

**International Assistance  
for Implementing the UN Programme of Action  
on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms  
and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects**

**Case Study of the South Pacific**

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## SUMMARY

Over the years, different Pacific island countries have felt the destabilizing effects of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to varying degrees. The impact of SALW on Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands has been, and for Papua New Guinea continues to be, devastating on local populations. Although SALW is not typically associated with the islands of the South Pacific, the mere presence of a few small arms, or even rumours of their presence, is enough to displace families and communities and fuel the demand for SALW.

This report finds that without overstating the threat of SALW to individual countries in the Pacific, there is critical and timely work to be done to improve national and subregional capacities to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Combat, Eradicate and Prevent the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA). While the remoteness of the islands and their small populations make them unlikely targets for large-scale arms traffickers, the current gaps in legislation and enforcement are readily exploitable by those wishing to bring in SALW illegally, particularly if linked to the avenues used for crime existing in the area such as illegal fishing and logging, piracy and human, drug and wildlife smuggling.

The interests in addressing SALW in the case study countries reflected in this report centre on preventing illicit SALW from entering the country, being able to account for and keep adequate records on existing weapons held by private individuals, monitoring undeclared firearms from entering the country on a small scale, and overseeing and accommodating for new challenges such as in the area of private security. The relationship between security and development is also gaining in importance as issues relating to property rights, resource depletion, rapidly increasing populations and the high number of youths facing unemployment, urban migration, competing systems of traditional and formal law and governance systems, and the increasingly sophisticated nature of crime pose ever-burdening pressures on limited resources.

The countries studied in this report—Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu—have distinct experiences with SALW and assign different levels of priority to implementation of the PoA. This report presents a number of entry points for SALW action and international assistance to help advance implementation of the PoA and to address SALW more broadly. In a subregion heavily dependent on assistance, the Pacific island countries have limited human and financial resources at their disposal to address SALW and security-related concerns more broadly. Strategic approaches to identify and coordinate between national and regional priorities on SALW, border controls, security, terrorism and organized crime are needed in order to pool and make best use of available resources, aid and cooperation.

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## INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) was agreed by all Member States of the United Nations in 2001. Eight years later, the PoA remains the principle UN policy document for addressing small arms and light weapons (SALW), and provides the central framework that states can use to channel SALW-related international assistance.

The PoA has led to a number of achievements in the area of SALW; however, the carefully agreed content of the PoA focuses the instrument on dealing with the illicit trade. This means that discussions taking place on improving the identification of what forms of assistance are useful and necessary, and the coordination of such assistance, are also confined to aspects of SALW specific to the illicit trade that may not be manifest in a given country's experience with SALW, whether illicit or not.

What does the specific scope of the PoA mean for countries where the illicit trade in SALW is not the primary problem, but where the destabilizing effects of SALW are still felt on social and political development and where infrastructure and capacity are insufficient to handle SALW problems of any kind that may arise? A case study in the South Pacific provides a means for addressing this question. This report examines the needs for international SALW assistance as expressed in five states—Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Each of these countries has distinct experiences with SALW and has severely limited resources at their disposal to engage with present or potential problems.

- Fiji has had four coups d'état since 1987 and is governed by an interim military regime that strictly controls access and use of SALW.
- The level of armed crime in the capital city of Papua New Guinea places it among the most dangerous cities in the world, while SALW feature prominently in ethnic and tribal conflict in the Highland provinces. Its newly autonomous province of Bougainville faces post-conflict challenges, including the clean-up and control of SALW that continue to proliferate on the island.
- SALW had a significant role in the instabilities of the Solomon Islands from 1998 to 2003. The country is now a fully disarmed and gun-free state, with the exception of those SALW held by the peacekeepers and police officers of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI).
- Tonga is the last monarchy in the South Pacific. Frustration over the slow pace of democratic reforms, among other things, led to riots in the capital of Nuku'alofa in 2006. SALW are rarely used in crimes.
- Vanuatu has experienced a few SALW-related incidents over the years, but knives are more likely to be used in armed crime than SALW. With crime on the rise, the call to address SALW is growing.

By examining in each of these countries the types of international assistance that could enable and improve engagement with SALW, this report outlines what activities should already be taking place under Section III of the PoA. Furthermore, this report highlights the gaps between the assistance needs of these countries and the types of assistance put forth in the PoA, in order to suggest how to approach SALW issues that may not fall under the PoA's rubric of the illicit trade. The report further highlights challenges associated with international assistance in addressing SALW in the subregion, and makes recommendations on how national

and regional actors in the subregion could advance on issues relevant to SALW, whether illicit or not.



## OVERVIEW OF POA IMPLEMENTATION

### NATIONAL-LEVEL COMMITMENTS

Section II of the PoA covers the national-, regional- and global-level commitments made by states to address the illicit trade in SALW. Among the national-level commitments are:

- ensuring national coordination to address the illicit trade;
- putting in place laws, regulations and administrative procedures on illicit manufacturing, brokering, stockpiling and transfer of SALW;
- managing exports, re-exports and respecting arms embargoes;
- developing standards and procedures on stockpile management;
- ensuring the disposal of collected and surplus weapons;
- ensuring record-keeping and marking by, and licensing of, manufacturers; and
- implementing, where needed, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, and addressing the needs of children affected by armed conflict.

However, many of the national-level commitments in the PoA do not seem to engage with the nature of SALW problems as experienced in the case study countries. None manufacture weapons, state stockpiles are so small that surplus and re-exportation are rare, and the isolation of the islands (from each other, and from the rest of the world) makes transit, legal and otherwise, difficult. The SALW that do pose a threat to the countries in question generally have come from state stockpiles—where leaks generally have resulted from poor oversight and accountability, not necessarily lapses in physical security—or have been brought into the country singly by individuals. Large-scale trafficking is not present in the case study countries, mostly because there is simply not such a demand for SALW.

There are, nevertheless, a number of national commitments in Section II that are relevant to the situations in the case study countries, and where action should be taken. The laws, regulations and administrative procedures specific to SALW in each of the countries do not address or reflect the concerns of the PoA and need modernizing according to good practice, particularly with respect to transit, brokering and for formally establishing certain activities as criminal offences. The case is the same for customs legislation, as it rarely covers elements that would help to address SALW problems. There is also a lack of established procedures for handling or disposing of weapons that have been confiscated or that are held as evidence in the legal systems. And, while all the case study countries have a national point of contact for PoA implementation, the instrument is understood in terms of foreign policy obligations, not in terms of the control of SALW and associated problems. As such, national coordination on the issue is minimal.

While not a concern for all of the case study countries, reintegration of former combatants continues to be an issue in the Solomon Islands. In Papua New Guinea, DDR-type activities are being discussed for Bougainville, although the emphasis currently is placed on general weapons disposal.

## REGIONAL-LEVEL COMMITMENTS

The regional-level commitments laid out in Section II of the PoA include:

- establishing subregional or regional mechanisms for customs cooperation and networks for information-sharing among law enforcement and border and customs control agencies;
- encouraging states to promote effective stockpile management and security; and
- supporting national DDR programmes.

The main regional bodies relevant to PoA commitments are the Pacific Islands Forum, the region's intergovernmental body, which includes the Forum Regional Security Committee; the Oceania Customs Organisation; and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (known until 2005 as the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference). Each of the case study countries belongs to these bodies.

The Pacific Islands Forum, with its Pacific Plan, seeks to further development through greater regional cooperation. The Plan will address SALW-related issues, such as transnational organized crime and terrorism. The Oceania Customs Organisation serves as an information-sharing body, and aims to improve the national capacity of customs services in the region through technical assistance, training, policy advice and capacity-building. The Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police provides training to the police forces of its member states, and seeks to enhance information and cooperation among them.

Fifteen states of the region, including the case study countries, have been involved in RAMSI, which works toward recovery and development in a post-conflict environment, and which has included a disarmament component in its aims to bring stability to the Solomon Islands.

Section II of the PoA also includes the regional-level commitment to encourage negotiations that could lead to a legally binding instrument to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade of SALW. In 1998, the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference drafted the Honiara Initiative, which proposed a common regional approach to weapons control. This led to the development and signing of the Nadi Framework in 2000. It is grounded in two principles: to confirm 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 to improve public safety by imposing strict controls on the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, other related materials and prohibited weapons.<sup>1</sup> It covers such issues as legislation; marking; weapons confiscation or forfeiture; export, import and transit licences or authorization; strengthening of controls at entry and exit points; record-keeping; and information exchanges. The framework, produced by an expert working group composed of representatives of the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, Pacific Island Forum, Immigration Officers Organisation and the Oceania Customs Organisation, was followed by the development of a model weapons control bill in 2001 that comprehensively explains, elaborates and guides implementation of the measures contained in the Nadi Framework. However, efforts behind the framework and the model bill have lost strength, and at the time of writing there appears to be little awareness of them and their current status in the case study countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Towards a Common Approach to Weapons Control (Nadi Framework), Nadi, 10 March 2000.

## IMPLEMENTATION, INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION

Section III of the PoA covers implementation, international assistance and cooperation. The section states that “States and appropriate international and regional organizations in a position to do so should, upon request of the relevant authorities, seriously consider rendering assistance ... to support the implementation of the measures ... contained in the Programme of Action”. All of the case study countries are classified by the United Nations as Small Island Developing States—two of which (the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) rank as Least Developed Countries—and thus international assistance is essential for these states to fulfil their commitments with regard to the PoA.

Section III of the PoA includes the following issues:

- strengthening and building partnerships;
- conflict prevention;
- strengthening legislative frameworks;
- law enforcement;
- stockpile management and security;
- destruction and disposal;
- customs and borders;
- marking and tracing;
- coordination and engagement with international and regional information-sharing networks and mechanisms;
- mutual legal assistance;
- drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism;
- DDR;
- sustainable development; and
- research for greater awareness and understanding of the illicit trade in SALW.

Most forms of assistance encouraged in Section III concentrate on support for coordination, training and information exchange on a range of issues, which is largely the same nature of assistance provided through regional initiatives to the case study countries.

Australia and New Zealand provide assistance to the law enforcement structures in each of the case study countries, though assistance to Fiji has been suspended, except for essential services in areas such as health and education, since the 2006 coup d'état. As part of its Law Enforcement Cooperation Program, the Australian Federal Police, with the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, established the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre. The Centre, based in Samoa, manages and coordinates criminal intelligence provided by its network of Transnational Crime Units (TCUs) and regional law enforcement agencies. Four of the case study countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu) host TCUs. Another unit is being established in the Solomon Islands. Under the guidance of the Australian Federal Police and New Zealand Police, Combined Law Agency Groups were also formed in each of the countries. These groups bring together customs, police, coast guard and immigration to promote the sharing of information and to coordinate on combating criminal activities.

In 2008 Australia re-established a multi-year assistance programme to support infrastructure, training, equipment and recruitment for law enforcement in Papua New Guinea (the Strongim Gavman Program). A new policing system is necessary for the newly autonomous Bougainville and while Australia provides support for this through its Law and Justice

Programme, New Zealand has provided assistance particularly for community policing.<sup>2</sup> In Tonga, a new Tonga Police Strategic Plan has been developed for 2009, which will complement the recent five-year Tonga Police Development Project, which focuses on training and the provision of basic equipment (but not weapons).<sup>3</sup> Both of these undertakings receive significant financial and technical support from the New Zealand Police, Australian Federal Police, the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZ Aid) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Australia also supports the Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Project, which commenced in February 2006.

Following the 2000 coup d'état in Fiji, the severe stockpile leakages in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, and the incidents over time of armouries being raided in the case study countries, Australia and New Zealand responded to states' need for stockpile management and security in the subregion by building new armouries, strengthening existing armouries or supplying secure containers as required in each of the case study countries.

Destruction of SALW has taken place mainly in the context of post-conflict recovery in the Solomon Islands (under the aegis of RAMSI) and in Papua New Guinea. The case study countries noted that resources and funding are generally available when assistance is required for conducting destruction. Destruction will remain a top priority for Papua New Guinea, however particularly so in Bougainville—although 2008 was known in Bougainville as the year for weapons disposal, weapons continue to pose a serious problem and thus weapons collection and destruction continue to be a priority.

Despite the fact that the illicit trade of SALW as such is not a priority concern for the case study countries, there are a number of SALW-related concerns that are relevant for them, including prevention of the illicit trade and undeclared arms in the possession of private individuals. The PoA can be used as an entry point for addressing these concerns. However, in order for the parameters of international assistance to meet the full needs of these countries, they would have to extend beyond the PoA. The following section contains country-level profiles that outline the SALW situation and needs for international assistance in detail.

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<sup>2</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>3</sup> "Tonga's police force getting \$4m make-over", Matangi Tonga Online, 3 July 2008.

## COUNTRY PROFILES: SALW AND INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

### FIJI

The interim government in Fiji came about in a bloodless coup d'état when the Fijian Military took control of the government in 2006, marking the state's fourth coup d'état since 1987. One of the first steps taken by the military government was to disarm the national police force and to give the military a monopoly over access and use of SALW. Despite the military's monopoly over SALW, there is a small number of legally held private weapons for sport shooting and farmland protection, which are tightly controlled by the government.

Public perceptions of the military vary, ranging from a prestigious employer,<sup>4</sup> to an intimidating presence. Violations of human rights by the military, in the form of armed threats and unlawful holding of individuals, have also been reported.<sup>5</sup> There is public concern that the military culture is eroding traditional institutions and government accountability. Nevertheless, Fiji is a regional hub of commercial and tourist activity and hosts a number of regionally focused international organizations; it is often a transit point for travelling to other Pacific Islands.

SALW as a stand-alone issue has not been considered a significant concern for the interim military government.<sup>6</sup> Its security-related priorities centre on drug trafficking and other transnational crimes such as human trafficking, counterfeiting, money laundering, customs and revenue fraud and wildlife smuggling. Some interviewees expressed concern that Fiji is increasingly opening up to Asian crime rings.<sup>7</sup>

In response to the 2006 coup d'état, Australia and New Zealand imposed restrictions on the export of arms and ammunition to Fiji, and other states have followed suit by refusing import applications submitted by Fiji. Consequently, there is a reported shortage of ammunition available for recreational use and farmland protection, which some fear could encourage the illicit market.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The military represents a desirable career choice for many youths, especially as it can involve participation in one of Fiji's peacekeeping missions abroad (e.g. Iraq, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste). Over 3,000 young men and women also serve in the British Army, providing high remittances for families back home. Interview with Peniame Naqasima, Acting Deputy Secretary, Fijian Ministry of Defence, National Security and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Interviews with Ema Tagicakibau, Campaigner, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, Suva, 23 September 2008; Virisila Buadromo, Executive Director, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Suva, 6 October 2008. See also "US report highlights Fiji human rights abuses", *Fiji Times Online*, 7 March 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Interviews with the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 22 September 2008; Murray Isimeli, Acting Director, Political and Treaties Division, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Civil Aviation, Suva, 26 September 2008; Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Customs and Revenue Authority, 23 September 2008; Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008; Isireli Narawa, Disaster Management Office spokesperson, and Makereta Lasike, Focal Point, Ministry of Defence, Internal Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008; Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Interviews with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 22 September 2008.

## **NATIONAL COORDINATION ON SALW**

The focal point for PoA implementation is the Ministry of Defence, National Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, though there is no desk officer specifically assigned to address SALW.<sup>9</sup> Fiji submitted a national report on implementation of the PoA in 2004.

Fiji was the first host of the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre, though it moved to Samoa following the 2006 coup d'état. Fiji's own TCU was established in July 2002.

The police and customs collaborate to a small degree, which increases the utility of available resources. Representatives from both entities noted that the cooperation could be strengthened, particularly with respect to information-sharing systems, training and joint operation procedures for monitoring maritime borders.<sup>10</sup>

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Fiji passed an Arms and Ammunition Act in 2003, which was developed to reflect the Honiara Initiative and the Nadi Framework, and covers issues such as production, export, import, transit and retransfer, while criminalizing the illicit manufacturing, stockpiling and possession of SALW. It has yet to be enacted; the delay in its enactment is cited to be caused by a lack of human resources and expertise available to prepare secondary legislation and regulations and because of the changes in the political environment following the coup d'état of 2006.<sup>11</sup> With one staff member to draft all of the state's legislation, consultants often need to be hired.<sup>12</sup>

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The National Police are tasked with dealing with SALW issues. However, as the police force has been disarmed and is not permitted access to arms, the military must be called in to support the police in situations where arms are present or required.

