



DRAFT ONLY

Revised 30th November 2018

Bougainville Referendum

KEY MESSAGES AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A guide for awareness materials and activities

Presented to Joint Supervisory Body 14th June 2018 and deferred to joint Chief Secretaries for approval.

Bougainville Referendum

KEY MESSAGES AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

These key messages provide jointly agreed information from the two governments to the people of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea. The key messages provide people with neutral, consistent, and up to date factual information on the Bougainville Peace Agreement. They are designed to respond to frequently asked questions from community referendum and BPA awareness activities – in both Bougainville and in PNG provinces. It is intended that this information, once approved by both governments, will form the basis of multi-format awareness materials. These key messages should continue to be revised as both governments agree to new decisions and new information is available to share.

The Joint Supervisory Body (JSB), Arawa, 29 June considered a draft of these messages and resolved that:

the Joint Technical Team study and evaluate the proposed new awareness messages prepared by the ABG on pre-referendum and post-referendum issues, and authorizes the two Chief Secretaries to process and approve such messages on a progressive basis.

In response, the ABG, through a whole of government approach¹, has revisited the document and revised to reflect the most recent JSB resolutions at the Special JSB, Port Moresby 11-12 October. This document is now forwarded to the two Chief Secretaries for their joint approval.

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the JSB approved the first set of joint BPA/referendum key messages. These were produced into a range of information materials (posters, fact sheets, web content, videos, booklets). Now that new government decisions have been made and people are asking questions beyond the scope of the first key messages, there is an urgent need to update information being provided to people. That is the main purpose of this document.

The questions were primarily collected through the Bougainville Referendum Dialogue project (implemented under the Department of Peace Agreement Implementation (DPAI) by the Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia, and community consultations undertaken by DPAI with NCOBA. The PACSIA project has a team of more than 80 facilitators from all 33 constituencies of Bougainville who undertake dialogues in schools, market places, churches and community government offices. The team has captured the following 34 frequently asked questions. Their issues can be divided into:

1. General issues and concerns about Bougainville and its future (14)
2. Referendum process (20)

The responses, including a brief history of the BPA and its intentions, have been drafted in a collaborative effort between the ABG Directorate of Media and Communications, Department of Peace Agreement Implementation and the Office of the Bougainville Electoral Commissioner, with support from the Bougainville Legal Officer. The aim is neutral, consistent, concise, simple and factual information, creating an authoritative feedback loop to address community concerns.

¹ Office of the Chief Secretary, Department of Peace Agreement Implementation, Department of Community Government, Office of the Bougainville Electoral Commissioner, Department of Community Development and the Directorate of Media and Communications.

PART 1 – HISTORY OF THE BOUGAINVILLE PEACE AGREEMENT

The Bougainville Peace Agreement – or BPA - is a lasting peace strategy built on three pillars: autonomy, weapons disposal and referendum. It was signed in 2001 by the Government of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville leaders. The BPA has no end date.

The BPA was built on compromise and agreement. For example, the National Government did not want the referendum to be binding (where the result is final).

Different Bougainville groups had different views for Bougainville:

1. Early independence with referendum on as soon as possible (3-5 years), with a binding outcome – where the result was final.
2. Autonomy and deferred referendum: Immediate autonomy, with a referendum after enough time to conduct reconciliation and weapons disposal to avoid a return to conflict.
3. Remain part of PNG: but with a high level of autonomy.

Bougainville agreed to the ‘middle-road’ between the two extreme options: Autonomy with a referendum on independence 10-15 years later.

1.End of conflict

The BPA ended 10 years of fighting between different Bougainville factions and with PNG. It showed that different factions in Bougainville and the national government could compromise and come to one agreement.

2.Restoration

Under the BPA, Bougainville has a special relationship with the national government. Autonomy – the Autonomous Bougainville Government - has allowed Bougainville to take charge of its development agenda and resources, to deliver services in a Bougainville way - but with continued support from the national government.

This has resulted in the peaceful transfer of some national powers and functions to the ABG. Bougainville now have laws to protect and manage resources, finance, public service. Bougainville operates under a home-grown Bougainville Constitution.

