

The Auditor-General  
Audit Report No.53 2006–07  
Performance Audit

## **Australian Federal Police Overseas Operations**

Australian National Audit Office

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Canberra ACT  
29 June 2007

Dear Mr President  
Dear Mr Speaker

The Australian National Audit Office has undertaken a performance audit in the Australian Federal Police in accordance with the authority contained in the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. Pursuant to Senate Standing Order 166 relating to the presentation of documents when the Senate is not sitting, I present the report of this audit and the accompanying brochure. The report is titled *Australian Federal Police Overseas Operations*.

Following its presentation and receipt, the report will be placed on the Australian National Audit Office's Homepage—<http://www.anao.gov.au>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian McPhee', is positioned above the printed name.

Ian McPhee  
Auditor-General

The Honourable the President of the Senate  
The Honourable the Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT

## AUDITING FOR AUSTRALIA

The Auditor-General is head of the Australian National Audit Office. The ANAO assists the Auditor-General to carry out his duties under the *Auditor-General Act 1997* to undertake performance audits and financial statement audits of Commonwealth public sector bodies and to provide independent reports and advice for the Parliament, the Government and the community. The aim is to improve Commonwealth public sector administration and accountability.

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# Abbreviations

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ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AME	Aero Medical Evacuation
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANU	Australian National University
APS	Australian Protective Service
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AWG	Asbestos Working Group
CCTV	Closed circuit television
CMT	Contract Management Team
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DNA	Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid
DVI	Disaster Victims Identification
DVIIMC	Disaster Victims Identification Information Management Centre (part of the Thai Tsunami Victim Identification organisation)
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
FCP	Forward Command Post
FMA	<i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>
FMIR	Forensic Major Incident Room

GBR	Guadalcanal Beach Resort
IDETF	Inter-Departmental Emergency Task Force
IDG	International Deployment Group (of the AFP)
IPDT	International Pre-Deployment Training
IPMT	International Peace Monitoring Team
IMWG	Information Management Working Group
OC	Oleoresin Capsicum
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
ORT	Operational Response Team
PIC	Pacific Islands Countries
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PPF	Participating Police Force
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RSIP	Royal Solomon Islands Police (now SIPF)
SIPF	Solomon Islands Police Force (previously known as RSIP)
SIPS	Solomon Islands Prison Service
SRS	Special Response Service
TTVI	Thai Tsunami Victim Identification
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VMIP	Value Management Improvement Program



# Glossary

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Commander PPF	The most senior position within the Participating Police Force, with the occupant of the position also concurrently appointed as a Deputy Commissioner of the Solomon Islands Police Force.
Eminent Persons Group	A group of senior representatives from Pacific Island nations, appointed by the Pacific Islands Forum in 2005, to assess RAMSI's impact on Solomon Islands.
Forensic pathology	Forensic pathology is the legal branch of pathology concerned with: determining cause of death (including murder, accident or unexpected death); examination of some wounds and injuries due to crime or negligence; and examination of tissue specimens that may be relevant to rape, or other crimes.
Forensic science	A branch of science which applies science and scientific methodologies to assist in police investigations and questions of interest to the legal system.
International Deployment Group	Dedicated AFP functional unit that plans, administers and coordinates AFP contributions to international deployments.
Mission	In the context of this audit report, the term 'mission' is generally used as a noun when referring to the AFP presence in an overseas location. For example, 'the personnel deployed to RAMSI are provided with accommodation and recreation facilities in <i>mission</i> .'
Odontology	The scientific study of teeth. Odontologists are qualified dentists who undergo additional training in the analysis of ante mortem dental records and techniques to obtain post mortem dental evidence in order to assist in the identification of deceased persons.

Sworn member	A police officer legally empowered to exercise police powers under relevant legislation.
Unexploded Ordnance	Military munitions that have been primed, fused, armed, or otherwise prepared for action, and have been fired, dropped, launched, projected or placed in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to operations, installation, personnel, or materiel and remain unexploded either by malfunction, design, or any other cause.
Use of Force	The AFP requires all its sworn members to requalify annually in techniques relating to physical force that may be required in the course of their duties. Use of Force training includes the use of personal protection defensive techniques and use of accoutrements such as Oleoresin Capsicum spray and firearms.

## **Summary and Recommendations**



# Summary

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## Background and Context (Chapter 1)

### The Role of the Australian Federal Police

1. The Australian Federal Police (AFP) is the primary law enforcement agency through which the Australian Government enforces Commonwealth law. Established by the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979*, its functions include provision of policing services in relation to Commonwealth laws and property, and safeguarding of Commonwealth interests. The AFP also provides community policing services to the Australian Capital Territory and the Jervis Bay Territory. The AFP's Australian Protective Service is the Australian Government's specialist protective security provider.<sup>1</sup>
2. The AFP enforces Commonwealth criminal law and protects Commonwealth and national interests from crime in Australia and overseas. The AFP is also Australia's international law enforcement and policing representative and chief source of advice to the Australian Government on policing issues.
3. The AFP works closely with other Australian and international law enforcement bodies to enhance safety and security in Australia and to assist in providing a secure regional and global environment. It has an extensive network of liaison officers across more than 20 countries.
4. The nature of the AFP, and what is required of it, has changed significantly in recent years. A rapidly changing security environment has required a closer focus on national and international operational activities. These new challenges include counter-terrorism, people smuggling, drug trafficking, peace operations, protective security, cyber-crime and other transnational crimes.

### Audit objectives, scope and methodology

5. The objective of the audit is to examine and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of AFP's administration and management of its overseas deployments. The audit specifically examines two deployments and focuses on strategic and operational planning and logistics. The audit examines a

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<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, *Australian Government Online Directory*, available from <<http://www.directory.gov.au/>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

planned, long-term overseas deployment (as part of the Participating Police Force (PPF) within the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)) and a crisis-driven deployment in response to a specific event (Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) assistance to Thailand following the Indian Ocean Tsunamis of 26 December 2004).

## **The AFP's Role in RAMSI (Chapter 2)**

6. The AFP is the largest contributor to the PPF, which consists of police personnel from 15 countries.

7. Through the PPF, the AFP contributes to RAMSI through the law and justice 'pillar'; the other pillars of RAMSI being a more effective and accountable public sector, and economic growth. The law and justice pillar has six program outcomes, of which two are directly relevant to the work of the PPF.

8. The PPF's progress in achieving its objectives is measured through RAMSI's Annual Performance Report framework, which provides a basis for monitoring RAMSI's performance over time.

## **AFP Deployment to Solomon Islands (Chapter 3)**

9. The AFP deployed rapidly to Solomon Islands following Australian Government agreement to a request for assistance from the Solomon Islands Government. AFP personnel were quickly able to make a significant and positive contribution to law and order and public safety following the ongoing civil unrest that had beset Solomon Islands since the late 1990s. The first two phases of the mission, restoring and then consolidating law and order were implemented quite successfully.

10. The deployment to Solomon Islands was only the second large scale deployment of police internationally for the AFP (following Timor Leste), and as advised by the AFP, the largest civilian police-led intervention of its type in the world. It also became the first AFP international deployment where the AFP was required to maintain logistical support for the mission.<sup>2</sup>

11. The AFP has in place a sound approach to risk management for its Solomon Islands mission. Key elements include the identification and regular

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<sup>2</sup> Timor Leste was a United Nations (UN) led mission, with infrastructure and logistical support provided by the UN.

review of risks, which are recorded and monitored in a risk register and business continuity planning documents.

12. The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) noted the AFP's level of operational support for deployed personnel, and the sound infrastructure that supports the mission. The AFP has demonstrated a strong commitment to its deployed staff in mission, through force protection and health and safety initiatives. These elements of the mission have been well planned and flexibly managed to ensure that emerging needs are addressed in practical ways.

13. The AFP has developed, revised and refined its pre-deployment training over time in light of its evolving experiences. However, the ANAO considers that the AFP's pre-deployment training was not well synchronised with the phases of the mission. As a result, there was a significant time lag in updating the training of deployed personnel to accommodate the emerging skill needs associated with the capacity building phase of the mission.

## **Planning for RAMSI's Operations (Chapter 4)**

14. The planning and delivery of the AFP's role in restoring and then consolidating law and order in Solomon Islands was well managed and the outcomes have been highly regarded internationally.

15. The subsequent third phase of the mission, to assist in the capacity building and development of the Solomon Islands Police Force (SIPF), was commenced without a clear, staged strategy for implementation. In this context, personnel initially tasked with capacity development activities did not receive targeted training in preparation for this phase. As a result, personnel deployed as advisors did not all have the necessary skills, attributes and understanding of the task and the cultural implications of policing in Solomon Islands. Over time, the AFP has provided more targeted pre-deployment and in-mission preparation and training for AFP personnel involved in capacity building activities.

16. Overall, the capacity building and development phase has been progressing steadily. In the early stages of capacity development, the AFP's focus was on building police skills, knowledge and capacities. More recently, the AFP has broadened this focus to include skills such as literacy within the SIPF, which are fundamental in building a number of police skills and capacities.

17. Given present uncertainty about the tenure of the RAMSI deployment, there is scope for the AFP to include measurable short, medium and long term outcomes for its capacity building initiatives.

## **AFP Deployment to Thailand (Chapter 5)**

18. The AFP responded quickly and effectively to the impact of a natural disaster that affected many countries and required an international response on an unprecedented scale. Under difficult conditions the AFP provided strategic leadership and practical assistance to Thailand in the international effort to identify victims of the disaster in that country.

19. The AFP received considerable assistance in sustaining the Thailand deployment through the willingness of Australian State and Territory jurisdictions to provide personnel for short term deployments. However to ensure certainty around its capacity to respond to future events of this nature, the AFP should seek to clarify and document a set of 'standing arrangements' covering the nature, and terms of, the level of assistance to be provided by State and Territory jurisdictions, particularly with regard to seconded personnel.

## **Contracts for Logistical Support to Overseas Deployments (Chapter 6)**

20. Overall, the contract for logistical support in Solomon Islands has provided the services needed by RAMSI, generally in a timely manner. The AFP's recent efforts to develop a panel of providers across a range of logistical support functions will enhance scope for, and assurance of, continuity of service delivery and value for money.

21. However, a number of performance measures in the current contract could be improved, and penalty provisions in the contract could be enhanced, to encourage a greater focus on delivery of contracted services in a manner that achieves value for money.

22. The ANAO notes that the Thailand tsunami response highlighted the absence of suitable standing contractual arrangements to support a sustained crisis-response deployment. As a result, the AFP and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) had little choice but to rely on a standing contract, designed primarily for the Department of Defence for short-term repatriation services, as the basis for logistical support for the deployment. The ANAO notes that while this contract provided a legal basis for the essential



rapid mobilisation of support during the initial crisis phase of the response, it was not well suited to the scope and evolving nature of the deployment beyond the initial phase.

23. The ANAO considers the AFP, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, should work with DFAT to develop a panel of providers able to offer identified capabilities to cater for a range of crisis response and longer term disaster management situations. Standing contracts could assist to provide a sound basis for distinguishing the general conditions in obtaining crisis support as distinct from medium to longer term ongoing assistance, in the event of a future emergency.

24. In addition, the AFP (like all Government agencies responsible for negotiating any work authorisation agreements under emergency response standing contracts), should ensure that appropriate legal and financial management expertise is available to negotiate with the contractor and finalise details of actual support required at the time of need.

## **Reintegrating Staff Returning from Overseas Deployments (Chapter 7)**

25. The AFP is aware that personnel returning from overseas deployments can find the process of reintegrating into more mainstream AFP functions and work areas difficult for a range of reasons. In addition, the number of AFP members returning from overseas deployments has never been higher and is likely to continue to be an issue for the AFP for the foreseeable future. The significant expansion of the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) is likely to create longer term challenges in reintegrating members into domestic policing from overseas deployments.

26. In these circumstances, the ANAO considers the AFP should more actively address the management and welfare of staff returning from overseas deployments to ensure a smoother reintegration into the AFP's mainstream work areas. To this end, the ANAO considers the issue of reintegration of returning deployees should be given a higher priority by the AFP in its workforce planning and wellbeing services processes. This may help to ensure that returning members' career expectations are appropriately managed, and their value to the organisation is fully recognised.

## Overall Audit Conclusions

27. The AFP has demonstrated a sound capability in responding quickly to international crises. The AFP's operational planning and the deployment of personnel able to apply their core policing skills made a positive contribution to the international effort and the achievement of mission objectives in both Thailand and Solomon Islands.

28. The unprecedented nature of the two deployments selected as audit case studies created a number of challenges for the AFP with regard to aspects of strategic planning. The AFP as an organisation has demonstrated a willingness to meet changing priorities and resolve emerging issues during the course of these deployments, and has sought to actively capture the lessons learned from new situations.

29. The ANAO considers that the AFP could fine tune some aspects of its planning and arrangements for capacity building missions, and that some of the agreements with other jurisdictions and professional associations would benefit from some elaboration. Similarly, the AFP would benefit from having a panel of providers able to supply identified logistical capabilities in either crisis or ongoing situations. In addition, a renewed focus on reintegrating personnel returning from overseas deployments would assist with the long term capacity of the AFP to perform its role, both internationally and domestically.

## Recommendations

30. The ANAO has made six recommendations aimed at improving elements of the AFP's approach to planning, executing and sustaining its overseas deployments. While identifying areas requiring remedial attention, these recommendations broadly support the strategic directions and initiatives that the AFP is currently pursuing.

## Summary of the AFP's Response

31. Over the past five years, The AFP has been called upon to respond to a diverse range of off-shore incidents, particularly in the Asia and Pacific regions. The Australian Government has provided the AFP with significant additional resources to enable the AFP to increase its capability to deliver effective law enforcement responses that continue to contribute to regional and international stability and security on behalf of the Government of Australia.

32. The AFP continues to work closely with key whole of government partners to deliver flexible, immediate and effective responses to a wide range of international incidents including terrorism, transnational crime, peace and stability operations, law and justice capacity building programs and humanitarian crises.

33. Action continues to ensure all recommendations of the *Performance Audit – Australian Federal Police Overseas Operations* are addressed. The AFP's Security Audit Team will monitor the progress of the agency's response to these recommendations.

34. The AFP's full response is reproduced at Appendix 1. As a stakeholder for some aspects of the AFP's overseas deployment to Thailand, DFAT was also invited to respond to aspects of the report. DFAT's response is also reproduced at Appendix 1.

# Recommendations

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*Set out below are the ANAO recommendations. Recommendations 1-4 and 6 are directed to the AFP, and Recommendation 5 is directed at the AFP and the DFAT in their roles as members of the Mass Fatality Project, chaired by Emergency Management Australia. Details of agency responses are included at Appendix 1.*

**Recommendation No.1** For any future capacity development missions the ANAO recommends that the AFP:

**Para 4.37**

- (a) more closely focuses on early planning for that phase of the mission, ensuring that the development of strategic and operational plans takes appropriate account of local cultural issues, constraints and conditions;
- (b) places greater emphasis on recruiting personnel with the appropriate capabilities and skills relevant to the phase of the mission prior to their deployment; and
- (c) ensures stronger alignment of pre-deployment training to the emerging skill needs of the mission.

*AFP response: Agree.*

**Recommendation No.2** In respect of the AFP's involvement in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, the ANAO recommends that the AFP ensures the capacity development phase is structured to provide the Solomon Islands Police Force with identifiable and measurable short and long term improvements in its personnel's skill sets.

**Para 4.42**

*AFP response: Agree.*

**Recommendation  
No.3  
Para 5.30**

The ANAO recommends that the AFP includes agreed parameters for secondments of personnel in formal agreements with State and Territory jurisdictions, and professional associations within the Disaster Victims Identification community, in readiness for any future crisis response situations.

*AFP response: Agree.*

**Recommendation  
No.4  
Para 5.46**

The ANAO recommends the AFP reviews:

- (a) its arrangements with neighbouring countries to ensure that the risks facing AFP personnel providing in-country policing or humanitarian assistance are identified and adequately managed; and
- (b) the basis and rationale for the approach to deploying staff on future crisis response missions to ensure that business planning and decision-making processes are more clearly evidenced.

*AFP response: Agree.*

**Recommendation  
No.5  
Para 6.60**

The ANAO recommends that the AFP should, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to:

- (c) take appropriate account of lessons learned from the deployment to Thailand; and
- (d) develop a panel of providers able to offer identified capabilities for the provision of a range of crisis response and longer term disaster management services and logistical support.

*AFP response: Agree.*

*DFAT response: Agree.*

**Recommendation**  
**No.6**  
**Para 7.19**

The ANAO recommends that the AFP places an increased emphasis on assisting personnel returning to mainstream policing duties from overseas deployments by providing targeted wellbeing and workplace support and assistance.

*AFP response: Agree.*

## **Audit Findings and Conclusions**





# 1. Background and Context

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*This Chapter provides an overview of the Australian Federal Police's role and involvement in overseas deployments. This chapter also outlines the audit objective, scope, methodology and structure of this report, and provides a brief context of the Solomon Islands and Thailand case studies selected for the audit.*

## Australian Federal Police role and priorities

1.1 The Australian Federal Police (AFP) is the primary law enforcement agency through which the Australian Government enforces Commonwealth law. Established by the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979*, its functions include provision of police services in relation to Commonwealth laws and property and safeguarding of Commonwealth interests. The AFP also provides community policing services to the Australian Capital Territory and the Jervis Bay Territory. The Australian Protective Service division of the AFP is the Australian Government's specialist protective security provider.<sup>3</sup>

1.2 The AFP enforces Commonwealth criminal law and protects Commonwealth and national interests from crime in Australia and overseas. The AFP is also Australia's international law enforcement and policing representative and chief source of advice to the Australian Government on policing issues.

1.3 The AFP has two performance outcomes:

- Outcome One—Investigation and prevention of crime against the Commonwealth and protection of Commonwealth interests in Australia and overseas.
- Outcome Two—Provision of community policing to create a safe and secure environment in the Australian Capital Territory.

1.4 Within the context of its performance outcomes, AFP priorities are set through ministerial direction. Its current areas of focus include handling special references from the Government, and preventing, countering and investigating:

- terrorism;
- illicit drug trafficking;

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<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, *Australian Government Online Directory*, available from <<http://www.directory.gov.au/>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

- transnational and multi-jurisdictional crime;
- organised people smuggling;
- serious fraud against the Commonwealth;
- high-tech crime involving information technology and communications;
- regional peacekeeping and capacity building; and
- money laundering.

1.5 The AFP works closely with other Australian and international law enforcement bodies to enhance safety and security in Australia and to assist in providing a secure regional and global environment. It has an extensive network of liaison officers across more than 20 countries.

## **AFP overseas deployments**

1.6 The nature of the AFP, and what is required of it, has changed significantly in recent years. A rapidly changing security environment has required a closer focus on national and international operational activities. These new challenges include counter-terrorism, people smuggling, drug trafficking, cyber-crime, peace operations, protection and other transnational crimes.<sup>4</sup> This includes investigation, protection, guarding and security services. The AFP has staff at 30 posts in 27 countries.

1.7 The AFP's most recent 'peace-keeping' missions have been to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, although as Table 1.1 outlines, the AFP has an ongoing role in other significant peace missions.

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<sup>4</sup> Australian Government, AFP website, available from <[www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au)>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

**Table 1.1****AFP significant missions<sup>5</sup>**

Country / Mission	Lead Country / Organisation	Start date	Finish date	Total Personnel sent to mission as at March 2007
Cyprus	United Nations	May 1964	Ongoing	1490*
Assistance Mission Timor Leste	United Nations	June 1999	Ongoing	1202*
International Peace Monitoring Team Solomon Islands	Australia / New Zealand	Nov 2000	July 2002	82
Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands	Australia / New Zealand	July 2003	Ongoing	988**
Papua New Guinea Mission	Australia	2004	Ongoing	230 (approx)

\*includes State police officers. \*\* Includes Protective Service Officers.

Source: AFP.

1.8 The AFP also provides policing services to Australia's External Territories, including Christmas, Cocos and Norfolk Islands.

## International Deployment Group

1.9 The Prime Minister announced in 2004 the formation, within the AFP, of the International Deployment Group (IDG) to respond to the changing international environment.

They (International Deployment Group personnel) will have the permanent ongoing responsibility of taking part in international deployments. They obviously will incorporate many of the people who are now on deployment in Solomon Islands and to be deployed in the near future in Papua New Guinea. The difference is that we're going to have a separate dedicated group and the people involved in it will have the full time responsibility of taking part in international deployments.

The weakness of the current arrangement is that it's essentially [inaudible] that a police officer might be working, for example, in the Victorian police, go on deployment in the region on the understanding that he or she would then return to service in the Victoria police. That creates difficulties for state police forces because it's essentially ad hoc. And, of course, as these officers are

<sup>5</sup> For this purpose, significant missions are those that comprise over 50 personnel.

involved in apprehension in other countries they're required to give evidence in court when people are charged, that also creates further demands on their time and logic suggests that we should have a separate dedicated force.<sup>6</sup>

1.10 The original purpose in creating the IDG was to build up a body of personnel who could be deployed overseas for peacekeeping, restoration of law and order and capacity-building initiatives in the region.

1.11 A new \$2.8 million AFP International Training Complex, in Canberra, was opened in 2005 to give Australian and overseas personnel a dedicated facility to build their skills to assist in achieving stability in the region. The complex recreates the environments that police might experience when deployed on overseas missions. Designed to reflect the streetscape of a small overseas township, it enables true-to-life scenario training which helps to prepare police for the challenges they will face. The complex was purpose-built for IDG but training at the facility will extend beyond the needs of the IDG to cover counter terrorism, search and rescue, protection and forensics.<sup>7</sup>

1.12 In 2006 the Prime Minister announced a substantial strengthening of the AFP's capacity to respond to crises overseas, particularly in Australia's region. The IDG was to be increased by about 400 personnel, taking the expected total at that time to 1200. The 2006 initiative was the largest single increase in AFP staff since the force was established in 1979. The extra resources were to allow the IDG to establish a 150-strong Operational Response Group that is ready to respond at short notice to emerging law and order issues and undertake stabilisation operations. This expansion to AFP operations will cost some \$493 million over the next five years.<sup>8</sup>

## Summary of IDG resourcing

1.13 In 2003–04 the Government provided \$240.4 million of initial funding to the AFP for its role in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) from 2003–04 to 2004–05, including the logistics function. In 2005–06 the Government agreed to provide \$566 million to the AFP in additional

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Government, *The Prime Minister's International Deployment Speech*, 2 February 2004 available at <<http://www.afp.gov.au>> , [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>7</sup> AFP Media Release 23 June 2005 *Prime Minister opens new AFP International Training Complex* <[http://www.afp.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/1920/mr050623idglaunch.pdf](http://www.afp.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/1920/mr050623idglaunch.pdf)>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>8</sup> Australian Government, Prime Minister, Media Release 25 August 2006 *A Stronger AFP: Responding to Regional Challenges*, < [http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2006/media\\_Release2096.cfm](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2006/media_Release2096.cfm) >, [accessed 20 June 2007].

resourcing from 2005–06 to 2008–09, including \$494 million for the AFP's role in RAMSI.

1.14 The AFP will receive a total of \$258.9 million in 2006–07 for IDG activities. This includes amounts of \$137.4 million for the AFP's role in RAMSI, \$47.5 million for its activities in Papua New Guinea and \$30.2 million for peace monitoring in Timor Leste.

1.15 In terms of RAMSI, the largest of the IDG's commitments, the budgeted expenditure breakdown for 2006–07 is as follows:

- Employees (includes the employees costs of all AFP personnel in mission) - \$33.2 million;
- Suppliers (includes payments to contractors for goods and services and payments to State police jurisdictions in respect of seconded personnel) - \$77.7 million;
- Mission- based fixed costs (depreciation) - \$2.8 million; and
- Fixed Office (reflects the attributed Australia-based costs of supporting the mission) - \$23.6 million.

