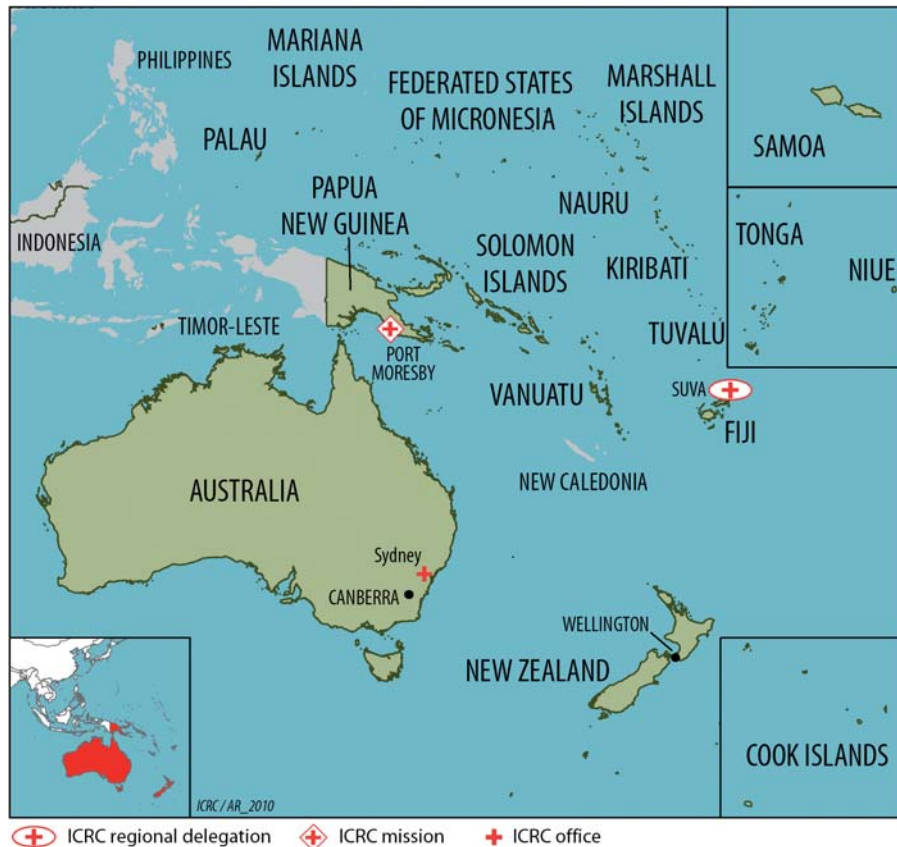


SUVA (regional)

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



EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	510
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,544
Cooperation with National Societies	1,045
General	-

► **3,099**

of which: Overheads 189

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	87%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	3
National staff (daily workers not included)	15

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- in coordination with Movement partners, helped the region's National Societies strengthen their capacities to respond to emergencies, restore family links and promote humanitarian principles
- with the National Society, provided assistance to over 3,600 people displaced by tribal and intercommunal violence in Papua New Guinea
- visited people deprived of their freedom in Fiji and Solomon Islands and assessed living conditions in 6 places of detention in Papua New Guinea
- advised on and welcomed Fiji's and Samoa's ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
- raised public awareness of the impact of war on civilians and on women in particular and the relevance of IHL in the Pacific and elsewhere through 3 ICRC photo exhibitions shown in Australia and New Zealand
- strengthened its working relationship with the Australian armed forces, including through participation in various military training exercises

Since 2001, ICRC operations in the Pacific have been carried out by the Suva regional delegation. In cooperation with the National Societies, it assists governments in the ratification and implementation of IHL treaties and promotes respect for and compliance with IHL among the region's armed and security forces. It also promotes IHL and humanitarian issues among academic circles, the media and civil society. The ICRC visits people detained in connection with past unrest in Fiji and Solomon Islands. It also helps build the emergency response capacities of the region's National Societies, particularly in Papua New Guinea.

