COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE

Reference: Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations

MONDAY, 20 AUGUST 2007

SYDNEY

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

INTERNET

The Proof and Official Hansard transcripts of Senate committee hearings, some House of Representatives committee hearings and some joint committee hearings are available on the Internet. Some House of Representatives committees and some joint committees make available only Official Hansard transcripts.

The Internet address is: **http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard**

To search the parliamentary database, go to:
http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON

FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE

Monday, 20 August 2007

Members: Senator Payne *(Chair)*, Senator Hutchins *(Deputy Chair)*, Senators Mark Bishop, Forshaw, Hogg, Sandy Macdonald and Trood

Participating members: Senators Adams, Allison, Bartlett, Bernardi, Birmingham, Boswell, Boyce, Brandis, Bob Brown, Carol Brown, George Campbell, Carr, Chapman, Cormann, Conroy, Crossin, Eggleston, Chris Evans, Faulkner, Fielding, Fierravanti-Wells, Fifield, Fisher, Heffernan, Hurley, Joyce, Kemp, Kirk, Lightfoot, Ludwig, Lundy, Ian Macdonald, Marshall, McGauran, Mason, Milne, Nash, Nettle, Parry, Polley, Robert Ray, Scullion, Siewert, Sterle, Stott Despoja, Watson, Webber and Wortley

Senators in attendance: Senators Mark Bishop, Forshaw, Hogg, Sandy Macdonald, Payne and Trood

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

The changing nature of Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations and the implications for the Australian Defence Force, AusAID, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Federal Police 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 and other relevant countries; and

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

WITNESSES

Committee met at 9.05 am

WAINWRIGHT, Associate Professor Elsina Margaret, Private capacity

CHAIR (Senator Payne)—I declare open this meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, which is inquiring into Australia's involvement in peacekeeping. These are public proceedings, although the committee may agree to a request to have evidence heard in camera or may determine that certain evidence should be heard in camera. I remind all witnesses that, in giving evidence to the committee, they are protected by parliamentary privilege. It is unlawful for anyone to threaten or disadvantage a witness on account of evidence given to a committee. Such action may be treated by the Senate as a contempt. It is also a contempt to give false or misleading evidence to a committee. If a witness objects to answering a question, the witness should state the grounds upon which the objection is taken and the committee will determine whether it will insist on an answer having regard to that ground which is claimed. If the committee determines to insist on an answer, a witness may request that the answer be given in camera and such a request may also of course be made at any other time.

I welcome our first witness, Professor Wainwright. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Prof. Wainwright—I am appearing in a private capacity, although I am affiliated with the Centre for International Security Studies at the University of Sydney.

CHAIR—The committee has before it your submission, which has been numbered 12. It is a paper that was published in 2006. I invite you to make a brief opening statement and then we will go to questions.

Prof. Wainwright—Thank you. I welcome the opportunity to appear before this committee today. In my opening statement I am going to focus on stabilisation, post-conflict, reconstruction and capacity-building operations, and look particularly at Australia's involvement in the South Pacific and in East Timor in what has clearly been a very tumultuous time in the last 18 months or so in the South Pacific and in East Timor. The main challenge facing the states of Melanesia and East Timor is that of internal instability. The causes of this instability are many and complex, and there are a host of historical, political, economic, demographic and social factors behind it. These deep-seated factors also increase the vulnerability of these states to many things, including transnational crime and pandemics.

Australia is at the forefront internationally of attempts to deal with fragile states, in part for reasons of necessity—we are surrounded by these states to our immediate north and north-east. It does seem to me that Australian interagency cooperation has been pretty good in terms of policy response—certainly compared to other countries. RAMSI is regarded as a model of its kind. The expanded international role of the Australian Federal Police and the creation a couple of years ago of the International Deployment Group has been closely watched internationally. It is at the cutting edge of policing, stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction and capacity-building operations at a time when internationally there are far too few civilian police to deploy to such operations and to meet the need which is there. That is all good news.

The bad news is that there is no template from elsewhere that Australia can seek to follow and no-one has better ideas internationally as to what to do. There are clearly enormous challenges for stabilisation, post-conflict reconstruction and capacity-building operations globally. Our region is no different.

The state-building euphoria of the 1990s and the early part of this century, which was spurred in part by the omissions of Bosnia and Rwanda and a sense of possibility that many, including me, saw in Bosnia, East Timor and Solomon Islands, has subsided to some extent as the complexity of the challenges faced in these state-building operations and the transformative effect that these operations have for good and for ill in these states have become clear. Before there was a sense of possibility and a sense of what state-building can achieve. Now there is more a sense of the limits as to how much one state or group of states can assist another, and how much needs to come from within these states, especially local political will to address and seek to resolve deep-seated crises.

I will mention just a couple of the challenges that Australia in particular has faced when it has mounted and continues to mount these operations. The first challenge is the scale of the task in complexity and duration. I have mentioned the complexity of the problems of internal stability facing many states in the South Pacific and in East Timor. In terms of duration there is research by the leading international scholar Paul Collier which suggests that fragile states stay fragile for around 50 years before they start to turn around. That is a long time when you are starting to conceive of how long a commitment is going to be. Furthermore, these states in our region have small economies and populations on a world scale and for some there are genuine questions as to economic viability.

The second challenge is that of some fractious bilateral relationships in our region which have clearly affected some of Australia's efforts at assistance. A related challenge—and this is number three—concerns those host governments. The Australian government's policy is one of cooperative intervention but there is an obvious problem when that cooperation ceases to be forthcoming in some way or when a state-building operation is there and has arrived to restore law and order but then it needs to pursue some members of that host government who have been implicated in corrupt activities. Clearly, a situation like that requires very dextrous handling.

The fourth challenge is that of sustainability. Based on the tempo of operations in the region over the last couple of years, it does seem likely that more operations will be required, and this will continue to place demands on the involved agencies—the Australian Defence Force, the Australian Federal Police and other agencies.

I will venture some observations as to how to respond to some of these challenges. First, the challenge of complexity requires a comprehensive response. The ADF and AFP are clearly important parts of the answer because security is necessary for progress on all other fronts. But they are only part of the answer. Aid, promotion of economic growth and dealing with the deep-seated weakness which is helping to fan the insecurity are also critical. I mentioned the leading scholar Paul Collier. He has also shown that around half of all post-conflict states revert to violence within five years. The clear lesson from that research is that assisting states should not seek to withdraw precipitously from a post-conflict state, presuming all will be well. As East Timor last year showed again quite clearly, it is less than ideal to keep having to send in the ADF to stabilise a situation that keeps deteriorating. I do think there is a need to find ways to address

the deep-seated political, economic, security sector and constitutional challenges that fuel these crises.

Second, the long-term challenge of state fragility will require a long-term commitment—clearly at least generational—to try to address some of the institutional weaknesses and build up human capacity. Third, part of the answer to fractious bilateral relationships must be to broaden the people to people and institutional linkages that we have with these countries so assistance efforts are not as vulnerable to that high level fracture. Working with others, including multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, might also help to ameliorate these problems. But that is a very complex issue.

Fourth is the importance of understanding your environment. A clear lesson from the operations Australia has been involved in recently is the benefits of predeployment language training and awareness of history, culture and politics. The fifth observation I would make is that prevention is better than cure—preventing an acute state crisis costs less than after-the-fact interventions in financial terms, in terms of the personnel that Australia needs to deploy and in terms of the misery of the people in these affected states. And I do think there is a need to become better at recognising warning signs—the security flare-ups and flashpoint events in our immediate region.

Sixth, there is a need to stop the unemployed young men in the region from becoming, and from being, agents of instability. I think the answer to this involves the promotion of economic growth but also the issue of labour mobility and continuing provision of scholarships to Australia.

I will close with some thoughts as to what we might see in the future worldwide in terms of peacekeeping. There are three points. First, I think we will continue to see complex situations emerging within fragile states which are going to require complex responses. In our part of the world this is clearly going to continue to place demands on Australia's capacity to respond. The second point would be a continued need for police. There is a growing recognition within the UN and internationally—and Australia was very much at the forefront of recognising this several years ago—that policing is very important in stabilisation and capacity-building operations in not only law enforcement but also building up that local policing capability. There is a worldwide shortage of deployable police at the moment.

The last point is that we are likely to see more regionally led and endorsed operations. The United Nations remains very stretched in terms of mounting these operations and is encouraging regionally led operations. We are going to see more of these operations around the world by states with an interest in seeing a regional crisis resolved. Thank you.

CHAIR—Thank you very much for that very valuable opening statement. A number of issues arise from it, but I am particularly interested in your last comments about where the UN now finds itself. I think the UN is optimistically looking to regional solutions because it is not able to meet the demands itself. In broader terms, where does that leave questions about the authority and status of interventions? My perception is that that remains a challenge to manage, particularly when you mix it with domestic politics—I do not mean Australian domestic politics—which is so often the difficulty in this region.

Prof. Wainwright—The authority of interventions is a very good question. The UN charter allows for regionally endorsed operations, and the UN as a body is encouraging them. But you are right: when issues of consent, legitimacy and authority exist and percolate in the background as these operations continue and as problems arise, the authority of intervention is a very live issue. My sense is that it need not be the issue that some people think it is if these operations have a fairly firm basis, as RAMSI does with the Pacific Island Forum mounted operation under the auspices of the Biketawa Declaration—as long as there is a solid legal framework which can emanate from either an international body such as the United Nations or from a regional body as in the case of the Solomon Islands, which comes from the Pacific Islands Forum and also within the country itself. There was the Facilitation of International Assistance Act within Solomons Islands in that instance. So you have a regional endorsement and an endorsement within that country. To me, that seems to tick all the necessary boxes.

Then there is the issue of continuing legitimacy as the operation proceeds. To my mind, if you tick the legal boxes then you need to tick the practical boxes, which is to continue to show success. These operations are only as good as the results that they demonstrate. As long as you have ticked the legal boxes at the beginning, continuing to show success will continue to make the operation seem legitimate in the eyes of the people. So I am quite sanguine about the legal authority of these interventions, especially regionally-led interventions, given that there is a provision within the UN charter and that regional bodies can endorse such operations within their own legal framework.

CHAIR—If you take Paul Collier's observations as the premise for moving forward—that is, an 'average of 50 years of fragility'—it is quite hard to discuss in country terms, particularly for domestic consumption, how difficult these challenges are. It seems to me that the media generally and in Australia particularly are very demanding in terms of instant solutions and complete and total solutions, then you wrap that up and you go away and move on to the next one. It doesn't really work that way, does it?

Prof. Wainwright—No, it does not at all. There is a need to continue to educate the Australian public in the fact that this is a long-term endeavour and that, when you are dealing with countries which are profoundly fragile and have a long way to go in their development, there will be security flare-ups and setbacks from time to time. A host of data points such as these does not mean that the whole operation is ill-fated. Fundamentally, there may be things going on which, with our assistance, will continue to put the state on the upwards trajectory.

There is also a continuing need to educate the public on the fact that, as Graeme Dobell, the ABC journalist, once said, 'You can't exit from your own neighbourhood.' It is a long-term endeavour and we have to be there for the long run because it is in Australia's interests that these states to our immediate north and north-east are as successful, stable and prosperous as they can be. We are there to help them out, but it is also in our interests to do so. Yes, there is an issue in that people perhaps do not understand the long-term nature of this challenge, but the need is there and it needs to be a long-term engagement.

Senator MARK BISHOP—This discussion about long-term involvement in a range of failed or failing states intrigues me. You have been talking about a military presence and a police presence. Your submission refers to the legal justice system. You know that there are significant problems with indigenous land issues. You referred to labour market problems and unemployed

young men and presumably violence and the like. You have also talked about institution building, public education, and the length of commitments that go from essentially the postwar times until now. How is that not a benign form of colonialism? How is that not a reversion to a lot of the things that were dominant in this country's history until the seventies, when they were rejected from that time onwards? If colonialism, country building, state building, institution building, education of people, justice development and legal system orientation are not benign colonialism, where does our responsibility end?

More importantly, from a Realpolitik perspective, it is useful to be altruistic. You said that you were sanguine about the future. If we are going to be paying hundreds of millions of dollars and, arguably, billions of dollars over two or three generations for individual countries, is cooperative intervention sufficient? I can remember having these discussions a long time ago at university. You are a bit younger than most of us here but, in terms of those discussions 30 years ago, you are advocating the other side of the fence as a template for the future. You might care to respond to that.

Prof. Wainwright—I would not use the term 'colonialism', even a benign form of it. What distinguishes it from colonialism is the fact that it is cooperative or that it seeks to be cooperative and is cooperative in that it seeks to work with the countries involved and the people within those countries. One of the key challenges, which is recognised, is the importance of working with the governments of these states and building up local political will to address some of the issues that these states face. As I mentioned in my statement, there are limits to what Australia and other states can seek to do in a state. There are limits to how much we can assist. We need to be all too aware of that. What I am painting for you is colonialism as a model 40 to 50 years ago and then, in the 1980s and early 1990s, a hands-off policy, if I can characterise it as such, towards the South Pacific. That is not a binary position. At the moment we are somewhere more in the middle, which is this cooperative intervention, where we work with the states. We engage with these states to seek to help them.

When you talk to people in the South Pacific region, it is interesting to note that the younger generation are more pragmatic about Australian assistance and less concerned about the spectre of colonialism or the potential reversion, in their eyes, to a colonised state. That is not so much the case with the independence generation—those who were there when decolonisation happened and who helped to usher in independence. Perhaps it is they who revere more state sovereignty and have more of a knee-jerk response to and an appropriate rejection of colonialism. But it seems to me that the younger people in the region are more pragmatic. They understand that they require assistance that Australia can provide. They are not so concerned about the issues of state sovereignty and colonialism.

You asked where our responsibility ends. As I said, there are clear limits on how much Australia can assist. We have to be very cognisant of the importance of seeking to promote good governance in these states. We also have to realise that we need good governance in these states. We can help with the supply side to good governance but the demand for good governance needs to come from within these states.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I have two further questions on that. Firstly, you talk about good governance. Countries, firms, investors and individuals legitimately have interests. If there is a new regime established, people who pay taxes will have an interest in the outcome and will seek

to influence how that new regime develops and the types of institutions it creates. So it is not going to be hands-off goodwill at a distance. It is inevitable in the nature of state relationships and human affairs that people try to influence the outcomes of the indigenous government. I suspect that that would necessarily lead to some sort of conflict. How is that to be avoided?

Secondly, you mentioned in passing labour mobility and young men. Every time there are problems in some of the South Pacific and African countries that are failed states, you see hordes of young men with machetes, sometimes under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, running riot, raping, burning, looting and the like. In avoiding that total breakdown of law and order, which then leads to some of the generational involvement of our country, how important is labour mobility and bringing under appropriate controls significant numbers of these young men? I say 'men', not being interested in the argument about bias. Generally, they have been the ones who have rioted and burnt. How important would it be to bring them here for work so that they could gain an income and develop the values that derive from work and responsibility? Is that a passing thing or is that critical?

Prof. Wainwright—I will address the second question first. I am not an expert on economics, but looking at it from a security and political point of view, I think that is quite important for the states in the region. There is not much of a history of people movements within Melanesia in contrast with the states of Polynesia, for example. The committee will have heard and know about the importance of remittances to a number of the economies in the region—for example, Tonga, Samoa and so on. But there is not that history of people movements in Melanesia, and it does seem to me that, if you had labour mobility, there would be the opportunity for some of the young people in these states, even a small number of them, to go abroad, pick up new skills, remit money home and then return home. This would benefit the community when those young people returned and it would also act as a bit of a safety valve. The problem on the streets of Dili, Honiara or Port Moresby is that you have, as you were suggesting, young men with a lack of gainful economic activity, and that does lead to crime and to security flare-ups. These young people can be manipulated by political forces that have their own agendas. We have perhaps seen that in East Timor in recent times. So to get some of those young people off the streets and also to offer them the prospect of getting off the streets is important. That would be my answer to your second point.

Senator MARK BISHOP—The first question I will make a bit more succinct. How are you going to stop the improper influence of vested interests from outside the fragile state manipulating the state for their own interests after intervention?

Prof. Wainwright—The short answer to that is it is very hard but it is crucial that it occur. I do think that Australia and also more broadly the traditional donors, the international donor community, have found it hard to promote good governance. It is one of the ideas which are in vogue at the moment—promote good governance—and I think it is a very appropriate goal of aid programs around the world. I think that traditional donors have had more success with promoting economic governance, creating a better regulatory environment in some of these states and so on, than they have had with promoting political governance. A lot of money is being thrown at helping to promote political governance and I think we are yet to quantify and see real measurable results.

Senator MARK BISHOP—So is it still a bit nebulous when you are trying to feed everyone?

Prof. Wainwright—Yes, it is. But my point is that to create good institutions and to create the demand for good institutions within states is a very difficult thing to do and I do not think donors have got it quite right yet. But good governance and building up good governance from within will be one of the ways you stop improper influence and vested interests in these states.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Would you now turn your attention to East Timor? We have been in and out of there since when—1998 or 1999?

CHAIR—Since 1999.

Senator MARK BISHOP—We were in for a while—a bit of military activity, policing work—and withdrew and the government decided to go back in. They are resolving their internal differences up there—their political structure is resolving their internal differences—and there was rioting again, I see, late last week or whenever. What is your assessment of the progress overall that has been made over that eight- or nine-year period? Has it been worth while and do you see positive signs, albeit perhaps slower in developing than we would have hoped? If not, what has been the problem and how do we attend to it?

Prof. Wainwright—I very much think that our intervention in East Timor has been worth while and that the stabilisation and restoration of security, which the Australian and other military presence have enabled, has been invaluable in itself. As I mentioned in my statement, when you deploy the military and the police to a situation like East Timor and you do create security, that is vital for progress on all other fronts.

When you had the gap in fighting and the return to security, progress was made. Take the fact that the institutions within East Timor could be built up and that the parliamentary processes and the democratic processes have been built up. That to me is progress. The fact that the East Timorese trust fund has been in my view dexterously managed is progress. What are the problems ongoing in East Timor? They are profoundly deep seated and they go back to the issue of young men that we were just talking about. East Timor has one of the highest, if not the highest, fertility rates in the world. Women have 7.9 children on average. So you have a lot of young people. Food security is an issue; some of the land is not terribly good. So you have all of these young people on land which is not terribly good creating all sorts of pressures—urbanisation and people moving into Dili.

There are problems with education. Clearly, the return to insecurity has not helped the issues of education, because schools have closed and you have had all of these displaced people. So there is a risk of a generation in a way not getting the education they need and not being able to develop the human capacity that the country needs for growth. I mentioned the trust fund and some good fiscal moves, but I think there is now a need to spend money to build up the institutions—this is for East Timor to do—and to generate employment opportunities for all of these young people. In addition, there are security sector tensions within East Timor. There are a lot of deep-seated issues.

