Chapter 1

Introduction and conduct of inquiry

Referral of inquiry

1.1   On 8 November 2006, the Senate referred the matter of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. The committee was to report by 16 August 2007. On 8 August, the Senate granted an extension to the committee's reporting date to 25 October 2007. Following the prorogation of the 41st Parliament on 15 October, the committee presented an interim report to the President of the Senate on 19 October, stating its intention to table its final report as soon as practicable. During the first sitting week of the new Parliament, the Senate re-referred the inquiry to the committee to report by 15 May 2008. On 14 May 2008, the Senate granted an extension for the committee to report by 26 June 2008; on 24 June, the Senate granted a further extension to 31 July 2008. On this day, the committee tabled out of session an interim report stating that it would table its final report on 1 August 2008.

Terms of reference

1.2   Under the terms of reference, the committee was to inquire into the changing nature of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations and the implications for the Australian Defence Force (ADF), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and other departments and agencies likely to be called on to assist a peacekeeping operation, with particular reference to:

   (a)   the policy framework, procedures and protocols that govern the government's decision to participate in a peacekeeping operation, for determining the conditions of engagement and for ceasing to participate;

   (b)   the training and preparedness of Australians likely to participate in a peacekeeping operation;

   (c)   the coordination of Australia's contribution to a peacekeeping operation among Australian agencies and also with the United Nations (UN) and other relevant countries; and

   (d)   lessons learnt from recent participation in peacekeeping operations that would assist government to prepare for future operations.

Conduct of inquiry

1.3   The committee advertised its inquiry on its website and in *The Australian*, calling for submissions to be lodged by mid-March 2007. The committee also wrote directly to a range of people and organisations inviting written submissions. These included government departments and agencies, academics, research and strategic studies institutes, non-government organisations, country support groups and

associations, veterans' organisations, and a number of embassies and high commissions of countries that Australia has worked with in peacekeeping operations.

1.4   The committee received 39 submissions which are listed at Appendix 1. During the inquiry, the committee also put a number of written questions to witnesses. The answers are available on the committee's website.

1.5   The committee held seven public hearings in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. A list of the committee's public hearings, together with the names of witnesses who appeared, is at Appendix 2.

1.6   Following the public hearings, a number of witnesses made corrections to their evidence. The committee received corrections relating to matters of substance as additional information. They are not recorded in the transcripts of evidence, but are publicly available on the committee's website and were also tabled with the report. These corrections, along with other additional information received and answers to questions on notice, are listed in Appendix 3.

1.7   In producing this report, the committee relied not only on the evidence presented to it but also on a significant body of recent research on peacekeeping operations and the recorded experiences of people closely involved with such missions.[1] Unless otherwise indicated, the title or designation of witnesses or commentators equates with their position at the time they made the statement referred to in the report.

Background to inquiry

1.8   Since 1947, Australians have served in many peacekeeping operations, both as 'blue helmets' in UN operations and as contributing forces to non-UN regional or coalition operations.[2] Operations have ranged from the traditional cease-fire monitoring missions to multifaceted, complex operations perhaps more appropriately conceptualised as peacebuilding or statebuilding operations.

1.9   Australians deployed to these complex missions have included not only military personnel but also police, scientific experts and public servants from a range of government agencies including DFAT, AusAID, the Australian Electoral Commission and Treasury. They have been engaged in all facets of a peacekeeping operation—peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Their engagement has involved activities as diverse as observing ceasefires, restoring law and order, clearing land and sea mines, training others in mine detection and clearance, intercepting merchant ships, locating and inspecting weapons and, if required, supervising their destruction. They have also assisted refugees, provided medical, dental and communication services, helped prepare for and supervise or conduct elections,

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1   See a list of selected bibliography at the end of the report.

2   Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie, *Committee Hansard*, 24 July 2007, p. 2.

including electoral education, and assumed various bureaucratic and training roles in transitional administrations.

