



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

EXERCISE COASTWATCHERS TRAINING CONTINUES WITH DRONE TRAINING FOR RSIPF MEMBERS

16 MARCH 2026

During last week, members of the RSIPF have been undertaking training with the Australian Defence Force (ADF). This combined training focuses on developing the skills of both the RSIPF and the ADF in areas requested by the Solomon Islands Government.

As part of the program, members from across the RSIPF have been training to become qualified drone pilots, under the supervision of the RSIPF's Chief Pilot SGT Molly Puiaraha, and trainers from the ADF.

The team is learning to fly on the ANAFI USA Parrot drones—the same high spec drone recently gifted by the Australian Deputy Prime Minister to the National Disaster Management Office during his visit in February. The ADF will be gifting a number of these drones to the RSIPF later this year, to coincide with the opening of the Western Border Outpost.

These drones can undertake a number of tasks, including search and rescue, border surveillance operations, and responding to natural disasters.

As part of Exercise Coastwatchers, two courses are designed to strengthen RSIPF's capability to fly these drones in response to the needs of the Solomon Islands, and will increase the number of qualified drone pilots in the RSIPF.

Exercise Coastwatchers runs from 6 March to 1 April.

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PHOTOS & CAPTIONS



Photo 1: PC Androcles Sualalu flying a *drone* as part of *Exercise Coastwatchers Drone Pilot's Course*



Photo 2: PC Androcles Sualalu flying a drone as part of Exercise Coastwatchers Drone Pilot's Course as other RSIPF, ADF and AFP members observe.



Photo 3: PC Androcles Sualalu undertaking pre-flight checks before he commences flying.