There is little police presence in the outer islands and few resources are available for law enforcement officers to visit the more remote islands when required. Another resource limitation relates to access to international information-sharing networks. Interviewees noted that law enforcement could benefit from information on and exposure to international networks such as the INTERPOL Weapons Electronic Tracing System (IWeTS).

Senior police officials identified the need for better training on human rights, use of force and lawful interrogation practices, in addition to training to improve internal oversight within the police force.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with Peniame Naqasima, Acting Deputy Secretary, Fijian Ministry of Defence, National Security and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Interviews with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Customs and Revenue Authority, 23 September 2008; Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008; Isireli Narawa, Disaster Management Office spokesperson, and Makereta Lasike, Focal Point, Ministry of Defence, Internal Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Selai Lewanitoga, Legal Officer, Attorney General's Office, Suva, 25 September 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Idem.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008.

## CUSTOMS AND BORDERS

Weapons and their components enter Fiji illegally through the postal system, in luggage and among personal effects, and in small air or sea craft.<sup>14</sup> Peacekeepers or other military officers serving abroad return from their postings and may bypass customs with weapons acquired abroad or may simply send them through the postal service.<sup>15</sup> In one case police encountered a firearm held by a minor whose father was currently serving in Iraq.<sup>16</sup> Relying heavily on manual inspections and an outdated record-keeping system,<sup>17</sup> customs and the postal service have no access to x-ray and scanning technology.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly to the other case study countries, private and commercial boats carry arms onboard (the vast majority carry firearms) for self-protection. Tourism and boat racing account for a large number of vessels to be cleared for entry and Fiji is also a regional hub for commercial vessels.<sup>19</sup> All vessels are expected to declare the arms they have onboard. For those staying less than a week, arms must be sealed securely on board. If the intended visit will be longer than a week, the arms are taken into police custody until the owner returns to pick up the items up prior to departure and returns unescorted with the arms back to their vessel.<sup>20</sup> If customs seizes illegal items, those are transferred to police custody,<sup>21</sup> though the lines of how this proceeds is unclear given that the police must defer all handling of weapons to the military.

It is reported that some weapon owners forget to retrieve their weapons, and there are no procedures in place for handling the forgotten weapons. Representatives of the Australian High Commission expressed concern that confiscated weapons have not been properly disposed of.<sup>22</sup> Similarly there are no procedures in place in Fiji for securing and tracking weapons once they are in the court system.<sup>23</sup>

According to the Oceania Customs Organisation, Fiji is reasonably well advanced in technical, administrative and customs legislation;<sup>24</sup> nevertheless, monitoring Fiji's 1.2 million km<sup>2</sup> exclusive economic zone remains a considerable challenge in terms of human resources and physical infrastructure. For instance, customs has one boat responsible for covering all issues in the zone, such as monitoring the fishing industry, enforcing quarantine, and

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with the Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Peniame Naqasima, Acting Deputy Secretary, Fijian Ministry of Defence, National Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>16</sup> "Fiji Police suspect guns from Middle East", Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association, 27 March 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Suva, 25 September 2008. Note, Whole of Government is the term used by the government to describe its multi-agency integrative approach to handling issues that cross portfolio boundaries.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>19</sup> Idem.

<sup>20</sup> Idem.

<sup>21</sup> Idem.

<sup>22</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Suva, 25 September 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Idem.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with the Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008.

investigating immigration, and human and drug trafficking. There is also a lack of access and training to international monitoring systems.<sup>25</sup>

Customs is staffed by approximately 770 individuals, although the Acting General Manager of Customs and Revenue notes that the staff must be increased by 146 in order to achieve an effective customs service.<sup>26</sup> The navy assists in the monitoring of territorial waters with its 300 naval officers and seven ships, although the relationship between the navy and customs could be more formalized,<sup>27</sup> and the navy also has limited human and material resources, including fuel, at its disposition, which limits the extent to which it can support monitoring.<sup>28</sup>

Support is also provided by certain civil society groups such as Greenpeace.<sup>29</sup> There is a reporting system in place to allow the outer islands to communicate to the Ministry of Defence about vessels entering national territory unofficially.<sup>30</sup> A naval officer noted, "We are probably not aware of 90% of what is actually taking place in our waters".<sup>31</sup>

There are a number of training programmes for customs officials. However, given the organizational culture of Fiji's public services, staff is frequently rotated from one post or portfolio to another and thus the benefits of the training is short-lived and must be frequently repeated.<sup>32</sup> There are few nationally based training programmes that focus on searching techniques for small craft, and on recognizing parts and components of SALW in luggage and parcel post and identifying fraudulent documents.<sup>33</sup> Further, as training generally takes place abroad, it does not factor in the conditions and resources available to officers in Fiji and draws staff members away from their duties, exacerbating the chronic shortage of personnel.

## **NATIONAL REGISTRIES AND LICENSING**

The firearms unit within the police force consists of four to five people responsible for the licensing and registration of private arms. Registration and licensing records are kept manually, though an electronic database is desired.<sup>34</sup>

Firearm licences are issued for sport shooting, hunting and farming. Licenses must be renewed on an annual basis. For applicants over 60 years of age, an evaluation of mental

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>26</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008.

<sup>28</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Isireli Narawa, Disaster Management Office spokesperson, and Makereta Lasike, Focal Point, Ministry of Defence, Internal Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>30</sup> Interviews with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008; Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008; Isireli Narawa, Disaster Management Office spokesperson, and Makereta Lasike, Focal Point, Ministry of Defence, Internal Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008.

<sup>31</sup> Interviews with Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Interviews with Isireli Narawa, Disaster Management Office spokesperson, and Makereta Lasike, Focal Point, Ministry of Defence, Internal Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008; Cecilia Warren, Second Secretary, New Zealand High Commission, Suva, 6 October 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Interviews with the Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008.



health is required. Representatives of the firearms unit noted that firearms safety campaigns are necessary, through seminars, trainings or publications.<sup>35</sup>

## **SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Fiji has historically been a relatively peaceful country, though a number of interviewees referred to tensions between different sectors of society, such as between indigenous and Indo-Fijian communities or along socio-economic or clan cleavages, which politicians are alleged to exploit.<sup>36</sup>

Over a third of the population (37%) live below the poverty line. Increasingly, individuals and families are moving to urban areas to seek gainful employment. A large proportion of youth poses a growing challenge, particularly in light of the lack of rural development and opportunities, inadequate delivery of services, rural–urban migration and rising unemployment. The fact that more than half of Fiji’s population (53%) is under the age of 25 means that these challenges will be exacerbated by a youth bulge that will soon be competing for the limited services, employment and resources.

Local crime is a growing concern for the police, resulting in national efforts in crime prevention. One such effort is the establishment of “crime free days”, whereby events and concerts will be organized to celebrate if no crimes are reported on the specified days.<sup>37</sup>

## **SUMMARY OF NEEDS FOR INTERNATIONAL SALW ASSISTANCE**

In response to the current political situation in Fiji, the two principle donors of international assistance in the Pacific—Australia and New Zealand—have suspended aid to Fiji aside from essential activities in areas such as health and education. Nevertheless, Fiji, being a regional hub of commercial activity, has an important role to play in combating the illicit trade in SALW.

Given that SALW is considered to be a matter for the police in Fiji, and yet they must defer to the military when the handling of arms is required or in certain law enforcement matters, the line between the police and military can be ambiguous in the eyes of the public. Considering the excessive use of force displayed by the police and rights violations on the part of the military, much work remains to be done in terms of ensuring greater accountability of the security sector and in earning the confidence of the public. Fiji’s security sector could thus benefit from training in the use of force, discipline and gender sensitivity.

More nationally based training programmes for customs and revenue staff is necessary in the areas of data collection, analysis and risk management.<sup>38</sup> Support for establishing and maintaining joint training and operations among the police, customs, immigration and navy could improve cooperation and coordination and make best use of limited resources.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Idem.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Mathew Leslie, Regional Security Adviser, and Lawrie Cremin, Political Issues Adviser, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva, 26 September 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Suva, 25 September 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with the Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>39</sup> Interviews with Peniame Naqasima, Acting Deputy Secretary, Fijian Ministry of Defence, National Security, Disaster Management and Immigration, Suva, 22 September 2008; Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 22 September 2008; Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008; Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008; Lt Cdr John Foxx, Navy, Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 24 September 2008.

However, a review of and changes to the staff rotation system may be necessary to complement training efforts in order to allow for more concentrated and less repetitious training.

Other options for SALW-related assistance for Fiji include support for establishing secondary legislation and regulations for the Arms and Ammunition Act, bolstering Fiji's monitoring capacity of the postal system, airports and territorial waters, and access and training to international communication networks such as IWeTs are also necessary.

#### **NATIONALLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

##### *Laws, regulations and administrative procedures:*

- developing secondary legislation and regulations for the Arms and Ammunition Act; and
- awareness-raising, promotion and enforcement of the Arms and Ammunition Act once it is enacted.

##### *Law enforcement:*

- training in human rights, use of force and conflict mediation/resolution techniques;
- training in self-discipline and gender sensitivity;
- providing psychosocial support and sensitization to address and minimize domestic abuse perpetrated by members of the security forces; and
- enhancing mobility to outer islands and providing physical resources to dispatch officers throughout the islands.

##### *Customs and borders:*

- reviewing the legislative framework with respect to SALW-related matters;
- strengthening physical infrastructure in terms of patrol boats and availability of fuel, access to technology (for example, x-ray machines or scanners at ports of entry, including for the postal services), communications and record-keeping;
- providing access and training in international information-sharing networks;
- training in detection and investigation of SALW and components; and
- supporting information-sharing and strengthening of coordination mechanisms among different government stakeholders, particularly with respect to joint operations between the police and customs.

##### *National registry and licences:*

- systematizing the auditing of firearms;
- developing an electronic record-keeping system for firearms licenses; and
- conducting awareness-raising programmes, and firearm safety training, seminars or publications targeting those with licenses.

##### *Security and development:*

- supporting employment schemes and micro-financing that target the high number of unemployed youths and the emerging youth bulge; and
- establishing and sustaining a crime prevention strategy, with a specific focus on youth.

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SALW is an identified top priority issue for the government of Papua New Guinea. Armed crime in the form of murder; robbery; street, gang and sexual violence; banditry; carjackings and kidnapping rank Port Moresby and Lae among the most dangerous cities in the world.<sup>40</sup> According to Australia-funded community crime surveys, two thirds of households have been victim of such crimes, some on multiple occasions.<sup>41</sup>

While unemployment and poverty are seen as contributing to the armed violence in the urban settings, tribal and inter-clan conflicts in the Highlands are another manifestation of SALW violence. During the field research for this study, 22 disputes were taking place in the Eastern Highlands alone.<sup>42</sup> Communities pool resources to purchase firearms for protection and also to rent them—and armed individuals—out for payment.<sup>43</sup> In the Highlands, “fighting is both a recurrent and legitimate means of prosecuting claims or seeking restitution”.<sup>44</sup>

In a third manifestation of SALW violence in Papua New Guinea, the newly autonomous island of Bougainville is facing post-conflict recovery, peacebuilding, a re-establishment of the rule of law, and disarmament and weapons collection and disposal. Now self-governed by the Autonomous Bougainville Government following from the elections in 2005, the island is undergoing a transitional period until 2015, at which time a referendum will determine Bougainville’s political future.<sup>45</sup>

SALW in Bougainville remains a key concern for both the Autonomous Bougainville Government and the national government and many political candidates and civil society are pushing a platform of a gun-free Bougainville.<sup>46</sup> The first phases of implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement were met with success, but the situation in the south has since been deteriorating and the number of weapons that remain in circulation is unknown.<sup>47</sup> The Director of the National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs states, “I believe we have more guns on the island than when we signed [the peace agreement] in 2001”.<sup>48</sup> Increasingly, a higher number of arms-related incidents are being reported and vehicle inspections yield more guns in cars than in earlier phases of the peace process.<sup>49</sup>

Confirmed reports of high-powered weapons as well as ammunition, which were left well preserved in old war bunkers near Torokina from the Second World War, are being dug up and sold to Noah Musingku’s army in Tonu, in southern Bougainville, which has led to speculation

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<sup>40</sup> S. Dinnen and E. Thompson, “Gender and Small Arms Violence in Papua New Guinea”, Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2004/8, 2004.

<sup>41</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Moresby, 21 October 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Daniell Cowley, Programme Manager, Oxfam Highlands Office, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>44</sup> L. Goldman, “‘Hoo-Ha in Huli’: Considerations on Commotion and Community in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea”, Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2003/8, 2003.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Bill Dhim, Director, and John Tangu, Peace Liaison Officer, National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Geraldine Paul, Communication and Public Relation Officer, Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Bill Dhim, Director, and John Tangu, Peace Liaison Officer, National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Idem.

<sup>49</sup> Idem.

that an arms build-up is taking place.<sup>50</sup> Interviewees stated that most of the young adults in Bougainville are in possession of arms,<sup>51</sup> and arms are beginning to circulate again, mostly for self-protection.<sup>52</sup>

Arms circulating in Papua New Guinea and Bougainville originated from either legal stockpiles that were raided or, more likely, had their stocks distributed by corrupt officials; were left over from the Second World War; or were rented out by off-duty police officers.<sup>53</sup> In some cases, politicians have distributed firearms to win populist favour or to intimidate voters in general.<sup>54</sup> Gun-running and “drugs for guns” across the Torres Strait has received considerable publicity over the years, although anecdotes and rumours of the trade exceed available evidence.<sup>55</sup>

The government has taken a number of steps toward addressing SALW. Together with regional partners, such as Australia and New Zealand, Papua New Guinea has worked to strengthen its stockpile security, leading to a reduction in physical leaks.<sup>56</sup> Further, Papua New Guinea was the first state to call for a regional approach to weapons control, a call which led to the development of the Nadi Framework. Papua New Guinea also accepted to participate as a “focus country” in the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, a process that seeks to link armed violence to various development concerns.

## **NATIONAL COORDINATION ON SALW**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the designated focal point for implementation of the PoA. A detailed national report on PoA implementation was submitted in 2005. The country established a TCU in August 2004, which is composed mainly of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary and customs.

In 2005 the government established a Gun Control Committee to undertake a study and public consultations on gun violence. The process culminated in a Gun Control Summit the same year. The report that emerged outlined a set of comprehensive, time-bound recommendations, which developed into a strategy that Parliament was expected to pass in November 2008 (however, this has been delayed). A Gun Control Commission is meant to be established in order to work out the details of implementing the recommendations and to coordinate the government and civil society response to the strategy. However, preparations for the Commission have encountered a number of internal challenges, which have hindered its establishment.<sup>57</sup>

The Government of Papua New Guinea has established the National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs, housed in the Office of the Prime Minister. Representatives from both

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<sup>50</sup> “Bougainville arms buildup in Tonu confirmed”, Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association, 9 March 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Geraldine Paul, Communication and Public Relation Officer, Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>53</sup> P. Alpers and C. Twyford, *Small Arms in the Pacific*, Small Arms Survey, Occasional Paper no. 8, 2003, p. 25.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.; D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenges in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003; P. Alpers, *Gun-Running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*, Small Arms Survey, Special Report no. 5, 2005.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Moresby, 21 October 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

the national government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government take part in a Joint Supervisory Body, which oversees the implementation of the autonomy, including SALW-related matters. Although autonomous, Bougainville is not independent and international assistance is designated through the Government of Papua New Guinea.

