



31 March 2020

RSIPF prepares officers in Renbel Province for COVID-19

Sharing of cigarettes, betel nut and lime, playing ludo on the same device and spitting of betel nut must be stopped to protect yourself from coronavirus (COVID-19).

These are the key messages highlighted during the awareness talks held by the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) on 31 March 2020 for its officers in the Rennel and Bellona to prevent any outbreak of the virus.

The awareness program aims to equip police officers with relevant information on the COVID-19 should there be any outbreak of the virus in the country. Following these awareness talks' police officers will assist health workers in the provinces to inform members of their communities on how to prevent an outbreak of the virus.

Mr Rolly Viga from the Public Health Emergency and Surveillance Unit of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) says, "Maintaining social distancing is very important. Maintain at least one to two meters between yourself and others especially if someone is coughing or sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth, which is too risky for us to take the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease."

Mr Viga adds: "The other easy way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is by keeping your own hands clean and cleaning surfaces that you come into contact with such as door handles. Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. This will kill any viruses that may be on your hands."

He told the officers who attended the awareness meetings at the various police stations: "RSIPF like any other law enforcement agencies in the world you have a key role to play in both supporting the implementation of public health measures to contain the outbreak and in preventing specific criminal activities arising from this context."

"Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not required when patrolling a public place. The best way to protect yourself from illness is to practise regular hand washing. If you cannot wash your hands use a hand sanitiser. Do not touch your face. Regular hand hygiene prevents more illness than masks. Do not shake hands – if you do not need to touch someone then do not touch them."

Mr Viga explains: "When dealing with uncooperative individuals, limit contact and practice hand hygiene. Policing duties can potentially expose officers to COVID-19. Before coming

back into direct contact with their loved ones, officers should maintain social distancing measures and follow these steps when returning home:

“Clean or decontaminate your work equipment, including shoes, avoiding the spread of particles/dust; Take off duty clothes and wash them with laundry soap as soon as feasible. Wash them in a way that limits exposure to skin, eyes, environment and other clean clothes (avoid shaking clothes); take a shower or wash exposed skin with soap and water; and self-monitor for signs of illness.”

As part of its COVID -19 Operation Plan to assist the Government’s efforts to prevent any outbreak of the virus in Solomon Islands, RSIPF officers from the Rove Police Headquarters assisted by officers from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, have been conducting nation-wide awareness programs on the virus to its officers and family members at the Rove Police Headquarters in Honiara and other police stations in Honiara and throughout the provinces.

The awareness team will travel to Lata in the Temotu Province tomorrow (1 April 2020) as the final destination in the nation-wide program for RSIPF officers and their families.

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<p>Media inquiries</p> <p>RSIPF Media Unit: 24016 or 23800 Ext 239</p> <p>Email: rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>For ongoing news and information, please go to www.rsipf.gov.sb</p> <p>Follow us on Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/rsipf</p>
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