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# CHAPTER VII

## Plan Maintenance Process

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The Plan Maintenance Process outlines two critical pieces to mitigation planning. The first is maintaining the mitigation plan and the second is monitoring the implementation of mitigation actions and the mitigation strategy. In each section a comparison is made between the 2011 plan and this update. The American Samoa Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council has the primary responsibility to maintain and implement the mitigation plan. They work in collaboration with ODAPM and TEMCO. The American Samoa Government understands the value of this plan and its positive mitigation impact and intends to continue updating this plan and implementing the plan's strategies.

### **Plan Maintenance**

The Territory must formally update and adopt this plan every five years according to FEMA regulations. The five-year update is inadequate to maintain a current and realistic plan. In reality, a process of monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan needs to be in place. During a five-year time period, policies and procedures at the Federal and Territory level may prompt changes to the plan in terms of priorities and/or funding. In addition, a major disaster would prompt review and possible modifications to this plan.

The American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Council will monitor the implementation of this Hazard Mitigation Plan and subsequent plans approved by the Hazard Mitigation Council. ODAPM and TEMCO are responsible for documenting plan monitoring and update activities. Documentation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan updates will occur as frequently as on a quarterly basis and minimally on an annual basis or as the need arises. ODAPM and TEMCO will work with the Council and the other relevant departments to review mitigation priorities and identify projects for funding under the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive Grant Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and other sources of support for mitigation activities identified in this plan and subsequent plans. The PDM Grant Program is administered by TEMCO and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is administered by ODAPM. The Hazard Mitigation Council, ODAPM, TEMCO and representatives from key government departments will evaluate and update the most recent plan updates and submit them to FEMA for final approval.

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### **Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating the Mitigation Plan**

The mitigation plan is the responsibility of the Territory Hazard Mitigation Council, however, multiple agencies are needed to monitor its maintenance, evaluate its relevance and update it for accuracy. The Territory Hazard Mitigation Council recognizes the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) as the individual who has the daily responsibility to monitor the hazard mitigation plan and potential mitigation opportunities. The SHMO has support from ODAPM and TEMCO. The table below indicates the activities required to update the mitigation plan annually as well as each year during the next five-years.

Timeframe	Actions
Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council meets following any large incidents in the Territory to review mitigation plan and discuss new funding opportunities.</li> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council meets to discuss implementation of mitigation actions.</li> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council requests the incorporation of this plan into plans of relevant government agencies.</li> <li>• SHMO works with departments seeking mitigation funding to complete benefit-cost-analysis and grant applications.</li> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council proceeds with mitigation action implementation.</li> <li>• Quarterly Reports.</li> </ul>
Months 1-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council initiates discussion of lessons learned from the development of the 2015 plan.</li> <li>• All annual actions listed above.</li> </ul>
Months 13-36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All annual actions listed above.</li> </ul>
Months 37-48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council seeks funding for consulting assistance to update this plan.</li> <li>• All annual actions listed above.</li> </ul>
Months 49-60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazard Mitigation Council updates this plan according to current FEMA standards.</li> <li>• All annual actions listed above.</li> </ul>

The SHMO will initiate documentation of a quarterly report that will: 1) summarize all mitigation and planning activities and actions that have been occurred during the quarter and 2) document the mitigation action status of all actions or projects included in this plan.

Identifying lessons learned from the planning process would be considered the first annual review and would take place during the first year of the plan's life. The SHMO will lead the Hazard Mitigation Council through a discussion aimed at generating lessons learned from the planning process. Steve Maga, ODAPM will support this discussion by documenting thorough notes. The SHMO will ask questions regarding the effectiveness of the public outreach strategy particularly the number of meetings held (both Council and Town Hall), the public preparedness survey, and the communication methods used for interacting with departments. The SHMO will also touch on the system for gathering mitigation actions and ranking their priority level. The meeting will conclude with a plan toward monitoring and updating the plan in the coming years.

In addition, the Hazard Mitigation Council will review this plan following each major disaster and update it to include a narrative of all relevant impacts from the disaster and the affects and damages to critical infrastructure, the government and population. In the past, government departments have had a difficult time generating a positive benefit-cost-analysis for grant applications. This is due in part to the lack of hazard data collected following major and minor disasters. In addition, the Council will review the mitigation plan goal, objectives and actions for priority and relevance.