Was it worth while to go in? Absolutely. My own view, as I mentioned in my comments, is that perhaps there was a decision taken that things were going well and therefore the military presence was drawn down—and now we have had to go back in, so perhaps maintaining a greater presence would have been a more worthwhile thing to do, because maintaining that

security is important for the reconstruction which needs to take place. There is no doubt we have taken a step back as a result of the insecurity on the ground at the moment.

Senator MARK BISHOP—One final issue that arises from your comments—we have heard a lot of evidence from the AFP and also from the ADF as to the necessarily for strong demarcation, if you like, between the purely military role of going in, establishing peace, maintaining law and order and, when the military have done that by their means, effectively withdrawing and handing over to the AFP to be a more civil type organisation, as we understand it in this country, with the checks and balances that are inherent in that. Are you comfortable with the dual roles that the ADF and the AFP have played, and do you think we are on the right model with this evolving demarcation between the ADF and the AFP? If not, why not, and what alternative model would you proffer for government consideration?

Prof. Wainwright—I do think that we are on the right road and I think that there has been a lot of foresight on the part of government agencies and government to realise that certain tasks need to be done by the agency that is best equipped to do that and that restoring security, removing weapons and so on and providing protection and logistical backup to other agencies on the ground are clearly within the domain of the Australian Defence Force and are tasks best performed by the ADF. However, with law enforcement—once weapons are removed and the situation is stabilised but to prevent the looting and often the chaos and the pandemonium which might ensue—once you have a certain level of security, to provide a symbolic presence on the ground, the blue as well as the green is terribly important in these societies because it is an indication of normality returning.

For that reason—and also because of the desperate need, which has been acknowledged in a number of fragile states around the world and in post-conflict states, to build up local policing capability to attend to these problems on their own—that all needs to be done by the AFP, and the AFP have recognised that that is a role that they can best play. So I think Australia has done pretty well in recognising this demarcation and not seeking to get, as often as other states seek to do, the ADF to do the AFP's job.

Senator MARK BISHOP—The AFP outlined to us in considerable detail the other week the creation of this new IDG: 1,300-odd people, 700 or 800 sworn officers and the rest skilled and support staff, with a lot of investment going in. Essentially they are creating a new institution for, I suppose, regional state assistance—they did not say that, but really that is, I think, the proper take on what is going on with this new IDG. I gleaned from your comments that you think there is justification for the creation of such a force and that it will be properly used into the future and you do not suggest any other alternative. Is that right?

Prof. Wainwright—I do not, and I do agree that this is the right trajectory for the AFP. I think that the expanded IDG is a good idea, if they can find the right personnel, because there has been a shortage of police to do these kinds of tasks, and training up police in a standing body does, it seems to me, make good sense, particularly as it will decrease the need to backfill from the states.

Senator MARK BISHOP—It is another problem.

Prof. Wainwright—Yes. That to me is a good thing. I also think the capability the AFP is seeking to get with I think it is the ORG, the operational response group—

Senator MARK BISHOP—Yes.

Prof. Wainwright—It makes good sense to build up the capability the AFP has to go in at the sharp end of activities, more alongside the ADF. This is, I think, in response to a clear need that was perceived in East Timor, for example. That to me makes sense as well. So I do approve of the trajectory that the AFP is on and the IDG specifically within the AFP. And the AFP, if you look at it in the last few years, just its expansion has been extraordinary, in terms of tasks it has been required to perform post September 11 and also in terms of personnel—and that has been in response to the tasks. It has grown very quickly, but I think, strategically, it is heading in the right direction.

Senator TROOD—Just on the issues that Senator Bishop has been raising, it strikes me that we have institutional capacity in relation to the restoring security dimension of these kinds of activities, which exists largely in the Australian military; we have institutional capacity with regard to the law and order dimension through the Federal Police, and, as you have just said, it is growing. Where we seem not to have institutional capacity—we are not without capacity but we do not seem to have it institutionalised very effectively—is in those very hard areas of building capability in relation to democracy building, finance, economics—all of those things that are the really hard aspects of the work we are now doing in East Timor and in the Solomons and elsewhere. My question to begin with is: do you think we need an institutional capacity there, or are we best left to rely upon the way in which we are dealing with those matters now?

Prof. Wainwright—That is a very good question. In terms of the institutional capacity we have for doing this building, the very difficult activities of building up institutions and promoting economic growth, I have been pleased to see the development of South Pacific sections within Attorney-General's Department in the last few years, the department of finance and Treasury and also the creation of the fragile states unit within AusAID. AusAID of course has longstanding experience of a number of fragile states, longstanding relationships and an awareness of what needs to be done to build up capacity. I think AusAID is actually doing a good job in seeking to elicit international best practice on how to respond to fragile states, and the fragile states unit is a very good example of how they are seeking to do that. Are you asking whether these particular sections could be bolstered or consolidated into a different agency?

Senator TROOD—We did hear from AusAID on the fragile states unit, and I thought that was a very interesting capability—although at the moment it is rather limited. But, for example, would there be some virtue in paying closer attention to the capacity of AusAID or an agency like AusAID to build up a fragile states expertise? Rather than relying upon it reposing in the Attorney-General's Department, in Treasury, in AusAID, in DFAT, in Defence et cetera, would there be some virtue, to your mind, in building that institutional capability more completely?

Prof. Wainwright—I think there would, and I look to the discrete units within the United Kingdom and the US focusing on post-conflict reconstruction. Perhaps such a similar model might be effective here. Yes, I think that is something to work towards—certainly to seek to expand the fragile states unit within AusAID. I think the linkages between all the agencies are pretty good on a world scale.

One point I would make is that it will be critical, given that I do think these are long-term endeavours, to continue to encourage younger bureaucrats to cycle through South Pacific sections and to spend time in fragile state sections within Treasury, within Attorney-General's, within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Several years ago, I worried that there was a lack of emphasis on these areas and I think that was to Australia's detriment. There are very good signs within Treasury, for example, of how important the department regards people cycling through the South Pacific section, and that is a good thing because younger bureaucrats can read those signals coming from the top.

But we are going to need a coterie of people with expertise in the South Pacific and our immediate region, a fondness for and an attachment to the region and connections with fellow bureaucrats, colleagues in the South Pacific as we go forward, because Australia has really lost a lot of that deep-seated expertise that we had through the colonial period and in the seventies and eighties and there is not a lot of it reposing in the young people at the moment. So as well as perhaps working towards building up the Fragile States Unit with AusAID and thinking about a discrete capability, I would say that continuing to encourage younger bureaucrats to go into the issues of fragile states in the South Pacific will be critical.

Senator TROOD—I take it you do not expect these issues to be short term—you have said that they are not short-term issues—but that we are going to require a long-term capability. The kinds of problems we are seeing in the Solomons and in Timor are typical of the kinds of problems that we will face around the region and into the future. So this capability is not something that we can afford not to build over time.

Prof. Wainwright—Yes, I think that is very right. A number of the states in the region are very fragile and will remain fragile for some time. They are just in the process really of post-colonial state creation and so it will take some time for those institutions to develop and there will be security flare-ups and crises and problems and they will require assistance for a long time to come. So I think Australia in building up a capability should not be worried that this is a flash in the pan. I think these will be long-term issues that Australia can be confident it is preparing to deal with.

Senator TROOD—Should we perhaps not only be focusing our attention on building agency capability in Australia but perhaps spending a bit more time creating a regional kind of capability for these? Is there virtue in us thinking more creatively about how we might draw together the resources of the region in a way which encourages the region itself to support these kinds of activities?

Prof. Wainwright—Yes, I think there is merit in thinking creatively and drawing together regional capability. RAMSI is a great model of its kind and is a great starting point for the cooperation between different countries. The Federal Police, for example, cooperate with their counterpart agencies throughout the South Pacific—that are involved in RAMSI—and I think there is great scope for drawing together those resources. Where you actually physically locate an institution is an issue—which country you put it in—but that is something which can easily be got around.

Senator TROOD—We can sort that problem out perhaps, but the question is really whether or not it would be useful to rely upon that capability in the region. Do you think the resources are there to build that kind of regional ability?

Prof. Wainwright—I think a regional ability needs to be worked towards, but Australia has to recognise that it remains the regional metropole and that Australia and New Zealand have the bulk of the police and the military and also the Treasury officials and other civil servants who could be brought to bear in such operations. We also have to be very careful that in small countries such as Niue, which have small police forces and small civil services on which to draw—we do not gut their domestic capabilities to service regional capabilities. So while I think it is important to build up regional resources and to have regional dynamics and cooperation working well, we should be under no illusion as to how much then we can seek to draw from our regional partners. I do not think it is in their interests that we always take their best and brightest for these regional endeavours. That said, sometimes it makes good sense for some of the few police perhaps from some of the countries in the region to be involved in these regional operations because then, like in the labour mobility instance, they bring you skills and they develop new skills which they can take home and use in their home. So that is a benefit as well.

Senator TROOD—Where would we begin to build that regional capability? Is it something that takes place within the forum or is it an issue that Australia and New Zealand should be promoting? Do you have any thoughts about the point at which we start this kind of process?

Prof. Wainwright—I think the Pacific Islands Forum is a good place to start. I noticed the foreign minister, Alexander Downer, gave a speech recently and mentioned public servants, the education of Pacific island public servants, and more exchanges between public servants and education of public servants perhaps in Australia and the need to look at those issues. I think that developing public servant capability within the South Pacific is a good place to start, perhaps looking at an institution of public management and that kind of idea.

Senator HOGG—Could I just follow on from that then? Do we really have a strategy to avoid the circumstances of failed or fragile states in the South Pacific? Do we have a proper strategy in place? If not, what should we do? You have just mentioned relationships with public servants, and I have seen this in action—but a defined strategy—

Prof. Wainwright—I think with RAMSI there was a belated recognition that the challenges the Solomon Islands had had deteriorated to become quite an acute political and security crisis which required an Australian response. After the regional assistance mission was mounted I think there was a better sense among government that it was best to seek to stabilise states and to build up fragile states before they declined to the point that Solomon Islands did when the regional assistance mission deployed. So I think there is now a better awareness of the importance of building up fragile states.

Do we have a strategy therefore to avoid state failure? I think the whole policy of engagement of seeking to deploy Australian officials in advisory and in-line positions in weak states to build up capability in states which have not shown signs of acute crises, such as Vanuatu, but have their own challenges is a good one. So I think we do have a strategy which we have in place.

We do need to become better though at recognising the warning signs when flare-ups occur. I think the riots in Honiara last year, for example, and the descent into chaos again in East Timor last year are events that we need to be better at predicting. It is very difficult to read those warning signs effectively. Internationally there is a lot of work going on at the moment into how you read warning signs and how you see that a weak country is deteriorating to the point where there will be an acute crisis. It is very hard to do but I think given Australia's experience in the last 18 months with flare-ups in Tonga and the Solomon Islands and East Timor we have to become better at it for reasons of complete necessity.

Senator HOGG—In terms of having a strategy in place, it seems to me that the one thing that does seem be lacking is an exit strategy. Based on what you have been putting to us this morning, many of these interventions will be generational rather than very short term. It seems to me that unless they are generational—because the problems are endemic within a particular generation—we are going to end up with very long commitments but no-one will have an idea as to how we are finally to get out of these interventions that do take place. What sort of exit strategy should be put in place? Can you give us an idea of how government, given the longevity of some of these commitments, can put successful exit strategies in place at all?

Prof. Wainwright—When I was in Bosnia several years ago there was a great phrase which was 'exit state not exit date'. That very much sums up my view that these are generational problems and they require a long-term commitment on the part of the Australian government and others to try to grapple with them. When we are seeking to devise an exit strategy we should look less to a certain date in the future—and in this case long into the future—than a state of affairs on the ground. That state of affairs should be, broadly speaking, that a particular state can maintain its own security; that it has a viable and working police force which can seek to maintain law and order; and has institutions which can continue to promote economic growth to maximise the stability and prosperity of those states. So we are looking, broadly speaking, at an exit state such as that and therefore the exit strategy has to be: how do we work towards that?

There are three phases, if you want to broadly look at it like that, of an intervention. They all happen instantaneously but then they draw down at different times. The military presence initially is there to restore security and it needs to be strong at the beginning. But, then, as things stabilise—and bearing in mind Paul Collier's research, which I mentioned earlier, about the likelihood of post-conflict states to revert to violence within five years, and not withdrawing precipitously—there is scope for large numbers of the ADF to scale down and to just maintain a training capability, continuing within the defence cooperation program, for example—continuing training and ongoing assistance and relationship building. Likewise the AFP, which again comes in at the outset and is working to build up the local policing capability. When it is judged that the local policing capability has been built up effectively and can do the job on its own, the AFP can scale that down, perhaps keeping a small presence for any continuing capability building and relationship maintaining. Then there is the long-term institution building end of things, which is going to be there for many years to come, in my view.

Senator HOGG—But surely many of the problems, which Senator Bishop alluded to, are economic problems. It seems to me that, unless one is really overplaying one's hand in this and seen to be taking over the whole of the economy, the whole of law and order, we get back to the situation that Senator Bishop was referring to, where we look like being a colonial power.

Prof. Wainwright—Yes.

Senator HOGG—You are caught between a rock and a hard place.

Prof. Wainwright—Absolutely. In my comments, I mentioned the importance of remembering the limits of what one state can do to assist another. I completely agree that these countries face so many economic problems and there is some question as to their ongoing economic viability. It seems to me that the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, for example, can fulfil all its objectives and promote as good as it can all the right economic reform and the right regular regulatory environment for the economy to thrive—and still, maybe, the Solomon Islands' economy might not prove to be a going concern in the long term. These are real issues that Australia will need to deal with.

In addition, there are issues around the question of dependency. Here I am talking about having the ADF, the AFP and Australian officials in advisory or in-line positions. There is an enormously outstanding question of dependency and making sure that we are passing on skills and not just doing the jobs ourselves. That is a terribly fraught issue. So I want to be sure that I leave no impression that I think this is an easy task. I think it is enormously difficult and I think we have to be aware of the challenges that are facing Australia. But I suppose I would just say that, if we look at the alternative, which is that Australia seeks to say, 'Look, this is just too hard,' and we pull out, what would happen in that instance? I will not go into this now, but I think that that would be a risk that Australia should not seek to bear—for us and for those states.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Arguably in some of these countries up in the South Pacific, the economic problems have a two-fold route. One is the communal land system, which is still the norm in a lot of these countries and we see similar problems in the Northern Territory at the moment. You cannot develop economic independence when you have communal land title—without passing any comment on its merit or otherwise. The other is the need to trade and trade around commodities—and necessarily that involves a certain amount, perhaps a lot, of the destruction of forests and the like. What I hear you not saying but meaning is that, if you are going to be in these joints for 50 years and you have security and police and institution building and training of civil servants and all that sort of stuff, sooner or later you are going to have to restructure the economies of these countries so that they are viable states and their people have a viable life. The absolute bar to that is their longstanding histories and traditions—and I refer to land use and commodity trading, without passing merit or otherwise on the argument. In 40 years time I might come to you and say, 'Listen, we've been here long enough; we're going to fix this another way.' But really that is on the table now. What is your answer to that?

Prof. Wainwright—It is a very good and difficult question. I suppose I would ask: who should seek to resolve these issues? They do need to be resolved. My sense is that this is where the cooperative intervention really comes into play. My own view is that it is not for outsiders to impose the answers to those deep-seated crises on affected peoples. The answers must come from within. My own view of what an assistance mission such as RAMSI should seek to do is to provide the breathing space, the window of opportunity with security, with the start of the development of robust institutions and ongoing assistance. That provides the breathing space and the window of opportunity, if you like, for these countries then to seek to solve these problems themselves. But—and this is where I get back to the point that this is enormously fraught and complex—this needs to be done, because if these deep-seated crises are not resolved, you are

going to continue to see the kinds of flare-ups we have just seen in East Timor in the last year. Therefore, the challenge for an assisting country such as Australia needs to be to work with the governments of the affected states to help generate the local political will and the demand within the affected populations for solutions—to find and to implement solutions to these crises.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—I will follow on from something you said in response to Senator Trood in terms of the public focus that Australians have on the South Pacific. You said there was less public focus now, since the end of the colonial era and also, I suspect, because of World War II, when we came so close to being invaded. You said that there was some government focus, in a sense, from bureaucrats being cycled through and you were encouraging that. Do you think that we could have a greater number of scholars or perhaps a greater number of departments or schools of Pacific studies at our universities? I am unaware of the number of schools of Pacific studies. Also, perhaps you could comment on whether Australia might be able to contribute to the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

Prof. Wainwright—I think there is great scope for Australia to build up its Pacific expertise, particularly within our universities. The main repository of Australia's South Pacific expertise is the ANU, the Australian National University. There is also a bit in Brisbane at the universities there. But elsewhere around the country frankly it is fairly thin on the ground. I think it needs to be improved, enhanced. ANU is a wonderful resource and there are some wonderful scholars there who have great expertise and understanding of the region. But—and I am sure my colleagues will not mind me saying so—they are getting older and we need younger—

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—And more experienced.

Prof. Wainwright—Indeed, more experienced, and there is a great need for young enthusiastic PhD scholars to come forward and replace them. There are some very talented and promising younger students coming but, in my view, not enough and they need to be more spread out geographically around the country. That would do a great amount to improve Australian awareness, I think, of the South Pacific. One of the good by-products of RAMSI and the enhanced cooperation program has been that it has really built up this coterie of younger bureaucrats who have an experience of the South Pacific and relationships with people in the South Pacific—Solomon Islanders or Papua New Guineans—and they will in the future be advocates for the South Pacific. We have started to lose that with the moving on of the generations—the World War II generation and the colonial and decolonisation generation. So that is a great thing and I think that that will continue to be the case with Australia's continuing policy of engagement. But certainly building up Australia's scholarly expertise, academic expertise and working perhaps at looking at a greater relationship with the University of the South Pacific is a good idea too.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—Since RAMSI first deployed in August 2003, which you might regard as RAMSI 1, and then last year when the flare-ups came in, I think, April, an awful lot of money—probably $800 million or $1 billion, I suspect—has been spent on our deployment to RAMSI. Are there any lessons that can be drawn from that deployment, apart from the very obvious ones, so that we do not make the same mistakes again? Is there anything more subtle than is obvious?

