



18 May 2020

RSIPF rescues 11 people adrift at sea in Shortland Islands

Officers of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) deployed to the common border between Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea have rescued 11 people adrift at sea between Mania Island and Onua Island in Shortland Islands on 17 May 2020.

Commander of the Police Forward Command Post (PFCP) at the Kulitanai Police Station, in the Shortlands, Western Province Inspector Wilken Miriki says, "Officers at the Kulitanai police station received a call from family members and responded immediately."

Inspector Miriki explains: "The boat was carrying five adults and six children. They are from Maleai village. On their return from Samanaogo they encountered mechanical problem with their Out Boat Motor (OBM) engine. Police was able to respond in a timely manner with the help of the installation of the new office phone at the Kulitanai Police Station."

Mr Miriki says, "The OBM had a problem with one of its spark plugs as a result the engine consumed a lot of fuel and they run out of fuel on their return."

"I would like to thank police officers who were involved in the search and rescue. It's not an easy task for such a rescue. It was a risky job because of the bad weather at that time. That is why police always appeal to people to check on the weather as well as check your OBM engine before you travel at sea," Inspector Miriki emphasises.

RSIPF would like to remind boat owners and skippers of the importance of sea safety. Before you travel, please plan your trip properly. Here are some safety points to remember before travelling:

- Plan your trip and let at least a member of your family know where you are going and what time you expect to arrive;
- Check the weather on SIBC or call the Met Service on 23658 or toll free 933
- If you start your trip and the weather becomes bad, seek shelter until the sea is calm;
- Make sure your boat is seaworthy and your OBM is serviced and maintained;
- Know your skipper. Make sure they are experienced in driving boats;
- Do not overload your boat
- Wear life jackets. Take food and water, paddles, first aid kit, anchor and rope, mirror to signal others, tools, bucket, torch, phone, flares and EPIRB;
- Take extra fuel;
- If your skipper is drunk, do not go with them or let them control the boat; and
- If you require help at sea call the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) on phone 21609 or 27685 or the toll free phone 977; or call the RSIPF National Communication Centre on phone 23666 or the toll free phone 999. Safety at sea starts with you. IF YOU ARE NOT TOO SURE, STAY ASHORE

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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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