

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on Friday 24th January 2020. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about the Proceedings of Parliament on Friday 24th January 2020, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

Friday 24th January 2020

9:10am

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

The Hon Speaker informed the House and the public listeners of the cause of the Emergency Fire alarm which went off in Chamber yesterday Thursday 23 January 2020 and consequently caused the adjournment of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. Mr Speaker asserted that experts have confirmed that due to excess condensation from the air con continuously on for more than 12 hours for two days straight caused the activation of the alarm.

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2019/2020 – *debate on second reading continues*

******* GOVERNMENT RESPONSES*******

i. Afioga Hon SALA Fata Pinati – Minister of Tourism- cont'

The Hon Minister conveyed appreciation and gratitude to the Samoan community in Papua New Guinea for their warm hospitality when hosting the Samoan delegation which travelled to PNG for the Ms Pacific Pageant. Sala was pleased to inform the House of the successful participation of the Miss Samoa in the pageant whereby she was crowned Ms Pacific for 2019/2020. The Hon Minister acknowledged Leiatavalesa Jerry Brunt and the Manaia Events Committee for their efforts in making the event successful.

FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga – Member for Palauli le Falefa (interruption)

The Member reminded the Hon Minister of the request to develop roads which lead to historical sites and tourist attraction.

The Minister stated that it is the Ministry's intention to achieve (1 Billion in two years) which the Tourism industry can attain if the leaders and community work together to beautify Samoa's scenic areas and tourist attractions to bring in more tourists to our shores; rather than seeking to gain profit in the short run (noting a scenario where tourists taking photos at historic sites are being charged \$20).

The Hon Minister noted that our people should be grateful that these tourists wish to capture the beauty of Samoa and possibly share their experiences with the world and bring in more tourists.

PRIME MINISTER - Interjection

The Hon Prime Minister elaborated further on the remarks made by the Minister and stated that the Pulemelei mound in Palauli district is another historic site which draws attention as its story is unique and related only to Samoa. The paramount intention is to improve tourist attractions with hope for them to stay longer than a day as tourism is one of the major contributors towards the economy of our country. He then urged the private sector and hotel operators to make the effort to promote local culture, handicrafts and food rather than serving dishes which can be found anywhere in the world. The Hon PM encouraged the community to give tourists a Samoan experience.

The Hon Prime Minister noted that villagers should attempt to beautify, maintain and promote the different tourist sites in their villages/constituencies rather than waiting at the side-line to charge the tourists who are contributing to the Samoan economy.

Afioga Hon SALA Fata Pinati - Minister of Tourism (cont.)

The Hon Minister emphasised that in order to make money, money should be spent. It is in this regard that development should be made in villages to beautify and maintain the different historic sites to attract more tourists in our country. The Hon Minister noted that there is currently a plan in place for roads in the constituency to be fixed; noting that the tourism industry has the ability to attain more income if roads were reconstructed as these roads lead to several attraction sites. SALA stressed that the roads are the way tourists can reach the sites - how can development and maintenance be made to the site when the roads that lead to it are not constructed or repaired. He acknowledged his constituency and concluded his response by voicing his support on the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

ii. Afioga Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama - Minister for Women, Community and Social Developments.

The Hon Minister greeted the House, Government, OCLA for their assistance during Parliamentary Proceedings, as well as our people listening in. TUITAMA then addressed issues raised by Members. Hon Minister noted that a total of 30 members spoke on the Bill and only 2 members mentioned the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

The Hon Minister informed the House of the confirmed figures he has on hand from the commencement of the Mop-up Program up until 22 January. A total of 2,331 individuals have not been vaccinated. The Minister was displeased with these people who refuse immunization yet it is freely made available for all of Samoa. Choices of the few people against vaccination has effects on the vulnerable groups, such as those who are under aged and those who are pregnant.

The Hon Minister then spoke on the new virus spreading from China known as 'Coronavirus' with detrimental impacts which has already affected several countries. Currently the Ministry has formulated plans in the hopes to stop the virus from spreading to Samoa. Furthermore, the virus travels rapidly which is a scare to any nation. He then urged Samoa's leaders to 'walk the talk' be more vigilant in monitoring entry points into Samoa to ensure the virus does not enter our shores as the possibility of it coming to Samoa exists.

Tofa LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Associate Minister of Communication, and Information Technology

The Member stated that the government has too many plans, and suggests using current plans with the underlying aim to make the public aware of it.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama - Minister for Women, Community and Social Developments

The Hon Minister of Women Community and Social Development continued to address the concerns raised by Members; one of the most common issues which are brought to the attention of the Ministry is the selection of Sui o Nuu and Sui o Tamaitai. The Hon Minister clarified that the *Internal Affairs Act 1995 s.14* - provides for the selection of 'sui o nuu' as Sui o le Malo selected by Cabinet upon the recommendation of the Minister.

