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"ROTARY – ONWARDS AND UPWARDS, OR ARE WE BUGGERED?"

Article by PDG John Prendergast, Zone 7B Rotary Coordinator



The title of this publication, *Rotary On The Move*, I think reflects precisely where Rotary is presently at – Rotary is absolutely on the move, the only unresolved question is, “where to?”

Is Rotary in our part of the world capable of moving onwards and upwards? Is Rotary globally capable of moving onwards and upwards? Or are we destined to continue our glacially imperceptible membership retreat, so glacial and so imperceptible that many Rotarians are blissfully unaware of it?

In 1989 Rotary had 1.2 million members. Today, we still have 1.2 million members. So, in the face of massive societal changes that have decimated other service, community and membership-based organisations, we’ve managed to hold our own – haven’t we done well!

Well, no, not that well actually. During that same period, we’ve opened the door to women becoming Rotarians, so we’ve doubled our market of potential Rotarians - but we haven’t doubled our membership. During that same period the world’s population has increased by 40%; but we haven’t increased our membership in reflection of this global population explosion. And we’ve also seen a significant membership “substitution” going on – Rotary in places such as South America, Asia, the Indian subcontinent and some parts of Europe has been growing membership fantastically well, but this has masked the uncomfortable reality that in areas where Rotary has been longer established – North America, Britain and Ireland, Australia and New Zealand – membership has been emptying out. Across Australasia in the last 15 years membership has dropped by 20%.

And all the while we’ve maintained our global 1.2 million headline membership number. So we’re at a crossroads – can we move onwards and upwards in our Australasian part of the Rotary world? Or to use a colloquialism, are we buggered?

We all know that Rotary began in Chicago in 1905, by the 1910s it had spread over the border to Canada, and crossed the Atlantic and taken root in Britain and Ireland, and then in the early 1920s Rotary made the big migration and chartered clubs in Australia and New Zealand. When Rotary arrived in Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and Wellington in 1921, there were less than 200 Clubs worldwide; today there are over 35,000 Clubs worldwide, as many Rotary Clubs as there are McDonalds.

So, in this part of the world we were early Rotary adopters. Rotary 1921-style saw Clubs meet once a week, they enjoyed a meal together, listened to a guest speaker, they had a President and Club Directors, and they involved themselves in service projects. Almost 100 years on, surely things have changed a lot, especially for we early-adopting antipodeans – in Rotary 2017-style our Clubs meet once a week, we enjoy a meal together, we listen to a guest speaker, we have a President and Club Directors, and we involve ourselves in service projects ...

Hang on a minute – when Rotary began here in 1921 it was found to be a good fit with the world as it was then; but fast forward 96 years to 2017 and if Rotary hasn’t changed, given the massive changes in transport, communications, technology, employment arrangements, family structures and societal norms, is the unchanged Rotary model of today still a good fit with the world it exists in?

Probably not. Perhaps we should look into this? – if we’ve got a bit of a mismatch between what we’re offering, and what the community wants, might it be affecting people’s willingness to join, and/or stay in, our Clubs?

Last year’s Council on Legislation (COL) was one of the most progressive ever held, with the COL giving Clubs a green light to fundamentally change the way they operate – it’s no longer a requirement that Clubs meet every week, you don’t have to meet at the same venue every time, nor do you have to have a meal or a speaker. And there are a host of new options for how someone can be a member – individual, family, corporate memberships, etc.

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The changes that the COL has given permission for aren't compulsory – the options can range from a Club not making any change at all to its operating model, through to quite radical change if a Club deems that that's what's needed to make it relevant, and attractive, to potential new members, while continuing to engage the equally valuable existing members of our Clubs.

So back to the crossroads that I mentioned earlier that Rotary is approaching – as we approach this intersection and think about which way to indicate, can we move Rotary forward in our Australasian part of the Rotary world, perhaps by embracing sufficient of these mandated changes to make us relevant and attractive? Or are we going to head off down a no change but also possibly a no-exit fork in the road, happy in our social club-like Rotary Clubs, all ageing happily together, but obliviously heading towards being buggered?

The answer is potentially yes to either of those two choices. And make no mistake, they are choices, neither option is set in stone, the direction we head in will be determined by some conscious decisions we make - and the time for making those decisions is about ... now.

