

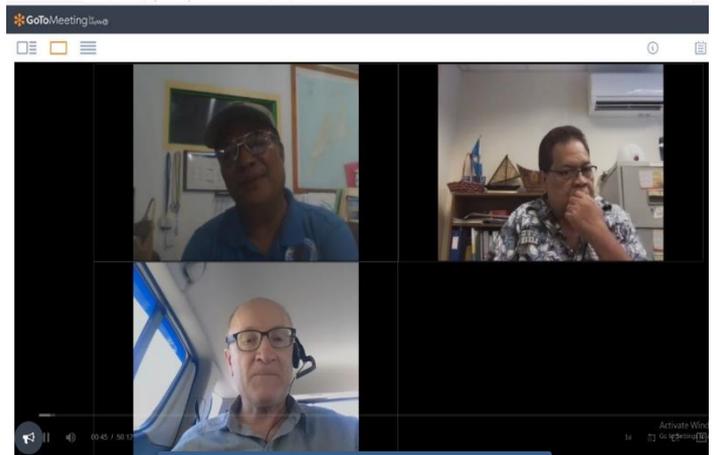


Pacific COVID-19 Response Network and Connectivity Project.

(From: Secretariat)



CEO Virtual Forum.



Utility and Allied Meeting.

Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA) established a comprehensive communication platform to use across its member groups to address emerging COVID-19 related needs as well as to strengthen its internet network and increase internet-based communications among its members.

Over the months since establishment, and with border closure and travel restrictions, members have been able to use the video conferencing platform of ‘Go to Meeting’ for its meetings and forums. PWWA also gave support to its member utilities by providing this mechanism for accessing professional advice or spare parts should breakdowns in water supply systems occur.

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PWWA meeting with AWA re Virtual Conference

AMERICAN SAMOA POWER AUTHORITY (ASPA)

East Side Villages Wastewater Collection System Project: Package 5, Phase I

The East Side Villages Wastewater Collection System Project (Packages 1-5) is a comprehensive plan to extend the centralized sewer collection system feeding the Utulei wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).



A study conducted in 2007 reported that “water quality monitoring in the streams and near shore areas of Leloaloo, Aua, and Onesosopo on the east side of the Pago Pago Harbor has clearly indicated chronic, ongoing, and long-term bacterial contamination. As a result, American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) initiated a project to reduce the amount of untreated wastewater released in the identified areas.

As part of the ASPA’s East Side Village Program funded through the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). ESV Packages 1, 2, 3 and 4 involved works to improve and upgrade the existing wastewater infrastructure in preparation for additional wastewater flow resulting from the collection system expansion.

Package 5 of the East Side Villages Wastewater Collection System Project (Packages 1-5) will enhance the conservation of both groundwater aquifers and the local marine environment by removing existing cesspools and failing septic systems.



Key Achievements

- Employment of 50 local American Samoans including construction supervisors and key administrative roles managing health, safety and environmental matters.
- Successfully excavating around an abundance of existing services both known and unknown.
- Successful completion of water pipeline infrastructure to include the construction of three (3) new sewage lift stations, force mains, sewer mains, sewer laterals and service connections to existing facilities within the project boundary, decommissioning of existing septic tanks and cesspools, new sewer manholes, concrete works, metal works, demolition, relocation, replacement, restoration work and electrical work.
- High level of coordination with the community, involvement of multiple stakeholders and consultation with individual landowners to ensure good communication was maintained and disruptions were always kept to a minimum
- Successful implementation of proactive

approach in redesigning and/or realigning drainage lines to address site constraints resulting in the omission of Lift Station #3.

- Cost saving for not installing Lift Station #3 amounting to \$245,138.00 not to include operational and maintenance cost.
- Extensive traffic management as all the works were on the main road.
- Successful implementation of Total Petroleum Contingency (TPH) Plan.
- Successful Operator's Training and commissioning.

(BY EDMON O. LACAULAN, M.ASCE)