The Minister attempted to clarify the selection process for Sui o Nuu and Sui o Tamaitai; (Sui o Nuu recommendation is made by the Village Councils - a written letter is provided to the CEO of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, and then referred to the Minister who will relay the nomination to Cabinet for their endorsement; at the same time, the Ministry will conduct their research on the recommended representative.

In the hopes of improving its overall processes, the Ministry continues follow its mandated legislation such as *s.16 (a) of the Amendment Act 2009* – the Act provides the selection of the Sui Tamaitai o Nuu - which is selected by the Women's Committee '*Komiti o Tina*' - then provided to the Village Council for their endorsement and then the same process applies (written recommendation to the CEO of MWCSO - then to the Minister - then to Cabinet.

The Hon Minister noted that the common issue that often arises in the selection of candidates is that villagers are mistaken which women's committee makes the recommendation - he iterated that the Act stipulates that it is the 'Women's Committee' not the Health Committee *Komiti Tumama*. The Minister recommended the villages to have one Women's Committee that the Ministry can consult with and then have sub-committees and assign them of their responsibilities where one sub-committee can focus on health and others.

The Ministry in its attempt to be fair in the selection of Women's Committee - are looking into implementing plans to specify the number of women composing the Women's Committee to qualify as a Women's committee. The Minister noted that a collective effort between the Ministry and the Office of the Attorney General are needed to redefine 'sui tamaitai o nuu'.

NAMULAUULU Sami Leota – Member for Faasaleleaga No.2

The Member interjected that he was the Member who raised the Sui o Nuu issue, as in his constituency there is one village (Sapapalii) with three different sub-villages. He urged the Ministry to assign one pulenuu and sui o tamaitai per village.

MULIPOLA Leiatua Laki – Associate Minister of Finance, and Member for Aiga ile Tai

The Member informed that House that when he sought the assistance of the Minister in regard to the process of selecting a sui o le nuu, the Minister advised him to prepare a letter. He then prepared a letter with the nomination for the Sui o le Nuu which was declined in a written letter by the CEO of the Ministry.

Afioga Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama - Minister for Women, Community and Social Developments

The Hon Minister clarified that Members should understand the law which stipulates 1 Sui o Nuu per village, it makes no mention of sub-villages (regardless of having separate village councils). The Hon Minister asserted that if sub villages are separate then responsible leaders should seek to legitimise their sub-villages with the Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration. He further noted that a total of 171 Sui o Nuu in Upolu and 85 in Savaii - in this regards to the 1,680,000 is appropriated for this service. The Minister jested that it would be simpler if each village operates for free and from the heart.

The Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM emphasised that these issues are not considered by the Minister alone - it will be referred to Cabinet for approval. The desire to have sub-villages promotes division when a united front symbolises strength. The Hon PM stated that it has become problematic since allowances have been allotted to the Sui o le Nuu and Sui o Tamaitai.

The Member urged village councils to appropriately choose and recommend Sui o Nuu as individuals who have the ability to walk and inform the village/community of Government's developments and plans, rather than choosing their elders who have mobility issues (as this defeats the purpose of having Sui o Nuu to better inform and make the villages aware of Government's policies)

Afioga Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama - Minister for Women, Community and Social Developments

The Hon Minister addressed the issue of Early Childhood Development (ECD) which is a program collectively implemented by four main Ministries; Ministry of Education Sports and Culture,

Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women Community and Social Development and Ministry of Health.

The first 1000 days since the child's birth are the most crucial times in a child's development - children must be nurtured, secured and loved as these feelings form the psychological being of the baby. The Hon Minister mentioned the importance of vitamins to the development of the child; elements such as iodine, Vitamin A, B, and C are required for proper development of the child. He then emphasised that after the first 2 years and the child has yet received all four elements it is possible to have hindrance to the full development of the child.

The Hon Minister touched on the District Development Plan (DDP) which is an initiative driven by the Ministry for effective development of individual districts. The Ministry is taking a backseat approach by letting the respective districts identify, design and implement their own plans and projections for the future wellbeing of respective districts with the assistance of the Ministry.

Proceedings were suspended at 10:26am

Proceedings reconvened at 11:16am.

- **LEADER OF THE HOUSE – MOTION**

The Hon Prime Minister moved a motion to continue proceedings of the Legislative Assembly until the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2019/2020 is passed then adjourn and reconvene next week Monday 27th January 2020.

Motion seconded and approved.

- iii. **Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell - Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour**

The Hon Minister greeted the House; he acknowledged the members that put forth requests to Samoa Land Corporation (which is under the Minister's Ministerial portfolio) asking for land for development purposes. Noted that other lands have been reserved for Fiafia Park, HDU etc but still informed the house to submit proposals to the Corporation. He then noted that more than 60 proposals have been received for land development. The Hon Minister elaborated on the processes of the Corporation whereby requests are granted on the understanding that the economy will benefit from such developments.

