



1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

### **RSIPF calls for safety first during the current bad weather**

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) re-emphasises to the public the need to think safety first as parts of the country experience the effects of tropical cyclone (TC) Lucas.

TC Lucas is moving east at 20 knots towards the southern waters of Rennell and Bellona Province, southern waters of Western, Russell Islands, Guadalcanal and Makira Provinces and is strengthening. The country continues to experience heavy rain and strong winds due to Lucas.

Such bad weather may lead to possible landslides and flash flooding over communities living near hill slopes, close to large rivers, streams and low-lying areas.

Supervising Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Police, Joseph Manelugu says, "Owners of boats and vessels are urged to think safety first before embarking on any trip at sea during the current bad weather. Check the weather by listening to the SIBC and other radio stations or call the Met service and get the right advice before travelling at sea."

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

"Road users in Honiara and throughout the provinces 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," Supervising DC Manelugu emphasises.

"Given the slippery road conditions, pedestrians are also encouraged to take care when walking along the foot paths. Children are encouraged not to play along the roadsides. Parents are reminded to keep your children away from flooded rivers or streams."

"We do not want to lose any lives during this bad weather. Let us all work together to make sure of everyone's safety and security," says Supervising DC Manelugu.

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.

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**For any media inquiries**

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The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. Its mission is 'To provide a safe, secure and peaceful Solomon Islands'. The RSIPF strive to provide efficient, capable and responsive policing service and expect RSIPF officers to adhere to the RSIPF values.

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