The quarterly progress reports combined with any disaster write-up will serve as the Plan's annual update. These annual reports will be referenced toward generation of the 2019 plan.

The following four-step process outlines the monitoring plan.

**Step 1: Begin Plan Monitoring**

The SHMO initiates the plan monitoring process by requesting a meeting of the Hazard Mitigation Council. At this meeting mitigation activity updates will be requested by way of a project update worksheet. Additional mitigation activities will be requested by way of the project worksheet.

**Step 2: Maintain Mitigation Action Data**

The SHMO will maintain data regarding the implementation of all mitigation actions.

**Step 3: Gather New Mitigation Opportunities**

The Hazard Mitigation Council will query its membership regarding new mitigation opportunities in each of their respective agencies. In addition, following a major disaster declaration, the SHMO will make the Hazard Mitigation Council aware of current funding opportunities. The SHMO will put out a call for projects through the Samoa News.

**Step 4: Gather Updated Planning Documents**

The Hazard Mitigation Council will request additional planning documents from all relevant government agencies and departments to include in the update of this plan.

The four-step process above outlines the process of maintaining the list of mitigation actions. This process has not been clearly documented in past mitigation plans. However, it is the process used by the Territory over the last ten years. Ms. Fiatoa has been the SHMO for many years in the Territory of American Samoa. In this position, she has completed grant applications including benefit-cost analysis and tracked the implementation of mitigation projects. Ms. Fiatoa works closely with each agency that has potential mitigation projects. She educates them about potential mitigation funding opportunities and guides them through the grant application process. Ms. Fiatoa collaborates with FEMA on project applications and project closeouts. Her work ethic and consistency over the years has enabled the Territory of American Samoa to access millions of dollars of project funding.

On a quarterly basis, the SHMO will provide a status or project summary for the Quarterly Mitigation Report to the Hazard Mitigation Council. An outline of the minutes from each Hazard Mitigation Council meeting will also be included in the Annual Plan Update. The reports and minutes will serve as a permanent record of the mitigation progress for American Samoa. During the Hazard Mitigation Council meetings, the SHMO may suggest new updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Council will provide advice and recommendations.

The mitigation plan will be monitored and updated by the SHMO, ODAPM and TEMCO annually and provide updates as deemed necessary. The Hazard Mitigation Council will review and approve all updates made.

**Analysis of 2015 Mitigation Plan Implementation**

The Planning Team for 2015 included many of the same individuals from the 2008 and 2011 updates, this consistency made for a smooth planning process. The most challenging part of the planning process was the collaboration of multiple government agencies. During the 2015 planning process the SHMO was able

to encourage the Hazard Mitigation Council to appoint a Vice Chair. The GAR is not always available and on-island which makes planning meetings difficult. It is the GAR's responsibility to call for a Hazard Mitigation Council meeting. Now the Vice Chair can take on this role. The SHMO maintained quarterly reports regarding the implementation of the 2011 plan. These reports informed the Council and the Planning Team on the status of mitigation action implementation. This work is expected to continue over the next five years. FEMA provided guidance to the SHMO and the Planning Team throughout the planning process.

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## Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating the Mitigation Plan

One of the primary purposes of this plan is to identify mitigation actions the Territory can implement to lessen their risk to natural hazards. Monitoring the implementation of those actions is a good way to measure success of the plan.

On at least an annual basis, beginning at least three months prior to each Grant application deadline, the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) will inform the Hazard Mitigation Council of project status as well as requirements for upcoming grant applications. The SHMO will monitor grant application development and ensure review by the Hazard Mitigation Council prior to finalization. The above process and timing will ensure political and community consensus on mitigation requirements and mitigation activities.

Each of the government agencies submitting proposed mitigation actions is responsible for tracking their implementation. Representatives from each agency will submit the following form to the SHMO on a quarterly basis. The SHMO will gather the data and present it to the Hazard Mitigation Council in their quarterly meeting. For simplicity purposes the form may be transferred to an online format using Jotform.com or to a fillable PDF. The SHMO will request direction from the Hazard Mitigation Council regarding the easiest way for each agency to maintain accurate records and submit the following information.

