

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region IX

**Subject:** **POLREP #5**  
**American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami**

**Pago Pago, American Samoa, AS**  
**Latitude: -14.2794000 Longitude: -170.7006000**

**To:**  
**From:** Jan Baxter, Situation Unit leader  
**Date:** 10/3/2009  
**Reporting Period:**

**1. Introduction**

**1.1 Background**

<b>Site Number:</b>	American Samoa	<b>Contract Number:</b>	NA
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	NA	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	9/30/2009
<b>Response Authority:</b>		<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b>	FEMA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Assessment
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	American Samoa
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	9/30/2009	<b>Start Date:</b>	9/30/2009
<b>Demob Date:</b>	9/30/2010	<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	NA	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	NA
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	NA	<b>State Notification:</b>	American Samoa
<b>FPN#:</b>	NA	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	NA

**1.1.1 Incident Category**

Earthquake  
Tsunami

**1.1.2 Site Descrip**

American Samoa is an unincorporated territory of the US, located in the South Pacific Ocean southeast of the sovereign state of Samoa (formerly known as Western Samoa). The main (largest and most populous) island is Tutuila, with the Manu'a Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island also included in the territory. American Samoa is part of the Samoan Islands chain, located west of the Cook Islands, north of Tonga, and some 300 miles (500 km) south of Tokelau. To the west are the islands of the Wallis and Futuna group. The 2000 census showed a total population of 57,291. The total land area is 200.22 km<sup>2</sup> (77 sq mi), slightly more than Washington, D.C. Damage is widespread with 32 known fatalities on American Samoa, and 1 missing.

**1.1.2.1 Location**

American Samoa

**1.1.2.2 Description of Threat**

On 29Sep at 1048 hrs PST, (0648 Samoa Standard Time) an 8.0 magnitude earthquake occurred 120 mi southwest of American Samoa. The 6:48 am local time (1048 hrs PST) earthquake triggered a tsunami that struck American Samoa (population 65,000) with a series of five waves. All waves struck the island and Pago Pago, the main village. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center reported the wave height at 5.1 feet for Pago Pago, American Samoa and 1.5 feet for Western Samoa. Over 73 aftershocks have been reported, including nine aftershocks ranging from magnitudes 4.5 to 6.3. The latest one (5.4) at 0508 hrs PST (0100 hrs SST) on 2OCT and the largest one (6.3) at 1008 hrs PST (1408 SST) on 01Oct.

**1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results**

EPA is in the process of making this assessment. Chris Reiner (OSC) has been deployed to begin the assessment.

**Situation Summary**

On 09/29 at 1048 hrs (PST) an 8.0 magnitude earthquake occurred southwest of American Samoa. The earthquake triggered tsunamis that struck American Samoa (population 65,000) with one wave

reported at 15 feet striking Pago Pago, the main village. Damage is widespread with 22 known fatalities, hundreds injured and many pulled out to sea. 28 aftershocks have been reported.

- Power outages are widespread but LBJ Hospital is operational
- Airport is operational
- Communication is spotty; only cell phone service is local from Samoa Teleco or Bluesky
- Local Coast Guard personnel report no large oil or hazmat releases;
- Water and infrastructure appear to be main issues.
- The governor of AS requested a federal disaster declaration on 9/29.

#### Operational Status:

- EPA R9 has received a mission assignment to staff the ESF-10 desk at the FEMA RRCC in Oakland, CA and to provide an on-scene coordinator to deploy to AS to conduct a rapid needs assessment with the FEMA team. The MA is currently for \$75,000.
- FEMA's RRCC is running 24 hour operations. Lance Richman staffed the ESF-10 desk until 0700 on 9/30. Thanne Cox relieved Lance at 0700 hrs. The phone number at the ESF-10 desk is 510.627.7709.
- OSC Chris Reiner hill deployed to AS, as ESF-10 support, at 0600 on 9/30, with one EPA START contractor and 5 members of the Pacific Strike Team.
- Initial FEMA team departed on 9/30, 0100 (PST) from Honolulu
- EPA R9 will provide situational awareness from the Regional EOC as information becomes available. Bret Moxley is the duty officer this week.
- EPA R9 will mobilize available drinking water engineers to provide technical assistance as needed.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

