



June  
2020

## PARLIAMENTARY SITTING SUMMARY

### DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of Part A of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Monday 29 June 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 Part A of Proceedings of Parliament on **Monday 29 June 2020**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

**Monday 29 June 2020**

**PART A**

**DAY 10**

**9:14**

### **I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – Reading of Bills**

#### **1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL No.3 2019/2020; and APPROPRIATION BILL 2020/2021**

#### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSES cont.**

##### **1. Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East.**

The Hon Minister conveyed well wishes to Members of the House and then began to address the issues raised by Members on his portfolio; In regards to free travel for Savaii voters during elections, the Hon Minister informed the Member for Faasaleleaga No.2 that his request has been noted, and negotiations will be made with the Shipping Services whether a 50% discount is feasible.

The Hon Minister then provided an update on the projects in progress for the Ministry. In regards to the ford at Moamoa – currently in progress and will be complete in October 2020. The west-coast road (asphalt phase) is currently implemented for Puipaa and Faleula, while the west-coast road package 2 is planned to complete in January 2021. The Hon Minister mentioned the progress of the Vaisigano bridge which is funded by the Government of Japan, the Hon Minister explained that this project aims to complete in August 2020.

The Hon Minister noted that an In-Kind donation from Japan is penned in to replace the existing Lady Naomi II and is envisaged that Samoa will receive this at the tail end of 2022 (December) when inspections have been finalised. The Hon Minister explained that the SSC is currently formulating a design for the new vessel.

Hon Minister stated that Fords for Lano and Sapapalii (Savaii), and Faatoia and Tiavea (Upolu) will be constructed once the Appropriation Bill 2020/2021 is approved. The Vaiaata road works is planned to complete by the end of the 2020 year.

In regards to Clean Water for consumption project, the Hon Minister for Lotofaga, Aleisa West, Lepale, Faleasiu Uta and Fasitoo Uta (these projects will be opened on 2 July 2020). In regards to the roads in Patamea, the Hon Minister stated that this project will be complete this year.

The Hon. Minister proceeded to provide an update for Sailors stranded abroad, 322 sailors employed on MSC (Mediterranean- Italy) 250 sailors employed whilst 57 completed their contracts and are awaiting reopening of borders to return home. 201 sailors under contract and 64 sailors employed on cargo ships and are still getting paid. The Hon Minister noted that all sailors are Covid Free and are in good stead. He then utilised the opportunity to convey appreciation on behalf of Parliament to the MSC (Mediterranean-Italy) for keeping all Samoans upon their ships safe and well. As it was noted that Samoans are well taken care of on these ships and are receiving free medical check-ups. The Hon Minister noted that one sailor is detained in Miami Florida awaiting deportation after charges for assault. The Hon Minister refuted claims made on Social Media & Newspaper outlets that Government is not assisting those stranded, and asserted that once borders have been reopened then Government will make relevant discussions to return these sailors.

#### **TAFUA Maluelue Tafua- Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo**

The Member acknowledged the Hon Minister for the proposed works on the ford at Tiavea. He then quoted “what is good for the Goose is good for the gander” and requested that the 50% reduction on costs for the Members in Savaii be done for transportation costs of his constituency during elections.

#### **NAMULAUULU Sami Leota, Member for Faasaleleaga No.2**

The Member commended the Minister and acknowledged the proposed 50% reduction for transportation costs.

#### **Mr. Speaker – Point of Order**

The Hon Mr. Speaker reminded Members to touch upon & clarify points/issues raised in their general statements rather than adding on new points.

#### **MULIPOLA Leiatua Laki, Member for Aiga i le Tai**

The Member noted that there is a proposal for alleviating transportation costs for Savaii & requested consistency for assistance for Manono Island, regarding transportation costs during elections.

**Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification**

The Hon PM urged Members of the House to raise all matters pertaining to alleviating costs during Elections. The Hon PM proceeded to touch upon why the Special Votes was forgone and recalled an incident whereby a Candidate had been declared the victor until special votes were counted and therefore the practice and process had to be revisited to ensure fairness and consistency. Hence the current procedure to ensure all electorates cast their votes in their respective constituencies.

**ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau, Member for Alataua West**

The Member taking up the Hon PM’s comments, stood to request a bus from Salelologa to her constituency for electorates

**FAASOOTAULOA Pati Taulapapa, Member for Gagaemauga No.2**

Member stated that Salamumu be afforded transportation to alleviate costs incurred on voters for election.

**Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and Member for Urban East (Cont.)**

The Hon Minister clarified to the Member for Faasaleleaga No.2 that the request for free ferry trips to Salelologa have not been confirmed, rather the necessary Authorities will consider the feasibility of a reduction of ticket costs. The Hon Minister concluded with acknowledging his constituency and addressed them in all their honorific salutations.

The Hon Minister noted that it had been 20 Consecutive Years since he had been the Representative for his constituency and expressed gratitude for the support of the constituency. “Soifua and God Bless”

**2. Hon. SALA Fata Pinati, Minister for Tourism and Member for Gagaemauga No.1**

The Hon Minister commenced with acknowledgement for the House, Samoa in her honorific salutations then acknowledged those employed by the Public Sector & commended them for their excellent service. The Hon Minister touched upon the Tourism Crunch faced by the Hospitality Sector in light of the Covid pandemic. He then proceeded to state the positives and recited a passage from the Legion Prayer. The Hon Minister noted the detrimental effects of the Covid on the hospitality sector, which has resulted to 1000 workers laid off.

In 2014-2015, the Ministry recorded 133,000 visitors with revenues of 347 million;

In 2015-2016, visitors recorded 146,000 and a collection of 385 million revenues;

In 2016-2017, total visitors of 146,437 and revenue of 387 million

In 2017-2018, visitors recorded were 163,323 while revenues included 454 million,

In 2018-2019, the Ministry recorded 178,564 visitors, while revenues 514 million.

In 2019- March 2020; the Measles & Covid era; 124,399 visitors, revenue- 375 million.

The Hon Minister cited the detrimental effects felt by the public and cited that the following sectors such as transportation sector, clothing stores, and others have laid off workers.

The Hon Minister requoted the economic principle of needs outweighing the resources available; and called for Unity in light of circumstances faced by the Nation and called to

set aside differences regardless of ethnicity, genetics & creed. The Hon Minister reiterated the need for Unity and displayed disappointment with the notion of looking to Government for assistance.

The Hon Minister quoted former president of USA, John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your nation can do for you, rather what you can do for your nation". The Hon Minister called for the nation and respective Ministries to be proactive and emphasized being considerate of others (love). Furthermore, the Hon Minister called the Public and Parliamentarians to take a proactive stance in approaching the Problems faced by the public. Hon Minister conveyed acknowledgement for Tourists whom have visited Samoa. (Investments is key). The Hon Minister recalled sentiments issued by the Hospitality Sector: "any assistance for our water& electricity bill?" The Hon Minister clarified that he does not personally own these and noted that he will & has requested on their behalf.

The Hon Minister proceeded to comment on measures implemented by the Tourism Sector to boost operations; Improvements in the website, street addresses, and overseas attachments and trainings to better promote local markets. The initiative to take journalists to Savaii so as to boost capacity in advertisements. The Hon Minister further noted that training costs incurred are covered by the Ministry. The Hon Minister reiterated the need for the public to market their wares & tourism hotspots.

#### **OLO Fiti Afoa Vaai- Member for Salega East**

The Member queried whether there is any assistance of note for measures in place for members of the Hospitality sector. The Member emphasized whether there is a plan for the Ministry at this time of Covid-19 with regards to revenue generated areas.

#### **LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata West**

The Member acknowledged the Minister & his Ministry for the timely submission of their report on the effects felt during the Covid-induced financial crunch. The Member stated that in his opinion the Sector needs 105Million of a Capital Injection. LEALAILEPULE queried the feasibility of extending opening hours of the hotels.

#### **FAUMUINA Faaolatane Tiatia Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa**

FAUMUINA called to place importance on the development of historical sites while the shutdown is on to prepare them for opening upon the lifting of the shutdown.

#### **Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification**

The Hon PM noted that the Hon Minister has provided a brief clarification on the trend of revenue gained from tourism and decrease of revenue due to covid19 and measles outbreak. In regards to the Government assistance to the hoteliers; Hon PM emphasized that this is already mentioned in the budget through its stimulus package to assist our people.

The Hon PM reiterated that all businesses were given assistance during the Stimulus budget. Hon PM cited the tax credit on hotels as one of Government's major assistance for the businesses. Hon PM reiterated the importance of diversifying developments to adapt to the

current market conditions; (don't put your eggs in one basket). The PM asserted that he advised the hotel sector to reduce hotel rates for our people and reiterated the importance of presentation and affordability for members of the Public. The Hon PM emphasized that this was the main factor behind the success of Chinese businesses, i.e., affordability.

