

AMERICAN SAMOA

BACKGROUND

American Samoa is a territory of the United States. Located approximately 2,600 miles SSW of Hawaii. It is comprised of a series of small islands that cover an area roughly the size of the District of Columbia. American Samoa has a population of less than 60,000 residents.

DISASTER INCIDENT

On September 29, 2009, President Obama Issued a Major Disaster declaration (DR-1859) for the Territory of Samoa as a result of an Earthquake, Tsunami, and Flooding that affected the area.

On January 15, 2010, President Obama authorized a cost share adjustment to the Federal share for Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, and the Other Needs Assistance portion of the Individual Assistance Program to 90 percent, and the Federal share for debris removal and emergency protective measures, including direct Federal assistance, under the Public Assistance program to 100 percent of the total eligible costs for 30 consecutive days.

CURRENT SITUATION

Recovery efforts continue throughout American Samoa. FEMA, other federal agencies, and the American Samoa Government (ASG) are coordinating efforts for both short and long-term strategies to mitigate physical, emotional, and economic impacts of the disaster. (Breakdown of Recovery below as of January, 2010)

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (IA)

- Total registrations – 8449
- Total IHP funding (housing and ONA) disbursed - \$22,122,416
- Total households received rental assistance – 1,129
- Total households received emergency shelters (tents) –
 - 546 Yurts
 - 471 Celina tents/1 Air Mobile tent
- SBA Loans Issued – Homes 483/\$6,309,400
Business 57/\$3,942,400
- Case Management – Conducted by the American Samoa Long Term Recovery Committee

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PA)

- Total funding obligated Federal share to Territory - \$7,593,824
- Total Number of Projects – 186
- Construction work for temporary schools (Sprung Structures) has completed in five designated villages. A total of twelve temporary buildings (classrooms, cafeteria, computer labs and auditorium) were

required to allow time for repairs of four schools and replacement of the one destroyed school.

HAZARD MITIGATION PROGRAM (HMGP)

- Total Hazard Mitigation funding allocated -\$0 (to come)
- Total federal share obligated to date - \$0 (to come)

FEMA/TERRITORY PRIORITIES

- Permanent Housing Construction
- Home Repairs
- Long term power plant solution (Tier III)
- Installation of Sprung Structures for temporary classrooms
- Finalize project worksheets

CHALLENGES/ISSUES

Transportation – Remote location. Only two flights a week to American Samoa (one American Flag Carrier to/from Honolulu). Rental vehicles in short supply. The ferries MV Sili and MV Manuatele between Tutuila, Ofu and Ta'u are out of service.

Lodging – Limited Accommodations to support a Federal agencies.

Communications: Telecommunication connectivity is affected due to remote location. There are two local cellular providers.

Passports/Immunization – Required/recommended

Cultural Diversity Training – Strongly recommended for Federal Staff

Health – Deployed individuals should be in general good health and free from medical/dental conditions that may require specialized treatment/equipment.

Logistics - Robust Mission Support (GO) Kits required for rapid response and sustainment

Policy Issues – Flood Plain/Long Term Housing

Disaster Related Program Challenges

- **IA:** Much of the property is communal in the villages with some exceptions. Many locations are in the flood plain. Available useable land space is limited due to the volcanic geology/topography of American Samoa. There are more than 60 villages. Most have no defined addresses or street numbers.
- **PA: FEMA/ASG considering** solution to restoration of permanent power to the island. One of the two power plants was destroyed by the tsunami. Other Public facilities are in the flood plain. Available land is limited
- **Hazard Mitigation:** Many locations with damage are in the flood plain. Alternate locations are limited