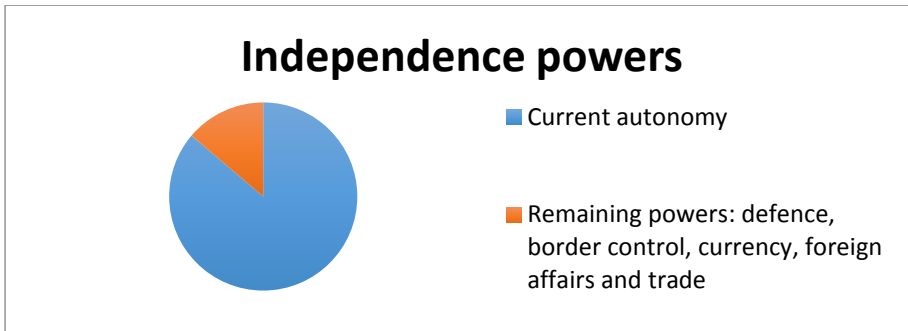
3.Preventing conflict relapse

The third achievement of the BPA was weapons disposal – removing guns from the community to restore a peaceful environment. Guns bring fear. Guns stop development. Today, factions outside the peace process have now signed up to a new Joint ABG-PNG weapons disposal plan.

Autonomy, weapons disposal and referendum – the three pillars of lasting peace.

PART 2 - GENERAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS ABOUT BOUGAINVILLE AND ITS FUTURE

AUTONOMY vs INDEPENDENCE



Autonomy: Autonomy is a level of independence and responsibility for the provision of service under a national government. There are many different levels of autonomy around the world. Under the Bougainville Peace Agreement, Bougainville has a high level of powers for home grown decision-making to restore and implement government in Bougainville. All provincial government powers and functions were automatically assumed upon inception of ABG in June 2005. Those outlined in BPA article 53 and ABG continues to transfer additional power/function through BPA part 7. Since 2015, the ABG has drawn down 25 additional powers and functions from the national government.

Independence: Additional powers and responsibilities provided by independence include defence, border control, currency and foreign relations.

1. What is the difference between Autonomy and Independence?

Autonomy and independence are different levels of self-rule, self-governance or responsibility, with independence assuming absolute sovereignty and full responsibility for provision of government.

Autonomy	Independence
<p>Autonomy is a level of government vested with higher level of decision making powers/functions.</p> <p>Under the BPA, Bougainville has a high level of autonomy or self-rule. It has all powers are available to the National Government except defence, boarder control, currency and foreign affairs.</p> <p>It can collect some taxes and make laws.</p> <p>Bougainville has drawn down 25 powers and functions from the national government, and will may draw down more powers as capacity, resources and money are available to the ABG.</p> <p>A recent study found that the ABG had only achieved 20% of the benefits that</p>	<p>Independence is when Bougainville can assume absolute sovereignty from PNG.</p> <p>Autonomy and independence are different levels of self-rule, self-governance or responsibility with independence the highest.</p> <p>Independence is total or absolute self-rule and responsibility. Independence for Bougainville would give it additional powers of defence, border control, currency and foreign relations which it doesn't currently have under autonomy together with absolute responsibility for funding government and services.</p>

should be derived from autonomy due to continued capacity constraints.	
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2. What is the difference between referendum and independence?

Referendum is the process of voting, like an election. *Independence* will be a choice or question people can vote for at the referendum – which could be Bougainville’s final political status – an independent Bougainville, breaking away from PNG. Like elections: The referendum will have ballot paper, ballot box, polling stations and observers. However, unlike ABG and national elections which happen every five years, the Bougainville referendum will happen once, so people cannot change their mind in five years’ time.

3. What is a referendum?

Referendum is like an election, but instead of voting for a candidate or a person, people will vote on a question put on the ballot paper. One of the questions for the Bougainville referendum will be to ask if people want to be independent, or break away, from PNG. Referendums are the way the international community resolve questions of independence in a legal and peaceful way. The referendum will affect future generations - so it is important that people think carefully about how they vote.

4. What is a unilateral declaration of independence?

Unilateral declarations of independence do not have the same legitimacy as a referendum in the eyes of the international community.

5. What is the Bougainville referendum?

The Bougainville referendum gives Bougainville a choice for greater autonomy or independence from PNG for its political future. It is a ‘non-binding referendum’. This means the final vote will not automatically be the final decision. The two governments have agreed on a process to decide the final status of Bougainville:

1. *Eligible people of Bougainville will vote in the referendum.*
2. *National Government and the ABG will consult.*
3. *National Parliament will make the final decision.*

6. If Bougainville votes for greater autonomy does that mean Bougainville has its own defence force, currency and foreign trade?