"HOW FLEXIBLE ARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS?"

From Rotary Membership Minute, Feb 2017

Do you know Rotaractors who could bring new perspectives, ideas, and energy to your club? Have your members asked for a more flexible attendance policy or different membership types?

Here are five ways to implement the new options for membership flexibility approved during the 2016 Council on Legislation.

- **Change your meeting schedule** – you can change the day and time your club meets, as long as your club meets at least twice a month.
- **Vary the meeting format** – you can meet in person or online, or have a combination of both. [Read how the Rotary Club of New York](#) is teaming with the UN to host monthly breakfast meetings online.
- **Relax attendance requirements** – while attendance is important, you can encourage members to give their time in different ways.
- **Offer different membership types** – alternative types include family, junior, or corporate memberships. These members will only be considered active and counted toward your membership total if they pay RI dues.
- **Invite Rotaractors to be members of your club** – you can reduce fees or relax the attendance policy for these members, as long as your bylaws reflect this.

Visit www.rotary.org/flexibility to learn more and to access resources to help your club start applying these changes.

"UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP WEBINARS FOR 2017"

Supplied by PDG Jessie Harman, Project Lead, Regional Membership Plan

No special software is required to participate in a webinar; you simply need to register via the link provided.

Using technology to strengthen Rotary: online meetings, e-clubs and other things

Thursday, 27 April 2017, 5.00 pm (AEST)

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5922169015578240003>

Telling our story: Communicating about Rotary in the community

Wednesday 24 May 2017, 8.15 am (AEST)

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1455062179133675523>

Trends in volunteering: Opportunities for membership and your club

Monday 5 June 2017, 5.00 pm (AEST)

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4753329881136224258>



*For more information;
contact Jessie Harman
at j.harman@gmail.com*

"DARE TO BE DIFFERENT"

Information supplied by [District 9520 Membership Chair Mark Huddleston](#)

"Dare to be Different" is the theme for the first ever regional membership conference to be held in Adelaide, hosted jointly by Districts [9500](#) and [9520](#).

This event is open to Rotarians, partners, alumni and friends from all over Australia.

We'll be discussing genuine innovation and different ways to grow, promote, meet and serve. Cost \$60.00pp includes all meals.

More details including program and key note speakers will be advised in due course.

For details and registration, please click [HERE](#) or call Mark Huddleston 0402 346 994.



In the second half of this article, (part 1 was published in this Newsletter last month) District 9520 Membership Chair Mark Huddleston describes the process of finding the members and the journey towards chartering the [Rotary Club of Seaford](#).



How did you find your members?

Getting those 20 charter members required to start a new club was undoubtedly our biggest challenge. The process took around 18 months from the advertising of an interest meeting through to the charter night. I met with local state and federal MPs and also council representatives to share our plans and ask for help. These meetings yielded some good contacts and ideas. We advertised an interest meeting in the local community newspaper, and also via a mail out to local businesses. Around 12-15 people attended, and from that first meeting around 8 people were happy to start working together to get the club off the ground, together with a lot of district support.

The first few meetings were all about Rotary knowledge, and I arranged for district leaders to present on various Rotary topics. The group was slowly growing, and also participating in local BBQs to raise funds and raise a profile. But it seemed for every two people who joined the interest group; one would lose interest and leave. This process continued for close to 12 months where the size of the group slowly grew. At that stage there were well over 20 people on the list of interested parties, but less than ten had committed to becoming Rotarians.

The group was treading water for a while, until a very enthusiastic member of another club decided to join the group and was very effective at getting wavering parties to commit. We suddenly had 3 responses from some advertising, and things started snowballing. Seven members signed up on one day. It would have been eight, but for one who was sick and unable to attend the meeting. The next day I chased up a couple and they committed too. ***We had reached 20.*** 18 months after the interest meeting, and almost 2 years after the first conversations, we were now ready to fill out charter documents. I'll admit might have even shed a few tears! We chartered on November 26, 2016 with 21 members, and inducted 2 more within the following weeks.

