



Report to the Pacific Islands Forum on RAMSI activities

2013

1. 2013 was a year of notable milestones for both Solomon Islands and the Regional Assistance Mission (RAMSI).
2. Following more than two years of planning and preparation - and in close consultation and dialogue with Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and Pacific Islands Forum contributing countries - RAMSI successfully completed its transition process. This involved a seamless shift from a comprehensive mission comprised of policing, development and military components, to RAMSI's new makeup - a regional mission focused on policing and security.
3. RAMSI also observed its Tenth Anniversary. The celebrations were an opportunity to showcase the progress made in Solomon Islands over the decade, while SIG hosted Pacific Leaders in Honiara with a series of successful events. These highlighted the mission's **uniquely Pacific approach** in terms of its architecture, regional make-up, and consultative work ethic.
4. Today, RAMSI retains its strong regional character with representatives from all Pacific Islands Forum members represented in the mission during 2013.

TRANSITION

5. Significant groundwork was undertaken to ensure that RAMSI's transition came to successful fruition. The first six months of 2013 arguably represented the most intense period of this work, as RAMSI and SIG prepared for changes to the development, military and policing pillars of the mission.
6. Ongoing coordination and communication with SIG, regional contributors and the Solomon Islands public remained central to progress. As work continued at a high tempo in 2013, the underlying strength of the partnership with SIG was the key factor in the successful transition progress, ensuring channels of communication remained open and key thinking shared.



7. As a result, on 1 July 2013 transition was completed seamlessly as follows:
 - RAMSI's former development programs in Economic Governance, Machinery of Government and Law and Justice **shifted** to bilateral aid programs now delivered by the Australian and New Zealand governments as well as other donors.
 - The mission's military component, the Combined Task Force, ceased operational tasking and completed its **final withdrawal** from Solomon Islands in September 2013.
 - RAMSI's Participating Police Force (PPF) **remains** in Solomon Islands and has worked with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and SIG to develop a comprehensive strategy for the next phase of the mission's assistance. This phase, running from 2013-17, will focus on continued capacity development of the RSIPF.
8. Following transition, the shape and size of the mission changed. **Downsizing** occurred as the development and military components were withdrawn to reflect RAMSI's more targeted focus on policing. PPF numbers supporting the police capacity development focus of the mission remained at current levels. In July 2013, the mission's former Public Affairs Unit was wound up and RAMSI's office at Lei Lei closed in August 2013.
9. All elements of the Office of the Special Coordinator (OSC) are now located at Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR), RAMSI's headquarters in Henderson, Honiara. The OSC remains the central coordinating point for the RAMSI mission, ensuring key stakeholders are informed of ongoing work and that the mission's agreed objectives are delivered.

RAMSI'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

10. RAMSI marked its tenth anniversary in Solomon Islands on 23 July 2013. To celebrate the success of the **RAMSI partnership** over the decade, Solomon Islands Government hosted Pacific Regional Leaders in Honiara from 23-25 July.
11. The official celebrations included a parade and welcome ceremony at Lawson Tama stadium in Honiara, Leaders' meeting, Police Response Team demonstration at GBR, visit to the Avu Avu Police Station and a series of successful events. These acknowledged RAMSI's contribution to stability and development in Solomon Islands and highlighted progress made by SIG over the decade to foster continued peace and growth. They also reinforced the excellent relationships the mission has shared with SIG, communities and regional partners.
12. During the anniversary RAMSI launched a video **documentary**, "Helpem Fren: Rebuilding a Pacific Nation", and a **book**, "Building a nation; ten years of the Solomon Islands-RAMSI Partnership". Copies of these publications are being distributed to schools and other interested parties as an educational resource for



Solomon Islands' youth.