Prof. Wainwright—I think the broad point, which might be obvious but still is worth making again because it is so true, is that prevention is better than cure. If I may digress for a moment, Jack Straw, when he was foreign minister in the UK, gave, in one of his speeches, a fascinating indication of the comparable amounts that the United Kingdom had spent on the different crises in the former Yugoslavia. They spent a huge amount of money when they intervened in Bosnia, because they intervened at a rather late stage in the affair. Then they spent, I think, about one-tenth of that—although I cannot quite remember the figures—in Kosovo because they intervened at an earlier time. They spent far less money in Macedonia, because they intervened so promptly; they had read the warning signs that the situation was starting to deteriorate. I think you could say that the costs in terms of human misery in all of those three cases were commensurate with the dollar terms. It is the case that intervening early and seeking to build up these states to prevent these acute crises makes so much more financial sense than going in after the fact and trying to deal with a flare-up. So all that Australia can do to read warning signs effectively and to build up the fundamentals in these states is what we should be doing.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—I suspect, though, with the first RAMSI deployment, that it is quite remarkable that we did what we did.

Prof. Wainwright—Absolutely.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—It was brave, it was right and the intention was right and there were enough resources put into it, but it did not succeed—and the timing was right. No-one really suspected that it was something that came as an initiative of government at the time.

Prof. Wainwright—I very much agree. I think RAMSI was a well-thought-through model which had very discrete goals and which were sought to be implemented. There were flare-ups last year after the election, but an election like that was always going to bring its own problems. My sense is that RAMSI has problems, and I mentioned in my opening statement the problem of fractious bilateral relationships that Australia has with countries in the region. Certainly our fractious bilateral relationship there is making things harder for RAMSI. But my sense is that RAMSI continues to do a very good job.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—Following on from what I first asked you, do you think that government should encourage further departments or schools of Pacific studies? We certainly can do it, but is it something that needs to be done from the federal government's point of view?

Prof. Wainwright—Yes, I do, very much. I think that building up Australian expertise and schools of Pacific studies would benefit Australians so that they do not have such a, frankly, binary view of the South Pacific—lovely beaches and bad people with guns who sometimes do nasty things—but to have a more nuanced picture. That would help with the long-term commitment we were discussing earlier, because then people would be less likely to just see a few data points of flare-ups and think that that means our assistance is ill-fated. They would see more of a nuanced picture of the region—that there will be flare-ups and problems from time to time—but that our assistance and continuation in working to build up the states are important. So I think it would very much help with allowing the Australian public to understand the need for a long-term commitment if there were a more nuanced picture of the South Pacific, and schools for South Pacific studies would enable that.

CHAIR—Before we conclude, I want to go back to the question of intervening early, which you were just discussing again with Senator Sandy Macdonald. What you call fractious bilateral relationships I sometimes think are domestic political circumstances where it is to the enormous advantage of an incumbent government in the region to beat up on Australia or New Zealand—it just depends where you are at any particular point in time—and by and large, given the nature of politics, it is very difficult to avoid that. So an early intervention, as it is termed by you and by others, is not just a simple statement: 'Here's a plan; off we go.' It just does not work that way. Isn't that a reasonable observation?

Prof. Wainwright—Eminently reasonable. Therefore, what we need to seek to do is to build up Australia's relationships with these states, thicken them up if you like, so that there is more receptivity and willingness to work with Australia when flare-ups occur. By thickening up relationships, I mean increasing people-to-people links, institutional links and academic links. With business-to-business links, there are a number of private sector institutions, particularly the banking sector, which have very solid and commendable links with the South Pacific, but I think that more can be done more broadly to build up private sector to private sector linkages. Then, if those relationships are thickened up, it seems to me that perhaps, with the fractiousness and the playing to the domestic constituency, there will be more understanding within the public of these states of Australia and Australia's objectives and perhaps less fertile ground for domestic politicians in those states to play up to.

CHAIR—Thank you very much for attending this morning. Our very best wishes go with you for the future in relation to your imminent move. We thank you for your submission and for your time.

[10.18 am]

FORD, Major General Timothy Roger (Retired), Private capacity

CHAIR—Welcome. A copy of today's opening statement has been provided to you. Do you have any questions regarding that statement?

Major Gen. Ford—No.

CHAIR—We also have before us your submission, which has been numbered 4. That is now a public document. Would you like to make any amendments or alterations to that submission?

Major Gen. Ford—No.

CHAIR—I invite you to make an opening statement and we will go to questions after that.

Major Gen. Ford—Thank you. I appear before this inquiry today as a private citizen. I am a retired army officer with 40 years experience in the Australian Defence Force, including postings as Commander First Division, Head of Mission of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in the Middle East and as the senior military adviser in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the United Nations headquarters in New York. I continue to assist the United Nations, Australia and other international organisations as an adviser and a mentor on peace operations.

I have made two submissions to the inquiry: No. 2 as the Chairman of the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project and No. 4 as an interested individual. I note from the transcripts of the hearings that some of the points I raised in my second submission have been discussed with some witnesses, and you may want to develop those points later.

I have three comments that I would like to record. First of all, Australia generally has a very fine record in supporting UN peacekeeping and providing very effective individuals and contingents, both police and military, to United Nations peace operations and other peace operations. Over the last 60 years Australia has contributed over 30,000 military police and civilian peacekeepers to more than 55 such missions. I define peace operations as those post-conflict activities authorised by a legitimate authority, such as the United Nations Security Council, which support the return of a region to stability, or missions taken to prevent a possible conflict from developing.

14 September marks the 60th anniversary of Australian peacekeeping and this will be commemorated by several events around Australia. I am also delighted that an Australian peacekeeping memorial to commemorate the sacrifices of Australian peacekeepers is to be constructed on Anzac Parade in Canberra. As the inquiry has heard from several witnesses, peace operations can often be dangerous and volatile. It is now core business for the Australian Defence Force and for the Australian Federal Police and it is fitting that this service and the sacrifices made on peace operations are recognised by this national memorial. I would hope that the government provides some additional funding to help construct the memorial.

My second point is the need for Australia today to ensure that it is fully prepared to respond with a coherent, whole-of-government—indeed, whole-of-nation—response to those peace operations which it seems to be in the national interest to support. These peace operations will normally be complex integrated missions involving several nations, international and regional organisations, and many other actors. Australia's contribution will normally include contingents and individuals from the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police International Deployment Group and from other government departments and agencies. I recommend establishing a national peacekeeping institution to ensure an integrated approach to peacekeeping training and the preparation of our contingents to develop coherent policy and best practice for our response and to support and inform international and regional peace operations development. There are examples of similar independent government institutions in other nations that have a strong peacekeeping background such as the Canadian Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy and the German Centre for International Peace Operations, known as ZIF.

Finally, despite our excellent record as a relatively rich and developed nation, I believe that we can do more to support international peace. In addition to the broader activities of our permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva we should seek to place more Australians in seconded positions in UN departments and agencies. In this respect I am delighted that an Australian, Commissioner Hughes, has been recently selected to fill the appointment of police adviser in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. I am also well aware of the fine contribution by officers of the ADF in the military division in the DPKO for many years. Australia should aim to place more in such UN positions, which will add to the professionalism of the organisation. Such action will strengthen the positive influence that a number of Australian individuals who have won positions on UN international staff already have in New York, Geneva and in UN missions around the world.

We also need to ensure that on return of seconded personnel to Australia we make best use of their experience. This has not always occurred in the past. I also believe that Australia can do more in our own region to support UN training objectives by providing training and support to regional nations as they prepare for a contribution to international peace initiatives, and to facilitating the conduct of UN courses in the Asia-Pacific region. Thank you for the opportunity of making an opening statement.

CHAIR—In your submission you talk about the potential for the military leadership to work more closely with AFP leadership in particular. What struck me in the opening hearings of the inquiry was that the AFP was clearly agreeable to, and in fact reasonably proactive in, engaging with the ADF—there are certain officers from the AFP placed within the ADF structure and so on—but it seemed to me to be rather a one-way street with the AFP going into the ADF and not a lot of the ADF coming into the AFP to learn about what they are doing, how they do it and how they have done it historically.

We also heard in relation to AusAID's Fragile States Unit, which I think we would all agree is an important initiative, that the ADF had placed a member in the unit when it commenced but after a year or so of operation—and I stand to be corrected by checking the record—they had withdrawn that person, apparently owing to staffing constraints, according to AusAID. That struck me as interesting. So I was concerned that it was a bit of a one-way street, that people

were trying to engage with the ADF but they seemed to some degree to be remaining in their silo, not coming out of it a lot themselves.

Major Gen. Ford—I tend to agree a little bit. There has been a great learning curve for all the departments, the AFP and the ADF since 1999, when Timor came upon us rather suddenly. There has been a great deal of cooperation, discussion and building of links between the two organisations and between other organisations in that period since, as we have seen in the subsequent operations that they have been involved in. I think if you looked at the relationship and the cooperation between the police and military in Timor in the early days, in Timor-Leste too, it was not that good. We have learnt a lot from that. I think the whole formation of the International Deployment Group is a great initiative. It is a world first in many ways, in that very few other countries have such an idea. The problem always in relation to police has been that you do not have police standing around in countries waiting to deploy overseas, like most military are waiting to do—hopefully, they are not fully deployed all the time. The police tend to be doing community policing or national or international policing. We have actually created this capacity to be able to deploy overseas, and I think the AFP have very much recognised the need to do that. They have also recognised that to do that they need to find out what the ADF does and have a much better understanding of it. The ADF are being used out at Majura to assist in some of their courses and some of their training.

Your other comment concerned whether the ADF were putting enough people into other areas. I think they are not because they seem to be awfully busy at the moment, to be honest. They are stretched. People at the level that you want—senior NCOs, senior officers—are in high demand at the moment. You are probably aware that a lot of people have come back into the ADF on full-time duties to fill a lot of the staff positions that have been created to try and support the heavy tempo or high tempo the ADF are at, compared to what it was like 10 years ago. So I think it is a matter of enough people to do it. Also, it is not considered yet to be fully core business. Even though there is a recognition in the ADF that peace operations are core business and that it is very important that they understand that that is going to be most of what they are going to be doing, there is still not a real acceptance that therefore they should be pushing people out to learn the expertise to do the integration properly with the civil agencies and organisations, with the police and even with other countries. That is something I recognise in some of the other statements you have had.

CHAIR—Thank you. My colleagues have other questions so I will just ask one more at this stage. You refer in your submission to the UN senior mission leadership course and you suggest that Australia take up the opportunity to host or to run one of those. Is it a hosting role or a role of running the senior mission leadership course?

Major Gen. Ford—The United Nations, as part of trying to make sure that member states are properly prepared to come to peacekeeping and to provide an asset when they arrive rather than a liability, has put out a whole lot of training modules. They have a thing called the standardised training module, levels 1, 2 and 3. Level 3 is the leadership one, the higher connection one. They have developed what is called the senior mission leadership course in conjunction with lots of other countries and they have now run this course seven times in other places. Normally it is run with the assistance of an organisation to provide some of the funding and some of the hosting of it. It has been run four times in Africa—twice in Abuja, once in Durban and once in Nairobi—and three times elsewhere at this stage. When it has been run in Africa it has been done with the

support of other countries, with DFID aid from the UK or with the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre supporting them or something like that. It has also been run in Toronto, in Berlin and in Stockholm, with the help of those three organisations I mentioned who again, for their governments, are providing the way into this sort of thing.

I believe we should be getting to a situation where all future leaders, be they civilian, military police or anyone else, who go into a UN peacekeeping mission should have attended one of these senior mission leadership courses. A senior mission leadership course makes them understand the integrated responsibilities. All the people who go into UN peacekeeping missions are professionals in their own right; they come with 30-odd years experience in their own area, but they have not necessarily had the opportunity to mix with the other professionals that are there—with the military, the police and so on. They may not have been in the difficult circumstances of an integrated mission, which is one of the most difficult organisations to run anywhere. The senior mission leadership course is designed to try to make sure that the future leaders understand their responsibilities in the missions and work as a senior mission leadership team.

We have not sent any Australians on any of those courses yet, at all. I believe that one way of trying to encourage a positive approach to peace operations is to try to host one of these courses in the Asia-Pacific. It does not necessarily have to be here but perhaps we could assist another country in hosting the course, much the same as we did with the doctrine seminar that was run in Singapore earlier this year. I believe that we need to get involved in helping the UN run these and other activities in the region. That gives us a way of getting into those things. As a relatively rich country I think we have a responsibility to do that.

CHAIR—If we hosted it and sent Australian participants on it we would also, I assume, encourage the engagement of regional leaders in the area to attend as well. Those countries, for example, that have been participating in RAMSI might have senior police or senior military members they wish to send.

Major Gen. Ford—Yes. The one that was run in Sweden recently had about 30 leaders attending. They came from different countries. There were about five places reserved for Nordic countries but there were also people from the rest of Europe and from Africa and other places. If we ran one in the region then we would encourage New Zealanders, Malaysians, Indonesians and lots of other people there as well.

Senator FORSHAW—I will follow on from the chair's questions, and in particular go to the three areas that you identified. You have already commented on how we might improve and increase our role and participation, particularly in the UN. How realistic is that? Is it achievable? Are there impediments within our various departments? I think you suggest that in the second dot point where you say that Australian influence in this process can be achieved by active participation in UN committees and working groups. I am trying to get a sense of how we may go about actually increasing our role and getting more people into these various positions within the UN bodies. Is the resistance, if you like, or the lax attitude, prevalent in the department here? What are the chances of us actually succeeding in getting an increased presence in the UN bodies? I am not so sure our significance, if you like—and you might correct me—is as great as what we might hope it to be.

Major Gen. Ford—That is a little bit chicken and egg. Until we get people into senior positions in the United Nations bodies we are not going to have a lot of influence. That has been the concern of some of our permanent representatives in New York for some time—we have not been able to get people in at the D2 and above level, the division type level in the United Nations. A few people who have applied have got in through the system.

Senator FORSHAW—Have we been trying aggressively?

Major Gen. Ford—I think we have tried a little but there is not a culture that it is good for a career to go and do a UN job. It tends to be, 'Oh yes, you are going off to have a good time in the UN,' when in fact the demands on, for instance, those military officers in the military division in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are some of the highest I have ever seen. They go off into areas in Africa, Europe and South America where the conflict is and they have to plan and work with people from lots of different cultures in preparing plans and Secretary-General reports and so on.

So first of all there has to be an acceptance that going and doing a UN assignment is actually good for your career and is as demanding as being the battery commander or being the brigade major in the deployable force headquarters up in Brisbane or Townsville. That is not accepted yet. It is not seen as a good career move to go off and have a posting, in the police or the military.

Senator FORSHAW—What are we talking about—DFAT, AFP, right across the board? The government as well?

Major Gen. Ford—AFP is a little different, and we talk about them separately, because they have to be first of all seconded into the IDG and then go off and do it. But, again, I think there is a culture developing in the police, recognising that international policing in a peace operation actually is good for their career and good for understanding international policing as well. But there is still a little bit in the military attitude of: 'It's not really what we signed up to do. It's not war fighting, and therefore it's not what we should be doing.' But in fact it is very demanding, and it is just as dangerous as many other war-fighting activities are.

Senator FORSHAW—I am interested to hear that, because we also make great play of—and I suppose it is significant with this inquiry itself that we have always talked up, and I believe quite rightly—our role in peacekeeping, being prepared to have members of our forces and AFP go to virtually all points of the globe, and we have had consistency of involvement. It is something that we tend to promote as an achievement, yet what you are saying is that, when it comes to the UN aspect, it may be—

Major Gen. Ford—We have done quite a lot in the local regional area recently, but prior to that we did not have a very large commitment to the United Nations at all. Yes, we went into Africa a couple of times, in Somalia and Rwanda, but we have not had a consistent attitude of what we should be providing overseas, and we have not, for instance, gone very often to where we do not think necessarily that our national interests are immediately affected. So I am not convinced that we necessarily punch over our weight in the peace community. When we go and do the job, we do it very well. Our young men and women in the police and the military are really very good at doing this sort of thing. Tactically and at the operational level, we perform

well when we deploy overseas. That is because of the training they receive in Australia in their own professions. But, as to our overall national commitment, I do not think we have a clear, coherent policy of where we are going to go and where we are not going to go.

Senator FORSHAW—Is there a difficulty with the whole sort of view about the UN and its success or failures in this area that colours our attitude?

Major Gen. Ford—I think there is a little bit of concern about the way that the UN operates in the General Assembly in New York. If you read some of the statements that have been made by our permanent representatives who have been there, they get frustrated with the process in New York, particularly the committee process and sometimes the General Assembly, and even the way the Security Council works. But that is a fact of life. We have to work in that system. I am saying that our attitude should be that we should be doing everything we can to make sure that the UN does act responsibly, does develop in the right ways that we want it to to be an assistance to international peace and security and that we should be pushing into it rather than holding back if we feel that it is not being done the way we would like it to be done.

Senator TROOD—General Ford, on the one hand you are saying that when we do undertake peacekeeping operations we do them well, and yet you are also saying that the ADF has yet to come to terms with these kinds of operations being part of their core business. There seems to be some inconsistency there, in that, notwithstanding the fact that they have not appreciated the importance of it, we nevertheless seem to get by—in fact, we do better than just getting by; we actually do rather well at these activities. How do you explain that apparent inconsistency?

Major Gen. Ford—The reason we do well is that we learn quickly and we train our military very well for war-fighting skills—a lot of which can be transferred across to peacekeeping. But I do believe that we need to also focus on making sure that we are better prepared for those peace operations, and particularly that our more senior officers and middle-ranking officers understand the links in those operations that are necessary between the other components in the force. I think we have learnt those things on the job in some cases, in Timor and other places. I believe that by more discussion and more interaction and some sort of body that is helping that, we would find better cooperation before we deploy.

Senator TROOD—Insofar as peacekeeping involves the defence forces, should we be building this capability on the foundations of our existing military training or should there be a more distinctive way of preparing people for peacekeeping operations?

Major Gen. Ford—I think we build it on what we have got, because we have got a very good formula. Our young officers and NCOs do perform well when they go over into these operations. But I believe that such things as a peacekeeping training centre need to be fully staffed and fully supported. We need to run more courses to make sure that our military observers, for example, when we send them overseas, have done a proper military observers course before they go. That is not always the case. We need to think ahead about what we want to do as part of helping the United Nations and building our expertise in this, rather than to just sort of respond, as we have over the last eight years. We have responded well, and we are starting to see things like the International Deployment Group being developed, which is a very capable organisation, but perhaps we should have foreseen some of that.

Senator TROOD—You are an making argument that we should make a national commitment to building expertise in peacekeeping and make that a policy priority—not necessarily to the exclusion of other things, but we should make that a commitment.

