



24 March 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by

29 March 2021

Solomon Islands – Provincial Airfield Upgrades

BRIEFING Cabinet Paper Covering Submission

PURPOSE This submission proposes that you take to Cabinet the attached paper seeking approval for ^{s6(a), s9(2)(j)} for provincial airfield upgrades in Solomon Islands.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Minister of Finance	For information by	29 March 2021
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs	For information by	29 March 2021

Whakaritenga wātaka - Timing requirement

Complete consultation	By 10 am on 5 April 2021
In Cabinet Office	By 10 am on 6 April 2021
For Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee (ERS) meeting	on 13 April 2021
For Cabinet meeting	on 19 April 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

Richard Griffith	Unit Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia	^{s9(2)(a)}
Ernest Stokes	Solomon Islands Desk Officer	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia	

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakāi - Minister's Office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Seen
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	

Comments

Pito mātua – Key points

- The Cabinet paper *Solomon Islands – Provincial Airfield Upgrades* seeks Cabinet approval ^{s6(a), s9(2)(j)} The proposal does not seek new Official Development Assistance funds, and will consist of existing aid programme funding, and funds from other donors.
- New Zealand has a long-standing commitment to support Solomon Islands' aviation sector through reform and infrastructure upgrades. In 2017 New Zealand committed to upgrade two provincial airfields. Australia has offered to contribute an additional AU\$18 million in support of the upgrades. Cabinet approval is required to receive these funds from Australia.
- In its COVID-19 Economic Stimulus package, the Solomon Islands Government highlighted upgrades to Seghe and Taro as priority projects and committed approximately NZ\$4.2 million to the upgrades. This brought the total amount of funding approved and managed by New Zealand to approximately NZ\$24.2 million.
- In your call on 24 February, Solomon Islands' Foreign Minister Manele reiterated the importance of New Zealand's support to aviation in Solomon Islands, particularly provincial airfield upgrades in Seghe and Taro.
- Upgrading airfields will increase international and domestic connectivity, enabling economic growth, tourism, and access to markets across Solomon Islands. Safe and reliable air travel also provides faster and safer access to essential services including healthcare and humanitarian responses.
- Our aviation-sector partnership with Solomon Islands spans many years. It has included upgrades to Munda Airfield (in Western Province) and the establishment of Solomon Islands Airports Corporation Ltd, a State Owned Enterprise responsible for managing and operating Solomon Islands' airports. The Solomon Islands Government highly regards New Zealand's continued support, ^{s6(a)}
- The project will employ provincial Solomon Islanders in the short-term, and diversify the economy in the long-term. We have shortlisted four construction firms for the airfields work and hope to contract a firm in April. Australia intends to handover AU\$10 million to us this financial year, and a further AU\$8 million in the next financial year.

s6(a), s9(2)(j)

s6(a), s9(2)(j) which will be managed by MFAT. In line with financial delegation policies, New Zealand Cabinet approval is required to accept and manage the additional funding. With your endorsement, we intend to seek Cabinet approval in April this year.



Ben McKenzie
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Note** NZ\$20 million of New Zealand funding has already been approved for Solomon Islands provincial airfield upgrades; **Yes / No**
- 2 **Note** Solomon Islands Government has identified the upgrades to Seghe and Taro airfields as national priority projects as part of its economic response to COVID-19 and committed NZ\$4.2 million toward the project; **Yes / No**
- 3 **Note** the total approved New Zealand-managed amount for the project is NZ\$24.2 million; **Yes / No**
- 4 **Note** Australia intends to handover a total of AU\$18 million to support the upgrades to both Seghe and Taro (via a delegated cooperation agreement); **Yes / No**
- 5 **Note** we seek approval for total expenditure for the activity ^{s6(a), s9(2)(j)}
s6(a), s9(2)(j) **Yes / No**

s6(a), s9(2)(j) and
- 6 **Agree** to lodge the Cabinet paper *Solomon Islands – Provincial Airfields Upgrades* with the Cabinet Office. **Yes / No**

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /



30 March 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

6 April 2021

SOLOMON ISLANDS – DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILISATION

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek approval for NZ\$10 million to support the Asian Development Bank-led Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project in Solomon Islands.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs

For information by

6 April 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Anton Ojala	Divisional Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	s9(2)(a)
Matthew Allen	Senior Policy Officer	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	s9(2)(a)

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakī – Minister's Office to complete

 Approved Noted Seen Needs amendment Declined Withdrawn Overtaken by events See Minister's notes**Comments**

Solomon Islands – Domestic Resource Mobilisation

Pito matua – Key points

- Through an ongoing partnership between MFAT, the New Zealand Inland Revenue Department, and Solomon Islands Inland Revenue Division (SIIRD), New Zealand has provided ongoing support to SIIRD to build its capacity and strengthen its revenue base for over 15 years.
- Over this period, we have worked with SIIRD to implement information technology system upgrades; localise the tax commissioner role; and strengthen human resources and leadership policies, capabilities and systems.
- This has contributed to a number of significant outcomes for Solomon Islands, including more than tripling revenue collection over the partnership period from SB\$0.6 billion in 2007 to SB\$2 billion in 2018 (approx. NZ\$103 million to NZ\$344 million).
- Building on areas identified in the New Zealand-led SIIRD constraints analysis, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has developed the Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project to continue donor support to SIIRD.
- This project provides a mechanism to direct New Zealand support to SIIRD by moving implementation to a trusted donor partner and allowing us to focus efforts on governance of the project and our strategic relationship with the Ministry of Finance.
- The project will focus on supporting SIIRD to improve revenue generation; strengthen public financial management through improved tax administration and revenue management systems; and improve public awareness of tax policy and administration changes.
- In addition to creating a more sustainable revenue base for Solomon Islands Government, the project will provide efficiencies for individual and corporate Solomon Islands taxpayers through more effective service delivery, reduced complexities and filing times, better access to tax information, and a fairer, more equitable tax system.
- We are seeking funding approval of NZ\$10 million for the proposed five-year ADB-led project. The total funding required for the project is US\$15.4 million (approx. NZ\$22.1 million).
- In addition to New Zealand's contribution, the project will also include financing from the ADB (approx. NZ\$7.2 million), Australia (approx. NZ\$5.2 million), and Solomon Islands Government (s6(a)). The ADB will manage all funding associated with the project.
- The attached annex provides information on how this activity fits into the broader aid programme.



Ben McKenzie
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Solomon Islands – Domestic Resource Mobilisation

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|
| 1 | Approve funding of NZ\$10 million for a five-year contribution to the Asian Development Bank-led Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project in Solomon Islands. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Refer a copy of this submission to the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs | Yes / No |

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /

Released under the
Official Information Act

Solomon Islands – Domestic Resource Mobilisation

Pūrongo – Report

1. Since the end of the period of civil unrest known as ‘the Tensions’ in the early 2000s, Solomon Islands economy has not kept pace with its rapidly growing population. While the country has experienced steady economic growth over this period, high population growth has meant that per-capita gross domestic product has stagnated. As of today, about a quarter of Solomon Islands’ population live on incomes below the international poverty line.
2. COVID-19 has further exacerbated the fragilities facing Solomon Islands’ economy with the ADB estimating an economic contraction of negative 6% for 2020. Similarly, 2021 growth is forecast to be as low as 1%. As noted in the “Solomon Islands Fiscal Crisis Response Financing” submission (18 November 2020), this has intensified budget pressures for the government with revenues weakening. SIIRD is averaging SBD35–SBD57 million [NZ\$6.4–NZ\$10.5 million] less than forecast per month and spending is increasing, including a sharp upturn in government payroll and additional expenditure associated with the COVID-19 pandemic economic response.
3. In order to ensure continued provision of social services, basic needs, infrastructure, and utilities, and to support its vision of “Improving the Social and Economic Livelihoods of all Solomon Islanders”, the Government recognises that new sources of growth need to be identified to broaden the productive base of the economy. A broad-base tax system which is efficient, simple, inexpensive to administer, discourages unproductive tax avoidance and evasion activities, and actively supports growth, is a prerequisite to this.

Previous New Zealand support to Solomon Islands Inland Revenue Division

4. Through an ongoing partnership between MFAT, New Zealand Inland Revenue Department, and SIIRD, New Zealand has supported SIIRD to build capacity and strengthen its resource mobilisation for over 15 years. Over this period, our support to SIIRD has resulted in a number of significant outcomes for Solomon Islands, including a more than tripling of revenue collection over the period (from SB\$0.6 billion in 2007 to SB\$2 billion in 2018).
5. New Zealand’s existing programme of support to SIIRD ended in 2019 with the production of a constraints analysis that identified a number of areas where ongoing donor support could usefully be targeted.

Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project

6. The ADB has developed the Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project to support Solomon Islands Government and, specifically SIIRD, to mobilise domestic revenue through improved revenue management, tax administration, and public awareness of tax policy and tax administration changes.
7. The project will be delivered by ADB over a five-year period from April 2021 through to March 2026. It will seek to support the Government to develop a fairer and more equitable tax system, provide tax education and taxpayer outreach, and establish more accessible taxpayer services. The lack of information on the workings of the tax system available to the public limits informed decision-making on livelihood development, employment, and investment in enterprise growth, particularly for women.
8. Having clearer tax information and simpler processes would encourage more workers and enterprises to transition from their engagement in the informal sector (with associated

Solomon Islands – Domestic Resource Mobilisation

vulnerabilities) to employment and business ownership in the formal economy. This shift could stabilise incomes, increase wage-earners' access to labour guarantees and social security, and increase entrepreneurs' access to finance and business development services.

9. In addition, the project will recognise the disadvantages that women face in this sector, through the inclusion of training on gender equity and gender sensitive tax policy, provision of leadership training opportunities for female staff in SIIRD and delivery of bespoke public awareness/tax education programmes for female entrepreneurs.
10. The total project value is estimated to be US\$15.4 million [approx. NZ\$21.2 million]. MFAT is seeking funding approval of NZ\$10 million for the project. The project will also include financing from ADB (NZ\$7.2 million), Australia (NZ\$5.2 million), and Solomon Islands Government ^{(S6(a))}
 - i. ADB will manage all funding associated with the project.
11. The Domestic Resource Mobilisation Project builds on New Zealand's support to-date and seeks to continue important reforms in SIIRD, addressing areas identified by our own constraints analysis. Based on their role in supporting SIIRD to-date, New Zealand Inland Revenue Department has been asked to take on a governance role in the project alongside representatives from ADB, the New Zealand and Australian High Commissions and Solomon Islands government and civil society.

