



## Report to the Pacific Islands Forum on RAMSI activities

2011

### TRANSITION

1. During 2011, RAMSI continued to put systems in place to prepare for the next phase of RAMSI's existence, which will start from 1 July 2013 and last for four years (2013-17). This process was aimed at creating the conditions to facilitate the smooth 'transition' of the mission from mid-2013. 'Transition' is the word used to describe RAMSI getting smaller and changing its focus. It is aimed at giving Solomon Islanders the chance to lead the development of their nation.
2. Throughout 2011, RAMSI focused on transition planning and capacity development across the mission's security and policing, law and justice, economic governance, and government strengthening programs. An overarching goal was to ensure that reforms achieved since the mission's arrival were sustainable and that programs would be best placed to address the needs of Solomon Islands into the future.
3. Consultation with the Solomon Islands Government (SIG), RAMSI contributing nations, the international donor community, and other stakeholders guided the manner in which RAMSI operated and progressed its transition-related activities over the course of the year.

### LAW, ORDER AND JUSTICE

#### *RAMSI Participating Police Force*

4. During 2011, the Participating Police Force (PPF) continued to provide assistance to the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) to ensure Solomon Islanders were free to go about their daily lives without undue fear of serious crime or intimidation, and had access to a formal and transparent justice sector.
5. As the capability of the RSIPF continued to improve in 2011, the PPF's focus shifted from front-line (stabilisation) policing to capacity development activities within the RSIPF. The joint PPF-RSIPF Transition Strategy 2011-2013, which commenced in 2011, resulted in a substantial decrease in the security footprint of the PPF and an increase in the RSIPF's ability to deliver services effectively.
6. This capacity was demonstrated following a change in Prime Minister in Solomon Islands, on 16 November 2011. The RSIPF successfully responded to a major public



order challenge prompted by political developments. A well-planned RSIPF-led operation quickly gained control and brought protesting crowds under control and the disturbance to an end. The operation demonstrated the practical abilities of the RSIPF and was applauded by members of the public and media.

7. The RSIPF also continued to assist in the development of an improved security and law enforcement environment in Solomon Islands. This contributed to improved investment prospects and strong economic growth in 2011.
8. The PPF continued to reduce its provincial security footprint through its withdrawal from a number of provincial posts in 2011. The PPF handed responsibility of Buala (Isabel Province), Tingoa (Renbel Province), Lata (Temotu Province) and Kirakira (Markira Province) Police Posts to the RSIPF and successfully withdrew from Isuna (Guadalcanal Province). PPF support focused on promoting local ownership and building capacity of local systems. A Provincial Police Commanders (PPCs) mentoring program, which focused on developing the upper management capabilities of PPCs, was initiated on withdrawal from each post.
9. The Police Housing Project continued to progress well in 2011. A further 69 police houses, and barracks, were completed which will allow RSIPF officers to be posted across Solomon Islands. The building of police housing in Auki was, however, delayed due to ongoing land issues.
10. Some operational deficiencies in the RSIPF were highlighted as a result of the implementation of the PPF-RSIPF Transition Strategy 2011-2013. The PPF, in partnership with the RSIPF, started addressing these issues in 2011 through:
  - the establishment of an Operational Safety Training (OST) Program to increase the RSIPF's capability to respond to threats of public disorder. This resulted in the formation of an OST Faculty within the RSIPF academy and the successful training of RSIPF officers to deliver OST.
  - a review of the RSIPF's training continuum - which has resulted in a revised Literacy and Numeracy Program (delivered locally through the University of the South Pacific), an Accelerated Leadership Development Program, a Middle Management Course and the development of a Leadership Ethos.
  - the inclusion of infrastructure and logistical programs which address operational deficiencies revealed through the reduction of PPF support.
  - the development a Monitoring and Evaluation system, at the program level, to ensure ongoing learning, adjustment and improvement.
11. A joint donor 'Children and Youth in Conflict with the Law' program was commenced in 2011 to enhance the quality of justice for children and youth in conflict with the law in the Solomon Islands. Twenty-two Crime Prevention Committees (CPCs) were established to deliver programs on crime prevention and diversionary activities for youth. The RSIPF received training as part of the program and now maintains a presence at all CPCs.