On 29Sep at 1048 hrs PST, (0648 Samoa Standard Time) an 8.0 magnitude earthquake occurred 120 mi southwest of American Samoa. The 6:48 am local time (1048 hrs PST) earthquake triggered a tsunami that struck American Samoa (population 65,000) with a series of five waves. All waves struck the island and Pago Pago, the main village. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center reported the wave height at 5.1 feet for Pago Pago, American Samoa and 1.5 feet for Western Samoa. Damage is widespread with 32 known fatalities on American Samoa, and 1 missing. Over 73 aftershocks have been reported, including nine aftershocks ranging from magnitudes 4.5 to 6.3. The latest one (5.4) at 0508 hrs PST (0100 hrs SST) on 2OCT and the largest one (6.3) at 1008 hrs PST (1408 SST) on 01Oct. The main issues remain infrastructure damage, debris removal and restoration of water and electricity service.

#### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA has deployed personnel to American Samoa to perform a Rapid Needs Assessment:

#### Operational Status:

- EPA R9 is operating under a Pre Declaration Disaster Surge Account for \$75,000 (7220SU-AS-EPA-02), covering RRCC activation and the rapid needs assessment on AmSam. The projected end date for this MA is 10/09/2009. The Region has also received a new, post declaration MA (1859DR-AS-EPA-02) for the same activities for \$10,000 to get us started. The projected end date for this MA is 10/10/2009.
- FEMA's RRCC is running 24 hour operations. Lance Richman staffed the ESF-10 desk 02Oct. The phone number at the ESF-10 desk is 510.627.7709. The R9 EOC will be staffed from 10030-2000 on 10/3 and 10/4.
- OSC Chris Reiner arrived in AS as ESF-10 support at 2300 SST on 9/30, with one EPA START contractor. OSC Reiner indicates (through OSC Weden) that communications have improved and his cell phone works fine.
- EPA R9 will provide situational awareness from the Regional EOC as information becomes available. Bret Moxley is the duty officer this week.
- EPA R9 is planning to increase staff to respond to both the tsunami and the upcoming typhoon impacts in CNMI
- OSC Reiner inspected ASPA plant today and directed ASPA to focus their clean-up efforts on getting oil off of surfaces that were not undercover to prevent runoff into the harbor from the forecasted rain. The tsunami hit the plant hard and flung waste oil (which the plant collects from throughout the island as a service) all over the facility. Black, oily high water marks as high as 4 to 5 feet were on walls, pipes, tanks, and inside the power generating area.
- OSC Reiner is conducting assessments in Pago Pago with ASEPA and identified several drums of waste oil and hazardous material. Pulled drums from the tide line and temporarily staged them along road with collection TBD. Mitigated released oil along main road with sorbent material.
- R9 GIS support continues to develop facility location data and update the EOC Google map display. It is not possible to upload batches of data such as the facility location file to the Resource Manager. The Am Samoa facility files will have to be sent to the Resource Manager contractor for uploading.
- OSC Reiner traveled toward Leone, which had the most physical damage. He met with village chiefs

and explained what to do about household hazardous waste.

- OSC Reiner wants to use 10 CSTs and 30 National Guard personnel to begin gathering and staging household hazardous waste for disposal, even though their availability may be limited.
- One good sized diesel spill was found near Leone.

Personnel & Supplies					
Date	Time	People	Agency	Unit Strength	Equipment/Supplies
30-Sep	0700 hrs	Gov Tulafono			
	0700 hrs	FEMA Coordinating Office (Kenneth Tingman)	FEMA		
	0700 hrs	Defense Coordinating Officer (Col. James George)	DOD		
	0700 hrs	initial response team	FEMA	50	team supplies for 7 days
	1900 hrs SST	Incident Management Assistance Team	FEMA		
		regionally based 'strike team'	FEMA		
		Disaster Medical Assistance Team	FEMA		
	2300 hrs SST	EPA OSC & 1 START contractor	EPA	2	
		USS frigate USS Ingrahm	US Navy		food, water, commodities, 2 Seahawk helicopters
1-Oct	0100 SST	National Guard personnel	Hawaii National Guard	40	4 vehicles, hazmat materials, communications equipment, cots blankets, food and water
	0400 SST	National Guard personnel	Hawaii National Guard	20	5 vehicles, hazmat materials, communications equipment, cost, blankets, food and water
		National Guard CERF-P Search & Rescue Teams			vehicles, trailers and cargo
2-Oct	2200 SST		FEMA		3 pallets & 2 large boxes of medical supplies

### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

Not Applicable

### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<b><i>Waste Stream</i></b>	<b><i>Medium</i></b>	<b><i>Quantity</i></b>	<b><i>Manifest #</i></b>	<b><i>Treatment</i></b>	<b><i>Disposal</i></b>

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

EPA has activated the EOC in Region 9. The Regional Response Center has also been activated in Oakland. It is anticipated that EPA will need to staff up to perform household hazardous waste collection and removal.

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

EPA is in the process of deploying personnel to perform a Rapid Needs Assessment. Chris Reiner of Region 9 has been deployed to make the assessment.

#### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Schedules have been prepared for the weekend to man to EOC and the RRCC.

#### 2.2.1.3 ISSUES

- FEMA reports electricity restored to 1/3 to 1/2 of Tutuila Island. One of two island power plants continues to be offline.
- LBJ Hospital is operational. As of 1900 Samoa Standard Time (SST) on 30Sep, 129 injuries treated: 4 operated on, 19 admitted. 3 pallets and two large boxes of medical supplies scheduled to arrive 1800 hrs PST (2200 SST) on 02Oct.
- The only international airport in AS is operational; a limited supply of jet fuel may become a logistical problem. As of 1600 PST (2000 SST) 01Oct, 500,000 gallons of aviation fuel was verified on Tutuila Island.
- Water system runs off power plants and is functioning with low pressure.
- The situation in regards to drinking water has improved. The following information was provided by Brad Rea from ASPA via Jason Gambatese/R9 at 2:30 PM PST 02Oct, regarding drinking water issues.
  - He estimated that 95% of the people who had water before the tsunami currently have water and he expects that to go to 100% by the end of today. Not having all the wells operating is affecting system pressure.
  - The main issue is getting generators to run the pumps. They are a little slow in coming.
  - There are more leaks than usual in the system, but so far they are not finding any contaminated water and it is not affecting pressure because 2 of the canneries are not operating and they are major water users.
  - They are currently under a boil water notice, but ASEPA is out sampling today and the boil water notice could be lifted as early as tomorrow.
  - ASPA is getting all the support they need from FEMA. Brad had no current needs that FEMA was not addressing.
  - He said they may have a need for some structural engineers in the near future, mainly on the waste water side. But he knows the proper channels to go through to get the resources he needs.
- The Chicken of the Sea packing plant is closed but according to the company (via Fox news) was not damaged. Both canneries remain closed.
- Weather – isolated scattered showers, highs in mid 80s with 75% or more humidity, variable winds 5 – 15 mph, becoming southeast Friday afternoon and increasing to 10 – 20 mph.
- FEMA reports that as of 1500 hrs PST (1900 SST) 10Oct, 11 shelters contained a population of 1424 as people are starting to return home.
- A damaged section of the Leone/Auma bridge has been temporarily repaired for emergency vehicles only.

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

No information available at this time.

### **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

### **2.5 Other Command Staff**

#### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

#### **2.6 Liaison Officer**

#### **2.7 Information Officer**

##### **2.7.1 Public Information Officer-No reports this period**

## **2.7.2 Community Involvement Coordinator-No reports this period**

### **3. Participating Entities**

#### **3.1 Unified Command**

EPA is coordinating its efforts under FEMA.

#### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

EPA is working with FEMA and local authorities in American Samoa.

### **4. Personnel On Site**

Chris Reiner has been deployed as OSC.

### **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

### **6. Additional sources of information**

No information available at this time.

### **7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.