



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE MEMBERS ARRIVE FOR SECOND EXERCISE COASTWATCHERS OF 2026

31 AUGUST 2026

On 29 August 2026, 31 Australian Defence Force (ADF) members arrived to undertake the second iteration of Exercise Coastwatchers for the year.

Exercise Coastwatchers is the premier exercise between the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and the ADF to build sovereign policing capacity in the Solomon Islands. Exercise Coastwatchers is developed jointly with the RSIPF and the ADF, responding directly to the needs of the Solomon Islands Government and RSIPF.

During this Exercise Coastwatchers, training will occur both in the provinces and in Honiara. Coastwatchers delivers specialised training for the ADF and RSIPF across a number of skills and also works to build the future trainers of the RSIPF.

This iteration of Coastwatchers will expand on previous training and knowledge, with participants building on skills taught in previous exercises in more advanced and complicated scenarios. This training will empower participants to plan, lead, and deliver training in support of operations across Solomon Islands.

The Advanced Small Boats course covers skills such as small boat maintenance and advanced navigation and will see participants deploy to a number of provinces across the Solomon Islands. The training aims to develop participants' skills progressively, preparing them to serve as small boat handlers, instructors, and ultimately team leaders.

With the opening of the Western Border Outpost (WBO), ADF will also support the RSIPF with additional training on the high-spec Parrot drones to assist the RSIPF with border surveillance activities from WBO.

Other courses, including advanced medical training, will equip RSIPF members with the skills to respond to emergencies and provide vital first aid. An administration course will strengthen capabilities in records management and organisational processes.

Vehicle maintenance and logistics training will help improve efficiency, extend the lifespan of RSIPF vehicles, and help to ensure the right equipment reaches officers when and where it is needed.

These skills are highly transferable and will not only support members in their professional roles but also contribute to their personal development, strengthening the capability of the RSIPF as a whole.

Australia's Acting Defence Advisor to the Solomon Islands, Brett Verity, said Exercise Coastwatchers reflected Australia's strong partnership in the Pacific.

"Exercise Coastwatchers is an important training activity we conduct in Solomon Islands which delivers practical skills that support the RSIPF in its day-to-day operations and long-term capability development.

"Australia and Solomon Islands share a strong security partnership, and this exercise reflects our commitment to working together to build capability and strengthen relationships. Most importantly, Exercise Coastwatchers is building the capability of the RSIPF to protect the people, resources, and security of the Solomon Islands."

"I know my ADF colleagues coming across to take part in the exercise are looking forward to returning to Solomon Islands and training alongside their Pacific brothers and sisters, as both skills and culture are shared between the ADF and RSIPF."

This iteration of Exercise Coastwatchers will run from 31 August until 23 September.

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PHOTOS & CAPTIONS



Photo 1: PC Michael Koroa and PC Gerrard Babanisi planning a patrol with other RSIPF members on the Advanced Border Surveillance Course during Coastwatchers in March 2026.



Photo 2: Australian Army soldier Corporal Aaron Caruana (left) from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force officer Sergeant Molly Buiaraha conduct the drone surveillance course of Exercise Coastwatchers (March 2026).



Photo 3: RSIPF and ADF members planning a patrol as part of the Advanced Border Surveillance Course (March 2026).



Photo 4: Australian Army soldier Corporal Justin MacLennan from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, observes Mr Steve Nasui from the National Disaster Management Organisation deploy a drone during a full mission profile (March 2026).



Photo 5: Royal Solomon Islands Police Force officers step off for a simulated search and rescue task as part of the Small Boats Instructor course at Aola Maritime Police Base (March 2026).