

HON JUDITH COLLINS KC, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

SOUTH PACIFIC DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING 2024: BRIEFINGS

November 2024

This publication provides briefing documents supporting the Minister of Defence to attend the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting 2024, which was held in Auckland over the period 1-3 October 2024.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- *South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting 2024: Briefing Document*
- *South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting 2024: Bilateral Meetings*

The Bilateral Briefings pack mentions a potential meeting with France which did not proceed.

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at: www.defence.govt.nz/publications/

It has been necessary to withhold certain information in accordance with the following provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Where information is withheld, the relevant sections of the Act are indicated in the body of the document. Where information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2) of the Act, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Information is withheld where making it available would be likely to prejudice:

- the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand [section 6(a)]
- the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country [section 6(b)(i)].

Information is also withheld in order to:

- maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials [section 9(2)(f)(iv)]
- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty [section 9(2)(g)(i)].

Tab Four: Meeting and Concept Papers (pages 54 – 79) of the briefing pack has also been withheld in full under sections 6(a), 6(b)(i) and 6(b)(ii). This information was provided to New Zealand under the basis of confidence.

SOUTH PACIFIC DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING 2024

Briefing Document

1 – 3 October 2024, Auckland, New Zealand



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TAB ONE: OVERVIEW

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Overview

New Zealand will host the 9th SPDMM from 1-3 October in Auckland. The annual meeting brings together Defence Ministers from Australia, Chile, Fiji, France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Tonga to discuss key defence and security issues affecting the South Pacific. The United States, United Kingdom and Japan are SPDMM Observers.

Since it was established in 2013, the SPDMM has become a valuable mechanism in the Pacific regional security architecture. It is a forum for Defence Ministers to set regional priorities for defence forces and defence policy agencies. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The SPDMM 2024's overarching theme is "*Collectively looking to the future: our region in 2050.*" This connects to the retrospective theme of France, last year's host, who focussed on the past achievements of the SPDMM while enabling New Zealand to inject a fresh future-focussed outlook.

This theme will bring together the various components of the meeting; regional security challenges, maritime security, improving the effectiveness of our Defence Forces, and climate change. It also ties in strongly with New Zealand's key policy outcomes for the SPDMM.

New Zealand's key policy outcomes for SPDMM 2024 are to:

- **Reinforce the SPDMM as the pre-eminent Defence meeting** for the Pacific and strengthen regional discussion,
- **Understand Pacific partners' views** on the region's top Defence and Security challenges. This includes how we can collectively position ourselves to face challenges, and ways to improve the effectiveness of our Defence Forces now and into the future; and
- **Encourage Pacific solutions to regional challenges** including by retaining the strong Pacific identity and values of the SPDMM membership.

Agenda Items New Zealand is leading

New Zealand is host and chair of the meeting so will introduce each agenda item and call on speakers, as well as officially open and close the meeting.

New Zealand will also speak first on the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 9: improving the effectiveness of our Defence Forces in 2050
 - Closed session – Agenda item 3: SPDMM and Regional Defence Architecture
 - Closed session – Agenda item 4: [REDACTED] s6(a)
- [REDACTED]

Key Actions / Decisions Required from New Zealand

During the meeting, you will be asked to endorse/approve or give views on the below proposals. More information can be found in each agenda brief.

- **Open session - Agenda Item 7 Ship-Riding Opportunities:** [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] This item is an opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to supporting SPDMM members ship-riding when requested [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]

- **Closed session - Agenda Item 3 SPDMM and regional Defence architecture:** New Zealand proposes to establish a central coordination point through which regional defence operational issues are discussed at the officials level and relevant activities are passed up to SPDMM Ministers for their visibility. We recommend that you seek members' support for the SPDMM Intersessional Working Group to explore a mechanism to co-ordinate the Defence Architecture, and report back for SPDMM 2025.

[redacted] s6(a)

- **Closed session - Agenda Item 5 Pacific Response Group (PRG):** Australia will provide an update on the Pacific Response Group and seek endorsement by all Ministers of the concept of operations. We recommend that you endorse the PRG, noting there are some areas, such as interactions with civilian agencies that need to be worked through at officials' level.

In addition, we anticipate that the below items could be raised throughout the agenda. Suggested responses to each potential initiative are below.

[redacted] s6(b)(i)

Additional NZ Deliverables

- **SPDMM publication on non-traditional security challenges:** In 2021 NZ offered to fund a publication on defence's role in addressing non-traditional security challenges, as a way of promoting SPDMM and the role of regional defence forces. In 2022, NZ shared a concept note on the publication which was agreed by SPDMM members. We will be releasing this publication on the last day of the SPDMM 2024.

SPDMM Attendees

This year SPDMM delegations will be represented by:

- **Tonga:** His Royal Highness Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Tonga
- **Australia:** The Honourable Richard Marles, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and Minister for Defence;
- **Fiji:** The Honourable Pio Tikoduadua, Republic of Fiji Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration;
- **Papua New Guinea:** The Honourable Dr Billy Joseph, Minister of Defence of Papua New Guinea
- **Chile:** Ricardo Montero Allende, Defense Undersecretary (Associate-Minister equivalent);
- **France:** Ministerial attendance TBC

SPDMM Observer nations will be represented by:

- **Japan:** Naoya Morikawa, Director, Japan Ministry of Defence
- **United Kingdom:** Mr Nick Gurr, Director of International Security, UK Ministry of Defence
- **United States:** Mr Andrew Winternitz, Director of International Security, Office of the Secretary of Defence

SPDMM Guest – for the first time the Pacific Island Forum will be attending, represented by:

- **Pacific Island Forum** Secretary General, Baron Waqa

New Zealand Delegation

From New Zealand Defence, you will be accompanied by:

- Brook Barrington (Secretary of Defence);
- Air Marshal Tony Davies (Chief of Defence Force);
- Kathleen Pearce (Head of International Branch, Ministry of Defence) ;
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (Assistant Chief of Strategic Commitments and Engagements);
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (Director – Pacific and Australia, Ministry of Defence);
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (Senior Analyst – Pacific Regional, Ministry of Defence);
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (Military Adviser, NZDF);
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (Private Secretary, Defence); and
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) (personal staff officer to CDF).

Pacific Regional Issues – an overview

Strategic environment

- The Pacific is increasingly the site of strategic competition. [redacted] s6(b)(i)
[redacted]
[redacted]
- [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] SPDMM serves as an opportunity to build this understanding and common voice with Pacific Defence Ministers.

s6(a)

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**SOUTH PACIFIC DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING (SPDMM)
1-3 OCTOBER 2024 AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND**

THEME: Collectively looking to the future: our region in 2050

OPEN SESSION AGENDA

Time	Agenda Item	First speaker
TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER		
1400	1. Karakia (prayer)	New Zealand
1405	2. Welcome remarks and introductions (2 min per delegation)	New Zealand
1430	3. Report from the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting Secretariat <i>The Secretariat to brief participants on outcomes and follow-up from the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting in 2023. This includes an opportunity to endorse the Governance Framework paper.</i>	SPDMM Secretariat only
1450	4. Regional Defence challenges now and into the future (5-7 min per Member) <u>Guiding questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the top three regional security challenges that you foresee in 2050? • How can we better position ourselves to face these challenges now and in the future? • In an era of strategic competition, increased interest in our region brings challenges and opportunities. Looking towards 2050, how can we navigate this congestion to reinforce Pacific sovereignty? 	Papua New Guinea
1540	<i>Reflections 1: Opportunity for observers and PIF Secretary General to share reflections (5 mins each, starting with PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK, then USA).</i>	
WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER		
0830	5. Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting (ODMIM) Intelligence Briefing	ODMIM

	<i>This briefing will be presented by s6(a), s6(b)(i) and focusses on the topic of Maritime Security.</i>	
0845	<p>6. The Future of Maritime Domain Awareness in the Pacific (5-7 min per Member)</p> <p><i>A discussion on shared MDA challenges and how to enhance our collective MDA efforts across Defence and in collaboration with other agencies.</i></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can emerging technology, including space, enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)? • What new MDA challenges will we face in 2050? • With the emergence of MDA as a cross-cutting issue, how can we effectively collaborate with civilian authorities working in MDA (particularly the Forum Fisheries Agency, Customs units and police maritime units)? • How can we improve MDA information exchanges? 	Tonga
0945	<p>7. Ship riding arrangements (2 min per Member)</p> <p>s6(a)</p>	France
1015	<i>Reflections 2: Opportunity for observers and PIF Secretary General to share reflections (5 mins each, starting with PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK, then USA).</i>	
1030	<i>MORNING TEA</i>	
1100	<p>8. Adapting to climate change and its impacts (5-7 min per Member)</p> <p><i>An opportunity for members to share insights and experience on climate change impacts and adaptation.</i></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should SPDMM as a group work and coordinate together with civilian agencies and regional HADR actors? • What is the role of defence forces in relation to the climate change challenge beyond addressing the impacts? • What contribution can the SPDMM make to climate change resilience in the Pacific? (For instance, the 2019 SPDMM climate change study implementation) 	Fiji
1145	<p>9. Improving the effectiveness of our Defence Forces in 2050 (5-7 min per Member)</p> <p><i>Discuss the potential impacts of our changing demographics on our Defence Forces, how we can and ought to engage with other government agencies and the challenges and opportunities we face looking towards 2050.</i></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we position our Defence Forces to collectively respond to the current strategic environment? 	New Zealand

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we better integrate our militaries and build capability to respond and defend our interests? • How can SPDMM leverage cooperation between the militaries of the Pacific to bolster recruitment and retention? How can we better combine our strengths, pool our resources and help offset each other's challenges? • What can we be doing to continue to increase the number of women in Pacific defence and security agencies, and to better support the Women, Peace and Security agenda? • How can we better share lessons and build our collective ability to harness emerging technology to improve the effectiveness of our Defence Forces? • What new frameworks in the region might be needed to support our collective ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities? 	
1230	LUNCH	
1330	<p>10. Update to Povai Endeavour Framework</p> <p><i>Australia will seek the endorsement of the revised Povai Endeavour Framework. There will be a paper on this item.</i></p>	Australia
1345	<p>11. SPDMM regional training framework (2 min per Member)</p> <p><i>Update from Australia [and France for the Pacific Academy] on the SPDMM Regional Training Framework, with live interactive website demonstration.</i></p>	Australia
1445	<p><i>Reflections 3: Opportunity for observers and PIF Secretary General to share reflections (5 mins each, starting with PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK, then USA).</i></p>	
THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER		
1300	<p>Open session meeting closes (1-2 min per delegation)</p> <p>Concluding remarks from all delegations including observers about the open session SPDMM meeting.</p>	New Zealand



**SOUTH PACIFIC DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING (SPDMM)
1-3 OCTOBER 2024 AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND**

THEME: Collectively looking to the future: our region in 2050

CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

Time	Agenda Item	First speaker
THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER		
0900	1. Karakia (prayer)	New Zealand
0905	2. How should the SPDMM's role evolve in the future to meet emerging challenges? (5 min per Member) <i>Reflecting on discussions from the previous day, what role do we see in the future for SPDMM?</i> <u>Guiding questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What more do members want to see from the SPDMM? • How do we ensure that Pacific voices are heard in a more complex and contested security environment? 	Tonga
0940	3. SPDMM and regional Defence architecture (1-2 min per Member) s6(a)	New Zealand
1000	MORNING TEA	
1030	s6(a)	New Zealand

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	s6(a)	
1115	<p>5. Pacific Response Group (1-2 min per Member)</p> <p><i>Update from Australia on the concept of operations for a Pacific Response Group with Ministers asked to endorse the concept for enactment.</i></p>	Australia
1140	s6(a)	
1155	<p>7. Wrap up of session</p> <p><i>Secretariat to review actions and New Zealand to close the session</i></p>	New Zealand
1200	LUNCH	

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TAB TWO: ANNOTATED AGENDA – OPEN SESSION

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Item 1: Karakia – Tuesday 1 October 1400-1405

Action

1. Declare the 9th South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting open
2. Invite Brook Barrington, New Zealand Secretary of Defence, to open the meeting with a karakia

*Tūtawa mai i runga
Tūtawa mai i raro
Tūtawa mai i waho
Tūtawa mai i roto
Kia tau ai te mauri tū
Te mauri ora ki te katoa.
Hāumi e, hui e, taiki e!*

*I summon from above,
below, within and the
surrounding environment,
the universal vitality and
energy to infuse and
enrich all present!*

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First speaker: New Zealand (2 mins per delegation)

Action

1. Welcome your colleagues and outline the theme of the SPDMM 2024. Suggested talking points below. You will speak first.
2. Invite all Members, Observers and the Pacific Island Forum Secretary General to share brief opening remarks. In an anti-clockwise manner around the room.