## Audit objectives, scope and methodology

### Audit objectives and scope

1.16 The objective of the audit is to examine and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of AFP's administration and management of its overseas deployments. The audit specifically case studied two deployments and focused on strategic and operational planning and logistics. The audit examines a planned, long-term overseas deployment (RAMSI) and a deployment in response to a specific event (DVI assistance to Thailand after the Indian Ocean tsunamis).

1.17 The Solomon Islands deployment offered scope to observe AFP planning and management of a large overseas deployment and assess the application of lessons from previous deployments, such as Timor Leste (East Timor).

1.18 The Thailand deployment provided an opportunity to assess smaller-scale AFP planning and management of an urgent response deployment, with scope to benefit from networking and lessons from investigation of the Bali bombings.

1.19 The audit concerned only AFP deployment operations, not those of the international groups that the AFP participated in during the deployments.

### **Audit methodology**

1.20 The audit methodology was based on a review of files, records, systems and interviews with relevant AFP and DFAT personnel, and fieldwork in Thailand and Solomon Islands in relation to the selected case studies. The audit team conducted fieldwork in Thailand in November 2005, in Solomon Islands in January 2006 and in AFP and DFAT facilities in Canberra throughout the course of the audit.

1.21 In Thailand the audit team visited a number of tsunami-affected sites in Phuket and Phi Phi islands and met personnel deployed from or by the AFP and police assisting from Sweden, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The team also visited the TTVI Information Management Centre in Phuket City and the storage and mortuary facilities located in three separate sites in Phuket.

1.22 In Solomon Islands the audit team was given good access to AFP, PPF, RAMSI and Solomon Islands Police Force (SIPF) personnel. The team benefited from a program of visits and meetings with Solomon Islands police, community representatives (including church groups, teachers and village chiefs), and PPF personnel working in these areas. Details of the locations visited are included in Chapter 3.

1.23 A strong focus of the audit was to examine the AFP's capacity and willingness to ensure that lessons learned from previous experience and during the course of a deployment were captured and appropriately applied.

1.24 The audit methodology did not seek to include all facets of the work of the PPF or RAMSI. The audit focused only on the AFP contribution to the PPF and RAMSI. As such, the ANAO does not seek to provide a view on the efficiency or effectiveness of RAMSI as a whole or the law and justice pillar of RAMSI.

## Background to the selected case studies

### Solomon Islands

1.25 Solomon Islands is an independent country in the Pacific Ocean. It has a population of 483 000 people (2006 estimate) living on numerous islands.<sup>9</sup> More than half the population live on Malaita and Guadalcanal Islands. Detailed information on Solomon Islands and the difficulties it has experienced in recent years is available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) website.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Solomon Islands National Statistics Office , available from <<http://www.spc.int/prism/country/sb/stats/>> , [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>10</sup> Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade *Solomon Islands Country Brief* , available from <[http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/solomon\\_islands/solomon\\_islands\\_brief.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/solomon_islands/solomon_islands_brief.html)>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

**Figure 1.2**

# Map of Solomon Islands



Source: University of Texas Library, <[http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/australia/solomon\\_islands\\_pol89.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/australia/solomon_islands_pol89.jpg)> (accessed 22 March 2007).

1.26 In 2003 the Government responded to a request for assistance from Solomon Islands Government to restore law and order in Solomon Islands. The AFP's earlier peace monitoring role there was replaced by a full civilian policing function under the umbrella of RAMSI. RAMSI is a multi-national, multi-agency approach to address a range of social and economic issues facing



the people of Solomon Islands. Its mission is structured around three distinct 'pillars': law and justice, economic reform and machinery of government.<sup>11</sup>

1.27 RAMSI's policing function is carried out by a Participating Police Force (PPF), of which the main contingent is from the AFP. The PPF, in partnership with Solomon Islands Police (SIPF), aims to restore security, maintain law and order and re-build the SIPF. The first contingent of AFP arrived in Solomon Islands on 24 July 2003 and the deployment has continued since then.

1.28 The United Nations Secretary-General and Security Council and the Commonwealth Secretary-General have all expressed support for the RAMSI initiative.<sup>12</sup>

### *Prime Minister's report*

1.29 The Prime Minister's report on RAMSI in August 2003 included the following comments.

- RAMSI has received overwhelming support from the people of Solomon Islands. But the work of the mission has only just begun. The Solomon Islands Government has recognised that it is unable to address its problems or govern effectively—they know that if they do not stop the slide into chaos their nation will collapse.
- The problems have grown more serious. Criminal lawlessness has replaced ethnic tension. Some of the main culprits are in the police force. The country's institutions have been greatly weakened. This has contributed to severe economic decline, which in turn exacerbates the climate of political and social instability.
- Critical social welfare infrastructure has almost ceased to function. Power generation was essentially crippled—unable to supply hospitals, schools or business—and affected water supply. Government employees providing vital services have not been paid for months at a time.
- Criminals and militants have terrorised the community and brought the nation to the brink of collapse. Innocent villages have been brutalised as rival criminal gangs jostle for control. Kidnapping,

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<sup>11</sup> The ANAO also examined a number of aspects of RAMSI in Audit Report No.47 2006-07, *Coordination of Australian Government Assistance to Solomon Islands*, June 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat News Release *Commonwealth Secretary-General welcomes regional initiative on Solomon Islands* 2 July 2003, UN Press Release SG/SM8811 *Secretary-General commends regional response to Solomon Islands crisis* 5 August 2003 and UN Press Release SC/7583 *Press Statement on Solomon Islands by Security Council President*, 26 August 2003.

murder, rape and torture have gone unchecked. Police are unable or unwilling to investigate many of these crimes.<sup>13</sup>

1.30 Planning and management of the logistical elements of the AFP's deployment to Solomon Islands are discussed in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 discusses the AFP's strategic planning for, and contribution to RAMSI's 'law and order' pillar and the AFP's management of contracts for logistical support to RAMSI is discussed in Chapter 6.

## Thailand

1.31 The AFP responded to an invitation from the Thai Government for assistance after the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunamis, which badly affected major tourist areas on the island of Phuket. AFP personnel arrived in Thailand within 48 hours of the tsunamis and were ready to assist upon arrival. These initial personnel took a lead role in coordinating the international effort, and in the creation of the Thai Tsunami Victim Identification (TTVI) organisation.

1.32 Due to the nature and scope of the impact of the tsunamis, there was no well-established international operation for AFP to access readily and assist. Instead, the Thai authorities accepted the AFP's willingness to provide operational leadership to what had quickly become a major logistical challenge, both in terms of the impact of the disaster itself and the extent of the international community potentially affected and seeking to assist.<sup>14</sup>

1.33 The AFP's tsunami assistance to Thailand included the deployment of a range of forensic specialists, including Disaster Victims Identification (DVI) coordinators, odontologists, fingerprint experts, crime scene photographers and DNA specialists. The AFP's contribution to the international effort formally concluded with the return of the last of the AFP's staff in February 2006.

1.34 In addition to assisting the Thai Government as part of the international effort to identify victims, the AFP worked closely with DFAT and State authorities to establish which Australians were missing and believed to have been in the tsunami affected area. This required a considerable behind-the-

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<sup>13</sup> Prime Minister's report on RAMSI to the House of Representatives on 12 August 2003 (HR Hansard pp. 18197-18202). <<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/rep/dailys/dr120803.pdf>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>14</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, Australia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Human Rights Subcommittee, Committee Hansard, 12 May 2006, p. FADT 32.

scenes effort in developing and maintaining a database of possible victims in the early stages of the operation, with ongoing follow-up to establish the extent of multiple reporting of individuals, and updating the database as further news of reported individuals was received.

1.35 Planning and management of the AFP contribution to the international DVI efforts in Thailand are discussed in Chapter 5, and contract arrangements for logistics support are discussed in Chapter 6.

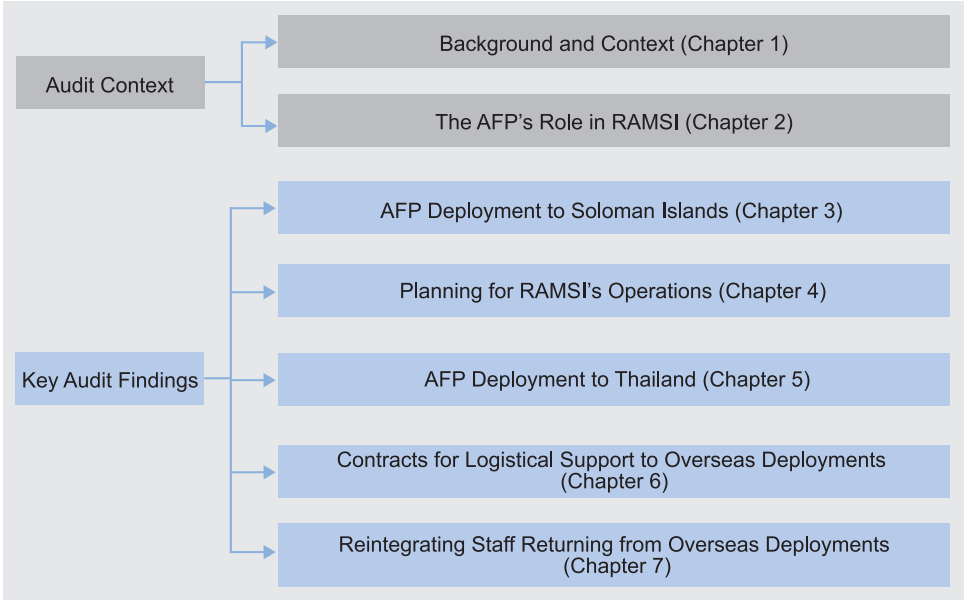
## Acknowledgements

1.36 The ANAO would like to thank the personnel of the AFP and DFAT who provided assistance in the conduct of the audit. In particular, staff of the AFP's IDG and Forensic Services have provided invaluable assistance to the audit team with fieldwork conducted in Australia and in the deployments in Thailand and Solomon Islands.

## Report structure

1.37 Figure 1.3 illustrates the structure of the report. Chapters One and Two provide the background to the AFP and its role in overseas deployments, including specific background on the selected case studies. Subsequent chapters are focused on specific information and analysis related to audit findings and recommendations.

**Figure 1.3**  
**Report structure**



Source: ANAO

## 2. The AFP's Role in RAMSI

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*This chapter describes the AFP's role in the PPF and RAMSI. It also provides some background on reviews and performance assessments of RAMSI to date.*

### Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)

2.1 RAMSI is a partnership between the people and the Government of Solomon Islands and 15 contributing countries of the Pacific region.

RAMSI is helping the Solomon Islands to lay the foundations for long-term stability, security and prosperity – through support for improved law, justice and security; for more effective, accountable and democratic government; for stronger, broad-based economic growth; and for enhanced service delivery.

The overarching goal of RAMSI's work is for a peaceful, well-governed and prosperous Solomon Islands.

This goal will be pursued over the long term through a mutual commitment with the Solomon Islands Government, which supports RAMSI's mandate to:

- Ensure the safety and security of Solomon Islands
- Repair and reform the machinery of government, improve government accountability and improve the delivery of services in urban and provincial areas
- Improve economic governance and strengthen the government's financial systems
- Help rebuild the economy and encourage sustainable broad-based growth
- Build strong and peaceful communities

RAMSI is helping Solomon Islanders to get their nation working and growing again. That will take years of hard work. Nothing will change unless Solomon Islanders want change and are prepared to work hard in support of a common cause.<sup>15</sup>

2.2 Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and other Pacific islands nations contribute police and military personnel to RAMSI. Australia's contribution to RAMSI includes provision of expertise in coordinating assistance from the various nations and agencies involved. Australia is also

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<sup>15</sup> Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, *RAMSI's Mandate*, available from <<http://www.ramsi.org/>>, [accessed on 22 February 2007].

providing expertise in a range of governmental administrative functions, including finance and budgeting, and infrastructure assistance through Australia's international aid agency, AusAID.

## **RAMSI and the PPF**

2.3 The PPF contributes to RAMSI's law, justice and security 'pillar'. In consultation with the Solomon Islands Government, RAMSI developed the *Solomon Islands Law and Justice Sector Strategic Framework 2005–2010*. This document aims to reflect Solomon Islands Government priorities for the law and justice sector over the next 5-10 years and takes into consideration key policy directions outlined in the *National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003–2006*.

2.4 RAMSI's goal in the law and justice sector is to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and stable environment in Solomon Islands that is underpinned by an effective, affordable and culturally appropriate law and justice system accessible to all Solomon Islanders.

2.5 The AFP is the most significant contributor to the PPF in terms of staff numbers, and the PPF was the most visible part of RAMSI from a community perspective. PPF personnel numbers by contributing nation are summarised at Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1****Participating Police Force numbers**

<b>PPF officers</b>	<b>July 2004</b>	<b>July 2005</b>	<b>July 2006</b>	<b>March 2007</b>
AFP	208	294	172	227
New Zealand	35	31	35	36
Fiji	15	13	15	8
Tonga	12	12	12	10
Samoa	10	9	9	7
Vanuatu	12	5	11	3
Kiribati	5	5	5	5
Nauru	3	4	-	5
Cook Islands	2	2	-	2
Papua New Guinea	-	10	-	6
Tuvalu	-	2	-	2
Marshall Islands	-	-	-	1
Palau	-	-	-	2
FSM	-	-	-	2
Niue	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>318</b>

Table prepared by ANAO from the following sources:

July 2004 data from AFP media release 23 July 2004 *AFP helps celebrate a new future for Solomon Islands*.

July 2005 data from AFP media release 22 July 2005 *AFP celebrates RAMSI anniversary*.

July 2006 data from AusAid website – RAMSI: Facts and Figures.

March 2007 data provided by AFP.

[http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/solomon/solomons\\_ramsi\\_details.cfm](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/solomon/solomons_ramsi_details.cfm).

2.6 An agreement between Solomon Islands, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga concerning the operations of police and armed forces deployed to Solomon Islands to assist in restoring law, order and security was signed on 24 May 2003. It was agreed that the most senior Australian police officer of the PPF would be the head of the PPF and Deputy Commissioner of the SIPF.

2.7 The PPF's role, under RAMSI's law and justice pillar, initially consisted of four stages:

- restore law and order;
- consolidate law and order;
- capacity building in the SIPF; and
- withdrawal.

2.8 These stages were not intended to be separate and discrete aspects of the mission. Although each stage represents a logical requisite step for moving to subsequent stages, the processes of restoring and consolidating law and order provided clear opportunities for some SIPF members to learn from the PPF through the initial stages. At the same time, although the mission formally focused on capacity building in the SIPF from July 2005, an adverse change in the current state of law and order could see the mission revert to the first stage. For example, in response to civil unrest in Honiara in April 2006, the PPF's immediate priority returned to restoring law and order. Once law and order were re-established, the capacity building phase resumed its prominence.

2.9 Reductions in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) contingent began in September 2003, and as at April 2007 there were 136 ADF personnel providing support to the PPF.<sup>16</sup>

2.10 Most PPF staff are located in or near Honiara. For PPF purposes the AFP leases a site known as the Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR), which is located 16 kilometres to the east of Honiara and about a kilometre from Henderson Airport. The site was initially leased by the ADF in 2003 as the base for the International Peace Monitoring Team.<sup>17</sup> The AFP and the ADF have progressively developed the site to accommodate up to 350 deployees on a medium to long-term basis and up to 700 including surge-capacity related short deployments. The site is leased by the AFP at an annual cost of \$462 000.

## The AFP's role in the PPF

2.11 As indicated above, the initial mission emphasis of the PPF was on restoring law and order. The initial police contingent, consisting of 74 AFP, Australian Protective Service personnel and New Zealand Police arrived in Honiara in July 2003.<sup>18</sup> By December 2003 there were 150 AFP officers deployed to Solomon Islands.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The ADF contingent was reduced by around 800 personnel by December 2003. (Senator the Hon Robert Hill, Minister for Defence, media release *Defence Personnel to come home from Solomons* 28 October 2003.

<sup>17</sup> The IPMT preceded RAMSI, and operated in Solomon Islands from November 2000 to June 2002. AFP personnel involved did not have police powers under Solomon Islands law, and were only able to monitor and report on the law and order issues in Solomon Islands, having no power to intervene.

<sup>18</sup> Senator the Hon C M Ellison (Minister for Justice and Customs) Senate Hansard 12 August 2003 p.13305. For New Zealand police numbers in Solomon Islands see New Zealand Police *Overseas Assistance: Solomon Islands*, July 2003, available from <<http://www.police.govt.nz/service/overseas/solomon-islands.html>> , [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>19</sup> Australian Federal Police, answer to Parliamentary Question No.2966, HR Hansard 22 June 2004 p. 31173.



2.12 After general elections in April 2006 there was a resurgence of violent civil unrest in Honiara. Public buildings were destroyed and 31 AFP officers were injured.<sup>20</sup> There were 282 AFP officers in the PPF at the time.<sup>21</sup> RAMSI sought further personnel, and Australia sent a further 70 AFP officers and 220 troops.<sup>22</sup>

### **Leadership structure of the PPF**

2.13 The PPF is headed by a Commander, who is also a sworn Deputy Commissioner of the SIPP. The Commander is the chair of the Board of Management, which consists of the managers of Operations, Operations Support, Specialist Operations, Learning and Development and the Chief of Staff. A summary of the PPF structure is at Appendix 2.

### **RAMSI annual reporting performance framework**

2.14 A performance framework established in 2005 sought to measure RAMSI's success and progress. Intended to provide a more systematic way of measuring achievements, it proposed to use the following methods:

- an annual people's survey (In May 2006 a team of overseas and local staff, in a pilot survey, spoke to 1100 people in villages in Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Western Province and Malaita, asking individuals about issues potentially affected by RAMSI's work.);
- capacity building stocktakes for all of RAMSI's programs;
- analytical reviews by a special team; and
- self-evaluation mechanisms by individual programs.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty address to Australasian Fire Authorities Council / International Fire Chiefs Association of Asia / Bushfire Co-Operative Research Centre Conference, 12 August 2006, available from <[http://www.afp.gov.au/media/national\\_media/speeches/afac\\_conference](http://www.afp.gov.au/media/national_media/speeches/afac_conference)> , [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>21</sup> Australian Federal Police, AFP media release *Eight AFP officers injured in violent protest*, 18 April 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Prime Minister John Howard media release *Australian contribution to regional assistance mission to Solomon Islands* 21 April 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, *How do we know if RAMSI is meeting its goals?* Available from <<http://www.ramsi.org/node/14>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

2.15 The first annual performance report was prepared by a US-based research company, CAMRIS International, and published in October 2006. As indicated on the RAMSI website:

The report showed that, over the past year, RAMSI had contributed to a range of positive results:

...in the Law and Justice sector:

- 99 new recruits graduated into the Solomon Islands Police Force, and more Solomon Islanders were appointed to key positions in the force
- 35 new recruits commenced in the Solomon Islands Prison Service
- a Solomon Islander was appointed as DPP following a period of systematic capacity building and mentoring
- magistrate services were expanded into the provinces
- building of a provincial prison and courts commenced
- the number of prisoners on remand had fallen.<sup>24</sup>

2.16 The first point above is particularly relevant to the capacity building work of the PPF. The remaining achievements reflect the efforts of a range of other agencies, with principal responsibility for coordination resting with AusAid and the RAMSI Office of the Special Coordinator.

### Figure 2.1

#### Excerpt from RAMSI 2005-2006 Annual Performance Report

**1. Security, peace and order.** Apart from the severe disturbances in Honiara in April 2006 there were no major security incidents recorded. By and large communities are gun free and safe. RAMSI accomplished this through two major achievements: 1) stimulating a functioning Royal Solomon Islands Police force (RSIP), which is increasing in competence; and 2) strengthening the criminal and civil justice system, ranging from the officers on the beat to the judges on the bench. These were important steps forward in restoring to Solomon Islanders security and confidence in the rule of law.

Overall, the People's Survey pilot results should be encouraging to the Solomon Islands Government and RAMSI. A majority of respondents in the limited pilot believed that law and order had improved in the last year. Questions about police attitudes and effectiveness elicited mixed responses, but will be a valuable reference that can be explored and elaborated as future People's Surveys are conducted on a representative national scale (nevertheless, the time lag between effective RAMSI support for the RSIP and measurable changes in capacity and perceptions of the RSIP is likely to be significant). Most significantly, RAMSI's positive impact on peace is reflected by the opinion of sixty-five per cent of respondents that widespread violence would definitely return if RAMSI were to depart soon.

Over the past year, increased Solomon Islands capacity and ability to resume key functions was demonstrated by the appointment of Solomon Islanders as Director of Public Prosecutions and Deputy Commissioner of Operations in the RSIP. The number of prisoners on remand decreased to approximately 100 in June 2006. The clearance rate of reported crimes continues to grow, reaching 40% in 2005. The Solomon Islands Prisons Service (SIPS) continued to reduce significant incidents, with only one major disturbance in the past year.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, available from <<http://www.ramsi.org/node/111>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

2.17 The law and justice pillar has six program outcomes, of which two are directly relevant to the work of the PPF:

- (a) safe and stable communities created through collaborative crime prevention, community safety and security initiatives; and
- (b) professional, effective and accountable law enforcement agencies.

*Safe and stable communities*

2.18 The performance indicator for this element is an increase in the community levels of trust and confidence in the SIPF. According to RAMSI, data from the People's Survey pilot report suggests that over 50% of those surveyed trust the SIPF: 57% of responses indicated that law and order was getting better, 48% perceive a reduction in violent crime, 25% are satisfied with police action and 59% consider that they had been treated respectfully by police.<sup>25</sup>

*Professional, effective and accountable law enforcement agencies*

2.19 The performance measure for this element is the increase in the number of crimes cleared as a percentage of the number of crimes reported. The reported clearance rate from 1 July 2005 to 11 May 2006 is 40% (of 2502 reported crimes, 1012 cleared).

2.20 There are significant limitations with this performance measure, as the report notes that continued inefficient reporting, recording, classification, clearance and notification of offences to SIPF National Intelligence Unit.<sup>26</sup> Measures to address these limitations are the responsibility of the Information Management Working Group (IMWG) of the PPF.

2.21 The ANAO notes that the annual performance report provides a useful basis for building a picture of RAMSI performance over time. At the same time, the ANAO acknowledges the difficulties in identifying definitive measures of performance for long term capacity development missions. In this context, the ANAO notes the significant limitations of the baseline crime clearance rate data. As a result, while this data can be of some use in developing an overall understanding of progress for the mission, an undue focus on this data in isolation has the potential to deflect efforts away from broader long term capacity development initiatives. It is important for the PPF to ensure that the performance assessment framework and output measures,

<sup>25</sup> RAMSI 2005/2006 Annual Performance Report, p. 34.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, p. 34.

such as crime clearance rates, are one of a number of performance indicators that assist in developing an overall picture of progress, and that the data is as robust and comprehensive as possible. This, in addition to outcome data obtained from tools such as the People's Survey, should provide for the monitoring of capacity development improvements over time.

### 3. AFP Deployment to Solomon Islands

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*This chapter examines the AFP's planning and management of its deployment to RAMSI as part of the PPF. This includes initial planning and risk assessment, recruitment and pre-deployment training of personnel. This chapter also examines measures to support the health, safety and wellbeing of deployed personnel.*

#### Initial planning for the RAMSI deployment

3.1 The AFP had 70 days in which to plan the deployment, from the time that the then Solomon Islands Prime Minister requested Australia's assistance until the Australian Government agreed to the terms on which a deployment would be provided.

