

SUVA (regional)

COVERING: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the territories of the Pacific



ICRC regional delegation ICRC mission ICRC office

Since 2001, ICRC operations in the Pacific have been carried out by the Suva regional delegation. With the National Societies, it assists governments in ratifying and implementing IHL treaties and promotes respect for IHL and other international norms among armed and security forces, as well as among academic circles, the media and civil society. The ICRC works to ensure that victims of violence in Papua New Guinea receive emergency aid and medical care, while it visits detainees there and elsewhere in the region. It helps National Societies build their emergency response capacities.

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

In 2014:

- ▶ some violence-affected communities in the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea met their basic needs through essential items/gardening tools donated by Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society/ICRC teams
- ▶ with ICRC support, first-aiders and some health facilities in the Highlands enhanced their services, such as the provision of care to victims of sexual violence that took place during intercommunal fighting
- ▶ the authorities in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea adopted a policy – developed with ICRC expertise – aimed at clarifying the fate of persons missing from the past conflict and addressing their families' needs
- ▶ the Australian authorities/military and the Australian Red Cross worked with the ICRC to promote IHL implementation, for instance by publishing a report on the protection of medical services during combat
- ▶ Australia, New Zealand and Samoa ratified the Arms Trade Treaty

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)	
Protection	1,089
Assistance	1,471
Prevention	1,750
Cooperation with National Societies	1,493
General	-
	5,803

of which: Overheads 354

IMPLEMENTATION RATE	
Expenditure/yearly budget	99%

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	11
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	29

YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Red Cross messages (RCMs)	
RCMs collected	7
RCMs distributed	23
Phone calls facilitated between family members	13
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	9
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	2,765
Detainees visited and monitored individually	90
Number of visits carried out	25
Number of places of detention visited	17
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	78
RCMs distributed	40
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	3

ASSISTANCE	2014 Targets (up to)	Achieved	
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)			
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	5,000	4,598
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	2,000	1,391
Health			
Health centres supported	Structures	2	1

CONTEXT

The persistent threat of natural disasters and the fragility of national economies, and their often serious consequences for people, remained matters of concern in the Pacific region.

In Papua New Guinea, criminality and intercommunal fighting persisted, necessitating ad hoc deployment of additional police forces to enforce law and order, particularly in the Highlands region and in tension-prone areas around gas/gold extraction sites. The result was often injuries/death, displacement and/or damage to homes/property. In the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, many families still had no news of relatives missing since the 1989–2001 crisis and armed conflict; their specific needs remained unmet.

Thousands of migrants and asylum seekers intercepted off the Australian coast and held in processing centres in Nauru and on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea still awaited resolution of their cases. The Nauru government began granting refugee status to some of these people, enabling them to leave the centre and settle elsewhere on the island; in Papua New Guinea, plans for the migrants' resettlement were still being finalized. There were clashes between the authorities and migrants at the Manus Island centre after migrants protested about the uncertainty surrounding their fate.

Fiji held its first general elections since 2006. The Solomon Islands and Tonga also held elections.

The Australian and New Zealand governments maintained their strong involvement in humanitarian affairs.

Countries in the region provided troops for peacekeeping operations and/or international coalitions.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC regional delegation in Suva, together with the National Societies, continued to promote humanitarian principles, IHL and other international norms among the authorities, armed forces/police and other parties concerned. It focused on addressing humanitarian needs arising from past conflict and ongoing intercommunal violence in parts of Papua New Guinea.

In Papua New Guinea, the ICRC continued to assist people affected by intercommunal fighting in remote Highlands districts. Leaders of these communities, local authorities and the ICRC discussed humanitarian principles, such as ensuring people's access to health care and distinguishing fighters from those not/no longer taking part in the fighting, on the basis of reports of incidents. The ICRC helped some violence-affected people rebuild their homes and secure their food supply, with tools, household essentials and agricultural implements distributed by Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society/ICRC teams. Wounded and sick people obtained care/treatment from National Society/ICRC-trained first-aiders and at a community-built health post. ICRC support for some key parties concerned enabled them to provide suitable care for victims of sexual violence that took place during intercommunal fighting. The National Society/ICRC constructed/restored water systems, improving people's access to safe water.