Responsibility for defence, currency and foreign trade are powers of an independent nation. However, ‘greater autonomy’ powers need to be defined by the two governments. Under current autonomy powers, Bougainville can send sports teams internationally under the Bougainville flag. Bougainville can have trade commissioners in PNG foreign embassies. Bougainville can also attend international conventions where Bougainville is being discussed. However, Bougainville has not yet exercised these powers.

IS BOUGAINVILLE READY FOR INDEPENDENCE/ECONOMIC?

7. Is Bougainville ready for independence? (human resources, infrastructure, law enforcement, universities and job creation etc) and where will Bougainville get money from after independence?

Bougainville is still in a development restoration phase after the conflict. Only 20 per cent of autonomy powers under the BPA have been accessed by Bougainville due to lack money, human resources and capacity. An independent or greater autonomy

Bougainville will need money to fund services to the people. Experts (National Research Institute) suggest it will cost about K900million per year to keep the current level of government and service delivery. Currently the ABG has about K12million revenue.

The ABG is working hard to grow the economy, for example the granting of mining exploration licenses. Another area is fisheries and support for the cocoa industry. Bougainville has signed an agreement with the National Fisheries Agency and will continue negotiations to draw revenue for fishing licences in Bougainville waters.

But the Referendum will go ahead whether or not Bougainville is economically capable to support itself now - otherwise known as fiscal self-reliance. Development will continue after the referendum, whether independence or greater autonomy.

But Bougainville must mobilise its resources. All Bougainvilleans must be ready to meet the cost of our choice, whatever option we choose: independence or greater autonomy. Government and people must listen to each other and work together. Post-referendum transition arrangements are being discussed between the two governments to help determine how the outcome will be implemented whichever option people choose: independence or greater autonomy.

8. What will the education system look like after independence and where will children go to university? (many)

Education is one of the many other agendas that the Transition Taskforce will consider in the transitional arrangement planning. This is the reason for which both Governments had agreed on a transition period)

9. How will PNG and the international community assess Bougainville's achievement of the three pillars?

The BPA is a joint creation of GoPNG leaders and Bougainville leaders in 2001. Both GoPNG and ABG have responsibilities in implementing the autonomy arrangements. The second review of autonomy arrangements looked at how well both ABG and GoPNG have done in implementing autonomy. The report has been finalised and will be reviewed at the next Joint Supervisory Body meeting, chaired by the PNG Prime Minister and Bougainville President.

Weapons Disposal - The first weapons disposal exercise was the UNOMB-led program that paved the way for the first election of the Autonomous Bougainville Government in 2005. The two governments now have agreed to a second joint weapons disposal process: this is based on registration of weapons and awareness on the *National Firearms Act*. Community Government members will undertake a survey across all Wards to ensure Bougainville is weapons free.

Referendum – the conduct of the referendum must be considered free and fair according to international standards as assessed by international observers.

Any assessment of poor or low level of weapons disposal or good governance cannot stop the referendum from going ahead by 15 June 2020. However, the presence of weapons and poor governance may affect the credibility of the referendum vote and whether the National Parliament would ratify the outcome.

10. People don't understand the choice/responsibilities of independence. More awareness is needed.

The ABG has been conducting awareness through each Member with support from the UN. The ABG is also working through other channels (like this) and with Community Government to get information to the people before, during, and after the referendum. The Bougainville Referendum Commission, the independent agency responsible for conducting the referendum, will also conduct awareness about the referendum options. The BRC Chair Mr Ahern has noted the importance of awareness and the need for the people of Bougainville to fully understand the options that would be put to them, the outcomes that would arise, and the process that would follow once the referendum takes place.

Listen to radio, read newspapers and look out for community awareness gatherings.

Other readiness/economic questions

[To be discussed by the two governments during the transition period.]

- Do we have the economic and human resources and capacity? (many)
- Concern about service delivery after referendum (many)
- Bougainville is not ready to vote because there are no services for people
- Concern about government salaries after referendum (many)
- Concern about education system (many): salaries and access to universities, Bougainville needs a university

(These concerns are to be addressed by the transitional taskforce in consultation with both Governments, Bougainvilleans and other stakeholders.)

