

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

PLATYPUS

MAGAZINE

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The platypus has been adopted by the Australian Federal Police as a symbol representing the diverse requirements placed on members in the execution of their duties.

This unique and tenacious Australian animal is a survivor against increasing pressure from today's environment. It leaves no stone unturned in its daily pursuits and has equipped itself with a range of features to adapt to changes over many years.

It is capable of passing unnoticed if required, yet it demonstrates an unfailing dedication to explore all possibilities in an effort to maintain its special place in Australia's environment.

Although generally a peaceful animal, the platypus is able to defend itself, if necessary, with a venomous spur. This is done, at times, against larger and more powerful opponents—a quality admired and respected by members of the Australian Federal Police.



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AFP Production team for this edition:
Editor: Graham McBean
Journalists: Graham McBean, Dom Byrne & Emilie Lovatt
Designers: Nicole Green & Design Services
Photographers: Ally McHugh & Peter Dolley

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Requests for permission to reprint material appearing in *Platypus*, and all general correspondence, should be addressed to:

The Editor
AFP Platypus Magazine
Corporate Communications
GPO Box 401
Canberra ACT 2601
Telephone (02) 6131 5960
Facsimile (02) 6132 6084
Email: publications@afp.gov.au

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Sacrifice remembered

Two new names were added to the National Police Memorial on National Police Remembrance Day in Canberra.

Law enforcement members paused on 27 September to remember the sacrifice of fallen police officers as the touchstones for Detective Inspector Bryson Charles Anderson and Constable Casey Blain were added to the National Police Memorial.

Detective Inspector Anderson was fatally stabbed at a siege in Oakville, NSW, on 6 December 2012 and Constable Blain died from injuries sustained during a single vehicle crash on 29 March 2013 near Georgetown, Qld.

A light breeze and clear skies broke for the dusk commemoration as more than 300 people paid tribute in a moving ceremony. AFP Commissioner Tony Negus hosted the service and delivered the formal address.

Governor-General Quentin Bryce attended as Guest of Honour in her capacity as patron of the National Police Memorial.

Ms Bryce spent time with members of both families of the deceased officers at the end of the service.

The new Minister for Justice, Michael Keenan MP, was also present for the service.

Other officials included diplomatic representatives from the embassies of a range of South West Pacific nations along with representatives from all Australian police jurisdictions.

Mr Andrew Wood, the Chief Operating Officer, said the ceremony is a fitting way to formally and officially remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to their communities.

"Underlying the formality and ceremonial traditions that are planned and delivered by the AFP's Ceremonial and Protocol Officers, is the public demonstration of support for the families of the officers killed in the line of duty," Mr Wood said.

"While the AFP is the host jurisdiction for the National Police Memorial, all Australian police jurisdictions play key roles in the service to promote a unified commemoration to all police who have died in the service of the Australian community."

The day of commemoration began at dawn, with the combined ACT Policing and NSW Police Force service at the Monaro Local Area Command Memorial, Queanbeyan, NSW.

AFP Chaplain, Reverend Gayl Mills blessed the new touchstones before they were escorted to the National Police Memorial for installation. The touchstones were lit for the first time during the dusk service.

NRPD services were held throughout Australia, the South West Pacific and at AFP mission locations throughout the world.

Commissioner's message



On 24 July 2003, the AFP, Solomon Islands, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands Forum member nations embarked on a significant operation that is still with us today.

The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was a ground-breaking endeavour in 2003. It is unique in that it is not a United Nations mission and was organised and deployed under the mantle of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Its success, 10 years later, is unqualified. Whilst there have been many challenges, the positive trajectory of the mission has not diminished.

It is, therefore, appropriate that as the Solomon Islands and RAMSI marked the 10th anniversary of the deployment with both formal and community events, the events reflected the hope that now exists in Solomon Islands.

This edition of *AFP Platypus Magazine* marks the significance of the 10 years of the RAMSI mission. The series of retrospective articles chronicles the RAMSI journey through the eyes of those who have taken part.

The Royal Solomon Island's Police Force's (RSIPF) achievements are many. More than 900 members are now trained in public order management, which has enabled the departure of the military. The establishment of rule of law has paved the way for the social and economic progress that depends on the stability brought by rule of law.

I congratulate the more than 1000 AFP members that have contributed to the RAMSI mission and the military and civilian members from across the Pacific

for their effort in bringing peace and stability to Solomon Islands.

Also highlighted in this edition of *Platypus* is the need for constant innovation and effective interagency partnerships in the fight against illicit drug importation.

Small amounts of drugs being sent through the postal system is not a new problem, however, the ever increasing frequency of this method of importing illicit drugs has necessitated new initiatives being implemented.

Rapid Lab was launched in Sydney to more effectively deal with the more than 500 parcel post items seized each week and will enable every package to be examined.

This partnership between the AFP and Australian Customs and Border Protection Service will allow multiple forensic disciplines to work on a seized item at the same time and drastically reduce turnaround times for examinations.

Finally, the edition provides an insight into the little known work of the AFP appointee at the Australian Civil Military Centre in Queanbeyan. Before 2008, responses to overseas conflicts were largely undertaken separately by each of the five agencies now served by the ACMC.

The article looks at how Australia's civil, military and police capabilities are now working together to assist overseas law enforcement, customs, justice and penal institutions rebuild their shattered nations.

Commissioner TW Negus

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Police and military from the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands arrive on 24 July 2003.

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Deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands on 24 July 2003 marked the beginning of an odyssey that continues to this day.

When the first Hercules C-130 aircraft lowered its ramp in the muted dawn light of 24 July 2003 in Solomon Islands, soldiers advanced with weapons drawn and fanned out from the aircraft in military formation.

"The reality was that we didn't know until we got there on 24 July exactly how we would be received," says the first Commander of the Participating Police Force (PPF), Ben McDevitt. To the then Assistant Commissioner McDevitt, it was a real concern. Now Queensland State Manager of the Australian Crime Commission, he says he thought that at some stage there could be casualties.

It was relief then, that greeting the first waves of police, soldiers and civilian staff of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), were "thousands of cheering, waving" people. "So the armed military quickly holstered weapons and waved back," Mr McDevitt says.

This reception from the citizens of Solomon Islands was repeated everywhere RAMSI members went and continued as the mission established itself. Mr McDevitt says "there was a tremendous air of expectation" to finally end five years of tensions and the gradual breakdown of their society.

"Prior to RAMSI," he says "the country was in a state of decline that met all the indicators of a failing state. Corruption was rampant and Honiara was under the sway of armed criminal elements.

"There was a form of civil war raging on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal that had followed years of very bitter ethnic tension in particular between the inhabitants of Guadalcanal and Malaita. In the remote areas, self-proclaimed warlords and thugs with guns created no-go zones where they committed horrific crimes at will."

Historical context

The sprawling Solomon Islands is an archipelago of almost 1000 individual islands and a combined land mass of 28,896 square kilometres. The country lies across 725,197 square kilometres in the south-west Pacific Ocean. Its nine provinces are mainly on the largest islands where more than 80 local languages are spoken. The capital, Honiara, is situated on



Assistant Commissioner Ben McDevitt meets the press in Honiara two days after the arrival in Solomon Islands.



AFP members of the Participating Police Force are greeted by the local people.



The Participating Police Force were welcomed throughout Solomon Islands.

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Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Acting Commissioner Juanita Matanga says the situation in 2003 "is hard to explain".

Guadalcanal – the site of some of the fiercest battles of World War II against the Japanese.

Just south of the equator, the country is typically tropical. In 2003, up to 90 per cent of the population was engaged in a subsistence lifestyle. Primary industry such as timber and fishing to palm oil and cocoa underpins the country's export economy. Land, therefore, is a fundamental component of wealth.

Land disputes would underpin the conflicts that became known as 'the tensions' of the late 1990s until the deployment of RAMSI in 2003. Many of these disputes predated Solomon Islands' independence on 7 July 1978 to its colonial times as a British protectorate. A recent study reveals that 61 per cent of Solomon Islands' people still say the most common cause of conflict is land.

Mr McDevitt says unemployment, urban drift to Honiara and deterioration of the economy would bring ethnic divisions to crisis point throughout the 1990s. Friction between the inhabitants of Guadalcanal and Malaita over issues such as land,

internal migration and compensation claims led to numerous outbreaks of violence and criminality.

"At the height of this conflict some 20,000 Malaitans were forced, through fear and intimidation, to flee their homes in Guadalcanal and return to Malaita. Young dispossessed and aggrieved youths took up arms and clashes between rival groups became commonplace," he said.

As the ethnic, social and political situation worsened, militias assumed control of Honiara unopposed. When the police opened its armories to the militia the situation was lost. The government and its institutions had ceased to function effectively. Corruption was widespread. Public finances were in ruin and many of the most basic services such as health and education

were not being delivered to the people. Solomon Islands was on the brink of collapse.

"It is hard to explain," says the current Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) Acting Commissioner Juanita Matanga. In 2003, Commissioner Matanga was the acting Director of Logistics. Clearly determined, intelligent and passionate, she reflects intensely on those times.

"It's hard to explain because you couldn't speak freely. You see your colleagues are not taking up their oath as [they were] supposed to do. At the same time you see how people were victims of many criminal activities. The police force was not able to give that security as it was mandated under the constitution.

"We didn't know what to do. We had no other plan. We ... hoped that one day things would go back to normal and it happened on that day [when RAMSI arrived]."

RAMSI is formed

In desperation, Solomon Islands' then Prime Minister Sir Allan Kemakeza made an urgent request for assistance to Australia in April 2003. RAMSI, in response, was born. Unlike the United Nations Mission in Timor Leste, RAMSI was raised under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and its 15 member countries would contribute. On 22 July 2003, the Solomon Islands National Parliament unanimously passed the Facilitation of International Assistance Act

Participating Police Force members discuss the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands weapon amnesty.



"We didn't know what to do."

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The joy of Solomon Islands' children was a gauge of mission success.

2003, which provides authority under Solomon Islands domestic law for RAMSI activities.

