

Minister for International Development speaks at AusAID, heads to Sols

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AusAID uploaded a [video](#) to its YouTube channel last week of the newly appointed Minister for International Development, Melissa Parke, addressing staff and speaking on the importance of the aid program. It's a short video, worth watching—it appears that in Parke the aid program has found itself a strong advocate within the parliament.

Though she didn't get an invitation to PNG with the Prime Minister, Parke went with Bob Carr to Solomon Islands this week. While it was [speculated](#) that the trip was intended to convince the Solomons government to join up to the new regional asylum seeker solution--which would seem a strange task given Parke's previous outspoken [opposition](#) to immigration detention--no announcement was made. Solomons PM Gordon Darcy Lilo said that his country was [interested in a deal](#) though. Other announcements were made on [avoidable blindness](#) and Australia's ongoing [support](#) for the country post-RAMSI as Lilo and Carr signed an expanded development partnership agreement that was actually [already announced](#) earlier this month.