Talking points

- Warm Pacific greetings to you all. Welcome to the city of Auckland, my home. I could not think of a better place to meet than the city of Sails, where you can see the vast expanse of the blue Pacific that connects us all.
- It is my absolute pleasure to host you for the 9th South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting. Auckland is New Zealand's largest city and it is very much a Pacific city – with a vibrant melting pot of Polynesian and Melanesian cultures - courtesy of our large indigenous Maori and Pasifika population – with strong European and Asian influences.
- Since being established in 2013, the SPDMM has become a **valuable mechanism** in the Pacific regional security architecture and an important annual event that brings Defence Ministers together to discuss ways to collectively safeguard our region, both now and into the future.
- The South Pacific is, and always will be, a focus for New Zealand. New Zealand is a Pacific nation, and our security is directly connected to that of our Pacific partners and of the region as a whole.
- This year, we build on the excellent SPDMM hosted by France in New Caledonia in 2023, where we reflected on the SPDMM's achievements and our journey thus far. I now ask you to take a look to the future, and the regional challenges and opportunities that lie before us, and share your frank views. The value of this meeting, will come from strength of our discussions.
- This brings me to this year's theme: "*Collectively looking to the future: our region in 2050,*" where I invite you to share your views on our region's top security challenges, and how we can better work together through the SPDMM, and alongside other regional Defence and security meetings.
- I first wish to acknowledge a special guest to this year's meeting: The Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, Mr Baron Waqa [*pronounced: Wong-ga*]. It is a pleasure to have you join us for the first time. Your attendance supports the spirit of **working collectively** together in our region – the Pacific.

- To our valued SPDMM observers from Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, a warm welcome. I look forward to inviting you, and the PIF Secretary General to share your views during the reflections segments of this meeting. This is the first time we have formalised opportunities for observers and select guests *to share their views*.
- *I would now like to invite all delegations to provide welcoming remarks by going around the room.*

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Item 3: Report from the SPDMM Secretariat – Tuesday 1 October 1430-1450

Lead: SPDMM Secretariat (20 mins)

Objective

- Acknowledge the Secretariat’s report.

Action

1. As Chair, invite the SPDMM Secretariat to present their report on outcomes from 2023.

Background

The SPDMM Secretariat will brief participants on outcomes from the SPDMM 2023, outlined in the table below.

The Secretariat will also bring attention to New Zealand’s SPDMM publication: *How Militaries across the South Pacific are responding to non-traditional security threats* which is an outcome from SPDMM 2022. This publication will be released on the final day of SPDMM 2024.

	Item	Objective	Lead
3.1	Pacific Defence Faith Network	Note the update on the establishment on the Pacific Defence Faith Network, including the conduct of the inaugural Faith forum in Auckland in 2024, and welcomed Australia hosting the 2025 conference.	Secretariat
3.2	The Future Leaders’ Summit in 2025	Note Australia’s update on the Future Leaders’ Summit to be held in Australia in 2025.	Secretariat
3.3	Intersessional Working Group	Note the value of the SPDMM Intersessional Working Group since its establishment this year, and priorities for 2025.	Secretariat
3.4	Amendments to the Governance Framework	s6(a), s6(b)(i)	
3.5	Academic Cooperation Network	Note Chile’s update on its proposal to foster links between defence/security think tanks within SPDMM nations.	Chile
3.6		s6(a), s6(b)(i)	

First speaker: Papua New Guinea (5-7 mins per Member)

Objectives

- To **understand Pacific partners' views** on the region's top defence and security challenges.
- To **share New Zealand's** views of the biggest Defence challenges we face now and in the future.

Actions

1. Thank the SPDMM Secretariat for the update.
2. Introduce agenda item 4 and invite Papua New Guinea to open the discussion.
3. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – Papua New Guinea, Tonga, New Zealand (your talking points are below), France, Fiji, Australia, and Chile.
4. Invite Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General once all Members have spoken to share his views on regional security challenges. s9(2)(g)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
5. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time.

Talking points for introduction

- This brings us to the first substantial agenda item *Regional Defence challenges now and into the future*. We wanted to start the meeting by looking ahead at what we might be facing as defence forces in the future and then spend the next two days discussing how we can prepare ourselves for them together.
- I invite Papua New Guinea to open the discussion.

Talking points for agenda item 4

- We are facing a range of complex challenges in the Pacific including climate change; mis-information and dis-information; cyber-attacks; illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing; and transnational organised crime.
- In this complex environment it is important that we make time to share experiences and perspectives, and to find the best way forward as a region.

- New Zealand has identified **increased geopolitical competition** along with **climate change** as the two principle challenges to our security interests. These challenges also impact on our region – the Pacific.
- In recent years, growing strategic competition has **challenged the effectiveness of the international rules based system** that reflects our values and supports our interests. This system of international law, norms and institutions contributes to stability and enables collective action across a range of issues.
- Strategic competition is playing out in our region in a way we have not seen before. We are all feeling increasing pressure as we manage important relationships with significant global players. That's no different for New Zealand.

s6(a)

- However, we do see it as important to be upfront about these challenges, in order to protect and maintain the international rules based system which we see as central to our security, as a small state.
- We are also conscious that we live in an interconnected world and what happens in one area has ramifications further afield. We see, for example, the economic impact of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine on food prices in our region. We have to be clear that the rules that we have protect small states and that when they are broken, that affects small states. For New Zealand, we increasingly see that you cannot have economic security without physical security.

Climate change and its impacts

- While strategic competition in the Pacific is increasingly challenging, it threatens to distract from the **region's most acute priority: climate-change**.
- The impacts of climate change will **exacerbate existing fragilities** within Pacific Island countries and across the region – and these stresses may require greater external support

s6(a)

- Climate change is a difficult and wicked problem, which presents significant challenges for all of us. Defence Forces are the 'ambulance at the bottom of the cliff' – we are ready to respond to some of the worst visible impacts of climate change, such as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief but what is required is really an all-of-government approach, that requires the will and desire of the international community.

- It is for this reason, Defence will continue to use our international platforms to amplify both New Zealand and the Pacific's voice on climate change.
- This includes other regional forums such as the **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus**, where New Zealand is the current co-chair of an Experts Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief with Singapore – this is a working group that has a strong climate change focus.

Defence Force retention

- Another challenge we are facing is the **retention of Defence personnel**. This will have long term impacts as recruiting and training new staff takes considerable time. It is now a common problem, especially after COVID-19 and now that many of us are operating in a more constrained fiscal environment.
- As you will know, the issue of retention has wider impacts than just Defence. Defence forces are primarily equipped for conventional military operations. However, their significant capabilities have dual-use potential and often play a vital role in countering transnational crime; illegal, unregulated and reported fishing; and disaster response as part of joint operations.
- Additionally, defence forces are often able to make a contribution to non-traditional military challenges. However Defence Forces cannot provide contributions if we don't have the personnel.

This brings me to how we can position ourselves to face these challenges together:

- **First:** In order to keep the focus in the Pacific on our desire for a peaceful, stable, prosperous and resilient region – we should:
 - **Deepen our understanding** of our region's greatest security needs and challenges;
 - **Share more information** with each other;
 - **Understand our strategic and operating environments** and the Defence capabilities and technologies we collectively possess; and
 - **Collaborate more** to address our shared security challenges so we as a region respond in the first instance to our own issues.
- **Second:** New Zealand thinks that **strengthening the Defence and security architecture** of the region can help us respond to complex problems that impact on regional security, but are not always Defence-led. This is beneficial because:
 - This improves our **understanding of by other Defence and security meetings in the region**: This also helps reduce duplication and helps coordinate our scarce resources, so we can work smarter and better together.

- A strong regional Defence and Security architecture would strengthen Pacific voices and our collective ability to push back on non-Pacific approaches or behaviours that exacerbate insecurity within our region.
- **Third:** We should strengthen the SPDMM, and articulate its role better in the region. We can do this by:
 - **Linking with other regional organisations such as the PIF**, so it is aware of our role and the value we provide to the region;
 - **Continuing to find opportunities for members to work collaboratively together**
 - Where there is consensus, calling out actions or behaviours that undercut existing regional processes, or threatens Pacific norms and priorities.

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Objective (5 mins each)

- This is an opportunity for the SPDMM observers to share reflections for 5 mins each, starting Japan, UK, and then the USA.

Actions

1. Invite Japan, the UK and the USA to provide reflections on the first session of the meeting.
2. Close the first session of the meeting and invite everyone to reconvene at 1715 at Ceremonial Garden for the official photos before the Welcome Reception at The Boathouse in the hotel.

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Item 5: Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting (ODMIM) Intelligence Briefing – Wednesday 2 October 0830 - 0845

Lead: Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting (15 mins)

Objective

- Receive a briefing on Maritime Security on behalf of the Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting.

Actions

1. Welcome delegates back to the meeting, share reflections on the first day (officials will provide talking points on the day) and / or the welcome reception and dinner.
2. Invite [redacted] s6(a) [redacted] and the Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence to start the session today.

Background

Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting

The Oceania Directorates of Military Intelligence Meeting (ODMIM) is an annual meeting of Pacific defence and security officials, which provides a platform to address common strategic intelligence priorities at the Chief of Defence Intelligence level.

2. A brief from the ODMIM is provided to the SPDMM every year. Leaders selected a brief on Maritime Security this year to fit in with the rest of the SPDMM agenda. You will be provided a briefing from [redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i) [redacted] will be supported by two New Zealand Defence Intelligence Analysts from the ODMIM. Australia who has been the current ODMIM Secretariat is passing on the ODMIM Secretariat role to New Zealand.

3. [redacted] s6(a) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Item 6: The future of maritime domain awareness in the Pacific – Wednesday 2 October 0845 - 0945

First speaker: Tonga (5 -7 mins per member)

Objectives

s6(a)

- Share how SPDMM can collaborate MDA efforts across the SPDMM membership.

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 6 and invite Tonga to open the discussion
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – Tonga, New Zealand (your talking points are below), France, Fiji, Australia, Chile and Papua New Guinea.
3. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time.

Talking Points for introduction

- That brings us to Agenda item 6, The Future of Maritime Domain Awareness. All of us have extensive Exclusive Economic Zones and understanding the activities in these zones is important to ensure our national, economic and environmental security.

s6(a)

- I invite Tonga to start the discussion.

Talking points for agenda item 6

- As you will all be aware, **we are seeing an increasingly challenging maritime domain** in the Pacific.
- We are seeing an increasing frequency of extreme weather, humanitarian and disaster response efforts, people displacement, increased pressure on marine biodiversity and resources, reducing sea ice and a changing operating environment across the Pacific – which has social, economic and security impacts across our region.