3.2 Planning for RAMSI involved a multi-agency effort and included a scoping mission in 2003 to assist in identifying the nature and extent of assistance sought, along with the logistics required to sustain such a deployment.

3.3 Initial planning relied on the adaptation of previous experience with the AFP's smaller, shorter deployments, and leveraged off some of the logistics planning by the military as part of the mission.

3.4 The initial deployment to Solomon Islands predated the creation of the IDG. The IDG was created in February 2004 to provide an administrative and policy platform for the planning and management of AFP overseas deployments. A benefit expected from the creation of the IDG was to concentrate and develop AFP expertise in the various aspects of overseas deployments, from the operational level to the administration of logistics planning and support.

#### Resourcing

3.5 The IDG prepares detailed monthly reports for the AFP executive. These reports monitor year-to-date actual against budgeted expenditure for the period, and provide full year budget and forecasts against employee, suppliers and fixed office expenses.

3.6 The reports provide detailed breakdowns for each IDG mission, and also report on capital expenditure by mission.

3.7 The ANAO notes these monthly reports provide the executive with regular summaries of the financial position of the IDG as a whole and of each mission. The format and presentation of the data provide the executive with a sound basis for considering appropriate action where expenditure significantly varies from budget.

## **Identifying and managing risks**

3.8 A better practice approach to risk management acknowledges that the identification and management of risk is integral to good management, and that it is an iterative process of continuous improvement that is best embedded into existing practices or business processes.<sup>27</sup>

3.9 The main components of the risk management process are:

- Communicate and consult;
- Establish the context;
- Identify risks;
- Analyse risks;
- Evaluate risks;
- Treat risks; and
- Monitor and review.

3.10 The AFP and the ADF identified a number of risks to the mission and staff in the lead-up to the first deployment in July 2003. These ranged from ad hoc and systematic undermining of the mission by Solomon Islands critics to the personal safety and welfare of individual AFP staff in mission. These risks were identified in the course of initial planning and were reflected in briefings to Government at the time. The AFP worked jointly with the ADF, as the ADF was integral as a high profile response to potential risks and threats to AFP personnel. The initial identification of risks and their treatments was an essential feature of the planning for the mission, was consistent with police operational planning, and represented sound practice.

3.11 The risks of non-delivery of essential services under the logistics contract are managed through provisions in the contract. Following the handover of responsibility for the logistics function from the ADF in July 2004,

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<sup>27</sup> Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand *Australian/New Zealand Standard — Risk Management*, AS/NZS 4360:2004, 2004.

the AFP's risk management included the development of business continuity plans across the range of functions covered by the logistics contract. Further risk mitigation is provided through the identification of alternative suppliers and the holding of additional essential supplies (for example, ration packs and bottled water) to be freighted to the mission if required.

3.12 Following the shift in mission focus from restoring and consolidating law and order to capacity building, the AFP developed a formal risk register for the mission late in November 2004. It is reviewed regularly in light of operational experience and intelligence gathered. The register includes 57 current risks to activities conducted by the mission or by PPF members and the resultant level of risk and consequences or impact to the mission should they occur.

3.13 In January 2006 the Commander of the PPF introduced a Risk Management Committee to advise the mission's Board of Management on current and emerging risks to PPF personnel and their operations and then to advise on appropriate treatments. The AFP advises that this committee is represented primarily by the Chief of Staff, Joint Intelligence Group Coordinator, and the GBR Security Officer. This group consults as necessary as information comes in from all PPF work areas and then briefs the Safety and Security Committee (comprised of members of the Board of Management).

3.14 The identified risks cover the key risks the AFP contingent is likely to face in the mission, and that the nature, environment and context of the mission presents a number of risks that are inherently difficult to mitigate or eliminate. Further, the development of business continuity plans and a formal risk register, along with arrangements for the regular consideration and review of risks and their treatments, provide the AFP with a sound structure and process for identifying and managing risks in and to the mission.

## Operational support

### Accommodating the PPF

3.15 At the time of the initial deployment, suitable accommodation infrastructure on the GBR site was minimal. As a result PPF and ADF contingents lived in tents and had access to very basic ablution facilities. Since then there has been a progressive development of the GBR facilities and site infrastructure, including the installation of a comprehensive perimeter security and monitoring system.

3.16 PPF members are housed in ADF-built temporary/relocatable accommodation consisting of clusters of shared bedrooms. Most PPF staff sleep two per room and share a common living space. Ablution blocks are separate, as are laundry facilities (which is a contracted service through the prime contractor). Meals for GBR residents are provided in a central mess, which is also operated under the logistics contract.

3.17 The AFP has plans to redevelop the GBR site to improve the standard of accommodation and upgrade facilities and utilities services. Timing of the redevelopment depends on a number of factors, including the management of accommodation and services during the upgrade and balancing the investment in the site with the uncertainty of mission duration, given the current political environment. The site upgrade is expected to cost \$9 million in 2006–07, with funding approved in 2006.

## **Provincial posts**

3.18 The PPF established 16 police posts outside Honiara, primarily in existing SIPF facilities, which are staffed by PPF or a combination of PPF and SIPF members. In some of the posts the PPF live at the police station; in others the PPF rents private accommodation as police residences.<sup>28</sup>

3.19 During the course of fieldwork the audit team visited the police stations at Auki and Malu'u on Malaita, Avu Avu on the Weathercoast of Guadalcanal and travelled to Munda and Noro (a SIPF only police station) in the New Georgia Islands. The most practical mode of travel to these areas from Honiara is by air (helicopter or fixed wing aircraft, depending on the destination and available runways). Roads are not well developed, which makes police patrols far more time consuming and difficult than in most parts of Australia. Similarly the remoteness of a number of these posts requires careful planning for any emergency evacuation of, or additional support to, PPF staff due to medical or operational reasons.

3.20 There are substantial logistical issues also involved in maintaining provisions, communications and operational support for these posts. For the most part, all supplies need to be flown in regularly (usually weekly). Maintenance of motor vehicles is potentially problematic. There are few service agents or repairers outside Honiara, and the nature of the roads system outside

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<sup>28</sup> The posts are located in: Tulagi (Central Province); Taro (Choiseul Province); Avu Avu, Isuna, Mbambanakira and Tetere (Guadalcanal); Buala (Isabel Province); Kira Kira (Makira Province); Ato'ifi, Auki and Malu'u (Malaita); Tingoa (Rennel/Bellona); Lata (Temotu Province); and Gizo, Munda, and Lofung (Western Province).



larger centres like Honiara and Auki results in considerable wear and tear of vehicles. Required service levels for logistical support to provincial posts are specified in the contract arrangements with the prime contractor.

3.21 The ADF provided most of the initial operational support. For example, the ADF built a number of provincial police stations in remote areas and provided accommodation on the site of the PPF's compound, the GBR. Until 2004 the ADF also provided hospital services to RAMSI personnel from the HMAS *Manoora*. As the military involvement wound down, logistical support was provided to RAMSI through existing ADF contract arrangements with the prime contractor. This was expanded to include the provision of medical facilities within the GBR compound.

3.22 The AFP received Government agreement and funding to take over the contract for services to RAMSI in 2004. The contract, which then cost \$42 million per annum, provided for 20 specified support functions. These functions include sea and air based logistics, catering, facilities and grounds maintenance, health management, freight forwarding and minor works.

3.23 Subsequent contract variations have involved a number of additional functions, including travel and accommodation, logistics management (Q store), transport (fleet) management, accounts payable, asset management and recreation and fitness services.

3.24 The ANAO notes that the accommodation arrangements are basic and functional, and require deployed personnel to experience living conditions that are very different from that typically experienced by AFP personnel in Australia.

## Staffing

3.25 AFP staffing requirements for police duties on international deployments include a minimum of two years' experience as an AFP sworn officer.

3.26 The AFP initially experienced difficulties in providing the PPF with a full complement of personnel.<sup>29</sup>

3.27 In July 2004 the AFP introduced a 'wave' model to stagger staff rotations into and out of the mission. Under this approach individuals can 'sign-up' for differing lengths of deployment (40, 60, 80 or 100 weeks), which

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<sup>29</sup> AFP Internal Audit Report RAMSI (PPF) Operations, November 2005.

has created far greater flexibility for potential deployees. At the time of fieldwork the ANAO found that there were a greater number of sworn officers seeking to be deployed to Solomon Islands than there were vacancies.

3.28 The wave model has been successful in offering flexibility to AFP personnel interested in serving in Solomon Islands, and has assisted the AFP in maintaining a supply of willing personnel to fulfil its obligations to RAMSI. In its most recent request for expressions of interest, over 800 positive responses were received.

3.29 The significant expansion of the IDG announced by the Government on 25 August 2005 should provide longer-term scope for the AFP to develop career paths for members across international deployments. As the AFP requires its members joining the IDG to have at least two years' policing experience before deployment, there may be a delay before the IDG can operate with a full complement of staff. An approach used by the AFP in providing the necessary numbers of deployees to Solomon Islands has been through recruiting from other jurisdictions (described below).

3.30 The AFP acknowledges it may face challenges in continuing to provide sufficient staff for the PPF over time, as an increasing number of AFP members interested in this type of work have now completed their contracted deployments to the IDG. Although the expansion of the IDG may provide a larger pool of potential deployees in the longer term, there will be a significant time lag while new recruits are suitably trained and gain experience for this type of work. The AFP is seeking to broaden the appeal of working in Solomon Islands for existing AFP members through a range of revisions to the living conditions of deployed staff.

3.31 The AFP indicated the planned redevelopment of the GBR (to improve accommodation and facilities for deployees), and to offer an increasing number of placements as accompanied (rather than as single/unaccompanied) postings are intended to broaden appeal for the RAMSI deployment.

## **Broadening the recruitment base**

3.32 In addition to normal AFP recruitment, the AFP recruits current and former police from other Australian jurisdictions to the AFP. Applicants for the program will generally be required to have completed two years' service and be free of probationary restrictions. For some positions, such as overseas service with the IDG, four years of service is required.

3.33 Such recruits currently undertake six weeks of residential or focused on-the-job training, with a further five weeks of mission-specific training for recruits to the IDG.

3.34 In March 2007, experienced police from other Australian jurisdictions accounted for 20 per cent of the AFP contingent to RAMSI and have provided a steady source of personnel over the life of RAMSI.

## Pre-deployment preparation

3.35 In preparation for the initial deployment, AFP members received a three-day briefing on RAMSI, which covered basic cultural, habitability and operational issues. This approach reflected the short time available for deploying to Solomon Islands once the Australian Government had formally agreed to the request for assistance from the then Prime Minister of Solomon Islands.

3.36 This approach was replaced in 2005 by a three phase process consisting of:

- International Pre-Deployment Training (IPDT);
- Mission Specific Briefing; and
- In-mission Induction.

## IPDT

3.37 Until recently, IPDT consisted of a 12-day generic-level training program which provided living skills, an introduction to the mission environment and general skills for all missions. The course required participants to reside at the AFP's Majura training complex in rural ACT and was designed to test participants' physical and mental resilience while providing training in practical skills across areas such as four-wheel driving, first aid and survival techniques.

3.38 In January 2007 IPDT was modified to become a seven week course covering administrative issues such as pay and conditions, financial management responsibilities, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S), as well as mission briefings, physical competency assessment, forensics, firearms, navigation theory, media awareness and personal hygiene. The final week of training is devoted to a 'field phase', where participants are based at the AFP's Majura training complex and learn a range of practical skills (for example, four-wheel driving), and experience a range of scenarios relevant to a remote

location and different culture (for example, dealing with a fatality in a remote location, negotiating purchases from a local market, and responding to an attack on police).

3.39 This component of pre-deployment training is compulsory for all PPF staff (including police from Pacific Islands Countries (PIC) and AFP administrative and support staff who are to be posted to RAMSI).

### **Mission Specific Briefing**

3.40 Until recently, the second phase of pre-deployment training consisted of a three-day mission specific briefing, which focused on issues relevant to RAMSI and Solomon Islands and included briefings from relevant areas (for example, Professional Standards). One full day was devoted to capacity building issues.

3.41 This second phase now consists of a half-day briefing on RAMSI, and immediately precedes the training class' deployment to mission.

### **In-mission Induction**

3.42 The third phase of pre-deployment training is a one and a half day induction that is provided immediately on a deployee's arrival in Solomon Islands, before being assigned to duties. This induction covers the following areas:

- expectations of behaviour while in mission, including a briefing on the disciplinary avenues for breaches of discipline;
- facilities and resources available in mission;
- health and safety information relevant to the mission, including a short, practical fire fighting training session on using the portable fire pump located within the GBR;
- location and procedures for using the firearm unloading bays at the GBR;
- current operating environment, including intelligence briefing on progress with particular investigations; and
- practical insights into policing and the work of RAMSI within Solomon Islands.

3.43 Throughout this induction, documentation is provided to inductees, who are encouraged to access and use information on the RAMSI and AFP intranet sites which are available on computers located within GBR.

3.44 The ANAO notes that the AFP has progressively refined the nature and content of pre-deployment training for prospective deployees. Over the period of the audit, whilst the nature and length of pre-deployment training has been modified and refined, the three distinct training phases have been maintained.

3.45 The AFP acknowledges that the nature and content of the training recognises that elements of 'police culture' need to be considered when developing appropriate training so that it has the necessary impact and outcome. In particular, a core requirement of effective community policing is for individual police to make numerous decisions every day about how to respond to situations and exercise discretion on what actions are appropriate under a range of circumstances.

3.46 This is an essential attribute when dealing with day-to-day situations that arise as part of general policing activities but can often mean that training needs to incorporate 'why' things should be done a particular way, rather than simply focusing on the 'what' and 'how' things should be done. Without a clear rationale or practical reason for taking a particular precautionary action, individual police may not perceive the need to follow the recommended approach. In recognition of these features of police culture, the practical elements of IDPT training seek to place participants in a range of unexpected scenarios so that practical lessons are learned throughout the training.

3.47 There are many situations where practical learning exposures are not possible. In such situations the AFP relies on PPF members being aware of, and adhering to, Commander's Orders. These Orders are tailored to the particular mission and in the case of Solomon Islands are referred to during the initial mission induction upon arrival. The induction emphasises the range and scope of disciplinary measures to be applied where breaches of Commander's Orders occur.

3.48 In addition, the AFP now specifically considers the competencies and criteria for selecting personnel for deployment, and its pre-screening processes provide greater assurance on the compatibility of personnel for the current capacity development phase. It also gives the Commander of the PPF greater formal involvement and input into the design of the IDPT, so that emerging skill needs can be more readily accommodated at the pre-deployment stage of the process.

3.49 These initiatives will better meet identified skill needs through front-end selection and training.

## Health and safety

3.50 The AFP National Guideline on Health and Safety states that AFP executive, managers, coordinators and team leaders have overall responsibility and accountability for providing a healthy and safe workplace, and that these responsibilities and accountabilities will form part of employment management plans and reviews.

3.51 During the course of the first deployment, health and safety issues were managed internally within mission. A risk register identified the more significant risks to health and safety facing AFP personnel.

3.52 Since then the AFP has made a number of refinements to the identification and treatment of health and safety risks.

## Healthcare facilities

3.53 In the early stages of the deployment the ADF provided medical facilities for all RAMSI staff. The facilities were provided on the HMAS *Manoora*, and consisted of Australian Level 3 Health Facilities.<sup>30</sup> With the progressive drawdown of the military presence as part of RAMSI, the AFP contracted with the prime contractor for the provision of medical and surgical services.

3.54 RAMSI's medical services have been provided under contract with the prime contractor, since 2004. The GBR Medical Centre is located within the GBR compound and its services comprise Primary Health Care, Emergency Resuscitation, Resuscitative Surgery, Critical Care, Medical Retrieval Services, In-patient Care with Diagnostic Imaging, Pathology, Paediatric and Dental Services.

3.55 The air services provided through the prime contractor include a 24 hour, seven day per week aero medical evacuation (AME) capability, with a capacity to be in the air within an hour of notification of a medical emergency. The AME helicopter has capacity for two stretchered and four seated patients, with adequate range to evacuate casualties from anywhere within Solomon

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<sup>30</sup> An Australian Level 3 Health Facility is staffed and equipped to provide resuscitation, initial surgery and post-operative treatment. Care at this level may be the initial step towards restoration of functional health as distinct from procedures that stabilise a condition or prolong life. (ADFP Health Support, p.1–1)

Islands. If the need arises, the AFP utilises a jet to evacuate casualties to Australia.

3.56 The AFP reported that 31 PPF members were injured during the April 2006 civil disturbances, all of which were from the AFP.<sup>31</sup> Of those injured, 27 were treated at the GBR Medical Centre and were able to remain fit for duty with RAMSI and four were repatriated for further medical treatment. The injuries received ranged from cuts and bruises to a fractured jaw and a dislocated shoulder, and were mostly the result of officers being struck by rocks thrown by a crowd.

### **Disease and infection control measures**

3.57 Under the terms of the logistical support contract, locally-engaged staff perform a range of disease and infection control measures at the GBR site. To reduce the risk and incidence of mosquito-borne disease (for example, malaria and dengue fever), a number of vector control measures are taken under the contract. For example, the GBR site is regularly treated by spraying areas where mosquitoes are likely to breed or congregate (under the relocatable buildings and around GBR perimeters). The AFP also ensures that anti-malarial medications are readily available to all GBR residents.<sup>32</sup>

3.58 Given the risk of mosquito-borne disease, the PPF Commander's orders initially specified that AFP staff were to wear long-sleeved shirts. Although clearly intended to minimise mosquito risks, this requirement was eased in 2005 because the humidity and usual daily ambient temperatures of 30–32°C made it difficult for many AFP members to comfortably comply with the orders. Instead, the AFP sought to manage the risks of mosquito-borne disease by promoting regular application of personal insect repellent.

3.59 Between June 2004 and December 2006 there were 18 recorded cases of mosquito-borne illness amongst RAMSI personnel, 15 cases of malaria (*Falciparum* and *Vivax*) and 3 cases of dengue fever. AFP personnel accounted for three of these cases. The ANAO notes that in the context of the number of AFP personnel deployed to RAMSI since July 2003, and Solomon Islands having one of the highest rates of malaria in the world, this figure suggests that

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<sup>31</sup> Australian Federal Police, *AFP News*, June 2006, p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> The term 'fogging' refers to the process of mosquito control by dispensing a mix of an oil based product (usually diesel or kerosene) with an insecticide using a fogging machine, which creates a fine smoky mist that kills mosquitoes on contact.

the AFP's strategies to manage the risk of mosquito-borne disease are operating effectively.

3.60 The AFP manages the risks of food-borne infection by requiring contractors to adhere to a number of service standards relating to general cleaning and food area hygiene. The service standards are specified in the AFP's logistical support contract. As at the date of preparation of this report, there have been no reported outbreaks of food poisoning or other food area related hygiene issues in mission.

## **Health statistics**

3.61 The AFP monitors usage of the GBR Medical Centre as part of the regular review of the services provided under the contract. Under the terms of the contract, the AFP can make spot checks across the range of performance indicators and can audit measured reporting by the contractor. The contract also requires such monitoring to be conducted by an independent health professional. To date, the AFP has been satisfied with the contractor's reporting under the contract, and has not sought to independently verify the data.

3.62 In terms of outpatient consultations, the most common conditions requiring treatment are dermatological (skin infections, Urticaria,<sup>33</sup> Erythema<sup>34</sup> and sunburn), averaging over three cases per day, and upper respiratory tract infections, averaging two cases per day. Routine medical examinations are the third highest contributor to the medical facility's attendance statistics. The monitoring and reporting of GBR Medical Centre usage provides the AFP with sufficient scope to assess the suitability of the level of care and services provided under the contract.

## **Diet and nutrition**

3.63 Catering at the GBR for deployed staff is provided under the logistical support contract. The contract's statement of works describes the range of meals, their availability and nutritional value, and is based on the variety, quality, quantity and nutritional value as required by the Australian Defence Force Ration Scale (ADFRS) specification.

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<sup>33</sup> Urticaria is the medical term to describe the allergic reaction more commonly referred to as 'hives'.

<sup>34</sup> Erythema is a redness of the skin caused by increased blood flow to the capillaries, and can be caused by increased photosensitivity (a known side-effect of the commonly used anti-malarial medication 'Doxycillin'), or be a reaction to medication or infection.



3.64 In 2006 the AFP commissioned a study by EatSmart.<sup>35</sup> The study was a response to observations that a number of deployees experienced weight gain during their periods of deployment. The study found that meals were of an adequate standard and were provided in accordance with contracted requirements. Portion control was highlighted as the major cause of weight gain. The report recommended that more low fat meal options be included and information be made available to staff on meal nutritional values.

3.65 The AFP has implemented these recommendations.

### **Firearms safety**

3.66 All PPF members issued with firearms are required to load and unload issued firearms in approved load/unload bays. Loading or unloading of firearms anywhere else in the GBR, including in accommodation areas, is forbidden. The PPF also provides firearm loading/unloading bays for each of the 16 provincial posts.

3.67 Consistent with normal AFP requirements, any discharge of a firearm, whether accidental or deliberate, must be reported to Professional Review and Standards (PRS). As at the date of preparation of this report, there have been two reports of accidental discharge of firearms incidents in Solomon Islands. The incidents occurred in November 2005 and January 2006, both occurred during the process of unloading official Glock firearms, and neither involved personal injury.

3.68 Since March 2006 the AFP has provided scope for members to maintain and renew their Use of Force qualification while on deployment.<sup>36</sup> Prior to that, members had to organise their renewal while on a recreational break in Australia.

3.69 From July 2003 until February 2006 unloaded firearms were required to be stored in personal lockable trunks in individual members' sleeping quarters. Since February 2006, when firearm safes were installed in the 24-hour manned GBR security centre, all firearms are required to be stored in these safes.

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<sup>35</sup> EatSmart is a food nutrition consultancy company.

<sup>36</sup> The Use of Force qualification requires sworn members to undergo an annual re-qualification process covering personal protection defensive strategies, including unarmed defence, and use of accoutrements (baton, Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray and firearms).

## **Unexploded ordnance (UXO)**

3.70 During World War II the Japanese occupied the larger of the Solomon Islands and there were numerous sea and land battles between Japanese and allied troops. A legacy of those battles remains today in the form of unexploded ordnance (UXO). During the monsoon season in particular (when heavy rains wash away topsoil) many locals discover UXO (mortar, artillery, anti-aircraft and small arms ammunition, as well as the occasional torpedo). It is not uncommon for police in provincial posts to be greeted at the police station counter by a local resident holding such UXO.

3.71 PPF employees have generally not been exposed to this kind of policing in their regular duties in their home country and it clearly has potential health and safety risks for the police concerned.

3.72 In recognition of these potential dangers to deployees, the AFP includes this topic in its induction briefings for incoming deployees. At the time of audit fieldwork suitably qualified and experienced AFP and military staff arranged to safely dispose of UXO. The AFP advises that the SIPF now has a fully qualified Explosive Ordnance Branch that carry out all destructions of UXO. PPF and military personnel no longer provide this service.

## **Asbestos in PPF workplaces**

3.73 During the course of the AFP deployments to RAMSI, concerns were raised that some PPF workplaces may contain asbestos. Issues first arose in response to repair and maintenance of PPF Outposts. Once identified, areas of concern were cordoned off until professional assessment could be undertaken.

3.74 An Asbestos Working Group (AWG) was formed in 2005 to advise the Commander of the PPF on asbestos hazards in PPF workplaces. The AWG meets quarterly. At its 29 July 2005 meeting the AWG agreed to implement short-term management measures for asbestos until a policy was developed and implemented. These short-term management measures included the instigation of an Awareness Program and accordingly, the non-disturbance of any questionable structures pending an investigation by an asbestos specialist.