Of the first 23 members,

- 1 was the Rotaractor I first approached (and became charter president)
- 3 transferred in from other clubs (including myself)
- 2 came to the initial interest meeting
- 3 responded to an advert in a local community newsletter
- 2 had visited our website
- 1 was the niece of a Rotarian from my former club
- 3 saw us at an event where we were cooking a BBQ
- the remaining 8 were family, friends and colleagues of others within the group

What are the key lessons learned from the process?

- Get your online presence set up FIRST. A simple website with clear messages explaining Rotary in non-Rotarian language with contact details, and a Facebook page.
- Speak to civic, government and community leaders about your plans and ask for ideas and contacts.
- Introduce Rotary and Rotary Youth Programs to local schools.
- Communicate your intentions with neighbouring clubs. *This is something we could have done better, and as a result there were some initial tensions.*
- Be seen! Take every opportunity to get Rotary people, Rotary signage, Rotary fliers in front of the public. Set up information stalls at local shopping centres and events. Seek out family events.
- Act like an existing club. Raise funds. Start with small projects. Hold meetings.
- Focus your conversations more on outcomes (the people we help) and less on process (meetings and rules).
- You have to ask people to commit. Not on the first day you meet them, but once they have shown an interest.
- Have an ongoing process of Rotary information sharing. There is a lot to learn.
- Give people roles

Would you have done anything differently?

We spent a lot of time and money drawing up a list of over 700 businesses, stuffing envelopes with fliers for a mail out, and did not receive one response. Either the message wasn't clear, or small business people aren't the ideal demographic to target any more. That has been an interesting lesson to learn. The majority of those who have joined are more what I would call community leaders and influencers than business leaders. I'm not sure what this means for the future of the organisation and our recruiting initiatives, maybe nothing at all, but I am keen to investigate further.

Despite advice to the contrary, we received more responses from advertising in local papers and community newsletters than any other method.

"ROTARY BACKS TRACHOMA DRIVE"

Article by Tony Thomas, *RC Central Melbourne-Sunrise*

Rotary's 2017-18 International President, Australia's Ian Riseley, wants a trachoma-free Australia by 2021, Rotary's 100th year in Australia. RI Zone 8 Director Noel Trevaskis is asking all Districts for support.



Trachoma is an infectious eye disease that can be prevented with good hygiene practices. It is still present in remote Aboriginal communities and can lead to permanent blindness. Australia is the world's only developed country with trachoma. The World Health Organisation has a global goal to eliminate trachoma by 2020.



With surgery and antibiotics, our trachoma rates have been cut from the original 200 'hot-spots' to 50, mainly in central Australia. But hygiene and the community environments must improve to completely prevent and eliminate the disease.

Melbourne RC's Rob McGuirk and Albert Park's Kerry Kornhauser have together established a not-for-profit company to run the project. It can accept tax-deductible donations. Funds have been raised to employ a project manager, Rotary Foundation Scholar and qualified public health worker, Lien Trinh, over the next three years.



Dr Murray Verso PDG has also joined the team adding his medical experience.

The disease spreads by hands, clothing, shared towels, bedding, and from flies which have contacted runny eyes or noses.

Some of the projects clubs can support include:

- funding communal washing machines or facilities
- subsidising hygiene kits of towels, soaps, and toothbrushes
- sponsoring the operations of remote community swimming pools to help keep kids clean and active

Rob, Kerry and the team are working with other NGOs and corporates to get products and services to affected communities.

Register your interest at; www.endtrachoma2020.org.au and like our Facebook page.

"RI STATISTICS 31 JANUARY 2017"

Statistics from RI Resource Extra, February 2017 VOL 12 No 8

	As at 1 July 2016	As at 31 Jan 2017	Variance	% Variance	As at 31 Jan 2017	
	Rotarians	Rotarians	From 1.7.16		Districts	Clubs
Worldwide	1,207,906	1,224,410	16,504	1.37%	540	35,405
Australia	29,194	29,088	- 106	- 0.36%	21	1,108
New Zealand & Pacific Islands	8,457	8,481	24	0.28%	6	267
Philippines	23,109	24,871	1,762	7.62%	10	880
Total (SPPO)	60,760	62,440	1,680	2.76%	37	2,255

"PRESENTING ROTARY TO PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS"

From Rotary Membership Minute, Feb 2017

What is Rotary all about? What do Rotarians do? Why should prospective members join your club? If you are looking for a presentation on the who, what, and why of Rotary, download the Discover Rotary PowerPoint presentation. This new resource touches on Rotary's values and history, and highlights the benefits of membership.



