

Tonga Police

**PRESS RELEASE, Wednesday 04 January, 2012.**

- Police Operation "Helepiko" was conducted during the Christmas and New Year season from the 23/12/2011 to 03/01/2012, with the mission to ensure community and road safety.
- Operation "Helepiko" focused on enforcement of Order in Public Places, Intoxicating Liquor and Driving under Influence of Alcohol Laws.
- During the operation period, a total of 75 criminal offences were reported to police compared to 112 crimes reported during operation "Halapua" from 23/12/2010 to 04/01/2011.
- Out of the 75 crimes reported - 30 reported at Central Police Station, 27 at Mu'a and Vaini Stations, 07 - Neiafu, Vava'u, 05 - Nukunuku, 04 - Leimatu'a and 01 each at Houma and 'Eua.
- Most reported crime was Assault with 23 offences followed by 19 - housebreaks, 14 - thefts, 3 each bodily harm, willful damage to other things and unlawful being on enclosed premises at night, 02 - grievous bodily harm, trespass, willful damage to cultivated plants.
- Total of 117 offences were registered under Other Acts besides Criminal Offences Act, mostly drunk in public places under the Order in Public Places Act.
- In relation to enforcement of drunken driving laws (driving while under the influence of alcohol) police stopped and tested alcohol 2,957 vehicle drivers and total of 53 drivers were charged with drunk driving after registering more than 150+ micrograms per volume of breath.
- 268 drivers tested positive for alcohol but registered less than the 150 microgram /v/breath limit.
- Police extends its appreciation to all drivers for the compliance and cooperation during the operation.
- Two (2) deaths on the road were recorded on 24/12/2011 as a result of car colliding a coconut tree head on at Hala Liku (Fonongahina). The 27yrs old male driver of Tokomololo and a 31 years old male passenger died on arrival at Vaiola Hospital. The two deaths were the only road deaths during the festive season, but brings the total number of road deaths for 2011 to 12 compared to 06 for the whole of 2010.
  
- **Suicide;**
  
- A 16 years old male of Kolomotu'a was found dead at his home in Kolomotu'a in the afternoon of 31/12/2011. An inquest on the 01st/01/2012 concluded that the victim took his own life by hanging. That brings the total number of suicides for 2011 to 07 compared to 11 in 2010.

- A 45 years old man from Ma'ufanga is held in police custody after being charged with causing bodily harm to a man of Asian origin at a location in By-Pass Road - Ma'ufanga on Sunday night 01<sup>st</sup> January 2012. Medical authorities from Vaiola Hospital confirmed that the victim is admitted to intensive care unit under observation for head injuries.

- Generally, the festive season was peaceful despite many social festivals including the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of 'Apifo'ou College.

- Appreciation is extended to all members of Tonga Police who continued duties throughout the operation period.

- Police wish to extend appreciation to the general public for their assistance and cooperation in maintaining law and order during the festive season. Mälö.

T. Faletau

**Acting Police Commissioner**