13. RAMSI also arranged a popular public **seminar**, “Looking Beyond RAMSI: Solomon Islands Perspective on their Future”, at which the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, the Hon. Gordon Darcy Lilo gave the opening address. The seminar was highly interactive. It met its objective of drawing the next generation of Solomon Islands' leaders into a discussion about what they saw as the key future challenges, opportunities and prospects for their nation.
14. As part of the Tenth Anniversary celebrations, RAMSI gifted its **photographic exhibition** “RAMSI: A History in Pictures” to the people of the Solomon Islands. The exhibition records over 300 images from across Solomon Islands and showcases the history, people, places and events that have shaped the mission since 2003. It toured Apia, Port Vila, Kiribati, Auckland, Canberra, Sydney and New York before reaching its final home in Honiara. The exhibition has proven a powerful visual tool to highlight the truly regional composition of the mission.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE COMBINED TASK FORCE

15. 2013 was the final year of operations by the Combined Task Force (CTF) - the military component of RAMSI. Throughout the first half of 2013, the CTF continued to provide **invaluable support** to the mission by providing an on-call security back-up to RAMSI police. As of 1 July 2013, the CTF's involvement in operations came to a conclusion and all military elements were withdrawn from Solomon Islands in September 2013.
16. The CTF's **contribution to the mission** over the last decade has been significant and evolved constantly. This is most visibly reflected in the changes to CTF personnel numbers over time. The CTF reduced in size from 1800 troops in 2003 when the mission began, down to less than 150 in 2013.
17. CTF tasks ranged from the initial re-establishment of security and disarming of militants in the early days of the mission, to the provision of operational support to the PPF, to widespread community engagement and outreach, to in-country training and development.
18. In recent years, the **improved security climate** in Solomon Islands meant the CTF was not required to deploy in support of any PPF operation. However, the CTF played a key role in maintaining an ongoing rapid response capability and its continuing provision of a security guarantee helped maintain confidence in Solomon Islands as a stable and peace-oriented democracy.
19. The **legacy of the CTF is enduring**. This legacy is the security and stability Solomon Islands now enjoys and the opportunity this has provided for the country to grow, develop and build on gains realised over the past decade.



ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

20. RAMSI's Economic Governance Program (EGP) concluded in June 2013 as part of the transition of RAMSI development programs to bilateral aid arrangements.
21. Over the year, the EGP continued to support the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) and other key agencies to deliver an extensive range of economic and fiscal policy reforms and improve financial management, budgetary and technical systems.
22. In early 2013, as part of RAMSI's transition, the EGP, together with the Machinery of Government Program, commenced design processes to shift key program elements into the new Australian bilateral Economic and Public Sector Governance Program (**SIGOV**). Preparation for transition was also undertaken through supporting corporate planning with MoFT, work on the Ministry's procurement roadmap and an increasing focus on organisational development.
23. Extensive preparatory discussions focused on determining SIG's priorities for the successor SIGOV program. These provided stakeholders with confidence that support for **core functions of state** would continue – not under RAMSI auspices, but through normalized and longer-term bilateral aid support. As a result, the EGP transitioned seamlessly from RAMSI to the Australian bilateral SIGOV program in July 2013.
24. The EGP supported SIG to maintain a **stable fiscal position**, including through the provision of policy advice to Ministers and focusing on revenue and cash management. Macroeconomic indicators continue to see some improvement, despite softening commodity prices and declining revenues from logging and mining. GDP growth for 2014 is projected to be close to 4.0 per cent, while GDP per capita rose from US\$1819 in 2012 to an estimated US\$1950 in 2013.
25. In a major milestone, in 2013 SIG passed a new **Public Financial Management Act**. The Act provides for the control and management of SIG public finance. It is expected to encourage greater transparency and accountability in budgeting, procurement and public expenditure.
26. Effective **debt management** has now placed SIG in a position to borrow for new high quality social and economic infrastructure projects, with the energy sector a key focus. This reflected sound implementation of the Debt Management Strategy developed and endorsed by Cabinet and Honiara Club Members in 2012. That SIG is now in a position to undertake prudent new borrowing – the first sovereign borrowing in over a decade – is a significant achievement.
27. Government debt decreased from SBD 1,134.07 million at the end of 2012 to SBD 1,021.53 million at the end of 2013. Debt to GDP ratio fell from 14 per cent to 11 per cent over 2013 - well below the acceptable benchmark of 30 per cent.