3.75 A contracted provider (JTA International Environmental Health Services) inspected PPF workplaces between 19 July and 22 September 2005 and found asbestos in several PPF workplaces. This was mainly Chrysotile asbestos, part of cement sheeting used as external cladding and louvres in a number of provincial post buildings. The survey report rated the risks to the

health of PPF personnel as low to medium, depending on the location and condition of the sheeting.

3.76 Interim policy and procedures were considered by the AWG in October 2005. The interim asbestos management policy established procedures for implementing asbestos hazard identification and risk management measures and provides a framework for development of an asbestos management plan.

3.77 Subsequently, AFP National Guidelines on Asbestos have been fully developed and include procedures for offshore missions.

### **Other health and safety measures**

3.78 The AFP funds the operation and maintenance of a fitness gym at the GBR, through its logistical support contract arrangements. The gym has a range of weights and fitness equipment, including weight stations and free weights, and treadmills and exercise bikes. The AFP also provides staff access to a number of bicycles (and helmets) and recreation facilities at the GBR (a synthetic grass bowling green and tennis court, and a swimming pool). The AFP also has available various sporting equipment for use by deployed staff, including tennis racquets, golf clubs and footballs.

3.79 Each AFP deployee is provided with a tropical first aid and survival kit, which includes tropical-strength insect repellent and a range of medications to alleviate symptoms of medical conditions that often arise in the tropics.

### **Wellbeing of deployed staff**

3.80 The AFP provides chaplains and psychologists to the deployment in Solomon Islands and has engaged Family Liaison Officers to assist staff and their families with issues that can arise from the demands that prolonged deployments can have on family situations.

3.81 PPF Commander's Orders restrict certain off-duty movements of PPF staff. A long-standing curfew requires PPF members to be back in the GBR compound before 11.00pm, and all off-duty staff leaving the GBR compound must sign out and in upon their return. PPF staff are not permitted to travel in a private vehicle outside the GBR compound alone after dark. In addition, the PPF Commander has designated a number of establishments in central Honiara as off-limits for off-duty PPF staff.

3.82 These restrictions form part of the AFP's approach to risk management, by seeking to mitigate acknowledged risks in that particular environment. The PPF Commander regularly reviews measures, such as the curfew, through the Board of Management.

### **Disciplinary issues**

3.83 PPF staff are provided with an induction package of documents on arrival at the GBR as part of the formal induction process. The documentation supports the range of housekeeping issues covered and emphasises the AFP's expectations on deployee's behaviour and performance of duties. Deployees are briefed on, and expected to quickly become familiar with, the PPF Commander's Orders.

3.84 Disciplinary options for the AFP include informal or formal counselling, suspension from duty with pay or to be sent home to face disciplinary measures. To be sent home has an immediate and a potentially longer term consequence for members. The immediate consequence is the loss of tax-free income, which is only available while on deployment; the longer term impact can be that the disciplinary matter may adversely affect future career prospects. The ANAO notes that the PPF has an in-mission Professional Services Investigation team to investigate complaints about individual PPF staff. Complaints may be from other PPF officers, SIPF officers or the general public.

3.85 In 2004–05 there were 21 complaints against AFP personnel that were substantiated, and in 2005–06 there were 35 substantiated complaints. All substantiated cases were subject to disciplinary action. The AFP has in place a number of avenues for reporting alleged breaches of discipline and has rigorous processes to investigate such allegations. The ANAO considers the numbers of staff involved in disciplinary action, and the response by the AFP to investigating complaints, indicates the AFP is able to deal effectively with disciplinary issues as they arise.

### **Force protection measures**

3.86 Force protection measures at Solomon Islands include a sophisticated perimeter security system at the GBR site, personal protective equipment and policies and requirements on movement of PPF staff in and around Honiara. The AFP's Operational Response Group (ORG) and the ADF rifle platoon stationed at the GBR can assist in force protection.

3.87 Measures such as curfew and night-time restrictions are part of the AFP's approach to force protection. During the April 2006 civil disturbances, all recreational activities were stopped. This included exercising outside approved accommodation, house sitting and weekends away to resorts. There was also a total ban on the consumption of alcohol and kava during this period. As a result of the April 2006 civil disturbances the Commander of the PPF reviewed curfew arrangements for off-duty PPF members, which resulted in greater restrictions on social and recreational activities both within the confines of the GBR and in provincial posts.

### *Security at the GBR*

3.88 Security at the GBR site has been progressively refined during the course of the mission. Current security measures include perimeter fencing, night and day APS monitoring via patrols and a sophisticated closed-circuit television (CCTV) and sensor system, restricted site access through gates manned 24 hours per day seven days per week by locally-engaged staff under the logistical support contract. Access to the GBR site is restricted to those with AFP-issued PPF/RAMSI identification. The audit team observed that, at the time of fieldwork, locally-engaged staff members at the security checkpoint at the entrance gates were diligent in sighting identification of everyone in every vehicle.

3.89 As at the date of preparation of this report, there have been three reported incidents where unauthorised entry to the GBR appears to have occurred. Holes cut in the perimeter fence were discovered by security patrols in September 2004 and July 2005, and an unauthorised person was discovered and arrested within the GBR compound in January 2005. While there were no items reported missing following the September 2004 and January 2005 incidents, a number of items of personal property went missing from the PPF accommodation area in early July 2005, just prior to the discovery of the hole in the perimeter fence at that time.

3.90 Each incident was investigated at the time, and the AFP took action to improve security arrangements after each incident. Further, as at May 2007, there have been no reported incidents of unauthorised entry to GBR since the addition of the CCTV and sensor systems to perimeter security in October 2005.

### *Personal protection equipment*

3.91 In addition to the standard issue accoutrements for the AFP's sworn members in mission (baton, OC spray and Glock pistol), the mission maintains an inventory of more specialised personal protection equipment for use by operational personnel. For example, at the time of audit fieldwork, there were sufficient ballistic vests for each shift of operational personnel on duty at a point in time.

3.92 Prior to the civil unrest in Honiara in April 2006, specialised riot equipment holdings in mission were supplied and limited to personnel trained in Public Order Management. This specialised riot equipment (chest/leg/arm protectors, gas masks and shields) was issued to members of the AFP Protective Service. A total of 14 specialist riot kits were held in mission prior to the civil unrest.

3.93 The PPF currently holds in excess of 200 ballistic vests for use by operational officers in mission and this has steadily increased since the first RAMSI deployment in July 2003. There are also currently in excess of 200 helmets in mission, with 100 being delivered there since late 2006. The AFP has provided two types of helmets for use in mission – those specifically used for riot training and those that are ballistically rated.

3.94 Both during and after the civil unrest a total of 70 further kits (excluding chest protection) were sent by the AFP to the mission. Due to the operational environment in which the PPF conducts operations, ballistic vests are used as a standard piece of issued equipment when responding to instances of civil disorder and therefore the 'soft-shell' riot armour for the torso is not required.

3.95 After the April 2006 civil unrest, the PPF Executive decided that all operational personnel would undergo Public Order Management training to enhance PPF response capabilities in mission. This training has been provided since July 2006, and the two-day course now forms part of the induction process for all incoming operational personnel.

3.96 The climate of Solomon Islands (hot and humid) is not conducive to wearing full personal protection items such as ballistic vests and helmets, for prolonged periods unless absolutely necessary for operational reasons. As a result the PPF allows, on most occasions, individual personnel to make a personal choice on the level of personal protection equipment they wish to use for their operational duties. However, should operational necessity and intelligence dictate, the use of specific equipment can be mandated, and has been at times during the course of the mission.

## Conclusions

3.97 The ANAO concluded that the AFP has accorded a high priority to the health, safety and wellbeing of its RAMSI staff in mission. The AFP has identified a comprehensive range of risks to personnel, and has managed those risks effectively. The AFP has demonstrated a high level of commitment to its personnel in mission through its responsiveness to emerging equipment needs and safety issues and in the contracted provision of high quality medical and other services. Further, the AFP regularly reviews its in-mission arrangements as part of the overall management of the mission, and has developed a sound approach to responding to emerging needs.

## 4. Planning for RAMSI's Operations

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*This chapter examines the AFP's planning and implementation of the phased strategy to restore law and order and develop the capacity of the SIPP.*

4.1 Appropriate planning is an essential feature for the AFP, for any overseas deployment. Sound business practice should involve planning across a number of levels, from strategic to operational. This planning should be mindful of the mission's objectives and take into account relevant lessons from previous missions. Planning should also reflect a sound understanding of any issues that are specific to the planned deployment.

4.2 The overarching goal of RAMSI's work is for a peaceful, well-governed and prosperous Solomon Islands.

4.3 This goal will be pursued over the long term through a mutual commitment with the Solomon Islands Government, which supports RAMSI's mandate to:

- ensure the safety and security of Solomon Islands;
- repair and reform the machinery of government, improve government accountability and improve the delivery of services in urban and provincial areas;
- improve economic governance and strengthen the government's financial systems;
- help rebuild the economy and encourage sustainable broad-based growth; and
- build strong and peaceful communities.<sup>37</sup>

4.4 The Australian Government initially agreed to four phases for the AFP's role as the core of the PPF in the RAMSI deployment:

1. restore law and order;
2. consolidate law and order;
3. capacity building; and
4. withdrawal.

4.5 The four phases were broadened to 10 phases in June 2006 by expanding the capacity building phase to incorporate additional steps (or phases),

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<sup>37</sup> RAMSI website welcome page <[www.ramsi.org](http://www.ramsi.org)>.

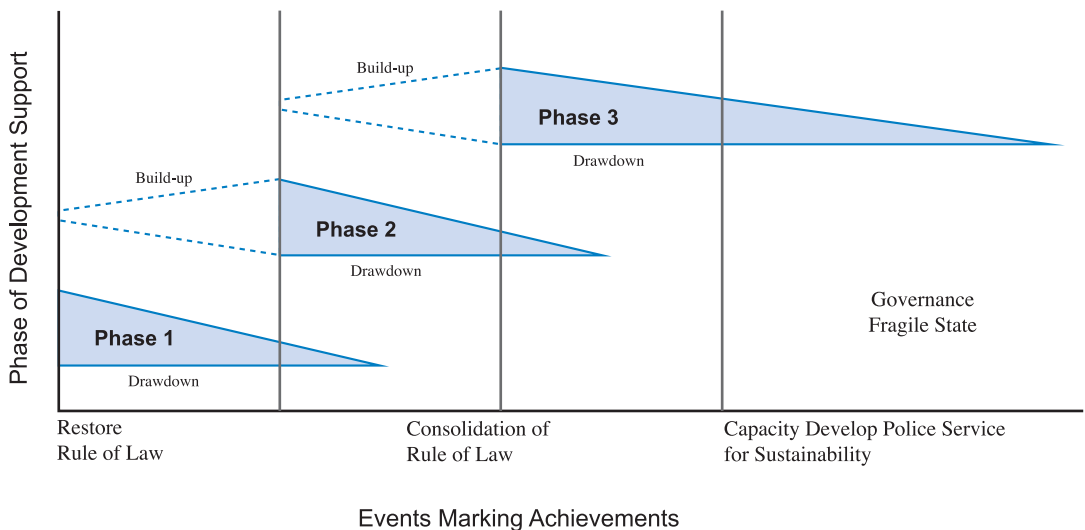


examined below. Phases 1 and 2 remain unchanged but expansion of Phase 3 into phases 3 to 9 has meant that Phase 9 is now Drawdown and Phase 10 is now Sustainment.

4.6 It was not intended that practical implementation of these phases would necessarily be sequential and discrete. Accordingly the nature of the AFP's role in each phase had to be carefully considered in the context of the objectives underpinning that phase. For example, skills and planning required to restore, and then consolidate, law and order are quite different from those associated with building the capacity of the SIPF to police effectively in Solomon Islands. At the same time, the opportunity for the SIPF to observe the PPF's approach to restoring law and order offered opportunities to build capacity within the SIPF.

**Figure 4.1**

### The Phases of the PPF Contribution to RAMSI



Source: AFP Annual Report 2005–06

## Restoring law and order

4.7 The first phase, restoring law and order, began immediately on the AFP's arrival on 24 July 2003 and operated officially until December 2003. A significant feature of the AFP's initial planning was to make an immediate and positive impact on the local community. In this context, the AFP had commenced its first police patrol of the central markets area of Honiara within one hour of RAMSI's arrival.

4.8 The AFP set the following objectives for the first phase, to be achieved within the first 100 days of the mission:

- initial deployment and force establishment;
- restoration of basic law, order and security;
- removal of illegally held weapons from the community; and
- disarmament and neutralisation of key militants.<sup>38</sup>

#### *The first 100 days*

4.9 The successes of RAMSI in restoring law and order have been well documented. The AFP reported that the initial deployment met with 'overwhelming support from the Solomon Islands community and made significant operational gains. More than 4000 arrests were made, including powerful militant leaders and corrupt police officers and more than 3700 weapons were collected during gun amnesties, 670 of which were military-style weapons.'<sup>39</sup>

4.10 This view is expressed consistently across a range of sources, and is encapsulated in the following:

RAMSI's (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands) first 100 days in Solomons has been nothing less than outstanding! Within a few short months, the 2000+ strong intervention force of Australian/New Zealand military personnel and police members from Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Island nations--Tonga, Fiji, PNG, Samoa and Vanuatu--have substantially reversed the country's slide to rooted lawlessness.

Through the RAMSI initiative almost 4000 high powered guns and other weapons have been confiscated and most encouraging, destroyed either by dumping them into deep ocean depths or burnt beyond recognition. Few if any have been stored away only to be looted once again as had been the case during the previous five years of Social Unrest. During this same period of time major high profile warlords--the most notorious, Harold Keke of Guadalcanal's Weather Coast and Jimmy Rasta of North Malaita--have been captured, locked up and are currently awaiting court appearances. All this without a single shot being fired.

As well, many of the country's strutting Rambos--25 Solomon Islands Police officers as well--have also been locked away, booked to await their day in

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<sup>38</sup> Described as historical context in the PPF document, *Royal Solomon Islands Police Capacity Development and Sustainment Strategic Project Plan*, April 2006, p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> Australian Federal Police, Jevtovic, P, *IDG — one year on*, Platypus Magazine – June 2005. p. 32.

court for their many serious crimes of theft, rape, intimidation and physical attacks.

RAMSI's fast work in gun collection and the peaceful capture and jailing of serious criminals has brought a welcome relief to the ordinary people of Solomon Islands. High powered gun firing at all hours of the night no longer rocks Honiara town. Ordinary citizens' relief at once more experiencing the basic joy of peace and the police's quick response to public misbehavior at markets, shops and simply walking town streets or going to village gardens has risen substantially.

On a more positive note, the intervention forces especially its police component have erected more than 16 police posts in the Solomons' rural areas to drive home the idea that peace, order and tranquillity are part of a healthy society's life-pattern and not simply that of Honiara and provincial capitols [sic]. Police posts with local personnel manning them accent the new outreach pattern for touching villagers' lives in a most practical way.

This new police work dimension differs in stark contrast to the recent past when armed guerillas were officially established as 'special constables' and incorporated into the police force. It was common knowledge that these same 'special constables' threatened the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance at the point of a gun to gain millions of dollars.<sup>40</sup>

## Consolidating law and order

4.11 Phase Two, consolidating law and order, officially operated from January 2004 until December 2004 and comprised the following elements:

- consolidation of the rule of law;
- institutional reform;
- building community trust and confidence; and
- creating the environment for economic reconstruction and commerce.

4.12 RAMSI's major achievements in this phase were the investigation and prosecution of a number of high profile individuals either arrested during the course of Phase One, or identified as suspects in a range of criminal activities.

## Capacity development and sustainability

4.13 Capacity development and sustainability officially began in January 2005 and is arguably the most challenging phase of the AFP's contribution to

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<sup>40</sup> Roughan, J, Solomon Islands Development Trust, State Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, Working Paper 2003/3, *RAMSI's first 100 Days*. p. 1.

RAMSI. Its success is critical to RAMSI's broader goals of long term stability and self-reliance for Solomon Islands.

4.14 A PPF strategic review of the SIPF in the first two phases of the mission was completed in 2005. It identified 18 areas of focus for Phase Three, which were used to guide development of future capacity development projects for the SIPF. They included annual business planning, human resources, major and minor police posts, intelligence, armed police, external agencies, fire service, maritime, general orders and instructions, in-service training, and police housing.

4.15 To drive progress in delivering sustainable capacity development for the SIPF, the PPF implemented three major projects: learning and development, SIP force structure review, and legislation and corporate governance. Project objectives are as follows.

*Learning and development project*

- Enhance the professional skills, knowledge and expertise of all ranks in the SIPF through effective on-the-job training and sustainable formal training and education;
- Establish an effective SIPF Police Academy able to deliver sustainable learning outcomes for the police service;
- Develop an effectively trained, professional, ethical and knowledgeable police force which has community support and respect; and
- Develop an accredited SIPF learning and development program.

*Force structure review project*

- Implement an effective, ethical, sustainable structure for the SIPF able to provide government directed law enforcement and security outcomes;
- Where possible shift corporate and logistical functions of the organisation to the private sector;
- Develop and implement a government endorsed Police Capability Plan; and
- Develop fire fighting and prevention services for Solomon Islands.

*Legislation and corporate governance project*

- Update legislation affecting the structure, management and operation of the SIPF;

- Develop a contemporary legislative and corporate governance framework that enables effective, efficient and ethical operation and management of the SIPF on a sustainable basis; and
- Implement a staff training and awareness program to make members of the SIPF aware of revised legislative provisions and governance frameworks.

4.16 As acknowledged in the PPF's strategic plan,<sup>41</sup> the change from 'doing', to 'coaching/mentoring', requires a large degree of planning to ensure any perceived constraints are mitigated early. Three projects were identified to achieve this shift:

- re-engineering of the PPF organisational structure;
- internal PPF up-skilling initiatives being developed through the creation of the Marketing and Development Team; and
- adoption of standardised project management methodology.

4.17 The ANAO considers that the initiatives described above represent an appropriate basis for progressing capacity development and sustainability, and provide a logical framework for implementing a range of practical measures in conjunction with the SIPF.

4.18 These initiatives, acknowledged by the PPF as key to the successful transition from consolidating law and order to capacity development for the SIPF, were identified in October 2004, in preparation for the official mission focus on capacity development commencing in January 2005. In this context however, the ANAO notes the team developing the internal up-skilling initiatives for the PPF was not formed until November 2005.

4.19 The expanded, phased structure for capacity building is as follows:

Phase:

1. consolidation of capacity enhancement
2. institutional (SIPF) capacity development
3. knowledge and skills gap identification
4. knowledge and skills gap filling
5. knowledge consolidation and sustainability
6. drawdown
7. sustainment and withdrawal.

<sup>41</sup> Participating Police Force, *Capacity Development and Sustainability Strategic Plan*, (internal working document).

4.20 Each of these phases has specific objectives. Each SIPP working group will progress through the identified phases. The PPF expects progress will be staggered across the SIPP and that the PPF Executive will be responsible for allocating adequate resources to particular SIPP work groups to ensure that milestones are achieved.

4.21 The PPF is presently implementing Phases 4 and 5 – consolidation of capacity enhancement and institutional (SIPP) capacity development.

4.22 The objectives of Phase 4 are to identify drawdown requirements, identify constraints to sustainable capacity development, develop and manage solutions to the identified constraints, identify relationship needs, and develop and manage relationships.

4.23 The objectives of Phase 5 relate to addressing institutional constraints to sustainable capacity development, and regional and international networks to support the SIPP in the longer term.

4.24 The ANAO notes the PPF's willingness to regularly review its approach to capacity development, and its efforts to modify and improve processes in light of experience. The planning process provides for modifications based on experience, reflecting improved understanding of the SIPP's context and priority needs for enhanced policing capacity, and for identifying key impediments to long-term positive change for the SIPP.

## **Managing capacity development**

4.25 Adequate planning for capacity development and sustainment is necessary for long-term reform and improvement in the SIPP. Capacity development should be underpinned by a sound understanding of the SIPP environment, with a sustainable structure and method of delivery of relevant initiatives. However, planning alone is not all that is required—it is the practical side of capacity development that ultimately delivers results.

4.26 The practical side of capacity development was implemented in some form from the very beginning of the phase. For most of the PPF personnel working alongside members of the SIPP, capacity development was open to individual judgement on the extent and nature of teaching and actual policing performed each day. In some areas the PPF remained as the personnel that were undertaking the police work, as the SIPP did not have personnel available for the task, or there were operational reasons for PPF personnel to retain responsibility for specific investigations and intelligence and professional review service functions.

4.27 The PPF defined, and began training PPF personnel in, capacity building and development after the commencement date of this phase. As a result, the initial implementation was relatively ad hoc and the level of understanding of objectives and strategies for capacity development was inconsistent and variable, and relied on the existing training skills of individual PPF personnel to achieve improvements in the SIPF's capacity.

### Figure 4.2 — Practical Issues with Capacity Development

#### Potential pitfalls in the capacity development of police

The new policing model is based, naturally enough, on officers' shared experience of policing in Australia, including an emphasis on the mantras of sound management and strategic planning. This appears to have had little success. Australian officers complain of the difficulty of engaging the RSIP in the reform process. The array of strategies designed to enthuse interest has yielded disappointing results: workshops are poorly attended and requests for written input rarely receive substantive responses. Interviews with PPF officers in Honiara indicate a lack of faith in the capabilities of RSIP officers and doubts about their capabilities in conducting basic tasks, never mind sophisticated assignments. Australian officers schooled in a world of systems, reviews and reports express frustration when RSIP officers do not operate in a similar system and cannot quickly become used to such styles.

Impatient with the pace of involvement and quality of RSIP work, Australian officers often take on the tasks themselves (they wrote the RSIP annual report for 2003 and 2004, for example). This fuels something akin to a dependency culture and does little to build up such capabilities within RSIP officers.

The reticence of the RSIP is also understandable: why work when someone more capable can do it? The IDG's approach underestimates the difference in operational cultures and the capacity of an organisation to absorb change. The RSIP has been expected to accommodate a bewildering array of new practices in an extremely short time: the rigour of the external factors has flooded an unprepared organisation with a deluge of unfamiliar approaches, methods and strategies, largely without RSIP engagement.

It raises fundamental questions about the soundness of the foundations being put into place. While a new broom may be crucial to reclaim public trust in the service, a combination of daily didactic instruction by 'outside' police officers and an exacting process of restructuring bring its own risks. The sheer scale of RAMSI and the well-intentioned desire on the part of the PPF to implant 'professional practice quickly could, paradoxically, serve to undermine the institutions it is trying to build up'.<sup>42</sup>

4.28 The scale and scope of the challenges faced in such capacity development should not be dismissed or underestimated. At the practical level, the policing role continues and requires ongoing skills in community interaction, dispute resolution, crime scene management and investigation, taking of statements and preparing briefs on matters under investigation, along with preparing briefs of evidence for prosecution.

4.29 At the same time, the SIPF did not have the range of equipment, technology and analytical tools for managing crime, crime statistics and intelligence that AFP members might see as normal or essential in effectively

<sup>42</sup> Peake, G and Studdard Brown, K, Policebuilding: The International Deployment Group in the Solomon Islands, *International Peacekeeping*, Vol.12, No.4, Winter 2005, p. 526

operating a quality police service. As a result there are inherent difficulties in implementing capacity development without a carefully considered strategy and framework for implementation.

