



12 February 2019

Police identify suspects as investigations continue into armed robbery in Shortland Islands

Investigators of the Royal Solomon Police Force (RSIPF) have identified four suspects so far in relation to the alleged armed robbery at Maleai in the Shortland Islands, Western Province on 6 February 2019.

Assistant Commissioner (AC) Provincial, Joseph Manelugu who is currently the Assistant Operation Commander of the RSIPF Operation following the incident says, "Our investigators have so far identified four suspects believed to be connected with the incident. Two are from Solomon Islands and two from Bougainville. But no arrests have been made so far as investigations continue into the armed robbery incident."

AC Manelugu says, "I want to thank the RSIPF investigators for working very hard on the case to show people in the Shortlands that this is a very serious case and we will find those responsible and bring them before the Courts."

"There could be more suspects involved in the planning and execution of the armed robbery but the investigations will reveal those people responsible in due course. I want to call on members of the public either in the Shortlands or in the Western Province who may have any information at all about the incident to come forward to police investigators currently in the Shortlands or call the Police National Communication Centre on phone 23666 or the toll free 999.

It is alleged that at about 6.30 am on 6 February 2019 a group of armed men believed to be from Bougainville as well as from Solomon Islands went ashore at Maleai and discharged firearms, during which a civilian person from Maleai Village as well as a foreign national sustained serious wounds. The group of armed men also allegedly looted the foreign national's valuable properties and took off with a large sum of money.

Initial police investigations confirmed that the group of armed men were also fully armed with high powered guns and with masks to cover their faces.

The RSIPF police patrol boat LATA is currently in the Shortlands with additional officers from Honiara assisting officers from Western and Choiseul Provinces to investigate the incident and to boost the security at the border. The officers are also conducting community awareness in the Shortlands including at Maleai Village.

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Media inquiries

RSIPF Media Unit:
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The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. Its mission is 'To provide a safe and peaceful Solomon Islands by strengthening relationships with the community'. The RSIPF strive to provide efficient and effective policing services for the Solomon Islands and expect RSIPF officers to adhere to the RSIPF values.

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