The United Nations Development Programme, in partnership with the Autonomous Bougainville Government, aims to undertake a two-year programme focusing on building data and research on the issue of SALW, undertaking awareness-raising on SALW, and establishing a strategy for and training on community security and SALW.<sup>58</sup>

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Once the strategy based on the Gun Control Summit recommendations is passed by Parliament, national legislation will have to be reviewed accordingly.<sup>59</sup> The current legislation is lacking in such areas as homemade firearms, gender (particularly with respect to the protection of women), guns held by private security companies,<sup>60</sup> and controls over dealers of and licenses for ammunition.<sup>61</sup> Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.) notes “People are selling ammunition like they are selling Coca-cola in fridges. There is no control”.<sup>62</sup>

The customs service is calling for a cross-sectoral analysis and assessment of harmonization of SALW-relevant legislation among various agencies.<sup>63</sup>

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary and the Royal Papua New Guinea Defence Force form the main security apparatus of the country, however resources are allocated in favour of the defence force over the police.<sup>64</sup> The national budgetary allocation for the police force is “simply not enough” to meet the country’s needs in policing.<sup>65</sup>

The Assistant Commissioner of Police notes that discipline in the force is an issue and cites the need to run training workshops to improve discipline and morale.<sup>66</sup> Police officers are often involved in harassment, intimidation and corruption (often as a means to compensate for their low salaries and poor housing).<sup>67</sup>

In the case of the Highlands, too few officers and resources are available to respond effectively to situations requiring law enforcement. Mobile forces, set up independently from the police but accountable to the Police Commissioner, respond to most tribal disturbances. A civil society organization in Goroka notes that there is a noticeable increase in petty crime

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with Tony Cameron, Chief Technical Adviser, United Nations Development Programme field office, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>60</sup> Existing legislation on private security companies covers the hiring and training of staff, but does not address the weapons associated with the company.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Idem.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with the Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008.

<sup>64</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Moresby, 21 October 2008.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Raphael Huafofo, Assistant Commissioner, Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Port Moresby, 24 October 2008.

<sup>66</sup> Idem.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with the Coalition Against Gun Violence, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

when the mobile forces are not around.<sup>68</sup> In coastal communities, community policing has met with success. Research into the programmes would help determine if lessons from the coastal community policing programmes could be applicable in other areas of the country.<sup>69</sup>

Private security companies proliferate in Papua New Guinea: there are approximately 30,000 private security guards, whereas there are only 5,000 police officers and 2,000 defence force personnel.<sup>70</sup> A Private Security Authority Service registers guards, weapons and ammunition, however there is little oversight and control of the companies and many are accused of violations of human rights.<sup>71</sup>

The police seek to increase the size of the force from the current 5,000 officers to 10,000 by 2014. This will have enormous resource implications in terms of salaries, housing, training, office space, equipment and so forth.<sup>72</sup> The initiative is estimated to cost about US\$ 380 million (1 billion kina) spread over a number of years, and the national government aims to cover the majority of the costs.<sup>73</sup>

In 2004 Australia initiated a five-year Enhanced Cooperation Programme, which designated about US\$ 675 million toward police infrastructure, training, equipment and recruitment. The programme withdrew six months later due to a political dispute over immunity granted to Australian officers in the programme. In 2008, after a 12-month scoping exercise, the programme restarted under the name Strongim Gavman Program. Both the police and Australia hope that the activities of the Program will help address in particular many of the discipline issues in the force.

In Bougainville, the Law and Justice Programme undertaken by Australia includes a strategy covering courts, corrections and police for the island, as a new policing system has to be introduced among other exercises to establish a governing infrastructure. New Zealand, which played a significant role in brokering the Bougainville Peace Agreement, is focusing on community policing.<sup>74</sup>

## **CUSTOMS AND BORDERS**

There is a moratorium on importing weapons, which according to the Assistance Commissioner of Police has caused an increase in the illegal trade, particularly of ammunition.<sup>75</sup>

Papua New Guinea is the only Pacific country with an international land border, shared with Indonesia. Large areas of the land and sea borders are unmanned and difficult to patrol.<sup>76</sup> About 90% of Papua New Guinea's trade is cleared through Lae (75%) and Port Moresby. Customs deal largely with fishing traffic and also perform immigration functions at air and sea

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<sup>68</sup> Interview with Sarah Garap, Director, Meri Kirap Sapotim, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>71</sup> Idem.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Raphael Huafofo, Assistant Commissioner, Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Port Moresby, 24 October 2008.

<sup>73</sup> Idem.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Raphael Huafofo, Assistant Commissioner, Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, Port Moresby, 24 October 2008.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with the Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008.

ports. Firearms on arriving vessels are sealed on board and verified upon departure. Unlike the other case study countries, firearm owners on vessels can apply for a specific temporary licence to carry the firearm.<sup>77</sup>

The customs staff numbers 280, whereas senior management officials would like to see that number increased to 500 in order to meet the minimal needs of processing paperwork and conducting searches. There is a customs presence in 24 locations, with some posts having just a single officer. Four Defence Force patrol boats and a landing craft plus crew are available to reinforce the capacity of customs, though customs pays for the use of them. The joint patrols increase capacity and strengthen cooperation between the agencies, though the vessels may not be available when needed.<sup>78</sup>

In 2004 Papua New Guinea Customs established the Customs Modernization Management Team, bringing together lawyers and technical experts in a working group. They identified areas for updating legislation and procedures and also included assessments of certain reforms to be made within the service. The work resulted in the Strategic Action Plan 2008–2011.<sup>79</sup>

The Strongim Gavman Program provides a team of four Australian customs officers to work in partnership with the Papua New Guinea Internal Revenue Commission. Several other bilateral customs assistance programmes cover a range of activities to build the capacity of the customs service. The Papua New Guinean–Australian Customs Twinning Scheme enables exchanges to take place between the respective services with a view to improving skills and to facilitate the delivery of assistance. The Border Security Programme involves a US\$ 6.3 million (AU\$ 7.7 million) assistance package, which began in 2007 and goes through mid-2011. The Programme focuses on “delivery and implementation of equipment, facilities refurbishment, specialist skilling, gap analysis, and operation support” as well as development of a maritime surveillance capability.<sup>80</sup>

Another bilateral programme, Joint Cross Border Patrols, focuses on the Torres Strait.<sup>81</sup> Still considered a “hot spot” by the Australian Federal Police, increased surveillance of the Torres Strait under a strategy of the Australian Federal Police entitled “Tough on Drugs” has had a significant impact on reducing the extent of all forms of trafficking in the Torres Strait.<sup>82</sup> Rumours of gun-running continue to abound; however, according to the Australian Federal Police, there is little evidence to support claims that a high number of arms are trafficked.<sup>83</sup>

However, the current number of patrols is not sufficient to cover all the land borders and waters that need to be monitored and customs officials would like to see a large container scanner placed in Lae, where the majority of trade enters and exits the country.<sup>84</sup> Customs would like to see advances made in risk management. Information gathering and assessments

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<sup>77</sup> Idem.

<sup>78</sup> Idem.

<sup>79</sup> Idem; C. Wall, “Papua New Guinea Customs: A comprehensive and integrated approach to capacity-building”, *World Customs Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 87–92.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with the Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008.

<sup>82</sup> J. McFarlane, “Torres Strait: Policing the Open Border”, *Australian Institute of Criminology, Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no. 92, 1998; “Guns for drugs arrests in PNG and the Torres Strait”, *Australia Federal Police, national media release*, 4 November 1998.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with the Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008.

<sup>84</sup> Idem.

are needed to determine where the threats are and to ensure there is an appropriate number of officials present and housed in remote and high-risk areas.<sup>85</sup> Australia is working to provide basic scanning equipment and funds have also been set aside for basic radio communication. There is also an idea to draw from the Australian assistance funds to establish a border response team.<sup>86</sup>

## **STOCKPILE SECURITY AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT**

The vast majority of arms used in crime and conflict in Papua New Guinea were either leaked deliberately from military or police stocks or, to a lesser extent, lost through raids and large-scale theft.<sup>87</sup> Both Australia and New Zealand, through their respective defence assistance programmes, have invested large amounts to strengthen the physical security of armouries and to improve record-keeping practices. As a result, the security of stockpiles has greatly improved and the number of leaks has been significantly reduced. However, in the case of weapons used by military and police officials, information about its use is scarce: “Once the weapon is out, you don’t know what is happening until it is returned”.<sup>88</sup>

## **WEAPONS DISPOSAL**

Weapons disposal, the third pillar of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, is seen as essential for creating the secure environment needed for implementation of the Agreement and is one of the conditions for the referendum of 2015. A significant number of weapons were turned in and destroyed through a voluntary weapon disposal programme implemented by the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville; however the SALW in circulation remain a serious problem for Bougainville.<sup>89</sup> The Autonomous Bougainville Government declared 2008 as the year of weapons disposal and reconciliation. A Reconciliation Committee has been formed on Bougainville to produce a new weapons disposal plan and a Weapons Disposal Committee has also been established. A United Nations assessment team visited Bougainville in 2008 in order to prepare long-term and strategic weapons collection and disposal programmes.

## **NATIONAL REGISTRATION AND LICENSING**

There is a moratorium on the issuing of new firearm licences, but current holders are permitted to keep their existing licenses but must renew them annually. Existing licenses are transferable, and thus those seeking to own firearms for the first time can do so by obtaining a license from someone who is willing to transfer their licensed weapon to them. Individuals can also apply for licenses to carry a weapon that is registered to a family member or to the private company where they work.

The Police Commissioner is the chief registrar and keeps a summary of the records. The firearms registry, which is kept manually, has 28,000 firearms on record of which only about a

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<sup>85</sup> Idem.

<sup>86</sup> Idem.

<sup>87</sup> P. Alpers, “Papua New Guinea: Small Numbers, Big Fuss, Real Results”, *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2008; P. Alpers, *Gun-Running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*, Small Arms Survey, Special Report no. 5, 2005; N. Haley and R. Muggah, “Jumping the Gun: armed violence in Papua New Guinea”, in *Small Arms Survey 2006: Unfinished Business*, Small Arms Survey, 2006.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Bill Dhim, Director, and John Tangu, Peace Liaison Officer, National Coordination Office for Bougainville Affairs, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.



quarter of the licenses for these are renewed each year.<sup>90</sup> The registry office used to have a staff member responsible for following up with individuals that failed to renew their licences, but this has discontinued since that staff member's departure.<sup>91</sup> There are no figures available for the total number of licenses to carry firearms that have been issued.<sup>92</sup> With respect to requests for tracing weapons used in crime, the police make such requests about three or four times a months and it usually takes a week to search through the registry; however, according to the registry office, there is a 50% chance that no matching records will be found.<sup>93</sup> The registry office expects to receive an ID photo machine to replace the current system, in which false pictures can be easily forged into the license.<sup>94</sup> However, in general, the office is recognized to not be very well organized and it is generally overlooked in department funding cycles.<sup>95</sup>

## SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Despite its mineral wealth and vast resources in certain areas of the country, development is a critical challenge for Papua New Guinea. The United Nations Development Programme notes that about 37% of the population lives below the poverty line and that the combined gross enrolment ratio was about 40%.<sup>96</sup> In the Highlands, violence regularly undermines efforts to exploit its natural resources for advancing development in the region.<sup>97</sup> In the urban centres, 260,000 youths between 17 and 18 years of age are unemployed and only about 10,000 of the approximately 80,000 school-leavers find formal employment each year.<sup>98</sup>

Gender-based violence is also deeply rooted in the traditional belief systems of many ethnic clans. It is difficult to find accurate figures on gender-based violence as girls and women often choose not to report the crimes, or the crimes are handled within the traditional governance systems and are thus not reported to the police.<sup>99</sup> The violence often involves threats, intimidation and physical violence with a firearm.<sup>100</sup>

## SUMMARY OF NEEDS FOR INTERNATIONAL SALW ASSISTANCE

The Government of Papua New Guinea has undertaken a number of steps to address the multitude of SALW challenges it faces, particularly with respect to undertaking the development of the strategy reflecting the recommendations made in the Gun Control Summit. Once that is passed, there will be a wide range of activities to be undertaken, and the interventions will have to reflect the diversity of the demand and use of SALW across the country.

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with Margaret Mangae, Officer In Charge, Firearm Registry, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>91</sup> Idem.

<sup>92</sup> Idem.

<sup>93</sup> Idem.

<sup>94</sup> Idem.

<sup>95</sup> Idem.

<sup>96</sup> See the United Nations Development Programme data on Papua New Guinea from the *Human Development Report 2009* at <[http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data\\_sheets/cty\\_ds\\_PNG.html](http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_PNG.html)>.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Daniell Cowley, Programme Manager, Oxfam Highlands Office, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008. S. Dinnen and E. Thompson, "Gender and Small Arms Violence in Papua New Guinea", Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2004/8, 2004.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Geraldine Paul, Communication and Public Relation Officer, Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council, Port Moresby, 27 October 2008.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Robyn Slarke, human rights advisor, Suva, 6 September 2008.

Research and baseline surveys will be necessary to create an accurate and in-depth account of the different manifestations of SALW violence and weapon ownership throughout the country and that assesses, in a participatory manner, community needs for SALW assistance and security-based programming. Weapons collection, amnesties and destruction will all require implementation over the coming years and equipment and training in marking and tracing were also identified as necessary.

Law enforcement will undergo a number of changes if the number of officers doubles as intended. This will require a number of steps to ensure that the facilities and infrastructure can support the influx of new officers. Among the reforms for law enforcement, attention should be focused on improving the discipline and management of police officers.

A number of assistance programmes exist to support the customs services. However, certain needs were additionally identified, such as reviewing the legislative framework with respect to SALW-related matters; increasing the human-resource capacity of customs (including housing in remote areas); developing infrastructure in terms of patrol boats and fuel, access to technology (x-ray machines, for example), communications and record-keeping; training, particularly in detection and investigation of SALW; and conducting assessments and training in risk management.

With respect to national registration and licensing, resources are needed to follow up with expired licenses, which would be done more effectively if the firearms sections in the provinces were better resourced to keep accurate records. A more effective record-keeping system is also sought as data is not currently easily retrievable or transmittable.

The country could also benefit from developing and implementing a crime prevention strategy, tailored appropriately to the country's diverse manifestations of armed crime, which should also be balanced with employment schemes and micro-financing in order to provide individuals with alternative opportunities to gun-based livelihoods.

#### **NATIONALLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

##### *Laws, regulations and administrative procedures:*

- harmonization of legislation across sectors; and
- reviewing firearms legislation in accordance with the Gun Control Summit recommendations, while ensuring that it further covers such issues as handmade firearms, women and guns, guns held by private security, and controls on ammunition.

##### *Law enforcement:*

- training to improve oversight, management and discipline;
- training in human rights, gender issues, conflict mediation/resolution techniques and the controlled use of force;
- building the capacity of the policing infrastructure (including issues such as housing and salaries for staff);
- reviewing the division of roles and responsibilities of the police, mobile forces and auxiliary police and community policing programmes to identify the resources required by each;
- developing a tiered policing strategy tailored to the needs of the provinces and Bougainville;
- supporting community policing programmes; and

- strengthening oversight of authorized weapons held military and police officers.

*Marking and Tracing:*

- training and equipment for marking and tracing weapons.

*Customs and borders:*

- reviewing the legislative framework with respect to SALW-related matters;
- increasing the human-resource capacity of customs (including housing in remote areas);
- developing infrastructure in terms of patrol boats and fuel, access to technology (x-ray machines, for example), communications and record-keeping;
- training, particularly in detection and investigation of SALW, and of new staff;
- supporting information-sharing and strengthening of coordination mechanisms among different government stakeholders; and
- conducting assessments and training in risk management.

*Weapons collection, destruction and disposal:*

- surveying opportunities for weapons collection;
- conducting participatory meetings and awareness-raising with potential stakeholders of collection programmes; and
- conducting weapons disposal programmes in accordance with the needs, concerns and circumstances in the different provinces and in Bougainville.

*Registration and licensing:*

- computerization of the record-keeping system for privately held firearms to facilitate tracing, and to improve record-keeping on licenses;
- conducting awareness-raising programmes, and firearm safety training, seminars and public outreach on the responsibilities of those licensed to own firearms;
- developing resources and capacity to follow up on expired licenses; and
- strengthen the capacity of firearms sections in the provinces.