ICRC-facilitated meetings/workshops involving the authorities, civil society actors, other parties concerned and the ICRC led to the government in Bougainville adopting a policy for ascertaining the fate of people who went missing in past conflict.

Delegates visited detainees at selected places of detention in Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, including migrants held at processing centres. Following the visits, conducted in line with standard ICRC procedures, delegates shared findings/recommendations confidentially with the authorities concerned to help them improve detainees' treatment and living conditions.

The ICRC provided technical support for governments in the region to implement IHL; Australia, New Zealand and Samoa ratified the Arms Trade Treaty. The Australian and New Zealand authorities, including their national IHL committees, continued to contribute to the "Strengthening IHL" process; they also promoted humanitarian issues/concerns in their diplomatic representations. In line with the Health Care in Danger project, the Australian Red Cross and the ICRC published a report summarizing the views of military experts on protecting medical services during combat operations.

At ICRC presentations/training courses, military/police officers learnt more about IHL and other norms applicable to their duties. The Papua New Guinean police and the ICRC held workshops on the proper use of force in law enforcement operations; military personnel taking part in such operations attended one. Members of the Australian and Fijian armed forces participated in international events on incorporating IHL in military operational planning and on the application of IHL at sea. Fijian police troops preparing for the elections attended briefings on law enforcement operations. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) shared with the ICRC lessons learnt in Afghanistan in connection with the humanitarian aspects of the ADF's operations there.

The ICRC maintained regular bilateral/multilateral dialogue/contact with the authorities, armed/security forces, members of civil society – such as academics – and the National Societies in the region. It encouraged and worked with them to promote humanitarian principles/IHL, and to raise awareness of issues/concerns such as migration, among various audiences.

The ICRC, in coordination with the Australian Red Cross, the New Zealand Red Cross and the International Federation, provided technical/financial support for Pacific Island National Societies to enhance their capacities to promote IHL/humanitarian principles and carry out their various activities. The National Societies in the Marshall Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu took steps towards obtaining recognition.

CIVILIANS

Community leaders and local authorities discuss application of humanitarian principles during fighting

Intercommunal violence in the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea continued to cause injuries and death, destruction of homes and livelihoods, and displacement. Leaders of two warring communities in remote districts and some local authorities discussed humanitarian principles and their application in intercommunal clashes, after the ICRC presented them with documented allegations of wounded people unable to access health facilities and of a lack of distinction between fighters and people not/no longer taking part in the fighting. Some officials expressed appreciation for National Society/ICRC efforts to further their communities' understanding of humanitarian principles; however, dialogue with them and with other high-level Highlands authorities on broader humanitarian concerns needed to be developed further.

The police and the ICRC discussed the proper use of force during law enforcement operations, and jointly held workshops to help police commanders, notably those assigned to tension-prone areas, reinforce their knowledge/application of internationally recognized policing standards.

People avail themselves of services at a community-built first-aid/health post

With ICRC support, communities became more capable of administering first aid to people wounded in the fighting. Thirty individuals, including fighters and women, acquired first-aid skills at National Society/ICRC training sessions. Some of those who had previously received training and first-aid materials also learnt to use an ICRC template to document their activities.

Some 7,350 residents of Uma, in the Kagua Erave district, including 930 women who availed themselves of ante/post-natal consultations, as well as people from neighbouring areas/clans, began to use a first-aid/health post built by the community with ICRC support in 2013; the facility opened in March. Children were vaccinated and some patients were referred to higher-level care. Two other health posts received ad hoc donations of medical equipment.

Discussions began with community leaders, local government/health officials and other partners, about a project to build another health centre.