Supporting effective collaboration on Maritime Domain Awareness

- Of course, Maritime Domain Awareness is a **cross cutting issue** and engages a range of maritime security interests. The NZDF carries out a wide range of tasks in close coordination and collaboration with a number of other New Zealand agencies – including Antarctica New Zealand, Maritime New Zealand, the Ministry for Primary Industries, the Met Service, and Police and Customs among others.
- New Zealand is a small but globally connected nation. We need to work well with others, to contribute, to innovate and to look for opportunities to be better together. New Zealand relies on partnerships to meet our interests, but we know the value of playing our part, both within our region and beyond.
- New Zealand is focused on ensuring the strength and effectiveness of existing architecture to enable closer collaboration. We consider regional organisations such as the **Pacific Islands Forum and the Forum Fisheries Agency** as crucial for enhancing maritime security in the region.
- Having an NZDF officer in the Forum Fisheries Agency is a concrete example of our commitment to supporting civil-military cooperation across the region.
- The NZDF also engages through the P-QUADs – the coordination mechanism for maritime between the US, France, Australia and New Zealand – and the South West Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces Meeting - which brings together heads of navy or maritime police forces from across the Pacific.
- Engaging with international partners to ensure interoperability and shareability of data, will support New Zealand and our partners to achieve improved performance of existing MDA capabilities collectively.
- I welcome the views of SPDMM members on how we can support closer engagement and effective collaboration across our region.

Role of emerging technologies to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness

- **Emerging technologies are playing an increasingly important role** in supporting our maritime activities. For example, space-based capabilities are being developed, purchased and used by international partners to support their maritime security objectives, including for a range of use cases such as detection of and responding to illegal fishing and smuggling, and environmental and trade route monitoring.

s6(a)

New Zealand's is strengthening our Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities

- New Zealand recently acquired a new Data Fusion System, a cloud-based system provided by the New Zealand company, Starboard. s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

- This has **enhanced New Zealand's ability to detect and respond to malicious activities**, natural disasters, and potentially hostile vessels, including illegal fishing in our exclusive economic zone and across the Pacific.

s6(a)

Background

The New Zealand Maritime Security Strategy 2024 provides an all-of-government approach to maritime security with the Ministry of Transport providing strategic coordination for maritime security issues. Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) coordination does not have an identified lead agency as it is a cross-cutting issue which engages the interests of a range of agencies.

s6(a)

s6(a)

3. The recent acquisition of the Data Fusion System is one of these priorities, providing the systems needed to support more effective MDA. s6(a)

4. The Ministry of Transport is leading the government's coordination on the remaining investments to ensure we have the right tools needed to support maritime security objectives. s6(a)

s6(a)

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First speaker: France (2 mins per Member)

Objectives

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
- **Reaffirm** New Zealand's commitment to supporting SPDMM members ship-riding when requested.

s6(a)

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 7 and invite France to start the discussion.
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – France, Fiji, Australia, Chile, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and New Zealand (your talking points are below).
3. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time.

Talking points for introduction

- I welcome France to open a general discussion on how we undertake ship-riding together in the Pacific.

Talking points for agenda item 7

- Embarked ship-riding is an operational component of the Royal New Zealand Navy's support to the Pacific.
- Ship-riding is invaluable to New Zealand in terms of knowledge exchange, and in strengthening our relationships, familiarity and interoperability with our Pacific partners.
- Ship-riding provides New Zealand the privilege to support and work alongside our Pacific partners to address maritime security threats and the implications of climate change in our region.
- The NZDF undertakes several regional operations and exercises throughout the year which offer ship-riding in support of either NZDF or Pacific partner operations. Operation CALYPSO is one such example. Undertaken up to twice per year, it presents opportunities to embark Pacific partner personnel in support of planned operational objectives.

- The Royal New Zealand Navy's Deployable Boarding team embarked on HMS TAMAR earlier this year, to conduct counter IUU fishing operations within Fijian waters alongside Fijian officials.

s6(a)

s6(a)

- New Zealand would like to continue to support SPDMM members with ship riding opportunities, and I encourage our Pacific friends to advise us of their needs early and directly through our Defence Advisors.

Background

Ship-riding in general terms supports operational requirements, allowing the embarkation of specialist personnel (using arrangements between individual states) to support activities such as fishery patrols within South Pacific partner nation waters.

s6(a)

s6(a)

3. A stock take would be a good chance to identify what the issues are for the region. This item is an opportunity to share what ship riding offerings New Zealand has for SPDMM members.

4. s6(a)

It presents a unique opportunity for the NZDF to address all five of its focus areas for Pacific engagement: People and Culture; Maritime Security; Climate Resilience; Regional Architecture; and Regional Security Cooperation.

5. HQ Joint Forces New Zealand plans and coordinates operations into the region to support Pacific partners.

6. RNZN vessels also look for sea-riding opportunities to embark personnel from other Navies for transits, short passages or deployments depending on the need. Sea-riding is another valuable engagement tool that the RNZN use to support Pacific partners.

Objective

- This is an opportunity for SPDMM observers and the PIF Secretary General to share reflections for 5 mins each, starting with PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK, and then the USA.

Actions

1. Invite the Secretary General, Japan, the United Kingdom and the USA to provide reflections on the second session of the meeting.
2. Invite delegates to break for morning tea.

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First speaker: Fiji

Objectives

- **Exchange views** on how SPDMM members can collectively adapt to and build our resilience to the impacts of climate change in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.
- **Underline** the importance of the SPDMM working and coordinating on adapting to climate change and its impacts with civilian agencies, particularly in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.
- **Consider** the role of Defence in relation to climate change beyond addressing its immediate impacts.

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 8 and invite Fiji to start the discussion.
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – Fiji, Australia, Chile, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, New Zealand (your talking points are below) and France.
3. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time

Talking points for introduction

- In recent years, we have all seen an increase in the intensity and frequency of weather events. I know here in Auckland, we are starting to see flooding in places that have never flooded before.
- In this agenda item, I am keen to hear your views on how we can build our resilience to the impacts of climate change and also consider the role of Defence beyond addressing the immediate impacts.
- I would like to invite Fiji to start the discussion on adapting to climate change and its impacts.

Talking points for agenda item 8

- New Zealand recognises climate change as a primary threat to the security of the Pacific. We recognise the need for a global response to both mitigate long term damage and adapt to the impacts that are already happening.
- Our region is one of the most vulnerable to natural disasters in the world. Last year, storms caused severe economic damage and threatened human security across the South Pacific.

- In 2023, while New Zealand was still dealing with the effects of Cyclone Gabrielle, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were impacted by consecutive Tropical Cyclones Judy and Kevin.
- This demonstrated the **added difficulty of responding to extreme weather events that are increasingly occurring in short timeframes**. Once again, the region came together in response.

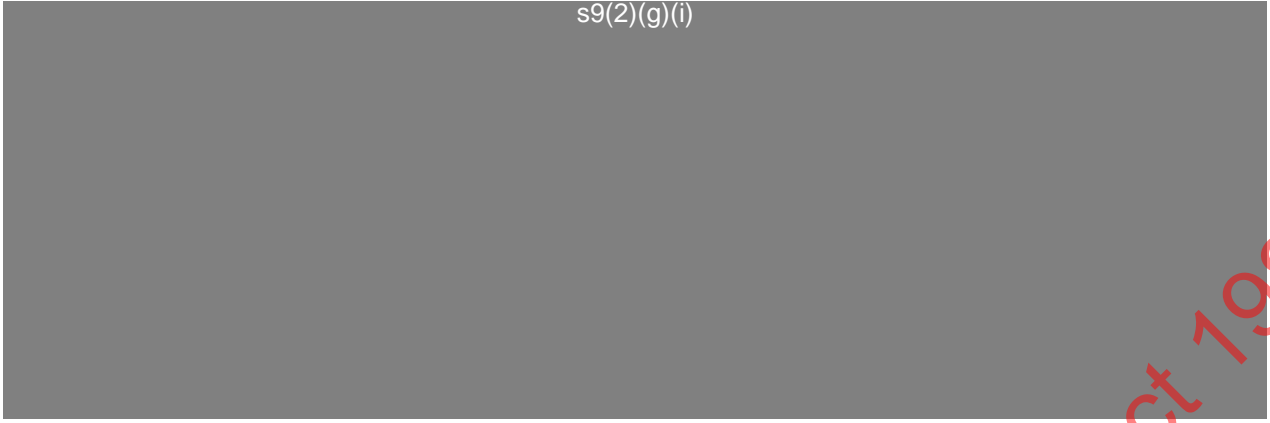
Climate change's impact on how we operate

- It is clear climate change is already having impacts on Defence Forces and the way that we need to operate together now, and in the future. This includes the likelihood of longer operations and deployments, more damage, more complex assistance (for example, due to a concurrency of disasters) and longer cyclone seasons.
- Climate change may also decrease operational effectiveness and change the type, timing and locations of operation. We need to be ready in the face of these changes.
- This also means we need access to **climate intelligence** that can describe the future physical operating environment for our personnel.
- Sharing this knowledge amongst SPDMM members is an **important way to enhance our readiness** in the face of climate change induced extreme weather events, and our ability to adapt and mitigate these impacts.
- On top of the need for humanitarian assistance, the challenges for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief include interoperability, co-ordination, funding, and personnel safety. These are areas that we, as SPDMM nations work together on by regularly exercising together and supporting each other.

Other ways Defence plays its part

- Beyond the SPDMM, New Zealand is focused on working with Pacific partners to **build climate change resilience**. [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- We also continually seek to understand and incorporate Pacific perspectives on shared challenges, including climate change, in an effort to **amplify Pacific voices internationally**, through various multilateral forums.
 - One recent example was at the **Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Forum**, which was hosted in Fiji this year. NZ Defence has used this platform to speak to the need to work through existing architecture in the Pacific to minimise the duplication of already excellent work in the region, and amplify Pacific voices.
- New Zealand continues to use platforms like these to advocate for ways to work with the Pacific in addressing this complex issue.

s9(2)(g)(i)



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First speaker: New Zealand (5-7 mins per Member)

Objective

- **Exchange** views on ways to improve military interoperability and collaboration between SPDMM members

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 9 and start the discussion.
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – New Zealand (your talking points are below), France, Fiji, Australia, Chile, Papua New Guinea and, Tonga.
3. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time.
4. Invite delegates to break for lunch at the end of this item.

Talking points for introduction and agenda item 9

- New Zealand's Future Force Design Principles, released last year, identifies the requirements of the future Defence Force to respond to the strategic environment and approach set out in the Defence Policy and Strategy Statement.
- Meanwhile, New Zealand is currently updating its Defence Capability Plan. This Plan will detail what is required to modernise the NZDF to operate now and in the future.
- It is expected over the next 15 years NZDF will need to deploy more often and in a greater variety of situations. To do so it will need to have the combat capability and resilience to act in many situations and environments, including doing this concurrently. It is also expected Defence will need greater flexibility to both protect against and utilise new technologies.
- In order to be an effective and responsible Defence Force, New Zealand considers it integral that we understand the current and future security needs of our region; our current capabilities and levels of interoperability; and areas of strength where members can uplift each other.
- I am focused on ensuring that New Zealand is an active and constructive partner, and that the New Zealand Defence Force has the right capabilities to operate effectively on the international stage, and right here in the Pacific.
- New Zealand wants to be able to act early and deliberately in pursuing and protecting our defence interests, particularly in the South Pacific.

- We can do this in numerous ways:
 - improving the effectiveness of our combat and other military capabilities;
 - Increasing our presence and strengthening defence resilience and security capacity in the Pacific;
 - Increased interoperability with the Pacific; and
 - Responding to security events in our region, including Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief activities and Stability and Support Operations.
- A clear example for New Zealand is through the Pacific Small Armies' Forum which was created in response to increased international engagement in the Pacific, and shared common resourcing challenges.

s6(a)

- SPDMM is also contributing to the effectiveness of our defence forces through the regional training framework, which further builds on this doctrine.

s6(a)

- This is not without its challenges. Defence retention is a problem that many militaries are facing and New Zealand is not alone.
- I am interested to hear about each of your nations' approaches to this issue.