MAJURO WATER AND SEWER COMPANY (MWSC) – Republic of Marshall Islands

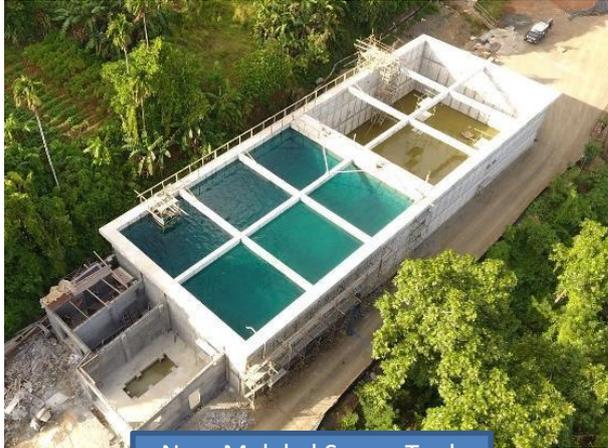
On Thursday, September 17, 2020, His Excellency Mr. Norio Saito, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Honourable Mr. Casten Ned Nemra, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, signed the Exchange of Notes for Japan's Grant Aid, a grant of 1.757 billion Japanese Yen (approximately USD 16.7 million at the current exchange rate) for 'the Project for Improvement of Water Reservoir at Majuro Atoll'. The Project will be implemented by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) together with the Ministry of Works, Infrastructure and Utilities; and Majuro Water and Sewer Company. The signing ceremony was held at the Cabinet Conference Room in Majuro, attended by His Excellency Mr. David Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Honourable Mr. Christopher J. Loek, Minister In-Assistance to the President and Environment, Honourable Mr. Jiba B. Kabua, Minister of Works, Infrastructure and Utilities, Cabinet Ministers; and staff members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as well as the Embassy of Japan. Enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disaster is highly prioritized in Marshall Islands due to serious threat posed by climate change. Under the current circumstances, rainfall amount and its pattern has been changing, and it is crucial for public water service to secure sufficient amount of water for overall water security. This project will construct a rainwater reservoir beside Majuro International Airport with storage capacity of about 15 mega gallons. Total capacity of rainwater reservoir will be increased to 51 mega gallons from current capacity of 36.5 mega gallons. At the ceremony, H.E. Ambassador Norio

Saito stated that it is an absolute honour and pleasure to contribute to water security of Marshall Islands. Ambassador Saito referred to Japan's commitment made, to strengthen the basis for resilient and sustainable development of this region, at the 8th Pacific Leaders Meeting (PALM8) held in Japan in 2018. Ambassador Saito continued that he is more than grateful, on behalf of the people and government of Japan, in keeping its word declared at the last meeting, at the time of anticipating the 9th Pacific Leaders Meeting next year. Ambassador Saito added his special thanks to Honourable Jiba Kabua, Mr. Catalino Kijiner, Mr. Joseph Batol and Mr. Shumon Yoshiara for their dedication to preparation works, and concluded his remarks by hoping to strengthen ties between the two countries on the occasion of the inauguration of the new Cabinet in Japan one day prior on September 16. Hon. Casten Nemra on behalf of His Excellency, President David Kabua and the Government of the RMI, expressed his sincere appreciation to the people and the Government of Japan for this long-awaited project. Honourable Casten Nemra congratulated on the new cabinet's inauguration in Japan and wished to continue cordial relationship between the RMI and Japan. Japan and the Republic of the Marshall Islands have deepened cooperative relationship for more than 30 years, since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1988 under the reign of late President Amata Kabua, First President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The Government of Japan hopes that the grant aid projects will help foster the over 100-year historical ties between the two countries.



PALAU PUBLIC UTILITIES CORPORATION

Koror Airai Sanitation Project Update



New Malakal Sewer Tank



Road construction in Malakal

The Koror-Airai Sanitation Project (KASP) is a national project funded by a \$28 million loan from ADB and implemented by the Palau Public Utilities Corporation to rehabilitate and expand the existing wastewater system in Palau. The Airai component of KASP was included in the original plan; however during implementation, the loan amount was not enough to fund it. The project is divided into 3 main components: 1) ICB-01- Sewer Network Rehabilitation and Expansion Works at Malakal and Meyuns area, 2) ICB-02- Sewer Network Rehabilitation and Expansion Works at Koror Main Road, and 3) ICB-03- Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade at Malakal. The project continues to progress although at a slower pace especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and with Palau’s borders closed. Much needed external specialists are unable to come on island. PPUC is now utilizing local subcontractors to continue with civil works. For ICB-01, works remain incomplete since the termination of contractor in October 2019. Bidding documents are being prepared for advertising in December 2020 to recommence works. Works to be included in the bidding package include 2 sewer pump stations and bridge crossing. Pending works for ICB-02 include commissioning of the new sewer pump station in T-Dock. For ICB-03, the Sequential Batch Reactor (SBR) structure has been constructed including a new office and control rooms. Mechanical and electrical experts from outside are needed to complete remaining mechanical and electrical works for commissioning early 2021. As part of the loan package, a CCTV and high-pressure jetter were purchased for the Wastewater Operations to enhance inspection and maintenance of sewer lines. A community awareness specialist was hired specifically to promote the project and educate the public of common sewer issues including overflows and what the community can do to help.



SAMOA WATER AUTHORITY

New Water Projects commissioned providing relief for Samoa Water Authority customers.

