



OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas

**Interior Provides \$250,000 in Emergency Assistance to Guam; Helps
Families Displaced in Aftermath of Typhoon Dolphin**

*Funds to Assist Over 300 Individuals Primarily from Freely Associated States
Ineligible for FEMA Funding*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 22, 2015) - The U.S. Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina today approved \$250,000 to assist Guam Governor Eddie Calvo and other emergency recovery officials in efforts to help over 300 individuals and families displaced in the wake of Typhoon Dolphin that hit Guam on May 15, 2015. The funding will be used to purchase tents, generators, portable cooling units, toiletry and first-aid kits, as well as food.

Assistant Secretary Esther Kia'aina and her staff from the Office of Insular Affairs have expedited consideration and release of funds for this emergency on Guam in response to urgent requests from island leaders. Guam Governor Eddie Calvo issued a disaster emergency declaration to "expedite the island-wide response and recovery of torrential rain caused by Typhoon Dolphin causing widespread flooding and coastal inundation." Federated States of Micronesia Ambassador to the U.S. Asterio Takesy also made a plea for OIA assistance.

"People on Guam are still reeling from the effects of this storm and we are pleased to support the Governor in assisting Guam's residents, including those who have migrated from the Freely Associated States under the Compacts of Free Association," said Assistant Secretary Kia'aina. "The funds will be helping those who are now either homeless or are living in substandard conditions as a result of Dolphin and who are at a risk for their health, safety and well-being. We want Guam to be successful in providing residents the basic necessities as they either return home or move into temporary or intermediate housing for the short-term and transition out of storm shelters for the long-term."

Under separate Compacts of Free Association with the United States Government, citizens of the neighboring Pacific Island nations of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau may travel freely to the United States and its territories for work and education without regard for visa. As of the latest U.S. Bureau of Census enumeration in 2013, there were 17,170 individuals from the Freely Associated States living on Guam.

“The recent circumstances of Typhoon Dolphin raise an important federal matter pertaining to the issue of Compact Impact Aid and the applicability or non-applicability of federal assistance for citizens of the Freely Associated States living in the United States,” said Assistant Secretary Kia’aina. “I commit to working with the White House and other federal agencies, the Governors of the affected jurisdictions, the leaders from the Freely Associated States and their communities, to develop short- and long-term federal strategies to address the issue of Compact Impact Aid. It is not something that the Department of the Interior can shoulder alone. It requires a comprehensive approach.”

The Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas carries out the administrative responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior in coordinating federal policy for the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. The Assistant Secretary executes these responsibilities through the Office of Insular Affairs.

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