28. Revenue grew in 2013 to SBD3.3 billion driven by an 8.5 percent growth in tax and non-tax receipts (totalling SBD2.8 billion) (Source: Core Economic Working Group)
29. The EGP continued to play a key role in the policy dialogue process with the Core Economic Working Group (**CEWG**) and assisting the Ministry of Finance and Treasury with the implementation of reforms. The CEWG is being reinvigorated as a forum to drive growth and provide a more consolidated agenda for public financial management reform.
30. RAMSI provided AUD 3.3 million in 2013 for the roll-out of the SIG-Connect. This project will improve whole-of-government communication by strengthening connectivity across the public service. The project continues under the Australian Government's bilateral programme.
31. Work on the **Customs and Excise Bill** continued including a period of public consultation. The Bill is expected to go before Parliament in 2014 for consideration.

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

32. RAMSI's Machinery of Government (MoG) program commenced in 2005 and concluded in June 2013 as part of the transition of RAMSI development programs to bilateral aid arrangements.
33. The program was aimed at promoting government administration that is strategic, professional, transparent and accountable in the delivery of services and priority programs. By 2013, the program's focus was on public sector management, public accountability, electoral systems strengthening, and increasing women's representation in senior government decision-making.
34. In these areas, MOG achieved a number of important outcomes towards strengthening democratic governance, and improving basic SIG functions and government accountability in Solomon Islands.
 - MOG's Electoral System Strengthening Program (ESSP) worked closely with the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission on capacity building and to **strengthen election management**. In February 2013, the program supported the successful administration of a by-election in Ngella, Central Province.
 - Under RAMSI, ESSP facilitated early preparations for the introduction of a new national **Biometric Voter Registration System**. The voter role has not been updated since 2009 and a new roll will improve the integrity of national elections. After some delays, the voter registration process is on track to commence from March 2014, supported by ESSP phase 3, which was redesigned and is now managed by Australia and the UNDP elections program. The 2014 elections will be a significant undertaking for the SIEC and continued donor support will be required.



- MoG has also supported advances in **human resource management** across SIG. The finalisation of performance agreements and the conducting of mid-year assessments for Permanent Secretaries have strengthened management and identified performance targets. Feedback indicates these have also been catalysts for new reforms, including in statutory compliance, budget and financial management, gender mainstreaming, and the rollout of performance management processes across ministries.
- **Public service recruitment and performance management** processes are more transparent and merit-based, with all vacant positions now advertised for open competition and managed centrally by the Public Service Commission.
- MoG supported the establishment of a Human Resource Management Board under the Public Service Improvement Program. This has increased coordination and cohesion between the Ministry of Public Service, the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. The Board is now collectively tackling core issues including public service remuneration, absenteeism, performance management and information systems.
- The Office of the **Ombudsman** is able to securely manage investigations and collect disaggregated data on cases (including by year, province and type of complaint). A pilot twinning initiative with the Australian Commonwealth Ombudsman was successfully implemented.
- In 2013 the **Leadership Code Commission** stepped up its scrutiny of Members of Parliament and Permanent Secretaries, strengthening enforcement of the legislative requirement for personal financial affairs to be declared, and in the process, promoting strengthened public accountability.
- The Office of the **Auditor General** has strengthened its audit capacity and is undertaking more challenging and sensitive audits, including on tertiary scholarships and constituency development funds.
- MoG's **Women in Government** program supported implementation of the National Gender Policy and assisted the establishment of a new Policy Coordination Unit within the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) to facilitate better coordination across SIG on gender mainstreaming. Support also enabled MWYCFA to complete its first report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).