12. A Police Youth Club was opened with support from the PPF in 2011. This is an ongoing program which seeks to enhance RSIPF engagement with children, young adults and communities.
13. The RSIPF continued to have one of the highest rates of female participation in the public service in 2011, with women making up approximately 15 per cent of the RSIPF workforce. The PPF continued to assist the RSIPF in the support and promotion of women and the RSIPF Women's Advisory Network. The PPF also assisted the RSIPF to build a community leaf hut at the Christian Care Centre, Honiara. This is the principal care centre for victims of domestic violence.
14. The Community Officer Program continued to explore a 'community officer' model of community policing to establish links between communities and the RSIPF and ideally act as a mechanism for addressing law and order issues in the provinces. In 2011 the program was put on hold for an evaluation conducted by the World Bank. The objective of the evaluation was to help the RSIPF and PPF determine the best way forward for community officers in Solomon Islands and to establish a feasible, sustainable and legitimate model. The World Bank subsequently finished the final review in 2012. The SIG, RSIPF, World Bank, RAMSI PPF, and the RAMSI Law and Justice program are currently deliberating on the final review, to determine the future of the community officer program.
15. The Revitalisation and Succession Planning Strategy continued to support organisational change in the RSIPF in 2011. A central pillar of this strategy is the Age and Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Program, which aims to facilitate workforce renewal by enabling age, capability and tension-related retirements. The final phase of the VER program relates to officers who, while not subject to prosecution, believe that they have lost the confidence of the community or their fellow officers as a result of their activities or associations during the Tensions.
16. After extensive deliberations in late 2011, it was determined that the panel found 16 officers should be offered early retirement under the program. In 2011, the RSIPF has subsequently sought agreement from the Police and Prison Service Commission (PPSC) to offer early retirement to the 16 officers, with communications being somewhat ad hoc. The process is still underway.

### ***Combined Task Force***

17. Throughout 2011, the Combined Task Force (CTF) continued to support RAMSI by providing on-call back up support to RAMSI PPF. The CTF also contributed to RAMSI's Community Outreach program, and successfully withdrew from guarding the observation post above the Rove Central Correctional Centre in July 2011.
18. In April 2011, a Titi Ulu ceremony of customary reconciliation took place between RAMSI and SIG and the family and community of the late Harry Lolonga, who died during an unfortunate incident involving RAMSI security personnel at Titinge in 2010. As part of the reconciliation process, RAMSI provided housing and will continue to provide education assistance to the family of Mr Lolonga.



## ***RAMSI Law and Justice Program***

19. The RAMSI Law and Justice Program continued to support Solomon Islands justice and corrections sectors throughout 2011. It was a year of significant change for the program as it shifted its focus from being a stabilisation program to a longer-term development program.
20. New joint planning and budget processes commenced in 2011. The Justice Sector Consultative Committee (JSCC) endorsed a new SIG– RAMSI funding process, which was consistent with SIG budget templates and timing. This new funding process outlined how agencies should apply for funding from RAMSI for 2012 and how SIG and the program would prioritise merit-based requests.
21. The Law and Justice Program’s engagement with the Budget Unit in the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs in 2011 assisted the Budget Unit to identify sectoral needs and spend all allocated SIG funds.
22. Operations in Correctional Services Solomon Islands (CSSI) continued to improve in 2011. Prison incidents (self-harm, attempted escape) fell by 30 per cent from 2010 to 2011 and recidivism rates remained flat (approximately 10 per cent). Correctional centre compliance with operational procedures also improved (from 63 per cent in 2009 and 77 per cent in 2010 to 86 per cent in 2011).
23. Evidence of CSSI’s transition to a self-sufficient organisation was clearly demonstrated in 2011. CSSI effectively managed its operations and recruited 40 new officers. It also continued to improve the quality of its officers by providing 783 in-house training opportunities. Seventy-nine per cent of CSSI employees had a Certificate III in Correctional Practice in 2011. The training for this Certificate was delivered by qualified Solomon Islanders – 28 per cent of them women.
24. RAMSI continued to provide support for a new Correctional Centre in Gizo (Western Province) in 2011. CSSI received land registration and title for the property on which the centre will be built and the design of the centre, and new staff housing, was agreed to.
25. Justice services – in particular case disposal in the High Court and Magistrate’s Court – improved in 2011. Anecdotal evidence from the Honiara Magistrates’ Court suggests that the introduction of pre-trial conferencing resulted in no real case backlog. In 2011, a trial went from charge to court in approximately two weeks – two years ago this process took 18 months. The High Court, including the Court of Appeal, continued to increase its output in 2011. In 2009, 180 cases were disposed of while in 2011, 437 were disposed of. Demand for High Court services is, however, growing at a rate that outstrips this impressive increase in clearance rates.
26. There was a strong focus on anti-corruption in 2011 in the justice sector. The Director of Public Prosecutions continued to prosecute allegations of corruption. Solomon Islands will host the 2012 Pacific Prosecutors’ Conference, which will include sessions on the prosecution of corruption cases.



