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Small Arms
in the Pacific

Philip Alpers and Conor Twyford

March 2003

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A publication
of the Small Arms Survey

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The Small Arms Survey

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANU	Australian National University
AUD	Australian dollar
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BETA	Bougainville Ex-combatants' Trust Account
BPMG	Bougainville Peace Monitoring Group
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army
BRF	Bougainville Resistance Forces
CPRF	Community Peace and Restoration Fund (Solomon Islands)
CRIN	Customs Regional Intelligence Network
DDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
DDR	disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDA	excess defence article
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
EU	European Union
FF	French franc
FJD	Fiji dollar
FMS	foreign military sales
FRSC	Forum Regional Security Committee (of the Pacific Islands Forum)
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GDP	gross domestic product
GPG	Guadalcanal provincial government
GPMG	general purpose machine gun
GRA	Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFM	Isatabu Freedom Movement
IHL	international humanitarian law
IPMT	International Peace Monitoring Team
IPPNW	International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
MEF	Malaita Eagle Force
MP	member of parliament
MPG	Malaita provincial government
NISAT	Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
NZD	New Zealand dollar
OCO	Oceania Customs Organization
OPM	<i>Organisasi Papua Merdeka</i>
PFF	Police Field Force
PGK	Kina (Papua New Guinea currency)
PILOM	Pacific Islands Law Officers' Meeting
PMC	Peace Monitoring Council
PMG	Peace Monitoring Group
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force

PPCC	Peace Process Consultative Committee
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
RPNGC	Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary
RSIP	Royal Solomon Islands Police
SALW	small arms and light weapons
SID	Solomon Islands dollar
SLR	self-loading rifle (often a NATO military assault rifle)
SPCPC	South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference
TMG	Truce Monitoring Group
TPA	Townsville Peace Agreement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNOMB	United Nations Observer Mission on Bougainville
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USD	US dollar
UXO	unexploded ordnance
VT	Vatu (Vanuatu currency)
WDC	Weapons Disposal Committee
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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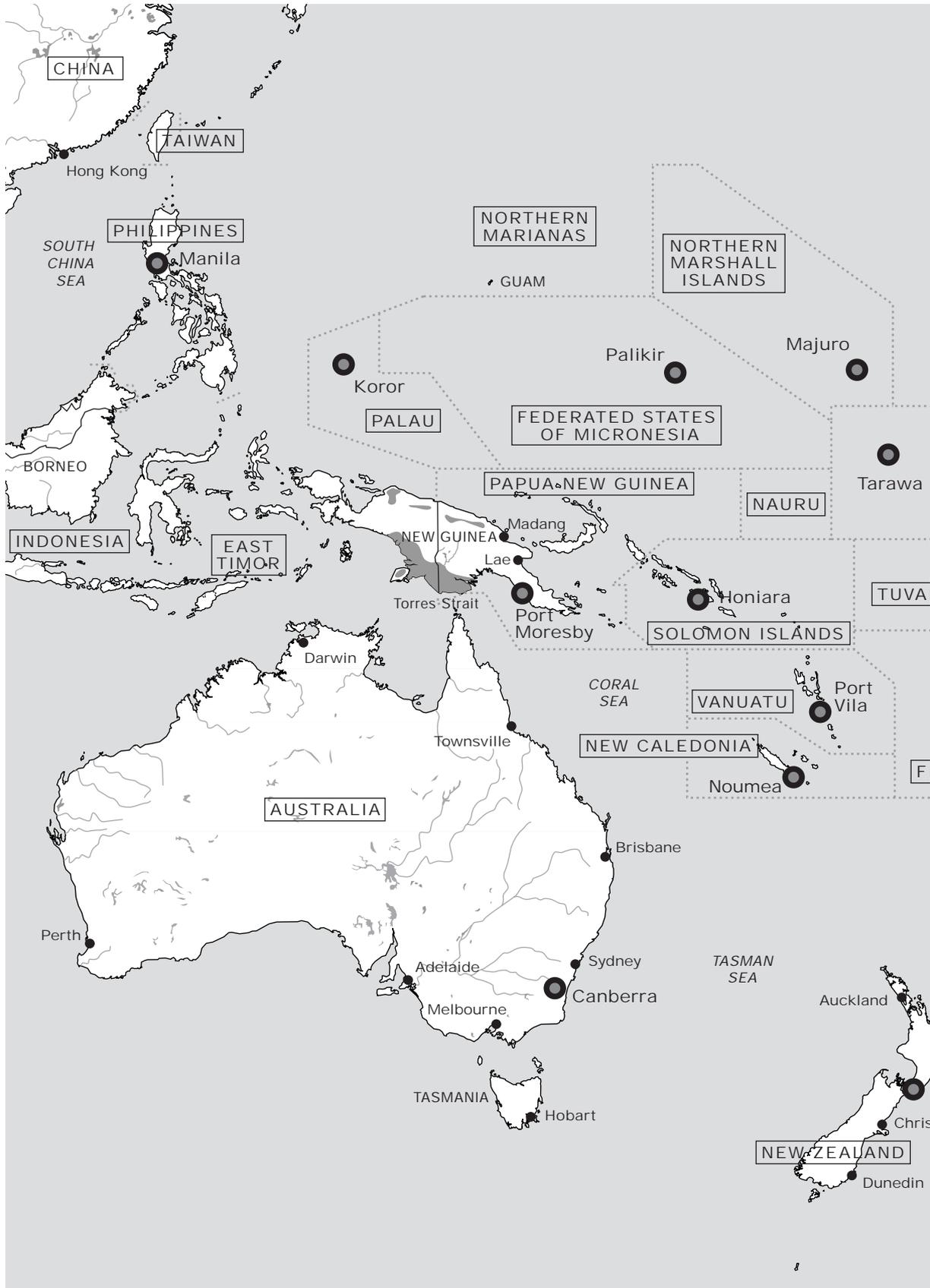
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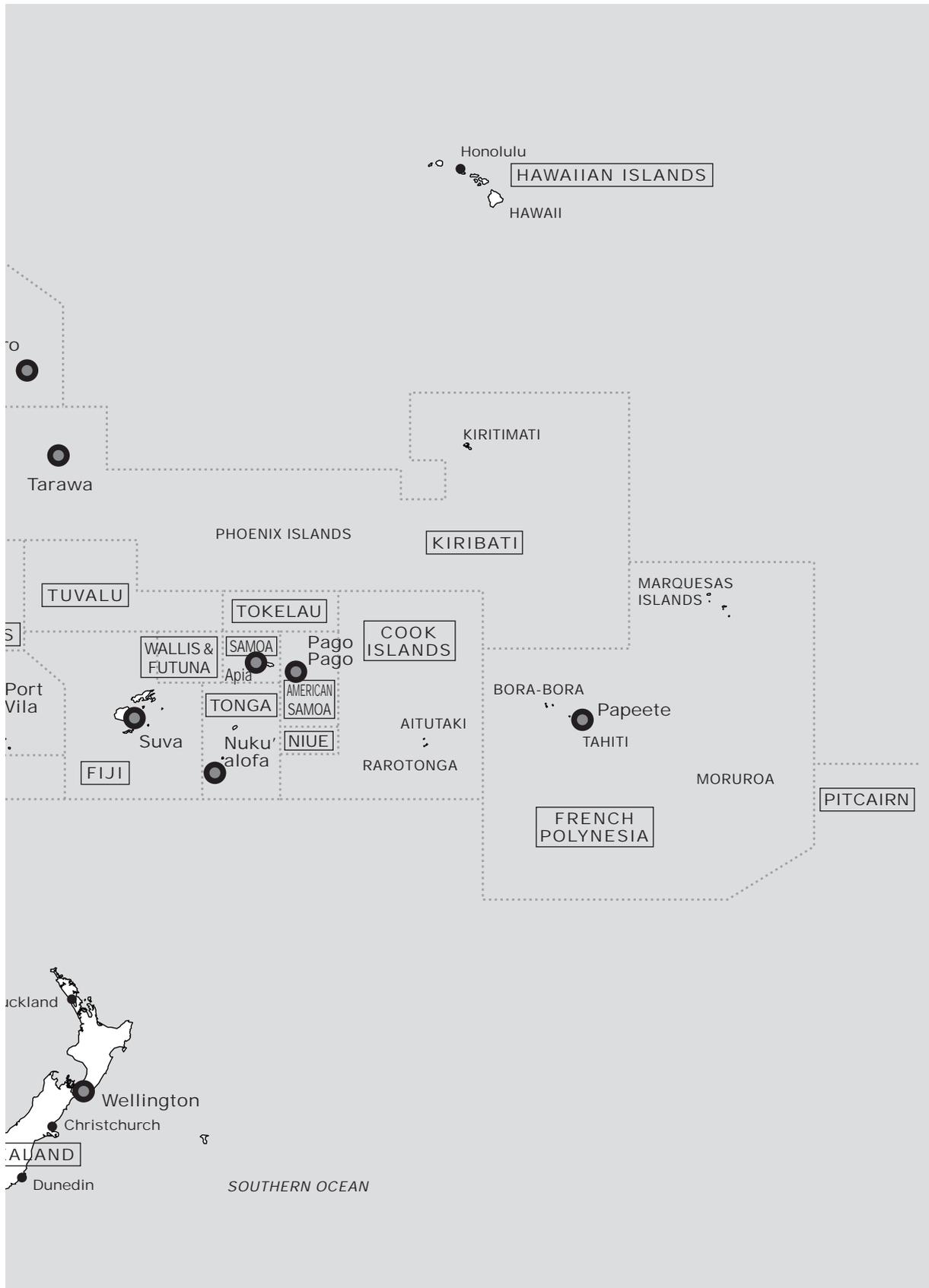
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OTHER PACIFIC/INTERNATIONAL

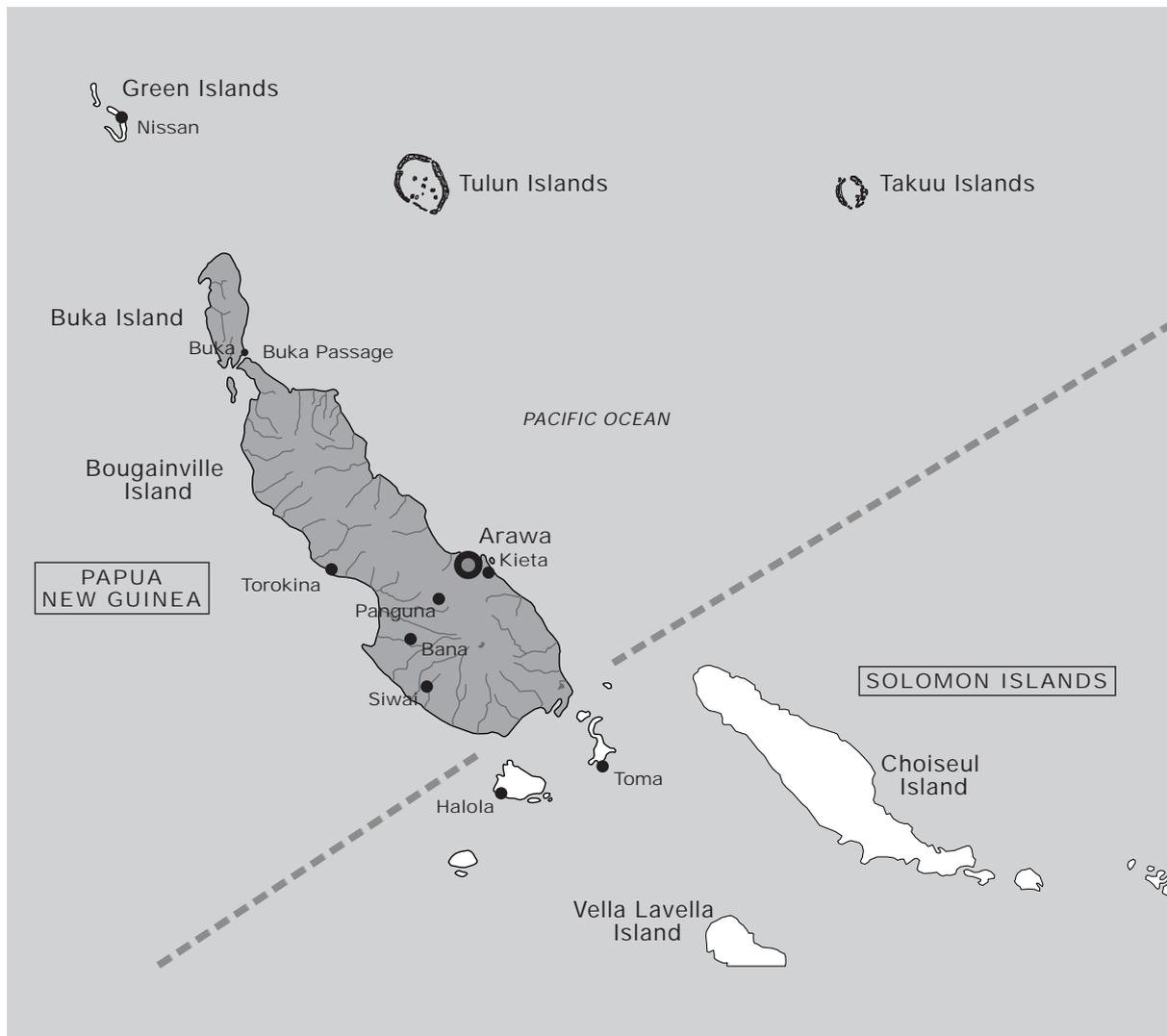
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Map 1 Pacific states

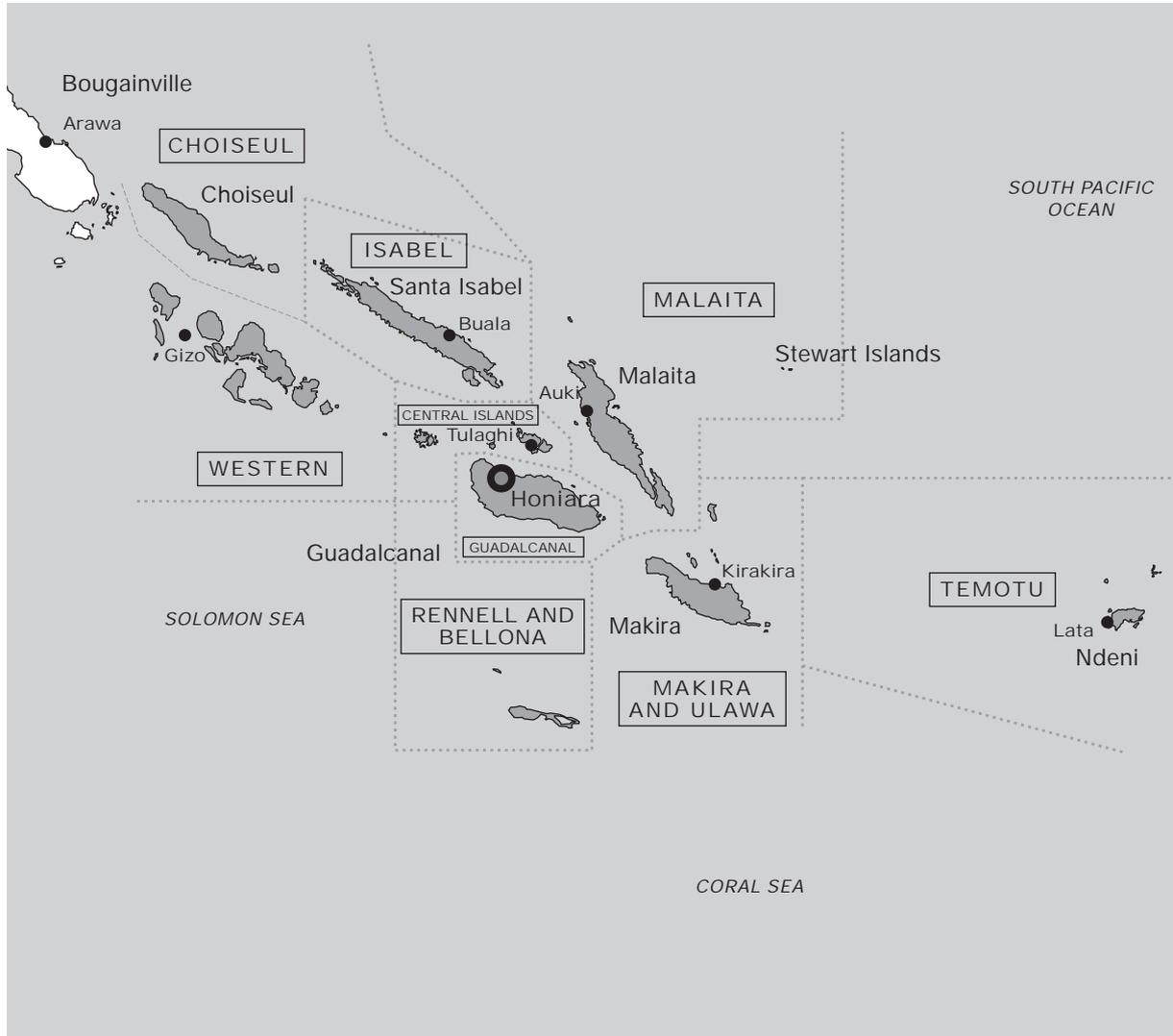




Map 2 Conflict states: Bougainville and surrounds



Map 3 Conflict states: Solomon Islands and surrounds



Summary

This study examines a wide range of small arms-related issues in 20 nations of the southern Pacific. It investigates the status of existing firearm legislation, the extent of legal stockpiles and illicit trade, and the socio-economic impacts of armed conflict on Pacific communities. Case histories examine more closely the disarmament process in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, along with the widespread disruption wrought with small arms in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Current initiatives to combat small arms trafficking in the region are also examined.

Key findings include the following:

Stockpiles and trafficking: Lawfully held civilian stockpiles of small arms in the Pacific include 3.1 million firearms, or one privately held gun for every ten people. This surpasses the global ratio of privately held firearms to population by more than 50 per cent.

The vast majority of firearms in the Pacific are owned by Australians and New Zealanders, who rank among the most heavily armed civilians in the industrialized world. New Zealand holds the largest per capita stockpile of firearms in the region.

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Although routinely unarmed police protect more than five million citizens in 12 of the 20 nations surveyed for this report, the combined law enforcement and military forces of the southern Pacific hold an estimated 226,000 small arms, or one-fourteenth of the civilian stockpile.

In Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea, groups bent on rebellion, intimidation, and profit have treated state-owned armouries as gun supermarkets, taking weapons when needed. Much work has been done, and much more is needed to improve the security and management practices of police and military armouries in many Pacific island states.

At least 26 nations legally export arms to the Pacific, with more than one half of sales coming from the United States. Small arms from China and Eastern Europe are far less common than in other regions.

By definition, illicit weapons are virtually impossible to count. Given that a full regional analysis may never be possible, this study can only estimate that many hundreds of thousands of illegal firearms exist in the Pacific region.

Illicit trafficking in small arms is a pressing issue in Papua New Guinea, where sources of gun-running include Southeast Asia and the Papua New Guinea/West Papua border. Although a significant number of handguns and handgun parts have been smuggled from the US to Australia, available evidence suggests that most illicit firearms in Australia are obtained internally, from local arms dealers and gun owners.

Allegations of widespread smuggling are rarely supported by evidence. Illicit small arms found in the region are seldom tracked back to their last lawful owners, either domestic or foreign. In the absence of systematic crime gun tracing, evidence-based policy options are likely to remain elusive.

In the Pacific region, firearms that 'leaked' from lawful owners to criminals are the most common instruments of gun-related crime and violence.

Social and economic impacts: Most Pacific nations are at peace, whether armed or not. In countries free from armed conflict, levels of firearm-related violence range from moderate to very low. In communities that have recently suffered widespread small arms-related violence, the social and economic consequences have been both painful and profound.

In this report, case studies of Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Bougainville (Papua New Guinea) show how devastating the impacts of armed conflict can be. The Solomon Islands continue to teeter on the edge of economic collapse, while in Bougainville the production base has been almost completely destroyed. Public confidence in the institutions of state has been badly shaken in all three case study communities.

Direct impacts of armed conflict include death and injury, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and forced displacement. While indirect impacts are rarely as clear-cut, many can be attributed to the ready availability of lethal weapons. They include declining access to basic entitlements such as health and education, long-term trauma and disruption, in particular to the prospects of an entire generation of young people, damage to social and economic infrastructure, and declining levels of investment, economic productivity, and self sufficiency.

In the light of recent experience in the Pacific, there now seems to be broad consensus among donor agencies, governments, and civil society that disarmament and the security or destruction of small arms are urgent prerequisites for future development, good health, and prosperity.

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Legislation: The many inconsistencies among laws covering small arms in the Pacific leave the region vulnerable to gun-running. Loopholes and permissive attitudes to small arms encourage illicit traffickers to mark countries as soft entry points, thus gaining access to whole regions. In the Pacific, wide variations in gun owner licensing, firearm marking and registration, and import/export laws—and in the penalties for breaching those laws—create holes in the Pacific's regional net for traffickers to exploit.

Six Pacific states have either banned the private ownership of firearms entirely, or have suspended civilian gun ownership for an indefinite period. Of the 20 nations surveyed, 15 prohibit the private ownership of handguns (pistols and revolvers), while the remainder allow handgun ownership only in exceptional cases. Only Papua New Guinea and the French territories permit the possession of private firearms for self defence. Ironically, among those with the most stringent gun controls are four current or former Pacific territories of the US.

Australian legislation is the most up-to-date and comprehensive in the region. By the standards of its 19 Pacific neighbours, New Zealand's domestic small arms legislation is the most permissive, facilitating easy ownership and undocumented transfer of the region's largest unregistered stockpile of private guns. Despite these differences, the two nations experience similar rates of gun crime and injury.

This report highlights the lack of capacity in many states even to enforce existing law. It seems clear that solutions will depend as much on capacity building as they will on legislative change.

Disarmament, Pacific style: Conflicts in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands had very different origins, and disarmament efforts should be tailored accordingly. Though comparisons must be made with great caution, a salient difference between the two disarmament processes is the extent to which ex-combatants have participated in, and taken ownership of the proceedings.

The relative success of disarmament in Bougainville, where political solutions have been inextricably linked to progress on weapon disposal, shows how important it is that all parties to the conflict have an investment in the process. While about the same number of firearms have to date been surrendered to peace monitors in the Solomon Islands, the Bougainville process shows more promise of bringing about a lasting peace.

Grassroots community involvement, particularly empowering partnerships with church and women's groups, has proven crucial in generating momentum for peace-building and weapons disposal in the Pacific.

Regional co-operation: A co-ordinated regional effort to harmonize small arms controls in the Pacific began in 1996. This culminated in the *Nadi Framework*, which was adopted by all 16 member states of the Pacific Islands Forum in March 2000. This report evaluates the *Nadi Framework* in the context of the *Programme of Action* from the July 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Some measures from the *Programme of Action* are already in force in the Pacific region, or have been incorporated within the provisions of the *Nadi Framework*. Other aspects, in particular the security of state armouries, have yet to be addressed in full.

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Successful implementation of the *Nadi Framework* and the *Programme of Action* could bring real benefits to Pacific Island Forum member states, including improved security for state armouries, increased regional co-operation in combating organized and transnational crime, and better public understanding of the dangers and devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms.

Wide implementation will require not just political goodwill, but extensive and ongoing support for capacity building among national and regional customs and law enforcement agencies and civil society groups.

This study was undertaken during the 14 months up to and including February 2003.

Philip Alpers
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Marsali Mackinnon

Surrendered weapons are collected to be thrown overboard off Honiara, the Solomon Islands, June 2002.



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Over 2,000 weapons are thrown into the sea off Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, June 2002.



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Surrendered weapons being burned in the Solomon Islands, June 2002.

I. Introduction

Pacific nations are no strangers to small arms. During World War II, island states in the region were home to thousands of armed troops, and suffered many bloody conflicts. More recently, small arms have reappeared as vectors of civil conflict and violent crime.

The region is not afflicted with large-scale arms trafficking, and in that respect is more fortunate than neighbouring countries in Southeast and South Asia. Yet the Pacific experience does demonstrate how deeply even a small number of small arms can damage small communities. Armed conflict and violent crime cause profound social and economic impacts in the region, not least of which are their effects on the future prospects of young Pacific Islanders.

In the most comprehensive examination to date of small arms in the region, this 14-month study draws together the knowledge and experience of more than 100 organizations and communities throughout the Pacific, many of whom have been directly affected by armed conflict and gun crime. While case study research focuses mainly on the states visited for this report in the Southwest Pacific, we hope our conclusions will also be of use to those working on community development, conflict resolution, disarmament, violence prevention, and good governance across all of the Pacific, and indeed in other regions as well.

Nations surveyed

American Samoa	Micronesia* (Federated States of)	Samoa*
Australia*	Nauru*	Solomon Islands*
Cook Islands*	New Caledonia	Tonga*
Fiji*	New Zealand*	Tuvalu*
French Polynesia	Niue*	Vanuatu*
Kiribati*	Palau*	Wallis and Futuna
Marshall Islands*	Papua New Guinea*	

**Members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)*

Limitations of the research

Lack of data, either in sufficient quantity or of adequate quality, is a key limiting factor in almost every field of research in the Pacific. This is particularly so in the area of small arms research. Official data is sometimes unreliable, outdated, or inaccurate, and although steps have been taken to strengthen the collection of statistics in the region. In many countries, building capacity to collect information is simply not a priority. Accordingly, much of the strength of this research lies in the material gathered through extensive personal contact with Pacific people.

Another important aspect, while not exactly a 'limitation', is the need for sensitivity in conducting research on small arms in the Pacific. In all cases it was important to establish at the start how important information would be shared, and with whom. All care has been taken to protect the anonymity of individuals where this has been requested.

Finally, while all member states of the Pacific Islands Forum and several other countries have been canvassed for the purposes of this report, other Pacific states, such as Guam, the Northern Marianas, and Hawaii, could also have been included given sufficient time and resources, and certainly warrant further investigation. Even among the countries covered here, there is a need for more in-depth research. Vanuatu and New Caledonia, for instance, have both experienced recent periods of instability, and the possibility of armed conflict in either community should not be dismissed.

II. Stockpiles and trafficking in the Pacific

Illicit trade in small arms is simply an extension of the legal trade. It's good trade gone bad.

Warren A. Paia, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, Solomon Islands, at a Pacific Islands Small Arms Seminar in Tokyo, 21 January 2003

The Pacific has yet to be affected by large-scale arms trafficking to the extent experienced by many of its Southeast Asian neighbours. Still, Pacific communities are by no means immune to the effects of small arms-related violence. Small populations, developing economies, and fragile systems of governance make many Pacific states extremely vulnerable to the shock waves generated by armed conflict. Cultures of violence develop quickly and prove hard to unravel. Large and permeable borders, with millions of square kilometres of unpatrolled ocean, can only be partially secured.

Demand for legal arms in Pacific states varies widely, depending on factors such as population size, levels of affluence, the presence or absence of regular military forces or routinely armed police, variations in firearm legislation, and social attitudes to gun ownership and use. With the largest military and police forces, 3.1 million legal firearms between them, and the lion's share of annual arms imports into the region, Australia and New Zealand dwarf the rest of the Pacific in this respect.

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There are prominent hotspots in the market for illicit firearms in the region. These include some suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, where a growing market for illicit handguns has been reported, and many parts of Papua New Guinea, where concern is mounting over the number of illegal high-powered firearms being used both in tribal disputes and in urban crime (O'Shea, 2002b; *The Australian*, 2002; Australian Associated Press, 2002; Wright, 2002; Sikani, 2002, p. 40). Conflicts in the Solomon Islands, Bougainville, and to a lesser extent Fiji, have also fuelled demand for illegal firearms in recent years. While there is some evidence that armed crime in Papua New Guinea is fuelling growth in illegal imports, the majority of illicit firearms used in conflicts and crime in the region appear to have been sourced internally.

Efforts to gauge the size of small arms stockpiles and the extent of arms trafficking in the Pacific are hampered by the same problems experienced elsewhere. Official data on imports and exports, and on the nature and number of small arms held by civilians, military, police, and other security forces is not always readily available. When publicly released figures are incomplete, outdated, or not comparable, these must be supplemented from a variety of non-governmental sources.

The line between licit and illicit small arms movements is as blurred in the Pacific region as it is anywhere. As the great majority of firearms used in violence began as legal-issue weapons from civilian, military, and police holdings, this section begins with an overview of the licit trade and existing legal stockpiles.

Legal trade: Demand and supply

Figures on commercial and military arms imports are rarely published by states in the region, though some legal weapon transfers from the US are openly documented. The US government produces a range of reports on military and commercial small arms transfers, including the *Pentagon Defense Security Assistance Agency's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Report*, the State Department's Section 655 Report, which contains a country-by-country listing of the value of all direct commercial sales (DCS) approvals, FMS export approvals, excess defence article (EDA) agreements, and the Department of Treasury's *Export Commodity Reports* (see Lumpe & Donarski, 1998). Table 2.1 lists a range of Pacific countries for which US small arms and ammunition export licence approvals were granted between 1998 and 2000.¹

Table 2.1. US small arms and ammunition export licence approvals, Pacific, 1998–2000

Importing country	Licence value (nominal USD)
Federated States of Micronesia	3,131
Nauru	2,514
New Caledonia	804,898
Papua New Guinea	325,769
Solomon Islands	199,406
Tonga	34,514
Vanuatu	1,517
Australia	127,137,186
New Zealand	8,123,120
Total	136,632,055

Source: Federation of American Scientists (2002)

Limited commercial sales data from other exporting states and some information on government sales is also available, mainly from customs authorities.² Table 2.2 indicates the extensive network of small arms and light weapons (SALW) exporters dealt with by Pacific states during 2000.

Although Table 2.2 includes Australian exports of 'Non-military Lethal Goods' declared in 2000 to Fiji (USD 110,000), and Vanuatu (USD 2,368), these figures lack transparency. The small arms and ammunition component of such transfers remains uncertain, but could be significant in the case of Fiji, where 100 per cent of that year's known arms trade was declared under this catch-all category. Due to uncertainty over their content, additional transfers of 'Non-military Lethal Goods' in 2000 from Australia to Papua New Guinea (USD 871,723), New Zealand (USD 358,000) and New Caledonia (USD 23,000) have not been included in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Declared small arms and ammunition imports, Pacific countries, 2000

Importing country (percentage of known imports into the region)	Exporting country	Small arms USD value	Ammunition USD value	Combined USD value	Country total USD known imports
Australia (76.8%)	Austria	32,000	194,000	226,000	33,953,700
	Belgium	21,000	537,000	558,000	
	Bosnia & Herzegovina		814,000	814,000	
	Brazil	251,000	637,000	888,000	
	Canada	41,200	302,000	343,200	
	China	15,500		15,500	
	Cyprus		75,000	75,000	
	Czech Republic	472,000	69,000	541,000	
	Finland	289,000	69,000	358,000	
	France		16,000	16,000	
	Germany	436,000	1,967,000	2,403,000	
	Italy	1,344,000	835,000	2,179,000	
	Japan	542,000		542,000	
	Korea, Republic of		1,134,000	1,134,000	
	Netherlands	39,000		39,000	
	Philippines	50,000	55,000	105,000	
	Portugal	78,000		78,000	
	Spain	165,000	544,000	709,000	
	Switzerland	36,000		36,000	
	UK	96,000	2,658,000	2,754,000	
US	2,362,000	17,778,000	20,140,000		
Fiji (0.25%)	Australia	110,000		110,000	110,000
French Polynesia (2.89%)	Unspecified	566,000	12,000	578,000	1,277,000
	France		681,000	681,000	
	New Zealand		18,000	18,000	
Nauru (0.03%)	Thailand	15,000		15,000	15,000
New Caledonia (1.7%)	Australia		43,000	43,000	735,122
	China	21,000		21,000	
	Czech Republic	58,000		58,000	
	Finland	49,000		49,000	
	France	51,000	198,000	249,000	
	Germany	50,000		50,000	
	US	171,000	109,000	280,000	
New Zealand (17.87%)	Australia	67,000	529,000	596,000	7,898,000
	Austria	16,000		16,000	
	Belgium	192,000		192,000	
	Bosnia & Herzegovina		300,000	300,000	
	Brazil	47,000	966,000	1,013,000	
	Canada		16,000	16,000	
	China	29,000		29,000	
	Czech Republic	30,000	11,000	41,000	
	Finland	153,000	149,000	302,000	
	France		1,487,000	1,487,000	
	Germany	91,000	30,000	121,000	
	Italy	180,000	200,000	380,000	
	Japan	206,000		206,000	
	Korea, Republic of		53,000	53,000	
	Philippines	15,000	33,000	48,000	
	Portugal	37,000		37,000	
	Mexico		15,000	15,000	
	Spain	35,000	176,000	211,000	
	Sweden	10,000		10,000	
	UK		884,000	884,000	
US	907,000	1,034,000	1,941,000		
Papua New Guinea (0.36%)	Australia	19,000	101,000	120,000	160,000
	US	40,000		40,000	
Samoa (0.03%)	UK		13,000	13,000	13,000
Tonga (0.06%)	Australia		11,000	11,000	28,000
	New Zealand		17,000	17,000	
Vanuatu (0.01%)	Australia	2,368		2,368	2,368
TOTALS		9,437,068	34,770,000	44,207,068	44,207,068

Source: Marsh (2003)

Who buys?

Demand for legal small arms in the region is influenced by a range of factors. The size of military, police, and other security forces in each state, and states' relative ability to purchase arms and ammunition all have an important bearing on demand. Australia and New Zealand (see Table 2.5, below), with by far the largest contingents of both police and military in the region, are also the largest importers (see Table 2.2, above). Although Australia imported 91,834 firearms in the three years to June 2002, that country's average annual imports have dropped by 66 per cent since gun laws were tightened in 1996/97 (Australian Customs Service, 2003a).

Papua New Guinea has the next largest defence and police forces in the region, but lacks the resources to import proportionate quantities of small arms and ammunition. Other security forces in the Pacific face similar resource constraints.

Civilian demand in Pacific countries is influenced by cultural attitudes, legislative controls, and purchasing power. In Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia, for example, sport shooting and hunting boost legal demand, and gun ownership is relatively open. In Papua New Guinea, while sport shooting clubs exist, demand for legal firearms has been capped to some extent by a moratorium since 1998, on the issuing of new firearm licences. In many of the smaller island states, firearm ownership for sports and leisure is much less part of accepted social culture. Indeed, as discussed in Section IV, firearm possession is often totally prohibited, or limited to low-calibre rifles and small-gauge shotguns for use in agriculture and hunting.

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Australia and New Zealand, the dominant economic powers in the region, are by far the largest importers of small arms, light weapons and ammunition. Between 1998 and 2000, they accounted for virtually all (98.99 per cent) of the imports into the region from the US (see Table 2.1, above). In 2000 alone, these two countries accounted for almost 95 per cent of all recorded small arms and ammunition imports (see Table 2.2, above). Though they trail well behind, the French territories of New Caledonia and French Polynesia are also significant regional importers, at least in comparison to the other small Pacific states. In 2000, for example, they imported 86 per cent of all small arms and ammunition destined for countries in the Pacific other than Australia or New Zealand. This may well be due to the presence of French military bases in each of these territories, as well as to the popularity of sport shooting and hunting. France plays a major role in exports to both countries, reflecting its continuing role as a colonial power in the Pacific.

Who supplies?

Small arms and ammunition are supplied to the region from a global range of nations (see Table 2.3, below). In 2000, 26 countries are recorded as having delivered arms and ammunition worth over USD 44 million to the Pacific. Major suppliers other than the US included France, Germany, Italy, and the UK, which between them contributed over 25 per cent of known exports in that year. Yet some of the world's leading arms suppliers figure only as minor players in the Pacific. Of the Eastern European arms-producing countries, only the Czech Republic and Bosnia figured in reported exports, suggesting that their marketing reach does not extend far into the Pacific. Chinese small arms are far less common in the Pacific than in other regions, both in imports declared and in numbers discovered.

In the military sphere, Singapore, Israel, and South Korea play important roles as suppliers of arms and ammunition to defence forces in the Pacific. In a 2001 survey of Pacific state armouries, small arms analyst David Capie identified Singaporean Ultimax-100 light machine guns and SR-88s in Papua New Guinean armouries, and Uzis, MP5s, Galils, and K2s (a South Korean copy of the M-16) in Fiji (Capie, 2003).

Table 2.3. Small arms and ammunition deliveries to the Pacific in 2000, by exporting country

Exporting country	USD value of known exports	Percentage of exports to the Pacific
US	22,401,000	50.67
UK	3,651,000	8.26
Germany	2,574,000	5.82
Italy	2,559,000	5.79
France	2,433,000	5.50
Brazil	1,901,000	4.30
Korea, Republic of	1,187,000	2.69
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1,114,000	2.52
Spain	920,000	2.08
Australia	882,368	2.00
Belgium	750,000	1.70
Japan	748,000	1.69
Finland	709,000	1.60
Czech Republic	640,000	1.45
Unspecified	578,000	1.31
Canada	359,200	0.81
Austria	242,000	0.55
Philippines	153,000	0.35
Portugal	115,000	0.26
Cyprus	75,000	0.17
China	65,500	0.15
Netherlands	39,000	0.09
Switzerland	36,000	0.08
New Zealand	35,000	0.08
Mexico	15,000	0.03
Thailand	15,000	0.03
Sweden	10,000	0.02
Total	44,207,068	100.00

Source: Marsh (2003)

American small arms most common

The US clearly dominates the region's known small arms trade. Between 1998 and 2000, over USD 136 million in licence approvals for small arms exports were granted to US companies (see Table 2.1, above). In 2000, the US contributed over 50 per cent of all known exports to the region, including 37 per cent of the region's small arms by value and 54 per cent of its ammunition by value (see Table 2.3, above). Clearly, the US maintains significant export interests in the Pacific (see the box below). Most US exports are destined for Australia and New Zealand, where military and law enforcement purchases reflect generally strong defence and economic links. These figures benefit from the comparative transparency of US trade in small arms, yet even if China and the Eastern European arms-producing nations were to publish their export data with equal candour, it seems unlikely that American small arms imports would lose the dominance established by long-standing trade and cultural affinities.

Pacific nations historically have closer political and economic ties to Europe than to Asia, while North American culture exerts a predominant influence in regional communication media. In civilian purchases at least, the region's choice of small arms imports is likely to be influenced by familiarity with American and European brand names, long supported by existing trade patterns in these and many other commodities.

Although the dollar values are tiny in world terms, the volume of firearms and ammunition being imported into smaller Pacific states from the US should not be ignored, given their tiny populations. For example, in 1995, one US dealer in Savannah, Georgia, gained approval to ship 610 'firearms and similar devices' to French Polynesia. This Pacific island territory, often referred to as Tahiti, has a population of only 241,000 (Federation of American Scientists, 2002).

Pacific Shenanigans

One significant and controversial sale to the Pacific involved a USD 4 million arms deal that took place in mid-1997 between US arms supplier Century Arms Pty Ltd and the then Solomon Islands government. The purchase was understood to have been prompted by the deteriorating situation on the Solomon Islands' border with Bougainville. Australia, worried about the potential impact that the arms shipment might have on the Bougainville peace process, had refused two previous requests for arms by the Solomon Islands government. Three export licences were eventually granted by the United States, on the understanding that the arms would only be used for patrol purposes. It was widely suspected that corruption had been involved in the deal, since independent assessments put the value of the military equipment included in the shipment, including M-16s, ammunition, and two light aircraft, at USD 700,000 to USD 1 million, a much smaller sum than the USD 4 million paid to Century Arms. In early 1998, the shipment was diverted from its course to the Solomons, and at the request of the newly elected Ulufa'alu government, impounded by Australia and New Zealand. Five years later in 2003, they were still impounded.

Sources: O'Callaghan (1998a, p. 3; 1998b, p. 37)

Trade within the region

Australia and New Zealand stand in marked contrast to other Pacific states as the only arms exporting countries within the region. Overall, however, these exports make up only a very small percentage of total deliveries of small arms and ammunition to the Pacific. In 2000, for example, Australia supplied 2 per cent of recorded deliveries to other states in the region (see Table 2.3, above), and New Zealand a mere 0.08 per cent. In contrast, the US and France during the same year contributed a total of just over 56 per cent of exports to the region.

While total export volumes may be small, Australia still plays an important supplier role for many Pacific states. In 2000, it was responsible for most recorded deliveries of arms and ammunition to Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu. New Zealand plays a much smaller role, but is still one of the main exporters of commercial arms and ammunition to Tonga and Vanuatu.³

Given their relative political and economic prominence, it might be expected that Australia and New Zealand would play a larger export role in the region. Broadly, though, their role is declining. In recent years, both countries have become increasingly wary of indirectly fuelling armed conflict on their own doorsteps, and consequently more cautious about granting export licences.⁴ Despite their own well-stocked official and private arsenals, both nations try, as states, to contribute more to arms control than to arms proliferation.

In the absence of comprehensive trade data, it is difficult to determine whether exports of small arms to the Pacific are rising or declining. In many smaller states, legal ownership can be assumed to be almost static: civilians in Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu, for instance, owned a total of 50 legal firearms between them in 2002 (see Table 2.4, below). In other states, demand is clearly much more robust. In New Caledonia, a country of around 224,000 inhabitants, trade is brisk enough for two gun dealers to sell 650 firearms a year (Tiphagne, 2002). Despite various amnesties and ownership restrictions in recent years, civilian demand kept 1,581 gun dealers in business in Australia in 1999 (Mouzos, 1999, p. 2). With one-fifth the population of its larger neighbour, New Zealand currently supports 320 licensed arms dealers.⁵

Lawful stockpiles

This study represents the first known attempt to estimate the size of legal stockpiles—both civilian and state—in the Pacific. In all, 20 countries—some of them extremely remote—were surveyed for the purposes of this report. All countries provided data, although some were reluctant to disclose figures on firearm licensing and defence-related information.

SMALL ARMS IN PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Figures for licensed civilian ownership are based primarily on interviews and correspondence with senior police and justice personnel throughout the Pacific, in mid-2002. For Papua New Guinea, additional figures were obtained from the 1998 *United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation* (United Nations, 1998). Many of these figures, and the UN numbers for Papua New Guinea in particular, should be considered approximations. The well-roundedness of the Papua New Guinea totals suggests 'guesstimates' rather than actual counts. Three other countries, the Cook Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu, also provided estimates. Yet taken as a whole, the figures do show the extent of licensed civilian firearm ownership in the Pacific.

Most Pacific countries that permit civilian ownership of firearms generally do so only for farming and hunting purposes, so the most commonly purchased civilian firearms are shotguns and .22 calibre rifles. With the exception of Papua New Guinea and the three French territories, firearm possession for the purpose of self defence is prohibited in almost every state. Still, per capita gun ownership in some of the smaller Pacific states is surprisingly high (see Table 2.4, below). Almost one in five people in Niue, for instance, owns a registered firearm. Added to this, Niuean officials readily confirm that an unknown number of unregistered firearms are in circulation (PACNEWS, 2001a). Cook Island officials volunteered a figure of 500 registered guns, but also noted that a total of 1,944 firearms have been registered in the Cook Islands since 1950. They calculate that 30 per cent of these are out of order, damaged, or destroyed. Even so, this suggests that as many as 860 unregistered firearms could be in circulation in the Cook Islands. If true, this would increase the national ratio from one firearm per 36 Cook Islanders to one for every 15.

Civilian ownership in the French territories is difficult to verify. In 2002, a newspaper in Noumea reported that over 19,000 firearms had been sold by New Caledonia's licensed dealers since 1968, suggesting an ownership ratio as high as one gun for every 12 citizens (Tiphagne, 2002). In French Polynesia, US export licence statistics reviewed earlier suggest a minimum of 610 civilian firearms exist; however, since ammunition worth USD 711,000 was approved for import in 2000, it is apparent that many more guns are in circulation.

