

Territory of American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan

Chapter 7: Plan Maintenance Process

American Samoa's Hazard Mitigation Plan is a living document. This 2020 update represents the fourth update to the original plan written in 2003. The Hazard Mitigation Plan is implemented by way of the Hazard Mitigation Strategy detailed in the previous chapter. As a living document the plan is designed to be changed throughout the five-years before an official update is required. This chapter details how the plan is reviewed, revised and updated as conditions in the Territory evolve. The Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) appoints the Hazard Mitigation Council and the State Hazard Mitigation Officer the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The American Samoa Government understands the value of this plan and its positive mitigation impact and intends to continue updating this plan and implementing the plan's mitigation strategy.

7.1 Keeping the Plan Current

S17. Is there a description of the method and schedule for keeping the plan current? [44 CFR §201.4©(5)(i) and 201.4(d)]

The American Samoa Government recognizes the need to track the relevance and implementation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and to assess the effectiveness of the plan in achieving its goals. To that end the Hazard Mitigation Council and the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) have committed to the following system to keep the plan current.

The Territory must formally update and adopt this plan every five years according to FEMA regulations. The five-year update is inadequate to maintain a current and realistic plan. In reality, a process of monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan needs to be in place. During a five-year time period, policies and procedures at the Federal and Territory level may prompt changes to the plan in terms of priorities and/or funding. In addition, a major disaster would prompt review and possible modifications to this plan. Finally a new study or risk analysis would prompt a plan review.

The American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Council is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Hazard Mitigation Plan and subsequent plans approved by the Hazard Mitigation Council. Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management (ODAPM) and Territorial Emergency Management Coordination (TEMCO) are responsible for documenting plan monitoring and update activities. Documentation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan updates will occur as frequently as on a quarterly basis and minimally on an annual basis or as the need arises. ODAPM and TEMCO will work with the Council and the other relevant departments to review mitigation priorities and identify projects for funding under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as well as other sources of federal funding. The Hazard Mitigation Council, ODAPM, TEMCO and representatives from key government departments will evaluate and update the most recent plan updates and submit them to FEMA for final approval.

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The Hazard Mitigation Council will work with all member agencies and departments as well as with other stakeholders in American Samoa to review the plan and recommend additional mitigation projects. The most current version of the plan will live on the American Samoa Government website, so it is accessible to the public and all stakeholders. The Hazard Mitigation Council will review the plan following any major disaster declaration and recommend projects for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

The mitigation plan is the responsibility of the Territory Hazard Mitigation Council; however, multiple agencies are needed to monitor its maintenance, evaluate its relevance and update it for accuracy. The Territory Hazard Mitigation Council recognizes the SHMO as the individual who has the daily responsibility to monitor the hazard mitigation plan and potential mitigation opportunities. The SHMO has support from ODAPM and TEMCO. The SHMO works with departments seeking mitigation funding to complete benefit-cost-analysis and grant applications. The SHMO maintains the Mitigation Action Tracker throughout the year. The Hazard Mitigation Council meets following any large incidents or disaster declarations to discuss mitigation funding opportunities and priorities of the mitigation plan. The SHMO monitors the Hazard Mitigation Plan on a monthly basis to check for project status and funding availability, as well as following any disaster, and annually with a formal review at the Hazard Mitigation Council meeting. The SHMO also completes quarterly reports for the Hazard Mitigation Council. The Hazard Mitigation Council reviews the plan in its entirety for accuracy and relevance at an annual plan review meeting, this is described below. Below are activities required to update the mitigation plan annually as well as each year during the next five-years.

7.1.1 Annual Plan Review

The Hazard Mitigation Plan will be reviewed annually to evaluate progress made toward implementing the mitigation strategy and to consider if changes need to be made based on previous events or changes in regulations. The annual review will be led by the Hazard Mitigation Council and include the following tasks:

- Review of the Mitigation Action Tracker to identify actions implemented, funding status of all actions, and priority order of actions.
- Document any changes made based on review of the plan and the Mitigation Action Tracker.
- The SHMO will lead the Hazard Mitigation Council in a review of the accuracy and relevancy of all components of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The SHMO will lead a discussion of the mission and goal statements in the plan to make sure current priorities throughout the government are represented. In addition, a review of current capabilities will be discussed so any new plans, regulations, or challenges are acknowledged. This includes identification of any new risk analysis. Based on this meeting, the SHMO will develop an amendment to the plan that includes any necessary changes.
- The formal Annual Review is the time for the Hazard Mitigation Council to request that member agencies or departments incorporate the Mitigation Plan into relevant agency or department plans.

