



Royal Solomon Islands Police Force

Media Release

9 April 2021

RSIPF and other gov't agencies conduct awareness for chiefs in the Shortlands on COVID-19 vaccination

Officers of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Immigration and Customs deployed to the western border with Papua New Guinea have conducted COVID-19 vaccine awareness to the Famoia Council of Chiefs in the Shortland Islands.

The meeting was held on 7 April 2021.

This follows the request by the Government to step up the presence of these agencies in the western border including the Shortlands and Choiseul as recent surveillance statistics show rapid increase in Covid19 community transmission cases in PNG and neighbouring Bougainville.

RSIPF Forward Commander at the Kulitanae Post Superintendent Michael Bole says, "With emerging challenges faced by the team deployed to the western border including the plans to roll out the COVID-19 vaccination the various government agencies felt it was important to engage with the Famoia Council of Chiefs who are expected to assist in the vaccination of their people."

The Vaccination Sensitisation Risk Communication meeting was conducted at the Nila Parish Hall and attended by a total of 22 chiefs within the Shortland Islands.

According to Superintendent Bole, "In his welcome remarks, the Coordinator of the Famoia Council of Chiefs Mr Bruce Otuna challenged the chiefs to take the lead in vaccination to encourage their people who are within the prescribed age limit to take the vaccination."

Superintendent Bole, who is also chair of the On Site Operation Coordination Centre (OSOCC) spoke on the Status of the Solomon Islands Government Stand on the Vaccination, the Western Border Joint Operation to contain Covid19, the State of Public Emergency, and Emergency Powers (COVID19) Regulations 2020 covering restrictions on vessels entering Solomon Islands waters.

Deputy Chair of OSOCC Dr Simbe told the meeting with the chiefs, “The recent rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in PNG including Bougainville has made it critical for people living at the western border to be vaccinated.”

During the meeting with the Famoia Chiefs, health officials explained how the COVID-19 vaccination was approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the possible side effects of the vaccine and why the Solomon Islands Government decided to use the Astrazeneca vaccine.

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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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