First speaker: Australia (15 mins)

Objectives

- **Receive** an update from Australia on the POVAI ENDEAVOUR Framework.
- **Endorse** the POVAI ENDEAVOUR Framework – including the decision for Exercise Talisman Sabre to be the interim SPDMM capstone exercise.

s6(a)

Actions

1. Handover this agenda item to Australia to provide an update
2. Open the floor for general discussion from Members.

Talking points for the general discussion

- New Zealand recognises the POVAI ENDEAVOUR Framework as a crucial mechanism for enhancing interoperability between military forces and coordinating exercises and operations in the Pacific.
- New Zealand is supportive of Exercise Talisman Sabre as the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Capstone event.

s6(a)

Pacific Response Group

- *[If raised: Pacific Response Group:]* **Note** that New Zealand is strongly supportive of regional responses to regional security needs such as the Pacific Response Group concept.

s6(a)

Background

The POVAI ENDEAVOUR Cooperative Exercise Framework (POVAI ENDEAVOUR) was agreed to at the SPDMM in 2013 and endorsed in 2015. POVAI ENDEAVOUR was initially established to maintain familiarity and as the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands drew down and we undertook fewer operations together. It now has a focus on interoperability and capability building.

Strategic Intent

2. POVAI ENDEAVOUR intends to facilitate enhanced cooperation between participating states, while concurrently de-conflicting activities to ensure partners work together in the most efficient and effective manner to build interoperability and facilitate skills transfer.

Capstone Activities.

3. The three identified capstone activities for the POVAI ENDEAVOUR Framework currently are:

s6(a)

4. These capstone activities are the heart of the POVAI ENDEAVOUR Framework, representing the culmination of ongoing skills training, capability development and increased interoperability within and across regional forces. Activities in each stream are identified as contributing to these routine and (relatively) large-scale capstone operations and exercises, distinguished by the fact they involve a high degree of coordinated effort between regional military forces.

Capstone activity decision

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Lead: Australia (2 mins per Member)

Handling note: This will be an update from Australia [and potentially France for the Pacific Academy] on the SPDMM Regional Training Framework, with a live interactive website demonstration

Objective

- Update all SPDMM Members on the Regional Training Framework being developed by Australia.

Actions

1. Invite Australia to demonstrate the SPDMM Regional Training Framework platform
2. Open the floor for general discussion from Members if there is time

Talking points

- Thank you Australia for sharing with us your proposed platform for a SPDMM regional training framework [if applicable]. And thank you France for your update on the Pacific Academy].
- We will make sure that New Zealand's training offerings are included in the Framework and I look forward to an update on further progress at next year's SPDMM.

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Objective

- This is an opportunity for SPDMM observers and PIF Secretary General to share reflections for 5 mins each, starting with PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK, and then the USA.

Actions

1. Invite the Secretary General, Japan, the United Kingdom and the USA to provide reflections on the first session of the meeting.
2. Close day two of the meeting.
3. Announce that the Members only session will take place tomorrow morning and we look forward to coming back together as a group in the afternoon to conclude SPDMM 2024.

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Lead: New Zealand (1-2 mins per Delegation)

Actions

1. Deliver closing remarks for New Zealand (your talking points are below)
2. Invite Members, Observers and the PIF Secretary General to provide brief closing remarks. Speaking order: France, Fiji, Australia, Chile, PNG, Tonga, PIF Secretary General, Japan, UK and the USA.
3. Declare SPDMM 2024 closed.

Talking points

- This afternoon brings us to the close of the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting for 2024.
- I would like to thank you all for the fruitful discussion over the two days. This has been a most valuable meeting. I hope you have also gained significant benefits from these discussions.
- We have heard about the challenges we face as a region. s6(a)
 However, I am confident in the strength of the SPDMM and I am enthused about the opportunities ahead of us. This includes the use of emerging technology and capabilities and the ideas I have heard about how we can continue to work collaboratively together.
- I wish to invite you all to the press conference at 2.00pm where we will launch the Joint Communique of the SPDMM and the SPDMM Publication on non-traditional security issues that New Zealand has developed with you all.
- In the meantime, I would like to welcome you all to share your thoughts on the SPDMM open session meetings, and your final remarks for open session as we bring the SPDMM 2024 to a close.

**TAB THREE: ANNOTATED AGENDA –
CLOSED SESSION**

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Item 1: Karakia – Thursday 3 October 0900 - 0905

Actions

- Invite Air Marshal Tony Davies, New Zealand Chief of Defence, to open the meeting with a karakia.

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Item 2: How should the SPDMM's role evolve in the future to meet emerging challenges? – Thursday 3 October 0905 - 0940

First speaker: Tonga (5 mins per Member)

Objectives

- **Exchange views** on how we can keep the SPDMM relevant and fit for purpose
- **Understand what role members envisage for the SPDMM** now and in the future

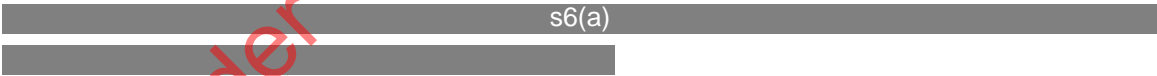

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 2 and invite Tonga to start the discussion.
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Chile, Fiji, France, and New Zealand. Your talking points are below.
3. Open the floor for general discussion if there is time.

Talking points for introduction

- As we close in on the tenth SPDMM meeting to be held in 2025, now is a good time to reflect on how we can keep SPDMM relevant and fit for purpose.
- The objective of this agenda item is for us to share our views on what we want to get from SPDMM now and also in the future.
- I would like to invite Tonga to start the discussion.

Talking points for agenda item 2

-  s6(a)

- The SPDMM's value is its ability to focus our efforts on shared Defence objectives for the region annually - from training and interoperability to how to address our region's biggest Defence and security challenges.
- Yesterday, we **shared some of our capabilities and how we are incorporating emerging technology** to face security challenges on our doorstep: whether it is maritime domain awareness of our large EEZ, or to monitoring transnational organised crime. Such technology can be a game changer.
- There is much to learn from each other. And I would like to see the SPDMM become a meeting where we come away with **fresh and innovative approaches** for the region.
- As the challenges we face continue to evolve, **SPDMM too should evolve and adapt to the changing environment**, while retaining a **strong Defence voice** for the region.

- New Zealand is a strong supporter of the region first approach to regional security. The regional architecture plays a critical role in enabling regional consensus to be built and the region's voice to be amplified.

s6(a)

Connecting with the PIF and regional Pacific architecture

- **Greater alignment with the Pacific Islands Forum** is an important way for the wider Pacific to understand defence issues across this region.
- The PIF Secretary General's attendance at this SPDMM is an important step towards **raising the PIF's awareness** of Defence issues across the South Pacific and the unique value-add of the SPDMM to regional architecture.
- This understanding could build connections and address efficiencies between Defence activities and other regional security activities such as fisheries, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Trans-National Organised Crime. Such linkages are likely to strengthen the regional security discussion across both organisations.

Finding our place within the regional and Defence architecture

- In order for the SPDMM to become an effective cornerstone of Defence engagement, it needs to better coordinate with regional Defence and security meetings in the region.
- New Zealand sees value in improving the flow of information and links between SPDMM and other defence meetings across the region. And I look forward to discussing New Zealand's ideas with you further in the next agenda item.

s9(2)(g)(i)

First speaker: New Zealand (1-2 mins per Member)

Handling note: As this is a New Zealand concept, you will lead this discussion.

Objectives

s6(a)

Actions

1. Introduce New Zealand's concept for developing a coordination mechanism for defence and security meetings in the region (your talking points are below).
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – New Zealand, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Chile, Fiji, and France.
3. Open the floor for general discussion if there is time
4. Should there be an agreement that defence and security meetings need better coordination, propose the SPDMM Intersessional Working Group work on options for a mechanism and report back at SPDMM 2025.

Talking points for agenda item 3

- Thank you for the opportunity to discuss where the SPDMM fits into broader regional security architecture, and to share our proposed approach to coordinate regional Defence meetings and activities.

s6(a)

s6(a)

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First speaker: Australia (1-2 mins per Member)

Objectives

- **Endorse** the Australian-led Pacific Response Group (PRG) concept
- **Emphasise** the importance of working with civilian agencies on this, as HADR responses are not a Defence lead.

Actions

1. Introduce Agenda Item 5 and invite Australia to start the discussion
2. Invite Members to speak. Speaking order is around the table – Australia, Chile, Fiji, France, New Zealand (your talking points are below), Tonga, and Papua New Guinea.
3. Open the floor for general discussion if there is time
4. [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]

Talking points for introduction

- This brings us to the Pacific Response Group. Those of you at the meeting last year will remember that we endorsed the PRG concept and tasked the working group to come back to us with a plan.
- I invite Australia to give us an update on the PRG concept of operations.

Talking points for agenda item 5

- Thank you Australia for your update on the Pacific Response Group.
- New Zealand is **supportive of the Pacific Response Group concept**. The PRG is one of the ways that SPDMM can collectively respond to supporting relief and disaster efforts in our region.
- As we discussed yesterday, climate change is impacting on the ways our Defence Forces operate, and increasing the frequency and intensity of severe weather events in our region. This is a timely initiative.

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- We look forward to hearing how the PRG will support existing civilian led frameworks, through which Pacific Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief responses are supported, and hearing further updates on the Pacific Special Advisory Team based in Brisbane.

- [Redacted] s6(a) [Redacted]
[Redacted]

Background:

Last year, Ministers supported the PRG initiative proposed by Australia and asked Chiefs and Heads of Defence to develop the initiative further for their consideration in 2024. Australia will provide an update on the PRG concept and seek Ministerial endorsement at this meeting.

2. This is a proposal to create a group made up of defence personnel across SPDMM members to allow for a combined response to disasters in the Pacific. This is aligned with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent aims of a flexible regional response mechanism.

3. [Redacted] s6(a) [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

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Item 7: Wrap up of session (closing remarks)

Lead: New Zealand

Secretariat to review actions and New Zealand to close the session

Actions

1. Deliver wrap up of the closed session (your talking points are below)
2. Invite the Secretariat to read back the outcomes from the closed session
3. Inform members of the press conference and official closure of the SPDMM in the afternoon.

Talking points

- Thank you colleagues for this very fruitful discussion. We have really appreciated your openness and the frank nature of this discussion.
- It has been encouraging to hear your ideas, and discuss the role of the SPDMM to meet future challenges.
- I would like to ask the Secretariat to read back the outcomes from this closed session so that we can all hear them once again.

[Secretariat to speak]

- I have really appreciated the opportunity to stop and consolidate the last few years' work at this meeting. Fewer outcomes that are more meaningful has been the goal and I am proud that we have collectively achieved that.
- The South Pacific is the most important region for New Zealand. New Zealand is a Pacific nation, and our security is directly connected to that of our Pacific partners and of the region as a whole.
- We are about to break for lunch and then we will officially close the SPDMM followed by a short press conference at 1400 to discuss this year's meeting. I look forward to hearing your closing remarks on the meeting this year and wish luck to next year's SPDMM host.

TAB FOUR: MEETING AND CONCEPT PAPERS

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TAB FIVE: BACKGROUND BRIEFS

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Background - Regional Pacific Defence Meetings and the Pacific Islands Forum

This brief gives an overview of regional defence meetings and security-related meetings of wider relevance to Defence and the South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting.