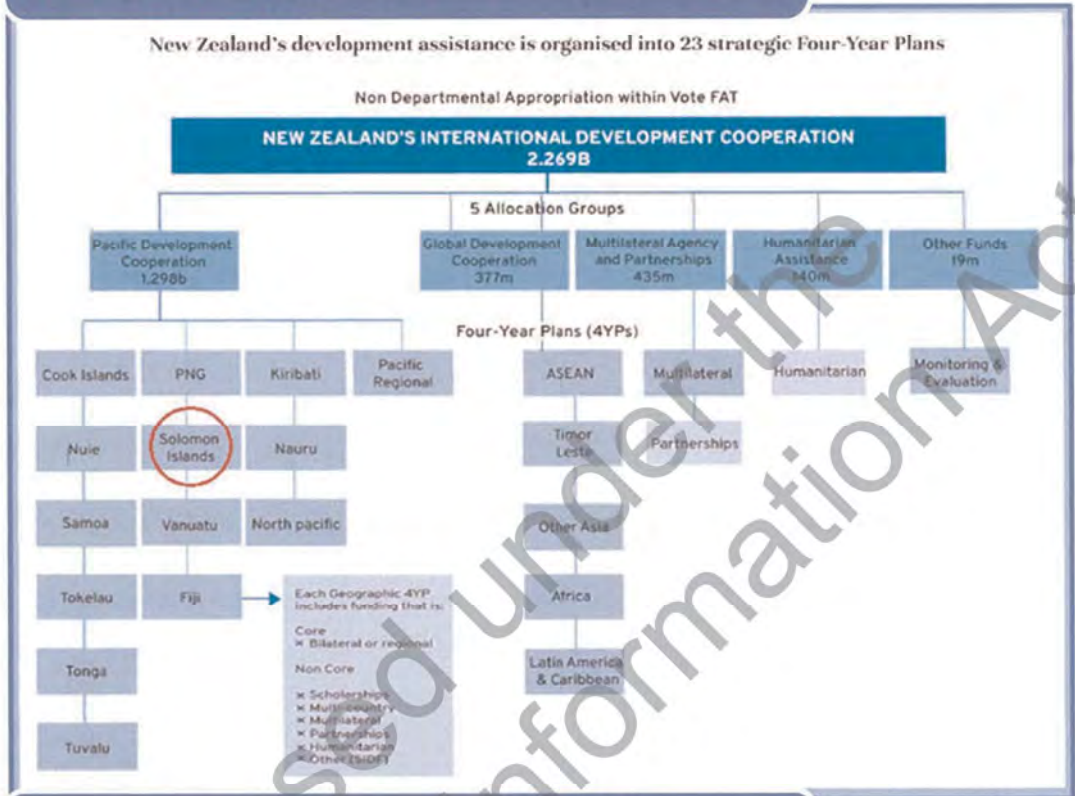
New Zealand Strategic alignment

12. New Zealand's strategic goals in Solomon Islands are to support:
 - Progress towards a state that delivers effectively for, and engages with, all its citizens;
 - A state that increasingly contributes to the security of its people and region; and
 - An increasingly resilient economy that enables greater prosperity and a more equitable distribution of benefits.
13. In order to achieve our goals and Solomon Islands' vision for the country, New Zealand and Solomon Islands agreed in the *New Zealand – Solomon Islands Statement of Partnership 2019 – 2023* that we would work in partnership to:
 - Build Solomon Islands' capacity to achieve accelerated sustainable growth;
 - Strengthen Solomon Islands' state capacity to maintain stability and build trust and confidence in state institutions; and
 - Deepen resilience, empower people and provinces and integrate the wider population into the mainstream economy.
14. Support to strengthen domestic resource mobilisation contributes to all these goals by providing a more reliable stream of revenue for the government to deliver its development strategies, poverty reduction priorities, and Sustainable Development Goal commitments.

Solomon Islands – Domestic Resource Mobilisation

Annex: Other Key Information

Funding for this activity comes from the Solomon Islands Programme, as per the diagram below:



Resilience: This activity supports economic and fiscal resilience in Solomon Islands

Impact: This activity will support Solomon Islands Government to develop a fairer and more equitable tax system, provide tax education and taxpayer outreach, and establish more accessible taxpayer services.

Measuring impact: The activity's impact will be measured by measuring annual increases in tax revenue.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): This activity will contribute to a range of SDGs in particular, Goal 8: *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.*

Aide Memoire — Solomon Islands Provincial Airfield Upgrades

- This paper seeks approval for New Zealand to enter a delegated cooperation agreement with Australia, which will enable the New Zealand Government to receive an additional AU\$18 million from Australia to upgrade two priority provincial airfields in Solomon Islands.
- Alongside funding from other donors, the Solomon Islands Government and from within the existing aid programme, s6(a), s9(2)(j) which requires cabinet approval. This is not a request for new Official Development Assistance funding.
- The Solomon Islands Government consistently highlights upgrades to Seghe and Taro airfields as priority projects of national importance. Last year it listed the upgrades as a priority in its COVID-19 economic stimulus package, and pledged approximately NZ\$4.2 million to the project through a delegated cooperation agreement.
- The Solomon Islands Government is prioritising tourism as an emerging non-extractive industry. Safer and more reliable forms of domestic connectivity between the provinces will strengthen social cohesion, support the administration of central and provincial government, boost tourism, and promote stability and economic growth. For communities in remote parts of Solomon Islands, better connectivity will also increase access to healthcare, education, and food security.
- The Australian funding s9(2)(j)

Australia will provide AU\$10 million this financial year and AU\$8 million next financial year.

Melanesia and Micronesia Division, MFAT
March 2021



27 April 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by

4 May 2021

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic and Financial Reform

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek approval for NZ\$12 million for a three year programme of support to economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs

For information by

4 May 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Jonathan Kings	Deputy Secretary	Pacific and Development Group	s9(2)(a)
Anton Ojala	Divisional Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	s9(2)(a)

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakāi – Minister's Office to complete

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes | |

Comments

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic And Financial Reform

Pito matua – Key points

- New Zealand has been partnering with Solomon Islands Government and other development partners to support economic and financial reform through the Core Economic Working Group (CEWG) for over a decade.
- As a member of CEWG, New Zealand provides direct budget support once Solomon Islands Government has successfully implemented jointly agreed reforms. Other members of the CEWG are the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, European Union (EU) and Australia.
- We assess that consistent and open dialogue with Solomon Islands Government through CEWG offers the best opportunity to strengthen its economic resilience and support Solomon Islands officials responsible for improving public financial management.
- In order to support the government's delivery of effective public financial management, New Zealand also provides funding for ad-hoc technical assistance. This supports policy reforms and funds two public sector positions: the Accountant-General and the Deputy Auditor-General. Both are important for supporting effective public financial management.
- MFAT seeks your approval for NZ\$12 million for this three year activity. This includes maintaining previously provided levels of general budget support (NZ\$3 million per year) over the next three years (NZ\$9 million total), up to NZ\$1 million in ad-hoc technical assistance to support effective public financial management, and continued support for key in-line government positions through to 2022/23 (up to NZ\$2 million).
- The proposed activity is separate to the Fiscal Crisis Response Financing activity you approved in February 2021. That budget support activity targeted short-term fiscal needs to alleviate the impacts of COVID-19. This activity will focus on medium to long-term policy reform agreed through CEWG.



Jonathan Kings
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Approve** funding of NZ\$12 million for a three year programme of support for economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands. Yes / No
- 2 **Refer** a copy of this submission to the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs. Yes / No

Jessica Thorn

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

pp: Date: 10 / 5 / 2021

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic And Financial Reform Pūrongo – Report

1. Following the 2009 global financial crisis, Solomon Islands Government established the Core Economic Working Group (CEWG) with New Zealand, the Asian Development Bank, Australia, the European Union, and the World Bank. The Group's aim was to develop a joint framework for mitigating the impacts of the crisis and build resilience to future shocks.
2. CEWG is the coordinating mechanism by which the government and development partners agree policy reform priorities against which CEWG partners commit and disburse budget support payments. CEWG is used to agree related technical assistance to support the Solomon Islands Government to achieve reform priorities. As a member of CEWG, New Zealand provides general budget support to Solomon Islands Government (currently NZ\$3 million per annum) on completion of agreed reforms.
3. The establishment of a new Government, followed by COVID-19, has slowed recent progress of CEWG. The Government has, however, recently reconvened CEWG as it seeks to coordinate with partners to support Solomon Islands' economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. CEWG met on 12 March 2021, where a set of policy reforms tied to the Government's response to COVID-19 were finalised for Solomon Islands' Cabinet approval (Annex 2).

Effectiveness of policy reform-linked budget support

4. Budget support demonstrates our respect for the sovereignty and independence of Solomon Islands. It enables the Government to respond flexibly and rapidly to the challenges they are facing, in line with their own national objectives, interests, and priorities. It also provides tangible support to officials working to improve public financial management processes through incentivising difficult reforms.
5. Policy reform-linked budget support programmes are long term interventions focused on progressive implementation of reforms. Evidence shows they are effective and sustainable. While there have been mixed periods of progress, CEWG has demonstrated several notable successes in Solomon Islands, including improved State Owned Enterprise and sectoral economic governance, strengthened revenue systems (alongside New Zealand's support to Solomon Islands Inland Revenue Division), and more transparent resource allocation. We assess that consistent and ongoing dialogue between Solomon Islands Government and other partners through CEWG offers the best opportunity to strengthen Solomon Islands Government's fiscal resilience.

Other support to economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands

Key in-line positions

6. In addition to support provided through CEWG, New Zealand also supports economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands with funding for the Accountant-General and Deputy Auditor-General, two key positions in Solomon Islands Government. Both of these positions provide important support to areas where there are capacity gaps within the Government's broader public financial management capabilities. The positions are currently filled by New Zealanders.
7. New Zealand funding to both these positions is the result of specific requests from Solomon Islands Government and are in areas that strongly align with the broader reform programme. Accordingly, we propose continuing support for these (and/or other key in-line positions if

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic And Financial Reform

requested by Solomon Islands Government) for the duration they remain required.
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) However, this is carefully managed through a clear delineation between roles and key decision making functions within their agencies. Our support to these roles to date has resulted in a number of positive outcomes for public financial management in Solomon Islands, including improved financial reporting, resolution of key audit recommendations, organisational restructuring, and improved audit quality and decision-making processes.

8. Additionally, a key component of the ongoing work plan for both the Accountant-General and the Deputy Auditor-General (and any future positions we support) is to identify and pursue local options for filling their roles. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Ad-hoc technical assistance

9. In order to support the Solomon Islands Government to implement policy reforms agreed through CEWG, it is important for New Zealand and other CEWG donors to be prepared to respond flexibly to requests from the government for technical assistance.

10. This type of support has been utilised effectively by New Zealand previously s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)
s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Examples of this type of support include: funding of a specialist advisor to support Office of the Auditor-General engagement in Government budget setting processes and provision of data-cleansing services by a New Zealand data analytics firm to resolve payroll and general ledger issues for the Ministry of Finance and Treasury.

New Zealand Strategic alignment

11. New Zealand's strategic goals in Solomon Islands are to support:

- Progress towards a state that delivers effectively for, and engages with, all its citizens;
- A state that increasingly contributes to the security of its people and region; and
- An increasingly resilient economy that enables greater prosperity and a more equitable distribution of benefits.

