



Please attribute statement to Deputy Commissioner Pelenatita Vaisuai, Tonga Police

19th September, 2018 **The overall crime for the whole Kingdom shows a 10% reduction (-628 offences) in total offences under the Criminal Offences Act in the report period (July 2017 - June 2018) versus the same period last year, which includes a 7% reduction in offences against the person, 14% reduction in offences against property and 11% reduction in wilful damage to property and animals.**

“I would like to personally thank and commend the efforts of our Police staff who continue to show courage and dedication in keeping our communities safe.”

This was a busy year for Tonga Police with Major Operations that includes the War against Illicit Drugs, General Election, Rugby League World Cup celebrations, which saw 451 arrest for public disorder, and Tropical Cyclone Gita which saw a spike in serious offences post TC Gita affecting public perception of crime. It may have been greater if not for the police initiated curfew and early closure of licensed bars and nightclubs.

Operation Safer Streets reached the highest arrest totals of 1841 which focused on public order with a zero tolerance on public drunkenness and monitoring of Licensed Premises.

Deputy Commissioner Pelenatita Vaisuai says, “The drop in recorded crime levels means a reduction in the number of victims of crime. This is a positive result for Tonga.”

“We continue to invest a lot of effort into working with the Community to prevent crime. We have been working hard to improve our response to reports of crime and combined with our prevention focus we are seeing a reduction in crime which is, in turn, making our communities safer.

However in order to continue this trend we need to continue our focus on victims, prevention activities and efforts to reduce alcohol and drug related crime. Information from the public is vital for us to prevent crime.

“We all have a role to play in reducing crime – If we all do our bit to watch out for our neighbours and fellow citizens and report suspicious activity we can make a big difference and significantly reduce the number of victims of crime in our community. We must all hold offenders to account.”

ENDS

Recorded crime dropped for 2017/2018

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