

Abbott announces ministry: no room for aid or the Pacific?

By Ashlee Betteridge
16 September 2013

Australian Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott announced his ministry line-up on Monday afternoon and there was bad news for aid and Pacific watchers: no dedicated Minister for International Development, no dedicated Parliamentary Secretary for International Development and no dedicated Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs.

The full list of the new ministry is available [here](#).

As we [reported last week](#), Abbott had to shed a number of ministerial and parliamentary secretary positions from his shadow ministry due to parliamentary limits for government. Brisbane MP Teresa Gambaro, who had been Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, was one of those who did not make the cut.

Julie Bishop will be the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as expected, and Senator Brett Mason will be the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. So responsibility for aid and development and the Pacific may fall to Mason, among other things, even though he has a 'multipurpose' title.

While the Coalition had never spoken on whether they would maintain the Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs role filled by Richard Marles and Matt Thistlethwaite under the Labor government, they had spoken strongly about their commitment to the region. However the Coalition appears to have taken a different approach to the role of Parliamentary Secretaries to Labor, with the positions now supporting cabinet portfolios and the PM, which could explain why that role has gone.

Julie Bishop will be the only female member of Cabinet.

Read more of our analysis on the new government and aid [here](#).

About the author/s

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Ashlee Betteridge was the Manager of the Development Policy Centre until April 2021. She was previously a Research Officer at the centre from 2013-2017. A former journalist, she holds a Master of Public Policy (Development Policy) from ANU and has development experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. She now has her own consultancy, Better Things

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Link: <https://devpolicy.org/abbott-announces-ministry-no-room-for-aid-or-pacific-20130916-2/>

Date downloaded: 25 April 2024



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