From April through to 24 July, a frenetic 10-week planning period began to deploy an international mission of 2,200 police, military and civilian staff. Mr McDevitt was appointed as the police-led mission's first commander of the PPF. Diplomat Nick Warner was appointed as head of the RAMSI mission and the then Lieutenant Colonel John Frewen would lead the military's Combined Task Force 635.

"We had a very interesting series of meetings," Mr McDevitt recalls with some humour. He says the Australian Government wanted a single concept of operation, "with good reason" he adds. "At one meeting we talked about how long we would be in Solomon Islands."

McDevitt explains that the military representative said securing the strategic military points would take 32 days, and then the military would be ready to withdraw. Mr McDevitt then explained that the community had lost trust in the then RSIP and the police component of the mission could take up to 10 years.

He says a representative from another agency then talked at length about endemic corruption in the country. Further, there was a need for significant programs in infrastructure, finance and all other departments. The assessment was that it would take a generation to make the necessary changes.

"So we've got a matter of weeks to put up a plan to cabinet for approval. We are talking about expenditure in the order of \$300 million initially and we have that sort of variance in that we are going to be there for days or years or for decades."

"... but when the kids stop waving at our vehicles then we are going to be in trouble."

A plan

But a plan did emerge. The concept of operations involved three phases – commencement, consolidation and sustainability/self-reliance.

Commencement. The commencement phase addressed the immediate tactical and operational issues in the initial six months. It was about establishing RAMSI in the country and winning back the streets of Honiara from criminals.

Consolidation. The second phase would deal with longer-term considerations such as re-establishing rule-of-law within the county and getting nation-building programs on track. Here, the multi-agency nature of the RAMSI mission was essential. However, other programs could not progress without rule-of-law.

Sustainability/self-reliance. The final phase would be the transition of law and order back to the now RSIPF. That phase is essentially still underway.

Success

The RAMSI mission is unquestionably a success. The United Nations itself has recognised the achievement of this unique police-led mission. The first 12 months of the mission arguably saved a country from collapse. Mr McDevitt says the success was no accident. He cites three underlying principles of the RAMSI mission that were integral to its success.

The first of these was that RAMSI followed a request for assistance by Solomon Islands. Moreover, it was wholeheartedly supported by the majority of law abiding citizens. Secondly, RAMSI had a strong mandate. The passage of legislation through Solomon Islands' parliament legally empowered RAMSI to immediately restore law and order.

Finally, Mr McDevitt says the multi-national and multi-disciplinary flavour of the mission was critical. He says the force was not only empowered with delivering law and order but delivering peace dividends as well.

"The first part was putting boots on the ground and restoring security and law and order – we are very

good at that. It's tried and true and in some ways that is the easier part ... what then?"

As the weeks and months of the mission rolled on the appreciative people of the Solomon Islands kept waving. Successive police commanders have stressed the importance of this relationship if this mission is to be successful. This wasn't lost on Mr McDevitt either.

"The children would always wave at a RAMSI vehicle with smiles on their faces. I remember saying in those months that it mightn't be a way of measuring technical support – but when the kids stop waving at our vehicles then we are going to be in trouble as a mission and it is something we would need to monitor very carefully.

"I think if there is one lesson that anybody could take out of Solomon Islands and RAMSI, I think it is the importance of relationships."

The 2011 People's Survey of Solomon Islands conducted by the Australian National University estimated that 86 per cent of the people of Solomon Islands still supported the RAMSI mission.

Partnership forges strong bonds

One of the fundamental successes of the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is the strength of the partnership within member nations of the Pacific Islands Forum and their commitment to Solomon Islands.

During good times and challenges, the RAMSI multi-national partnership and the multi-agency nature of the mission has been a bedrock of its success.

The first commander of the Participating Police Force, then Assistant Commissioner Ben McDevitt, says the strength of the RAMSI mandate is fundamental to the mission's success.

Ultimately, ongoing support for the RAMSI partners and partnership from everyday Solomon Islanders and their elected representatives has seen the mission weather any challenges.

Pacific Island Forum member nations

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Australia | Palau |
| Cook Islands | Papua New Guinea |
| Federated States of Micronesia | Republic of Marshall Islands |
| Fiji | Samoa |
| Kiribati | Solomon Islands |
| Nauru | Tonga |
| New Zealand | Tuvalu |
| Niue | Vanuatu |



Australian Participating Police Force members take in their surroundings.

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Weapons collected during the 2004 amnesty are destroyed in front of the Solomon Islands' people.



Harold Keke is taken into the custody of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Participating Police Force in Honiara.

It all hinged on Harold

The notorious Harold Keke was the linchpin to the success of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands in its first 12 months of operations.

Harold Keke, to say the very least, was an enigma in Solomon Islands. For four years he roamed the Weather Coast as a self-proclaimed warlord and prophet. Born around 1971, he was the grandchild of the founder of the South Seas Melanesian Church in Australia. Harold himself became extremely religious as he terrorised the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal.

Ironically, he was accused of everything from arson and rape to abduction and murder. By the time of his arrest on 14 August 2003 he was accused of more than 50 murders – including six missionaries. A local legend claimed he flew around the Solomon Islands in treetops at coconut level on a magic bicycle.

It was this fearsome legend and notoriety across Solomon Islands that made Harold Keke the linchpin to RAMSI's success. Any enduring progress was tenuous while Harold Keke and his militia group were at large.

"That is why Harold Keke became pivotal in all of this," says then Assistant Commissioner Ben McDevitt, the first Commander Participating Police Force (PPF). "Whether he deserved it or not, Harold was seen to symbolise everything that was wrong in the Solomon Islands."

Not that Harold Keke was Solomon Islands' only problem. On day four of the mission, the former AFP Assistant Commissioner was sworn in to the Commander PPF's dual role as a deputy commissioner of the then Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP). At a media conference, he outlined the PPF objectives for the immediate future.

A primary objective was to collect the illegal firearms from the community through a weapons amnesty. The

second objective was to then deal with the warring militia groups. The third primary objective was to tackle the endemic corruption that riddled the police force and Solomon Islands' public institutions.

Removing the thousands of illegal firearms from warring militia groups was critical to defusing their respective reigns of terror. Unless law and order was returned to government and the police then there was little chance of tackling other problems such as corruption. Community faith and confidence in public institutions was impossible until a fair and equitable system of transparent justice was in place. That confidence could not be nurtured and developed while armed militia groups held power.

"We needed a trigger point," says Mr McDevitt "to get at least one of those groups to surrender their weapons and use that as a catalyst. Until one of them surrendered we wouldn't be able to apply pressure to the others to surrender."

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The RAMSI weapon amnesty removed more than 3700 weapons, including more than 700 military style weapons from the Solomon Islands' community.

The linchpin

The weapons amnesty was critical. There were four major militia groups operating on Guadalcanal and Malaita – Solomon Islands' two main island centres. The Guadalcanal Liberation Front (GLF) led by Keke was running a military style campaign against the Isatabu Freedom Movement.

The Central Neutral Force occupied large areas of central Guadalcanal. It was led by Stanley Kaoni, who also went by the name of Satan. The Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) was centred on the areas of Auki and Malu'u on Malaita. The MEF also had strong affiliations with the rogue police elements in Honiara.

However, it was Harold Keke and the GLF that held the key to disarming the militia groups. The reason for this, Mr McDevitt says, was that Keke was seen "almost like a demon" by the people of Solomon Islands. Certainly, this wasn't by accident. Brutal criminal acts weren't confined to the GLF, but Harold Keke managed to set himself apart.

Mr McDevitt cites an incident when one of Keke's cousins was killed in a firefight against another militia group on the Weather Coast. Keke was grief stricken and wanted to demonstrate how deep his grief was.

He then got two groups of brothers from among his own followers. There were three brothers in one group and five in the other. Keke took them down to the beach and gave each group a rifle. They had one hour to decide which brother would die and which brother would pull the trigger. Then within the hour he watched as one brother from each group shot and killed his own brother.

It wasn't as if the authorities hadn't tried to stop Keke. The RSIP tried on multiple occasions to capture him. Invariably, Keke was tipped off and the GLF would ambush the RSIP mission. Out of the whole exercise, Keke and the GLF would only become stronger, more feared and better armed.

His peaceful arrest was paramount. The alternative was the forceful disarmament of the militia groups in the former World War II battlefields. Mr McDevitt says that Keke ultimately surrendered to have his day in court.

"He wanted to tell his side of the story about what had happened to him and I think that was a pretty

powerful incentive for him – one of several. He wanted to be able to say how he had been wronged."

Mr McDevitt had sent letters to Keke even before RAMSI had deployed to ask for a meeting. Keke agreed to a face-to-face meeting after a long exchange of letters. Initially, he didn't come to the first meetings, but finally surrendered on the 21st day of the mission.

"That was the day that the firearms were handed in from the Guadalcanal Liberation Front. That then was the catalyst in the following days and weeks for the delivery of the firearms which were in the possession of all of the other groups in Solomon Islands."

More than 3730 weapons and more than 300,000 rounds of ammunition were removed from the militia. About 700 of those were high-powered military style weapons. Mr McDevitt says that all but five of the weapons were handed in during the 21 days of the amnesty between 1 and 21 August.

Another crucial element of success was the decision to destroy the weapons in the local communities and in front of the people who surrendered them. These events became huge ceremonies and attended by thousands of people. RAMSI also appealed to the communities for support. Mr McDevitt says numerous women's groups, church groups, wives, mothers, daughters and sisters were called on to encourage the surrender of weapons.

The PPF then turned its attention to corruption. In many ways this was more problematic than the amnesty. Mr McDevitt says there were some very competent and loyal police officers as law and order dissolved throughout the tensions.

He says many were beaten and threatened and some had firearms held to their heads. Still, unpaid police were covertly collecting briefs of evidence for the day when law and order returned. These would ultimately assist in more than 3500 arrests in the first 12 months of the mission. However, the RSIP had been critically compromised during the tensions.

"At the start," Mr McDevitt says "I was the deputy commissioner of the RSIP in an office with two other deputy commissioners, both of whom were corrupt. I was also Commander PPF, which they knew was charged with cleaning up their police service.

Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) leader Jimmy Rasta and his men surrender weapons and ammunition. The MEF was one of four key militia groups in Solomon Islands.



