

# Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

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How the Commonwealth of Australia used Palladium's logistics support services to restore peace, law and order





The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is regarded as one of Australia's most successful foreign policy achievements. It is also one of the largest missions that the Australian Federal Government has ever undertaken to support the restoration of peace, law and order in a neighbouring country. Over six and a half years, the Commonwealth of Australia entrusted the management of this mission's logistics support services to Palladium.

## Case Study Snapshot

### Client

Commonwealth of Australia (COA)

### Challenge

The Solomon Islands was plagued with violence, corruption and lawlessness when its government called on the international community for help. Assistance was needed to both stabilise the environment in the short term, and upskill the local police so they could maintain stability over the long-term. A number of nations from across the Pacific region volunteered to help. COA decided to lead the mission, and knew that an in-country base would be needed to support the international contingents. These contingents consisted of

- **Police forces** from Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Niue, the Republic of Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- **Military forces** from Australia, New Zealand, Tonga and Papua New Guinea.
- **Pacific Island personnel** from the Federal States of Micronesia, Samoa, Nauru, Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu.

COA did not have the resources to provide the logistics operations that the in-country base required. Their challenge was to find an experienced contractor who could effectively provide these services.

“I would also like to extend our appreciation to all [Palladium] staff for their unwavering dedication, support and commitment to the RAMSI mission...[the team's support] has ensured that not only [has the base] continued to run smoothly over the years, but also that all members have had three quality square meals a day and have lived in a safe [and] secure environment ”

*Miles Humphrey*

*Australian Federal Police, July 2017*

89%

of the 155 full-time staff employed during the program's final year were locals



### Solution

COA selected Palladium for the delivery of the base's logistics support services because of the company's proven past performance and value for money approach. When the original contract was nearing its end and logistics support for an additional term was required, COA chose Palladium again after witnessing the Australian company's flexibility and commitment to continuous improvement.

Palladium's 24/7 services included supply chain management, base management, catering and special project management services. The business not only ensured that the program stayed on track and within budget, but also offered cost savings to improve value for money.

COA found that Palladium's surge capacity was particularly useful during training operations and government elections. This flexibility to scale up and down operations helped COA to accommodate up to 800 personnel on the base without affecting the efficacy of the services provided.

The program's logistics support services were consistently delivered in a smooth, transparent and professional manner which respected the local culture. As a result COA and the international contingents were able to focus their efforts on achieving their stabilisation and capacity building goals.

### Positive Impact

The team stabilised the environment and helped the local Solomon Islands police force to become a capable, accountable and professional unit. When RAMSI concluded, the local police were able to resume responsibility for their country's policing and security so long-term law, order and stability could be maintained.

24/7

logistics support services were provided

“[RAMSI] was overwhelmingly successful in achieving its primary objective of restoring law and order...Today, Solomon Islands has a very low crime rate by global standards and one of the lowest rates of gun crime in the world”

*John Howard, Former Prime Minister of Australia*

*Sydney Morning Herald, June 2017*

14,506

laundry loads were completed over RAMSI's final year



## Catering Services

High client satisfaction ratings were consistently received for Palladium's catering services. Some diners even went so far as to state that the kitchen had prepared the best pizza, ribs, porridge, seafood, cream puffs and pumpkin soup that they had ever tasted.

“Tonights meal was an absolute taste sensation. Every dish was excellent!!”

“Last night's dinner was fantastic! Thank you for lovely vegetarian options :)”

“Awesome meal as always!”

“I give chef 5 michelin stars thank you!”

*Client comment sheet responses*

36,382

meals were served on average per quarter over RAMSI's final year

0%

of the quarterly catering comments were negative on average over RAMSI's final year

Over RAMSI's final year an average of 108 diners were served per day, and 201 catering comments were submitted per quarter. 99% of these comments were positive, 0% were negative, and the remaining 1% were requests for alternate meals.

COA consistently provided positive feedback because Palladium ensured that they were fed three quality meals a day over the duration of the contract. The quality, quantity, variety and nutritional value of the meals always followed the National Health and Medical Research Council's Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults, and Palladium implemented a number of actions to ensure that these standards were consistently upheld. These actions included climate controlling the supply chain process, regularly undertaking rigorous microbiological product and environmental tests, and providing variety through a four week cyclic menu that took advantage of seasonal produce.

COA also had meal flexibility because Palladium offered a range of catering services. These included hot box meals, cut lunches, hamper meals, barbecue packs, sandwich packs and catering for functions. Additional variety was provided through theme nights, some of which included seafood night, barbecue night, pizza night, German night, Indian curry night and Mexican night.

In addition to flexibility, value for money was an important consideration for the catering department. One example that demonstrated this was the team's approach to a bain marie that needed to be repaired. If the standard procedures had been followed, the equipment would have been deemed unrepairable because of the high costs associated with the manufacturer's parts. However, Palladium presented an alternate solution that involved retrofitting cheaper, non-genuine parts to maximise bain marie's lifespan and COA's value for money. COA accepted the proposal, and the bain marie became a fully functional piece of equipment that continued to service the base.





“In the last quarter we responded to over 580 procurement requests totalling just under 800,000 AUD. The majority of procurement these days tends to lean towards local procurement, which for us in the last quarter was about 83%”

*Neil Crossley*

*RAMSI Supply Chain Manager*

*June 2017*

## Supply Chain Management

COA achieved their stabilisation and capacity building goals because their contractor reliably and flexibly provided the supply chain services that the base needed to operate. These services included freight forwarding, warehousing, procurement, inventory management and container management.

