

OPERATION ANODE: AUSTRALIAN OPERATIONS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS 2003-2013



Major General the Hon Justice Paul Brereton AM RFD

10:30AM Saturday 3 June 2023, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD

Since before Federation, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands have occupied an important place in Australian strategic thinking. On the outbreak of war in 1914, Australia moved swiftly to secure the German possessions in the Bismarck Archipelago through the AN&MEF. In 1942, the ill-fated Lark Force was deployed to defend Rabaul. Following the Japanese seizure of Tulagi and Guadalcanal, fierce battles were waged on land, at sea and in the air to recapture the Solomon Islands, Bougainville, and New Britain.

More recently in the 2000s, Australian military forces were deployed to the Solomons for over a decade. After five years of ethnic tensions and a coup in 2000, the Solomons faced serious problems: law and order had broken down, corruption was widespread, the institutions of government had ceased to function, and basic services were not being delivered to the people. In response to a request from the Government of the Solomon Islands in 2003, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was formed by Pacific nations, led by Australia, to help restore long-term stability and prosperity. The military component, known as Combined Task Force 635, was led by Australia and also comprised of personnel from New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. It was tasked with providing security and support for RAMSI's multinational Participating Police Force.

Operation Anode (2003-2013) was the Australian Defence Force contribution to RAMSI. From 2006, Reservists – including troops drawn from the Royal New South Wales Regiment – made a significant contribution.

In this lecture our Patron, Major General the Hon Justice Paul Brereton AM RFD – who when Commander 5th Brigade was responsible for the preparation of two contingents for Operation Anode – will review Australian operations in the Solomons during the period 2003 to 2013, in their historical context, drawing on contemporaneous records and the reflections of some of the commanders.



TIME AND VENUE

10:30AM Saturday 3 June 2023 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For information call 0419 698 783 or email: president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au

Biography – Major General the Honourable Justice Paul Brereton, AM, RFD

Justice Brereton was born in Sydney and practised as a solicitor from 1982 to 1987 and as a barrister from 1987 to 2005. He was appointed Senior Counsel in 1998. In 2005 he was sworn in as a Judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and joined the NSW Court of Appeal in August 2018. Justice Brereton is an Army Reservist who holds the rank of Major General. He enlisted in the Army Reserve in Sydney University Regiment in 1975, and was commissioned in the Royal Australian Infantry in 1979. He has served as Second-in-Command Sydney University Regiment (1994-6), Commanding Officer 4th/3rd Battalion, the Royal New South Wales Regiment (1997-99), Chief of Staff 5th Brigade (2004-5), Assistant Chief of Staff Land Headquarters (2006-7), and Commander 5th Brigade (2008-10). From 2011 to 2013 he was Head of Cadet, Reserve and Employer Support Division. He holds honorary appointments as Colonel Commandant of the Royal NSW Regiment and the University of NSW Regiment. He also sits as a member of the Defence Force Discipline Appeals Tribunal and acts as Assistant Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force. Justice Brereton was honoured with membership of the Order of Australia (Military Division) in 2010 and received the Reserve Force Decoration in 1995. He led an Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force investigation into alleged criminal misconduct on the battlefield by Australian Special forces in Afghanistan, issuing the *Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report* in November 2020. Justice Brereton was recently appointed the first commissioner of the federal National Anti-Corruption Commission. He is Patron of the Military History Society of New South Wales.

Our Venue

