



STEPPING UP AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR PACIFIC FAMILY



In 2019, Australia partnered with a Solomon Islands Provincial Government for the first time to develop crucial infrastructure: Gizo Marketplace

The Pacific Step-up is one of Australia's highest foreign policy priorities. First announced in September 2016 as a 'step-change' in the way we would engage the region, it has since been highlighted in Australia's Foreign Policy and Defence White Papers as of fundamental importance to Australia. On 8 November 2018, Prime Minister Morrison announced Australia would take our engagement to a new level, launching a **"new chapter in relations with our Pacific family"**.

The Step-up builds on over half a century of sustained engagement, responding to the region's priorities by further enhancing our commitments. Our future is deeply intertwined with that of our Pacific family. We have an abiding interest in the **sovereignty, stability, security and prosperity** of the Pacific. As the region's largest development assistance partner, we have committed a **record \$1.4 billion in development assistance to the Pacific in 2019-20**, to help our partner nations address their greatest concerns.

Australia will help **promote economic prosperity** through ambitious initiatives such as:

- the \$2 billion Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP);
- the Pacific Labour Mobility Scheme; and
- the Coral Sea cable, which will deliver high-speed telecommunications to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands by end-2019.

We are committed to supporting the security priorities agreed by Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders for **"Securing Our Future in the Pacific"**, including through:

- \$500 million over five years to help Pacific nations invest in renewable energy and climate and disaster resilience;
- the new Australia Pacific Security College; and
- the Pacific Fusion Centre.

We are enhancing Defence engagement to bolster capacity, resilience and interoperability across the Pacific, including through significant infrastructure developments and joint training activities. The Australian Federal Police have established a Pacific Faculty at the Australian Institute for Police Management.

The strength of our engagement is built on **deep personal, historical and cultural ties**. A new PacificAus Sports initiative, together with church partnerships and education programs will strengthen and celebrate these personal connections. We are rolling out the Pacific-Australia card to streamline travel to Australia by Pacific leaders, and we look forward to establishing a diplomatic mission in every Pacific Islands Forum member in coming years. **How we engage is just as important as what we do**, and so the newly established Office of the Pacific will work to better coordinate Australia's engagement with the region across government, as well as to drive implementation of our renewed focus.