Table 2.4. Civilian firearm ownership in Pacific nations, 2002

Country	Population ⁶	Licensed civilian firearm owners ⁷	Lawfully held civilian firearms ⁸
American Samoa	61,000	250	250
Australia	19,707,200	764,518	2,165,170
Cook Islands	20,000	500	500
Fiji	840,000	1,465	1,538
French Polynesia	241,000	Not available	610
Kiribati	92,000	8	8
Marshall Islands	54,000	30	30
Micronesia (FSM)	124,000	500	612
Nauru	12,000	0	0
New Caledonia	224,000	Not available	19,000
New Zealand	3,820,749	233,000	850,000 ⁹
Niue	2,000	397	397
Palau	20,000	0	0
Papua New Guinea	5,028,000	50,000	50,000
Samoa	160,000	11,995	17,845
Solomon Islands	479,000	800	800
Tonga	101,000	800	800
Tuvalu	10,000	12	12
Vanuatu	207,000	4,700	4,700
Wallis and Futuna	14,700	Not available	Not available
Total	31,217,649	1,068,975	3,112,272

Figure 2.1 Rate of lawful civilian firearm ownership in 20 nations of the Pacific

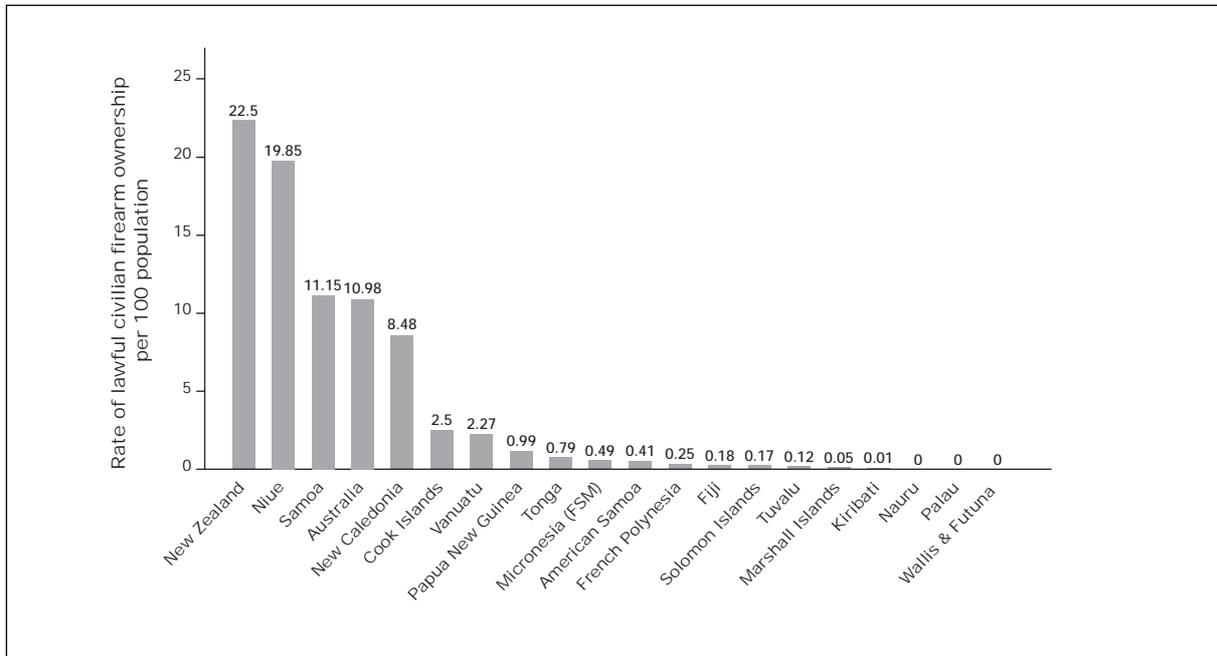
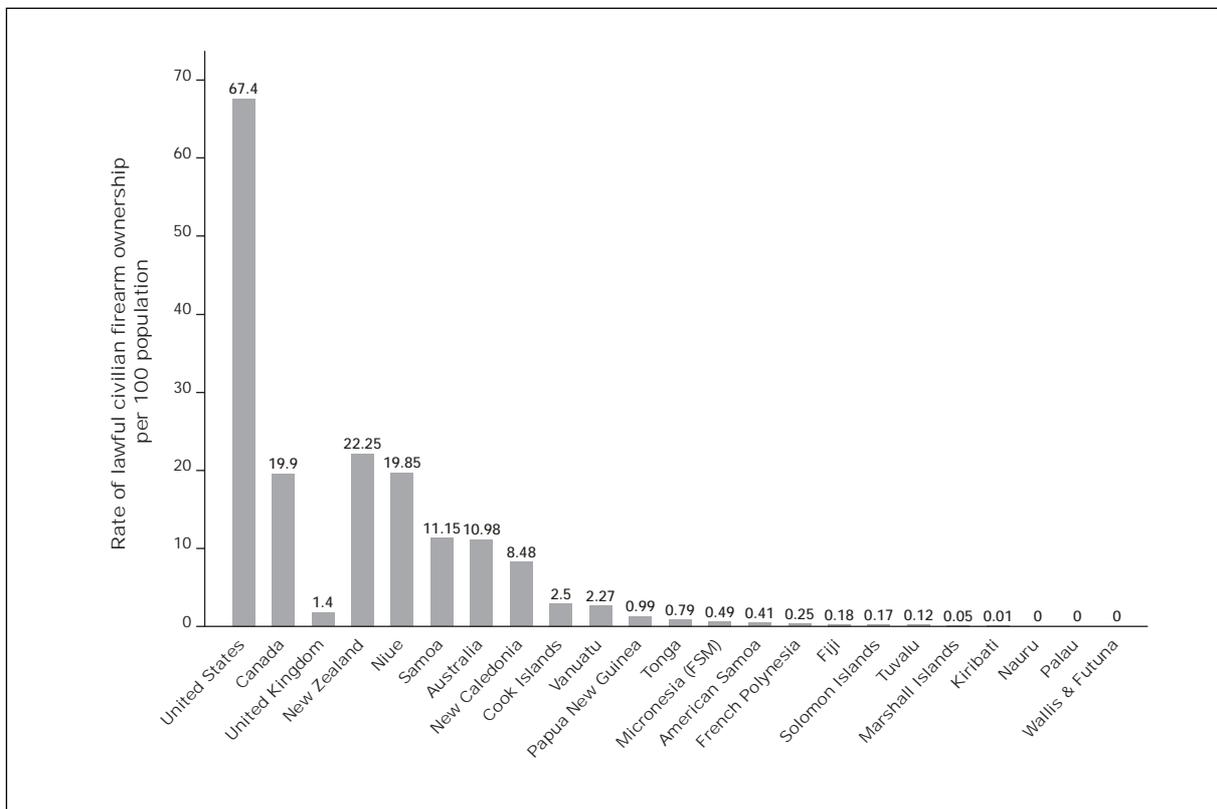


Figure 2.2 Rate of lawful civilian firearm ownership in 23 countries



Heavily-armed Pacific people

Lawfully-held civilian stockpiles of small arms in the Pacific include 3.1 million firearms, or one privately-held gun for every ten people. According to recent estimates, the global total of small arms stands at 639 million, of which 387 million are in the hands of civilians (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 80). Given a world population of 6,275,366,000 people in early 2003 (US Census World Population Clock, 2003), this suggests that there is one privately-held gun for every 16 persons on the globe. In the Pacific, lawfully-held guns alone surpass that planetary ratio by more than half.

In terms of private, lawful firearm ownership, Australia and New Zealand rank as two of the more well-armed countries in the world. In common with Canada and the United States, high rates of private gun ownership are attributed to early pioneering histories, heavy reliance on agriculture, the needs of pest control and the protection of crops, hunting traditions—and, of course, purchasing power.

In 1990, the National Committee on Violence put the number of firearms in Australia at 3.5 million, or at that time approximately one firearm for every four Australians (National Committee on Violence, 1990). Various amnesty schemes since then, including the 1996/97 national firearm buy-back of 643,000 guns, led to the destruction of a significant proportion of the civilian arsenal. Yet in 2001, Australians still owned more than 2.1 million legally-registered firearms (Mouzos, 2002b, p. 5). This equates to one firearm for every nine Australians, or 11 guns per 100 population. The majority of these are single-shot rifles and shotguns.

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With two lawfully-held firearms for every nine residents, the New Zealand ratio of legal guns to population (22 per 100 people) is twice that of Australia. This is a conservative figure, with NZ Police quoted as citing a higher estimate of one million guns in a population approaching four million (Green, 2002).

Though telephone polling suggests that 20 per cent of New Zealand homes contain at least one firearm (Thorp, 1997, p. 37), establishing the real number of guns in New Zealand is hampered by current law. Alone among Pacific nations, New Zealand has ceased to register most firearms owned by licensed gun owners. In 2002, only four per cent of private guns—27,985 handguns, 6,772 military-style semi-automatic firearms, and 3,456 restricted weapons (total 38,213)—were registered to their owners.¹⁰

Firearm ownership estimates for Australia and New Zealand remain low in comparison with the US, where four per cent of the world population possesses 50 per cent of the planet's privately-owned firearms (Alpers, 2002, p. 262), and where more than 40 per cent of households have at least one gun (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 80). Yet they are high in comparison with countries such as England and Wales, where only four per cent of households are estimated to possess a firearm.

State security force stockpiles

Military inventories: Like their counterparts in other regions, most Pacific security forces are less than eager to reveal the extent of their weaponry. Concerns about security and prestige are key factors behind unwillingness to disclose. In some countries (see the box below), accurate inventories simply do not exist. Either way, it is often difficult to access figures for military stocks.

Armoury management in the Pacific

I'm the most powerful man in the country. I hold the key to the armoury.

A Pacific Island delegate, speaking at a small arms seminar in Tokyo.¹¹

Inadequate accounting and poor stockpile management are common problems in many Pacific states, making estimates of inventories difficult and endangering national security—and by extension, peace and stability in the region. In Papua New Guinea, for example, a 2001 Eminent Person's Group (EPG) report commented that 'poor accounting procedures have led to uninvestigated and unexplained losses, damaging the Force's standing with the public'. In the Solomon Islands, an International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) audit, in 2001, of the central police armoury, found that there were no proper accounting measures in evidence for the storage of ammunition and explosives; and that little knowledge existed on explosive storage accounting and regulations, or on weapons accounting and servicing procedures. In Fiji, accounting for firearms in the wake of the May 2000 coup has been complicated by the lack of data on pre-existing military stocks. Personnel in Pacific countries often lack the training to safely dispose of obsolete firearms and sweaty ammunition.

Assisting their Pacific neighbours to improve inventory management practices is high on the agenda of both the Australian and New Zealand governments. The New Zealand Defence Force's Mutual Assistance Programme and Australia's Defence Co-operation Programme both provide training to Pacific Island forces in small arms use and security, and assistance in refurbishing police armouries.

In May 2001, the Australian government held a regional workshop on small arms security, which emphasized the importance of safe custody and effective management of security force firearms, and included on-site visits to official Australian armouries to demonstrate best practice in stockpile management. Three months later, at the August 2001 PIF leaders' meeting in Nauru, Australia and New Zealand made a formal offer to assist other Pacific Island countries with training and technical advice on small arms accounting procedures, physical security, and disposal of munitions.

The offer received an enthusiastic response. Australian and New Zealand defence force armourers and unexploded ordnance (UXO) experts have since visited a wide range of Pacific states, including Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, Nauru, Tonga, and Kiribati. Activities have included one-on-one training in munitions disposal and small arms accounting procedures, assistance with armoury audits, and disposal of unserviceable weapons and unstable ex-World War II ammunition. Australia has also assisted in the rebuilding of three Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) armouries in Port Moresby, with the construction of another three in outer areas planned for 2003.

The process has not been without its challenges. Development partner involvement in audits of existing stocks, for instance, sometimes raises understandable concerns about national sovereignty and security, which must be resolved before any such work can proceed. Munitions disposal, too, can be made more complicated when poorer Pacific states, lacking the resources to replace existing stocks, are loathe to destroy redundant weapons.

Ultimately, of course, rigorous record keeping and transparent stockpile management cannot provide all the solutions. Rebuilding the morale, efficiency, and discipline of the security forces is just as essential, and Australia, New Zealand, and other donor partners have an important role to play in providing continued support for capacity building in this area.

Sources: Commonwealth of Australia (2001); Commonwealth EPG (2001); interviews with Australian and New Zealand defence advisors; Solomon Islands IPMT internal reports

Internationally, methodologies have been developed to address this problem. One approach, first described in the *Small Arms Survey 2001*, is to multiply the number of uniformed security force personnel by the number of small arms that countries typically hold for each member of their security forces. This approach uses a multiplier of 2.25, which is based on the number of small arms known to be possessed by the Canadian armed forces (*Small Arms Survey, 2001, p. 76*).

This methodology has important limitations. It is a conservative estimate, based on the weapon-to-troop ratio of an affluent nation in a year (1987) when military forces and arms arsenals were expanding. Moreover, as the *Small Arms Survey 2002* observed, the ratio itself is subject to change. If personnel are retrenched, the ratio may increase simply because there are now more arms per soldier. In addition, many countries may have much larger, or smaller, weapon-to-troop ratios.

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Trends in the Pacific are towards smaller military forces, making the application of a multiplier even more problematic. In Fiji, approximately 320 Territorial peacekeeping soldiers and reservists were to be decommissioned in July 2002 due to the downsizing of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeping force in Southern Lebanon (*Sunday Post, 2002a*). In March 2001, a Commonwealth EPG review recommended that the PNGDF be downsized from over 4,000 troops to just 1,900 (MacLellan, 2001). The Papua New Guinea government shelved the EPG report, but subsequently announced its own retrenchment strategy: a smaller number, but retrenchment no less.

Use of the Canadian multiplier also assumes similar arms procurement policies in the Pacific. In practice, the 'cargo cult' habit of hoarding items of value is alive and well. A major problem exists in many Pacific armouries with recycling: as new stocks are brought in, old ones (from as far back as World War II) are not being destroyed.¹² Often, trial weapons are not returned. One defence diplomat interviewed during this study commented that the PNGDF has 'far too many weapons for the size of its force'.¹³

Despite these qualifications, the Canadian multiplier has been used here to generate an estimate of the size of the military inventory in the Pacific. In the absence of data about military and police force stockpiles, it at least allows a base estimate to be developed for the Pacific region, which can be refined as more specific information becomes available.

In 2000, total regular personnel for the five largest defence forces—Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea—numbered 67,295. In addition, Vanuatu supports a paramilitary force numbering 256, and Tonga has a small armed force of approximately 390. The total number of armed forces personnel in the Pacific is conservatively estimated at 69,221.

Combining this figure with the Canadian multiplier of 2.25 produces a conservative estimate of 155,747 military small arms in the Pacific. It is quite likely that total troop numbers have declined since then. However, total weapons stocks will, if anything, have increased, since ageing firearms tend to be recycled rather than destroyed, and most Pacific countries are still seeking to increase their overall stocks.

Police inventories: Not all Pacific police officers carry guns. As shown in Table 2.5, below, routinely unarmed police protect more than five million citizens in 12 of the 20 nations surveyed for this report. Larger police stations often maintain a small store of firearms and ammunition, which can be unlocked for a range of purposes, from shooting feral pigs to protecting heads of state. In countries where there is no military force, police may also maintain a reserve of military-style weapons.

Survey data from around the world indicates that the ratio of firearms to police personnel is usually much lower than the weapons-to-troops ratio described earlier. In Norway, for example, the ratio is 1.2 guns per officer, while in Belgium and Sweden it is 1.3. South Africa has a ratio of 1.45 to 1 (Small Arms Survey, 2001, p. 71). Given the multifaceted role of most Pacific police, but at the same time taking into account the ageing armouries of many Pacific countries, it seems reasonable to place routinely armed police forces in the Pacific somewhere in the middle of this range. Using a multiplier of 1.3, a total of 51,558 routinely armed police would give a figure of approximately 67,025 police firearms in those forces.

An estimate taken from New Zealand, where most police are routinely unarmed, might be reasonably used to account for firearms possessed by the remaining police forces in the region. In 1995, 6,967 sworn New Zealand police were estimated to have access to approximately 2,000 firearms, giving a multiplier of 0.29 (NZ Police, 1995, p. 67).¹⁴ Applied to all 11,291 non-armed Pacific police, this would add a further 3,274 police firearms, bringing total police guns to 70,299. Total security force firearm stocks are estimated to be at least 226,046.

Table 2.5. State security forces in the Pacific, 2002¹⁵

	Population	Police (sworn)	Police routinely armed?	Military (regular)
American Samoa	61,000	200	No	0
Australia	19,707,200	43,722	Yes	50,700
Cook Islands	20,000	100	No	0
Federated States of Micronesia	124,000	500	Yes	0
Fiji	840,000	1,970	No	3,500
French Polynesia	241,000	220	Yes	530
Kiribati	92,000	458	No	0
Marshall Islands	54,000	130	No	0
Nauru	12,000	80	No	0
New Caledonia	224,000	268	Yes	704
New Zealand	3,820,749	7,038	No	8,695
Niue	2,000	16	No	0
Palau	20,000	75	Yes	0
Papua New Guinea	5,028,000	5,311	Yes	4,400
Samoa	160,000	490	No	0
Solomon Islands ¹⁶	479,000	1,442	Yes	0
Tonga	101,000	418	No	390
Tuvalu	10,000	72	No	0
Vanuatu	207,000	319	No	256
Wallis and Futuna	14,700	20	Yes	46
Totals	31,217,649	62,849		69,221

These are conservative estimates, and much more could be done to refine the assumptions on which they are based. As increased transparency across the region renders local information more accessible, this may allow more accurate calculation of security force holdings.

The illicit small arms trade

Crime and conflict are, as elsewhere, the main drivers of demand for illegal small arms in the region. With the exception of some level of trade into Papua New Guinea from Asia and Australia and into Australia from the US, illicit imports into the Pacific appear to be minor. To date, the region's relatively small populations, large and readily accessible internal stocks in Australia and New Zealand, low purchasing power, and the lack of a developed gun culture in smaller nations all seem to have limited the demand for smuggled guns.

Anecdotal evidence suggests a small trade in illegal firearms between American Samoa and Samoa, two close neighbours in the Southeast Pacific.¹⁷ Law enforcement officers talk of illicit handgun possession in the Samoan fishing fleet and illegal long guns in Nauru, Niue, and the Cook Islands, yet evidence remains elusive.

Those unlawfully-held firearms that do surface, either following the execution of violent crime or in conflicts within the region, appear to come almost exclusively from previously legal stocks. While home-made production has contributed to illegal stocks in some areas, craft manufacturing is decentralized and unsystematic, producing only crude and inaccurate single-shot weapons. The region as a whole plays little or no role as an exporter of illicit small arms to other states.

The key centres of illicit trade in firearms for the purposes of armed crime are, not surprisingly, those with the largest populations—Australia and Papua New Guinea. Though it appears to suffer less from such problems, the extent of trafficking in illegal firearms in New Zealand is also reviewed here.

Australia

ARMED CRIME

Concern about the level of illicit firearm trafficking in Australia—particularly the trade in handguns, which were used in 67 per cent of all armed robberies, in 2001—has risen in recent years (*The Age*, 2002).

Illegal handguns are said to be commonly bought and sold in Sydney's west and southwest. Depending on their calibre and condition, unconfirmed media reports suggest they can fetch between AUD 1,500 and AUD 5,000 (USD 750–2,500). Desirable but expensive black market handguns include 9mm Glock semi-automatics, .357 Magnum revolvers, and .38 Smith & Wessons (O'Shea, 2002a). Ex-US Army firearms such as .45 calibre Colt semi-automatic pistols used in World War II have also surfaced on Sydney's streets. In the two years to December 2002, the NSW Firearms Squad seized 4,100 illegal firearms, including 680 handguns (ABC, 2002b).

No organized black market in firearms appears to exist. Rather, police intelligence suggests that trade in illegal firearms is divided between criminal gangs whose focus is other crime, and small networks of individuals who buy and sell by word of mouth (Mouzos, 1999, p. 3). The main buyers appear to be street criminals, with police reporting, in 2002, that handguns were being found in the possession of increasingly youthful gang members (*The Australian*, 2002a).

SMUGGLING

In the 2001/2002 financial year, Australian customs authorities seized 812 illegally imported firearms, including 204 handguns, nearly three times the number seized in the previous year (O'Loughlin, 2002a). A study by the Australian Institute of Criminology found that the greater percentage of firearms smuggled into Australia are imported as parts by mail from the United States (Mouzos, 1999, p. 4).

Popular opinion in Australia holds that many of the illegal firearms used in serious crime have been smuggled from overseas, particularly from China. This is not supported by the evidence. Firearms seized at crime scenes and in routine policing can commonly be traced back to licensed Australian owners and arms importers. China's Norinco brand has for many years been one of Australia's more popular legal gun imports. In the absence of concerted crime gun tracing, the true origins of illicit firearms remain uncertain.

LEAKAGE FROM CIVILIAN STOCKS

Possession of semi-automatic handguns and revolvers is not illegal in Australia, as it is in most other Pacific nations. After the Port Arthur massacre in April 1996, new firearm laws saw the banning of semi-automatic rifles and shotguns in Australia, but not semi-automatic handguns. Though handgun-related violence remains low (see Section III) and handgun crime is still far less common than crime and injury with long guns, pistols and revolvers have replaced rifles and shotguns as the country's most talked-about lethal weapons. In 2002, Australia's National Coalition for Gun Control estimated there were as many as 300,000 handguns in circulation (*The Age*, 2002). In October 2002, new calls for a national ban on semi-automatic handguns came after a further shooting tragedy at Monash University in Melbourne, in which two students were killed by a licensed pistol club member (Goodenough, 2002).

Thefts from private dwellings are common. In 2002, an Australian Institute of Criminology study found that in the six years to June 2000, more than 25,000 firearms were reported stolen from civilian owners. Fifty-two per cent of the firearms stolen were rifles, while shotguns and handguns accounted for 21 per cent and 14 per cent respectively (Mouzos, 2002b, p. 1). Although this only equates to about 4,000 thefts a year, there is widespread agreement that many more thefts go unreported. Indeed, one of the perceived limitations of the 1996 firearm reforms is that owners may be unlikely to report the theft of a firearm if, since the reforms were introduced, they were no longer eligible to possess it or had not registered it (Mouzos, 2002b, p. 1).

A number of licensed arms dealers have been prosecuted for illegal firearm sales to criminals, and their legal stocks also provide a tempting target for thieves. In 1999, one South Australian dealer lost 350 handguns in a single robbery, and 'highly organized raids' in Victoria and NSW netted at least 500 more (*The Advertiser*, 1999). In 1998, 135 handguns were stolen from Queensland homes and businesses (Lawrence, 1999; Bearup, 1996), while in NSW, 188 handguns were reported stolen between 2000 and 2001 (Lawrence & Kamper, 2002).

It seems clear that the domestic leakage of firearms from licensed owners to criminals exceeds the volume of guns shown to have been smuggled into Australia. The Australian Institute of Criminology reports that 'for firearms trafficking, one of the main methods of illegal acquisition of firearms is through thefts from firearms dealers, military facilities and firearms owners' (Mouzos, 2000). In November 2002, Australia's federal Justice and Customs Minister said there was no evidence 'whatsoever from any police force in Australia of there being a problem with guns smuggled into Australia', and that most guns that fell into the wrong hands were stolen from licensed shooters (Chris Ellison, MP, quoted in Toohey, 2002).

TRACING ILLICIT FIREARMS

Widely reported guesswork as to the predominant source of Australia's illicit firearms fuels a controversy beyond resolution. Until an adequate sample of crime guns have been traced back to their last lawful owners, either domestic or foreign, evidence-based policy options are likely to remain elusive. Although police protocols and forensic techniques are in place to trace seized illicit small arms, lack of resources and a perception of low priority commonly combine to prevent collection of the evidence required.¹⁸

LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

In response to rising alarm over illegal handguns and armed violence, the Australian government announced a new crackdown on trafficking in illegal firearms, especially handguns. In July 2002, a new agreement to reduce the illegal trade—including trafficking in guns that land on Australian soil legally—was reached by Australian police ministers. The agreement included:

- tougher penalties for illegal handgun possession;
- better controls over legal firearm manufacture and dealing, including probity checks of dealership employees and others with interests in the business;
- uniform legislation dealing with the illegal manufacture of firearms;
- new laws against interstate trafficking, including penalties of up to ten years jail and AUD 250,000 for anyone caught carrying illegal firearms across state and territory borders;
- classification of possession of firearms with defaced serial numbers and record falsification as criminal offences; and
- improved customs checks for illegally imported firearms, including the installation of X-ray machines at Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Fremantle (Mickelborough, 2002; *New Zealand Herald*, 2002; Brendan, 2002; Hudson, 2002).

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In December 2002, seven weeks after the country's most recent multiple shooting at Monash University, Australian authorities announced further restrictions. The nation-wide agreement included a uniform, state-by-state ban on up to 500 models of handgun, a six-month amnesty, and a government-funded handgun buy-back scheme, all to take effect from 1 July 2003. Federal customs regulations were also amended to prohibit the importation of a wide range of pistols and revolvers based on calibre, magazine capacity, and barrel length (*The Australian*, 2002c; Australian Customs Service, 2003b).

New Zealand

STOCKPILES

Sir Thomas Thorp's 1997 *Review of Firearms Control in New Zealand* estimated that New Zealanders owned between 700,000 and one million lawfully held firearms, and between 10,000 and 25,000 illegal firearms (Thorp, 1997, pp. 27, 33). This is the largest per capita small arms stockpile in the region. Given the rarity of smuggled firearms (see below), it seems that demand for illicit guns in New Zealand is largely satisfied by the legal stockpile.

ILLICIT MARKET

The market for illegal guns appears to be divided mainly between those who use firearms in armed crime, and others involved in organized crime, such as drug dealing. Illegal pistols and revolvers are relatively scarce, primarily as a result of stringent handgun laws in place since 1921. These require proof of genuine reason for ownership, stringent licensing and registration, membership of

a police-approved pistol club, inspection of secure storage, and a prohibition on gun possession for self defence (Chatvick, 1999, p. 23; New Zealand, 1983, *Arms Act*). Much cheaper, more accessible sawn-off long guns are commonly used in armed crime, while genuine handguns are favoured for protection purposes by gang members and others involved in criminal business (Newbold, 1998).

SMUGGLING

Claims of systematic smuggling of illicit firearms into New Zealand surface from time to time, but have not been substantiated. In 1997, stories circulated of handguns being smuggled into ports by East European seamen and sold to gang members and others for NZD 1,000 to NZD 1,500 (USD 400–600). Police and customs confirmed they had heard such stories, but that they had not seen any of the firearms, and subsequently the rumours died off (Drent, 1997; Van Beynen, 1997). In the past decade, New Zealand police and customs have discovered only a few dozen smuggled firearms, all of them one-off imports or in very small numbers, trafficked by opportunistic individuals.

The infrequent discovery of smuggled guns tends to confirm that the majority of illegal firearms in circulation were at one stage legal imports. A 1997 survey of 51 New Zealand prison inmates convicted for offences involving firearms indicated that while some licensed gun owners did lend or sell their guns to criminals, the bulk of firearms available on the black market had been stolen from legitimate owners (Newbold, 1999, cited in Chatvick, 1999, p. 22). A study the following year found that 60 per cent of firearms were stolen from an urban dwelling, with rifles (54 per cent), shotguns (34 per cent), and handguns (five per cent) the most common types stolen in New Zealand. It also found that 52 per cent of incidents of gun theft involved firearms that had not been securely stored by their owners (Alpers & Walters, 1998).

Thorp concluded that '[b]oth Customs and the Police believe that illegal [firearm] imports into New Zealand have at least until recently been at low volume, and that large-scale imports would have become apparent were they occurring' (Thorp, 1997, pp. 25–6).

An officer in charge of the New Zealand Police Firearms Licensing Task Force once wrote: 'I have no doubt that in the overwhelming majority of cases, those firearms [used in crime] came into this country lawfully, and their original New Zealand owners were the holders of firearms licences or permits'.¹⁹

DEREGISTRATION

One of the key hindrances to effective control of the illicit trade in firearms in New Zealand has been the deregistration, since 1983, of almost all legally-owned firearms. The result is that any person over the age of 16 with an entry-level firearm licence can lawfully possess any number of unregistered long guns, with no requirement to record private purchases, sales, or transfers. Police concede that the abandonment of universal registration has facilitated the disposal of stolen firearms onto the black market (Hunter, 1998, p. 3). If police seize a rifle or shotgun, they frequently have no way of tracing its route from lawful ownership into criminal hands.

In August 1998, the New Zealand government approved the implementation of a firearm control strategy based on recommendations made in the Thorp Review. One of the main components of the strategy was the universal registration of firearms. Nearly five years later, none of the recommended legislation had been pursued.

Papua New Guinea

LEAKAGE FROM LEGAL STOCKS

While theft from civilian owners is a concern, many of the firearms that surface in armed crime in Papua New Guinea once belonged to the state. ‘Leakage’ from police and defence force armouries is a commonly reported occurrence. In December 2000, for instance, almost 100 police firearms were reported missing, including ten machine guns, 32 M-16 automatic assault rifles, 25 SIG Sauer pistols, and five semi-automatic shotguns, along with thousands of rounds of ammunition.²⁰ An audit the following year estimated that as many as 600 firearms were missing from the police armoury.²¹ The PNGDF fares no better. In the space of just 12 months, two raids were conducted on its armouries—one in March 2001, at PNGDF Headquarters, and one in March 2002 at Moem Barracks, in Wewak. In both cases, high-powered military weapons and ammunition were stolen (Maclellan, 2001).

CRAFT MANUFACTURE

Home-made firearms form another distinguishing feature of Papua New Guinea’s illicit weapon trade. A small cottage industry exists on the Papua New Guinea mainland, producing crude, single-shot guns and pistols, made mostly from water pipes, and using mostly 12-gauge ammunition. Home-made single-shot guns and pistols have been found throughout Papua New Guinea, from Lae to West New Britain to the Highlands.²²

Though it is difficult to pinpoint the main centres of production or volumes being produced, the Highlands have in the past been a centre of both demand and supply (see the box below). Police reports indicate that these weapons are manufactured exclusively for domestic use, rather than export (United Nations, 1998). Economic value to local communities in the region is very small, although in some parts of Papua New Guinea, guns are used as barter items. Presumably this trade includes home-made weapons.

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Guns for the clan

The village gun-maker’s teeth clench and his face grimaces. He twists the screwdriver, forcing a long screw into the cradle he has carefully scooped out of a lump of hardwood. The cradle will support the metal firing chamber of his home-made shotgun. He is working in a small, open-sided hut only a few kilometres up the mountain from the police station in Kundiawa, capital of the Highlands province of Simbu (or Chimbu). Down below, the police station armoury is full of such home-made weapons confiscated in police raids. But the police have a hopeless task and are on the losing side.

‘In my village, every man they have a gun, a gun of their own,’ Francis Danga tells me as we squat not far from where the gun-maker is hard at work. ‘Now, if you don’t have one for yourself then, “Yu nogat nem”—you don’t have a name in the village. Your wife can be raped. They can steal. They can do anything to you. For example, the hill on the other side of the mountain here is no-man’s-land now. They have a big fight and one clan won the fight because it wipes out the other tribe.’ Francis was, until last year, the deputy manager of a bank. He was retrenched after 27 years.

‘We are ready to fight and we are ready to defend,’ he says. ‘And if we don’t have a gun? Sorry, all our houses will be burnt and all our coffee trees will be cut and we’ll be wiped out. We’ll be refugees in someone else’s land.’ The reasons for fighting are endless—land, pigs, women, and the newest reason, politics. If your clansman gets into Parliament your village could win big

benefits. ‘Ohhh! Now the gun is in demand,’ Francis grins. ‘And if you can sit down and do it properly, in a week you might sell five or, maybe, ten. But right now we do not have a tribal fight. Wait until the election period. It’s coming close and wait until there is a tribal fight. You won’t sleep!’ He picks up a gun, holds it high in his right hand and shakes it. ‘They want guns!’

Source: Sean Dorney (2000, pp. 318–9; with permission from the author)

It is difficult to estimate the number of illicit arms in circulation in Papua New Guinea, though black market prices give some indication of the comparative demand for, and availability of, various types of illegal firearm. In the Highland provinces, demand for home-made weapons appears to have dropped as the popularity and availability of high-powered firearms has increased. While home-made shotguns can be bought for USD 25–50, an Uzi might fetch up to USD 500, and a ‘pristine M-16 or AR-2’ between USD 1,250 and 2,500.²³

IMPORTATION ROUTES

In contrast to Australia and New Zealand, the illicit trade in Papua New Guinea appears to be fed to a significant extent by illegal imports, although no official estimates exist. A number of illicit trafficking routes appear to be active.

1. **Across the Torres Strait:** One route that has been the subject of sustained media attention is the narrow stretch of island-dotted sea between Australia’s Cape York Peninsula and the town of Daru, in Papua New Guinea’s Western Province (see Saunders, 2000; *The Australian*, 2000). The large number of islands in the Torres Strait, their remote location, communication difficulties, and the length of coastline make it very difficult for authorities to comprehensively monitor the border. In addition, over 20,000 border crossings are made each year by local residents (Keelty, 2000, p. 76).
2. Certainly there is evidence of some trade in drugs for arms. In January 2002, for instance, Papua New Guinean police busted a small arms smuggling ring in Daru, capturing a bolt-action rifle, a handful of .22 pistols, an SKS semi-automatic rifle, and a Russian-made AK-47.²⁴ Australian border authorities have also intercepted small numbers of handguns, rifles, semi-automatic firearms, and shotguns en route to Papua New Guinea. Seizures have included an air rifle worth USD 80 being exchanged for three kilograms of cannabis worth USD 12,000, and two rifles, a magazine, ammunition, and USD 350 swapped for ten kilograms of cannabis (Saunders, 2000).

Overall, however, the volume of both gun and drug smuggling across the Torres Strait appears to be low. A 2000 Australian Federal Police submission to a parliamentary inquiry investigating Coastwatch, Australia’s Customs border monitoring service, described Papua New Guinea/Torres Strait drug-running operations as ‘ad hoc, opportunistic and unsophisticated, albeit effective’ (Saunders, 2000). While there have been occasional seizures of smuggled military-style weapons, the number of firearms imported into Papua New Guinea via the Torres Strait is not believed to be high, and seems limited to small numbers of handguns, shotguns, and .22 rifles.

3. **From Asia into Papua New Guinea:** Australian Federal Police have for many years assisted the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) in tracing the origin of small arms detected during criminal investigations. In the vast majority of cases, these guns are traced to countries other

than Australia (Keelty, 2000, p. 77). Firearms produced in illicit factories in the Philippines and ex-military weapons from Vietnam and other countries in Southeast Asia have all been discovered in Papua New Guinea (Atkinson, 2000, p. 93).

There are a number of coastal entry points for these firearms. Cargo vessels from Asia regularly visit Madang and Lae, on the east coast of the Papua New Guinea mainland. From there, arms are easily moved by road to the Highlands, or to the West Papuan border. There is some suspicion, but no hard evidence, that Malaysian, Philippine, or Singaporean logging company personnel may also be involved in the illicit arm trade as an aside to their legal operations.²⁵

4. **Papua New Guinea/West Papua:** A well-recognized trade in drugs and arms exists along the border between Papua New Guinea and the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya, or West Papua. Much of the terrain along this border is very difficult to monitor, and there is no PNGDF patrol of the adjacent coastal area.²⁶ Police resources in the area have been crippled by the condemning, in 2000, of both the barracks and the local police station (RPNGC Corporate Planning Directorate, 2001, Appendix (i), p. 5).

It is difficult to determine in which direction most illicit arms flow across this border. The Papua New Guinea National Intelligence Organization certainly believes that the Papua New Guinea/Indonesian border is the main point of entry into the country for illegal arms (Bonsella, 2002). In Jayapura, the coastal capital of Irian Jaya, the going rate for a pistol is only PGK 300, or about USD 75; the town of Vanimo, the capital of Papua New Guinea's Sandaun Province, is just an hour's drive away (Chin, 2002). On the other hand, there is evidence that high-powered firearms have also been brought into West Papua from Papua New Guinea to supply members of *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (OPM), the West Papuan independence movement (Keelty, 2000, p. 82). In late 2002, OPM leaders also warned Papua New Guinean authorities about the increasing number of incursions across this border by Muslim extremist groups linked to attacks on Christians in some areas of Indonesia (*The Independent/PI News Association*, 2002). The most credible conclusion is that some level of illegal trade in arms occurs in both directions.

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THE TRAFFICKERS WITHIN

Authorities face a plethora of problems in tackling illicit arms trafficking and small arms-related violence in Papua New Guinea. Chief among these is dealing with the incidents of theft and 'leakage' from police and defence force armouries. While physical security is an issue, in many cases the biggest risk is posed by state security forces themselves. Both defence force raids mentioned above were instigated by defence personnel in reaction to planned staff cutbacks (Maclellan, 2001, p. 7). Not all of the weapons stolen were returned, yet no disciplinary action was taken.

A key challenge is how to control supply and demand in a situation where the apparatus of state is so fragile. Lack of discipline in Papua New Guinea's security forces is compounded by limited financial resources and chronic understaffing, in turn constraining the forces' capacity to control the illegal trade in drugs and arms. With one of the lowest ratios of police to population in the Pacific, it is not surprising that border control in some areas of Papua New Guinea is next to non-existent.

Legal solutions are one avenue. In an attempt to quell the increasing use of firearms in tribal fights, a total ban on the sale of firearms and ammunition is currently in place in the Highlands region (United Nations, 1998). Papua New Guinea has also made several attempts to deal with the problem of home-made weapons by increasing penalties for illegal manufacture and instituting laws empowering

authorities to forfeit machining tools and vehicles used in the gun trade (Papua New Guinea, 1996, new sec. 7B). Yet, as the problems with the police and defence force clearly illustrate, lack of institutional capacity is the central issue confronting law enforcement efforts in Papua New Guinea. This is a problem shared by many other states in the region (see the following box).

Pacific law enforcement: Challenges and constraints

Law enforcement agencies throughout the Pacific are committed to combating firearm trafficking and other criminal activity, but are often hampered by a lack of capacity and limited co-ordination.

A key body at the regional level is the Oceania Customs Organization (OCO). The OCO engages in a range of activities to strengthen links between its 23 member countries, including the Customs Regional Intelligence Network (CRIN), which provides an overview of trafficking patterns in the region. OCO members submit reports of seizures, methods of transportation, and methods of detection to the Intelligence Section of the NZ Customs Service, which updates CRIN data and publishes a quarterly bulletin.

The CRIN bulletin has a potentially important role to play in co-ordinating regional enforcement. Between 1995 and 2001, a total of 77 firearm reports were submitted to CRIN by eight member states other than Australia and New Zealand. According to these reports, Customs agencies seized 128 firearms, 250 canisters of pepper spray, and 15,588 rounds of ammunition during this six-year period. Firearms seized included 60 rifles, 30 shotguns, and 29 pistols. The bulk of seizures of known origin came from Australia (41 per cent) and the US (33 per cent), with ammunition predominantly imported in accompanied luggage and small arms mainly imported in sea freight consignments.

This kind of information sheds valuable light on trafficking in the region. Success of the system, however, depends on the quality of information supplied by member states, and on their consistent participation. Of the 77 reports provided over that period, 64—or 83 per cent—came from only two countries—Papua New Guinea and Samoa. In addition, reports that were provided often lacked essential information. For instance, the origin of seized weapons was not recorded in 34 (44 per cent) of cases.

Customs and other law enforcement agencies also face constraints at the national level. Limited financial resources and chronic understaffing often constrain the ability to adequately control national borders. In the Solomon Islands, some of the more remote Customs outposts have not been resourced since the outbreak of conflict. In Fiji, whole cargo containers have been known to disappear from the Suva wharves. A lack of sufficient, adequately trained staff and an absence of formal intelligence structures also limit agencies' capacity to undertake risk assessment, trend analysis, and profiling, thus undermining the region's long-term ability to anticipate emerging threats.

Sources: OCO and CRIN (2001); personal communications with John Marks and Tau Malietoa, OCO Secretariat, Brisbane, 18 June 2002; interviews with police and customs officials in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji, March–June 2002.

Conflicts in the region: Drivers of demand

Several states in the region have experienced outbreaks of armed conflict in recent years. In May 2000, a small group of armed men, led by businessman George Speight, stormed the Fijian Parliament. The rebels held Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudry and most cabinet ministers and members of parliament hostage inside the parliamentary complex for the next 56 days. While Speight held the country to ransom, rioting and outbreaks of violence took place in many other parts of the two main islands of Fiji.

Less than a month later, on 5 June 2000, combatants from the island of Malaita arrested the Solomon Islands prime minister and staged a takeover of key institutions in the capital of Honiara. This marked the peak of a conflict that had festered for three years, and sparked a round of new atrocities in which over 100 people were killed.

In Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, a peace agreement signed in 1997 between Bougainvillean combatant groups and the Papua New Guinea government signalled the end of nine years of devastating civil conflict in which several thousand people are believed to have died. Each of these armed conflicts, and their impacts, is discussed in depth in Section III, while Section V considers aspects of the Bougainville and Solomon Islands disarmament processes.

The vast majority of firearms used by combatant groups in these conflicts were sourced internally. Key sources include the following:

1. Security force armouries

Small arms stolen or otherwise obtained from security force armouries have featured prominently in all three conflicts in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Bougainville. Indeed, in each of these conflicts, access to state armouries—often with the complicity or open support of the security forces—has been pivotal.

In Fiji, the May 2000 raid on parliament could hardly have been executed without assault rifles stolen from the Fiji Military Force armoury. The number of firearms used in Suva was small—only seven gunmen executed the coup, and Speight later provided arms to perhaps another 100 young rebels—yet it was sufficient to unseat a democratically elected government. Members of the Fijian Army's Counter-Revolutionary Warfare Unit—ironically, a crack team established in the wake of two earlier coups in 1987—were implicated in providing these arms, and many also defected to support Speight during the coup (Ali, 2000; Simpson, 2000).

In the Solomon Islands, members of the Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP) paramilitary force colluded directly with Malaitan militants in the theft of approximately 500 powerful firearms, including SR-88A assault rifles and Ultimex 100 machine guns, which were subsequently used to overthrow the government (Kabutaulaka, 2000a, p. 5; Fennessy, 2002, p. 2). During the nine-year crisis in Bougainville, both combatant factions—the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and the Bougainville Resistance Forces (BRF)—were known to have used stolen or 'gifted' PNGDF firearms.²⁷

Most of the firearms used in the coup in Fiji, in May 2000, appear to have been returned. However, in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, hundreds of former security force firearms remain in circulation, adding to the challenges of disarmament and fuelling violence and armed crime.

2. World War II arms and ammunition

Firearms salvaged from World War II and home-made guns have featured prominently in the Bougainville and Solomon Islands conflicts (Associated Press, 2000). Japanese and Allied troops were scattered throughout the region during World War II, and at war's end many tons of weapons and military equipment were buried or dumped. Fifty years later, some of these weapons have surfaced in working order.

Bougainville peace monitors have distinguished between rusty 'World War II relics' and some carefully maintained, still very functional .303 rifles.²⁸ Yet World War II firearms make up only a small proportion of the weapons handed in to peace monitors, and the majority of these are in poor condition or unserviceable. While the decay curve of firearms can be long, tropical humidity tends to shorten any firearm's useful life. In Bougainville, less than ten per cent of the firearms surrendered between December 2001 and July 2002 were from World War II, while in the Solomon Islands, the 'handful' of war relics surrendered have all been degraded and unusable (BPMG, 2002b).²⁹ Though the possibility exists that ex-combatants have retained their best guns for future use, wartime firearms remain less desirable than modern weapons.

Of more immediate concern is the amount of ex-World War II ammunition still in circulation, or yet to be unearthed. A 'huge dump' of wartime munitions is widely believed to be buried in Torokina, in north Bougainville, but as yet no one has been able to locate it.³⁰ A large cache of unexploded ammunition is also understood to exist in the Guadalcanal Plains, outside Honiara.³¹ Ammunition is unearthed periodically in Vanimo, Milne Bay, along the Kokoda Trail, and other parts of the Papua New Guinea mainland.³² Where it has survived in working order, the problems created by this ammunition are twofold. Firstly, it has the potential to cause serious harm through accidental explosion. One source spoken to from Nissan Island, in north Bougainville, estimated that eight out of ten injuries on the island, many of them to children, could be attributed to accidental explosions of World War II ammunition. Secondly, even 60 year-old brass-cased ammunition will sometimes fire as intended in either a World War II or a home-made firearm.

3. Home-made production

Home-made firearms have added significantly to the arsenal used by combatants in both the Bougainville and Solomon Islands conflicts, primarily as a substitute for unaffordable commercial firearms. In Bougainville, home-made weapons made up more than half of those surrendered to peace monitors in the first 11 months of disarmament (BPMG, 2002c). In the Solomon Islands, they made up almost three quarters of weapons handed in during the first nine months after the signing of a peace agreement in October 2000 (Solomon Islands IPMT, 2001).

In both cases, production was facilitated by the ready availability of wartime ammunition, mostly of .30 and .50 calibre. Ammunition of this size—particularly the .50 calibre—lent itself well to the production of home-made firearms, since local water pipes were the right diameter or could be machined to fit. Occasionally, other home-made weapons were reported in these conflicts, including 12-gauge shotguns, rifles of .22, .303, 5.56mm, and 7.62mm calibres, 40mm cannons, and even rumours of an anti-tank gun, also probably 40mm, which never seems to have been sighted.³³ In summary, crude single-shot .22 or .50 calibre pistols and 12-gauge shotguns were by far the most commonly observed home-made firearms in either conflict.³⁴ There is no evidence of local production of pump- or lever-action, semi-automatic or automatic firearms.

In both conflicts, home-made guns were produced in greater quantities by the side with proportionately less access to high-powered firearms. In Bougainville, they were more evidently in use by the BRA than by the BRF, since the BRF had marginally more access to PNGDF firearms. In the Solomon Islands conflict, close relations with the police meant that the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) sourced many of its firearms directly from the police armoury. The Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), an opposing ethnic group, had fewer claims on police support, and so augmented its arsenal by producing home-made guns.³⁵

The Bougainville and Solomon Islands conflicts gave rise to a spate of home-made production, which petered out as the conflicts themselves abated. In these post-conflict environments, home-made guns became virtually worthless.³⁶ Apart from the small amount of production in Papua New Guinea discussed earlier, there is little evidence of ongoing home-made production elsewhere in the region. The 1998 UN study indicated that some illegal production of crude 12-gauge shotguns has in the past occurred in Fiji, but only on a very small scale and with no recent reports (United Nations, 1998).

Post-conflict zones as centres and sources of illicit trade

None of these recent conflicts appear to have generated sufficient demand to prompt an influx of arms from countries outside the region, or even from other Pacific states. In addition, few combatants have had the financial resources to procure a shipment of any size.

Yet other conflicts in the region have generated small arms traffic in the past, and the possibility remains for this to recur. In May 1988, only months after two military coups in Fiji, customs officers in Sydney seized a 12-ton container of 'used machinery' en route from North Yemen. Found to be full of second-hand Czechoslovakian arms, it was headed for Fiji. Alerted by Australian customs, Fijian authorities subsequently discovered that a ten-ton shipment of mostly Soviet arms had arrived on the Suva wharves a month earlier. The key figure involved in the incident was an expatriate Fijian Indian, Mohammed Rafiq Kahan, living in London. Kahan was arrested and served jail terms in Britain for other offences (Ross, 1993, p. 128). While no conclusive explanation has ever surfaced about the intended end-users of these shipments, they are widely suspected to have been instigated by organizers of the 1987 coups.