**Hon. SALA Fata Pinati, Minister for Tourism and Member for Gagaemauga No.1 (Cont.)**

The Hon Minister addressed matters pertaining to STEC, Hon Minister acknowledged The Almighty for the major improvement in the State of operation of STEC. Hon Minister acknowledged JICA & Hokkaido Investments who will collaborate with the Government to construct a lab/factory at Mulifanua for the Vanilla and Orchid plant

In regards to STEC Lands, the Minister acknowledged the Member for Aiga-i-le-Tai and commended him for confirming that his constituents are not living illegally as squatter settlements in the area. Hon Minister noted that talks are in place the establishment of a Township at Mulifanua (the area between Faleolo and Mulifanua).

The Hon Minister elaborated that 150 acres of land have been sub-divided into 516 blocks of quarter acres which can be leased out to the public for development; Hon SALA explained that lease is at \$718 annually per 1/4 acre and this is subject to renew after 30 years. Furthermore, the Hon Minister stated that there is also 200 acres, which have been sub-divided into blocks of acres also open for lease for the development of agricultural crops/vegetation and farming. Hon Minister asserted that these are only plans, which have yet to receive Cabinet's endorsement, and reiterated that the STEC lands are not for Sale.

In regards to development projects of STEC, The Hon Minister stated that there is cultivation for yam, taro, cocoa, banana, etc currently in progress & reiterated sentiments made by certain members of the house that the Country is in a dire state of affairs. Hon Minister noted that one harvest of Taro in an area smaller than 1/4 acre equates to 500 SAT.

In regards to Biomass Energy Finances - STEC is receiving approx. 20,000 from this project; The Hon Minister spoke upon the Solar Project collaboration with EPC & noted that it had reduced tariffs by 50cents per kilowatt compared to the \$1 per solar . In regards to overseas developments, the Hon Minister explained that STEC has already purchased land at Otahuhu (plans have been hindered because of the pandemic). Hon Minister further explained that the marketplace aims to have a storage place for agricultural crops for locals. The market place will generate revenues as it will be leased to locals interested to sell local produce in New Zealand.

**Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification**

The Hon PM wanted to clarify on the development plans raised by the Minister, and explained that in the past, there were originally two locations of land for the sole purpose of selling local crops in NZ— however, the STEC did not receive any revenues from this project. The second area was located at the center of Auckland where local products were received and then a retail was also opened to distribute local products specifically taro.

However, the Samoan community in NZ have raised the need to have our own shop/market, as the markets/dairies which sell our local taro are mostly owned by Indo-Fijians and reports have

been made that these shops are utilizing dirty tricks to paint Samoa's Taro in a negative light. Using local Fijian taro which is not up to standard and selling it under the guise of Samoa Taro. Furthermore, the Hon PM explained that currently the storage of taro is located at the residency of the Samoan Consulate, which is unprofessional; Hon PM asserted that this is the rationale of reopening Samoa's local Warehouse for Taro.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:46am;  
and resumed at 11:26am.**

### **Motion from the Leader of the House**

Hon PM noted that the lengthy Government Responses pertaining to matters raised by the House is reflective of the high esteem with which Cabinet holds Members of the House. The Hon PM noted that previous parliamentary terms had proceedings which commenced until late hours. He asserted that the Ministry of Finance have requested the budget for tomorrow, hence the need to amend sitting hours to ensure it can be met. Hon PM moved a motion to extend sitting hours from 9am – 1pm; and

3pm – 11pm

*Motion seconded & approved.*

### **Hon. SALA Fata Pinati, Minister for Tourism and Member for Gagaemauga No.1 (Cont.)**

In response to the member for Palauli le Falefa; calling for emphasis on the development of historical sites: the Hon Minister noted the sobriquet of Samoa is the Pearl of the Pacific.

### **Hon SILI Epa Tuioti, Minister of Finance**

Hon Minister noted that he sought to clarify Government's Stimulus Package for the Tourism Sector and cited Tax Credit From 2003- 142 million for the Hospitality sector. The Hon Minister stated that talks are underway to close the tax credit for hospitality sector. In regards to the Stimulus package: the Hon Minister cited Government undertaking 2% payment for the Hospitality Sector loans; furthermore, the Minister cited the redundancy package for laid off workers under the stimulus package.

Moreover, the Minister noted that 50% reduction in electricity & water bills fees during the Covid Financial Crunch. The Hon Minister further noted that there is an appropriation, which will be addressed in detail by the Minister of Public Enterprise during his speech; additionally the Hon Minister stated there is also an assistance for the Samoa Airways. In regards to the waterfront project, Hon SILI explained there was a fund set aside to aid an awareness with regards to this new project as soon as we borders are reopened.

