

Defence Portfolio

SENATE ESTIMATES QUESTION

(Question No. 88)

Senator Simon Birmingham asked the Department of Defence the following question, upon notice, on 16 June 2023:

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2. Are there any plans to incorporate Pacific troops into Australia's domestic defence program?

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Senator Simon Birmingham – The Department of Defence provides the following answer to the Senator's question:

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2. The ADF already works closely with Pacific security forces and we are continuing to increase the ways in which we do so.

New Response:

The ADF does not recruit from the Pacific but does support secondments for in-line positions from Pacific defence forces. The ADF also offers opportunities for lateral transfers for individuals with recent overseas military skills and experience to fill capability gaps..

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| Authorising Officer |
|--|
| <p>Cleared by:</p> <p>Hugh Jeffrey Deputy Secretary Strategy, Policy, and Industry</p> <p>Date: 23 June 2023 Ph: s47E(d)</p> |

Contact Officer: s47E(d) , Acting Assistant Secretary Indo-Pacific Enhanced Engagement Branch, Ph: s47E(d)

Through: s22

CC: Secretary, CDF, Assoc Sec, VCDF, FASMECC s22

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AUSTRALIA – FIJI

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If pressed: Is Australia considering direct recruitment of Fijians into the ADF?

- *Australia is proud to work side-by-side with Fiji through our Vuvale partnership, including through our long-standing Defence Cooperation Program and the strong partnership between the ADF and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces*
- Through this program, we are increasing our personnel exchanges, especially through senior embeds, which is key to growing the close bonds between our defence forces.
 - We stand ready to work closely with our Fijian partners on how we can deepen the connections between our militaries.
- Currently, there are no direct pathways for foreign nationals to join the Australian Defence Force (ADF), as Australian Citizenship is generally considered a requirement for service in the ADF, with limited exceptions for permanent residents.

- Australia is not at this time considering the direct recruitment of foreign nations into the ADF.

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CLEARANCES

| | Name | Appointment | Time/Date drafted |
|-----------------------|---------|--|-------------------|
| <i>Drafted by</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC Joint Collective Training Public Affairs Officer | 311617K MAY 23 |
| <i>Updated by</i> | s47E(d) | s22 Planner | 051249K APR 23 |
| <i>Updated by</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC Joint Collective Training Public Affairs Officer | 271352K JUN 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | s22 Chief Security Officer | 071603L MAR |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | s22 Chief Safety Officers | 061237L MAR 23 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|----------------|
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | s22 Training Areas and Civil Military Engagement | 032021K APR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | Air Force Public Affairs Officer – Plans and Exercises | 171344L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | Maritime Operations Public Affairs Officer | 080908L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | Army Headquarter Public Affairs Officer | 161345L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC Scientific Officer | 171445L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC Legal Officer | 061127L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC EMS Operations | 060849L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) s47E(d) s47E(d) s47E(d) s47E(d) | Director US Alliance Policy Policy Officer – Europe desk Assistant Director UK, Canada & Five Eyes International Policy Division Department of Defence Director South Asia Assistant Director (Korean Peninsula and Mongolia) North Asia Section | 171249L MAR 23 |
| <i>Consulted with</i> | s47E(d) | HQJOC Environmental Officer | 091615L MAR 23 |
| <i>Cleared by</i> | s47E(d) | Director Joint Collective Training | |
| <i>Cleared by 1*</i> | BRIG Damian Hill | Director General Joint Collective Training | 040922K MAR 23 |

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PNG citizens serving in the ADF

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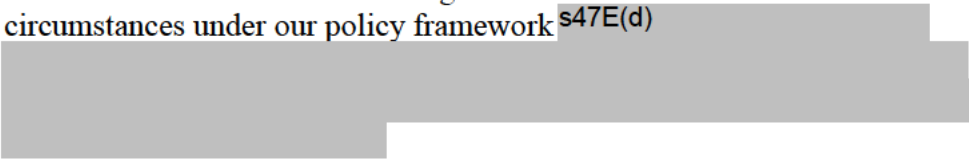

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Also aware that the ADF laterally recruits members from overseas, this has on occasion included the PNGDF as well as other Pacific and partner militaries.

– Australian citizenship is normally a requirement for ADF recruitment.

: So this lateral recruitment of foreign nationals occurs in limited circumstances under our policy framework s47E(d)



– The ADF has applied the same approach to all countries.

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If raised: Offer of Fiji

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RFMF to serve in the Australian Defence Force

s22 Aside from lateral and embedded recruitment, there are no direct pathways for
Fiji nationals to join the Australian Defence Force (ADF), as Australian Citizenship is
generally considered to be a requirement for service in the ADF, with limited exceptions
for permanent residents.

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SENATE ESTIMATES BACK POCKET BRIEF

Pacific Engagement: Pacific Recruitment

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Talking Points

Questions relating to ADF Recruitment and Recruitment Policy should be directed to Defence People Group.

- The Defence Strategic Review prioritises deeper engagement with the Pacific, supporting the centrality of regional frameworks, while deepening our diplomatic and defence partnerships with key regional partners.
- Defence shares longstanding relationships with our Pacific partners and we will continue to work closely with one another.
- Australia's position is that security is the shared responsibility of the Pacific, of which we are a member.

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Background

- In response to SEN. Birmingham QON 88 from July 2023: The ADF does not recruit from the Pacific but supports secondments for in-line positions from Pacific defence forces and offers opportunities for lateral transfers for individuals with recent overseas military skills and experience to fill capability gaps.

Cleared by: Lisa Clutterham, Assistant Secretary Pacific Regional Policy and Governance Branch, Pacific Division

Date: 24 October 2023

Relevant Recent Reporting

- 1 May 2023: Sydney Morning Herald - [The radical proposal to recruit foreigners to fight for Australia](#)
- 4 May 2023: The Lowy Institute – [The case for opening the ADF to citizens of Pacific Islands nations](#)
- Pacific Islands nations
- 17 May 2023: [ASPI Strategist – Recruiting Pacific Islanders](#)

Summary Brief: Senior Leadership Meeting with DEPSEC 13 October 2023

Key Issues of Media Interest in Pacific Engagement SEB [SB23-000728]

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Pacific Recruitment

- **A potential line of question during Senate Estimates.**
- Questions relating to ADF Recruitment and Recruitment Policy should be directed to Defence People Group.
- The Defence Strategic Review prioritises deeper engagement with the Pacific, supporting the centrality of regional frameworks, while deepening our diplomatic and defence partnerships with key regional partners.
 - Defence shares longstanding relationships with our Pacific partners and we will continue to work closely with one another.
- Australia's position is that security is the shared responsibility of the Pacific, of which we are a member.