4.30 During the restoration and consolidation of law and order phases, attending PPF personnel would often undertake investigation tasks such as obtaining witness statements, with or without attendance from members of the SIPP as observers. The shift to capacity development has meant that literally overnight these roles have been reversed, with the SIPP taking statements as the PPF looked on. It quickly became apparent to the PPF at the operational level that general levels of English literacy in the SIPP created some difficulties in conducting police business, particularly when the attending SIPP officer had limited written English skills. (According to PPF personnel, SIPP officers' education was generally limited to the equivalent of an Australian primary school.) As a result, PPF personnel would often continue to undertake the policing work, instead of performing the more 'passive' role of advisers or capacity builders.

4.31 There is a need to balance the timeframe involved in the practical side of capacity development as indicated above, with broader RAMSI and SIPP performance measures such as crime clearance rates, whilst building community confidence in the policing function within Solomon Islands. This highlights the importance of adequate, early planning for capacity development, including identifying the SIPP's skill deficits that need to be addressed in a systematic way. Since English is the official language of the SIPP, further practical education and training in written English may assist the SIPP in delivery of policing services.

4.32 The ANAO considers the AFP should assess the most appropriate personnel (that is, the contingent of capacity developers need not necessarily consist entirely of sworn members of the PPF) to provide such foundation skills for capacity development. Skill sets brought into the mission should relate directly to, and address the identified development needs of, the SIPP.



### Case Study 4.3 — Rebuilding the SIPF

#### Rebuilding the SIPF through capacity development

The PPF have worked closely with the SIPF in reopening the SIPF Training College at Rove, in Honiara. Prior to the arrival of RAMSI, the training college had become derelict, and had not run professional development or police training for [insert time period]. Since July 2003, the training college has trained 212 new recruits to the SIPF and a further 124 SIPF personnel who had not received training when joining the police, and has run 152 professional development and training courses for SIPF personnel.

To run these courses and programs, the PPF had to develop courses and training programs structured to meet the learning requirements and capabilities of the participants. Given the variable levels of literacy and educational attainment of recruits and existing members of the SIPF, there was little scope to utilise and apply the AFP's existing training resources for this task. The PPF has allocated nine personnel to the training college, who are involved in the development and delivery of these courses. Feedback from the SIPF and individual course participants has been very positive.

4.33 The ANAO notes that detailed and strategic planning for capacity building tended to occur well after this phase was commenced. It could be argued that the PPF was a victim of its own success in quickly restoring, and then consolidating, law and order, as the timeframes for planning the capacity building phase were shortened as a result. The importance of capacity building to the overall success of RAMSI is such that a closer focus on understanding the SIPF's capacity development needs and planning to meet those needs was warranted before the capacity building phase began.

4.34 Instead the PPF's skill set at the time was heavily geared to normal police concerns with maintaining law and order through hands-on policing. As a result it was difficult for some PPF personnel to suddenly stand back and advise, coach, train and mentor without sufficient training and understanding of these roles and the impact of this phase on the longer term success of RAMSI.

4.35 The AFP reviewed its pre-deployment training and selection processes between February and April 2006. The review identified areas of suggested improvement to these processes and it recommended changes to selection criteria and training regimes to select for and focus on applicants' key competencies relevant to capacity development, rather than the existing focus on practical skills such as first-aid training and four-wheel drive experience. The ANAO considers that initiatives such as this review provide a practical insight into the AFP's willingness to strive for continued improvement in performing its role in capacity development.

4.36 Whilst the ANAO notes the implementation of this initiative, it considers that the capacity development phase of the mission commenced without a clear, detailed strategy for implementation, including attention to issues such as the criteria for selecting deployed personnel and the nature and content of the training they received.

## Recommendation No.1

4.37 For any future capacity development missions the ANAO recommends that the AFP:

- (a) more closely focuses on early planning for that phase of the mission, ensuring that the development of strategic and operational plans takes appropriate account of local cultural issues, constraints and conditions;
- (b) places greater emphasis on recruiting personnel with the appropriate capabilities and skills relevant to the phase of the mission prior to their deployment; and
- (c) ensures stronger alignment of pre-deployment training to the emerging skill needs of the mission.

### **AFP response**

4.38 Agreed.

The IDG, through the IDG Future Strategy, has established two planning teams reporting to the Manager (Planning and Development). The IDG is in the process of finalising the appointment of personnel to the remaining vacant positions within these two teams.

The planning teams will conduct planning at the 'Operational' level defined as the level between the strategic and tactical planning where strategic intent is translated into program design and delivery.

Planning teams are also deployable, for short periods, to assist as a component of the headquarters element of new missions, this will assist in translation of 'Operational' level plans to distinct 'tactical' activities that, combined, will achieve specific identified outcomes.

Planning outputs will include plans for short duration law enforcement response, phased capacity development missions and contributions to United Nations missions. Plans will be constructed using 'effects based' component blocks of staff and resources.

Planning activities will, wherever possible, include a scoping mission to recipient country. These scoping missions will clarify a number of planning

valuables and include culture, constraints, limitations and conditions, required skill sets.

Planning outputs will focus on desired end-states and planning teams will be able to re-visit missions to re-define plans if phase changes are indicated.

IDG Planning teams, in concert with IDG Doctrine, are also in the process of generating Planning Doctrine that will ensure consistent application of planning methodology for future activities.

The IDG Future Strategy has allowed the IDG to accurately define the required skill sets and recruit permanent staff members to these roles. This process is ongoing until December 2008.

The IDG Pre-deployment Training Program was re-designed between the period October 2006 to January 2007. On 23 January 2007 the new Pre-deployment Training (PDT) was delivered. The PDT increased to 5 weeks duration. The significant amount of additional time focuses on capacity development, culture, coaching, human rights and a number of United Nations training requirements (such as power imbalance and gender issues).

## Withdrawal

4.39 Planning for the withdrawal phase should reflect the possible scenarios that could lead to the implementation of this phase. Monitoring progress towards this phase could be based on achievement of RAMSI's law and justice pillar objectives, including development of the SIPF to a level where it can police Solomon Islands effectively without any foreign assistance. However, the withdrawal phase could also be triggered by a request from the Solomon Islands Government to leave.

4.40 Section 23 of the Solomon Islands Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003 allows the Solomon Islands Parliament to review any international assistance on an annual basis and to pass a resolution to annul such a notice. Annulment of the notice in respect of RAMSI would require RAMSI to cease operating and withdraw within a very short period of time.

4.41 Planning for the capacity development phase of the mission is premised on an expectation that the PPF would build capacity in the SIPF over the long term. As such, the planning does not adequately manage the risk of a sudden cessation of RAMSI. The ANAO considers the AFP should plan for this possibility and structure the delivery of capacity development initiatives in a

way to provide the best prospects of improving SIPF's policing capability in the short and medium term.

## Recommendation No.2

4.42 In respect of the AFP's involvement in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, the ANAO recommends that the AFP ensures the capacity development phase is structured to provide the Solomon Islands Police Force with identifiable and measurable short and long term improvements in its personnel's skill sets.

4.43 In making this recommendation, the ANAO acknowledges that a key element of capacity development in policing is the development of appropriate values within the SIPF. While this is an area that can take time and does not readily provide scope for easily identifiable time-based milestones, a balanced focus on values and skills would provide a potentially valuable legacy of the mission.

### **AFP response**

4.44 Agreed.

The RAMSI PPF Strategic Project Plan highlights as its broad strategy, that phases three to nine (capacity development) are focused on knowledge and skills gap identification as well as consolidation and sustainability for SIPF personnel. In addition, it highlights institutional development and strengthening of the organisation itself. These highlights are replicated in work area project plans that utilise identifiable and measurable outcomes described in documents such as *SIPF Probationary Constable's Workbook* and the *SIPF Leadership Development Programme Level Two – Introductory Police Leadership Program* to improve personnel skill sets and to measure milestone achievement. Indicators outlined in the SIPF Annual Business Plan are also utilised to develop and strengthen the organisation.

These work area project plans form the cornerstone of a rigid capacity development framework that is underpinned by a gap analysis process that again reiterates outcomes contained in the *SIPF Probationary Constable's Workbook*, *SIPF Leadership Development Programme Level Two – Introductory Police Leadership Program* and *SIPF Business Plan*. A disciplined reporting regime supports this framework and, together with an evaluation/quality assurance service provided by RAMSI's Planning and Development Team, short and long term improvement are able to be monitored and reviewed.

Further, the IDG has engaged the University of Queensland (UQ) to research and develop a framework to measure the impact of IDG capacity building

missions and projects. The five-year undertaking will deliver a companion set of measures for those just completed by UQ to assess the impact of IDG peace stabilisation missions. The five-year timeframe includes a two-year operational assessment of the measures after they have been applied to targeted IDG capacity building missions.

## Conclusions

4.45 The AFP's planning and management of the initial deployment and implementation of the first two phases of the mission (restore and then consolidate law and order) were done well in difficult circumstances. The success of these phases could be in part attributed to the skills and professional conduct of those deployed and the alignment of the objectives of the mission with the core competencies and expertise of the AFP's deployed personnel.

4.46 The first two phases of the mission were closely aligned to core policing skills and competencies expected of the AFP and its sworn members. The ANAO acknowledges that capacity development on the scale and scope demanded by the commencement of Phase Three represented a significant shift away from the direct application of core policing skills for many of the AFP's deployed members.

4.47 The ANAO concluded that, at the time implementation began on the capacity development and sustainment phases however, the planning and preparation for those phases were not sufficiently advanced to enable PPF members to fully understand their redefined role as coaches and mentors, rather than as front-line police. The ANAO acknowledges that the nature of the AFP's role in capacity building represented a new area of activity for most deployed staff. In this context, however, that phase may have benefited from more forward planning in order to develop a common understanding of capacity development and provide PPF staff with sufficient training to assist them to acquire the skills and knowledge required to coach and mentor SIPF staff.

4.48 The ANAO considers the AFP needs to align more closely the skills of its deployed personnel with the skills required to undertake capacity building in the SIPF. At the same time the ANAO acknowledges the AFP needs to retain sufficient operational capacity in mission to be able to respond effectively to threats to the rule of law.

4.49 The AFP's (and PPF's) commitment to, and roles in, developing the SIPF's Training College have been a key strength in the contribution to longer-term capacity development and sustainment for the SIPF.

4.50 The RAMSI mission exists at the invitation of the Solomon Islands Government. Although the mission is expected to be long term, prevailing circumstances could see it cease at short notice. In this light, some planning for a short-notice withdrawal should be done as a contingency for a possible withdrawal of support for the mission and consequent cessation of the PPF.

4.51 This issue should also influence immediate and medium term capacity planning. For example, the AFP (as the key contributor to the PPF), should ensure that capacity development initiatives are structured to provide short and medium term gains. In doing so, the SIPF would receive some longer term benefits even if RAMSI was to cease prior to achieving all of its intended capacity development objectives.

## 5. AFP Deployment to Thailand

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*This chapter examines planning and management of the AFP's deployment of DVI assistance to Thailand after the Indian Ocean tsunamis.*

5.1 A series of tsunamis struck the coastlines of Indonesia, Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives on 26 December 2004, caused by a strong earthquake off Indonesia's Sumatran coast. There was considerable loss of life and destruction. It is estimated that over 275 000 people were killed and 1.69 million people were left homeless.<sup>43</sup>

5.2 The Thai Government accepted offers of international assistance on Phuket and Phi Phi islands and at Krabe, particularly in respect of DVI expertise, as these areas were badly affected and the victims were likely to include many foreign tourists. The AFP mobilised a small team within 48 hours of the tsunamis and began assisting with the logistics and processes required to attempt to identify the 5395 bodies recovered after this disaster, of which more than 2400 were expected to be foreign visitors, including an uncertain number of Australians.

5.3 The first steps included measures to preserve the bodies as much as possible to enable positive identification and also to manage the desire of relatives to take the bodies they believed they could identify. Given the nature of the disaster (with many victims the result of drowning or significant trauma), and the prevailing climatic conditions (over 30°C and high humidity), visual identification of bodies was potentially very difficult from the very early stages of the operation.

5.4 This initial crisis deployment enabled the AFP to scope the situation and to begin to coordinate with relevant Thai authorities and other overseas experts on the nature and scope of assistance required. In order to maximise its effectiveness, the international effort required a significant level of coordination and organisation. The AFP took a lead role and was instrumental in forming the TTVI organisation.

5.5 Australia's response to the Indian Ocean tsunami was the subject of an Australian parliamentary joint standing committee inquiry in 2006. A relevant extract from the evidence provided to the standing committee, which outlines

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<sup>43</sup> It has been reported that the last unidentified victims of the tsunamis in Thailand were buried on 8 December 2006. (The Sydney Morning Herald, *Last burials mark closure in Thailand two years after tsunami disaster*, 8 December 2006.

the unprecedented challenges and complexities of the AFP's role, is included at Appendix 3.

5.6 The AFP follows internationally agreed protocols with regard to DVI, which are reflected in Interpol's *Disaster Victims Identification Guide*.<sup>44</sup> The application of these protocols to the tsunami victims is briefly described in Figure 5.1.

### Figure 5.1 — Identifying victims from the tsunami

The AFP recognises that the anxiety of people who fear that family members and friends are victims of a major incident is understandable and tries to do everything possible to alleviate this anguish.

Because of the circumstances of the tragedy itself and the devastating effect of its impact, it is crucial that the international protocols for identifying victims are followed. This ensures absolute certainty in each identification when it is made. The protocols are developed and maintained by Interpol (the world's largest international policing organisation) and agreed to by all its member countries, including Australia. The purpose of the protocols is to establish the best practices to be followed in investigations undertaken when lives have been lost. The process is called Disaster Victim Identification, better known as DVI.

Responsibility for DVI normally rests with police. It is a difficult and demanding exercise which can only be successful if properly carried out by trained officers. The ultimate aim is to establish the identity of every victim by comparing and matching accurate information available before death (ante-mortem) with post-mortem data.

In a disaster situation, visual identification of a body cannot be accepted as the only form of identification - the results of such an unscientific approach could later prove to be inaccurate. This may lead to serious distress for family and friends and may also cause legal difficulties in the victims' home countries. It is vital to ensure identification through using a combination of criteria and not rely solely on visual recognition.

Relatives are likely to be involved in the phase where information about the suspected victim is collected - referred to as the ante-mortem phase. This includes gathering and recording a detailed description, medical and dental records, and DNA samples.

The specialised DVI teams (comprising pathologists, odontologists, radiologists, forensic experts and police teams) examine the human remains found. Personal effects and clothing are photographed and collected. Information such as gender, approximate height and weight, distinguishing marks (tattoos/scars), dentition, clothing, jewellery worn and personal effects are also gathered. DNA samples and fingerprints are also collected.<sup>45</sup>

'Data from post mortem examinations (PM data) was processed and in some cases sent to laboratories for further forensic testing. PM data includes DNA, fingerprints, dental records, medical details such as previous surgical procedures, broken bones and tattoos. Each body was assigned a unique identification number and all data was entered into PlassData, a computer identification program.

Trained investigators worldwide collected data from families, friends and communities of each victim. This ante mortem (AM) collection process met significant challenges as entire families, and some communities, were killed. Identification required a comparison of AM data with PM data.

The scale of the disaster was such that it would be impossible for any one country to deal with it alone. Nearly 2000 personnel from 31 countries contributed to the TTVI operation. This has required the co-operation of the Thai government, Royal Thai Police, Interpol, foreign governments and the individual agencies and organizations which contributed the resources required to continue the process.

By the end of 2005 the work of the TTVI IMC had led to the identification of nearly 3000 victims out of a total of 3750 recorded in the DVI system.'<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Interpol, Disaster Victim Identification Guide, available from <http://www.interpol.int/Public/DisasterVictim/guide/default.asp>, [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>45</sup> Australian Federal Police, available from [http://www.afp.gov.au/international/operations/previous\\_operations/tsunami\\_2004.html](http://www.afp.gov.au/international/operations/previous_operations/tsunami_2004.html), [accessed 20 June 2007].

<sup>46</sup> Interpol, available from [http://www.interpol.int/public/asiadisaster/background/TTVI\\_FAQ.asp](http://www.interpol.int/public/asiadisaster/background/TTVI_FAQ.asp), [accessed 20 June 2007].



## Initial planning and assistance

5.7 As this deployment was a direct response to a major crisis arising from a natural disaster, there was little opportunity for detailed initial planning. Instead, lessons and arrangements from previous experience in crisis response situations were drawn upon.

5.8 The AFP adopted its normal operating procedures by setting up a major incident room within Forensic Services and marshalled resources for an initial scoping mission to establish a forward command post at Phuket. The AFP worked closely with other agencies in developing an integrated Australian Government response to the tsunamis. Representatives from these agencies met at least daily from the day of the tsunamis to identify ways of assisting Australians caught up in the disaster and to scope assistance for any international effort. These meetings were chaired by the DFAT. Staff from the AFP, DFAT and other agencies in Canberra worked with inter-agency Emergency Response Teams deployed to the affected areas and Australian regional missions to develop a short-term crisis response.

5.9 There was some scope to leverage off the experiences of developing a crisis response to the Bali bombings, including setting in place arrangements for the repatriation of Australian casualties. The Australian Government drew on an existing standing contract for repatriations signed by the Department of Defence and a contractor. This is discussed in Chapter 6.

5.10 In the AFP's initial response 21 personnel travelled to Phuket within 48 hours of the tsunamis, with a further 16 personnel arriving within the next 48 hours. As indicated earlier, the AFP did not expect to provide a major leadership role in the DVI process. It soon became apparent that leadership of the international assistance was needed and the AFP agreed to assist the Thai Government in this way. At that time, it was unclear whether Australian casualties would be in the tens, hundreds or thousands.

5.11 Back in Australia, DFAT with assistance from the AFP was developing mechanisms for collecting the names and details of Australians believed to be in the affected area at the time. DFAT led the Inter-Departmental Emergency Task Force (IDETF), which sought to bring together expertise from Australian Government agencies to assist in responding to tsunami devastation in the region and to assist Australians caught up in the devastation.

5.12 At the same time, the AFP set up and operated a Forensic Major Incident Room (FMIR), which acted as a command centre for the DVI

component of the operation. The FMIR was staffed by 26 personnel on rosters to provide for 24 hour per day operation in the early stages of the operation, tapering to one staff by October 2005.

5.13 The broad mechanisms for assisting the international effort were that the Forward Command Post (FCP) in Phuket would contact the FMIR in Canberra to request personnel with particular skills as requested by the TTVI. The FMIR would liaise with other police services to identify appropriate staff and arrange for them to deploy to Phuket. The FMIR was also responsible for organising other AFP expertise to assist the mission. For example, the AFP called upon its corporate management functions to provide relevant expertise in financial management to set up financial expenditure and monitoring systems for the FCP. AFP IT systems personnel set up and maintained the FCP's connectivity with the AFP's intranet and systems.

5.14 The AFP has in place an agreement with the Australasian Committee of DVI Coordinators (which represent Australian and New Zealand police jurisdictions) for the provision of personnel should the need arise. This document formed the basis for the AFP's approach to individual jurisdictions for personnel to support the mission.

5.15 A total of 310 Australian personnel deployed to assist the DVI process in Thailand from 28 December 2004 to 28 February 2006. Up to 33 personnel were deployed at any given point in time. These figures include Australian police at the AFP's FCP and police and forensic experts deployed to assist the TTVI in various roles.

5.16 The AFP identified the need to clarify the role, scope and cost of services provided by the contractor during the first two weeks after the disaster and, with assistance from DFAT, sought to control the extent of those services and associated costs. Management of the contract is discussed in Chapter 6.

## **Ongoing planning and management**

5.17 DVI is a time and resource intensive process, involving collection and recording of data from a post mortem examination of each victim, collection of information and ante mortem data for missing persons, and a process of seeking to match post mortem and ante mortem data. The sheer scale of the disaster and the volume of casualties and missing persons meant that the process would take a long time.

5.18 Specialist DVI expertise was required for a prolonged period of time. This necessitated the ongoing cooperation of the law enforcement agencies of the Commonwealth, States and Territories. The AFP relied heavily on State and Northern Territory police forces' goodwill and their willingness to assist. The AFP had to balance the clear and singular TTVI objective, which was to identify the victims of the Thai tsunamis and release the identified deceased for repatriation to their families, in accordance with Thai law, Interpol DVI Guidelines and TTVI protocols,<sup>47</sup> with the broader objectives of the cooperating jurisdictions.

5.19 Throughout the course of TTVI, 90 per cent of personnel provided by State and NT police forces were available only for single, short-term placements rather than longer or repeated rotations. Possible reasons for this were to contribute to the mission without compromising the ability of the local law enforcement agency to deliver its core business outcomes, maximise training and development opportunities for individuals, and to manage the risks of individuals experiencing short or long term difficulties arising from exposure to the impact of such a major disaster.

5.20 The AFP advised that deployments for DVI personnel were coordinated through the Forensic Major Incident Room. Police DVI specialists were identified by AFP and State Police DVI Commanders as representatives of the Australasian DVI Committee. Australian Forensic Pathologists had nominated a single contact point for the AFP to nominate forensic pathologists available for deployment. Forensic dentists operated under a similar arrangement through a single contact point representing both private and public sector practitioners.

5.21 As the mission progressed the numbers of different specialists deployed varied to match the operational environment and the nature of the work required. For example, when the post mortem phase was complete, the need for forensic dentists to staff the mortuaries was reduced. The layout of the mortuary facilities and the various roles of specialist personnel are described at Appendix 4.

5.22 Throughout the course of the deployments the AFP maintained records of the personnel deployed, their roles in Thailand and their dates of deployment.

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<sup>47</sup> Thailand Tsunami Victim Identification organisation, TTVI Mission Statement, taken from *TTVI Business Plan*, May 2005.

5.23 The AFP drew on the networks and experience gained from DVI work arising from the Bali bombings, in order to quickly identify and deploy relevant expertise to tsunami affected sites in Thailand. The ANAO considers that informal working contacts and relationships were an integral feature in the rapid mobilisation of personnel.

5.24 It is important for training, familiarisation and efficiency in the costs of deployment that there be a reasonable degree of continuity for deployed personnel. The AFP ensured there was a high level of continuity of AFP personnel deployed to the TTVI position of Joint Chief of Staff, with only three senior AFP personnel rotating through this position during the course of the 13 month mission. However, the ANAO notes the selection of AFP personnel for other roles during the course of the mission did not generally place a strong emphasis on previous experience with the mission. Thus only 20 per cent of AFP personnel participated in more than one rotation during the mission. Whilst quite low, this compared favourably to only 10 per cent of State and Territory police who had multiple rotations. The highest number of multiple rotations came from non-police specialists such as forensic dentists, pathologists, biologists and mortuary staff, where 29 of the 91 Australians deployed multiple times during the course of the mission.

5.25 Australia's DVI community is relatively small, and the AFP faced an unprecedented challenge in providing and then sustaining expertise to assist the international effort over the period of the mission. At the time of fieldwork, a number of international personnel working in the TTVI's Information Management Centre (DVIIMC) expressed the view that the Australian personnel were very well regarded and were of a consistently high standard. At the same time, these international personnel expressed the view that the short term placements and rotations of Australians, combined with the low rate of return of individuals on subsequent rotations meant some efficiencies to the international effort were lost. This was because new personnel generally took a few days to settle into their roles and build relationships with their new colleagues, only to return to Australia after a 2–3 week deployment, without subsequent participation in the international effort.

5.26 The AFP sought to balance the needs of the international effort, and the efficiencies arising from deployment continuity, with the needs and interests of individuals seeking deployment opportunities and the operational requirements of these individuals' employers (participating Australian jurisdictions, mortuaries, universities, dental practices, etc). In doing so, some

potential efficiencies to be gained from increasing the numbers of individuals participating in multiples rotations were not able to be maximised.