WEAPONS/FACTIONS

11. What is being done about Weapons Disposal? Will the referendum go ahead if weapons are still in communities?

The issue of weapons is both a legal and moral one – both before and after referendum. During the conflict, in 1990 after Papua New Guinea withdrew, guns were used by Bougainvilleans against Bougainvilleans, creating internal conflict and loss of life.

Guns also affect Bougainville's ability to become a peaceful nation. Morally, Bougainville wants to be weapons-free, to remove fear from communities and create an environment that assists confidence and development.

The referendum result will be questioned by the national and international community if people cannot vote freely and fairly because they are afraid of guns and factions. After referendum, if there is no security, it will be difficult to establish a new government.

The Bougainville House of Representatives has agreed that all constituencies must declare themselves *Referendum Ready* by December 2018 to make sure Bougainville is weapons-free and unified under the Bougainville Peace Agreement. The ABG is working with Community Governments who will assess whether their communities are weapons-free and identify where further support is needed to resolve outstanding issues from the conflict.

Reconciliation is needed to remove weapons from Bougainville, beginning at the highest leadership level down to every community.

The two governments approved a joint weapons disposal plan in December 2017. This includes registration of weapons, building of monuments and disposal. It separates

weapons of war, from weapons held by criminals, who can be prosecuted under the *National Firearms Act*. All unregistered weapons are illegal under national laws, and all weapons in Bougainville are illegal under Part E Weapons Disposal, paragraph 10 (a), (b) and (e) of the BPA and under Section 15 (3) (a) and (b) of the Constitution of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

The ABG has been working with all factions and veterans to ensure they are part of the peace and weapons disposal process. Former commanders including Panguna Meekamui signed an MOU with the ABG in Tsiroge. They pledged their support to weapons disposal and made a commitment to be weapons free by December 2018. The UN continues to support this process to ensure compliance with the United Nations action on small arms and light weapons.

12. What will happen to people with weapons? People with weapons put at risk the outcome of the referendum being seen as credible by national and international communities. As part of preparing Bougainville to be weapons-free, the ABG insists on compliance with the provisions of the BPA, the United Nations Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the *National Firearms Act*, meaning that people who continue to hold weapons after 31st December 2018 can be arrested and fined – including 10 years’ jail and K10, 000 fine. The ABG will continue to work with police and former combatants to ensure a weapons-free Bougainville.

13. Is it safe to become an independent state (while different governments/factions exist in Bougainville)?

No. The different factions and governments are one of the key issues and challenges for the referendum. If Bougainville does not have respect for rule of law under a single government for Bougainville, sovereignty cannot be established. A sovereign Bougainville state must have only one government recognised under the Constitution. Bougainville must stay united and accept our diversity. Unity and security must be established through reconciliation and unification processes at all levels: families, communities, regions and at leadership between Bougainville and PNG.

The ABG has been working with all factions and veterans to ensure they are part of the peace and weapons disposal process. Former commanders including Commander Moses Pipiro and Panguna Meekamui signed an MOU with the ABG in Panguna, and all the factions have committed themselves for united Bougainville on 17th May 2017 in Arawa. They pledged their support to weapons disposal and made a commitment to be weapons free by December 2018. The UN continues to support this process.

Bougainville cannot continue with different factions operating outside the Constitution and legal government processes. Unity under one government will assist Bougainville develop, no matter what the final political status of Bougainville is. The ABG will continue to work with police and former combatants to ensure a weapons-free Bougainville.

14. Amnesty/Pardon

The BPA provides for grant of Amnesty and Pardon to those that comply with the peace process. The two governments have reaffirmed grant of pardon/amnesty for those political factions that didn't sign BPA provided they participate in weapons disposal as provided under the BPA.

Other gun owning individuals and groups have also been offered pardon to dispose their weapons during the weapons disposal with its due date on 31st December 2018.

PART 3 – REFERENDUM PROCESS

ELIGIBILITY

15. Who can vote?

The two governments have agreed on who can vote in the referendum according to the BPA, the Bougainville Constitution and national electoral laws. At its simplest, every Bougainvillean over the age of 18, residing in PNG and with a link to a clan by birth or adoption, by either parent or by marriage, can register to vote.