Major Gen. Ford—We should make it a greater priority and have greater commitment to it. We should use it within our region to develop our links within our region better as well. It is a non-threatening environment to go and talk to other people about, to do seminars in, to get to know the region and to help other countries develop their understanding of their position in the world, of governance, of responsibilities of countries and so on. So it is a very good forum to develop that sort of relationship, which I believe we want to develop, with our regional neighbours.

Senator TROOD—Insofar as the focus, just for the moment, is on building Australia's national capability, is the facility you are speaking about one that builds on the existing peacekeeping capability? Is it a question of expanding the kinds of things we are already doing or is your advocacy for a new institution of some kind?

Major Gen. Ford—I think it can develop. We have some elements of it. Obviously the AFP are still building their capability to train for going overseas. The Defence Force have the peacekeeping training centre at Williamtown, which does some courses. They also have their deployment unit, which does some preparation for organisations going overseas. We have a number of academic institutions that are starting to look at this whole issue of peace operations. There is John Braithwaite's organisation in the ANU, and there is ASPI. Professor Wainwright has quite a lot of expertise in this. There would seem to me to be some advantage to bringing these together with a clear policy, a clear aim, to ensure that we understand peace operations, military and civil police, the whole-of-nation response and the whole-of-government response and that we teach that and that we understand the latest practices and best practices and we teach that to our middle-ranking people in the civilian, military and police areas.

Senator TROOD—So this is a capability which would develop doctrine, policy, but would also have training capability as well.

Major Gen. Ford—That is right. It does not want to take over all the courses that have necessarily been run in the ADF or by the police or civilian organisations, but certainly those that start to talk about integration. We run an international peace operations seminar every year, through the Peacekeeping Centre, which has about 20 Australians and about 20 international students on it. That has recently been conducted in Canberra. That is the sort of thing I would see them running more of, and at different levels, so that people are well versed in whole understanding of this environment.

Senator TROOD—And this facility or institute, whatever one might call it: where would it be located in agency terms? Which portfolio area would it be in?

Major Gen. Ford—That is always the problem. That is why it has to be an independent government—

Senator TROOD—We want some answers here, General!

Major Gen. Ford—That is why, if you look at those other countries, they have normally created something outside the defence department or outside foreign affairs or outside the police, but it brings experts from all of those departments together with an academic bent, and gives it some sort of reporting line straight to government. That is how, for instance, the Folk Bernadotte Academy works in Sweden and how the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, which has gone through a number of iterations to get to where it is now, is working. Whether they come straight under the defence department or whether they come under some other organisation needs to be worked out for Australia. Australia should develop what is best for it. I think we have the people but we need to start to bring them together so that we do not just have the military looking at the military side and the police at the police side.

Senator TROOD—You seem to have been studying your Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, General, in relation to the indirect approach. I do not think you answered the question, although you provided a range of thoughts. Where do you think it should be? I can see the point; obviously, there are agency contributions but if you were asked tomorrow where you would put this, what would you say?

Major Gen. Ford—Are you talking about where the facility should be located?

Senator TROOD—I do not mean physically. That is of no interest, really. What is important is the responsibility. To whom should it report? Is it part of the responsibility, for example, under the Prime Minister's department or DFAT, or is it better located within AusAID, or should it be a defence facility?

Major Gen. Ford—I think Defence do their part all right already. I think it has to be bigger than that. That is why I think we take it out of Defence and have defence people coming across into it—as per the first question from the chair: Defence should be helping to advise others.

Senator TROOD—I see that.

Major Gen. Ford—Perhaps it could sit under DFAT. I am not wed on where it should go at all, just that it should involve a number of different elements and perhaps some academics from outside as well to make sure we are looking at best practice—what is going on in the UN, what are they talking about in the integrated mission approach that they are developing.

Senator TROOD—Might it best sit outside of government altogether? Would it be best established as an institution independently?

Major Gen. Ford—Then you have to decide where its funding is going to come from. Government would need to fund it. I think most of these countries have found that government needs to fund it because they are not going to get a lot of benefactors who are going to fund this.

Senator TROOD—On the broader question of peacekeeping and in relation to the United Nations, peacekeeping has gone through various kinds of transformations as an activity over 60 years or so. Is your sense now that the kind of peacekeeping activities in which Australia has been involved in the Pacific over the last 10 years are likely to be the kind of activity we are now facing in peacekeeping operations? In other words, will it be that more demanding activity moving beyond just separating forces and patrolling the line? It is about building capability,

building economic capability and governance, et cetera. Is that the kind of future you think we are facing in relation to peacekeeping?

Major Gen. Ford—Yes, I believe that the United Nations—and, in fact, the international community—have appreciated with the experience they have had with the number of phases that international security has gone through over the last few years that if you are going to respond to a post-conflict situation you need to go in and look at all the elements. What were the causes of the original dispute? You need to understand the background and you need to try to develop a stable environment that is sustainable. That means it is not just a job for the military or the police but requires an integrated approach that looks at both peace building and peacekeeping, and there needs to be an acceptance that one does not follow the other sequentially any more. You have to actually think about the peacebuilding elements from the very start. What is your exit strategy? What do you want to attain? What is the UN strategy post conflict? What is it trying to create at the end of that? That needs to be thought about from the very start by the United Nations and by the international body, and that should be included in the reports that are going to the Security Council.

So I do see the missions as being integrated missions that will have a number of components that the UN will take on. Having established some sort of fragile peace through peacemaking in the form of negotiation and so on, there is a need to develop from there. The military provide the security that will allow that peace process to develop, which is a political process. The police come in and they provide an element of security and an element of assisting training, security sector reform and transmission to the proper rule of law that is required. Then the other civilian elements, including all the UN agencies, the non-government organisations and the international organisations, are also there to build the process so that you end up with local ownership and national ownership of a responsible organisation. So, yes, I do see that, if the UN is going to respond. I think we see it very much in Africa, where I got a lot of my peacekeeping experience.

Senator TROOD—Thank you.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I would like to explore three issues with you. Firstly—correct me if I am wrong—did I hear you say that some or all peacekeeping work is as dangerous as general work that the military undertake? I would have thought that there was, for example, a qualitative difference between our current activities and activities over the last three years in Afghanistan and the odd hotspot or flare-up in East Timor or the Solomon Islands. In Afghanistan we are hunting what we regard as bad people and our purpose is to destroy them. In East Timor and the Solomon Islands, our purpose is otherwise. Did I misunderstand what you were saying?

Major Gen. Ford—You did not misunderstand what I am saying. I am saying that when the military are deployed on peace operations the situation can be extremely dangerous and volatile. I am not going to try to compare one particular mission with another particular mission but I could also draw your attention to missions such as the Congo mission, where we had 35 Pakistani soldiers killed in one instance recently. If the UN have decided that they need to go in, that there is a need for a quite robust capacity in the military force and that there are still militants or people who are not satisfied with the peace agreement, then you need to be quite firm sometimes. You need to have a lot of capability to establish the credibility of the peacekeeping force. You can have things change quite rapidly and quite violently. I think the force commander of UNIFIL in Lebanon, which has been there for nearly 23 years now, would

have thought things were fairly calm there just over 13 months ago; and then you had a great fight start between the Hezbollah and the Israeli defence force in which a number of peacekeepers were killed. It can be dangerous and it can be violent. I am not saying that it will be like that all the time, but we need to make sure that our military are well prepared and that they understand the use of force could be necessary, the limitations on the use of force and the restraints on the use of force. There may be the need to use force in self-defence and the protection of civilians in peacekeeping operations. They need to go prepared to do that. One could argue whether in fact people in Afghanistan now are on a peace operation or otherwise. There is a UN mandate there now and they are assisting a UN mandate. I do not want to get too defined about what is a peace operation and what is not a peace operation, but certainly we need to be well prepared for any operations that we go into. They can change very rapidly.

Senator MARK BISHOP—The second point I want to raise is that, when you read your submission, the strong theme is for a UN role, UN institution building, UN placement, UN training, UN tasks and the integration of our efforts with that particular approach. That is an approach. My observation is that, for a range of reasons, the UN has been unable or unwilling in more recent years to carry out the breadth of activities that are required in this area. As a consequence of that, in this part of the world, where there has been a vacuum, countries like Australia and New Zealand have had to step into the breach, so to speak. It strikes me that we have a long-term national interest in retaining indigenous capacity to intervene on a needs basis to protect our interests as well as to protect those islands in that arc across the north of Australia. I think I probably have a fundamentally different take on the approach. Am I correct in characterising your approach as a 'UN first and last' approach? Do you disagree with me on our need to develop and retain that indigenous capacity for a lot of the reasons that Professor Wainwright outlined in her earlier session? Could you go to that part of the argument?

Major Gen. Ford—No, I do not believe that it is a 'UN first and last' approach. I believe that the United Nations though, through the UN Security Council, does have the responsibility for international peace and security. That has been given to it by the charter, which we have signed along with another 192 other countries at this stage. So the UN certainly has the overarching responsibility to try to do things about international peace and security—keep an eye on it and try to respond if it believes it needs to. But these days it is very clear that the UN must also work with other regional organisations and with other partnerships. The UN cannot do this on its own; the UN can never do anything on its own. It can only do what the member states allow it to do and give it the authority, the funds and the resources to do. I believe that it is very important that it does work with regional organisations and that regional areas work out their own problems if they can. It is best in West Africa that ECOWAS sort out the problems rather than having to get the African Union or the UN involved. But sometimes things get bigger than that and there is a need for a partnership between the United Nations, which brings in a greater international response in the way of flags on the table, if you like, and the commitment of the international media and the international community. So I do not think it is one or the other. I do not think we have to say, 'No, we are going to handle all the problems in our area.' We need to be working through the United Nations in partnership with the regional arrangements to respond to developing situations in region that might affect Australia. Australia must obviously be aware of what is happening around us and must be able to respond. I think we are also going to find that often a regional arrangement or a multinational force may need to respond in the region first before the United Nations can get its act fully together to get the international support and resources available to help it—in much the way that INTERFET handed over to UNTAET. It is a

bit of both worlds, and we should be trying to get doctrine coming from the United Nations that recognises that. Countries will obviously be interested in their own national interest and their own national area, and you want to work in groups and regions that build that up.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Thank you. The final point I want to raise relates to this national institute. I have been very surprised at the nature of the evidence we have received from the ADF, the AFP and a range of universities. My general take is that, in an evolving and difficult new set of scenarios, by and large the operational forces in this country have worked well at an operational level and the coordination and situational reporting to government has been almost exemplary in terms of East Timor, the Solomons and other areas of concern in the last 10 years—that is, we have evolved a capable force that learns and that is doing a pretty sound job. Prior to the inquiry my initial assessment was quite different—I will say that. In that context, we seem to be learning by doing and developing capable institutions. Our police, military and a range of other government agencies seem to be establishing productive niches to provide assistance where necessary—Customs, AQIS and those other sorts of organisations. That being the case, what is the justification for creating a national institute? Do you see that as a precursor to a separate peacekeeping force? Is this national institute going to have responsibility, in your mind, essentially for the operations and training—for the sort of work that the IDG is doing within AFP?

Major Gen. Ford—I am not quite sure what you mean by a 'peacekeeping force'. I do not ever see a peacekeeping force waiting to go established in Australia.

Senator MARK BISHOP—No, I meant a separate force distinct from the ADF or AFP—a completely separate peacekeeping force.

Major Gen. Ford—No, I do not ever see a peacekeeping force sitting around Australia waiting to go somewhere; I see us preparing for an operation based on the forces that we have got training in our different organisations. The Australian Federal Police, the ADF and other departments have a capacity; and when we start to think about going into a mission to respond to a situation where we need to bring those together, as we have done very well in recent times, we will.

What I am suggesting is an institute that could be making sure that the backbone for all that is there in that people will have thought about how peace operations should be conducted—the integrated nature of peace operations. They could have studied the way it has been done in the past, have taken the best practices and have thought about them. They would ensure that we have the links between us, the United Nations and other regional organisations and that we develop a core of thought and a professionalism about the way we approach peace operations so that when we are required to take the elements and put them together for a particular operation, the people who are going into the key positions will have done the thinking, planning and training for an integrated force.

Senator HOGG—It seems to me that the best form of peacekeeping is no peacekeeping at all, which leads to this question: what do we need to do, given we are not already doing it, to minimise the need for peacekeeping? In other words, we must be failing in other endeavours, other avenues, if the focus of what we are doing is planning for peacekeeping. Where are we failing?

Major Gen. Ford—You are saying that prevention is better than cure?

Senator HOGG—Yes.

Major Gen. Ford—I think that everyone would agree with that. We should be doing things in our region and in the world as best we can in our relationships and by supporting the other things that the United Nations and regional organisations are doing to ensure that proper governance is carried out, that threats do not develop in states and that states do not start to fail. As I think a number of witnesses have said to you, we should be trying to develop those links to our neighbours and to the world so that we can assist in that process of making sure that where threats are developing in countries they are stopped before the stage is reached where we have to respond—when there is a conflict and then a post-conflict phase.

Senator HOGG—I am not saying that we should not have some sort of capacity to respond, but it seems to me that if one looks at the difficulties that are just within our own region, let alone worldwide, we seem to be planning more for responding to the failure rather than trying to avoid the failure in the first place. In other words, there must be something fundamentally wrong with the programs that we have got in place to prevent failure in the first instance. If you are thinking in terms of a structure to address peacekeeping, do we need a structure to address the potential failure of sovereign states in our region? If so, what form would it take? How would it interact with your peacekeeping strategy?

Major Gen. Ford—I think that the institute would certainly not be just looking at peacekeeping; it would speak about the whole situation associated with international peace and security in the world and understand the causes of peace and how we might respond academically and with our ambassadors and various links to the countries around the world. I do not think that it is something we only do afterwards. I think that studying conflict prevention would be part of what the institute would be looking at as well.

Senator HOGG—That begs the question as to where it would really sit, whether within government or outside of government—as was raised by Senator Trood. I would see in those circumstances that it would have to reside fairly much wholly within government.

Major Gen. Ford—I am putting up a proposal; I am not suggesting that I have an answer to it. But I do think it is worth thinking about because we are getting involved in a range of peace operations and there is an arc of responsibility and instability around. We need to think about how we are going to approach it from a national point of view both in preventing things occurring and, if things start to occur, in responding in an integrated way that will come up with a sustainable solution.

Senator HOGG—It almost appears that we are planning for failure rather than trying to prevent failure, and that is a concern. Whilst the focus of this inquiry is peacekeeping, it would seem to me that an integral part of this inquiry is also prevention such that we do not need to resort to peacekeeping. What is your experience in that area? Have you actually done much in looking at trying to prevent the failure of states?

Major Gen. Ford—That is not an area of my expertise at all.

CHAIR—One of the issues which we have discussed and which is raised in other submissions is the effectiveness of the ADF civil-military doctrine and the sort of role that we play in that regard. Austcare, for example, are critical to a degree of our CIMIC approach and believe that we could do better and more, and align it with the UN more. Given the tone of your submission in relation to Australia's engagement with the UN, I wonder whether you support that observation and how adequate you think current civil-military doctrine is.

Major Gen. Ford—The term CIMIC, civil-military cooperation, has developed from a military background and is seen as the way the military gets other organisations to work with it rather than turning the whole thing around. The military is normally in the supporting role in most of these operations and it is a matter of civil-military cooperation and coordination rather than of the military making sure that these other people do not get in the way of its task. That is what a lot of CIMIC training in the past has been about: how does the military get them to make sure that they do not interfere with their operations? That is not the approach that I have in mind. We should understand that this is an integrated operation and a political process and that the military is generally in the supporting role, albeit that it might have to be quite robust at times in carrying out its duties to ensure that security is maintained in an area.

That is probably what the Austcare submission is getting at. Certainly we still run CIMIC courses in the Australian Defence Force rather than civil-military coordination courses. Having said that, and having been a presenter of those courses, generally the discussion is much more integrated than the name and the background of that term 'CIMIC' suggests. It comes from a US approach. They have looked at how, when you are on a military operation, you make sure you have some link to the civilian things that are going on.

CHAIR—Austcare's submission comes very much from the approach of the challenge that an NGO or a humanitarian organisation has in working in what can be an overtly military environment, depending on the stage of the intervention. When a humanitarian organisation or an NGO is trying to maintain its neutrality or its impartiality—various words are used; whatever is appropriate in context—and the military is trying to do its job, it seems to me that it is really a two-way street, again, in that both organisations need to, as you say, cooperate and coordinate. Certainly there needs to be flexibility on both sides—to the extent that flexibility is possible in the military, which some might describe as an oxymoron of course.

Major Gen. Ford—This whole issue of humanitarian space, as it is often referred to, and the need for the non-government organisations and for the UN agencies to be able to carry out their humanitarian activities where there is a military presence, makes for a very difficult environment. It is an environment which people need to think about. The more robustly the military are required to act to maintain security, the more difficult it is to get that coordination and cooperation between the activities that the humanitarian organisations, agencies and international organisations want to carry out and the military, who want to make sure that security is basically there so they can do their job. So there is a degree of difficulty which is recognised, I think, by both sides. There is a lot of work going on now about determining how best you approach that.

One of the ways that is done by the United Nations is by ensuring that one of the deputy special representatives of the integrated mission is also the resident coordinator or humanitarian coordinator for the UN agencies and organisations and that the deputy special representative

understands the mission mandate as well as what the NGOs and UN agencies are trying to achieve. They try to make sure that that civil-military interface is as effective as possible, but it is a very difficult environment. It is not a problem that is going to be solved easily. There are some very strong views held by some humanitarian and military personnel about the intervention or interference by one group in the work of the other.

CHAIR—My observations about flexibility go both ways. I have seen in the field in a number of areas, both in RAMSI and East Timor, particularly inflexible approaches from NGOs and I understand how difficult it is. But you have said that there is a lot of work going on now—I assume to examine this issue to try to find some resolution. What are you alluding to in that regard?

Major Gen. Ford—A number of seminars looking at this have been conducted around the world. I attended a seminar in Malaysia run by an international organisation about 18 months ago where we were making sure that the military and civilians from the region understood what humanitarian space is, why it is important and the different views and approaches to it. It is the sort of issue which I would expect we would be looking at if there were an integrated institute in Australia.

Senator TROOD—You placed the UN at the centre of your submission as being critical to peacekeeping activity. I just want to clarify this point. Does it follow from that that it would be undesirable to have regional organisations of one kind or another participating in these activities? I am thinking of NATO, for example, engaging in peacekeeping activities in places like Kosovo. Perhaps one could even conceive that, if further evolution could take place, the ARF in Asia could undertake peacekeeping activities. Perhaps that is a big stretch but nevertheless it could be another example. Professor Wainwright spoke about regional capability in the Pacific. Do you think that would be appropriate or inappropriate? Would we lose something if the UN were not involved somehow or other in most of these kinds of operations?