*Research and awareness-raising:*

- implementing research and baseline surveys to get an in-depth picture of the different SALW problems and their impacts across the different regions of the country;
- establishing an effective knowledge management system for maintaining accurate records of the different problems and interventions made to address SALW in addition to documenting challenges and lessons learned in undertaking the SALW interventions; and
- awareness-raising of the risks of SALW and the advantages of finding alternatives to gun-based livelihoods.

*Security and development:*

- developing programmes to address gender aspects of SALW;
- supporting psychosocial programmes, particularly for women affected by domestic armed violence and intimidation;
- supporting locally owned reconciliation programmes;

- linking reintegration programmes in Bougainville with long-term sustainable development projects;
- providing employment opportunities and micro-financing that are specifically tailored to the circumstances in the urban centres, the Highlands and Bougainville; and
- conducting youth programmes as a means for crime prevention.

## SOLOMON ISLANDS

The civil conflict or “tensions” as it is referred to in the Solomon Islands began in 1998. The Townsville Peace Agreement was signed in 2000; however, violence continued until the Facilitation of International Assistance Act enabled the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI)<sup>101</sup> to intervene in July 2003. Originally conceived as an 18-month security-building and policing mission, RAMSI’s Operation Helpem Fren broadened its scope and duration for a 10-year period to focus on state-building, particularly with respect to law and justice. While the government seeks to move closer to RAMSI’s departure, the general public fears future uprisings will emerge if the mission withdraws too soon.<sup>102</sup> An exit strategy for RAMSI has not yet been agreed and it is anticipated that once the current mandate comes to a close, certain aspects of the mission will be extended for an additional 5–10 years.<sup>103</sup>

The Facilitation of International Assistance Act enabled the country’s full disarmament. RAMSI officers are the only authorized armed personnel in the country, covering all SALW-related activities from investigating illicit SALW circulation to tracing and destruction. The country does not have an SALW manufacturing industry and imports are suspended. In the first months of its mission, RAMSI collected approximately 3,700 weapons and over 300,000 rounds of ammunition through a combination of amnesties and strict deterrence measures. The number of weapons collected represented about 90–95% of the country’s stockpile, which had been stolen from police armouries during the conflict.<sup>104</sup> It is estimated that fewer than 100 weapons remain unaccounted for in the country and arms are not implicated in crimes.<sup>105</sup> SALW is thus not considered a pressing issue for RAMSI. A full SALW legislative framework and enforcement strategy will have to be established, however, as the country prepares for RAMSI’s eventual withdrawal.<sup>106</sup>

## NATIONAL COORDINATION AGENCY

The political focal point for the PoA is the United Nations Branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Ministry of Planning is the focal point for implementation of the PoA. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs aims to engage the Ministry of Police to be the contact for SALW.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>101</sup> The 15 contributing states are Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

<sup>102</sup> Interviews with Ella Kauhue, General Secretary, National Council of Women, Honiara, 17 October 2008; Rev. Philimon Riti and Ethel Suri, Solomon Islands Christian Association, Honiara, 16 October 2008; Paula Aruhuri, Matana Ara Women Association, Honiara, 17 October 2008. For instance, despite RAMSI’s presence, unarmed riots erupted in Honiara following elections in 2006.

<sup>103</sup> Interviews with Jane Christie, Acting Deputy Program Director, RAMSI Law and Justice Program Unit, Ministry of Law and Justice, Honiara, 1 October 2008; Treavor Unusu, Chief Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>104</sup> C. Nelson and R. Muggah, *Solomon Islands: Evaluating the Weapons Free Village Campaign*, Small Arms Survey, 2004, p. 27.

<sup>105</sup> This figure was given during an interview with D.I. Bernie Rankin, Australian Federal Police secondment to the Participating Police Force, Honiara, 17 October 2008.

<sup>106</sup> Interviews with Peter Mae, Chief Policy Officer for Security, Office of the Prime Minister, Honiara, 16 October 2008; Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Treavor Unusu, Chief Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

The Solomon Islands submitted two national reports on implementation of the PoA, one in 2003 and one in 2004.

A TCU does not yet exist, though plans for its establishment are underway. The Government of the Solomon Islands is currently aiming to revive the Combined Law Agency Group. The previous Group dissolved during the tensions though it still exists in a smaller form. Efforts for its revival began in 2006, but progress has been slow due to a lack of human resources. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been responsible for spearheading the Group's revival, but its efforts have been limited due to their own staffing problems.<sup>108</sup>

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The Facilitation of International Assistance Act modifies and effectively nullifies the Solomon Island's Firearms and Ammunition Act (1968, amendments 1989 and 2000),<sup>109</sup> which is considered to be outdated.<sup>110</sup> The Act enabled the full disarmament of the Solomon Islands, giving sole authorization to RAMSI and its policing branch—the Participating Police Force—to access and carry arms. New or at least updated SALW legislation would have to be drafted as RAMSI slowly reduces its presence in certain operations. The Chief Policy Officer for Security in the Office of the Prime Minister notes that the country needs to take stock of its multilateral and bilateral obligations to address this issue and national expertise needs to be strengthened to translate these obligations into national law.<sup>111</sup>

Customs legislation makes reference to firearms in so far as it sets out procedures for dealing with SALW aboard vessels and stipulates that these vessels are prohibited from having automatic rifles.<sup>112</sup> A Legal Adviser has been appointed for a two-month period to revise the Customs Act and supporting legislation.<sup>113</sup>

The National Council of Women also notes that the law does not support women sufficiently and gender should be reflected in revised legislation addressing SALW and armed violence more broadly.<sup>114</sup>

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Participating Police Force covers all SALW-related matters and a few officers are assigned to track the estimated 100 arms that are not accounted for.<sup>115</sup> The Participating Police Force, in consultation with the Solomon Islands Police Force Police Commissioner, oversees the storage and disposal of confiscated weapons.

Public confidence in the Solomon Islands Police Force is low and civil society groups and communities at large blocked an attempt for the Solomon Islands Police Force to rearm in

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<sup>108</sup> Interviews with Peter Mae, Chief Policy Officer for Security, Office of the Prime Minister, Honiara, 16 October 2008; Treavor Unusu, Chief Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>109</sup> D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenge in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Gabriel Suri, Acting Attorney General, Attorney General's Chambers, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>111</sup> Interview with Peter Mae, Chief of Policy Officer for Security, Office of the Prime Minister, Honiara, 16 October 2008.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Nathan Kama, Comptroller of Customs and Excise, Department of Finance and Treasury, and Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, Honiara, 20 October 2008.

<sup>113</sup> Personal communication with Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, 23 April 2009.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Ella Kauhue, General Secretary, National Council of Women, Honiara, 17 October 2008.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with D.I. Bernie Rankin, Australian Federal Police secondment to the Participating Police Force, Honiara, 17 October 2008.

2008. While many would like to see the Solomon Islands Police Force remain unarmed, the Solomon Islands Police Force may pursue measures to re-arm in 2010–2011.<sup>116</sup>

With the support of Australia, the Government of the Solomon Islands and the international NGO Save the Children, the Solomon Islands Police Force and the Participating Police Force have been undertaking the development of a National Crime Prevention Strategy, which would involve community crime prevention councils.<sup>117</sup> The strategy, however, has not yet been agreed. The Participating Police Force is further soliciting donor support in order to:

- provide housing in rural provinces for the Solomon Islands Police Force;
- establish large posts in provinces to support outlying posts in remote communities; and
- provide boats to help the Solomon Islands Police Force patrol the provinces.<sup>118</sup>

Before RAMSI withdraws from the Solomon Islands, the country's full security apparatus will have to be revised. This would entail an assessment of the physical infrastructure, human resources and training with respect to, among other things, the capacity to and needs for preventing and combating the illicit trade of SALW, in enforcing the rule of law, and for establishing the criteria and systems for, or establishing measures to prohibit, private firearms licensing.

## **CUSTOMS AND BORDERS**

Shipping traffic entering or passing through the country's 1.6 million km<sup>2</sup> exclusive economic zone will increase as the economy recovers from the tensions.<sup>119</sup> Commercial fishing and timber shipping were identified as harbouring risks of illicit activities.<sup>120</sup> Through RAMSI, the Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division is working on a Customs Modernisation Programme with assistance primarily from the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.<sup>121</sup> While there are x-ray machines provided for aviation security, they are not x-ray machines available for customs and there are no scanners at sea ports.<sup>122</sup> The focus of the customs service, which is part of the Ministry of Finance, is geared towards the collection of revenue, particularly with respect to protecting agriculture and fishing. Customs can only focus on prohibited imports such as illicit drugs and weapons when alerted through their risk assessment process.<sup>123</sup>

Customs officials question vessels for the arms they have on board. Firearms are normally sealed on board and checked on departure. If the boarding officer deems that the vessel is not

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<sup>116</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008.

<sup>117</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>118</sup> Interviews with the Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008; D.I. Bernie Rankin, Australian Federal Police secondment to the Participating Police Force, Honiara, 17 October 2008.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with D.I. Bernie Rankin, Australian Federal Police secondment to the Participating Police Force, Honiara, 17 October 2008.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Nathan Kama, Comptroller of Customs and Excise, Department of Finance and Treasury, and Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, Honiara, 20 October 2008.

<sup>121</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Peter Mae, Chief Policy Officer for Security, Office of the Prime Minister 16 October 2008.

<sup>123</sup> Interview with Jane Christie, Acting Deputy Program Director, RAMSI Law and Justice Program Unit, Ministry of Law and Justice, Honiara, 1 October 2008. Christie further notes that it is impractical and costly to specifically monitor for such imports at all times given the current low level of threat.

secure they will take the arms off the vessel and return them at the vessel's last determined port in the country. If firearms are seized, they are transferred to the Participating Police Force.<sup>124</sup>

During the tensions, customs staff were removed from the country's two most outer posts, for Bougainville and Vanuatu. The proximity and close cultural ties between the western provinces (Shortlands) of the Solomon Islands and Bougainville facilitated the movement of arms back and forth during their respective internal conflicts. Rumours and anecdotes continue to surface that arms still move back and forth; however, there is no evidence to support the allegations.<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, the area continues to be considered a potential high-risk area, which could grow and tie into other issues such as drug and human trafficking.<sup>126</sup>

Having appealed to the government for funding in 2009, the customs service has as a priority an interest to restaff these two posts, most immediately for Bougainville.<sup>127</sup> Housing support will be necessary to ensure the effectiveness of dispatching staff to these posts.<sup>128</sup> A new border post consisting of police, customs, immigration and quarantine services and with one patrol boat at its disposal was officially launched in March 2009 in the Western Province.<sup>129</sup> The office has not yet been staffed, however, as housing and other infrastructure matters need to be addressed.<sup>130</sup> The needs for assistance to establish this post as well as the need for a jetty to accommodate the patrol boats has been conveyed to RAMSI and Australia under the Defence Cooperation Programme.<sup>131</sup>

Communication between the ports and customs headquarters is by phone though the telecommunication system can be unreliable; fax and e-mail are not currently possible.<sup>132</sup> Customs has a manual register of seized items. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship seek to improve the communication technology and information-sharing strategies between departments.

The current number of staff available at border points is considered to be mostly adequate. However, new staff and training will be required to meet the needs that come from establishing and refurbishing customs points, which is now taking place or is anticipated.<sup>133</sup> While the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service supplied a training course for 10 people, there is a shortage of national trainers to ensure a sustainable and continuous customs training programme.<sup>134</sup> The Deputy Customs Controller highlights the importance of learning how other custom services address SALW. Better inter-agency coordination between the Solomon Islands Police Force, immigration and revenue services would further bolster the limited resources.

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<sup>124</sup> Interview with Nathan Kama, Comptroller of Customs and Excise, Department of Finance and Treasury, and Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, Honiara, 20 October 2008.

<sup>125</sup> Idem.

<sup>126</sup> Idem.

<sup>127</sup> Idem.

<sup>128</sup> Idem.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with D.I. Bernie Rankin, Australian Federal Police secondment to the Participating Police Force, Honiara, 17 October 2008. Personal communication with Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, 23 April 2009.

<sup>130</sup> Personal communication with Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, 23 April 2009.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with Nathan Kama, Comptroller of Customs and Excise, Department of Finance and Treasury, and Christine Heiser, Team Leader, Customs Modernisation Program, RAMSI, Honiara, 20 October 2008.

<sup>133</sup> Idem.

<sup>134</sup> Idem.

## SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The tensions in the Solomon Islands are rooted in long-standing and still unresolved issues of land use, property rights and the distribution of resource revenues.<sup>135</sup> Land reform, which must reconcile traditional customs of land ownership and inheritance with government designation and use of land, is thus at the core of the government's efforts to establish long-term and sustainable peace.<sup>136</sup>

In addition to land reform, the country faces a number of other challenges in the security and development nexus. For instance, the timber industry, which accounts for about 70% of the country's economy, will be fully depleted as early as 2013.<sup>137</sup> Climate change, and illegal and destructive fishing practices<sup>138</sup> are also having serious impacts on the Solomon Island's fisheries. There are high levels of unemployment, which will be exacerbated by the closing of the timber industry.

The emphasis on development and post-conflict assistance is centred on Malaita and Guadalcanal, which leaves out the outer provinces. The outer provinces were not directly involved in the civil conflict but nevertheless they felt its impact and continue to face severe development challenges as well. The Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace warns that this discrepancy could raise frustrations against the government and RAMSI in these outer areas.<sup>139</sup>

Almost 3,000–4,000 former combatants still feel entitled to the compensation packages they were promised under the Townsville Peace Agreement but did not receive due to the corruption and bad management that depleted available resources.<sup>140</sup> The issue re-emerges during election periods, as politicians exploit the broken promises and make new ones to former combatants.<sup>141</sup>

## SUMMARY OF NEEDS FOR INTERNATIONAL SALW ASSISTANCE

The Solomon Islands will require a national plan for addressing SALW, both in terms of preventing and combating the illicit trade and for reintroducing, if agreed, SALW back into the country. The Solomon Islands will be expected to uphold regional coordination and commitments on SALW issues, and the capacity and mechanisms that RAMSI has used to address SALW will need to be sustainable and manageable by the Solomon Islands' government in order to continue after the withdrawal of RAMSI. It is thus imperative for the government to prepare the foundation for SALW control and to begin establishing the roles,

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<sup>135</sup> The issues came to a head when an increasing number of Malaitans, the second largest ethnic group, migrated to the main island of Guadalcanal. A militia group, the Istabu Freedom Movement, was formed in Guadalcanal. In response, the Malaita Eagle Force emerged, which had important links with the Solomon Islands police. As tensions escalated, vandalism and confrontations involving the two groups ensued.

<sup>136</sup> Interviews with Treavor Unusu, Chief Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honiara, 15 October 2008; Gabriel Suri, Acting Attorney General, Attorney General's Chambers, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Christine Carlson, Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>138</sup> Local fishermen will use explosives from unexploded ordnance from the Second World War, which damages coral and negatively impacts the environment and local fishing resources. Interviews with the Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008; Christine Carlson, Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>139</sup> Interview with Joy Kiriau Kere, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace, Honiara, 25 October 2008.

<sup>140</sup> Launched in April 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission aims to identify legitimate claims for restitution with respect to victims, land and abandoned property. However, the state of the existing records (or lack thereof) make it difficult to verify claims of who surrendered weapons.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with Joy Kiriau Kere, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace, Honiara, 25 October 2008.



responsibilities and procedures to effectively deal with SALW matters prior to RAMSI's departure.

Conflict and crime prevention should also be priority areas for international assistance in order to prevent the demand for SALW from re-emerging. It is essential for the resources and capacity of the public service to be strengthened in order to absorb the large numbers of youth entering the education system and seeking vocational training, employment and micro-financing. The National Crime Prevention Strategy will be an important contribution in this regard. The youth bulge—estimates suggest that 70% of the population is under the age of 25,<sup>142</sup> and 40% is under the age of 15<sup>143</sup>—is also likely to increase urban migration, thus adding additional pressure on services and increasing the competition for resources, particularly land. Mitigation strategies to counter the impacts of the closing timber industry are also critical.