5.27 From a different perspective, as a result of the number of personnel assisting with the international effort through the life of the mission, Australia now has a potentially larger pool of experienced personnel in the event of a future large scale disaster victims identification situation.

5.28 In terms of learnings from the experience of assisting in such an unprecedented, large scale human tragedy, the ANAO considers that there is merit in combining the benefits of obtaining assistance through informal networks amongst jurisdictions and professional bodies with the further development of a formal agreements with jurisdictions and professional associations over the use of Australia's DVI expertise and resources. The expertise and assistance provided beyond the initial crisis response may have benefited from a greater reliance on more formal parameters within existing agreements with various contributing jurisdictions, to effect a greater use of expertise on multiple rotations. The ANAO considers that there would be merit in the AFP consulting with state and Northern Territory jurisdictions to seek agreement to a target for appropriate personnel to be made available for multiple rotations. Such a target (for example 40 per cent of deployees) would enable the jurisdictions to balance continuity at the mission with opportunities to develop expertise in an international context.

5.29 The ANAO notes that in March 2007 the AFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, and considers this initiative to be an example of the intent underpinning the following recommendation.

### **Recommendation No.3**

5.30 The ANAO recommends that the AFP includes agreed parameters for secondments of personnel in formal agreements with State and Territory jurisdictions, and professional associations within the Disaster Victims Identification community, in readiness for any future crisis response situations.

#### ***AFP response***

5.31 Agreed.

The Australian DVI Committee (community) uses several formal and informal arrangements to supplement resource deficiencies in the event of a 'declared DVI incident'. A declared DVI incident – means an incident where there are

multiple fatalities, beyond the capacity of the lead DVI agency, requiring inter- or multi-jurisdictional assistance. These arrangements include:

- PANS MOU – Memorandum of Understanding that exists between the signatories of the Police Assistance in Neighbouring States/Territories in Australia (PANS);
- Australian DVI Activation and Response Plan;
- National CT Plan/Handbook and State Plans;
- COMDISPLAN/Emergency management Australia – Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan;
- National Emergency Management Committee; and
- Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC) arrangements.

The nature and extent of the incident will determine which combination of arrangements is implemented.

Further to the above, the DVI Committee is currently formalising arrangements with private organisations i.e. odontologists regarding deployment arrangements (including terms and conditions) for these organisations.

The DVI Committee will review these arrangements regularly.

## **Health and safety of deployed staff**

5.32 Deployment of personnel to the tsunami-affected region of Phuket posed health and safety challenges and issues for the AFP. Some arose from the nature of the work required. Others related to the environment at the location of the deployment.

5.33 Many deployed personnel worked long hours in a difficult and very stressful environment. For example, personnel working on mortuary lines extracted post mortem data from up to 60 tsunami victims a day from bodies in poor condition due to the nature of death, tropical climate and lack of immediate access to mortuary and refrigeration services. The physical and psychological stress upon these personnel was enormous.

5.34 The initial deployment was a rapid response to an unprecedented crisis driven by a large-scale natural disaster. As a result, there was insufficient time to ensure that personnel were up to date with vaccinations and to have commenced the recommended course of anti-malarial medications. This situation only affected the first deployment, as subsequent deployments were

planned with sufficient lead time to ensure that these environmental health risks were able to be managed appropriately.

5.35 For rapid response purposes, the AFP now maintains a list of appropriately trained personnel with current vaccinations relevant for a range of possible overseas locations and who have skill sets necessary to contribute at short notice to a range of crisis situations.

## Risk management

5.36 The AFP faced a number of risks when assisting the international effort in Phuket after the tsunamis. Risks to individuals included exposure to tropical illnesses such as malaria, food-related illnesses and psychological pressures arising from the difficult and emotionally draining work being undertaken. Risks to the effective conduct of the mission included reliance on other Australian police jurisdictions to nominate suitable personnel to assist the AFP with the deployment, dependence on a range of international personnel to perform specified roles effectively, pressure from the families of victims to make quick identifications, the availability of appropriate and sufficient logistics support and equipment, and the sheer volume of data and data entries to assist in identifications.

5.37 The AFP identified these risks in the course of the deployment, and sought to manage or mitigate these risks where possible.

5.38 The AFP was able to manage the risks of personnel experiencing physical, psychological or emotional stress arising from the mission by arranging Australia's contribution to the TTVI process on short term deployments (usually of 2–3 weeks duration). While the AFP indicated this was a relevant factor in initially determining the length of deployments, the basis for the approach was not well documented and did not appear to be formally reviewed in light of changes to the operational environment. As a result, the ANAO is not able to form a view on whether the deployment policy used was an efficient use of resources. In the context of the audit, the AFP has indicated this represents a lesson learned for future missions.

5.39 The ANAO notes the AFP ensured that chaplain and psychologist services were available to staff while deployed in Thailand. The AFP's Wellbeing Services Unit was responsible for any follow-up for AFP personnel, and individual state and NT police forces were responsible for post-deployment welfare and wellbeing of their deployed staff.

5.40 During the course of fieldwork, the ANAO became aware of a further risk, to both the individual and the mission, relating to the potential for Australian personnel to be a driver in a serious motor vehicle accident.

5.41 Fatal road accident rates are three times higher in Thailand than in Australia, and the driving conditions, mix of traffic (bicycles, motor bikes and scooters, trucks, buses and cars) and behaviour of drivers and riders are often quite different from those experienced on Australian roads.<sup>48</sup>

5.42 This different driving environment, combined with the nuances of the different legal system, posed potentially significant risks to deployed staff opting to drive in Thailand, both in terms of the individual and the deployment more generally. In such a situation, the unavailability of deployed expertise could have reduced the effectiveness of Australia's effort.

5.43 The AFP recognised this potential risk in January 2005 by engaging local drivers on contract to provide transport services to the AFP. The ANAO considers this was sound risk management but notes it could have been enhanced by issuing a directive that deployed personnel were to use these services and to drive only in exceptional circumstances while in mission. Instead, the AFP issued general guidance to deployed staff recommending that they not drive while in mission. Most deployed staff prudently used AFP funded transport and drivers but some personnel chose to drive despite the risks.

5.44 The AFP's deployment to Thailand after the tsunamis was to provide humanitarian assistance. Police expertise was critical in DVI work but the Australian police involved were not authorised by the Thai Government to exercise any police powers. As civilians in Thailand, they had no immunity from prosecution under local law for issues arising while providing any assistance. This was a relatively novel feature of the DVI deployment to Thailand, as personnel deployed to previous overseas forensic deployments (for example, Bali in 2001 and 2002) were contributing to criminal investigations as part of a joint local police and AFP operation, and were exercising their sworn powers in the conduct of their duties.

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<sup>48</sup> In 2003 Thailand reported 14 446 road fatalities (excluding those removed from the accident scene who later died from their injuries) from a population of 65 million. For purposes of comparison, Australia's road toll in 2005 was 1636, from a population of 20.5 million. Further information on Thai road fatality data is available from <<http://www.grsroadsafety.org/?pageid=28&projectid=31>>, [accessed 20 June 2007].



5.45 As a result, the ANAO considers there is scope for the AFP to consider the broader range of risks associated with overseas deployments, especially if staff are acting in a civilian capacity and, taking account of issues and circumstances that may impact on deployments to particular countries, to develop appropriate strategies for managing and mitigating identified risks.

## Recommendation No.4

5.46 The ANAO recommends the AFP reviews:

- (a) its arrangements with neighbouring countries to ensure that the risks facing AFP personnel providing in-country policing or humanitarian assistance are identified and adequately managed; and
- (b) the basis and rationale for the approach to deploying staff on future crisis response missions to ensure that business planning and decision-making processes are more clearly evidenced.

### **AFP response**

5.47 Agreed.

IDG Planning, as an element of scoping activities, examines the legal and threat risk factors that deployment to the recipient country will generate. A comprehensive threat and security risk assessment are created as part of the planning process and issues such as immunity from host nation jurisdiction and other legal requirements are also identified and addressed.

The AFP Forensic and Technical portfolio has recognised the need to forward deploy an assessment and initial response team to evaluate in-country assistance and response requirements for more accurate capability and mission planning. This process is routinely reviewed and assessed to ensure continual improvement and procedures have been implemented to formalise the process.

The IDG Planning Team are currently assisting in the development of doctrine that will holistically address the planning process and define comprehensive outputs to be produced at each step of the planning/decision making cycle. Doctrine will incorporate strategies to capture lessons learned for the evolution of planning outputs in the future. Sound evidence based decisions will be captured at each step of the planning process by executive sign-off at various times throughout the planning cycle.

AFP Forensic and Technical and the Australian Disaster Victim Identification Committee (ADVIC) are independently assessing deployment periods based on the nature of the incident and the operational phase of the incident. The

outcomes of this assessment are largely dependent on expertise requirements and specific issues relating to the operation. The responsible AFP portfolio for the operation will form an integral component in developing an in-country risk assessment together with the forward deployed assessment team. The risk assessment will factor the nature and duration of the operation.

ADVIC is independently assessing DVI responses taking into consideration the type and magnitude of DVI response required. The duration of deployment, phases of the operation and operational continuity considerations as outlined in the ANAO report, are under consideration by ADVIC. It is recognised that issues and decisions relating to deployment, although considered during the operation, were not clearly documented.

## Conclusions

5.48 The nature of the tsunamis crisis required a rapid deployment response. The ANAO concluded that the AFP's efforts in this regard were appropriately targeted, as was the leadership role of key personnel in assisting Thai authorities in coordinating a major international effort under very difficult circumstances. The AFP accorded a high priority to the safety and wellbeing of personnel while on deployment.

5.49 The ANAO acknowledges that there was a trade-off between the efficiencies that could be generated by providing personnel for longer term deployments (particularly where the nature of the work involved relationship building rather than the narrow exercise of technical expertise), and managing the risks of adverse effects on the wellbeing of personnel deployed for potentially longer periods under such difficult and demanding circumstances.

## 6. Contracts for Logistical Support to Overseas Deployments

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*This chapter examines the contract arrangements for logistics support for the two audit case studies – Solomon Islands and Thailand. This chapter also identifies a number of practical issues to consider when contracting for a crisis-response situation.*

### Background

6.1 Deployment on an overseas mission often involves risks and uncertainties for the AFP and its members. The AFP's capacity to successfully meet deployment objectives and manage the range of risks faced is underpinned by an appropriate level of logistical support.

6.2 As the AFP does not have an in-house capacity to provide logistical support for overseas deployments, it relies on contract arrangements with third parties to deliver the logistical support required for missions.

6.3 In most circumstances, it is better practice to have a written contract. A written contract is generally accepted as the appropriate means of managing procurement risk particularly to specify requirements such as price, performance, duration, termination, confidentiality, risk management and intellectual property.<sup>49</sup>

6.4 Over time, service requirements and/or the business environment evolve and contractual deliverables change. It follows that the contract itself should continue to accurately reflect any varied or additional requirements. Procedures that establish and keep contracts up to date will help to ensure that documents relating to a contract are consistent and that all parties hold a common view. This will, in turn, allow the provider to operate with greater certainty and assist the entity to effectively manage the contract and the risks.

6.5 ANAO reports have previously highlighted situations where there were no formal contracts for the supply of property and services.<sup>50</sup> This work has also identified examples where entities have managed variations to contracts

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<sup>49</sup> Australian National Audit Office and Department of Finance and Administration, *Developing and Managing Contracts Better Practice Guide*, February 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Australian National Audit Office Audit Report No.57 2004–05, *Purchasing Procedures and Practices*, June 2005, Audit Report No.34 2005–06 *Advance Passenger Processing*, March 2006.

through correspondence, including letters and e-mails, between the parties.<sup>51</sup> The absence of formal contract variation documentation increases the risk of disputation over the scope of what the parties intended to be delivered and the terms on which it is to be delivered. A lack of rigour in managing and documenting variations also increases the risk that required approvals, in particular FMA [*Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*] Regulations 9 to 13, will be overlooked.<sup>52</sup>

## **Purchasing - risk management**

6.6 The ANAO audit *Purchasing Procedures and Practices* identified the main purchasing risks to be addressed by an entity as:

- unavailability of supplies at the time of need;
- supplies not meeting user requirements;
- over-reliance on key suppliers;
- supplies not representing value for money;
- incurring costs above budget estimates; and
- fraudulent activity.<sup>53</sup>

6.7 The AFP faces further risks with its logistical support contract arrangements in that generally:

- the lengths of missions at the time of commencement (and consequent need for logistical support) are uncertain; and
- a fundamental objective of AFP overseas missions is to ensure the safety and security of its deployed personnel at all times.

6.8 These risks can create challenges in balancing the need for contractors to recoup high fixed cost elements of logistical support services over the minimum contracted period, with obtaining value for money outcomes for the AFP over the life of a contract.

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<sup>51</sup> Australian National Audit Office Audit Report No.34 2005–06 *Advance Passenger Processing*, March 2006 p. 86, Audit Report No.8 2006–07 *Airservices Australia's Upper Airspace Management Contracts With the Solomon Islands Government*, October 2006. p. 21.

<sup>52</sup> Australian National Audit Office, Audit Report No.57 2004–05, *Purchasing Procedures and Practices*, June 2005, p. 25.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p. 25.

6.9 This chapter provides an overview of the logistical contract arrangements for each of the case studies and an assessment of common issues against the main purchasing risks identified in paragraph 6.6.

## Solomon Islands

### Background to the logistical contract arrangements

6.10 In October 2003 the Department of Defence entered into a two-year contract for *Provision of Logistic Support Services to the Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands*. The AFP took over control of the contract from Defence on 24 July 2004. In November 2005 the AFP renegotiated aspects of the contract and extended it to 30 June 2008. The original contract included scope for 16 six-month extensions, taking the total potential contract period to 2013.

6.11 The current contract specifies the services to be provided by the contractor to support RAMSI. This involves substantial support for the PPF's main facility at GBR, near Honiara. These services are garrison support;<sup>54</sup> cargo consolidation in Australia and Solomon Islands; air and sea freight between Australia and Solomon Islands; sea and fixed wing/rotary wing air passenger cargo transport in Solomon Islands; vehicle maintenance including roadside assistance and towing; vehicle and container hire; security services for GBR and other sites as required; a bus service for personnel based in the environs of Honiara; a kerbside refuelling point operator; a commercial 'Tier 2' watercraft; medical and dental services;<sup>55</sup> cargo distribution and material handling in Solomon Islands; and infrastructure development and upgrade works.

6.12 The contract also specifies a number of services that are essential because their non-performance would seriously undermine Commonwealth assistance to Solomon Islands. These are catering services; aviation services; sea-based logistical support; freight consolidation and forwarding; cargo distribution and material handling; provision of rations and bottled water; waste management; and medical retrieval. Special contract provisions apply in the event of non-performance of essential services.

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<sup>54</sup> Garrison support services include office equipment; foodstuffs and bottled water; catering; grounds maintenance; plumbing and electrical maintenance; waste collection and disposal; hazardous material storage, removal and disposal; and cleaning and laundry.

<sup>55</sup> Medical and dental services include aero-medical evacuation to Australia; primary health care; provision and administration of pharmaceuticals; and preventative health; potable water testing and swimming pool cleaning.

6.13 The contract sets out the expected level of performance and the basis for payments.

6.14 Under the terms of the contract, the contractor is required to obtain two written quotes for items valued between AUD \$100 and \$5 000, and three written quotes for items above AUD \$5 000 in value. The clear intention of this requirement is to provide the AFP's contract management with evidence that the required good or service represents value for money.

6.15 However, the contract does not contain a specific requirement for the contractor to have regard for value for money when obtaining quotes for additional services. The contract allows for additional contract items to be charged to the AFP at cost and for the contractor to receive a percentage margin of the cost of that additional work. In the absence of further controls this arrangement could leave the contractor with an incentive to maximise revenue through its percentage margin by obtaining a number of quotes and furnishing the more expensive quotes to the AFP for consideration and approval.

6.16 As a result of taking on these areas of contract management responsibility, the AFP has resourced the IDG to develop a core of expertise in contract management and procurement. The AFP manages the contract from Canberra but maintains a small contract management team (CMT) outposted to the GBR in Solomon Islands. This arrangement is intended to provide the AFP with a general understanding of the local market for contracted services, and some assurance that additional contracted procurements represent value for money.

6.17 The ANAO notes that the CMT maintained direct oversight of the procurement process undertaken by the contractor to provide for RAMSI's vehicle fleet repair and maintenance services (estimated to cost \$850 000 per annum), to ensure it was conducted in accordance with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines.

## **Contracting over uncertain timeframes**

6.18 As indicated earlier, there are a number of practical considerations when contracting in an environment where requirements may change rapidly and the timeframe for the life of the contract is uncertain at the outset due to a number of extraneous variables (such as political decisions to extend or withdraw from a deployment). A sound contract should be of mutual benefit to each party and seek to adequately apportion the management of a variety of

risks to the contracted party better able to manage and mitigate these risks. Contract arrangements should also provide clarity of responsibilities, expected levels of service and timeframes for that service, and provide appropriate incentives for satisfactory performance of contract deliverables. Incentives can be tailored to meet the context of the contract, and may involve bonuses, penalties, rebates and volume discounts.

6.19 The AFP's deployment to RAMSI is of uncertain length. The Australian Government has indicated a clear commitment to RAMSI and acknowledges that capacity building takes time, but the AFP and RAMSI remain in Solomon Islands at the invitation of the Solomon Islands Government. As a result, the level of infrastructure investment in RAMSI needs to be weighed against this uncertainty. This factor is particularly relevant for logistical services that involve expensive items, where the capacity to amortise the high fixed cost of providing them may be limited.

6.20 For example, the cost of purchasing, delivering and installing a large power generator to a remote area involves a significant upfront cost. A value for money decision to lease from the contractor or purchase outright and engage the contractor to service and maintain the generator would require consideration of a number of issues. These include a life cycle costing of the generator, the minimum timeframe that the generator is required and the uncertainties of the length of the mission. The monthly cost of leasing a generator would be expected to be higher over a six month contract than a contract that extended over the effective useful life of the generator.

6.21 In such a case, the AFP would need to determine whether better value for money is obtained by leasing the generator from a contractor over the period of the mission, or whether the AFP should contract for the purchase of the generator outright. Other options might include contracting for a particular rate for the first six months, and a lower rate for periods after that time, recognising that significant upfront costs would have been recouped in the first six months. These decisions are generally best informed by consultation with potential providers ahead of determining the most suitable acquisition strategy.

6.22 In the context of the existing contracted services for logistical support, the ANAO is mindful that the AFP inherited a set of arrangements and decisions from the ADF. The ANAO notes the AFP maintains a Register of Change Proposals to manage the progression of contract amendments through the approval process. Change proposals are considered by the AFP at regular

meetings, and appropriate action on each proposal is determined, taking into account discussions with stakeholders, investigation of available options in-country, and budgetary issues.

6.23 In an effort to encourage identification of opportunities to improve value for money under the contract, the contract includes a clause relating to the Value Management Incentive Program (VMIP). This program provides scope for the contractor or the Commonwealth to identify savings under the existing contract, through proposing methods for performing the contract more economically. Under the contract, such savings would be shared between the Commonwealth and the contractor.

6.24 The ANAO notes the VMIP clause was used to reduce sea freight containers from 20 to 10 per month for RAMSI. This reflected the mission's actual on-going requirement and resulted in a cost reduction of \$320 000 per annum, effective from February 2005.

### **Aviation logistical support for the RAMSI**

6.25 The contracted service with the highest cost is the provision of fixed and rotary wing aviation logistical support, at a current cost of some \$1.9 million per month. This includes the provision of three helicopters, (including one with full AME capability), and a fixed wing aircraft, flight crews, ground support and maintenance.

6.26 Provision of appropriate aviation logistical support is essential to the effective operation of PPF and RAMSI, and the market for these aviation resources is predominantly supply driven, with limited availability of suitable air frames for the terms and requirements of RAMSI.

6.27 The AFP has market tested this service to provide assurance that value for money is being achieved.

6.28 The ANAO notes the extension of the logistical support contract to June 2008 resulted in savings in the cost of aviation support of some \$395 000 per annum, totalling more than \$1 million over the life of the contract extension.

### **Health Services for RAMSI personnel**

6.29 The GBR Medical Centre costs the AFP \$1.2 million per month, and provides surgical and medical facilities within the GBR compound. The level, scope and volume of health and medical services are regularly monitored and reviewed under the contract.



6.30 The provision of health services was subject to a competitive tendering process in 2003. The facilities comprise four buildings that house:

- reception;
- a primary health care service;
- a dental service
- a 10 bed ward (including two isolation rooms);
- a pharmacy;
- a pathology service;
- two resuscitation bays;
- an ambulance; and
- an AME capability.

6.31 The GBR Medical facility also includes a mobile medical facility which contains an operating theatre, sterilisation equipment, radiology and a two-bed intensive care/recover unit.

6.32 This provides the GBR Medical Centre with the capacity to:

- treat minor and routine complaints and ailments;
- allow initial diagnosis;
- provide routine dental services (for example, fillings and extractions); and
- provide emergency treatment with a view to stabilisation prior to repatriation.

## **Vehicle fleet management in Solomon Islands**

6.33 The AFP procured vehicles for its use in Solomon Islands through its Australian-based vehicle procurement arrangements with Toyota. The vehicles ordered were to the same specifications as for domestic use, with some additional accessories fitted (for example winches) to better suit the mission environment. The ANAO notes the Toyota dealership in Honiara advised the AFP that Australian vehicles would not be suitable for Solomon Islands as the quality of diesel was different from that available in Australia, due to the higher sulphur content in the fuel.

6.34 The AFP investigated this and concluded the Australian-purchased vehicles would be suitable provided they had more frequent servicing and that fuel and oil filters were replaced more frequently (that is, every 5 000 kilometres rather than 10 000 kilometres). The AFP advised other factors influencing this decision were the very poor condition of Solomon Islands roads, the climate and the vehicles' exposure to coastal conditions which all combined to significantly reduce the expected useful life of the vehicles. These revised vehicle standards and specifications were the result of lessons learned from previous experience, following informal consultation with the AFP Fleet Manager, vehicle drivers and maintenance staff. The ANAO considers the basis for the AFP's stated decisions on vehicle procurement to be reasonable, but that the procurement of the 190 vehicles for RAMSI warranted a more thorough approach to documenting the factors taken into account when making these decisions.

6.35 Under the terms of the initial contract, the AFP managed the vehicle fleet, with the contractor managing vehicle repair and maintenance services.

6.36 There are significant difficulties in repairing and maintaining the vehicles at provincial outposts. Repairs are undertaken:

- by a local mechanic (if available) once the parts are either shipped or flown to the outpost, if they are available in Honiara;
- by a mechanic sent from one the two local service suppliers (if available); or
- the vehicle is replaced by sea as soon as is practicable from the AFP's pool of vehicles located in Honiara.

6.37 The AFP advised that the contractor has employed a mechanic to travel to the outpost to undertake repairs (usually travelling by RAMSI helicopter on the weekly supply trip), but the time available to repair the vehicles is limited to the time the helicopter can be on the ground.

6.38 From 30 January 2006 the AFP contracted out management of all AFP-owned vehicles, including AFP vehicles allocated to PPF personnel, vehicle and key security, cleaning and refuelling, and management of maintenance and repair requirements. This expanded service adds \$384 000 per annum to contract charges but generates estimated net savings to the AFP of \$871 000 per annum.

6.39 The ANAO notes that while the AFP has monitored service records of each vehicle over the course of the mission, notifications of vehicle

breakdowns and requests for repairs have not been systematically monitored. As a result the AFP has not been able to determine whether the contractor is meeting its performance requirements under the contract. The ANAO considers that the AFP should monitor breakdowns and repairs to assist in assessing the contractor's performance.

