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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 009 – 2009

AN ORDER CREATING A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREPAREDNESS SYSTEMS DURING AND AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2009 AND ASSESSING THE VALUE OF DISASTER TRAINING EXERCISES PERFORMED BEFORE THAT DATE.

WHEREAS, the interval between the earthquake and consequent tsunami of September 29, 2009, was of such a short duration that many were caught unaware and with little warning, if any; yet

WHEREAS, in the throes of, and immediately after the earthquake and tsunami many members of the public, including employees of the government, showed courage and valor in evacuating persons from coastal areas, thereby preserving many lives, and in some instances, rescuing those swept up or trapped by the tsunami waves; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami disaster the abundant heroism and bravery of those involved in the rescue and recovery effort has continued; and

WHEREAS, while relief and recovery efforts persist and tsunami victims continue to endure hardships and displacement because of the disaster; and

WHEREAS, stock must nevertheless be taken of the methods and procedures that were used to notify and prepare the public for, and evacuate people from, the disaster.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, by the authority vested in me as Governor of American Samoa, by the Constitution and laws of American Samoa it is hereby ordered:

1. That a "Post-Tsunami Review Task Force" is created. This task force shall operate with oversight from the Office of the Governor and is intended to be a "board of investigation" as described in A.S.C.A § 4.0302(b).
2. This task force shall review and evaluate the effectiveness of the preparedness systems that were in place on September 29, 2009 and which were activated or otherwise became effective during and after the earthquake and tsunami disaster of that date.

3. The task force shall also review and evaluate any training exercises, evacuation plans or other measures which were initiated, performed, conducted or implemented by any agency, department or branch of the American Samoa Government preceding the disaster of September 29, 2009.


4. To perform the duties described above, the task force is granted investigative authority pursuant to A.S.C.A § 4.0302(b), and shall be empowered to subpoena witnesses and documents relevant to its functions and duties, as well as to administer oaths, and report contempt to the High Court, which shall punish such contempt in accordance with the law.

5. Upon its review and evaluation of the matters described in numbered paragraphs 2 and 3 of this order, the task force shall report its findings to the Governor and make recommendations as to any remedial actions, changes, or other permanent solutions to improve notification to the public and the government's response in the event of a threatened or actual catastrophic event.

6. Mr. Moeiletuasivi Filipino Ilaoa is appointed as the chairman of this task force and shall make recommendations to the Governor as to any further appointments to the task force and other needs.

This order shall become effective immediately and shall be effective until it is rescinded or repealed.

Dated: October 15, 2009


TOGIOLA T.A. TULAFONO
Governor of American Samoa