The slides can be customised to include information and images that reflect your club, an excellent way to introduce Rotary to prospective members or at public events.

"HOW INCLUSIVE IS YOUR CLUB?"

From Rotary Voices. Posted on February 17, 2017

By Kate McKenzie, Rotary E-Club of Western Australia



Recently, I came across the concept of “conscious inclusion” when reading [an article](#) about how a bank consulted with an NGO for people with vision impairment when designing their new credit/debit cards. I started thinking about whether Rotary clubs are practicing conscious inclusion.

Unconscious bias means that we are often not aware of the needs of others. We may be willing to adjust if someone asks, but we may not be proactive about thinking ahead, asking for advice and then communicating with people that we have considered their needs.

People used to raise children in their 20s so by the time they were in their 30s they were starting to have time to do other things. Now parents often welcome their first born when they are in their 30s and juggling career with everything else. Volunteering with Rotary could be easier if children could be a part of it. Does your venue have highchairs and maybe a small box of toys/books? Does your website mention that children are welcome? Do you plan some activities in family-friendly places like parks?

When I became a mother, I was suddenly a lot more aware of street design, building entrances and corridor width. Pushing a pram around made me aware of the challenges that people using a wheelchair must face. Has your club conducted an accessibility audit of the venue(s) where you meet? Do you consider accessibility when planning social events? Perhaps you could engage a guest speaker to help learn what you need to consider? You may find that persons with disability are more likely to join your club if your website gives them key information relevant to their needs.



The Rotary E-Club of Western Australia

In my previous Rotary club, one of our members had impaired hearing. He was taught to lip read from a young age, so didn't use sign language. It was important, however, that we allowed him to sit where he could easily see the guest speaker and that we made an effort to face him directly during conversation. Through asking him what he needed, we learned how to make his Rotary experience more fulfilling.

Finally, many Rotary clubs come together in the act of sharing food. It's important, however that we consider medical, ethical and religious dietary needs, so that food doesn't divide us. Does your venue serve vegetarian or vegan options? Can kosher, halal options be made available? Do you collect information about dietary requirements in advance? If a member or visitor is fasting, can they attend without feeling obligated to pay for a meal? Is the kitchen capable of serving food that is safe for people with allergies or other medical needs?

A little forethought can go a long way to making our clubs more welcoming of diversity in our communities. Diversity makes us stronger.

"INTERPLAST INCLUDED IN BENDIGO ROTARY SHOWCASE"

From Interplast Australia & New Zealand, January 2017 update

We were delighted to be part of the first leg of the 2017 Rotary Showcase Roadshow in Bendigo, northern Victoria, on Australia Day. About 15,000 people walked the circuit around Lake Weerona to learn about the many ways that Rotary is working for a better world.

The most frequently heard comment was “I didn't know that Rotary did all of these things”. Pictured you can see the local Chinese dragons dancing past the Interplast stand. [View a gallery of images from the day here](#). Two more showcases will be held, one at [Melbourne's Federation Square in February](#) and the other at [Echuca, Northern Victoria, in June](#).



Our thanks to the Rotary clubs of Bendigo and region, and the [District 9800](#) team.

[Find out more about the important partnership between Rotary and Interplast here.](#)

"HOW ONE CLUB BOOSTED MEMBERSHIP AND ENTHUSIASM"

Article by Paul Engleman, from the February 2017 edition of 'The Rotarian'

When past District 5360 governors Mike French and Steve Rickard were looking for a strong leader for the [Rotary Club of Calgary West](#), Alta., in challenging times, they turned to Tony Knight. Club membership had been gradually declining, and energy was flagging. In short order, he proved their judgment had been correct. In 18 months, starting when Knight became president in 2014, the club added 25 members and was re-energized. He was recently appointed district membership director.

The Rotarian: Calgary West has seen a remarkable increase in membership, for which you are receiving praise. What did you do?