27. The Law and Justice Program also continued its support to other donor initiatives, including the World Bank's 'Justice for the Poor Program' and Save the Children's 'Children and Youth in Conflict with the Law' project with the PPF.
28. The program continued to support gender equality in the law and justice sector in 2011. The number of female officers employed by the CSSI increased from 48 in 2010 to 57 in 2011. A slight increase (from 44 per cent to 46 per cent) was also recorded in the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs and National Judiciary.
29. The program also continued its support of the CSSI Women's Network and the annual CSSI Women's Conference. CSSI hosted the 2011 Pacific Islands Regional Correctional Women's Conference in Honiara.

## **ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE**

30. RAMSI's Economic Governance program continued to support the Ministry of Finance and Treasury in 2011 to deliver a range of economic reforms and manage government finances. During International Monetary Fund (IMF) consultations in 2011, the IMF commended the Solomon Islands for its strong economic performance.
31. With the support of the program, macroeconomic indicators (economic growth and GDP per capita) and IMF forward estimates continued to improve in 2011, pointing to the effectiveness of the program - stabilising the cash, budget and debt position in Solomon Islands.
32. GDP grew at an estimated 10 per cent in 2011, up from 4 per cent in 2010. Revenue collection also grew by approximately 10 per cent from 2010 - due to improved tax administration and compliance.
33. Debt decreased from SBD 1, 441.2 million in 2010 to SBD 1, 316.2 million in 2011. This resulted in the downgrading of SIG's debt risk rating from high risk to moderate risk. In 2011, debt was at 18 per cent of GDP (well below the accepted benchmark of 30 per cent, and the 53 per cent level it was in 2008).
34. State Owned Enterprise reform, supported by the program, contributed to an aggregated profit for all State Owned Enterprises in 2011 of SBD 21.5 million (compared with a loss of SBD 95.09 million in 2007).
35. With support from the program, monthly financial reports were produced independently by SIG officers and published in the national newspaper in 2011. National Accounts were also produced independently, in-line with statutory requirements, and expanded budget papers were provided with additional information on SIG spending priorities. Greater consultation with ministries, civil society organisations and within government also occurred as part of 2012 Budget preparations. A program of budget reform was commenced with the World Bank.
36. The Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre award for most improved tax administration in the Pacific was awarded to the Inland Revenue Division (IRD) of



the Ministry of Finance and Treasury in 2011. IRD's increased focus on identifying cases of tax evasion in Solomon Islands led to Solomon Islands' first successful prosecution for tax evasion.