LAW AND JUSTICE

35. Up to 30 June 2013, the RAMSI Law and Justice Program (L&J Program) continued to implement agreed projects with the objective of improving law and justice services. To achieve this, L&J provided technical assistance, training, small scale development expenditure, institutional strengthening and infrastructure.
36. Like RAMSI's other development programs, in the first half of 2013 the L&J Program focused on preparing for **transition**. Program staff partnered with SIG to identify jointly the most appropriate type of future support to the sector. Early planning, clear communication and regular meetings ensured the smooth transfer of the L&J Program to the Australian bilateral Solomon Islands Justice Program from July 2013.
37. A particular focus for the L&J Program was on promoting **local ownership** of the justice sector and aligning with, and building the capacity of, local systems. On the financial side, the L&J Program channelled more donor funds through SIG systems to strengthen those systems and to support long term maintenance of assets invested in by RAMSI.
38. Across the board, the role of advisors in the L&J Program have shifted from in-line duties to capacity building support, with the final few moving across to a capacity building function in 2013. A good example of this is in the Public Solicitor's Office where advisors take on the role of instructing solicitor and Solomon Islanders assume the role of leading advocate. The shift from advisers "doing" to "advising" reflects the program's increasing transfer of responsibility to SIG with a view to longer-term sustainability.
39. Throughout 2013, **human resource management** remained the most serious challenge in the justice sector. High vacancy rates, underperformance, absenteeism and dissatisfaction with remuneration rates were the main issues confronting agency heads. Given the shortage of effective SIG personnel, dependency on technical advisors remained high. Despite this, close cooperation with SIG saw continued progress in advisers stepping from in-line duties, and the number of justice advisers reduced from 32 in 2012 to 23 in 2013. Advisor support now has a greater focus on strengthening internal corporate management of human and financial resources.
40. The **Magistrates Court** had a particularly challenging year. A critical staffing shortage led to a scale-back in services, which resulted in an increased number of prisoners held on remand, and increased pressure on Correctional Services Solomon Islands, as well as a growing backlog of cases. Positively, however, progress has been on developing sustainable remuneration solutions for Magistrates (an impediment to local recruitment). While the final hurdle in passing this reform is yet to be completed, it is hoped to pass through Parliament in the first half of 2014. The successor program to RAMSI's L&J Program continues to work with SIG to address some of the broader constraints facing the Magistracy including ongoing mentoring and advisory support to magistrates and the registrar.



41. In 2013, **case disposals in the High Court** increased by approximately 5%, with 316 civil cases and 82 criminal cases disposed of. In the criminal jurisdiction, in 2013 some 58% of cases allocated to the High Court involved gender-based violence.
42. **Correctional Services** Solomon Islands (CSSI) saw many achievements in 2013, including the opening of the correctional centres in Lata and Kirakira, a continuing reduction in technical advisors (from 11 in 2012 to 8 in 2013), improvements in compliance with legislation, policies, procedures and orders, more targeted training opportunities and continued improvements to **rehabilitation** work with prisoners. Construction of the Gizo Correctional Facility also began in 2013 and is on track for completion in 2014. The operating CSSI facilities at Auki, Rove and Tetere continued to comply with United Nations standards. L&J supported an investigation into CSSI's procurement practices, the results of which will improve financial compliance and facilitate closer alignment of funding requests with annual work plans.
43. Gender remained a key priority for the program, with an emphasis on strengthening laws and increasing services to address violence against women and, more broadly, promote gender equality. **For example**, the L&J Program continued to support work on the development of family protection policy and the drafting of a **Family Protection Bill**. The Bill, among other things, will clarify offences relating to gender-based and family violence and tighten penalties. It is expected that this important legislation will be passed into law in 2014. Gender mainstreaming continues to be a focus for CSSI in particular, with female officers now making up 16% of all CSSI staff where previously they were prohibited under the law from being employed by CSSI.
44. RAMSI's L&J program has delivered tangible benefits to Solomon Islanders and strengthened the rule of law. By the end of the program's transition, all justice agencies were headed by Solomon Islanders, with basic levels of service delivery being achieved. The operations of the courts have improved, improving access to justice. The National Judiciary is now delivering regular and impartial decisions. All operating correctional facilities now meet UN standards, and most offenders from the Tension have been prosecuted.