To be eligible to be included on the Referendum Voter Roll a citizen must:

- Be a citizen of PNG;
- Be at least 18 years of age by the estimated date of the Referendum;
- Be ordinarily resident in the ward and so resided for the last 6 months (Note: the Bougainville Referendum Commission will declare the location of voting districts);
- Be of full capacity;
- Not be under sentence of death or sentence of imprisonment for a period of more than 9 months;
- Have not in the last 3 years committed an electoral offence.
- Non-resident Bougainvillean are eligible for enrolment under the categories as outlined on the Claim for Enrolment form, and will be enrolled in specific locations outside of Bougainville.

To be Bougainvillean according to the *Bougainville Constitution* (7)1:

- a. you are a member of a Bougainville clan by birth or adoption
- b. or you are married to a member of a clan by birth or adoption
- c. or you are a child of a parent who is a member of a clan by birth or adoption

Note: It is mandatory under the Organic Law for ALL eligible electors to be registered on the Referendum Roll.

16. Voting age – some say from as young as 14 up

The two governments reaffirmed that the voting age will be 18 years and over. This is both an international standard, and in accordance with the Bougainville Peace Agreement, National Constitution and electoral laws. People under the age of 18 can still be involved by helping to create a peaceful, secure and informed referendum process.

17. Bougainvilleans outside Bougainville – some say should, some say haven't earned right

The two governments have decided the criteria for Bougainvilleans living outside Bougainville in other provinces to vote using the *Bougainville Constitution Section 7(1)*, and being a *Section 52(1) of the Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Elections* for an electorate in Papua New Guinea outside the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

To be Bougainvillean according to the *Bougainville Constitution* (7)1:

- a. you are a member of a Bougainville clan by birth or adoption
- b. or you are married to a member of a clan by birth or adoption
- c. or you are a child of a parent who is a member of a clan by birth or adoption

18. Non-Bougainvilleans married to Bougainvilleans

- 1. For non-Bougainvilleans married to Bougainvilleans and living in Bougainville, the BPA says eligibility to vote in the referendum will be the same as for national elections in Bougainville.
- 2. Those criteria include being at least 18 years old, being a citizen of PNG (and no other country), and having resided in the electorate for a period of at least six months.

19. What happens to people refusing to vote: particularly factions, hardliners, no-go zones

All factions, including hardliner groups, have committed to participating fully in the referendum. Various MoUs and declarations have been signed and agreed to by faction leaders and commanders. This includes Tsiroge and May 17 agreements. These give full support to the Autonomous Bougainville Government through the referendum process.

The outcome of the referendum will affect all Bougainvilleans – including those who did not vote. It is important that all people register on the referendum roll and participate in the referendum because this is a very important process.

It is also mandatory under the Organic Law for ALL eligible electors to be on the Referendum Roll.

20. Concerns raised that national people will be able to vote

The two governments will agree on voting eligibility criteria for Bougainvilleans outside Bougainville, and voter registration will ensure that only people who meet those criteria are registered to vote. The referendum will have officials and observers like an election to ensure only those registered on the referendum roll can vote.

21. How can we trust vote occurring outside Bougainville?

It is very important that the referendum process is independent, transparent and the result is trusted and credible. The Bougainville Referendum Commission – an independent agency chaired former Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahearn – will conduct the referendum. Its job is to make sure the result is trusted both in and outside Bougainville and achieve a credible result. This includes training of polling officials and the presence of international observers and scrutineers.

THE QUESTION

22. What will the question be? Will it be simple, take into account literacy – concern that will be complicated for people?

The two governments have agreed on the referendum question.

Preamble: The outcome of the referendum on the future political status of Bougainville, will be discussed by both governments (the GoPNG and ABG), and will be presented to the National Parliament for final decision making in accordance with the Bougainville Peace Agreement and the National Constitution.

Question: Do you agree for Bougainville to have:

- (1) Greater Autonomy; or*
- (2) Independence*

Explanation of process:

1. *Eligible people of Bougainville will vote in the referendum.*
2. *National Government and the ABG will consult.*
3. *National Parliament will make the final decision.*

The Bougainville Referendum Commission will be responsible for the design of the ballot paper.