12. The *New Zealand – Solomon Islands Statement of Partnership 2019 – 2023* agreed that we would work to “support the development and implementation of policies that foster responsive, resilient and inclusive growth that unlocks wealth from within.”

13. New Zealand can most effectively support these priorities when we leverage our experience and resources with partners to achieve greater impact and promote common policy objectives.

Scope of approval

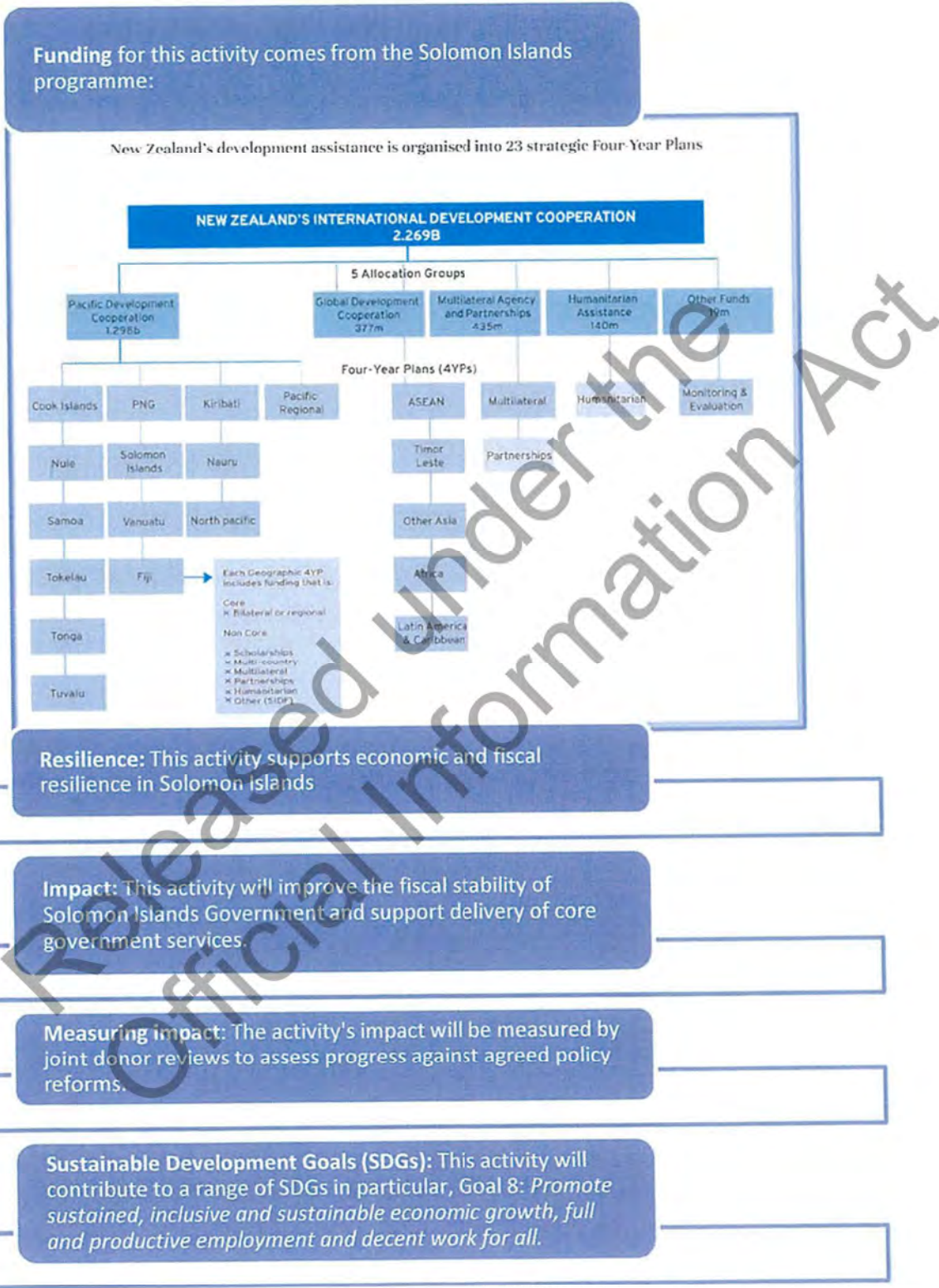
14. MFAT seeks your approval for up to NZ\$12 million to support economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands. In addition to continued budget support (NZ\$3 million per year) over the next three year period (NZ\$9 million in total), the proposed scope of New Zealand support for economic and financial reform in Solomon Islands also includes:

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic And Financial Reform

- Up to NZ\$1 million in funding for technical assistance to support the implementation of agreed policy reforms and/or respond to requests from the government to support broader public financial management needs; and
 - Continued support to in-line government positions to support effective public financial management in Solomon Islands for three years (up to NZ\$2 million).
15. The fiscal crisis response financing detailed in a recent submission (approved in February 2020) will be delivered alongside this proposed budget support to alleviate short-term fiscal needs, while targeting funding to the government's COVID-19 response. The proposed budget support under this approval is focused on long-term policy reform agreed through CEWG.
16. Other CEWG donors' support to future policy reform is yet to be confirmed and will be informed by the amount of COVID-19 related support they provide. Donor disbursements to the 2018 reform matrix were as follows: Asian Development Bank: US\$5.0 million; World Bank: s6(a), s9(2)(j) ; Australia: s6(a), s9(2)(j) ; and European Union: s6(a), s9(2)(j)

Released under the
Official Information Act

Solomon Islands – Supporting Economic And Financial Reform
Annex 1: Other Key Information



The following two pages have been withheld in full under s 6(a) and have been removed



27 May 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

4 June 2021

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

BRIEFING Overview Submission

PURPOSE In 2018 Cabinet agreed that Aotearoa New Zealand adopt early, calibrated and transparent action on climate-change related displacement and migration in the Pacific. At the halfway point to an agreed 2024 report-back to Cabinet, this submission provides an overview and progress towards that early action.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Minister for the Environment	For information by	4 June 2021
Minister for Immigration	For information by	4 June 2021
Minister for Pacific Peoples	For information by	4 June 2021
Minister of Climate Change	For information by	4 June 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Llewellyn Roberts	Divisional Manager	Development People and Planet Division	s9(2)(a)
Roger Dungan	Lead Adviser	Development People and Planet Division	

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakī – Minister's Office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Seen
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	

Comments

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Pito matua – Key points

- In 2018 Cabinet agreed five early actions on climate migration in the Pacific, and directed they should be consistent with Pacific-led values and reflect the desire of Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries, where possible. Work will acknowledge the whakapapa links Māori have with Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, and the Treaty partnership between Māori and the Crown.
- Cabinet directed officials to report on these early actions in 2024 with advice on a longer-term New Zealand approach to Pacific climate migration.
- Progress is tracking well, with some activities necessarily delayed by the COVID-19 response and recovery.
- The attached annex has additional detail and timelines. Progress includes:
 - *a). Consider how ODA initiatives can avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for Pacific climate migration:* The Aid Programme's \$300 million four-year investment in climate outcomes is helping reduce the role of climate change in people's migration decisions. New Zealand is supporting activities to prevent migration-related conflict in Fiji, and funding work to help Fiji plan for community relocations.
 - *b). Facilitate regional dialogue and explore a regional instrument on Pacific climate migration through the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF):* New Zealand is funding international organisations to work with the PIF Secretariat to prepare possible leader-level discussions this year on a regional framework for cross-border climate migration at the Forum, possibly adopted at the 2022 Forum.
 - *c). Work to strengthen international language and frameworks through multilateral action:* New Zealand is a member of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage. Officials are considering support for the Geneva-based Platform on Disaster Displacement.
 - *d). Championing the progressive development of international law to protect coastal state rights in respect of maritime zones in the face of sea-level rise:* New Zealand advocacy is raising the profile of this issue internationally, and encouraged the International Law Commission (ILC) to take up the topic. New Zealand has also been s6(a) contributing to formal PIF input to the ILC's work. New Zealand also contributed significantly to the Pacific regional conference held in September 2020 on the legal options to address the problem, and s6(a) developing the text of a possible normative declaration for adoption by PIF Leaders later in 2021.
 - *e) Commission robust research to better understand future climate migration trends and the social and economic impacts on Aotearoa New Zealand and Pacific Island countries:* Scoping study completed in 2020. Call for proposals to conduct research under way in June, with results timed to inform the 2024 Cabinet report-back.

Jonathan Kings
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Note that in 2018 Cabinet agreed the New Zealand Government should adopt early, calibrated and transparent action on climate change-related displacement and migration in the Pacific Islands region. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Note that in 2018 Cabinet directed officials to implement five early actions on climate change-related displacement and migration in the Pacific, to report to Cabinet on progress on those actions in 2024 and advise Cabinet on a longer-term New Zealand approach that might also involve consideration of immigration options. | Yes / No |
| 3 | Note that these early actions are tracking well, but with some activities delayed by the COVID-19 response and recovery. | Yes / No |
| 4 | Note that Cabinet agreed that immigration options be considered as part of a longer-term approach once that the scale and potential impact of Pacific climate migration is clearer. | Yes / No |
| 5 | Refer a copy of this submission to the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Immigration, the Minister for Pacific Peoples, and the Minister for Climate Change. | Yes / No |

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Pūrongo – Report

1. Climate change is intensifying an already wide range of challenges to Pacific Island countries' sustainable development and resilience. Pacific leaders continue to underscore that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific.
2. Migration has always been a part of Pacific resilience, including as a measure of last resort when other options have been exhausted. Leaders from Pacific Island countries continue to emphasise the need to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change: Pacific peoples want to continue living in their own countries, where possible.
3. Discussions on climate migration are sensitive for Pacific countries including because not all historical relocations have been voluntary or had positive outcomes. A sustainable response is one that is mapped out and driven by the region, rather than by metropolitan countries and development partners.
4. Climate migration includes a broad range of responses determined by individual, family and community circumstances. It can include temporary movement of people within and between countries to support community resilience (e.g. via labour mobility schemes), relocation of people and communities within a country (whether voluntary or not, including in response to climate-related hazards), and permanent migration across the Pacific or further afield.
5. Climate change is adding to existing drivers of mobility and migration in the Pacific and elsewhere. While attributing a direct effect of climate change on current mobility decisions can be difficult, climate change will impact Pacific Island countries' security including through increasing water insecurity, salt-water intrusion affecting agricultural production, and from increased adverse weather events as climate change intensifies. Low-lying atolls face an existential threat if collective action fails to prevent catastrophic climate change.
6. In 2018, Cabinet agreed¹ that New Zealand's action on climate migration should be underpinned by Pacific-led values that honour the desire for Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries, where possible, and which respect the Pacific's sovereignty and the right to self-determination. Cabinet also agreed New Zealand should recommend that any solution be led by those countries most significantly impacted and, in the regional context, advocate for a Pacific-led response through the Pacific Islands Forum. Policy responses must also involve iwi, hapū and Māori in recognition of their Treaty partnership relationship with the Crown as well as their own status, and acknowledge the whakapapa links Māori have with Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa.
7. Cabinet also agreed a set of five early actions on climate-related human mobility in the Pacific:
 - a) Consider how ODA initiatives can avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for Pacific climate migration when making decisions on the scope and direction of climate-related assistance.
 - b) Facilitate a regional dialogue and explore a regional instrument on Pacific climate migration through the PIF.