Knight: Before my term began, I called every one of our members. Those conversations were fantastic. I had people in tears, people who were angry. I also called the district governor and specifically asked about the Rotary rules. I like breaking rules that hold people back. I started a group that totally ignored Rotary rules – what we call our Calgary West satellite group. Millennials, we have about 50 of them. A few have become club members. They like to volunteer for projects, but they don't want to come to lunch every Friday. They're trying to hold down jobs. They can't disappear for two hours during the day. Rotary is steeped in tradition. Some of it is fantastic, but we need to be more adaptive to move forward with the times.



Tony Knight

TR: What were the biggest changes you made?

Knight: I changed the location of our meetings. I told my membership during the first month we were moving to a brand-new hotel on indigenous land for one month. After two meetings, people wanted to stay at the new location. We also broke the club down into four teams. Once every second month, we'd have team meetings at four different tables.

TR: We understand you've initiated a partnership project with the [Bethany Care Society](#), a senior care facility, and other Rotary clubs in Calgary.

Knight: I reached out to the other Calgary clubs to raise funds for an atrium within a Bethany care facility for patients with dementia. Rotary is building a covered garden that will be the heart of the facility, an area where people with dementia can walk around in peace, where their families could visit them, where Rotarians and our satellite kids could volunteer. We're hoping to build atriums in other care facilities in the district.

TR: What advice do you have for other Rotary clubs to increase membership?

Knight: Focus on what you can do to make your meetings more exciting. Make sure you have a good venue with a good meal at minimal cost, convenient location, easy parking. Invite really good speakers. Try different things. Try to make things fun. But you want to provide some really stimulating stuff. When you can laugh and cry at the same time, it's really good!

"ROTARY: MAKING A DIFFERENCE AND SECURING ROTARY'S FUTURE"

Excerpts from an article by Ryan Hyland, RI

Rotary International President-elect Ian H.S. Riseley made the case that protecting the environment and curbing climate change are essential to Rotary's goal of sustainable service, when he unveiled the 2017-18 presidential theme, to incoming district governors at Rotary's International Assembly in San Diego, California.



The president-elect challenged every Rotary club to make a difference by planting a tree for each of its members between the start of the Rotary year on 1 July and Earth Day on 22 April 2018. Trees remove carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from the air, which slows global warming.

"It is my hope that the result of that effort will be far greater than the environmental benefit that those 1.2 million new trees will bring," Riseley said. "I believe the greater result will be a Rotary that recognizes our responsibility not only to the people on our planet, but to the planet itself."

Securing Rotary's future

Riseley also urged clubs to improve their gender balance and lower the average age of their members.

Only 22 percent of Rotary's members are women, up from 13 percent 10 years ago. At that rate, Riseley said, it will take another three decades for Rotary to achieve gender parity. "Three decades is far too long to wait to achieve a Rotary that reflects the world in which we live. We need to make it a priority now," he said.

Riseley also believes it is imperative that clubs find ways to attract and engage younger members. Today only 5 percent of reported members are under 40, and a majority of members are over 60, Riseley told the audience.

"Consider what Rotary stands to look like 10 or 20 years from now if we don't get very serious, very soon, about bringing in younger members," Riseley said.

"STEPS TO RECRUITING AND RETAINING A MEMBER"

From Lead Your Club - Membership Committee, 2016-19 edition. 226B-EN—(315)

Adapted and summarised by this Newsletter's editor.

The process for cultivating a Rotary club member often includes the following stages:

IDENTIFY

> INTRODUCE

> INVITE

> INDUCT

INFORM
AND
ORIENT

> INVOLVE

> EDUCATE

Identify. Identify members of your community who are a good fit for your club.

Introduce. Introduce prospective members to Rotary by telling them about your experience as a member, why you joined and why you've stayed etc.

Invite. Invite him or her to attend your club meeting as a guest to get a feel for what the club does and what it is like to be a member. If your guest seems keen submit the membership proposal to your club's board of directors.

Induct. Do something special when new members join. Make the induction ceremony an important social gathering and invite family members to attend.

Inform and orient. Tell new members about your club and Rotary, including: How to get involved in the club's activities and projects, Your club's culture, What to expect at meetings, How to create a My Rotary account on Rotary.org

Involve. Consider these suggestions for involving new members: Assign new members to a committee or give them a role at club meetings, Consider the best ways to involve members without overwhelming them with too many assignments.