## **Contract notification**

6.40 During the course of fieldwork, the ANAO examined documentation relating to the approval of amendments to the AFP's contract for RAMSI's logistical support. Government policy requires agencies to publish in AusTender certain details of contracts and contract amendments over \$10 000, within six weeks of entering into the contract. The AFP amendment of the contract for logistics support for RAMSI, with a total a value of \$9.6 million (\$3.6 million per annum for 2 years 8 months), was signed in November 2005 but not notified in AusTender until 18 December 2006.

## **Thailand**

### **Background to the logistical contract arrangements**

6.41 In the early stages of the deployment to Thailand the level of logistical support and the extent of the repatriation services required were uncertain. In the days immediately after the tsunamis, DFAT received reports of 15 000 Australians missing in the region, and the international effort had to deal with over 5 000 deceased of unknown nationality, let alone identity.

6.42 The AFP sought to leverage its lessons learned and networks of forensic and DVI expertise from the Bali bombings of 2001. Arrangements fostered through the Australasian DVI Coordination Committee and through agreements with State and Territory police services provided the basis for identifying appropriate staff with the necessary expertise for the deployment.

6.43 Logistical and administrative support for the AFP's deployment to Thailand was provided initially by the AFP's Forensic Services staff. As the magnitude of the crisis and the level of assistance required by Thai authorities became clearer, the AFP continued to provide administrative support (for example, travel arrangements, coordination of DVI related expertise from around Australia). Logistical assistance was then provided through a Department of Defence 'standing offer' contract for repatriation services. Commonwealth administration of the contract was handled by consular services staff of DFAT.

## **The contract used for logistical support**

6.44 Signed on 22 April 2003, Defence's contract for repatriation services required the contractor, in the event of a disaster or military casualties, to provide emergency services, as specified in a Work Authorisation Agreement.

6.45 The Australian Government's decision to use this contract as the framework for logistical support in Thailand reflected the expected need for mortuary assistance and repatriation services, and the absence of any other standing arrangements for logistical support services. DFAT and the contractor signed a Work Authorisation Agreement on 16 January 2005, which set out required services, while being broad enough to provide flexibility in responding to an uncertain situation. A second Work Authorisation Agreement, signed on 22 March 2005, further refined the scope of work to be performed.

6.46 The initial range of services requested for the period from 26 December 2004 to 2 January 2005 included incident management; search for and recovery of remains; and providing and sustaining up to three mobile disaster morgue operations. Subsequent additional requirements included providing hardware and software to the Disaster Victim Identification Information Management Centre (DVIIMC), personnel to coordinate the collection and transfer of records from the morgue sites to the DVIIMC and meal support to the DVIIMC.

6.47 The contractor quickly mobilised to the affected region. Within days it had arranged for the provision of three portable mortuaries and related services. Contractor support peaked in the period January to April 2005.

6.48 Activating the contract to enable the rapid deployment of assistance was necessary to support the international effort during the crisis period immediately following the tsunami.

6.49 While the contract was the only available 'off-the-shelf' standing contract under the circumstances, the use of a short term contract over an extended period locked the Australian Government into various daily rate payment arrangements premised on a short term deployment. As a result, the Australian Government was, subsequent to the initial crisis period, unable to obtain lower, longer term contract rates, particularly as the exact length of the assistance was uncertain and a change in provider would have created a significant disruption to the international DVI effort.

6.50 Some areas of contracted logistical support (for example, the provision of meals and beverages to the DVIIMC) were terminated after the initial crisis phase, as cost-effective local suppliers were identified.

6.51 The AFP and DFAT faced a further difficulty in relation to identifying a single decision-making point for determining the mix of resources applied to the contracted services. The international effort was applied across three mortuary sites, at least one hour's drive apart, and a central data management centre. Thus, managing the contract had to balance the need for specific approvals under the contract with providing services and practical assistance to the DVI effort on a daily basis, which often involved requests for supplies and equipment from deployed staff at the various sites. Combined with insufficiently detailed or specific contract documentation (for example, the contract did not specify the make-up of a mortuary team in any detail), the scope for significant misunderstandings and disagreements was relatively high.

6.52 There was a large volume of correspondence and documentation regarding many issues associated with the scope and nature of the contractor's assistance to the international effort and the growing cost of the assistance over time. It is clear from this correspondence that while DFAT and AFP staff sought to control and contain costs, the lack of clarity and detail in the contract arrangements created confusion and difficulties for the duration of the logistical support of the international DVI effort.<sup>56</sup>

6.53 During the course of the audit the ANAO examined a sample of invoices, and identified a number of instances where errors appear to have occurred. DFAT has advised that it has engaged an external auditor to review all of the invoices as a precursor to formally approaching the contractor over possible overpayments.

6.54 The ANAO considers that a further and related issue with the contract was that there was no requirement, or incentive, for the contractor to seek to obtain value for money for the Australian Government in the procurement or provision of services. Under the terms of the contract, the Australian Government would pay the contractor the costs incurred in obtaining services. The absence of such a requirement created difficulties, particularly in the more

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<sup>56</sup> Over the course of 2005, the Australian Government sought and obtained \$6.2 million in contributions towards the costs of logistical support from a number of nations participating in the international DVI effort. These contributions reduced the net cost to the Australian Government, which had underwritten the costs of the logistical support contract.

stable, ongoing situation. For example, the procurement of transport by the contractor for its own personnel while in Thailand highlights this difficulty.

6.55 The AFP and DFAT were able to obtain local vehicles with drivers for their personnel's use at a rate significantly below the rates the contractor had obtained. Despite correspondence from the Australian Government to the contractor advising of local providers offering more cost-effective rates and good quality services, the contractor's staff continued to use their preferred provider for their transport needs and invoiced the Australian Government, under the terms of the contract, for the (significantly higher) costs incurred.

6.56 In this context, the ANAO acknowledges that at the time of an initial crisis and emergency response, the assessment of value for money would be weighted more heavily on a provider's capacity to deliver services or an outcome within a very short timeframe, rather than being the result of a considered procurement process where timeliness, quality of service and cost are all appropriately assessed. However, the transport issues noted above did not occur during the period of initial emergency response, but were raised as the nature and scope of the ongoing logistical support function was bedding down.

## **Future Preparedness**

6.57 The standing contract provides a skeletal framework of a possible range of services able to be provided and includes schedules of daily rates for levels of personnel and equipment. The Work Authorisation Agreement is the key document within the standing contract that defines the scope of work to be performed for any given situation, once the extent of required support is determined.

6.58 The ANAO considers the Australian Government would benefit from developing a panel of providers able to offer identified capabilities across a range of specialist emergency support and logistical support functions. Standing contracts could assist to provide a sound basis for distinguishing the general conditions in obtaining crisis support as distinct from medium to longer term ongoing assistance, in the event of a future emergency.

6.59 Emergency Management Australia received additional funding of \$2.4 million over four years in the 2006–07 Budget for the Mass Fatality Project. This project aims to build upon existing arrangements to develop a scalable, deployable mortuary to supplement the national capacity to manage mass fatalities. The ANAO considers that the advisory groups supporting this

project (which have representation from a number of agencies including the AFP and DFAT), would be well-placed to progress development of logistical support arrangements for the provision of services in a mass casualty incident, as part of a whole-of-government approach.<sup>57</sup> In doing so, the ANAO suggests that lessons to be learned from the logistical support contract arrangements in Thailand should be taken into account.

## Recommendation No.5

6.60 The ANAO recommends that the AFP should, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to:

- (a) take appropriate account of lessons learned from the deployment to Thailand; and
- (b) develop a panel of providers able to offer identified capabilities for the provision of a range of crisis response and longer term disaster management services and logistical support.

### **AFP response**

6.61 Agreed.

The AFP continues to work within a whole of government framework with other agencies, in particular DFAT.

During a recent disaster involving deceased Australian citizens, several meetings with numerous government agencies were held. This consultative approach, including the contractual arrangement with a non-government organisation resulted in a crisis response that was effective and efficient.

Preparedness for a larger scale long term disaster management response is being conducted and will require embedding into routine policies, procedures and guidelines. This would include contractual arrangements with non-government organisations.

The IDG has established a panel of providers for the provision of International Deployment Logistic Services. There are five members on the panel who were selected as the result of a two-stage tendering process. They have been engaged under a standing offer for an initial period of three years. The concept for operations is that each provider will be invited to provide a response for services under a predefined quotation process. Each quotation is assessed

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<sup>57</sup> DFAT is the lead agency for international emergencies affecting Australians, chairing the Australian Government's Interdepartmental Emergency Task Force, and assisting Australians experiencing difficulties overseas through its Consular Services and Consular Operations branches.

according to agreed selection criteria with the successful bidder being engaged for the scope of works under an official order.

This solution provides the AFP and potentially whole of government partners depending on the crisis, with a flexible, yet effective solution for the provision of international deployment logistic services. The concept of operation was developed a result of lessons learnt from IDG deployments to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), Timor Leste and Papua New Guinea.

The panel of providers established by the IDG could be utilised by other government agencies leading a crisis response. The AFP will enter into consultations with DFAT and other organisations such as Emergency Management Australia to consider the utility of the IDG panel in the context of this recommendation.

### ***DFAT response***

6.62 Agreed.

## **Logistical issues common to both deployments**

6.63 Common to both deployments' logistical support contract arrangements, was the uncertain timeframe for logistical support. In such circumstances it is reasonable for contractors and suppliers to price their services such that they recoup their high fixed costs for specialised support over a relatively short timeframe. Such an approach enables the contractor to manage the business and financial risks of committing significant resources to a contract that could be quickly and unexpectedly terminated due to a range of factors, including political decisions to withdraw from the deployment, or the host country terminating the arrangements underpinning the deployment.

6.64 In the case of logistical support for RAMSI, the prime contractor has a number of contract arrangements with third parties to deliver services to RAMSI, including the provision of air support and medical services, for which the set-up costs are re-couped over the short term. There are clearly high fixed costs associated with the provision of these services (for example, the acquisition and deployment of airframes and experienced personnel), for which the contractor needs to be recompensed. Under current arrangements, the contractor's monthly charge for a service imputes an amount enabling it to amortise the fixed costs over the life of the contract. The ANAO notes that when the contract was extended, (enabling the contractor to amortise its fixed costs over a longer period of time), the monthly charges were reduced by less than two per cent. While the AFP did not consider this to be a significant discount, its view was that the contract extension with the prime contractor



enabled it to secure the airframes for the new contract period. The AFP advises that the airframes, in particular the Super Puma AME helicopter, have limited global supply and high demand. As a result, the contract extension generated a modest price reduction but provided longer term certainty of services for the mission.

6.65 Under current arrangements, logistical support functions are market tested through a competitive tender process for a range of services over a fixed period. Under the terms of the contract, a number of six monthly contract extensions may be offered. This approach does not provide an incentive for a tenderer to offer a price for services over an initial period (for example six months) and revised rates over an extended period. As a result, extensions to the initial contract period are more likely to reflect short term pricing structures, rather than offering discounts over time.

6.66 The ANAO provides the following comments against the purchasing risks identified in ANAO Audit Report No.57 2004–05 *Purchasing Procedures and Practices*.

### **Unavailability of supplies at the time of need**

6.67 The AFP has built sufficient additional capacity/redundancy into key deliverables under the RAMSI logistical support contract to adequately manage the risk of unavailability of supplies at a time of need.

6.68 Examples include the weekly supply runs to provincial posts that ensure these posts are regularly topped up with food, water and fuel, etc. There is sufficient storage for food and fuel at these posts so that a failure to renew supplies weekly would not have an immediate, adverse affect on provisioning for staff at those posts.

6.69 Orders for procurement items are prioritised as urgent, high, medium or low, to help ensure that requests for urgent and high priority items are acted upon appropriately. In addition, the contract arrangements provide for supplies to be freighted by air and sea, which enable large, bulky, low priority items to be freighted in a cost-effective manner, while providing for the delivery of urgent and high priority items by air to meet the AFP's operational needs.

6.70 The RAMSI contract includes provisions for unsatisfactory performance which enable the AFP to deduct up to five per cent of the fixed monthly fee until service is satisfactory. While the ANAO considers this penalty represents a relatively low threshold and may not provide an imperative for the

contractor to quickly respond to an issue, the AFP has advised that issues arising under the contract have been resolved satisfactorily to date without invoking these provisions.

### **Supplies not meeting user requirements**

6.71 The AFP seeks to manage this risk with respect to the RAMSI logistical support contract by requiring the contractor to procure goods and services only with the written approval of the two out-posted AFP contract management staff (the CMT). The AFP also seeks to engage relevant expertise in the development of specifications for its equipment purchases, along with input from equipment users.

6.72 The AFP devotes full-time resources to the contract management and procurement process, and negotiates contract amendments in order to secure supplies which meet emerging AFP user requirements.

### **Over-reliance on key suppliers**

6.73 The nature of a mission such as RAMSI has the potential to create supplier dependencies, as a single logistics supplier is likely to develop a dominant 'footprint' on the mission during the delivery of its contracted services. Given the potential upfront investment in infrastructure and systems for logistical support, an incumbent provider may have a market advantage over potential competitors for the delivery of logistical support services.

6.74 However, the AFP has expanded the scope of logistical support services over the life of the RAMSI mission, and the contract has not been subject to a full market testing exercise during that time. During that time, the contract has increased in value from \$42 million in 2004 to \$60 million in 2006, without a competitive process to provide ongoing assurance of value for money. In November 2005 the contract was extended to June 2008.

6.75 On 3 January 2007 the AFP implemented a 'Panel of Providers' for services including health, project management, facility leasing, facility support, catering and potable water, transport, freight, purchasing and hire, equipment maintenance, security, management, induction and personnel support under a Deed of Standing Offer arrangement. These panel arrangements resulted from an open approach to the market. The ANAO considers this initiative should provide the AFP with a sound basis to manage the risks of an over-reliance on a key provider.

6.76 Crisis management arrangements, necessarily put in place in the immediate aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunamis provided scope for an international reliance on a particular contractor for key elements of logistical support. Such reliance went well beyond the initial scope of the standing contract arrangements with the contractor to provide repatriation services. While there is little doubt that the contractor provided valuable assistance to the international effort, the developing reliance on the contractor's services and infrastructure throughout the weeks of the initial crisis response created practical difficulties in winding back services during the ongoing business phase of the mission in the subsequent months.

### **Supplies not representing value for money**

6.77 The AFP has taken steps to test for value for money in relation to individual additional services not covered by the RAMSI logistical support contract. The AFP's CMT is based in Honiara to assist in developing a sound understanding of the local market for the supply of goods and services relevant to the mission. In addition, the contractor is required to obtain and provide quotes for these services, as specified under the terms of the contract. These staff also serve as an in-country first point of contact for identifying emerging needs for services to the mission.

6.78 The CMT identified potential savings from changing in-mission office stationery suppliers, and from January 2007 these items have been sourced utilising existing AFP Standing Offer arrangements, rather than being sourced through local suppliers in Solomon Islands.

### **Incurring costs above budget estimates**

6.79 The AFP has a sound system of monitoring RAMSI mission expenditure, and regularly reports expenditure against budget to the executive. The ANAO considers the AFP is well placed to manage the risks of costs rising unexpectedly against budget estimates for the mission.

6.80 Despite not having responsibility for managing the logistical support contract for the Thailand tsunami assistance mission, AFP personnel were actively assisting DFAT in seeking to contain the scope and costs under the contract. This was done in the context of an evolving international operational environment and limited detail in the contractual arrangements, and a proactive approach by the contractor in offering assistance and services to the increasing demands of the international effort.

6.81 Personnel from DFAT and the AFP actively managed the contract arrangements for the Thailand deployment, but were hampered by the lack of detail and scope contained in the contract, which led to significantly different perspectives about the resources required to support various activities and services that the contractor was to perform.

## **Fraudulent activity**

6.82 Agencies can implement a range of measures to manage the risks of fraudulent activity. These can include processes for checking that invoiced goods and services have been satisfactorily delivered, appropriate checks for probity and the identification and management of potential conflicts of interest for individuals involved in procurement and contract management processes and financial delegates.<sup>58</sup> Other important elements can include financial delegates having a sound understanding of the contract and deliverables, and their financial management responsibilities when approving expenditure under the contract. Contract management staff should have a sound understanding of the market for required services to ensure consideration of quotations for additional work under the contract are based on value for money, and are not artificially inflated in scope or price.

6.83 The AFP provides all delegates with access to details of their delegations, Commissioner's Financial Instructions and the relevant contract under which they may exercise their financial delegations.

6.84 The AFP also has in place a number of internal checks and systems to manage the risks of fraud, including:

- all staff involved in procurement are required to complete a declaration listing their personal interests;
- the AFP's Professional Review Service has the power to investigate and respond to any matter referred to it by anyone within or outside the AFP; and
- the AFP has an internal 'Confidant's Network', which provides for internal staff to advise of any AFP personnel's actions or behaviour that is of concern. Issues of concern are then investigated without the need to identify the complainant.

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<sup>58</sup> A conflict of personal interest is defined as a situation in which the impartiality of an officer in discharging their duties could be called into question because of the potential, perceived or actual influence of personal considerations, financial or other.

6.85 The ANAO considers the combination of these measures provides a sound basis for managing the risks of fraudulent activity occurring from within the personnel of the AFP.

## Conclusions

6.86 The ANAO concluded that the AFP has developed an appropriate contract management focus in response to the emerging needs of providing logistical support to its overseas deployments. In both case studies the AFP took over existing Department of Defence contracts, and sought to improve its existing contract arrangements and learn from experience. While the audit identified some instances where formal record keeping could be improved, the AFP has demonstrated a strong commitment to its deployed personnel through its logistical support arrangements, and has actively sought to continually improve its contract arrangements.

## 7. Reintegrating Staff Returning from Overseas Deployments

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*This chapter examines the AFP's approach to reintegrating staff returning from overseas deployments. The chapter discusses the factors involved in successfully reintegrating personnel including sufficient planning and lead time for the receiving work area to managing the expectations and career needs of the individuals returning from deployment.*

7.1 The AFP has staff deployed overseas in a number of locations and roles, working directly for the AFP (for example, Overseas Liaison Network and external territory policing), working for the United Nations and in the case of RAMSI, working for the PPF.

7.2 Due to the nature of forensic deployments (particularly in matters such as the Bali bombings and the assistance provided to the Thai Government following the Indian Ocean Tsunamis), the time members spend overseas tends to be shorter and the nature of the work is often more intense (for example, mass disaster victim identification situations).

7.3 The AFP acknowledged there have been some challenges facing individuals returning to normal duties from overseas deployments, and also for the work units and AFP as a whole when officers return to duty from extended absences.

7.4 The AFP commissioned a research project in 2002 designed to:

- identify and assess the magnitude and nature of the issues that members, after extended absences, have in returning to their normal duties and/or workplace, and, based on that information,
- develop a 'one-AFP' approach to re-integrating returning members, that can be applied and adapted by AFP Management Teams, Team Leaders and Local Business Service Groups, as a practical management tool, tailorable to the particular needs of individuals in this regard.<sup>59</sup>

7.5 The major findings of the project were that many returning members did not feel that the organisation truly regards them as an asset, and sees much of what AFP espouses in terms of people management and development as

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<sup>59</sup> Davidson Trahaire, *Australian Federal Police — Framework for Successfully Re-Integrating Returning Members*, October 2002, p. 1.

nothing more than rhetoric. Returning members did not feel they are valued because of the nature of the work they are given on return to 'normal duties'.

7.6 The project report contained a number of recommendations covering the four phases: pre-deployment, redeployment, return and reintegration. The recommendations arising from the report have not been not systematically addressed by the AFP.

7.7 The ANAO notes this report was prepared prior to a number of the AFP's current deployments (including to Solomon Islands), and before the IDG was formed.

## Reintegrating staff from the IDG

7.8 Under the IDG staffing model, members interested in international deployments apply to join the IDG. AFP members can then 'sign-up' with the IDG for a minimum of 40 weeks and a maximum of 100 weeks.

7.9 After completing duty with the IDG, AFP members are due to return to their previous position in the AFP unless they are moved to another position for operational reasons.

7.10 The AFP monitors the welfare of its overseas personnel through the Wellbeing Services Unit's team of psychologists. Personnel are tested for suitability prior to joining the IDG, and there are regular monitoring processes in place throughout the deployment. Personnel are also interviewed by AFP psychologists upon their return from deployment.

7.11 In instances where personnel have been on deployment for a total of 100 weeks, (returning to Australia on leave for four weeks every 16 weeks), a number do not readily reintegrate to the routines of their personal/family life, with some reporting that they feel more at home in terms of belonging while on deployment, than being temporarily back in Australia.

7.12 The recruitment of experienced police from other jurisdictions to the IDG creates further potential issues for the individual and the organisation upon completion of the agreed overseas term of deployment. For example, while an AFP trained overseas deployee would normally expect to return to their previous duties and seek to reconnect professionally and socially, a police officer recruited from another jurisdiction may find the AFP's culture, work styles and methodologies to be quite different to their previous jurisdiction, and not have any familiarity with others in the team or work area. In addition, the AFP's Performance Review Process (where performance reviews are a

factor in determining career progression and development opportunities) only includes their performance while on overseas deployment, which means taking time to prove themselves within the mainstream AFP. As a result, these recruits may have greater challenges in readjusting to life in Australia, at both a personal and professional level.

7.13 A further complication for long term deployees upon reintegrating into the AFP's domestic policing activities is the differences in the value placed on their experience within the organisation. According to the project report, difficulties in reintegrating were compounded in some cases by perceptions from other members that returning members have had too many benefits, and that those who stayed behind have been doing all the work so that deployed members can take life easy.

7.14 Conversely, returnees report that whilst the AFP promotes overseas postings as a career enhancing opportunity, they feel their own careers have been stifled and that they are disadvantaged relative to others who remain within the mainstream career of the AFP.

## **Staff returning from the TTVI deployment in Phuket**

7.15 The nature and scope of the deployment to the TTVI in Phuket was very different to the arrangements in place for deployment through the IDG.

7.16 As indicated in Chapter 5, the deployments to the TTVI were for most members 2–3 weeks in duration, with limited numbers of staff returning for multiple rotations. In a small number of cases, staff were deployed for up to 2 months at a time, where the nature of the work and the role necessitated greater continuity of staff.

7.17 Reintegration for returning members under these circumstances did not present significant issues, as they returned to their normal role and duties, whether that was in forensic services, general duties, or administrative/finance roles.

7.18 An issue that this deployment had in common with deployments organised through the IDG was that members who were deployed unaccompanied for longer periods of time reported some challenges in easily fitting back into their domestic and work routines. The demanding nature of the work (long hours a day six days a week) and the artificial lifestyle (for example, a lengthy stay in a hotel room and socialising predominantly with other deployed staff) made adjusting to the normal routine and reconnecting



with family, friends and work colleagues on return more difficult than some may have expected.

## Recommendation No.6

7.19 The ANAO recommends that the AFP more actively assist personnel returning to mainstream policing duties from longer term overseas deployments by providing greater workplace support and assistance.

### **AFP response**

7.20 Agreed.

In October 2006 the IDG formed and staffed a Reintegration Coordination Team (RCT) in order to address all reintegration issues faced by members upon return from IDG missions to Australian based duties. The team was tasked with developing a program that would assist members and 'owning business areas' with reintegration back into the Australian workplace following a completion of 40 weeks or more IDG overseas service. It is further designed to assist the AFP as a whole when members return to duty following an extended absence.