In addition to the role that local conflicts may have in swelling imports into the region, it is important to consider the contribution that small arms remaining in post-conflict communities may make to the local black market. In the Solomon Islands, for instance, it is believed that as many as 500 high-powered firearms are still in circulation locally, now mainly in the hands of criminals, helping perpetuate a situation of lawlessness, impunity, and armed violence (Fennessy, 2002, p. 2). Outbreaks of armed crime, though less prevalent, also occur from time to time in parts of Bougainville.³⁷ Some internal movement of firearms—sales to business people, family members, and the illicit security industry—has been observed by residents of Bougainville.³⁸

Another issue is the 'leakage' of firearms that may occur from post-conflict communities to black markets elsewhere, despite the best disarmament efforts. In this respect, leakage from the Bougainville process is worth considering. As Section V discusses, the disarmament process there appears to have been largely successful. Indeed, Bougainville has been recognized internationally as an emerging peace-making society, particularly in relation to reconciliation processes and weapon disposal (Kenneth, 2002b). One of the challenges to the disarmament process in Bougainville, however, is the potential loss of firearms to the black market, as ex-combatants succumb to the temptation to trade their arms for cash.

Two potential sources of demand for ex-Bougainville small arms exist: from the Papua New Guinea mainland and from the Solomon Islands. From Buka, in north Bougainville, firearms may be transported to Rabaul, on the island of New Britain, and on to Papua New Guinea's main island. From villages at the southern tip of Bougainville, they can easily be transferred to neighbouring islands in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands, some of which are only minutes away by speedboat, and on to Honiara.

Papua New Guinean authorities suspect that some level of trade in factory-made firearms is occurring between Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, and this impression is backed up by Bougainville residents.³⁹ A local leader in Buka, for example, comments that since transport lines re-opened, Papua New Guinea Highlanders have been travelling to Buka to purchase firearms. Papua New Guinea police and customs are starting to check ships, but only in port; outside of Buka and Rabaul, speedboats can easily sit in wait on small islands. Bougainvilleans travelling from Buka to Rabaul can get USD 250 for a self-loading military assault rifle (SLR), making the journey well worthwhile.⁴⁰ Further down the main island of Bougainville, a long-time resident who works closely with ex-combatants stated bluntly that there had been a 'constant stream' of firearms out of Buka, particularly since the start of the 2002 election period. Prices for firearms ranged from approximately USD 500 for an M-16 to USD 2,500 for an M-60.⁴¹ In February 2002, police making a routine check at Kimbe in New Britain seized one M-16 assault rifle and ammunition from a ship travelling from Bougainville, but few other seizures have been made (Australian Federal Police, 2002).

Close cultural ties exist between the people of Bougainville and the western Solomon Islands, and some trafficking across that southern border no doubt occurs. As late as June 2002, armed criminals from Bougainville were known to be moving in and out of Western Province.⁴² Caches of BRA weapons may also be stored in parts of Gizo and Western Province. In September 1996, approximately 80 firearms, including SLRs, M-203s, and M-16s, were stolen during an incident at Kangu Beach on the Bougainville/Solomon Islands border. Subsequently, a feud broke out between two local BRA leaders, and some of the militants who had been involved took their firearms and moved to Gizo. The feud remains unresolved, and it is possible that many of those weapons remain cached in Gizo.⁴³

Little hard evidence has emerged to date to support claims of serious arms trafficking from Bougainville into the Solomons—or vice versa, for that matter. Members of the Solomon Islands IPMT in Honiara had not observed any 'new or unusual' influxes of firearms from elsewhere.⁴⁴ As one journalist in Honiara pointed out, the BRA has been at pains to disarm 'rogue elements' of their forces, conscious of the effects they could have on the fragile peace process in the Solomons.⁴⁵ If price is any indication, what demand there is for ex-Bougainville firearms comes from Papua New Guinea. In May 2002, a machine gun could allegedly be purchased in Honiara for just SID 2,000, or about USD 300.⁴⁶ In the Papua New Guinea Highlands, on the other hand, a machine gun can apparently fetch almost ten times as much: PGK 10,000, or about USD 2,500.⁴⁷ It is important to note, however, that reported prices such as these are rarely supported by evidence.

Conclusion

Compared to many other regions of the world, Pacific stockpiles are tiny. Yet within the region itself, important differences exist. In particular, New Zealand and Australia distinguish themselves as two of the world's better-armed industrialized nations.

Elsewhere in the Pacific, especially in some of the micro-states, firearm possession is minuscule by world standards and export licences and deliveries are very small. Yet for many of these countries, the issue is not so much the size of stockpiles or the volume of imports as it is one of sensitivity to transfers.⁴⁸ As the next section explores, the impact of an outbreak of small arms-related violence on these communities cannot be underestimated.

While the inadequacy of much publicly available information makes certainty impossible, the number of legal small arms in the region can be estimated with reasonable confidence. As elsewhere, civilians dominate legal firearm ownership. In all, security forces in the region possess about 226,000 firearms. The 3.1 million guns in civilian hands outnumber those of the armed forces and police by a ratio of nearly 14 to one.

Illegal ownership remains difficult to calculate, and a full regional analysis may never be possible. It is likely that many hundreds of thousands of illegal firearms exist in the region. In Australia alone, one federal government estimate suggests that, despite the 1996/97 buy-back of 643,000 prohibited semi-automatic long guns, as many as 800,000 such firearms may remain undeclared (Chapman, 1998, Table 5.2, p. 121⁴⁹). Many thousands of illegal guns, home-made, or otherwise, are also likely to exist in Papua New Guinea.

In many ways, the small island nations of the Pacific are no strangers to the process of globalization. When it comes to the legal trade in arms, supply networks to the Pacific are extensive. Yet overall, legal trade in the region is dominated by relationships with the US and to a lesser extent France. With the exception of an evident trade in illicit imports into Papua New Guinea and Australia, the region as a whole has yet to succumb to the levels of illegal trafficking in arms endured by its neighbours in South and Southeast Asia.

While this section has focused on the major centres of legal and illegal trade in arms, other parts of the Pacific also deserve attention. As mentioned earlier, an illegal arm smuggling ring is alleged to operate across the border between the US protectorate of American Samoa and its neighbour, Samoa. In New Caledonia, the 1988 Matignon Accord between the Kanak independence movement and the French government ended armed hostilities, but there have been notable incidents during the last decade, including the arrest in 1994 of a group found in possession of small arms, explosives, and passports⁵⁰ stolen from the French High Commission (Maclellan and Chesneaux, 1998, p. 180). Until January 2002, the small island nation of Tonga operated a shipping registry that was implicated in arms trafficking to the Middle East (Cooley, 2002, p. 15).⁵¹ The relationship between the licit and illicit trade in each of these states is certainly worthy of further research.

III. The impact of armed conflict on Pacific island communities

We were once able to draw tourists from across the globe, tourists who were in search of the perfect Pacific paradise—warm, friendly people, clear blue waters, white beaches, a wealth of custom and culture found nowhere else in the world. However, I fear that this image has been shattered by the recent crises in our region. We shouldn't be surprised if people view our region as one characterised by coups, militancy, instability and general lawlessness.

Sir Peter Kenilorea, Chairman, PMC, Solomon Islands (2001)

In many of the smaller Pacific countries, development processes are fragile. States such as the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, which rank alongside Cambodia and Zimbabwe as two of the 'least developed' countries in the world, lack the resources or capacity to deliver basic services such as health and education adequately to their citizens (UNDP, 2003). In contexts such as these, perceived or real levels of inequality, lack of economic opportunity, and long-standing conflicts over resources become intensified, adding to existing social pressures. Factors such as these have contributed to the emergence of armed conflict in each of the communities studied in this section.

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The introduction of small arms into these communities has made conflicts more protracted and much more difficult to resolve. As the 1998 *United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation* commented, the proliferation of small arms 'affects the intensity and duration of violence', encouraging militancy and fuelling the demand for powerful firearms (United Nations, 1998). Cultures of violence threaten to become a way of life.

In the last two decades, access to poorly secured armouries by undisciplined state security forces has also been instrumental in undermining democratic institutions in the Pacific. Armed violence and voter intimidation during the 2002 Papua New Guinea elections provides the most recent example of this.

Clearly, small arms alone do not cause states to fail. But the emergence of conflict using small arms may push already weak states to the edge of collapse, and spark a humanitarian crisis. The availability and presence of small arms 'translates the landscape of struggle from the political to the military realm', creating complex emergencies that may involve 'huge population shifts, long-term agricultural insufficiency, general economic collapse, and civil population decimation from disease, starvation, and direct conflict' (Stohl & Smith, 1999, p. 1).

This section considers some of the effects that armed conflict has had on communities in the Pacific. The report considers a range of direct and indirect impacts in three communities—Fiji, Bougainville (Papua New Guinea), and the Solomon Islands, along with brief discussions of the Papua New Guinea mainland, Australia, and New Zealand.

Armed conflict: Direct and indirect impacts

As other studies have shown, small arms-related violence can deeply affect the well-being and productivity of societies, generating a range of immediate and long-term effects (WHO, 2001, p. 15). The direct impacts of conflict using small arms, including firearm-related death, injury, and displacement, are reasonably easy to gauge. While statistics are not always available, estimates can be obtained from a range of informed sources and cross-checked for validity.

Any attempt to develop an analytical framework for assessing indirect social and economic impacts, however, will always be open to debate. Cause and effect at this level are rarely clear-cut. As an earlier Small Arms Survey study has commented, 'the broad economic and social impacts of conflict could not be narrowly interpreted as a proxy for small arms' (Muggah & Berman, 2001, p. 6).

Having acknowledged this, there is a range of indirect impacts that can be attributed, perhaps not solely, but certainly primarily, to the prevalence of armed conflict or the unregulated availability of small arms and light weapons. Indirect impacts of armed conflict include individual and psycho-social trauma, increasing levels of criminality, and reduced access to basic entitlements such as health and education (Muggah & Berman, 2001, p. 7).

Various key indicators have been used in this study to illustrate the impacts of small arms on Pacific communities. They include the following:

Death and injury: Where possible, figures have been ascertained for firearm-related death, injury, and crime rates. In other cases, reliable estimates or related data have been used to give some indication of the extent of the impact.

Forced displacement: Internal displacement may have many contributing factors, but in the case studies that follow, the presence of an armed threat was clearly the driving factor forcing people to leave their homes and communities.

Violations of international humanitarian law (IHL): Parties to armed conflict are bound by internationally accepted humanitarian law governing the rules of war. In all three case studies, parties have breached the principles of IHL and laws governing human rights. In Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, ill-disciplined combatant groups and militant factions committed many serious human rights atrocities, for which they are yet to be held accountable.

Trauma, domestic violence, and developing cultures of violence: Small arms-related violence can lead to lasting trauma at both the individual and social level. Violence may become endemic to cultures, so that even where genuine disarmament efforts are being made, individuals continue to respond to problems by resorting to armed force (IPPNW/SAFER-Net, 2001, p. 11). Militants or criminals involved in illicit firearm use may also make a personal investment in criminal or combatant skills, rather than in education and training. Long-term cultural shifts may occur where the availability of guns challenges customary systems of control, perhaps putting young men out of the control of village elders or chiefs. As this report will show, women and young people often bear the brunt of the impact.

Access to basic services, e.g. health and education: Individuals affected by armed conflict may be denied access to basic social entitlements such as adequate medical care and formal education, resulting in immediate suffering and potentially creating long-term constraints on development.

Targeting of development staff: Personal safety can be a major source of stress for development workers. At best, this manifests as a low-level sense of personal insecurity. At worst, personnel may be exposed to threats, abuse, intimidation, and violence. If sufficiently prolonged or intense, the level of risk posed by violence using small arms may cause aid programmes to be suspended or cancelled in places where they are most needed.

Impacts of economic productivity, investment, and tourism: As stated earlier, it is impossible to attribute many of the indirect impacts of conflict solely to the presence of small arms. This is particularly so with respect to the impact of armed conflict on economic productivity. Other variables, such as global shifts in commodity prices, seasonal variation, and fluctuating exchange rates also affect economic performance in the Pacific. Rates of investment and tourism flows are affected by similar factors. However, in the case studies that follow, economic productivity, investment levels, and visitor numbers have all clearly been affected by the outbreak of armed conflict.

Opportunity costs: Resources that are diverted to dealing with the aftermath of conflict cannot be used effectively elsewhere. Opportunity costs incurred may include additional expenditure on law and order, funds directed away from existing programmes to deal with the immediate impact of a crisis, and funds spent on weapons containment and disposal programmes.

Measuring the impacts: The challenges of quantitative research in the Pacific

Major challenges confront researchers attempting to quantify the impacts of small arms-related violence in the Pacific. Although firearm-related violence is now generally recognized as a major issue of public health, law, and order, many countries do not yet record firearm-related data. As this study found, sometimes the only way to ascertain the relative level of firearm-related violence in a community is to prevail upon the institutional memory of the interviewee.

Crime and justice-related data

A preliminary survey of firearm-related homicide, robbery, and assault in 20 Pacific states illustrates the problems (see Table 3.1, below). The survey found the following:

- Only anecdotal evidence was available from police and justice agencies in five of the smallest countries: Nauru, Niue, the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Tonga.
- In Papua New Guinea and Fiji, authorities do not collate statistics about the type of weapon used in various offences, although local police do record this information.
- Firearm-related crime figures were not available from American Samoa, the Solomon Islands, and the French territories.
- Justice authorities sometimes supplied incomplete data, or data outside the requested time boundaries. Figures for Papua New Guinea were only provided for the first six months of 2001, and in Vanuatu, only for 2001.
- Even where figures are available, differences of definition can make comparisons problematic. Some jurisdictions include attempted homicides in their 'homicide' total, and many countries do not distinguish between armed and unarmed robberies, let alone record the type of weapon used.

Health-related data

The absence of firearm-related mortality and morbidity data from health sources in the Pacific islands defeated the early intentions of this study to provide comparative figures across a range of nations. Where health-related death and injury figures are kept, the type of weapon used is rarely recorded. A range of definitional problems also apply. Consider the large difference between total unintentional deaths (any cause) in Tonga (2,701) and the Federated States of Micronesia (16) between 1997 and 2001—two countries with roughly similar populations.⁵² The reason for this difference may be that in Tonga, the category of ‘total unintentional deaths’ includes death by natural causes as well as by external causes.

While key criteria vary so wildly, and samples are so small or non-existent, any correlation between firearm availability and the prevalence of gun violence in the Pacific is likely to remain elusive. In the region’s smaller states, much work is needed to establish consistent processes for recording health- and justice-related data. For some time to come, qualitative research may remain the most effective form of investigation in the Pacific.

Armed crime

In many of the smaller Pacific countries, levels of firearm-related crime are very low. In the Federated States of Micronesia (population 124,000), of the seven homicides between 1997 and 2001, none were committed with a gun. Nor did any of the 493 assaults recorded by police during the same period involve a firearm.⁵³

Six other Pacific island nations, in which a significant level of civilian firearm ownership is not accompanied by armed conflict, report five-year gun crime totals as low as zero (see Table 3.1, below). Given the regional attention accorded to any such events, the efficiency of island grapevines, and the absence of contradictory reports in news media and other sources, the authors have no reason to doubt these figures.

In other Pacific states, armed violence and illegal trafficking are emerging as a significant problem. In Samoa (population 160,000), firearms were used in ten of the 175 homicides committed between 1998 and 2002.⁵⁴ The shooting assassination of a Samoan cabinet minister, in August 1999, was notable, mainly because such an event was unprecedented in that country (*Pacific News Bulletin*, 1999).

High levels of armed crime in Papua New Guinea are a major concern to the region, along with post-conflict armed violence in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands.

Table 3.1. Homicide, robbery, and assault in Pacific states, 1997–2001⁵⁵

	Population ⁵⁶	Civilian firearm ownership	Homicide, any method	Homicide, firearm	Robbery, any method	Robbery, firearm	Assault, any method	Assault, firearm
Australia	19,707,200	Yes	1,570	300	116, 613	8,544	680,135	3,766
Cook Islands	20,000	Yes	1	0	1	0	745	2
Fiji	840,000	Suspended May 2000	95	Not recorded	Not available	Not recorded	21,090	Not recorded
Kiribati	92,000	Yes	34	0	2	0	1,313	0
Marshall Islands	54,000	No (30 exemptions)	10	1	15	0	250	0
Micronesia (FSM)	124,000	Yes	7	0	0	0	493	0
Nauru	12,000	No	0	0	0	0	1,000	0
New Zealand	3,820,749	Yes	346	38	9,136	1,097	165,943	1,980
Niue	2,000	Yes	3	3	0	0	Not available	0
Palau	20,000	No	Not available	0	Not available	0	Not available	0
Papua New Guinea ⁵⁷	5,028,000	Yes	193	Not recorded	1,501	Not recorded	581	Not recorded
Samoa	160,000	Yes	175	10	23	3	1,622	5
Tonga ⁵⁸	101,000	Yes	Not available	0	Not available	4	Not available	0
Tuvalu	10,000	Yes	3	0	0	0	5	Not available
Vanuatu	207,000	Yes	6	0	2,187	0	1,180	0

Fiji

Fiji is a damaged, divided democracy. George Speight's dramatic intervention has dislocated the process of political reconciliation, severely strained race relations, and shattered the foundations of the nation's economy just when Fiji was gradually emerging from the debris of 1987. The images of looting and burning, thuggery, and violence on the streets of Suva, the worst in the history of Fiji, will forever remain deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of its people, and the recovery from the wreckage and ruin will be long and hard.

Brij Lal, 'The Sun Set at Noon Today' (2001, p. 11)

There were fewer physical casualties in the May 2000 coup in Fiji than in other recent armed conflicts in the Pacific. In all, five shooting fatalities occurred as a direct result of the coup.⁵⁹ Yet the effects of a third coup on Fiji's society and economy have been profound.

Many of the social and economic problems facing Fiji are of long standing. The May 2000 coup occurred in the context of a long history of unrest that dates perhaps as far back as independence in the early 1970s, and certainly since two earlier military coups, both in 1987. Any discussion about the impact of armed conflict on Fiji needs to take this into account. Nonetheless, the May 2000 coup amplified pre-existing tensions and added considerable weight to the social, political, and economic pressures already facing the country.

Background

The election to government, in the spring of 1999, of the first Indo-Fijian prime minister, Mahendra Chaudry, and his Fijian Labour Party met with bitter opposition from many in the indigenous Fijian establishment. Already unsettled by the adoption of a multiracial constitution in 1997, and unhappy with the interventionist direction of the new administration, they combined with nationalist forces to oppose the Chaudry government. Rhetoric of indigenous self-determination and existing racial tensions combined to create a volatile mix for unrest, making it relatively easy to recruit support from the ranks of young, disenfranchised ethnic Fijians. An increasingly politicized police force and military did little to help the situation.

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Two violent protests against the Chaudry government took place in the month leading up to the hostage taking. On 19 May 2000, while the third of these protests was taking place, a small group of men armed themselves with Uzi and Galil assault weapons stolen from state armouries. Led by local businessman George Speight, the gang took Prime Minister Chaudry and most of the elected government hostage. For the next 56 days, members of parliament and others were kept captive inside the parliamentary complex.

In the early days of the coup, widespread looting and rioting took place in the capital of Suva. Twenty shops were set alight and 167 were looted, causing an estimated FJD 30 million (about USD 13.9 million) in damages (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 8). In rural areas, widespread violence, arson, and looting targeted Indo-Fijians. As the crisis unfolded, the situation was exacerbated by the imposition of power cuts across the main island of Viti Levu, further acts of arson, prolonged road blockages, the takeover of a military base on the second largest island of Vanua Levu, and the takeover of police stations and a number of tourist resorts.

Speight and his supporters were finally arrested on 26 July 2000. As they still retained arms that should have been surrendered, they were accused of breaking the conditions of an earlier amnesty agreement and were subsequently imprisoned on an island off the coast of Suva. In early 2002, George Speight and his supporters were convicted of treason, with a death sentence for Speight commuted to life imprisonment.

A further crisis occurred in November 2000, in which more lives were lost than during the coup period. On 2 November, the Counter-Revolutionary Warfare Unit of the Fijian Army, many of whom had been directly involved in the coup, attempted to murder the Chief of Staff in command of the Army, Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama. They were said to be armed with Uzis and M-16s, some of them sourced from the coup itself (*Fiji Times*, 2000a). Eight soldiers were killed: three loyal to the

military, and five from the rebel force. Other soldiers were critically injured, and scores more, including a number of civilians, were hit by stray bullets (*Pacific News Bulletin*, 2000d). Forty firearms were estimated to be missing from the military headquarters following the revolt (*Fiji Times*, 2000b). Speaking shortly after the incident, a military spokesperson, Major Howard Politini, stated:

It's a sad situation—one our military was not trained for. To combat internally. But here we're seeing our own soldiers kill at random, indiscriminately... When we see the bullet marks, we cannot believe this is happening in our own country. It's something you expect to see in the Middle East or elsewhere, but never in our own country (Lewa, 2000).

Forced displacement and increased migration

Though Speight and many media reports suggested otherwise, the May 2000 coup was by no means sparked solely by tensions between indigenous Fijians and Fijians of Indian extraction. Growing social inequalities within the indigenous community itself were key, but less visible, drivers of the conflict. However, the coup deepened tensions between the two ethnic groups. In the weeks that followed, Indo-Fijians fell victim to widespread violence. While small arms were not always in evidence, victims were disempowered by the collapse of law enforcement and the knowledge that not far away, the government was being held to ransom by a small group of armed rebels.

Looting, destruction, eviction, and arson forced several hundred Indo-Fijians to flee to refugee camps, leaving behind their homes, farms, and businesses. Almost a year later, several hundred people were still displaced (Böge, 2001, p. 57). Those who stayed on suffered many acts of terrorism (Pene, 2001, p. 10).

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Many of those who had the resources and ability to leave the country did so, swelling the ranks of skilled workers, mainly Indo-Fijian, who had been leaving Fiji permanently since 1987. Between May 2000 and November 2001 alone, 9,800 people emigrated; of those, 8,500 were Indo-Fijian. By May 2002, more than 11,500 people had left Fiji (Gurdayal, 2002; *Port Vila Presse*, 2002b).

Job losses and declining incomes

The May 2000 crisis caused mass redundancies and reduced income through shorter working hours. In the three months after the coup, the Fijian Ministry of Labour recorded a significant increase in unemployment, particularly in the tourist, garment, and manufacturing industries (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2001b, p. 8). Significant job losses also occurred in construction, furniture making, and retail. By July 2000, over 7,500 jobs had been lost (Fiji Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations redundancy survey, 5 July 2000, cited in Hicks, 2000). Unemployment doubled, rising to 15 per cent (Böge, 2001, p. 65).

Recovery was slow. Six months after the coup, over 6,500 people made redundant by the crisis remained unemployed, mainly in the hospitality, tourism, retail, manufacturing, and mining sectors (Fiji Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, cited in Carling, 2001, p. 46). In November 2001, the Fijian government estimated that at least 9,000 workers had been made redundant as a result of the crisis (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2001b, p. 20).

Violation of IHL and human rights

During the coup, Amnesty International, the Red Cross, and many other international and local NGOs expressed concern about the hostage-taking and its results: lawlessness and human rights abuses perpetrated in Suva and outlying areas (Amnesty International, 2000a). Further abuses occurred in the November 2000 mutiny. Some of the rebels in this incident were allegedly beaten to death with rifle butts, their injuries so severe that they were unidentifiable (*Pacific News Bulletin*, 2000d).

Another notable form of human rights abuse in the weeks following the coup was the use of sexual violence against women. Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) files indicate that 'race motivated rapes' began on the day of the coup. Threats of rape were also used to force male family members into cooperating with demands (Pene, 2001, p. 11).

Conflict-related trauma

Stress induced by the crisis manifested itself as trauma and insecurity among women and children. In a survey of 400 women carried out by the FWCC in the year following the crisis, 49 per cent said that they did not feel safe outside their homes (Pene, 2001, p. 13). A 2001 Save the Children Fund survey on the impact of the crisis on children found that many were traumatized by the events of the crisis, particularly children of the hostages and those in schools near sites where the events of the political crisis had taken place (Carling, 2001, p. 9). FWCC counsellors also documented anti-social behaviour among refugee children traumatized by violence (Pene, 2001, p. 10).

At a deeper level, the conflict has reduced the level of social harmony and community cohesion throughout Fiji. Relations between the Indo-Fijian and the indigenous Fijian populations are still tense, and agencies such as the FWCC and Save the Children Fiji report that many Indo-Fijian families continue to live in fear.

Access to basic entitlements: Education and health

Schools in the main urban areas of Fiji were closed for almost two months following the May 2000 conflict. A number of schools had been damaged, vandalized, or burnt in ensuing violence, and attendance was very low on reopening. In the year following the coup, Fiji's education budget was cut by FJD 6 million (USD 3 million). Schools that had already received their full 2000 grant before the revised budget received no new funding in 2001 (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2000, 2001a).

Health facilities were not targeted during the coup, but there was a substantial reduction in health expenditure in the post-coup budget, particularly with respect to capital expenditure and training. The 2001 health budget contained a further decrease in operating costs (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2000).

Impact on economic productivity and prosperity

Fiji's economy contracted sharply following the crisis, with an overall decline, in 2000, of 2.8 per cent in GDP (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2001b, p. 8).

In the weeks following the coup, major donor countries such as Australia and New Zealand introduced a range of sanctions. The Australian bilateral aid budget, which in 2000 was estimated at AUD 17.5 million (about USD 8.5 million), was reduced by 30 per cent. Most non-humanitarian programmes were cut.⁶⁰

At the request of Fijian trade unions, Australian and New Zealand trade unions imposed bans on the loading and unloading of cargo to and from Fiji, for periods of 25 and 4 days respectively. The bans had a major impact on the economy of Fiji: losses of approximately FJD 124 million (about USD 57 million) were accrued as a result (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 5). The threat of further trade sanctions led to falling export demand, and in the first three months following the coup, export levels fell by 20 per cent (Böge, 2001, p. 65). By early September, the coup was estimated to have cost the country FJD 650 million, or about USD 300 million (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 10).

Coupled with supply disruptions and electricity cuts, the drop in export demand led to a decline of 6.2 per cent in manufacturing output. Flow-on effects included increased unemployment and pressure on retail and business operations. With further declines in manufacturing output predicted for 2001, the Fijian government pinned its hopes on a broad-based recovery in 2002 (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2001b, p. 12).

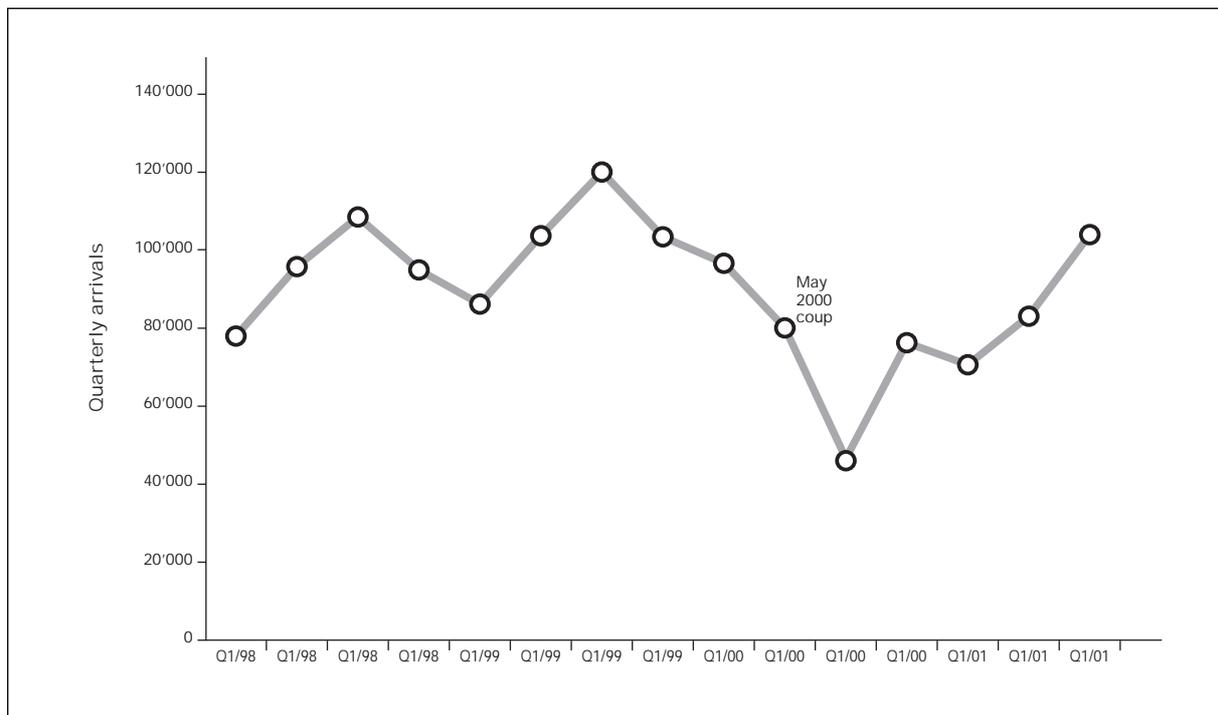
The late 1970s and early 1980s had seen investment in Fiji reach as high as 29.4 per cent of GDP. However, continuing political instability since 1987 had depressed business confidence, and investment levels just prior to the coup were struggling to reach 11 per cent (Fiji Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2001b, p. 18). In mid-July 2000, Moody's Investment Service downgraded Fiji's foreign currency rating, further depressing the investment market (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 8). Investment levels in March 2002 hovered at an all-time low of less than 10 per cent of GDP (Tabureguci, 2002).

Impact on tourism

Gross receipts from tourism rival those from the once-strong sugar industry as Fiji's major source of foreign currency earnings. In 1999, tourism generated FJD 540 million (USD 250 million), or around 30 per cent of GDP, and directly and indirectly employed 45,000 people. That year, 410,000 tourists arrived in Fiji, an increase of 10 per cent on 1998 visitor numbers (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2000a, p. 24).

Political instability, following the May 2000 coup, immediately affected the Fijian tourism industry. Massive decreases were recorded for visitors from all major markets. In the third quarter of 2000, tourist numbers dropped by 62 per cent to just 45,000, compared to 119,300 in the same quarter of 1999 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2000b).⁶¹ Over 2,000 workers in the tourism and hospitality industry lost their jobs. Financial losses to the industry were estimated at FJD 1 million daily, and totalled over FJD 100 million (USD 46 million) during the crisis period (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 6).

Figure 3.1 Quarterly tourist arrivals in Fiji, 1998–2001



Source: Fiji Visitors Bureau Annual Reports, 1999 & 2000

A year after the coup, the Fijian tourism industry appeared to be recovering, and the Fiji government was confidently forecasting that visitor arrivals in 2003 would surpass the record of 410,000 set in 1999 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2001b). Yet almost two years later, employment figures for the tourism accommodation industry were still 5.2 per cent lower than they had been just prior to the outbreak of the conflict (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, cited in the Fiji Times, 2002, p. 35).

The Solomon Islands

Conflict in the Solomon Islands is not a new phenomenon. Its regular occurrence has given the people knowledge and skills to resolve conflict in a manner that is fair and responsive to their culture and environment. However, the current so-called ethnic tension conflict is too big and life threatening and involves modern weapons.

Alice Pollard, 'Resolving Conflict in Solomon Islands: The Women for Peace Approach' (2000, p. 44)

Four years of armed conflict and instability in the Solomon Islands have brought into sharp focus how serious the development situation now is in that country. The few social and economic gains that had been achieved over the previous two decades, a period characterized by poor economic and financial management and increasing dependency on external aid, have been eroded by the recent social and political crisis. As one UN report states, development in the Solomon Islands has not simply stopped; it has regressed (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. xiv).

Background

Towards the end of 1998, conflict erupted in the Solomon Islands. Young men from the main island of Guadalcanal, frustrated with the failure of successive governments to address development issues, had been collecting arms—legally held civilian rifles, old World War II arms and ammunition, and home-made guns—for some two years (Kabutaulaka, 2000a, p. 3). Long-standing, smouldering disputes over occupation of land in Guadalcanal by settlers from the island of Malaita had become the focus of their frustrations, aggravated by a number of one-off incidents of Malaitan violence against people from Guadalcanal.

From October 1998 onwards, organized gangs of Guadalcanal men, or ‘Gualese’, attacked Malaitan homes in the capital of Honiara and surrounding areas. By the end of 1998, a Gualese militant group had been formed, known initially as the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) but later named the IFM. Perhaps as many as 2,000 young men and boys were involved (Slade, 2001, p. 4). By mid-1999, at least 50 people had been killed by armed militants and about 20,000 people, including 13,000 Malaitans, had fled Guadalcanal (Solomon Islands Government, 2000, p. 70).

Malaitans reacted by forming the Malaita Eagle Force. In January 2000, the MEF raided the police armoury at Auki, in Malaita, equipping themselves with high-powered assault rifles (Radio Australia, 2000). By late 1999, open confrontations were occurring between the IFM and the MEF. At the request of the Solomon Islands government, the Commonwealth Secretariat deployed a contingent of police officers from Fiji and Vanuatu, but this failed, as did a number of other attempts to facilitate a peace process (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. 55).

On 5 June 2000, the MEF staged another armoury raid, this time in Honiara. In collusion with some members of the RSIP, they took over key institutions in Honiara, forcing the prime minister to resign. The leader of the opposition, Manasseh Sogavare, was subsequently installed as the new prime minister (Kenilorea, 2001, p. 4). Open confrontation between the two militant groups continued, and by the end of 2000, over 100 people were estimated to have been killed (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. xiv).⁶² Although this figure has never been independently verified, reliable sources from both factions confirm that even where people may not have died directly by gunshot, the presence of an armed threat facilitated other forms of violence (Kabutaulaka, 2000b).

In August 2000, the two factions agreed to a cease-fire, and in mid-October, a peace agreement was signed in Townsville, Australia. The signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) established an International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) and a local Peace Monitoring Council (PMC), and put in place provisions for weapon surrender (see Section V).

While the TPA brought about the cessation of overt violence, serious law and order problems persist. Combined with spiralling economic problems, the outlook for peace in the Solomon Islands remains uncertain. In late June 2002, 11 Malaitan men were alleged to have been shot dead in a confrontation on the ‘Weather Coast’ of Guadalcanal, in what was apparently a foiled plot to capture militant leader Harold Keke (PACNEWS 2, 2002d). Two months later, Father Augustine Geve, Minister for Youth, Women and Sports, was shot to death while trying to resolve the ongoing conflict on the Weather Coast, and in September 2002, militant crossfire east of Honiara claimed the lives of three women, a young boy, and a baby (PACNEWS, 2002d).

Forced displacement

Youths were forced at gunpoint to join the militants... Babies are being born in the bush and cannot be vaccinated against deadly diseases... Food shortages are also being experienced because a lot more people have gone back to the villages. Mothers as primary caregivers forgot their fears and walked miles into town in order to buy or get food and medical supplies for their families and relatives from the Red Cross and other charity organisations.

Dalcy Tovosia Paina, 'Peacemaking in Solomon Islands: The Experience of the Guadalcanal Women for Peace Movement' (2000, p. 47)

The 1999 Solomon Islands census estimated the total number of Solomon Islanders displaced between 1998 and 1999 at over 35,000 (Solomon Islands 1999 census, cited in Velayudhan, 2001, p. 3). By October 2000, estimates of the total number of displaced had reached as high as 40–50,000 (Kudu, 2000). Included among these were groups of Gualese from Malaita Province, who began returning to Guadalcanal from October 1998.⁶³ But the majority, around 23,000, or 4,100 families, were Malaitans fleeing Guadalcanal (Liloqula & Pollard, 2000, p. 2).

Families who were displaced lost houses and property, jobs, and other means of livelihood. By October 2000, it was estimated that 8,000 people had either lost their jobs or had taken leave without pay (Kudu, 2000). Many more people suffered reduced hours or income (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 15). Those who had become dependent on the cash economy and no longer had the skills to sustain themselves in a rural environment suffered the most.

The influx of thousands of people to their home villages placed pressure on services, land, and food security in outlying provinces. In some areas, emergency food supplies were outstripped by the inflow of displaced people. A World Health Organization (WHO) case study in Malaita noted that although over 59 per cent of villages had water supply systems, nearly 32 per cent were rendered inadequate by the arrival of the new settlers (Velayudhan, 2002, p. 5). Land disputes on Malaita increased as displaced persons began to arrive from Honiara, placing extra pressure on local resources (Chevalier, 2000, p. 84).

Violation of IHL and human rights

Amnesty International visited Guadalcanal and Malaita in September 1999 to investigate reports of violations of human rights. It found that the armed conflict had resulted in 'a rapidly deteriorating human rights situation', with civilians suffering abuses by all sides, including 'deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture, rape and abduction, as well as internal displacement, looting and burning of village homes'. Both militant factions were implicated (Amnesty International, 2000b).

Of particular concern was the involvement of many personnel from the RSIP in the conflict. RSIP personnel had been implicated in a number of human rights violations, and had on numerous occasions failed to investigate allegations of violations and abuses of human rights. This left the civilian population of Guadalcanal vulnerable to further atrocities carried out with impunity by armed militants (Amnesty International, 2000b).

Those involved in the violation of international humanitarian law and human rights—militants or police—have yet to be held accountable. Participants in the conflict were given blanket amnesty

under the TPA, sparking deep concerns about the potential for victims to seek effective redress, and for the possibility of genuine reconciliation ever to occur.

Family breakdown, violence, and criminality

... the problem lies deep within our hearts. A relatively small number of men are establishing a new way of acting. The gun and what it stands for—intimidation and power—is creating a society where the culture of violence rules.

John Roughan, local NGO leader (2001)

There is a profound need in the Solomon Islands for some sort of national healing process and widespread trauma counselling. At the community level, social structures and norms have broken down as a result of mass displacement and the pressure of the crisis. The number of single-parent families has increased, most of them headed by women from Guadalcanal and Malaita who have been forced to return home and now shoulder most of the pressures of transition. Malaitan women who fled to Malaita and were abandoned by their Gualese husbands cannot now go back to Guadalcanal.⁶⁴

The breakdown of traditional social structures has serious implications for the development of Solomon Islands youth. Four years of civil unrest has left deep scars on the psyches of Solomon Islands children, especially in Honiara. At least 100 child soldiers aged 12–17 fought in the conflict, and many other children have seen horrific violence (Amnesty International, 2000b). Many children have missed a number of years of school, and the failing Solomon Islands economy offers them little opportunity for development. Traditional systems of authority have broken down, and few functional role models exist.

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This has provided fertile ground for the culture of violence to take root. Militarization has revived young men's role as warriors, giving them glamour, status, power, and income. Young ex-militants, now criminals, continue to cause fear and insecurity in the streets of Honiara. Fear, intimidation, cultural and family ties, and the threat of armed violence deter police and other law enforcement officials from enforcing the law.

To add to this, in 2001, the government recruited hundreds of ex-militants into the RSIP as 'Special Constables', swelling the ranks of this force from a few hundred to approximately 2,000.⁶⁵ While numbers later dropped to around 1,400, as one United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report notes, the contribution of these former militants to public security is dubious (UNDP, 2002a, p. 2).

In this context, as one commentator has put it, disarmament will need to be both physical and psychological, 'getting rid of not only the guns in people's hands, but also the guns in their heads' (Chevalier, 2000, p. 84).

Access to basic services: Health and education

HEALTH

In addition to deaths directly resulting from armed violence, many other people are believed to have died during the height of the conflict due to lack of access to basic health services. All major health programmes throughout the country were affected, and many donor-funded health programmes had to be postponed, so that the most urgent needs could be addressed (Velayudhan, 2002, p. 1). In one instance, a prolonged MEF blockade prevented the Red Cross from taking emergency supplies to rural

clinics, leaving a population of 60,000 people in rural Guadalcanal largely cut off from access to essential medical assistance. Many other remote clinics experienced serious shortages of essential medicines, due to influxes of injured patients or disruptions in supply (Amnesty International, 2000b).

Health services in the Solomon Islands continue to suffer ongoing problems. Medical staff who left Guadalcanal in fear and frustration have been slow to return, and lack of finances cripple existing services. At the beginning of 2002, there was provision for a total of 76 doctors (one for every 5,382 people), but only 30 Solomon Islanders and 19 expatriate doctors were occupying posts (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. xiii). In May 2002, the Malaitan Provincial Health Management considered a temporary suspension of basic health care services due to lack of funds, and throughout 2001 and 2002, health workers across the country periodically went on strike in protest over non-payment of salaries (PACNEWS 2, 2002b).

EDUCATION

Solomon Island children's access to education during the conflict was severely constrained, particularly in Malaita and Guadalcanal. In Malaita, the mass influx of children from Honiara stretched an already struggling education system beyond capacity. Many of the extra children simply could not be accommodated. A survey carried out in September 1999 showed that 41 per cent of children on Malaita were not in school. Meanwhile, primary and secondary enrolments in Guadalcanal and Honiara declined as students, subject to harassment and intimidation, stopped attending (Kudu, 2000, p. 1). A December 2000 Young Women's Christian Association survey found that in central Guadalcanal alone, around 6,000 students had fled into the bush and were not yet able to return to school (cited in Böge, 2001, p. 40).

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Four years of political and financial disruption have resulted in a continuing decline in the financial resources available for education. As late as October 2002, teachers were still being paid one or two fortnights in arrears.

Targeting of development staff

The crisis immediately affected the situation of development personnel working in the Solomon Islands. Approximately 200 expatriate staff in the NGO sector who had been working there prior to the conflict were withdrawn following the coup. Most foreign NGOs and some local NGOs suspended operations. Those who stayed on faced abuse and intimidation from militant groups, as well as threats to their families and homes.⁶⁶

In 2002, humanitarian, development, and disarmament personnel continued to face threats and insecurity. Personnel from the unarmed IPMT and PMC, each of which had duties to report regularly on breaches of the peace agreement, had to rely on the demoralized RSIP for their safety. Three IPMT groups were forced to quit their posts because of threats to security.⁶⁷ The murder of an expatriate worker in February 2002 simply served to heighten existing insecurities (Gower, 2002).

Impacts on development assistance

The outbreak of armed conflict in the Solomons meant that money that would normally have been spent on development had to be spent on emergency humanitarian measures. New Zealand suspended or terminated the vast majority of its development programmes and over the next two years redirected 73 per cent of its entire NZD 8 million (USD 3.2 million) annual Solomons aid budget towards humanitarian assistance and conflict resolution.⁶⁸ Australia redirected extra funds towards the

Solomon Islands, increasing its assistance from an average of AUD 13.6 million (USD 8.6 million) over the previous six years to over AUD 35 (USD 22 million) per year in the three budget years following the coup.⁶⁹ The EU suspended its 65 million euro (USD 72 million) 1998/1999 development assistance funding to the Solomon Islands for more than two years.⁷⁰

Much of both Australia and New Zealand's aid to the Solomon Islands in the two years following the coup went directly to support the peace and disarmament process, for example by supporting indigenous peace-building efforts and the IPMT, and funding programmes for the reintegration of ex-combatants. In the budget years 2001 and 2002, New Zealand committed on average over 18 per cent of its annual Solomons aid budget of NZD 8 million (USD 3.2 million) to the peace process. The real cost of supporting peace and disarmament, however, was far higher, as that amount did not include salaries of foreign affairs, defence, or police staff seconded to the Solomon Islands, the cost of the New Zealand Navy deployments to the Solomon Islands, or other hidden costs such as air force flights to and from Honiara.⁷¹

Impacts on economic productivity and investment

Wide fluctuations in economic productivity and growth are not uncommon in the Solomon Islands. Its dependence on a small number of primary export products means that the level of national income from year to year is strongly influenced by world market prices and by climatic variations. In addition, years of government mismanagement had all but bankrupted the country even before the conflict erupted (*The Economist Intelligence Unit*, 2000, p. 55). However, the production base remained intact, and improvements in external conditions usually saw a subsequent upturn in the economy.

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The advent of armed conflict pushed an already fragile economy to the verge of collapse, a position from which it has yet to recover. Most major industries ceased operations, and in late 2002, many were still closed. In mid-1999, civil unrest on Guadalcanal led to the closure of Solomon Islands Plantations Ltd, the only palm oil producer in the country and also a producer of cocoa. Production of copra and cocoa on Guadalcanal by other commercial enterprises and smallholders also ceased that year. In mid-2000, the premises of the only mining operation, Gold Ridge mine, were ransacked and it consequently ceased operations, as did all timber log production and saw milling on Guadalcanal. The country's major industrial fishing operation, Solomon Taiyo Ltd, was able to continue for some time, but ceased operations after armed rebels boarded fishing vessels (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. 44).

The civil unrest also adversely affected the operations of manufacturing and service industries in Honiara. Many businesses closed and stopped taking new orders for the basic goods needed by residents and people all over the Solomon Islands (Liloqula & Pollard, 2000, p. 7). At the start of 2002, of the large commercial enterprises, only two tuna fishing operations had resumed (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. 44).

The shutdown in production meant that export earnings fell dramatically. Estimated losses of SID 144 million (about USD 28 million) in exports and SID 170 million (about USD 33 million) in imports occurred in the first three months following the coup (PIF Secretariat, 2000, p. 14). By 2001, exports, valued in 1991 at USD 150 million, had fallen to USD 55 million. A sharp decline in GDP followed. In 2000, GDP fell in real terms by 14 per cent, from USD 69 million in 1999 to USD 57 million (Central Bank of Solomon Islands *Annual Report*, cited in UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. 43). GDP declined again by five per cent in 2001, and a further decline of five per cent was expected in 2002 (ADB, 2002, p. 155).

