



28th November 2025

TEACHER FOUND GUILTY OF EMBEZZLEMENT

Cecilia Tome, a former teacher in Malaita, has been found guilty by the Honiara Central Magistrates' Court of one count of embezzlement totaling \$1.3 million.

She has been remanded in custody and will be sentenced on 12 December 2025.

In December 2017, Tome mistakenly received \$3.8 million into her bank account from the Solomon Islands Government (SIG).

Instead of reporting the mistake, she transferred funds out of her account. SIG discovered the mistake some eight months later and was only able to recover \$2.4 million, leaving \$1.3 million unable to be recovered.

Tome was originally charged in 2020 by Taskforce Janus, and in 2021, Principal Magistrate Tearo Beneteti acquitted Tome after a "no case to answer" submission by her lawyer.

Commissioner of Police Mostyn Mangau said the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) appealed the decision, and the High Court ruled that the matter be retried in the Magistrates Court. Tome was rearrested in 2021.

Commissioner Mangau said this case has been a lengthy and complex investigation, requiring the expertise of Task Force Janus to explain the matter to the court and to ensure justice was served.

Mr. Mangau said today's outcome reflects the dedication, hard work, and teamwork of the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT), RSIPF, Taskforce Janus, and the DPP.

He said this is a good result for the Solomon Islands. Investigations of this kind are complex, take time, and require specialist knowledge."

The police chief said, If you are a public servant and you are overpaid, you must contact your employer or bank immediately. Money mistakenly deposited into your account is not yours. You must pay it back, and spending it is a crime.

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