In regards to an additional aircraft, the Minister sought the tolerance of the nation with the current aircraft as most issues causing a delay are technical factors and its surroundings; for instance, another delay occurred to a flat tyre overseas and after its deliberation it noted that a tool was accidentally and carelessly left on the airport runway which made the tyre flat. Therefore, he sought the forbearance of the nation with the current situation as negotiations are under way to attain another aircraft. The Hon Minister urged the Samoa Immigration to work together with Samoa Air Ways to ensure the service is effectively and efficiently provided to the nation.

The Hon. Minister disproves statements aired about MCIL not doing their duty, and strongly assured the House that the Ministry continue to perform inspection works, he emphasised that the inspection is conducted twice a week and he has evidence and stats of the work that they have been doing and they are doing their job of monitoring and servicing local shops in the country.

FAAULUSAU - interject on a point of order

The member interjected that her statement did not mention the inability of the Ministry to conduct inspection services rather the team should effectively monitor the products sold at retail shops as there were products contaminated and passed expiration date but were on the shelves of shops.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Hon Minister noted what has been highlighted by the Member (Faaulusau) and he will look into the matter as stated to ensure it does not occur in the future. However he stated that it would be easier to solve the problem if those who noted the issue informed Members regarding local shops that are selling expired goods.

Hon Prime Minister – Point of clarification

The Hon PM elaborated on the importance of having evidence to confirm such expired products are being sold in shops to assist the inspection teams with identifying the owners.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Minister strongly advised local shops and customers of to come forward and inform the Ministry of what items are being sold in the shops. LAUTAFI emphasised that the sustainability of the business is determined on the quality of products sold in it. He then mentioned that the main objective of the Competition and Consumer Act is for products and services to be affordable.

The Hon Minister stated that people around the country expect more at reduced costs, which is why it is important that the (Chinese shops) are able to meet their needs at any time. There was also mention that if an expiry product is sold at the shops do not purchase such items and report the shop to the Ministry and provide proof.

The Hon Minister commented on the Recognisable Seasonal Employment scheme and emphasised that they also need to be registered and to ensure opportunity is equally given to the people. In regards to a request for a Police office in Savaii (Salelologa), the Hon Minister mentioned a land reserved for it together with the Court Building as mentioned in the respective Minister's response.

Furthermore, there are plans in the pipeline to purchase a bigger aircraft (ATR) consist of 50 passenger seats to fly around the region to Tokelau, Fiji and neighbouring islands.

Afioga LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi – Associate Minister of Ministry of Communication and Information Technology

The Member reminded the Minister, to look at having an airport in Savaii for flights between the two islands (Upolu and Savaii)

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell – Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour

The road to Fiaga is considered and work will begin as soon as possible; The Hon Minister then concluded his response by addressing his Constituency and thanking them for their support.

iv. Afioga Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

The Hon deputy PM noted that 23.6m is supplemented for developments as proposed in the Bill. However, there is no allocation to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; therefore she will only address the issues raised by members regarding the Ministry. The Deputy PM noted requests for seawalls, Climate Change and other matters on the Vaisigano project. In regards to seawalls, she noted that there are plans in the pipeline for seawalls in respective districts.

On the issue of climate change she noted there are two primary aspects to consider; (i) mitigation and (ii) adaptation. Hon Fiame mentioned that the Ministry enforces plans on adaptation as it manages future climate risks and others. Adaptation plans include protection of Government assets like hospitals and schools.

The Hon Minister emphasized that all projects put forward to the government for funding should be aligned with the national and international plans and goals that have been set by the government to be achieved. The Deputy PM mentioned sustainable solutions to combat the impacts of sea level rising; furthermore the Ministry continues to identify appropriate developments for escape routes which lead inland during tsunamis. The Minister highlighted that the Government's priority is placed heavily on protecting capital developments, schools, health, etc. The Vaisigano Project is funded by Global Climate Fund. In terms of climate change, the town areas have been most affected during natural disasters in the previous years.

Afioga ALAIASA Moefaaouo Sepulona Moananu – Associate Minister for Education Sports and Culture

Mentioned the Paris Agreement to fund government projects and informed the Minister of the dire need for seawall to keep the sea out from their homes and lands. The Member stated that the Paris Agreement could have been good help to them to fund the mentioned seawall.

Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa – Member for Vaimauga East

The Member requested the Minister to look at providing seawalls for the village of Lauili in regards to its vulnerability to sea level rising.

Afioga Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

The Hon Minister asserted that all requests have been noted due to climate change and emphasised that the government is continuously ensuring the operation of Climate proofing to integrate climate change impacts. However, all developments go back to the process of what needs to be prioritised first.