The closure of many of the country's major industries, whether due to the impact of the crisis or because of pre-coup mismanagement, has meant that post-coup administrations have been unable to collect sufficient revenue to sustain recurrent budget expenditure on essential services. By late 2001, payments to public servants, transfers to provincial governments for education and health, and payments to utilities were all in arrears (Asian Development Bank, 2002, p. 155). At the end of 2001, 30 per cent of government employees were still on unpaid leave (Velayudhan, 2002, p. 1).

By early 2002, total government debt was in excess of SID 1.3 billion (about USD 250 million).⁷² Many multilateral donor agencies such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) were threatening to suspend funding for existing projects unless outstanding arrears were settled (*Pacific News Bulletin*, 2002b). Gross external reserves at the end of 2001 were sufficient to cover only about one month of imports, and external reserves continued to decline in 2002 at the rate of USD 10 million a week (Jackson, 2002).

New investment will be needed to restore income and employment-generating businesses and to rebuild the badly damaged export base. However, many investors and business people are staying away from Honiara because they lack confidence that the peace process will be sustained. Losses incurred because of the conflict, the inability to service outstanding debt, and difficulties in securing new credit also prevent many people from resuming business. Reduced government revenue and borrowing constraints limit the ability of government to generate new investment and economic activity.

Most commentators agree that the Solomon Islands economy is in a perilous state. It is debatable, of course, how much of the current predicament can be blamed on the conflict, and how much of it can be attributed to continued mismanagement. After the signing of the TPA, the Solomon Islands economy had an opportunity to recover from the adverse effects of the crisis. The government secured a USD 25 million concessional loan from the ADB, and the Taiwanese government made a series of soft loans amounting to SID 100 million (USD 19.5 million) in May 2002 (Jackson, 2002; ADB, 2002, p. 155). This money could potentially have been used to help repair damaged infrastructure and resettle displaced persons. Instead, much of it has been paid out in compensation to militants. The speed of economic recovery depends to a large extent on how quickly the rule of law and competent administration can be restored.

Bougainville

The nine-year crisis on Bougainville is regarded as the longest and most devastating conflict to have occurred in the Pacific since World War II. It has not yet been authoritatively established how many people were killed or injured. A figure of 12–15,000 deaths is commonly reported, but no methodology has as yet been put forward to account for this (see Peacock-Taylor *et al.*, 1999, p. 8; Böge, 2001, p. 5). Scholars in the field consider that at least several thousand civilian Bougainvilleans perished during the conflict, as well as several hundred PNGDF personnel and similar numbers from the two combatant groups, the BRA and the BRF (see Regan, 1999, pp. 557–9). A four-year blockade by the Papua New Guinea government led to the complete collapse of the health system and contributed significantly to the casualties of war.

The crisis generated enormous and ongoing social and economic costs. All major infrastructure was either damaged or destroyed, and central Bougainville, in particular, still bears the scars of this destruction. Restoration of the economic production base has been slow, and many of the deeper impacts on Bougainvillean society are only now becoming apparent.

Background

The recent crisis has its roots deep in the colonial era. The mountainous main island of Bougainville, together with the neighbouring island of Buka to the north, and a number of smaller islands, form the Papua New Guinean province of North Solomons. As the name suggests, geographically the islands form part of the Solomon Islands; yet they were annexed as part of Papua New Guinea by Germany in 1899. Culturally, however, Bougainvilleans are quite distinct from the people of Papua New Guinea.

Existing tensions were aggravated by Rio Tinto's development of the Panguna gold and copper mine in central Bougainville in the late 1960s (Claxton, 1998, pp. 23–6). Between 1972 and 1989, production at Panguna accounted for 40 to 50 per cent of Papua New Guinea's total foreign exchange, and 15 to 20 per cent of national income, with few visible benefits for Bougainvilleans (AusAID, 2000, p. 12). Inequality between outsiders and locals, environmental damage, and disputes over compensation payments to traditional owners generated increasing tension.

In November 1988, mining operations were brought to a standstill after a co-ordinated attack by armed landowners from the surrounding area. By June 1989, the conflict had escalated into a war between the PNGDF and the newly formed BRA, led by Francis Ona. Though the PNGDF was by far the better-equipped of the two forces, the energetic guerrilla tactics of the BRA, armed with World War II-era firearms, home-made guns, and stolen PNGDF weapons, forced a cease-fire in March 1990. A four-year blockade by Papua New Guinea ensued.

From 1992, the PNGDF began to recapture parts of the province, aided by the BRF, groups that had formed in retaliation against the at times unrestrained violence of the BRA. Through its connections with the PNGDF, the BRF was at times considerably better armed than the BRA. The war slowly evolved from a purely secessionist one into a much more complex conflict, fought both between Bougainvilleans and the Papua New Guinea government, and among Bougainvilleans themselves. Human rights atrocities were committed by all sides of the conflict, including the BRF.

Several attempts had been made since 1990 to negotiate an end to the conflict, but none were successful. Ironically, a heavy-handed move by the Papua New Guinea government, in 1997, to hire British and South African mercenary troops to crush the BRA and recapture the mine provided the catalyst for the peace process to begin. Amidst public outrage, the then Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Julius Chan resigned, and the Sandline mercenaries never reached the shores of Bougainville. Military solutions were effectively discredited (Regan, 2001, p. 8). In June 1997, a round of negotiations between the conflicting parties began, and in October 1997, a truce was negotiated at Burnham, New Zealand. At the request of the parties, a New Zealand-led Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) was deployed to Bougainville.

In January 1998, the parties signed the Lincoln Agreement on Peace, Security and Development on Bougainville (Lincoln Agreement) in Christchurch, New Zealand. This provided for a formal international peacekeeping force to monitor an official cease-fire. The cease-fire became 'permanent and irrevocable' on 30 April 1998. Under the endorsement of the UN Security Council, an Australian-led Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) replaced the TMG. A UN Observer Mission was dispatched to Bougainville, and a Peace Process Consultative Committee (PPCC), chaired by the leader of the UN Observer Mission, was formed. The PMG, an unarmed delegation comprising civilian and defence personnel from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu, has operated since this time from a number of bases throughout Bougainville.

Negotiations on Bougainville's political future have continued since 1998, culminating most recently in the Bougainville Peace Agreement, signed at Arawa, Central Bougainville, on 30 August 2001. Subsequently, in late March 2002, two bills were passed by the Papua New Guinea parliament that clear the way for elections for an autonomous Bougainville and a future referendum on independence. As discussed further in Section V, a complex, three-stage weapons disposal plan is an integral part of this process.

Major causes of death

No methodical studies have yet been undertaken to quantify the number of deaths that occurred as a result of the war in Bougainville. Little quantitative data exists, since most government records were destroyed during the crisis. However, deaths can be attributed to three broad causes:

- direct combat between groups;
- extra-judicial executions and 'disappearances'; and
- untreated illness or injury due to the blockade of Bougainville imposed by Papua New Guinea from mid-1990 (Regan, 1999, pp. 557–9).

In early 1997, it was thought that an average of approximately three Bougainvilleans might be continuing to die every day, mainly due to indirect causes of the conflict (*The Age*, 1997). As one writer comments, it would be difficult to differentiate between the number of deaths caused by untreated illness or injury that were directly attributable to the blockade, and those that might have been expected to occur anyway (Regan, 1999, pp. 557–9).

Forced displacement

Without warning one day [the BRA] came to my village firing shots indiscriminately. It was chaos and nightmare. Families were separated. The next day I gave birth prematurely with the assistance of a local doctor in an abandoned bank. A few minutes later on the same morning, another pregnant woman came in—she was not so fortunate. She died from loss of blood. Her baby survived. After her came another pregnant mother who needed to give birth by caesarean method. Her stomach burst open—she died. Her baby survived. What could the doctor do without equipment and medicine? He was helpless. Ten days later our village was completely burnt and we had to run into the jungle to hide.

Helen Hakena, Pacific NGO delegate, statement to the UN Small Arms Conference, July 2001

Armed conflict generated huge disruptions in the life of Bougainvilleans. Many fled to the bush, and stayed there for months or even years. Others were forced to live in 'care centres' run by the Papua New Guinea government. By April 1995, over 64,000 displaced Bougainvilleans had taken refuge in 39 care centres throughout Bougainville (UNDP, 1997, p. 30). It is estimated that up to two-thirds of the care centre population throughout Bougainville were women or girls, and nearly half of the population were children below the age of 15 (UNDP, 1997, p. 38). Perhaps as many as 9,000 Bougainvilleans fled to the neighbouring Solomon Islands and settled there. Many of them did not begin to return to Bougainville until the late 1990s. Families who fled their homes found their ability to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and security very much curtailed.

The recovery process varies across Bougainville. In some areas, villages remained largely intact throughout the crisis; other villages have yet to recover, while still more villages were re-established some years ago. There are reports still of villagers who fled to the bush in parts of Bougainville and Buka in the early 1990s who have not yet returned to rebuild their villages on the coast.⁷³

The continuing presence of firearms, increasing law and order problems, and the excessive use of home-brew alcohol constrain community recovery and prevent many people from resuming normal lives. Villages continue to be subject to armed attacks, with one attack in Buka occurring as recently as December 2001. The young men of the village in question, who had already disarmed, located fresh firearms to defend their village.⁷⁴

Violation of IHL and human rights

A range of human rights atrocities were committed by all combatant groups. In 1996, the UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary, or arbitrary executions confirmed that between 1991 and October 1995, at least 64 people had been extra-judicially executed by the PNGDF. PNGDF personnel were also involved in the 'disappearance' and arbitrary detention of individuals suspected of having BRA affiliations. In addition, both the BRF and BRA engaged in deliberate and arbitrary killing, ill treatment and torture of civilians (Amnesty International, 1997, p. 1).

Problems of discipline within the PNGDF and unclear chains of command in the combatant forces, particularly in the BRF, contributed to the level of human rights violations. A notorious incident occurred in September 1996 at Kangu Beach, in South Bougainville, in which BRF forces collaborated with the BRA to attack PNGDF soldiers who had been drinking and harassing local women. Twelve PNGDF soldiers were shot dead. In October of the same year, the premier of the Bougainville Transitional Government, Theodore Miriung, was fatally shot while visiting his wife's village in Southwest Bougainville. Local BRF soldiers and PNGDF personnel were believed to have been involved in the killing (Amnesty International, 1997, p. 8).

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One of the most common forms of human rights abuse was gender-based violence. Women were raped and sexually abused by armed Papua New Guinea security forces, sometimes even in the care centres. Few such cases were investigated by the Papua New Guinea authorities. Women actively seeking to restore peace were often subjected to ill treatment and harassment by the authorities. Such women were also sometimes targeted by the BRF and the BRA (Amnesty International, 1997, p. 16). Violence against women and girls continued even after a truce was negotiated in late 1997.⁷⁵

Amnesty and pardon negotiations held as part of the ongoing peace process exempted former security force personnel and combatants from accountability for many human rights abuses, though acts of gender-based violence and other war crimes were not exempted (BTCC, 2002).

Trauma, violence, and the power of the gun

... the Papua New Guinea 'Defence' soldiers raped our young daughters, sisters, and even the married mothers, right in front of their husbands, brothers and uncles. The men could do nothing when faced with the high-powered army weapons. ... People were forced at gunpoint to lie face down on the melting heat of the bitumen road.

Josephine Sirivi, 'Surviving a Nine Year War', in Dé Ishtar (1998, p. 53)

For many families in Bougainville, the war has not ended. The Buka-based counselling and women's advocacy organization, Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, reports that many of the sexual violence and abuse cases now coming to light date back to the crisis period. Some women are only now starting to feel safe or confident enough to report long-withheld stories.⁷⁶

Many children have lived their entire lives in constant fear and insecurity, and now have problems adjusting to conditions of relative peace. Children bring their behavioural problems to school, where they 'act out' the atrocities they have seen. Boys who were child soldiers are becoming parents without ever having experienced a normal childhood themselves (Peacock-Taylor *et al.*, 1999, p. 11).

Men, especially young men, have also been deeply affected. Ex-BRF and BRA soldiers are finding it hard to return to normal life. Many important relationships were severely damaged during the conflict and memories of atrocities are never far from the surface. Many men try to cope with their residual feelings of anger, hatred, resentment, and guilt by consuming excessive quantities of 'JJ', the local homebrew. This can lead, in turn, to escalating levels of domestic and community violence.⁷⁷

A major challenge will be how to reintegrate into society the large numbers of young men who have developed an identity and level of self esteem based on the power of the gun. Younger ex-combatants who missed out on years of schooling have only a limited range of skills to enable them to participate in the economy. This group is most at risk of resorting to criminal behaviour in the absence of other opportunities. Many Bougainvilleans see disarmament and the strengthening of traditional authority as being essential to the reintegration of these young people (Regan, 1998, p. 16).

Access to services: Health and education

HEALTH

[At the time of the crisis] I was the only doctor left on Bougainville. I was put on the dead list for questioning the impacts of the conflict on the innocent. But they couldn't shoot me—I was the only doctor!—so I still argued.

*Dr Joe Vilosi, Buka Hospital, June 2002*⁷⁸

Both hospitals in Bougainville were destroyed early in the crisis, and many medical facilities were forced to close. An almost total blockade of medicines from 1990 meant that those health facilities that were not destroyed lacked the most basic supplies and equipment. In Central and Southern Bougainville, between 1992 and 1998, there were no doctors to provide medical services to approximately 100,000 people (Mirinka, 2000, p. 77).

The consequences of this for women and children were especially serious. Lack of immunization coverage led to outbreaks of whooping cough in children. Malnutrition occurred in some children as a consequence of malaria. The Arawa Health Centre recorded 228 cases of dysentery-type gastroenteritis in 1996 for children aged 2–5, causing three deaths at the centre and ten deaths at home. Many women died while giving birth in hiding, unattended by medical help (UNDP, 1997, pp. 47–8). Inadequate food reduced the resistance of women to infections. Many developed malnutrition, and those who had had operations prior to the war suffered from the breakout of wounds due to incisional hernias (Mirinka, 2000, p. 77).

Health services are now operative in Buka and Arawa, the two main centres, but it will take many years to repair the damage to health systems. Tuberculosis and leprosy are now major problems, despite having been all but wiped out before the crisis. Arawa Hospital has treated more than 500 people for leprosy since it opened in late 2000 (*Te Manu Rere*, 2000). A decade without immunization for measles and whooping cough has been equally disastrous, and immunization programmes have not yet been completely restored. There has been no mosquito spraying for malaria prevention for many years.⁷⁹

New problems have also appeared since the armed conflict. Homebrew consumption, which causes throat inflammations, oedema, liver damage, and peptic ulceration, is dangerously high. Boys are starting to drink homebrew from the age of five or six. Yaws, an infectious tropical disease characterized by painful skin eruptions, is appearing for the first time.⁸⁰

Better primary health care is an urgent priority for Bougainville, but reorganization of health structures is slow, and doctors returning to the demands of post-conflict Bougainville are frustrated and traumatized. They are also not immune from attack. The only doctor to have remained through the entire conflict had his private surgery burnt down in 2000.⁸¹

EDUCATION

Prior to 1988, Bougainville had one of the highest rates of literacy in the Pacific. It was the leading province in Papua New Guinea in terms of junior secondary educational achievement, and had high levels of retention to senior secondary and high tertiary enrolments (AusAID, 2000, p. 37).

Armed conflict virtually destroyed the education system. Education facilities were closed and a large number of schools were damaged or destroyed. Between 15,000 and 20,000 young people—an entire generation—were denied a formal education because of the war (UN, 2001, p. 11).

The education system is now being restored throughout much of Bougainville, but recovery is slow. Schools lack sufficient numbers of trained teachers, and overcrowding is a major problem. In 2002, for instance, only 45 of 296 available secondary teaching positions throughout Bougainville were filled by qualified teachers. Asitavi High School in Northwest Bougainville, with a capacity of 350, was home to between 550 and 600 students.⁸² Young children are sharing classrooms with former ex-combatants, creating social pressures and putting further strain on teachers. Older students, many of them illiterate or semi-literate, are experiencing significant adjustment problems, resulting in behavioural and learning difficulties and unstable learning environments. Absences, intoxication, and intimidation of teachers and other students are all common problems.⁸³

Targeting of development staff

Many indigenous and international NGOs operated in Bougainville before 1988, working to support a wide range of development and community projects. All international aid agencies withdrew during the armed crisis, with the first only returning after 1995.⁸⁴

International NGOs are highly visible and often targeted. Their vehicles are regularly stolen, and every staff member or volunteer has a personal story of abuse and intimidation to tell. Personal and office security is at a premium, and personnel tend to be sent on shorter rotations than in other parts of the Pacific.⁸⁵

Regular attempts are made to break into NGO offices. In December 2001, armed militants broke into the Red Cross warehouse in Arawa, stole diesel, food, and medical supplies, and burnt the building down.⁸⁶

As recently as July 2002, Caritas, the lay Catholic organization, suspended its operations in Bougainville following armed attacks on staff and property:

... [a staff member] was held up at gunpoint and harassed at the start of the no-go zone leading up to the Panguna mine. Six weeks after that he was again held up in the south of Bougainville and he was shot at and they took our car. He was also ordered to drive the [men] around for a considerable amount of time. Then, to compound that, our house was broken into and they took a considerable amount of equipment. We've gone up and done an assessment and decided that it was best to suspend at this point (Justine McMahon, Caritas Pacific Programme Co-ordinator, July 2002, cited in *PACNEWS 2* (2002e)).

Opportunity costs of peace programmes and weapons disposal

Funds spent on the Bougainville peace process and associated weapon disposal efforts represent an opportunity cost to donor partners, since they might otherwise have been spent on ongoing development assistance. In the 2001/02 budget year, for instance, New Zealand spent 21.5 per cent of its entire Bougainville assistance budget of USD 1.58 million on support for the PPCC and its Weapons Disposal subcommittee. In its 2002/03 aid budget, New Zealand committed approximately NZD 600,000 (USD 310,000) or about 15 per cent of its total Bougainville aid budget towards assisting the peace and disarmament process (NZAID, 2003). During the five years following the start of formal peace talks in mid-1997, Australia spent at least AUD 25 million (about USD12.4 million), or more than 15 per cent of its entire Bougainville budget over that period, on direct support to the peace process.⁸⁷

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Impacts on economic productivity

The widespread destruction of infrastructure, economic collapse, and years of lost education and training in Bougainville have been a major setback to the province's productive capacity. Prior to the conflict, the Bougainville economy was dominated by the Panguna gold and copper mine and associated service industries. Together they employed large numbers, with a survey of 114 establishments in Arawa in 1980 indicating that approximately 7,400 people were employed in this way (AusAID, 2000, p. 20). Mining operations ceased completely with the onset of the crisis.

Cash returns from cocoa and copra production produced in plantations and by smallholders also made an important contribution to the Bougainville economy. Copra production occurred over most of Bougainville, with approximately 45 per cent of smallholders and 57 plantations involved in its production. In 1988/89, Bougainville produced 18,000 tons of cocoa and 27,000 tons of copra respectively (AusAID, 2000, p. 27). After the armed conflict began, cocoa production fell to negligible levels, and copra production declined significantly. Cocoa fermenters, plantation infrastructure, and an estimated 14 million cocoa trees were destroyed during the conflict. Estimates in 2000 were that only 20 per cent of cocoa trees remained in the southern part of Bougainville (AusAID, 2000, p. 28).

Post-conflict, the level of economic activity in Bougainville is very much reduced. Formal employment opportunities in the much smaller service sector are very limited. Business and government activity in the two main centres, Buka and Arawa, is constrained by regular power cuts and telecommunication breakdowns. Communities are still re-establishing traditional production structures, and the plantation sector is no longer operational. Under the auspices of the UNDP, cocoa production is expected to recover in coming years.⁸⁸

One of the difficulties facing Bougainville as it moves toward elections for autonomy is the drastically weakened state of its provincial government. When the Panguna mine closed, the provincial government lost a key source of revenue: as much as 40 per cent of its income had been sourced from mine royalties and taxes. Provincial government taxes and royalties fell from PGK 11 million (USD 2.75 million) in 1988 to PGK 1 million (USD 250,000) in 2000 (AusAID, 2000, p. 19). As the crisis wore on, the once highly effective administrative arm of the provincial government became moribund. The Bougainville provincial government now lacks the financial and human capacity to undertake many of its core functions. A transition to statehood will require significant rebuilding and strengthening of that capacity.

Throughout all this, observers, donor agencies, governments, and most Bougainvilleans see disarmament and the destruction of small arms as essential and urgent prerequisites to future development, good health, and prosperity.

Papua New Guinea

Armed crime

The level of armed violence in Papua New Guinea has increased dramatically in recent years, with centres of demand for illegal firearms emerging both in urban areas and throughout the remote Highlands provinces. Armed hold-ups along the highways are also commonplace.

With a population of five million, Papua New Guinea is the second largest country in the Pacific. In the nation's capital city, Port Moresby, and in other coastal towns such as Lae and Madang, urban drift since independence in 1975 has brought an increase in unemployment and violent crime, driving up the demand for illegal firearms and fuelling the growth of criminal gangs. By the late 1980s, a dozen 'raskol' gangs controlled crime in Port Moresby (Dorney, 2000, 306–7).

A recent United Nations victimization survey of 13 developing countries found the incidence of violent crime in the Papua New Guinea towns of Port Moresby, Lae, and Goroka to be twice as high as in Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro, cities known for their high rates of violence (Levantis, 2000, 131–2). Port Moresby's rate of violent crime is also four times that of Manila (Dinnen, 2000, p. 67).

Markets for illicit firearms in urban centres cater for two classes of criminal. Those with limited purchasing power, such as younger gang members, tend to buy home-made guns, while those who can afford to spend more, perhaps due to political or social connections, favour factory-made firearms.⁸⁹

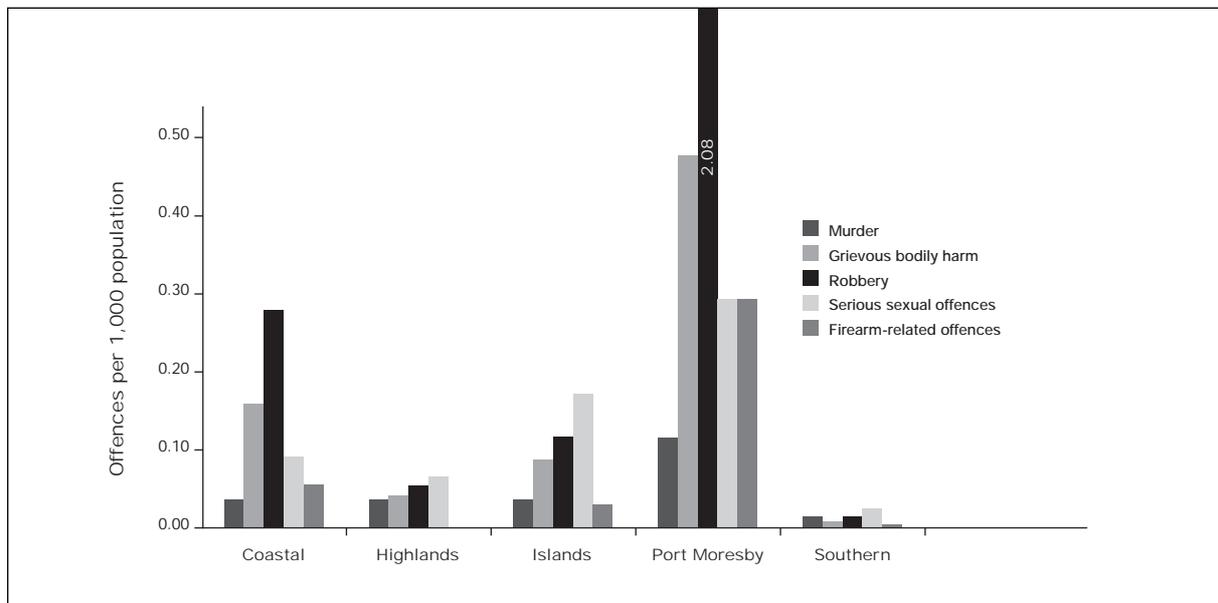
Undercounting gun violence

Available data is unlikely to represent the full extent of armed crime in Papua New Guinea. Many crimes, particularly in rural areas, are not reported to authorities and so do not appear in police statistics. Although armed tribal fights are known to be a major cause of violent death, it is believed that the majority of these deaths are not reported as criminal offences (UNDP and Government of PNG, 1999, p. 140).

Discerning the level of firearm-related crime in Papua New Guinea is further complicated by the fact that national crime statistics do not record the type of weapon used in an offence. 'Firearm offences' only cover offences related to the Act, such as possession of a prohibited firearm, not offences such as robbery and homicide that involve the use of firearms.

Authorities have certainly noted an increase in crimes committed with the use of firearms in recent years (UNDP and Government of PNG, 1999, p. 136). However, in the absence of hard data, the only reasonable certainty at this stage is that the firearm offences tend to track the overall crime rate (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Major crimes reported, Papua New Guinea, Jan.–June 2001



Source: Corporate Planning Directorate, RPNGC (2001)

Deficiencies in statistics aside, the incidence of crime in Port Moresby is still considerably higher than anywhere else in the country. Port Moresby records more than 50 per cent of all serious crimes and 46 per cent of all urban street crimes reported in Papua New Guinea (Sikani, 2000, p. 40). Robberies and attacks in Port Moresby have hit unprecedented levels in recent years (UN, 2001). Shoot-outs between criminal gangs and police are regularly reported.

Increasing levels of violent crime in Port Moresby profoundly affect the life of the city and its people. Those who can afford to, live behind razor wire and sleep in bedrooms protected by solid steel bars, known locally as 'rape cages' (Wright, 2002). Fear of criminal violence has led many civilians to arm themselves, increasing the potential for gun-related violence. Public figures routinely carry concealed firearms, and five senior politicians have been accused of brandishing or firing their handguns in anger in recent years (*The Australian*, 2002b).

The impacts of tribal fighting in the Highlands

A 1997 report suggested that over a five-year period, armed tribal fighting had resulted in an average of 200 deaths a year in the Highland provinces of Papua New Guinea (Young, 1997, p. 42).

High-powered military-style firearms are highly valued, and have assumed a strategic role in tribal disputes. In past years, traditional inter-clan payback fights saw perhaps a handful of combatants killed with spears, arrows, blades, and clubs. During the 1980s, shotguns became the weapon of choice in many tribal disputes, increasing their lethality by several magnitudes. From the late 1980s, the use of high-powered rifles spread rapidly, as villagers sought their superior range.⁹⁰ Police intelligence confirms

that in four of the five highland provinces—Enga, Southern Highlands, Western Highlands, and Simbu, as well as much of the Eastern Highlands—high-powered firearms comparable to, or more sophisticated than, police and defence force weapons are now commonplace (Inguba, 2000, p. 88).

The growing use of factory and home-made firearms in tribal fighting presents a serious threat to social, political, and economic development in the Highlands. One example is the recent spate of tribal warfare in the Southern Highlands town of Mendi. In December 2001, a three-year tribal war between the Ujama and Wogia clans intensified, claiming more than 100 lives (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier Online*, 2002). High-powered firearms stolen from the PNGDF were involved.⁹¹ The fighting scared away hundreds of government workers and forced the closure of the province's only hospital, its nursing school, and Mendi High School (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier Online*, 2002). In mid-March 2002, tribal leaders agreed to a four-week cease-fire, prior to signing a more lasting peace agreement. While the peace ceremony was a relief for the thousands attending, concerns were also raised that guns used in the warfare were still in the hands of the warriors (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier/PINA Nius Online*, 2002b).

One of the most serious consequences of tribal fighting in the Highlands is the effect it has on locals' access to basic health services, such as immunization. During the first half of 2002, the WHO was unable to send an assessment team into many parts of the Papua New Guinea Highlands to determine measles immunization needs because of the risk to its personnel.⁹²

In June 2002, Mendi High School was still closed and the hospital was still abandoned, a telling sign given that health personnel are usually the last to vacate.

2002 election violence: Gunpoint democracy

Election-related armed violence is not a new phenomenon in Papua New Guinea. Australian academic Bill Standish, a regular visitor to the Chimbu area, recalls that firearms were used as far back as 1977 to impress local voters and intimidate rival candidates and their supporters. In 1997, gun warfare in the area killed 35 people and drove about 1,000 people off their land (Standish, 2002).

The June 2002 Papua New Guinea general elections were marred by similar problems (Commonwealth Expert Group, 2002). Delays and irregularities in the polling process caused by poor planning and under-resourcing combined with the threat or actual use of armed violence to produce a volatile and chaotic environment in many areas. Supporters and candidates alike openly displayed high-powered firearms during election campaigns. Anticipating widespread violence, the Papua New Guinea government deployed 13,000 sworn police, reservists, and auxiliaries to cover the elections, and placed 700 members of the PNGDF on standby (Sela, 2002, p. 5).

Standish returned to Simbu as an observer during the June 2002 polling period:

At Emai, in Sinasina, candidates had been saying for days that one of their rivals was heavily armed. He had already intimidated polling teams on the Saturday before voting. ... In Koglai ... there was group discussion on 21 June about how the community would vote, living as they do along an access route controlled by a volatile politician renowned in the last ten years for his use of firearms. ... On polling day in the Singga Valley from Pari through Kurumugl and Koglai area, Waiye Team 81 at Kuman saw the following semi-automatic military weapons: M-16, SLR, AF-15 [sic] as well as an old .22 rifle (Standish, 2002).

Standish also documented instances of police use, and abuse, of small arms during the polling period. In one incident, a heavily-armed police squad, upon seeing evidence of double-voting, pointed their weapons at polling officials and confiscated and burnt all remaining ballot papers. In another situation, a police riot squad driver used his automatic rifle to shoot his way through a heavily armed roadblock set up by a candidate (Standish, 2002).

Election-period incidents in other areas of Papua New Guinea included the following:

- **17 May:** Supporters of a Southern Highlands MP shoot dead a policeman and hold four people hostage, including a rival candidate (Kone, 2002).
- **14 June:** A District Administrator in the Western Highlands warns airline companies that any aircraft flying into his electoral area during the polling period risks being shot down. This follows reports that the 19 candidates in his area, including the sitting member, have stockpiled firearms including AK-47s, M-16s, M-202s [sic], SLRs, and .303s, which they intend to use during the elections (Thomas, 2002).
- **19 June:** Four men are killed and dozens injured when supporters of rival candidates clash in gunfights at polling booths in the Central Highlands town of Mount Hagen (Radio Australia, 2002).
- **21 June:** Two people are shot dead during polling violence in the Western Highlands province. Rival candidates appeal to the Governor-General to declare the elections null and void, saying they fear warfare in their electoral areas. The Western Highlands Deputy Administrator says people are being forced to vote under the barrel of a gun by candidates' supporters (PACNEWS, 2002b).
- **21 June:** Ex-combatants on Bougainville re-arm themselves to protect polling booths, breaking into firearm storage containers provided as part of the peace process (PACNEWS, 2002b).

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By late August 2002, approximately 30 people had died from election-related violence, many of them by guns (Standish, 2002).

In November 2002, a Commonwealth Expert Group published its review of the Papua New Guinea election process. It reported high levels of voter intimidation, a prevailing gun culture, and a climate of fear, especially in the Highlands, and warned of the need for a massive security operation in any future polling event (Commonwealth Expert Group, 2002).

Australia

In Australia, 76 per cent of the 353 firearm-related deaths during 1999 were suicides, 14 per cent were gun homicides, while the remaining ten per cent were unintentional, cause undetermined, or law enforcement shootings (Burke, 2001).

In the fiscal year 2000–2001 there were 317 victims of homicide in Australia. Sixty-nine of these (22 per cent) were shot, half of them with handguns (Mouzos, 2002b). Australia's firearm homicide rate of 0.35 per 100,000 population⁹³ compares with a rate of 3.9 per 100,000 population in the US (Minino *et al.*, 2002).

In 2002, an Australian Federal Parliamentary inquiry found that 6.9 armed robberies occurred per 100,000 people, compared with 59 per 100,000 in the United States (ABC, 2002a).

Australia's national rates of firearm-related homicide and violent crime have for several years trended downwards, and they remain moderate by world standards (Mouzos, 2001, 2002a; Graycar, 2000). Despite this, localized gun violence problems have emerged recently in some suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne. In the two years to April 2002, the number of robberies involving firearms in Sydney's most populated areas rose by 34 per cent (Allen *et al.*, 2002). Nationally, in the five years to June 2001, handgun homicide as a proportion of firearm homicide grew from 13 per cent to 50 per cent (Mouzos, 2001, 2002a). Public concern at the level of illicit firearm trafficking in Australia—particularly the trade in handguns, which were used in 67 per cent of all armed robberies in 2001—has risen accordingly (Chulov & Videnieks, 2002; *The Age*, 2002; Sutton, 2002).

New Zealand

In 2000, New Zealand Police reported 53 murders by all methods. Firearms were used in six of these murders, one of which involved a handgun (Williams, 2002). In the period 1988–98, there were 1,046 deaths by gunshot, an average of 95 each year. Of these, 76 per cent were gun suicides, 13 per cent gun homicides, seven per cent unintentional shootings, with the remaining four per cent undetermined or 'other cause' (Dow, 2003). During this period, New Zealand's annual rate of firearm homicide per 100,000 people remained at 0.35, or one-eleventh the rate in the US (Minino *et al.*, 2002).

Robberies with violence totalled 1,657 in fiscal year 2000–01, of which 164 involved firearms. In the five years from 1996–97 to 2000–01, the proportion of robberies involving firearms declined steadily, from 13.5 per cent to 9.9 per cent (NZ Police, 2003).

New Zealand's rates of firearm-related violence are moderate by world standards. As in Australia, more than 80 per cent of gun deaths do not occur during criminal activity (Norton & Langley, 1997).

Conclusion

Armed conflict has had profound and lasting impact on all of the communities studied in detail in this report. While the conflict in Fiji may have cost fewer lives, tensions have not been resolved, and new eruptions of violence cannot be ruled out. Profound concerns about democracy, indigenous rights, and reconciliation, and about the integrity of the police, judiciary, and other arms of government continue to plague the people of Fiji.

In the Solomon Islands, any sense of national unity that existed before the June 2000 crisis has been shattered. Although discipline within the police force has improved, atrocities continue to occur, and the Solomon Islands economy teeters on the brink of collapse.

In Bougainville, recovery is well under way, and individuals and communities are continuing to reconcile after nine years of war. Yet the effects of nine years of armed conflict have been profound, and much work is still to be done to ensure both effective disarmament and a lasting peace.

Papua New Guinea, a country of almost five million people, suffers from chronic small arms-related violence, while its democratic processes come under increasing armed threat.

The impact of armed conflict on these communities reverberates well beyond their shores. Since the Pacific is usually considered as a single entity both by potential investors and tourists, conflict

anywhere in the region dampens financial confidence and tourist flows alike. The potential for further conflicts to bring on a region-wide recession cannot be dismissed.

At the broadest level, protracted armed conflicts, such as those in the Solomon Islands and Bougainville, and the breakdown of law and order here and elsewhere, represent two of the greatest challenges to sustainable development in the Pacific. Increasing militarization is one response states can make, but it comes at a cost to overall development and tends to invite reprisals and retaliation. Use of violence by the state also tends to aggravate public distrust of law enforcement institutions, already at a low ebb in many Pacific states. Most donor partners have responded to the recent crises by focusing instead on projects that help strengthen capacity and build good governance, both within the government sector and among NGOs.

Lasting peace in any of these communities will only occur when adequate alternative sources of economic opportunity are generated to meet the needs of the burgeoning population of young, disenfranchised Pacific islanders now reaching adulthood throughout the region. In addition, work must be done to heal the damage that has already been inflicted on the psyches of Pacific youth. Disarmament needs to happen literally, as in the case of the Solomons and Bougainville, but also figuratively, among those who perceive few choices other than to exert what power they have through the barrel of a gun.

IV. Pacific small arms legislation: Domestic and regional issues

Well-structured, comprehensive firearm legislation, though not sufficient in itself, forms the foundation of effective small arms control, both domestically and regionally. Stringent rules on small arms ownership and use, limits on access to ammunition, careful background checks of licence applicants, and regularly updated firearm registers are just some of the components of such legislation, underpinning national security and sustaining effective law enforcement.

Like most transnational crime, illicit small arms trafficking thrives on the ability to exploit differences between and inefficiencies in jurisdictions. Countries seeking to combat small arms proliferation thus need to focus not only on improving local and national laws, but on harmonizing key components of firearm law across all states. Uniform import and export laws and penalties for illegal trafficking are particularly important in this respect, as are common rules regarding the marking and tracing of firearms.

Pacific island states are firmly committed to addressing small arms issues in their region, and to this end, have broadly agreed upon a set of joint initiatives entitled *Towards a Common Approach to Weapons Control*, known as the *Nadi Framework* (SPCPC and OCO, 2000). If uniformly adopted, the *Nadi Framework* legislation would significantly improve upon the existing firearm laws of many states, and provide a common regional deterrent to small arms traffickers. The draft legislation and other measures contained in the *Nadi Framework* are discussed in detail in Section VI.

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Most Pacific island countries, however, are likely to select aspects of the *Nadi Framework* to update their existing law, rather than adopt it in its entirety. Indeed, region-wide implementation of the *Nadi Framework* could take several years. In this context, it is important to consider the status quo. How adequate are existing small arms laws in the region? What are their weaknesses and strengths? Perhaps most importantly, are there inconsistencies *between* states' small arms laws that might leave the region vulnerable to exploitation?

This section considers some of the key components of existing Pacific firearm law, within the context of these questions.

Pacific firearm laws: An overview

All countries in the Pacific were at one stage protectorates or colonies. Most, but not all—New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna, for instance, are still under French rule—became independent during the 1960s and 1970s. With some exceptions, such as Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, most of the smaller states have not significantly altered their firearm legislation since independence. Rather, existing legislation tends to reflect the legislative style and attitudes to firearm control of former colonial administrations (see the box below). Appendix 1 lists the relevant laws for each of the jurisdictions covered in this study.

As the only two fully industrialized nations in the Pacific, with 75 per cent of the region's population between them, Australia and New Zealand have had greater capacity for legislative reform, and both play a leading role in small arms policy development in the Pacific. Although New Zealand encourages

and supports its island neighbours in curbing the proliferation of small arms, it remains, conspicuously, the only Pacific nation in which most firearms are not registered, and in this regard stands almost alone with the US among the world's industrialized countries.

The origins of Pacific small arms legislation

Legislative arrangements in place at the time of independence or transition to self-governance have largely determined the complexion of existing firearm laws in most Pacific Island countries.

Former British protectorates such as Fiji, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu share almost identical small arms legislation reflecting British administrative practice. Three countries with direct colonial links to New Zealand—the Cook Islands, Niue, and Samoa—exhibit a wide degree of variation in the wording, structure, and content of their small arms legislation, perhaps reflecting a looser style of colonial administration.

Several Pacific states, including the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, became trust territories of the US following World War II. Not surprisingly, they possess virtually identical arms control legislation that, ironically, is far more restrictive than either US federal or state legislation. American Samoa—still a territory of the US, but again with far more stringent controls than would be tolerated on the mainland—appears to have developed its own firearm laws quite separately.

France continues to exercise a colonial presence in the region. Its Pacific territories New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna have enacted their own gun laws based to a large degree on French firearm law, which dates back to World War II. New Caledonia's gun laws were first established in 1982, and have gone through a number of changes since then.

Small arms legislation in the former British colonies of Australia and New Zealand was originally based on British law, but in both countries has evolved significantly over the last few decades. While one law covers all of New Zealand, there is no uniform national firearm legislation in Australia. Australian federal law controls importation, but each state and territory has separate legislation regulating civilian ownership and use of firearms. Most progressive reform in Australia has been initiated at the federal level, primarily by negotiating uniformity between states.

Papua New Guinea, with five million people, has the largest population in the Pacific after Australia. Its relative size and its continuing relations with Australia since independence in 1975, may help explain why Papua New Guinea has some of the most comprehensive small arms legislation in the Pacific. Along with Vanuatu, which until 1980 was jointly administered by Britain and France, it is one of the few developing states in the Pacific to have extensively revised and adapted its small arms legislation in recent years.

The tiny state of Nauru (population 12,000) has perhaps the most idiosyncratic small arms legislation in the Pacific. A former Australian-administered British protectorate, its *Arms and Opium Prohibition Ordinance* (1936–1967) bans 'Natives and Chinamen' from possession of firearms, and clearly has not been updated since independence in 1968.

What is a small arm?

At the global level, this is a controversial question, since the act of definition itself has the potential to limit policy scope and legislative application. Definitions were a subject of intense debate at the 2001 UN Small Arms Conference. Arguments about whether the definition of 'small arms' should be limited to military weapons—thus exempting the great majority, which are civilian—or should include ammunition and explosives, were contentious issues that, ultimately, were not resolved (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 203). In the absence of consensus, the Conference opted for no definition.

Many publications, including the draft *Programme of Action* of the 2001 Conference, have relied on the definition of small arms and light weapons developed for the 1997 report of the UN Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. Here, small arms were defined as 'revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns' (UN, 1997).

In the Pacific, definitions reflect the realities of Pacific environments. In many of the island states, devices designed solely for the purpose of killing fish are not included in the definition of an arm, and do not come under the purview of firearm legislation. Most countries, except the Cook Islands and Nauru, have definitions sufficiently broad to enable comprehensive coverage of all non-exempt firearms. Only Samoa and the French territories have no definition. Definitions for each country other than these, and for each of the Australian states, are listed in Section IV, Appendix 2, below.

Definitions of 'ammunition' or 'explosive' vary, the most common of which echo descriptions derived from British law, such as 'bullets, cartridges, shells or anything designed or adapted for or capable of use with any arm, or designed or adapted to contain any noxious liquid, gas or other thing'. New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, the French Pacific territories, American Samoa, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands do not define either of these terms in their arms legislation.

Civilian possession and use

Three Pacific countries—Nauru, Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands—have banned civilian firearm ownership completely.⁹⁴ Elsewhere in the region, rules regarding civilian possession and use vary widely.

- States that have recently experienced periods of social or political unrest, such as the Solomon Islands and Fiji, have suspended civilian firearm licensing completely since April 1999 and May 2000 respectively. In both countries, licensed owners have been required to surrender their arms and ammunition to central armouries.⁹⁵
- In Papua New Guinea, where the prevalence of small arms-related crime is a matter of increasing concern, a moratorium on new licences for shotguns, pistols, and high-powered firearms has been in effect since August 2000. In theory, this should place a cap on the total number of firearm licences in Papua New Guinea. It is still possible, however, to acquire a 'licence to carry', which may create a loophole for further firearm purchases. Existing firearm licences can also be transferred from one approved person to another.⁹⁶
- In the French territories, civilian licences are issued according to the type of user: private citizen, accredited hunter, and/or accredited sport shooter. French law divides firearms into eight categories based on their design and purpose, and regulations for possession and use vary accordingly. Over

time, certain firearms, such as semi-automatic rifles, have been re-categorized to make them subject to more restrictive regulation. The possession of handguns in French Polynesia and New Caledonia is tightly controlled, and bound in practice to members of an affiliated sporting club. In Wallis and Futuna, civilian ownership of handguns is prohibited. Contrary to the practice in France, where some categories of arms are unrestricted, it is necessary in the French territories to obtain a permit from the police for every firearm and all ammunition purchased.

- Smaller Pacific states have a range of restrictions in place. The Cook Islands stopped issuing civilian licences in 1992. Kiribati prohibited further imports of arms and ammunition in 1985. Tonga allows civilian ownership, but has effectively banned the possession of automatic firearms (see Table 4.1, below). Inhabitants of American Samoa may apply for a 12-month licence to possess only shotguns, .22 calibre rifles, and corresponding ammunition (American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4221)).
- All Australian states and territories permit civilian gun ownership. Laws vary between jurisdictions, and recent years have seen significant harmonization of state and territory firearm regulation. Within weeks of the shooting massacre in April 1996, of 35 people at Port Arthur, in the state of Tasmania; police ministers from all states and territories agreed to enact new legislation for tighter regulation of gun ownership, including a list of prohibited firearms (see Table 4.1, below). By mid-1997, all jurisdictions had moved toward this goal. Following the October 2002 killing of two students by a licensed pistol club member, the federal government announced a new buy-back of 'pocket pistols', listing 500 handgun models to be banned, based on barrel length, calibre, and magazine capacity. Sweeping reform of pistol club membership is proposed, along with increased penalties for firearms trafficking. Implementation began in December 2002 with a federal ban on the importation of proscribed handguns, to be followed by revision of legislation in all eight Australian jurisdictions by 1 July 2003 (O'Loughlin, 2002).
- Civilian ownership of unregistered long guns (rifles and shotguns) is widely permitted in New Zealand. Owners of handguns, military-style semi-automatic long guns, and restricted weapons (fully automatic machine guns, etc.) must obtain additional licence endorsements of varying stringency. Only these relatively uncommon weapons—four per cent of civilian firearms—are required to be individually registered to their owners.

Different types of firearm are often treated differently in Pacific law, or prohibited entirely. Many countries, for instance, have legislated to prohibit various types of semi-automatic firearms and all fully automatic machine guns for civilian use, regarding them as weapons of war (see Table 4.1, below). Shotguns and rifles tend to be classified less stringently as 'sporting' firearms.