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The first Participating Police Force Commander Ben McDevitt launches the RAMSI weapon amnesty.

"In fact, I didn't wear a shirt with the badges of the RSIP until the day after we arrested and charged the second of those deputy commissioners with corruption offences. That was nine months into the mission.

"To me, again that was symbolic of what we were doing and what we were about. It served to be able to say to the community that I felt proud to be a deputy commissioner of the RSIP."

Eventually, 25 per cent of the RSIP was either arrested and charged with corruption offences or discharged from the force. More widely, an ombudsman, a magistrate, numerous lawyers, multiple public servants, corrections officers and four government ministers were arrested in a very public and transparent cleansing of corruption.

Another component of mission success in the first 12 months was rapidly increasing RAMSI's reach beyond Honiara and Guadalcanal. Clearly, the PPF

Commander Participating Police Force Ben McDevitt negotiates the peaceful arrest of militia leader Harold Keke.



realised the benefit of acting decisively and quickly. PPF/RSIP patrols were active within hours of RAMSI landing at Henderson airfield.

First police post

The first post outside Honiara was opened at Avu Avu on the Weather Coast on day 14 of the mission. By day 100, RAMSI had established 16 police posts in all nine provinces. Just short of RAMSI's first anniversary, the 17th post was opened at Lofung on the border of Papua New Guinea.

Like the weapon amnesty ceremonies, the public openings of police posts were community events. Mr McDevitt says local villagers walked 20 kilometres to come to the police posts. Newspaper reports from Honiara's local paper, the Solomon Star, were posted at the stations to provide community updates on RAMSI activities.

"We ran numerous events. We would hold soccer matches and games of volleyball. The police would even arrange slide shows and movies. They were extraordinary places and hubs of activity and of course the added benefit was they were extraordinary places for gathering intelligence about what militia groups were doing and who had firearms still."

Mr McDevitt reflects on that first 12 months of RAMSI operations and says decisively "it's fair to say that the start of the mission was very successful". He quickly adds that all PPF members and representatives from the other agencies, disciplines and nations should "be very proud" of what was achieved.

He says the greatest challenges are still with us in terms of the third phase of the initial RAMSI mission – sustainability and self-reliance. "The back end of nation building is always harder than the front end." And so the long road to transition in Solomon Islands began.



Jubilant spectators at the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) parade in Honiara. The arrival of RAMSI restored confidence in the Solomon Islands' population.

What's in a name?

It's a bit of an institution at Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR) and many would have enjoyed a break from the stress of work at Harry's Bar located at the main dining complex.

Some may even have pondered which 'Harry' the bar was named after.

It may then come as a surprise to know that the Harry in Harry's Bar is none other than self-proclaimed warlord, Harold Keke.

The former militia leader was a 'guest' at GBR for more than four months in 2003 after his arrest on serious criminal charges from arson to murder.

As a linchpin to success of the RAMSI mission — Keke was one of the first persons of interest to be detained and later tried for crimes during the troubled times of the so called tensions.

However, inaugural Commander Participating Police Force Ben McDevitt says at that point Keke's wellbeing would have been in serious jeopardy at Honiara's main Rove prison.

"I had real concerns about the integrity and security of the goal," Mr McDevitt says — and with good reason.

Members of militia groups already had been allowed access to the prison where rival militia members had been shot in the elbows and knees and left where they lay.

A former police member arrested for the murder of Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Commissioner Sir Frederick Soaki also had escaped from custody at Rove.

Consequently, military engineers were tasked to build a remand facility within the site of the former beach resort's existing buildings. Keke's family was also relocated to GBR for their safety.

Harold Keke's initial court hearing was held at GBR where Mr McDevitt gave sworn evidence as the arresting officer and Keke was then remanded into the custody of the PPF. He was later transferred to Rove prison when its security could be guaranteed.

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The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in 2003-2004 was applauded internationally as an unqualified success. The United Nations, no less, has recognised

the mission as a benchmark of a successful peacekeeping model.

By July 2004, Solomon Islands was considered stable. Militia groups had been disarmed and key militia



Tragedy: Protective Service Officer Adam Dunning and Private Jamie Clark were the first tragic casualties of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.



leaders had been arrested, including Jimmy 'Rasta' Lusibaea, Ronnie Cawa and Harold Keke. RAMSI and the Solomon Islands could now focus on the final phase of the mission – the sustainable transition of law enforcement to a self-sustained national police force.

It was this goal that the second commander Participating Police Force (PPF), Sandi Peisley, turned her attention to when she arrived in mission in July 2004. Now retired from law enforcement, Ms Peisley says it was felt that the initial role to establish a safe and secure environment had been completed.

"It was now a safe place, albeit there were still people they wanted to arrest and firearms they wanted to take off people," Ms Peisley says. "But the general feeling was that security had been established."

"My tasking," she says "was to move the PPF mission from being a strictly operational mission to capacity developing".

The operational investigations from the tensions also had been hugely successful. By July 2004, 3316 people had been arrested on 4788 charges. This success was made possible through evidence collected and secreted by Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP) who remained loyal during the tensions. Similarly, the security situation in Solomon Islands had stabilised to such a degree that military personnel were drawn down in the second half of 2004.

Ms Peisley was impressed by the solidarity of the mission. She says the "development of the wider police family" from across the Pacific Islands was a definite highlight of the mission. So too was the PPF's first steps to transition from operational policing to mentoring and developing the RSIP.

Tragedy

But it was on 22 December in 2004 that the RAMSI mission suffered its first tragedy. Protective Service Officer (PSO) Adam Dunning was on a routine night-time patrol in Honiara when the vehicle he and a colleague were travelling in was ambushed on the East Kola Ridge Road in Honiara. PSO Dunning was fatally wounded by an assailant with a high-powered rifle.

"It was a very big dark cloud on the mission," says Ms Peisley. The attack was the second such incident in two months. A patrol by Tongan and Nauruan police officers was ambushed in October 2004. PPF and RSIP members considered the incidents linked and arrests of four men quickly ensued in January 2005. Even so, the two former militants charged with murder were later acquitted.

Ms Peisley says the murder was considered an isolated incident by rogue elements. It was never considered an attack on the RAMSI mission as such. "This was more a one-off, senseless murder than a targeting of PPF officers". Regrettably, PSO Dunning's murderer was never brought to justice.

No less tragic was the accidental death of Private Jamie Clark, a member of the Australian military contingent. Private Clark deployed to Solomon Islands in January 2005 as the arrests were being made in the PSO Dunning case. Just two months later, Private Clark died from injuries when he fell into an obscured sinkhole while on patrol searching for possible weapon caches on 10 March 2005.

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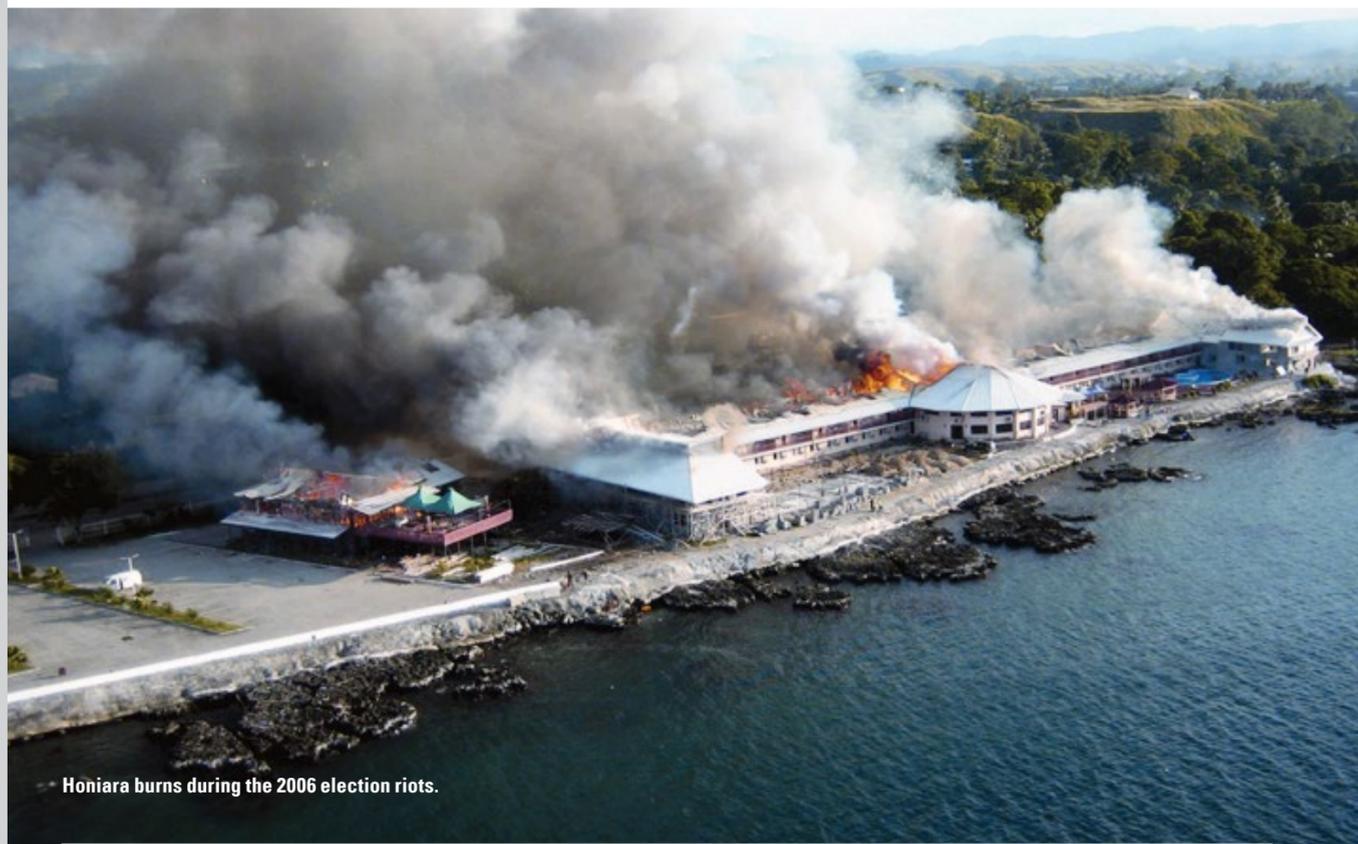
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Honiara burns during the 2006 election riots.