1.10   Australian peacekeepers have experienced first hand the difficulties in coordinating the diverse elements of a peacekeeping operation and making the transition from one phase of a mission to the next. They have served in UN peacekeeping operations such as the troubled missions to Somalia and Rwanda. In these cases, Australian peacekeepers witnessed the horrors created by a country's internal conflict. Australia has also taken on leadership roles in peacekeeping missions to Cambodia, East Timor and Solomon Islands. Regional engagement is a major element in Australia's current involvement in peacekeeping.

Previous inquiries

1.11   Committees of the Parliament have conducted inquiries into Australia's involvement in peacekeeping on two previous occasions. In 1991, the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade tabled its report *United Nations Peacekeeping and Australia*, and in 1994, the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade tabled a report *Australia's Participation in Peacekeeping*. Also relevant, in June 2001, the Joint Committee tabled its report *Australia's Role in United Nations Reform*, with substantial chapters on peacekeeping operations, preparations for rapid deployment and the role of the UN in reconstruction. Although their findings relate to circumstances going back many years, these inquiries have direct relevance to the current inquiry, especially for the committee's consideration of the changing nature of peacekeeping operations. Reference is made throughout the report to the findings of these inquiries and a summary of their recommendations is at Appendix 4.

Current inquiry

1.12   While a number of the issues explored in the earlier inquiries are pertinent to current consideration of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations, there have been major developments in peacekeeping that provide a different context for this report. In particular, since the two earliest inquiries, Australia has been heavily committed to peacekeeping operations in the region. In 1997–98, Australia participated in the New Zealand-led Truce Monitoring Group in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. From 1998 through to 2003, Australia led the subsequent Peace Monitoring Group and Bougainville Transition Team, promoting the Bougainville peace process and assisting the transition to autonomous government.

1.13   In 1999, Australia commanded the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET), which involved some 13,000 personnel from over 21 countries. The INTERFET mission was the largest single Australian deployment since World War II, with 5,500 peacekeepers deployed in 1999.[3] Australia has been involved in each

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3   Department of Defence, answer to written question on notice W3, 24 July 2007.

subsequent UN mission in East Timor. It also leads the coalition International Stabilisation Force (ISF) in Timor-Leste, formed in response to a request for assistance following a break down in security in mid-2006. The force was reinforced in February 2008 following another serious outbreak of violence.[4] Australia's contribution to peacekeeping operations in East Timor has ranged across a broad spectrum of activities, from peace enforcement to assisting with the transition to an independent government and developing state institutions and other capacity-building activities. Australia's active engagement in peacekeeping operations in Timor-Leste[5] continues today.

1.14   In 2003 Australia led the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). This engagement demonstrated Australia's willingness to conduct, at the invitation of the host country, a regional peacekeeping operation outside the UN structure. RAMSI is an example of the complex and integrated nature of contemporary peacekeeping operations. It has a broad mandate including not only security, law and justice but also governance and economic reform. A large number of government and non-government agencies contribute to RAMSI, which is led by a civilian. Australia remains committed to this peacekeeping operation.

1.15   These missions indicate the growing importance of Australia's engagement in peacekeeping activities in the region. They also show that the scope of today's peacekeeping operations has expanded to focus on helping to create long-term stability in fragile states. Such developments make the committee's inquiry particularly timely.

Australia's peacekeeping operations

1.16   While Australia's commitments in the region provide an important context for this current inquiry, Australia is also committed to operations further afield. Australia is currently involved in the following UN-led operations.[6] The ADF operation name for its contribution to relevant missions is provided in brackets.

UN operations

- UNAMA (Afghanistan)—one military observer (Operation Palate II);
- UNFICYP (Cyprus)—15 police;
- UNMIS (Sudan)—nine troops, six military observers (Operation Azure), nine police;

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4   The Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, answer to question without notice, *House Hansard,* 13 February 2008, p. 220.

5   See paragraph 1.23 for an explanation of 'East Timor' and 'Timor-Leste'.

6   As at December 2007, www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2007/dec07_3.pdf (accessed 18 January 2008).

- UNMIT (Timor-Leste)—four military observers (Operation Tower), 49 police;[7] and

- UNTSO (Middle East)—11 military observers (Operation Paladin).