Table 4.1. Civilian firearm ownership and prohibitions in the Pacific

Country	Civilian gun ownership	Specific prohibitions listed in legislation
American Samoa	Licensed gun owners may possess only shotguns, .22 calibre rifles, and corresponding ammunition.	Machine guns, explosive weapons, short-barrelled rifles or shotguns, and silencers. ⁹⁷
Australia	Licensed gun owners may possess a wide variety of rifles, shotguns, handguns, assault weapons, and machine guns, though the latter types of firearm are accessible only to a narrow range of applicants.	Semi-automatic rifles and shotguns and pump-action shotguns are prohibited unless 'genuine need' is demonstrated by narrow categories of applicants. These include professional animal cullers and a small minority of farmers and target shooters, many of whom are limited to a single firearm of the type applied for. Bona fide gun collectors may possess 'prohibited' semi-automatic and fully automatic firearms.
Cook Islands	Only existing licensed owners, police, and defence personnel. The issuing of new civilian licences has been prohibited. ⁹⁸	None
Federated States of Micronesia	Licensed gun owners may possess registered .22 rifles, .410 gauge shotguns, and corresponding ammunition. ⁹⁹	Handguns, automatic weapons, silencers. Rifles larger than .22 calibre, shotguns larger than .410 gauge and corresponding ammunition are also prohibited. ¹⁰⁰
Fiji	Only police and defence personnel. All civilian firearm licences have been suspended since May 2000. ¹⁰¹	Arms with barrels less than 610mm; arms converted from imitation firearms to functioning firearms. ¹⁰²
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna	Each adult without a criminal record who can produce a justification for hunting or a territorial French Shooting Federation card, and who has obtained the endorsement of the authorities, can own two smooth-bored arms (hunting), one Category 5 rifle (carbine), and one Category 7 rifle. ¹⁰³	Category 1 firearms ('materials of war') are prohibited by law. These include automatic pistols, any handgun designed to fire designated military ammunition, and long guns designed or destined for war purposes, among others. A detailed list of specific firearms that fall under this category is provided by law. Possession of Category 4 arms (defensive weapons, including handguns) is prohibited unless authorized by the High Commissioner. ¹⁰⁴
Kiribati, Tuvalu	Possession is limited to air guns, shark protection devices, construction power guns, single action shotguns, and starting pistols. ¹⁰⁵ In Kiribati, further civilian licensing has been effectively prohibited by a ban on new imports since 1985. ¹⁰⁶	Importation of all arms prohibited without special permit. No shortening or conversion. Sale, possession, and use of automatic firearms is specifically prohibited in Kiribati. ¹⁰⁷
Nauru, Palau, Marshall Islands	No	None
New Zealand	Licensed gun owners may possess a wide variety of rifles, shotguns, handguns, assault weapons, and machine guns, though the latter types of firearm are accessible only to a narrow range of applicants.	No common firearm type is prohibited in legislation. Import permits are refused for some individual models of firearm, and almost all military-style semi-automatic long guns. Handguns, sub-machine guns and machine guns, rocket launchers, mortars, and pre-ban military-style semi-automatic weapons are all lawfully owned by civilians with the appropriate licence endorsement. ¹⁰⁸
Niue, Samoa	Yes	None
Papua New Guinea	Moratorium on issue of new licences since August 2000, but existing licences may be transferred or renewed. ¹⁰⁹	Machine guns; firearms, articles, or instruments capable of discharging an irritant liquid, gas, or powder, or other substance capable of causing bodily harm (some exceptions in cases of genuine need, e.g. veterinarians) ¹¹⁰
Solomon Islands	All civilian firearm licences suspended since April 1999. ¹¹¹	Automatic and semi-automatic firearms, all pistols and revolvers; firearms and ammunition of .300, .303, .38, and .45 inch and 7.62 and 9 mm calibres; no shortening or conversion. ¹¹²
Tonga	Yes	Automatic firearms are prohibited without the authority of the prime minister. ¹¹³
Vanuatu	Yes	1988 ban on import of automatic and semi-automatic firearms; pistols and revolvers of all types; firearms of .300, .303, .38, and .45 inch and 7.62 and 9mm calibres; firearms designed to discharge noxious liquid or gas and related ammunition. Prohibition on possession, use, import, or sale of air weapons. Shortening and conversion prohibited. ¹¹⁴

Additional prohibitions without legislation

It is important to note that in some Pacific jurisdictions, key ownership restrictions are still enforced, despite the absence of corresponding legislation or regulations. Handgun laws are a case in point. Handguns are legally banned only in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Yet in practice, they are also unavailable in the Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Tonga, American Samoa, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.¹¹⁵ Often, such practices are the result simply of established convention. In reality, police issue civilian handgun licences only in New Zealand, Australia, the French territories, and Papua New Guinea.

Ammunition

In addition to regulating gun ownership and use, most jurisdictions in the Pacific have made some attempt to limit firearm owners' access to ammunition. Most states only allow firearm owners to purchase ammunition for the specific type of firearm for which they are licensed. Only New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and the Australian state of Queensland have no such requirement. Most jurisdictions also place a legal ceiling on the amount of ammunition that may be purchased during the life of the licence, though in Australia, only Tasmania—the state in which the Port Arthur massacre occurred—imposes such a ceiling (Australia, 1996c). In other Australian states, there is provision for quantities of ammunition to be prescribed, but it is not compulsory to do so.

Preconditions for civilian licensing

Licensing preconditions and background checks are an important element of small arms control, which, if employed effectively, help reduce the risk of mishandling or irresponsible use. However, most Pacific states currently lack adequate procedures for vetting applicants. Many of the licensing requirements now commonly adopted by countries elsewhere—proof of identity, references, training certification, payment of a fee, photo ID, mental health examinations, safe storage requirements, and criminal and domestic violence record checks—are either not required by law or not well defined. Two important preconditions are considered here.

'GENUINE REASON'

In the Pacific, only Australia and Papua New Guinea require an applicant to meet a definition of need (see Table 4.2, below). In several jurisdictions, including New Zealand, applicants need only claim a 'lawful, proper and sufficient purpose' for requiring a firearm—the assessment of which is at the discretion of the individual licensing officer. This requirement is commonly satisfied by citing sport, hunting, pest control, or farming, with no need for proof.

Despite this, most of the smaller Pacific island countries do tightly restrict firearm ownership and use. Generally, licences are only issued for hunting, farming, and fishing purposes, in recognition of the subsistence lifestyles still practised by many Pacific citizens.

Importantly, only Papua New Guinea and the French territories explicitly recognize self defence as a genuine reason for ownership. None of the other 16 Pacific states covered in this study sanction the possession or carriage of firearms for self defence.

Table 4.2. 'Genuine reason': A snapshot of Pacific definitions

Country	'Genuine reason' defined in law	'Genuine reason' defined in law or in practice by police or justice personnel
American Samoa	No	Plantation protection and hunting are the most commonly accepted reasons for ownership. Ownership for self defence is prohibited. Written endorsement of the applicant's good character and the stated need for each firearm must first be obtained from the village mayor, county chief, and police. ¹¹⁶
Australia	Yes	The following classes of persons are identified as having a genuine reason for owning a firearm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persons with occupational requirements, e.g. primary producers and their licensed employees; • security employees and professional shooters for nominated purposes; sporting shooters using lawful firearms who maintain valid membership of, and regularly attend an approved shooting club; • recreational shooters/hunters who produce written proof of permission from the owner of public or private land to shoot upon that land; and • bona fide collectors of firearms; persons who have other limited purposes authorized by legislation or ministerial approval in writing, e.g. firearms used in film production. In addition to the 'genuine reason' test for the owner, for some categories of firearm, owners may be required to prove they need that particular firearm for the specific task at hand (i.e. that they have a 'genuine need' for that firearm). ¹¹⁷
Cook Islands	No	'Mainly for shooting wandering animals on their farms or planting paddocks' ¹¹⁸
Federated States of Micronesia	No	Hunting and fishing. ¹¹⁹
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna	No	French law assumes hunting, sport shooting, collecting, and in some cases personal defence to be legitimate reasons for owning a firearm. None of these activities except self defence require justification, although the type of weapon that may be legally acquired for these activities is limited by definition.
Kiribati	No	Shooting unwanted pests and eradicating wild animals. ¹²⁰
New Zealand	No	Applicants need only claim an intended purpose such as sport or hunting as sufficient reason to possess any number of long guns. Possession of handguns, military-style semi-automatic, and restricted weapons such as machine guns requires more cause. ¹²¹
Niue	No	(1) to protect taro plantations from feral pigs; (2) Niue Cabinet normally declares a shooting season for 1, 2, or 3 months of the year, during which licensed gun owners are permitted to shoot wild pigeons and fruit bats. ¹²²
Papua New Guinea	Yes	'Substantial reason' in relation to requiring a firearm includes: (a) use in an approved club; (b) protection of life and property; (c) under-water hunting, e.g. with an explosive shark head; (d) veterinary purposes; (e) scientific research; (f) commercial hunting; (g) slaughter or destruction of stock; (h) sporting purposes; (i) subsistence hunting; and (j) any other purpose approved by the Registrar. ¹²³
Republic of the Marshall Islands	No	Exemptions for fishing (killing sharks) or killing pigs. ¹²⁴
Samoa	No	A firearm can be owned when the applicant owns a livestock farm or establishes a sporting purpose, but not for general protection. ¹²⁵
Solomon Islands	No	Hunting and fishing. ¹²⁶
Tonga	No	Hunting, farming, fishing. ¹²⁷
Tuvalu	No	Shooting birds. ¹²⁸
Vanuatu	No	Farming is the only legitimate purpose. ¹²⁹

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Background checks defined in legislation for prospective gun owners vary widely from one Pacific state to another. In Australia, a uniform screening process applies to all applicants. Those found to be subject to a restraining order or charged or convicted for domestic violence are subject to a five-year period of prohibition (Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 1996). Evidence of mental illness in some states prevents an applicant from being granted a firearm licence, but in others must only 'be taken into consideration'.

In New Zealand, as in many Pacific states, heavy reliance is placed on individual police officers to predict the future behaviour of applicants. No explicit background check requirements pertain in law, and there are no specific prohibitions on the possession or use of firearms by those with either a mental illness or a history of domestic violence (United Nations, 1998). While respondents to a protection order are prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm, that prohibition can be lifted while the protection order is in place.

Other than Australia, only three countries—Federated States of Micronesia, American Samoa, and Papua New Guinea—legally require licensing authorities to undertake specific and comprehensive checks of applicants' backgrounds.¹³⁰ Elsewhere, the closest powers are default ones, either allowing licensing officers discretion to refuse to issue or renew on the grounds that the applicant or others close to the applicant are not 'fit and proper' persons (Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, New Zealand), on grounds of 'public safety', or if the applicant has been convicted of an offence or a breach of the Act (Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu).

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Although such requirements are often absent in law, many Pacific law enforcement agencies state that background checks are in fact carried out. Internal police guidelines in New Zealand include provision for background checks, character references and family and/or spousal interviews (NZ Police, various dates). An additional comment often made during interviews is that, in the typically small communities of the Pacific Islands, an applicant's background is already well known to police.¹³¹ In some situations, however, a legal obligation to check could save a life. Many countries in the Pacific are struggling to cope with domestic violence, yet only Australia and New Zealand require a spousal reference to complete a firearm licence application.

Even where legislation is in place, existing systems sometimes do not provide the necessary support. In Papua New Guinea, where background checks are required by law, ineffective intelligence systems mean that criminal record checks will not turn up individuals who have been charged but not convicted in domestic violence cases, or who have a history of mental illness.¹³²

Broadly speaking, the systems for vetting Pacific civilian applicants—both in a legal and a practical sense—are in need of review.

SAFETY TRAINING AND SAFE STORAGE

Only Australia and New Zealand legally require all licence applicants to undertake basic firearm safety training. Although 'safe storage' of arms and ammunition is a common legal requirement in most Pacific nations, this is rarely defined in law, and compliance checks are infrequent. New Zealand legislation requires that the 3,500 restricted weapons owned by licensed collectors (mainly machine guns, sub-machine guns, and assault weapons) must be kept disabled and incapable of firing if stolen, yet this provision is often overlooked.¹³³

Deterring small arms trafficking within and between states

Some elements of firearm law play an essential role, not only in domestic arms control, but in regional efforts to combat small arms trafficking. Included among these are requirements for firearm registration and marking, controls on manufacture and sale, and regulations controlling imports and exports of small arms and ammunition. Ideally, penalty regimes for enforcing these laws would be uniform across states, in order to deter arms traffickers searching for the 'weakest link'. Procedures for calling in firearms, either in peacetime or during periods of conflict, are also important mechanisms for limiting the movement of illicit small arms, both across and within state borders.

Registration

Firearm registers are an important tool for law enforcement authorities seeking to track the flow of small arms within and between countries. Of the Pacific countries that permit civilian firearm ownership, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu all maintain comprehensive firearm registers under legislation. Firearm registers are also kept in Niue, American Samoa, and the Solomon Islands, despite no express legal requirement. In the French territories, gun dealers must transmit information on every firearm sale to the police each month, thus updating the official register (New Caledonia, 1982, art. 14).

New Zealand stands out as the only Pacific nation that does not practise universal firearm registration. Shotguns and rifles (96 per cent of all private firearms) are not required to be registered, while the small remainder—handguns, military-style semi-automatic ('assault') weapons, machine guns, sub-machine guns, and the like—are individually registered to their licensed owners. This situation persists, despite a judicial review in 1997 that strongly recommended the reinstatement of universal registration (Thorp, 1997).

Of the 20 countries surveyed, only Australia, New Zealand, Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, and Papua New Guinea have computerized their registers of civilian small arms. The Republic of the Marshall Islands also keeps computer records of the 30 exempt rifles held in civilian possession. In Fiji and the Solomon Islands, the presence of a central register has enabled authorities to call in privately held small arms during periods of widespread violence and instability.

In some countries where registration is mandatory, legislation is vague about the exact detail that should be recorded, or how and when registers should be updated. Police personnel in many of the smaller Pacific nations also lack adequate training in armoury management. In least developed countries such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, police are severely under-resourced, limiting their capacity to update local registers or file regular reports to the central armoury. Accordingly, the accuracy of small arms registers varies between states, with some authorities maintaining high accounting standards, while others rely on educated guesswork to estimate the size and makeup of their civilian and state stockpiles. Section II, which discusses stockpiles, looked at these issues in more depth.

Marking

Marking and identification regimes form another crucial element of effective small arms management, both at the domestic and regional levels. They enable more accurate record keeping, improve armoury security, and help track missing weapons.

Many Pacific states have a provision allowing, but not specifically requiring, the marking of individual firearms if no serial number exists. Currently only the Federated States of Micronesia, American Samoa, the French Territories, and the Solomon Islands legally require a serial number or identifying mark to be recorded.

Table 4.3. Firearm marking requirements in Pacific states

Country	Marking requirements in legislation
American Samoa	A person commits the crime of possession of a defaced firearm if he/she knowingly possesses a firearm that does not have the manufacturer's or importer's serial number engraved or cast on the receiver or frame of the firearm. ¹³⁴ Firearms to be marked at the time of licensing if no distinctive mark already exists. ¹³⁵
Australia	No requirement in civilian law. ¹³⁶
Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu	None
Federated States of Micronesia	No firearm shall be transferred that does not have a serial number or from which the serial number has been removed, defaced or altered. ¹³⁷
Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, New Zealand	Provision in legislation for marking of firearms. ¹³⁸
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna	None, although dealers must record a serial number. ¹³⁹
Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau	Not applicable, ownership prohibited.
Solomon Islands	No licences to be issued for unmarked arms; licensing officer may cause firearm to be marked. ¹⁴⁰
Tonga	Licensing officer may cause firearm to be marked. ¹⁴¹
Niue, Samoa	Provision for regulation to require marking. ¹⁴²

Controls on manufacture and domestic trade

Most countries in the Pacific have laws regulating the domestic trade in arms and their manufacture. Only Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, and Tonga expressly prohibit manufacturing; only Palau and Nauru expressly prohibit sales. American Samoan firearm law prohibits the manufacture of machine guns, explosive weapons, short-barrelled rifles, or shotguns and silencers, while the French territories prohibit all manufacture apart from the reloading of some categories of cartridge.

In many of the smaller states, controls on manufacturing are more of a formality, to allow for the unlikely prospect of legal mass production of arms commencing within their borders. In Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu, for instance, the minister or Commissioner of Police must approve the establishment of an arms arsenal, effectively prohibiting the manufacture of small arms.¹⁴³

Licensed manufacturing is permissible in Australia, New Zealand, Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, and Vanuatu. Of these, only Australia currently has the capacity to manufacture legal small arms in any quantity.¹⁴⁴ Australian proposals in 2002 for a uniform national firearm policy sought to introduce tighter controls on legal production and dealing, and to reclassify illegal gun manufacture as a serious crime (*New Zealand Herald*, 2002). In New Zealand, a small number of appropriately licensed gunsmiths build individual firearms to order.

GUN DEALERS AND GUNSMITHS

Commercial sales and repairs of small arms are reasonably well regulated in the Pacific. American Samoa, the French territories, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Australia, and New Zealand all provide for dealer licensing, usually with clear requirements to maintain detailed sales records and regular reporting cycles. Australia and New Zealand have approximately 1,900 licensed arms dealers between them, while less than 20 operate in New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, American Samoa, and Vanuatu combined. In some small states, such as the Cook Islands and Tuvalu, and in states where firearm licensing has been temporarily suspended, such as Fiji, the Police Commissioner is the only legal supplier of arms.

PRIVATE SALES AND TRANSFERS

Non-commercial transfers—private sales, exchanges, gifts, and bequests—are generally legislated for in Pacific small arms law, but treatment varies widely. In Australia, all civilian firearm transfers must be conducted by licensed arms dealers or police, with each firearm being registered to its new owner. There is no legal provision for private transfers in Vanuatu or Tuvalu. Private individuals may lend or transfer most categories of arms in New Caledonia, but must first seek the permission of the High Commissioner. In Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, and the Solomon Islands, applications for private transfers must be made to the Commissioner or Minister of Police, or in the case of American Samoa, the Commissioner of Public Safety. In the Federated States of Micronesia, people wishing to make private transfers must first ascertain that the transferee holds a licence, then send a record of the transfer equivalent to that required from a dealer to the Attorney-General. Similar rules apply in Papua New Guinea.

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In Samoa, Niue, and New Zealand, on the other hand, gun owners are permitted to transfer long guns to anyone they understand to hold a valid firearm licence. No record of the transaction or other reporting is required.

Import and export controls

Import and export controls are far from uniform across the Pacific, with Australia and New Zealand setting the standard for the most rigorous regimes. Imports and exports in Australia are controlled at the Federal level via the *Customs Act* (Australia, 1901) and associated import and export regulations, and in New Zealand through the *Customs and Excise Act* (New Zealand, 1996) and connected import and export prohibition orders.

Imports into Australia are subject to a wide range of tests, and need the written permission of the Attorney-General. A comprehensive range of safety requirements and other conditions apply, according to the type of firearm being imported and its intended use. Handgun, automatic and semi-automatic firearm imports are strictly regulated (Australia, 1956, sched. 6). The importation of handguns, semi-automatic military-style weapons, and restricted weapons is strictly controlled in New Zealand (NZ Police, n.d.).

In terms of exports, both countries maintain a register of 'strategic goods' in order to ensure that all export consents remain consistent with broader national interests and international obligations, including security and human rights considerations. Munitions lists contained within these goods registers include both military and non-military firearms, and comply with various international arms agreements (Australian Defence Materiel Organization, n.d.; New Zealand Ministry of Disarmament and Arms Control, n.d.). Both Australia and New Zealand comply with third party transfer undertakings and obligations provided to the original exporting state, including notification of the intention to retransfer.

In contrast, most other Pacific states currently have only very rudimentary import and export controls, and many do not stipulate any controls at all (see Table 4.4, below). Several have some restrictions on imports, but none on exports. Penalties for illegal importation, if they exist at all, vary enormously (see Table 4.5, below). This is one of the key areas where harmonization seems essential if a uniform regional deterrent to trafficking is to be established.

Table 4.4. Import and export laws in Pacific states

Country	Import controls	Export controls
American Samoa	The Commissioner of Public Safety may issue an import licence, given prior approval from the Attorney-General. ¹⁴⁵	None ¹⁴⁶
Australia	A broad range of requirements and conditions for the importation of firearms, firearm accessories, firearm parts, magazines, ammunition, components of ammunition, and replicas apply. ¹⁴⁷ Prohibited or restricted firearms may only be imported with the appropriate import permission and, under certain circumstances (e.g. high-powered firearms), require the permission of the Attorney-General. ¹⁴⁸	Exportation of goods specified in the <i>Defence and Strategic Export Controls: Guidelines</i> ¹⁴⁹ is prohibited without either a licence or written permission from the Minister for Defence or an authorized person. ¹⁵⁰ The minister may specify conditions to which the exportation is subject. ¹⁵¹
Cook Islands	Importation prohibited since 1992, except for police or defence personnel; and the replacement of existing licensed firearms with the same or lesser calibre. ¹⁵²	Governor-General may by Order in Council prohibit the export of arms, and of materials that may be used in the manufacture of arms. ¹⁵³ Persons leaving the Cook Islands must surrender registration certificates to police. ¹⁵⁴
Federated States of Micronesia	Delivery must be to a licensed person. Attorney-General must be sent details of shipment of arms or ammunition. Common carriers to deliver invoice and shipment to District Chief of Police before delivering to customer. Provision for forfeiture of unlawful imports. ¹⁵⁵	Not specified
Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu	Must have import licence, or leave in the possession of police until licence is obtained. Police to be advised of any importation within 3 days. Arms or ammunition sent through post must not be delivered until an import licence is produced. Power to detain vessel suspected of illegal importation. Minister may define ports and places of import and export. Customs declaration must be made when importing arms or ammunition. There has been a total ban on importation of firearms and accessories into Fiji since 1992. Further imports of arms and ammunition into Kiribati prohibited since 1985. ¹⁵⁶	Must have export licence. Minister may prescribe places and types of export. Arms and ammunition to be left with police on exit from country. Power to search any vehicle or vessel suspected of illegal exportation and to arrest anyone on it. ¹⁵⁷
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna	Importation of 'materials of war'—arms and ammunition of Categories 1, 2, and 3—is prohibited, except for defence and police purposes. Importation of Category 4, 5, 7, and 8 arms—defensive, hunting, sport shooting, amusement, and collector's pieces—is subject to authorization by the High Commissioner. Importation of Category 6 arms—'armes blanches'—is unrestricted. ¹⁵⁸	Not available

Table 4.4. Import and export laws in Pacific states (continued)

Country	Import controls	Export controls
Nauru	Not specified	Not specified
New Zealand	A police 'permit to import' is required for every firearm imported into New Zealand and may only be issued to a holder of a New Zealand firearm licence. The importation of handguns, military-style semi-automatic, and restricted weapons is strictly controlled. Only firearm types that have been approved by the New Zealand armourer for importation can be brought into the country. ¹⁵⁹	Must have approval to export goods identified in the current Strategic Goods List. Provision for seizure of illegal exports. ¹⁶⁰
Niue	Must have import licence; must present firearm or ammunition for inspection. Broad provision to prohibit the importation of any good. ¹⁶¹	Governor-General may by Order in Council prohibit the exportation of any arms, and of materials that may be used in the manufacture of arms. ¹⁶²
Palau	Prohibited	Surrendered firearms may be sold overseas to any person outside the Republic who may lawfully purchase such firearms and ammunition. ¹⁶³
Papua New Guinea	Permission required from the Commissioner of Police. ¹⁶⁴	Not specified
Republic of Marshall Islands	Prohibited	Not specified
Samoa	Must have import licence. Provision for seizure of suspected illegal imports. Broad provision to prohibit the importation of any good. ¹⁶⁵	Head of State may prohibit the exportation of any arms, and of materials that may be used in the manufacture of arms. ¹⁶⁶
Solomon Islands	Must have import licence. Must send particulars of imports to Principal Licensing Officer. Must make customs declaration on importation. Arms or ammunition sent through post must not be delivered until import licence produced. Minister may define ports and places for importation or exportation. Minister may prohibit importation or exportation. ¹⁶⁷	Must have export licence. Minister may proscribe places and types of export. Minister may prohibit importation or exportation of certain weapons. ¹⁶⁸
Vanuatu	Must have import licence. Licensing officer to keep record of all importers. Minister has power to prohibit importation of certain types of firearm and to define ports of importation. ¹⁶⁹	Not specified

Gun control by import tariff

As a deterrent to firearm proliferation, both Vanuatu and American Samoa impose high customs import duties on guns and ammunition (250 per cent and 150 per cent of landed value respectively) (Vanuatu, 1998, sec. xix, ch. 93). In the case of Vanuatu, this recently became an international trade issue when the US made the abandonment of this 'barrier to trade' a condition of Vanuatu's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).¹⁷⁰

Visiting vessels

Firearms are often carried on private and commercial vessels in the Pacific. All states impose a regime for temporary importation, if not under specific legislation or regulation, then by common practice among border control authorities and police. Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and the Cook Islands, despite internal prohibitions on civilian possession or on further importation, nevertheless allow seafarers who declare their firearms to keep them under lock and key until departure, either on board or with local police (Capie, 2003, pp. 43–6).

Penalty regimes

A solid base of consistent penalties in the region would make it more difficult for small arms traffickers to exploit legal disparities between countries. Yet this is precisely what is lacking at present. As shown in Table 4.5, below, enormous variations in penalty regimes exist. Many penalties are simply too low to act as much of a deterrent, and inconsistencies abound between states. States within Australia exhibit similar inconsistencies: penalties for unlawful firearm possession, for example, range from 12 months' jail in the Northern Territory to 14 years in NSW.

Table 4.5. Selected penalties for firearm offences in the Pacific

Country*	Unlawful firearm possession	Unlicensed dealing in firearms	Illegal firearm manufacture	Illegal firearm importation	Illegal firearm export
American Samoa	Class A misdemeanour; up to \$1,000 and/or 1 year imprisonment. ¹⁷¹	Class C felony; a term not to exceed 7 years. ¹⁷²	Class C felony; a term not to exceed 7 years. ¹⁷³	Class A misdemeanour; up to \$1,000 and/or 1 year imprisonment. ¹⁷⁴	No provision
Australia: Federal	Regulated at state level.	Regulated at state level.	Regulated at state level.	A penalty not exceeding 3 times the value of the goods or 1,000 penalty units, whichever is the greater. ¹⁷⁵	A penalty not exceeding 3 times the value of the goods or 1,000 penalty units, whichever is the greater. Persons guilty of knowingly or recklessly exporting goods classified under the Defence and Strategic Goods List may be subject to a fine not exceeding \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for 10 years. ¹⁷⁶
Australia: Australian Capital Territory	Up to 1 or 2 years and/or 100 or 200 penalty units depending on type of firearm. ¹⁷⁷	Up to 1 year and/or 100 penalty units. ¹⁷⁸	Up to 1 year and/or 100 penalty units. ¹⁷⁹	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: Queensland	6 months to 2 years, or 20 to 100 penalty units, depending on type of firearm. ¹⁸⁰	6 months to 2 years, or 20 to 100 penalty units, depending on type of firearm. ¹⁸¹	6 months to 2 years, or 20 to 100 penalty units, depending on type of firearm. ¹⁸²	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: New South Wales	Up to 14 years for prohibited firearm or pistol; up to 5 years in any other case. ¹⁸³	Up to 7 years. ¹⁸⁴	Up to 10 years, or 20 years for pistol or prohibited firearm. ¹⁸⁵	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: Northern Territory	12 months or 50 penalty units. ¹⁸⁶	50 penalty units or imprisonment for 12 months or, where the offence relates to a category A or B firearm, 10 penalty units or imprisonment for 3 months. ¹⁸⁷	12 months or 50 penalty units. ¹⁸⁸	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: South Australia	1 to 4 years or AUD 5,000 to AUD 20,000, depending on the type of firearm. ¹⁸⁹	Up to 2 years or AUD 10,000. ¹⁹⁰	Up to 2 years or AUD 10,000. ¹⁹¹	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: Tasmania	Up to 2 years and/or 50 penalty units. ¹⁹²	Up to 2 years and/or 50 penalty units. ¹⁹³	Up to 2 years and/or 50 penalty units. ¹⁹⁴	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Australia: Victoria	12 months to 4 years, or 60 to 240 penalty units depending on type of firearm. ¹⁹⁵	2 to 4 years, or 120 to 240 penalty units, depending on type of firearm. ¹⁹⁶	2 to 4 years, or 120 to 240 penalty units, depending on type of firearm. ¹⁹⁷	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.

Table 4.5. Selected penalties for firearm offences in the Pacific (continued)

Country*	Unlawful firearm possession	Unlicensed dealing in firearms	Illegal firearm manufacture	Illegal firearm importation	Illegal firearm export
Australia: Western Australia	Up to 18 months or AUD 6,000. ¹⁹⁸	5 years—summary conviction of 18 months, or AUD 6,000. ¹⁹⁹	5 years—summary conviction of 18 months, or AUD 6,000. ²⁰⁰	Regulated at federal level.	Regulated at federal level.
Cook Islands (1977)	\$100. ²⁰¹	Up to 3 months or \$100. ²⁰²	No provision	Up to 3 months or \$100. ²⁰³	No provision
Federated States of Micronesia (1982)	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁰⁴	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁰⁵	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁰⁶	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁰⁷	No provision
French Polynesia	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
Fiji (1985)	Up to 5 years, or 10 years if committed in a prohibited area. ²⁰⁸	Up to 2 years and/or \$200. ²⁰⁹	Up to 10 years and/or \$2,000. ²¹⁰	Up to 12 months and/or \$500. ²¹¹	Up to 12 months and/or \$100. ²¹²
Kiribati (1977)	2 years and \$400; 10 years and \$2,000 if in a prohibited area. ²¹³	2 years and \$400. ²¹⁴	10 years and \$2,000. ²¹⁵	12 months and \$200. ²¹⁶	12 months and \$200. ²¹⁷
Nauru (1967)	\$40 ²¹⁸	\$400 ²¹⁹	No provision	No provision	No provision
New Caledonia (1984)	Up to 10 days in prison and/or FF 320. ²²⁰	Up to 10 days in prison and/or FF 320. ²²¹	Up to 10 days in prison and/or FF 320. ²²²	Up to 10 days in prison and/or FF 320. ²²³	Up to 10 days in prison and/or FF 320. ²²⁴
New Zealand (2002)	3 months and/or \$1,000. ²²⁵	\$1,000. ²²⁶	\$1,000. ²²⁷	1 year and/or \$2,000. ²²⁸	Individuals up to 6 months or \$10,000 and companies up to \$50,000. ²²⁹
Niue (1990)	Up to 3 months and/or \$200. ²³⁰	No provision	No provision	No provision	\$1,000 or 3 times the value of the goods. ²³¹
Palau (1997)	No less than 15 years and up to \$5,000. ²³²	No provision	No less than 15 years and up to \$5,000. ²³³	No less than 15 years and up to \$5,000. ²³⁴	No provision
Papua New Guinea (1998)	6 months or PGK 1,500. ²³⁵	10 years or PGK 10,000. ²³⁶	Up to 5 years. ²³⁷	No provision	No provision
Republic of the Marshall Islands (1983)	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²³⁸	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²³⁹	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁴⁰	Up to 5 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁴¹	No provision
Samoa (1999)	Up to 5 years. ²⁴²	Up to 5 years. ²⁴³	No provision	Up to 5 years. ²⁴⁴	No provision
Solomon Islands (1996)	5 years and/or \$3,000; 10 years and/or \$5,000 if in a prohibited area. ²⁴⁵	2 years and/or \$1,000. ²⁴⁶	10 years and/or \$5,000. ²⁴⁷	1 year and/or \$500. ²⁴⁸	1 year and/or \$500. ²⁴⁹
Tonga (1988)	Up to 5 years, or 10 years if committed in a prohibited area. ²⁵⁰	Up to 2 years and/or \$100. ²⁵¹	Up to 10 years and/or \$2,000. ²⁵²	Up to 12 months and/or \$100. ²⁵³	Up to 12 months and/or \$100. ²⁵⁴
Tuvalu (1978)	2 years and \$400; 10 years and \$2,000 if in a prohibited area. ²⁵⁵	No provision	10 years and \$2,000. ²⁵⁶	12 months and \$200. ²⁵⁷	12 months and \$200. ²⁵⁸
Vanuatu (1988)	Up to 6 months and/or VT 20,000. ²⁵⁹	Up to 12 months and/or VT 50,000. ²⁶⁰	Up to 2 years and/or VT 100,000. ²⁶¹	Up to 12 months and/or VT 50,000. ²⁶²	No provision
Wallis and Futuna	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available

*Dates in brackets indicate age of most recent legislation, revision, or regulation. Otherwise, penalties are as of 2002. The value of a penalty unit in the Australian Capital Territory, for example, is: Individual—AUD 100, corporation—AUD 500. Currencies are local.

Collection and destruction

Provisions for weapons collection and destruction help to limit the number of firearms in circulation that might otherwise be destined for criminal use, become part of an arsenal used in armed conflict, or be used in family violence, suicide, or unintentional shootings. Many countries in the Pacific have legislated to allow for a call-in of firearms, should the need arise. Some have created provisions for amnesty, with or without compensation.

Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu all have provisions within their arms law for the responsible minister to declare a prohibited area and to order the surrender of any or all arms and ammunition within its boundaries. Weapons surrendered in this way are to be returned to licensed owners after the prohibition is no longer in force, with destruction being an option only in the event that the owner cannot be located. Vanuatu has a section in its *Firearms Act* providing for the call-in, compensation for and subsequent prohibition, in 1988, of all air weapons and associated ammunition (Vanuatu, 1987, sec. 20 (1) (b)).

In Palau and the Marshall Islands, compulsory surrender orders were enforced in 1982 and 1983 respectively, and all existing licences were cancelled. Amnesty was offered by Palau as part of this process, and both Palau and the Marshall Islands offered compensation (Palau, n.d.a, secs. 3304, 3305, 3309; Republic of Marshall Islands, 1983, sec. 6).

Three other states—Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands—have legislated for amnesty in recent years. Fiji has granted two amnesty periods, in 1998 and 2000 respectively (Fiji, 1998, 2000). The Solomon Islands government has granted a series of amnesties since the June 2000 coup, the last in April and May 2002 (Solomon Islands, 2000, 2001a). Papua New Guinea enacted amnesty and compensation legislation in 1996 (Papua New Guinea, 1996). American Samoa has no provision for amnesties in legislation, and none have been held in recent memory.²⁶³ Amnesty and surrender provisions are commonplace in Australia and New Zealand. Although authorities promote them only sporadically, in reality a year-round amnesty applies in both countries for most surrendered firearms (see the following box).

The 1996–1997 Australian firearm buy-back and amnesty

The April, 1996 mass killing of 35 people by a single gunman in Port Arthur, Tasmania, prompted immediate law changes. From late 1996 until the end of September 1997, all Australian states and territories joined in a national buy-back and amnesty scheme, which saw the return and destruction of 643,764 prohibited firearms (Mouzos, 1998) and more than 60,000 other firearms, representing an estimated one-fifth of all stock in Australia. After the close of the buy-back period, semi-automatic long guns and pump-action shotguns joined machine guns as prohibited firearms.²⁶⁴ Owners of firearms which had been made illegal as a result of new laws passed in every state were compensated, as were firearm dealers who could prove their businesses would be affected by the new prohibitions.

The success of the buy-back varied widely. In the state of Tasmania, where the mass shooting that prompted the law changes occurred, an estimated 90 per cent of illegal guns were handed in. In New South Wales and Queensland, on the other hand, the return rate may have been as low as 50 per cent. It is also difficult to determine to what extent the firearm inventory has since been boosted by illegal imports.

There are many variables that influence crime rates. While firearm-related violence in isolated urban hot spots is undoubtedly on the rise, Australia-wide firearm-related crime rates have improved markedly since 1996. In the years following the buy-back, the number of firearm-related homicides fell sharply, and national rates for all firearm-related crime also declined. In 1993, 37 per cent of armed robbers in Australia used a firearm. By 2000, three years after the gun buy-back, this proportion had dropped to 14 per cent (Peter Reuter and Jenny Mouzos, cited in Ludwig & Cook, 2003, ch. 4).

In the ten years from 1987 to 1996, 100 people were shot dead in Australia in mass shootings alone. During the six years following the buy-back and the introduction of new gun control laws there were no mass shootings (which can be defined as four or more victims shot dead in proximate events).

Conclusion

The many inconsistencies among small arms-related laws in the Pacific leave the region vulnerable to gun-running. Loopholes and permissive attitudes to small arms encourage illicit traffickers to mark countries as soft entry points, thus gaining access to whole regions. In the Pacific, wide variations in firearm marking, registration, import/export laws, and in the penalties for breaching those laws, create holes in the Pacific's regional net for traffickers to exploit.

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Most states could profitably review the conditions that applicants must satisfy in order to be granted and to retain a firearm licence. Uniform ownership restrictions, long part of other states' regimes, could also be adopted across the region, particularly with regard to handguns and military-style firearms.

Co-operative enforcement between Pacific states to combat small arms trafficking could be greatly enhanced if each jurisdiction were to adopt the following measures progressively:

- Implement standardized guidelines for firearm registers.
- Define and inspect secure storage for small arms.
- Legislate to define and enforce the uniform marking of small arms.
- Harmonize import and export laws across the region.
- Adopt penalties for firearm offences sufficient to deter trafficking.
- Conduct prosecutions where necessary.

Australian legislation is the most up-to-date and comprehensive in the region. By the standards of its 19 Pacific neighbours, New Zealand's small arms legislation is the most permissive, facilitating easy ownership and undocumented transfer of the region's largest unregistered stockpile of private guns. Despite these differences, the two nations experience similar rates of gun-related crime and injury.

Some smaller states lack sufficient capacity even to enforce existing law. Solutions, therefore, will depend on continued capacity building, as well as legislative change. Development partners could be encouraged to continue their assistance to manage armouries, strengthen intelligence systems, and support effective law enforcement. In this respect Australia, New Zealand, and Japan already play important roles in the Pacific region.

Appendix 1: Firearm laws in the Pacific

Country	Relevant Legislation
American Samoa	American Samoa Territorial Law, American Samoa Code 1962 & 1979, amended 1980, title 46, ch. 42: Weapons.
Australia – federal	<i>Customs Act 1901</i> <i>Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956</i> <i>Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958</i> <i>National Firearms Program Implementation Act 1998, No. 81</i>
Australia – state*	<i>Firearms Act 1996 (Australian Capital Territory)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1996 (New South Wales)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1977 (Northern Territory)</i> <i>Weapons Act 1990 (Queensland)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1977 (South Australia)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1996 (Tasmania)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1996 (Victoria)</i> <i>Firearms Act 1973 (Western Australia)</i>
Cook Islands	<i>Arms Ordinance 1954, No 3.</i> <i>Crimes Act 1969</i> <i>Arms Amendment Ordinance, 1955, No. 2</i> <i>Amendment Act 1973-74, No. 39</i> <i>Arms Ordinance Amendment Act 1977, No. 4</i> <i>Customs Act 1913</i>
Federated States of Micronesia	<i>Trust Territory Weapons Control Act 1971 [cap. 12]</i> <i>Weapons Prohibition Act 1981, Title 11 [cap. 10]</i> <i>Weapons Control Act, Title 11 [cap. 9]</i>
Fiji	<i>Arms and Ammunition Act 1962 [cap. 188]</i> <i>Penal Code 1978 [cap. 17]</i> <i>Firearms, Explosives and Ammunition (Amnesty) Act 1998, No. 8</i> <i>Arms, Explosives and Ammunition (Amnesty) Decree 2000</i>
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna	French Law: <i>Law Decree of 18 April 1939 establishing the regime of materials of war, arms and ammunition</i> <i>Law Decree no. 95-589 of 6 May 1995 (refers to above)</i> <i>Law Decree no. 98-1148 of 16 December 1998 (refers to both above)</i> New Caledonia: <i>Order no. 268 of 28 January 1982 as modified by Order no. 1135 of 4 May 1982 and order no. 1422 of 5 June 1984</i>
Kiribati	<i>Arms and Ammunition Ordinance 1977 [cap. 3]</i> <i>Penal Code 1977 [cap. 67]</i> <i>Customs Act 1977 & 1993</i>

Nauru	<i>Arms and Opium Prohibition Ordinance 1936-1967</i> <i>Ordinances Revision Ordinance 1967, No. 11</i>
New Zealand	<i>Arms Act 1983</i> <i>Arms Amendment Acts 1985, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1999, 2000</i> <i>Arms Regulations 1992</i> <i>Customs Export Prohibition Order 2002</i> <i>Customs and Excise Act 1996</i>
Niue	<i>Arms Act 1975, No. 4</i> <i>Arms (Amendment) Act 1998</i> <i>Customs Act 1966</i>
Palau	<i>Constitution of Palau 1979, sec. 12</i> <i>National Firearms Control Act [cap. 33]</i> <i>Trust Territory Weapons Control Act [cap. 34]</i>
Papua New Guinea	<i>Firearms Act 1978 No. 46 [cap. 310]</i> <i>Firearms (Amendment) Act 1983, No. 1</i> <i>Firearms (Amendment) Act 1986, No. 28</i> <i>Firearms (Amendment) Act 1993, No. 17</i> <i>Firearms (Amendment) Act 1996, No. 40</i> <i>Firearms (Amendment) Act 1998, No. 50</i> <i>Criminal Code 1974 & 1993 [cap. 262]</i> <i>Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulation</i>
Republic of the Marshall Islands	<i>Weapons Control Act 1971 [cap. 13]</i> <i>Firearms Control Tax Act 1978</i> <i>Firearms Control Act 1983 [cap. 12]</i>
Samoa	<i>Arms Ordinance 1960, No. 11</i> <i>Crimes Ordinance 1961, No. 13</i> <i>Arms Amendment Act 1969, No. 2</i> <i>Arms Amendment Act 1975, No. 28</i> <i>Arms Amendment Act 1978, No. 11</i> <i>Arms Amendment Act 1980, No. 18</i> <i>Customs Act 1977</i>
Solomon Islands	<i>Firearms and Ammunition Act 1968, No. 4 [cap. 80]</i> <i>Penal Code (Amendment) Act 1987 No. 3 [cap. 26]</i> <i>Firearms and Ammunition (Amendment) Act 1989, No. 17</i> <i>Penal Code 1996 [cap. 5]</i> <i>Amnesty Act 2000, No. 8</i> <i>Amnesty Act 2001, No. 3</i> <i>Firearms and Ammunition (Amendment) Act 2001</i>
Tonga	<i>Arms and Ammunition Act 1968, No. 10 [cap. 39]</i> <i>Arms and Ammunition Act 1981, No. 8</i>

Arms and Ammunition Act 1988, No. 46
Criminal Offences Act 1988 [cap. 18]
Customs & Excise Act

Tuvalu	<i>Arms and Ammunition Ordinance 1964, No. 6 [cap. 74]</i> <i>Arms and Ammunition Ordinance 1971, No. 8</i> <i>Arms and Ammunition Ordinance 1972, No. 3</i> <i>Penal Code 1978 [cap. 8]</i> <i>Customs Act</i>
Vanuatu	<i>Firearms Act 1987, No. 7 [cap. 198]</i> <i>Restriction of Offensive Weapons Act 1988 [cap. 54]</i> <i>Firearms Regulations, Extraordinary Gazette 27/6/88, Order No. 27</i> <i>Criminal Procedure Code 1981, No. 21</i> <i>Import Duties (Consolidation Amendment) 1998, No.8</i>

* A wide range of associated regulations also apply in the Australian states.

Appendix 2: Pacific definitions of 'arm' and 'firearm'

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Country	Definition of an arm
American Samoa	Arm includes guns, rifles, pistols, air rifles, air pistols, gas rifles, gas pistols, ammunition, shells, cartridges, gunpowder, dynamite, nitro-glycerine, blasting powder, fireworks, and all other firearms and explosives and materials for the manufacture of the same. Firearm means any weapon that is designed or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.
Australia	<p>Federal Law: Firearm means a device designed or adapted to discharge shot, bullets, or other projectiles by means of an explosive charge or a compressed gas, whether that device is fitted with a magazine or other feeding device designed to be used with it or not, but does not include the following devices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a nailing or stapling gun; (b) an explosive-powered fixing tool; (c) a flare gun, or other signalling device, designed for emergency or life-saving purposes; (d) a line-thrower; (e) a hand-operated device that uses blank cartridges to propel objects for retrieval in connection with the training of dogs; (f) a tranquilliser gun; (g) a gun that operates a captive bolt for the slaughter of animals; (h) a device for the casting of weighted nets; (i) an underwater power head; (j) large-calibre armament, weapons, launchers, throwers, and projectors, designed for grenades, bombs, rockets, or any other missile, ammunition, or substance, to which item 8 of Schedule 2 applies;

- (k) a sidewall core gun designed for geological purposes, mining purposes, or both;
- (l) an expandable casing perforation gun designed for geological purposes, mining purposes, or both.

Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales: Firearm means a gun, or other weapon, that is (or at any time was) capable of propelling a projectile by means of an explosive, and includes a blank fire firearm or an airgun, but does not include anything declared by the regulations not to be a firearm.

Queensland: Firearm means:

- (a) a gun or other thing ordinarily described as a firearm; or
 - (b) a thing ordinarily described as a weapon that, if used in the way for which it was designed or adapted, is capable of being aimed at a target and causing death or injury by discharging—
 - (i) a projectile; or
 - (ii) noxious, corrosive, or irritant liquid, powder, gas, chemical, or other substance; or
 - (c) a thing that would be a firearm mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b), if it were not temporarily inoperable or incomplete; or
 - (d) a major component part of a firearm;
- but does not include—
- (e) an antique firearm, explosive tool, captive bolt humane killer, spear gun, longbow, or crossbow; or
 - (f) a replica of a spear gun, longbow, or crossbow; or
 - (g) a slingshot.