Some health actors enhance their provision of care to victims of sexual violence

One hospital in the Southern Highlands received medical/office supplies to help it to provide suitable, good-quality care to victims of sexual violence that occurred during intercommunal fighting; one health worker received training in this regard. The ICRC continued to study the incidence of sexual violence during fighting and to seek ways, with other parties concerned, to tackle the consequences.

IDPs meet some basic needs

In the Kagua Erave and Mount Hagen districts, some 6,250 people (1,250 households) displaced by intercommunal fighting eased their conditions, thanks to National Society/ICRC-donated tools, household essentials and agricultural implements. In interviews conducted during follow-up visits, Kague Erave communities, including beneficiaries of distributions made in 2012, confirmed that the donations allowed them to rebuild their homes and gardens, and to secure/restore their dwellings and food supply in accordance with their cultural norms.

People had safe water following ICRC-supported construction/rehabilitation of water supply systems: specifically, the piping of water to a government-run health centre serving a population of 18,000, and new rainwater collection systems in two communities hosting large numbers of displaced people.

On the completion of an ICRC-supported National Society project begun in 2013, a community affected by a landslide in the Highlands regained access to its water supply.

Bougainvillean authorities and other parties concerned study the issue of missing persons

At various events, the local authorities in Bougainville, representatives of the Papua New Guinean government, former parties to the conflict, NGOs, diplomats, other parties concerned and the ICRC discussed the issue of people reported missing in relation to past conflict in Bougainville. This led to the Bougainvillean government adopting a policy – developed with ICRC expertise – for ascertaining the fate of these people and addressing their families' needs. Representatives from various branches of government and other pertinent bodies formed a consultative committee to discuss implementation of the policy.

An assessment of the needs of 20 families of missing persons provided information to guide future action. It confirmed that the families mainly needed psychological support, particularly for conducting commemoration ceremonies and, for those who knew the location of their relatives' remains, for burying them. With ad hoc ICRC support, some of the families organized two ceremonies at sea and initiated awareness-raising activities to further public understanding of their situation.

National Societies enhance their emergency response capacities

Papua New Guinea Red Cross instructors boosted their first-aid teaching skills through ICRC-supported training. Ahead of elections in their respective countries, the National Societies in Fiji and the Solomon Islands enhanced their emergency response capacities by adopting the Safer Access Framework with ICRC training and financial/material assistance.

Dispersed families in the region kept in touch through family-links services offered by the National Societies/ICRC.

CIVILIANS	NAURU	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	SOLOMON ISLANDS
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			
RCMs collected		6	1
RCMs distributed		23	
Phone calls facilitated between family members	7	6	
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		52	
<i>of whom women</i>		16	
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance - girls</i>		6	
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance - boys</i>		13	
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		9	
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		56	
<i>of whom women</i>		16	
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance - girls</i>		9	
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance - boys</i>		11	

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

As priority was given to assisting victims of intercommunal violence (see *Civilians*), the ICRC was unable to carry out a number of planned activities in behalf of people deprived of their freedom or to deepen its network of contacts among detention authorities. Nevertheless, some detainees in Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands received visits from delegates, conducted in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures. Migrants intercepted off the Australian coast and held at a processing centre in Nauru received joint Australian Red Cross/ICRC visits; others at a processing centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea received ICRC visits with Australian Red Cross support.

Delegates confidentially shared findings and recommendations with prison authorities to help them improve detainees' treatment and living conditions. Notably, government bodies in Australia, Nauru and Papua New Guinea received reports on the situation of thousands of migrants held at the processing centres, based on findings from the visits and as part of ongoing dialogue, for instance on issues/concerns surrounding the outbreak of violence at the Manus Island centre and the resettlement of asylum seekers.

Discussions between Australian authorities and the ICRC on the latter's offer to visit people held in relation to federal anti-terrorism laws continued.

Only one person previously held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, who had been resettled in Palau, remained in the country. The former internee continued to receive ICRC support for his communications needs and to follow up his situation with the authorities concerned.