1.17   Australia is also participating in operations endorsed or approved by the UN but not conducted by the UN.

Other operations

- MFO (Sinai)—25 ADF personnel (Operation Mazurka);[8]

- RAMSI (Solomon Islands)—140 ADF personnel (Operation Anode), 208 police;[9]

- ISF (Timor-Leste)—780 ADF personnel which was increased in February 2008 to 1,000 ADF (Operation Astute), and 130 AFP personnel.[10]

The above figures are approximations and fluctuate over time.

Scope and terminology

1.18   The committee's terms of reference asked it to inquire into the changing nature of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations and the implications for

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7   In addition, 10 AFP members deployed to the Timor-Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP), set up under a bilateral arrangement between the governments of Australia and Timor-Leste, are currently working with UNMIT. The TLPDP is currently under review. See http://www.afp.gov.au/international/IDG/current_deployments/timor.html (accessed 18 January 2008). Also, 17 ADF personnel are deployed to Timor-Leste to support the Defence Cooperation Program. This is a regional engagement initiative to assist the development of the Timor-Leste Defence Force and is conducted independently of the ADF contribution to UNMIT. See http://www.defence.gov.au/optower/index.htm (accessed 18 January 2008).

8   Department of Defence, http://www.defence.gov.au/opmazurka/index.htm (accessed 18 January 2008).

9   Department of Defence, http://www.defence.gov.au/opanode/default.htm (accessed 18 January 2008); Australian Federal Police, *Submission 28*, p. A-5. The more recent figures given here for the APF come from AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, *Estimates Hansard*, 18 February 2008.

10   Department of Defence, http://www.defence.gov.au/opastute/default.htm (accessed 18 January 2008) and the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, answer to question without notice, *House Hansard*, 13 February 2008, p. 35. In April 2008, the Prime Minister announced that the Australian commitment to the ISF would return to the pre-February level of about 750 personnel. Prime Minister of Australia, Media Release, 'Australian Troops in Timor-Leste Return to Pre-11 February 2008 Levels', 26 April 2008. As at 29 May 2008, the number was 750, http://www.defence.gov.au/opastute/default.htm. Defence also records ISAF (Afghanistan) with 970 ADF personnel (Operation Slipper). To peak at around 1000 by mid-2008. Department of Defence, http://www.defence.gov.au/opslipper/default.htm (accessed 18 January 2008). As at 2 June 2008, the number was 1080, http://www.defence.gov.au/opslipper/default.htm.

a range of government departments and agencies likely to be called on to assist a peacekeeping operation. In specifically nominating a broad range of agencies, the terms of reference indicated that the committee was to consider operations extending beyond the traditional 'peacekeeping' model to include today's complex multidimensional missions.

1.19   Given the possible narrow interpretation of the concept of 'peacekeeping', a number of submitters to the inquiry suggested alternative terminology. Some used the term peacekeeping, but related it to a broader set of undertakings 'focused towards creating the conditions for sustainable peace, economic advancement, and fulfilment of human rights'.[11] The AFP used the phrase 'peace and stability operations'. In its view, the phrase recognises that current crises require a 'more holistic and strategic view that addresses root causes of conflict and creates road maps for peace, and most importantly provides for the longer term development of stable societies'.[12]

1.20   Discussions about appropriate terminology to describe international efforts to secure peace and stability are not new. The first recommendation of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in its 1994 report related to the need for a 'common terminology with respect to peacekeeping'.[13]

1.21   In this report, the committee has used the term 'peacekeeping operations' as set down in the committee's terms of reference. By using this term, the committee acknowledges the complex, integrated nature of many contemporary missions and the importance of looking beyond the traditional peacekeeping role of monitoring truce lines or state borders with the consent of the parties to the dispute.

1.22   For clarity, when using the term peacekeeping operations, the committee means international deployments that may involve civil, police and military personnel whose objective is to prevent, resolve or limit conflict and stabilise post-conflict environments. Such operations must have been legitimately established under international law, either by the UN or through the explicit consent of the host country government. Purely preventative or government-to-government endeavours to create or maintain peace, such as the use of diplomacy or economic sanctions, were considered to be outside the scope of the inquiry. The committee also uses the term 'peacekeepers' in a general sense to refer to those involved in peacekeeping operations.

