

American Samoa: American Samoa: State of emergency declaration 29 Sep, 2009, 2:00 P.M

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WHEREAS, at 6:48 a.m. on September 29, 2009, a magnitude 8.3 earthquake occurred off the coast of Tonga, coordinates 15.3 South 171.0 West, approximately 120 miles from American Samoa; and,

WHEREAS, shortly after said earthquake, a tsunami resulting from the earthquake began inundating all coasts of American Samoa, including the islands of Tutuila, Manu'a, Swains Island, Rose Island with high seas and destructive waves; and,

WHEREAS, the earthquake and the resultant tsunami waves have damaged and destroyed several homes, businesses, sea-going vessels, vehicles and real and personal property of American Samoa's residents, government and businesses: and,

WHEREAS, the earthquake and resultant tsunami waves have also damaged critical infrastructure that provide electricity and potable water to homes and businesses; and,

WHEREAS, debris, in the form of concrete, appliances and furniture from destroyed homes, destroyed vehicles, uprooted trees and brush, and personal property litter the inland coasts as well as the shorelines of American Samoa; and,

WHEREAS, initial reports from emergency response agencies list deaths directly resulting from the earthquake and tsunami at nineteen; and

WHEREAS, search and rescue operations are still underway for individuals that are still missing; and

WHEREAS, initial reports from emergency response agencies list immense and wide-spread damage to individual, public and commercial buildings in coastal areas; and

WHEREAS, there has occurred widespread damage, injury, loss of life and property resulting from the earthquake and tsunami; and,

WHEREAS this Proclamation is issued to reduce the vulnerability of people to damage, injury, and loss of life and property; prepare for the prompt and efficient rescue, care and treatment of persons victimized and threatened by disaster; and to provide a setting conducive to rapid and orderly restoration and rehabilitation of persons and property affected by this disaster.

NOW THEREFORE, I, FAOA A. SUNIA, Acting Governor of American Samoa hereby declare a State of Emergency for the entire Territory of American Samoa. Furthermore, I call upon the government, non-government organizations, private sector and residents of the Territory of American Samoa to assist and cooperate with the authorities to safeguard lives and property. Therefore, I hereby activate the Emergency Operations Center and the Territorial Emergency Operations Plan and designated the Territorial Emergency Management Coordinating Office to take the Lead in all emergency coordination efforts.

FAOA A. SUNIA
Lieutenant Governor

29 Sep 2009