Example—

A replica of a gun capable of causing death or injury by discharging a projectile is a firearm. However, a replica of a gun not capable of causing death or injury by discharging a projectile is not a firearm.

Northern Territory: Firearm means a device or part of a device (whether or not assembled, operable, or temporarily or permanently inoperable) that is designed or adapted to discharge shot, a bullet, or other missile –

- (a) by expanding gases produced in the device;
- (b) by igniting combustible material; or
- (c) by compressed air or other compressed gases (whether stored in the device or attached to the device in pressurized containers).

South Australia: Firearm means:

- (a) a device designed to be carried by hand and to fire shot, bullets, or other projectiles by means of burning propellant or by means of compressed air or other compressed gas; or

(deleted)

- (c) a device of a kind declared by regulation to be a firearm for the purposes of this Act, and includes a device which, if in working order, would be a firearm within the meaning of this definition (except such a device that has been rendered unusable in a manner stipulated in the regulations or

by the Registrar) but does not include a device of a kind excluded by regulation from the provisions of this Act.

Tasmania: Firearm means:

- (a) a gun or other weapon that is capable of propelling anything wholly or partly by means of an explosive; and
- (b) a blank-fire firearm; and
- (c) an air rifle; and
- (d) an air pistol; and
- (e) an imitation firearm, other than a toy; and
- (f) any other prescribed thing; and
- (g) any thing that would be a firearm under paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d) if it did not have something missing from it or a defect or obstruction in it.

Victoria: Firearm means any device, whether or not assembled or in parts and whether or not operable or complete or temporarily or permanently inoperable or incomplete –

- (a) which is designed or adapted to discharge shot or a bullet or other missile by the expansion of gases produced in the device by the ignition of strongly combustible materials or by compressed air or other gases, whether stored in the device in pressurized containers or produced in the device by mechanical means; or
- (b) which has the appearance of such a device – and which is not –
- (c) an industrial tool powered by cartridges containing gunpowder which is designed and intended for use for fixing fasteners or plugs or for similar purposes; or
- (d) a captive bolt humane killer; or
- (e) a spear gun designed for underwater use; or
- (f) a device designed for the discharge of signal flares; or
- (g) a device which was manufactured before 1900 for which cartridge ammunition is not commercially available; or
- (h) a device commonly known as a kiln gun or ring blaster, designed specifically for knocking out or down solid material in kilns, furnaces, or cement silos; or
- (i) a device commonly known as a line thrower designed for establishing lines between structures or natural features and powered by compressed air to other compressed gases and used for rescue purposes, rescue training, or rescue demonstration; or
- (j) a device of a prescribed class.

Western Australia: Firearm includes any lethal firearm and any other weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet, or other missile can be discharged or propelled or which, by any alteration in the construction or fabric thereof, can be made capable of discharging or propelling any shot, bullet, or other missile, but does not include anything that is prescribed in regulations under the Weapons Act 1999 to be a prohibited weapon or a controlled weapon.

Cook Islands	Firearm includes any weapon from which a missile is discharged by the force of any explosive substance or by compressed air.
Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands	Firearm means any device, by whatever name known, which is designed or may be converted to expel or hurl a projectile or projectiles by the action of an explosion, a release, or an expansion of gas, including but not limited to guns, except a device designed or redesigned for use solely as a signalling, line throwing, spear fishing, or industrial device, or a device which hurls a projectile by means of the release or expansion of carbon dioxide or air.
Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga	Arm means any lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet, or other missile can be discharged, or which can be adapted for the discharge of any shot, bullet, or other missile, and any weapon of whatever description designed or adapted for the discharge of any noxious liquid, gas, or other thing dangerous to persons, and includes any component part of any such weapon, and any accessory to any such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon, but does not include articles designed or adapted solely to discharge spears for spearing fish.
French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna	Not defined
Nauru	Firearm means every kind and variety of gun or pistol used or intended for the discharge of projectiles of any kind, and also any part of any such gun or pistol.
New Zealand	Firearm: (a) Means anything from which any shot, bullet, missile, or other projectile can be discharged by force of explosive; and (b) Includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything that has been adapted so that it can be used to discharge a shot, bullet, missile, or other projectile by force of explosive; and • Anything which is not for the time being capable of discharging any shot, bullet, missile, or other projectile but which, by its completion or the replacement of any component part or parts or the correction or repair of any defect or defects, would be a firearm within the meaning of paragraph (a) of this definition or subparagraph (i) of this paragraph; and • Anything (being a firearm within the meaning of paragraph (a) of this definition or subparagraph (i) of this paragraph) which is for the time being dismantled or partially dismantled; and • Any specially dangerous airgun.
Niue	Firearm includes any weapon from which a missile can be discharged by the force of an explosion or by the force of any compressed gas or compressed air, and includes a weapon which for the time being is not capable of discharging a missile but which by the replacement of any component part or parts, or the correction of any defect, would be so capable, and also includes any weapon which is for the time being dismantled, but subject to subsection 4 of Section 13 thereof, does not include any firearm of the type commonly known as humane killers, or bolt, or stud guns.

Palau	Firearm means any device, by whatever name known, including but not limited to rifles, pistols, and other types of guns, which is designed to or may be converted to shoot or expel any projectile by the action of any explosion, a release, or an expansion of gas; the term 'Firearm' does not include devices designed solely for signalling, line throwing, spear fishing, or industrial purposes, nor does it include blowguns or air guns.
Papua New Guinea	Firearm includes (a) an air rifle or other kind of rifle or gun from which a shot, bullet, or other missile, or irritant liquid, gas, or powder or other substance capable of causing bodily harm, can be discharged; and (b) rifle or gun from which for the time being any such missile or substance cannot be discharged because of (i) the absence or defect of one or more of its parts; or (ii) some obstruction in the rifle or gun, but which, if the part or parts were replaced, renewed, or repaired, or the obstruction removed, would be capable of discharging.
Samoa	No definition
Solomon Islands	Firearm means any lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet, or other missile can be discharged, or which can be adapted for the discharge of any shot, bullet, or other missile, and any weapon of whatever description designed or adapted for the discharge of any noxious liquid, gas, or other thing dangerous to persons, and includes any component part of any such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon, but does not include an air gun, air rifle, or air pistol except where otherwise expressly provided, nor articles designed or adapted solely to discharge spears for spearing fish.
Tuvalu	Arm means any lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet, or other missile can be discharged, or which can be adapted for the discharge of any shot, bullet, or other missile, any air gun or air pistol of whatever description, and any weapon of whatever description designed or adapted for the discharge of any noxious liquid, gas, or other thing dangerous to persons, and includes any component part of any such weapon, and any accessory to any such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon, but does not include articles designed or adapted solely to discharge spears for spearing fish.
Vanuatu	Firearm means any lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet, cartridges, shells, or other missile can be discharged, and includes any air weapon, any prohibited weapon, any component part of any such lethal barrelled weapon, air weapon or prohibited weapon and any accessory to any such weapon designed or adopted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon.

V. Disarmament Pacific style: Experiences in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands

Disarmament in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands is critical if peace in either community is to be sustained. Without comprehensive small arms disposal, law and order problems remain difficult to resolve, and the potential for breaches of respective peace agreements lingers.

No two conflicts are alike; nor are they resolved in exactly the same way. In Bougainville, the conflict was long and its resolution has been complex, involving a wide range of actors. Various earlier attempts at peace, while not successful in themselves, set the stage for a sustainable peace process, characterized by the full engagement of most actors and a negotiated political settlement.

In the Solomon Islands, however, the conflict has been more acute and its resolution less well rehearsed. While the October 2000 TPA may have brought an end to fighting itself, it did not adequately address deeper political issues, and tensions continue.

Disarmament processes in each society have to some extent been determined by the nature of each conflict, and the way in which it has been resolved. In Bougainville, a complex three-stage 'weapons disposal plan' is intricately linked to plans for autonomy and possible independence. Although challenges have emerged from time to time, widespread trust in the process prevails, and the outlook for comprehensive disarmament is positive.

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In the Solomon Islands, trust in the process is not so well established. Peace agreements and peace monitoring bodies have focused heavily on weapons disposal, arguably at the expense of resolution of deeper issues. While public support for disarmament has been consistently strong, tensions between groups remain, and ex-combatants have been slow to disarm. Law and order problems continue to plague Honiara and outlying areas.

This section considers the problems and challenges encountered in both disarmament processes, and reflects on some of the lessons to be drawn from 'disarmament Pacific style'.

Bougainville: Getting the house in order

After ten years of war, we have had these weapons too long ... to achieve what we want, we have to lose our weapons. Tomorrow we will be free; the country will be free. The house will be in order.

Komoiki, Bougainville ex-combatant (UNDP, 2002b)

A range of 'dress rehearsals' for peace took place from the very early days of the Bougainville conflict.²⁶⁵ While none of these efforts succeeded in their own right, they established a basis of trust and clarified an agenda for successful peace negotiations in mid-1997.

Weapons disposal had been one of the more sensitive issues on that agenda, and remained on the sidelines for some years after the start of formal peace talks. This was in large part due to continued

mistrust between the combatant factions, and between the BRA and the PNGDF, who at that time remained in significant numbers on Bougainville. Tactically, it made sense in the earlier stages of the peace process for the BRA to retain their arms, since they represented an important form of leverage, should peace talks begin to falter (Regan, 1999).

A long period of stasis ensued, at least as far as weapons disposal was concerned. In January 2001, this situation changed when factional leaders from Bougainville met with representatives from the Papua New Guinea government to establish a set of principles for a referendum on Bougainville's political status. Weapons disposal had now become central to continued progress on this issue, and in recognition of this, the parties met again the following month. Although positions on both autonomy and weapons disposal were considerably narrowed, no final agreement was reached.

In early May 2001, BRF and BRA leaders reached agreement on weapons disposal. Shortly afterwards, they met with representatives from the Papua New Guinea government and agreed on a three-stage arms disposal process, which was then integrated into the wider political settlement.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement, finalized at Arawa, in August 2001, between the Papua New Guinea government, the BRA, and the BRF, included provisions for a transition to autonomy and a deferred referendum on independence, as well as a complex plan for weapons disposal (Regan, 2002). The provisions for autonomy and referendum required a set of amendments to the Papua New Guinea constitution, which the Papua New Guinea government began drafting soon afterwards.

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The weapons disposal programme, launched on 6 December 2001, is intended to be implemented gradually across Bougainville, and is intricately linked with progress on political and constitutional issues.

- In **Stage One**, small arms are handed to local level factional commanders for storage in secure containers provided by the PPCC. The containers are then sealed by representatives from the UN Observer Mission in Bougainville (UNOMB).
- **Stage Two** begins with the delivery of the contained weapons to senior commanders from each faction, who then place them in secure containers in a number of central locations.
- Upon the passage of the amendments to the Papua New Guinea Constitution, the arms are to be moved to secure containment with two locks: one key to be held by the ex-combatant commander, the other to be held by the UNOMB.
- The final part of Stage Two provides for the constitutional amendments to come into operation. Before this can happen, however, the UNOMB must first verify that sufficient arms have been collected and safely secured. Only then can preparations for the first autonomous elections begin.
- **Stage Three** of the process determines the final fate of the weapons. Discussions regarding their fate are to be held within four and a half months of the autonomy legislation coming into effect. If no decision is made, the BRA, BRF, and Papua New Guinea government may decide whether enough arms have been collected to allow elections to proceed, or they may decide to delay the election process. The UNOMB may also be called upon to determine whether sufficient arms have been collected for free and fair elections to take place. The Bougainville parties are bound by the UNOMB findings.
- A referendum on independence for Bougainville is to be held not less than ten but not more than 15 years after the first autonomous elections.

There are a number of junctures at which the weapons disposal process and movement towards autonomy and independence are inextricably linked. Elections for an autonomous Bougainville require that all areas of Bougainville first proceed to Stage Two of weapons disposal. At the same time, continued progress on weapons disposal puts the onus on the Papua New Guinea government to implement the new constitutional laws.

In late March 2002, the Papua New Guinea parliament unanimously passed a set of constitutional amendments to give effect to the Bougainville Peace Agreement (*Port Vila Presse*, 2002a). In the months prior to the vote, ex-combatant groups in many districts around Bougainville made remarkable progress on disarmament, knowing that support for the passage of the legislation through the Papua New Guinea parliament in large part depended on visible progress being made on weapons disposal.

By early April 2002, 1,034 weapons had been contained, including 222 'high-powered' firearms (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 2002b).²⁶⁶ The majority of districts, however, remained at Stage One of the process, i.e. the arms were still in village trunks under the supervision of local unit commanders. Over the following four months, overall progress on weapons disposal slowed, and several districts remained reluctant to move to Stage Two. Still, by the end of July 2002, a further 400 firearms had been handed in, including another 59 high-powered firearms (BPMG, 2002b). By late October 2002, 1,639 firearms had been surrendered, and all districts had made efforts to proceed to Stage Two containment (BPMG, 2002c).

Practical disarmament in Bougainville

The weapons disposal process is led by the UN Observer Mission in Bougainville, a five-person team based in the two main centres, Buka and Arawa. The head of the UNOMB chairs both the PPCC and the Weapons Disposal Committee (WDC). The UNDP assists with programme design and implementation, and communicates with government and donor partners to co-ordinate funding efforts.

Technical management of small arms containment and joint awareness programmes are the responsibility of the PMG, an unarmed, neutral organization with personnel drawn from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu. The PMG commander, chief negotiator and civilian monitors are supported by a team of military personnel. PMG offices are situated at a number of locations around Bougainville and in Buka. Since 2000, the total number of PMG personnel has been reduced from over 300 to around 200, as peace has started to become a more permanent part of the landscape (see Wehner & Denoon, 2001, Appendix G, p. 190).

Terms of reference of the PMG

- Monitor and report on compliance with all aspects of the cease-fire.
- Promote and instil confidence in the peace process through its presence, good offices, and interaction with the people of Bougainville.
- Provide assistance in the implementation of the Lincoln Agreement, as agreed by the parties and the contributing states.
- Assist with the democratic resolution of the situation.

Sources: Downer (2001) and the Lincoln Peace Agreement (1998)

Local and district Weapons Disposal Subcommittees, supported by the PMG, are involved in raising awareness and organizing containment ceremonies throughout Bougainville. The PMG itself has no enforcement authority and must rely on its status as a neutral, unarmed peace-building organization to secure weapons handovers.

Different areas of Bougainville began to disarm at different times, and have reached different stages. Siwai in Southwest Bougainville was one of the first areas to disarm. At the time of writing, Siwai was the only area to have reached Stage Three, having destroyed 117 of its 199 contained weapons by the end of March 2002. Other areas to disarm early were Torokina in Northwest Bougainville, Bana in Central Bougainville, and Buka.

Stage One containments leading up to the parliamentary vote proceeded at a rapid pace. Overall, in the months following the vote, the rate of weapon surrender slowed, but in some areas encouraging progress occurred. In Kieta, home of many of the most powerful of the BRA leadership, ex-combatants from both factions surrendered 142 firearms in Stage One containment ceremonies during June and July, raising the district's Stage One containment total to 183.

By late October 2002, 1,639 firearms had been contained. Of these:

- 596 had been handed in by the BRF, and 1,043 had been handed in by the BRA.
- 304 were high-powered, 284 were sporting rifles, 892 were home-made, and 159 were World War II relics.
- Home-made firearms made up just over half of all containments, comprising 61 per cent of all weapons handed in by the BRA, and 43 per cent of the firearms handed in by the BRF.
- Less than 20 per cent of weapons surrendered were high-powered, comprising 16 per cent of the weapons surrendered by the BRA and 24 per cent of those surrendered by the BRF.
- Sixty per cent of all firearms and 70 per cent of all high-powered firearms were handed in during the four months leading up to the constitutional vote in the Papua New Guinea parliament (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Bougainville weapon containments to 24 October 2002

Month	Newly registered	Number of high-powered firearms
December 2001	25	10
January 2002	71	13
February 2002	30	5
March 2002	860	185
April 2002	90	11
May 2002	89	10
June 2002	206	30
July 2002	75	15
August 2002	89	9
September 2002	76	12
October 2002	28	4
Total	1,639	304

Source: BPMG (2002c)

The low proportion of high-powered firearms surrendered tends to suggest that significant numbers of such arms remain in Bougainville. However, no base figure exists for the number of high-powered firearms thought to have been involved in the conflict. As a result, it is very difficult to estimate how many are still in circulation. To complicate matters, Bougainville factions had ‘talked up’ the numbers they had at the start of the peace process, but have since tried to talk them down.²⁶⁷

Table 5.2. Weapon containment progress by district at 24 October 2002

District	BRF	BRA	Registered contained*	Stage 1+	Stage 2+	Stage 3+	Removed during break-ins+	% of St. 1 moved to St. 2 or destroyed+
Bana	94	176	270	63	205		2	77
Buin	140	204	344	207	135		2	40
Buka	35	27	62	0	62			100
Kieta/Central	44	245	289	214	74		1	26
Kunua-Keriaka	41	81	122	0	44		78	36
Selau-Suir	0	31	31	0	31			100
Siwai	117	95	212	63	32	117		70
Tinputz	17	36	53	17	36			68
Torokina	76	77	153	0	126		27	82
Wakunai	32	71	103	8	95			92
Total	596	1,043	1,639	572	840	117	110	

Source: BPMG (2002c)

* Total registered as contained – does not reflect weapons removed from containment

+ Status at 24/10/2002 – reflects weapons removed from containment

The most positive development in the latter half of 2002 was the widespread shift across districts from Stage One to Stage Two. While only five districts had achieved any Stage Two containments by the end of July, by late October, all ten districts had made some attempt to move to Stage Two. Two of those districts, Buka and Selau-Suir, had moved all of their Stage One weapons to Stage Two locations (see Table 5.2, above). However, Siwai remained the only district to have moved any of its weapons to Stage Three.

Regrettably, a number of serious incidents also occurred in the latter half of 2002. Several Stage Two containers were broken into, with 110 firearms in all ending up in the hands of ex-combatants. The PMG took steps to prevent further such incidents by welding protective sheaths over the locks of the containers, but even these precautions are not failsafe.

The break-ins highlighted the reality that, should the situation in Bougainville deteriorate, many combatants would still have reasonably easy access to firearms. Ultimately, successful weapons disposal relies on confidence among Bougainvilleans in the continued success of the peace process (BPMG, 2002c).

Challenges to disarmament

Progress on weapons disposal in Bougainville during 2002 was variable over time, and across districts. In addition to the key driver of the March 2002 constitutional vote, several other important factors influenced factional leaders’ enthusiasm for disarmament.

AMNESTY AND PARDON ISSUES

One of the main issues of concern to factional leaders following the constitutional vote in March 2002 had been the need to reach a clear consensus on issues related to amnesty and pardon. Both had been provided for in the Lincoln and Bougainville peace agreements, and they had also been included in the constitutional amendments passed by the Papua New Guinea parliament, but combatant leaders were reluctant to disarm until the details were clear.

This issue was resolved in mid-May 2002. In the first half of May, Bougainville ex-combatant leaders worked with technical advisers and representatives from the Papua New Guinea government in Port Moresby to develop a set of joint recommendations on amnesty and pardon. Factional leaders then returned to Bougainville to hold further consultations (BTCC, 2002).

By mid-June 2002, widespread agreement had been reached about key aspects, such as offence categories, the time period to be covered, and eligibility for amnesty or pardon (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 2002d). A common policy has yet to be worked out on issues of compensation and reconciliation, and compensation in particular may yet emerge as another challenge to the peace and disarmament process (BTCC, 2002). Throughout 2002, BRF ex-combatants continued to express their dissatisfaction at the distribution of crisis-related compensation payments, making threats against weapon containers in a number of regions (BPMG, 2002c).

THE ELECTION OF A NEW NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Another factor impeding early progress on disarmament was the build-up to the June 2002 Papua New Guinea general elections. In a practical sense, the onset of the election period meant that key figures joined the campaign trail, and as a consequence, became less available to attend weapons disposal meetings. In a deeper sense, factional leaders were unsure of what direction a newly elected government might take on Bougainville issues. While the constitutional amendments passed in March 2002 were protected from unilateral change by the Papua New Guinea government, fears remained about the changes in leadership that an election might bring, and the impact that new personalities might have on the peace process.²⁶⁸ Consequently, leaders were wary of making too many concessions on weapons disposal before the election.

FRANCIS ONA AND THE REPUBLIC OF ME'EKAMUI

A major variable in the peace process for many years had been the non-participation in the peace process of the Republic of Me'ekamui, a paramilitary faction of ex-BRA combatants led by former BRA commander Francis Ona. Claiming the backing of more than 700 chiefs and supporters, in 1997 Ona established a large 'no-go' zone around Panguna mine in central Bougainville, declaring it off-limits to all outside groups, including former BRA colleagues (Regan, 2001, p. 9; Carl & Garasu, 2002). The no-go zone covers a large geographical area and at times Ona has extended its boundaries, in so doing cutting off road access from south to north Bougainville. There is no reliable estimate of the size of the Me'ekamui armoury, but Bougainville peace monitors estimate that as many as 35,000 people live inside the no-go zone.²⁶⁹

An example of the insecurity generated by the presence of the no-go zone occurred during the 2002 polling period. One week into the election period, Me'ekamui extended its exclusion zone by five kilometres. In response, ex-BRA combatants broke into Stage One storage containers, purportedly to protect polling booths close to the no-go area (PACNEWS, 2002b).

Incidents such as this have provided a strong incentive for local ex-combatants to remain armed. However, some contact has been occurring between senior Me'ekamui and BRA since 2000, and in

July 2002, a breakthrough occurred when 16 BRA leaders and representatives from the Panguna no-go zone met with the PMG commander and chief negotiator (Kenneth, 2002a). They agreed to officially join the peace process and to commence the process of reconciliation in their area. Although Francis Ona's involvement is still unclear, these developments are significant and positive events.

WHO OWNS THE GUNS?

In addition to the broader political and tactical issues canvassed above, other factors operate at the micro level to slow disarmament in Bougainville. Weapons disposal is complicated by the fact that, particularly within the BRA, firearms are considered to belong not to the faction but to the individual.²⁷⁰ As time passes and command structures deteriorate, factional leaders become less able to exercise authority over ex-combatants, limiting their ability to direct them to lay down their arms.

Giving up one's gun also means giving up power, both social and economic. As one source commented, young men emerging from the crisis have no legitimate role or voice in their communities, and have had no training in leadership.²⁷¹ They also face a very limited range of economic opportunities. Some incentive will therefore remain for individual ex-combatants to hold on to their firearms.

DISARMAMENT OCCURS AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS IN DIFFERENT PLACES

As Geoff Harris (1998, p. 3) comments, it is exceptional for nationwide peace to be achieved in the short term. Instead, the achievement of peace is an incremental process, in which pockets of instability may be encountered over time, or in defined areas. In Bougainville, many factors operate at the local level to determine the speed of disarmament. As a former PMG commander observed, 'the ten districts are all unique—there are ten solutions here, not one'.²⁷² The speed of disarmament may vary according to, among other things:

- the impact of the crisis in the area;
- the number of guns in the area;
- who the leadership is;
- closeness to the Me'ekamui no-go zone; and
- the difficulty of the terrain.

Stakeholder perspectives on the weapons disposal process

While factional leaders had reservations about the weapons disposal process, so too did other stakeholders, such as donor partners and civil society groups.

TOO MUCH FOCUS ON EX-COMBATANTS

Many sources felt that ex-combatants had built up a formidable position within the weapons disposal process, and that this was now becoming an impediment to disarmament, and indeed to the recovery process. With so much energy being directed at weapons disposal, potential existed for community-wide resentment to develop as other needs were not met, or were met more slowly than expected. Many people involved in the peace and disarmament process felt it was important to try to build a district-specific peace dividend, or one that covered the whole population, rather than focus on individual ex-combatants or combatant groups. Programmes that sought to reintegrate ex-combatants into society needed to take this into account (see the following box).

Building a broader peace: The role of Reintegration Programmes

The effective social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants is increasingly being recognized as essential to building sustainable peace in societies recovering from armed conflict. In its absence, ex-combatants may resort to criminal behaviour, especially if their only skills are in the use of weapons. However, such programmes need careful planning if they are to avoid generating new problems and tensions in the community.

Solomon Islands Community Peace and Restoration Fund

In the Solomon Islands, the Australian government has funded an AUD 3 million (USD 1.46 million) Community Peace and Restoration Fund (CPRF). Twenty local co-ordinators manage over 240 community-generated restoration projects across the country, and to date the success rate of CPRF projects has been very high.

Along the way, however, CPRF team members have learned important lessons about the reintegration of ex-combatants. Soon after the signing of the October 2000 TPA, 104 former militants from North Malaita—home of some of the most prominent leaders of the MEF—developed a project to rebuild the roads in their communities. It seemed like a good way to get the former fighters home and working before Christmas, and the project was approved. However, shortly after it started, a small group of ex-militants commandeered essential road-building equipment, demanding money in return for use by the project. With no control over the ex-militants, the local community was powerless to do anything, and the project was effectively torpedoed.

In South Malaita, militants are still helping to rebuild the roads, but communities themselves have negotiated the projects. The lesson from the CPRF experience is clear: reconstruction projects that seek to reintegrate ex-combatants need to be driven by communities themselves, not the ex-combatants.

Bougainville Ex-combatants' Trust Account

Programmes that directly target ex-combatants can be sustainable, but they need to be seen to contribute to the broader peace dividend. If others in the community perceive that ex-combatants are being rewarded, first for ruling by the barrel of a gun, and then for disarming, resentment may build.

The Bougainville Ex-combatants' Trust Account (BETA) is attempting to address this issue. Ex-combatant groups that have reached Stage One containment—or groups of widows and children of ex-combatants who died during or after the crisis—may apply for in-kind assistance of up to PGK 50,000 (USD 12,500) to a panel of eminent Bougainvilleans, who have access to a AUD 5 million (USD 2.44 million) trust account. Before the panel considers the application, BRA or BRF factional leaders must first consult with leaders in the local community. Ex-combatants still benefit directly by gaining new skills and opportunities, but any such benefits are located within the context of broader community development.

Though the project is still in its early stages, it has already raised new issues. For instance, what is the definition of an ex-combatant, and who defines it? How does one ensure projects are self-sustaining? How does one explain to friends and relations of ex-combatants that they are not eligible for funding? Answers to these kinds of questions need to come from communities themselves, if the programme is to succeed.

Sources: Judi Pattison, CPRF Project Co-ordinator; Chris Watkins, BETA Project Co-ordinator; Robin Kenaus, BETA Area Co-ordinator, May/June 2002

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM THE PROCESS

A common criticism of the process had been its almost total exclusion of women from the negotiations. This occurred despite the important role that they had played in building the momentum for peace. As one senior PMG member commented, weapons disposal will occur where there is sufficient incentive: 'for men, disarmament reduces what power they have—so we need some other leverage. But for women, getting rid of the guns is enough'.²⁷³ While women undoubtedly continued to exercise influence at the local level, the exclusion of women from the WDC marginalized a key source of support for disarmament.

DONOR FUNDING AND THE NEED FOR AN EXIT STRATEGY

The weapons disposal process began in earnest in December 2001. Phase One funding for logistics and awareness programmes, totalling approximately USD 280,000, was provided by the Papua New Guinea government, the UK, and New Zealand.²⁷⁴ While there was no direct contribution from Australia, it committed AUD 5 million (about USD 2.4 million) for an associated 'Ex-Combatants' Trust Fund' (see the box above), which could be used to develop re-integration initiatives among ex-combatants in areas that had reached Stage One of the weapons disposal plan.

In mid-2002, funding became a sticking point for donors. The weapons disposal process had lost much of its impetus, and Phase One funds had been exhausted. Frustrations existed about the way in which initial funds had been disbursed. Insufficient communication, for instance, between the provincial and district Joint Awareness Teams had meant that the first round of funding had been taken up overwhelmingly at the provincial level, leading to outstanding commitments in the districts.²⁷⁵

With no end to the process in sight, and with political negotiations becoming increasingly protracted, donors felt some reluctance about contributing to Phase Two funding. As one source put it, the process appeared to have become so comfortable that it had almost become an impediment to disarmament.²⁷⁶ In the event that new funding was forthcoming, ex-combatants needed to understand that the process was not open-ended, which would give donor partners confidence that there was a way forward for the disarmament process.

Clearly, new direction was needed. The June 2002 meeting of the WDC met with this in mind. Leaders from every level of the weapons disposal process were brought to a meeting in Buka so that full and frank discussions could be held. Continuing high levels of goodwill enabled participants to agree on new procedures to target funding more carefully, and to strengthen communication between different levels. Ex-combatants agreed on the future sequencing and timetable for implementation of the disposal plan, and likely exit dates for the PMG and UNOMB. In return, donors reconfirmed their support for the peace and disarmament process in Bougainville (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 2002a).

In late October 2002, parties to the process met to review the situation once again. By now, the deadline of 2 September 2002, for completion of all Stage Two containments, had long passed. Acknowledging the limitations of donor funding, and anxious to maintain momentum on the autonomy process, the PPCC set a new deadline of 24 December 2002 (*The Independent*, 2002a).

Despite some obvious tensions, as evidenced by the break-ins, the October PPCC meeting succeeded in reconfirming all parties' commitment to the process.

- Traditional chiefs gave their assurance to the UNOMB that they would assist with the collection of guns within their respective communities (*The Independent*, 2002b).
- Ex-combatant leaders undertook to make the Stage Two containers more secure.
- The UNOMB and PMG sought to actively re-engage women and church groups in the final part of the process.

Following the meeting, the head of the UN mission announced the immediate start of an intensive one-and-a-half month peace process awareness programme throughout all districts of Bougainville (*The Independent*, 2002a). Church leaders and women's groups supported this final push, urging ex-combatants to surrender any remaining guns and stressing the importance of the continued engagement of Me'ekamui in the process.

More setbacks occurred in the weeks that followed. Two weeks after the October PPCC meeting, weapon containers in Torokina—one of the sites of the first weapons disposals—were broken into by Chris Uma, an ex-combatant commander with alleged links to Me'ekamui. Uma was also said to be targeting containers in other districts and encouraging criminal elements. By 19 December, more than 360 weapons had gone missing following further container break-ins (Taimbari, 2002b).

Yet even these serious difficulties appear not to have substantially damaged the momentum on weapons disposal. Instead, Uma's incursions have prompted ex-combatants to seek dialogue with Me'ekamui chief commander Moses Pipiro about the return of weapons taken from containers, to set up roadblocks to check vehicles for firearms, and to start actively protecting their containers (Taimbari, 2002b). With combatants only too aware of the consequences of failure, Stage Two BRA containments continued to occur throughout December, and commitment to the peace process remained high.

The Solomon Islands: An uneasy peace

When members of the RSIP joined with militants from the MEF, in June 2000, to overthrow the government, over 1,000 guns were stolen from the police armoury at Rove in Honiara (Slade, 2001, p. 4). Malaitan fighters graduated from old World War II .303 bolt-action rifles and home-made shotguns to SLRs, SR-88A assault rifles, and Ultimax 100 machine guns. Earlier that year, 15 militants had raided the police armoury at Auki, the capital of Malaita, making off with 34 rifles and ammunition (Radio Australia, 2000). Members of the IFM from Guadalcanal, with fewer connections inside the police, were less well equipped. This did not prevent a bitter and bloody conflict.

Several attempts had been made to reach a peaceful settlement over the twelve months prior to the coup.²⁷⁷ Many meetings had attempted to address underlying issues and deal with the concerns and demands of the warring parties, but militant leaders were notable by their absence. In contrast to their role at the Bougainville peace talks, they were now less part of the process, but more its target. At talks in Auki, in May 2000, attendance by the MEF was conditional on their surrendering their arms beforehand. Pressure to disarm was strong from the beginning, but combatants, having so far not engaged with the process, had no investment in doing so. In August 2000, a cease-fire was signed between the MEF and the IFM, but it was violated within 24 hours (Kabutaulaka, 2000a, p. 24).

Peace—or at least an end to overt hostilities—finally came in October 2000, with the signing of a peace agreement in Townsville, Australia. This was a meeting that militant leaders did attend. The nine-part agreement covered a very broad range of issues, including reconciliation, restructuring of the police force, amnesty, rehabilitation of militants, compensation for loss and damages, increased autonomy for Malaita and Guadalcanal, and promises of infrastructure development in both provinces.

The TPA contained two provisions for amnesty. An initial weapon amnesty required all arms and ammunition used during the conflict to be handed over to the respective commanders within 30 days. In return, former militants and police would be granted immunity from prosecution with respect to the

stealing or illegal possession of firearms. In the event that the weapon amnesty was fully complied with, those concerned might then be granted general amnesty regarding unlawful acts committed in direct connection with the conflict (TPA, Part 2: see Section V, Appendix 2).

To facilitate the peace and disarmament process, an International Peace Monitoring Team was established, as well as an indigenous PMC. Civilian-led and unarmed, the IPMT drew its membership, which peaked at around 50, from Australian and New Zealand police and defence forces, civilian government departments, and from the police forces of Pacific Island nations such as Tonga and Vanuatu (Hegarty, 2001a, p. 2).

The primary role of the IPMT was to support the work of the local PMC and other civil society organizations by:

- Assisting with confidence-building amongst the parties to the TPA and the wider Solomon Islands population;
- Receiving and monitoring weapon surrenders and maintaining an arms inventory; and
- Monitoring, observing and reporting on breaches of the TPA ('Commitment between Parties to the Townsville Peace Agreement', 2000).

The PMC provided indigenous leadership, liaising closely with communities throughout Guadalcanal and Malaita, and running a vigorous media campaign to encourage militants to comply with the TPA. Contact with the indigenous Anglican Melanesian Brothers and Sisters was especially important, as they were a source of much influence in the local community, and were later formally commissioned to negotiate with militants over weapon surrenders. As with the peace monitors in Bougainville, neither the IPMT nor the PMC had any enforcement authority, instead focusing on building community confidence in the process in order to secure arms handovers (see the box that follows).

The role of peace monitors

Although we often monitored a peace that we barely understood, we must not underestimate our important—sometimes crucial—role. The PMG was particularly successful in instilling confidence among Bougainvilleans in their own peace process. Our presence provided a space where people could begin to articulate and debate their vision for the future, often literally before our eyes. I hope that this will prove an enduring legacy.

Katherine Ruiz-Avila, PMG Monitor, 2001

Peace monitors have played a crucial role in building community commitment to disarmament in both Bougainville and the Solomon Islands.

In Bougainville, strong community support for peace already existed, but years of bitter conflict meant that, initially, deep suspicion remained between the parties. The potential remained for conflict to break out again. Building trust was therefore a key priority in the early stages of the peace process. The presence of the unarmed, neutral PMG created a 'safe space' for that trust to develop, and is often cited as one of the most important reasons why little armed conflict has broken out between combatant groups since 1997, and why weapons disposal has progressed as far as it has to date. Importantly, both the PMG and its predecessor, the TMG, drew their members from a broad cultural base. The rapport and affinity shared between Bougainvilleans and indigenous peace monitors from New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu has significantly contributed to the success of the PMG.

In the Solomon Islands, peace monitors have played an equally important role. Over the last two years, local and international groups alike have developed an intimate understanding of the dynamics of disarmament, Solomons style. Local peace monitors point to their close cultural connections with combatants, a developing basis of trust and respect, and a deepening understanding of what catalyses ex-combatants to lay down their arms as key factors in the success of the recent campaign.

Sources: Wehner & Denoon (2001); Regan (1999); interviews with PMG, IPMT, and PMC peace monitors

Early weapons surrenders

Four IPMTs on Guadalcanal and two on Malaita worked with the PMC, church and women's organizations, and former militants (some of whom staffed the PMC) to arrange handovers of stolen firearms, ammunition, and explosives. Eight sealed and padlocked storage containers were put in place to receive the weapons (Hegarty, 2001b, p. 2).

Results were initially encouraging. In the nine months following the signing of the peace agreement, over 1,000 firearms and over 3,600 rounds of ammunition were surrendered. Table 5.3 provides a summary of early weapon surrenders.

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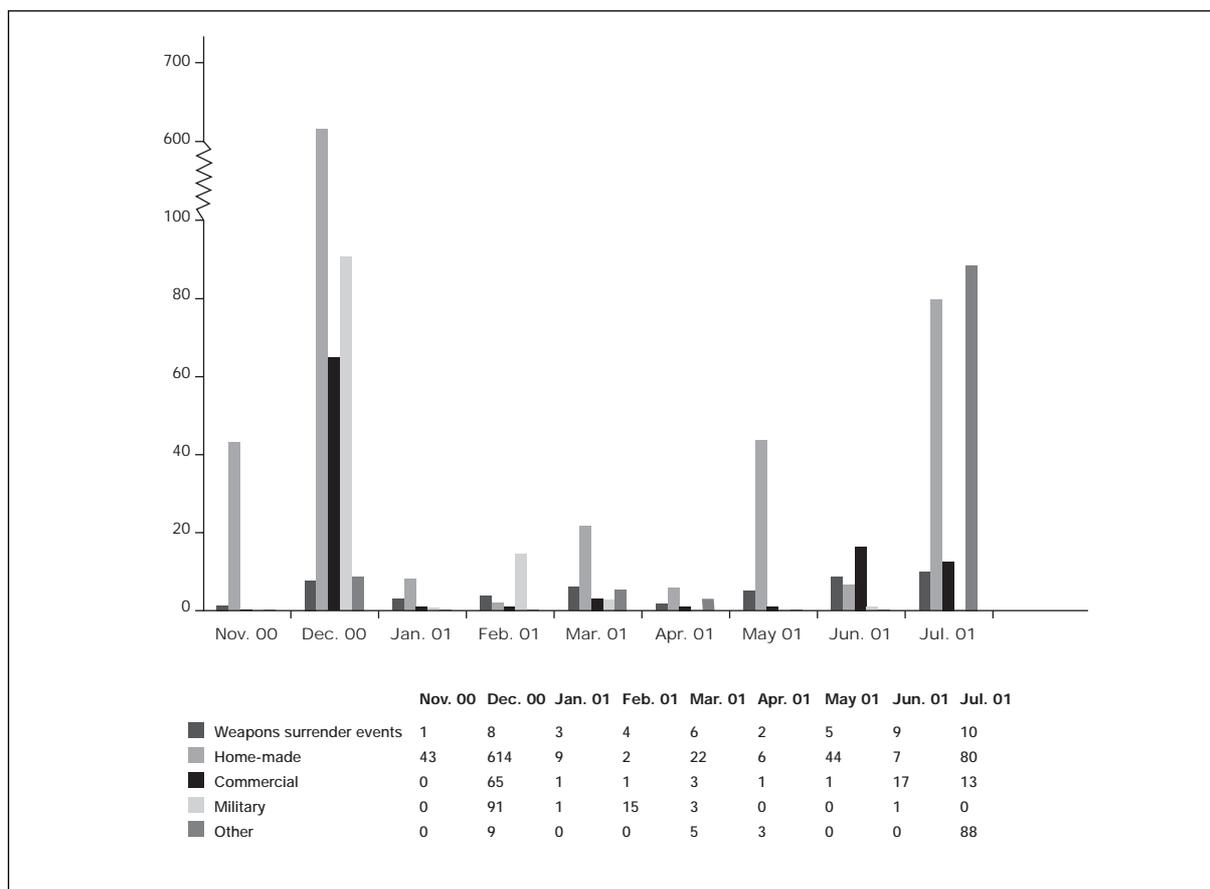
Table 5.3. Solomon Islands weapon surrenders, November 2000–July 2001

Weapon type	Number
Home-made ²⁷⁸	831
Commercial ²⁷⁹	62
Military ²⁸⁰	141
Other ²⁸¹	97
Total weapons²⁸²	1,131

Source: Solomon Islands IPMT, July 2001

As shown in Figure 5.1, below, the overwhelming majority of weapon surrenders occurred within the first two months. In addition, nearly three-quarters of the firearms handed in were home-made, while only about 12 per cent were high-powered military firearms.

Figure 5.1. Solomon Islands weapon surrenders by month, November 2000–July 2001



Source: Solomon Islands IPMT, July 2001

As might be expected, given that the MEF had sourced most of its arms from the police armoury, most military firearm surrenders occurred in Malaita, while most of the home-made firearms surrendered during this period came from Gualese ex-combatants.

Weapon types	Malaita	Guadalcanal	Total
Home-made	63	768	831
Commercial	13	49	62
Military	119	22	141
Other	9	88	97
Total	204	927	1,131

Source: Solomon Islands IPMT, July 2001

Ammunition handed in for destruction was mainly of World War II vintage and much of it appeared in a very degraded condition (Phillips, n.d., p. 1). An IMPT armourer, working on arms disposal in the first half of 2001, commented that he suspected much of the functional ammunition was being held back.²⁸³

Explosives had not been included in the TPA amnesty provisions, and as such were not supposed to be accepted at weapon handovers. However, RNZAF armourers posted to the IPMT were also qualified to dispose of explosives and ordnance, and in the interest of public safety, the IPMT's role expanded to assisting the Explosives and Ordnance Disposal section of the Solomon Islands Police in the disposal of World War II and civil explosives. Once again, very few explosives were recovered by the IPMT. Out of 13,862 detonators stolen from the Gold Ridge mine in Guadalcanal, only 962, or 6.6 per cent, were received to June 2001. Only about one per cent of the 80 tons of high explosives stolen was recovered, and over half of this amount was handed in directly to the IMPT by Gold Ridge mine itself. Again, it was suspected that the vast majority of explosives were being held back (Phillips, n.d., p. 13).

Five hundred high-powered firearms still missing

By July 2001, concern was growing about the drop-off in arms surrenders. Despite initial progress, IPMT and PMC monitors were aware that hundreds of high-powered police firearms still remained in circulation. In 1997, and twice in 1999, New Zealand armourers had carried out inventories of the main police armoury in Rove on behalf of the Solomon Islands government. IPMT armourers also conducted regular audits following their deployment. By comparing pre- and post-coup inventory figures and cross-referencing the results against the serial numbers of surrendered firearms, the IPMT was able, with some qualifications, to establish that almost 500 high-powered police firearms still remained at large in the community.²⁸⁴

Table 5.5. Estimation of missing high-powered police firearms at 22 June 2001

Weapon type	High count from pre-coup audits conducted between 1997 and 2000	Known police issue from 6 Dec. 2000	Held by IPMT	22 June 2001 audit	Possible outstanding ²⁸⁵
Lee-Enfield .303 rifle	115	0	17	33	65
SLR L1A1 rifle	320	44	55	115	106
CIS SR-88 rifle	300	19	27	87	167
Armalite rifle	3	0	0	0	3
Sterling 9mm SMG	5	0	0	0	5
GPMG machine gun	20	0	3	6	11
SLR L2A1 rifle/MG	2	0	0	0	2
CIS Ultimax 100 MG	50	1	5	22	22
Beretta 9mm pistol	13	0	0	0	13
Browning 9mm pistol	11	0	0	0	11
Revolver, .38 (various)	37	0	0	0	37
Greener shotgun	26	0	7	23	-4 ²⁸⁶
Remington 870 shotgun	70	1	10	1	58
Total	972	65	124	287	496

Source: Solomon Islands IPMT, July 2001

Despite two extensions of the weapon amnesty, returns slowed to a trickle. Between August and December 2001, only one rusty rifle was handed in to the IPMT.²⁸⁷ Concerned about the lack of progress, the PMC planned a review meeting of the TPA for September 2001. However, following the fatal shooting of prominent Gualese leader Selwyn Saki, it had to be abandoned, and the review was never completed (PACNEWS, 2001b).

Deterrents to disarmament

Many militants and villagers were reluctant to hand over weapons for fear of being attacked when their defences were down. The other factor was sense of balance. Each side wanted to know what the other was handing back. If one side knew what the other had, and what was, or was not, handed over, then they could calculate the threat to their village or area.

RNZAF Flt. -Sgt. John Phillips, former IPMT armourer, June 2002²⁸⁸

Clearly, there are factors in operation that deter ex-combatants from disarming. Chief among these is a very real sense of insecurity, felt broadly across the community. In particular, Gualese groups in Honiara and villagers in rural Malaita feel that they are still under threat, and fear retribution in the event that they surrender their guns.²⁸⁹ Increasing crime levels in Honiara also feed a sense of insecurity.

COMPENSATION CRISIS

As in Bougainville, for many ex-combatants in the Solomon Islands, access to guns represented their only visible source of social and economic power. As the Solomon Islands government began to succumb to compensation demands by former militants, in a vain attempt to appease them and to prevent further conflict, this perception was reinforced.

In traditional Solomon Islands society, compensation was traditionally tied to reconciliation, and the exchange of pigs, shell money, and other goods took place at different levels in the community.²⁹⁰ The compensation processes that sprang up during 2001 were very different, and many were essentially corrupt payoffs. Although mechanisms for compensation had not been included in the TPA, the Solomon Islands government began paying 'disarmament allowances'—essentially, large sums of cash—to factional leaders and former commanders soon after the first weapon handovers (Hegarty, 2001a, p. 3). This fuelled ex-combatants' expectations about financial incentives for laying down their firearms, impeding progress on disarmament.

