final Report will be presented to Solomon Islands Cabinet by the Honourable Prime Minister.

The Office of Permanent Secretary to RAMSI and Forum Representative in the Solomon Islands will be responsible for management issues relating to the review.

5. Composition of the Review Team

The review team will comprise three persons. The team leader will be appointed by Honourable Prime Minister. The two other positions will be selected by the Team Leader in consultation with the Office of the Prime Minister based on skills and experiences.

The Team Leader will be responsible for all deliverables. The review team will have strong professional skills and experience in:

- institutional reform and countries in transition
- development programs monitoring and evaluation
- a good understanding of the genesis of RAMSI
- Pacific regional politics and development issues.

The review team is responsible for presenting the findings, analysis and any recommendations throughout the report. The review team is expected to engage members of the Members of Parliament, Provincial Premiers, RAMSI officials, Permanent Secretaries and other stakeholders as appropriate in the preparation of the review report.

6. Outputs and reporting requirements

The reviewers will produce the following outputs:

- A review plan for discussion with the Steering Group and Cabinet;
- Verbal debrief with Honourable Prime Minister, Steering Committee Members, Cabinet Members, and the relevant bodies prior to finalising draft report.
- Final report.

7. Approach

A review plan will be developed by the review team after an initial desk review.

The review will determine a quality consultation process involving members.

Additional consultants may be recruited by the Team Leader to provide technical expertise as necessary.

8. Timeframes and key tasks

It is expected that this review will begin on 3rd July 2013 and be concluded by June 30th2014. Tasks will include:

- First week for the Team to draw up their Review Plan from their own base,
- Initial visit to Honiara for team members to meet with Honourable Prime Minister and Steering Group and finalise TOR and Review Plan,
- Consultations with Ministries during the review, primarily through meetings with the Permanent Secretaries, Program Directors, Members of Parliament, Provincial Leaders, senior citizens of Solomon Islands and selected individuals,
- Draft report,
- Presentation of draft report to Steering Group, and
- Final report.

9. Tabling of Report to Parliament / Forum

The final report shall be presented to Cabinet and be referred to Parliament.

10. Funding

The review is funded by the Solomon Islands Government with support from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

Appendix 2: letter of Appointment

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

P.O.BOX G1, HONIARA
SOLOMON ISLANDS

TEL: 21863 FAX: 28649

Date: 26th June 2013

Our Ref: Cab 1/10/19

Professor Jon Fraenkel,
School of History, Philosophy, Political Science & Internationa Relations,
Victoria University of Wellington,
PO Box 600,
Wellington 6140
New Zealand.

Dear Professor Fraenkel,

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSOR JON FRAENKEL AS TEAM LEADER, INDEPENDENT REVIEW TEAM ON RAMSI

Let me on the outset, on behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands; express my gratitude to you for the role you play at the University and the warm and close working relations with Solomon Islands over the past years.

It is in the spirit of this unique relationship and the leadership role that you play over the years in the field leadership and education that the Solomon Islands Cabinet on the 23rd May 2013 endorsed and approved the establishment of the Independent Review Team on RAMSI.

I, acting on the advice of the Solomon Islands Cabinet, hereby appoint you to be the Team Leader of an Independent Review Team.

As you would aware, in this important phase of RAMSI transition, it is my intention that this Independent Review Team will be assisted by the Permanent Secretary for RAMSI to undertake broad consultations across relevant government agencies, and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to assess the concluding SIG/RAMSI Partnership Framework 2009. It would also be very useful to note any specific recommendations on how assistance under this important mission could have been better delivered.

Acknowledging the importance of the call by my Government that the transition of RAMSI be task-bound and not time, this Independent Review Team shall review the Partnership to identify the achievements, problems and challenges in the implementation of programs under the Framework and present to my Government recommendations on the areas that needs to be addressed by my Government.

As this is a regional intervention, It is only logical that both SIG and RAMSI knows how far has the Framework succeeded in achieving the goals agreed to by SIG and RAMSI and endorsed by the Forum leaders in 2009. What are the lessons learnt from this regional intervention? What are the difficulties or likely challenges with the RAMSI delivery modality? How can this assistance be better offered? Should there be another need for such intervention in the future, under the Biketawa Declaration, the Solomon Islands example is the model to work from.

