

Taking our place in the International community

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) has always had a strong tradition of supporting overseas deployments of police to the world's trouble spots.

Over recent years the Ethical Standards Command (ESC) has managed and supported officers deployed internationally as part of regional and multi-national police forces. Last year some of those officers returned from East Timor and the Solomon Islands where they served with distinction with Australia's International Deployment Groups.

The ESC's role extended not only to sending letters and correspondence to these officers but providing vital links to the QPS and the outside world.

Ms Susan Kirkland of the Ethical Practice Branch was the ESC contact for the members working overseas. She said she maintained a direct link between the officers and their friends and work colleagues.

"It was great to hear how appreciative the officers were in receiving parcels from home and work updates including the *Police Bulletin* magazine, the *Queensland Police Service Gazette* and a little bit of local news," Ms Kirkland said.

"I quickly learnt how important it was for our members to receive this contact from home."

Officers returning from the Solomon Islands, where they were part of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) were singled out by the outgoing RAMSI Special Coordinator James Batley for their professionalism and dedication. The officers survived ethnic riots which destroyed the commercial heart of Honiara and assisted with the earthquake and following tsunami damage which saw nearly 100 Solomon Islanders killed.

One RAMSI officer praised for his outstanding leadership skills was Senior Sergeant Bruce Kuhn, from Far Northern police region. Senior Sergeant Kuhn was promoted to Acting Superintendent in RAMSI's Participating Police Force (PPF), taking control of all PPF operational police within the country. Twelve months on, Senior Sergeant Kuhn has fond memories of his time with RAMSI and his contact with other Pacific Island police officers.

By Acting Inspector Mark Stewart,
Ethical Standards Command



Stepping up to the challenge

Seven weeks training in Canberra, a few days at home and then inbound to Honiara—who would have thought?

My interest in working in the international arena stemmed back to the '80s when I became aware of police officers who had worked in Cypress on secondment in the '60s. I also knew some officers from Cairns who were already in the Solomons. My opportunity came in 2006 and it sounded too good not to apply.

I had worked for many years in Cape York and the Torres Strait—solid experience which helped towards being accepted—however the Solomons was to prove the most picturesque country I have ever seen. It is made up of 900 tropical islands with active volcanoes and WWII war relics everywhere from the battle between American and Japanese forces. I spent some of

my recreation time scuba diving on Japanese warships, planes and submarines within a short drive of the city, straight off the beach.

Honiara City itself has a population of about 50,000 with 300 officers on the northern side of Guadalcanal, the scene of one of the biggest sea battles between US and Japanese ships. Up to 40 ships were sunk in one night—hence the name 'Iron Bottom Sound'.

Initially I was placed as Team Leader, Honiara, coordinating the capacity building of the Solomon Islands Police Force (SIPF) in the city in general duties policing, harbour patrol, traffic,

From left: Senior Sergeant Bruce Kuhn visits a remote village; a makeshift police station; riots in Honiara.

