



23rd July 2025

RSIPF strengthens capability to investigate assault cases against children and vulnerable people

Within the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) is a specialist team of highly trained officers responsible for conducting investigations into sexual assault cases against children and vulnerable people.

The Sexual Assault Squad (SAS), within the National Criminal Investigations Department (NCID) have recently undertaken further training on specialist interviewing techniques that will enable investigators to obtain detailed and thorough victim and witness statements during investigations, while empowering victims of crime to tell their story and give back the voice taken from them by their assailant.

During delivery of Vulnerable Witness Foundation and skills refresher programs, RSIPF investigators learned about the importance of recorded evidence and how it can be used in court.

Participants also had a valuable opportunity to visit local schools, where they practiced their new skills by engaging with students of different ages, backgrounds, and levels of communication and understanding.

This training was supported by Australian Federal Police (AFP) specialist investigators who work with RSIPF to strengthen investigations in both Solomon Islands and Australia.

Following the completion of the training program, investigators were further supported with the provision of specialist equipment, and the establishment of a dedicated victim interviewing room.

The victim interviewing room designed with comfortable seating and a calming atmosphere, the room offers a secure, distraction-free environment intended to make victims feel at ease during interviews.

Specialist audio-visual recording equipment, funded by the Pacific Community for Law Enforcement Cooperation (PCLEC) Small Grants program and supported by the AFP, will enhance RSIPF's SAS in supporting victims of abuse and gender-based violence.

The equipment is vital for accurately capturing interviews with vulnerable individuals, recording both verbal accounts and non-verbal cues such as body language and gestures.

In addition to the interview room, PCLEC funded the construction of an on-site children's playground behind SAS office within the Rove Police Headquarter.

The playground serves as a therapeutic space, helping to reduce stress for child victims and creating an environment that supports open and honest communication.

At the official gifting ceremony at Rove Police Headquarters, RSIPF Supervising Assistant Commissioner (AC) Crime, Rodney Wheatney said, "The establishment of the playground will provide investigators with the tools to establish trust and build rapport with victims and their families, while at the same time ensuring victims feel safe and comfortable."

End//...

Photos with captions



Image 1: Refurbished dedicated victim interviewing room within the National Criminal Investigations Department Sexual Assault Squad.

Media inquiries

RSIPF Media Unit:
24016 or 23800 Ext 239

Email:
rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb

The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was established in 1954. It's 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.

For ongoing news and information, please go to www.rsipf.gov.sb



Image 2: Nine RSIPF officers recently conducted Interviewing Vulnerable Witness training at Bethesda Disability School (participants, left to right: Devlyn Mara, Robert Madeo, Oloteko John, Stephen Melomi, Celestina Ariana, John Totori, Noel Tahnimare, Jessie Salini, and RAPP NCID Advisor Amanda Thompson).

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Image 3: RSIPF officers from the National Criminal Investigations Department Sexual Assault Squad with the PCLEC-funded children's playground at Rove Police Headquarters.

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Image 4: RAPP NCID advisor training RSIPF NCID officers (from left: WPCs Celestina Ariana, Florence Teiraru, and Sgts. David Foa and John Totori) on the use and benefit of recently gifted audio-visual interview recording units.

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Image 5: RSIPF Supervising Assistant Commissioner of Crime and Intelligence, Rodney Wheatney, addressing RSIPF and AFP officers at the gifting ceremony.

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Image 6: RSIPF Supervising Assistant Commissioner Crime, Rodney Wheatney, and AFP Superintendent with members of the RSIPF NCID SAS and RAPPP.

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Image 7: RSIPF Supervising Assistant Commissioner of Crime and Intelligence Rodney Wheatney and AFP Superintendent signing the official gifting of the PCLEC-funded children’s playground.

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Image 8: PCLEC funded children's playground at the RSIPF NCID SAS

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