



**BOUGAINVILLE STATE OF EMERGENCY  
OFFICE OF THE BOUGAINVILLE EMERGENCY CONTROLLER**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

Good morning everyone, this is just to give you some update again on the State of Emergency that currently underway on Bougainville

**1. UPDATE ON STATE OF EMERGENCY (SOE) OPERATION**

Briefly on the SOE on Bougainville, the enforcement of all orders that were issue from my office eventually commenced yesterday Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2020 with members of the BPS in the main centres of Buka, Arawa and Buin conducting patrols and closing shops down, especially liquor outlets and restaurants. Other shops like supermarkets were advised shut down at 2:00pm in which most of them did comply. The main markets of Buka, Arawa and Buin have also been closed as well including small road side markets located within the vicinity of these main towns. Police check points were also set up along the roads to monitor motorist to ensure they were complying with the social distancing requirements. With regard to awareness, this was continuing with local ABG members for respective constituency carrying out small community awareness for their people. Police and other stakeholders have also been actively involved in these programs.

On the Covid-19 Response, we have received a number of reports of persons of interest from Arawa. One of these has been identified as a female of Fijian origin who was married to a male person from Arawa. This particular POI, as of this morning has been cleared by the Covid-19 Response Team from Arawa. There is also another POI who has been identified and located in Buin. The POI has been identified as Fr. Ambrose Kakatal from Turiboiru. Briefly, this POI recently returned from Philippines, on the Tuesday the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020. For this POI,

the Police and Covid-19 Response Team from Buin were aware and keeping track of him.

On border surveillance, the Buin/SI border has been very quiet so far with very little or no movement of people taking place at all along the border. Police and other lead agencies have continued to monitor the border. Our combine security agency teams were continuing to monitor vessels coming into Bougainville sea and airports. Last night, a report of a cargo ship sighted in the waters of Kangu was received. As of this morning the ship was checked and identified as a ship owned by Agmark Shipping by our border surveillance team and refused permission to moor at the Kangu. The ship meanwhile has been directed back to Arawa. There is also a chartered air niugini flight that was scheduled to arrive from Port Moresby today with emergency supplies for the Covid -19 team. However, due to a number of issues, the flight has been cancelled.


## **2. LAW & ORDER SITUATION UPDATE**

On the Law & Order situation, the police in the three regions have reported a very quiet start to the SOE enforcement so far. No major incidences have been reported as yet.

The only major incident that occurred overnight was the cell breakout at the Arawa Police Station cell which saw 12 detainees escaping. The incident occurred between 11 and 12am where the detainees walked out by breaking the back wall of the cell and escaping. Just after the breakout, police in Arawa were alerted and gave chase but as of 8:00 this morning, there was still no reports of sightings or of any re-arrest of these escapees. On this report, I wish to appeal to relatives of these escapees to please talk to them and have them surrendered to the police.

Apart from the breakout, there was also a report received from Buin of a roadblock at Mailai Hill by displaced villagers from Konnou who were alleged to be disappointed with emergency food supplies not being distributed fairly. Police in Buin have received the report and will be attending to this today. Updates on this will be provided at a later press conference. Otherwise, apart from these few reports, the situation has been very quiet so far.

Thank you.



**Francis N. Tokura, OBE, QPM, DPS**  
**Deputy Commissioner of Police**  
**Chief of Bougainville Police Service & Bougainville Emergency**  
**Controller**