As you would note from the Terms of Reference attached herein, the objective of the Independent Review Team is to:-

- Undertake a holistic assessment of the SIG RAMSI Partnership Framework, and make recommendations to inform the Government of Solomon Islands how well and effective the SIG RAMSI Partnership Agreement has been responding to the changing needs of Solomon Islands over the years of its operations,
- Inform Solomon Islands Government of the effectiveness and efficiency of the service delivery methodologies undertook by the Mission, and the level of commitment and resources the Solomon Islands Government needs to avail to sustain current achievements,
- Provide recommendations on how programs under this partnership could be better managed and utilized to build SIG's capacity and capability to sustain their core functions after the changing and drawdown of relevant RAMSI support,

I hope that with the finding of your team of highly regarded individuals, my Government and the members of the Pacific Islands Forum shall be comprehensively be informed of the RAMSI mission and the achievements, challenges and commitment that would be required by the Solomon Islands Government to sustain the achievements to date.

May I assure you and your Team that the Government of Solomon Islands continues to have highest consideration and commitment to maintaining our warm and close relations with our Forum Leaders in this regard.

I certainly look forward in meeting with you in the near future.

Yours Sincerely,

Honourable Gordon Darcy Lilo, MP
PRIME MINISTER

Encl.

Appendix 3: Biographical Details

Jon Fraenkel is a Professor in Comparative Politics in the School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations at Victoria University of Wellington. He formerly worked at the Australian National University (2007-12) and the University of the South Pacific in Fiji (1995-2007). He is author of *The Manipulation of Custom; from uprising to intervention in the Solomon Islands* (Victoria University Press & Pandanus Books, 2004) and co-editor of *The 2006 Military Takeover in Fiji; A coup to end all coups?* ANU EPress, 2009. His current research work focuses contemporary Pacific politics, economic history of Oceania, and electoral systems in Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

Joni Madraiwiwi is a Fijian lawyer who has worked in both government service and the private sector. He is a former judge and served briefly as Vice President of Fiji. He was a member of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Joni presently serves as a Privy Councillor and Law Lord of the Kingdom of Tonga. He lives in Bau near Suva and works as a legal consultant.

Henry Okole is a Papua New Guinean consultant who resides in Port Moresby. He presently heads a technical team assisting a review process of PNG's provincial and local-level government system as a prelude to a New Organic Law. He also teaches political science part-time in the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University of PNG. In recent years, he was a senior research fellow at PNG's National Research Institute (2011-2013). Before that, he was Chief of Staff to the Secretary-General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States (2005 – 2010) in Brussels and a former academic at the University of PNG (1993 – 2004).

Appendix 4: List of Interviewees

PMC
Honourable Prime Minister Gordon Darcy Lilo, 21.7.13
Dr. Philip Tagini, Special Secretary to Prime Minister, 13.12.13

Pacific Islands Forum
Neroni Slade, Secretary-General, Pacific Islands Forum, 25.7.13.
Sakiusa Rabuka, Pacific Islands Forum Representative to Solomon Islands.

RAMSI/GBR
RAMSI Special Coordinator – Nicholas Coppell, 2.8.13.
RAMSI Special Coordinator (2003-4) – Nick Warner, 23.7.13.
RAMSI Special Coordinator (2004-6) – James Batley, 17.6.14.
PPF Commander - Paul Osborne, 31.7.13
Johnson Honimae, Public Relations Officer, 2.12.13
Mataiasi Lomaloma, Assistant Special Coordinator, 5.12.13
Justine Braithwaite, Special Coordinator, 13.12.13
Wayne Higgins, Deputy Special Coordinator, 6.11.13 [Wellington]
Andie Driu (Ms) RAMSI Advisor DPP's Office, 25.4.14
Rob Barry former RAMSI Advisor DPP's Office, 16.7.13

Ministries/Government
Managing Director, SIBC, Ashley Wickham, 30.7.13
Ministry of National Planning and Aid Coordination – Lyn Legua, 2.8.13
Auditor General Edward Ronia & Deputy Robert Cohen, 23.7.13
Public Service Commission — Eliam Tanirogo, 30.7.13
Taeasi Sanga, Clerk, Parliament, 31.7.13
Paula Uluinacewa, Accountant General. 2.12.13
Fred Meesa, PS justice, 2.12.13
Fred Vakari'i, PS Home Affairs, 3.12.13
Emmanuel Kohouto Leadership Code Commission, 5.12.13
Jo Porai, Ombudsman, 5.12.13
Sir Allen Kemakeza, Speaker, Parliament, 4.12.13.
Nesta Maelanga, acting Commissioner of Lands, 5.12.13
Francis Haisoma, Commissioner, Correctional Service, 7.12.13
Edmond Sikua, PS Police, 10.12.13
Shadrach Fanega, PS Finance, 10.12.13
Colin Johnson, Australian advisor, Ministry of Finance & Treasury, 10.12.13
Ethel Sigamanu, PS, Ministry of Women, 11.12.13
Walter Rigamoto & Phil Whelan, Electoral System Strengthening Program, 13.12.13
Nathan Kama Comptroller of Customs 16.6.2014