37. Significant business regulatory reform, which has been ongoing over the past years, resulted in Solomon Islands improved rating (moving up 11 places) in the World Bank's 2011 'Doing Business Ranking'.
38. The replacement or upgrading of key public financial management systems continued across the Ministry of Finance and Treasury in 2011 with support from the program. Upgrades to the budget, payroll and financial management IT systems made budget and expenditure processes more efficient in 2011, and improved control of public service salaries and allowances
39. A core skills program, which concentrated on English language and computer skills, was developed and implemented in the latter half of 2011. RAMSI also funded the recruitment of 12 new graduates within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury in 2011.
40. The program continued to support gender equality in 2011. Equal access for both men and women to economic opportunities improved through the commencement of a State Owned Enterprises reform initiative to increase the number of women directors on the boards of State Owned Enterprises. The National Financial Inclusion Taskforce, established in 2011, also made the extension of financial services and financial literacy training to women its top priority. The finalisation of the Aurion payroll system - which now encompasses sex-disaggregated data across all of SIG - was a vital first step in the collection of gender statistics needed to understand the role of women in the public service.

## **MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT**

41. In 2011, the Machinery of Government program reviewed the relevance of its program designs and developed Implementation Strategies for the period 2011-13. Strategies were refined to ensure better targeted RAMSI support and to provide the basis for long-term development assistance post-RAMSI.
42. Refinements made to the program in 2011 resulted in incremental improvements in its effectiveness. The Machinery of Government program shifted its emphasis from legislative and technical reform to operational effectiveness to ensure existing SIG institutions can better engage with long-term governance challenges. A 'problem solving' approach was adopted in 2011 to help SIG address specific institutional and operational problems, focusing primarily on building institutional and individual capacity. However, significant governance challenges remained in Solomon Islands in 2011.
43. Program support was rationalised to focus on eight sub-programs in 2001, including:
  - Public Service Improvement Program – targeting and guiding support for improved human resource management (HRM) in the public service.



- Electoral System Strengthening Program - working with the Office of the Electoral Commission to strengthen capacity to administer national elections and promote electoral reform.
- Accountability Program - building the effectiveness of the three accountability institutions (Office of the Auditor General, Office of the Ombudsman, Leadership Code Commission).
- Women in Government Strategy - supporting the mainstreaming of the Gender Equality and Women's Development policy with a specific focus on the equal participation of women and men in decision making and leadership.
- Parliamentary Strengthening Project - strengthening the Parliament by improving its law making, representation and executive oversight capacities.
- Housing Management Project Transition Phase - supporting SIG to establish and implement accountable and transparent policies and management practices for government housing, and
- Provincial Governance Strengthening Program - improving Provincial Government's service delivery through improving their financial management capacity.

44. With Accountability Program support, the Auditor-General's Office continued its high performance in 2011. The departure of two RAMSI audit advisers in mid-2011 highlighted significant gains in sustainable capacity. The Auditor General provided audit opinions on: all available State Owned Enterprise financial statements, three statutory bodies, eight grant audits, and work was well advanced on SIG 2010 Financial Statements. The Ombudsman finalised 269 cases and completed three major investigations.

45. The Electoral System Strengthening Program focused on supporting corporate strengthening in 2011. This resulted in the finalisation of the Electoral Commission's first corporate plan and more effective office management, providing a better basis for long-term donor engagement. Two successful by-elections were conducted in 2011 (Shortlands and Baegu Asifola) and a Voter Registration Plan was developed to construct a new electoral roll.

46. The Electoral System Strengthening Program also supported the finalisation of a comprehensive Solomon Islands Election Commission operational plan. The plan will assist the office to better carry out major electoral activities in coordination with other donors as RAMSI transitions

47. With Public Service Improvement Program support, personnel data for input into the Aurion payroll system and Human Resource Management system was confirmed. This resulted in significant savings for several Ministries in 2011, including in the Ministry of Education and Human Resources where the identification of more than 500 'ghost' teachers occurred. This resulted in savings of more than SBD1 million per year, or 3 per cent of the total payroll.



48. The inaugural Leadership Development Program was designed and delivered by the Institute for Public Administration and Management, as part of a ‘home-grown’ leadership development framework. This program places SIG at the forefront of what is emerging as a regional priority under the auspices of annual regional meetings of Public Service Commissioners.
49. With support from the Public Service Improvement Program, Parliament continued to hold Committee meetings throughout 2011. A total of 121 meetings were convened, including several Public Accounts Committee hearings despite Parliament not sitting regularly, demonstrating strong National Parliament Office leadership.
50. The program continued to promote gender equality in 2011, including through a dedicated Women in Government Program. The program directly supported the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs in 2011 to implement SIG’s national gender policy through its decision to recruit a locally engaged national gender policy adviser.