1.23   East Timor achieved independence on 20 May 2002 and on 27 September 2002 joined the UN with the official name, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.[14] In this report, the committee has used *Timor-Leste* when referring specifically to

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11   Austcare, *Submission 11*, p. 5.

12   Australian Federal Police, *Submission 28*, pp. 5 and 7.

13   Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Australia's Participation in Peacekeeping*, 1994, p. xix.

14   UN General Assembly, *Unanimous Assembly Decision Makes Timor-Leste 191st United Nations Member State,* Press release, 27 September 2002.

peacekeeping operations post-September 2002. However, *East Timor* has been used when discussing peacekeeping operations prior to this time, or when referring generically to all peacekeeping operations in East Timor.

Structure of report

1.24   The report is presented in six parts, focusing on key areas of concern regarding Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations. Part I provides an introduction, including an overview of the changing global circumstances and evolving types of peacekeeping operations. Part II focuses on the decision to participate in peacekeeping operations, including the framework in which such decisions are made and the major factors influencing decisions. Part III considers Australia's preparedness for peacekeeping operations, including the capabilities Australia has to bring to these operations, and the training and preparation of Australian personnel. It also looks at the coordination of Australia's contribution to peacekeeping operations among government and non-government agencies. Part IV examines Australia's role as a participating country with other countries in a peacekeeping operation. It explores some of the challenges Australian peacekeepers face in establishing and maintaining a constructive partnership with the host country and with partners in the operation. It also looks at Australia's engagement with the United Nations with regard to peacekeeping activities. Part V of the report looks at the welfare and recognition of Australian personnel involved in peacekeeping operations.

1.25   Finally, in Part VI, the committee focuses on how Australia evaluates its performance in peacekeeping operations and uses the lessons of past involvement to prepare for future operations. This part discusses international examples of peacekeeping institutes and centres of excellence and considers the case for the development of such an institute in Australia. In the final chapter, the committee presents a summary of its findings.

Acknowledgments

1.26   The committee thanks all those who contributed to the inquiry by making submissions, providing additional information or appearing before it to give evidence.

1.27   The bulk of the inquiry was conducted throughout 2007—the 60th anniversary year of Australia's first involvement in peacekeeping. The committee takes this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by Australian men and women to peacekeeping operations. They have served with distinction in many locations throughout the world. The following table provides an outline of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations from 1947 to the present.

Table of Australian Participation in Multinational Peacekeeping Operations to 2006

Name of operation	Theatre	Dates of Australian involvement	Total number of Australians involved	Main role of Australians
UN Consular Commission	Indonesia	1947	4	military observers
UN Good Offices Commission (UNGOC)	Indonesia	1947-1949	up to 15	
UN Commission for Indonesia (UNCI)	Indonesia	1949-1951	up to 19	military observers
UN Commission on Korea (UNCOK)	Korea	1950	2	military observers
UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)	Kashmir	1950-1985	up to 18	military observers and air transport
UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK)	Korea	1951	1	military observer
UN Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC)	Korea	1953-present	1-2	monitoring ceasefire between North and South Korea
UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) [Israel and neighbours]	Middle East	1956-present	13 in 1990s	military observers
UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC)	Congo	1960 - 1961	a few	medical team
UN Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA)	West New Guinea	1962-1963	11	helicopters supporting humanitarian aid
UN Yemen Observation Mission (UNYOM)	Yemen	1963	2	military observers
UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)	Cyprus	1964-present	16-50 state and federal police	maintenance of law and order
UN India-Pakistan Observation Mission (UNIPOM)	India/Pakistan	1965-1966	3	military observers
UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)	Israel/Syria	1974	a few	military observers detached from UNTSO
UN Emergency Force II (UNEF II)	Sinai	1976-1979	46 RAAF personnel	monitoring a ceasefire between Israel and Egypt
UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Lebanon	1978	a few	military observers detached from UNTSO
Commonwealth Monitoring Force (CMF)	Zimbabwe	1979-1980	150	monitoring Rhodesian forces, cantonment of guerillas, and return of civilian refugees
Multinational Force and Observers (MFO)	Sinai	1982-1986; 1993-present	110; 25-30	monitoring Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai
Commonwealth Military Training Team - Uganda (CMTTU)	Uganda	1982-1984	6	training government forces
UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group	Iran/Iraq	1988-1990	15	military observers (only in Iran)