1,114m<sup>3</sup>

of sea freight and 311m<sup>3</sup> of air freight were imported over the program's final year

2,000+

procurement requests a year worth over AUD 1 million were actioned by the team



COA's consumables and rations—including dry and perishable items—were stored in 20 foot containers during the program. Over RAMSI's final year, 504 containers of these items were managed by the supply chain management team. The containers provided cost-effective warehousing solutions, and offered COA the ability to easily scale the levels of stock as the program's needs changed. The team also helped COA to maximise their supply chain value for money whenever an opportunity arose. When a tank that was part of the sewage treatment plant collapsed, the obvious solution was to order an off-the-shelf replacement tank. Instead, the team sealed a container in fibre glass so it could be used as a replacement tank. The replacement had double the life span of a regular tank and maximised COA's value for money.

Palladium also assisted the military contingent with a number of their specific needs. This included arranging the shipment of weapons, ammunition and dangerous goods; and assisting with mobilisation and demobilisation whenever their teams needed to be rotated.



## Base Services

Palladium provided a wide range of services to keep the base running smoothly.

### Facilities and Grounds Management Services

- ✓ Accommodation management
- ✓ Waste collection and disposal
- ✓ Pest control and feral animal removal
- ✓ Transport management
- ✓ Base power supply management
- ✓ Maritime vessel management
- ✓ Laundry and cleaning services management
- ✓ Recreational and fitness facility management
- ✓ Internet management
- ✓ Security management

### Maintenance Services

- ✓ Plumbing repairs
- ✓ Carpentry restorations
- ✓ Electrical fixes
- ✓ Air conditioning and refrigeration repairs
- ✓ Generator repairs
- ✓ Appliance and fire extinguisher inspections
- ✓ Vehicle safety inspections and repairs
- ✓ Swimming pool and lawn maintenance

0

hours of lost time to injuries over the program's final year

169

vehicle safety inspections were conducted over the last year of the contract

2,605

passengers on average were transported in taxis during each quarter of RAMSI's final year

>99%

internet availability on average during RAMSI's final year

2,642

gym sessions took place each quarter on average over the program's last year

5,233

air conditioning, 794 carpentry and 1,175 electrical tasks were performed over RAMSI's final year

### Recreational and Fitness Facility Management Services

A range of recreational and fitness facilities were maintained by Palladium to keep COA's base community fit and healthy. These facilities included a fully equipped gym, spin room, swimming pool, tennis courts, fitness trail, beach volleyball court and a bowling green. The company also maintained the fitness equipment on the base, and in RAMSI's final year this amounted to 22 tennis racquets, 15 mountain bikes, 12 golf clubs and 8 sparring gloves.

### Transport Management Services

A number of transport options were available to COA including a taxi service, bus service, fleet service and inter-island sea transport service. The taxi service was a convenient option for those that required a driver, including the children of COA personnel who needed to be driven to and from school. During RAMSI's final year, the team transported an average of 2,605 taxi passengers and conducted 440 school runs every quarter.

If staff preferred to drive themselves, a fleet of 116 vehicles were available. Palladium ensured the safety of these vehicles through safety inspection and repair services, and maintained the stock of fuel that provided convenient kerbside refuelling.





### Base Service Savings

COA were presented with a variety of innovative proposals throughout the program that provided cost savings and maximised value for money. One example was the water treatment proposal that saved COA AUD 20,000 in the year that followed the proposals implementation. The water in the Solomon Islands was very hard and contained minerals that tended to accumulate. This build-up corroded equipment and reduced their efficiency and longevity. Palladium had been using water softening salts and water softening units to mitigate the problem, but the team decided to investigate alternate solutions that could potentially provide better efficacy, availability and value for money.

**\$20,000**

was saved in the first year  
after a water treatment  
innovation was proposed

The team found that magnetic water conditioners and replacement filter media could be purchased at a one-off cost, and that this would be lower than the annual cost of importing water softening salts. An added benefit was that the magnetic water conditioners wouldn't cause shipping container corrosion, unlike the salts. Palladium also found that the magnetic water conditioners could improve the lifespan of the existing water softening units. COA accepted the proposal, and not only saved AUD \$20,000 in the first year, but also reduced their costs and increased the lifespan of their existing investments in the years that followed.

**\$20,000**

per specialist visit was saved  
when Palladium's electrician  
installed internet connectivity  
on diagnostic software

Additional cost savings were realised when Palladium's electrician installed internet connectivity on the diagnostic software of the generators. This enabled the manufacturer's electricians to remotely access, diagnose and fix any issues that arose. This installation removed the need to bring in costly specialists who had previously cost approximately AUD 20,000 per visit.



\$111m

worth of special projects were managed

480+

projects were completed

## Special Projects

Palladium completed AUD 111 million worth of special logistics projects for COA. Over the six and a half years of the program the company

- ✓ Constructed Honiara's first fire station
- ✓ Built five police stations and a police headquarters
- ✓ Created armoury buildings
- ✓ Built a safe space for women to report cases of sexual assault
- ✓ Constructed a forensic building
- ✓ Organised new cell blocks and evidence storage facilities
- ✓ Upgraded the CCTV
- ✓ Built boat ramps
- ✓ Procured police station furniture
- ✓ Set up a sports carnival
- ✓ Provided solar power charging stations

Solomon Island businesses were engaged when Palladium worked on these special projects. This helped COA to build local business capacity, and directly benefited the Solomon Islands economy.

Does your program need logistics support services?

Contact Palladium on +61 2 9526 8777 or at [LogisticsInfo@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:LogisticsInfo@thepalladiumgroup.com) for an obligation-free consultation.





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For the past 52 years, we have been making Positive Impact possible. With a team of more than 2,500 employees operating in 90 plus countries and a global network of over 35,000 technical experts, Palladium has improved—and is committed to continuing to improve—businesses, economies, societies and most importantly people's lives.

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