

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Wednesday 24th February 2021**. 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 **Wednesday 24th February 2021**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

PART B

Day 26
6:21pm

Wednesday 24th February 2021

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021- second reading & Debate on the Bill (cont.)

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

i. Hon SALA Fata Pinati, MINISTER FOR SAMOA TOURISM AUTHORITY cont.

The Minister acknowledged the members of the Finance and Expenditure Committee for the effective work done by the Audit Office which has been updated from the last 10 years. Mentioned that the Audit Office only reported 50 reports in 2010 and by 2015, 166 reports were made which is a significant increase. Noted that the Audit Office has future plans to refrain from having backlogs on auditing financial reports. Attributed the significant developments in Samoa to the high level of education our people are exposed to. Acknowledged scholarships awarded to audit officers staff to pursue their Masters' degree: 5 scholarships offered to study China; 1 in the USA and 15 in Australia and 1 in New Zealand. Scholarship for Doctorate degrees are also offered to staff: 3 scholarships have been offered to the current staff. He then accentuated that 'Knowledge is Power'.

The Hon Minister acknowledged the private auditors for their assistance in sharing the load for the Office of the Auditor General. The Hon Minister then noted a

recommendation from the Finance Committee on the audit report which ended 30 June 2019, which recommended the Audit Office to collaborate with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry for Customs and Revenue to thoroughly assess outstanding debts which have been accrued from previous years.

FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy Stowers, ADDITIONAL MEMBER FOR GAGAIFOMAUGA No. 3

The member noted that good governance is reflected through the update of audit reports (referring to the clearing of their backlog). The Member was pleased to note efforts made by Office to ensure all audits were carried out for different government ministries and offices. She commended the Minister for a job well done. The Member acknowledged the scholarship opportunities offered to the youth and future generation which is the main reason for the development of this nation.

Hon TUILAIPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

The Hon PM mentioned that this is one of the Governments agency that collaborates with private auditors as they have outsourced their work with the private sectors however all work is finalised by the Office of the Controller and Auditor General. This is also similar to the Attorney General's Office where they outsource their work to Private firms. He then noted that outsourcing of government work has contributed in increasing the number of employment.

Hon PM then noted an initiative to privatise the Public Trust Office (PTO) to cut back on government costs; then noted the functions of the PTO in terms of managing the assets and trust for deceased. The Office acts as the administrative body to ensure assets are given out according to the will of the deceased to uphold peace within families. (noted that it is important especially when dealing with the will of the deceased parents and assets are shared amongst their children). Hon PM noted the importance of the work carried out by the PTO and therefore concluded that the office remains under the Government's stewardship. Hon PM suggested the importance of conducting audits for law firms (preferably 2-3 times a year like the practice in NZ) to ensure the dignity of the law firm is guaranteed.

Hon LAUOFO FONOTOE NUA FESILI Pierre Laufofo, MEMBER FOR ANOAMA WEST

The member for Anoama West responded to a comment made by the PM that private law firms should also be audited to ensure dignity in their dealings with the public and stated that auditors are the ones that need to be transparent not the lawyers.

Hon TUILAEPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

Hon PM clarified that any assets/trust which cannot be determined who it belongs too, will remain with the Public Trust Office. Hon PM noted that in the absence of the will, the asset/trust can only be given to the family of the deceased after all debts (if any) have been settled and a lawyer acts on behalf of the family to ensure that a surviving family member is made an administrator for the assets discussed.

Hon SALA Fata Pinati, MINISTER FOR SAMOA TOURISM AUTHORITY cont.

The Hon Minister echoed statements by the PM with the issue of privatisation for the Public Trust Office, and acknowledged the Prime Minister for the foresight to keep PTO under Government.

Hon Minister then spoke on the Samoa Trusts Estate Corporation (STEC) noted that due to the recent reshuffling of Cabinet portfolios which led to STEC being assigned to his portfolio. He then commended the CEO for his work. Noted that there have been numerous projects which have been planned, some have come to fruition, these include: biomass energy at Mulifanua which generate electricity, plans are underway to establish a township in Mulifanua (using 300acres) and warned the public to not be late in leasing out the lands at Mulifanua in case it runs out. He recalled during the development of Vaitele, numerous lands were for sale, he purchased some pieces for land worth \$2,000 but he forego most of the lands thinking that it would not be developed, however has regretted this decision, with the cost of land today in Vaitele (worth 100,000). He then clarified that the lands under the stewardship of the STEC are public lands not HRPP lands.