2006 election riots

An event that did have the potential to impact on RAMSI was the 2006 post-election riots. The transition process was developing under new Participating Police Force (PPF) Commander, Will Jamieson, who deployed to the mission in July 2005. He was also the first to assume the role under a two-year appointment.

In April 2005, the former National Manager of the AFP's International Deployment Group Shane Castles had been appointed as Commissioner Royal Solomon Islands Police. Now retired, the then Assistant Commissioner Castles had taken up the position vacated by British policeman Bill Morrell. It was a bonus in that having an AFP member as RSIP Commissioner could provide synergy with the RAMSI mission.

In sync with the PPF goal, Mr Castles says his aim was to assist with establishing the RSIP as the police force of the country. "It was time to start moving the PPF to the back seat of the bus as key advisors and to put the RSIP back in charge of their police force." He says with a two-year tenure until April 2007, his intent was to have a Solomon Islands' police officer replace him as commissioner.

"That all changed with the elections of 2006," Mr Castles says.

When the Solomon Islands independent Commission of Inquiry into the riots was released in June 2009, the then Prime Minister Dr Derek Sikua said the document contained "certain contentious and sensitive materials". Consequently, the report has never been released in its full form. But the riots had the potential to set back much of what the RAMSI mission had achieved.

The elections were held on 5 April and were conducted peacefully. The riots erupted on 18 April 2006 when Snyder Rini was appointed Prime Minister by the newly elected parliament. Three days of unrest unfolded amid claims of political involvement in planning the riots and criticism of the RSIP and the PPF. Chinatown in Honiara, particularly, was targeted during the riots, with up to 90 per cent of businesses burnt down. Many Chinese evacuated the country in fear of their safety.

Prime Minister Rini was in office just eight days before resigning on 26 April ahead of a no-confidence



Handover: Sandi Peisley, left, hands over command of the Participating Police Force to its third commander, Will Jamieson, in July 2005.



Assistant Commissioner Shane Castles was appointed Commissioner of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force in 2005.

vote. Manasseh Sogavare was then elected by the parliamentary incumbents for a second term as Prime Minister, having led the country in 2000-2001. What followed was a turbulent relationship between RAMSI and the Sogavare Government for the next 18 months. The relationship between the Sogavare and Australian governments also was strained. Australian High Commissioner Patrick Cole was expelled in September 2006. The appointment of Mr Castles as RSIP Commissioner also was effectively terminated in 2006. Mr Castles left Solomon Islands for holidays in December of that year and was refused reentry to the country.

Even so, RAMSI would endure. The underlying strength of its multi-national and multiagency mission was equally matched by community support in Solomon Islands. This support was ultimately reflected by Solomon Islands' parliamentary members. On 13 December 2007, Prime Minister Sogavare was defeated in a no-confidence motion on the floor of the Solomon Islands' parliament – prompted largely by the deteriorating relations with Australia.

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Participating Police Force officer Sergeant Tuineau 'One' One and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force officer Agnes Aihunu patrol with the military at the Honiara Ports Authority.

On to the future

Shane Castle's legacy also endured. In his 20 months as RSIP commissioner he embarked on a determined program of administrative and structural reform. Many of the reforms he helped champion are now the foundations of the extraordinary success of RAMSI, the PPF and the RSIP following the hurdles of the 2006 elections.

Chief among these initiatives was the formation of the RSIP executive management team. In conjunction with leadership development, the intent of the management team was to devolve strategic and policy planning across the senior management of the RSIP.

Formerly, executive control of the RSIP rested largely with the RSIP commissioner, with direction from the national police minister and prime minister. This new reform would vastly increase accountability in the senior ranks of the police by spreading executive responsibility across its senior members.

Mr Castles also was instrumental in raising the Police Capability Plan. This would address many of the day-to-day planning issues from logistics, training and equipment management to recruiting and starting the RSIP's first media unit.

Importantly, he would also lobby key stakeholders for improvements in police housing. He says housing conditions for police were "the greatest bane of my life" during his time in-country. Raised in the Police Capability Plan, he argued that providing adequate housing facilities would underpin the progress of the RSIP in becoming an effective police force.

The project to upgrade and refurbish police housing and infrastructure would commence with the fourth Commander PPF Denis McDermott and a priority for

successive PPF commanders. To date there are new provincial police headquarters in seven of the nine Solomon Islands' provinces.

Mr McDermott (who now works for AFP Professional Standards in a civilian capacity) recognises the contribution of Shane Castles. He says he was 16 months into his tenure as PPF commander and "picking up some of the good work that Shane had done" was still instrumental in taking the mission forward.

Another key goal during Mr McDermott's tenure as PPF commander was to refocus RAMSI and the PPF on rebuilding its relationships. The mission had weathered its most rocky challenges since the 2006 elections. But Mr McDermott says the PPF could not allow a similar operational oversight to happen again. "That was my motto for two years," he says. Along with "bedding down" the transition of the PPF into a mentoring role – a key operational focus was ensuring the renamed RSIPF and the PPF were ready to effectively meet any further unrest.

Mr McDermott acknowledges the work done across the RAMSI and the RSIPF in moving forward from 2007. "I was lucky. I had a really good team of people. That's crucial." In building and strengthening relationships, he says many outcomes directly improved the life of Solomon Islanders.

Domestic violence programs are now being implemented across Solomon Islands by the RSIPF. The Pink Ribbon Women Charity was established in 2008 by Lady Alice Waena, the wife of Solomon Islands' then Governor General Sir Nathaniel Waena. The charity was a first of a kind to be established in the country to raise awareness of breast and cervical cancer in the country.

A gathering of international police and military celebrates the 100th International Women's Day at the RAMSI Women's Breakfast in 2011 at the Mendana Hotel in Honiara. Long standing community initiatives have been hugely successful in building relationships in Solomon Islands.



Carols in the Park at Lawson Tama Stadium in Honiara drew 10,000 people to the event in 2007 and 2008. AU\$40 million would also be approved in administrative funding.

AU\$20 million would be allocated to begin the upgrade project of police housing and infrastructure. New Zealand would contribute AU\$3.5 million toward this goal as well.

Mr McDermott highlights one project in particular. He clearly wears his heart on his sleeve when he reflects on the lives of the average Solomon Islanders. "We have it all, they have very little," he says. But he doesn't disguise his admiration for kindergarten teacher Beverly Komasi and principal of Mercy School.

Mrs Komasi was the inaugural recipient of the RAMSI Special Coordinator's Award for Women in 2009. Soon after RAMSI deployed, Mrs Komasi decided to voluntarily start Mercy School. She was moved by the plight of children who spent their days picking through rubbish at Ranadi dump on the outskirts of Honiara. The school was under way by 2005.

Then RAMSI Special Coordinator Graeme Wilson acknowledged Mrs Komasi and the significant role of women in reimagining their country. "From the time women stood up and demanded their sons and husbands lay down their weapons, the door for development was reopened," Mr Wilson said at the time.

Mrs Komasi received her award in 2009 at a special breakfast for International Women's Day. By then, Mercy School had 320 students. "She now has two schools with over 600 kids," Mr McDermott finishes the story.

Certainly, much had been achieved during Mr McDermott's two-year tenure. Transition of the RSIPF was established and well down the path of sustainability and self-reliance. The RAMSI mission, the RSIPF and Solomon Islands now looked to a new election in 2010. As new Commander PPF Wayne Buchhorn started his tenure in Solomon Islands the mission was also looking toward a new developing partnership. Solomon Islands ended the first decade of the 21st century worlds apart from where it had started.

Taking the lead: Royal Solomon Islands Police Force officer Agnes Aihunu, centre, listens to a complaint from a local man during a military supported 'x-ray' patrol in Honiara.



The fourth Commander Participating Police Force Denis McDermott visits local child Flinson and his mother after a medical evacuation.



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Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands Timeline



17 October – Malaitan Eagle Force militia leader Jimmy 'Rasta' Lusibaea is arrested.



14 August – Guadalcanal Liberation Front militia leader Harold Keke is arrested.



1-21 August – The RAMSI weapon amnesty removes 3730 weapons from the community.



24 July – RAMSI deploys.



22 July – Solomon Islands National Parliament passes the Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003, providing authority for RAMSI operations.



May – Commander Ben McDevitt is appointed the first Participating Police Force commander.



April - Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Sir Allen Kemakeza makes an urgent request for assistance to Australia. Prime Ministers Howard and Kemakeza meet on 5 June 2003.

2003



24 July – Commander Will Jamieson is appointed Commander PPF.



5 April – Assistant Commissioner Shane Castles is appointed Commissioner RSIPF.



10 March – Private Jamie Clark dies during operational accident.

2005



26 June – RAMSI medical emergency evacuation saves Buala child Flinson Ben Rago.

2008



2 April – The 2007 tsunami impacts Solomon Islands, RAMSI provides assistance.



June - Denis McDermott is appointed Commander PPF.

2007



19 December – Assistant Commissioner Castles departs to Australia for annual leave and is refused re-entry into Solomon Islands.



14 December – First People's Survey is released.



18 April – Snyder Rini is elected Prime Minister sparking election riots.

2006



26 April – Snyder Rini stands down as Solomon Islands Prime Minister.



24 July – Commander Sandi Peisley is appointed second Commander PPF.

2004



22 December – Protective Service Officer Adam Dunning is murdered while on routine patrol.



30 June – Commander Paul Osborne is welcomed in as the new Commander PPF.



24 March – Keys are handed over to RSIPF families at Rove police housing compound for the first houses built under the Police Accommodation Program.

4 March – RAMSI congratulates Solomon Islands' Ministry of Finance & Treasury on collecting more than SBD \$1 billion in revenue in the 2010 calendar year, the first time in the history of the nation.

