
CHAPTER I

Introduction

The significance of the *American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan* is that it provides American Samoa with a comprehensive mitigation strategy for prioritizing projects, programs, and activities that will save lives and reduce losses from the impacts of natural disasters. This plan defines responsibilities and analyzes local capacities and capabilities to manage mitigation projects. It also fulfills the Federal Emergency Management Agency's requirement for a mitigation planning process that first, ensures federal assistance to the people of American Samoa following future significant disasters and second, allows the American Samoa Government to compete for federal mitigation project assistance annually. This Mitigation Plan defines risks and vulnerability in a systematic manner, and analyzes the vulnerability of critical structures with respect to mapped known natural hazard areas. It also provides a framework for informed decision-making regarding prioritization of mitigation projects that will insure both the protection of life and property and cost-effective use of taxpayers' funds.

American Samoa is required to revise and update its current Hazard Mitigation Plan every five years to be eligible for non-emergency public assistance from FEMA, Pre-Disaster Mitigation project grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding and Flood Management Assistance Grants. The first plan was approved in 2003. Eligible mitigation projects include emergency debris removal and emergency protective measures and for repair and restoration of roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities, and parks and recreation. This updated plan has identified new mitigation projects to minimize the disruption and damages due to the prevalent identified natural hazards affecting American Samoa. In addition, the 2011 mitigation plan projects were reviewed; some have been completed, and some are no longer priority. The top forty-one projects are listed in priority order in Table 1.

The American Samoa Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council has been active since the mitigation planning process in 2003. This Council has worked to assure that the updated plan has met the requirements of FEMA and the American Samoa Government. The plan makes sustainable development a priority, helping to ensure safer future development. The planning process encouraged inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination on the islands regarding mitigation planning and emergency management.

The Plan was updated with cost-effective mitigation recommendations that maintain or enhance the current natural and built environment, maintain or enhance the current quality of life on the American Samoa Islands, foster local resiliency to disasters, and identify and respond to local concerns and issues. The updated Hazard Mitigation Plan recognizes the unique qualities and characteristics of American Samoa's environment, economy, and culture. It focuses on the previously identified natural hazards including tropical cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, droughts, floods and tsunamis, climate change, hazardous materials, wildfire and volcano. Five hazards were added to this list they are sea level rise combined with climate change, lightening strike, coastal erosion, high surf and soil hazards. Hazard and risk information was updated. Meetings were held with the Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council, the Governor's Authorized Representative and the directors and technical staff of each relevant department and organization to gather their input regarding the updated plan goal, objectives and mitigation strategies. The plan meets the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and guidelines provided by FEMA's Multi-hazard Mitigation Planning Blue Book, November 2006. The Plan prioritizes the top thirty-eight most important and cost-beneficial mitigation projects for future funding. The Plan also reviews past mitigation projects and accomplishments as well as documents American Samoa's stewardship of financial and project management of mitigation projects completed over the past eleven years.

2015 Mitigation Strategy

The hazard mitigation strategy is the culmination of work presented in the planning area profile, risk assessment and capability assessment. It is also the result of multiple meetings and public outreach. The Hazard Mitigation Council reviewed the goal and objectives from the 2011 plan. They deemed they should remain consistent for this updated plan. The Goal of the 2015 American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan, endorsed by the Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council, is to:

Reduce the risk of all natural hazards (identified and unidentified) to the Territory, thus alleviating loss of life and property to insure the well being of the people of American Samoa.

The Objectives of the Plan are to:

1. Promote effective land use planning and regulation, as well as public awareness, in order to reduce damage from natural hazards.
2. Improve infrastructure development standards with special attention to mitigating the increasing flood hazard.
3. Develop and implement hazard mitigation projects aimed at reducing the risk of damage and destruction of existing assets and infrastructure from the full range of natural disasters threatening the Territory.
4. Improve building codes and standards, as well as training programs, in order to reduce disaster damage from strong winds, earthquakes and tsunamis.
5. Develop public information and education programs in order to reduce disaster damage from strong winds, earthquakes and tsunamis.
6. Fund related planning projects to strengthen mitigation standards, research, education, and outreach efforts.

2015 Mitigation Actions

The following table represents the mitigation actions approved by the Hazard Mitigation Council for this plan. They are listed in priority order. However, the Hazard Mitigation Council recognizes that funding may not come in this order. The bullets below describe the abbreviations for the departments referenced.