¹ CAB-18-MIN-0218, confirming ENV-18-MIN-0013

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

- c) Work to strengthen international language and frameworks through multilateral action, advancing New Zealand and Pacific interests.
 - d) Develop a strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand in championing the progressive development of international law to protect coastal state rights in respect of maritime zones in the face of sea-level rise.
 - e) Commission robust research to better understand future climate migration trends and the social and economic impacts on Aotearoa New Zealand and Pacific Island countries.
8. As work on the actions has been progressing, feedback has been that Cabinet's Pacific-led values-focus will be increasingly important. It is also clear that sensitive and values-based conversations about people's decisions on where they live, particularly when they may have limited control over that, can take time if people's well-being is to be protected and enhanced.

Progress on the 2018 Action Plan

9. Progress towards the 2018 Action Plan actions is set out in the attached "programme at a glance" A3 (Annex 1, attached). MFAT has contracted four key delivery partners (GNS Science, International Organisation for Migration, Conciliation Resources, and the German Development Agency GIZ) to establish climate mobility programming at community, national, and regional levels in the Pacific. Partners report that project delivery was impacted during 2020 by the COVID-19 response and recovery, with extended timeframes expected across most workstreams; work in countries where delivery partners lack existing relationships has been significantly delayed.

Action a): Supporting climate action through the New Zealand Aid Programme

10. Aotearoa New Zealand has committed to spend at least NZ\$300 million over the period 2019–2022 to support climate action in developing countries with two thirds allocated to the Pacific and at least half to adaptation initiatives. While only a subset of that is being targeted to specific, migration-related support, activities that reduce emissions and help adapt to the effects of climate change will help reduce the role of climate change in people's migration decisions.
11. One pillar of the Aid Programme's NZ\$150 million Climate Change Programme is supporting activities to help Pacific Island countries avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for climate change-related human mobility. Activities funded through this include:
- Supporting a peace-building NGO (Conciliation Resources) to help communities prevent and manage conflicts that may result from climate-change related displacement and relocations. Initial work by delivery partners is under way in three rural districts in Fiji, and will be extended to other countries once COVID-19 related travel restrictions ease.
 - A partnership with the German Development Agency (GIZ) to support the Government of Fiji in developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the planned relocation of communities in Fiji. New Zealand has committed to grant NZ\$1.5 million to a trust fund to support community relocations once appropriate legal, financial and management arrangements are in place. Capital contributions to the Fund, and relocations undertaken following the SOPs, could begin early 2022.

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Action b): Regional dialogues

12. Aotearoa New Zealand is funding a consortium of UN and international organisations, led by the International Organisation for Migration, to work with the Secretariat of the PIF to prepare discussions on a possible regional framework for cross-border climate migration through the Forum process. This work has been progressing, but will continue to depend on delivery partners' ability to progress work through PIF processes in time for this year's Forum. New Zealand has the opportunity, along with all Forum countries, to join the Joint Working Group to progress this work. s6(a)

Officials are actively considering New Zealand's membership, s6(a)

13. Officials have participated in other regional dialogues and consultations, including Pacific Regional Consultations on the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Internal Displacement.

Action c): Multilateral action

14. Progress multilaterally has been slower, partly because COVID-19 travel restrictions have reduced opportunities for in-person meeting, but mostly because Pacific-led migration-specific interests through these forums are not yet articulated. New Zealand has participated in the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (established under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change). New Zealand is currently represented on the Committee by Wellington-based Pacific climate change consultant Penehuro Lefale.

15. s9(2)(g)(i)

Action d): Championing international law to protect coastal state rights

16. This work focuses on ensuring that the maritime zones guaranteed in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea will not be diminished as a consequence of sea level rise, taking forward a PIF Leaders commitment from 2019 to take collective efforts to ensure that maritime zones are protected in the face of sea level rise and climate change.

17. s6(a) This has
included advocacy at the UN and in other settings, including encouraging the International Law Commission to take up the subject; contributing to PIF submissions and statements on the subject, contributing to a successful regional conference in 2020 that considered the legal options and developed an action plan for the region, s6(a) the
development of the text of a normative declaration to be considered for adoption by PIF leaders later in 2021 and conducting bilateral outreach to potential partners outside of the region to encourage a positive reception for the declaration. The normative declaration aims to clarify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in a way that ensures the protection of maritime zones.

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Action e): Commissioning robust research

18. MFAT is working with officials from the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment to commission research to understand current and future patterns of Pacific climate-related human mobility, and associated social, economic and cultural impacts. This has been informed by an initial desk-based scoping study conducted through 2020, and inter-agency discussions.
19. That inter-agency group is finalising terms of reference to procure this research, and a call for proposals is expected by the end of June with procurement processes to be designed to encourage the active involvement of Pacific researchers. This is on track for research to be underway by late 2021 with results to be delivered in time to inform the 2024 Cabinet report-back.

A 2024 report-back: Developing a strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand

20. Cabinet directed officials to report back on these actions in 2024, and advise Cabinet on a longer-term New Zealand approach to Pacific climate migration that might also involve consideration of immigration options. Cabinet also agreed that immigration options, including any humanitarian visa category, be considered as part of a longer-term approach, once the scale and potential impact of Pacific climate migration is clearer.
21. We are roughly half way to 2024, and the above actions are tracking well towards the Cabinet report-back. The 2018 Action Plan commissioned a set of early actions, but made no assumptions these would be sufficient. Advice to Cabinet on a longer-term approach will depend on:
 - The evidence base provided by the commissioned research. This will underpin advice on a sustainable and Pacific-led response, and evidence will need to be collected in ways that allow for indigenous perspectives – both from Aotearoa New Zealand and from the Pacific – to be reflected.
 - Progress in regional dialogues in order to demonstrate that policy is consistent with the 'Pacific-led' values Cabinet agreed in 2018, and to make sure New Zealand policy supports Pacific resilience. A response from Aotearoa New Zealand needs to be *with* the Pacific rather than *for* the Pacific.
 - Progress in New Zealand's own domestic response. As part of its work for the proposed new Climate Adaptation Act, the Ministry for the Environment is considering how 'managed retreat' can form part of New Zealand's climate change response. The Ministry for the Environment is also leading work on a National Adaptation Plan for Aotearoa New Zealand. In developing the Plan, officials are considering the impact of climate change on Pacific peoples in New Zealand who have family and community connections in the region. The Emissions Reduction Plan is also tasked with considering the impact of climate change on Pacific Island countries and New Zealand's role within this kaupapa.
 - Lessons from central and local government's work with iwi, hapū, and whānau that inform New Zealand's work with the Pacific, including on ways to support well-being in the context of internal migration. There are already instances of iwi/hapū-Pasifika collaboration in facing natural calamities (e.g. following the 2011 Canterbury

Pacific Climate-Change Related Displacement and Migration: Update

Earthquakes) that may provide valuable lessons of not only indigenous and traditional knowledge at play but also of cross-cultural cooperation.

22. In addition, the Minister of Immigration has announced a reset of immigration priorities to take advantage of the border closure. This will deliver short-term changes across temporary migrant visa categories and skilled residence pathways, and will consider opportunities for temporary workers from the Pacific. Policy work on options for these changes will occur over the coming months with proposals for change reported to Cabinet from September 2021.
23. In the meantime, as part of the second phase of the Pacific immigration policy review, MBIE continues to look at improving existing temporary migration opportunities for Pacific people which may support community resilience in the Pacific. The Pacific immigration policy work programme agreed by Cabinet includes a possible third phase of work to investigate the need for, and design of, changes to visa settings for people displaced by climate change. However, this work is not currently scheduled in the immigration policy work programme, which MBIE reviews on an ongoing basis with the Minister of Immigration.
24. As well as drawing on the 'early actions', advice to Cabinet will also draw on a growing understanding of climate migration in the Pacific. We are seeing:
 - Political will strengthening in the Pacific for addressing climate mobility. This is a shift from the past where some governments were unwilling to openly discuss the issue.
 - Related to that, a need to allow space for historical experience to be heard in developing policy for migration in the Pacific and in Aotearoa New Zealand. While the history and tradition of voyaging is a foundation of Pacific and Māori identity, not all experiences of movement and migration have been positive. Those historical perspectives strongly resonate in peoples' current lived experience.
 - Increased interest in climate-related migration from development partners in the region. For instance, on 4 February 2021 President Biden issued an Executive Order tasking US officials with preparing a report on climate change and its impact on migration and to work collaboratively with other countries, international organisations, and NGOs, to respond to migration resulting from climate change
 - Good practice examples already in the Pacific (e.g. Fiji's Planned Relocation Guidelines) that can be shared globally, including from traditional approaches to 'predictive' measures, mitigation, adaptation and resilience framed by traditional and indigenous knowledge systems.
 - Experience that supporting planned relocations is a time and resource-intensive process, involving multiple stages with inclusive, transparent cross-agency and community engagement needed to maximise well-being.
 - In some settings, COVID-19 has tested relationships between government and society in respect of how states use and enforce power (e.g. lockdowns), and this can impact relationships between actors associated with relocation enterprises
25. This submission reflects the inputs from Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment. Officials from these agencies are working together to progress aspects of this work.

Annex 1- Climate Migration Action Plan: Programme at a Glance. May 2021

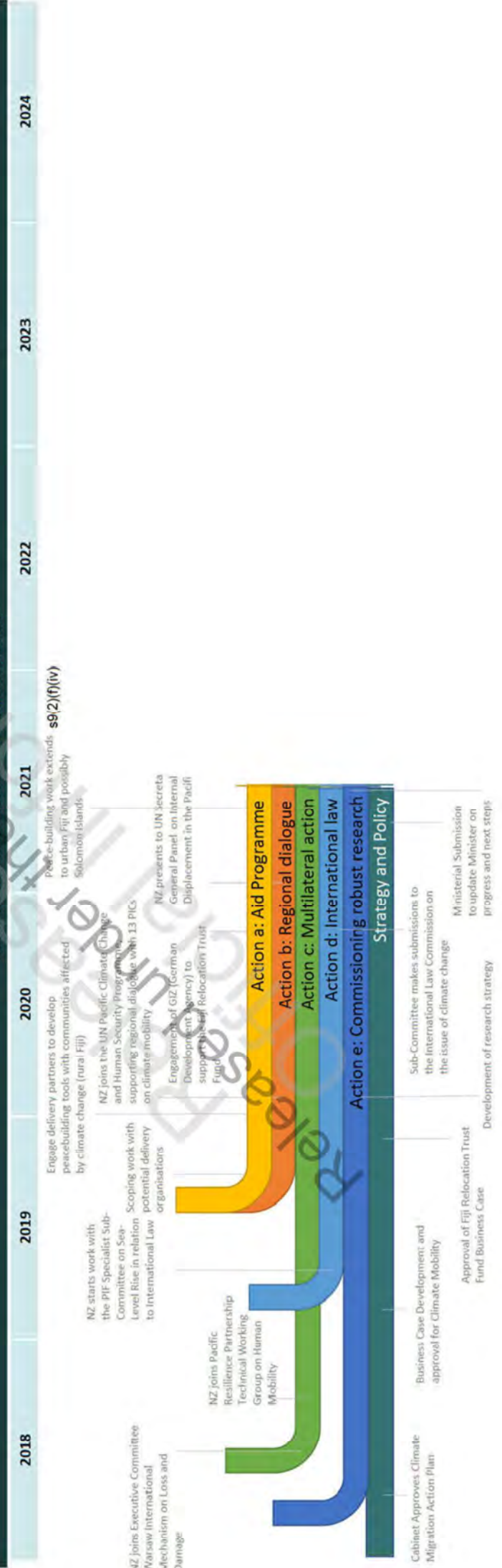
OVERALL UPDATE		MATTERS FOR ATTENTION: RISKS and ISSUES	
CONTEXT	Climate change is intensifying challenges to Pacific Island countries' sustainable development and resilience and adding to drivers of mobility and migration in the Pacific and elsewhere. In 2018 Cabinet agreed a set of five early actions on climate-related migration in the Pacific.	SITUATION	WHAT WE ARE DOING
UPCOMING	The Minister of Immigration is working towards a reset immigration priorities, which will consider opportunities workers from the Pacific. s9(2)(f)(iv) Meanwhile MBE continues to look at improving temporary migration opportunities for Pacific people.	Regional Dialogues:	Broadly on track, progress depends on interest and capacity within the Pacific to progress this through the forum process. Currently, work is mostly by regional agencies and forum secretariat.
Status	On Track	COVID-19	Resources have been diverted to COVID-19 response in Aotearoa and in the Pacific. This continues to be unpredictable. Travel restrictions are impacting on delivery partners' ability to progress aspects of this work.
Status	On Track	Evidence Base:	Initial scoping work and research proposal, commissioned from contractors, has needed additional work to ensure it will meet Cabinet instruction and is conducted in Pacific-led way.

Action a): Supporting climate action through the New Zealand Aid Programme		Action d): Championing international law to protect coastal state rights		Action e): Commissioning robust research	
Status	On Track	Status	On Track	Status	On Track
Level of influence/control	High	Level of influence/control	High	Level of influence/control	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities to reduce and/or adapt to effects of climate change will help avert and delay climate-related migration. COVID has limited migration-specific activities to Fiji. Planned relocations there depend on Fiji Government developing sound operating procedures, and appropriate Trust Fund management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International organisations working with PIF Secretariat to prepare possible regional framework for cross-border climate migration. Progress depends on Secretariat's ability to prepare for discussions at the Forum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officials are preparing to commission research to understand current and future patterns of Pacific climate-related human mobility - expected by the end of June, with results to be delivered in time to inform the 2024 Cabinet report-back. 			

Progress on the 2018 Action Plan - KEY ACTIVITIES

Action b): Regional dialogues		Action c): Multilateral action	
Status	On Track	Status	On Track
Level of influence/control	Moderate	Level of influence/control	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage delivery partners to develop peacebuilding tools with communities affected by climate change (rural Fiji) NZ joins the UN Pacific Climate Change and Human Security Programme supporting regional dialogue with 13 PICs on climate mobility Engagement of GIZ (German Development Agency) to support the Fiji Relocation Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (under the UNFCCC). Considering support to Geneva-based Platform on Disaster Displacement 		

CLIMATE MIGRATION ACTION PLAN ROADMAP



Aide Memoire – Oral Item to Cabinet 29 November 2021: Solomon Islands unrest: Aotearoa New Zealand support

Purpose

- This Aide Memoire is intended to support your presentation of an Oral Item at Cabinet on 29 November seeking:
 - Cabinet’s agreement in principle to Aotearoa New Zealand providing a small deployment to support the sustainable restoration of order and recovery in Solomon Islands, once a request is forthcoming from the Solomon Islands Government and necessary legal arrangements are in place; and
 - Cabinet delegating authority to the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Police, as Ministers with Power to Act with respect to a deployment.

Notes to support Oral Item

Background

- s6(a)
- On Wednesday 24 November planned anti-government protests in Honiara turned violent, with rioting and looting. s6(a)

A “leaf hut” on the Parliamentary compound was set alight and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSPIF) used tear gas and less-than-lethal rounds (“rubber bullets”) to disperse the crowd at Parliament. A number of Chinese-owned businesses were targeted, but not exclusively. Unrest continued into 25 November.
- s6(a)

On 25 November, Australian PM Morrison, accompanied by Ministers Payne and Seselja, announced Australia would deploy Australian Federal Police, Defence Force and DFAT officers to Honiara, in support of the RSIPF.

s6(a)

- Twenty-three AFP officers plus three DFAT arrived in Honiara that evening, followed by a 70-strong ADF element on 26 February. The Australian Navy Patrol Boat, *HMAS Armidale*, is also expected to arrive next week.
- PM Morrison has emphasised that the deployment is in response to Solomon Islands' security needs, as envisaged by the 2017 bilateral security treaty. s6(a)

- The situation in Honiara is stabilising, although there has been extensive damage to property (assessed as worse than the 2006 "Chinatown riots") and at least three deaths s9(2)(a), s6(c)
- An Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) under DPMC, including the Intelligence Community, NZDF, Police and the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Trade was convened on 25 November and has met daily since. This briefing reflects input from the IAWG.

Aotearoa New Zealand and regional support

- s6(a)

s6(a)

- Both Papua New Guinea and Fiji have volunteered personnel. A contingent of police, defence and corrections personnel from Papua New Guinea arrived in Honiara on 26 November. Logistics for a Fiji Military Force deployment are being worked through.
- Acting Foreign Minister Parker released a press statement on 26 November expressing solidarity with Solomon Islands and welcoming Australia's intervention.

New Zealand interests

- The resilience principle of tātou tātou guides Aotearoa New Zealand's clear interest in supporting a secure, stable and more prosperous Solomon Islands. We are deeply invested in Solomon Islands' stability and resilience: Aotearoa New Zealand was a significant contributor to RAMSI from 2003-2017; and Solomon Islands is a major partner for the New Zealand Aid Programme, which includes a long-running activity to support the RSIPF. ^{s6(a)} It is clear that Aotearoa New Zealand should respond positively to a request for support from Solomon Islands.
- Should Aotearoa New Zealand receive a request for assistance, it would be desirable to respond quickly to show manaakitanga to Solomon Islands, Australia and other regional partners. We would intend working closely with Australia in responding.
- ^{s6(a)} Any Aotearoa New Zealand security assistance ^{s6(a)} would also be short-term. While Australia and regional partners' support has enabled RSIPF to restore calm, ^{s6(a)} Aotearoa New Zealand is already heavily invested in building Solomon Islands' long-term resilience through our aid programme; officials will provide further advice on transition at the end of any short term mission.

Recommendations

Recommend that Cabinet **agree in principle** to a small New Zealand deployment in conjunction with Australia's security support to Solomon Islands, should a request be forthcoming from Solomon Islands and necessary legal arrangements including rules of engagement be put in place.

Recommend that Cabinet delegate authority to the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence as Police, as Ministers with Powers to Act in respect of further decisions in relation to any such deployment.

Note that Ministers with Powers to Act would review and confirm rules of engagement should the deployment proceed.

Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
Manatū Aorere
November 2021

Released under the
Official Information Act

Briefing for call to Solomon Islands Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Hon. Jeremiah Manele, afternoon November 30

Haurongo – Biography



Jeremiah Manele (“ma-nel-ee”), was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in 2019. A career diplomat, he was previously Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs and External Trade. An in-person visit to New Zealand by Manele scheduled for March 2020 was deferred due to COVID-19. **You spoke to Minister Manele by Zoom in February 2021**, during which you discussed COVID-19 recovery, the Pacific Islands Forum and RSE. He also spoke with Minister Twyford via Zoom in June 2021, during which they discussed economic cooperation under PACER Plus, and disarmament and arms control matters.

Ngā whakaritenga - Call logistics

- Text Minister Manele to confirm a call s9(2)(a)

Ngā Whāinga – Objectives

- To acknowledge the request for assistance from Solomon Islands on the afternoon of 30 November, and note New Zealand’s impending positive response.

Ngā Take - Issues

- **Express** solidarity with Solomon Islands and sadness for the destruction and deaths in Honiara last week.
- **Acknowledge** receipt of the request from Solomon Islands Government for New Zealand support to the international deployment of personnel to Honiara.
- s6(a)
- **Note** that, subject to approval from Ministers with Powers to Act, New Zealand will respond positively to the request.

Tuarongo - Background

- As at 1400 on 30 November, the situation in Honiara is continuing to stabilise. The focus for residents and businesses has shifted to cleaning up. The damage from the unrest was severe: early estimates indicate economic damage upwards of SBD 227m (c. NZD 41m) and the loss of 1000 jobs.
- s6(a) Leader of the Opposition, Matthew Wale, has tabled a Motion of No Confidence, which will be debated on December 6. s6(a)
- The Solomon Islands Government formally submitted a request for New Zealand assistance on the afternoon of 30 November to Prime Minister Ardern. s6(a)
- Officials from relevant agencies (Ministry of Defence, New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Police, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet) are preparing a submission to Ministers with Powers to Act to outline possible New Zealand responses to the request.
- Prior advice (Monday 29 November) is included in Attachment One.

*Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
Pacific and Development Group
MFAT
November 2021*

RESTRICTED

Page 3 of 5

Attachment one appears in this tranche on page 26. The attachment has been removed here to avoid duplication

Attachment one: Aide Memoire – Oral Item to Cabinet 29 November 2021: Solomon Islands unrest: Aotearoa New Zealand support

Released under the
Official Information Act



1 December 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

1 December 2021

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek approval from Ministers with the Powers to Act to deploy New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel to Solomon Islands for up to 30 days.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For approval by	1 December 2021
Deputy Prime Minister	For approval by	1 December 2021
Minister of Police	For approval by	1 December 2021
Minister of Defence	For approval by	1 December 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Mark Ramsden	Divisional Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	s9(2)(a)
Richard Griffith	Unit Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakī – Minister's Office to complete


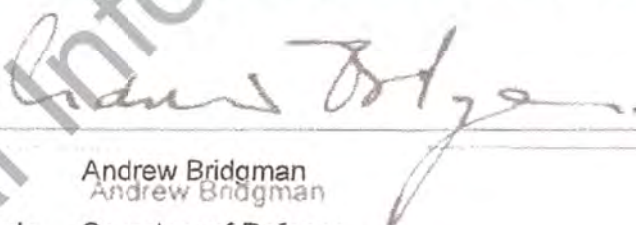
- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes | |

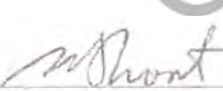
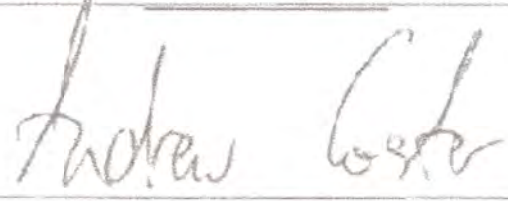
Comments

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Pito matua – Key points

- Recent unrest in Honiara, Solomon Islands, has caused significant damage, and poses risks to the ongoing security and development of the country. ^{s6(a)}
- Personnel from the Australian, Papua New Guinean, and Fijian defence and police forces are currently deployed in Honiara to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF).
- We received a request for assistance from the Government of Solomon Islands on 30 November, which requests ^{s6(a)}
- There is a strong strategic case to respond positively to Solomon Islands' request, grounded in both Aotearoa New Zealand's equities in the Pacific and our fundamental partnership with Australia.
- Officials have assessed options and recommend a joint deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police for up to 30 days. It will aim to assist in stabilising the situation, rebuilding community trust, which will assist businesses and communities to begin the process of rebuilding from the unrest. This deployment will complement New Zealand Aid Programme activities, including ongoing support to the RSIPF and humanitarian assistance as needed.
- ^{s6(a)}
- Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force will prepare a submission with specific deployment advice for Minister Defence, referred to Ministers with Powers to Act.

	
Jonathan Kings	Andrew Bridgman
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Secretary of Defence
Date: 1 / 12 / 2021	Date: 1 / 12 / 2021

	
Air Marshal Kevin Short	Andrew Coster
Chief of Defence	Police Commissioner
Date: 01 / 12 / 21	Date: 1 / 12 / 2021

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Approve** the deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel to Solomon Islands for a period of 30 days Yes / No
- 2 **Note** that this deployment will be accompanied with ongoing support from the New Zealand Aid Programme Yes / No
- 3 **Note** that all personnel deployed to Solomon Islands will follow COVID-19 protocols to minimise risks of transmission Yes / No
- 4 Prime Minister to **consider and approve** text in the attached letter for Prime Minister Sogavare Yes / No
- 5 **Note** that Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force will prepare a separate submission for Minister of Defence with specific deployment advice, for referral Ministers with Powers to Act Yes / No
- 6 **Note** that forces will be deployed under the ^{s6(d)} Rules of Engagement Yes / No

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Prime Minister

Date: 1 / 12 / 21

Hon Grant Robertson

Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Finance

Date: / /

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere

Date: / /

Hon Poto Williams

Minister of Police

Date: / /

Hon Peeni Henare

Minister of Defence

Date: / /

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Approve** the deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel to Solomon Islands for a period of 30 days Yes / No
- 2 **Note** that this deployment will be accompanied with ongoing support from the New Zealand Aid Programme Yes / No
- 3 **Note** that all personnel deployed to Solomon Islands will follow COVID-19 protocols to minimise risks of transmission Yes / No
- 4 Prime Minister to **consider and approve** text in the attached letter for Prime Minister Sogavare Yes / No
- 5 **Note** that Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force will prepare a separate submission for Minister of Defence with specific deployment advice, for referral Ministers with Powers to Act Yes / No
- 6 **Note** that forces will be deployed under the ^{s6(d)} Rules of Engagement Yes / No

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern	Hon Grant Robertson
Prime Minister	Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Finance
Date: / /	Date: [1 12 21]

Hon Nanaia Mahuta	Hon Poto Williams
Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere	Minister of Police
Date: / /	Date: / /

Hon Peeni Henare
 Minister of Defence
 Date: / /

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Approve the deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel to Solomon Islands for a period of 30 days | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No |
| 2 | Note that this deployment will be accompanied with ongoing support from the New Zealand Aid Programme | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No |
| 3 | Note that all personnel deployed to Solomon Islands will follow COVID-19 protocols to minimise risks of transmission | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No |
| 4 | Prime Minister to consider and approve text in the attached letter for Prime Minister Sogavare | Yes / No |
| 5 | Note that Ministry of Defence and New Zealand Defence Force will prepare a separate submission for Minister of Defence with specific deployment advice, for referral Ministers with Powers to Act | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No |
| 6 | Note that forces will be deployed under the ^{s6(d)} Rules of Engagement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No |

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Prime Minister

Date: / /

Hon Grant Robertson

Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Finance

Date: / /

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere

Date: / /

Hon Poto Williams

Minister of Police

Date: / /

Hon Peeni Henare

Minister of Defence

Date: 1 / 11 / 2021



Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Pūrongo – Report

Situation and context

1. A political protest in Honiara on 24 November developed into the most significant unrest in Solomon Islands since the Chinatown riots in 2006.
2. The protests rapidly escalated into arson and looting across Honiara. While the bulk of the targets were Chinese-owned businesses in Chinatown, police stations, banks, schools, and Solomon Islands-owned businesses were also targeted.

3. s6(a)

4. s6(a) The Central Bank of Solomon Islands estimates that 56 buildings were destroyed and anticipates losses to the Solomon Islands economy of at least SBD \$227 million (c. NZ\$41 million). Over 1000 jobs are affected. s6(a)

5. The security situation is stabilising s6(a) As at 1700 30 November, there are no further reports of looting and rioting, and the city has entered clean-up mode. s6(a)

6. Details of humanitarian need are still emerging. With supplies burned or looted, and movement of food from rural Guadalcanal into Honiara restricted, food shortages have been reported in Honiara and prices are likely to rise. s6(a)
s6(a)

The Australian-led support mission

7. Following an announcement by PM Scott Morrison on Thursday 25 November, Australia has deployed Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Australia Federal Police (AFP) personnel to Solomon Islands under a 2017 security agreement.² ADF and AFP forces are now supporting the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) to maintain order around Honiara. They were joined by personnel from the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary

s6(a)

² Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Solomon Islands Concerning the Basis for Deployment of Police, Armed Forces, and other Personnel to Solomon Islands, Canberra, 14 August 2017

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

(RPNGC) on Saturday 27. The current deployment is 99 ADF, 45 AFP, and a total of 37 from the RPNGC. Fiji has also deployed around 50 personnel from the Royal Fiji Military Force. All outside forces in Honiara fall under the command of the AFP Commander on the ground, who reports to the Commissioner of the RSIPF.

Solomon Islands Government request

8. We received a request for New Zealand support from Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare on 30 November 2021. The letter addressed to Prime Minister Ardern requests ^{s6(a)}
s6(a)

Aotearoa New Zealand response – strategic case

9. Solomon Islands is a core partner for Aotearoa New Zealand in the Pacific. ^{s6(a)}
s6(a)

Aotearoa New Zealand was a significant contributor to the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) from 2003-2017, which more than 2000 New Zealanders served in. Solomon Islands is also a major partner for the New Zealand Aid Programme, which includes a long-running activity to support the RSIPF.³

10. ^{s6(a)}

11. ^{s6(a)}

12. ^{s6(a)}

13. New Zealand Police have an established close working partnership with senior RSIPF Executive members through the Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme (SIPSP), funded through the New Zealand Aid Programme. SIPSP has been supporting RSIPF with

³ Details of Aotearoa New Zealand's current Aid programme with Solomon Islands are included at Annex One

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

the implementation of their strategic plan and the progression of a community policing model. ^{s6(a)}
s6(a)

14. Responding to a request from the Solomon Islands Government for assistance is consistent with the 2000 Biketawa Declaration and the 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security. Engagement is also consistent with the vision and values of the Pacific Islands Forum's Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and has been welcomed across the region.

Sustainability and risks

15. The presence of international forces is likely to calm the situation over the next 3-4 weeks. ^{s6(a)}
16. The New Zealand Aid Programme will continue to support the development aspirations of Solomon Islands, and will remain a critical component in the medium term response to the unrest. In particular, SIPSP will play an important role in supporting RSIPF through the rollout of the Crime Prevention Strategy with continued community engagement and prevention activity.
17. Solomon Islands has remained COVID-free by maintaining strict border controls, and the entry of deployed personnel increases the risk of COVID transmission. All New Zealand personnel will be fully vaccinated and tested 48 hours before departure.

s6(a)

Options analysis

20. Officials assess that, ^{s6(a)} positively to the requests from the Solomon Islands Government ^{s6(a)} we should respond

21. We have the following three broad options for a response.

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

s6(a)

- 21.3. **A blended deployment, which uses New Zealand Police and Defence Force personnel** to secure the situation and support the RSIPF. In this option, New Zealand Aid Programme activities will continue to support stability and resilience in Solomon Islands, with potential to adjust for new needs in the medium term. This is the recommended option.

22. s6(a)

Recommended option: Blended deployment

23. We recommend a blended deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel for up to 30 days, with support from the New Zealand Aid Programme over the medium term. In this option, the Local Coordinating Authority will be the Australian senior national officer, who reports to the Commissioner RSIPF. There will be close coordination with RSIPF, New Zealand Police, New Zealand Defence Force, and other partner agencies.

New Zealand Police contribution

24. s9(2)(g)(i)

25. It is considered that any additional deployment of New Zealand Police constabulary staff
s6(d)

26. s9(2)(g)(i)

New Zealand Defence Force contribution

27. An advance team can deploy to Honiara ahead of the main contingent. This grouping can depart New Zealand on 2 December, arriving in Honiara on the same day. The deployment of this group will only occur should the necessary legal arrangements be in place with Solomon Islands Government before their arrival. The group have met COVID-19 requirements. The remainder of the of the deployment can mobilise on 4 December.

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

28. An NZDF national command element of up to 20 personnel can provide interagency and multinational coordination at the local level, communications and logistics support, and command over deployed NZDF elements.
29. A platoon group of up to 40 personnel can assist the RSIPF and partner nations to maintain stability, for community engagement, and to provide public reassurance. The NZDF is liaising with agencies and the Australian Defence Force to confirm the composition of this group.
30. The NZDF are able to provide fixed wing transport for personnel and equipment between New Zealand and Honiara from 2 December and will do multiple flights as required.

31. ^{s6(a)}

32. Defence will provide detailed deployment advice separately to Ministers with Power to Act.

New Zealand Aid Programme support

33. In the immediate term, the New Zealand Aid Programme will be utilised to support the RSIPF through the existing policing programme. The New Zealand High Commission in Honiara also has access to an Emergency High Commission Fund to support urgent humanitarian needs as identified by the Solomon Islands Government.
34. Officials will explore options to utilise the proposed deployment to respond to requests from Solomon Islands Government or partners for delivery of humanitarian and other equipment (e.g., PPE) as they arise.
35. Officials will consider whether there is a need to adjust the activities and priorities of the New Zealand Aid Programme over the medium term in response to the unrest.