**Hon PRIME MINISTER - Clarification**

The Hon PM noted that the House has understood the merits of the stimulus package. The Hon PM singled out the \$142 million in overdue Taxation to emphasize Government's priority given to the Hospitality industry. Furthermore, the Hon PM cited the approval by NEOC for travel & quarantine of the travelling public as another indicator of the high regard Government has for the aforementioned sector. Moreover, the Hon PM reiterated the interdependent nature of benefits incurred for the hospitality & local producers.

**Hon SALA Fata Pinati, Minister of Tourism and Member for Gagaemauga No.1 (cont.)**

The Hon Minister noted commented on the importance for unity in light of market conditions produced by Covid19. Furthermore, the Hon Minister reiterated that projects by Cabinet & the House be guided by the principle of benefits for our future generations. The Hon Minister concluded by addressing his Constituency & refused to take credit and diverted credit to the Almighty. Hon SALA addressed Aleisa who will be included in the Minister's constituency come 2021 Election. Development works for road and water supply will be develop and once budget is approved. Hon SALA noted that he had conveyed a golf course, schools and all other developments to Minister Lautafi, MESC schools, noted that he had conveyed to the Minister the wishes of the Constituency

**3. Hon TUITAMA Talaelei Leao Tuitama, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development and Member for Aana Alofi No.1 East**

The Hon Minister commenced by acknowledging and addressing Samoa in all her Honorific Salutations; addressed the 3 arms of Government, Clergy and all CEO's. The Hon Minister responded to matters raised by Members.

District Development Plans; Hon Minister elaborated that 49 constituencies have formulated and presented guidelines barring one constituencies from Savaii which have not presented theirs. The Hon Minister stated that 14 have formulated guidelines for DDP but have not implemented. Moreover, 14 villages are formulating Drafts for their DDP. 1 has not formulated or presented theirs. The Hon Minister noted that DDP will have significant positives for the Constituencies as it will help consolidate Village By-Laws and ensures that a standardised Penance System is consolidated targeting Violence against Women & Children. Cited Vaie'e as an example whereby \$2000 is the standard fine if found guilty of assaulting one's spouse (wife) and children.

The Hon Minister further clarified the process of DDP provided under the Village Fono Amendment Act 2017 new section 5A 'Registration of policies and resolutions of by-laws copies are given to Court Registrars, Clerk of the House, MWCSO Office. The Hon Minister proceeded to read out 21 Constituencies which have provided their DDP guidelines, and 14 constituencies who's DDP's are still in the draft form.

Palauli Number 3 is the only Constituency that has not presented anything on the DDP. The Hon Minister noted that upon presentation of DDP's; the Ministry will then commence to implement

developments stipulated in their respective DDP's. The Hon Minister stated that emphasis in DDP's are placed on Education, health, Fines etc.

Hon TUITAMA then acknowledged villages/constituencies whom assisted in compiling their DDP's. The Hon Minister noted collaboration with UNFPA (Targeting those (women and girls) whom contract STD's, pregnancies, chronic diseases) noted that there was assistance in the form of wheel chairs under the Fund.

In regards to the Samoa Disability Program, Hon Minister noted that Phase 2 is underway & new title for the Program is Disability Partnership Program. The Hon Minister clarified that there had been requests for assistance in the procurement of sewing machines & elei painting noted that this was addressed under the CSSP-Civil Society Support Programme (grant from Australia DFAT, Green Climate Fund, EU, WB, through the UN)- all incorporated under the (Samoa Women Shaping Development program) the first phase of this program will be complete in the next financial year and it will run for the next four years.

Furthermore, Hon Minister noted that assistance has been sought from the UNDP addressing areas pertaining to Beautification of Villages and keeping marine environment clean Sewing Machines & Teachers have been procured from the assistance of the Government of China and are awaiting the lifting of travel restrictions to meet the aforementioned request. The Hon Minister conveyed support & reiterated that the Ministry will continue to seek assistance to address the needs as identified by respective constituencies. Hon Minister noted that Lefaga & Falessela, and Alataua West constituencies are efficient and proactive in achieving their own personal goals and commended the responsible MP.