Hon TUILAEPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

In regards to wills, you can do several wills however the most legal one is the latest will that was made. Hon PM made reference to townships- townships are built in accessible areas. He then made reference to the Government's proposal to build a township at Aleipata due to its proximity to American Samoa (given that American Samoa accepts our proposal to build a wharf at Aleipata which would be easier for ships to travel to and fro rather than having to travel all the way to Apia). The Hon PM noted that the rural parts of Samoa are in the pipeline for further developments this is the vision of the Government.

Hon SALA Fata Pinati, MINISTER FOR SAMOA TOURISM AUTHORITY cont.

The Minister continued to speak on the importance of the quarry (crushed stones) for road maintenance. He expressed that the Board of Directors have approved the

usage of the rocks from the crusher machine own by the STEC to provide aggregate stones for road development in the country.

The member concluded his speech by acknowledging the Leader of the House for appointing him as a Minister and for his strong faith, which has made him capable of doing all things necessary for the development of Samoa regardless of the hardships encountered along the journey. Acknowledged his fellow Ministers, and paid special acknowledgement to Hon Tuitama a colleague whom have served alongside him for a long period of time; wished him well in his retirement. Acknowledged his Associate Minister, Parliamentarians, CEO's of Government Ministries and staff of the various Offices under his portfolio for the hard work during the term. Hon Minister acknowledged his constituency of Gagaemauga No.1 (soon to be Sagaga No.3), for bestowing him with this honour to represent them in the highest House of Samoa. Acknowledged his villages Lealatele- Samalaeulu, Mauga and Patamea in Savaii that will not be included under the new arrangement proposed in the Electoral Constituencies Act. He noted that despite the amendment proposed, he will still remember them for their endless support. Acknowledged the youth of Samoa and encouraged them to do well because what they do now sets the future. Acknowledged Aleisa Sasae and Sisifo which is the new electoral constituency he will be running in and wished them well in the upcoming elections. The Minister acknowledged his loved ones, his family for their unending support and love.

Proceedings were suspended at 8:02pm

Proceedings resumed at 8:48pm

ii. Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, MINISTER FOR WORKS, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon Minister greeted the House, Mr Speaker, Parliamentarians, the 3 arms of Government, the Clergy, all Government officials and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. Conveyed sympathies to the wife and family of the deceased Member for Lefaga and Faleaseela, Afioga Vaafusuaga Toleafoa Ken Poutoa; and also conveyed sympathies to the mother of the Member for Faleata West, Afioga Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi.

The Hon Minister then delved into the Ministries/Corporations under his portfolio which are 10 in total. The Hon Minister made specific mention of certain development projects which were implemented throughout the parliamentary term which included the following:

- Samoa National Action Plan for Road Safety;
- Samoa Road Safety Pathway Assessment 2016;

- Review of National Road Safety Standards 2016;
- Samoa Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy 2018;
- Phase 1 completed for the construction of the river wall for Vaisigano and Leone to reduce the impacts of flooding faced by residents living near this area and plans to progress to phase 2 are underway;
- Vaisigano Catchment Project;
- The beautification of the Apia Waterfront Event Space and Clock tower 2019;
- National Building Code 2019;
- Guidelines for the application of the National Building Code for the Single Storey Residential Housing 2018;
- Apia Waterfront Development Project 2015-2021;
- Urban Design Standards 2018;
- Apia Catchment 2016-2026;
- Clock tower Boulevard 2016;
- Friendship Park 2021 funded by the Government of China;
- Urban Design Development 2018;
- Plans are under way to continue Phases 2, III and IV for Vaisigano Catchment Project GCF anticipated to be complete in 2026;
- Project funded by the Green Climate fund: the feasibility study for integrated sewerage system in Apia;
- Additional generator installed at Fuluasou;
- Installation of a 750kw Biomass Bioplant;

Hon Minister noted the following projects which were completed during 2016-2021 for the Electric Power Corporation (EPC):

hydro power for Tafitoala, Fausaga, Vailoa, Fuluasou

- Hydro power improved for Alaoa, Fale o le Fee, Loto Samasoni, Lefaga (and an additional generator in Moataa Lefaga);
- Batteries for the storage of electricity in Fiaga and Faleolo;
- Installation of a 750kw Biomass Gasification Bioplant at Mulifanua;
- Improved hydro power at Lalomauga (31.7mkw)