CONTEXT

The Pacific region remained prone to the effects of climate change, in particular rising sea levels and frequent natural disasters. A series of powerful earthquakes in New Zealand's South Island damaged homes and infrastructure but fortunately spared lives, unlike the unprecedented floods in Australia's Queensland in December.

Interethnic tensions persisted in Papua New Guinea's Highlands region, periodically erupting into violence. Serious clashes and protests occurred in various parts of the country in relation to works to enable large-scale natural gas extraction projects, which were expected to increase the country's existing revenue by up to a third.

Fiji remained suspended from the Pacific Islands Forum and instead devoted its attention to another platform for multilateral diplomacy, the Melanesian Spearhead Group, of which it assumed the chair.

In Solomon Islands, which saw a brief outbreak of renewed riots, the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands remained a stabilizing element. The recently established Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigating the 1998–2003 violence held its first public hearings.

In Tonga, the first democratic parliamentary elections were held, but a state of emergency remained in place in the capital.

Australia and New Zealand continued to be actively engaged in Afghanistan, with troops and diplomatic representation on the ground, and in Solomon Islands with other Pacific Island nations. Both countries maintained a dozen much smaller commitments to bilateral or UN deployments. The first Tongan contingent joined international coalition forces in Afghanistan, and Papua New Guinea ratified a bill enabling the deployment of troops under UN mandate.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PROTECTION

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Documents	Total		
People to whom travel documents were issued	1		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses) ¹			
ICRC visits	Total	Women	Minors
Detainees visited and monitored individually	39		
Number of visits carried out	18		
Number of places of detention visited	18		

1. Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

ASSISTANCE

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.) ²			
Economic security, water and habitat	Total	Women	Children
Agricultural, veterinary and other micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	3,690	
Health			
Health centres supported	Structures	1	
Average catchment population		30,000	
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)			
Economic security, water and habitat			
Essential household items ³	Beneficiaries	230	

2. Papua New Guinea only

3. Solomon Islands only

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Cooperation with the region's National Societies and the International Federation remained a priority for the Suva delegation. It focused its financial and technical support on the Red Cross Societies of Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu in order to boost their capacities in the fields of emergency preparedness, restoring family links in disaster situations and the promotion of humanitarian principles. Partnership meetings were held with the Australian Red Cross, the International Federation and the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society in order to consolidate the Movement's strategy for strengthening the Papua New Guinea Red Cross's capacities.

The ICRC visited people detained in connection with past unrest in Fiji and in Solomon Islands, as well as former inmates of the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba resettled in Palau. With a view to initiating similar work in Papua New Guinea, it assessed the general living conditions in six prisons.

People displaced by tribal disputes in Papua New Guinea received assistance, delivered by the National Society with ICRC financial and technical support. A health centre in violence-affected Bougainville received medical supplies.

The region's governments benefited from ICRC technical advice, including model laws, compatibility reviews of existing legislation and training, to help them ratify and implement IHL

treaties. Major progress was achieved in several countries, with, for example, the ratification by Fiji and Samoa of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and promising steps by Australia, Cook Islands and Palau towards the same goal.

In light of Australia’s substantial troop deployments and increased focus on whole-of-government approaches to disaster response and conflict missions, the ICRC worked to strengthen and broaden its contacts with all relevant stakeholders to better communicate with them on issues of humanitarian importance such as IHL, civil-military interaction, the protection of civilians and the safety of humanitarian workers. The focus of activities moved beyond promotional or educational work to a substantive dialogue on issues of principle, law and practice with both government and non-government audiences. The ICRC office in Australia also sought to draw on Australian expertise on and analysis of issues of relevance to ICRC operations within the wider Asia-Pacific region.

Cooperation with the media in Australia and in New Zealand was consolidated with the organization by the ICRC of a seminar on war reporting held at Auckland University and presentations on IHL and the ICRC’s activities and mandate given at training courses for foreign correspondents organized by the Australian public television broadcaster.