Samoa Water Authority completed and commissioned new water supply projects which includes rehabilitation and extension of coverage, with more people accessing reticulated water for the very first time. The trend of people moving inland to cultivate lands and establish themselves has grown immensely with the introduction of tar sealed roads going inland and the availability of electricity. The challenge for the Authority is the lack of a water source especially on the western side of Upolu.



An estimated number of 5,088 people reside inland on this side of the island in the villages of Sapulu Faleasiu, Lepale and Fasito’o Uta. They now access water from a borehole drilled at Sapulu Faleasiu and a network of pipelines of up to 36.9 kilometers. The total costs for this project is **\$7,012,242.39** including drilling of the borehole (depth of 192m), building of two tanks (250m³) and implementation of pipelines.

Freehold lands being sold in the higher altitudes of Upolu also presented a challenge, with people moving to reside in the villages of Laloanea, Falemauga and Aleisa East. Samoa Water Authority installed a 250m³ water tank, feeding it from the Tapatapaō Water Treatment Plant using a booster pump. The availability of reticulated water to these higher and more secluded area will encourage more to move in as well as more vegetable plantations as

it is known for. Total cost of this project is **\$2,833,701.71**



On the eastern side of the island, the Authority completed the rehabilitation of the water supply for Lotofaga. They have been managing their own water supply under the Independent Water Supply but have recently decided to come under Samoa Water Authority. The rehabilitation included maintenance works on the water tank at neighboring village Matatufu and the implementation of 8 kilometers of pipelines in Lotofaga. This will cater treated water to over 700 people residing there. The total cost for the project is **\$480,000.00**

These projects were funded by the World Bank (PPCR) and the European Union.

Further works are due to be completed inland of Tufulele and Lealalii Faleasiu which will see them access water from the Faleasiu Borehole. On the eastern coast of Upolu, a new Borehole was drilled at Saleaamua and pipeline networks are being laid out.

Works are also continuing in the big island of Savaii, the Sataua borehole was recently commissioned and now catering for the western side of the island including Sataua, Fagasa, Vaisala, Auala and parts of Asau. These villages were subject to the issue of

salinity which have now been resolved. The Authority had also drilled a borehole in Gataivai, which was the only village with an untreated water supply in Savaii and will be commissioned soon.

Water tanks were built in Saleaula, Samata Uta and Logoipulotu to store water from the boreholes to reduce the risks of salinity.



Completed and commissioned new water supply projects opening ceremonies.



INDEPENDENT WATER SCHEMES ASSOCIATION (IWSA) - Samoa

Drinking Water Safety Plan Workshops for all Independent Water Scheme Communities.

The European Union (EU) in partnership with the Government of Samoa through the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) has provided a funding assistance of EUR 490, 000 (about SAT 1.5 million) to the Samoa Independent Water Schemes Association (IWSA) in its continued efforts to improve the capacity of communities with independent water schemes to better manage water resources.

Communities under IWSA manage their own water supply network whereby the Village Council appoint a Water Committee to be responsible for the Operations and Maintenance.

Drinking Water Safety Plan workshops conducted so far are at the following Independent Water Schemes:

- Sili IWS
- Satupaitea IWS
- Salailua IWS
- Lotofaga Safata IWS
- Maasina IWS
- Lona IWS
- Sataoa IWS
- Nuusuatia IWS

where representatives from the communities such as the Village Mayors, Water Committee and Women’s Committee were present.



One of the priority actions under this project is the development of Drinking Water Safety Plans (DWSP) for all Independent Water Schemes, to systematically assess and manage risks to their water supply from catchment to consumer.

Representatives from government ministries were also present such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development as well as the Ministry of Health. The ministries presented on the management of their water catchment, good governance in a community and ensuring good drinking water quality, respectively.



IWSA presented on the current condition of their network and recommendations on how to improve the operations and maintenance of their network to ensure good quality drinking water is received by all. IWSA President Sulutumu Sasa Taiatu Milo said “To ensure access to clean water and infrastructure that is climate resilient, we must work together to

maintain our systems regularly and minimize risks to our water supply from catchment to consumer. This involves the enforcement of by-laws by the Village Council to govern their water network, the routine maintenance done by the water committee and the collection of water fees from the community for ongoing operations and maintenance. Everyone plays an important role in Water Security”



The Team at Satupaitea

TONGA WATER BOARD (TWA) - Tonga

Hon Rev Dr Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa, the Prime Minister of Tonga addressing his keynote speech at the opening of the Common Utilities Office at the Taumoepeau Building in Central Nuku'alofa, on Monday 3rd August 2020.



Education & Training, Mr Sevenitini Toumo'ua – Board Director, and Mr Quddus Fielea – D/CEO Engineering for Tonga Water Board.