PARTICIPATING POLICE FORCE

45. RAMSI's Participating Police Force (PPF) had a busy year in 2013. PPF worked together with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), the Ministry of Police, National Security & Correctional Services (MPNSC) and the Office of Special Coordinator to commence planning and transition from the RAMSI PPF Transition Strategy 2011-2013 to the **RAMSI PPF Drawdown Strategy 2013-2017**.



46. Following extensive consultations, the ‘Drawdown Strategy’ was formally approved and signed by SIG stakeholders and RAMSI in October 2013. The Strategy is the mission’s comprehensive blueprint for the next phase of support from 2013-17. It identifies the need for the PPF to focus on increasing RSIPF capability in the following areas:

- Training and leadership;
- Community Policing;
- Mobility, infrastructure and logistics;
- National emergency and disaster response;
- Corporate support, policy and governance; and
- National security capabilities.

Training and Leadership

47. During the year a total of **1045 RSIPF members received training** supported by the PPF. This consisted of 878 men and 167 women representing **87%** of RSIPF members.

48. Training courses included Front Line Family Violence (171), Public Order Management (101), Operational Safety Training (OST) Refresher (419), Strategic Planning Workshop (26), Channels of Hope ‘Train the Trainer’ (27) and leadership programs (70). Over 900 RSIPF members have qualified in OST. Significant effort has continued to develop RSIPF trainers to deliver training (supported by the PPF). In line with the increasing transfer of responsibility from PPF to RSIPF, **the majority of training is now delivered by RSIPF officers.**

49. During October 2013, two RSIPF Police Response Team (PRT) trainers travelled to Canberra as guest instructors for the AFP Public Order Tactical Trainer Qualifying Program (‘train the trainer’ program). AFP instructors were impressed with the knowledge and skills of the RSIPF PRT trainers and indicated they met Australian standards. The RSIPF officers mentored students and provided operational context to the tactics, utilising their own professional experience from Solomon Islands.

Community Policing and Promotion of Gender Equality

50. The RSIPF has continued its efforts to promote women in policing. Acting Commissioner Juanita Matanga has continued in the role of Acting Commissioner since April 2013. The RSIPF now has approximately **17% women** in its workforce (one of the highest rates of female participation across SIG agencies). The percentage of women by rank is as follows (figures accurate in January 2014):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|
| • Constable | 20.0% |
| • Sergeant | 12.0% |
| • Senior Sergeant | 5.0% |
| • Inspector | 10.0% |
| • Superintendent – Chief Superintendent | 8.5% |



51. The PPF has helped promote greater **gender equality** within the Solomon Islands and the RSIPF on a number of fronts. This included advocacy on issues such as influence on laws and policies, social mobilisation including community awareness and behavioural change. Specific examples include:
- Facilitating a RSIPF Women’s Advisory Network meeting to enhance awareness of family violence to the 81 participants
 - The Community Engagement and Family Violence teams have delivered awareness programs throughout the Solomon Islands reaching a large number of community members (including remote communities)
 - Continued to enhance justice for children and youth in conflict with the law by funding the Save the Children project (delivered by Save the Children)
 - Supported gender equality by funding the Channels of Hope project (delivered by World Vision) aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour towards gender based violence. This project included a number of RSIPF officers qualifying at a ‘train the trainers’ course.
52. A **National Family Violence Workshop** was conducted at the RAMSI base in November 2013. A total of 26 RSIPF Family Violence officers (representing each of the Provinces) attended the Workshop, together with SIG and NGO representatives. Presenters included World Vision, Christian Care Centre and victims and perpetrators of family violence. Topics included family violence, sexual assault and gender-based violence. The Workshop culminated in the delivery of family violence awareness programs at the Honiara Central Market and some Honiara Churches in November 2013. The RSIPF participated in White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2013 with other stakeholders and delivered community awareness presentations.
53. In late 2013, the PPF commenced renovations of a building at Rove Police Headquarters for use by the Sexual Assault Squad. The renovation will provide improved privacy and is purposely designed for dealing with victims of sexual assault (it includes bathroom facilities, break out areas, and interview rooms.) The new facility will be completed in 2014.