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

51. The *RAMSI: A History in Pictures* photographic exhibition continued to tour the region in 2011. It was exhibited in Samoa, Solomon Islands and at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand. The exhibition showcases the history, people and places that have shaped RAMSI over nearly a decade. It has now been seen by more than 12,000 people.
52. RAMSI Community Outreach in 2011 focused on community consultations on RAMSI’s transition drawing on a combined team of senior Solomon Islands Government, RSIPF and RAMSI representatives for the discussions. Consultations in the provinces targeted communities where Participating Police Force posts were being withdrawn. Six provinces were visited in 2011: Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Isabel, Malaita, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu.
53. Transition consultations in Honiara targeted key leadership stakeholder groups such as chiefs, church, young professionals, women and youth leaders. Along with a number of School Forums held at local secondary schools, these *Wokabat Toktoks* were designed to stimulate discussion on the opportunities that RAMSI’s transition provides for Solomon Islanders. Consultations were also undertaken with the media on RAMSI’s transition messaging.
54. A new brochure on RAMSI’s transition was prepared to address key concerns and answer common questions on the changing nature of RAMSI. Several thousand copies of the brochure were distributed throughout the provinces, at outreach events and community activities such as Solomon Islands Anti-Corruption Day in 2011.
55. A number of events were hosted by RAMSI in 2011. A Women’s Breakfast for more than 200 women - from all walks of Solomon Islands life - was held to mark International Women’s Day in March. The Special Coordinator, Nicholas Coppel, presented the Special Coordinator’s Award for Women at the event. A RAMSI





Media Lunch was held in May to mark World Media Freedom Day. The Special Coordinator's Media Encouragement Award was presented.

56. RAMSI continues to host its weekly radio program, *Talking Truth*, on the national broadcaster, SIBC. In 2011, the majority of the programs focused on topics relating to RAMSI's transition.
57. The 2010 People's Survey was launched in April 2011 jointly by Prime Minister Danny Philip and the Special Coordinator. Questions for the 2011 survey were also revised to cover perceptions related to RAMSI's transition and eventual departure.

## ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

58. The RAMSI Triumvirate - comprising of the Special Coordinator, Nicholas Coppel, the then SIG Permanent Secretary with responsibility for RAMSI, Paul Tovua, and the Forum Representative for Solomon Islands, Sakiusa Rabuka – continued to meet approximately monthly during 2011 to discuss RAMSI's transition and performance and engagement with SIG. The Triumvirate also started to meet regularly with Solomon Islands Governor General, His Excellency Sir Frank Kabui GCMG CSI OBE.
59. The Special Coordinator and RAMSI Principals briefed the SIG Cabinet on RAMSI's transition in May 2011. RAMSI continued to express its on-going willingness to meet with the SIG Cabinet and Permanent Secretaries. Throughout the year, the Special Coordinator met ministers including the new Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Cordon Darcy Lilo in November 2011, and other new ministers, to discuss RAMSI's transition.
60. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited RAMSI headquarters in September 2011. The Special Coordinator Nicholas Coppel briefed the Secretary-General on the peacekeeping and development aspects of RAMSI's work. He advised that the strength of the mission came from its regional make-up. The ongoing process of RAMSI's transition was discussed.
61. A number of senior ministers and officials visited the RAMSI headquarters in 2011, including:
  - Australia's Minister for Defence, the Hon Stephen Smith, in July
  - Australia's Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, the Hon Senator David Feeney, in March, June and July
  - Australia's Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, the Hon Richard Marles, in July, September and in December led a Australian Parliamentary delegation
  - Australian Federal Police Assistant Commissioner, Frank Prendergast, in December
  - Australian Chief of the Defence Force, General David Hurley, in December
  - New Zealand's Foreign Minister, the Hon Murray McCully, in June, and
  - United States of America's Assistant Secretary of State, Kurt Campbell, in June.