The Hon Minister noted on-going projects for the Electric Power Corporation:

- EPC Smart Metering Program (ongoing project); more than 30,000 meters required to be installed and currently the Corporation has installed more than 3,000;
- Vaipu pumping skin;
- System Protection Study (to avoid the blackouts during accidents which affect street lights);
- Fiaga Lightning Protection System (to eradicate impacts of lightning to our electricity system);

- Additional diesel power station for Savaii;
- Lalomauga hydroplant plant 2.5mva transformer needed;
- Smart distribution grid remote control;
- Corss Island power lines from Tanugamanono to Siumu;
- Tiapapata New Hydro Station currently in bidding process;
- Distribution expansion network community obligation;
- Solar power for Savaii;
- Renewable energy grid market in progress (negotiation with PPA) Hon Minister added that the LTA have plans to import electric vehicles to kick start this renewable energy project;

- Samoa Water Authority (SWA):
Hon Minister mentioned development which were implemented in 2016-2021:
 - New drilled water for Gatavai, Sataua, Saleaumua, Nofotalii and Satapuala;
 - New water installations for Gataivai, Sataua, Saleaumua, Satapuala, Nofotalii, Faleasiu Uta, Tanumalala, Lepale, Afiamalu, Malololelei, Matavai, Magiagi, Seese, Aleisa Sasae, etc.

Samoa Water Authority's Project Developments for 2021-2026:

- Project development for Vavau, Lotofaga and Salani;
- Project development for Aleisa Sisifo;
- On-going projects for Malololelei and Afiamalu;
- There is an on-going project at Samusu under SWA and clarified that all projects regarding water is done by SWA as some candidates are using it as a part of their campaign measures;
- To initiate a project to use solar power to create electricity using (vai vili) or pumped water from the earth;
- Pumped earth water for Vailele and Moamo Fou;
- Improve pipelines for water supply in the areas of Apia also drainages.

- Land Transport Authority (LTA):
Projects completed in 2016-2020:
 - Leone Bridge completed;
 - The bridge at Vaisigano that was funded by Japan which costs 44 million;
 - Concrete crossing road at Samalaeulu funded by the World Bank in partnership with the AusAid which cost 12 million;
 - New concrete roads at Moamo Fou and Nusuatia, Sopoaga funded by World bank and AusAid;
 - New bridge at Lotosamasoni, currently funded by Samoa and AusAid;

- Drainages improvement and development in the areas of Apia- funded by the Green Climate Fund;
- West Coast road from Saina to Malua have been completed- co-funded by the World Bank and Samoa;
- Ongoing road project from Fusi Safotu to Patamea;
- road at Leone;
- road at Samalaeulu

Hon Minister noted the appropriation allocated for the road works and fixing of roads throughout this Parliamentary term for Upolu and Savaii:

2017: 27,923,182;

2018: 28,535,677;

2019: 28, 277,273; and

2020: 41,575, 152.

Furthermore, the Minister stated work forecasted for 2021-2026:

- improve and develop road at Lelata funded by Green Climate Fund;
- improve and develop roads at Lano and Sapapalii funded by World Bank;
- improve and develop crossing road at Afega funded by the World Bank;
- improve and develop Cross Island road- from Tanugamanono to Siumu funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB);
- continue work in progress for the west Coast Road from Malua to Faleolo funded by the World Bank;
- continue research in progress on finding a way to stop landslides at East Coast roads in Upolu and also Safotu- Manase in Savaii; and
- improve and develop 4 corners at Aleisa and Tanumalala.

Access roads intended to be implemented before the FY 2021 ends include:

Upolu: Samalaga in Alafua, Tufulele, Launiu, Pati, Solosolo Uta, Falelauniu, Aleisa Sasae, Fusi Safata, Tuvao, Saina, Manunu, Vini, Apaula Street, Salesatele, Vaovai, Utulaelae, Matapu'e, Saleaumua and Satitoo, road to school in Leauvaa and Satuulufilufi.

Work is forecasted for roads in Savaii villages such as Malae, Tapueleele, Lalomalava, Utuloo – Asau, Nuualofa, Falelima, Satupaitea and road to Sagone school.

The Hon Minister noted that despite difficulties with climate change, flooding and road damages, the Ministry continues to work efficiently as possible to repair roads which have been damaged, and improve drainages to combat the impacts of flooding.