Mobility, Infrastructure and Logistics

54. RAMSI’s PPF continued its extensive program of **infrastructure development** for the RSIPF. Phase 2 (the final phase) of the Police Accommodation Program was completed during 2013. This resulted in the construction of 62 additional houses and three provincial police headquarters. The police houses were built at Taro (9), Gizo (6), Auki (21), Atori (3), Kira Kira (20), and Henderson (3). This makes a total of 144 houses now completed across the project at a cost of AUD 20 million. Provincial police headquarter buildings were completed at Gizo (including barracks), in Western Province, Taro in Choiseul Province and Henderson in Guadalcanal Province. Auki RSIPF Headquarters is due to start in 2014.



55. The new accommodation has actively addressed sustainability issues, minimising travel time and transportation costs for the RSIPF, and making it easier to transfer staff between provinces. The provision of modern provincial police headquarters has resulted in an improved working environment and will enable the RSIPF to deliver a more professional and effective service to communities.
56. Improving the RSIPF's **logistical capability** has been a key focus for the PPF over the year. In October 2013 the PPF formally gifted 25 new Ray Boats and 7 Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats to the RSIPF under the joint PPF/RSIPF mobility plan. These vessels have enhanced RSIPF access throughout the provinces to villages and communities inaccessible by road, improving patrols and community policing.
57. In 2013 the PPF's **Communications Upgrade** Project was completed with a dedicated radio workshop handed over to the RSIPF. RSIPF members are now completely responsible for the maintenance and up keep of all radio assets for the RSIPF. A PPF advisor is in place, to focus mentoring activities on personnel and general unit management skills. There has also been an upgrading of both the VHF and HF radio networks in Solomon Islands.

National emergency and disaster response

58. The RSIPF is responsible for the provision of fire response and land-based rescue services in the Solomon Islands. Capacity development projects provided by the PPF over the year have enhanced the RSIPF Fire & Rescue Service's capacity to respond to fire, natural disasters and other emergencies in a timely and effective manner.
59. RAMSI's planned establishment of a world-class National Emergency and Disaster Response Training Facility at Hell's Point has not, however, progressed due to an ongoing land dispute.

Corporate support, policy and governance

60. In 2013, the RSIPF made progress on important strategy, corporate planning and policy initiatives. In September the Executive endorsed the RSIPF 2014-2016 Strategic Directions which outlines four specific areas of mission, vision, goals and values.
61. The RSIPF Strategy & Policy Unit also facilitated workshops with Provincial Police Commanders (PPC) and Directors in October 2013, to discuss and finalise the RSIPF Annual Business Plan (ABP) 2014. Prior to the workshop the RSIPF Strategy & Policy Unit conducted extensive consultations to prepare and present a draft ABP to the workshop for further discussions. The workshop included presentations on budget allocations and issues surrounding human resource management. The 2014 RSIPF APB was subsequently approved by the Executive with only minor changes.



62. The Police Act 2013 was first tabled in parliament in March 2013 and passed in April 2013 without amendment. Advice is that parliament will gazette the Police Act and Police Regulations early in 2014. The new Act will provide a solid and sustainable foundation to support the RSIPF in strengthening their operational capacity to maintain law and order and to ensure community safety. The new Act includes legislative updates to governance, terms and conditions of employment, discipline and police powers/duties.

