

For Official Release
PR 001-12292021
Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
December 29th, 2021



“Governor’s Resilience Office Committed to the Protection, Adaptive Capacity, Resilience, and Well-Being of the Islands and Residents of American Samoa.”

"The temperature of our oceans has affected sea life and presents new challenges for preserving healthy coral reefs. Threats include the changing of ocean currents, weather patterns, and disrupting entire marine food ecosystems and food chains."

In Executive Order 010-21: signed on December 23, 2021, Governor Lemanu issued the "Order Creating the American Samoa Resilience Commission & Governor's Resilience Office." The Governor's Resilience Office (GRO) mission statement is as follows:

"American Samoa recognizes the urgency of climate impacts with grave concern and the need to respond quickly and strategically to ensure the protection, adaptive capacity, resilience, and well-being of the islands and residents of American Samoa."

The Governor's Resilience Office (GRO) consists of a Director, a Territorial Resilience Coordinator, a Communications Specialist, and a Finance Coordinator.

The American Samoa Resilience Commission (ASRC) will include:

1. Lieutenant Governor, ASRC Chair;
2. Member of Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;
3. Member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
4. Director of the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources or designee;
5. Director of the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency or designee;
6. Director of the Department of Commerce or designee;
7. Director of the Department of Agriculture or designee;
8. Secretary of Samoan Affairs or designee;
9. Chief Executive Officer of the American Samoa Power Authority or designee;
10. Director of the Department of Public Works or designee;
11. Director of the Department of Health or designee;
12. Director of the Territorial Energy or designee;
13. Director of the Department of Education or designee;
14. Director of Homeland Security or designee;

15. Director of the Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management or designee;
16. Executive Director of the Visitor's Bureau or designee;
17. Director of the American Samoa Community College Land Grant program or designee;
18. Chairperson of the Chamber of Commerce or designee;
19. Attorney General of American Samoa or designee;
20. Director of the Port Administration or designee;
21. Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation or designee;
22. Executive Director of the Historic Preservation Office or designee; and
23. Director of the Governor's Resilience Office

The GRO and ASRC recognize that actions must "strategically plan for climate change" and how it impacts the "physical, social, and cultural infrastructure of the Territory." They will also work closely to carry out the American Samoa Government's (ASG) commitment to "Territorial, regional, and global climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts."

"The dangers of climate change are literally at our doorstep. Rising sea levels have increased the erosion of our coasts. The temperature of our oceans has affected sea life and presents new challenges for preserving healthy coral reefs. Threats include the changing of ocean currents, weather patterns, and disrupting entire marine food ecosystems and food chains," stated Governor Lemanu.

He continued, "Our ancestors have passed down the capability to weather hurricanes and storms for thousands of years. We need to prepare our future generations to do the same by improving our resilience as a people and infrastructure to meet the new challenges of protecting our island. We have a chance to make a major impact now. Recently, our administration took part in the Flex for 1pt5 climate change campaign, hosted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021. Its goal is to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and carry out a major online/social media campaign recognized globally. ASG will continue to take advantage of this type of partnership and many others as we continue to keep our citizens educated on how to do their part."

"The Lieutenant Governor and I are committed to doing what we can to avoid climate change from getting worse, protecting our ocean resources, and expanding our scientific capacities. This has been a major goal for our Administration and I charge the GRO with the development of innovative adaptation and response strategies that will safeguard our natural systems and strengthen our economy."

###