#### **NATIONALLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

##### *National Coordination Agency:*

- engaging all government stakeholders, RAMSI and relevant civil society groups as well to initiate discussions on such issues as building a national strategy on SALW, establishing new or revised legislation and handling arms control following the withdrawal of RAMSI.

##### *Laws, regulations and administrative procedures:*

- revising the Firearms Act and Customs Legislation in advance of RAMSI's departure.

##### *Law enforcement:*

- resources and capacity to revitalise the Combined Law Agency Group;
- resources and capacity to establish the TCU (with customs);
- resources and capacity for implementing the national strategy on crime;
- housing in rural provinces for the Solomon Islands Police Force;
- strategically placed police centres in provinces to support outlying police posts in remote communities;
- patrol boats and their maintenance to help Solomon Islands Police Force access remote communities;
- training on all SALW-related matters, including from human rights and gender perspectives; and
- public outreach campaigns.

##### *Customs and borders:*

- resources and capacity to establish and maintain the TCU (with police);
- physical capacity and infrastructure for refurbishing and establishing new border posts and surveillance;
- establishing management policies;
- supporting border policing and building the long-term capacity of the customs service in anticipation of RAMSI's departure;

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<sup>142</sup> Interview with Christine Carlson, Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Honiara, 15 October 2008.

<sup>143</sup> This figure is taken from the country profile of the Solomon Islands produced by the Fund for Peace, see <[www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=349&Itemid=511](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=349&Itemid=511)>.

- confidence-building and training for staff to assess risks of when weapons or components may be present and to handle cases when SALW are encountered; and
- inter-agency coordination, joint operations and information sharing.

#### *Security and development:*

- supporting for the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;
- expanding the coverage of development and security-related assistance to better include the outer provinces;
- promoting employment opportunities and supporting micro-financing opportunities;
- strengthening the education system to absorb the youth bulge; and
- clearing the unexploded ordnance left from the Second World War and providing awareness-raising programmes on the associated laws and negative impacts of using explosives for fishing purposes.

## **TONGA**

SALW is not considered to pose a direct or immediate threat to Tonga. Crimes involving firearms are rare.<sup>144</sup> SALW did not feature in the riots that broke out in November 2006, when frustrations over the lack of progress toward democratic reform by the monarchy and the high number of foreign-owned businesses led to burning and looting in the capital city.

Given its relatively isolated location and small resident population of 119,000, traffickers have little economic incentive to ship arms to or via Tonga.<sup>145</sup> However firearms “are available to those who want to get them”,<sup>146</sup> and the Deputy Commander of Police states that arms have been used in a number of robberies over the past five years.<sup>147</sup>

Tonga’s isolation and small population do not, however, always protect it from other forms of transnational crime that can have links to SALW, such as drug trafficking,<sup>148</sup> human trafficking, various forms of documentation fraud and money laundering, that occupy Tonga’s security agenda.<sup>149</sup> Counter-terrorism is receiving increasing attention due largely to the momentum at the regional level to address the issue.<sup>150</sup>

As opposed to large illicit shipments, SALW come in undeclared through the post, or are brought in by nationals returning from abroad.<sup>151</sup> As one senior customs official notes, “we know arms come in and we know our limitations”.<sup>152</sup> The inadequacy and lack of

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<sup>144</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku’alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>145</sup> Interview with Debbie Reschke, First Secretary, Australian Agency for International Development, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008; Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku’alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>147</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku’alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>148</sup> Tongans generally cannot afford drugs, but the country can and increasingly could be a transit point according to Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>149</sup> Interviews with Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Service, Nuku’alofa, 1 October 2008; Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku’alofa, 2 October 2008; Paula Ma’u, Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister’s Office, 2 October 2008.

<sup>150</sup> Interviews with Debbie Reschke, First Secretary, Australian Agency for International Development, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008; Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku’alofa, 1 October 2008.

<sup>151</sup> The population of Tonga in 2007 was 119,000 according to the World Health Organization. It is estimated that over 200,000 Tongans live abroad, mainly in Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America. Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>152</sup> Interview with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku’alofa, 2 October 2008.

harmonization of the legislation and the lack of infrastructure in place to deter and detect SALW in Tonga will do little to prevent SALW from proliferating should the demand for SALW arise.<sup>153</sup> Recognizing this, in 2008, as Tonga chaired the Pacific Islands Forum, the Prime Minister of Tonga encouraged regional efforts to address SALW, and expressed interest in taking a strong stance on the issues nationally, as well.<sup>154</sup>

### **NATIONAL COORDINATION AGENCY**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the focal point for all UN-related issues, is the designated focal point for PoA implementation. Tonga has not submitted a report on implementation of the PoA.

As SALW is not a pressing issue in Tonga, there is little inter-agency coordination on the issue. The need for improvement in this area has been recognized, however, particularly with respect to integrating SALW into actions taken to address drugs and other transnational crime. The Tongan TCU was established in October 2003 and is comprised mainly of police force members. In particular, customs notes that the members of the TCU should review the links and roles each agency of the TCU has with respect to SALW.<sup>155</sup>

### **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The Arms and Ammunition Act in Tonga dates back to 1988. According to the Deputy Commander of Police, the Arms and Ammunition Act would be adequate if its registration and licensing aspects were revised.<sup>156</sup> The Minister of Police suggests that the legislative framework is outdated in terms of meeting current national needs and international commitments.<sup>157</sup> David Capie notes that the legal framework for SALW in Tonga suffers from inconsistencies, particularly with respect to the congruency of penalties associated with possessing an unregistered rifle, versus the possession, sale or purchase of prohibited weapons or violations of the conditions set out by the Prime Minister for possession of an otherwise prohibited weapon.<sup>158</sup>

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The security apparatus of Tonga consist of the Tonga Police Force and the Tonga Defence Services. The police force is generally unarmed, but a mobile force serves a paramilitary role and has access to weapons as required.

The results of a survey conducted by Australia National University in 2006 on the public perceptions of the police force revealed that the public had little confidence. The key issues

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<sup>153</sup> Interviews with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008; Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku'alofa, 1 October 2008; Paul Ma'u, Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008; Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>154</sup> Interviews with Paula Ma'u, Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, 2 October 2008; Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku'alofa, 1 October 2008.

<sup>155</sup> Interview with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>156</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>158</sup> D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenge in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003, p. 50.

highlighted in the report referred to the management and lack of discipline of the police officers and the disproportionate use of force.<sup>159</sup>

A Tonga Police Strategic Plan has been developed, is currently being translated into Tongan and is intended to be launched in 2009. The 2009 Strategic Plan will be the fourth of its kind. The first two plans “had been very disappointing simply due to lack of Government support in providing the necessary resources and the lack of understanding among senior government members on the Force on how, when and why implementing the Plan [sic]”.<sup>160</sup>

The 2009 Plan will replace the third, existing Tonga Police Strategic Plan that was to cover 2006 through 2011 and was considered by many to be a good document but too far-reaching and ambiguous.<sup>161</sup> The 2009 Plan targets many of the problem areas identified in the 2006 Plan:

- The inadequacy and poor state of the transport fleet [less than half of the 40 vehicles function at any given time];
- The inadequacy and poor state of the telecommunications network;
- The lack of accommodation in rural police stations [which is essential, particularly for dispatching personnel to the outer islands];
- The lack of patrol launches for Tongatapu, Ha’apai and Vava’u;
- The outmoded record keeping practices [data is currently not easily retrieved and transmissible];
- The poor and unhygienic state of police buildings including the Force Headquarters;
- The poor training facilities and training standards; etc.<sup>162</sup>

Other constraints relate to human resources such as the lack of qualifications and perceived boredom of the police officers. The salaries of the police force are low and salaries and promotions are not perceived to be merit-based.<sup>163</sup> While some police recruits meet basic qualifications, others are recruited for their large physical size.<sup>164</sup> Training, which tends to take place outside of Tonga, is often used as a reward to officers close to retirement. There is also little structure in terms of the dispatching of officers to outer islands leading some islands to have more than enough officers present while another island may have none.<sup>165</sup>

The combination of run-down physical infrastructures, the lack of incentives to motivate the police force, and the limited number of opportunities for officers to apply their training due to the low level of crime in Tonga leads to general boredom, low morale and lack of pride in the force.<sup>166</sup> The limitations of the police force were seen in its inability to respond effectively to the riots of 2006. In response, a new five-year US\$ 1.9 million (AU\$ 2.6 million) Tonga Police Development Project emerged with the financial backing of Australia and New Zealand.<sup>167</sup> The first step of the plan included the appointment of a New Zealand national as Police Commissioner, at the request of the Tongan government. The project will “focus on training of

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<sup>159</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>160</sup> “Tonga Police Strategic Plan 2006–2010”, foreword by Sinilau Kolokihakaufisi, Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, 2005, p. iii.

<sup>161</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>162</sup> “Tonga Police Strategic Plan 2006–2010”, Tonga Police Force, March 2005, pp.1–3.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku’alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>164</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>165</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>166</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>167</sup> “Tonga’s police force getting \$4m make-over”, Matangi Tonga Online, 3 July 2008.

police staff, help develop local leadership within the force, and provide practical equipment such as office tools but will not include arms".<sup>168</sup>

The 2009 Strategic Plan and the Police Development Project receive significant financial and technical support from the New Zealand Police, the Australia Federal Police, NZAID and AusAID.<sup>169</sup>

## CUSTOMS AND BORDERS

Similar to the other countries studied in this report, discussions on the issue of SALW in Tonga quickly focus on the need to build the physical and human capacity of customs, to strengthen border security in general, and to monitor the 700,000km<sup>2</sup> exclusive economic zone.<sup>170</sup> Customs and revenue note that various forms of smuggling is a general problem, however the extent of it is unknown as there is limited surveillance and intelligence capacity within customs itself. In one example, well-sealed, large packages of drugs washed up on an uninhabited island, demonstrating that trafficking activities do take place, often undetected.<sup>171</sup>

Vessels carrying private arms dock in Tonga at what is considered to be a manageable rate of two to three a week.<sup>172</sup> Yachts present a particular challenge to customs as they are small and can dock in places other than designated ports of call. Checks of yachts are ad hoc and depend on the resources and capacities available. Tonga's Commissioner of Revenue, Sefita Tangi, notes that most yachters are law abiding, but "we know that some transport contraband, illegal immigrants or traffic goods/humans".<sup>173</sup> The customs officers use a "risk assessment system",<sup>174</sup> however, *kastom*,<sup>175</sup> or traditional clan or family ties, makes physical inspections less stringent.<sup>176</sup> All inspections are conducted manually "and rely on human judgement".<sup>177</sup> Eleven customs officers, five deployed at the wharf and six at the airport, conduct physical inspections. Tangi notes, however, that "SALW may enter undetected. We could triple our staff and discover the problem is bigger than we thought or that we have the same results. We have no way of knowing what is or is not taking place; we do the best with the resources we have".<sup>178</sup>

Officers generally have to go abroad for training, limiting further the human resources for conducting inspections. The post does not have scanning capability.<sup>179</sup> AusAID is in the process of supplying customs with an x-ray machine,<sup>180</sup> however there is still a lack of equipment to

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Personal communication with Dominic Walton-France, New Zealand Agency for International Development Manager, Nuku'alofa, 18 April 2008.

<sup>170</sup> Interviews with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008; Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku'alofa, 1 October 2008; Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>171</sup> Interview with Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku'alofa, 1 October 2008.

<sup>172</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>173</sup> Interview with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>174</sup> Idem.

<sup>175</sup> *Kastom* is a commonly used term to describe the deeply entrenched traditional systems found throughout the South Pacific islands that are based on customary law, social norms, belief systems and close family or tribal networks.

<sup>176</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>177</sup> Interview with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>178</sup> Idem.

<sup>179</sup> Idem.

<sup>180</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

screen incoming containers. A mobile scanner is sought to cover the main seaport and all air cargo and warehouses.<sup>181</sup>

The Australian Defence Force provides the Tonga Defence Services with three patrol boats for surveillance. Joint operations involving defence, customs and police began in March 2008 with a view to controlling the importation of arms; however, the relationship is not formalized by terms of reference. All representatives of customs, police and defence interviewed seek to see the operations formalized and for better coordination and information-sharing to take place in order to send a clear message that methods are being taken to secure borders.<sup>182</sup>

## **STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY**

New Zealand supported the establishment of a central armoury. The areas for international assistance identified are with respect to computerized registration, data management and related training.<sup>183</sup>

## **NATIONAL REGISTRIES AND LICENSING**

Tongans submit applications for firearm licenses to the Minister of Police. However, as a result of unlawful importation for personal use, and inaccuracies in the firearms registry caused by individuals failing to renew their licences or properly relinquish their firearm, the actual number of non-state held arms is difficult to determine.<sup>184</sup>

## **SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Youth played a significant role in the 2006 riots.<sup>185</sup> With 57% of the population under the age of 25,<sup>186</sup> the issue of youth presents a growing concern for a number of the officials interviewed.<sup>187</sup> Police records indicate that young adults between the ages of 22 and 30 are the leading offenders, and men in the 26–30 age group are most often convicted for crimes related to theft, assault and housebreaking.<sup>188</sup> The Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports notes there is very little capacity to absorb the youth as they enter the labour market to support

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<sup>181</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>182</sup> Interviews with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008; Col Siamelie Latu, Tonga Defence Services, Nuku'alofa, 1 October 2008; Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>183</sup> Interview with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>184</sup> Interviews with Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008; Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>185</sup> Interview with Taniela Fusimalohi, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>186</sup> According to the 2006 census, 38% of the population is under 14 years and 19% is between the ages of 15 and 25. "Population Census 2006", Tonga Department of Statistics, <[www.spc.int/prism/Country/TO/stats/Census06/Population/population.htm](http://www.spc.int/prism/Country/TO/stats/Census06/Population/population.htm)>.

<sup>187</sup> Interviews with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008; Taniela Fusimalohi, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008; Taniela Faletau, Deputy Police Commander, Tonga Police Force, Nuku'alofa, 30 September 2008.

<sup>188</sup> "Tonga Police Strategic Plan 2006–2010", Tonga Police Force, 2005, pp. 228–9.

their families and earn a living.<sup>189</sup> Urbanization is also increasing, which leads to new pressures on land tenure and local resources.<sup>190</sup>

Yet another dimension of the challenges associated with youth relates to the question of young returnees. The resident population of Tonga (119,000) accounts for only one third of the overall Tongan population; over 200,000 Tongans live abroad, primarily in New Zealand, the United States of America and Australia.<sup>191</sup> During 2002–2007 over 440 deportees, mostly young men,<sup>192</sup> returned to Tonga often as a result of having had confrontations with the law. Others were sent back to learn about their traditional culture. Taniela Fusimalohi of the Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports notes that although the number of returnees is not large, they have a significant impact on small island communities and the youth have considerable influence over their peers.<sup>193</sup> The President of Tonga's National Youth Congress, Drew Havea, notes that some of the young returnees have been exposed to firearm use and gang culture in the cities from which they are being returned. Havea further suggests that some returnees from the United States helped shape the way the 2006 riots escalated.<sup>194</sup>

### **SUMMARY OF NEEDS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

Although SALW is not a priority issue for Tonga, there are a number of activities that would help Tonga not only to fulfil its PoA commitments but also to prevent SALW from proliferating at a later stage. The central areas for assistance involve reinforcing the legislative framework for dealing with SALW, and reinvigorating the policing system. There is additional need to sensitize and train the police force to handle cases of the domestic and sexual violence and abuse, and to build systems to mitigate the level of domestic abuse perpetrated by police officers. Structured patrols, appropriate and regular trainings, and designing activities for community engagement could significantly improve the motivation and professionalism of the force and could decrease the boredom of officers. Similarly, a system of recruitment, possibly including entrance exams, is necessary in addition to an established, systematic approach for issuing promotions and for sending officers abroad for training.<sup>195</sup>

Customs also requires assistance in order to better oversee potential risks of illicit SALW entry through the post, airport and sea borders and in investigating vessels that have not declared themselves at an authorized port of entry. Given the fact that armed violence in Tonga is low and that SALW is not a priority issue or significant problem for Tonga, inter-agency coordination and training to sensitize customs, police and defence officers to SALW, and incorporating SALW with other training and joint operations on other transnational issues, will support implementation of the PoA in making best use of the limited resources.

