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## Solomon Islanders take the lead on corrections training

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The Correctional Service of Solomon Islands achieved a major milestone this week with the completion of a training course that will equip staff to assess and evaluate the performance of correctional personnel.

The RAMSI-funded training course, which has been conducted over the past three weeks at Honiara's Rove-based Correctional Service Training Centre, was delivered by a team from Australia's Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE.

The first group of 20 correctional staff who completed the course this week are now in a position to undertake core Human Resource (HR) functions such as training, assessment and evaluation of other staff. This represents a significant milestone for Correctional Services, as previously these assessments had been conducted by RAMSI advisers.

Participants based in Honiara were joined by others who travelled from Temotu, Makira and Malaita province, to take part in the course. A number of them will be working at the new Correctional facility in Auki, Malaita Province, when it opens later this month.

In another milestone, one quarter of those participating in the course were women.

Acting Commissioner of Correctional Services, Heinz Konga said that the training represented a significant milestone in the capacity of Corrections' relatively new workforce.

"Just a few short years ago the correctional service workforce needed significant work to meet international standards," said Mr Konga.

RAMSI effectively re-established the correctional services in the country shortly after they arrived in 2003.

"The fact that Solomon Islanders will soon be leading key HR functions in Corrections is a major milestone in the country's focus on capacity development", Mr Konga said.

"The training program represents a strong example of the greater focus on Human Resources throughout the public sector – and it makes me very proud to see the Corrections Service leading the way.

“That we are able to establish this course is a great credit to the staff themselves – who have shown the drive and commitment to further themselves and their careers.”

The program is the first of what is expected to be a number of capacity-focused training programs delivered at the Correctional Service Training Centre. More than 350 correctional officers and other staff will be undertaking skill development programs at the Centre, with the majority of these programs now set to be delivered by local staff.

RAMSI Development Coordinator, Paul Kelly, praised the work of the Correctional Services Solomon Islands, saying that the training program would deliver long-term benefits to the Solomon Islands correctional system.

“This program will help to develop staff to produce a highly-skilled and professional workforce in the correctional industry long into the future,” he said.

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