2010



22 September – The construction phase of the Police Accommodation Project officially launched.



4 August – The 2010 election is conducted successfully and peacefully.



4 June – Commander Wayne Buchhorn is appointed Commander PPF.

2009



4 June – Outgoing Commander PPF Denis McDermott is farewelled in style.

2011



8 November – 10 new ray boats costing SBD \$7.7 million boost mobility in Solomon Island provinces.



10 September – The new Provincial Police Headquarters opens at Buala.



18 May – The planned withdrawal of the RAMSI military component is discussed at the 6th Forum Ministerial Standing Committee on RAMSI.

2012



27 March – Assistant Commissioner Juanita Matanga is appointed Acting Commissioner RSIPF. She is the first woman to hold that post.

2013



24 July – RSIPF members display public order display management capacity as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations.



23-25 July – Solomon Islands celebrates the 10th anniversary of RAMSI.



30 June – The RAMSI military role ends and the last contingent departs on 1 August.



27 March – Assistant Commissioner Juanita Matanga is appointed Acting Commissioner RSIPF. She is the first woman to hold that post.

2013

The successful 2010 Solomon Islands national election was a watershed moment for the nation and the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.

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It was hard to escape the fact that a celebration was brewing in Solomon Islands. Billboards throughout Honiara heralded the coming 10th anniversary of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Radios chattered incessantly with well wishes from citizens. Honiara buzzed with the constant hum of a seemingly endless stream of traffic.

"The changes are dramatic," says AFP Federal Agent Steve Hardy – one of the first AFP members to deploy with RAMSI in 2003. "Out on the streets of Honiara, people are far more relaxed." Even the traffic, he says, is evidence of a new confidence.

"Yesterday, I was held up in a traffic jam in Honiara while a parade went through," Federal Agent Hardy continues. "There are two issues. One, there are enough vehicles on the road nowadays to have a traffic jam. Secondly, that a youth parade of about 2000 young people went past. That event wouldn't have happened in 2003. People were too fearful of assembling in any numbers at all."

This new confidence is brewing everywhere. Funding was recently approved to extend RAMSI for another four years until 2017. Even so, the Pacific Islands Forum Ministerial Standing Committee met on 21-22 May and a potential "transition to bilateral assistance arrangements" was on the agenda for discussion.

Solomon Islands' Permanent Secretary for Police and National Security Eddie Sikua is a good

barometer of that change in attitude. As late as 2010, the then RSIPF Deputy Commissioner says after the 2006 election "we felt things might not be going well".

Like RAMSI and the Participating Police Force (PPF), the impending 2010 elections weighed heavily on the RSIPF. "Certainly in 2010," Mr Sikua says "our thinking was 'while RAMSI is still here, what is the RSIPF doing to step up when RAMSI goes'."

By contrast, as the 2010 election passed successfully it was a watershed for the RSIPF. Since then, a different RSIPF has emerged and developed. The old RSIPF of 2003 no longer exists. In 2013, Mr Sikua says "all that has now changed".

"I think the opportunity is here now – not only for the RSIPF but for the Solomon Islands – to move forward. The ball is in the Solomon Islands' court for peace and prosperity."

Transition

The fifth Commander PPF, Wayne Buchhorn, says "it's hard now to remember how much pressure was on the RAMSI mission and the Solomon Islands' Government and the local people to have a safe, fair and free election". Commander Buchhorn arrived in mid-2009 when capacity building projects were well under way. The PPF was still actively involved in frontline policing. Combined RSIPF, PPF, and



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military 'x-ray' patrols were effectively delivering law and order. But as the August 2010 election got closer the election "became the focus".

"Everyone in Solomon Islands was very much aware an election was coming," he says. "The country needed to get the election done and dusted safely and peacefully." He says numerous briefings were delivered to various forums as the security planning for the election progressed. In effect, the security planning had a significant flow on effect of engendering confidence and allaying some rising concerns in the lead up to the election.

"When a successful election did occur," he says, "we were very pleased – for both the RAMSI and PPF planning and for Solomon Islands and its people.

"Importantly, it was significant for the development of the country. Solomon Islands had gone through an election process and a change of government in a peaceful manner. That was a significant milestone."

RAMSI and the RSIPF now built on that momentum. Much new work would be progressed in the next two years:

- **Review of the Police Act.** The intent was to update the Act to create a contemporary model for the RSIPF. The review of the Act passed through the Solomon Islands Government this year.
- **Review of the RSIPF structure.** Before the review, one assistant commissioner was responsible for about 60 per cent of RSIPF staff. An updated structure would provide a wider spread of responsibilities and build in better accountability.
- **Transition Plan.** A formalised plan for the PPF to withdraw from the provinces and hand over frontline policing to the RSIPF was developed. To date there are now just two provinces with PPF advisors.

Police Accommodation Project

But chief among the new programs was undoubtedly the Police Accommodation Project. The determination of successive PPF commanders to make this project a reality illustrates just how critical it was. The housing program effectively underpinned the continued operational development of the RSIPF.

Police housing was a service entitlement in Solomon Islands. Even so, existing housing had deteriorated to such an extent by 2003 (and after) that many police either worked from available government office space or from their own homes.

Funding for police transfers throughout the provinces also had long since dissipated by the time RAMSI arrived. Without an effective posting cycle, police officers and their families had become integrated into the local communities. What was designed as a benefit of service had actually contributed to the deterioration of police effectiveness.

"We were saying 'you have got to be a disciplined force, turn up on time and look sharp,'" Commander Buchhorn says. "That's all well and good but you have got to recognise the operating environment. If the police didn't have a sufficiently comfortable family

Commander Wayne Buchhorn.



New police housing is providing a solid foundation for stable policing throughout Solomon Islands.



Old and new: the new Isabel Provincial Headquarters in Buala is one of seven new headquarters already provided under the mantle of the Police Accommodation Project and inset: the old Buala Police Station.



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existence then it is really not surprising that it impacts on the way they perform."

With funding available, delivering 146 police houses throughout Solomon Islands began. Additionally, flexibility in the application of funding within RAMSI programs meant that new police headquarters in Solomon Islands' nine provinces would also be possible. Seven of those new headquarters are now in place.

The PPF Coordinator Capacity Development and Monitoring, Corporate Service and Infrastructure David Quayle says the impact was immediate. "There is no way our other projects could have gone ahead without secure new facilities," he says.

"The new buildings are secure, they have gates and fencing and that enables us to confidently install VHF and HF communications networks and all the associated expensive equipment securely.

"In addition, it provides secure storage for the mobility program where we are rolling out a number of boats and vehicles. So we couldn't do those things without having that critical infrastructure in those key provincial centres."

Essentially, the project provided a springboard for the administrative, logistical and operational development in the provinces. In turn, it further enabled the drawdown of the PPF and the transition of frontline policing to the RSIPF. In essence, it paved the way for the RSIPF to re-establish the formal law and order role in Solomon Islands.

Looking to the future

Post 2010 election, the RSIPF is in the process of what present Commander PPF Paul Osborne calls the 'professionalisation' of the force. Capacity development and project delivery continue unabated and remain core day-to-day functions. A key additional factor is the mentoring program now that the PPF has withdrawn from most police posts and active frontline policing role.

Commander Osborne says a new police force is emerging. Sixty five per cent of the current RSIPF members were not in the force during the tensions. Additionally, 10 years of concentrated capacity development is producing a new type of police officer. "So it's new, it's developing a new culture and a new ethos and, hopefully, a good civilian policing ethos."

Capacity development has been hugely successful, often instigating secondary outcomes. The rise in expertise of locally grown commercial project management during the Police Accommodation Project was unexpected. It actually allowed RAMSI members to relinquish hands-on daily management.

But it is the RSIPF's delivery of core law enforcement outcomes throughout Solomon Islands that is the most spectacular success. "The RSIPF we see now is rapidly becoming equal to any other Pacific police force," Commander Osborne says. "I suspect that in some of the areas where we have developed their capabilities and capacity they are actually superior."

The Family Violence Program established at Buala in Isabel Province is a classic example. Provincial Training Officer Sergeant Josiah Laumana says the project was a joint RSIPF and PPF outcome. When the PPF withdrew in 2011, it was Sergeant Laumana's job to continue the program in his dual role as the Family Violence Coordinator.

He says the program began in response to the numerous complaints of domestic violence. "Family violence is a big issue because people think it is part of the customary culture," he says.

Workshops were conducted throughout the province. Up to 40 candidates were selected from the villages to attend. It was their job to take the messages back to their respective villages.

"The issue here is if you assault your wife or your husband it is not a cultural issue it is a criminal offence under Solomon Islands' law. People didn't understand that. But when we talked to them they realised – it's no longer a private matter it's a crime."

The program has been so successful that the model has been implemented in Choiseul and Malaita provinces. Commander Osborne says it has been one of the most gratifying programs during his tenure. He says a briefing he attended with present RSIPF acting Commissioner Juanita Matanga was illuminating.

"The police in Buala put up a list of questions the communities are actually asking them face-to-face. They were very sensitive issues and very specific, sensitive questions. The communities were prepared to open up to the police.

"That wouldn't have happened three years ago," he says "but they are doing that now. It shows me that they

have confidence in the police, that they want the police involved in cleaning up those problems. The statistics now show that is the case."

There are still challenges.

"We have got another four years" Commander Osborne says "but there are no guarantees after that". The 2014 election will be the first where the RSIPF is the lead law enforcement agency. Meanwhile, a range of programs to increase mobility, infrastructure, vessels and vehicles, and focus on administrative support areas will continue the process of professionalisation.

Even so, there are still two areas that Commander Osborne says need a particular focus – rearmament and leadership. He says that the process of rearming with non-lethal force is already under way. But the issue of rearming the police with some degree of lethal armaments is still a concern in the community.

"It was abundantly clear the military would be leaving" when Commander Osborne deployed as commander in 2011. But it was also evident that the RSIPF was not then ready to take over some of the security responsibilities when the military left.

Commander Osborne says the Transition Plan 2011-2013 addressed those important issues, such as rearmament.

"I don't see how they can be a fully functioning independent police force unless they can be trusted to have an armed capability again and protect their own national security."

The transition strategy set forth a program in operational safety training and public order management. In two years, the RSIPF has gone from a police response team of 12 members to 470 fully trained riot police. The RSIPF can now field 260 fully equipped riot police at any time. Additionally, there are now 900 officers trained in handcuffs, batons and pepper spray, which they now wear in public.

