



16th February 2023

RSIPF and RAPPP conduct a Copen Awareness Seminar in Honiara

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and Australian Federal Police Policing Partnership Program (RAPPP), held a seminar that focused on Copen at Rove Police Headquarters recently.

There are emerging issue relating to Copen that affects Honiara's Primary and Secondary Schools. Key stakeholders from the RSIPF's Crime Prevention Department, Honiara City Council, local schools and the Australian High Commission attended the seminar and offered valuable insights from their respective organisations.

Sergeant Tristan Collett from the RAPPP Health, Wellbeing, Gender and Community Engagement Team said, "The Copen Awareness Seminar was held to inform guests on the dangers of Copen and the current understanding of the risks associated with using the substance."

Before the seminar, RAPPP undertook an informal survey of children between the ages of 8 to 20-year-old, which showed that Copen substance use was highly prevalent in teens.

Sgt Collett said, "As Copen is so prevalent in school-aged children, the seminar provided the chance to hear from school representatives and gave us an opportunity to plan the implementation of a school-based Copen awareness program for Primary and Secondary schools in the Honiara district."

The Copen Awareness Seminar was an open forum for all invitees to have a say and share insight into the emerging issue of Copen.

Rose Manekaea from King George VI National High School shared that Copen had caused major issues within her school and that students have admitted to taking Copen during the school days and are often found by teachers with illnesses like vomiting and headaches after its use.

Manekaea says, "Suspending the students is only a quick fix and that students need to be aware of the long-term risks associated with using the substance."

Nelly Hano, Health Promotion Officer at Honiara City Council, said, "I am excited about the program hitting schools, I have two young nieces, and I do not want them involved in Copen. I hope that parents and teachers alike can attend the program and gain an understanding of how dangerous Copen can be."

RAPPP looks forward to developing and delivering the awareness strategy across Honiara as a way to combat Copen and achieve the goals set out by the RAPPP Health and Wellbeing overarching program, working with RSIPF Community Policing team.

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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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