Key Pacific Defence Meetings

Indo-Pacific Command Chiefs of Defence Force (INDOPACOM CHODs) Meeting

- Convened by the Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command, the INDOPACOM CHODs meeting brings together heads of defence forces from across the Indo-Pacific, including Pacific forces. The discussions often focus on wider Indo-Pacific issues including freedom of navigation issues and strategic competition. The meeting was in September this year. SPDMM CHODs meet in the margins of this meeting to discuss the upcoming SPDMM.

Joint Heads of Pacific Security (JHOPs) Meeting

- Established by Australia, the JHOPs is a meeting that brings together heads of Pacific security agencies for discussions on operational security. Involved agencies include militaries (where Pacific countries have these), police forces, customs, and immigration.

s6(a)

Oceania Directorate of Military Intelligence Meeting

- A capacity building and networking opportunity for Pacific Military Intelligence personnel, as well as select Pacific Police Forces. The Oceania Directorate of Military Intelligence Meeting briefs SPDMM members on the outcomes of the meeting. The meeting is conducted annually and last took place in Wellington in August this year.

PACANZ / Totara Retreat

- Established by New Zealand, this meeting (known by different names) brings together Chiefs of Defence from Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu (paramilitary force) annually. Participants build networks and create frameworks for sharing challenges and experiences.

Pacific Small Armies Forum

- Established by New Zealand Army, the Small Armies Forum is an informal, lower level meeting of land forces from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu (through its paramilitary force).

s6(a)

South Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces (SWPHMF) Meeting:

- Established by New Zealand during our last hosting of SPDMM (in 2017), The aim of the SWPHMF is to create strong and enduring relationships between the Heads and Chiefs

of South West Pacific (SWP) maritime forces, in order to facilitate better cooperation and coordination and ultimately further maritime capability within the SWP maritime domain.

South Pacific Secretaries of Defence Dialogue

- Established by New Zealand, this meeting brings together the Secretaries of Defence (or equivalent) from around the region to develop the relationships between Secretaries and create the framework for the sharing of challenges and experiences. This usually occurs annually.

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the PIF Leaders Meeting

- Key outcomes of the 2024 meeting held in Tonga in August (as they relate to Defence) include:

Pacific Architecture Review:

- [Redacted] s6(a) [Redacted]
[Redacted] Leaders endorsed moving the review to Phase 2 – in which the PIF Secretariat and members will do further work on what a revised structure might look like. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted] s6(a) [Redacted]

Climate Change and Infrastructure

- Climate change, particularly the impacts of climate change on infrastructure, featured heavily in the communique. The impacts of sea level rises on hospitals and schools, many of which were low-lying, was particularly noted. The region launched a Pacific Infrastructure Resilience Facility to help with infrastructure funding.

[Redacted] s6(a) [Redacted]

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Background: Japan, United Kingdom, and United States in the Pacific

Japan

- The Pacific is a priority area of engagement for Japan, underpinned by its *Free and Open Indo-Pacific* policy. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
- [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
- Japan's Pacific interests has motivated its leadership in Pacific-focused regional fora, including the Pacific Leaders Meeting (PALM10; foreign affairs focused), and the Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (JPIDD).

[redacted] s6(a)

[redacted] s6(a)

- Japan's Official Security Assistance (OSA) Project provides funding, resources, and capabilities to its partners across the Indo-Pacific. [redacted] s6(b)(i)

[redacted] s6(a)

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- The Japanese Self-Defense Force participated in Exercise TROPIC TWILIGHT in 2024 as observers, a New Zealand-led exercise intended to complete projects to build Pacific resilience. Japan-New Zealand collaboration is intended for future iterations of the exercise.

- [REDACTED] s6(a)

United Kingdom

- The previous UK Government significantly increased the UK's economic, diplomatic and military presence in the Indo-Pacific, as part of a broader 'tilt' towards the region. This included expanded diplomatic footprint, the UK's accession to the CPTPP, and achieving Dialogue Partner status with ASEAN. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] the UK has also established a resident Defence Advisor post in Fiji and has deployed two naval assets to the region 'in perpetuity'.

- The two River-class Offshore Patrol Vessels, HMS SPEY and HMS TAMAR, are deployed to the region for five years. The vessels alternate responsibility for covering Asia and the Pacific. TAMAR has been stationed in the South Pacific for most of 2024, and has visited New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, and Nauru within the last six months.
- The Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) has worked closely with SPEY and TAMAR on multiple occasions over the two and a half years they have been stationed to the Indo-Pacific. Most recently, a RNZN deployable boarding team embarked on TAMAR alongside officers from Fiji's Ministry of Fisheries to monitor illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in Fiji's exclusive economic zone.

[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

United States

- The United States' engagement with the Pacific has grown over the last three years, [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(ii) Since releasing its *Indo Pacific Strategy* in September 2022, the US has increased its diplomatic and development footprint in the Pacific and announced new commitments totalling around US\$1 billion. It also led on the establishment of the **Partners in the Blue Pacific** initiative, which also includes Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

[REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The NZDF routinely cooperates with the US Coast Guard through our shared participation in the Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group (**PQUAD**), alongside Australia and France. PQUADs members support the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) by conducting maritime patrols, training activities, and capacity building to counter against illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in the region.

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
 - Exercise CARTWHEEL: [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
 - Exercise TROPIC TWILIGHT: [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
 - Exercise CROIX DU SUD: [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background - Defence Activities in the South Pacific over the last 12 months

The New Zealand Defence Force has long-stand capacity building programmes in place with Pacific Island Defence and security forces, and remains committed to assisting Pacific Island Countries in their emergency response operations.

Over the last 12 months, the NZDF has participated in:

Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Response

- Papua New Guinea – The NZDF deployed a Royal New Zealand Air Force C-130 Hercules to assist with the distribution of aid to communities affected by an earthquake and flooding in May 2024.

Pacific Security Response

- Pacific Games – HMNZS Canterbury, HMNZS Manawanui, two NH-90 helicopters and 89 NZDF personnel deployed to the Solomon Islands to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) during the 2023 Pacific Games in Honiara.
- Explosive Remnants of War – The NZDF deployed HMNZS Manawanui with Maritime Explosive Ordnance Disposal Divers, to dispose of explosive remnants of war in Port Vila harbour.
- Solomon Islands Assistance Force (SIAF) – Four personnel are deployed to Solomon Islands as part of the regionally-led SIAF. The SIAF is an Australian-led response, requested by the Government of the Solomon Islands, to support domestic security alongside the RSIPF.
- Operation [redacted s6(a)] – A Navy Boarding Team and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle embarked on HMS Tamar to participate in Operation [redacted s6(a)], a Forum Fisheries Agency, counter Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing activity.
- Operation [redacted s6(a)] – 16 personnel deployed to the Solomon Island on the Australia-led, Operation [redacted s6(a)]. The Operation is a multination contribution to disposing of explosive remnants of war.

Exercise Tropic Twilight

- Exercise Tropic Twilight is an annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise in the South West Pacific. This is an MFAT funded activity delivered by NZDF to support a stable, prosperous and resilient Pacific.
- Tasks undertaken are typically construction related, focused on enhancing the hosting nation's resilience and ability to respond to natural disasters.
- The latest iteration of Exercise Tropic Twilight was delivered in Tonga, in two phases. The first phase was completed in May 2023, with NZDF working alongside HMAF to undertake reconstruction, upgrade and repair of two community/evacuation centres located in Tongatapu, as well as maintenance and servicing of emergency equipment in the National Emergency Management Office in Tongatapu.
- The second phase was completed in May 2024, on Lifuka Island. Notably, this was a Multinational exercise. The NZ team as supplemented with engineering support from

Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, the United States, and Great Britain. Japan and France (via the French Armed Forces in New Caledonia) attended as observers. In addition, NZDF medical and dental teams provided assistance alongside local Tongan community health facilities.

Mutual Assistance Programme (MAP)

- The MAP is a key element of New Zealand's contribution to peace and security in the Pacific region, increasing regional interoperability through common training.
- Activities within the MAP include the provision of training and technical advice to South Pacific Defence and security forces, with an emphasis on ab-initio military training, leadership and professional development, gender awareness, and trade skills uplift.
- Through the MAP NZDF personnel are embedded as "Technical Advisors" within; the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, Vanuatu Mobile Force, His Majesty's Armed Forces of Tonga, Cook Islands Maritime Police Force, Republic of Fiji Military Force, and the Foreign Fisheries Agency in the Solomon Islands. Two more Advisors are based in Timor Leste.
- Each year, 80 – 90 personnel from Pacific militaries and security forces attend NZDF professional military development courses in New Zealand, generating strong and enduring people to people connections.

Pacific Leadership Development Programme (PLDP)

- The PLDP is a standing NZDF commitment to support leadership development within the military forces of Fiji, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea, and the Vanuatu Mobile Force.
- The Programme aims to foster ethical, effective leadership and governance, in Pacific Defence and security personnel.
- Tailored leadership frameworks have been developed in each country, with NZDF instructors and advisors assisting, on request, with the delivery of tiered professional development courses.
- To date, the PLDP has trained over 4600 participants in member countries.

Pacific Defence Gender Network (PDGN)

- The PDGN is a collective Pacific-led platform for inclusive dialogue and action.
- It aims to advance gender equity, and uplift the representation and participation of women in Pacific Defence and security forces by facilitating Pacific participation in NZDF Gender Focal Point courses and Pacific-focused workshops, and maintaining regional engagement with PDGN leads in Pacific Island Countries.

Pacific Small Armies Forum (PSAF)

- The PSAF Forum was initiated through multilateral discussion with New Zealand Army, following the South West Pacific Regional Reconnaissance Conference in in 2022. PSAF forum members include Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Tonga, with Vanuatu observing (through the Vanuatu Mobile Force).

s6(a)

SPDMM 2023 Formal Message

South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting 4-6 December 2023

NOT FOR CABLE EXCHANGE

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

Defence Ministers from South Pacific countries met in New Caledonia 4-6 December for the annual South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM). As the only formal meeting for Defence Ministers in the region, the extensive programme provided Minister of Defence, Hon Judith Collins an opportunity to engage with her Pacific counterparts across a range of topics.

Discussions across the two day programme included key Defence and regional security issues such as climate change, maritime security and wider maritime domain awareness, interoperability, and strengthening the existing regional security architecture.

[REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED] initiatives in information sharing, ship-riding and training opportunities, plus a concept for a Pacific Response Group were advanced.

[REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

New Zealand was announced at the host of the next SPDMM in 2024, which will be held in Auckland with dates to be confirmed.

HOHENGA – ACTION

For information.

PŪRONGO – REPORT

The Minister of Defence, Hon Judith Collins, travelled to New Caledonia over 4 – 6 December 2023 to attend the 8th iteration of the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM), in her first official engagement as Minister. This year's meeting was hosted by France in Noumea. The Minister was accompanied by the Chief of Defence Force Air-Marshal Kevin Short, and officials from the Ministry of Defence.

2. SPDMM was well attended by Member states. Participants included Australian Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Minister for Defence Richard Marles; Chile's Vice-Minister for Defence Riccardo Montero; Fiji's Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration Pio Tikoduadua; Papua New Guinea's Minister for Defence Win Daki; and Tonga's Minister for Internal Affairs Lord Vaea (filling in for Prime Minister and Defence Minister Hu'akavameiliku). This year marked the first time that France had chaired the meeting, and sent a Defence Minister to attend the meeting in person. Chile also opted to send its Vice-Minister for Defence. [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] While the 8th iteration, the meeting marked the 10th anniversary since establishment.

SPDMM 2024, 1-3 Oct, Auckland

3. All SPDMM Observer nations were represented at the meeting - Japan Director General, Ministry of Defense Jun Miura; UK Defence Advisor to Australia, Brigadier Nigel Best; and US Coast Guard Rear Admiral [redacted] s6(a) .

