

MEDIA RELEASE

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For more information please contact:

ASTCA
Marketing Department

 699-3000
 marketing@astca.net

Connecting American Samoa to the World

ASTCA Announces Scheduled Repairs to the BLAST Undersea Cable Connecting the Manu'a Islands

Pago Pago, American Samoa (November 6, 2025)

The American Samoa Telecommunications Authority (ASTCA) would like to inform the public that scheduled repairs to the undersea portion of the BLAST fiber-optic cable system, connecting Tutuila, Aunuu, and the Manu'a Islands, will take place from November 17 to November 22, 2025.

The BLAST Cable System is a critical communications link for American Samoa, providing high-speed connectivity throughout the territory. It includes five landing sites located in Auasi and Fogagogo (Tutuila), Aunuu, Ofu, and Ta'u (Manu'a Islands).

Damage to underwater sections of the cable occurred in March 2020 and June 2021 following severe wave activity near the Auasi, Ta'u, and Ofu shorelines. Fiber breaks were caused by abrasion and deterioration where protective cable layers had worn down, leaving fiber segments vulnerable to ocean conditions and coral reef structures near the landing zones. The scheduled repair will replace the fiber and reinforce these sections, restoring long-term, high-reliability fiber connectivity to Manu'a.

During this time, ASTCA maintained connectivity to the Manu'a Islands by deploying one of the longest over-water microwave network links in the world. That system remains in service today and has gained international industry attention for its distance and its resilience in extreme tropical weather conditions.

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To ensure safe operations, ASTCA is coordinating with Department of Public Safety (DPS), American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA), Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources (DMWR), Search and Rescue (SAR), Department of Health (DOH), and NOAA. These partnerships are essential for safely managing work in the surf zone, where powerful wave energy, shifting currents, and sharp reef structures create some of the most challenging conditions for underwater construction.

During the repair period, customers in Manu'a may experience brief service interruptions. ASTCA engineering teams and marine cable specialists will closely monitor operations to minimize downtime.

The restoration of the fiber link marks an important moment for the Manu'a community.

Governor Pulaali'i Nikolao Pula highlighted the significance of restoring reliable connectivity to Manu'a:

"Our Manu'a residents deserve the same reliable services and opportunities that we enjoy here on Tutuila. Connectivity is vital for our islands, especially given our unique and remote distances. Our people depend on stable communication for education, healthcare, and most importantly, safety. I commend ASTCA and all the departments working together to make this repair possible and to fully restore connectivity to the Manu'a Islands."

ASTCA Chief Executive Officer Folasaitu Sorepa Fata Thomas emphasized the significance of maintaining connection across islands.

"We know how important it is for our islands to stay connected. Even though we've had a temporary system in place, we are excited to finally restore the cable connection to Manu'a. We thank our Manu'a residents for their patience and understanding, and we recognize our dedicated ASTCA engineers who have worked tirelessly to keep Manu'a connected through the temporary microwave link."

This effort brings together cable engineers and divers from multiple countries, supported by more than 30 ASTCA personnel mobilized from Tutuila, who will work alongside our dedicated team permanently based in Manu'a. ASTCA will continue to provide updates throughout the repair period.

ASTCA appreciates the community's understanding and cooperation as we work to strengthen communications for the Manu'a Islands for the future.

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