



1 March 2021

RSIPF warns sea travellers to take precaution during bad weather

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) reminds the public of the need to think safety first during the current bad weather.

The call comes after seven people went missing at sea after the boat they were travelling in capsized between Guadalcanal and the Russell Islands yesterday (28 February 2021).

Reports say four adults and two children left Visale in Northwest Guadalcanal for Russell Islands on a boat powered by a 75 HP engine when they capsized in rough seas. Only the driver of the boat and a 4- year-old child managed to swim ashore at Bonavester Island in the Central Province while five others are still missing. Officers at the Tulagi Police Station are continuing with the search.

Assistance Commissioner Provincial (AC) Joseph Manelugu says, "Owners of boats and vessels are urged to think safety first before embarking on any trip at sea between our islands 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."

"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 the current bad weather affected the country. Please do not cross flooded rivers or streams," AC Manelugu emphasises.

He adds, "Given the slippery road conditions, pedestrians are also encouraged to take care when walking along the footpaths. Children are warned not to play along the roads. 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 everyone's safe and secure," says AC 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; and
- If your skipper is drunk, do not go with them or let them control the boat.

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For any media inquiries

RSIPF Media Unit contact:

24016 or 23800 Ext 239

Email: rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb

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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