



**OPERATION RENDER SAFE: THE REMOVAL OF WORLD WAR TWO
BOMBS, WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION IN TOROKINA LED BY
THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE
FACT SHEET
AS AT 6 AUGUST 2014**

Operation Render Safe

- At the **request of the Autonomous Bougainville Government**, the Australian Government will lead Operation Render Safe 2014 in Torokina.
- The Papua New Guinea Government **approved** the operation in June 2013.
- Operation Render Safe involves the **removal of bombs, weapons and ammunition** remaining from World War Two.
- Operation Render Safe **occurs regularly** in the South West Pacific, most recently removing explosive remnants of war from Solomon Islands in 2013 and from Rabaul, PNG in 2011.
- Operation Render Safe is a **multinational** operation, with approximately 200 **uniformed personnel** from Australia, Solomon Islands, New Zealand, the United States and Canada all participating in the 2013 operation in Solomon Islands.

Operation Render Safe in Torokina

- Operation Render Safe in Torokina will increase community **safety**, enable safe **farming and gardening**, and contribute to **weapons disposal** in Bougainville.
- Operation Render Safe in Torokina follows the United States-sponsored explosive ordnance disposal mission by DynCorp in 2010.
- Operation Render Safe in Torokina will look to dispose of located World War Two small arms and ammunition, and those weapons **voluntarily** provided by the community.
- Operation Render Safe personnel will **prioritise areas** affected by bombs, weapons and ammunition in Torokina **in consultation** with the community.
- Operation Render Safe **does not entail** paying compensation or the delivery of community development projects.
- The Autonomous Bougainville Government asked the Australian Government to **focus on Torokina**, and not other areas affected by unexploded ordnance.



Progress to date

- Since June 2013, the Australian Government has consistently **consulted** with National Government and Autonomous Bougainville Government stakeholders, and with the people of Torokina.
- The Australian Defence Force performed an **aerial survey** of Autonomous Region of Bougainville waters in October 2013 to update navigational charts.
- An Australian Defence Force **scoping team** visited Buka and Torokina in November 2013 to establish the logistics and support requirements for Operation Render Safe.
- Two Royal Australian Navy ships, HMAS BENALLA and HMAS SHEPPARTON, undertook **hydrographical surveys** in Autonomous Region of Bougainville waters in the period 28 February until 24 April.
- These surveys around Torokina and the west coast of Bougainville Island up to and including Buka Island were conducted to **enable safe navigation** of ships involved in the Operation.
- Ships will be a feature of Operation Render Safe, and will need to traverse the waters between Buka and Torokina to move supplies, equipment and personnel, as well as be ready for medical evacuation if required.
- The ships charted the depths of the water, measured tides, marked any underwater obstructions and determined suitable anchorage points for ships involved in Operation Render Safe.
- The survey ships also **examined the beach** at Torokina to determine its capacity to handle equipment moved from ships offshore to onshore locations to support the Operation.
- The results of these surveys will be **shared** with the PNG National Maritime Safety Authority and the Autonomous Bougainville Government to update Bougainville's navigation charts.
- 14 Australian Defence Force members and a Royal Canadian Navy observer visited Bougainville 29 May until 7 June to scope the **explosive ordnance disposal aspects** of the Operation.
- Captain Jay Bannister led the scoping team, and he will also be the **overall Commander** of Operation Render Safe when it occurs in October 2014.



Upcoming Operation Render Safe activities

- Australian Defence Force members will visit Buka and Torokina to **finalise the details** of the operation ahead of the operation's commencement.
- The operation will **commence in October** 2014 and will be approximately one month in duration.
- The operation will be **based from HMAS CHOULES**, which will be moored off the coast of Torokina. Explosive ordnance disposal experts will travel from CHOULES to Torokina district each day during the operation to conduct bomb disposal.
- It will be a **multinational** operation, with United States, Canada, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, France, and Tonga all indicating they will participate.
- A temporary **medical facility** will be established in Buka, close to the airport, to support casualty evacuation in case an incident occurs.

Communication and awareness

- The Australian Government will **continue to inform** the National Government and Autonomous Bougainville Government as planning for Operation Render Safe develops.
- Australian Government officials, including Australian Defence Force members, will continue to visit Bougainville to **build community awareness** about Operation Render Safe and the presence of military personnel in Bougainville in partnership with the Autonomous Bougainville Government.
- A submission will be made to the Autonomous Bougainville Government seeking formal approval of the operation ahead of its start.