The SHMO will maintain a Mitigation Action Spreadsheet to track the progress of each proposed action. The spreadsheet will include the information below as well as the ranking number established by the Hazard Mitigation Council and indicated in Chapter 6: Mitigation Strategy. The SHMO will update the spreadsheet as funding becomes available for projects or as they are completed, in addition to the quarterly updates.

<b>Mitigation Action Progress Report</b>				
<b>Progress Report Period</b>	From Date		To Date	
Action/Project Title				
Responsible Department				
Contact Name				
Contact Phone/Email				
Project Description				
Project Goal				
Project Objective				
Project Cost				
<b>Project Status</b>				
Date of Project Approval	Date of Project Start	Anticipated Date of Completion	Project Canceled	Project Delayed
Explanation of Delay or Cost Overruns				
<b>Project Report Summary</b>				
What was accomplished for this project during this reporting period?				
What obstacles, problems, or delays did the project encounter?				
Plans for next reporting period.				

Figure 1 Mitigation Action Progress Report

### **System for Reviewing Progress Towards Mitigation Goals**

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.

Six objectives are attached to this goal:

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.

This goal and these objectives have remained relevant since 2011 and are expected to remain relevant until 2019 when the plan is updated for FEMA approval.

The implementation of this plan's mitigation actions is the best indication of how well this goal and these objectives are being achieved. However, as actions are implemented and as hazards impact the Territory, it may be necessary to change the order of priority of mitigation actions. As the actions are re-evaluated annually and following each disaster, the Hazard Mitigation Council will review the mitigation goal and objectives for their relevancy. If the Hazard Mitigation Council deems it necessary the goal and objectives will be changed.

### **System for Reviewing Progress Towards Mitigation Actions**

The Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council will review progress of the implementation of mitigation activities during the annual review of mitigation priorities. TEMCO and ODAPM will report on the status of projects funded under the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and other sources of support for mitigation activities identified in this plan and subsequent plans in order to set priorities for the subsequent year.

The Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council may commission an external review of mitigation plans and mitigation activities carried under such plans. The Hazard Mitigation Plan will be evaluated and updated with the purpose of understanding and documenting changes, additions, and progress in mitigation programs and activities. This will encourage the Territory to solicit additional project funding through available funding sources.

FEMA has provided guidance for funding of the nationally competitive Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program. The Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council is responsible for establishing project priorities for funding under the

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program to meet annual application deadlines. Following any Presidentially declared disaster in American Samoa; the Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council will reprioritize mitigation projects for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as soon as possible following the disaster.

### **Were 2011 Mitigation Actions Implemented as Planned?**

Mitigation strategies have been implemented as planned. Since the Hazard Mitigation Plan acceptance in 2011, through Hazard Mitigation Plan implementation and deliberations by the Hazard Mitigation Council, American Samoa has demonstrated successful implementation of mitigation outreach and training programs to schools, villages, government, and industry. ODAPM has managed substantial funds from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for five disaster declarations, including:

- Severe Flooding, DR- 1473, 2003
- Hurricane Heta, DR-1506, 2004
- Hurricane Olaf, DR-1582, 2005
- Tsunami, DR-1859, 2009
- Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, DR-4192, 2014

The 2011 Plan included thirty-eight hazard mitigation projects. Twelve of these projects have received funding. The funded projects include the Satala Power Plant Retaining Wall, undergrounding power lines, and flood mitigation projects. Details regarding the implementation of the 2011 projects are in Chapter 6: Mitigation Strategy.

Determining a positive benefit-cost analysis for projects is one of the most challenging aspects of mitigation action implementation. The government departments have not kept thorough disaster impact data in the past. The other challenge is gathering application data information from each department interested in funding. Each of these challenges will continue to be addressed by the Hazard Mitigation Council.

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### **Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Summary**

The Territory of American Samoa Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan provides guidance for multi-hazard mitigation projects and activities on the islands of American Samoa. This plan has undergone a complete revision from the 2011 plan. This updated plan includes the best-available data for a new multi-hazard risk assessment. The plan fulfills FEMA's requirements for a "state" level mitigation plan according to (44 CFR § 201.4).

The Hazard Mitigation Council and the SHMO are committed to maintaining this plan and implementing the identified mitigation projects. The council knows that implementing these projects will save lives and property in the Territory of American Samoa.