4. The two day programme featured a plethora of agenda items, covering climate change; maritime security; Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle; Women, Peace and Security (WPS); regional information sharing; UN peacekeeping operations; Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR); ship-riding; and interoperability, among others. [redacted] s6(a)

5. The SPDMM 2023 Joint Communique (attached) outlines the key discussions and decisions made this year, including that New Zealand will host SPDMM in 2024 and that SPDMM would share outcomes of the meeting with Pacific Island Forum Leaders. Several key initiatives raised during the discussions are expanded on further below.

Pacific Response Group

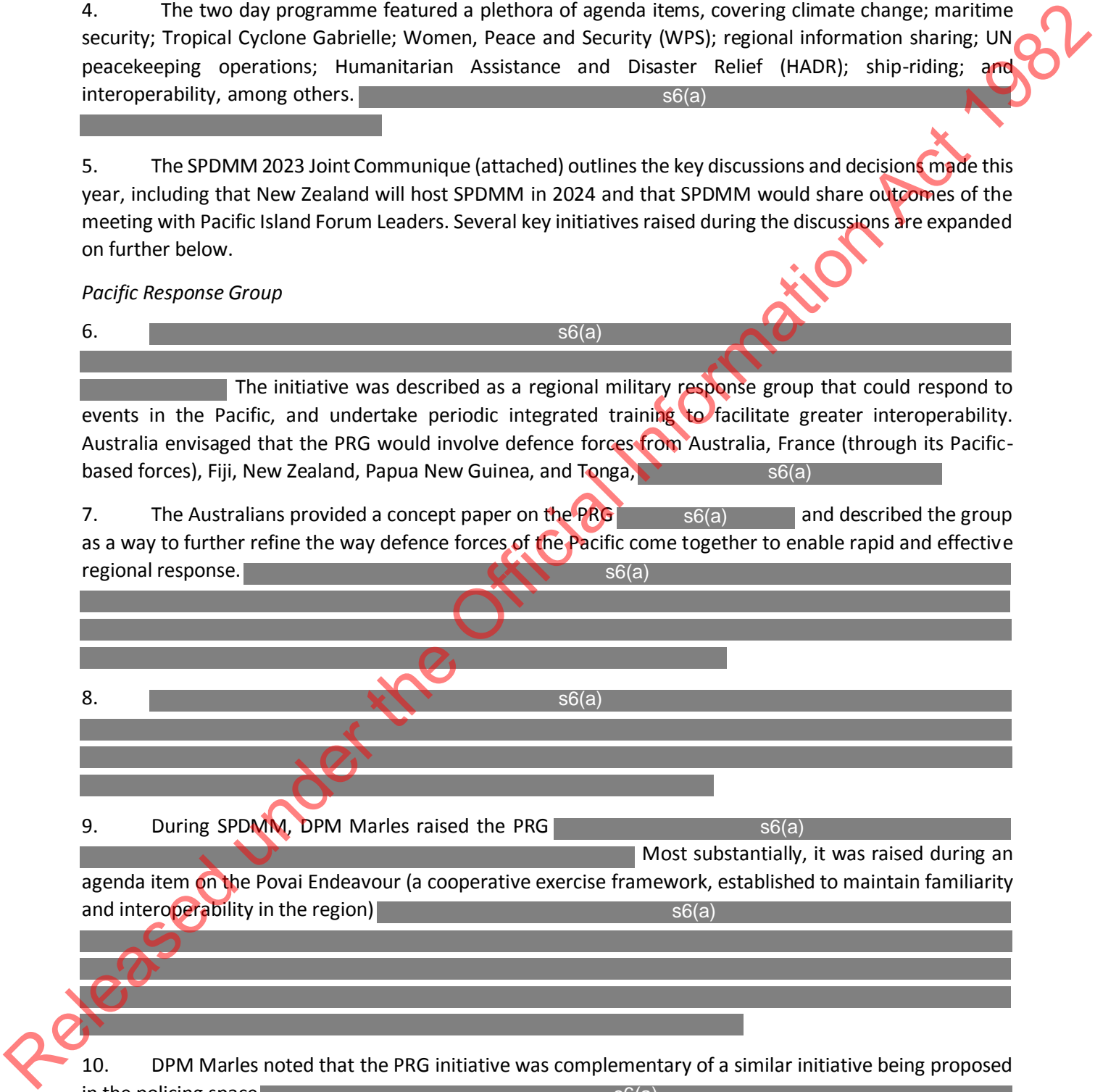
6. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted] The initiative was described as a regional military response group that could respond to events in the Pacific, and undertake periodic integrated training to facilitate greater interoperability. Australia envisaged that the PRG would involve defence forces from Australia, France (through its Pacific-based forces), Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Tonga, [redacted] s6(a)

7. The Australians provided a concept paper on the PRG [redacted] s6(a) and described the group as a way to further refine the way defence forces of the Pacific come together to enable rapid and effective regional response. [redacted] s6(a)

8. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

9. During SPDMM, DPM Marles raised the PRG [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted] Most substantially, it was raised during an agenda item on the Povai Endeavour (a cooperative exercise framework, established to maintain familiarity and interoperability in the region) [redacted] s6(a)

10. DPM Marles noted that the PRG initiative was complementary of a similar initiative being proposed in the policing space [redacted] s6(a)



11. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

12. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted] Ministers supported the PRG, in-principle, and asked Chiefs and Heads of Defence to develop a more detailed concept of operations.

13. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Pacific Academy

14. France's big initiative was the announcement of their Pacific Academy, a training centre they are constructing in Noumea. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Letter of Intent on Information Sharing

15. All Ministers signed a letter of intent on information sharing. This was the only official output signed by Ministers at this meeting. The letter of intent asks Member countries to explore ways to exchange information between officials related to SPDMM activities, to work towards an arrangement to exchange and protect information shared and facilitate regular dialogue and meetings amongst officials.

HADR Interoperability Guide

16. Members endorsed the proposed HADR interoperability guide (an updated non-binding version of the previous HADR Standard Operating Procedures), which will serve as the backbone for supporting planning and participation in exercises and operations.

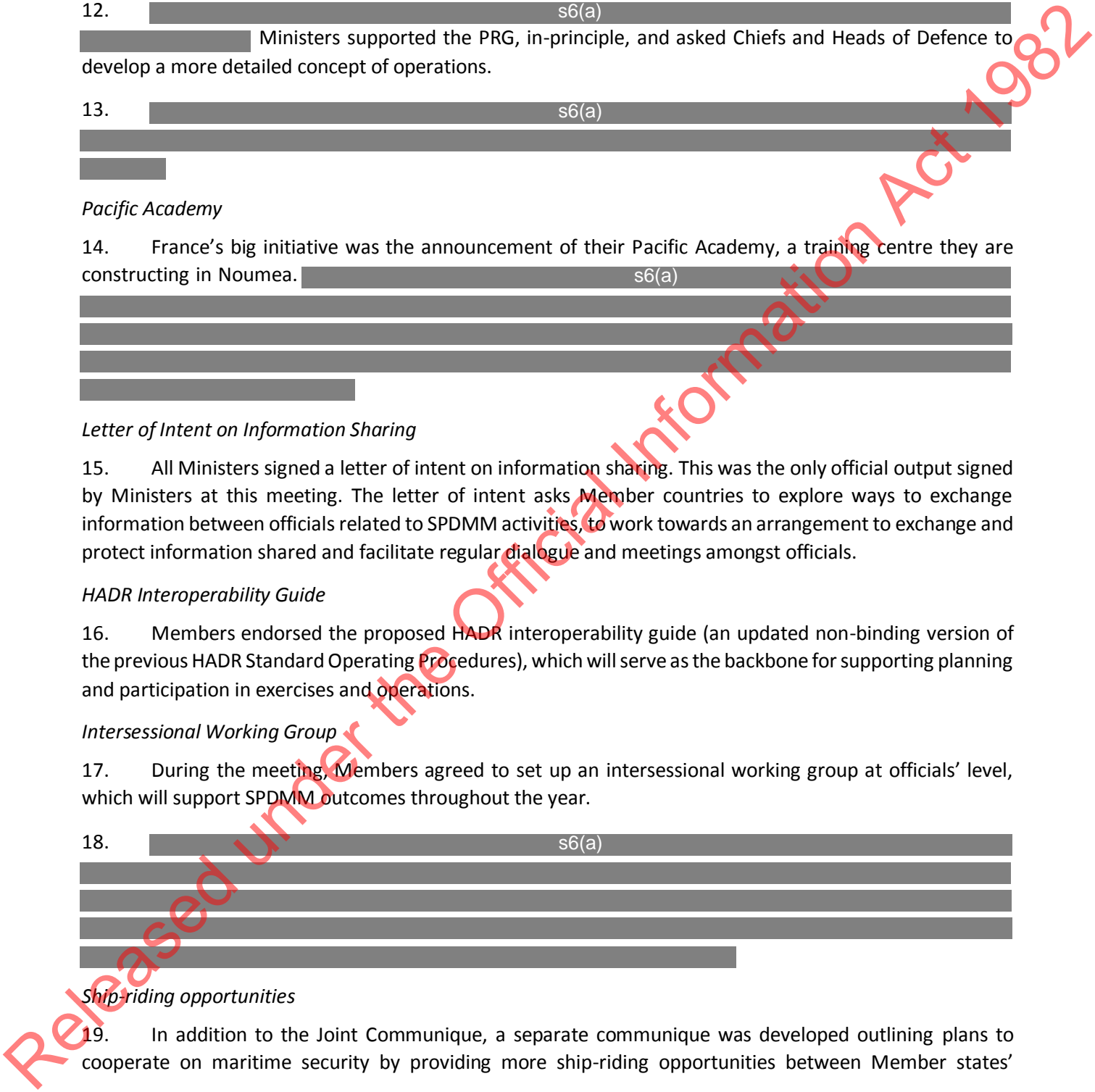
Intersessional Working Group

17. During the meeting, Members agreed to set up an intersessional working group at officials' level, which will support SPDMM outcomes throughout the year.

18. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Ship-riding opportunities

19. In addition to the Joint Communique, a separate communique was developed outlining plans to cooperate on maritime security by providing more ship-riding opportunities between Member states'



defence forces. This would allow officers from one SPDMM state to embark on another's ship to carry out Maritime Domain Awareness activities as well as enforcement.

s6(a)