Some detainees in Papua New Guinea benefit from hygiene kits and improved access to water, and receive family visits

In Papua New Guinea, 1,653 detainees had better access to water following ICRC-supported projects to improve the water supply at two places of detention. Distributions of medical equipment planned for 2014 were completed earlier, in 2013.

Some 70 detainees held at Highlands police stations in Papua New Guinea found some relief in ICRC-distributed hygiene kits, sleeping mats and/or recreational materials.

Through the efforts of National Society/ICRC teams, detainees at correctional institutions maintained contact with their families in Bougainville through RCMs; 29 detainees from Bougainville and 22 in the Solomon Islands received family visits.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Pacific States ratify the Arms Trade Treaty

Bilateral/multilateral relations with the region's governments helped promote IHL implementation and awareness of humanitarian issues.

Australia, New Zealand and Samoa ratified the Arms Trade Treaty. Legislation in New Zealand implementing Additional Protocol III came into effect. The New Zealand government and other partners organized a workshop that sought to encourage ratification of the Rome Statute; at this event, Pacific States and the ICRC shared their experiences in drafting legislation.

The Australian and New Zealand authorities, including their national IHL committees, contributed their views during consultations linked to the "Strengthening IHL" process; they also drew attention to humanitarian issues in their diplomatic representations. They, along with the National Societies in both countries, the International Federation and the ICRC, followed up Pacific States' implementation of pledges and made other preparations for the 32nd International Conference in 2015.

The Papua New Guinean government and the ICRC discussed a headquarters agreement formalizing the ICRC's presence in the country; no progress was made in reviving the national IHL committee.

The Australian Defence Force and the ICRC discuss lessons learnt in Afghanistan

The Australian military/police forces and the ICRC kept up their dialogue on IHL-related humanitarian and operational issues. The ADF shared with the ICRC lessons learnt in Afghanistan in connection with the humanitarian aspects of the ADF's operations there – with a view to incorporating them in the military's doctrine/training and to using them as a basis for planning future cooperation. Australian military training institutes fostered discussion of IHL-related issues, such as those linked to new technologies in warfare; they also incorporated ICRC presentations in their courses.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	FJI	NAURU	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	SOLOMON ISLANDS
ICRC visits				
Detainees visited	18	1,289	1,450	8
<i>of whom women</i>		378	28	
<i>of whom minors</i>		181	7	
Detainees visited and monitored individually	18	36	28	8
<i>of whom women</i>		7		
<i>of whom boys</i>		2	1	
Detainees newly registered	8	26	28	
<i>of whom women</i>		7		
<i>of whom boys</i>		2	1	
Number of visits carried out	6	8	9	2
Number of places of detention visited	4	3	8	2
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected	1	3	70	4
RCMs distributed	1	2	37	
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	3			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support			29	22

The Papua New Guinea Defence Force and the ICRC pursued discussions on the issue of persons unaccounted for in Bougainville (see *Civilians*) and on areas of cooperation, including training for military officers engaged in law enforcement. Military personnel/police units attended a workshop on internationally recognized standards for law enforcement organized by the ICRC and the police. Police commanders assigned to tension-prone areas and tribal/clan fighters also attended workshops/briefings on the use of force and principles of humanity, respectively (see *Civilians*). Police officers learnt more from ICRC booklets on police conduct.

Military/police personnel in the region, including high-ranking Australian military officials and military/security personnel preparing for the elections in Fiji, furthered their understanding of the ICRC and IHL and other applicable norms at briefings/courses held locally and abroad. Australian and Fijian military personnel exchanged views with their counterparts at international seminars/workshops on IHL considerations in military operational planning (see *International law and policy*) and on the application of IHL at sea (see *Kuala Lumpur*). Peacekeepers, including troops from 15 countries undergoing training in Australia, attended ICRC-facilitated predeployment briefings.