Provincial Premiers
Choiseul, Jackson Kiloe, Premier Choiseul, 24.7.13
James Habu, Premier, Isabel Province, 24.7.13

Business community
Tommy Chan – Honiara Hotel, 31.7.13
Tony Hughes, former Governor CBSI, 1.8.13
Rev Vernon Smith, General Manager, Coconut Bioenergy, 3.8.13
Ruth Liloqula, former senior public servant & presently works for Gold Ridge, 8.8.13
Bob Pollard, TISI, 2.12.13

Members of Parliament:
Honourable Member for South Guadalcanal – David Day Pacha, 29.7.13
Honourable Commins Maewa, Minister for Justice, Member for Temotu Nende, 2.12.13
Honourable Derek Sikua, Leader of the Opposition, Member for North-East Guadalcanal, 3.12.13.

Legal Profession
Chief Justice Palmer, 19.7.13
Director Public Prosecutions, Talasasa, 22.7.13
Public Solicitor, Douglas Hou, 19.7.13
Rodney Kingmele, 22.7.13
Chief Magistrate/Judge Leonard Maina, 22.7.13 & 13.12.13

Public Servants / Prominent Citizens

Father Mark, Priest, Avu Avu Catholic Mission, 26.11.13
Henry Alebua, retired Public Servant, Avu Avu village, 26.11.13
Dominic Alebua, Teacher, Avu Avu Primary School, 1.12.13
Chaniel Tohaiha, Catechist, Makina Catholic Church, 27.11.13
Stanley Tova, Marau Provincial District Administrator, East Guadalcanal, 27.11.13
Claudius Sarai, employee of World Vision and community elder from Tavalai Island, Marau Sound, East Guadalcanal, 27.11.13
Joseph Kanai, traditional chief from Hautahe village, Marau, East Guadalcanal, 27.11.13
David Tairamo, village leader/elder, Marapa island, Marau Sound, East Guadalcanal, 28.11.13
Francis Mamou, Marau Sound, East Guadalcanal, 28.11.13
Paul Tovua, former MP and former RAMSI Permanent Secretary, 30.11.13
Kamilo Teke, former MP, 6.12.13

Police

Acting Police Commissioner, Juanita Matanga, 26.7.13
Jack Balaga RSIPF: A/ACP – National Operations – 6.8.13
Inspector Frank Menesa and Constable Allen Supa – 6.8.2013
Patterson Maegonia, retired police officer, Malaita, 7 August 2013
Deputy Police Commissioner – National Security – Walter Kola, 8.8.13
Aloysius Ora – Retired Chief Superintendent, 21.11.13

Johnson Siapu, - former Assistant Police Commissioner, 29.4.14
Peter Marshall, former Chief of Police, [Wellington] 6.11.13
Constable Gilbert Maruta OIC, Avu Avu Police Station, East Guadalcanal, 25.11.13
Constable Ronaldo Belasio, Marau Police Station, East Guadalcanal, 26.11.13

Prisons

Adam Hatfield, adviser to prison services, Rove Prison, 6.12.13
Michael Nagu OIC, Tetere Prison, 7.12.13

Inmates
Malcolm Leke, Rove prison, 6.12.13
Willie Maoma, Rove prison, 6.12.13
Cornilius Goalasa, Rove prison, 6.12.13
Stanley Gitua, Rove prison, 6.12.13
Jonas Keja, Rove prison, 12.12.13
Harold Keke, Rove prison, 12.12.13

Civil Society & Others
John Roughan, 31.7.13
Ofani Eremae (editor Solomon Star), 31.7.13
Daniel Fenua, Transparency Solomon Islands – 3.12.13
Morgan Wairiu – 3.12.13
Ben Afuga & Redley Raramo, FSII, 6.12.13
Daniel Faáfunua, 4 May 2014

Diplomats

Matt Anderson, Australian High Commissioner, 21.11.13
Sarah Wong, acting NZ High Commissioner, 3.12.13
Domonic Mieklejohn, British High Commissioner, 26.7.13

Focus Groups

Malaita Maasina Forum–Martin Housanau, Henry Daukalia, Charles Ashley. 25.7.13

Parliament Support Services, 31.7.2013
Taeasi Sanga (Clerk of Parliament); Albert Kabui (Lawyer), Ian Rakafia (HRM); Celsus Talifilu (UNDP Project Manager); Jefferson Hallu (Committee Secretary).