"I know I am leaving here," Commander Osborne says "and the RSIPF, with the PPF, will be able to contain almost any security situation."

Leadership is now one of the final issues that must be addressed by the RSIPF. Commander Osborne



More than 900 Royal Solomon Islands Police Force members are now trained in public order management.

says "The RSIPF leadership has got to take the next step," not only to manage effectively but to embrace accountability and guard against corruption, "They have got to stand above that."

Commander Osborne is quick to add that there are many leaders who are beneficiaries of the 10 years of direct PPF influence and are ready to lead. He says Mr Sikua and Assistant Commissioner Matanga have both benefitted from the PPF leadership programs.

RSIPF Acting Commissioner Juanita Matanga is the first woman appointed to the rank of assistant commissioner since independence in 1978. As director of Human Resources in 2008, she was instrumental in addressing gender issues and reforming "a significant lack in fairness and competition" between male and female members of the RSIPF.

As the 10th anniversary celebrations unfold in Solomon Islands, Commissioner Matanga says recognising what is needed in the next four years and beyond is the best way of recognising what happened in the past. "I am confident the RSIPF can move forward from the work that has been done in the last 10 years," she says. "I do have confidence that the RSIPF can do it."

Mr Sikua is also confident that the RAMSI model can be sustained – not only in Solomon Islands but, if needed, throughout the South Pacific region. RAMSI, he says, has facilitated a relationship with more than 200,000 people from participating countries. On the 10th anniversary he says it is a good opportunity to say thank you.

"I think it has been an exciting 10 years. From the RSIPF perspective we have travelled together these 10 years. Whether we have walked or crawled, we have all walked and crawled together."

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When the 2009 Beale Review recommended that the AFP transition to an 'All-In' model for Australia's 10 major airports it created a problem for federal law enforcement. Where do you find 500 new police officers when you need them?

Beale's *New Realities: National Policing in the 21st Century* recommended that security at major airports in the post September 11 world should be policed under a single Commonwealth agency.

The subsequent All-In model meant the former arrangement with AFP, state jurisdictions and protective service officers (PSO) would be replaced with a complete "All-In" sworn AFP uniformed police presence.

While the all-in model is widely accepted as best international practice – the problem remained. Where do you find a new Aviation police force roughly equivalent in size to the ACT's community police force?

Project Macer

In mid-2010, Project Macer was established to make the All-In model happen. A big initiative of Macer was to transition airport PSOs who could become redundant under the new model into the new All-In workforce.

Like all successful initiatives, Project Macer's implementation and lack of ripples means it hasn't attracted too much attention. In aviation parlance it has pretty much flown in under the radar. Now completed – two years ahead of schedule and an estimated \$10 million under budget – you could say Project Macer made a perfect three-point landing.

The most personally satisfying outcome for National Manager Aviation Shane Connelly was the take up of PSOs who transitioned to sworn policing.

"I've felt the PSOs were wonderful throughout this process," Assistant Commissioner Connelly says. "They really did take a leap of faith in the organisation and that paid off for them and it paid off for the organisation."

Under Project Macer, PSOs were given first option to transition as sworn police officers to staff the extra positions needed at airports. However, there was some concern about how many would take up the offer. There was a series of gateways in the transition process. The transition course was 16 weeks – in addition to the member's previous PSO course.

A strong communication campaign made sure the airport-policing community had accurate information. Ultimately, the former PSOs/new constables became the project's best ambassadors. Assistant Commissioner Connelly says it was "tremendous" that there were very few redundancies in what was an extremely large reform. Very little external recruiting was needed to achieve project objectives.

"Some PSOs had to make big life decisions. It's a scary thing for any person faced with potential redundancy. They've got a family to feed, a mortgage to pay. So that was quite challenging.

"But as a group they were up to the challenge and proved to be role models. If you talk to the college, the transition courses were some of the best courses they have run."

Opportunities

The benefit to the former PSOs is the world of increased opportunities as a sworn police officer. Constable Will Collett made the decision to transition specifically as a career opportunity. He graduated in May 2012 and says taking up the offer was a positive step.



Constables Warwick Hodges, left, and Will Collett conduct a patrol at Canberra airport.

"Some PSOs had to make big life decisions."

"I was an air security officer previously," says Constable Collett. "It was similar to PSOs from the perspective where you were limited in where you could go and what positions were available within the AFP. That's not a criticism at all. It's just that if you wanted to do other things outside that field then it could be limited."

He says there are now many more opportunities available to him, both in Aviation and the broader AFP. "The major airports like Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane in some ways are like small towns and there is a great deal of work." Alternatively, Constable Collett says he is looking toward the broader AFP field at some time in the future.

"Just about everything that is on the table within the AFP is now potentially available when you are sworn. That may be determined by your time or ability in the job, but the opportunity is there, where previously it wasn't. As a result you also feel you can achieve more personally and at the same time contribute more to the broader community and the AFP."

Assistant Commissioner Connelly says "we didn't stop the transition on recruitment". Providing opportunity was integral to the Project Macer. The All-In model provides new universal training opportunities for all Aviation members and the possibility of transfers to and from the Aviation function.

Training, in particular, will also add to the career curve for new Aviation members. He says in raising a unified community, national and aviation law enforcement capabilities "we are training a professional workforce that can be deployed to many roles". That means building trade craft across the workforce.

Other developing trade skills such as Behavioural Assessment and Security Questioning will be rolled out to every Aviation member to aid behaviour assessment of people at airports. Similarly, Immediate Action Rapid Deployment training is to be implemented across the Aviation function as well. Constables will also be trained in and qualified to investigate small prohibited imports, which takes pressure off Crime Operations and Serious and Organised Crime.

Assistant Commissioner Connelly says these opportunities are not just available to Aviation members. Post-Macer, he wrote to all state office managers and airport commanders to stress that this was an opportunity for all AFP members. "We no longer need to think about Aviation Sydney or Sydney Office – we have to start thinking of AFP resources be they in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth or wherever.

"These opportunities are not just about Aviation. These opportunities are about any AFP member wherever they are."

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AFP members and Australian Military Police work together in Dili, Timor Leste, as an estimated 3000 protesters enter the city. Photo by Leading Aircraftman Rodney Welch

On stable ground

When Detective Sergeant Steve Mellick talks to his colleagues back at AFP Headquarters, the agency's crucial role in stabilising troubled overseas nations is foremost on the agenda.

As the AFP secondee to the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) in Queanbeyan, it is his job to help the AFP – and other Australian government agencies – to develop a combined national capacity to deal with post-conflict 'security sector reform'.

"Put simply," Detective Sergeant Mellick says, "security sector reform is where you are transitioning away from a military-led conflict. It's a situation where the environment that you're operating in looks less like a military environment and more like a civilian one."

The term 'security sector' is a collective name for the range of agencies involved in the security of a nation. This includes law enforcement, the armed forces, intelligence services, customs, justice and penal institutions. The aim of the ACMC is, through research and collaborative discussion, to recommend an interagency strategy to enable the AFP and partner Australian agencies to respond when an overseas security sector can no longer effectively provide democratic order.

He says the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is a classic example of "a great model of cooperation" between government agencies.

"RAMSI really is the poster child for international assistance being provided to another state from a range of government agencies – and there are also regional partners, particularly in terms of the community policing, mentoring and capacity building role."

Essentially then, the ACMC is tasked with supporting Australia's civil, military and police capabilities to prevent, prepare for and respond to conflicts and disasters overseas. The AFP has provided a direct contribution to the centre since it opened in 2008.

To achieve its aim, the ACMC is divided into three key directorates: Concepts, Capabilities and Outreach. Detective Sergeant Mellick has been involved mainly with security sector reform issues since January this year. This means he works in and takes a lead role in 'Civil-Military Concepts' directorate.

His role is a broad and complex church of responsibilities. As the sole AFP representative, his job is to act as a liaison officer for the AFP, coordinating engagement with whole-of-government partners and providing subject matter expertise relating to the security sector. His work in Civil-Military Concepts dovetails into the work done by the other directorates. Civil-Military Capabilities focuses on preparedness, planning, 'lessons learnt' and research. Civil-Military Outreach delivers training and education to the ACMC's key partners.

Even so, the ACMC does not have a direct mandate in terms of a policy or a statutory requirement to enforce recommendations. In essence, the centre is like a think tank for developing best-practice doctrine and further supports the agencies in their offshore roles. In the end, the decisions made are up to the individual agency.

"We therefore work alongside principal government agencies whose mandate it is to do these security sector reforms, particularly as it relates to conflict and disaster management offshore," Detective Sergeant Mellick says.

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Australian Civil-Military Centre staff in August. From left, Australian Council for International Development secondee Susan Hutchison, AFP secondee Detective Sergeant Steve Mellick, Executive Director Dr Alan Ryan, Australian Agency for International Development Humanitarian Advisor Philippa Nicholson and Military Advisor Colonel Rowan Martin.



Australian Government representatives attached to 3rd Brigade during Exercise Talisman Saber 2013. From left, Australian Agency for International Development's (AusAID) Shannon Rooney, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Marcus Wu, AFP secondee to ACMC Detective Sergeant Steve Mellick and AusAID's Lara Franzen.

"RAMSI really is the poster child for international assistance..."

"We can say 'OK, this is your domain – we're going to help you in that domain and these are the things we can assist you with'. We can then come together as a whole-of-government to share an understanding of security sector reform and then understand that there is a better way of doing business together."

Interoperability

The key principle at the heart of the ACMC is interoperability. Before 2008, Detective Sergeant Mellick says, responses to overseas conflicts were largely undertaken separately by each of the Australian government agencies. "That's part and parcel why the ACMC was brought into being," he says. It was the very disconnection between agencies during operations that highlighted the need for better coordination and understanding. The AFP United Nations experience in Timor Leste was a classic example.

The AFP's present National Manager Crime Operations Steve Lancaster has highlighted this point in his own accounts of operations in Timor Leste. Assistant Commissioner Lancaster deployed to Timor Leste in 2006 as Commander Operation Serene. He says it was a very complex operational environment, which also included a separate, pre-existing United Nations mission.