Reviews of the security apparatus will be needed as the country moves toward democratic reforms in 2010. It will also be important for Tonga to focus on emerging issues

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<sup>189</sup> Interview with Taniela Fusimalohi, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>190</sup> Interview with Debbie Reschke, First Secretary, Australian Agency for International Development, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>191</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>192</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

<sup>193</sup> Interview with Taniela Fusimalohi, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, Nuku'alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>194</sup> "Youth incited into taking part in riots in Tonga says Youth Congress", Radio New Zealand International, 20 November 2006.

<sup>195</sup> Interview with Vern Morris, Inspector, New Zealand Police, Nuku'alofa, 29 September 2008.

related to youths, urban migration and unemployment within the context of long-term armed violence and crime prevention strategies.

#### **NATIONALLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

##### *National coordination:*

- establishing a network to promote inter-agency discussions and coordination on SALW as required, and integrating SALW into related actions on drugs and transnational crime, etc.

##### *Laws, regulations and administrative procedures:*

- reviewing the legislative framework, particularly with respect to the registration, licensing and vetting of applications.

##### *Law enforcement:*

- strengthening the physical infrastructure, including refurbishing 12 of the 13 stations and staff housing quarters;
- resources, training and capacity-building to strengthen police force management;
- establishing a programme for community engagement and structured patrols;
- reviewing and formalizing a system for recruitment and standardizing promotion and pay structures;
- “training-the-trainer” programmes;
- resources to enable more national-based training for law enforcement;
- reviewing the links between agencies and their roles in addressing SALW; and
- improving inter-agency/departmental coordination and information-sharing.

##### *Customs and borders:*

- an electronic record-keeping system to facilitate the effective retrieval and transmission of data;
- “training-the-trainer” programmes;
- resources to enable more national-based training for customs;
- training for customs officials on techniques to detect arms and their components;
- exposure to other practices, methods of detection and standard operating procedures;
- reviewing the links between agencies and roles to play in addressing SALW; and
- improving inter-agency and departmental coordination and information-sharing.

##### *Stockpile management and security, including inventory management:*

- training for armourers, particularly with respect to record-keeping, registration and data management.

##### *National registries and licensing:*

- supporting updates to the firearms registry, preferably through the establishment of an electronic record-keeping system; and
- awareness-raising on license renewals and amnesties to register currently undeclared weapons.



### *Security and development:*

- vocational training and employment initiatives targeting young adults;
- research on and strategy to address shifts caused by urban migration; and
- awareness-raising and violence reduction programmes, including domestic violence committed by police officers.

## **VANUATU**

There are mixed views over the level of priority Vanuatu should assign to SALW. Many in the international assistance community are surprised to discuss SALW and believe it is not a relevant issue given that armed crime is most likely perpetrated with knives.<sup>196</sup> A national representative of Oxfam notes, “people here walk around with bush knives and take part in random violence. One day someone is going to pick up a gun”.<sup>197</sup> Others question if a domino effect will bring the political instabilities of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands to Vanuatu,<sup>198</sup> especially given the tensions that arose when paramilitaries raided the Parliament and held the President and Prime Minister of Vanuatu at gunpoint in 1996.<sup>199</sup>

Vanuatu’s key priorities are education and health,<sup>200</sup> and in terms of transnational crime, its main concerns centre on monitoring illegal fishing and the trafficking of drugs, contraband and humans. The Vanuatu Police Force and Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue would like to see SALW raised in importance on the national and donor agendas. Not all of the firearms that were in circulation before independence have been confiscated.

Drug use and an influx of youths into Port Vila, where unemployment is high, are blamed for raising the crime levels, both in terms of frequency and intensity.<sup>201</sup> In response to rising crime levels, private security is a rapidly growing business that is increasingly importing arms.<sup>202</sup> The local theatre/social advocacy group Wan Smol Bag stresses the importance of tempering a growing “culture of violence”, evidenced as well in high levels of domestic violence.<sup>203</sup>

### **NATIONAL COORDINATION AGENCY**

The focal point for PoA implementation is the Treaty and Conventions Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Vanuatu has not submitted a national report on implementation of the PoA.

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<sup>196</sup> Interviews with Bernard Fabre-Teste, World Health Organization Country Liaison Officer, Port Vila, 7 October 2008; Brenda Mutumba Nabirye, Project Officer, Child Protection, United Nations Children’s Fund Vanuatu Field Office, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with Anthea Toka, Country Representative, Oxfam International Vanuatu Office, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>198</sup> Interview with Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, 9 October 2008; D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenge in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003.

<sup>199</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>200</sup> Interview with Serge Alain Mahe, Conventions and Treaties, Department of Foreign Affairs, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>201</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Anthea Toka, Country Representative, Oxfam Vanuatu Country Office, Port Vila, 10 October 2008; Jo Darras, co-founder, Wan Smol Bag Theatre, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>202</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>203</sup> There are no comprehensive statistics on domestic violence as most cases are handled at the village-court level and are not reported to the police. Interview with Brenda Mutumba Nabirye, Project Officer, Child Protection, United Nations Children’s Fund Vanuatu Field Office, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Jo Darras, co-founder, Wan Smol Bag Theatre, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

The TCU in Vanuatu was established in July 2004 and has issued three reports to the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre. There is a Joint Planning and Operations Centre for the police, the Mobile Force and the Police Maritime Wing.

## **LAWS, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

A number of interviewees noted that Vanuatu's Firearms Act (1987) requires updating, revision or replacement in order to reflect the reality of present day issues, particularly with respect to importation, methods for dealing with seizures of arms, and registration and licensing of privately held weapons and private security companies.<sup>204</sup> The police are considering developing new legislation that specifically targets private security companies.<sup>205</sup> The Acting Commissioner of Police is also working towards seeing the role of "special constables", who would work with communities and chiefs, formalized within the legal framework.<sup>206</sup>

The planning officer in the Vanuatu Paramilitary Force suggests that both the Police Act and Defence Act require revision and that Vanuatu would benefit from technical expertise to help understand the legal, judicial and administrative needs necessary to sustain a substantive approach to SALW.<sup>207</sup> Customs legislation is currently under review and requires input on handling SALW and, as mentioned by a senior customs official, it would be useful for parallel reviews of customs and firearms legislation.<sup>208</sup>

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

With a staff of 528 personnel, Vanuatu's security apparatus consists of the Vanuatu Police Force, the Vanuatu Mobile Force and the Police Maritime Wing.<sup>209</sup> The national police force is generally not armed, though it can access weapons as required. The Vanuatu Mobile Force, accounting for half of personnel originated as a paramilitary force. It serves to support the activities of the Vanuatu Police Force. The Vanuatu Mobile Force however, does not have "clearly stated day to day responsibilities and/or tasks".<sup>210</sup> For this reason, and given the fact that the three divisions share a small pool of financial resources,<sup>211</sup> tensions surface occasionally between the Vanuatu Mobile Force and Vanuatu Police Force.<sup>212</sup>

The Force as a whole is poorly financed and only 20% of the population is covered by an active police presence.<sup>213</sup> Assistance projects supporting the Vanuatu Mobile Force and

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<sup>204</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>205</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>206</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>207</sup> Interview with Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>208</sup> Interview with John Silik Sala, Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement, Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue, 9 October 2008.

<sup>209</sup> Interview with Cedric Netto, Federal Agent, Australian Federal Police Capacity Building Project Team Leader, Australian High Commission, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>210</sup> D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenge in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003, p. 56.

<sup>211</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>212</sup> Interviews with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008; Blandine Boulekone, Executive Director, Transparency International–Vanuatu, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>213</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

Vanuatu Police Force are generally centred around Port Vila, Luganville or Santo and do not target rural areas.<sup>214</sup> There are no radio communications between police outposts<sup>215</sup> and mobility to and from the outer islands and remote areas is difficult.<sup>216</sup>

In order to improve police presence in rural areas, there was an attempt to establish “special constables”.<sup>217</sup> The plan did not materialize partly because the programme was not formalized in legislation,<sup>218</sup> and partly because not enough qualified candidates applied for the positions.<sup>219</sup> It is difficult to attract recruits as the salaries are low and facilities at headquarters and especially in outer areas, including the housing for officers, are in serious need of refurbishing and general maintenance.<sup>220</sup> Several interviewees presented anecdotes on the issue of lack of discipline and misuse of force by members of the police force.<sup>221</sup>

Australia is currently supporting the 5-year, US\$ 23 million (AU\$ 28 million) Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Project, which commenced in February 2006.<sup>222</sup> The project, involving eight full-time staff and eight additional staff to be engaged for specific activities, aims to help the government reform the police force by:

- supporting the improvement of Vanuatu Police Force operations to enhance community safety, crime prevention and victim support;
- supporting the improvement of community views/perceptions of the Vanuatu Police Force through proactive policing (community policing);
- assisting in the update/development of Vanuatu Police Force legislation and policy, including as concerns the roles, powers and functions of the police, the Commissioner of Police and the Police Service Commission;
- supporting organizational change and human resource development and management to make more effective use of human resources;
- supporting the improvement of administrative systems and procedures (including equipment and facilities) to enhance service to both internal and external clients; and
- supporting organizational planning and performance reporting, including joint-submission of project management reports.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Interviews with Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>215</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>216</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force Plans Officer, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>217</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>218</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>219</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>220</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>221</sup> Interviews with Blandine Boulekone, Executive Director, Transparency International–Vanuatu, Port Vila, 13 October 2008; Jo Darras, co-founder, Wan Smol Bag Theatre, Port Vila, 13 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>222</sup> Interview with Cedric Netto, Federal Agent, Australian Federal Police Capacity Building Project Team Leader, Australia High Commission, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>223</sup> See “Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Project”, Australian Federal Police, <[www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/current\\_deployments/vanuatu.html](http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/current_deployments/vanuatu.html)>.

## CUSTOMS AND BORDERS

At present there is no proper recording system of firearm imports.<sup>224</sup> Corruption is a problem in Vanuatu,<sup>225</sup> and this adds to already existing difficulties in record-keeping. Although import licences indicate the quantity of firearms entering the country, the actual number of items imported may not be checked against the licences, allowing dealers to order more firearms than they are authorized under the licences.<sup>226</sup>

Vanuatu is a popular destination for tourists, and estimates suggest that there will be more than a dozen firearms in the harbour at any given time.<sup>227</sup> Arms confiscated by customs are sometimes deposited with the police, or may be kept in the customs office.<sup>228</sup> In the latter case, there are no procedures for safely storing the weapons or formalized procedures for handling the weapons following seizure.<sup>229</sup> The Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement of the Customs and Inland Revenue Service notes, "We confiscate firearms, but cannot store them. Sometimes we deposit them with the police, or we keep them in our office and this is not secure ... How to deal with firearms is one of our priorities".<sup>230</sup>

There are 25 border officers for Port Vila and Santo, the two largest ports, and this is not deemed to be sufficient to cover all of the issues, containers and documents that need to be processed.<sup>231</sup> Customs and Inland Revenue further notes that the country lacks scanners and does not have an adequate record-keeping system for customs.<sup>232</sup> There is little knowledge of the boats entering the country, or who and what is on board.<sup>233</sup> Tracing capability, particularly with respect to connecting the Vanuatu Police Force with IWeTS, could be enhanced.<sup>234</sup>

One patrol boat, provided under Australia's Pacific Patrol Boat Programme, monitors the 700,000km<sup>2</sup> exclusive economic zone, and there are no night patrols.<sup>235</sup> While additional patrol boats could be donated through international assistance, such as through Australian Defence Force assistance, sustainability in terms of fuel and maintenance remains a problem.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>225</sup> Interviews with John Classen, Programme Manager, New Zealand Agency for International Development, Port Vila, 8 October 2008; Blandine Boulekone, Executive Director, Transparency International-Vanuatu, Port Vila, 13 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008;

<sup>226</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>227</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>228</sup> Interview with John Silik Sala, Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement, Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>230</sup> Interview with John Silik Sala, Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement, Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>231</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>232</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>233</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>234</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>235</sup> Interview with John Silik Sala, Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement, Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>236</sup> Interview with Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

The Australian-supported Vanuatu Police Force programme Operation Goodwill, which aims to liaise with communities and raise awareness about crime, gave rise to another programme entitled Vanuatu Coastwatch, which uses development incentives to encourage the public to report suspicious activity to the police.<sup>237</sup>

## STOCKPILE SECURITY AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

The armoury located in Port Vila is the largest in the country, and is not deemed to be secure.<sup>238</sup> There is a magazine close to the armoury which is reasonably secure.<sup>239</sup> There are 700 confiscated firearms awaiting disposal.<sup>240</sup> Although resources to this end are available through the Defence Cooperation Programme, the process has been delayed for bureaucratic reasons or, as some speculate, pending the state's importation of SALW pledged by France.<sup>241</sup>

## NATIONAL REGISTRATION AND LICENSING

As mentioned above, the registration and licensing procedures for privately held weapons in the legislation are outdated and there is no formalized vetting process for issuing firearms licences.<sup>242</sup> Chiefs or community leaders can attest to the applicant's "genuine reason" for wanting a firearm, but "you are not sure whether it is a real *kastom* chief doing the witnessing, or just some random person".<sup>243</sup>

The computerized firearms registry was established in 1987; however problems in the network have meant that it has not been accessible since 2008.<sup>244</sup> The registry lists 4,200 licensed firearms owners,<sup>245</sup> however the Acting Officer In Charge of the firearms registry notes that "there are more rifles out there than registered and documented" as licence-holders may have died, may not be aware of the obligation to report transfers of licences, or do not want to pay the renewal fee.<sup>246</sup> The Police Department has also not had the means available to pay for the postage of sending out printed invoices for the license fees—there are 29,000 outstanding invoices, and only some 800 invoices are paid each year.<sup>247</sup>

The Vanuatu Police Force seeks to update the registry and account for the arms in the country through a scoping and awareness-raising exercise, coupled with an amnesty that allows

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<sup>237</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>238</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>239</sup> Interview with Capt. Alistair Mitchell, New Zealand Defence Force secondment, Vanuatu Mobile Force Engineers, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>240</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>241</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>242</sup> Interview with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, and Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>243</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>244</sup> Interview with Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>245</sup> Personal communication with Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 2 April 2009.

<sup>246</sup> Interview Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>247</sup> Personal communication with Sgt Jimilton Tabi, Acting Officer In Charge, Central Firearm Registry Office, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 2 April 2009.

delinquent licence-holders to come forward for registration. Such an exercise has not yet taken place due to a lack of available resources and capacity to implement it, though the Police Force would like to see it come under the assistance provided through the Police Force Capacity Building Project.<sup>248</sup>

## SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Classified as a Least Developed Country, Vanuatu faces a number of challenges that fall in the security–development nexus. The high birth rate in a country where 60% of the population is under the age of 25 will further burden the already inadequate delivery of services,<sup>249</sup> heighten unemployment, fuel urban migration and add pressure to existing tensions over resources and land.<sup>250</sup> Despite the high population of youths, few have university educations<sup>251</sup> and the country thus faces a severe shortage of human capacity.<sup>252</sup>

Government presence throughout the country is weak, and services break down the further away one moves from the main urban areas.<sup>253</sup> As 80% of the Vanuatu population lives in the rural areas, their first point of contact to governance is through their local chief and *wantok* systems.<sup>254</sup> and a many of the youths take advantage of the loopholes created by the existence of the traditional and formal systems.<sup>255</sup> Corruption is reportedly rife in the country,<sup>256</sup> while many politicians, working within an increasingly fractionalized party system, switch their party allegiances readily and make promises outside of their government's or party's priorities and policies in order to win populist support.<sup>257</sup>

## SUMMARY OF NEEDS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE

Vanuatu does not suffer from the illicit trade of SALW or its negative impacts as some other countries do. However, it does not have a sufficient legislative framework or the physical or human resources to prevent future demand for and proliferation of SALW. There is little control over the private security companies that are emerging in response to heightened levels in crime. The firearms registry is outdated, many licences are delinquent and there is a need for a state-wide awareness-raising campaign on the roles and responsibilities of firearm-licences holders, with an amnesty to bring forward those without licenses or with expired licences. A compendium of relevant legislation, once revised, would be a useful tool to support awareness-raising campaigns on firearms among government officials and the wider public.