Major Gen. Ford—On the contrary, I believe we should encourage the development of regional organisations and collective security within regions. The people there understand their region and the issues associated with their region. There should be a partnership between the regional associations and the United Nations. At times a regional association would not be able to work the problem out, as we have found in Africa with ECOMOG and some of the other organisations. Then it is necessary for the United Nations to provide additional capacity or additional international clout. It will always be a matter, I hope, of the regional organisation being authorised by the United Nations under chapter VIII of the charter. A regional operation will often have to react fairly quickly to a situation and then seek authority to continue that operation from the United Nations under chapter VIII—and then possibly even be supported or replaced by a United Nations organisation if they do not have the capacity to continue to solve the problem.

Senator FORSHAW—I do not think that the performance of the EU and NATO was all that laudable in Central Europe—

Major Gen. Ford—I think they were on a learning curve—

Senator FORSHAW—I was specifically talking about Kosovo.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—Much of what the ADF does—and I suspect other agencies as well—in terms of peacekeeping is completely below the radar, or much of it is for the Australian public. Firstly, do you think that is true? Secondly, do you think it is necessary for there to be a higher public awareness? Thirdly, how should that public awareness be initiated?

Major Gen. Ford—I do think that the Australian public does not have a strong understanding of the work that Australia has done over 60 years in peacekeeping and the sacrifices that have been made by peacekeepers—who have been injured, wounded or killed—and their families, who have often been affected by the work they have done in some of these peacekeeping missions such as in Rwanda, Somalia and places like that. For that reason I am delighted that we are going to have the Australian peacekeeping memorial on Anzac Parade, which will demonstrate that peacekeeping is a core business, is dangerous and is something that we should—

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—And also the War Memorial—

Major Gen. Ford—We have a War Memorial as well.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—And the War Memorial has a special exhibition, I understand.

Major Gen. Ford—That is right. They clearly identify peace operations as well at the War Memorial and they are redoing those areas at the moment. I believe that Australia has had better understanding since 1999 when we were so involved in Timor. In our region we have not seen the United Nations being required until recently to a great extent. We have not seen the World Food Program, the UNHCR and all the other agencies operating because they do not operate much in Australia—they do not need to operate in Australia because we do not have the problem. But we started to get an exposure to the problem when we saw Timor and we have seen some situations since. I believe there is a better exposure to it now and I believe we should be making sure that the Australian public understands that we are contributing to peace operations around the world, and that it is something honourable to do and something that a country like ours should do. Perhaps this peacekeeping institute, or whatever it might be, could be involved in making sure that there was a better exposure to that sort of thing by running seminars and so on.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—I think that average Australians would be rather surprised with that proposal for 1,200 AFP with 750 in the IDG. That is a very substantial effort. I do not know whether it is necessary for people in the body politic to understand these things or whether it is an advantage for them to understand. I suppose, at the end of the day, they are taxpayers. Therefore if governments are going to do things and take initiatives and put Australians in harm's way then the population have to understand it. They have not understood to this point, as you say, how quickly the problem with East Timor came about, and there was also the situation in the Solomons, but in the future it is probably going to be necessary for people to be more conscious of their responsibilities. How can we do that?

Major Gen. Ford—You are right. I think that we need to make sure, first of all, that Australians recognise with pride what has been done in the past and what we are doing now. Australia is stepping forward and accepting its responsibility as a member of the international

community in contributing not only to things that directly affect our interests but also a little bit outside that and helping the international environment. I think we should be promoting that more. If we do such things as run UN courses, support UN courses being run or support regional activities that are developing that way, I think we will get better coverage for it.

CHAIR—I thank you very much on behalf of the committee for both your submission and your attendance here this morning.

Major Gen. Ford—Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

[11.20 am]

GEE, Mr Alistair Patrick, Executive Director, Christian World Service

ROY, Ms Julia, Responsibility to Protect Policy and Advocacy Officer, Christian World Service

THOMSON, Mr James D., Director, Policy and Advocacy, Christian World Service

CHAIR—Welcome. I understand that a copy of today's opening statement has been provided to you. Do you have any questions regarding the document?

Mr Gee—No, thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR—The committee has before it a submission from the Christian World Service, No. 31, which is now a public document. Do you need to make any amendments or alterations to that submission?

Mr Gee—No, thank you.

CHAIR—I will invite you to make a brief opening statement and will go to questions after that.

Ms Roy—I want to begin by thanking the committee for this opportunity to speak to our submission. We look forward especially to your questions. Christian World Service is the humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. We have been working with refugees and internally displaced persons from armed conflicts around the world for over 50 years. In 2005 the United Nations General Assembly recognised the responsibility of states and the international community to protect civilians in armed conflict. It is because of our extensive experience with refugee and IDP issues that we embrace this international norm.

The sentiments of foreign minister Alexander Downer that the responsibility to protect, also known as R2P, 'represents a momentous change in the way the world thinks about the relationship between government and citizen' are shared by the Christian World Service. World leaders have recognised that sovereignty has limits while confirming that states have the primary responsibility to protect their own people.

I should stress also that when we speak on military, police and national security issues we do so only after extensive consultation with the personnel and publications of national and international authorities. We have taken forward only those recommendations which not only provide for adequate protection measures but which have been identified by these top peace and security authorities as viable implementable policies within our current national and international security climate.

The focal points of our submission, and those which I suspect will attract the most attention from the honourable committee members, are as follows. Firstly, there is the recommendation

that we adopt a human protection operation or HPO framework to replace existing peacekeeping discourse. The framework itself is taken from the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty's report on the 'responsibility to protect', which was headed by former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans. It serves to reinforce existing Australian best practice policies while providing a robust and predictable set of deployment guidelines. It should also be noted that while this is a rules-based, as opposed to ad hoc, approach it remains able to flexibly and appropriately adapt to each unique deployment climate.

Secondly, there is the recommendation that Australia pursue the formation of a regional human protection security force. Such a standing agreement could be established through existing forums, as was mentioned earlier; and the ASEAN Regional Forum is one possibility. A recent report stressed that it is important that Australia work in concert with our Asian partners to share our expertise and deepen the understanding of successful HPOs across the spectrum from peace enforcement to peace building. Australia has at the diplomatic level been at the forefront of creating and securing the 'responsibility to protect' doctrine internationally. It is now crucial that this leadership continues to flow through our domestic policies and regional participation if Australia is to remain a positive and effective contributor to international police and security. I want to thank you again for the opportunity to make this opening statement, and I might add that CWS shares and supports the training and preparedness mechanisms that were just recommended by Major General Tim Ford. Thank you.

Senator FORSHAW—I just want to clarify something. Somewhere in your submission you refer to the International Crisis Group.

Ms Roy—Yes.

Senator FORSHAW—Is there a connection with the International Crisis Group that is chaired by Gareth Evans?

Mr Gee—Yes.

Senator FORSHAW—What is the connection between CWS and ICG?

Mr Gee—It is an informal connection. We are in discussion with the leaders of the International Crisis Group on this matter. We had a meeting with Gareth Evans last week and we will have another one next week. He is familiar with this submission.

Senator FORSHAW—But are you part of ICG?

Mr Gee—No.

Ms Roy—We do not speak for them.

Senator FORSHAW—Thank you.

CHAIR—Just to wrap that up, you have included a foreword in your submission from the ICG's vice president for advocacy and operations?

Ms Roy—That is right. That was written for our submission, but it is an informal working relationship.

CHAIR—Just for future reference, that is not immediately clear to us.

Senator FORSHAW—That was my question.

Ms Roy—Point taken and we are happy to note that for future reference.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Apart from informal relationships between individuals, there is no formal relationship or nexus between the two groups—is that correct?

Mr Gee—Correct, other than that we share the same understanding of what needs to take place on peacekeeping and the responsibility to protect civilians from mass atrocities.

Senator MARK BISHOP—To the extent that this is a submission from Christian World Service, the arm of the National Council of Churches, is it your submission or was it drafted for you by the International Crisis Group and you have adopted it?

Mr Gee—It is the other way around. It is our submission and the International Crisis Group have read it, and felt it appropriate that, while not putting in their own submission, they would like this information to be put before the committee. As it is consistent with what we are saying, both groups felt it appropriate to be included in the one report. The body of the report is entirely Christian World Service.

Senator MARK BISHOP—You are representatives or employees of the Christian World Service and you are putting forward a policy submission that speaks solely on behalf of the organisation—is that correct?

Mr Gee—That is correct.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Page 9 of your submission states:

5. **Force protection** for the intervening force, although important, **should not have priority** over the resolve to accomplish the mission—

however defined. What does that mean?

Mr Gee—Force protection has been at the forefront of a lot of the international peacekeeping operations, particularly through the nineties when it became an issue, say, in Srebrenica where a clear distinction was made between the mission and the protection of the people in the force and the protection of civilians at risk of mass atrocities. In an earlier recommendation, we asked that the mandate be made clear and specific, and include the protection of civilians. This is part of having a more robust mandate than has perhaps previously been the case; having a chapter VII mandate where they can enforce peace and protect civilians.

Senator MARK BISHOP—So force protection does not refer to self-protection by intervening force members?

Mr Gee—Could you restate that?

Senator MARK BISHOP—If we have ADF or AFP personnel, or their equivalent, in other countries, sometimes they have to use military force to advance their interest or protect themselves and they attempt to take out the opposition. In the phrase 'force protection', do you mean that they are properly entitled to use force as they think appropriate to protect themselves in the circumstances of a particular mission or does that force protection extend to their decision to use force to protect the civilians for whom they are ostensibly there to intervene on behalf of?

Mr Gee—That is right; it goes to both. Obviously they are there to protect themselves and to take measures that are needed to protect themselves, but there is some risk in going into a conflict situation where civilians are at risk, and their mandate should be extended to that point—to use proportionate force but to go into that theatre in order to protect the civilians.

Ms Roy—For clarity, particularly on point 5, what that means quite plainly is that force protection—in other words, the safety of the forces—must be of the highest importance but not more important than accomplishing the mission of protecting civilians. It is controversial, certainly, but—

Senator FORSHAW—In effect, the mandate or the rules of engagement should not be limited to prevent them from using force to protect civilians—

Ms Roy—Yes.

Mr Gee—That is correct.

Senator FORSHAW—in situations where they have a mandate to use force to protect themselves—

Mr Gee—That is correct.

Senator FORSHAW—which is where there were initial problems in Rwanda?

Mr Gee—Yes.

Ms Roy—Yes.

Senator FORSHAW—And in Srebrenica, I think.

Senator TROOD—I agree that responsibility through the protection concept is of growing importance. Are you now of the view that this has been established as an international legal norm?

Ms Roy—'Legal' is tricky. You might extend to calling it 'soft law', but it is much more a norm or a doctrine to the extent that it has been approved by the General Assembly and used by the Security Council both in the protection of civilians, a matter of international peace and security, and in different forces that have been deployed or authorised to be deployed. As to the

question of whether or not it is technically a legal framework, whenever you are talking about international doctrines it is tricky to say 'legal' as such.

Mr Gee—There has been significant progress on that. It is a legal issue in that all the nations of the world signed off at the world summit and the Security Council signed off in resolution 1674. What now needs to happen is the implementation through governments working with other governments, such as Australia working with forces and operations in Asia so that we embed and implement the recommendations that have been made at the international legal level.

Mr Thomson—Another important consideration—as well as it having a legal element because it has General Assembly and Security Council endorsement and because of the resolution on Darfur, for which there is a legal document outlining a mandate—is that this is the only international agreement on sovereignty and responsibility and it is absolutely crucial in a peacekeeping operation to be able to deal with the two issues of outlining where sovereignty may be breached and outlining where the responsibility for human protection lies.

Senator TROOD—One would have thought that, if it applied anywhere, it applied in the Sudan, yet we have had enormous difficulties getting any kind of international force deployed there. That seems to challenge the assumption that it is a well, fully and comprehensively accepted principle of international law.

Mr Gee—It has been applied to Darfur. I recall that the resolution on Darfur refers to the responsibility to protect, and it is consistent with that. One of the threshold criteria under the responsibility to protect is that it must do more good than harm. It has been the assessment by consensus, given the role that the Khartoum government has been playing and the consequences for the humanitarian space and the suffering that would be inflicted upon internally displaced people in Darfur, that it would be premature to move ahead without getting Khartoum to agree with the resolution and the UN hybrid force.

Senator TROOD—You are asserting the proposition that the responsibility to protect ought to be more fully and comprehensively established as the legal principle, and I do not have any difficulty with that proposition, but are you also seeking to argue that any kinds of peacekeeping operations come within the ambit of that doctrine? I was not quite clear about that.

Mr Gee—Not 'any'. An important part of the responsibility to protect is that it has to relate to threshold matters—matters of genocide, ethnic cleansing or mass atrocities. So we are not talking about RAMSI as being a matter under the responsibility to protect, but the human protection operation framework covers the spectrum from peace enforcement to peacekeeping and through to peace building. It is important, as Major General Tim Ford was saying, that it is often difficult to tell when a situation will deteriorate—he referred to the Congo. It is perhaps possible to see that Solomon Islands are unlikely to deteriorate in the fashion that the Congo did. But so many of the operations at the moment, particularly in Africa, are complex and high risk. Therefore it would be appropriate to establish such a framework. As was mentioned in the opening submission, it is sufficiently flexible that you would still have enough expertise on a classic peacekeeping operation within that framework, but it also establishes enough expertise to deal with the more complex and high-risk situations.

Senator TROOD—If we regard the responsibility to protect as an important and emerging international doctrine, my own view would be that it would be undesirable to limit peacekeeping activities only to those kinds of activities which might be covered by the doctrine. There are places around the world, notably in the Middle East—Sinai might be one, and Cyprus is another where we have been engaged since 1964, and there are many other places you can think of—which are traditionally part of peacekeeping activities but would not normally be regarded as coming under the R2P concept. I assume you are not wishing to limit—

Mr Gee—No, certainly not. We support the peacekeeping operations Australia is currently involved in, which are well outside the responsibility-to-protect framework, so we do not want to see that diminished. Perhaps I could refer to an earlier question asked by Senator Hogg of a previous witness about what more we need to do on prevention and a broader spectrum, not just looking at peacekeeping. Australia has moved ahead well in terms of supporting the establishment of law and order in a number of countries in the region. We need to boost other aspects, now, of human security, to sit alongside that. We have made a number of submissions to AusAID and government about what more Australia could be doing, under human security and international development, so that we are boosting up the full range of work we can do in this area and not just putting all our focus onto the responsibility-to-protect doctrine.

Ms Roy—I might also add that while the human protection framework comes from the original *The responsibility to protect* report, the human protection framework is not limited to those situations that would be classified as responsibility-to-protect situations. It encompasses a broader range of peacekeeping activities.

Senator TROOD—I think it was you, Mr Gee, who mentioned the ARF. Is it a concept that you are particularly keen that the ARF should incorporate into its broad mandate, its rather confused bag of responsibilities, at the moment?

Mr Gee—We have been trying to work to ensure that the responsibility-to-protect and anti-atrocity provisions are included in the ASEAN charter. That is the extent to which we have worked with ASEAN at the moment. In terms of the ASEAN Regional Forum, we note the comments made by, I think, Ms Bird of DFAT about work that Australia is doing within the ARF in progressing this. If that is the primary area where we can progress these matters, then we will be happy with that—though we are keen to see that enhanced significantly, to the point where there does come, within the coming years, a point at which we are part of a regional force and there is sufficient harmony between the way that Australia operates and the way our Asian partners operate that that force can be readily deployed within a short period of time, as recommended by a number of the UN reports. I would also note that Force 2020 and *Defence 2000*, one of the Australia government reports on defence, call for greater partnership—or at least identify the importance of partnership with other countries in our defence forces.

Ms Roy—With regard to the capability of the ASEAN Regional Forum, it is certainly in its early days. As it develops, it would be incredibly valuable for Australia to be involved in that process and for any potential standing agreements on force deployment to emerge.

Senator TROOD—I do not know whether we can have things that are ‘very premature’ but it seems to me that if you can then conceptually you are right. Are you working through non-government organisations within the region to try to get this onto the agenda more effectively?

Ms Roy—Absolutely.

Mr Gee—We are not working exclusively through NGOs. We have recently written to former foreign affairs ministers and people of influence within ASEAN and shortly we intend to take it up with, for instance, the chair of the high-level working group, so we are prepared to work on these sorts of issues with whoever is involved.

Senator FORSHAW—Thank you for your submission. There is a lot of discussion going on around the world about the responsibility-to-protect principle, so I was pleased to see your submission focus on that. You suggest a change in terminology to 'human protection operations'. This could cause some confusion because, as I understand it, a lot of people regard peacekeeping as meaning 'after the event' or when things have broken down almost completely. Am I correct that, whilst it is not the only aspect, the concept of the responsibility to protect is about earlier engagement and certainly could and would involve taking forceful action to intervene at an earlier stage to prevent genocide and the complete collapse of civil order? I am not trying to restrict the definition, because this is a very complex area.

Mr Gee—That is the contentious end of the responsibility to protect, and it is the area that gets the most focus. As you will see from our submission—

Senator FORSHAW—Sorry, but that is legitimate, in the sense that that is what the general public have reacted to when they eventually see it on their TV screens, because it is the media that exposes the horrible genocide of Rwanda, Srebrenica, Darfur and so on.

Mr Gee—How we deal with the Rwandas was behind the decision to set up the ICISS group. Responsibility to protect looks at prevention, so it comes in earlier than peacekeeping—and it is not just military prevention but a range of measures, including diplomacy, to prevent these matters arising. It looks at reaction, and that is perhaps an area where it comes close to peacekeeping, but it also adds on more to the spectrum than peacekeeping does. It looks more at the responsibility to rebuild a situation to ensure that it does not lapse again. It comes after the fact and continues on beyond what peacekeeping looks at.

Senator FORSHAW—That is why I was intrigued by your wanting to change the name to HPO, human protection operations. I am not suggesting you mean to restrict it to the concept of human protection and not rebuilding the society and governance and so on, but I think that proposal—and I am not sure if I speak for Senator Trood—suggests that it is a shift from peacekeeping as people understand it today to another element of the whole process. If you do that, you might be putting emphasis on one to the exclusion of the other. I do not know how you would define it in the end. Is it necessary to have Security Council approval to invoke the doctrine of responsibility to protect?

Mr Gee—In terms of a military intervention, yes.

Senator FORSHAW—Would that include actions against an aggressor state, as distinct from actions within the country where the responsibility to protect is required?

Mr Thomson—It does restrict it just to state actors.

