



26 August 2020

JANUS arrests and charges woman for allegedly stealing \$1.3 million

JANUS, the Joint Task Force between the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) yesterday (25 August 2020) arrested and charged a Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) employee with one count of Embezzlement by Public Servant contrary to Section 273(b) (ii) of the *Penal Code Chapter 26*.

JANUS is based in the National Criminal Investigations Department at the Rove Police Headquarters in Honiara.

The arrest is the result of an extensive joint investigation into irregularities concerning this individual and the receipt of an extremely large amount of Solomon Islands Government funds into her personal bank account by virtue of her position as an Early Childhood teacher in Malaita Province.

The value of the offence alleged against this individual is \$1,393,996.30.

The charge relates to the receipt of the funds by the defendant after a keying error by a former public officer who has been terminated from his employment with the MoFT. That error resulted in large amounts of money deposited into the account of the defendant over two pay periods in December 2017.

A total of \$3,806,297.77 was deposited into the bank account operated by the defendant.

JANUS will allege in Court that rather than reporting the error to MEHRD, her employer, the defendant then set about withdrawing huge amounts of cash from her account in person at the Bank, and transferring large amounts of money to her secondary bank account and the accounts of others.

When the MEHRD and MoFT officers identified the discrepancy in July 2018, the remaining funds across the two accounts operated by the defendant were recovered with the funds being sent back to the Solomon Islands Government account.

As a result of a request from MoFT, the ANZ Bank secured and returned to the Solomon Islands Government the amount of \$2,412,301.47.

The defendant appeared in the Honiara Magistrates' Court yesterday and was placed on strict bail conditions to appear for mention before the same court on 8 September 2020.

RSIPF Commissioner Mostyn Mangau acknowledges the efforts of officers in JANUS for their investigation that has led to the arrest and charging of the defendant.

“Fraud investigations involve a whole lot of relevant documents to be collected by the RSIPF if we are to prove our case in our courts. I call on all institutions who have been served with court orders, upon the RSIPF’s application to provide the relevant documents, to do so as soon as possible. Let us all assist the RSIPF to fight corruption. RSIPF cannot do it alone,” says RSIPF Commissioner Mangau.

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Media inquiries

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The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. It’s 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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