VOTER REGISTRATION AND REFERENDUM ROLL

23. Voter Registration/WILL COMMON ROLL BE USED?

You can only vote in the referendum if your name is on a specially prepared Referendum Roll based on updating the 2015 ABG electoral roll. The Referendum Roll will be developed by the Bougainville Referendum Commission through a three-step enrolment process. Unlike elections, the referendum roll registration is being conducted house to house to make sure the community has a bigger role in verifying the final roll.

Phase 1 – Verification of 2015 ABG voter roll against Ward Voter registries

Phase 2 – Enrolment. Ward recorders visit every house to ensure names are correct or enrol new eligible electors not on the Working Roll using *Claim for Enrolment* form.

Phase 3 – Objection period. Public display and verification of the *Preliminary Referendum Roll*. The roll will be displayed in each Ward for people to see.

It is important that all Bougainvilleans take part in the registration process to help the Bougainville Referendum Commission create a good referendum roll for each Ward. You must check with your Ward Recorder that your name is on the final list being prepared. It is then important that once you register, you must vote,

Bougainvilleans living in Papua New Guinea provinces

In PNG, PNG Electoral Officials will assist the BRC to register Bougainvilleans on the Referendum Roll. Enrollment Forms will come from Bougainvilleans living in mainland PNG, back to every Ward for them to verify. You must vote where you are registered.

Because of logistics, Bougainvilleans living outside Papua New Guinea will not be able to vote but can come back to Bougainville to vote in the referendum.

REFERENDUM PROCESS

24. What is the BRC/BRC must be transparent

The Bougainville Referendum Commission is the independent agency that will conduct the referendum. It has been formally established but is only just becoming operational due to lack of funds. The BRC will conduct all referendum operations, including awareness, voter registration, polling, counting and announcing the result. It will also look at security and campaigning. It must be neutral, credible, independent, and follows international standards.

The Commission has an international Chair, Hon Bertie Ahern, appointed by both governments, two representatives appointed by each government, and the PNG and Bougainville Electoral Commissioners. Bougainville has appointed Patrick Nisira and

Ruby Mirinka as its commissioners. The national government has nominated Thomas Webster and Robert Igara as its commissioners. (However the referendum charter requires that at least one must be a female.)

A BRC Transitional Committee is progressing referendum planning and registration of voters. This is co-chaired by the PNG and Bougainville Electoral Commissioners; the two chief secretaries (or their designated alternates) are also members.

25. Will the ABG have enough money to conduct the referendum?

The referendum is a joint responsibility and legal requirement of both national and Bougainville governments. The two governments have agreed on a budget for the BRC of K34million. ABG has provided K500,000 start-up funds and both the Australian (AUD1million) and New Zealand (NZD1.5million) governments have provided funding.

The two governments have also requested for UN and other countries for funding and technical assistance. Prime Minister O’Neill has committed to incorporating K34 million into the 2019 National Budget.

26. Who will assist illiterate voters?

Just like an election, there will be polling officials from the Bougainville Referendum Commission who will assist illiterate voters mark their paper/cast their vote. People needing assistance to vote can choose someone to help them, but that person cannot influence their vote.

THE RESULT

27. What percentage vote will secure independence?

The legal framework does not mention a specific percentage requirement – only that the outcome of the referendum is non-binding and the final decision is a negotiated process between the two governments that may be subject to ratification by the National Parliament.

28. What does a ‘failed’ referendum mean?

A failed referendum means that people did not vote, or the referendum vote was not declared as free and fair by referendum observers. All eligible voters on the referendum roll must also cast their vote. This is one reason why there must be no fear of weapons in Bougainville.

29. What happens if people vote for independence? What if people vote against independence?

The referendum is an internationally recognised process to inform the final decision making of Bougainville’s future political status: independence or greater autonomy. This process must be credible, free and fair, provide a clear result and lead to consultation between the two governments with a final decision being made by National Parliament.

Whatever the result, it is important that people accept and respect the outcome – whatever it is. The people will have spoken, and the decision is theirs. All Bougainvilleans must maintain peace and continue our development journey, no matter what the referendum outcome is.