The model developed to address reintegration issues is based on the facilitation of the program components being conducted at different times, locations and through differing methods. The six components that form the program are:

- Deployment Debrief and Feedback Process
- Medical Clearance and Briefing
- Psychological Clearance and Wellbeing Presentation
- Re-induction Course
- Career Development Assistance
- Recognition Function (including IDG and AFP Executive address)

The program will also provide the opportunity to gather feedback from the participants, both on operational and support issues as well as personal experiences, for the purpose of enhancing IDG processes. It is expected that the program will also assist in career planning and development of the repatriated members.

It is anticipated that the program will be ready for implementation in mid 2007.

The Forensic and Technical portfolio has undertaken a proactive and more formalised response to the issue of personnel deployed overseas. All persons

deployed are reported to AFP Wellbeing Services to ensure proper monitoring of personnel and their families, both during and post deployment.

## Conclusions

7.21 The number of AFP members returning from overseas deployments has never been higher and will continue to be an issue for the AFP for the foreseeable future. The significant expansion of the IDG will create longer term challenges in reintegrating members into domestic policing from overseas deployments.

7.22 The ANAO concluded that the issue of reintegration of returning deployees should be given a higher priority by the AFP, to ensure that returning members' contributions to the overseas deployments are suitably recognised and career expectations are appropriately managed. This would assist with the long term capacity of the AFP to perform its role, both internationally and domestically.

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Ian McPhee  
Auditor-General

Canberra ACT  
29 June 2007

# Appendices



## Appendix 1: Agency Responses

### AFP

Through the implementation of the AFP International Engagement Strategy and increasing expertise with the establishment of the IDG in 2004 and expansion of the AFP International Network, the AFP has become a leader within the law and justice sector in the delivery of offshore law enforcement initiatives, and contributing to regional and international stability and security on behalf of the Government of Australia.

Internationally, the AFP's partnerships with agencies and its international liaison network are increasingly integral elements in the investigation of transnational crime. A cornerstone of the AFP's international cooperation is its international network of 30 posts in 27 countries. At present there are over 60 liaison officers deployed as part of the International Network which continues to expand as a result of the volume of transnational crimes that are being investigated by the AFP.

Recognising that the concept of traditional peacekeeping, as a response mechanism to conflict, does not adequately address the range of offshore operations conducted by the AFP, our focus is a more holistic and strategic view that addresses root causes of conflict and creates road maps for peace, and most importantly provides for the longer term development of stable societies. The international participants that respond will be the same: police, military, humanitarian, human rights and governance experts, their entry and exit point in the process will be determined by levels of security and the capabilities of the emerging or reshaped state.

The environment the AFP will operate in ranges from intervention in conflict zones where well armed regular or militia forces operate, there is an absence of government institutions and rule of law may be non-existent. At the other end of the spectrum the AFP will undertake coaching and mentoring of police in developing nations. Consequently the AFP is revolutionising its approach to offshore operations.

The AFP IDG was formed in February 2004, and currently has personnel deployed in capacity building initiatives in Nauru, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu. Members are also deployed to peacekeeping missions in Cyprus, Sudan and Timor-Leste.

The AFP is developing capability through expansion of the IDG, to address pre and post conflict capacity building in the region and the ability to rapidly

deploy well trained, professional and capable officers at times of immediate crisis.

The *IDG Future Strategy*, (IFS), which was approved in August 2006, provides a significant boost to capability and capacity of the AFP with additional funding of \$493.2 million; and an increase of staffing levels to 1200 over two years. In recognition of the changing global environment, this includes an Operational Response Group of 150 people for immediate response to international operations. It also includes a policing and capacity building group of over 750 people located both overseas and in Australia, and promotes greater liaison between like interoperable agencies such as the AFP and Australian Defence Force (ADF) operationally and logistically.

Partner relationships in law enforcement capacity building continue to increase and demand greater coordination with AusAID. The secondment of AFP officers to AusAID's Fragile States Unit and the Office of Development Effectiveness builds on the cooperative efforts both organisations enjoy.

The AFP recognises that joint operations with the ADF as part of national offshore crisis response will become more frequent and increased interoperability will be necessary. Progression toward this objective will partly be achieved this year with the embedding of AFP officers in Joint Operations Command and the Australian Defence Force Warfare Centre, and the meeting of mutually agreed milestones as expressed in the interoperability joint terms of reference signed in November 2006.

The IFS includes the creation of two planning teams to conduct planning at the 'operational' level, defined as the level between strategic and tactical planning where strategic intent is translated into program design and delivery. These planning teams are deployable, for short periods, to assist as a component of the headquarters element of new missions. This will assist in translation of 'operational' level plans to distinct 'tactical' activities that, combined, will achieve specific identified outcomes. IDG planning teams, in concert with IDG Doctrine, are also in the process of generating Planning Doctrine that will ensure consistent application of planning methodology for future activities.

IDG planning, as an element of scoping activities, examines the legal and threat risk factors that deployment to the recipient country will generate. A comprehensive threat assessment and a security risk assessment are created as part of the planning process and issues such as immunity from host nation jurisdiction and other legal requirements are also identified and addressed.

The AFP has ensured that the capacity development phase of the AFP's involvement in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is structured to provide the Solomon Islands Police Force (SIPF) with identifiable and measurable short and long term improvements in its skill sets. Through the PPF Strategic Project Plan the capacity development phase has been expanded from three to nine phases, focussing on knowledge and skills gap identification as well as consolidation and sustainability for SIPF personnel. The importance of institutional development and strengthening of the organisation itself has been replicated in work area project plans that utilise identifiable and measurable outcomes described in documents. Indicators outlined in the SIPF Annual Business Plan are also utilised to develop and strengthen the organisation.

To assist personnel returning to mainstream policing duties from overseas deployments the AFP Forensic and Technical portfolio has undertaken a proactive and more formalised response to the issue of personnel deployed overseas. All persons deployed are reported to AFP Wellbeing Services to ensure proper monitoring of personnel and their families, both during and post deployment. The AFP IDG has also recognised the need for a complete professional and personal reintegration program. To this end, the Reintegration Coordination Team was formed in 2006 to provide:

- deployment debrief and feedback process;
- psychological clearance and wellbeing briefing;
- medical clearance and briefing;
- re-induction into the AFP Australian based workforce;
- recognition function; and
- career management assistance.

The AFP Forensic and Technical portfolio has recognised the need to forward deploy an assessment and initial response team to evaluate in-country assistance and response requirements for more accurate capability and mission planning. This process is routinely reviewed and assessed to ensure continual improvement and procedures have been implemented to formalise the process. AFP Forensic and Technical and the Australasian Disaster Victim Identification Committee are also independently assessing deployment periods based on the nature of the incident and the operational phase of the incident.

Action continues to ensure all recommendations of the *Performance Audit – Australian Federal Police Overseas Operations* are addressed. The AFP's Security Audit Team will monitor the progress of the agency's response to these recommendations.

## **DFAT**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) appreciates the opportunity to see the report in its draft form as several elements of its contents are relevant to our involvement in the response to the 2004 Asian Tsunami and to future crisis management arrangements.

In general we consider the descriptions and assessment of DFAT's activities during the Tsunami in managing the logistical support contract appear balanced. We are pleased to see the ANAO refer to the emergency operational imperatives, the limitations in the contract we had to work from, and the various efforts we undertook to constrain costs.

It would be worth mentioning that among these efforts was the development of a second Work Authorisation Agreement of 22 March which was implemented over the following month. This agreement further refined the Work Authorisation Agreement of 16 January, which is referred to in the draft report. We consider that DFAT's successful efforts to recover \$6.2 million from a number of countries that had benefited from our engagement of the contractor deserves greater prominence.

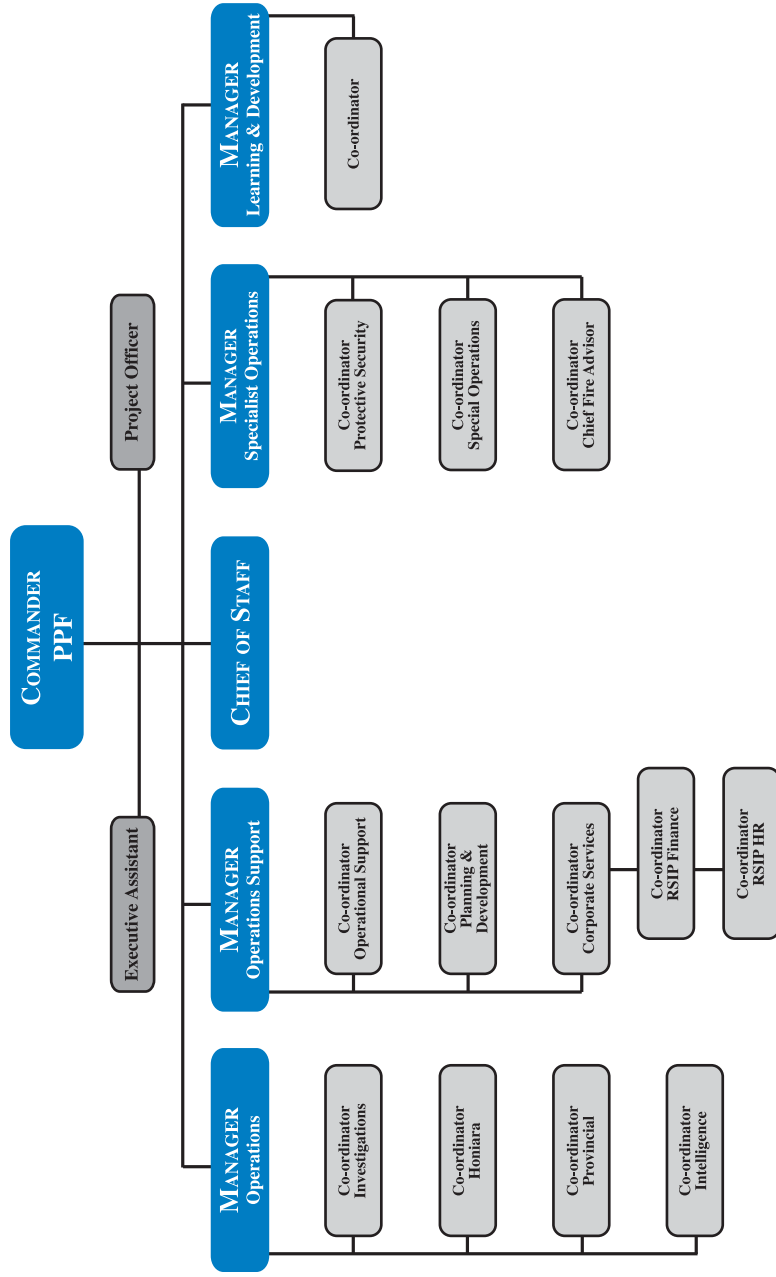
DFAT has engaged an external auditor to look at all of the contractor's invoices and advise which ones raise issues which would justify seeking to recoup expenses from the contractor. On that basis we will enter a formal dialogue with the contractor.

We will of course consider carefully any recommendations relevant to DFAT when the final report is issued, but our initial view is that the draft recommendations, including on developing a panel of service providers are useful. We note however, that this is a highly specialised sector and options for a panel that can provide the full range of services are likely to be limited. We may find that we would need to have both full-service panel members but also more limited service providers (undertakers, supply chain experts, logistical and transport companies).



# Appendix 2: Participating Police Force Organisation Structure

Figure A 1



Source: AFP

## **Appendix 3: Extract from Hansard, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Human Rights Subcommittee**

Reference: Australia's response to the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Transcript of Public Hearings, Friday 12 May 2006, Canberra.

CHAIR—Senator Stott Despoja has some questions on emerging lessons that she wants to pursue, and Senator Moore does as well.

Senator STOTT DESPOJA—I want to ask some questions of our federal agents on the issue of victim identification. It fits into both parts of today's agenda. I am curious to know about current operational matters, for example, for the AFP and state police agencies that may still be in Thailand. There is also the fact that, to me, what you did and have been doing in that context is a stand-out, amazing, good-news story. It is one that I do not think—and I may be wrong in suggesting this—a lot of Australians are aware of. I am interested first of all in the challenges and the success story but also in some of the issues that the police faced in the victim identification work. That is something that I was able to see, albeit briefly, and have been incredibly impressed by. Looking to the future, as per the chair's direction, I am interested in what we as governments and as nations can do. Indeed, I am curious about NGO involvement, if any, in the issue of victim identification. Robert, I am very conscious of the recommendations, in particular on privacy, that the Red Cross has made in trying to facilitate identification. So I want to look at those future issues and one other that I will throw into the mix. I apologise for this gladbag.

Rear Admiral, you were talking about looking after our own, particularly Defence Force personnel. I was not so worried about the AFP, but I was a bit worried about some of the state police with whom I met in terms of how they were being looked after when they got home. This may be an unfair reflection, but some of the police I met with were taking their holiday leave in order to go to Thailand to do this extraordinary and traumatising work. I was there for a day and I found it overwhelming, but these people were taking off six weeks or whatever it might have been at a time, coming back home and maybe having colleagues saying, 'You have had your leave.' I may be wrong and I may not be quite aware of the specifics, but I am wondering if the federal agency could elaborate. I think that Australia's efforts in response to the tsunami were extraordinary. How can we build on them, and how can we make sure you are resourced for future occurrences?

Federal Agent Kent—I could respond to some of those questions. In the first instance, when we deployed on the 28th, my riding instructions concerned an assessment mission to see how we could contribute to a DVI operation in Thailand, given that the Thais had made a request for assistance. Secondly, we anticipated that we would simply be plugging into a well-established international operation and be playing a part in that, albeit perhaps a small part. I think that was the initial intent.

Upon arriving in Thailand, it was evident that the Thai authorities themselves were at some loss as to how to deal with the situation. There was no lead agency identified. While the Minister for the Interior was the key contact point and the Royal Thai Police, the Ministry of Justice and local governors had a role, it was difficult to engage a single agency that would point the direction.

To add to that political complexity, a number of foreign nations were arriving with teams that were starting work, looking for their own deceased. After our arrival and probably by 30 December, there were about nine foreign countries trying to commence DVI work with over 100 DVI specialists in country. Within a week, that number had swelled to 30 nations in country with over 400 DVI specialists all trying to do work in an uncoordinated fashion.

There were also significant logistical challenges. The deceased were being recovered from land and sea operations and taken to wats and temples across four separate provinces, separated by significant distances—well over 120 kilometres to the north in Phang Na and over 150 kilometres to the east in Krabi. We made strong recommendations early that we should try to consolidate all the deceased at a single point in Phuket, preferably near the airport—for logistical reasons and to facilitate a more rapid identification—where we could mount a 24/7 operation and have supplies flown in. This was a key efficiency.

However, there were sound cultural and very practical reasons why the Thai government could never agree to do that. The people who lived in the northern provinces were very poor. If we removed all their deceased and loved ones to Phuket, they would be exceptionally worried about going there to collect them. They could not afford to do that. To some of them, that journey would have represented four months salary—as an example—for the whole family. This caused enormous tension within Thailand. While it would have been the best result from an economy of scale perspective, it certainly was not achievable—and certainly the Thai authorities were never going to agree to that.

That meant we had to extend our supply chains across hundreds of kilometres. We had to set up not one but four mortuaries and then supply them with staff and resources. The Thais had also embarked on a process of separating the deceased into two groups: the non-Thai and the Thai. They asked the international group to focus on the non-Thai, while they dealt with the Thai. Of course, from a DVI operation perspective, you want all your information from post-mortem to reside in one site or one information centre so that you can compare all that data with the antemortem or prior death information. For us, the degrees of complexity of this operation were unprecedented.

An absolute key initiative was the establishment of a TTVI information centre, where all the data could be centralised, and to convince the Thais of the need to combine into one site the information that they were achieving from what they believed were Thai victims with that of other foreign nationals. That took months to achieve. In the meantime, some of the Thai agencies already were releasing deceased under a different process. I think the achievement finally of being able to identify, with a high degree of confidence, over 3,000 deceased through the TTVI process was an exceptional outcome, given the political, environmental and logistical complexities that existed in Thailand at the time.

At that time, domestically, Thailand was also heading towards an election. There were certain things you simply would not get traction on in terms of influencing, because an election was in process. After the election took place and key players were in position within the government, progress on key critical issues that were affecting us was made more possible and such issues were achieved over time.

Also of interest was that many of the international community who responded sent people but no equipment or operational funding to run the business. Effectively, only three nations were contributing significantly to the operational fund; they were Thailand, Australia and Norway. Other nations who had suffered significant losses, such as Germany, were very slow to commit anything other than people to this operation. For us, that created a significant barrier to maintaining our day-to-day operations. Without the ongoing support of the Australian government and the funding it provided, we would never have achieved the outcomes that were achieved. Enormous thanks go to our colleagues in DFAT for their ability to influence and to maintain that level of support for the operation.

As for lessons learned, at no stage in Thailand did we have a formalised agreement between Australia and Thailand that Australia would lead the

operation. It was through influence that we maintained our position as joint chief of staff. While there was a very strong commitment by Thailand for Australia to maintain that role, there was no agreement as such. In effect, that was how we managed the operation. If we were to go through this process again, I think we would seek to establish a more formalised agreement early in the operation. It may have assisted us in achieving our outcomes more effectively as the operation progressed. Having said that, it would have been difficult to do that during this crisis, given the political environment in Thailand at the time.

The movement from what was a critical incident response to a business setting, if you like, became critical. That took a lot longer than we would have hoped for. Again, that was, in part, because it took us a long time to convince other nations to contribute financially to the operational funding of the work. We were able to achieve that only through the establishment of a business plan, which we submitted to those agencies and countries that were engaged; in that way, we convinced them to contribute towards it. That took some months to achieve. We found that challenging because, while you are responding to a crisis, creating a business plan is not at the top of your list of things to do. We hope that a lesson to be learned from this for the future would be that the international community establish some form of fund to enable at least the initial crisis response to take place. Then we would know that funds were available, which all international partners were contributing to, and we would not be doing business plans in the middle of a response. I think that is certainly some key learning.

In terms of the welfare of the officers concerned, there is no doubt that every single person who participated in the identification process was affected by it. But I would say that at the same time there was an enormous sense from those people that they were doing a great service to humanity and that they were driven very strongly by that. I think that is true of all the participants in the DVI community. There were certainly members from some police forces who made the decision that they were prepared to take personal leave to contribute to the operation. I would add that there were many private practitioners in the health industry—forensic dentists, forensic pathologists and others—who were also taking leave of their practices and the like to participate in this because they believed in its significance. I think Australia owes an enormous debt to that whole community because of their willingness to participate and contribute to such a humanitarian response. But I think they also take a lot personally out of their contribution.

In terms of the management of welfare of people upon their return, we had some experience with this in Bali. A lot of the state agencies, the state police agencies in particular, insisted that they maintain the responsibility for the welfare of their people once they were back in country, rather than the AFP taking ownership of that. What we did maintain was our duty of care responsibilities in country, and we had police chaplains provided from a number of jurisdictions as well as our own organisational psychs who paid regular visits. I think both were highly effective. The chaplains in particular were extraordinary because they actually deployed and worked with the teams in the mortuaries. That served to gain the trust of those who were engaged in the work and I believe that that was critical in managing the welfare of those individuals.

There were also some key ceremonies, particularly after the first contingent, which were held at Patong Beach and gave people the opportunity to grieve. Those who had actually responded had the opportunity to grieve and to have some release before they returned to their families and to what would be considered their normal lives. I think it was extremely valuable to go through that process, rather than stoically pretending that no-one had any emotion associated with this and sending them back home. I think that was absolutely critical.

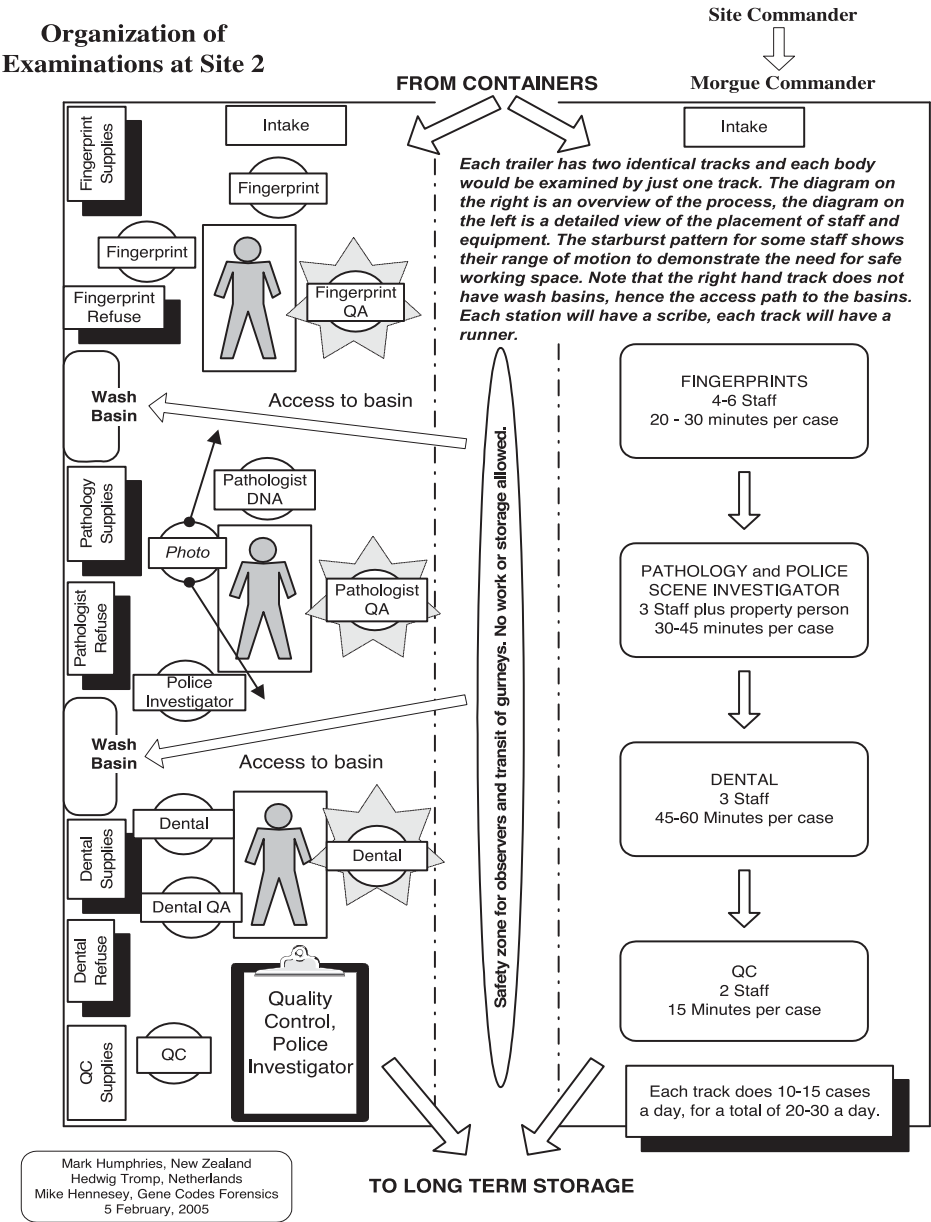
(Federal Agent Karl Kent is a senior manager in the AFP's Forensic Services Group, and led the initial AFP contingent to Thailand in the aftermath of the tsunami.)

**The full transcript of the public hearing is available from:**  
<<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/joint/commttee/J9284.pdf>>.

**The Joint Standing Committee Report Australia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami is available from:**  
<<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/tsunamiresponse/report.htm>>.

# Appendix 4: Organisation of Post Mortem Examinations in Mobile Mortuaries in Thailand Following the Indian Ocean Tsunami

Figure A 2



Source: AFP

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