

DISCLAIMER

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DAY 6

**PART A
9:33am**

Tuesday 1st February 2022

I. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

Hon Speaker greeted the House and noted the events of yesterday regarding the Member for Faleata 3. Mr Speaker noted his disappointment with statements made by the Member as he was asked to exit Chambers for 24 hours. However, despite his disappointment, the Chair has chosen to choose the godly way and forgive the wrongs of yesterday while focusing on moving forward.

- **Tofa LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata 3**

The Member stood to convey apologies to Mr Speaker and the House and noted that since he became a Parliamentarian, this was the first time he was asked to exit the House, hence his disappointment, regardless, the Member was remorseful and also agreed to move forward.

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

**1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2021/2022
Government Responses (cont.)**

1. Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Hon Minister commented on the Price Control Board and clarified that this Board ceased in 2017 when the Government agreed to an open market competition where suppliers were free to set their prices thus encouraging competition.

The Ministry is looking at other possible solutions to counter for the increasing prices, furthermore the Ministry is also looking at consistent visitations to shops in the hopes of monitoring the prices of goods sold to the public. The Hon Minister also noted that the cargo ships which usually arrive in 2 weeks, have now taken much longer to reach our shores (noting a lengthy wait of 2months) therefore requested possible reviving of Samoa's Pacific Shipping or Pacific Forum Line.

Afioga Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM pointed out that the prices of goods is a global issue, further clarified that the Government considers the factors that are affecting the prices of goods such as the supply chain and others.

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour (cont.)

The Minister spoke on the seasonal employment scheme which has provided employment for approximately 5,000 locals (3,000 – Australia and 2,000 – New Zealand). The Hon Minister then mentioned the numerous problems encountered with seasonal workers, such as marital problems, limited officials responsible to administer the workers as well as the contributing factor of the scheme to the problem of teacher shortage. Hon Minister noted that a number of teachers have opted to leave their teaching careers to pursue seasonal work. This raises the question why teachers would leave their important callings to work abroad in different climates. The Hon Minister also commented on plans to employ another liaison officer for Australia to assist with the administering of our people working abroad.

- **Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Member of Satupaitea – Interjection:**

The Hon Member acknowledged efforts to secure an additional liaison officer for Australia, and encouraged the Minister to also push the Australian Government to fund the pay for this liaison officer

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour (cont.)

The Hon Minister confirmed that when married people apply for seasonal work, their partners must sign a consent form prior their departure for overseas to ensure both parties are in agreement with the spouse leaving. In regards to the issue of Daylight Saving - the Minister noted that one of the reasons the Government considered to make necessary changes, was after considering the children who walk to and from schools (especially in the rural areas), to ensure

their safety and wellbeing it was appropriate to revisit the daylight saving initiative, and further noted that an amendment bill is in draft form.

- **Susuga MAULOLO Tavita Aмоса, Member for Salega 2 – Interjection:**

The Member reminded the minister regarding his request for the MCIL to install and implement a system which can help identify and record casual workers which would benefit both workers and their employers, he further compared this system to that which PSC uses for all public servants which has all the records of all employees. The system would help track casual workers when they move around from one job to another. The Member stressed that the system would also assist employers on tracking and monitoring of references to determine the character and attitudes of casual workers.

- **Afioga SULAMANAIA Taviliili Tuivasa - Member for Vaimauga 1 – Interjection:**

The Member queried the reserved list and asserted that this list was initiated by the previous government as a protective measure for our local producers and service providers as they cannot compete with prices offered by the Chinese entrepreneurs. The Member further requested to consider whether gas stations are under this reserve list for our local producers and services providers.

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour (cont.)

The Hon Minister took note of the Members request and concerns then noted specific allocations for certain Associations such as the Samoa Nurses Association, Samoa Seafarers and Maritime Association and others. He mentioned that the National ID project has kick started. The Hon Minister noted that the allocations will assist with improving services for these Associations. In regards to the reserved list, the Minister noted that Chinese who operate retail shops are qualified and eligible to do so under the Samoa spouse register.

- **Susuga MAULOLO Tavita Aмоса, Member for Salega 2 – Interjection:**

Susuga MAULOLO reminded the Minister that his request is two-fold, as the Minister is responsible for SLC as well as STEC. Therefore the Member mentioned in his request whether the land in Malie which was used by the SLC are available to lease by the village.