30. What will the government do after the vote?

The Bougainville referendum is a ‘non-binding referendum’. This means the final vote will not automatically be the final decision. The two governments have reaffirmed the process outlined in the BPA and agree on the following process to decide the final political status of Bougainville:

1. *Eligible people of Bougainville will vote in the referendum.*
2. *National Government and the ABG will consult.*
3. *National Parliament will make the final decision.*

The two governments have agreed on a Post Referendum Planning Taskforce, headed by the National Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Bougainville and the ABG Minister for Peace Agreement Implementation. This will map out what the post-referendum process between the two governments with a particular emphasis on:

- Ensuring peaceful acceptance of the referendum results
- Timely consultation between the governments about the results of the referendum
- Reference to the Parliament for timely ratification only if the two governments agree
- Developing an agreed basis for the ongoing relationship between Bougainville and PNG.

A Joint Post Referendum Summit is planned for late 2018 in Buka. The Taskforce will report to the respective Parliaments by the end of 2018.

31. What will the status of Bougainville be if not independent after the referendum?

The BPA is a living and evolving document which does not end in 2020. Bougainville will continue to operate as an Autonomous Region under the powers of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, Bougainville Constitution, and PNG Constitution until the two governments negotiate the final political status of Bougainville based on the result of the referendum.

32. How do we stay secure and not go into another Crisis?

Security is one of the key issues and challenges for the referendum. If Bougainville is not peaceful and secure with respect for rule of law, neither the national government or international community will accept the referendum result. If there is no security, a new single government for Bougainville cannot be established.

People must respect the result of the referendum – it is the will of the majority of the people. Peace by peaceful means we learn from the past. Bougainville must stay united and accept diversity of opinions. We must resolve through peaceful means any conflicts that arise.

Security must be established through reconciliation and unification processes at all levels: families, communities, regions and at leadership between Bougainville and PNG.

33. How many years is the transition period/There should be a long transition period/It should be five, ten years.

The transition period, the time after the referendum to implement the result, is not set in the BPA. This is being discussed by the Joint Transitional Taskforce, which will provide a process for endorsement by the two governments.

The transition period is important for the following reasons:

- To make necessary amendments as consistent with the outcome of the referendum
- To ensure Bougainville draws down powers and functions from the National Government
- To address and resolve any peace-building and referendum-related grievances and issues to maintain unity and stability

34. What relationship will Bougainville have with PNG provinces under independence?

The two governments will need to agree on the relationship between Bougainville and the PNG under an agreed independence decision for Bougainville. However, control of migration, borders, customs and trade are powers of an independent state.

The two governments have established a Post Referendum Planning Taskforce which will look at developing agreements for the ongoing relationship between Bougainville and PNG under different political options – which will include independence.

Other post-referendum questions (to be considered in future government decision-making)

- Why should PNG grant Bougainville independence:

Bougainville needs a clear result for leaders to hear the majority wishes of Bougainvilleans. It is then up to the National Government to respect the democratic process

- What happens if PNG doesn't accept an independence vote?

Bougainville's accepted second option is greater autonomy.

- What is the ABG plan if not independence? This should be communicated.

Bougainville's accepted second option is greater autonomy. The Transition Taskforce is currently determining how greater autonomy can be defined.

- If Bougainville becomes independent, will the people who voted against independence have to move?

No. People must have the freedom to exercise a choice without having to move.

35. Compensation for conflict period?

The ABG is currently working on a peacebuilding policy that will continue beyond the referendum period and address outstanding issues.

36. Reconciliations need to be completed before referendum

Reconciliations are an ongoing process in Bougainville. Many reconciliations, both large and small have already taken place, leading the way for others to happen.

37. Corruption fear, ABG mismanagement

The ABG has been active in stamping out corruption and mismanagement. Poor performing heads of departments, ministers and public servants have been removed to improve service delivery and management of government funds.

38. Need for a stronger police force

Changes to the current Bougainville Police Service are only for consideration after referendum. However, the two Governments have agreed to seek Pacific Regional Security Assistance to strengthen policing in Bougainville both now, during and post referendum period. This assistance will involve arms and or arming of police

39. Need to improve services

The GoPNG and ABG has restored service delivery and Bougainvilleans should appreciate the current status in light of the challenges to effective and timely service delivery. The recent second review of autonomy arrangements found that in many areas of good governance, the ABG is performing well, including the delivery of services and conduct of elections. However, the ABG will continue to be hampered by a lack of economic development through a lack of resource development – this is a responsibility of all Bougainvilleans.