Bilateral Meetings

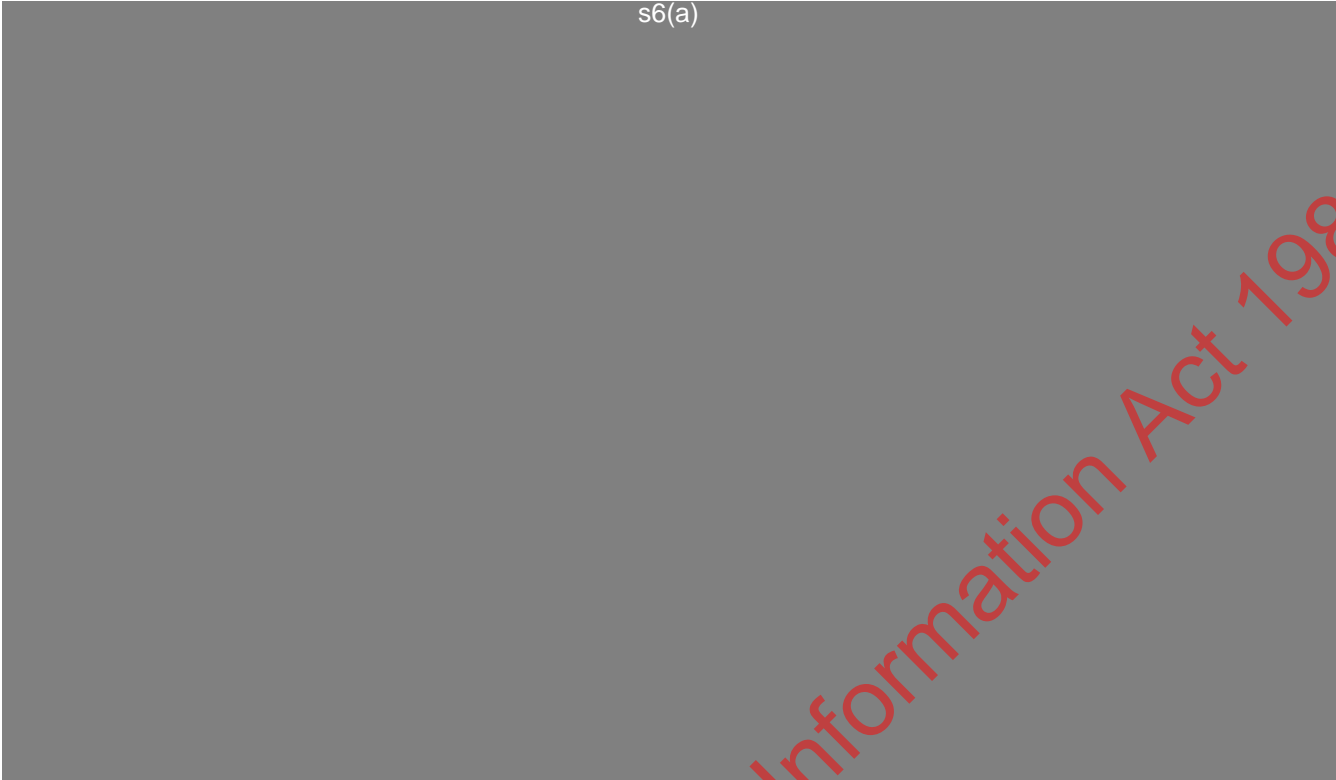
26. The Minister and CDF also had a chance to meet with their counterparts in short bilateral meetings. For the Minister, these meetings were predominately introductory, s6(a)

s6(a)

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

29. SPDMM was a timely opportunity for our new Minister of Defence to meet with most of her Pacific counterparts and build relationships early in her tenure. The Minister's attendance, as a sign of New Zealand prioritising the Pacific, was commented on throughout the meeting alongside the make-up of the New Zealand delegation, which was predominantly women. While relatively minor, gender representation in what is usually a male-dominated portfolio sends a positive signal to other Members.

s6(a)



MUTU – ENDS

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s6(a)

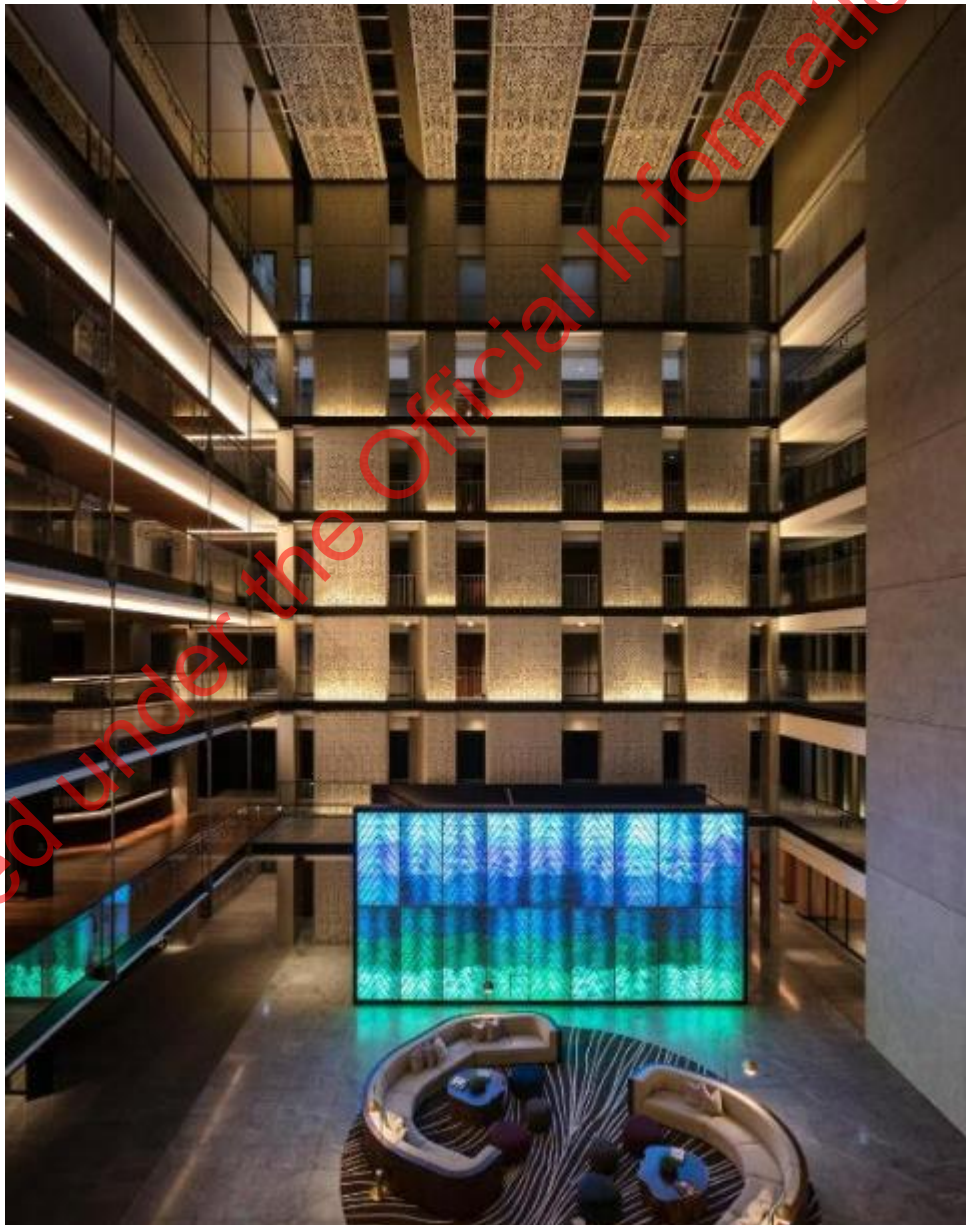
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s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

SOUTH PACIFIC DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING 2024 BILATERAL MEETINGS

2 October 2024, Auckland, New Zealand



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Australia, Wednesday 2 Oct, 15:30-15:50

Hon. Richard Marles, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and Minister for Defence

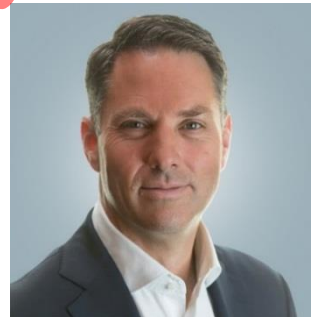
Purpose

s6(a)



Biography

Hon Richard Marles is currently the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and Minister of Defence. DPM Marles' previous appointments include Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Science, Shadow Minister for Defence, Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Minister of Trade. Born in 1967, Richard was raised and educated in Geelong and went on to study Law and Science, achieving a LLB (Hons) and a BSc from the University of Melbourne.



You last met with DPM Marles in the margins of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024. This will be your fourth time meeting.

s6(a)



Key messages

- The trans-Tasman relationship is in good shape. Intensive engagement is occurring at all levels.

s6(a)



ANZMIN / DMM Outcomes

- s9(2)(g)(i)
- I hear the Australian embed¹ in the position of Deputy Commander Joint Forces New Zealand is settling in well, and I'm pleased that the reciprocal New Zealand embed² into ADF's Deputy Chief Joint Operations has recently commenced in the

¹ Brigadier Mick Bassingthwaighe (ADF)

² Major General Hugh McAslan (NZDF)

role. Cooperation of this nature really gets to the heart of our intention to be truly interoperable.

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- **Other than these important initiatives, are there other specific outcomes you are seeking out of the ANZMIN and DMM meetings?**

[REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

[REDACTED] s6(a)

Pacific Response Group

- I'm looking forward to the discussion on the Pacific Response Group. As you know, New Zealand is supportive of this initiative, which we deem important for our regional security [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Background

s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

*International Branch/ Strategic Commitments and Engagements
Ministry of Defence, New Zealand Defence Force
September 2024*

Chile, Wednesday 2 Oct, 15:55-16:15

Mr. Ricardo Montero Allende, Undersecretary of Defence (Equivalent Associate Minister)

Pronounced: “Ree-car-doh” “Mon-tear-oh” “Ah-yehn-day”

Purpose

- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Biography

Ricardo Montero Allende is the Defense Undersecretary for Chile and holds a degree in Law and a Master’s in International Relations. During the second administration of former President Michelle Bachelet, he served as chief of staff of the Defense Ministry and the Interior and Public Security Ministry, a position he held again under the current Interior Minister, Carolina Toha.

You last met at SPDMM 2023, in New Caledonia.



Key messages

- I am very pleased to welcome you to New Zealand for SPDMM.
- New Zealand appreciates Chile’s cooperation in the South Pacific, including through attendance at regional fora and conferences, such as SPDMM.
- While there is a lot of distance between us, I think there are many similarities between our two countries, including with the defence issues we face. New Zealand and Chile are both Antarctic gateway nations and share many of the same challenges in the Southern Ocean. We also both have significant Exclusive Economic Zones and, I venture, face similar broad challenges resulting from the impacts of climate change and strategic competition.
- **I would be interested in your reflections of SPDMM**, and the discussions across the Pacific. [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- I am eager to better understand Chile’s priorities for the region. **What do you see as the major challenges in the Pacific region, and how do you see Chile engaging with these issues?**

Regional Defence architecture concept paper

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]

s6(a)

Background

Bilateral defence relationship

s6(a) we have niche areas of collaboration which make the relationship valuable – especially around similar challenges we face as small Antarctic gateway nations, both with extensive search and rescue coordination responsibilities and large Exclusive Economic Zones. Reflecting this, our main areas of collaboration with Chile are through our respective Navies.

2. Chile and New Zealand are common members of a range of Pacific defence and security fora, including SPDMM, the Pacific Army Chiefs Conference, and initiatives led out of the Indo-Pacific.

s6(a)

s6(a)

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, NZDF
September 2024*

Hon. Pio Tikoduadua, Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration

Pronounced: “Pee-oh Tee-kon-doo-an-dooah”

Purpose

- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Biography

Hon. Pio Tikoduadua was sworn in as Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration in late December 2022. This portfolio covers military, police, corrections, and immigration. Tikoduadua’s published priorities in the portfolio include: building trust in defence and security institutions, enhancing civilian-led policy, strengthening traditional defence and security partnerships, contributing to regional security, and building a secure border. Before politics, Tikoduadua served in the Republic of Fiji Military Forces for 26 years.



You last met at Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2024.

Key messages

- Ni sa bula Vinaka Minister. I am very pleased to be able to host you in New Zealand.
- For New Zealand, we are keen for SPDMM to discuss how we speak as a collective on defence issues that matter to us across the region. It’s increasingly clear that the world is getting more complex and we think there is scope to do more to speak with a united voice of regional defence ministers where our interests align. I would be interested to hear your views on this.

Defence Capability Plan (DCP24)

- The increasingly challenging security environment is one that New Zealand is actively thinking about as we look to finalise our Defence Capability Plan. [REDACTED] s6(a)

- The Defence Capability Plan will detail what is required to modernise the NZDF, to continue to operate now and into the future. The Defence Capability Plan is intended to be an integrated plan, which looks at investment opportunities across platforms, workforce, and infrastructure. It will cover existing domains such as maritime, land, air, information, as well as identifying opportunities within the space domain.