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<sup>248</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>249</sup> Interview with John Classen, Programme Manager, New Zealand Agency for International Development, Port Vila, 8 October 2008.

<sup>250</sup> Interviews with Lt Col Arthur Edmanley, Acting Commissioner, Vanuatu Police Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008; Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, 9 October 2008; John Classen, Programme Manager, New Zealand Agency for International Development, Port Vila, 8 October 2008.

<sup>251</sup> Interviews with John Classen, Programme Manager, New Zealand Agency for International Development, Port Vila, 8 October 2008; Jo Darras, co-founder, Wan Smol Bag Theatre, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>252</sup> Interview with Serge Alain Mahe, Conventions and Treaties, Department of Foreign Affairs, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>253</sup> Interview with Jo Darras, co-founder, Wan Smol Bag Theatre, Port Vila, Vanuatu, 13 October 2008.

<sup>254</sup> "The term 'wantok' (one talk) in Melanesian Pidgin literally means someone who speaks the same language. In popular usage it refers to the relations of obligation binding relatives, members of the same clan or tribe, as well as looser forms of association". S. Dinnen, "Law, Order and State in Papua New Guinea", Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 1997/1, 1997, p. 13.

<sup>255</sup> Interview with Anthea Toka, Country Representative, Oxfam International Vanuatu Office, Port Vila, 10 October 2008.

<sup>256</sup> Interview with Blandine Boulekone, Executive Director, Transparency International–Vanuatu, Port Vila, 13 October 2008.

<sup>257</sup> H. Van Trease, "Vanuatu's 2008 Election—Difficulties of Government Formation in a Fractionalized Setting", Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia briefing note, no. 1, 2009.

Improved inter-agency coordination and training to sensitize customs, police and the Vanuatu Mobile Force on SALW, and incorporating SALW issues into training and joint operations on other transnational issues will support implementation of the PoA while making best use of the limited resources.

Current assistance aimed at governance and the rule of law will help reduce the corruption that undermines firearms legislation. However, there is also a need to strengthen the management and oversight of officers and to include human rights and gender in training programmes. The physical infrastructure of police stations and housing require refurbishing and maintenance and further capacity must be built to extend the presence of the police in the outer islands.

It is also essential for the Government of Vanuatu to focus on emerging issues related to youths, urban migration and unemployment within the context of long-term armed violence and crime prevention strategies.

### **NATIONALLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SALW ASSISTANCE**

*National Coordinating Agency or body to address SALW:*

- establishing a network to promote inter-agency discussions and coordination on SALW as required, and integrating SALW into related actions on drugs and transnational crime, etc.

*Laws, regulations and administrative procedures:*

- reviewing and updating the legislative framework, particularly with respect to registration and licensing of private users and private security companies; and
- preparation of a compendium of relevant legislation.

*Law enforcement:*

- resources, financing and capacity to improve police presence outside of Port Vila;
- support for refurbishing and maintaining the physical infrastructure of stations and housing, especially in the rural areas;
- establishing communications with outer islands;
- accessing communication networks such as IWeTs;
- training in management, oversight and discipline of officers;
- training in human rights and gender;
- strengthening partnerships and coordination between customs and police; and
- reviewing the roles and responsibilities and budgetary requirements of the Vanuatu Police Force and the Vanuatu Mobile Force.

*Customs and borders:*

- establishing operational procedures for handling and ensuring the safe storage of SALW that have been retrieved or confiscated;
- sustainable physical capacity and human resources to strengthen patrols;
- training and closer coordination between customs and police for establishing SALW risk assessments and investigating undeclared SALW;
- strengthening partnerships and coordination between customs and police; and

- promoting the integration of SALW in related issues such as drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism.

*Stockpile management and security:*

- training in stockpile management and security; and
- strengthening the armouries and containers.

*National registries and licences:*

- updating the firearms registry, including patrols and amnesties to locate missing and unregistered firearms.

*Security and development:*

- vocational training and employment schemes to absorb the youth bulge;
- revision of labour laws to protect the hiring and employment of both men and women; and
- social programmes that target the excessive use of alcohol, marijuana and other intoxicants and that aim to engage unemployed youths.



## CHALLENGES FOR ADDRESSING SALW IN THE CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

The challenges for implementing the PoA in the case study countries can be partly attributed to the general sense that the illicit trade in SALW is not a significant problem there. When raising the issue of SALW during the field interviews the conversations would invariably turn to the tensions of the Solomon Islands and the SALW in Papua New Guinea. The supply-side nature of the PoA has perhaps distracted the states away from seeing the important measures of the PoA that are still relevant to them, particularly with respect to strengthening the capacity to prevent the illicit trade from emerging. Instead, there is a lack of political momentum and efforts in awareness-raising on the relevant aspects of the PoA to address SALW related issues more broadly in the countries. While regional approaches are taken to support neighbours afflicted by armed violence, such as RAMSI and the Gun Control Summit in Papua New Guinea, these have not necessarily translated into states acting nationally on SALW and there has been little regional support to directly target the illegally held or undeclared weapons of individuals.

Another limitation to implementing the PoA and in addressing SALW more broadly is that of availability, consistency and reliability of data.<sup>258</sup> Records and documentation of older SALW programmes and activities are non-existent. Other useful datasets such as crime records are incomplete as many crimes, particularly smaller crimes and infractions, are reported only to community chiefs as per local custom. Aside from in the relatively gun-free Solomon Islands, the police in the case study countries are unable to provide comprehensive estimates of the number of unregistered weapons or expired licenses. Further, the interviews uncovered a number of contradictions in the general perceptions of the extent of the SALW problem to specific details of activities and their funding. Interviews also revealed information that contrasted with information in published literature. For instance, staff from the firearms registry in Papua New Guinea noted that records were kept manually, whereas a 2003 study noted that the firearms registry in Papua New Guinea was computerized.<sup>259</sup>

Personnel turn-over and rotations have an impact on training. Rather than investing in more comprehensive training and long-term strategic planning with staff members, there is a continuous flow of new staff that must be trained on the basics of their post. Any training received on SALW is lost with rotation.

Other challenges to PoA implementation are characteristic of the limitations of any small island developing state or of Least Developed Countries in particular (these being the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu): limited human resources as a result of small populations, limited access to secondary education and small, resource-strapped public sectors; insufficient resources to establish, maintain or equip physical structures; asymmetrical attention to urban centres over rural areas; lack of motivation or reward that would promote professionalism and deter corruption; competition over limited public funds by different ministries and agencies; and a reliance on public sectors where the mechanisms in place (or lack thereof) may make it difficult to absorb, coordinate and make best use of financial assistance.

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<sup>258</sup> P. Alpers and C. Twyford, *Small Arms in the Pacific*, Small Arms Survey, Occasional Paper no. 8, 2003; D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenges in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003; P. Alpers, *Gun-Running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*, Small Arms Survey, Special Report no. 5, 2005.

<sup>259</sup> D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenges in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003.

Poor knowledge management on SALW issues also appears to be an issue. There is a lack of institutional memory on SALW-related activities at all levels and many SALW-related initiatives are forgotten, cannot be traced or cannot be reliably accounted for. As much in the donor countries as in the case study countries, attention to SALW relies largely on the interests of the present staff. The high turn-over of staff in the departments of donor governments, the states in question and in international and regional organizations meant that interviewees were frequently unaware of previously implemented activities and outcomes. One striking illustration of this concerns the Nadi Framework and its Weapons Control Bill: while many interviewees could cite its importance, none were able to provide information on its current status.

Civil society groups are in a unique position to undertake research, awareness-raising and public outreach, to hear the grassroots perspective of local populations. They can also be an important information resource for states to draw upon in their discussions on SALW. Civil society can also be instrumental in conflict prevention and violence-reduction activities. However, only a handful of civil society groups include the issue of SALW in their work, and they are severely under-resourced to be able to undertake activities effectively and to coordinate with other civil society groups nationally, regionally and internationally.

The case study countries must also reconcile cleavages between formal law and justice in a modern state with the traditional and deeply entrenched *wantok* or *kastom* systems.<sup>260</sup> In terms of SALW-related matters, the parallel systems of governance and justice enable individuals to choose the least rigid system to handle their lesser crimes, which lessens deterrence to commit small crimes or domestic violence. Police officers may feel a sense of loyalty or obligation to family, tribe, or community, thus turn a blind eye. The loyalties to family make the need for housing all the more important in remote areas, as the police force must ensure the officers can act objectively in their enforcement of the law, which is more easily done in areas where they are not tied to their deep-rooted traditions or connections.

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<sup>260</sup> As noted elsewhere in the report, *kastom* is a commonly used term to describe the systems found throughout the South Pacific islands that are based on customary law, social norms, belief systems and close family or tribal networks.

## FILLING THE GAPS OF SALW ASSISTANCE

### NATURE AND SCOPE OF ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

As the previous sections of this report show, there are a number of assistance activities undertaken in the case study countries that reflect the commitments of the PoA, particularly with respect to strengthening stockpile management and security and in assisting in disarmament, reintegration and weapons collection and disposal programmes.

Much of the support provided from the international community reflects the nature of the assistance outlined in Section III of the PoA, which is largely in the realm of supporting the exchange of information, providing training and strengthening partnerships. The regional activities and support provided for the TCUs and the Combined Law Agency Groups, as well as the engagement of the regional organizations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Oceania Customs Organisation, have gone a long way in supporting these elements. However, the initiatives mainly targeted terrorism and organized crime. While SALW can be linked with these issues, particularly with respect to terrorism and the trafficking of humans and drugs, illegal immigration, illicit financial transactions and foreign criminal rings, it does not represent the whole picture of the SALW problem as experienced in these countries. Addressing SALW only in this manner leaves out the most relevant aspects of the problem.

There are also many training programmes available for customs, law enforcement and intelligence, however, these are generally conducted outside of the case study countries. The lack of nationally based trainers and experts was noted in each of the case study countries. When the officials go abroad for training, it creates a shortage of available staff in areas where human resources are already insufficient.<sup>261</sup> Donor countries and implementing agencies noted that often the training takes place in a context outside of the actual working conditions of the trainees, there are no systems in place for the trainees to report back on the training, and the trained staff rarely have opportunities to exercise what they have learned as a result of the small amount of transnational crime that actually takes place in the countries.<sup>262</sup> New staff must be continuously trained on the basic elements of the issue at the expense of more specialized and in depth training.<sup>263</sup> A legal officer at the Attorney General's Office in Fiji stated, "There is a lot of training, but too few people to focus on separate issues. Everybody then needs to train on disarmament, terrorism and fisheries for instance, and the trainings may not be as effective".<sup>264</sup>

The nature of another common form of training-based assistance provided to the case study countries is the hiring and secondment of nationals from donor countries as Technical Assistants to work in various ministries and agencies. The Technical Assistants help in building national capacity on specific issues and the national counterparts gain expertise from them. The term "boomerang assistance" is a common term used repeatedly throughout all of the case study countries to describe the use of Technical Assistants as assistance, partly because of the high turn-over of the Assistants in their posts. The other reason is because the nature of the

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<sup>261</sup> Interview with Maj. Jerry Singirok (ret.), Gun Control Committee, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>262</sup> Group interview conducted at an Australia Whole of Government meeting, Suva, 25 September 2008; Tessa Te Mata, New Zealand Agency for International Development Country Manager and Counsellor, New Zealand High Commission, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008.

<sup>263</sup> Interviews with Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008; Jalal Ud Dean, Acting General Manager of Customs and Excise, Fiji Islands Revenue and Customs Authority, Suva, 23 September 2008.

<sup>264</sup> Interview with Selai Lewanitoga, Legal Officer, Attorney General's Office, Suva, 25 September 2008.

assistance is viewed by many of those interviewed as providing equal if not more benefit to the donor countries in terms of employment and training for their young professionals.

The training programmes, the secondments of Technical Assistants and the established networks for information-sharing and coordination have important and positive roles to play but, alone, do not adequately cover the full spectrum of assistance needs as outlined by the case study countries, including the requirements related to human resources, such as more national staff.

## **ADVANCING THE POA**

There are a number of issues contained in the PoA that require attention in the case study countries. Although each of the case study countries has a focal point for PoA implementation, each highlighted that inter-agency coordination requires improvement and that discussions should distil how SALW issues could be incorporated better into existing frameworks.<sup>265</sup> Ministries and agencies are not fully aware of the links and roles each have with respect to addressing SALW, which may be because there is very little research taking place on the nature and scope of the individual SALW situation in the respective countries and for assessing the types of competencies required for addressing SALW on items that are not widely understood throughout the countries in the subregion, such as brokering. The national firearms legislation in the case study countries is either outdated or, in the case of Fiji, not in force due to a lack of secondary legislation and regulations. Customs legislation could also be harmonized with firearms legislation.

The Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement of Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue notes that one of their priorities is to cover training in how to deal with firearms, from detection and appropriate risk-assessment tools for SALW to formalizing procedures for handling weapons confiscated from vessels.<sup>266</sup> The case study countries further noted that they did not have access to, training on or experience with the INTERPOL Weapons Electronic Tracing System (IWeTs).

Although SALW is not viewed to be an issue in Tonga and Vanuatu, there is no public outreach or awareness-raising on the roles and responsibilities of gun owners under their respective national laws, which could be an important part of conflict- and crime-prevention strategies.

The language in the PoA covering the issues of conflict prevention and sustainable development is ambiguous. For conflict prevention, Section III, paragraph 4 reads that relevant actors “should consider promotion and assistance of the pursuit of negotiated solutions to conflicts, including by addressing their root causes”. This language potentially opens a wide door for implementing a range of SALW-related activities. However, perhaps because the paragraph does not offer concrete direction or suggestions of the types of assistance that could be provided, conflict prevention is generally referred to, as much in the international arena as in the case study countries, as an end goal rather than a practical issue of the PoA in its own right. The interviewees in the case study countries, including donors and implementing agencies, were unable to provide examples of programme linkages between SALW and conflict

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<sup>265</sup> Only Papua New Guinea engages concertedly on national coordination to address SALW, particularly with respect to the development of an anticipated Gun Control Committee.

<sup>266</sup> Interview with John Silik Sala, Deputy Director of Customs, Services and Enforcement, Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue, 9 October 2008.

prevention, even though each of the countries have experienced political instabilities to some degree and the level of development and adequacy of public services is low to almost non-existent at times.<sup>267</sup>

The situation is much the same for sustainable development. Section III, paragraph 17 states that “States should make, as appropriate, greater efforts to address problems related to human and sustainable development”. Sustainable development is the number one priority for each of the case study countries, and yet discussions and programmes linked to the relationship between SALW and development were basically non-existent.

Although the linkages between armed violence, SALW and development were regularly acknowledged in the interviews, the outcome of the interviews conducted in this study made it clear that, despite the Whole of Government approaches adopted by the donors and case study countries and the United Nations’ Delivering as One approach, such discussions on SALW and development seemed to be limited within, rather than across, fields and disciplines. In both the case study and donor countries, development officers declined meetings that related to SALW, since it was not consistent with their mandate.

The complexity of line ministries, budgets and distinctive mandates makes it difficult to discuss, let alone implement, projects that combine or cross the security–development boundary. Overcoming this boundary is essential for the case study countries where there are a number of development-related issues that could lead to an increase of undeclared arms brought illicitly into the country if such elements as violence reduction, conflict prevention and SALW are not taken into consideration. Rapidly growing populations, disproportionately large segments of the population under the age of 25, poverty, urban migration and growing crime are all social pressures that could fuel existing frustrations felt in the case study countries over property rights, dwindling natural resources, high unemployment and inadequate public service delivery. Related to governance, riots protesting the slow progress made on democratic reforms in Tonga, post-election riots in the Solomon Islands, multiple coups d’état in Fiji, lack of government control over the violence throughout Papua New Guinea and frequent votes of no-confidence in the Vanuatu Parliament further highlight the fragility of the political environment in the case study countries.