Educate. Members who feel informed and involved are more likely to stay actively engaged. Keep members aware of Rotary news and updates on club and district initiatives. For example: Have a multiclub social with a presentation on a Rotary topic to continue new member education.

From the editor, who was privileged to be asked and invited to join Rotary in 1982:

"It is not 'rocket science', ignoring any of these steps is the reason for our membership numbers remaining stagnant even though we induct over 100,000 new members every year, but due to the effort of clubs and districts in Asia and Africa our membership numbers worldwide are not declining.

Let us not reinvent the wheel; all the above steps are of paramount importance and rely on every member being pro-active for the continuity of Rotary.

It is every Rotarian's responsibility to Ask, Ask, Ask, Invite, Inform, Involve, Educate and Mentor prospective and new members. IT IS THAT SIMPLE."

"A FRESH NEW LOOK – ROTARY.ORG"

Have you visited the new [Rotary.org](https://www.rotary.org) public-facing website yet?



You can use Rotary's improved public site as an introductory resource to inspire potential members, donors, and partners to get involved.

The public-facing site has a fresh, contemporary look that clearly answers the often-asked question: "What is Rotary?"

SHARE YOUR CLUB OR DISTRICT SERVICE PROJECT AND MEMBERSHIP BEST PRACTICES.

We would like to hear from Clubs or Districts telling us what they have done. Please include a summary, contact details, a couple of captioned photos, and email to [Issa Shalhoub](mailto:Issa.Shalhoub@rotary.org), this Newsletter's editor.

We also would like readers to share their experiences and stories on Best Practices in their Clubs and what has worked for their Clubs in gaining new members and also what has helped in keeping members.

"THOUGHTS ON MEMBERSHIP – AND THE NEED FOR HOW"

Article by **DG Stephen Lamont, D9780** and supplied by **ARC PDG Tim Moore**

After completing club visits the topic of membership was very prominent during discussions with each club. What was highlighted to me was not WHY membership building is so important but rather clubs were asking HOW to build membership. The plethora of resources on membership was almost too much to take in and clubs are in need of assistance in implementing a strategy for growth and a plan on how to use the resources available.



DG Lamont

This is not a short-term fix but rather an ongoing concept. After discussion with the members of the Governor's Team and the board, it was resolved to form a "Membership Task Force" to be trained to go out to clubs (and more importantly groups of clubs in a common locale) to facilitate with implementing a plan for HOW. Positive support must also be provided by all clubs (as some are stronger than others) to each other and we need to understand the concept of collaboration rather than competition. We currently have group President meetings quarterly and this would be a good forum to discuss and provide feedback on progress made.

Members of the Task Force need to be diverse. Having people from clubs that have a proven record of membership growth to be part of this team was seen as an important component. We plan to start training the Task Force soon and we have already had a number of Rotarians prepared to be part of the team. As our district is large geographically, travel time is an issue. The use of webinars and online forums need to be considered as well as personal onsite contact with clubs.

I have often stated that help is always available to those that ask – in regards to membership we just need to produce the Task Force to implement that help – and we have now begun the process.

"Presidential Message"

2016-17 RI President John F. Germ

The 2016 Council resulted in many new, forward thinking decisions, including membership flexibility. This gives your clubs more freedom to decide how they run their business, while maintaining the classification system and our high ethical standards. Clubs can now determine how meetings are held, who is invited to join, and what defines engagement.

We know that if we want *Rotary Serving Humanity* to become even better in the years ahead, we'll need more willing hands, more caring hearts, and more bright minds to move our work forward. We'll need clubs that are flexible, so that Rotary service will be attractive to younger members, recent retirees, and working people. We'll need to seek out new partnerships, opening ourselves more to collaborative relationships with other organizations.

All past editions of the "Rotary on the Move" Newsletter can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#)

If you wish to receive an electronic copy of this Newsletter, or you know of someone who would like to receive one, please email the editor; Issa Shalhoub shalhoubissa@shoal.net.au

ROTARY COORDINATORS TEAM 2016 - 17 Zone 8 and 7B

Zone 8: Australia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and Nauru.

Zone 7B: New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Vanuatu, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Tonga and Samoa.

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