



3rd April 2025

Reflecting on 23 years of service in the RSIPF

Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) Superintendent, Flotilda Sabino, reflected on her 23-year journey in law enforcement.

Superintendent Sabino's story is one filled with challenges and victories. It was an inspiring evidence to the resilience of women in policing.

During an event to mark this year's International Women's Day (IWD), last month (March), Superintendent Sabino used the opportunity to share the pros and cons in the policing career she chooses.

In the first place, Superintendent Sabino wanted to become a police officer because she doesn't want to get married.

"I joined the force because I never wanted to get married. I thought that women police officers never married," Superintendent Sabino said.

Her personal choice to stay single was not true after all. She got married in 2015 and as of this year she has four children.

Superintendent Sabino recalled the intensity of her first night shift, a daunting but formative experience that laid the foundation for what she described as a "deeply fulfilling career".

After completing training at the Police Academy at Rove in 2002, Superintendent Sabino was first posted to the Central Police Station, where she handled a range of duties ranging from patrolling the streets and investigating crimes to resolving disputes and enforcing traffic laws.

According to Superintendent Sabino, her role changed daily which makes her work both dynamic and demanding.

Superintendent Sabino was later posted to the Guadalcanal Provincial Police as a Community Policing Officer before transitioning to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) as a Detective Officer, where she spent five years handling cases ranging from minor offences to major crimes.

She then moved to the Professional Standards and Internal Investigations (PSII) Unit that investigated cases of misconduct among police officers.

Following two years in PSII, she joined the Strategy Planning & Policy (SP&P) office, where she worked for eight years, gradually rising to the position of Coordinator.

During this time, she earned a Diploma in Administration from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) and a Diploma in Leadership and Management from the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC).

In 2016, she was posted to the Police Human Resources as Deputy Director, where she served for three years before earning the rank of Superintendent.

She was then assigned to the Central Police Station as a Support Manager for the Honiara City Policing jurisdiction, a position she holds to this day.

Superintendent Sabino admitted that being a police officer is both fulfilling and challenging.

“The role is a rich and rewarding one like no other,” Superintendent Sabino said.

She said police officers play a vital role in maintaining law and order, protecting communities, solving crimes and ensuring public safety.

Superintendent Sabino said the unique opportunities that come with the job includes the ability to make a tangible difference in people’s lives.

“This sense of fulfillment and the ability to contribute to the greater good can be deeply rewarding,” Superintendent Sabino said.

She said there are many difficulties that come with the profession.

“Police officers often face dangerous and high-pressure situations, work long and irregular hours and experience significant emotional and mental strain. The stress and pressure of the job can impact the wellbeing and personal lives of police officers,” Superintendent Sabino said.

She said public scrutiny of police work can add another layer of stress, especially when faced with negative perceptions or controversial incidents.

For female officers, Superintendent Sabino said that the challenges are combined by the need to balance professional responsibilities with family and personal life.

Despite the challenges, she said the progress women have made within the RSIPF proves that they have the capabilities across all fields of policing.

She said even in the face of challenges with gender inequality, discrimination and bias, women in the RSIPF have continually proven themselves to be a powerful force by breaking barriers, accelerating action and championing gender equality.

“Police women are unstoppable,” Superintendent Sabino said.

Superintendent Sabino’s journey is an inspiration to all, showcasing the resilience, courage and unwavering dedication of women in the RSIPF.

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.

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The participation of RSIPF female officers in this year's IWD was supported by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) through the RSIPF & AFP Policing Partnership Program (RAPPP).

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