Senator FORSHAW—I mean that you get situations where a neighbouring country—as distinct from what is happening within the internal forces of a country—has taken over or is controlling or directing the genocide, if I can use that example. I do not want to name countries, but we know what we are talking about.

Mr Thomson—With the responsibility to protect, we are really talking about situations of internal civil conflict. Where you have one state that invades another or imposes itself, there are pre-existing rules that relate to an occupying power.

Senator FORSHAW—I am suggesting, for instance, what happened in the Balkans, when, in the end, the US took action against Serbia because it saw it as the instrument that was directing the activities in Kosovo and other places.

Ms Roy—I might address what you asked earlier about UN Security Council authorisation. The most important role for the Security Council within the R2P is to authorise action that is military. But certainly, as my colleagues have said, the majority of the action that would be taken under an HPO framework and an R2P framework would be non-military. In those capacities it is not necessary always to go through the UN. It is desirable but absolutely not necessary. Really, the only sense in which the UN Security Council is absolutely fundamental would be in authorising uninvited military intervention.

Senator FORSHAW—Another comment you make in your submission is that:

> Australian participation in HPOs must be based on a **precisely defined political objective**.

You go on to make some comments. Could you elaborate on what that means? Let us use the example of the Solomons or East Timor. What would be the political objective, particularly when a lot of the focus of the doctrine of responsibility to protect is a humanitarian, moral, international legal obligation as distinct from politics?

Ms Roy—Certainly there are a number of interpretations to that, the more relevant being that, while it is a rules based framework, it needs to be able to remain ad hoc. It needs ultimately to be led by the decisions made by the political leader in the situation; it cannot be 100 per cent handed over to a pre-established formula or just to a military commander. There needs to be political control, particularly because the processes outside of any Australian intervention or operation must constantly be coordinated with the other actors that are involved. You must continue to maintain communication with the other state actors and the non-state actors. In that sense, the decision-making power and the motivation for it must always remain with either the politically elected representative or the political parties in that area.

Mr Gee—It is recognising that this goes beyond what could be defined as a military objective.

Ms Roy—Yes.

Senator FORSHAW—I have a final question, which goes back to some of the questions about prevention rather than cure that Senator Hogg was asking an earlier witness. In paragraph 3.1.5 of your submission, under the heading 'Effective protection: prevention', you refer to the Carnegie commission report and how much money could have been saved if more effective

preventive measures had been taken. Two paragraphs on, you give the example of Macedonia—the only example. Could you elaborate on what actually happened then? We can use the phrase 'preventive measures' but, short of straight-out intervention and getting into the whole issue of sovereignty, the answers may not be readily available.

Ms Roy—Firstly, since this report has been written, Gareth Evans has suggested there has been a second example of effective prevention. If it is acceptable, I will read his analysis on that:

> Burundi since the early 90s is a good example of what can properly be described as an 'R2P situation', although nobody has really badged it as such. It is one, moreover, which has not at any stage involved coercive military action—just a lot of hard, grinding preventive action to ensure that the worst which everyone feared did not in fact happen. The situation there was certainly capable of deteriorating into the kind of large scale genocidal violence that wracked neighbouring Rwanda, and it [is] arguably only the intense engagement of many international actors—including among others Nelson Mandela with his mediation, South Africa with its troop presence, the International Crisis Group with our analysis and advocacy, and the new Peacebuilding Commission with its making of Burundi its first case—that has prevented that occurring.

Regarding Macedonia: having written a submission a few months ago, I would take that part of the question on notice, as to those particular prevention mechanisms, but that would be a second example.

Senator FORSHAW—How effective do you rate the use of sanctions as a preventative measure?

Ms Roy—It is absolutely a case-by-case basis as to its effectiveness. They would have to be—

Senator FORSHAW—Absolutely—

Ms Roy—On a case-by-case basis—that sanctions would be effective. Again, that is something you cannot prescribe a predefined set of rules for—though I would go so far as to say that they should be targeted sanctions, in any event, targeting political leaders, perpetrators, their families, their ability to travel, et cetera.

Mr Thomson—Part of the strength of the R2P framework is that it has precautionary principles that relate to the saying 'Do more good than harm'. So I think they come into play at that level—in looking at what types of sanctions they would be, what impact they would have in a particular conflict, and that sort of thing.

Mr Gee—Work is being started shortly on a global audit of what sorts of preventative measures various countries are involved in already, and what is working and is not working. So this will become a clearer area in the coming years.

Senator FORSHAW—Thank you.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Reading through your submission and listening to the discussion, I am struck by the thought that it really is a reaction, in policy terms, to a lot of the insoluble problems that have been a feature of Africa, the Middle East and Central Europe in the last 10 or 15 years. That is my first point.

My second point is that peacekeeping per se, as it is developing in this country and the South Pacific and parts of South Asia, relates to what we call 'failed states' or 'fragile states' where, after economic failure, there is civil disorder, intervention, restoration of some form of law and order, and then withdrawal by the occupying force. That is how this new IDG appears to be developing in Australia, particularly with the ORG aspect.

In terms of your analysis at the beginning of your document as to the causes of those earlier problems—lack of preventative action, lack of sufficient political will, lack of civic courage and all those sorts of things: I do not see any of those preconditions or features extant in this part of the world. Indeed, I see a lot of civic action, civic demonstration, political will, intervention, allocation of resources, long-term strategies—the whole lot. That being the case, what role is there for this approach in this part of the world, which is our part of the world? Are you simply inviting endorsement to get a regime that might be a solution in other parts of the world but, on my reading, does not have any application to the problems we have experienced in the South Pacific and South-East Asia which have warranted our intervention in the last 10 or 15 years? So what role—and what relationship to our developing peacekeeping role?

Mr Gee—As mentioned, we believe that this framework is large enough to be able to address the specific nature of what is going on with failed states, particularly those within the region, though it broadens out the understanding to include more of the spectrum of operations that the Defence Force have identified, so that it can also provide better opportunity for Australia to be involved in the mass atrocity issues that we do agree are more likely to happen outside the region.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Page 10 of your submission states:

... when a state is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity—

these are examples of the need to invoke the R2P. None of those features—genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity—were on any scale at all features of activity in East Timor, the Solomons or other states that are on the horizon and likely to fail in this part of the world.

Mr Thomson—Not necessarily always in this part of the world—

Senator MARK BISHOP—It is clear under the current government—and I have not seen a strong demur from our side of politics—that we are developing an indigenous capacity for peacekeeping that is relevant to the needs in this part of the world, and it relates to current failing states or future failing states. That is what is developing here. I do not see in this part of the world—South Asia, South-East Asia and the South Pacific—those sorts of horrific, mass atrocity events that warrant the R2P doctrine. What is the relevance in a practical sense of this doctrine, and the force structure you appear to suggest ought to be created, to what is happening on the ground?

Mr Thomson—There are a couple of considerations. Firstly, there is potential in the region—with Burma in particular—for worse things to come. That is debatable, but that is looking into the future and I think is what we are talking about here: setting up a framework that will benefit

Australia for the next 10, 20 or 30 years. There are likely to be more conflicts in the region during that period.

I might just come back to a point that I also wanted to mention. You referred to 'the responsibility to protect'. The development of the ICISS framework, which is the broader framework that resulted from the commission itself, has tried to synthesise all the lessons in peacekeeping that have been learnt over the 15 or 20 years as well as the changes in peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enforcement and peace building—covering the full continuum of activities. It also tries to deal with the key problems of peacekeeping that have been recognised over the years, one of those being sovereignty. When does the UN or the international community have the responsibility to step in? When does it become clear that a state is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens? It comes in to address a number of those things, just to come back to your original point.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I do not quarrel with any of that. We all know the history of Europe, the Middle East and Africa and the large-scale mass destruction problems there. I can see how your solution synthesises that and is rational to those parts of the world. In terms of us building indigenous capacity for our backyard, I do not quite see that we have had ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in any parts across that spectrum of instability. I just wonder what the direct relevance is to our apparent indigenous peacekeeping capacity that the government is building.

Ms Roy—I completely agree on your initial observations. The failures listed in the beginning of our submission are not Australian failures. In that sense, we put Australia forward as a best practice example. We completely agree. We suggest that the value of applying the R2P framework is to allow us to, in a sense, export our best practice model to regional partners and internationally and to enshrine that best practice value within a framework that can be mirrored and adopted by other agencies. In that sense, it is a feeling that peacekeeping is one of our international roles in which we do take a bit of leadership. I completely agree that those failures are not ours. In fact, Australia is an excellent example of doing peacekeeping well.

CHAIR—I am just trying to find where the reference is to best practice on behalf of Australia.

Ms Roy—I am not sure if it is said in as many words, and I would apologise to the committee if it is read as a criticism of Australian practice. It is not meant in that way at all.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I just want to pursue this point. Our developing expertise and capacity building, and what you refer to as best practice, have developed over the last 10 or 15 years in the context of failed or fragile states. That is the background to the operations we have gone into. So lessons can properly be learnt on how to apply appropriate solutions to failed states. How are those lessons in this context relevant to occasions where you have continuing mass crimes against humanity or ethnic cleansing for whatever reason? I am not sure you can extrapolate a conclusion from a different situation.

Mr Gee—There are limitations, but I think the lessons learnt and the experience that Australia has developed from working with fragile states are relevant to situations which involve mass atrocities, particularly once those mass atrocities have been stopped and there is more of a traditional peacekeeping operation in place, and then there is the work that Australia has been

doing in the fragile states with building institutions and returning to law and order. The HPO framework is not supposed to water that focus down in any way. It is an important niche that Australia has, but it does, though, bring in some other work that Australia is doing, particularly on the more robust end—the more chapter VII mandated work—that it would be good for Australia to also be contributing to. It is important that Australia is able to provide five nurses to Darfur. If this operation allowed us to perhaps be part of the UN system a little more consistently and perhaps gave us a greater capacity to contribute a little more than five health workers to Darfur, I think that would be in Australia's interest.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I understand. Thank you.

CHAIR—There are some interesting aspects to your submission, some of which Senator Bishop has been pursuing. I am trying to read into it what you are saying to us, but my crystal ball is slightly non-functional today, so in some parts it is a bit of a challenge. Under 'Training and Preparedness', for example, at 3.2, you make some observations about training in relation to the AFP, but I find it remarkable that you could comment on AFP training and not mention the International Deployment Group and the significant work that has been done in that regard.

Mr Gee—We have left it to others with more experience on the International Deployment Group to comment on that. We do certainly support—

CHAIR—So you comment on the inadequacy of training but you do not comment on the substantial enhancement of training. I do not understand that.

Mr Gee—If the committee would allow us the opportunity to put in a further submission addressing that point, we would be happy to.

Ms Roy—We also would note that we do highly commend the work of the Australian Defence Force Peacekeeping Centre and other multibody coordinated training efforts—

CHAIR—It is interesting because there are a lot of criticisms of the ADF Peacekeeping Centre in other submissions, so I am trying to find where the middle point is on all of that. Have you had any engagement with the ADF Peacekeeping Centre as an organisation?

Ms Roy—We would like to have more, but, as has been mentioned in other submissions, their capacity is fairly limited. We would welcome any increase in that capacity.

CHAIR—Have you been an NGO presenter, for example, at the peacekeeping centre?

Ms Roy—We have only been in contact with them informally. They have a staff of four—and I am not certain if they are all full time. They have just not had the capacity to engage regularly with NGO or other interested groups.

Senator MARK BISHOP—On the point that she has raised, one of the recurring themes that has struck me in this entire inquiry is the amount of resources that have been dedicated by government, the huge amount of manpower that has been hired or is being hired in both the ADF and the AFP, the high competence of both those organisations in a range of functions and their commitment to a range of worthy tasks that have been given by government. It is a highly

professional, well-funded, well-functioning set of organisations in this role. That has been a bit of a surprise to me; that is my own ignorance. What has struck me in this inquiry is that a whole range of NGOs are simply not familiar with the depth and breadth of work that is occurring at government level—at IDC level, at AFP level and ADF level—and just how far ahead of NGOs they are. They are light years ahead in terms of the work they are doing, and it has not yet permeated down into the overall consciousness of the NGO community. A lot of their criticisms are, in context, very minor and dated.

Ms Roy—Yes.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I am surprised at my own thinking and my own conclusions. It has not yet penetrated down into the breadth of the NGO community or the university community. I say that as, unfortunately, an opposition person not a government person. I would love to be finding areas to kick them—but I ain't finding too many in this inquiry.

Ms Roy—I have to be honest and say that we had a similar experience in that initially we found—in beginning our submission and our research—frequent criticisms, but we did not find a lot of material available to us that explained it. We rewrote our submission many times before it was formally tabled, and we consulted privately with groups like the Australia Institute and the policy institute. We never collaborated formally but they offered a lot of insight to us about the high standard—which is why we have made the focus a best practice approach. That is why it should be formalised into a framework: so that the Australian public and the Australian NGO community can see and understand that best practice and how many resources really are going into this. We had the same impression initially—

Senator MARK BISHOP—The same impression as me.

Ms Roy—We thought that all these criticisms were valid and we found, only after being consulted with privately, that that is not at all the case; and the fact that that should not be common knowledge is a shame. I completely agree.

CHAIR—Not enough people read the annual reports, clearly. Can you tell me very briefly what the ACT development group of agencies is? It is referenced on page 3.

Mr Gee—This is something that we have spent several years setting up. It stands for 'Action by Churches Together'. They are agencies similar to ours, around the world, who are involved in development work.

CHAIR—Is CWS an instigator of that?

Mr Gee—CWS is the Australian member. It was launched in February 2007 after five years of consultations.

CHAIR—Where would I find more information about that?

Mr Gee—We would be happy to provide it. I should say that it is limited to long-term development work. It is not about humanitarian work and does not address this. In terms of work

we are involved in with others on this, all the member churches of the World Council of Churches have approved of the responsibility to protect.

CHAIR—Thank you very much. I thank you for your submission and the interesting discussion that we have had this morning.

Proceedings suspended from 12.08 pm to 1.03 pm

GOLDSMITH, Professor Andrew, School of Law, Flinders University

Evidence was taken via teleconference—

CHAIR—Welcome. You were not present to hear today's opening statement, so I remind you that these are public proceedings, although the committee may agree to a request to have evidence heard in camera or may determine that certain evidence should be heard in camera. I would also remind you that in giving evidence to the committee you are protected by parliamentary privilege. It is unlawful for anyone to threaten or disadvantage a witness on account of evidence given to a committee and such action may be treated by the Senate as a contempt. It is also a contempt to give false or misleading evidence to a committee. If a witness does object to answering a question, the witness should state the ground upon which objection is taken and the committee will determine whether it will insist on an answer having regard to the grounds which are claimed. If the committee determines to insist on an answer, a witness may request that the answer be given in camera. Such a request may of course be made at any other time. I now ask you to make a brief opening statement and then we will go to questions.

Prof. Goldsmith—First of all, I would just like to apologise for not having prepared a detailed written submission for you. I was in hospital last week and have been recovering from an elbow operation, so my level of preparation may not be quite what you deserve or the occasion deserves, but I will do my best. I mentioned to your research assistant officer, Lisa, that there are some publications that I can provide to the committee which I have not yet had a chance to send through—and I promise to do that after today—which I think should assist you in some of your deliberations on these matters.

If I could address, firstly, the background to the project. The three researchers for this project, 'Policing the neighbourhood', each come with some interest either in the region or in transnational policing and policing in developing countries, for want of better phrases. It reflects a coincidence of academic interest and some area expertise in the arc of instability, if you like, and led to the origin of this project. The project, 'Policing the neighbourhood', is a three-year, Australian Research Council linkage project. The industry partner in this project is the Australian Federal Police. The nature of their support is in-kind and involves cash as well. The project started in 2005 and was due to finish at the end of 2007. However, for a variety of reasons, I think it is looking more like mid- to late- 2008 now. As the committee will appreciate, the difficulty of studying many of the countries in the so-called arc of instability is due to some of the instability and political turmoil that have taken place in the last couple of years.

The three case studies are Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste. They were selected quite deliberately for their representation of different challenges, to some extent, although obviously there are some commonalities as well. Basically, the scope of the project is, as I say, an academic one. Its goal is to look at how Australia, if I can speak so broadly, goes about these police assistance missions, what kind of job we are doing in undertaking these different kinds of missions—and I can elaborate on that—and what the policy lessons are from this experience. One premise for undertaking this research I think was the novelty of what

Australia was engaging in, starting, I suppose, with RAMSI in some respects but, obviously, going back further to 1999 with Timor. In our region, on a scale, I think, Australia was beginning to engage and is engaging in something of considerable international significance. That was what motivated our study and continues to motivate our study.

If I could say something next about where our project is now. It is still ongoing. We are finishing up our data collection from interviews with Australian policing personnel right now. As I mentioned earlier, some upsets in the field in each of the three case studies, in fact, have affected the speed of progress of the research. We are not quite as close to finishing as we would have predicted three years ago. There have been personnel changes as well. We currently have some articles coming out on some of the work we have done already. We have a book proposal in with Cambridge University Press in which we will attempt to summarise and write up our results, which will hopefully come out sometime next year. I suppose that is really where we are with the project now. If you like, I could briefly raise some of the issues as I see them, and then I imagine there will be some questions.

CHAIR—Thanks, that would be helpful.

Prof. Goldsmith—When I talk about police assistance, I am talking about the range of things from peacekeeping through to capacity building, post-conflict reconstruction and the strengthening of policing institutions—the range of things we have seen from Timor through to the Solomon Islands. The first question I would ask rhetorically is: is this a technical exercise or is it really something more deeply political? I think the emerging and strong conviction that we come to as we proceed through this is that to treat it as a technical exercise is a big mistake and that the politics is something we are barely beginning to understand. I will develop some of these points a little further later on.

I will follow that up by saying that perceptions, not just our technical ability or competence, matter enormously in this area. Again, I think that is where more commentary is needed and where there are more lessons to be learnt. Part of the problem in evaluating these as technical or political or in evaluating the importance of perceptions is appreciating the spectrum of engagements that often the same mission moves across—from an initial peacekeeping role, where separating the warring parties or keeping them apart and restoring basic law and order is something which meets with pretty universal regard from the local populations, on to the longer term and often more politically contested activities around capacity building and peace building, where many of these political problems and perception problems become more manifest and difficult to engage with.

