The **Battle of Arawe** (also known as Operation *Director*) was fought between [Allied](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allies_of_World_War_II) and [Japanese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empire_of_Japan) forces during the [New Britain Campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Britain_Campaign) of [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II). Initial Allied goals for the landing at Arawe included securing a base for American [PT boats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PT_boats) and diverting Japanese forces away from Cape Gloucester. There is no consensus among historians on whether the Allied offensive at Arawe was necessary. In July 1942, the U.S. [Joint Chiefs of Staff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff) directed that the main objective of the Allied forces in the [South Pacific](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Pacific_Area) and [Southwest Pacific](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_West_Pacific_theatre_of_World_War_II) area commands was to capture the major Japanese base at [Rabaul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabaul) on the eastern tip of [New Britain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Britain). From August 1942, U.S. and Australian forces conducted a series of offensives in [New Guinea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Guinea) and the [Solomon Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands), with the goals of eliminating Japanese positions in the region and establishing air bases close to Rabaul. In June 1943, the Allies launched a major offensive—designated Operation Cartwheel—to capture Rabaul. During the next five months, Australian and U.S. forces under the overall command of General [Douglas MacArthur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_MacArthur) advanced along the north coast of eastern New Guinea, capturing the town of [Lae](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lae) and the [Huon Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huon_Peninsula).