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See Distribution

DPS(A)28/9/PS4(A)

4 Dec 09

FIJI – REVISED BRITISH ARMY LEAVE AND TRAVEL GUIDANCE

References:

- A. DPS(A)28/9/PS4(A) dated 2 Sep 09.
- B. Commonwealth Secretariat Suspension of Fiji from the Commonwealth 1 Sep 08.
- C. JSP 760 Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absences.

1. This Fiji leave and travel advice updates and replaces Reference A which should be destroyed. At the time of writing the situation in Fiji remains calm and the MoD continues to monitor conditions carefully. This advice also reflects the fact that following the coup, Australia and New Zealand¹ imposed travel restrictions on members of the Fijian interim government, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) and their immediate families. It explained who was likely to be affected in order that they could take any restrictions into account when making their travel plans.

2. Reference B announced Fiji's suspension from the Commonwealth on 1 Sep 09. This step by the Commonwealth does not however alter the legal status of Fijians serving in the British Armed Forces for whom it remains business as usual. Individuals can continue to serve in the same way as before suspension took place. Individual Fijians (according to UK legislation) are still Commonwealth citizens and therefore they can apply to join the UK Armed Forces. There are no plans to take the legal steps that would be needed to prevent Fijians joining the UK Armed Forces. As previously announced, the UK Armed Forces is not sending an Overseas Pre-Selection Team to Fiji in 2010.

3. Under Commanding Officers arrangements all soldiers, regardless of nationality who indicate that they wish to take leave in Fiji are to be briefed that:

a. Serving personnel and their families may take leave in Fiji in line with the normal unit leave authorisation procedures in Reference C.

b. All individuals are strongly advised to ensure they have considered carefully all the travel advice that is available and are reminded that any decision to travel on leave is a personal one. Fijians may also seek guidance from the Fijian Embassy in London at www.fijihighcommission.org.uk or tel: +44 (0)207 5843661 or through the airline with which they are travelling. UK citizens and their families can seek guidance from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website at www.fco.gov.uk. At the time of writing this advises that: 'A military coup took place in Fiji in December 2006. On 10 April 2009, the Fiji Court of Appeal ruled the interim government unlawful and urged the creation of a new interim government.'

¹ New Zealand's Fiji sanctions are listed at Encl 1.

Travellers should exercise caution and are advised to monitor the local situation for developments. You should avoid all political rallies and avoid openly discussing political issues' in addition 'In July 2009 an outbreak of brucellosis was confirmed in the Wainivesi dairy farming area near Suva. Public are advised to avoid any unnecessary visits to the area and use only pasteurised milk' also that 'Dengue occurs in Fiji. Dengue is transmitted by mosquitoes. There is no vaccination against dengue, but there are preventative measures that you can take, as advised on the National Travel Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) website'.

c. Following the military coup that took place in Fiji in 06, Australia and New Zealand have imposed travel restrictions on members of the Fijian interim government, high profile supporters of the interim government, the Officers and Warrant Officers of the RFMF and their immediate family members transiting or staying in Australia or New Zealand. British Army personnel and family members with close relatives² in the RFMF or holding positions within the Fijian Interim Government considering travelling to or transit through Australia and New Zealand are advised to check with their nearest Australian or New Zealand High Commission before making travel arrangements to establish if these travel restrictions apply to them. MoD International Policy and Planning (IPP) guidance on alternative travel routes are included at Annex A.

d. On arrival in and immediately prior to departure from Fiji, all Service personnel must contact the British Army Support Office (BASO) in Fiji during normal Fiji working hours on 00679 3229100 to confirm actual arrival and departure in order BASO Fiji can provide support if required. Out of Hours Emergencies by contacting the BHC Duty Officer on 00679 990 7683 who will pass urgent information.

e. Service personnel should maintain a low profile at all times.

f. Personnel are not to take any active part in the affairs of any political organisation, party or movement and are not to participate in political marches or demonstrations. Failure to comply with this guidance will be treated extremely seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

g. Those travelling should be advised to ensure that they are in possession of serviceable and undamaged passports as BASO Fiji reports that travelling on a damaged Passports sometimes results in individuals being refused exit from Fiji by Fijian Immigration Officers.

h. Individuals should be advised to notify their banks/credit card companies of their intention to withdraw funds in Fiji prior to departing on leave to avoid UK/German banks and credit card companies refusing access to funds given unannounced and therefore unusual cash withdrawal patterns.

4. Commanding Officers are also to ensure that the following extract is published regularly on unit orders as a reminder:

Fiji - Travel Advice. Personnel serving in the British Army who wish to take leave in Fiji may do so, in line with normal unit leave authorisation procedures. Given the current situation in Fiji there is a requirement for both a unit briefing and pre-notification of intended travel arrangements to the UK Defence Advisor in New Zealand and British Army Support Officer in Fiji so that appropriate support can be provided if required. Individuals are to notify any travel to Fiji to their Chain of Command so that a briefing can

² For the purpose of Fiji Coup travel restrictions the Australian definition of close relatives includes for Officers and Warrant Officers of the RFMF, their: parents, children, children-in-law, siblings and siblings-in-law. For RFMF serving personnel below the rank of Warrant Officer including senior interim government appointments (ie; permant secretaries and government board members, travel restrictions only apply to these individuals and not their families.

be provided and pre-notification take place in accordance with D/DPS(A)28/9/PS4(A) dated 2 Sep 09.