National security capabilities

63. A key outcome in 2013 was the completion of a major Review of **Border Control and National Security** between Solomon Islands and Bougainville. Wide consultation on the review was undertaken with local communities, provincial and national governments, and other key stakeholders.
64. The review identified that RSIPF logistics within the border region is a major area of concern – in particular, the lack of a suitable vessel within the region severely restricts RSIPF and interagency operations. The PPF's Maritime Mobility project will purchase three mid-range Tier One vessels in 2014 to conduct patrols (including border patrols), assist in resupply and conduct search and rescue operations. The review also identified a lack of communication between RSIPF post and Bougainville Police Service (BPS) which will be considered in future communication projects.
65. A very significant policy development occurred in October 2013, when SIG authorised RAMSI to commence the first phase for the **limited reintroduction of firearms** to the RSIPF. This is the last key capability gap needing to be addressed for the force to be able to independently guarantee law and order in Solomon Islands.
66. The first phase of the limited rearmament project includes building infrastructure and training facilities, developing governance frameworks and training selected RSIPF officers. Consultants have been appointed to prepare a Project Plan and associated documents. During November/December the consultants engaged with stakeholders and commenced drafting a Project Plan for the planned rearmament. **Separate approval from the SIG** will be required before the actual introduction of firearms to those few select areas of the RSIPF (the Police Response Team, the close personal protection team and airport security) requiring a lethal armed capability. SIG has committed to lead extensive community consultations ahead of any rearmament.

Operational capabilities

67. In the lead-up to transition the PPF increasingly withdrew from front-line policing roles, progressively transferring responsibility back to the RSIPF. By April 2013, the PPF had completed the last of its withdrawals from eleven out of thirteen provincial police posts. PPF mentoring programs for Provincial Police Commanders were put in place, as well as improved logistics and communications,



to help provinces better connect with their national capital. The PPF now maintain a presence in Honiara, Gizo and Auki, predominantly in advisory/capacity development roles.

68. A major focus for PPF trainers has been strengthening the RSIPF's operational capabilities. This focus has paid dividends - today, the RSIPF's **Police Response Team (PRT)** is highly effective at maintaining public order and is a professional and disciplined unit. Throughout 2013, the PRT successfully conducted, and responded to, a number of high risk operations. For example, in November 2013 the PRT (supported and advised by the PPF) conducted two such operations in remote areas over an extended period. These resulted in the arrest of two dangerous escapees on the Weather Coast and two suspects who had been terrorising a community in Malaita Province.
69. The PPF have up-skilled the RSIPF through training and use of a range of less-lethal use of force options. In April 2013 a new Use of Force policy was approved by Commissioner RSIPF. Subsequently Commissioner's Orders were introduced and an Operational Safety Committee established. After appropriate training the roll out of Oleoresin (capsicum) Spray commenced in August 2013 at selected work units. This has provided RSIPF officers within those work areas another less lethal option to use force (in addition to the existing options of handcuffs and batons).
70. In September 2013 an Operational Safety Training (OST) facility was opened at RSIPF Police Headquarters, Rove. This is a purpose built building which has enabled the RSIPF to conduct OST and public order management training within a modern facility. Two vehicles and equipment were also provided for use of OST trainers.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

71. Prior to its closure at the end of June 2013, RAMSI's Public Affairs Unit (PAU) focused on two main areas: the mission's transition and RAMSI's 10th anniversary.
72. RAMSI continued to connect with local communities, particularly as the mission transitioned. A proactive outreach program combined with continuous community engagement improved public awareness of RAMSI's transition. This involved extensive consultation with communities throughout the country, providing reassurance that RAMSI remains an active contributor to security in Solomon Islands.
73. The mission's outreach effort included fifteen local community consultations held in and around the Honiara area, along with nine school forums. In addition four 'Wakabaot Toktok's' took place, targeting key audiences. These were women/teachers, young professionals, media and church leaders.