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7.1.2 Post Disaster Review

Following any Presidential Disaster Declaration, the Hazard Mitigation Council will meet to review hazard mitigation needs and opportunities. Post-disaster is an opportune time to implement mitigation actions and to receive mitigation funding. It is also the time for the Hazard Mitigation Council to amend the Hazard Mitigation Plan with lessons learned or new priorities for mitigating risk. It may not be necessary to hold an Annual Plan Review if a Post Disaster Review is warranted.

7.1.3 Five-Year Plan Review and Update

The Territory has secured consulting services to support the development of the 2025 plan through January 2022. During this time, the Hazard Mitigation Council will hold several meetings, collect additional data for an updated risk assessment and further develop mitigation actions. The work done by the consulting team will not produce a 2025 Mitigation Plan Update but will position the Territory and the Hazard Mitigation Council to secure additional funding to complete the plan.

The American Samoa Government is committed to updating the plan every five years. They recognize the need for a formal review, update and adoption of the new plan. ODAPM, TEMCO and the SHMO will lead the five-year update process with the support of a consulting team and the Hazard Mitigation Council. The plan will be reviewed by the GAR and then submitted to FEMA for review and approval.

Per FEMA requirements the five-year plan review will include consideration of the following:

- Changes in land use and the built environment.
- Changes in population demographics that may impact vulnerability to hazards.
- Changes to the vulnerability of critical facilities, infrastructure, and government owned buildings.
- The relevancy of previously identified goals, objectives and mitigation actions.
- The availability of resources to implement the mitigation plan.
- Any progress made to completing mitigation actions, current status of those actions and any barriers to their implementation.
- Any changes to Federal or Territory laws or regulations that should be addressed in the plan, including current funding opportunities.
- Lessons learned from plan implementation.

7.1.4 Consultation with FEMA

In coordination with quarterly plan reports, the SHMO will hold a conference call with FEMA Region IX to review the status of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and all identified actions. The SHMO will meet more frequently with FEMA if a major disaster is declared or if funding becomes available for identified projects. The technical assistance provided by FEMA to review potential projects is invaluable to ensuring the Hazard Mitigation Plan is implemented efficiently.

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7.1.5 Plan Maintenance Schedule

The table below details the plan maintenance schedule for each year.

Table 55 Plan Maintenance Schedule

Timeframe	Actions
Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazard Mitigation Council meets following any large incidents in the Territory to review mitigation plan and discuss new funding opportunities and priority mitigation actions. They will review funding priorities at this time and amend the plan as necessary. • Hazard Mitigation Council meets to discuss implementation of mitigation actions. • Hazard Mitigation Council requests the incorporation of this plan into plans of relevant government agencies. • SHMO works with departments seeking mitigation funding to complete benefit-cost-analysis and grant applications. • Hazard Mitigation Council proceeds with mitigation action implementation. • SHMO maintains the Mitigation Action Tracker. • Quarterly Reports are developed.
July 2020 – June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2020 update was done so quickly that the Hazard Mitigation Council recognizes the need to begin immediately with a thorough plan update process. • The Territory has secured consulting services to support the development of the 2025 plan through January 2022. During this time, the Hazard Mitigation Council will hold several meetings, collect additional data for an updated risk assessment and further develop mitigation actions. • All annual actions listed above.
July 2022 – June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazard Mitigation Council seeks funding for additional consulting assistance to complete an update to this plan. • All annual actions listed above.
July 2023 – June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazard Mitigation Council updates this plan according to current FEMA standards. • All annual actions listed above.
July 2024 – June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazard Mitigation Council Completes the plan update. • All annual actions listed above.

Figure 103 Plan Maintenance Schedule.