- Samoa Ports Authority (SPA):
 - Projects completed in 2016- 2020:
 - Enhancement of safety of the Apia Wharf funded by JICA;
 - Improvement of two (2) tugboats;
 - Lighthouse at Mt Vaea improved;
 - Improve wharf for Manono Uta funded by ADB (USD \$75million);
 - Manono Uta wharf passenger waiting area funded by JICA while the Samoa Ports Authority fund the wharf;
 - Pilot boats;
 - Survey for wharf at Satitoo, Aleipata;
 - Survey for a tugboat including floating facility.

Projects in the pipeline for 2021- 2026:

Wharf at Vaiusu 2026- Minister expressed disappointment to the member of the Constituency for opposing the project yet will be beneficial to the residents there.

LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, MEMBER FOR FALEATA WEST

The member sought clarification towards Hon Minister's remarks towards the wharf project at Vaiusu and expressed that if the member of that constituency refuses to have the wharf; he supports the project and advice to call it Vaitele wharf as this wharf covers more of the Vaitele area.

Hon TUILAEPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

Noted that such arguments by the Member for the constituency (Vaiusu wharf) are unfounded. Advised the Minister for the government to deliberate on the benefits of the project and for the public not to worry about this matter.

Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, MINISTER FOR WORKS, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE cont.

Suggested that the mentioned Members are too young to understand the intention of the Government when they propose and implement their projects. Also expressed disappointment in regards to statements made against our Chinese partnering country. (misleading information by FAST which stated that the purpose of the wharf schedule for Vaiusu is for Chinese military base). Reassured the public that China does not intend to take our property but wishes to support us financially. Stated that the importance of the Vaiusu wharf development project: it is close to the industrial Zone at Vaitele to avoid the heavy loaded trucks in the town area of Apia, enough space for containers storage, and also the ships would not be affected by swells (galu aa) as this is a common problem at the Matautu wharf.

Hon Minister clarified on-going projects for the Tiavea Airport and reiterated that this is a small airport that cannot accommodate a B737. He clarified the Tiavea Airport was built to cater only Twin Otters and ATR Flights but not a B737.

Hon FAUMUINA TIATIA FAAOLATANE Liuga, MEMBER FOR PALAULI LE FALEFA

The member noted that he recommended for an additional 500 meter to the 1400m right then it will be sufficient to land the aircraft B737 only.

TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, MEMBER FOR ALEIPATA ITUPA I LALO

Pointed to correct for the records that the Tiavea airport is not 1400m but it is currently 867m.

Hon PAPALIITELE Niko Lee Hang, MINISTER FOR WORKS, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE cont.

Hon. Minister accepted the correction made but it was the information that was given to him. He further noted that the Maota Airport will be extended by 300 meters on the east side to accommodate large aircrafts such as B787. Also clarified that the airport at Tiavea will only cater for smaller aircrafts at the moment. Plans are in place to improve the airport at Maota specifically the arrival and departure area and to fix fence. The Airport at Asau needs development particularly the runway as well as to mend its fence. It is anticipated that the airport at Tiavea will be extended by another 700 meters; an arrival and departure lounge will also be installed at the airport.

The Minister stated that these are some of the projected projects under the sectors in which he oversees. He then acknowledged his constituency for their support. Called out to the villages that will be included in his new constituency namely, Vaimauga No.3 and stated that actions speak louder than words therefore the peoples judgement should be based on the work implemented but not words. Acknowledged the Leader of Government for his leadership; acknowledged the Speaker; acknowledged Cabinet and members of the House, wishing them well for the upcoming elections.

Hon TUILAEPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, PRIME MINISTER

The Hon PM commented on the importance of the Lighthouse at Mt. Vaea project to be built as a big cross as an icon statue of Christ the Redeemer and clarified that the light on top of the cross is the function of a lighthouse to safely direct sea travellers into our Harbour. He further clarified that the lighthouse will be raised at a higher area and it will be in a form of a cross and be known as an icon for Samoa and the road leading to the lighthouse will be called 'ole ala ile Satauro' 'the road to the cross'. Another matter he wished to speak on is the misleading statements made by certain Members with the intention to destroy all the good works that government has done. However, he noted that there should be a rule to be put in place to refrain members from telling lies.

Other Announcements by the Speaker

Reminded the Members of Parliament that pursuant to S.O 24 and 25 Members should seek approval from the Speaker for their absence.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 10:14pm
Parliament will again reconvene at Thursday 25th February 2021 at 9am.**