74. As transition approached, PAU produced an explanatory brochure on coming changes to RAMSI's military, policing and development components and progression to a regional policing mission. This was published in daily newspapers as well as distributed widely through various SIG ministries.
75. RAMSI's two sponsored weekly radio programs, *Talking Truth* and *Spotlight*, continued to discuss current issues relevant to Solomon Islanders with a variety of guests from both RAMSI and SIG.
76. RAMSI hosted the International Women's Day breakfast on 7 March 2013 for local women from all walks of life. The keynote speech was delivered by Dr Patricia Rodie, the Vice Chancellor of the new Solomon Islands National University. 2013's annual Special Coordinator's award was presented to Mrs Taeasi Sanga for her outstanding service as Clerk for the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.
77. The sixth **People's Survey** was completed in 2013. The survey continued to reflect high levels of public support for the RAMSI mission and indicated satisfaction with the mission's continued progress. In 2013 the survey was also broadened to seek public views on a number of issues which will be of use to the SIG more widely.
78. RAMSI's tenth anniversary was an intense period for RAMSI public affairs. In addition to the book, documentary and seminar noted above, the mission produced a paper on RAMSI's achievements over the decade which was distributed to all contributing nations through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

OTHER COORDINATION

79. The RAMSI Triumvirate; the Special Coordinator, Permanent Secretary RAMSI and the Pacific Islands Forum Representative in Honiara continued to meet regularly. The Triumvirate coordinates RAMSI's activities and ensures the priorities of the mission are aligned with the SIG and PIF. The Triumvirate also met regularly with Solomon Islands Governor General, His Excellency Sir Frank Kabui GCMG CSI OBE to provide visibility of the mission's progress.
80. Critically, 2013 saw the start of reconciliation processes between the SIG, RSIPF and communities on the Weathercoast. RAMSI supported the SIG in this important endeavour through coordination efforts and the provision of logistics support to key reconciliation events.
81. RAMSI continued to facilitate high-level engagement with contributors from around the region. This included the ninth Enhanced Consultative Mechanism Meeting and the seventh and final Forum Ministerial Standing Committee on RAMSI which met in Honiara in May, and the Forum Regional Security Committee Meeting in Suva in June.



82. A number of senior ministers and officials visited the RAMSI headquarters in 2013. They included:

- Gordon Darcy Lilo, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands
- The Right Honourable John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand
- Hon Baron Divavesi Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru
- Hon Henry Puna, Prime Minister of Cook Islands
- Hon Toke Lalagi, Premier of Niue
- Hon Tuilaepa Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa
- Hon Moana Carcasses, Prime Minister of Vanuatu
- Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia
- Senator the Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia
- Hon Philip Muller, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Marshall Islands
- Hon Chris Laore, Minister for Police, National Security and Correctional Services, Solomon Islands
- Hon Fabian Pok Minister of Defence, Papua New Guinea
- Hon Sunia Fili Minister of Police, Tonga
- Hon Teima Onorio, Vice President of Kiribati
- Hon Winstone Peters, New Zealand
- Hon Peter Dunne, New Zealand
- Helene Quilter, Secretary for Defence, New Zealand
- Hon Neroni Slade, Secretary General Pacific Islands Forum
- Mr Nicholas Warner AO PSM, Inaugural RAMSI Special Coordinator
- General David Hurley AC DSC, Chief Defence Force, Australia
- Brigadier John Frewen AM, Commander First Brigade, Australia
- Air Vice Marshall Kevin Short, Commander Joint Forces, New Zealand



- Commissioner Peter Marshall, NZ Police Commissioner, New Zealand
- Hon Melissa Parke MP, Minister for International Aid and Development, Australia
- Senator the Hon David Feeney, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Australia
- Senator the Hon Brett Mason, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia
- H.E Natasha Stott Despoja, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls
- Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development, Australia
- Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Australia
- Hon Richard Marles, Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs and Foreign Affairs, Australia