#### **BEYOND THE POA: SALW ASSISTANCE RELEVANT FOR THE CASE STUDY COUNTRIES**

Extending beyond the parameters of the PoA, the case study countries expressed interest in being able to account for and keep adequate records of privately held weapons, monitor small-scale, undeclared firearms from entering in the country (for instance by post or on the person of an individual), oversee and accommodate new challenges such as in the area of private security, and develop training-the-trainer programmes and nationally based training programmes. Management and discipline and the resources to promote greater professionalism within law enforcement were also identified as key areas for receiving support, as were exposure to how other countries approach SALW from the vantage point of arms control and link SALW with efforts to address transnational crime, and monitoring small-scale importations. Crime prevention, which links closely with development, is also an issue gaining salience on national agendas and which requires a range of political and social interventions.

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<sup>267</sup> RAMSI has sustained peace in the Solomon Islands. However, a common view within the country is that violence would erupt again if RAMSI were to leave too soon. Even with RAMSI’s presence, unarmed riots erupted in Honiara following elections in 2006. Unarmed riots also took place in Tonga in 2006 when rioters took to the streets in protest over lack of progress toward democratic reform and the high number of foreign-owned businesses.

Each case study country suffers from a lack of human and financial resources to sustain a consistent and reliable police presence throughout the rural areas and outer islands of their respective countries. Housing facilities for police officers in remote areas and resources for police mobility are seen as essential, but are severely lacking. Such facilities and capacity are necessary to accommodate the powerful traditional, community and tribal ties and obligations found throughout the islands: it is difficult for officers to be objective when they are stationed near their ancestral villages. Also, corruption is another widespread problem in the islands.

Although the PoA covers assistance for customs and borders in Section III, paragraph 7, it is a good example where the purpose of the assistance, which is “enhance cooperation, the exchange of experience and training among competent officials” does not fit with the needs of the states. Each of the case study countries lacks sufficient technology such as x-rays and scanners at border entry points and monitoring is thus heavily reliant upon manual searches.

Australia and the Patrol Boats Programme provide significant support to customs throughout the region, particularly with respect to training and in supplying patrol boats. However, a central concern for the case study countries is finding the resources to sustain the patrols in their vast exclusive economic zones, where SALW among other smuggled items could make their way to or through the countries’ ocean borders. The average patrol boat consumes about US\$ 10,000 of oil per day,<sup>268</sup> and the Plans Officer for the Vanuatu Mobile Force notes that there is a significant resource burden to maintain and sustain the boats.<sup>269</sup> Although vessels are not deemed to be a serious threat for smuggling weapons, the capacity of the small customs units in each of the countries is severely limited to be able to search and verify the declarations made by the personnel on board.<sup>270</sup>

Similarly, the TCUs and the Combined Law Agency Groups are considered a “good way of doing business with scarce resources”.<sup>271</sup> However, interviewees in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga all stressed that the burden on national resources for maintaining their respective national Groups and Units, including the delegation of staff to the Units, where the available capacity of human resources is already low.<sup>272</sup>

This section demonstrates that there has been a high degree of intra-regional engagement in a number of regionally based or bilaterally supported initiatives. Despite the existence of the initiatives and the valuable role they have, the nature and scope of the assistance received does not always reflect the key SALW concerns of the states, and much work remains to be done. Efforts to implement the PoA and to provide SALW-related assistance more broadly will have to be concertedly addressed, even when SALW is only part of a larger programme or activity.

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<sup>268</sup> Presentation made by David Abbott, Team Leader for Millennium Development Goals, United Nations Development Programme, UNDP Pacific Centre Consultative Group Meeting, Suva, 25 September 2008.

<sup>269</sup> Interview with Capt. Arnold Vira, Plans Officer, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Port Vila, 9 October 2008.

<sup>270</sup> Interview with Sefita Tangi, Commissioner of Revenue, Revenue Services Department, Nuku’alofa, 2 October 2008.

<sup>271</sup> Interview with the Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008.

<sup>272</sup> Idem.

## CONCLUSION

Without overstating the threat of the illicit trade in SALW to individual countries in the Pacific, there are many steps that must be taken to address SALW and armed violence in the interest of national and regional security. It is thus difficult to assess the actual extent of illicit weapon circulation and whether or not the problem is larger or smaller than currently understood—information, research and data collection being a problem that plagues the case study countries. Nevertheless, the mere presence of a few arms, or even rumours of their presence, is enough to displace families and communities and create demand for SALW, and—as has been the case in Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea—to undermine governments to varying degrees. The impact of SALW on Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands has been, and for Papua New Guinea continues to be, devastating on local populations.

Given the current outdated state of most firearms-related legislation, the severe limitations posed by the lack of physical and human resources of the law enforcement and customs services, as well as challenges in the area of information management and record-keeping, coupled with the fact that organized crime is on the rise, the case study countries will not be in a strong position to prevent SALW from proliferating should the demand for SALW arise or traffickers find lucrative and tempting opportunities.

The priorities for SALW assistance that relate directly to the commitments of the PoA and that were consistently highlighted in the case study countries are enhancing national inter-agency coordination, establishing new or revising existing firearms and related legislation, enhancing cooperation with international information-sharing networks, raising awareness on SALW among national government bodies and to the public, and building the capacity and resources for law enforcement and customs and border security. Albeit the language is ambiguous, the PoA includes conflict prevention and sustainable development in its coverage, and each of the countries demonstrated a need for addressing the security–development nexus, particularly with respect to property rights, exploitation and competition over natural resources, environmental degradation, food security, urban migration, high unemployment and large youth populations, inadequate service delivery, loopholes left between competing systems of traditional and formal systems of governance, and crime. Beyond the PoA, firearms registries, armed crime, private security, basic material resources and human resources are the leading SALW priorities for these states. International, regional and national efforts could also make better use of civil society.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In a subregion heavily dependent on assistance, the case study countries have limited human and financial resources at their disposal to address SALW and security-related concerns more broadly. Aside from Papua New Guinea, where SALW are rife, the issue of SALW is lost behind other more pressing priorities such as development, education and health. Therefore, in order to ensure that SALW is addressed and the PoA is implemented, strategic approaches to identify and coordinate between national and regional priorities on SALW, border control, security, terrorism and organized crime are needed to pool and make best use of available resources, aid and cooperation. A regionally supported approach to national coordination on PoA implementation and SALW may be useful to accommodate for countries that are not faced with particular SALW threats and that have limited public sectors. In order to implement such an approach, the following recommendations on SALW assistance for the case study countries are made:

- Undertake a revision and revival of the Nadi Framework and its Weapons Control Bill or undertake a new initiative to address SALW at the regional level and support national efforts in the region.
- Conduct an assessment of existing initiatives and mechanisms in place to see how and where SALW could be best incorporated and addressed by these. Create alternative systems to cover the aspects that remain outside of the existing initiatives and mechanisms.
- Review the areas for SALW assistance identified by states in the country profiles of this report to determine opportunities for national action and international assistance and to implement them.
- Promote knowledge management, undertake research and improve data collection systems on SALW-related issues, with a view to improving the region's informational resources on SALW and to strengthening institutional memories on SALW efforts and activities, given the high turn-over rate and frequent rotation of staff in both donor and case study countries.
- Explore the links between security and development in the case study countries and seek ways to design practical, cross-sectoral programmes that incorporate SALW-related elements and to ensure that such dialogue is promoted systematically.
- Ensure that the priorities and needs of states on SALW-related issues are included in national development strategies.
- Support civil society organizations to participate in discussions related to SALW and in carrying out SALW-related activities.
- Promote efforts that support women's engagement in discussions and decision-making in SALW and security issues.

Stepping outside of the case study countries, the results of the study have further demonstrated that there are a number of measures that remain essential and which risk being overlooked in states that have been fortunate enough not to have felt the impact of large-scale illicit trade in SALW. For some states the relevance of the PoA may be limited to preventing the illicit trade from emerging in the future. However, PoA commitments are important building blocks for addressing more focused, particular or immediate socio-economic issues, such as armed violence reduction or conflict prevention.

In highlighting the gaps between the coverage of SALW assistance in the PoA and the outstanding needs of the case study countries to address SALW, this report makes it clear that the PoA does not provide an adequate framework for covering all SALW assistance, which is the role it currently holds. Thus, as an additional recommendation to this report:

- It is essential for the international community to consider concrete measures to frame its objectives and commitments for channelling the technical and financial assistance necessary to cover the multi-faceted requirements of addressing SALW in all its aspects.



## ANNEX I

### METHODOLOGY

In undertaking this study, UNIDIR drew from its previous research on assistance and cooperation, notably a global survey on international SALW assistance, in which Pacific Island States participated, as well as a regional case study of East Africa, which sought to define the challenges associated with SALW assistance. One aspect of this work has been to improve the matching of needs of states with donor funding. To this end, UNIDIR has developed a checklist to help states to identify their assistance needs, and designed a web-based mechanism for matching needs and funding.<sup>273</sup>

The case studies involved a review of existing literature, national statements made at international and regional meetings, and national reports submitted on implementation of the PoA and field research. The field research consisted of interviews conducted with 115 individuals from government bodies, regional and international organizations, and civil society. The checklist which UNIDIR drafted to help states identify their needs for international assistance helped to structure the interviews.

The government interviews targeted, where applicable, ministries of foreign affairs, defence, internal security, customs, immigration, aid coordination and planning, and the offices of prime ministers and attorneys general. Ministries addressing youth, development or gender issues were consulted when possible.<sup>274</sup> Representatives of donor governments were interviewed in each of the five countries, and an Australian Whole of Government meeting was held in Canberra to help provide an overview of Australia's security and aid interventions in the case study countries.<sup>275</sup>

The research team further met with the United Nations Development Programme regional office and national offices in every country, the United Nations Children's Fund in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women regional office. Interviews were also conducted with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Oceania Customs Organisation.

There are only a few civil society organizations in the Pacific that focus on SALW. Thus the research team also met with representatives of national and international civil society organizations focusing on development, gender and human rights.

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<sup>273</sup> The matching needs and resources mechanism is now being incorporated in the PoA-Implementation Support System (PoA-ISS) administered by the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs. See <[www.poa-iss.org](http://www.poa-iss.org)>.

<sup>274</sup> In the Solomon Islands, representatives from RAMSI and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission were also consulted.

<sup>275</sup> Whole of Government is the term used by Australia to describe its multi-agency integrative approach to handling issues that cross portfolio boundaries.

## ANNEX II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

There are only a handful of articles and publications that specifically address the issue of SALW in the Pacific. A common qualification made by researchers relates to the paucity of available statistical data, reports and evidence needed to make accurate quantitative assessments of the problems associated with SALW.

Two studies are the most frequently referenced documents on SALW issues in the Pacific.<sup>276</sup> These publications, by Philip Alpers and Conor Twynford, and by David Capie, focus extensively on existing firearms-related legislation, the basis of the legal trade in SALW and the security of legal stockpiles (from which most illicit weapons are sourced). Both aim to quantify the SALW situation in the Pacific by estimating the number of state- and civilian-held weapons.

The Small Arms Survey has published a number of country-specific studies, including the Alpers and Twynford report that have focused mainly on Papua New Guinea (particularly the Highlands and Bougainville) and the Solomon Islands.<sup>277</sup> In April 2008, *Contemporary Security Policy* published an article by Alpers examining the factors that led to the destruction of over one third of the military weapons in Papua New Guinea; the report also comprehensively details armoury security and stockpile management in Papua New Guinea back to the 1970s.<sup>278</sup>

A report by Andrew Winnington is a notable effort to quantify SALW violence by researching firearm injuries and deaths registered at Mendi General Hospital in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea from 1999 to 2007.<sup>279</sup>

The Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University has also explored the issue of SALW in a small number of articles, generally in the context of governance, state-building, conflict and violence, gender and law and order.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> P. Alpers and C. Twynford, *Small Arms in the Pacific*, Small Arms Survey, Occasional Paper no. 8, 2003; D. Capie, *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenges in the Pacific*, Victoria University Press, 2003.

<sup>277</sup> P. Alpers, *Gun-Running in Papua New Guinea: From Arrows to Assault Weapons in the Southern Highlands*, Small Arms Survey, Special Report no. 5, 2005; E. LeBrun and R. Muggah (eds), *Silencing Guns: Local Perspectives on Small Arms and Armed Violence in Rural Pacific Island Communities*, Small Arms Survey, Occasional Paper no. 15, 2005; N. Haley and R. Muggah, "Jumping the Gun: armed violence in Papua New Guinea", in *Small Arms Survey 2006: Unfinished Business*, Small Arms Survey, 2006.

<sup>278</sup> P. Alpers, "Papua New Guinea: Small Numbers, Big Fuss, Real Results", *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2008.

<sup>279</sup> A. Winnington, "Small Arms Violence in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea: Analysis of Hospital Related Data 1999–2007", International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (New Zealand), 2008.

<sup>280</sup> S. Dinnen and E. Thompson, "Gender and Small Arms Violence in Papua New Guinea", Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2004/8, 2004; L. Goldman, "'Hoo-Ha in Huli': Considerations on Commotion and Community in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea", Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2003/8, 2003.

## **ANNEX III**

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN GROUP INTERVIEWS**

*Republic of Fiji Military Forces, Suva, 22 September 2008*

Col Aziz Mohammed, Chief of Staff

Col Evans, Strategic Command

Maj. Waqa, Operations

*Fiji Police Force, Suva, 23 September 2008*

Kumar, Firearms Section

Vaniniqi, Tactical Force

Cdr Laqai, Assistant Commander

*Oceania Customs Organisation, Suva, 23 September 2008*

Robert Taylor, Head of the Secretariat

Nacani Dreu, Project Officer

Selwa Nandan, Project Officer

Felise Finau, Project Officer

*Australia Whole of Government, Suva, 23 September 2008*

Andrew Martin, Deputy High Commissioner, Australian High Commission

Richelle Tickle, First Secretary, Development Cooperation Section, Australian High Commission

Gregg Quigg, Counsellor, Law Enforcement Liaison, Australian Federal Police

Col Ron Morley, Defence Adviser South Pacific

Maj. Paul Randall, Australian High Commission

*Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Vila, 10 October 2008*

Sue Langford, Deputy High Commissioner, Australia High Commission

Patrick Haines, Senior Programme Manager, Australian Agency for International Development

Paul Spooner, Federal Agent, Australia Federal Police

Maj. Paul Prickett, Mobile Force Training Adviser, Vanuatu Police Force

Cedric Netto, Team Leader for the Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Project, Australian Federal Police

*Ministry of Police and National Security, Honiara, 16 October 2008.*

George Hiele, Permanent Secretary

Walter Kola, Deputy Commissioner of Police

Johnson Siapu, Acting Police Commissioner

*Australia Whole of Government meeting, Port Moresby, 21 October 2008*

Matthew Flint, First Secretary, Australia High Commission

Steven Hulbert, Senior Liaison Officer, Australian Federal Police  
Joanne Choe, Acting Programme Director, Sub-National Governance

*Internal Revenue Commission, Port Moresby, 22 October 2008*

Chris Wall, Deputy Commissioner, Enhanced Cooperation Programme

Alois Daton, Acting Commissioner of Tax

Waliya Abilo, Assistant Commissioner, Enforcement

Paul Iramu, Assistant Commissioner of Revenue Management and Regional Operations

*Coalition Against Gun Violence, Port Moresby, 23 October 2008*

Vavine Gabi, Deputy Chairperson, Coalition Against Gun Violence

Eileen Kolma, Country Representative, Oxfam Papua New Guinea

Tony Cameron, Chief Technical Adviser, United Nations Development Programme

Daniell Cowley, Programme Manager, Oxfam Highlands Office

## ACRONYMS

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
IWeTS	INTERPOL Weapons Electronic Tracing System
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
PoA	United Nations Programme of Action to Combat, Eradicate and Prevent the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
SALW	small arms and light weapons
TCU	Transnational Crime Unit