"It was a very complex challenge before us," he says. Just to add to the complexity, the Australian agencies involved did not have the time to conduct predeployment training.

"It wasn't just Australian troops or police. There were also other bilateral arrangements with Portugal, Malaysia and New Zealand as well," Assistant Commissioner Lancaster says. "So it was quite a complex quilt of several countries along with the police and the military."

The Australian police (AFP and state police) were the first law enforcement agencies in the operational area. They quickly had to restore law and order but also had to work with the many other agencies there to help.

"There was a lot of pressure on us to start doing things but also working within the complex arrangements with the army in the coordination, command and control context, which is actually quite difficult.

"So it took a lot of coordination and cooperation with the military and we, of course, had to work with the local East Timorese Government to ensure that we were consistent with their views – it was their country."

It was this situation that led to the whole-of-government initiative that would produce the ACMC. Not surprisingly, Detective Sergeant Mellick says understanding the common goals of other agencies is paramount. A large part of that means coordination and liaison.

This begins with weekly contact with the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) to maintain operational awareness of policing issues. "I use the meetings to keep the IDG across what the centre is doing, what the initiatives are and new directions, so I can be joined up to the other efforts – and other government agencies, of course.

"I rely heavily on the wider network and understanding of the AFP Operations Committee and the IDG Executive in terms of where we undertake mission deployments across the globe. I talk to all of the coordinators that represent AFP interests in Asia, Afghanistan, Domestic and Rest of World, and the AFP's Pacific Police Development Program."

He is also in contact with AFP-Australian Defence Force liaison officers at the Headquarters Joint Operations Committee at Bungendore, near Canberra, and the United Nations.

Far and wide: missions and exercises

It has been a steep learning curve for Detective Sergeant Mellick. To begin with, and, to better understand and work with the ADF, Detective Sergeant Mellick attended the ADF's demanding Australian Command and Staff College 46-week program in Canberra before starting at the ACMC. He says it has given him an important grounding in the large and complex ADF organisation.

As a primary and complex operational organisation in conflict zones, he says the understanding of the ADF has been insightful. He says from Cyprus to Vanuatu and Afghanistan to Sudan, the AFP has been involved in a myriad of missions and exercises in the civil-military arena. He adds that his own experience on the recent Exercise Talisman Saber has also added to his



Members of the AFP Specialist Response Group deliver an up-skilling course in public order management to members of the Vanuatu Police Force.



AFP member Federal Agent Bob Tait, left, works with Australian and Afghan military members in Afghanistan. Photo by Sergeant Mick Davis.

"There was a lot of pressure on us to start doing things..."

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AFP members work with the Australian Defence Force in Dili, Timor Leste. Photo by Leading Aircraftman Rodney Welch.



Multiple Australian agencies meet in Tarin Kot, Afghanistan. Photo by Petty Officer Paul Berry.

understanding – and the absolute need for – police-military and other agency cooperation.

This year's Talisman Saber, which ended in August, saw the AFP's Protection Liaison, Intelligence Analysts, Airport Uniformed Operations Policing, and High Tech Crime Operations all supporting the ADF and Attorney General's Department with security arrangements.

AFP Manager of Missions Commander Bruce Hill also worked with the Talisman Saber 2013 Crisis Response Coordination Group in Hawaii, providing strategic guidance and managing AFP activities. Detective Sergeant Mellick was also involved in the initial phase of Talisman Saber in Townsville – an experience he appreciated.

"It gave me the opportunity to understand the difference between military planning and police planning – especially as it relates to whole of government," he said.

"I saw what the military needed to do to prepare itself – getting into the theatre of operation and then undertake the clearing, fixing and holding of the

enemy so other government agencies could undertake security and stability operations to engage the fictitious local community.

"To see all that unfold from a police officer's perspective is very interesting. The logistics are enormous."

More research and development of inter-agency cooperation is on the way in the very near future. Between February and May this year, the ACMC studied security sector reform in more detail.

The ACMC's report – *Security Sector Reform in Conflict-Affected States: Environmental Scan and Future Options* – was distributed to key partner agencies. The aim of the research was to understand the international definition of security sector reform – and how it differs from nation to nation.

Detective Sergeant Mellick says the research looked at how security sector reform translates to the Australian experience and vernacular. It also looks at how Australia's government agencies are performing their civil-military-police efforts.

The AFP has also requested the ACMC to undertake specific research to determine the link between aid development and security sector reform – the results of which are expected to be presented by the end of this year.

Detective Sergeant Mellick's secondment at the ACMC ends in early 2014. He says it has been an extremely interesting and rewarding time.

"And as I return to the AFP proper I'll be better equipped to understand the value of partner agencies and how to maximise unity and effort to achieve our goals, particularly in the field of security sector reform."



AFP members Sergeants Annette Outtrim, left, and Leisa James teach interview skills to Afghan Army and police officers at Tarin Kot, Afghanistan. Photo by Major Chris Linden.

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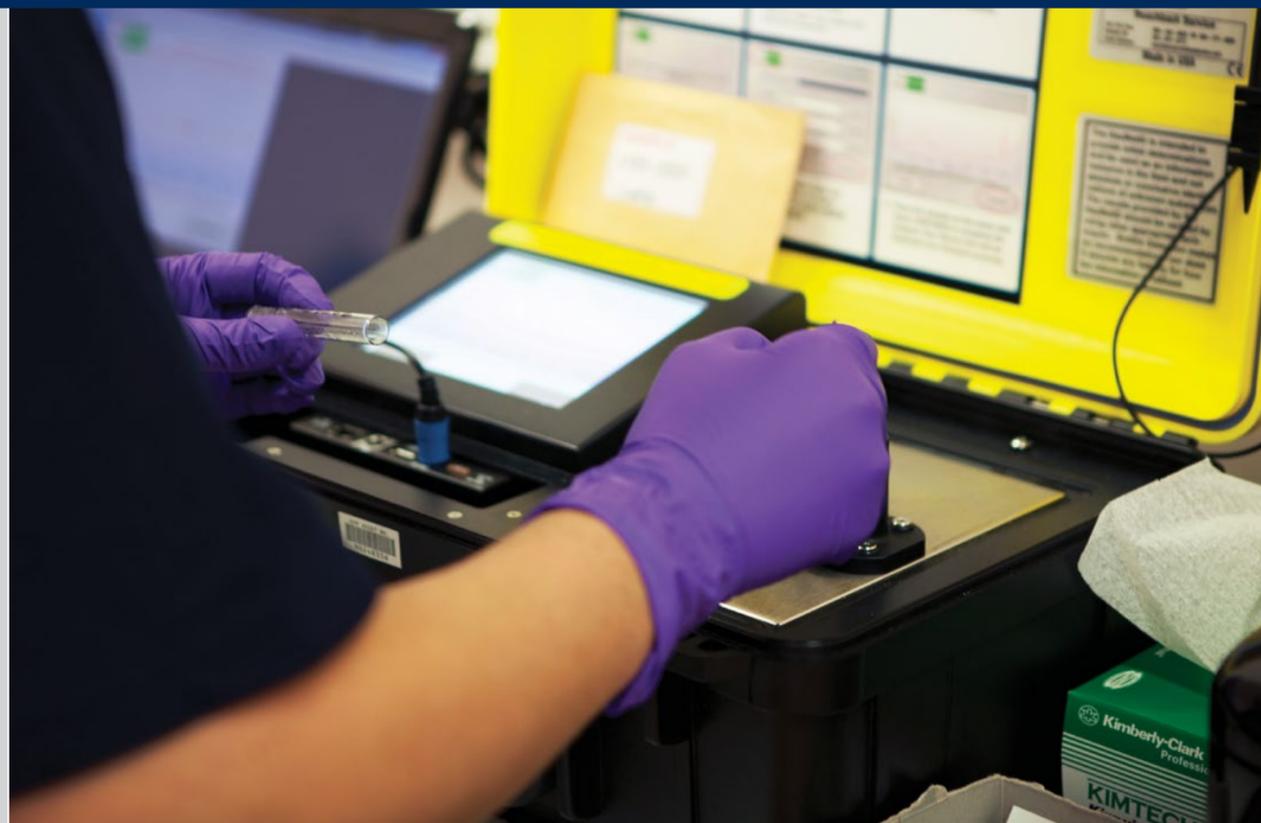
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New initiative brings rapid results

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A 16 year old Australian boy sits at his computer, eager to buy a couple of pills to make his year 10 formal more interesting. On the other side of the computer screen, a drug dealer in the Netherlands stashes a package of pills inside a birthday card, not giving much thought to the fact that he's selling illicit drugs to minors.

The international mail system is being exploited and facilitated by anonymous internet platforms. Thought to be travelling 'under the radar' - low volume-high frequency importations are posing a considerable threat to Australian law enforcement agencies.

But the AFP's new Rapid Lab technology aims to change all that.

Rapid Lab

To ensure law enforcement stays one step ahead of the game, the AFP launched the National Forensic Rapid Lab in Sydney this year. The launch came about after National Manager Serious and Organised Crime Ramzi Jabbour and National Manager Intelligence Kevin Zuccato called for new and innovative capabilities to support the AFP Crime Program.

Rapid Lab targets low volume-high frequency drug importations and drastically shortens the turnaround time for the analysis of parcel-post seizures. The revolutionary technology allows different forensic disciplines to work on a seized item at the same time,

similar to a factory production line, and ensures information is disseminated to relevant parties as quickly as possible.

The team working in Rapid Lab triage all packages seized in Sydney prior to analysis. Any usable information and intelligence is extracted and then quickly referred to investigators. Information gathered includes finger prints, handwriting, chemical structure of the drug and place of origin. All information related to the seizure is stored in a database and cross-tested against other data as it comes through the lab.

AFP Manager Forensic Operations Mark Harrison was the driving force behind Rapid Lab. He says the technology is effective because of the close working relationship between Forensics and Intelligence.

"Rapid Lab not only tackles the Parcel Post issue, it also significantly adds value to the process," he says.

"The integration of Forensic Intelligence into the examination of seizures allows us to identify and investigate serial drug importations, new and novel synthetic drugs and analogues, importation routes and organised criminal activity."