CIVILIANS

In Papua New Guinea, urban and rural populations alike continued to suffer the effects of endemic violence. The heavily populated Highlands region and Bougainville island were most seriously affected by tribal strife and other forms of armed violence. Meanwhile, the main cities witnessed high levels of intercommunal violence, aggravated by the proliferation of weapons.

Given the situation, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross and the ICRC launched joint activities to respond to the needs of the people affected.

Over 3,600 people displaced following tribal disputes near the capital and in the Highlands used emergency shelter, household items and farming inputs to create makeshift homes and start to re-establish a livelihood. Medical material delivered to Arawa health clinic in Bougainville helped boost the facility’s capacity to meet the needs of the 30,000 people within its catchment area. At the same time, ICRC representations reminded the authorities of their obligation to protect civilians from violence, intimidation or harassment and to prevent forced displacements.

As it was engaged in a reorganization process, the National Society slowed down its ICRC-supported work to strengthen its capacity

to assist victims of violence. Therefore, planned training activities did not take place. However, at a disaster-management and discussion forum held by the National Society in Morobe province with ICRC participation, volunteers learnt more about their roles and responsibilities with respect to victims of violence.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

People held in connection with past unrest in Fiji and Solomon Islands continued to receive ICRC visits, carried out according to the organization’s standard procedures, to monitor their treatment and living conditions. Following the visits, delegates provided confidential feedback to the relevant authorities. Detainees received clothing and hygiene, recreational and educational items as necessary.

In Fiji, the findings and recommendations from ICRC visits to detainees in several places of detention helped the authorities to assess progress made in their efforts to bring the country’s prisons in line with international standards. Detainees held in Honiara, Solomon Islands, received visits from family members living on outlying islands, organized with ICRC/National Society support, although the programme was temporarily suspended by the National Society because of staff management problems.

To support an ICRC offer of services to the relevant Papua New Guinea authorities, the treatment and living conditions of detainees in six prisons in the Highlands were assessed by the ICRC at the end of the year. An emergency supply of clean water was distributed in one prison in response to an acute shortage leading to an outbreak of dysentery. The findings and recommendations of these initial visits were to be shared with the national detaining authorities together with information on standard ICRC procedures for visits to people deprived of their freedom and proposals to initiate longer-term cooperation in this field.

Six former inmates of the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay who had been accepted for resettlement in Palau in November 2009 were visited by the ICRC to check how they were coping in their new surroundings.

AUTHORITIES

The Pacific States made progress in implementing IHL, with technical support from the ICRC, including through model laws, compatibility reviews of existing legislation and training. Fiji and Samoa ratified and started implementing the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Australia and Cook Islands initiated work towards the same goal and Palau announced its intention to ratify the convention.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	FIJI	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	SOLOMON ISLANDS
ICRC visits			
Detainees visited and monitored individually	7		32
Number of visits carried out	10	6	2
Number of places of detention visited	10	6	2

Vanuatu took steps to accede to the Rome Statute. The Papua New Guinea parliament approved accession to the 1977 Additional Protocols. The Solomon Islands authorities decided to include the Rome Statute in the law reform agenda. New Zealand undertook preparatory work towards ratifying Additional Protocol III.

Representatives of 10 Pacific Island nations discussed the three Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions and related issues at an ICRC seminar. They took home reasons why their countries should accede to and implement these fundamental humanitarian treaties. At the annual meeting of the Pacific Island Law Officers' Network, senior legal professionals from 12 countries gained greater insight into IHL, the humanitarian impact of the proliferation of small arms, and the importance of weapons trade regulation during an ICRC presentation. Representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand and Samoa attended the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees held in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*).