Name of operation	Theatre	Dates of Australian involvement	Total number of Australians involved	Main role of Australians
(UNIIMOG)				
UN Border Relief Operation (UNBRO)	Thailand/Cambodia border	1989-1993	2 federal police	law and order creation; training police
UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)	Namibia	1989-1990	300	engineering support; supervision of elections
UN Mine Clearance Training Team (UNMCTT)	Afghanistan, Pakistan	1989-1993	13 in 1993	mine clearance - instructing refugees and planning operations
Maritime Interception Force (MIF)	Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea	1990-present (not continuous)	up to 3 ships; 600+ personnel in 1990, 2001-03	enforcing UN-imposed sanctions on Iraq
Operation Habitat	Kurdistan (northern Iraq)	1991	75	delivering humanitarian aid
UN Special Commission (UNSCOM)	Iraq	1991-1999	5 in 1993	inspection of Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear weapons capabilities
UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)	Western Sahara	1991-1994	45	communications
UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC)	Cambodia	1991-1992	65	communications
UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)	Cambodia	1992-1993	over 500	communications, transport, assisting the election and maintaining law and order
UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I)	Somalia	1992-1993	30	movement control unit
Unified Task Force (UNITAF)	Somalia	1992-1993	1100	protecting delivery of humanitarian aid
UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR)	former Yugoslavia	1992	a few	military observers and liaison
UN Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)	Somalia	1993-1995	40	movement control unit, HQ staff, police
UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)	Rwanda	1994-1995	300	medical personnel (115), infantry protection, support troops
UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)	Mozambique	1994	20	police, deminers
South Pacific Peace-Keeping Force (SPPKF)	Bougainville	1994	200, plus two ships	force commander; logistic and other support
Multinational Force (MNF)	Haiti	1994-1995	30	police monitors
United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINIGUA)	Guatemala	1997	1	observer
Stabilisation Force (SFOR)	former Yugoslavia	1997-present	6	officers attached to British forces with NATO
Truce Monitoring Group (TMG)	Bougainville	1997-1998	110	monitoring ceasefire, facilitating peace process

Name of operation	Theatre	Dates of Australian involvement	Total number of Australians involved	Main role of Australians
Peace Monitoring Group (PMG)	Bougainville	1998-2003	260 in first phase	monitoring ceasefire, facilitating peace process
Kosovo Force (KFOR)	Kosovo	1999-present	a few	officers attached to British or American forces with NATO
UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET)	East Timor	1999	50 police, 6 military liaison officers	facilitating referendum
International Force East Timor (INTERFET)	East Timor	1999-2000	5,000	establishing peace and security, facilitating humanitarian aid and reconstruction
UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)	East Timor	2000-2002	up to 2,000	maintaining security, facilitating reconstruction
International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT)	Solomon Islands	2000-2002	25	monitoring peace process
United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)	Ethiopia/ Eritrea	2000-present	2	staff officers
International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT)	Sierra Leone	2000-2003	2	military observers
UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET)	East Timor	2002-2005	1,600 > 100	maintaining security, facilitating reconstruction
UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission for Iraq (UNMOVIC)	Iraq	2002-2003	a few	weapons inspections
UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	Afghanistan	2003-2004	1	liaison officer
Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)	Solomon Islands	2003-present	1,650 > 500**	police, civilians, military providing security and logistics
United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)	Sudan	2005-present	15	observers, logistics, air movement controllers
United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)	East Timor	2005-present	fewer than 100	military and police support duties

** Numbers may now be lower

Compiled by Dr Peter Londey, Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations.

Part 1

Background to peacekeeping

Part 1 is an introduction to peacekeeping. It provides an overview of the changing global circumstances and evolving types of peacekeeping operations.