7.2 System for Monitoring Plan Implementation

S18. Does the plan describe the systems for monitoring implementation and reviewing progress? [44 CFR §201.4©(5)(ii) and 201.4©(5)(iii)]

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One of the primary purposes of this plan is to identify mitigation actions the Territory can implement to lessen their risk to natural hazards. Monitoring the implementation of those actions is a good way to measure success of the plan. The system defined below is what the Hazard Mitigation Council will use to track the implementation of mitigation projects and activities identified in the Mitigation Strategy. The system includes the specific schedule, responsible parties, and the roles of each. Also detailed is the criteria for evaluating progress for the goals, objectives and mitigation actions defined in this plan. In summary, this system defines a process for collecting and evaluating feedback on the Territory's progress toward their long-term goal to:

Reduce the risk of all natural hazards (identified and unidentified) to the Territory, thus, alleviating loss of life and property to insure the well-being of the people of American Samoa.

The best measure of the Mitigation Plan's success is implementation of the mitigation strategy. Implementing this strategy, and specifically each mitigation project, the Territory moves closer to achieving its goal of reducing risk and alleviating loss of life and property. Achieving this plan implementation is accomplished by continually monitoring, evaluating, and updating the mitigation actions as new information and priorities become available. It is the responsibility of each agency or department that has a mitigation action in the plan to implement that action. The SHMO will assist each agency with benefit-cost-analysis and grant applications for their projects. The SHMO continually monitors funding opportunities and makes them known to the Hazard Mitigation Council.

The SHMO will use the Mitigation Action Tracker to monitor and evaluate plan implementation. The Mitigation Action Tracker, described in the Mitigation Strategy, is an Excel based spreadsheet that has been customized with details about each mitigation action. It also includes information regarding the status of each action. Information included in the Mitigation Action Tracker for progress reporting includes:

- Date of project start
- Date of project completion
- Explanation of project delay or cost overrun
- What was accomplished during the quarterly reporting period?
- What challenges or obstacles did the project encounter during the reporting period?
- What are the plans for the next quarter?

The SHMO will prepare quarterly progress reports combined with any disaster write-up to serve as the Plan's annual update. These annual reports will be referenced toward generation of the 2025 plan.

The following four-step process outlines the monitoring plan.

1. Begin Plan Monitoring

The SHMO initiates the plan monitoring process by requesting a meeting of the Hazard Mitigation Council. At this meeting mitigation activity updates will be requested by way of a

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project update worksheet. Additional mitigation activities will be requested by way of the project worksheet. An example is shown in Appendix F.

2. Maintain Mitigation Action Data

The SHMO will maintain data regarding the implementation of all mitigation actions through the Mitigation Action Tracker.

3. Gather New Mitigation Opportunities

The Hazard Mitigation Council will query its membership regarding new mitigation opportunities in each of their respective agencies. In addition, following a major disaster declaration, the SHMO will make the Hazard Mitigation Council aware of current funding opportunities. The SHMO will put out a call for projects through the Samoa News.

4. Gather Updated Planning Documents

The Hazard Mitigation Council will request additional planning documents from all relevant government agencies and departments to include in the update of this plan.

The four-step process above outlines the process of maintaining the list of mitigation actions. The Territory has successfully used this process for over a decade. Ms. Fiatoa has been the SHMO for many years in the Territory of American Samoa. In this position, she has completed grant applications including benefit-cost analysis and tracked the implementation of mitigation projects. Ms. Fiatoa works closely with each agency that has potential mitigation projects. She educates them about potential mitigation funding opportunities and guides them through the grant application process. Ms. Fiatoa collaborates with FEMA on project applications and project closeouts. Her work ethic and consistency over the years has enabled the Territory of American Samoa to access millions of dollars of project funding.

On a quarterly basis, the SHMO will provide a status or project summary for the Quarterly Mitigation Report to the Hazard Mitigation Council. An outline of the minutes from each Hazard Mitigation Council meeting will also be included in the Annual Plan Update. The reports and minutes will serve as a permanent record of the mitigation progress for American Samoa. During the Hazard Mitigation Council meetings, the SHMO may suggest new updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Council will provide advice and recommendations. The mitigation plan will be monitored and updated by the SHMO, ODAPM and TEMCO annually and updates will be made as necessary to reflect current conditions. The Hazard Mitigation Council will review and approve all updates made.