



BY AUTHORITY

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SOLOMON ISLANDS GAZETTE

NO.149

Friday 9th October

2026

GAZETTE NOTICES

[753]

SOLOMON ISLANDS INDEPENDENCE ORDER 1978

(Legal Notice No. 43 of 1978)

ESTABLISHMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF A TRIBUNAL TO INVESTIGATE AND INQUIRE INTO ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, MR. IAN VAEVASO

IN EXERCISE of the powers vested in the Governor-General by section 129(5), of the *Constitution*, I, Sir David Tiva Kapu, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Solomon Islands, hereby revoke the instrument published as Gazette Notice No. [652] of 2026 and replace it with this instrument.

WHEREAS serious complaints against the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ian Vaevaso, have been presented to the Prime Minister, Hon. Matthew Cooper Wale;

AND WHEREAS the complainants have alleged that the Commissioner of Police had in 2019 and 2024 interfered with lawful investigations and arrests;

AND WHEREAS the Prime Minister has also received information regarding involvement of the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ian Vaevaso, in destruction of illicit drugs (i.e., Ketamine and Methamphetamine);

AND WHEREAS the Prime Minister has written and represented to me, pursuant to section 129(5) of the *Constitution*, that a tribunal be appointed to investigate and inquire into the question of removing Mr. Ian Vaevaso from the office of Commissioner of Police on the ground of inability to discharge the functions of the office of the Commissioner of Police arising from the serious allegations against him, or for misbehaviour, pursuant to section 129(3) of the *Constitution*;

I, Sir David Tiva Kapu, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Solomon Islands, therefore, in exercise of the powers vested in me by section 129(5) of the *Constitution*, hereby appoint a Tribunal comprising the following persons:

- (a) Ret. Justice Ellenas Vitata Batari, Former Judge of the National and Supreme Courts of Justice of Papua New Guinea, as Chairman of the Tribunal;
- (b) Felix Hollison, Principal Magistrate, as a member of the Tribunal;
- (c) Tearo Ribua Beneteti, Principal Magistrate, as a member of the Tribunal;

to inquire into the allegations and to report and recommend to me within 90 days from date of appointment whether the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ian Vaevaso, ought to be removed from the office of Commissioner of Police for inability to discharge the functions of the office of the Commissioner of Police arising from the serious allegations against him, or for misbehaviour. The 90 days may be extended, after my consultation with the Prime Minister, if the Tribunal seeks such extension of time to enable it to conclude the inquiry and to present a complete report and recommendation to me.

The terms and conditions of the Chairman and members of the Tribunal shall be as contained in their respective engagement contracts.

In their consideration of the question whether Mr. Ian Vaevaso ought to be removed from the office of Commissioner of Police, the Tribunal shall inquire into and report on the following issues:

- (a) Whether Mr. Ian Vaevaso, when he was the Deputy Commissioner of Police, unlawfully interfered with the lawful arrest of Mr. Jackson Vaikota in 2019;
- (b) Whether Mr. Ian Vaevaso, when he was the Deputy Commissioner of Police, unlawfully interfered with, in 2024, the lawful investigation into illegal mining operations conducted by a Chinese businessman Mr. John Szetu within Mount Vunusa in Central Guadalcanal where Gold Ridge Mining Ltd held a Prospecting Licence;
- (c) Whether Mr. Ian Vaevaso, when he was the Deputy Commissioner of Police, unlawfully intervened and caused destruction of illicit drugs (i.e., Ketamine and Methamphetamine);
- (d) Whether Mr. Ian Vaevaso concealed any of the above-named incidents from the recruitment and appointment process which led to his appointment as Commissioner of Police;
- (e) Whether, having regard to any findings made by the Tribunal in relation to the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (d), Mr. Ian Vaevaso ought to be removed from office for inability to discharge the functions of the office of Commissioner of Police or for misbehaviour.

The particulars of the allegations shall be as contained in a statement of allegations to be issued and served on Mr. Ian Vaevaso by the Counsel Assisting Tribunal, assisted

by one or more Assistant Counsel. The Attorney-General shall make arrangements for the provision of Counsel Assisting Tribunal and one or more Assistant Counsel as may be necessary. Mr. Ian Vaevaso may engage a Counsel to represent him at the inquiry.

In exercise of the power vested in the Governor-General by section 129(6) of the *Constitution*, the suspension of the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ian Vaevaso, made on 17 June 2026 shall continue unabated to allow for free and fair investigation until the Tribunal has provided its report and recommendation to me.

The Tribunal shall exercise its functions in accordance with the *Constitution* and, in particular, section 137(8), and shall have powers conferred upon it by that provision.

The following support services are to be provided by the Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet to facilitate the efficient functioning of the Tribunal:

- (a) the Tribunal Secretary;
- (b) Secretarial Support Service and office facilities;
- (c) Office of the Counsel Assisting Tribunal.

Dated at Honiara this ninth- day of October 2026.

SIR DAVID TIVA KAPU
GOVERNOR-GENERAL