Published report outlines how military forces can protect health workers and patients more effectively

The Australian Red Cross and the ICRC published a report summarizing the findings of a year-long consultation process – organized with the Australian government in connection with the Health Care in Danger project and which included a 2013 workshop – involving military experts from around the world that sought to identify methods for protecting medical personnel/facilities during combat operations. During a panel discussion and at meetings, government officials, NGO representatives and members of the medical/academic communities discussed the subject and planned initiatives to promote protection for medical services.

Public sector and civil society in Australia and New Zealand kindle interest in humanitarian issues

Authorities, think-tanks, academic institutions, civil society organizations and the Australian and New Zealand National Societies helped promote IHL among various audiences. In addition to advocating the protection of medical services, they raised awareness of such domestic/global humanitarian issues as the welfare of detainees, migration, the recruitment of child soldiers and the impact of war on women. They highlighted matters of humanitarian concern and incorporated ICRC presentations in their programmes/activities, which included workshops on civil-military relations, experts' round-tables on security/political considerations in carrying out humanitarian work, exhibits and publication/distribution of informational materials.

At training sessions, 30 journalists learnt more about reporting on conflicts and on the Movement's activities. Media- and think-tank-affiliated researchers/professionals drew attention to humanitarian issues and the Movement's work, using ICRC resources to prepare and publish articles via various media, including online.

University students in Papua New Guinea added to their knowledge of IHL with the help of lectures and ICRC-donated books. Those from Australia and New Zealand did so at ICRC-facilitated sessions within their curricula for international relations and conflict and peace studies or at moot court competitions, at local and regional levels (see *Beijing*); the Jean-Pictet Competition on IHL was held in Portugal instead of Australia as originally planned.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Pacific Island National Societies, together with the Australian and New Zealand National Societies, continued to improve their capacities – for instance through a regional communications workshop – to promote IHL and humanitarian principles and carry out their activities. They enhanced their emergency response capacities with ICRC support (see *Civilians*). They were guided by common Movement approaches to humanitarian priorities, developed and discussed during regular Movement events/meetings, including joint orientations/briefings for newly elected leaders of National Societies.

National Societies worked to strengthen their legal base; those in the Marshall Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu took steps towards obtaining formal recognition: for instance, they completed the drafting/revision of their constitutions according to Movement standards or submitted drafts of related legislation to their governments for review.

Several Pacific Island National Societies, such as those of the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu, reinforced their leadership/governance structures with the support of the Movement's Pacific Governance Enhancement Programme Working Group and/or other Movement partners.

With Australian Red Cross support, a number of Pacific Island National Societies developed or prepared to publish IHL handbooks for parliamentarians.

The Australian Red Cross welcomed the ICRC's suggestions for developing a strategy for its work abroad and for revising its approach to enhancing the family-links capabilities of Pacific Island National Societies. Staff interested in working in overseas operations attended International Federation/ICRC briefings.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Red Cross messages (RCMs)¹					
			UAMs/SCs*		
RCMs collected		7			
RCMs distributed		23			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		13			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons²					
			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		52	16	6	13
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		9			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		56	16	9	11
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)³					
ICRC visits					
			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		2,765	406	188	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		90	7		3
Detainees newly registered		62	7		3
Number of visits carried out		25			
Number of places of detention visited		17			
Restoring family links					
RCMs collected		78			
RCMs distributed		40			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		3			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		51			

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands

2. Papua New Guinea

3. Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)¹				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	4,598	40%	20%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries		
		4,598		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,391	19%	23%
Health				
Health centres supported	Structures	1		
Average catchment population		28,322		
Consultations	Patients	7,350		
	<i>of which curative</i>	Patients	2,063	3,107
	<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>	Patients	930	
Immunizations	Doses	6,852		
	<i>of which for children aged five or under</i>	Doses	5,767	
Referrals to a second level of care	Patients	49		
Health education	Sessions	160		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)¹				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	50		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,653		

1. Papua New Guinea