



PRESS RELEASE

Public reminded to travel safely this festive season - MSAF

The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) is once again appealing to members of the public travelling to outer islands this festive season to take heed of safety rules and precautionary measures on board inter-island ships.

MSAF Acting Chief Executive Officer John Tunidau strongly urges members of the public and parents to ensure the safety of their children and to keep a close eye on them while on-board the ships throughout the journey.

"We are once again reminding shipping companies on the need to instruct their crew regarding pre-departure briefings for passengers, the use of life saving appliances such as the donning of life jackets, the location of life rafts and exits," Mr Tunidau said.

He added that such briefings by the ships' crew to passengers are what MSAF Enforcement and Compliance Officers would need to confirm before a ship departs, given that an expected increase in the number of passengers entering and exiting jetties and ports this festive season.

"We are advising all Masters and operators/ship owners of local ships that overloading of the vessel is unsafe, unacceptable and administrative and criminal action may be pursued in accordance with the Maritime Transport Decree 2013 and related Regulations. For this reason, we will be closely monitoring and scrutinising passenger boats this festive season to prevent overloading," he said.

"Non-compliance with the law could result in prosecution, suspension or cancellation of the Masters Certificate of Competency, detention of the ship and also prosecution of the owner/operator of the ship," said Mr Tunidau.