The Hon Minister in response noted that the Ministry aim to assist with ensuring that in the event of an outbreak the Public is aware on measures for protection. Hon Minister acknowledged the Minister of Agriculture for the procurement and allocation of Small Taro Shoots (Ti'apula) for the public to avert the possibility of a food shortage in light of conditions of Covid19. The Hon Minister commended the Village Council in regulating & ameliorating the over-expending of our resources: coconut - (encourage replanting of coconuts), marine resources.

The Hon Minister noted that the aforementioned measures is to ensure the food security is at an optimal state in case of a food shortage. Minister echoed sentiments by the Ministry of health on the importance of cleanliness and stated that 20 to 40- seconds minimum is the standard to ensure cleanliness. The Hon Minister in response to Faumuina Wayne Fong clarified that the song is approximately 40 seconds long which is in tandem with the minimal standard to ensure cleanliness.

The Hon Minister noted that Measures in place by the Ministry aim to avert the Covid effects in case of an outbreak. In regards to independent water sources; Hon Minister clarified that requests are given to the Tenders Board based on recommendations made by respective villages. Hon Minister elaborated that funding is from the European Union with support from the World Bank. The independent water sources in Siumu and Paia are with the Tenders Process. The Hon Minister noted that the aforementioned follows a set guideline (in regards to TB approval process). The Minister stated that the fund will be given to all the villages for this project as requested by their Members for them to work on this project (independent water source). Hon TUITAMA noted that Post this FY, all requests will be diverted to an Independent Water Scheme Association. Hon Minister noted the appropriation of 1.5 million for CSSP through the EU for the Independent Water Scheme Association to meet Independent Water Needs and for water safety plans for those using this independent water scheme. There are 34 villages initially under the Water scheme association with 29 utilising services provided by the SWA.

The Hon Minister noted that the main concern which backs their recommendation to utilise the service provided by SWA pertains to healthy and safe consumption; and reminded the public that if ever in doubt of the quality of drinking water, it is safe to boil drinking water.

In regards to the Government's printing press, the Hon Minister asserted that the Printing press is widely used by Government Ministries, Mafutaga a Tina and others. Hon Minister noted that the service is free to the Public to utilise: schools, churches etc. Hon Minister further noted that the Electoral Rolls, Honorary Salutations, the Budget being deliberated are all from the Source. Hon TUITAMA also noted that one of the benefit's of the Press is its privacy.

Hon Minister briefly touched upon services; engravings on bibles, repairing Bibles et al, stated that 26 are employed and all printers are in good stead barring 2. (in need for 2 more digital printers as requested for the upcoming election printing and process. Hon Minister noted that Color Printing will be available for Candidate Flyers to help voters identify candidates to voters.

The Hon Minister cited the Independent Printing Companies as a challenge for the Printing Press and asserted that calls by Members of the House stating that the Printing Press incurred a deficit are incorrect. Hon TUITAMA explained that Projected Revenue was at 600,000 however, current figures reflect that the Press exceeded the projection by collecting 652,000.

#### **AUMUA Isaia Lameko- Member for Falealili**

The Member noted that he spoke on the printing press mentioned by the Hon Minister and stated that he only touched on the printing press because there is no allocation to assist the community (sui ole nuu and sui tamatai o nuu) when they need to print copies of respective bylaws. In addition, he mentioned that the community can not access getting a copy of the Village Fono Amendment Act 2017 online.

#### **Hon TUITAMA Talaelei Leao Tuitama, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development and Member for Aana Alofi No.1 East**

The Hon Minister noted that in 1995 May, the printing of Honorific salutations was moved under the Jurisdiction of Ministry of Internal Affairs. Noted that the first edition in the year 2004 discarded the glottal stops, commas, accentuations and others, this will be reincorporated in the Second Edition in 2013 for Honorary Salutations due for printing this year. Hon Minister reminded the Public to present any possible amendments to spelling etc.

In regards to the website upgrading (as raised by Member for Falealili) noted that his request has been duly noted. In regards to hard copies the Minister stated that this can be procured from his Ministry or the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative. The Hon Minister touched upon the Governing Legislation's pertaining to the Ministry and provided the following legislations available on their website.

1. Ministry of Women affairs Act 1990 amended to
2. Ministry of Women affairs Amendment act 2009
3. Village Fono Act 1990
4. Village Fono Amendment Act 2017
5. Internal Affairs Act 1995
6. Internal Affairs Amendment Act 2010
7. Family Safety Act 2013
8. Infant Ordinance 1961

9. Samoa Antiques (Samoa Fine Mats) Regulation 2013

**Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly set aside at 1:01pm;  
and will resume at 3pm**