Hon Prime Minister - interjection

The Hon PM noted that requests have been noted and Government will progress with developments depending on urgency and what is prioritised.

v. Prime Minister – Susuga Hon TUILAEPA Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi

The Hon PM noted that the World Bank also requests for proof from Tenderers- on contractors who applied and in determining who the successful contractor was. He stated that Samoa is one of the top nations in the region on being compliant with the monitoring of developments funded by donor aid and assistance from overseas countries and organisations. He also commented on the Maliolio project where the World Bank requested proof of funding for transparency. He then asserted that however qualified the experts are in constructing a project there are challenges which hinder or obstruct and therefore it is important to take enough time in determining the best approach and design to undertake.

He recalled an occurrence in Los Angeles when the bridge collapsed after an earthquake.

Hence, the government is considering matters in detail step by step. The Hon Prime Minister stated that Ministers have provided enough clarity and response to the concerns and issues raised by Members, and therefore he will speak briefly on the issues on his portfolio and wrap up Government's responses.

The Hon Prime Minister stated that developments are implemented for the benefit of the nation and emphasised that there are certain developments which are interdependent; such as agricultural projects cannot be successful if there are no roads to agricultural areas. Another example is transportations, where you cannot travel between Savaii and Upolu without ferries, etc.

In regards to foreign donors/assistance, the funds are equally portioned to source the developments of Samoa with prioritised developments first. Government treats all sectors the same in order to prevent any complaints from the public, unless the foreign aid/donor specifically sources a certain project for a specific Ministry then the Government have no say on such allocations.

On the issue of birth certificates, the Hon PM responded to a Member requesting the use of baptism certificates to register births for ease of reference.

Another issue raised by members was on illegal drugs, to which the Hon Prime Minister mentioned that Police have been conducting numerous drug raids in Samoa which resulted to capturing majority of inmates.

2. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2019/2020- consideration in detail

MCIL	\$64,055 -	Approved
MOF	\$10,743,251	Approved

Disaster Management Appropriation:

LAAULI queried whether there will be compensation for families who lost their loved ones from the measles similar to the tsunami incident

Hon Prime Minister/Government's Response

The Hon Prime Minister stated that donations from the Public and Non-Government Organisation are enough.

SCHEDULE 1 ADDITION IN APPROPRIATIONS

MCIL	\$64,055	Approved
MOF	\$10,743,251	Approved
MOH	\$3,933,000	Approved
MJCA	\$504,455	Approved
MOP	\$158,073	Approved
MCR	\$211,706	Approved
OCLA	\$210,000	Approved
MPE	\$38,696	Approved
SBS	\$829,988	Approved
STA	\$253,000	Approved
LTA	\$2,300,000	Approved

Issues raised:

LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi raised the quality of the tar used for the roads leading to the Faleoo International Airport and requested that asphalt should be used for these roads so as to avoid early damages. The member requested to use asphalt similar to the roads from Malifa to Saina which is durable.

The Hon Minister for Works Transport and Infrastructure responded that the use of asphalt will be done for these roads.

MPCS	\$4,350,729	Approved
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Issues raised:

OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai queried an issue whereby the appropriation for Prisons fencing and water tanks is repetitive and that this was the same appropriation enlisted in the previous Supplementary

Chairperson of the Finance and Expenditure Committee responded that the amount was shown in the previous Supplementary however it was not actioned and only actually effective in this Supplementary. She further clarified that the Ministry of Finance (MOF) savings was used to fund the prison fencing and water tanks, now that Chinese buses have been sold and received extra funds this will be used to reimburse the MOF savings. Added to that, in regards to water tanks, tanks have already been installed but these new tanks will be reserve tanks.

LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi queried to clarify on the 300,000 for a Generator because he recently bought a generator that was sufficient to power the whole of his constituency at just \$100,000 SAT.

Motion - PM

The Hon PM moved a motion for the Member for Gagaeifomauga No.3 to table, proof of the Generator purchased by the Member; motion approved.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr Speaker advised the member to table evidence requested by the PM within 48hours.

Total Additional Expenditure Programs Proposed \$23,596,953 Approved

**SCHEDULE 2 REDUCTION
IN APPROPRIATIONS**

MJCA	-	\$350,000	Approved
MPCS	-	\$806,549	Approved

Total Reductions Overall Expenditures 2019/2020 \$1,156,549 Approved

The Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2019/2020 proceeded without amendments.

3. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2019/2020- third reading

The Minister of Ministry of Finance, SILI Epa Tuioti put forth a motion for the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2019/2020 to be third read.

Seconded by: Minister of MESC, Minister of MJCA.

Motion approved

Bill passed the Assembly

Proceedings were adjourned at 1:55pm;
and will reconvene at 9:00am Monday 27th January 2020.