Senior Police Officers, Rove, 31 July 2013.
George Pailai (Director NEMSEP); Hugo Maelasi (Traffic Coordinator); J.L. Kanabaea (D/CID); Gwen Ratu (Director – HR); Lazarus Taki (Director– National Response Division); Gabriel Manelusi(Police Commander – Honiara); Nela Mosese
(Deputy Commissioner – Operations); Maxwell Saelea (Deputy Director – HR); George Guna; (Director – Strategy & Policy); James Maelanga

(Director of Music); Jack Balaga (A/ACP National Operations); Malcolm Ariki (C/CPP Team).

Police Officers - Central Police Station, 1 August 2013
Ben Jonathan (Sergeant); Mark Oge (Sergeant); Joseph Leguhavi (Sergeant); Frank Menesa (Inspector).

CSSI Officers - Francis Haisoma, CSSI Commissioner; Mactus Forau, Deputy Commissioner – Administration; Patrick Sale, Deputy Commissioner – Operations; Leah Alufo'oa, Director Strategic Planning (Inspector), Mendana Hotel, 30 April 2014.

Villagers – Piapia Village, Marau area, East Guadalcanal, 27.11.13
Villagers – Marauiapa Village, Marau Sound, East Guadalcanal, 28.11.13

Ministry of Finance (Treasury Division) 30.4.14 - Denty Tuke, Ontona Riringa, Ann Halea, Douglas Sade.

Western Provincial Council 1.5.14 - Hon. Pye R. Kave, Premier; Adrian Toni, Provincial Secretary; Harrison Gewi; Hon. John Walevavu, MPA; Hon. Wayne Maepiou, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries; Hon. Chris B. Mesepita, Minister for Culture and Tourism; Hon. David Sogavare; Minister for Planning; Hon. Carlos Kesiana, MPA; Hon. John Hopa, Minister for Education; Hon. Richard Tekifono, Speaker, Hon. Jane Tozaka, Minister for State and Community Affairs; Hon. Billy Veo, Minister for Housing and Lands, Hon. Malloney Lopoto; Min. for Mines, Energy & National Resources; Hon. Goldie Ringe, MPA; Hon. Lester Saomasi, Minister for Finance; Hon. Isaac Vula Tatapu, Minister for Commerce and Investment.

Consultation Workshop, 20 June 2014, Mendana Hotel
Mr. Shadrach Fanega, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Treasury; Mr. Jeremy Manele, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Development Planning; Mr. Edmond Sikua, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Police, National Security & Correctional Services; Mr. Fred Fakari, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs; Mr. Stanley Pirione, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Provincial Government Institutional Strengthening; Mr. James Remobatu, Secretary to Cabinet, Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet; Hon. Peter Chanel Agovaka, MP, Member of Parliament - Central Guadalcanal, National Parliament of Solomon Islands; Hon. Chris Laore, MP, Minister for Police, National Security, & Correctional Services; Hon. Walter Folotalu, MP, Minister, Ministry of Communication & Aviation; Hon. Hypolite Taremae, Minister, Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation, & Peace; James Lengi Deputy Principal, St. Nicholas Secondary School; Roger Maleboti White River Secondary School; Principal, Mbua Valley Secondary School, Honiara; Mrs. Florence Naesol Deputy Clerk, National Parliament of Solomon Islands; Gane Simbe Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Solomon Islands; Mrs. Junita Matanga, Commissioner of Police, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force; Principal, Bishop Epale Secondary School, Honiara; Mr. Robert Iroga, Chief of Staff,

Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet; Chief Justice Palmer, High Court of Solomon Islands; Mr. Douglas Hou, Public Solicitor; Hon. Lence Tangosia, Premier, Renbel Province; Hon. Anthony Veke, MP, Premier, Guadalcanal Province; Mr. Joe Poraiwai, Ombudsman; Office of the Ombudsman; George Walenenea; Charles Ashley, Malata Forum; Joseph Maelaua, Business Entreprenuer; Dr. Judson Leafasi, Senior Citizen; Charles Ashley Masina Forum, Martin Housanau, Masina Forum; Ronald Unusi Permanent Secretary – CRU, Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet; Sakiusa Rabuka, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Rep; Jeffrey S Kauha Permanent Secretary – RAMSI, Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet