

Commissioner's message



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commissioner TW Negus