



20th July 2023

RSIPF drone capability enhanced

Officers of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) have completed a weeklong training program that will enhance the drone capability of the RSIPF.

Officers from the Close Personnel Protection (CPP) unit, Police Response Department (PRD) and Maritime are attending this Remote Pilot Licence (RePL) Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle (UAV) Training 1-2023.

Instructors from the New Zealand organisation, Adventure Helicopters, were contracted by the RSIPF-Australian Federal Police (AFP) Policing Partnership Program (RAPPP) to provide this accredited remote pilot license training. Adventure Helicopters New Zealand is a long-time established drone training provider.

In his remarks during the opening of the training on 11 July, RSIPF's Director, National Response Department, (NRD) Chief Superintendent Francis Ramoni said the RSIPF officers will learn valuable new skills expanding the capabilities of the RSIPF.

Chief Superintendent Ramoni said a drone capability had been a gap in the RSIPF's capabilities which was why this specific support from RAPPP was requested.

He said the RSIPF needed this capability as it prepares for major upcoming events like the Pacific Games in November and the National General Elections in 2024.

Chief Superintendent Ramoni urged participating officers to make the most out of the training.

"You are fortunate to join this training so take full advantage of this opportunity. Once successful, you will become our drone pilots," the RSIPF Chief Superintendent said.

RAPPP's A/Superintendent (National Operations), Craig Bell, said the training is a difficult and technical course.

A/Superintendent Bell said it is critical to comply with aviation regulations in order to safely fly a drone which is why the training is important.

He said a drone capability is important to the RSIPF when it comes to land or sea search and rescue, close protection and frontline operations.

Adventure Helicopters Remote Pilot Instructor, Will Dolman, said the training will help participants to understand the rules and regulations for flying a drone.

Dolman said the training will also provide theory and practical experience in drone flying and incorporate technical training in equipment use including battery management and camera operations.

Following a request by the RSIPF to enhance its drone capability, the RAPPP has established a drone office, procured drones and equipment and a designated vehicle to

support the drone capability. The training is part of the support from RAPPP to develop the drone capability of the RSIPF.

Drones can be used to provide intelligence and capture evidence during public order incidents among other things. The RSIPF now has a live feed capability that allows every image captured by drones to be viewed at the Police Operation Centre in real time. This is important as it will help the RSIPF make tactical decisions and identify offenders. In a Maritime environment, drones will help border patrols and search and rescue operations.

RAPPP Advisor, Peter Young, said a big part of the course is on flying safely and being responsible in the air space.

Young, who is the chief drone pilot, said this is the first endorsed accredited aviation drone training offered to RSIPF officers.

One aim of the training is to establish four fulltime pilots and eight part-time pilots.

He said the drone capability will give the RSIPF a tactical advantage from the air.

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<p>Media inquiries</p> <p>RSIPF Media Unit: 24016 or 23800 Ext 239</p> <p>Email: rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>For ongoing news and information, please go to www.rsipf.gov.sb</p> <p>Follow us on Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/rsipf</p>
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