Rapid Lab Intelligence Officer Natasha Horne is responsible for using the information produced by Rapid Lab to create intelligence packages.

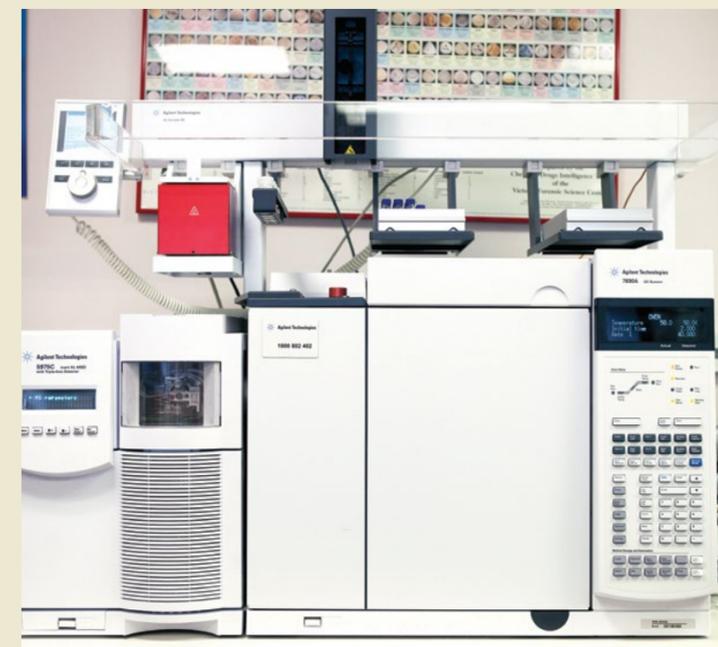
"Once the items are seized we want to get the information as soon as possible so that interested parties can take action on the intelligence we've produced. We don't want to be sitting on something for two to three weeks, we want to be adding value to operations," she says.

"Forensic intelligence is all about detecting, disrupting and preventing crime. We want to know who the dealers are and where they are supplying to so we can prevent further drug offences."

The outcomes for Rapid Lab are both domestic and international. Not only can investigators apprehend offenders in Australia before they move on, but the AFP international network can also be reached to effectively stop the crime at its source overseas. Commander Harrison is confident that utilising the international network will drastically reduce the number of parcels that reach the shores of Australia.



The gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer (GC-MS) instrument can be loaded with up to 100 separate drug samples for automated analysis



The Sydney Rapid Lab's new gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer (GC-MS) instrument is now used for the identification of illicit drugs and other chemical compounds.

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It all hinged on Harold 10

The notorious Harold Keke was the linchpin to the success of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands in its first 12 months of operations.

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Rapid Lab technology allows different forensic disciplines to analyse an item at the same time.

"We have significant numbers of liaison officers around the world and they will act as the gateway to international law enforcement agencies," he says.

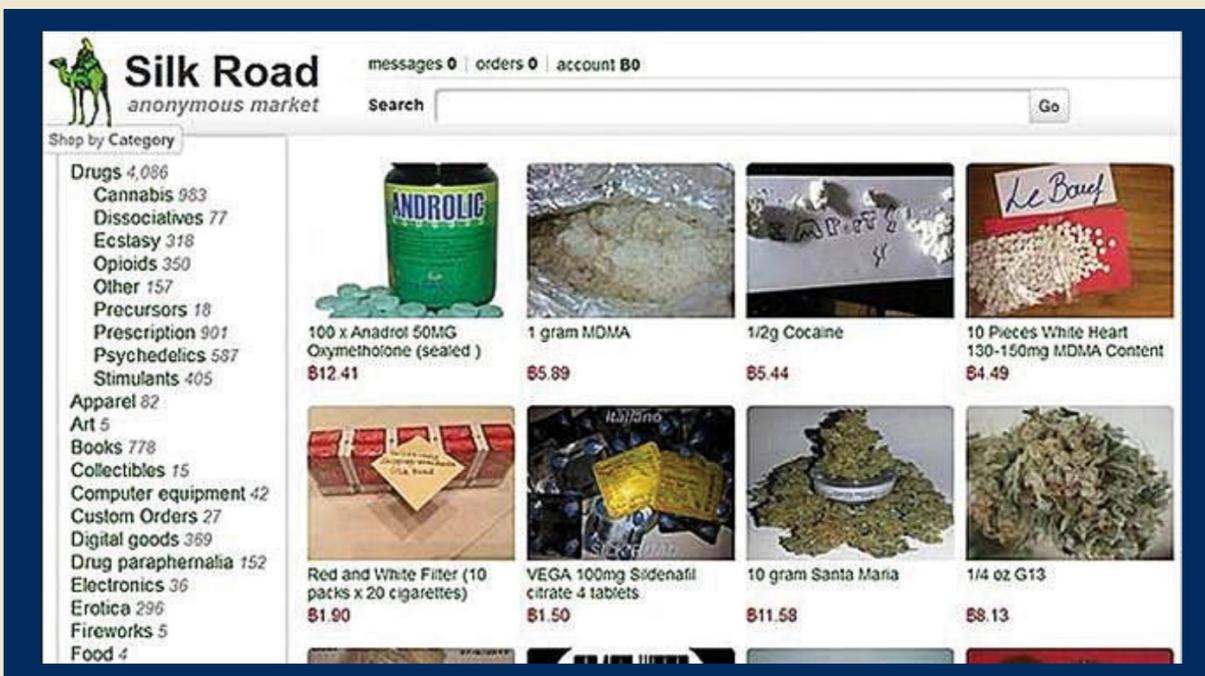
"Through these networks and our Rapid Lab technology we're going to see what effect we can have on the mail system."

The National Forensic Rapid Lab has a strong working relationship with AFP Crime Operations (Investigations), AFP Intelligence (Intelligence collation and reporting), AFP International Network (source country disruption) and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (mail screening and detection).

Rapid Lab also has the capability to identify other crime types such as the importation of false identity documents, firearms and firearm parts, counterfeit and genuine currency, performance enhancing drugs and false credit cards.

Silk Road

One of the challenges facing Rapid Lab is the number of individual packages that are being imported for personal use. Silk Road is just one example of online



Silk Road connects buyers and sellers in an anonymous online marketplace.



A strategic blitz of the mail system by Customs and the AFP led to major operational success.

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Key partnerships are producing significant results.

infrastructure that facilitates the trade of illegal goods. Many similar sites exist in what has been labelled the 'dark web'.

Known to many as 'the e-bay of drugs', Silk Road connects buyers and sellers in an anonymous online marketplace. The site uses two technological tools to provide anonymity. The first is encrypted currency known as Bitcoin. Bitcoin is the first decentralised digital currency and enables trade through peer-to-peer networks without involving a centralised third-



party. Transactions are verified using state-of-the-art encryption.

The second technological tool is free software for enabling anonymity online. Known as Tor (originally short for 'The Onion Router'), the software encrypts layers of data using a worldwide volunteer network. This system was originally developed by the US Navy to protect government communications. Tor was designed to give users privacy and anonymity online and was predominantly used by people under hostile regimes as a way to safely obtain or disseminate information. The current applications are far more sinister. The foundation of Silk Road is the Tor network, as the level of security is high enough to protect the physical location of the computers operating the network, as well as those visiting the site.

The site users range from opportunistic individuals dabbling in the drug market for the first time, to large-scale organised crime syndicates. The international mail system has been exploited by Silk Road, with packages of illegal drugs sent around the world inconspicuously. The creative methods of packaging have included birthday cards, DVDs in Amazon packaging and various parcels disguised as something else.

AFP officers deal with seized items during Operation Pat.



An Australian Customs and Border Protection member inspects a suspicious item.

Operational Success

Rapid Lab is already starting to make inroads on the Parcel Post issue. Although Silk Road claims that users will be offered anonymity, it is not foolproof. The innovative technology used in Rapid Lab already has linked packages to Silk Road. The new technology has been augmented by old fashioned on-the-ground policing methods. The combination of old and new is proving to be effective against web technology like Silk Road.

In February this year the AFP arrested a 32-year-old Melbourne man, Paul Leslie Howard, and charged him with 10 offences relating to the importation, trafficking and possession of narcotics via Silk Road. Howard was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in gaol.

A strategic blitz on drug importations through the mail system, Operation Pat, was conducted shortly after the arrest. The AFP, Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and local Australian law enforcement authorities undertook a range of activities, focusing their efforts on high-frequency, low-volume drug importations.

A broad range of illicit substances were seized, including LSD, heroin, MDMA and cocaine. Substances were concealed in various items including cushions,

a handbag, prints, a jade dragon, cosmetic brushes, birthday cards and other letters and parcels.

AFP Manager Crime Operations Jennifer Hurst says that criminals who attempt to exploit the international mail system through online networks will experience the full brunt of the law.

"The AFP will continue to identify, investigate and prosecute individuals or groups importing narcotics into Australia, including via illicit e-commerce platforms such as Silk Road," she says.

Operation Pat

Operation Pat led to the seizure of at least 140 packages and 18.1kg of illicit substances with a street value of \$8.2 million.

During the search warrants more than \$127,000 in cash was seized and a number of arrests were made. Intelligence was recovered linking some of these seizures to the Silk Road website.

"The AFP continues to liaise with its Australian and international law enforcement partners to prevent illegal drugs and precursors from entering Australia. We are ensuring a whole of government approach to fighting crime at its source," Commander Hurst says.

"The AFP has never been in a stronger position to combat organised crime."

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Male volunteers URGENTLY NEEDED to help kids living with cancer.



Boys living with cancer need male role models to help with their development and confidence at camps which involve everything from rolling in mud to laser tag.

"You'll change lives by making a kid living with cancer smile and laugh. You'll make life-long friends with other volunteers who are selfless, funny and inspiring."
a Camp Quality volunteer



**CAN YOU HELP?
or know someone who can?**

campquality.org.au/volunteer or 1300 662 267

Front page: Participating Police Force member Brendan Smith and Auki Provincial Police Commander Alfred Uiga (Royal Solomon Islands Police Force) visit Lilisiana village in Solomon Islands. Photo by AFP photographer Ally McHugh.



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