Continued compensation payouts by the government—in some cases using 'soft loan' funds provided by Taiwan—exacerbated an already perilous economic situation. A dangerous precedent had been set, and despite a 2002 Law and Order Action Plan that promised 'no more buy-backs', threats and intimidation surrounding compensation claims for former combatants continued to occur.²⁹¹

DEMORALIZATION OF THE POLICE FORCE

The involvement of members of the Police Field Force (PFF)—the paramilitary wing of the RSIP—in the June 2000 uprising had serious implications for practical disarmament in the Solomon Islands. Many of the PFF who became involved in the coup had done so only reluctantly, torn between their police training on the one hand and ethnic loyalties on the other.²⁹² Given the opportunity to disarm, they did so. Indeed, a former IPMT armourer described them as 'my best customers... They handed over more weapons and explosives in good faith than any militant group'.²⁹³

Many did not disarm so quickly. Demoralization spread through the police force, not helped by the knowledge that senior members of the police still retained firearms stolen during the crisis. To add to this, the TPA provided for members of the police who had participated in the coup to return to police duties, without any recognition of the role that they themselves had played in facilitating human rights abuses or in undermining the rule of law. Public trust in the ability of the police to fulfil their law enforcement duties has understandably been shaken.

RECRUITMENT OF FORMER MILITANTS AS 'SPECIAL CONSTABLES'

The recruitment by the Solomon Islands government of hundreds of former militants into the police as 'Special Constables' has created a whole new raft of problems for the ailing force. Prior to the coup, only about 200 of these mostly unarmed, village-based police had existed. During peace negotiations, it had been agreed that one hundred militants from each side would be absorbed into their ranks; subsequently, ex-militant Special Constables were issued firearms from the Rove police armoury. Ultimately, the numbers absorbed were much larger, and by the second half of 2001 they had blown out to over 2,000 (UN Resident Co-ordinator, 2002, p. 40).

By early 2002, the government had been able to reduce the number of Special Constables to under 1,400 by removing those with criminal records or with full time employment elsewhere.²⁹⁴ But those who stayed created a huge drain on the economy, on occasion demanding payment directly from the Treasury under armed threat.²⁹⁵ A flawed attempt at demobilization had backfired badly, leaving the police force in worse shape than ever.

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In mid-2002, donor agencies were discussing plans for a new programme to demobilize the Special Constables, co-ordinated by the UNDP in close collaboration with the Solomon Islands government (UNDP, 2002a). As late as October 2002, however, Special Constables were still causing mayhem in Honiara. Their constant intimidation of government officers over salary demands caused the Finance Ministry to close the doors of its Treasury Division for the sixth time that year.

On the evening of 10 February 2003, Sir Frederick Soaki, a highly respected member of the National Peace Council, was gunned down by a masked assassin as he dined at a restaurant in Auki, on the island of Malaita. Sir Frederick's murder was immediately linked to his work with a UN delegation to demobilize the Special Constables (Skehan, 2003; The Economist, 2003).

UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING AMNESTY ISSUES

As discussed earlier, the TPA contained two provisions for amnesty. The first allowed for the return of weapons used during the conflict. Pending compliance with its provisions, a general amnesty allowed for possible immunity for unlawful acts committed during the course of the conflict.

Legislation covering these issues was passed through the Solomon Islands parliament in December 2000, theoretically clearing the way for ex-combatants to begin the process of reintegration. The Amnesty Act (Solomon Islands, 2000) provided immunity for a number of crisis-related offences, primarily:

- offences relating to arms and ammunition;
- killing or wounding in combat conditions or in connection with military or security operations; and
- damage done or loss caused to any property during or in connection with military or security operations.

Given the almost complete collapse of law enforcement capacity in the Solomon Islands, it is not surprising that early attempts at amnesty drew little response from former militants. Not only was their safety and protection not able to be guaranteed, but past deeds seemed unlikely to draw the attention from law enforcement bodies that might otherwise have been expected.

Fear that the amnesty legislation was somehow flawed—or a belief that with the passing of the official deadline, they were no longer covered—also prevented some militants from coming forward. The latter was a reasonable fear, given that for some months after the second amnesty deadline had passed, the government did not announce any extension (Kenilorea, 2001).

Other sections of the community had concerns about the amnesty provisions as well. Doubts were raised, for instance, about a possible confusion between the weapons and general amnesties—that militants, having disarmed under the weapons amnesty, might think they were automatically granted full amnesty. There was a risk, too, that having handed in what was supposedly their only firearm, ex-militants might be granted amnesty while still retaining other firearms.²⁹⁶ These concerns were revived when, in 2002, the amnesty was extended once again as part of a revitalized weapons collection campaign.

Campaign 2002: A new start?

In early 2002, community support for disarmament developed fresh momentum. In early March, 10,000 people attended a 'Wokabaot for Pis' ('Walkabout for Peace') organized by civil society groups in Honiara. In mid-April, the PMC and the Solomon Islands government launched a new campaign to recover small arms, ammunition, explosives, and property stolen during the conflict. A new amnesty deadline of 31 May was set, and villages were encouraged to free themselves of guns. PMC members fronted an energetic radio and print media campaign that generated new momentum for disarmament.

The campaign peaked during the week prior to the 31 May deadline. A week before the expiry of the newly extended amnesty, a major surrender of high-powered firearms by the RSIP took place. In a handover ceremony at police headquarters, 77 guns were surrendered, including 55 high-powered firearms. Four days later, police surrendered a further 45 firearms; of those, 43 were high-powered.²⁹⁷ Perhaps most importantly, senior members of the police were outspoken in their support for the revitalization of the police force and the weapons surrender campaign.

Two weeks after the expiry of the amnesty deadline, the number of firearms held in IPMT containers totalled 2,043. Of those, 815—near enough to 40 per cent—had been handed in to the IPMT, the PMC, and the Melanesian Brothers since the start of the 2002 campaign. In addition, 2.86 tons of explosives had been handed in, roughly three times the amount that had been received a year before (PMC, 2002).

Shortly afterwards, the IPMT revised its estimate of the number of missing high-powered firearms. It established that the earlier figure of 500 missing firearms was short by about 130; i.e. the total missing at December 2000 should have been closer to 630. The most recent surrenders (see Table 5.6, below) resulted in the total number of missing high-powered firearms being reduced to 499 (Fennessy, 2002, p. 2).

Table 5.6. Revised summary of missing high-powered police firearms, 11 June 2002

Model	Baseline (high count of combined pre-coup armoury audits)	IPMT police armoury audit, Dec. 2000	IPMT police armoury audit, June 2002	Surrendered to IPMT in May & June 2002	Number still outstanding, June 2002 ²⁹⁸
<i>Rifles</i>					
SLR L1A1, 7.62mm	320	161	132	64	124
SR 88, 5.56mm	300	103	113	34	153
Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk 1, .303	115	38	32	21	62
Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk 3, .303	3	0	0	0	3
Armalite AR-15, 5.56mm	3	0	2	1	0
Sterling 9mm	5	0	0	1	4
<i>Machine guns</i>					
SLR L2A1, heavy barrel	2	0	0		2
Browning 0.5	6	4	4		2
GPMG 7.62mm, CIS version of MAG 58	20	7	7	3	10
Ultimax 100, 5.56mm	50	19	21	6	23
<i>Handguns</i>					
Beretta 9mm semi-auto. 92F	13		5	1	7
Browning 9mm semi-auto. L9A1	10		0		10
Webley .38 revolver	36		3	2	31
Smith & Wesson .38 special, revolver	1		0		1
Ruger .357 Magnum revolver (5)	1	1	1		0
Colt .45	3		0		3
<i>Shotguns</i>					
Greener police gun Mk 2, 12 gauge	4	4	0	3	1
Greener police gun Mk 3, 12 gauge (4)	34	26	19	8	7
Remington model 870 police Magnum	70	3	4	14	52
Mountaineer pump-action shotgun	4	4	0	0	4
Total	1,000	370	343	158	499

Source: Solomon Islands IPMT, July 2002

While significant numbers of high-powered firearms still remained at large, the momentum of the 2002 campaign gave the Solomon Islands community new hope for the restoration of law and order and lasting peace. Concerns about the flow-on effects of the new amnesty campaign lingered, however. Ex-combatants who had handed in arms or ammunition during the 2002 campaign were to be issued a certificate. Two concerns arose from this: firstly, that ex-combatants might mistakenly assume that by receiving that certificate they were automatically granted general amnesty.²⁹⁹ PMC monitors had been at pains to explain during the campaign that the issuing of surrender certificates did not equate with automatic amnesty, but it was easy to see how the perception might develop.³⁰⁰ A second concern related to those ex-combatants who had surrendered their arms during earlier weapon amnesties. They would not have certificates, but these pieces of paper were now starting to be seen as important collateral in the event that ex-combatants were brought before the court over other offences committed during the conflict.

Apart from these concerns, the Solomon Islands community was pleased to see such a boost in weapon surrenders. A further boost came a few days later. The destruction of otherwise functional commercial and military firearms had been seen as a fairly controversial issue, and for this reason had been left unresolved.³⁰¹ On 17 June 2002, however, the IPMT dumped hundreds of guns into the aptly named Iron Bottom Sound off the coast of Honiara, witnessed by a group of Melanesian Brothers and crowds of cheering Solomon Islanders (PACNEWS, 2002c). All 2,000 contained firearms are now scheduled for destruction.

Peace for the Solomons?

An uneasy peace remains in place in the Solomons. Certainly, the 2002 amnesty campaign has injected fresh hope into the community about the potential for sustainable peace. A strong network of civil society organizations has developed, their membership very vocal about government corruption and the continuing crisis of law and order. The wise leadership of local elders, ongoing support from donor partners and growing community pressure may yet result in the restoration of peace.

Hope is also growing about the potential of the police to rebuild. As one peace monitor commented, 'for the Police executive to turn around and order their officers to surrender is a very big shift—previously they had deliberately resisted our efforts, declined meetings. But now they are taking a leading role' (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 2002a).³⁰²

Yet serious challenges remain—particularly in the policing sector. Despite shows of support for a gun-free community during the 2002 amnesty campaign, leading members of the RSIP as well as the notorious Special Constables continue to make threats and demands for compensation from the government. Internal corruption within the police force is perhaps the most serious impediment to controlling what has become an entrenched criminal element in Honiara, and consequently to any further progress on disarmament.

Since the winding down of the IPMT in late June 2002, donors have sought to address this problem by directing resources towards rebuilding the police force and bolstering the capacity of the justice system. New Zealand's Solomon Islands Police Project provides mentoring and on-the-job training to police officers working on the front line. Australia, through its Law and Justice Institutional Strengthening Program, has a presence in the middle tiers of the policing and justice systems. In January 2003, at the invitation of the Solomon Islands government, a British

police commissioner was also appointed. With most future development aid heavily contingent on the restoration of law and order and further progress in recovering stolen guns, the challenge is considerable.

Deeper conflicts have also yet to be resolved, and many outbreaks of crime still carry ethnic overtones. Since early June 2000, former militia leader Harold Keke, from the remote Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, had been engaging in talks with independent Solomon Islands MP, Yukio Sato (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 2002a). These talks came to an abrupt halt after an armed clash resulted in the massacre of 11 men off the Weather Coast, including a number of Malaitans. The men had apparently been on a mission to capture Keke (*PACNEWS 2*, 2002d). Over the next four months, at least seven other people died. One, a local minister, was beheaded, and the other six were shot. A month-long police hunt for Keke, in November 2002, resulted in at least two more deaths by gunshot (Coutts, 2002b).

Conclusion: Disarmament, Pacific style

It is still too early to say whether either of the disarmament programmes explored here have been an entire success. If success is judged in terms of actual numbers of weapons collected, neither process has yet to reach critical mass. In the Solomon Islands, roughly 500 high-powered firearms, and possibly more, remain at large. In Bougainville, an absence of baseline data makes evaluation more difficult, and in late 2002, many areas had yet to complete Stage Two containment.

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In terms of sheer numbers, the Solomon Islands disarmament process has actually produced more results to date: over 2,000 firearms were surrendered there, compared to 1,639 in Bougainville. Yet, if considered as part of a broader commitment to peace and reconstruction, the Bougainville disarmament effort has been more successful, since it carries with it the ownership and regularly renewed commitment of all parties to rebuilding peace, including, now, the Republic of Me'ekamui.

Commitment to process is possibly the defining difference between the two disarmament efforts. Concerns have certainly been raised in Bougainville that attention to process has, in itself, become an impediment to further progress. Yet it is this attention to process that has, more than any other factor, sustained the peace in Bougainville and enabled weapons disposal to occur to the extent that it has. In the absence of hard data, the decision in Bougainville to proceed to verification must be based on a political judgement, rather than a technical one. As a recent PMG commander commented, weapons disposal is not so much about collecting guns, but about building trust (Wayne Jackson, PMG Commander, cited in Gomez, 2002).

In the Solomon Islands, on the other hand, stakeholders have repeatedly identified the flawed nature of the peace process itself as the source of many problems. The TPA has been described as being a one-sided affair, 'bulldozed into being' by one party in Honiara,³⁰³ which in many ways served simply to institutionalize existing disorder.³⁰⁴ In its failure to include militant groups genuinely, it built fundamental flaws into the peace and disarmament process.

Above all, the TPA has been accused of failing to address the fundamental causes of the conflict (Kabutaulaka, 2002). Yet given the way in which it came into being, perhaps it could never have done so. In the Solomon Islands, transparent, open debate still needs to be held about issues such as land tenure and provincial autonomy, within the context of a broader constitutional review.

In both cases, the likelihood is that some firearms will continue to circulate. In both communities, some incentive still exists for ex-combatants to cache their best arms for future use, while simultaneously taking advantage of the 'peace dividend' by handing in inferior weapons. The blurring of distinctions between criminal elements and ex-combatant groups in both communities, and the limited economic opportunities available to ex-combatants, also make complete arms disposal a challenging proposition (Regan, 1999).

Scope for further reconciliation work exists in both Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Suggestions have been made that in both contexts some sort of restorative justice process may be needed—along the lines of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa.³⁰⁵ As the peace studies writer Johan Galtung has commented, if conflict resolution and reconstruction are carried out without reconciliation, 'all the traumas, hatred and damage done to the social structure and the culture of the society will hit back, sooner or later' (Galtung, 1995, p. 9).

Ultimately, efforts either to disarm or reconcile must be viewed within their cultural context. In Melanesian societies such as Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, conflicts often take many years to unravel. In the Solomon Islands, fights begun during World War II are only now being resolved.³⁰⁶ Similar stories are told in Bougainville of feasts being held as recently as the 1980s to resolve conflicts started 40 years earlier. As one writer comments with respect to conflicts elsewhere in the Pacific:

In order to work effectively towards positive conflict transformation, it is essential to acknowledge and understand the complexity of the conflict as well as the cultural environment in which it occurs. ...effective strategies can [then] be developed to reduce tension and work towards shared meaning and peaceful coexistence. As in untangling or mending a fishing net, this process takes time and patience (Pirie, 2000, p. 57).

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Having said this, disarmament experiences in the Solomon Islands and Bougainville have much to contribute toward a deeper understanding of the issues involved in successful practical disarmament world-wide.

Appendix 1: Extract from the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement

PEACE PROCESS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (PPCC) RESOLUTION ON WEAPONS DISPOSAL

Introduction

1. The PPCC welcomes the way in which the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and the Bougainville Resistance Force (BRF) have come together, and acknowledges the positive foundation the *Rotokas Record* establishes for a comprehensive weapons disposal plan for Bougainville that is acceptable to all parties.
2. The PPCC reaffirms the commitment of all of the parties to implementation of the *Lincoln and Ceasefire Agreements*.

PPCC Sub-Committee

3. (a) The PPCC hereby establishes a sub-committee to develop, manage and implement weapons disposal in accordance with this Resolution. The agreed membership of the sub-committee will be as follows:

Chairman: Director, United Nations Observer Mission on Bougainville (UNOMB), or his representative

Deputy Chair: Commander, Peace Monitoring Group (PMG), or his representative

Representatives of the following: the National Government
the BRA
the BRF

- The sub-committee may, by agreement, co-opt other members, including representatives of other groups.
4. (a) The sub-committee will seek support for, and co-ordinate:
- i. an active joint programme to promote public awareness, understanding and support of weapons disposal;
 - ii. development and implementation of this Resolution, including mechanisms to ensure location, identification, control, withdrawal from the community and secure storage of weapons, with special regard for factory-made arms and ammunition;
 - iii. means of ensuring the full and accurate recording of weapons, and securing the co-operation and participation by individuals and other groups.
- The sub-committee shall take such account of the need for confidentiality as the parties may require for security at stage 1.
- (c) The sub-committee shall resolve such differences as may arise in relation to implementation under this Resolution.

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Implementation

- Weapons disposal will be implemented in stages.

Stage 1

6. Stage 1 will begin immediately, initially in areas where there is no Defence Force or Police Mobile Unit presence. It will proceed in all areas as follows:
- Councils of Chiefs/Elders will inform UNOMB when the people in a particular area are ready for ex-combatants to disarm and re-integrate into the community, remaining Defence Force and Police Mobile Units to withdraw, and weapons to be securely contained;

- UNOMB will inform the PPCC sub-committee;
- the National Government will be advised and take appropriate steps to arrange for Defence Force and Police Mobile Unit personnel to withdraw from that area;
- weapons will be handed in to BRA and BRF unit commanders, who will store them securely in containers provided through the PPCC and sealed for purposes of verification by UNOMB.

Note: BRA and BRF structures are outlined in Attachment 1.

Stage 2

7. (a) After implementation of stage 1 in any area, stage 2 will begin in that area with the delivery of weapons to company commanders, who will place them in secure containers at a small number of central locations.
 - (b) When and if amendments to the National Constitution to implement the comprehensive agreement are ready for certification, the weapons will be held in containers under UNOMB supervision and secured by two locks—with one key held by the relevant commander and the other held by UNOMB—pending a final decision on the ultimate fate of the weapons.
- The Bills to amend the National Constitution will provide for the constitutional amendments to take effect on verification by UNOMB that the weapons are in secure, double-locked containers under its supervision.

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Stage 3: final fate of the weapons

8. (a) A decision on the final fate of the weapons should be made within 4 months of the coming into effect of the constitutional amendments. If no decision is made, the Parties will meet with a view to reaching agreement on whether or not the elections should be delayed, taking into account whether or not there has been genuine handing in of weapons and the level of security of the weapons.
- In any event, any of the parties may call on the UNOMB with the assistance of the PMG to verify and certify whether there has been substantial compliance by the parties in the handing in of weapons and whether the level of security of the weapons makes it conducive to holding the elections.
 - UNOMB's report will be presented to, and considered by, the PPCC.
- (d) The Bougainville parties will be bound by UNOMB's findings on whether or not the first election for the autonomous Bougainville Government will be deferred, and the length of any deferral.

Verification and other practical considerations

9. (a) UNOMB will carry out such inspections and enquiries as its representative considers necessary at each stage, verify the collection and storage of weapons, and report its findings regularly, frequently and fully to the PPCC, with respect for such confidentiality as may be required.
- (b) The parties will co-operate with each other and UNOMB to ensure that UNOMB can carry out its responsibilities under this Resolution efficiently and effectively.
10. (a) Weapons that have been handed in will not be reissued.
- (b) Ex-combatants will not attempt to rearm.
- (c) Keys will be kept securely by those to whom they are entrusted, and not handed over to anyone else.
- (d) The parties will respect and co-operate in promoting wider respect for the security of containers, keys and those who are responsible for them under this Resolution.
- (e) The National Government assures the PPCC it will not redeploy members of the Defence Force or the Police Mobile Units in new areas or areas from which they have been withdrawn.

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International Aspects

11. The National Government will seek the agreement of the United Nations Security Council for UNOMB to carry out the responsibilities specified in this Resolution.
12. The National Government will request the states that contribute to the Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) to (1) provide technical assistance, (2) agree to the PMG's support, for implementation of this Resolution.
13. The National Government will seek the assistance of foreign development co-operation partners in developing and implementing a programme to assist in the reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-combatants.

Reconciliation

14. Recognising that weapons disposal and reconciliation are both mutually reinforcing and necessary to lasting peace, the parties undertake to co-operate in promoting reconciliation among ex-combatants and in the wider community, and restoration of civil authority in Bougainville.

ATTACHMENT 1

- (1) The Bougainville Resistance Forces are organised as follows:

Company Command
|
Unit Command

A unit consists of 10–30 men, organised mainly on a local geographical basis.

A company command covers the area of an administrative District.

(2) The Bougainville Revolutionary Army is organised as follows:

Regional Command
|
Company Command
|
Unit Command

A unit consists of 10–12 men, usually made up of localized membership.

There are 14 BRA companies, organised on a loosely geographical basis, and each consisting of 80–150 members.

Regional commands are organised into Southern, Central, Northern and Marine commands.

2. WEAPONS DISPOSAL – MANDATES OF UNOMB AND PMG

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330. The parties agree that –

- the PMG countries and the UN Security Council will be requested to agree to continue the PMG and the UNOMB in Bougainville and assist in implementing the PPCC Resolution on Weapons Disposal until the decision is made concerning the final fate of weapons at stage 3 of the agreed weapons disposal plan and the autonomous Bougainville Government is established;
- the decision concerning the final fate of the weapons may require a continuing presence by the PMG and the UNOMB for a short period to conclude their assignments during implementation; and
- the likely exit-dates for the PMG and the UNOMB are around the middle and not later than the end of 2002.

Appendix 2: Extract from the 2000 Townsville Peace Agreement

- **Weapons Amnesty**

Members of the MEF and IFM who are currently in possession of weapons shall surrender the same in accordance with paragraph [4] of this Part and in consideration of handing over any such weapon the person so doing shall be granted immunity from prosecution in respect of the stealing or possession of that weapon (or any of a similar kind) at any date after the 1st January, 1998 up to the date of this Agreement and the SIG undertakes to do all things necessary, including passing legislation to give full legal effect to this provision.

- **General Amnesty**

Members, leaders and other civilian advisors associated with the MEF, IFM, and any Police, Prison Service or RRU or PFF officers who participated in military operations during the course of the ethnic crisis up until the date of execution of this Agreement shall, subject to such conditions as shall be contained in an Act of Parliament, be granted amnesty or immunity in respect of criminal acts done –

- 1 in connection or in association with the forceful eviction from the Province of Guadalcanal of certain persons in furtherance of the demands of the indigenous people of Guadalcanal;
- 2 by Malaitans, including members of the MEF, in retaliation against the forceful evictions of Malaitans from Guadalcanal;
- 3 in the execution or purported execution of the paramilitary operation conducted on the 5th day of June 2000, and the joint/paramilitary security operations carried on thereafter until the date of the coming into operation of this Agreement;
- 4 The amnesty or immunity referred to in this clause, shall inter alia be on condition that:-
 - (i) all weapons and ammunition presently in possession of the two groups be surrendered; and
 - (ii) In this clause “criminal acts” means unlawful acts which are directly connected with matters specified in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) and in particular –
 - a. offences relating to arms and ammunition;
 - b. killing in combat conditions or in connection with the armed conflict on Guadalcanal;
 - c. damage done to properties during or in connection with the military operations; and
 - d. traffic offences committed during or in connection with security operations.

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3. Civil Liabilities

Members of the MEF, IFM, the Officers and their associates and advisers shall be granted immunity and amnesty against civil liabilities and disciplinary actions arising in connection with the armed conflict on Guadalcanal.

4. Remaining in Unlawful Possession

For avoidance of doubt it is hereby declared that any person who unlawfully possesses, uses, controls or in whose custody is found, any firearms and ammunition or identifiable stolen property and who after the period described in Part Two, clause [3] (b) refuses or fails to surrender the same in accordance with the terms of this Agreement shall not be granted amnesty or immunity for any offence whatsoever.

...

[4] Surrender of Weapons and Property

- (a) Subject to this clause, there shall be surrender of arms and ammunitions (“weapons”) in return for granting of amnesty.

- (b) Within thirty days after the execution of this Agreement all weapons in the hands of the MEF, IFM and the Officers shall be handed over to their selected commanders who will then place the weapons under the control of the International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) at such places as it may determine in consultation with the SIG, MPG and the GPG.
- (c) All surrendered weapons shall –
 - 1 in respect of the MEF weapons to be stored in Auki, Malaita Province and;
 - 2 in respect of the IFM weapons to be stored at not more than four locations on Guadalcanal; and
 - 3 be inspected by a neutral weapons inspection team to be appointed by the SIG.
- (d) The IPMT shall carry out an inventory of all surrendered weapons which shall be stored in tamper-evident containers.
- (e) Inspections of surrendered weapons shall be carried out by the IPMT at such intervals as it may decide.
- (f) Surrendered weapons shall remain under the control and supervision of the IPMT for twenty-four months.
- (g) Before the expiration of twenty-four months following the execution of this Agreement a review shall be carried out by a committee consisting of persons appointed by the SIG, after consultations with provincial governments, on the security situation throughout Solomon Islands. Upon being satisfied that there is improved state of ethnic co-existence in Solomon Islands all surrendered weapons shall be armoured or be disposed of in such manner as may be determined by the SIG.
- (h) All property appropriated by members of the MEF, IFM or Officers prior to the date of execution of this Agreement shall be surrendered within thirty days to locations to be identified by the SIG.

VI. Regional co-operation, the Nadi Framework, and the UN 2001 Small Arms Conference

Concern about the increasing trade in illegal small arms has sparked a flurry of activity at all levels in recent years, culminating in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN Small Arms Conference), held in New York from 9–20 July 2001. While the Conference was beset with contentious debates among states and left a range of issues unaddressed, it produced the first international framework for efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. More than 150 countries reached consensus on a politically binding *Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (Programme of Action)*, a substantial package of recommendations and measures to help guide the efforts of national governments, regional and international organizations, and civil society groups to limit the destabilising effects of small arms.

Recognising that domestic and regional controls on firearms are crucial elements of any international effort to curb the illicit trade in firearms, a number of regions had developed their own initiatives in the years leading up to the Conference.³⁰⁷ In the Pacific, the 16 member states of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)³⁰⁸ had worked since 1996 to develop a common regional approach to weapons control. In March 2000, this culminated in the *Nadi Framework* (SPCPC & OCO, 2000), an agreement that seeks to encourage cross-border co-operation and harmonize domestic arms laws throughout the region.

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Towards a common regional approach

The idea of a common regional approach to weapons control was first proposed by Papua New Guinea at a meeting of the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) in 1996. In February 1997, the FRSC directed a subcommittee of the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC) to examine the region's existing legislation on arms control and firearm licensing. Building on this work, in October 1998, the SPCPC produced the *The Honiara Initiative: Agreement in Principle on Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives, and Other Related Materials*, generally known as the *Honiara Initiative*, a set of principles for a common regional approach to weapons control. Noting the deadly effects of small arms and light weapons on the security of member countries and the region as a whole, on the well-being of its people, and on their social and economic development, the *Honiara Initiative* included agreements to explore:

- legislative or other measures to criminalise the illicit manufacturing, trafficking, sale, and possession of arms and ammunition;
- measures necessary to establish jurisdiction over their sale, possession, and use;
- processes for the marking and tracing of firearms;
- procedures to confiscate or forfeit illegally manufactured or trafficked arms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials;
- strengthening and harmonization of import, export, and trans-shipment controls, including stronger controls at entry and exit points and improved inter-country notification systems;
- improvements in licensing systems and record-keeping; and
- enhanced exchange of information on various aspects of weapon control (SPCPC, 1998).

At the 1999 PIF gathering in Palau, PIF leaders directed the SPCPC subcommittee to commence work on a draft legal framework that would incorporate the principles of the *Honiara Initiative* and also address issues related to weapons other than firearms. Subsequently, in March 2000, a subcommittee of the SPCPC and the Oceania Customs Organization (OCO) produced the document *Towards a Common Approach to Weapons Control*, commonly known as the *Nadi Framework*. The *Nadi Framework* is based on the premise that:

- the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, other related materials, and prohibited weapons is a privilege that is conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety; and
- public safety will be enhanced by imposing strict controls on the import, possession, and use of firearms, ammunition, other related materials, and prohibited weapons (SPCPC & OCO, 2000).

At the October 2000 meeting of the PIF in Kiribati, leaders approved the development of model legislation to facilitate the implementation of the principles enshrined in the *Honiara Initiative* and the *Nadi Framework*.

The first draft of this model legislation was presented at a small arms workshop hosted by the Australian government in Brisbane, the following May. Enhancements suggested by participants at that workshop were referred back to legal drafters, with a view to a revised version being presented to the PIF Regional Security Committee meeting in June 2001 (PIF Secretariat, 2001a, p. 5). However, in light of the impending UN Small Arms Conference to be held the following month, production of a final draft was delayed so that any substantive issues arising out of the Conference *Programme of Action* might be incorporated (PIF Secretariat, 2001b, p. 3). In early 2003, that draft was still under review.

Co-operative enforcement in the Pacific

Co-operative law enforcement on small arms issues and other matters of Pacific regional security is facilitated by a range of interlocking regional organizations. Included among these are:

- The Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC), a subcommittee of the PIF made up of representatives of regional police, customs, and immigration organizations. The FRSC co-ordinates regional initiatives, disseminates information, and facilitates contact and co-operation on matters of common regional concern, such as drug trafficking, weapons control, and the regional security environment.
- The Pacific Islands Law Officers' Meeting (PILOM), an annual meeting of senior law officers that discusses high level legal and policy matters and legislative developments in member countries. PILOM's Law and Order Committee advises the FRSC on amendments to the regional model weapons control legislation.
- The South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC), consisting of Police Commissioners from all Pacific Island countries, also meets once a year to discuss small arms and other regional enforcement issues. A mid-term SPCPC working group addresses the resolutions arising from each conference. Representatives of the SPCPC attend FRSC and other regional forums throughout the year.

As discussed in Section II, the Oceania Customs Organization (OCO) also plays a role in regional small arms control, and is one of the few reliable sources of small arms trafficking intelligence in the region.

International organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) play an active role in regional efforts to enhance regional security and strengthen the rule of law. The ICRC, with a regional delegation based in Suva, works closely with security forces throughout the region to develop understanding of the principles of humanitarian law and human rights. In 2002, ICRC seminars included a four-day course on the law of armed conflict for senior members of the PNGDF and a seminar on international humanitarian law and human rights law for high-ranking officers of the RPNGC.

Australia and New Zealand also provide support to many of the regional enforcement bodies. The Australian Federal Police force plays an active role in the SPCPC and, through its Law Enforcement Co-operation Programme, provides counterpart law enforcement agencies with training and technical assistance and hosts regular workshops on issues such as small arms control and combating transnational crime. New Zealand's regional Law and Justice Programme supports similar projects.

The Nadi Framework: Developing model legislation

The *Nadi Framework* draft model legislation has two overarching goals. Firstly, it establishes as a primary objective the need for applicants to have a 'genuine reason' for possessing or using a weapon (firearm or otherwise). Definitions of the expression 'genuine reason' are provided in the legislation. As mentioned in Section IV, the lack of a requirement for applicants to prove a genuine reason to own a firearm, as defined in law, is currently seen as a deficiency in most Pacific countries' arm laws.

Secondly, it seeks to establish strict requirements for the importation, possession, and use of firearms. Key areas in which the draft legislation improves on existing Pacific law include the following:

- **Definitions:** Definitions are updated and coverage is more comprehensive than in most existing Pacific firearm law.
- **Prohibited weapons:** The draft legislation specifies a comprehensive list of prohibited weapons, including machine guns, sub-machine guns, self-loading rim-fire and centre-fire rifles, self-loading shotguns, pump-action shotguns, fully automatic handguns, and a range of non-firearm weapons.
- **Conditions of possessing a licence:** These are clearly outlined. Applicants may only possess a weapon of the type and for the purpose specified by their licence, must comply with safe storage requirements, must ensure that the firearm is safe to use, and must not possess ammunition exceeding the amount fixed by the Commissioner.
- **Coverage of issues relating to possession and use of weapons by police and defence forces:** A major source of illegal firearms in the smaller nations of the Pacific has been security force

armouries, due either to 'leakage' or theft. The model legislation addresses this concern by inserting specific provisions for the registration and secure storage of police and defence force firearms.

- **Background checks:** In considering a licence application, the Commissioner must 'take into account' issues such as an applicant's mental and physical condition, criminal background, whether they are subject to an apprehended violence order, or whether they have at any time within five years before the application been subject to such an order. The Commissioner must refuse a licence to a person if that person has been convicted in the last five years or sentenced to imprisonment for violent crime, or convicted of an offence under the legislation. While aspects of this section are still uncomfortably vague, it is certainly an improvement on most current legislation, which simply requires that an applicant be 'fit and proper' to possess a firearm, a condition rarely defined.
- **Registration:** The *Nadi Framework* provides for a central civilian firearm register to be kept, as well as for separate defence and police force registers. It also requires that a duplicate copy of the police and defence force registers be stored separately and securely elsewhere.
- **Marking and identification:** All firearm registers, dealer records, and certificates of registration must contain the make, model, country of manufacture, serial number, and calibre of the firearm.
- **Storage:** Storage requirements for civilian firearm licensees are specified, as are storage requirements for dealers, police, and defence force personnel.
- **Training:** Applicants must show on their application that they have attended a firearm safety training course.
- **Ammunition controls:** Ammunition may only be sold to firearm owners and must be for the type of firearm for which a person is licensed. The amount of ammunition that is acquired during a year must not exceed the amount specified on the licence.
- **Regulation of dealers:** Dealers must keep detailed records, and detailed rules are prescribed regarding safe keeping of records, labelling of firearms, display for sale, and repair.
- **Border controls:** Imports will require a licence, while exports or shipments within or through a country will require the written authority of the Commissioner. Specific rules are established for mailing firearms, firearm parts, accessories, ammunition, or other weapons to persons outside the country. Mailing firearms or receiving them by mail *within* a country would become an offence. Mis-description of imports or exports, concealment, trans-shipment without authority, and trafficking are established as offences, and penalties are prescribed.
- **Penalties:** Penalties for misuse of firearms and for offences against the Act are increased and made more comprehensive (see Table 6.1, below). New offences and penalties, for instance, for possessing firearm parts without a licence, mailing firearms either within or outside a country, trans-shipment without authority, mis-description or concealment of a firearm, and trafficking have been created.

Table 6.1. The draft *Nadi Framework*: A comparison of selected penalties

Offence	Penalty under draft <i>Nadi Framework</i> ³⁰⁹	Comparison with existing Pacific law (fines are in local currency)
Unlawful possession	Up to AUD 5,000 or up to 5 years' imprisonment, or both.	Up to 14 years for possession of prohibited firearm or pistol in NSW, Australia; elsewhere, penalties vary enormously, from \$40 (Nauru) to 10 years and \$2,000 (Kiribati, possession in a prohibited area).
Transfer to an unlicensed person	Up to AUD 5,000 or up to 5 years' imprisonment, or both.	Non-existent in Palau, Samoa, and Vanuatu; small fines of up to \$20 in Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu; maximum is in FSM and Marshall Islands (up to 5 years and/or \$2,000).
Unlicensed dealing	Up to AUD 5,000 or up to 5 years' imprisonment, or both.	No penalty in Palau or Tuvalu; other countries vary enormously, from 3 months and/or \$200 in Niue to up to 7 years in NSW, Australia.
Illegal import	Up to AUD 10,000 or up to 10 years' imprisonment, or both.	Australia has a \$10,000 fine; elsewhere, penalties vary from non-existent (Nauru, Niue, PNG) to no less than 15 years and up to \$5,000 (Palau).
Illegal export	Up to AUD 10,000 or up to 10 years' imprisonment, or both.	FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, PNG, Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Vanuatu currently have no offence, or no penalty, or both; elsewhere, penalties of 12 months' imprisonment are common.
Illegal manufacture	Up to AUD 10,000 or up to 10 years' imprisonment, or both.	Non-existent in Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, and Samoa; maximums elsewhere are no less than 15 years and up to \$5,000 in Palau; 20 years for pistol or prohibited firearms in NSW, Australia.

Source: *Nadi Framework*, second draft; various Pacific laws as given in Section IV, Appendix 1

Some elements of the draft legislation still need work. While the definition of 'genuine reason' does not include self-defence, it includes categories such as 'genuine business or employment', which leaves the legislation open to wide interpretation. In addition, while the legislation makes provision for the special needs of police and defence forces, it does not make any provision for other government agencies that might need to use firearms, such as customs or fisheries. The suggestion has also been made that tighter controls might be applied to handguns relative to long guns in terms of licensing (PILOM Law and Order Committee, 2001).

The UN 2001 Small Arms Conference Programme of Action: Implications for the Pacific

Opinions vary considerably on the success, or otherwise, of the July 2001 UN Small Arms Conference. Some have described it as 'unprecedented' or 'path-breaking', while others have derided its outcome as a 'Programme of Inaction' (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

While the Conference certainly brought small arms to the forefront of the international debate on arms control, it fell short in addressing several key issues. Many participants had been promoting commitments to legally binding international instruments on arms brokering, marking, and tracing, some form of restraint on transfers of small arms to non-state actors, and greater regulation of the civilian possession of weapons (see Krause, 2002; Bondi, 2002).

Despite these disappointments, positive outcomes were achieved in many areas. The *Programme of Action* includes extensive references to the need to enhance national rules regarding small arms production and transfer, to ensure that manufacturers mark all firearms, to increase the physical security of state armouries, and to encourage the destruction of small arms seized in criminal investigations, collected in post-conflict disarmament programmes, or deemed surplus to national requirements (Krause, 2002, p. 2).

Examples of actions states have agreed to undertake through the *Programme of Action* include:

- establishing or enhancing national legislation and national export controls to regulate the production of and trade in small arms;
- ensuring that licensed manufacturers mark small arms as an integral part of the production process, to facilitate weapons tracing;
- maintaining accurate records on the manufacture and transfer of small arms;
- destroying confiscated, seized, or collected small arms, provided they have not been assigned to another officially authorized use;
- ensuring national police and armed forces establish adequate standards for the safe management and control of official small arms stocks; and
- encouraging regions to enhance transparency with a view to combating the illicit small arms trade.

During the three preparatory meetings leading up to the UN Small Arms Conference, and during the Conference proceedings themselves, PIF states expressed strong support for international efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms (Tesch, 2001, p. 5). At a subsequent meeting of PIF leaders in Nauru, member states were urged to support the implementation of the *Programme of Action* (PIF Secretariat, 2001c, para. 41).

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The *Programme of Action* contains a series of politically binding national, regional, and global measures to curb small arms trafficking. Some measures are already in force in the PIF region, or have already been incorporated within the provisions of the *Nadi Framework*. Various member states already share information, as provided for by the *Programme of Action*, about groups and individuals engaged in the illicit firearm trade (sec. II, para. 6). Under the *Programme of Action*, member states agreed to put in place laws, regulations, and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the production of small arms and light weapons within their areas of jurisdiction and over the export, import, transit, or retransfer of such weapons (sec. II, para. 2). They also agreed to criminalise the illegal manufacture, possession, stockpiling, or trade of small arms and light weapons (sec. II, para. 3). These are primary goals of the *Nadi Framework* legislation. The *Nadi Framework* seeks also to tighten member state regulations regarding imports, exports, and trans-shipments of small arms and light weapons, another important provision of the *Programme of Action* (sec. II, para. 11).

However, some important measures are either not yet included in the *Nadi Framework* or require further enhancement, as indicated below.

- **Improved management of security force armouries:** As part of the *Programme of Action*, states have undertaken to establish detailed management procedures relating to physical security of small arms and light weapons. These include control of access, inventory management, staff training, and accounting for small arms held or transported by authorized personnel, along with procedures and sanctions in the event of theft or loss (sec. II, para. 17). The *Programme of Action*

also provides for the regular review of security force stocks and for the disposal, preferably through destruction, of stocks that are surplus to requirements (sec. II, para. 18). The *Nadi Framework* suggests significant steps in this direction, such as setting up separate police and defence force registers and outlining more exacting storage requirements for police and defence force weapons. Some promising initiatives are also under way to improve armoury security under the respective defence co-operation programmes with Australia and New Zealand. However, much work remains to be done in this area.

- **Destruction of seized weapons, surplus stocks, and post-conflict weapons:** At the UN Small Arms Conference, states agreed to ensure that all confiscated, seized, or collected small arms and light weapons are safely destroyed, subject to any legal constraints and in the absence of other authorized forms of disposal or use (*Programme of Action*, sec. II, para. 16). Apart from the destruction of firearms in the event that safe storage requirements are not met, this provision is not currently matched in the *Nadi Framework*.
- **Implementing effective DDR initiatives:** States also agreed to develop and implement effective disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programmes, including the effective collection, control, storage, and, where possible, destruction of small arms (sec. II, para. 21). They also undertook to address the special needs of children affected by armed conflict (sec. II, para. 22). States are encouraged to support DDR programmes in their region (sec. II, para. 30). Although extensive disarmament experience now exists in the region, DDR measures are not currently included in the *Nadi Framework*. This may well be appropriate, as the *Nadi Framework* is primarily concerned with civilian possession and government stockpiles. However it is an issue that deserves further consideration, perhaps in the context of the *Biketawa Declaration* (Kiribati PIF Leaders' Meeting, 2000) (see the box below).
- **Improved inter-agency communication:** At the regional level, states at the UN Small Arms Conference agreed to establish subregional and regional mechanisms, in particular trans-border customs co-operation and networks for information-sharing among law enforcement, border, and customs control agencies, with the aim of curbing the illicit trade in small arms (sec. II, para. 27). This provision could support and strengthen existing initiatives in the *Nadi Framework*.
- **Improved public awareness and information:** States undertook to raise public awareness about the problems and consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, including, where appropriate, weapons destruction and voluntary weapons surrender, if possible in co-operation with civil society organizations (sec. II, para. 20). They also undertook to make public laws, regulations, and procedures that have a bearing on efforts to curb the illicit small arms trade, and to voluntarily submit to relevant regional and international organizations information on small arms destroyed within their jurisdictions, and other relevant information such as illicit trade routes and techniques of illegal acquisition (sec. II, para. 23). This is another area where the *Nadi Framework* is currently silent, but experience with awareness programmes, for instance in Bougainville, has shown the benefits of public education about small arms-related problems.
- **National and regional points of contact and co-ordination:** States also agreed to designate national and regional points of contact to act as liaison mechanisms on matters relating to the implementation of the *Programme of Action* (sec. II, paras. 5 and 24). In addition, they resolved to designate national co-ordination agencies and infrastructure for policy guidance, research, and monitoring of efforts to curb the illicit small arms trade (sec. II, para. 4).

In addition to the *Programme of Action*, important measures are contained in the 2001 UN *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Firearms Protocol)* (UNGA, 2001). The *Firearms Protocol* requires, for instance, that states maintain small arms records for at least ten years, in order to enable their tracing and identification. It also requires states to appropriately mark all commercial and privately owned firearms on importation. In addition, all firearms transferred from government to civilian use are required to be marked to enable identification of the transferring country (UNGA, 2001). Measures such as these would also need to be considered in any review of the *Nadi Framework*.

As of December 2002, Australia and Nauru were the only regional signatories to the *Firearms Protocol*.

The Biketawa Declaration

The Biketawa Declaration, formulated by PIF foreign ministers in August 2000, offers a platform for the development of constitutionally-based guidelines for relations between Pacific states and their security forces, according to the rule of law. It also outlines a clear procedure for member states to respond quickly and collectively to political crises in the region. The Declaration states that in time of crisis or in response to a member government's request, the PIF Secretary-General would consult the PIF Chairperson and other PIF leaders as appropriate, as well as national authorities. If necessary a meeting of PIF foreign ministers may be called to decide on an appropriate course of action.

As a result of the Biketawa Declaration, for instance, the PIF despatched the first ever Forum Elections Observer Mission to observe the 2001 Solomon Islands elections and to support the democratic process there. This, together with an EPG visit to the Solomon Islands, in 2002, to report on possible areas of assistance by the PIF, signals an increasingly proactive role for it in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Potential for successful implementation

Successful implementation of the *Nadi Framework* and the UN *Programme of Action* could bring real benefits to PIF member states. It could result, for instance, in improved systems of security force stockpile management, increased levels of regional co-operation in combating organized crime, and better public understanding of the dangers and devastating consequences of the illegal trade in small arms.

Pacific member states have to date shown high levels of support for both processes. At the international level, they have participated constructively in UN Small Arms Conference preparations and subsequent proceedings. At the regional level, PIF states have worked closely, through various regional law enforcement bodies and mechanisms, to develop the initiatives and legislation contained in the *Nadi Framework*. Recent delays in progress on the *Nadi Framework* are understandable, given the efforts by all states to comply with UN anti-terrorism conventions, yet it remains important to keep small arms issues on the regional agenda.

Future progress requires more than political goodwill, and depends on extensive and ongoing support for capacity building of national and regional customs and law enforcement agencies and civil society groups. Support for developing best practices in post-conflict DDR programmes is also needed, so that the lessons learnt from Bougainville and the Solomon Islands may be shared and built upon.

Funding is also a pivotal issue. For many smaller Pacific Island countries, external support will be necessary if either programme is to be implemented. While the 2001 *Programme of Action* included a section dedicated to international co-operation and assistance, no concrete commitments were made to provide additional funding to facilitate its implementation (Bondi, 2002, p. 1). Australia, Japan, and New Zealand have in the past actively supported efforts in the Pacific to address regional small arms issues, and have also indicated a willingness to provide assistance in building on these efforts in future. In August 2001, the PIF Secretariat suggested that a working group including these three countries, together with other PIF members, appropriate NGOs, and civil society organizations, be established to assess assistance needs and develop practical guidelines to implement the *Programme of Action* (PIF Secretariat, 2001b, p. 4). States have also committed to hold biennial meetings to review progress on its implementation, in the lead-up to an international review conference to be held no later than 2006 (sec. IV, para. 1).

Ultimately, solutions to small arms proliferation will not just be about strong legislation, capacity building and technical assistance, or even strong enforcement. If lasting peace is to be achieved, fundamental principles of good governance and adherence to constitutional norms must also become entrenched. The breakdown in many states of relations between government, civil society, the judiciary, and police and defence forces raises constitutional, political, and public management questions, while the erosion of human rights and other principles makes arms control even more difficult. If such principles are not operating, regional efforts to control the proliferation of small arms cannot succeed.