Legal basis for deployment

36. Officials are finalising the legal basis for a proposed deployment. In line with PM Sogavare's 30 November letter of request, New Zealand has been asked by Australia to contribute personnel, as a third state, to its deployment under the 2017 Security Agreement between Australia and Solomon Islands. ^{s6(a)}

New Zealand's inclusion as a third state to this Agreement would cover off command and cooperation elements of this deployment.

37. ^{s6(a)}

38. NZDF personnel will deploy with ^{s6(d)} Rules of Engagement ^{s6(d)}. These are attached to this submission for Ministerial information. ROE are orders which must be complied with by NZDF deployed personnel. ^{s6(d)}

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Media and communications

39. Minister of Foreign Affairs would lead initial communications with other Ministers to make subsequent releases. A detailed communications plan is being developed.

Released under the
Official Information Act

Solomon Islands unrest: New Zealand deployment

Annex one: New Zealand engagement in Solomon Islands, from 'Solomon Islands Four Year Plan'

Goal	Description	Example activities
Goal One: Progress towards a state that effectively delivers for, and engages with, all its citizens	Our engagement focuses on supporting Solomon Islands Government to deliver effectively, accountably and transparently to Solomon Islanders. We partner with all levels of government and civil society to promote engagement by all Solomon Islanders including women, children, young people, rural communities and other excluded people in decision making and the processes and benefits of development.	Education Sector Support Programme Solomon Islands Youth Engagement
Goal Two: An increasingly stable Solomon Islands that contributes to the security of the region	We partner with Solomon Islands Government to promote security and stability both nationally and regionally. We partner with government, civil society and communities to address the root causes of conflict, including emerging drivers; tackle the drivers of insecurity; and strengthen peace.	Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme Supporting Economic and Financial Reform
Goal Three: An increasingly resilient Solomon Islands able to enjoy greater prosperity and sustainability, and more equitable benefits of development	We support the development of sustainable and diverse economic opportunities that provide tangible benefits and build resilience for communities. We promote opportunities for women and young people to drive as well as benefit from greater economic growth and social inclusion. We seek to diversify our partnerships so that people living across the country, including in rural communities, share these opportunities.	Provincial Airfield Upgrades Solomon Islands Tourism Recovery Programme
Goal Four: New Zealand's distinctive partnership with Solomon Islands is recognised, valued and reciprocated	We invest in our relationship with Solomon Islands. We work in partnership to achieve the priority areas for cooperation as outlined in the New Zealand-Solomon Islands Statement of Partnership. We collaborate with Solomon Islands to ensure that our shared priorities, including climate change, are recognised at a regional and global level. By promoting open and constructive dialogue, we maintain our strong ties with Solomon Islands	Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Plant Project Management Office Regular values-based engagements with SIG partners

Released under the
Official Information Act



21 December 2021

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

21 December 2021

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

BRIEFING	Decision Submission
PURPOSE	To seek approval from Ministers with Powers to Act to extend the mandate to allow a small deployment of up to five New Zealand Defence Force personnel to operate in Solomon Islands in the first quarter of 2022. The paper also briefs Ministers on ^{s6(a)} and Aotearoa New Zealand's medium term options for supporting Solomon Islands.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For approval by	21 December 2021
Deputy Prime Minister	For approval by	21 December 2021
Minister of Police	For approval by	21 December 2021
Minister of Defence	For approval by	21 December 2021
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs	For information by	21 December 2021

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Mark Ramsden	Divisional Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	s9(2)(a)
Richard Griffith	Unit Manager	Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division	

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakāi – Minister's Office to complete

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes | |

Comments

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Pito matua – Key points

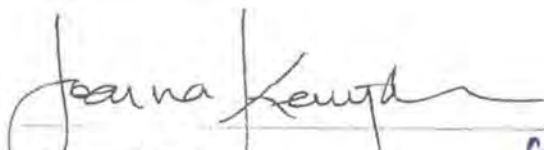
- We seek approval from Ministers with Powers to Act to extend the deployment of up to five New Zealand Defence Force personnel to Solomon Islands from 1 January 2022 to no later than 31 March 2022. The deployment would take place as part of the Australian-led regional mission in Solomon Islands and would be in support of policing efforts.
- We also seek approval from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to broaden the scope of the *Solomon Islands Fiscal Crisis Response Funding*¹ to allow greater flexibility in apportioning funds to respond to emerging needs as a result of Solomon Islands' recent unrest.
- The presence of international security forces has restored a sense of calm in Honiara s6(a)
s6(a) the deployment of the New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel alongside those from Australia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji has been well-received by Solomon Islanders.
- Notwithstanding the success of the Pacific regional mission and its support to the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), s6(a)
s6(a)
- s6(a)
- On 6 December Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare survived a Motion of No Confidence vote; Solomon Islands Parliament has subsequently risen for the year. s6(a)
s6(a)
- Extending Aotearoa New Zealand's defence deployment to 31 March 2022, alongside the ongoing efforts of New Zealand Police, Australia and other Pacific partners in support of the RSIPF, and enabled under Australia's bilateral security treaty with Solomon Islands, would assist in maintaining peace and security, s6(a)
s6(a) The deployment is in line with the Minister of Defence's Pacific and people priorities.
s6(a)

¹ 11 November 2020 Submission to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

s6(a)

Our country strategy for Solomon Islands sees us well placed to help ^{s6(a)}
s6(a) the Aotearoa New Zealand International
Development Cooperation (IDC) Programme and the New Zealand Police supported
Solomon Islands Police Support Programme offer opportunities to target further support,
s6(a)


Joanna Kempkers

for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Date: 21 / 12 / 2021


for Andrew Bridgman

Secretary of Defence

Date: 21 / 12 / 2021


for Air Marshal Kevin Short

Chief of Defence Force

Date: 21 / 12 / 2021


Glenn Dunbier

Acting Police Commissioner

Date: 21 / 12 / 2021

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------|
| 1 | Approve the extension of the deployment period for up to five New Zealand Defence Force personnel to Solomon Islands out to 31 March 2022; | Yes / No |
| 2 | Minister of Foreign Affairs to approve broadening the scope of the <i>Solomon Islands Fiscal Crisis Response Funding</i> , to allow funds to be used in response to the unrest; | Yes / No |
| 3 | Note that the deployment will be accompanied by ongoing support from New Zealand's International Development Cooperation Programme including the New Zealand Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme; | Yes / No |
| 4 | s6(a) | Yes / No |
| 5 | Note that officials are continuing engagement with the Solomon Islands Government s6(a) | Yes / No |
| 6 | Agree that officials would revert to Ministers with Powers to Act should officials recommend that the deployed number of land-based New Zealand Defence Force personnel exceed five, or recommend that the deployment's mandate exceed the 31 March 2022 period; | Yes / No |
| 7 | Note that the legal basis for New Zealand's deployment to Solomon Islands is on request from Australia, under the Australian Security Agreement, with the approval of the Solomon Islands Government; | Yes / No |
| 8 | Note the estimated marginal cost of the proposed deployment of up to five New Zealand Defence Force personnel to the Solomon Islands up to 31 March 2022 is NZ\$ 0.356 million; | Yes / No |
| 9 | Note the proposed New Zealand Defence Force commitment can be funded within the existing unallocated baseline for Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA; and | Yes / No |
| 10 | Note that the overall operational threat to New Zealand Defence Force personnel deployed to Solomon Islands is assessed as s6(a) that the Minister of Defence will be notified should this increase, and that the current Rules of Engagement will remain extant. | Yes / No |
| 11 | Agree a media statement which would outline New Zealand's adjusted force posture. | Yes / No |

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Prime Minister

Date: / /

Hon Grant Robertson

Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Finance

Date: / /

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere

Date: / /

Hon Poto Williams

Minister of Police

Date: / /

Hon Peeni Henare

Minister of Defence

Date: / /

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Pūrongo – Report

Purpose

1. To seek approval:
 - 1.1. from Ministers with Powers to Act (MWPTA) to extend the existing mandate for a deployment of up to five New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel to continue to operate in Solomon Islands to no later than 31 March 2022; and
 - 1.2. from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to broaden the scope of the *Solomon Islands Fiscal Crisis Response Funding* to allow for the use of funds to go toward responding to requests from Solomon Islands as a result of the unrest.

Background

2. On 29 November 2021 Cabinet agreed in principle to a small New Zealand deployment in conjunction with Australia's security support to Solomon Islands, if a request was forthcoming from Solomon Islands (CAB-21-MIN-0510).
3. Cabinet also authorised a group of Ministers comprising the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Police, and the Minister of Defence, to have the Power to Act to make decisions on the deployment, if required, including any necessary legal arrangements, rules of engagement and other details.
4. On 30 November 2021 the Solomon Islands Government formally requested assistance from the NZDF and New Zealand Police (NZP) to work alongside partners from Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Fiji to restore peace and security.
5. On 1 December, Ministers With Power To ACT (MWPTA) agreed to the deployment of up to 60 NZDF and up to 11 NZP personnel to Solomon Islands for up to 30 days from 2 December 2021.
6. Additionally on 3 December MWPTA approved the deployment of an Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) with an embarked helicopter and up to 80 NZDF personnel.

Situation and context - update

7. Since the events of 25 and 26 November, the security situation in Honiara has stabilised as a result of the support of Pacific security forces assisting the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF). Together with the RSIPF, Aotearoa New Zealand police and defence personnel, and international partners Australia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, have provided both reassurance to the community and deterrence against potential agitators. As a result of the improving security situation, some New Zealand and Australian security personnel have departed Honiara as part of an adjustment to capability of the Solomon Islands Assistance Force that reflects the stabilised situation on the ground.
8. With fewer than 200 RSIPF personnel in Honiara, the presence of Pacific security personnel has strengthened the capacity ^{s6(a)} of Solomon Islands' police, who have continued to maintain a visible presence on the streets in Honiara. The RSIPF was also able to manage the security operation around the sitting of Parliament on 6 December and the ongoing Parliamentary session that week.
9. As of 21 December, the Aotearoa New Zealand contingent consists of:

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

- 9.1. Eleven NZDF personnel (fifty four NZDF personnel and one Ministry of Defence civilian returned to New Zealand over the past week); and
- 9.2. Eleven NZP personnel including one non-sworn staff member. This does not include the four pre-existing NZP staff working as police advisors on the Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme.
10. The deployment of *HMNZS Wellington* has concluded and the ship is on its way back to New Zealand having departed Solomon Islands on 18 December.
11. Despite the security situation stabilising, ^{s6(a)}
s6(a)

s6(a)

12. s6(a)

13.

14.

15.

Impacts of the riots

16. The economic impacts of the recent riots are becoming clearer. The Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) Riot Impact Assessment reported that the impact on the economy is estimated at approximately SB\$ 534 million (NZ\$ 97.3 million), up from the SB\$ 227 million (NZ\$ 41.4 million) initially estimated.
17. While the Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office is still finalising the assessment of the extent of humanitarian needs, our judgement is there is no need for large scale humanitarian relief at this stage. The New Zealand High Commission has made use of its Emergency Fund to support Solomon Islands Red Cross Society's operations on the ground. We have responded to requests from the Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Government to support COVID-19 preparedness and life jackets and wet weather gear have been handed over to the Solomon Islands Government.

s9(2)(g)(i)

18.

s6(a)

19.

