

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 120**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2006:**

Has any consideration been given to Australian officers backfilling positions in Pacific countries in order to free up more Pacific Islanders to join the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI)? If so, could the Australian Federal Police provide a list of such countries as well as an indication of what processes are under way to put this into effect?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

Yes.

The deployment of Australian officers to Pacific countries to backfill positions presents a number of difficulties for the AFP. Backfilling arrangements would require Australian officers to deploy to inline positions, and would include:

- the swearing-in of Australian officers;
- negotiating government to government arrangements for appropriate immunities and protections; and
- appropriate training for Australian officers in relation to local practices and procedures, to ensure the appropriate discharge of their responsibilities.

While not insurmountable, the aforementioned issues would require a commitment of significant Whole of Government resources to implement, which would effectively out-weigh any benefit.

More importantly, the AFP has not received any requests from Pacific countries to provide officers to backfill positions.