



26<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

### **EODD boosted with new medium excavator machine**

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Department (EODD) of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) were boosted with a new medium excavator today (26 April 2024) at Hells Point in Guadalcanal Province.

The new excavator cost about SBD 2.5 million and was handed over to EODD by the Japanese Ambassador to Solomon Islands, His Excellency Miwa Yosiaki. The handing over program happened in the presence of the EODD officers and the supplier of the excavator.

In her brief remarks at the handing over ceremony, Assistant Commissioner (AC) National Operations Evelyn Thugea said over the past years, the Japanese government through Solomon Islands Embassy has been funding the work of the RSIPF EODD. They have been provided with equipment and training to ensure EODD can do their job efficiently.

AC Thugea said today Japan continues to support the joint effort of removing unexploded ordnance (UXOs) around the Solomon Islands by gifting the EODD a Medium Excavator. This excavator will be used to clear ground by allowing any deep buried UXO's to be located and removed. The machine will also be used to ensure the EODD range facility at Hells Point is maintained for destruction of UXO's.

"On behalf of the RSIPF Commissioner and Executive, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Japanese government for the support provided. We have developed a strong working partnership that is growing from strength to strength every day," said AC Thugea.

AC NO Thugea said the EODD team please use this equipment with pride and care. As I have mentioned, this excavator will significantly support your operations out in the field more effectively and safer so look after it well for its purposes.

Japanese Ambassador to Solomon Islands, His Excellency Miwa Yosiaki in his brief remarks said on 15 March 2022 a grant contract of SBD about 6.2 million dollars was signed. The grant assistance is to provide important equipment such as excavator, special purpose vehicles and boats required to widen the scope of EODD to reach out to other islands.

Ambassador Yosiaki said in order to proceed the urgent and dangerous operation of EODD effectively and safely, the equipment was donated to Solomon Island Government. It is our government's intention to develop cooperation with our partners in this particular project to secure a safe life in the Solomon Islands.

"I note that UXO endangers peaceful life, economic activities and even the lives of innocent citizens. The Solomon Islands is heavily contaminated with UXOs even today as a result of the battle between Japan and Allied Forces 80 years ago during World War II. My government has been providing assistance to the National Response Department to develop capacity to deal with the UXO threats," said Japanese Ambassador Mr. Yosiaki.

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**Media inquiries**

RSIPF Media Unit:  
24016 or 23800 Ext 239

Email:  
[rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb](mailto:rsipf.media@rsipf.gov.sb)

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.

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