



6<sup>th</sup> April 2020

### 15 people survive sunken boat in Western Province

The Royal Solomon Island Police Force (RSIPF) strongly urges small boat operators throughout the country to take sea safety very seriously especially during bad weather being experienced throughout the country at the moment.

This appeal is being made after police at Gizo police station received a report that an OBM boat carrying 15 people from Gizo to North Vella La Vella sunk outside Sumbolai Village on 4 April 2020. Luckily all 15 people survived the ordeal.

Provincial Police Commander Western Province Chief Superintendent Mathias Lenialu say, "Police at Gizo sent out its stabi-craft to assist after it received a report about the incident but luckily the 15 people managed to swim ashore and did not sustain any injuries as the incident happened not too far from land."

"Owners and skippers of boats and vessels are urged to think safety first before embarking on any trip at sea even though the cyclone warning has been cancelled. Be responsible and do not take any risks with your life. Please not overload your boat and make sure you have all the necessary sea safety equipment before travelling at sea. We cannot stress these enough. We cannot lose any more lives at sea due to people's carelessness and not listening to advice."

"Check the weather by listening to the SIBC and other radio stations or call the Met service on 933 and get the right information before embarking on your trip."

"If you are at sea and need help, contact the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) on phones 21609 or 27685, or toll free line 977. You can also call the Police Communication Centre on 23666 or the toll free line 999."

"Road users in Gizo and throughout the Western province are also advised to take safety measures when travelling on the roads as we experience bad weather throughout the country. Please do not cross flooded rivers or streams," says PPC Lenialu

"Given the slippery road conditions, pedestrians are also encouraged to take care when walking along the footpaths. Parents are reminded to keep your children away from flooded rivers or streams."

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**Media inquiries**

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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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