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ODAPM Kicks Off First Annual Disaster Resilience Summit in American Samoa

“Summits like this keep us vigilant in times of crisis. Lives will be saved because of the work that you all do, we express our profound gratitude, and send our best wishes for a successful summit.”



Pictured (L-R): FEMA Region IX Recovery Division Director Robert Pesapane, ODAPM Director Lisa Tuato'o, Acting Governor Fainu'ulelei Falefatu Utu-Alailima. (Photo Credit: HB Media)

On September 27, 2022, the Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management (ODAPM) held an opening ceremony for the First Annual Amerika Samoa Disaster Resilience Summit at the Rex H. Lee Auditorium in Utulei.

Special Remarks were delivered by Acting Governor, Honorable Fainu'ulelei Falefatu Alailima-Uti:

“On behalf of Honorable Governor Lemanu Palepoi Sialega Mauga, and Honorable Lieutenant Governor Talauega Eleasalo Vaalele Ale, it is my honor to help launch the first Disaster Resilience Summit in American Samoa. I give a warm welcome to Mr. Robert Pesapane, Director of FEMA Region IX Recovery Division, our federal and local partners, and everyone here today.

Disaster Resilience is not a matter of choice, but it is a matter of survival. Our people are naturally resilient and we do not take that for granted. Through earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, COVID-19 outbreak, king tides, recent marine volcanic activities and tremors, Samoan people are resilient because everyone plays an impressive role during these critical times,

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor thanks ODAPM Director Lisa Tuato'o for hosting this Summit. Summits like this keep us vigilant in times of crisis. Lives will be saved because of the work that you all do, we express our profound gratitude, and send our best wishes for a successful summit.”

The Disaster Resilience Summit is a three day summit focused on strengthening American Samoa community preparedness, response and recovery efforts to ensure safety and resiliency during all hazard disasters. “This year's theme is '***Bridging the gap between Government and Communities.***' The goal is to generate a dialogue between the government and the people, and provide an opportunity for both to share information in this capacity,” stated Director Lisa.

Over twenty outreach educational booths and training sessions from local and federal partners, departments, and agencies were set up around the auditorium site to engage students, members of the community, and government leaders in their emergency support functions, roles and responsibilities in times of disasters.

A Memorial Prayer Service will be held on September 29, to commemorate those who have lost their lives 13 years ago during the 2009 Tsunami disaster.