5. Exceptions to travel restrictions such as medical emergencies and family bereavement may be considered by the Australian and New Zealand Government on a case by case basis. In the case of publicly funded movement (ie: DILFOR), JCCC should be consulted in the first instance.

6. British Defence Liaison Staff (BDLS) Wellington (the Defence Advisor responsible for Fiji) and the British Army Support Office in Fiji continue to request that the Army maintain a central record of those taking leave in Fiji. Therefore, all Army units should notify UK DA New Zealand by signal of any serving personnel (Fijian or UK citizens) planning to travel in Fiji using the draft template at Annex A. UK DA New Zealand will in turn notify BASO Fiji by secure means. Signals should also be copied to Tps Upavon for the attention of DPS(A) PS4(A) SO3 Families in order that the Army can maintain a central record.

7. Action addresses are asked to promulgate this advice down their respective Chains of Command.

{Signed on Dllf}
R B HARWARD
SO2 Families PS4(A)
for DPS(A)

Encl:

1. New Zealand Fiji Sanctions Travel Restrictions Leaflet.

Annexes:

- A. Fiji – Suggested Alternative Travel Routes.
- B. British Army – Notification Leave and Travel Fiji Signal.

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FIJI – SUGGESTED TRAVEL ROUTES

1. Personnel wishing to travel to Fiji who are affected by the restrictions may wish to consider using the following PDRS suggested alternative travel routes:
2. Korean Air. They fly from London Heathrow & Frankfurt to Fiji via Seoul
 - a. There are no visa requirements.
 - b. Scheduled flights are on Monday, Wednesday, Friday.
3. Air Pacific (Fiji national airline). They fly from Los Angeles to Fiji direct, (their partner airlines are BA & Virgin Atlantic who fly from the UK to LA).
 - a. A USA transit visa would be required for Private Travel, a NATO Travel Order is acceptable for service personnel transiting on duty. (Compassionate/DOMCOL travel should be considered on duty).
 - b. Scheduled daily flights to and from Los Angeles.
4. In addition BASO Fiji reports that Air Pacific have started a new service, Nadi to Tokyo on Air Pacific (overnight in hotel cost covered by airline) to LHR with Interline Partners, Japan Airlines, BA or Virgin, return fares as low as FD\$2923. Their flights depart Nadi for Tokyo every Monday, Thursday & Saturday. Details should be verified with the Airlines concerned.

BRITISH ARMY – TEMPLATE NOTIFICATION OF LEAVE AND TRAVEL TO FIJI

Security Class	RESTRICTED	Special Caveat	
MESSAGE FORM		Serial No	F/Sigs 266 (Rev 3/90)

Line 1	File Ref:
2	Routed by
3 DE	Time
4	Prep by
	Time

Precedence: Action/ ROUTINE	Info	For single trans
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FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE UK DA NEW ZEALAND AND SO3 FAMILIES PS4(A) TPS UPAVON. SUBJECT BRITISH ARMY – NOTIFICATION OF SOLDIER TAKING LEAVE IN FIJI

ALPHA UNIT NAME: **1SG**
 BRAVO UNIT CONTACT TEL NUMBER: **0044 1980 612345** UNIT 24HR CONTACT TEL NUMBER (GUARD ROOM): **(0044) 01980 612345**
 CHARLIE UNIT EMAIL ADDRESS: **1SG-RAOWO@MOD.GOV.UK**
 DELTA DETAILS OF VISITING FIJI. RANK FULL NAME AND NUMBER: **PTE JOHN NAURVA 24345453**
 ECHO PASSPORT NUMBER AND EXPIRY DATE: **453332F 24 JUL 09**
 FOXTROT SOLDIERS LEAVE ADDRESS (NOT PO BOX NO) AND TEL NUMBER: **C/O MR THOMAS NAURVA (FATHER) 12, THOMS ST, SUVA, FIJI TEL (679) 3312432**
 GOLF OUTBOUND TRAVEL DETAILS: **1ST STAGE: DATE 21/10/08. FLIGHT NO: KE 123 FROM LHR TO SEOUL 2ND STAGE: DATE 22/10/08 FLIGHT NO: KE 45 FROM SEOUL TO NADI**
 HOTEL RETURN TRAVEL DETAILS: **RETURN DETAILS 1ST STAGE: DATE 22/12/08 FLIGHT NO: KE 456 FROM NADI TO SEOUL 2ND STAGE DATE: 22/12/08 FLIGHT NO: KE 456 FROM SEOUL TO LHR**
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