

**Western
Pacific
Regional
Fishery
Management
Council**

February 26, 2010

Honorable Togiola T. A. Tulafono
Governor of American Samoa
Executive Office Building, Third Floor
Utulei, Pago Pago
American Samoa 96799

Dear Governor Tulafono:

At the request of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at its 146th meeting, we made a request to the U.S. Coast Guard to facilitate a clean up of the debris, including sunken vessels, in Pago Pago harbor as a result of the tsunami of September 2009. The U.S. Coast Guard sent back a response explaining that the responsible agency to undertake this action would be the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under an assignment directly from the Federal emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The U.S. Coast Guard further recommended that the best course of action to accomplish this debris removal would be for a direct application for assistance to FEMA by the American Samoa Government.

We are therefore, writing to you and sending you a copy of this correspondence such that, if this specific request has not already been made to FEMA, you may wish to do so.

We would be happy to assist further in any aspect of disaster relief efforts that you may require. Please do not hesitate to contact our office at (808)-522-8220 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Kitty Simonds
Executive Director

Attachments: Letter from WPRFMC to USCG
Letter from USCG to WPRFMC

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander
United States Coast Guard
Sector Honolulu

400 Sand Island Pkwy
Honolulu, HI 96819
Staff Symbol: s
Phone: (808) 842-2640
FAX: (808) 842-2690

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Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Attn: Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Executive Director *Kitty* Simonds:

I'm writing in response to your letter of November 9th addressed to RADM Brown, the District Fourteen Commander, regarding debris removal in Pago Pago Harbor. As the Federal On Scene Coordinator for the waters surrounding American Samoa, I oversaw a specific part of the tsunami response for pollution and hazmat. Non-contaminated debris removal, which you describe in your letter, is an Emergency Support Function (ESF) mission number 3 under the National Response Framework. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the responsible federal agency for ESF-3, which covers public works and engineering. Consequently, the Army Corps of Engineers would require a mission assignment directly from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to conduct the specific work you are requesting.

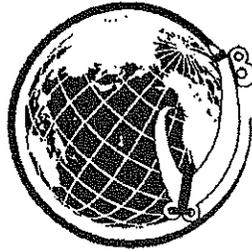
The U.S. Coast Guard's operations were conducted in American Samoa within the scope of our mission assignment under ESF-10, which exclusively covers pollution and hazmat response. Our contracts with the Pacific Environmental Company (PENCO) and SOLAR, Inc, were specific in nature and limited to the recovery and removal of oil and hazardous material spilled as a result of the tsunami. Under the ESF-10 assignment, our Coast Guard personnel managed the removal of 600 gallons of oil, 40 gallons of hazardous materials, 90 batteries, 28 cylinders, 26 drums, and 11 vehicles from Pago, Pago Harbor. Additionally, on scene Coast Guard representatives directed PENCO to conduct a survey of the harbor by using both divers and sonar throughout the search and recovery of hazardous materials. No significant hazards to navigation were noted during the survey, and I am currently unaware of any specific hazards to navigation in the harbor.

Furthermore, the Stafford Act applies following a Presidential disaster declaration. FEMA has the authority to provide assistance to affected parties to remove debris from public and private property. This is applicable during a high level of public interest and when it is necessary to eliminate immediate threats to public safety, or to ensure the economic recovery of an impacted community. In your particular case, the best recommended course of action to elicit removal of any remaining non-contaminated debris from the harbor is a direct application for assistance to FEMA by the American Samoa Government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. A. Compagnoni".

B. A. COMPAGNONI
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Federal On Scene Coordinator



**Western
Pacific
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Fishery
Management
Council**

November 9, 2009

RADM Manson K. Brown, District Commander
Fourteenth Coast Guard District
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 9-108
Honolulu, HI 96850-4982

Dear RADM Brown:

The Council, at its 146th Meeting in Honolulu on October 20-23, 2009, discussed the impacts to the communities of the American Samoa Archipelago resulting from the September 29, 2009 tsunami and the necessary disaster relief efforts. We are working with people in American Samoa to compile information on the losses incurred to facilitate a declaration of a fishery disaster such that the Government of American Samoa may request funding for fishery disaster relief. We have had reports of safety issues associated with debris not only on shore but also in the harbor which is affecting other types of survey and clean up activities and causing hazards to navigating within the harbor at Pago Pago.

We understand the US Coast Guard has a remediation company under contract (PENCO) and the Council requests that you require them to clean the entire harbor bottom to eliminate hazards to navigation to fishing boats, especially those utilizing the back of Pago harbor in areas of boat ramps and moorings.

We look forward to your response and assistance in helping American Samoa recover from the disaster. If you have questions regarding this request please feel to contact me at the Council office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kitty M. Simonds'.

Kitty M. Simonds
Executive Director