Conclusion

The Pacific remains free of large-scale trafficking in small arms, yet has proven most sensitive to their effects. Conflicts in Fiji and the Solomon Islands have shown how even a small number of firearms can facilitate the downfall of a democratically elected government. In Bougainville, an influx of small arms enabled bands of men to terrorise an entire province for nearly a decade.

Armed conflict has had profound long-term consequences for several communities studied in this report. Disarmament processes in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands deserve to be treated as ‘make-or-break’ measures, with thousands of livelihoods—and lives—potentially in the balance.

Disarmament, Pacific style

Painful as it was for those involved, ‘disarmament, Pacific style’ has thrown up lessons that may prove useful to others. Among them are the following:

- True disarmament seems most likely to occur when all parties to a conflict are engaged in the process, and strategies that do not incorporate effective political solutions seem more likely to fail.
- Community involvement is critical in generating goodwill and longevity for weapons collection programmes. People need to see clearly the benefits of participation.
- Too much emphasis on the centrality of ex-combatants to a disarmament process can be damaging, with fair balance essential in each cultural and political situation.
- Small arms should be destroyed in order to highlight disarmament successes, eliminate the risk of recycling, reduce storage concerns, and instil public confidence.
- In dealing with the impacts of armed conflict, it seems important to counter cultures of violence. A crucial role exists for civil society groups to promote conflict resolution and peace and disarmament education, especially among youth.
- Security sector reform remains a critical feature of long-term disarmament processes, raising community confidence in governance and reducing the risk of violence.

Wake-up call

The ease with which firearms and ammunition leak from state armouries is a wake-up call for all Pacific states. Injections of lethal weapons into fragile communities enable previously powerless criminals to threaten the social and economic development of entire island nations.

Existing stockpiles of small arms in the region are the primary source of weapons used in crime, rebellion, ethnic violence, and other armed conflict. Whether these spring from inadequately guarded state armouries or unmonitored private stocks, it is clear that current mechanisms often fail to prevent the transfer of small arms from lawful owners to criminals. In Australia, heightened concern about gun crime is tangled with speculation over the origin of the firearms involved.

Legislation, capacity, and information

The region's arms laws are as diverse as the region itself, and many have not been updated since pre-independence. While blanket responses are not always advisable, the Pacific stands to benefit greatly from harmonization of key laws, particularly in the areas of gun owner licensing, firearm registration and marking, ammunition availability, penalty regimes, and import/export controls. That said, enhanced legislation could prove an empty gesture, in the absence of region-wide capacity-building in training, monitoring, compliance, and enforcement.

Many Pacific states, including Papua New Guinea, do not adequately record firearm-related health and justice information. In public health, as in criminology, accurate data are the lifeblood of informed policy-making. Without even base-level knowledge of the impact of small arms-related violence in communities worst affected, without establishing the true source of the firearms and the routes they travel from harmless to harmful, the proliferation of small arms in some parts of the Pacific seems destined to get worse before it gets better. To avoid this gloomy pattern of contagion so common in other regions, donor partners in the Pacific have as important a role to play in prevention as they do in after-the-shooting remedies.

Cause for optimism

Despite hot spots in which illicit arms already proliferate, there are many reasons to be optimistic about controlling the flow of small arms in the Pacific. The *Nadi Framework* promises to bring an element of uniformity to gun control laws. Key governments and civil society groups seem united in concern, if not yet in action. Outside Australia and New Zealand, firearm stockpiles in the Pacific remain moderate, or in some countries minimal. Trade in illicit small arms is limited, and has only become visible in recent years. Cultures of gun violence, even in war-torn Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, are still young. Much of the damage could yet be unravelled.

Endnotes

- ¹ The high threshold for compulsory dollar-value reporting and the immunity from reporting enjoyed by smaller, but significant commercial arms sales from independent US dealers mean that many transactions are not captured by either DCS or export commodity reporting. Thus the data in Table 2.1 is merely indicative of the flow of arms from the US into the Pacific.
- ² Data compiled by Nicholas Marsh, Project Leader, Small Arms Database, NISAT and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Sep. 2002.
- ³ Interview with Bob Lehmann, Australian Federal Police Liaison to the Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 15 May 2002.
- ⁴ In 2001, for instance, the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs declined an application from Auckland-based company Tropical Exports to export 65,000 rounds of .22 calibre ammunition, as well as a number of rifles and shotguns to a Vanuatu gun dealer, Port Vila Hardware, because of concerns that the ammunition might have been diverted to neighbouring Solomon Islands (Capie, 2003).
- ⁵ Personal correspondence with Insp. Joe Green, Manager Licensing, NZ Police, Wellington, 11 Nov. 2002.
- ⁶ Population data: **Australia:** Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002); **New Zealand:** Statistics New Zealand/Te Tari Tatau (2002); **American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu,** and **Vanuatu:** UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Population and Rural Development Division (2002); **Wallis and Futuna:** PIF Secretariat (2002).
- ⁷ Gun owner licensing and firearm registration data: Fiji Commissioner of Police (2001); United Nations (1998); Mouzos (2002b, p. 5); interviews and correspondence with Pira Wichman, Cook Islands Commissioner of Police; Det. Insp. Allan Timore, Kiribati; Insp. Joe Green, NZ Police; Insp. Maria Tongatule, Acting Chief of Police, Niue; Richard Hickson, Assistant Attorney-General, Republic of the Marshall Islands; Li'o Masipa'u, Chief Legal Adviser to Samoa Police; Michael Sala, Deputy Commissioner, American Samoa Dept. of Public Safety; Wilfred Akao, Deputy Commissioner, Operations, RSIP; Ass. Supt. Opeti Prescott, Tonga Police; Willy Telavi, Tuvalu Commissioner of Police; Bob Lehmann, Counsellor Police Liaison, Vanuatu Police Force, Australian Federal Police, Port Vila, Vanuatu.
- ⁸ **American Samoa:** 111 shotguns, 108 .22 rifles, and 31 'grandfathered' and/or antique handguns of .22, .38, and .45 calibres; **Cook Islands:** 263 rifles, 228 shotguns, 9 pistols; **Federated States of Micronesia:** 512 .22 rifles, 100 .410 gauge shotguns; **Fiji:** 903 shotguns, 560 rifles, 8 pistols; **French Polynesia:** shotguns and rifles; **Kiribati:** 12-gauge shotguns, .177 calibre air rifles, .410 gauge shotguns; **New Caledonia:** shotguns and rifles; **New Zealand:** includes 27,985 pistols, 6,772 military-style semi-automatics, 3,456 restricted weapons; **Niue:** shotguns only; **Papua New Guinea:** 795 handguns, 402 rifles, 48,803 shotguns; **Republic of the Marshall Islands:** .22 calibre rifles only; **Samoa:** 10,897 shotguns, 6,948 rifles; **Tonga:** 400 shotguns, 400 rifles, no semi-automatics; **Tuvalu:** 3 shotguns, 9 air rifles; **Vanuatu:** shotguns and rifles; **Wallis and Futuna:** shotguns and rifles.
- ⁹ While 96 per cent of legally held firearms in New Zealand remain unregistered, authorities can only guess their number. Sir Thomas Thorp's 1997 *Review of Firearms Control in New Zealand* (Thorp, 1997) estimated the country's lawfully held civilian small arms stockpile at between 700,000 and 1,000,000 firearms, a range cited by NZ Police and widely accepted. For purposes of comparison, the authors cite 850,000 as the midpoint.
- ¹⁰ Personal correspondence with Insp. Joe Green, Manager Licensing, NZ Police, Wellington, 19 Aug. 2002.
- ¹¹ Comment made at the Pacific Islands Countries Regional Seminar on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held in Tokyo, 20–22 Jan. 2003. The delegate, who shall remain nameless, was reflecting on the responsibility he feels at holding the key to his nation's armoury—and expresses the power that weapons have to influence societies in the Pacific—and any other—region.

- ¹² Interview with Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat, Suva, 2 April 2002.
- ¹³ Interview with Vince Shaw, First Secretary Defence Liaison, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 21 May 2002.
- ¹⁴ Personal communication from Graham Harding, National Secretary, NZ Police Association, Wellington, 13 July 1995.
- ¹⁵ Sources: **Australia:** Police data from the Australian Institute of Criminology; defence information from International Institute for Strategic Studies (2001, p. 185). **Cook Islands:** Personal correspondence with Pira Wichman, Commissioner of Police. **Fiji:** Police: personal correspondence with Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat; defence: International Institute for Strategic Studies (2001). **FSM:** High Commission of the [French] Republic (2003). **Kiribati:** Personal correspondence with Allan Timore, Assistant OC Crime Branch. **Nauru:** Personal correspondence with Junior Dowiyogo, Dir., Nauru Police. **New Caledonia:** Interview with Yves Nicole, Dir. of National Police, Noumea. **New Zealand:** Police: NZ Police (2002); defence: personal correspondence with Justin Fepulea'i, NZ Ministry of Defence. **Niue:** Personal correspondence with Insp. Maria Tongatule, Acting Chief of Police. **Palau:** Personal correspondence with Michael J. Rosenthal, Minister of Justice. **Papua New Guinea:** Police: personal correspondence with Frank Clair, Australian Federal Police, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby; defence: International Institute for Strategic Studies (2001). **Marshall Islands:** Personal correspondence with Richard Hickson, Asst. Attorney-General. **Samoa:** Personal correspondence with Li'o Masipa'u, Chief Legal Adviser to Samoa Police. **Solomon Islands:** O'Connor (2000). **Tonga:** Police: Newton (1998); defence: *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter Source Book 2002-2003* (2003). **Tuvalu:** Personal correspondence with Willy Telavi, Commissioner of Police. **Vanuatu:** Personal correspondence with Bob Lehmann, Counsellor, Police Liaison, Vanuatu Police Force, Australian Federal Police, Port Vila, Vanuatu. **Wallis and Futuna:** Police: personal correspondence with John McFarlane, Australian Defence Studies Centre, Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra; defence: interview with Yves Nicole, Dir. of National Police, Noumea.
- ¹⁶ For the Solomon Islands, it has not been possible to distinguish between the regular police, who are not routinely armed, and the armed paramilitary. As at least 1,000 weapons were stolen during the June 2000 coup, clearly the multiplier for routinely non-armed police of 0.28 would underestimate police holdings, since it would give a figure of only 400. We have instead applied the multiplier for routinely armed police of 1.3 to calculate Solomon Islands police stocks.
- ¹⁷ Personal correspondence with Dr Penelope Schoeffel, University of Auckland, 19 March 2002.
- ¹⁸ Interviews with Australian researchers and police, speaking with an expectation of confidentiality.
- ¹⁹ Personal correspondence with Insp. Phil Gubb, Coordinator, NZ Police Firearms Licensing Task Force, Wellington, 4 Feb. 1994.
- ²⁰ The weapons were ordered from and delivered by ZD Industries in Port Moresby, but never picked up and recorded in the central record of the constabulary of the Quartermaster (*The Australian*, 2000).
- ²¹ Interview with Frank Clair, Australian Federal Police, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 3 June 2002.
- ²² Personal communication with Frank Clair and Leisa James, Australian Federal Police advisers, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 3 June 2002.
- ²³ Interview with Vince Shaw, First Secretary Defence Liaison, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 21 May 2002.
- ²⁴ It is possible that the AK-47 referred to was in fact a semi-automatic 'civilian' version of the original fully automatic assault weapon.
- ²⁵ Interviews with Vince Shaw, First Secretary Defence Liaison, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 21 May 2002 and Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat, Suva, 2 April 2002.
- ²⁶ Interview with Vince Shaw, First Secretary Defence Liaison, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 21 May 2002.
- ²⁷ Interview with Lt.-Col. Andrew Morris, Defence Adviser, NZ High Commission, Port Moresby, 14 Aug. 2002.

- ²⁸ Interview with Matt Anderson, Exec. Officer, Papua New Guinea Section, Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 23 April 2002.
- ²⁹ Personal correspondence from Flt.-Sgt. John Phillips, former RNZAF IPMT armourer, 18 June 2002.
- ³⁰ Interview with Robin Kenaus, Area Co-ordinator, BETA, Buka, 10 June 2002.
- ³¹ Interview with Greg Cummins, Customs Specialist, Customs Development Project, Honiara, 30 May 2002.
- ³² Interview with Lt.-Col. Vagi Oala, Dir., Land Operations, PNGDF, Port Moresby, 4 June 2002.
- ³³ Interview with John Fennessy, Leader of the IPMT and Tony McLeod, IPMT Deputy Leader, Honiara, 28 May 2002; personal correspondence with the Bougainville Peace Monitoring Base, 15 Aug. 2002.
- ³⁴ Personal correspondence with Flt.-Sgt. John Phillips, former RNZAF IPMT armourer, 14 Aug. 2002 and Lt.-Col. Andrew Morris, Defence Adviser, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 14 Aug. 2002.
- ³⁵ Interview with Trisha Gray, Solomon Islands Desk Officer, AusAID, Canberra, 24 April 2002.
- ³⁶ Interviews with John Fennessy, Leader of the IPMT and Tony McLeod, IPMT Deputy Leader, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ³⁷ Interview with Tony Cameron, Community Policing Liaison Officer, Buka, 6 June 2002.
- ³⁸ Interview with Br. Ken McDonald, Principal, Mabire Marist School, Arawa, Bougainville, 12 June 2002.
- ³⁹ Interview with Lt.-Col. Vagi Oala, Dir., Land Operations, PNGDF, Port Moresby, 4 June 2002.
- ⁴⁰ Interview with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir., Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁴¹ Interview with Br. Ken McDonald, Principal, Mabire Marist School, Arawa, Bougainville, 12 June 2002.
- ⁴² Interview with Lucy Sinei, Co-ordinator, Arawa Women's Vocational Training Centre, Bougainville, 14 June 2002.
- ⁴³ Interview with Matt Anderson, Exec. Officer, Papua New Guinea Section, Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 23 April 2002.
- ⁴⁴ Interviews with John Fennessy, Leader of the IPMT and Tony McLeod, IPMT Deputy Leader, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ⁴⁵ Interview with Mary-Louise O Callaghan, Pacific correspondent, *The Australian*, Honiara, 27 May 2002.
- ⁴⁶ Interview with Val Stanley, Community Development Officer, Oxfam Australia Solomon Islands Office, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ⁴⁷ Interview with Mary-Louise O Callaghan, Pacific correspondent, *The Australian*, Honiara, 27 May 2002.
- ⁴⁸ We are grateful to Aaron Karp for his conceptual insight.
- ⁴⁹ Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board figures were provided by firearm registries in each State and Territory.
- ⁵⁰ The French High Commission is the local headquarters of the mainland French government.
- ⁵¹ The *Karine A* was intercepted with 50 tons of weapons and ammunition that Israel and the ship's Palestinian captain claimed were destined for Palestine.
- ⁵² Personal correspondence with Tonga Ministry of Health, 5 June 2002 and Amato Elymore, Health Statistician, FSM, 9 May 2002.
- ⁵³ Personal correspondence with Lt. Lino Amor, Dept. of Justice, FSM, 13 May 2002.
- ⁵⁴ Personal correspondence with Li'o Masipa'u, Chief Legal Adviser to Samoa Police, 10 July 2002.
- ⁵⁵ Crime data: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002a, p. 16); NZ Police (2003); NZ Ministry of Justice (2002); RPNGC Corporate Planning Directorate (2001); interviews and personal correspondence with Vaitoelau Filiga, Statistician, Economic Development Planning Office, American Samoa; Pira Wichman, Cook Islands Commissioner of Police; Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat, Suva; Lt. Lino Amor, National Police Headquarters, FSM; Det. Insp. Allan Timore, Kiribati; Junior Dowiyogo, Dir., Nauru Police; Insp. Joe Green, NZ Police; Insp. Maria Tongatule, Acting Chief of Police, Niue; Richard Hickson, Assistant Attorney-General, Republic of the Marshall Islands; Li'o Masipa'u, Chief Legal Adviser to Samoa Police; Ass. Supt. Opeti Prescott, Tonga Police; Willy Telavi, Tuvalu Commissioner of Police; Bob Lehmann, Counsellor, Police Liaison, Vanuatu Police Force, Australian Federal Police, Port Vila, Vanuatu. Figures for firearm-related crime were not available from American Samoa, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, or Wallis and Futuna.

- ⁵⁶ Population data: **Australia:** Estimated resident population at June 2002, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002c); **New Zealand:** Statistics New Zealand/Te Tari Tatau (2002); **American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu:** UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Population and Rural Development Division (2002); **Wallis and Futuna:** PIF Secretariat (2002).
- ⁵⁷ Papua New Guinea's crime figures are for the first six months of 2001 only.
- ⁵⁸ Tonga's crime figures are for 2001 only.
- ⁵⁹ Five people died during the Fiji hostage crisis, four of them at gunpoint. On Sunday 28 May, two people were shot by Speight's supporters in central Suva; on the same night, a police officer was shot at a security checkpoint. A security officer also died of a heart attack that evening while fleeing Speight's mob during a shooting spree in Suva. A month later, on 3 July, one of Speight's supporters died and five were wounded after a shootout outside the parliamentary complex.
- ⁶⁰ Interview with Peter Waddell-Wood, Counsellor, Development Co-operation, AusAID, Suva, 2 April 2002.
- ⁶¹ In July 2000, visitor arrivals dropped to 12,804, a 68 per cent decrease on the number of visitors in July 1999.
- ⁶² This figure has not been independently verified, but is most likely an underestimate.
- ⁶³ Personal communication with Agnes Wale, Solomon Islands Red Cross Society, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ⁶⁴ Interview with Val Stanley, Community Development Officer, Oxfam Australia Solomon Islands Office, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ⁶⁵ Interview with Trisha Gray, Solomon Islands Desk Officer, AusAID, Canberra, 24 April 2002.
- ⁶⁶ Personal communication with Agnes Wale, Solomon Islands Red Cross Society, Honiara, 28 May 2002.
- ⁶⁷ Interview with Mary-Louise O Callaghan, Pacific correspondent for *The Australian*, Honiara, 27 May 2002.
- ⁶⁸ Personal correspondence with Glenys Karran, Solomon Islands Programme Manager, NZAID, Wellington, 14 Aug. 2002.
- ⁶⁹ Personal correspondence with Caitlin Wilson, Solomon Islands Desk Officer, AusAID, 12 Feb. 2003.
- ⁷⁰ Personal correspondence with Hendrik Smets, EU office, Solomon Islands, 27 Aug. 2002.
- ⁷¹ Personal correspondence with Glenys Karran, Solomon Islands Manager, NZAID, Wellington, 14 Aug. 2002.
- ⁷² Kemakeza, Sir Allan, '100 Days and Beyond: Restoring Economic Growth in Solomon Islands', speech by the Prime Minister Hon. Sir Allan Kemakeza to the Economic Association of Solomon Islands, Mendana Hotel, Friday 22 Feb. 2002.
- ⁷³ Interview with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir. of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁷⁴ Interview with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir. of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁷⁵ Interview with Tessa Te Mata, First Secretary, NZ Overseas Development Assistance, Papua New Guinea High Commission, Port Moresby, 20 May 2002.
- ⁷⁶ Personal communication with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir. of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁷⁷ Interview with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir. of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁷⁸ Interview with Dr Joe Vilosi, Buka Hospital, Bougainville, 11 June 2002.
- ⁷⁹ Interview with Dr Joe Vilosi, Buka Hospital, Bougainville, 11 June 2002.
- ⁸⁰ Interview with Dr Joe Vilosi, Buka Hospital, Bougainville, 11 June 2002.
- ⁸¹ Interview with Dr Joe Vilosi, Buka Hospital, Bougainville, 11 June 2002.
- ⁸² Interview with a senior staff member of the Bougainville Education Dept., 12 June 2002.
- ⁸³ Interview with Br. Ken McDonald, Principal, Mabire Marist School, Arawa, Bougainville, 12 June 2002.
- ⁸⁴ Interview with Helen Hakena, Exec. Dir. of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, Buka, Bougainville, 7 June 2002.
- ⁸⁵ Interview with NGO staff member, Arawa, 13 June 2002.

- ⁸⁶ Interview with NGO staff member, Arawa, 13 June 2002.
- ⁸⁷ This includes support to the Papua New Guinea government's Bougainville Peace and Restoration Office, funds to enable Bougainville leaders to travel to Peace Process meetings, funds to cover the costs of Australian civilian participants in the PMG and overseas participants in peace consultations, and funds for an ex-combatants' trust account.
- ⁸⁸ Interview with Bernard Choulai and Michelle Rooney, UNDP Bougainville Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Project, Port Moresby, 22 May 2002.
- ⁸⁹ Interview with Frank Clair and James Leisa, Australian Federal Police, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, 3 June 2002.
- ⁹⁰ Personal correspondence with Dr Mike Bourke, Dept. of Human Geography, ANU, 23 Aug. 2001.
- ⁹¹ Interview with Lt.-Col. Vagi Oala, Dir., Land Operations, PNGDF, Port Moresby, 4 June 2002.
- ⁹² Interview with Dr Yves Renault, WHO Representative to Papua New Guinea, 5 June 2002.
- ⁹³ Australia's estimated resident population at June 2001 was 19.5 million people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002b).
- ⁹⁴ Note, however, that the Marshall Islands grant a small number of exemptions 'on the basis of genuine need'. Thirty licences, for .22 calibre rifles and below only, are issued under exemption for the purpose of 'killing sharks and pigs' (personal correspondence with Richard Hickson, Assistant Attorney-General, Republic of the Marshall Islands, 11 May 2002).
- ⁹⁵ Interviews with Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat, Suva, 2 April 2002 and Det. Chief Supt. Eddie Sikua, RSIP, Honiara, 30 May 2002.
- ⁹⁶ Interview with Chief Supt. Andrew Sterns, RPNGC Headquarters, Port Moresby, 5 June 2002.
- ⁹⁷ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4202).
- ⁹⁸ Personal correspondence with Pira Wichman, Commissioner of Police, Cook Islands, 10 May 2002.
- ⁹⁹ Personal correspondence with Lt. Lino Amor, Dept. of Justice, FSM, 13 May 2002.
- ¹⁰⁰ FSM (n.d., secs. 1023 (3), (5), PL 11-72, sec. 196).
- ¹⁰¹ Interview with Shaun Evans, Law Enforcement Liaison Officer, PIF Secretariat, Suva, 2 April 2002.
- ¹⁰² Fiji (1962, secs. 14 (3), 24 (1), 26 (1), 27 (1), Legal Notice 28/76).
- ¹⁰³ New Caledonia (1982, art. 6-2). All three territories impose local restrictions in addition to mainland French law. Wallis and Futuna prohibits the private possession of handguns, while in French Polynesia, sport shooters are not required to be members of the French Shooting Federation before obtaining a firearm.
- ¹⁰⁴ New Caledonia (1982, arts. 1, 5).
- ¹⁰⁵ Tuvalu (1964, Legal Notice 39/74); Kiribati (1977a, Legal Notice 39/74).
- ¹⁰⁶ Personal correspondence with Det. Insp. Allan Timore, Kiribati Police, 2 Sept. 2002.
- ¹⁰⁷ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 27 (1)).
- ¹⁰⁸ New Zealand (1983, with amendments and regulations).
- ¹⁰⁹ Interview with Chief Supt. Andrew Sterns, RPNGC Headquarters, Port Moresby, 5 June 2002.
- ¹¹⁰ Papua New Guinea (1978, secs. 9, 60).
- ¹¹¹ Interview with Det. Chief Supt. Eddie Sikua, RSIP, Honiara, 30 May 2002.
- ¹¹² Solomon Islands (1969, Legal Notice 54/1968, secs. 14 (1) & (2), 26 (1)).
- ¹¹³ Tonga (1968, sec. 26 (1)).
- ¹¹⁴ Vanuatu (1987, secs. 21 (1) & (2), 5 (1), 8; 1988a, sec. 2 (a)).
- ¹¹⁵ Confirmed in personal correspondence with senior police and justice personnel in each state.
- ¹¹⁶ Interview with Michael Sala, Deputy Police Commissioner, American Samoa Dept. of Public Safety, Pago Pago, 13 Feb. 2003.
- ¹¹⁷ Australasian Police Ministers' Council (1996).
- ¹¹⁸ Personal correspondence with Pira Wichman, Commissioner of Police, Cook Islands, 10 May 2002.
- ¹¹⁹ Personal correspondence with Lt. Lino Amor, Dept. of Justice, FSM, 13 May 2002.
- ¹²⁰ Personal correspondence with Det. Insp. Allan Timore, Kiribati Police, 2 Sep. 2002.
- ¹²¹ New Zealand (1983, and amendments).
- ¹²² Personal correspondence with Insp. Maria Tongatule, Acting Chief of Police, Niue, 21 May 2002.
- ¹²³ Papua New Guinea (1978, sec. 2).
- ¹²⁴ Personal correspondence with Richard Hickson, Assistant Attorney-General, Republic of the Marshall Islands, 11 May 2002.

- ¹²⁵ Personal correspondence with Li'o Masipa u, Chief Legal Adviser to Samoa Police, Apia, 10 July 2002.
- ¹²⁶ Interview with Det. Chief Supt. Eddie Sikua, RSIP, Honiara, 30 May 2002.
- ¹²⁷ Interview with Ass. Supt. Opeti Prescott, Tonga Police, 10 May 2002.
- ¹²⁸ Personal correspondence with Willie Telavi, Commissioner of Police, Tuvalu, 30 July 2002.
- ¹²⁹ Interview with Paul Willie Ruben, Commissioner of Crime, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 15 May 2002.
- ¹³⁰ FSM (n.d., sec. 1005 (5), PL11-72, sec. 178): The issuing agency must be satisfied that the applicant may lawfully possess and use a firearm, and must not issue a licence if the person has been: (a) acquitted of any criminal charge by reason of insanity; (b) adjudicated mentally incompetent; (c) treated in a hospital for mental illness, drug addiction, or alcoholism; (d) convicted of a crime of which actual or attempted personal injury or death is an element; (e) convicted of a firearm-related crime; and (f) convicted of a narcotic- or drug-related crime. Papua New Guinea (1978, sec. 9 (1)): The Registrar must be satisfied that the applicant: (a) is over 18; (b) has not been convicted of an offence against the Act and sentenced to a term of imprisonment; (c) has not been convicted of any firearm-related offence; (d) is a 'fit and proper person'; (e) is no danger to public safety; and (f) has a 'substantial reason' for carrying a firearm and that the firearm is safe and fit for use. Note: to the extent that ownership is permitted in the Marshall Islands, the same background checks apply as in the FSM. See Republic of the Marshall Islands (1971, sec. 5 (5)). As a US territory, American Samoa is a 'Brady State', subject to the mandatory pre-purchase background checks of the mainland's Brady Law.
- ¹³¹ Personal correspondence and interviews with senior police and justice personnel in Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- ¹³² Interview with Chief Supt. Andrew Sterns, RPNGC, Port Moresby, 5 June 2002.
- ¹³³ In the mid-1990s, for instance, local police declined to revoke gun owners' licences despite prominent thefts of multiple, fireable machine guns from collectors (interview with Bill Davidson, Firearm Advisory Officer, NZ Police HQ, Wellington, 10 Oct. 1995).
- ¹³⁴ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4205).
- ¹³⁵ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4228).
- ¹³⁶ However, strict control measures do apply to military weapons, munitions, and explosives. Weapons are individually numbered and tracked, and are stored securely in defence establishments. All weapons are registered and subject to strict accounting procedures, including an annual census under the supervision and direction of the Defence Inspector General's Office (Australian Permanent UN Mission, 2002).
- ¹³⁷ FSM (1971, sec. 1213 (2) (b)).
- ¹³⁸ Fiji (1962, sec. 7 (1)); Kiribati (1977a, sec. 7 (1)); New Zealand (1983, sec. 74); Tuvalu (1964, sec. 7 (1)).
- ¹³⁹ New Caledonia (1982, art. 15).
- ¹⁴⁰ Solomon Islands (1968, secs. 8 (2), 9 (1)).
- ¹⁴¹ Tonga (1968, sec. 7 (1)).
- ¹⁴² Niue (1975, sec. 24 (2) (b)); Samoa (1960, sec. 27 (2) (b)).
- ¹⁴³ In the case of Kiribati, permission to manufacture must be sought from the 'Governor', but presumably this is in practice the Police Commissioner. Kiribati's arms laws appear not to have been updated since 1977, two years prior to independence.
- ¹⁴⁴ Although it no longer manufactures automatic firearms for commercial purposes, Australian Defence Industries produces and exports Steyr AUG assault rifles under licence, under the name F88.
- ¹⁴⁵ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 22 (a) (b) (c)).
- ¹⁴⁶ Although no export restrictions apply in legislation, American Samoa's only licensed firearm dealer obtains police approval before transferring firearms overseas (interview with William G. Satele, Samoa Sports, Pago Pago, 14 Feb. 2003).
- ¹⁴⁷ Australia (1956, sched. 6).
- ¹⁴⁸ Australian Permanent UN Mission (2002).
- ¹⁴⁹ Australia Defence Materiel Organization (n.d.).
- ¹⁵⁰ Australia (1958, reg. 13E).
- ¹⁵¹ Australia (1958, reg. 13CK).

¹⁵² Cook Islands (1913): personal correspondence with Pira Wichman, Commissioner of Police, Cook Islands, 10 May 2002.

¹⁵³ Cook Islands (1913, sec. 27).

¹⁵⁴ Cook Islands (1954, sec. 22).

¹⁵⁵ FSM (1971, sec. 1221 (1), (2), (3) & (4)).

¹⁵⁶ Fiji (1962, secs. 16 (1) & (3), 17, 19, 20, 25); Kiribati (1977a, secs. 16 (1) & (3), 17, 19, 20, 25, 42 (2)); Kiribati (1977 & 1993, sec. 33, sched. 2:2 Prohibited Imports); Tonga (1968, secs. 15 (1) & (3), 16, 19, 24); Tonga (n.d., pt. 1, sched. II (1) List of Restricted Imports); Tuvalu (1964, secs. 12 (1) & (3), 13, 15, 16, 20 (1), 35 (1) & (2)); Tuvalu (n.d., secs. 33, 34 (1) (2), sched. 2.2).

¹⁵⁷ Fiji (1962, secs. 18, 19, 24 (1), 34 (3), 42 (1) & (2)); Kiribati (1977a, secs. 18, 19, 24 (1), 34 (3), 42 (1) & (2)); Although the Kiribati Customs Act (1977 & 1993) provides for a range of exports to be prohibited in Schedule 3, arms and ammunition are not listed (secs. 33, 35 (1&2)); Tonga (1968, secs. 17 (1), 18, 23 (1), 33 (3), 41 (1)). The Customs and Excise Act (n.d.) contains no provision for listing prohibited arms exports; Tuvalu (1964, secs. 14 (1), 15, 20 (1), 28 (3), 35 (1) & (2)). Although the Tuvalu *Customs Act* (n.d.) provides for a range of exports to be prohibited in Schedule 3, arms and ammunition are not listed (secs. 33, 35 (1&2)).

¹⁵⁸ New Caledonia (1982, art. 3).

¹⁵⁹ New Zealand Police (n.d.).

¹⁶⁰ New Zealand (2002) promulgated under New Zealand (1996).

¹⁶¹ Niue (1975, sec. 3 (1) & (2); 1996).

¹⁶² Niue (1996, sec. 70 (1) (a)).

¹⁶³ Palau (n.d.a, sec. 3308).

¹⁶⁴ Papua New Guinea (n.d., sched. 11, item no. 84).

¹⁶⁵ Samoa (1960, sec. 6 (1), (2) & (4); 1977).

¹⁶⁶ Samoa (1977, sec. 73 (1) (a)).

¹⁶⁷ Solomon Islands (1968, secs. 15 (1) & (3), 16, 18, 19, 23).

¹⁶⁸ Solomon Islands (1968, secs. 17 (1), 18, 23).

¹⁶⁹ Vanuatu (1987, secs. 7, 14 (2), 17, 18, 22).

¹⁷⁰ 'It has become one of the clichés of accession negotiations that in the end the negotiations always come down to "booze and cigarettes"; but now the United States,

clearly under pressure from its own gun lobby, is putting pressure on acceding countries to liberalize the trade in weapons' (Grynberg (Deputy Dir., Trade & Regional Integration, Commonwealth Secretariat, London) and Joy (Trade Negotiator, Vanuatu), 2000).

¹⁷¹ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4202 (d)).

¹⁷² American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4202 (d)).

¹⁷³ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4202 (d)).

¹⁷⁴ American Samoa (1962, 1979 & 1980, sec. 46.4234).

¹⁷⁵ Australia (1901, sec. 233AB (2)).

¹⁷⁶ Australia Defence Materiel Organization, n.d.

¹⁷⁷ Australia (1996a, sec. 16 (1)).

¹⁷⁸ Australia (1996a, sec. 66).

¹⁷⁹ Australia (1996a, sec. 66).

¹⁸⁰ Australia (1990, sec. 35).

¹⁸¹ Australia (1990, sec. 35).

¹⁸² Australia (1990, sec. 69 (1)).

¹⁸³ Australia (1996b, sec. 7 (1)).

¹⁸⁴ Australia (1996b, sec. 43).

¹⁸⁵ Australia (1996b, sec. 50 (a)).

¹⁸⁶ Australia (1997, sec. 58).

¹⁸⁷ Australia (1997, sec. 63).

¹⁸⁸ Australia (1997, sec. 22).

¹⁸⁹ Australia (1977, sec. 11).

¹⁹⁰ Australia (1977, sec. 16).

¹⁹¹ Australia (1977, sec. 16).

¹⁹² Australia (1996c, sec. 9 (1)).

¹⁹³ Australia (1996c, sec. 11 (1)).

¹⁹⁴ Australia (1996c, sec. 11 (1)).

¹⁹⁵ Australia (1996d, sec. 6).

¹⁹⁶ Australia (1996d, sec. 59).

¹⁹⁷ Australia (1996d, sec. 59).

¹⁹⁸ Australia (1973, sec. 19 (1)).

¹⁹⁹ Australia (1973, sec. 19 (4)).

²⁰⁰ Australia (1973, sec. 19 (4)).

²⁰¹ Cook Islands (1954, sec. 6 (1)).

²⁰² Cook Islands (1954, sec. 5 (1)).

²⁰³ Cook Islands (1954, secs. 4 (1), 5 (1)).

²⁰⁴ FSM (1971, secs. 1205 (1), 1206 (1)).

²⁰⁵ FSM (1971, sec. 1210 (1)).

²⁰⁶ FSM (1971, sec. 1210 (1)).

²⁰⁷ FSM (1971, sec. 1208).

- ²⁰⁸ Fiji (1962, sec. 4 (1)).
- ²⁰⁹ Fiji (1962, sec. 10 (1)).
- ²¹⁰ Fiji (1962, sec. 10 (1)).
- ²¹¹ Fiji (1962, sec. 16 (1)).
- ²¹² Fiji (1962, sec. 18).
- ²¹³ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 4 (1)).
- ²¹⁴ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 10 (1)).
- ²¹⁵ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 10 (1)).
- ²¹⁶ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 16 (1)).
- ²¹⁷ Kiribati (1977a, sec. 18).
- ²¹⁸ Nauru (1936–67).
- ²¹⁹ Nauru (1936–67, secs. 5, 6).
- ²²⁰ New Caledonia (1982, art. 30).
- ²²¹ New Caledonia (1982, art. 30).
- ²²² New Caledonia (1982, art. 30).
- ²²³ New Caledonia (1982, art. 30).
- ²²⁴ New Caledonia (1982, art. 30).
- ²²⁵ New Zealand (1983, sec. 20).
- ²²⁶ New Zealand (1983, sec. 5).
- ²²⁷ New Zealand (1983, sec. 5).
- ²²⁸ New Zealand (1983, sec. 16).
- ²²⁹ New Zealand Ministry of Disarmament and Arms Control (n.d.).
- ²³⁰ Niue (1975, sec. 4 (1)).
- ²³¹ Niue (1966, sec. 70 (1)).
- ²³² Palau (n.d.a, superceded by n.d.b, sec. 3306 (a) & (b)).
- ²³³ Palau (n.d.a, superceded by n.d.b, sec. 3306 (a) & (b)).
- ²³⁴ Palau (n.d.a, superceded by n.d.b, sec. 3306 (a)).
- ²³⁵ Papua New Guinea (1978, sec. 6).
- ²³⁶ Papua New Guinea (1978, sec. 39 (a)).
- ²³⁷ Papua New Guinea (1996, sec. 7A).
- ²³⁸ Republic of Marshall Islands (1983).
- ²³⁹ Republic of Marshall Islands (1983).
- ²⁴⁰ Republic of Marshall Islands (1983).
- ²⁴¹ Republic of Marshall Islands (1983).
- ²⁴² Samoa (1960, sec. 7 (1)).
- ²⁴³ Samoa (1960, sec. 3 (1)).
- ²⁴⁴ Samoa (1960, sec. 6 (1)).
- ²⁴⁵ Solomon Islands (1968, sec. 5 (1)).
- ²⁴⁶ Solomon Islands (1968, sec. 11 (1)).
- ²⁴⁷ Solomon Islands (1968, sec. 11 (1)).
- ²⁴⁸ Solomon Islands (1968, sec. 15 (1)).
- ²⁴⁹ Solomon Islands (1968, sec. 17 (1)).
- ²⁵⁰ Tonga (1968, sec. 4 (1)).
- ²⁵¹ Tonga (1968, sec. 10).
- ²⁵² Tonga (1968, sec. 10 (a)).
- ²⁵³ Tonga (1968, sec. 15 (1)).
- ²⁵⁴ Tonga (1968, sec. 17 (1)).
- ²⁵⁵ Tuvalu (1964, sec. 4 (1)).
- ²⁵⁶ Tuvalu (1964, sec. 3 (1)).
- ²⁵⁷ Tuvalu (1964, sec. 12 (1)).
- ²⁵⁸ Tuvalu (1964, sec. 14 (1)).
- ²⁵⁹ Vanuatu (1987, sec. 3).
- ²⁶⁰ Vanuatu (1987, sec. 6 (a)).
- ²⁶¹ Vanuatu (1987, sec. 6 (a)).
- ²⁶² Vanuatu (1987, sec. 7).
- ²⁶³ Interview with Michael Sala, Deputy Police Commissioner, American Samoa Dept. of Public Safety, Pago Pago, 13 Feb. 2003.
- ²⁶⁴ The use of the term 'prohibited' in Australian legislation can be misleading. Thousands of prohibited firearms, from machine guns to semi-automatic centre-fire rifles, remain legally owned by appropriately licensed civilian collectors, pest control contractors, and the like. For purposes of comparison, the Australian 'prohibited' category is equivalent to the 'restricted' category in most other jurisdictions.
- ²⁶⁵ These included a peace package proposed in 1989 by the Papua New Guinea government and the then North Solomons provincial government, talks in 1990 and 1991, a cease-fire in 1990 and 1994, a 1994 peace conference, the establishment of the Bougainville Transitional Government in April 1995, and a peace plan in early 1997; see Regan (1999).
- ²⁶⁶ E-mail communications with Tim Marsden, PMG monitor, 18 Aug. 2002 and Flt.- Sgt. John Phillips, former RNZAF IPMT armourer, 17 Aug. 2002. No standard official definition exists for 'high-powered' weapons in either the Solomon Islands or Bougainville disarmament processes. In Bougainville, peace monitors have loosely defined them as a factory manufactured military style weapon (M-16, AR-15, SLR, FAMAS, SIG, etc.) . In the Solomon Islands, the IPMT defined a military weapon as 'any high-powered centre-fire semi-automatic, automatic, bolt

action, magazine fed shotgun, riot gun, or signal pistol issued to members of the Solomon Islands police'; in other words, any high-powered weapon was, by default, a military weapon.

²⁶⁷ Personal communication with Lt.-Col. Andrew Morris, Defence Adviser, NZ High Commission, Port Moresby, 20 May 2002.

²⁶⁸ Personal communication with Lt.-Col. Andrew Morris, Defence Adviser, NZ High Commission, Port Moresby, 20 May 2002.

²⁶⁹ Personal communication with Bill Pollock, PMG, Arawa, 12 June 2002.

²⁷⁰ Personal communication with Chris Appleton, PMG Commander and Corinne Tompkinson, PMG Chief Negotiator, 13 June 2002.

²⁷¹ Personal communication with Br. Ken McDonald, Principal, Mabiri Marist School, Arawa, Bougainville, 12 June 2002.

²⁷² Personal communications with Chris Appleton, PMG Commander and Corinne Tompkinson, PMG Chief Negotiator, 13 June 2002.

²⁷³ Personal communications with Chris Appleton, PMG Commander and Corinne Tompkinson, PMG Chief Negotiator, 13 June 2002.

²⁷⁴ PGK 200,000, NZD 500,000, and PGK 132,000 were provided by the Papua New Guinea, NZ, and UK governments respectively (e-mail communication with Fred Terry, Project Manager, UNDP Bougainville Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Development Project, Arawa, 26 June 2002).

²⁷⁵ Personal communication with Tessa Te Mata, First Secretary, NZ Overseas Development Assistance, Papua New Guinea High Commission, Port Moresby, 20 May 2002.

²⁷⁶ Personal communication with Chris Appleton, PMG Commander, 13 June 2002.

²⁷⁷ These included the June 1999 *Honiara Peace Accord*, the *Marau Communiqué*, signed in July 1999, the August 1999 *Panatina Agreement*, the *Buala Peace Communiqué* of 5 May 2000, and the *Auki Communiqué* of 12 May 2000.

²⁷⁸ A home-made firearm is any locally made firearm with a barrel and stock.

²⁷⁹ A commercial firearm is any civilian recreational firearm not defined as being military.

²⁸⁰ A military firearm is any high-powered centre-fire semi-automatic, automatic, bolt-action, magazine-fed shotgun, riot gun, or signal pistol issued to members of the RSIP.

²⁸¹ 'Other' are non-firearm weapons such as bows and spears, etc.

²⁸² 'Total weapons' includes 'Other'.

²⁸³ E-mail communication with Flt.-Sgt. John Phillips, former RNZAF IPMT armourer, June 2002.

²⁸⁴ The exact number of weapons under the control of the police could not be calculated, as many weapons held by police posts in outer islands or issued to individual police officers were not all documented in a central recording system. Subsequent audits conducted by the IPMT also did not ascertain the number of weapons issued to local officers (Phillips, n.d., p. 1).

²⁸⁵ Possible outstanding = High count minus (Police issue 6 Dec. 2000 + Held by IPMT + 22 June 2001 audit).

²⁸⁶ This negative number may be because more firearms of that type were returned than were originally recorded as being part of the RSIP armoury.

²⁸⁷ Personal communication with Trisha Gray, Solomon Islands Programme Manager, AusAID, Canberra, 24 April 2002.

²⁸⁸ E-mail communication.

²⁸⁹ Interview with David Hegarty, Convenor, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Programme, ANU, Canberra, 22 April 2002.

²⁹⁰ Personal communication with Joy Kere, PMC monitor, Honiara, 29 May 2002.

²⁹¹ Personal communication with Trisha Gray, Solomon Islands Programme Manager, AusAID, Canberra, 24 April 2002.

²⁹² Interview with Mary-Louise O Callaghan, Pacific correspondent for The Australian, Honiara, 27 May 2002.

²⁹³ Personal correspondence with Flt.-Sgt. John Phillips, former RNZAF IPMT armourer, June 2002.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Trisha Gray, Solomon Islands Programme Manager, AusAID, Canberra, 24 April 2002.

²⁹⁵ Interview with Kees Kingma, Co-ordinator, UNDP Peace and Development Programme in the Solomon Islands, 26 May 2002.

²⁹⁶ Interview with Kees Kingma, Co-ordinator, UNDP Peace and Development Programme in the Solomon Islands, Honiara, 26 May 2002.

²⁹⁷ Personal correspondence with David Apps, AusAID Adviser, Honiara, 24 May 2002 and Marsali Mackinnon, PMC Communications Adviser, Honiara, 1 June 2002.

²⁹⁸ Number still outstanding June 2002 = Original baseline audit figure minus (Total firearms surrendered to IPMT + June 2002 IPMT Rove audit).

²⁹⁹ Personal communication with Kees Kingma, Co-ordinator, UNDP Peace and Development Programme in the Solomon Islands, Honiara, 26 May 2002.

³⁰⁰ Personal communication with Henry Tobani, PMC monitor, Honiara, 28 May 2002.

³⁰¹ Interviews with John Fennessy, Leader of the IPMT and Tony McLeod, IPMT Deputy Leader, Honiara, 28 May 2002.

³⁰² Interview with Henry Tobani, PMC monitor, Honiara, 28 May 2002.

³⁰³ Personal communication with Dr Sinclair Dinnen, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Programme, ANU, Canberra, 22 April 2002.

³⁰⁴ Personal communication with David Hegarty, Convenor, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Programme, ANU, Canberra, 22 April 2002.

³⁰⁵ Personal communication with Bob Pollard, Solomon Islands Christian Association, Honiara, 28 May 2002; BTCC (2002).

³⁰⁶ Personal communication with David Hegarty, Convenor, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Programme, ANU, Canberra, 22 April 2002.

³⁰⁷ In 1997, for instance, the OAS (1997) adopted the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, while in 1998, ECOWAS agreed to a three-year moratorium on the manufacture, export, and import of small arms and light weapons.

³⁰⁸ Formed in 1971, the PIF includes Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. New Caledonia has had observer status since 1999.

³⁰⁹ The *Nadi Framework* model legislation proposes benchmark penalties in Australian dollars, as a guideline for conversion to local currencies in any subsequent national legislation.

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