All these police assistance missions fall within broader state-building or nation-building exercises that one can see other countries engaging with elsewhere in the world, not just Australia engaging with in our own region. The basic point I make here is that there is not a lot of science in this nation-building and state-building activity. To a large extent we are in the dark, and that has implications for the likelihood of getting it wrong or not necessarily knowing how to move expeditiously between point A and point B in ways that would be cost-effective and which preserve the legitimacy of our activities. In any activity such as this, we probably suffer from deficiencies in local area knowledge which undermine our efforts. I think that is an issue that is appreciated across the board within, say, the Federal Police IDG but is probably something that is worth bearing in mind. Another point is the long-term nature of any of these

activities. The time lines that are envisaged for some of these activities are now growing longer. We started with some pretty short time lines; we now hear time lines of five or 10 years, and I suspect that is a minimum in many cases. This in turn raises problems about our commitment to such things and the resources available.

The next point is Australia's capacity to respond to the various challenges in the region. There is a natural regional dominance. We have the relative scale and ability to respond. One would have to ask: along with that capacity to respond, what is our commensurate cultural and political aptitude to do so? That is an area which clearly your committee will need to spend some time deliberating on. There is an ongoing learning process within the Federal Police IDG around these issues. As I said, because so much is going on in the dark, there is a lot of learning on the job.

Another question I would like to raise is the appropriateness of Australia's response in these different quarters, and I realise I am generalising a lot here. Australia faces an almost inevitable perception in the region of being a kind of symbolic big brother, and that poses a number of legitimacy problems. It raises the question of how Australia does engage—whether there are ways of tackling some of these issues that do not pose the big bully or big brother symbolism that is easily generated out of these kinds of engagements, even with the best will in the world on the Australian side of the engagement. Maybe there are other ways of tackling some of these issues—perhaps by the use of third parties or having a smaller policing footprint or a bigger development focus—but I think these are issues related to the issue of legitimacy.

If there is, on strategic grounds, a need for a strong police focus in these missions, then the question becomes: how does Australia best engage with these challenges by using police? Clearly, there are issues. People have made submissions to you regarding the challenges of recruitment, training and so on. In relation to recruitment, the challenges must confront the general shortage of police, recognised across Australia in the present climate, and selecting the right people—and, again, I think people have made submissions to you already about that. In light of who the right people are, the question is: what are the skill sets that we are talking about? What is it that we are trying to achieve in these countries? What are the appropriate skill sets? In recent times, training has increasingly raised the need for language skills as well as cultural awareness. There is clear evidence that the IDG has learnt a lot in the last 2½ to three years and has modified its curricular at Majura to try and tackle some of these issues. They are very difficult issues to tackle in a short framework like a two-week or three-week—or even a month—training course.

Another aspect of how you do a police-led mission better is the ability of police to build local relationships in places such as the Solomons or East Timor. There are issues that need to be confronted there around the structuring of the rotations into and out of countries. It is inconceivable, I think, from basic relationship-building theory and practice, that you can sustain or make good relationships over a long period of time when personnel are being rotated through relatively quickly. It needs to be appreciated that sometimes people who are sent to the Solomons or other destinations for four or six months will often be serving in several different places within that period. It is not as if they are necessarily even working with the same group of people for that period. From a capacity-building point of view, where there is building of local relationships, trust relationships, we are talking about a particularly difficult and probably counter-productive practice in many ways. How you overcome that, given the personnel and

human resources issues back here in Australia, is one of the difficult questions that your committee might want to address.

One of the things that we have been thinking about in our project more broadly, in terms of recognising some of the political dimensions over the technical ones, is: what are the justifications for police-led missions? These raise questions of local legitimacy in the country, in places like Timor and so on. Whose notion of policing is being put forward? What are the motives for this activity? I think it is clear that, in many missions around the world, but also in our own backyard, there are various motives for getting engaged in these activities, and they can vary during the course of a mission, from humanitarian activities through to fighting the war on terror, fighting organised crime and so on. Sometimes the motives get mixed up and therefore the game that is actually being played becomes less clear.

Another basic observation would be that any kind of police reform strategy in any country is inevitably political in nature and will engender debate, controversy and, sometimes, worse things. When you are doing this across national borders, in the context of where the politics are different, where our appreciation of circumstances on the ground is inevitably limited, then I think it is even more deeply political and challenging than it is already. As I said, the transition from peacekeeping to capacity building often signifies a shift from something which is relatively universally accepted locally to something which is more contestable at the local political level.

The next broad area that I could comment a little bit on is to do with the lessons from the last year or two. I think the last 18 months have been particularly instructive in terms of Australia's involvement in offshore police assistance missions. Here I refer to events in the Solomon Islands last April—April 2006—and also events in Timor in April, May and June of 2006. I know there are other reports and there are others probably more competent to analyse some of the political dimensions of what these different events gave rise to. But my point would be that to some extent we came to recognise that what we were doing in the Solomons—and also what we were doing in Timor through the Timor-Leste police development program—was almost a sideshow to some of the real needs that were emerging at the time. Here I refer to the political problems in the ministry of interior in Timor, the country that perhaps I know better than the Solomons. We were training police in basic investigative notebook maintenance and things like this while the ministry of interior was self-destructing, leading to the implosion of the police more generally. Again, I think this re-emphasises the fact that it is not technical issues that we need to be strengthening our hand in in many respects; it is really about the deeper politics and the more broadly based cultural context in which we are trying to do what we regard as often being very basic police development activity. We cannot decouple our police training from these contextual political issues.

I am drawing towards the end. Working multilaterally is one of the issues that you have expressly put in your terms of reference. I think RAMSI and Timor probably provide different lessons. What is interesting with RAMSI is that it is notionally a multilateral mission yet one can visit Honiara or go to the Solomon Islands and be struck by the huge Australian footprint that the mission evidences. I think that huge footprint is something that even our partners, the New Zealanders, can draw some rhetorical advantage from at times. It is probably inevitable, but the question is: how do you manage it? What do you do about that? Do you perhaps give consideration to greater use of third parties to undertake some of this work rather than getting Australians to do some of the core business? But that begs questions about what the mission is

setting out to achieve, what are the most efficacious ways of achieving it and also perhaps what are the most acceptable ways of achieving it.

I think to some extent that point applies in relation to Australia's involvement in Timor. Australia has an interest in that country and probably will continue to do so. How we engage effectively with developing policing institutions in that country is still a difficult question to answer. To seek to do so outside a kind of multilateral framework raises certain problems but also offers certain opportunities. I think Australia has got dilemmas whichever way it moves on that front. What one sees not just in East Timor—but this is particularly so in Timor—is that we are not the only player on the block. There are other countries—with historical connections, regional propinquity and so on—that influence how locals perceive and respond to Australian gestures and practices in this area of police assistance. Australia's involvement in oil and gas with Timor has coloured our ability to operate as effectively as we would like in Timor-Leste. Again, that is a question of management of perceptions as much as anything else.

My last point would be this. An interesting question is how these policing assistance missions articulate with some broader rule of law objectives and justice sector reforms. What one sees in Timor, the Solomons and other countries is often a high level of focus upon the police and relatively few resources put into courts, corrections and prisons. There are issues of priority levels of investment in the different parts of the criminal justice system and of the speed of change in these different areas. But of course unless there is a coordination and a balance there then you can have the problems, seen in Timor earlier on, of people being arrested but no jails to put them in. Having consistent agendas is of course a difficult one. Stabilising disorder may not necessarily have the same strategic objectives as prosecuting people for criminal acts. There has always been that tension between policing and prosecution, but I think, again, it has deeper political resonances in some of the countries that we are discussing. I will draw a halt at this point and see whether anybody is interested in anything I have said.

CHAIR—I can assure you that we are, Professor Goldsmith. Thank you very much for those very interesting observations and that further information about the work that you are doing.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—Professor, I was interested in your comments about the lack of local area knowledge that affects peacekeeping operations, particularly with the AFP. I would suggest there is a lack of Australian knowledge generally, particularly of the Pacific. That applies even to our very highly intelligent and skilled bureaucrats. We heard Professor Wainwright this morning say that there is a tendency to cycle some of the younger bureaucrats through Treasury, Finance, DFAT and Defence so that they have a particular knowledge of the South Pacific. As background, I make the point that, since the end of the colonial era and since World War II, there is probably a lower level of knowledge in the Australian community of the Pacific than there was at an earlier time, which is interesting. I would be interested in your views about whether we should place more emphasis on university schools of Pacific studies or schools of the South Pacific and perhaps also greater attention and emphasis on Australian involvement with the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

Prof. Goldsmith—I think each of those things you have just suggested would raise the level of mutual understanding and consciousness and so on. In terms of whether we know enough or where the deficits in area knowledge are apparent, I think one might want to look at different levels and perhaps discriminate or distinguish between different countries in terms of relative

awareness and so on. One would assume that Australia should have a lot of awareness of Papua New Guinea, given its long-term engagement there as an aid partner and so on. Perhaps that is less true of a place like Timor. And yet one still sees difficulties translating some of our strategic aspirations into programs on the ground there where some of these political difficulties have been already anticipated or compensated for. I guess what I am saying is that, in the bureaucracy at certain levels, that knowledge, if it is there, is perhaps not being applied in ways that always question the potential impact of some of these engagements in ways that might mitigate the level of resistance and so on.

When I make that point, I am thinking particularly of the context of Timor, where I suspect perhaps our area knowledge is even weaker than it is in the Pacific. We do not tend to classify Timor as being in the Pacific. Timor, as you know, is a very small country, of a million people. At the moment it seems enormously important in terms of what happened recently in terms of our aspirations. I will give an example of an attempt in a ministerial meeting in Dili to present a plan for Australian engagement in the future in policing, where the only copy provided to the minister was in English. The minister in question had no English competence to speak of. His competence was in Tetum and Portuguese, I think, to some extent. To me that is a very simple gesture, where perhaps we could have done a lot better. The symbolism of presenting a Tetum-speaking minister with something which he cannot read is not positive, to put it mildly.

Can we blame the universities? I do not know whether we can blame the universities for something as simple as that. As I said, there is a lot of learning on the run in this—and I would not point the finger at anybody in particular, because I learnt about this meeting from somebody from the United Nations, not from somebody here in Australia. Those sorts of gestures, simple things, often have reverberations which I think do not necessarily get appreciated at the time or indeed by the people, who then find their subsequent meetings with this minister very difficult. So it is about knowledge and being able to influence the kind of strategic advice that, say, the AFP is getting when it moves into Timor or the Solomons. Again, it may be tracked back to greater awareness among university graduates—and I certainly would not discount that as an important direction for you to take. It is also about how this knowledge percolates up through the bureaucracy and gets dealt with in the policing area in ways that are not counterproductive or that at least assist us.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—The actual experience of the engagement process is obviously very educational. If you are a young soldier stationed at Suai on the border in East Timor for three weeks dealing with the local people, you come back with a very keen knowledge and understanding of East Timor, its problems and its culture. You take that experience back into the Australian community whether or not you continue your military career. Experience in life is everything, I guess, so that is very important. I do not really know whether public knowledge is a requirement; in some ways, it is a drawback. With the very best intentions in the world, we committed to assisting in the Solomons. We spent probably $800 million over four years, and really the process can only be put down to experience. We are not starting again, but we are starting with a lot of experience that we did not have before. We did that at a time of very strong economic growth in Australia, but there may be a time when we are not in a position to make that commitment, and to sell that involvement, at that price, to the Australian community may be more difficult. Therefore, I think that, somewhere along the line, we will have to make some effort to get greater public knowledge and understanding of the problems we face, particularly in our near arc of instability.

Prof. Goldsmith—Yes. As you say, without public understanding of the problems in the region, there is unlikely to be ongoing support for activities in these countries.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Thank you, Professor Goldsmith, for your contribution. I noted that your CV traces your long expertise in the area of international policing. This morning we had evidence from Professor Wainwright, who said the RAMSI mission had been a model of its kind, was at the cutting edge of policing and had been watched closely by the international community to see whether lessons could be gained for the future from our experience over there. In terms of your own background, interests and expertise, do you have any serious criticism to make of our involvement in the Solomons? If so, is that criticism systemic? Finally, if mistakes have been made, are they one-offs that can be put down to inexperience and perhaps impetuosity as opposed to being deliberate and malevolent?

Prof. Goldsmith—That is a big question. Are you talking about Elsina Wainwright?

Senator MARK BISHOP—Yes.

Prof. Goldsmith—I think she is right about the fact that the RAMSI mission has been of great interest to people from other places—I recall the Rand Institute in the United States and the International Peace Academy in New York. Groups like that have shown a lot of interest in RAMSI, and I think it is of world significance because it was an attempt at a whole-of-government multilateral regional engagement of a kind which it is very difficult to find parallels for. In that sense, it was more systematic and broadly based, in more ways than one.

Again, to make a point that I made at the very beginning, there is a lot that made this project of ours, Policing the Neighbourhood, very exciting, because Australia is engaged in things that are without precedent. When we look at some of the stumbling efforts that are going on in the Middle East and so on, we see that perhaps the nature of the problems is not as great but we are able to engage in something that is quite unusual, valuable and worth studying. In terms of evaluating the overall success of RAMSI, like most of these missions there are always mixed positives and negatives. A lot of effort has been put into the whole-of-government coordination between the different Australian governments in terms of the interdepartmental committees and so on by the choice of the special coordinators in country who have good local regional knowledge. I think that that sort of attempt at the beginning to plan to commit good people to these positions, again, has probably stood RAMSI in pretty good stead. At the end of the day you cannot plan all the eventualities and some of the problems that emerge politically. Of course, what was going on inside the government and the subsequent governments and prime ministerships is something that is perhaps difficult to see completely, but why some of the problems that emerged last April were not anticipated is, I think, a question that some people have raised.

One of the interesting issues of symbolism—again, to go back to my point—is the Solomons example. If there were a future engagement and one were thinking about doing something differently, there is the perception—not just a perception, in this case—that Australians are running both the Royal Solomon Islands Police and the Participating Police Force, the PPF. It does not take any great observer of events there to sit back and say, 'It looks like there are a lot of Australians running both sides of the operation there.' In hindsight, that underlines something

that one might want to think about if one were to do it again or something similar. I do not know whether that has answered some of your concerns.

Senator MARK BISHOP—It has answered the first part of my question. The second part was: do you have any sustained criticism of our policy role there or the role of the AFP on the ground? There have been reported instances of aberrant behaviour, if I can put it that way. I am not aware that it is direct evidence—it struck me as being hearsay—but nonetheless it has been raised. If those events have occurred, have they been systemic or has there simply been aberrant behaviour on the part of individuals?

Prof. Goldsmith—I know that the ammunition issue has been raised in one of the submissions to you. I do not have any direct evidence or knowledge of that. It seems clear enough that what happened on those days caught the Australian contingent and the RAMSI contingent by surprise. I have no evidence of broad systemic problems beyond the inevitable challenges of putting missions with people from Australia and other countries into these places under what are very extraordinary circumstances. When I say 'extraordinary', I do not necessarily mean frightening or particularly violent—although we have seen some violence, of course—but I mean the huge cultural gaps between people working in these countries and the locals. I am pretty sure that Australian officers who have been found wanting in terms of, say, fraternising sexually with locals, have been dealt with in Timor and Australia in quite firm ways. The allegation has been made to me that it is a shame that some of the other countries did not take such a firm approach. The Australians who, if you like, misbehaved have paid a high price compared with some of the officers from other participating countries in some of these missions. I think Australia has attempted to respond relatively firmly to some of these issues. I am not aware of there being any scale of the problem. I certainly have not heard that there is a systemic problem of that kind.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Thank you, Professor. I have one final question. We have had a lot of evidence at a senior level from both the ADF and AFP that they continually go back and study previous engagements, that there are lessons there to be learned, that their role has really been evolving over time and that they have been learning and developing new skill sets to respond to difficult situations that are forced upon them. Do you have any comment to make on the role of the ADF and the AFP in ongoing planning, strategising, thinking, reviewing and learning lessons from past engagements? Is that adequate, in your mind?

Prof. Goldsmith—My focus has been much more on policing and much less on the military. From my very limited experience of the ADF, it strikes me that they are very impressive in planning their missions and perhaps their initial positions in terms of cultural awareness, language training and so on. To me it is clear that the Australian Federal Police, by being relatively new to these sorts of offshore missions, have probably had occasion to learn from the ADF about the appropriateness of more language training and so on for some of these missions. The ADF has done more in the past; the AFP is seeking to catch up in some regard. I think there is a kind of learning process going on, where the Australian Federal Police are learning from not only their own experiences but also the modelling from the ADF.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Accepting that the AFP are on a learning curve and new and additional demands are being made upon them in terms of the IDG, is it your observation that at

a senior level there is the requisite commitment to making the IDG a worthwhile and successful operation in terms of the likely demands to be made upon it by government?

Prof. Goldsmith—I think the IDG has been put in a very challenging place, as has the AFP more broadly. The expectations that have emerged over a relatively short period of time on a scale that overshadows the pre-existing AFP in terms of budget and numbers of people and so on mean that it has been in a very challenging place and has had to respond very quickly. One of the interesting observations to make is the kind of impact that has had not just on staff growth but also on some of the key staff members, who have had to work very hard and in some cases have possibly paid a price. It has been a very stressful environment for them to have to work in, without many precedents to rely upon, as I said. They have done a very difficult job in a very short time without a whole lot of guidance and with a whole lot of expectations being thrust upon them.

Mick Keelty, the commissioner, made a speech at the National Press Club last year where he talked about policing being a foreign policy place or space. As I said, these are really uncharted waters. So while one can find fault with some of the strategic choices and operational rollouts and so on, the contextual difficulty of what is being asked of the IDG, and indeed the AFP more generally, also has to be put into the balance. I know of no other single police force in the world that has had to respond in such a way across areas which, if we are to be completely frank, are not just about policing; they are about community development and broader social development. A police officer from Belconnen is not necessarily naturally well-prepared to do capacity development in Baucau, East Timor. These are big expectations, big shifts, that we are asking ordinary Australian police officers to undertake. I think that is part of what needs to be factored into any assessment about how anybody has performed.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Thank you very much, Professor. That was a very interesting commentary.

CHAIR—We are limited for time and there are further questions from both Senator Trood and Senator Hogg, so I encourage brevity in both questioning and answering. That would be helpful.

Prof. Goldsmith—I take the point.

Senator TROOD—Professor Goldsmith, just on the last point you made, do you think these are unreasonable expectations being placed upon the Federal Police?

Prof. Goldsmith—That is a difficult one. There is a political choice about our need to engage with these countries and there has been a choice made about the appropriateness of policing. In terms of the need to stabilise and restore law and order, it seems a perfectly reasonable choice that one seeks primarily to use police for those kinds of stabilisation or order maintenance functions. As you probably know, the IDG is undergoing adaptation and changes in light of last year's experience to deal better with some of those challenges. Perhaps the problem comes out of what expectations are put upon them to achieve, in what sorts of time frames and with what sorts of resources. To my mind, the unprecedented international nature of these things makes those assessments very variable in terms of what your assumptions and expectations are.