- **Afioga MASINALUPE Makesi Masinalupe, Member for Lefaga & Faleaseela – Interjection:**

The Member noted that in his village there is a rule which bans Chinese from operating any store/business; further noted that there are some families in his village who have renovated their shops and leased them to Chinese thus, the Member wanted to reaffirm these people to consider their rules and the reserve list which was mentioned by previous members.

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour
(cont.)

The Hon Minister gave a division of the lands under the SLC at Falealili which equates to 251 acre; 123 acre already divided in 2013, there were pieces which were leased out by 1 acre but have not received any lease from this due to no access roads therefore, access roads need to be set to ensure it is accessible and eventually receive lease from these lands. The Hon Minister noted that lands from Matautu which certain members have requested to lease are breeding grounds and mangrove areas. Furthermore, in 2021, 108 acres have been divided for the village of Matautu for farming and cultivation; however these lands have not completed formal process.

Hon Minister noted that there is 20 acres near the sea which was leased to a hotel however this lease has been terminated, thus the land is available to lease for business purposes. The Hon Minister also noted that the Corporation will look at fixing the access roads to the lands in Matautu and then continue the leasing of these lands.

Furthermore, the Hon Minister noted that SLC has lands leased out in the villages of Vailele, Letogo, Saina, Faleula, Fasitoo etc, and further emphasised that SLC are prioritising all paperwork for registration.

In regards to the CT Scan which is funded by the ACC, the Hon Minister noted that the old scan was also funded by ACC, however they are looking at repairing the old scan in addition to the new scan aforementioned. He then informed the House that the scan left Shanghai on 15 December 2021, then arrived in New Zealand (Auckland) on 27th January 2022, scheduled to depart New Zealand on 5th February 2022 then arrive Samoa on 12th February.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:41 am;
and resume at 11:17am**

MOTION – Hon PRIME MINISTER:

Hon PM moved a motion to set aside SO 32 (1) to continue proceedings until 1pm and resume at 2pm until all Government Orders are complete; motion seconded and approved

- **Afioga MAIAVA Fuimaono Tito Asafo - Member for Falealili 2**

The Member reminded the Minister about his request for the village of Salani to clarify whether it is under the SLC or MNRE.

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Socialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour
(cont.)

The Hon Minister clarified that there are three bodies responsible for administering of lands; these include the SLC, STEC and MNRE. The responsible minister will respond to the land in Matautu as requested by the Member for Falealili 2. In regards to Samoa Airways, Hon Minister noted the importance of this agency as it garners revenues from tourism, however due to Covid we would not be able to continue with our services. Furthermore, Samoa did not meet the minimum requirement to transport passengers between Apia and Auckland. Although Members continue to push for our own carrier, given the changes in time the Government believes that there are more pressing issues, and given the impacts of Covid, the aircraft must be returned and the lease ceased given the unprecedented times we are currently experiencing.

- **Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Laufo, Member for Anoamaa 2**

The Hon Member commended the minister for clarifying his questions regarding the aircraft and further queried whether there was a short term or long term that Samoa will get an aircraft or otherwise. The Member suggested that China has many airline companies and whether they can assist our nation with acquiring an aircraft.

- **Afioga Hon. LAUTAFI Selafi Purcell, Member for Satupaitea**

The Hon Member clarified that his understanding was that the aircraft payment record was clean and that most paperwork were handled while he was in Office, therefore cannot understand how it was a positive initiative and now there seems to be many obstacles and hurdles.

Hon PRIME MINISTER – Interjection:

The Hon PM pleaded to the Members that the Government of the day has new policies in plan, and the current government has no intention to bring the aircraft to Samoa.

Afioga Hon LEATINUU Wayne Soialo – Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour
(cont.)

The Hon Minister commended the member for Anoamaa 1 for his advice regarding the seasonal work scheme. The minister further elaborated on their plan to divide the 2,000 employment opportunity amongst the 51 constituencies to allow all constituencies the opportunity to send their people overseas to improve their living standards. This will overturn the current process by the Ministry where workers are selected accordingly based on individual profiles which is then submitted to overseas companies who are responsible for selecting the final list of workers. Thus, the Minister stated that he supports the idea by the member for Anoamaa 1, to allow respective constituency committees' to select and vet their own people who want to go on the scheme and submit their list to the Ministry.

2. Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele – Minister for Health

The Hon Minister acknowledged all Members who spoke on the Supplementary and asserted that all recommendations and concerns raised have been duly noted and will be considered in due time. Also noted that certain Members with District Hospitals will receive an Ambulance soon as it is the Ministry's intention to ensure all Health Clinics receive an ambulance.

- **Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA Kika Stowers, Member for Gagaifomauga 1**

The Hon Member reiterated and urged for an allocation to assist the Ministry, especially now as there are positive cases in isolation. Emphasized that there is insufficient resources, doctors, nurses, facilities, equipment and everything to assist Samoa in its efforts to counter Covid-19. The Hon Member accentuated that people are waiting and willing to help in any way in order to keep our country safe. Further advised the Minister to utilize the 17 people who are elected as part of each constituencies committee responsible for the 200k initiative to assist the MOH with their work in ensuring that everyone from their constituency are vaccinated and other related duties to protect the nation from the pandemic.

- **Afioga ALAIASA Moefaauouo Sepulona Moananu - Member for Anoamaa 1**

The Member expressed gratitude for the ambulance received by his district hospital, then queried the possibility of a booster vaccine for the public then perhaps consider possibility of opening borders.

- **Afioga PESETA Vaifou tevaga- Member for Faasaleleaga No. 5**

The Member stated that in his speech before, he requested an ambulance for his constituency however there will be a vehicle for Anoamaa when his constituency needs it more, requested that the Minister look into this and also for the patients to be transfer directly from Tuasivi to Motoootua Hospital to ensure they receive the necessary care needed.

Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele – Minister for Health (cont.)

The Hon Minister clarified that there is a reason why the ambulance transporting a patient from Savaii stops at Leulumoega, to ensure the patient receives medical check before continuing to Motoootua. Hon Minister then acknowledged constituencies that hosted the Ministry during their community visits. The Minister then spoke on the issues of the CT scanner.

- **Afioga LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1**

The Member suggested that the Ministry thoroughly checked all passengers whether requirements are met before allowing to travel to Samoa. He further stated that the flight from Australia even brought children below the vaccinated age which was a risk.

Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele – Minister for Health (cont.)

The Hon Minister noted that he did not want to confirm when the Member for Safata 1 queried about the first 10 confirmed cases as he respects the authority vested in the Hon Prime Minister as she is the only one that gives an official announcement; however, in regards to the community case, he asserted that Members should refrain from paying attention to rumours. The Hon Minister also emphasised the importance of following appropriate lines of communication especially when dealing with government announcements.

- **Afioga LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1**

The Member queried the Minister why it took 3 days for the Government to announce the nationwide lockdown.

Mr Speaker – Interjected:

Hon Speaker confirmed that the Minister of Health has made it clear there is no community case.

- **Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Lauofo, Member for Anoamaa 2**

The Hon Member commended the Minister for his explanations then queried why the information of covid cases given in our reports differ from the numbers shown on the data by the WHO. Further queried whether the number of cases recorded by the WHO is accurate or not, as it states that Samoa has 32 covid cases. He then emphasized that he does not believe any information conveyed on social media like fb, as the only reliable source is from the ministry. Hon Member then acknowledged the Minister for clarifying that there is no community case and quashing the rumours which cause unnecessary panic to the public.

Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele – Minister for Health (cont.)

The Hon Minister commended the deputy opposition leader for his comments, and stressed that all accurate information will be announced by the government. In regards to the delay in lockdown after the positive tests were obtained, it was owed to having proper discussions with relevant authorities such as NEOC before a decision was made. However, the Ministry notes the requests for the centers or zones for community testing and the Ministry will consider using other district hospitals for this initiative.

- **Afioga SULAMANAIA Tauiliili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga 1**

The Member queried on the delay of the roll out for the third dose (booster), further advised for the booster vaccine to start off with the Parliamentarians as we are all in this together. He then commended the minister for his work and wished him well on all his responsibilities. Also suggested that fasting and prayers will get Samoa through these trying times.

Afioga Hon VALASI Luapitofanua Tafito Selesele – Minister for Health (cont.)

The Hon Minister noted that, he will look into requests made by the Members this includes the Hospital at Fagaloa. Also asserted that consideration will be taken into risk allowances for all front liners. The Hon Minister conveyed apologies for any shortfall and concluded his response.

**Proceedings suspended at 1pm; and
will resume at 2pm**