20.

21.

Aotearoa New Zealand's strategic interests

22. Aotearoa New Zealand's broader strategic interests continue to be served by s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Our regional objective in the Pacific is to promote a safe, peaceful, prosperous, and resilient Pacific s9(2)(g)(i)

This intersects with the Minister of Defence's prioritisation of the Pacific in the Defence portfolio,² and the Defence principal of kotahitanga.

23. Extending the mandate for an NZDF deployment would allow Aotearoa New Zealand to deliver against its objectives in Solomon Islands, supporting the Solomon Islands Government and illustrating our responsive approach to the needs of a key partner in the region. s6(a)

² The Minister of Defence's Portfolio Priorities were announced on 8 December 2021, and include: i) People; ii) Infrastructure; and iii) The Pacific.

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

s6(a)

24. Australia is our closest partner and continues to welcome our support on the ground. New Zealand's police and defence personnel have operated effectively with the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Defence Force (ADF). s6(a)
s6(a)

Extending the mandate

25. s6(a)

26.

27.

28. s6(a)

29. Continued New Zealand support to the Australian-led effort would meet the following objectives:

29.1. strengthen our relationship with Solomon Islands by responding to a request from the Solomon Islands Government for New Zealand personnel to remain into the first quarter of 2022;

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

- 29.2. enable New Zealand to be well positioned to respond to further unrest by remaining connected to the Solomon Islands Government and other security forces including from Australia and Fiji;
- 29.3. s6(a) reinforcing New Zealand's commitment to kotahitanga for Pacific Island nations requiring assistance (in line with the Minister of Defence's Pacific priorities); and
- 29.4. s6(a)
30. The NZDF has capabilities in New Zealand which could be deployed at short notice if the security situation was to deteriorate, as demonstrated by the previously mandated deployment.

New Zealand Police contribution

31. NZP currently have 11 staff operating in Honiara. These personnel are due to continue their support to the current mission until the end of December 2021, aligned with the current mandate.
32. NZP will maintain a presence in Honiara through the Solomon Islands Police Support Programme (SIPSP), which includes four senior NZP personnel. The four NZP personnel will continue mentoring and advisory work within the crime prevention space, and will pivot as needed to be complementary to the community engagement and investigation work the RSIPF are undertaking in response to the unrest. A scheduled review of the SIPSP programme in early 2022 will offer the opportunity to look at whether increased investment in the policing space will help support the RSIPF's development.
33. New Zealand Police will review the current policing response if the situation on the ground in Honiara deteriorates for any reason.

New Zealand Defence Force contribution

34. It is proposed that MWPTA approve up to five NZDF personnel to remain in Solomon Islands until no later than 31 March 2022 as a contribution to the ADF-led *Multinational Police Support Group*. This group will work closely with Solomon Islands authorities, NZP, other New Zealand agencies, Australian and Fijian contingents.
35. The NZDF contingent will be made up of the following personnel (refer to *Annex One* for organisational context and position descriptions):
- 35.1. Operations Officer;
 - 35.2. Company Sergeant Major;
 - 35.3. Medical Staff Member;
 - s6(a)
 - 35.5. Logistics Officer.

Fixed wing transport

36. If NZDF aircraft are used for periodic flights between New Zealand and Solomon Islands from 1 January to up to 31 March 2022, these flights will be used to transport personnel

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

and equipment to and from Solomon Islands as required. Air crews are not included in the numbers for this deployment as these will vary by flight, and the crews will not be stationed within Solomon Islands' territory.

Offshore Patrol Vessel deployment

37. The requested mandate extension does not include an extension to the deployment of the Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV). The OPV provided valuable maritime security posture presence, profile, ^{s6(a)} It is assessed that the RSIPF patrol boats are in a position to provide unassisted maritime security support.

Threat assessment

38. The overall threat level to NZDF personnel deployed to Solomon Islands is ^{s6(a)} The Minister of Defence will be notified if the assessed threat level increases.
39. The overall health threat is assessed as ^{s6(a)} due to the risk of infectious diseases and insect-borne diseases, in relation to the time period on the ground in the Area of Operations.

Financial implications

40. The estimated marginal cost of the proposed deployment of up to five NZDF personnel to Solomon Islands to up to 31 March 2022, as part of Aotearoa New Zealand's response to Solomon Islands' request for assistance, is NZ\$ 0.356 million. The table below sets out the expenditure and funding arrangements for this deployment. The costs associated with the air elements of this support will be funded from within existing baselines.
41. The estimated cost of the mission can be funded from within the existing unallocated baseline for Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA. This takes into account all currently mandated and planned deployments.

Vote Defence Force	2021/22 (NZ\$'M)
	30.79
Assist to Solomon Islands	0.356
Residual MCA Funding Available	5.957

42. This deployment is under review for 'qualifying for operational service' under the Veterans Support Act 2014. If approved the cost for five personnel would be NZ\$ 0.198 million.

Legal Considerations

43. Aotearoa New Zealand would be responding to a formal request for support from the Government of Solomon Islands. The deployment is at the request of the Government of

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Australia. Under the Security Agreement³ between those two states, Australia, with the consent of Solomon Islands, may invite third states to contribute to a deployment. This approval was sought and provided for New Zealand personnel in relation to the existing deployment, and will be confirmed for the duration of any extension. Under the 2017 Agreement, should the Solomon Islands Government request further assistance from Australia, the Australian Senior National Officer will continue to be the local coordinating authority for NZDF and partner actions as a third State.

Status of Forces agreement – application of host law to NZDF personnel

44. Members of NZDF are immune from arrest, detention and all legal proceedings in Solomon Islands' courts and tribunals in relation to actions that are taken in the course of, or are incidental to, official duties.
45. All other NZDF legal considerations for the current approved mandate will continue to apply to the requested extension. This includes: the human rights assessment; the health and safety considerations; the management of the risk of harm to civilian casualties; the detainee handling considerations and the rules of engagement (as outlined in the *New Zealand Defence Force Deployment to Solomon Islands* Ministerial submission, approved by MWPTA on 1 December 2021).

Sustainability and risks – the outlook beyond March 2022

46. s6(a)

47.

48.

49.

³ Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Solomon Islands Concerning the Basis for Deployment of Police, Armed Forces, and other Personnel to Solomon Islands dated 14 August 2017.

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

s6(a)

50. The only sustainable path towards stability is to continue to support Solomon Islands' long-term development aspirations, addressing areas of under-privilege, increasing economic opportunity that benefits all Solomon Islanders, strengthening social capital, and promoting the effective and accountable function of government (including through our support to RSIPF and public financial management reforms).

New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme support

51. Aotearoa New Zealand's Development Cooperation prioritises promoting stability, addressing poverty, s6(a)
 s6(a) We have identified opportunities to use our existing programmes and relationships to address very immediate needs, including the rehabilitation of damaged school buildings, as well as addressing the s6(a)
 s6(a)

52. s6(a)

Response

53. In the short term, we will retain the ability to respond to humanitarian crises caused by the unrest (and the ongoing COVID-19 related economic contraction). We will continue to use the Emergency High Commission or Embassy Funds (EHEF) to respond in a timely and targeted way, and will consider further direct requests from Solomon Islands as they arise.

Recovery

54. We have undertaken activity planning and prioritisation processes through 2021, and have a number of proposed development activities that – if approved – will build on Aotearoa New Zealand's existing focus and relationships to help address s6(a)
 s6(a)

55. We have committed to standing-up a project management office to facilitate the build of the Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Facility, which is in Malaita. This is a transformational infrastructure development project which has been a priority for Solomon Islands for the past two decades, s6(a)
 s6(a)

56. We will leverage our education partnership in the medium term to work with government to consider how peace and civic education can be strengthened, and may also consider

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

options to expand our support to senior secondary education. We are also supporting youth engagement and employment through a new five year phase of programming. The programme design will be informed by youth voices and will consider how to improve the education and health outcomes for urban and provincially-based young people, while supporting them to contribute to economic growth, and develop their place in society. We will continue to leverage opportunities across our development cooperation for young people, including through our infrastructure activities.

57. We also seek to broaden the scope of approved Fiscal Crisis Response Funding to assist if needed. In November 2020 the Minister of Foreign Affairs approved NZ\$^{s9(2)(j)} for Fiscal Crisis Response Funding from the existing Solomon Islands three year core funding allocation. This funding sought to address the severe economic contraction caused by COVID-19. Medium and longer-term recovery from the security crisis in Honiara is expected to create intensified fiscal burden on the Solomon Islands Government, and we anticipate further requests for support from this mechanism. Note that use of this facility will likely be attached to set outcomes.

Media and communications

58. The media are aware that security personnel have already returned to Aotearoa New Zealand, and the security situation in Honiara is currently calm. We recommend Ministers should make a joint-statement about the adjustment of Aotearoa New Zealand's footprint in Solomon Islands, during the week of 20 December. A proposed release will be provided.

Released under the Official Information Act

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

Annex One: NZDF Support to the Multinational Police Support Group in Solomon Islands

Introduction.

1. The organisation chart below illustrates the various NZDF elements involved in the *Multinational Police Support Group* in Solomon Islands. It will consist of up to five NZDF personnel on the ground, based in Honiara.

OP SOLOMON ISLANDS ASSISTANCE MULTINATIONAL POLICE SUPPORT GROUP

s6(b)(i)

2. Descriptions:

- a. **Headquarters.** The Headquarters will be the command and control element of the group, and provide the planning, execution, coordination and logistics functions. They will liaise and coordinate with the Australian Federal Police, New Zealand Police, and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, as well as consular representatives, and other key stakeholders. The New Zealand contribution to the headquarters will consist of three personnel:

Solomon Islands unrest: Request for extension of mandate

- i. **Operations Officer.** The Operations Officer will lead the planning and execution of the Multinational Police Support Groups tasking in support of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, and the supporting Australian Federal and New Zealand Police personnel. This role is a critical function within the group.
 - ii. **Company Sergeant Major.** The Company Sergeant Major coordinates all personnel and administrative aspects of the Support Group. Their role will be pivotal to the success of the mission by ensuring that the Commander and Operations staff are able to focus on operational tasks.
 - iii. **Logistics Officer.** The Logistics Officer will be part of a small cell whose responsibility will be to sustain the Support Group, and be prepared to facilitate the reception of high readiness forces from Australia, New Zealand, or the broader Pacific, should there be a deterioration of the security situation that necessitates their deployment.
- b. **Medical Staff.** The intention is to maintain a credible and capable medical team as part of the Multinational Police Support Group. This will ensure self-sufficient medical cover for the support personnel, as well as police, without placing a demand on local facilities. It will also provide a core medical capability to support any high readiness force deployment if the situation demands. This contribution may initially be a Medical Officer, a Nursing Officer or Environmental Health Officer.

s6(a)