In Australia and New Zealand, substantive dialogue between relevant government departments and the ICRC, in addition to presentations and events organized with the National Societies, helped strengthen authorities' support for IHL and knowledge of the ICRC's mandate and position within the Movement.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The Australian and New Zealand armed forces and the ICRC strengthened their high-level and operational contacts on topics including detention, the protection of civilians, civil-military-police relations and the independence of humanitarian action. At various discussions, presentations and military exercises in which the ICRC took part, over 860 Australian Defence Force officers gained greater understanding of IHL and the ICRC. A further 220 members of the military and police, as well as representatives of government bodies and NGOs, from Australia and the Asia-Pacific region heard and debated the ICRC's views at civil-military interaction seminars and workshops.

Australian and New Zealand government officials and the ICRC discussed the ICRC's Interpretive Guidance on Direct Participation in Hostilities and the Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies. At a seminar, 70 academics and legal advisers debated with the ICRC on IHL training issues and standards for military and security companies.

Some 200 high-level participants from over 30 countries learnt about the ICRC's approach and the legal framework underpinning the protection of civilians at the third International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, held in Australia.

Members of the armed and security forces of Fiji (including those preparing for deployment on peacekeeping missions), Papua New Guinea and Tonga learnt about IHL and the Movement at ICRC briefings. A military legal adviser from Papua New Guinea attended an IHL course in San Remo.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The Australian and New Zealand media used ICRC material to raise public awareness of the impact of conflict. Journalists learnt about IHL, ICRC activities and the importance of accurate reporting on humanitarian themes at a seminar on the challenges of war reporting in New Zealand and at presentations during training courses for foreign correspondents organized by the Australian public television broadcaster. An edition of the *Pacific Journalism Review* focusing on conflict reporting was published.

Some 9,200 visitors viewed the impact of war on women, its long-term effects on civilians and the relevance of IHL in the Pacific and elsewhere at three ICRC photo exhibitions put on display in Australia and New Zealand.

Links forged between selected Australian think-tanks, NGOs and the ICRC helped foster specialist and public debate, including through joint events, on issues such as the protection of civilians and the security risks faced by humanitarian personnel. Initial contacts with Muslim and Pacific community leaders in Australia led to nascent dialogue and the planning of joint events for 2011.

Academics and students in Australia and New Zealand learnt about IHL and humanitarian issues at ICRC presentations and through moot court and essay-writing competitions and up-to-date reference materials. The University of Papua New Guinea consulted the ICRC on the possible inclusion of IHL in an undergraduate law course. Art students produced paintings with humanitarian messages, to be printed on playing cards for people in violence-affected areas.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The region's National Societies continued to strengthen their capacities in core fields of activity, with ICRC technical and financial support. The Red Cross Societies of Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu developed their activities to promote knowledge of IHL and the Movement among volunteers and the public. The Fiji and Micronesia Red Cross Societies received draft model laws to establish their legal bases.

In Papua New Guinea, the National Society received support from the Australian Red Cross, the International Federation and the ICRC in its reorganization process. In parallel, a survey on public perception of the National Society was initiated focusing on violence-affected regions, and the first draft of a dissemination handbook for volunteers was produced.

The Australian Red Cross and the ICRC continued to work together to develop the capacities of the Pacific National Societies to restore family links in natural disasters. Fiji Red Cross officers received training, a needs assessment was conducted in Tonga, a new train-the-trainers manual was produced, and a review of the support programme was launched.

The main Movement partners working in the region held coordination meetings to harmonize strategies. They carried out joint missions to nine Pacific Island nations to better understand the National Societies' priorities and define suitable support. Management members from seven National Societies attended a good governance workshop organized by the International Federation with ICRC support.

Cooperation between the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross Societies and the ICRC continued in the areas of IHL, communication and the training of delegates. The Australian Red Cross worked on adapting an IHL handbook for parliamentarians in Samoa and Solomon Islands and organized an IHL course for dissemination officers from the Samoa and Solomon Islands Red Cross Societies. The New Zealand Red Cross trained Solomon Island and Vanuatu Red Cross members in providing first aid in situations of violence.