

# Media Release



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## **ANZ operations suspended in Solomon Islands**

ANZ today announced it had been forced to suspend banking operations in the Solomon Islands following serious threats made to the personal safety of the bank's staff and premises.

The closure includes ANZ's branches in Honiara, Panatina, Auki, Noro and Gizo. These branches will remain closed until the law and order situation in the Solomon Islands improves and the safety of staff can be guaranteed.

ANZ deeply regrets the inconvenience the closure of its branches will cause customers and the Solomon Islands community however banking operations cannot continue in the current climate of lawlessness.

Although banking services are unavailable at present, all customer funds are safe.

During the closure ANZ will centralise banking operations in Melbourne, Australia. ANZ will be advising customers later this week how they can access their funds while operations in the Solomon Islands are closed.

Solomon Islands customers who need to contact the bank regarding their accounts today can call ANZ in Australia on +61-3-9273 0796. A toll-free number will be established in the near future.

The threats to the bank's staff and premises are associated with the activities of the Family Charitable Fund. ANZ welcomes the recently announced police investigation into the activities of the Fund however the nature of the threats received are so serious that banking operations can not continue at present.

ANZ restates its advice to the Solomon Islands community not to be involved in anyway with this Fund. ANZ would like to confirm that neither the bank nor any of its staff are or have ever been involved with the Family Charitable Fund. ANZ does not hold nor is it receiving any funds on behalf of this organisation.

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