- This Plan will not only be about replacing existing equipment, it will also look at the opportunities provided by emergent new military technologies (such as remote systems), and how we can work more closely with partners. s9(2)(f)(iv)

[Redacted]

- s6(a)

- Ultimately, the DCP helps us with the tools and capability that NZDF requires to achieve New Zealand's Defence priorities. s6(a)

[Redacted] This has, and will continue to be kept in mind as part of this process.

- We look forward to being able to provide a more detailed update once this plan has been put forward to Cabinet for consideration.

Regional Defence Challenges

- One of the challenges we see with defence discussions in the region is that defence issues often touch on those of other agencies – two examples being fisheries and transnational crime. Conscious that you hold a broad domestic security portfolio, how do you think SPDMM can connect more with other parts of the Pacific on these issues?

- s6(a)

Policing

s6(a)

- New Zealand, as we know Fiji does, recognises the importance of Pacific-owned and Pacific-led responses to regional security challenges and we will continue to work with the region to support this.

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Regional Defence architecture concept paper

s6(a)

Background

Bilateral defence relationship

New Zealand and Fiji have a strong defence cooperation relationship. s6(a)
s6(a) we have broad collaboration across a wide range of defence activities, including mutual support for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief events (including Fiji assisting NZ), joint exercises and leadership training. Army, in particular have a close relationship with their Fiji counterparts.

2. NZDF and MFAT agreed to the funding of four leadership development centres across the Pacific to support the Pacific Leadership Development Programme. Two have been completed, in Tonga and Papua New Guinea, s6(a)

Fiji in the region and in the world

s6(a)

France, Wednesday 2 Oct, 16:45-17:05 (TBC)

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Hon Dr Billy Joseph – Minister of Defence, Papua New Guinea

Purpose

- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Biography

Dr Billy Joseph was appointed as Minister of Defence in January 2024 following a Cabinet reshuffle. He was elected to Parliament in 2022. This is his first term as an MP and first time holding a Ministerial portfolio. He is close to the Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape.

Before his political career, Joseph was a medical doctor. He graduated with a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery from the University of PNG in 2008. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)



You have not previously met Minister Joseph.

[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- New Zealand is keen to discuss how we use SPDM to speak as a collective on defence issues that matter to us across the region.
- It's increasingly clear that the world is getting more complex and we think there is scope to do more to speak with a united voice of regional defence ministers where our interests align.
 - What are your thoughts on this?

Defence Capability Plan

- The increasingly challenging security environment is one that New Zealand is actively thinking about as we look to finalise our Defence Capability Plan. [REDACTED] s6(a)
- The Defence Capability Plan will detail what is required to modernise the NZDF, to continue to operate now and into the future. The Defence Capability Plan is intended to be an integrated plan, which looks at investment opportunities across platforms, workforce, and infrastructure. It will cover existing domains such as maritime, land, air, information, as well as identifying opportunities within the space domain.

- This Plan will not only be about replacing existing equipment, it will also look at the opportunities provided by emergent new military technologies (such as remote systems), and how we can work more closely with partners. s9(2)(f)(iv)

[Redacted]

s9(2)(g)(i)

- Ultimately, the DCP helps us with the tools and capability that NZDF requires to achieve New Zealand's Defence priorities. s6(a)

[Redacted]

[Redacted] This has, and will continue to be kept in mind as part of this process.

- We look forward to being able to provide a more detailed update once this plan has been put forward to Cabinet for consideration.

NZ – PNG Defence Relationship

- New Zealand values its bilateral relationship with Papua New Guinea. I know that our respective defence organisations have a long history of cooperation where our forces have fought together.
- I am also very pleased to note our expanded cooperation in defence policy through our respective defence ministries, including the recent establishment of a secondee from New Zealand into the Department of Defence.
- I look forward to seeing our strong Defence relationship continue to grow. I am pleased that our forces continue to train together and that PNG and New Zealand Defence maintain strong people-to-people links.

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Regional Defence architecture concept paper

- s6(a)

[Redacted]

- [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
 - [redacted]

Commemorations and Events

- Congratulations to Papua New Guinea for hosting of His Holiness Pope Francis recently.
- I understand next year Papua New Guinea will be commemorating its 50th anniversary of Independence in 2025. I appreciate that this will be a significant undertaking.

[redacted] s6(a)

Background

Papua New Guinea Defence Relationship Overview

Papua New Guinea is an important relationship for New Zealand Defence [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

2. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted] The NZDF and the PNG Defence Force (PNGDF) then deployed alongside one another to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands from 2003 – 2017.

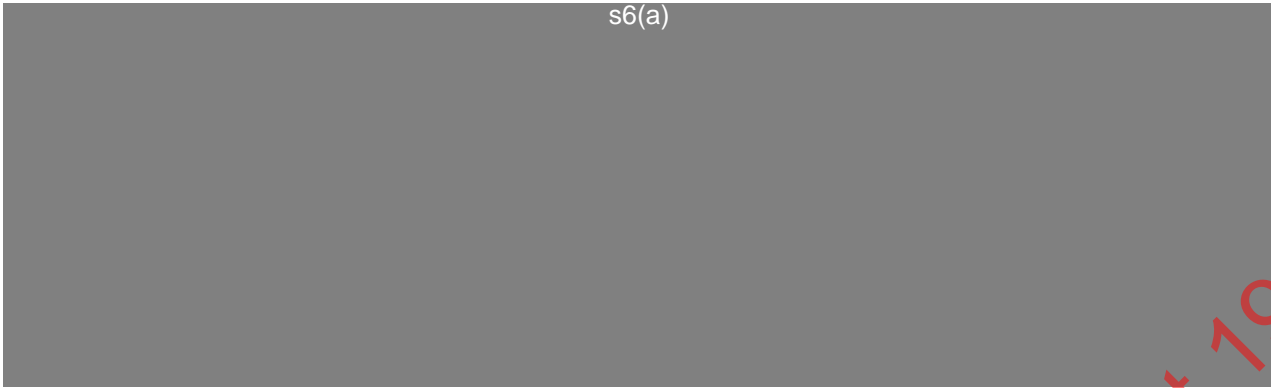
3. [redacted] s6(a)
New Zealand's presence in PNG includes a Defence Attaché, a Technical Adviser who acts as Leadership Mentor, an embedded Deputy Chief of Staff [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted]
[redacted] and a MoD analyst seconded to Papua New Guinea Department of Defence.
[redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Future Bilateral Defence Cooperation

4. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted] s6(a)

s6(a)



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Tonga, Wednesday 2 Oct, 17:35-17:55

His Royal Highness Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Tonga

Pronounced: "Too-paw-to-a" "Uloo-ka-lah-lah" Address as: His Royal Highness the Crown Prince

Purpose

s6(a)

Biography

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Tupouto'a 'Ulukalala is heir to the Tongan throne. He studied at the Australian National University, graduating in 2021 with a Master's degree in Military and Defence Studies and also in Diplomacy. He has undertaken NZDF Leadership courses and works in the Palace Office on secondment from the Armed Forces. He is married to Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Sinaitakala Tuku'aho. They have four children.

s6(a)



You last met during your visit to Tonga in July.

Key messages

- Tēnā koe Your Royal Highness.
- Firstly, let me pass on my congratulations to Tonga for hosting the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, and the meetings associated with that. I appreciate that this was a significant undertaking. *[Prime Minister Luxon attended the PIF Leaders Meeting in early September].*
- I am very pleased to welcome you to New Zealand, especially as I was so wonderfully hosted by Tonga earlier this year. My trip to Tonga, and the engagements that I have had since becoming Minister of Defence, have reiterated to me the enduring close links between the NZDF and His Majesty's Armed Forces.
- Two recent examples from me are:
 - Exercise Tropic Twilight on Lafuka Islands
 - And, Tonga's recent hosting of the South West Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces Meeting, at His Majesty's Armed Forces Leadership Centre.
- This sense of cooperation between the Pacific defence forces and defence ministers is one that we are keen to promote through the SPDMM discussions.

- One of the challenges we see with defence discussions in the region is that defence issues often touch on those of other agencies – two examples being fisheries and transnational crime. I am keen to understand from your own experiences, **how do you think SPDMM can connect more with other parts of the Pacific on these issues?**

Defence Capability Plan (DCP24)

- The increasingly challenging security environment is one that New Zealand is actively thinking about as we look to finalise our Defence Capability Plan. s6(a)
[Redacted]
- The Defence Capability Plan will detail what is required to modernise the NZDF, to continue to operate now and into the future. The Defence Capability Plan is intended to be an integrated plan, which looks at investment opportunities across platforms, workforce, and infrastructure. It will cover existing domains such as maritime, land, air, information, as well as identifying opportunities within the space domain.
- This Plan will not only be about replacing existing equipment, it will also look at the opportunities provided by emergent new military technologies (such as remote systems), and how we can work more closely with partners. s9(2)(f)(iv)
[Redacted]
- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
- Ultimately, the DCP helps us with the tools and capability that NZDF requires to achieve New Zealand's Defence priorities. s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted] This has, and will continue to be kept in mind as part of this process
- We look forward to being able to provide a more detailed update once this plan has been put forward to Cabinet for consideration.

s6(a)

s6(a)

Background

Royal Protocol

Refer to the Crown Prince as “Your Royal Highness” or “the Crown Prince of Tonga”. In smaller and more informal conversation, you can use “sir”. s9(2)(g)(i)

Bilateral defence relationship

s6(a)

3. Disaster relief and recovery, as well as transnational crime, are areas of focus for HMAF – s6(a)

Exercise Tropic Twilight

4. Exercise Tropic Twilight is an annual Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise, conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The second phase was completed in May 2024 with a range of engineering rebuild and reconstruction tasks being undertaken in Lufuka. In addition, NZDF medical and dental teams deployed to provide assistance to and work alongside local Tongan community health facilities. NZDF partnered with HMAF, alongside with Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, Japan, the US, the UK and France (via the French Armed Forces in New Caledonia) on the Exercise.

s6(a)

*International Branch/ Strategic Commitments and Engagements
Ministry of Defence, New Zealand Defence Force
September 2024*

Baron Waqa, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum

Pronounced: “Wong-ga” Address as: Secretary General

Purpose

[Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Biography



Baron Waqa became Secretary-General of the PIF in June 2024 and is responsible for the management of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and its delivery of regional priorities mandated by Leaders.

Waqa was President of Nauru from 2013-2019. He has met Prime Minister Luxon and Deputy Prime Minister Peters, with both registering New Zealand’s readiness to support the PIF in its role as the political apex of our regional architecture.

You have not met Baron Waqa.

Key messages

- Thank you Secretary General for attending the SPDMM as a guest for the first time, and for your contributions to the open session meeting of the SPDMM.
- I wish to congratulate you for the successful delivery of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- I would like to hear your reflections on the Pacific regional security architecture and how New Zealand can best support a Pacific-owned and Pacific-led approach to the region’s security needs.

- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]

[Redacted] s6(a)

- Once again, I thank you for your contribution to the SPDMM, and I hope you have found these meetings just as valuable as SPDMM nations do.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background

The Pacific Islands Forum

New Zealand is a founding Member of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). We have an enduring commitment to reinforcing the centrality of the Forum and its ability to deliver on the region's collective priorities, as outlined in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

2. The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's pre-eminent political organisation for Pacific Leaders to discuss, build consensus, and act on shared challenges. The Forum brings together 18 Member countries³ to chart the Pacific's regional policy agenda and respond to priority issues. It provides an opportunity for the Pacific to publicly articulate shared goals and aspirations, and to reinforce the norms and values we want to see embedded.

3. As a Pacific country, New Zealand has a direct stake in the region's peace, stability, prosperity, and resilience. We have a shared Pacific future. In an increasingly complex strategic environment strengthened regionalism is essential.

s6(a)



³ Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. Tokelau is an Associate Member.