Senator TROOD—I am just shifting ground here a little, in light of the Chair's injunction, to the nature of the challenges being faced in each of these three places that you are studying. To what extent are the problems related or do they have a transnational criminal dimension? Are you able to make any observations on that at the moment?

Prof. Goldsmith—In each of those countries one can obtain intelligence to suggest that there are at least modest levels of transnational illegal activity. It varies from country to country. How one assesses the magnitude of that will differ according to whether you talk to me or whether you talk to somebody on the law enforcement side—in other words, how serious is the threat they pose right now. The more difficult one is their longer term implications. Are there small Islamist groups emerging in the Solomon Islands right now? Some people would say there are signs of that. How you interpret that is a matter of judgement. I would make a judgement and senior law enforcement might make a judgement that is quite different. Some people might say that the actual threat of transnational crime from some of these places has been exaggerated and so on. Perhaps it is fair to say that, at the moment, the exact nature of those challenges does not loom large in the global transnational policing or law enforcement environment. That is not to say that things are not simmering away. Those with law enforcement intelligence are better placed to make those calls than me right now.

Senator TROOD—To what extent do you think it is desirable or unnecessary for peacekeeping activity or the kinds of activities that we are engaged in here to have some kind of United Nations imprimatur as a foundation for international legal legitimacy? Are there other ways than through the UN whereby we can legitimise these activities and do these things at a regional level?

Prof. Goldsmith—The Timor example has already had the UN historically involved. So there is perhaps little choice from Australia's point of view in this case. It either rejects or accepts the UN opportunity. Regionally, as I suggest in the context of the RAMSI example, there is a model that does not involve the UN but does involve a self-selected regional group of countries. The issue of how you make that work less like an Australian dominated mission is perhaps worthy of further examination. As I suggest, maybe that would involve Australia's willingness to step back and use third parties more to achieve some of its objectives by possibly supporting contingents from other countries in the Pacific. You are right: the UN is not the only model on the block. There are other models.

Senator HOGG—In respect of stakeholder building and nation building, I do not know whether I incorrectly heard you when you said that there was not a lot of science, that we are in the dark and that we suffer from a lot of local area deficiencies. Is that correct?

Prof. Goldsmith—When I say 'We suffer from local area deficiencies,' I mean that we would benefit by having a lot more. It is not to say that there are not areas of expertise at the ANU and other Australian universities, but, as another question drew out earlier, getting that knowledge to filter down through to the operational ranks so that the people who engage on the ground are also imbued with some of that knowledge is the point that I was trying to make there.

Senator HOGG—Is this not so much about intelligence gathering but about intelligence dissemination? In other words, do we have in place the correct and appropriate functions which can gather the material in the first instance, whether it be through our intelligence organisations,

through DFAT or through academic research for dissemination? Is there a lack here or is there just a lack in the way in which the information is passed on to those who are going to be in the field?

Prof. Goldsmith—There is a structural limitation in training people for the field as to how much you can imbue in them when they have no background. Perhaps one of the messages to be drawn out here is that we should be thinking about longer term cadres of individuals who are prepped or on standby for future engagements so that we do not have to teach them pigeon English in two days or teach them about Timor's culture in a week. We would have cadres of people who would be able to do some of this work, having been imbued over a longer period of time and having the language skills. The point about language skills has to be a fundamental one. How do you build trusting relationships where you cannot talk to the people? We have all seen the news clippings of American soldiers shouting in English at Iraqis—there is a fundamental blockage of communication. That is one way to think about overcoming the problem. Maybe there is a lot of information which is not, as I said, getting used or disseminated as much. But there is still much more to be learnt about the politics of some of these places—witness the events of last year.

Senator HOGG—Does that mean more academic research or does it mean better intelligence through the likes of DFAT or the Australian intelligence organisations that might be active?

Prof. Goldsmith—I suspect you need enhancement in all of those three. Perhaps that is to indicate that there should be greater opportunities for interaction and exchange across those levels. To some extent, I think there is probably a silo effect or a necessary bureaucratic separation between some of those agencies and the universities. I would never argue against the need for more academic research in an area like this.

Senator HOGG—I did not think you would.

CHAIR—Professor Goldsmith, thank you very much for the time you have been able to give the committee today. I think we have all found it extremely helpful.

Prof. Goldsmith—Thank you.

CHAIR—The committee will take a very brief suspension for one or two minutes for a private meeting.

[1.54 pm]

CRAWFORD, Rear Admiral Ian McLean, National President, Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council

CHAIR—Welcome. I understand that a copy of today's opening statement has been provided to you. Do you have any questions about that document?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Not at all.

CHAIR—We also have before us a copy of your submission, which has been numbered 10, from the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council. It is of course now a public document. Do you need to make any amendments to that submission?

Rear Adm. Crawford—No, I do not.

CHAIR—I invite you to make a brief opening statement and we will go to questions after that.

Rear Adm. Crawford—Thank you. Good afternoon, Senators. I thought it would be helpful if I gave you a background to AVADSC so that you can see the capacity in which I am appearing before you today. I will comment on the variety of deployments that the Australian Defence Force has been involved in since the Second World War, and what this means for recognition, which is so important. Recognition, of course, is a great factor in morale, mental health, wellbeing and peace of mind of veterans, which is what interests us in the Australian defence forces council. I will highlight the contribution that those deployed overseas have made to the national objectives of this country and how we are seen internationally, with implications for diplomatic and trade factors and the reputation of Australia as a good world-community citizen. Finally, I will highlight the importance of our forces deployed overseas being adequately equipped, trained and prepared for the task.

AVADSC was set up in the 1970s because the Minister for Repatriation wanted a chairman to bring together the ex-service organisations so that they could create a joint representation to government. This had benefits for the veteran community and for the government, instead of having the various veteran organisations fighting amongst themselves and coming up with different positions. With the agreement of the ex-service organisations, the Australian Services Council was formed—as it was initially called. The first independent chairman was Air Marshal Sir John McCauley. He was succeeded by Lieutenant General Sir Mervyn Brogan. After six years, he was succeeded by Rear Admiral Guy Griffiths, who stayed there for 23 years. I took over in 2004. The important factor there is that the chairman brought together ex-service organisations and tried to resolve the differing issues. The reason I mention this is that I appear before you as the national president of this organisation. I chair meetings. I have no direct involvement and firsthand experience of the matters of peacekeeping and peacemaking. Within our structure, the APPVA, whom you will be speaking to later, is a member of our Victorian State Advisory Council.

I will go now to the variety of deployments since the Second World War. Of course, we all recognise that in the Second World War the whole nation was mobilised for the task of meeting the threat. Since then, we have been overseas in Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf, East Timor and now Iraq and Afghanistan. We have been involved in an enormous range of peacekeeping, peacemaking, humanitarian and law and order operations—all with different characteristics. I am quite sure that in the future there will be a greater variety of operations, and therefore we have to envisage what the characteristics of these are. We seem to have made provision in the deployments in detail to recognise the characteristics of each of these operations. This has been done so that the sailors, soldiers, airmen, nurses and humanitarian people get recognition, and that recognition is so important to their morale.

It seems to me that, with the plethora of conditions, it is very difficult to be precise in detailing the characteristics of each of these operations for the purposes of recognition. I would encourage a more general approach, that when people serve overseas on operations—outside, of course, the normal training and diplomatic postings—there would be a generality of recognition when they are involved in non-warlike operations instead of trying to precisely define each one. The problem with trying to define each one is that there will be endless claims of anomalies and special circumstances. I see from the APPVA's submission to you that they are seeking to have certain operations redefined in order to bring them into a certain category of recognition. I think this does not do justice to the nature of our people who are employed overseas and it takes up a lot of administrative time in trying to get this detail.

One common feature which I think needs to be accepted by government and government agencies and be projected by government to all Australian people is that, in committing Australians to overseas operational situations, we are contributing to the way Australia is perceived internationally. That is so important. This includes diplomatic and economic factors as features of our national strategy, with implications for the general economy and trade as other countries note our preparedness to be involved as a good citizen of the world community. These factors affect the lifestyle of all Australians, to the extent to which we are recognised overseas. The readiness of government to commit Australians to a variety of non-warlike operations is influenced by the calibre and qualities of those in readiness for the deployment. These people need to be looked after before, during and after their deployment. Peacekeeping operations and the people who are deployed need to be recognised for their contribution to national objectives. These people make an enormous contribution to the way we are seen. Recognition is important. It affects the morale and wellbeing of the people when they are deployed and their peace of mind when they have finished their defence service.

Sadly, I have seen the way that recognition is debated amongst many veterans. There is a propensity for old soldiers to disparage the veterans of more recent operations than the one they were involved in. The particular war that I was involved in was the Korean War. When the veterans came back from Korea, they were not recognised by the RSL. This is sad, and it was projected again to the veterans of the Vietnam War. I think you will find that a lot of the old soldiers have some misgivings about peacekeeping, peacemaking and humanitarian aid operations, and, undoubtedly, law and order. There is no doubt in my mind that the experience of so many of our people who were involved in these operations has a traumatic effect on the individuals, as with a lot of the experiences in the Second World War, Korea, Vietnam and more recent conflicts. Recognition through medals—not a plethora of medals, which seems to be sought in some areas—is so important.

I also want to talk about the rules of engagement and the orders for opening fire. I noticed that Paul Copeland of the APPVA has given a lot of attention to this. This contributes to the peace of mind of the individuals of the time and the reputation of Australia. When you hear stories of Australian servicemen and servicewomen in peacekeeping or humanitarian aid situations having to stand by where, quite clearly, brutality is underway, and finding it impossible to deal with that situation, I think we do harm to the individuals and to the standing of Australia. I am not sure of the extent to which we can insist that the United Nations have more robust rules of engagement and orders for opening fire, but it can be a condition of our being involved in these operations that we cannot tolerate people having to stand by and see acts of brutality, murder and massacre and not be in a position to do anything about it.

We of course discussed with the APPVA many of the issues we raised in our submission, and they really amount to what is seen as sound military leadership in providing for such matters as messing, accommodation, medical records and logistics—standard provisions in a military environment. What is important is that, with the pressures on the Defence Force today and the multitude of operations, we do make provisions for adequate management issues and that our Defence Force is sufficiently equipped, trained, led and manned at levels appropriate to the tasks and the threat assessments to permit these fundamentals of personnel management to be met. We hear stories that people are being redeployed without sufficient leave and that medical records are inadequate. These are issues of a Defence Force which is under stress to meet its strategic tasks. We see evidence daily of a very well equipped Defence Force, but I think we need the numbers to make sure that we get sufficient rotation of people, rest time and time for training and preparation before they are next deployed. Those are the important issues I bring to you from the point of view of Defence Force participation.

CHAIR—Thank you very much, Admiral Crawford, and thank you for the submission from the council. As you noted in your opening remarks, you have made a number of recommendations pertaining to medical records, health checks, managing family and things like that. Do these essentially derive from complaints or issues raised with your organisation and its constituent bodies? Is that where the evidence for your recommendations comes from?

Rear Adm. Crawford—The evidence for this came directly from my discussions with the APPVA, which, as I said, is a member organisation. A number of the forums I am involved in, dealing with mental health and wellbeing, and my consultations with other veterans and the leaders of other veteran communities at these forums, have led me to believe that the medical records have been inadequate and that, when people are deployed on operations such as this, they can receive their medical treatment from a variety of agencies when they are overseas. It is important that the integrity of those medical records is established immediately after return to Australia or even earlier. Once again, I can only give you an example from the Korean War. We did not have medical services in Korea for the Australian Army; we depended on the Indians. Our records are quite incomplete because of that, and we have had to appeal to veterans from the Indian medical services for information about the casualties, wounds and so forth in the Korean War. The more we get into this international environment of peacemaking and peacekeeping, the more dependent we will be on other agencies for medical services. So it is very important for people's entitlements when they return and for their ongoing service that those medical records are of a very high standard of integrity.

CHAIR—Indeed.

Senator HOGG—It is not simply a matter, surely, of medical records? It is also a matter of long-term health studies of those people who have returned. Has your organisation found that there is a deficiency in long-term health studies covering those people who have served in peacekeeping deployments? Alternatively, is it purely and simply a matter of the records of what they had done by way of service, or is it a combination of both?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Going back to my role as a chairman, I am completely dependent on the issues that people and ex-service organisations bring to me. We have seen the steps being taken by the Director of Health Services in the Department of Defence to improve the preparation and the services following deployment. I was not aware, and my organisation was not aware, of any deficiencies in the health services following people's return to Australia. It has not been represented to us, and I certainly am not aware of it. But I am aware that the Director of the Defence Health Services Division has taken measures to give more structure to, and to go into greater detail about, the support provided to people before they deploy, after they return to Australia and before they redeploy.

Senator HOGG—I accept that, but one of the by-products of serving in peacekeeping forces has been that a number of the participants have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of their participation which does not necessarily manifest itself during the operation or immediately upon their departure from formal service as such. That is why I was asking whether or not this had been raised with your organisation—not that specifically but the need for ongoing, long-term health studies of participants in this sphere of operation to see if there are any genuine and bona fide medical consequences arising from their deployment in peacekeeping. But if you have not been pressed on that issued then that is fine.

Rear Adm. Crawford—No. It has not come to us. I personally have thoughts about mental health and wellbeing. In the 1960s we had a structure—in the Navy it was called the divisional system, in the Army it was called the platoon system and in the Air Force it was called the flight system—where there was a hierarchy of junior NCOs, junior officers, ever present, watching over the welfare of their people. We have taken a lot of those responsibilities away from that hierarchy. We do not live in close proximity the way we did on a ship, in a battalion or in an air station. People disperse, so the vigilance is not there to see any development of a mental health condition. I cannot offer any solution to that, because it is what the Defence Force people want. They want a freer lifestyle. But I can tell you that the individual was under greater observation when we had this close-knit hierarchy of surveillance from junior NCOs, junior officers, leading up to the command. That does not exist to the same extent today.

Senator HOGG—You might like to take this question on notice and put it to your constituent organisations. Do they see the need for long-term health studies of those who have served as peacekeepers such that conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder might be addressed where there is a gap between the departure from the service and the manifesting of the condition?

Rear Adm. Crawford—I will certainly take that on notice. You are aware of course that the Department of Veterans' Affairs is conducting mental health and wellbeing forums and they have brought to it the problems of the peacekeepers as well as the ordinary combat oriented problems.

Senator HOGG—Yes, I accept that to a certain extent but there is nothing rigorously formalised about this. Part of the difficulty is that there are limited numbers in some peacekeeping forces in comparison to those who may have participated, say, in the Korean War or the Vietnam War where they have a better idea of the control group and those who may well be affected as a result of their service. So there are real difficulties in necessarily establishing any posteffects from peacekeeping service, and that is why I raised it. If you have no information, that is fine.

Rear Adm. Crawford—No. Thank you.

Senator MARK BISHOP—In your introductory remarks, you referred to the generality of conditions for all persons serving overseas in non-warlike service and appropriate recognition for that service. Can you tell me what you mean by that?

Rear Adm. Crawford—It is recognition through medals and return-from-active-service badge type recognition. It is also recognition by the nation—and of course that recognition manifests itself in a medal—by the general community and recognition through the media and the government of what these people contribute.

Senator MARK BISHOP—So you are talking about a medal as an example of the symbol of the work that these people do on a particular posting or task?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Are you raising the issue of wages or conditions?

Rear Adm. Crawford—No, certainly not wages and conditions. What I am raising is that the government, through the media, can point out to the general community the worth of the work that these people are doing overseas in establishing the reputation of Australia as willing to get involved in difficult situations in the world and playing its role.

Senator MARK BISHOP—You would be aware that medals are traditionally awarded for one of two reasons: valour or degrees of valour in battle or service in a geographic battle. In terms of the symbol that you are proposing, are you going down the path of that second one?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes, the campaign award.

Senator MARK BISHOP—That is your comparison point?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes. The peacekeepers and peacemakers seem to be seeking a medal for each type of operation. There is such a range of operations that I think a general overseas service medal in this humanitarian, peacekeeping or peacekeeping service is justified rather than trying to cover each individual type of operation.

Senator MARK BISHOP—If I had served in our contingent in Rwanda back in those days or in East Timor in more recent times as part of the ADF, I would have received a medal or badge that recognised my placement in that particular mission, would I not?

Rear Adm. Crawford—If you were in warlike service, you would have received a medal for that warlike service. I am referring to service that is short of warlike service—peacekeeping and peacemaking.

Senator MARK BISHOP—So non-warlike service, peacekeeping type duties in overseas locations?

Rear Adm. Crawford—That is it.

Senator MARK BISHOP—For everyone involved—the cook up to the nurse, sort of thing?

Rear Adm. Crawford—That's it, whether they are AFP or ADF.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I've got you.

Rear Adm. Crawford—It's general recognition.

Senator MARK BISHOP—Thank you.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—If they were ADF they would get an ASM now?

Rear Adm. Crawford—They would get an ASM, an Australian Service Medal.

Senator SANDY MACDONALD—But you are saying a medal for everybody?

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes, a medal for everybody. We are all part of the same group.

Senator MARK BISHOP—That would mean some of the ADF people would get two. They would get the ASM, referred to by Senator Macdonald, plus this new type of symbol that you are proposing.

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes, and it has happened that the ASM is in addition to an existing medal.

Senator MARK BISHOP—I suspect they would not like to lose an existing medal.

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes. As an illustration of that, when I left the Navy I had three or four medals. I have received more medals since I retired from the Navy than in all of my service.

CHAIR—That gives us a very useful perspective, Admiral Crawford. Thank you for that. There is another question that I want to ask you. There is a reference in your submission to living conditions and the suggestion is made that all personnel, whether ADF or AFP, should be dealt with under the same banner. I have seen this myself in Honiara, for example, in the early days of RAMSI. Interestingly, when we asked the Vice-Chief of the Defence Force and his colleagues about this question, he effectively said—and I paraphrase and stand to be corrected by the record—that it didn't really bother the people who were there, they were okay with it and

they just went along with it however it was played out for them respectively. But you make a specific recommendation, and I wonder if you would like to comment on that.

Rear Adm. Crawford—Yes, I would. Once again, we drew on the APPVA for that as members of our organisation. Yes, it is good for morale if all people are living under the same conditions of messing, accommodation and so forth. But the reality is that the messing and the accommodation will be determined by the purpose of the deployment. It is a nice ideal but in reality I think it would be very difficult to achieve.

CHAIR—Thank you for that perspective. As there are no further questions, I thank you very much, Admiral, for the submission of your organisation and for your interest in our inquiry. We are very grateful for that and for your appearance here this afternoon. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Committee adjourned at 2.23 pm