- ASPA – American Samoa Power Authority
- ASTCA – American Samoa Telecommunications Authority
- DHS – American Samoa Department of Homeland Security
- DOC – American Samoa Department of Commerce
- DPR – American Samoa Department of Parks and Recreation
- DPW – American Samoa Department of Public Works
- EPA – American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency
- HC – American Samoa High Court
- OPI – American Samoa Office of Public Information
- PORT – American Samoa Port Authority

Ranking	Agency	Project Title
1	Port	Fuel Farm Relocation
2	ASPA	Water Wells Mitigation
3	ASPA	Water Tanks Mitigation
4	ASPA	Fagatogo Reservoir Mitigation
5	Port	Runway Shoreline Protection
6	DPW	#2 Landslide: Rte.6 (Afono,Masefau), Rte.1 (Matuu,Gataivai)
7	DPW	Ottoville Drainage Flood Mitigation
8	DPW	Fagaima Road Flood Mitigation
9	DPW	Fatuoaiiga Drainage Flood Mitigation
10	DPW	#7 Electrical Upgrades Campus Grounds Drainage 10 Schools
11	ASPA	Tafuna Wastewater Treatment Plant
12	DPW	#6 Pava'ia'I Elementary
13	ASPA	Faga'alu Booster Station
14	ASPA	Pago Water Booster Station Mitigation
15	ASPA	Utumoa River Flood Mitigation
16	ASTCA	Leone to Poloa U/G Communications Lines ¹
17	ASTCA	Afono Pass to Blue Sky Tower U/G Communications Lines
18	ASTCA	Amouli to Aoa U/G Communications Lines
19	ASTCA	Fagaitua,Masefau,Masausi,Sailele U/G Comm. Lines
20	DOC	Mapping Project

Table 1 2015 Mitigation Projects in Priority Order

¹ This project was funded in June 2014. Fili Sagapolutele. Samoa News. (6/30/2014). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from <http://www.samoanews.com/content/en/blast-project-passes-federal-audit-flying-colors-according-ceo>

Ranking	Agency	Project Title
21	ASPA	Weather Proof Sewage Lift Stations
22	ASTCA	Lauli'I/Breaker's Point Tower Replacement Parts
23	EPA	Landslide Early Warning System - Faga'alu Pilot Project
24	ASTCA	Aunu'u Tower Replacement Parts
25	ASTCA	Manu'a Islands U/G Comm. Lines
26	OPI	Office Of Public Information Building
27	DPW	#5 Happy Valley Road Drainage
28	DPR	Vaipito Stream Revetment
29	DHS	Wind Shutters EOC Project (currently under further review by FEMA)
30	DPW	Ili'ili Drainage Flood Mitigation
31	DPW	#1 Rockfall: Rte.009 (Utumea, Poloa, Amanave)
32	ASPA	Nuuuli To Mesepa U/G Lines
33	DPW	Permanent Landslide Repair Route 005
34	ASPA	Poloa To Fagamalo U/G Lines
35	HC	High Court And District Court Building Relocation - Change to Elevation Project
36	DPW	#3 Amouli Stream Mitigation Project Ofu, Manu'a
37	DPW	Afono Culvert Improvement
38	DPW	Vaitele Stream Flood Mitigation (Name Correction Passed By Council)
39	DPW	#4 Leone Village Road
40	DPW	#8 Ugrading of DPW-M&O Building
41	DPW	Permanent Landslide Repair Route 11

Authority and Assurances

American Samoa will continue to comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations during the periods for which it receives grant funding, in compliance with 44 CFR 13.11c, and will amend its plan whenever necessary to reflect changes in State or Federal laws and statutes as required in 44 CFR 13.11(d).²

In acknowledgement of all the stakeholders involved in the mitigation planning process, the strengths and accomplishments of the plan development process have been numerous. The American Samoa Government has endorsed the 2015 American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan with an Executive Order signed by the Governor. The Governor, Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), State Hazard Mitigation Officer, and the Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council has provided strong leadership and advocacy throughout the Territory, ensuring a continuous mitigation planning process. Adequate funding and technical guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for mitigation planning projects, coupled with annual funding incentives for competitive mitigation grants, have continued to drive the mitigation planning process.

² Federal Register 1 Vol. 67, No. 38 /Tuesday, February 26, 2002 / Rules and Regulations §201.4(c)(7).

Accomplishments of this planning project include the American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Council (Hazard Mitigation Council) leadership, American Samoa Government agency support and commitment, public participation, hazard and loss estimation research, geographic information system mapping of critical facilities and hazards, project development, and analysis of mitigation issues through the planning process.

And finally, this Hazard Mitigation Plan builds on a growing record of mitigation successes in American Samoa and technical expertise involved in composing the American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan 2003, 2008 and 2011.