Nineteen staff from Tonga Water Board successfully satisfied the Tonga Red Cross requirements for First Aiders. Certificates were awarded by HE Mr Adrian Morrison, the Australian High Commissioner to Tonga, during a special program to commemorate the World First Aid Day on Friday 11th September 2020, at the Tonga Red Cross Conference Room.



Three new boreholes are being drilled to cater for the increasing demand for public water supply for the residents of Eua.



WATER AUTHORITY OF FIJI

Cultural Transformation

Since his appointment in late 2019, Mr. Omundson has spent a great deal of his time traveling throughout the country taking time to visit depots and offices to meet and speak with staff one on one. This exercise has enabled Mr. Omundson to better understand the Water Authority of Fijis (WAF) Culture from the perspective of its employees.

Culture put simply is ***“The way we do things”***. While speaking to staff during his tours around the country it was clear to see that there was much work to be done to strengthen and improve the Workplace Culture at WAF.

Mr. Omundson is passionate in developing and providing his employees with the very best

working environment, a key component of which is to establish a positive workplace culture.

Establishing a good, positive workplace culture has proven to improve organisation performance, increase revenue and decrease expenditure.

In order to achieve this Cultural Transformation, WAF has commenced with its Cultural Development Planning with specialists’ consultants from HRS Connect.

This Cultural transformation will begin from the bottom up; the new culture will be developed in consultation with the employees, for the employees.



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

While there is much needed work for WAF to do in order to become a Utility of the Future. WAF’s first and foremost goal is to get the basics right.

The Annual Business Plan [“ABP”] is WAF’s roadmap for the new financial year and was developed by CEO with input from the Combined Management Team. The ABP’s sets out the action plan/tasks/activities for the new financial year with target dates and staffs responsible. The ABP is linked to our 5 Year Strategic Plan 2020 to 2025.

The ABP provides a clear direction for senior managers and employees on the way forward and also ensures accountability and responsibility of all staff in the organisation.

Regional update

In order to become the utility of the Future, the Water Authority of Fiji is currently undergoing an organisational re-alignment.

WAF over the last 3 years has been facing some major challenges in the effective and efficient

running of its Operations and Maintenance. The challenges were in the form of increasing Non-Revenue Water Levels, escalating Operation and Maintenance Cost and the steady increase in fault complaints being escalated to higher authorities due to the deteriorating levels of service delivery.



*WAF CEO- Mr Barry Omundson
Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery Central Eastern – Mr Leigh Chan
Acting Assistant Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery Central Eastern – Mr Patrick Pagkale*

The deterioration in service delivery was a factor of a number of things. One of these was services operational structure, capability, and consistency.

In late 2019, the CEO Mr. Barry Omundson working with the WAF Board of Directors identified that in order to introduce change to improve service delivery; a change at senior regional management level was required.

In line with the restructure, WAF has introduced technical management at the regional level,

converting/re-classifying the previous Regional Manager positions to that of the Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery.

The new Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery positions are responsible for not only Water and Wastewater Service Delivery but also Urban and Rural Infrastructure delivery.

The job description and qualifications was changed from a predominantly strategic oriented position to now be a balance of technical skills & experience with strategic foresight.



*WAF CEO- Mr Barry Omundson,
Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery Northern – Mr Samuela Rokovaleusa
Acting Assistant Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery Northern – Mr Ilaitia Beka*

WAF CEO- Mr Barry Omundson,
Manager Infrastructure & Service Delivery
Western – Mr Miteshwar Chand



In previous years, the Regional Managers predominantly handled the strategic operation of the regional teams while the team leaders and supervisors handled the technical operations. This resulted in a disconnect from the Executive & Board level to what was actually required on the ground. There was also a clear lack of accountability.

Over the last 5 months that the new Manager Infrastructure and Service Delivery have taken over regional operations the Water Authority of Fiji has noticed a substantial improvement in service delivery and reduction in Non-Revenue Water. Operation and Maintenance Cost is slowly being brought under control especially under the current COVID-19 situation.

SURVIVING COVID-19

It has been six (6) months since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation, with personal hygiene being of utmost importance, the consistency of service delivery and expectations of our customers remain very high.

These high expectations are nothing new, especially to a provider of an essential service such as water. Fiji has been fortunate that its government took an early assertive stance in containing COVID. Even so, the socio-economic impacts of this pandemic are inescapable.

Fiji has been hit hard with the economic fallout of this pandemic, with international borders closed, our once thriving tourism industry has now fallen on hard times, and this has resulted in job losses into the thousands.

The Water Authority in response to the COVID-19 situation has made the decision to defer its disconnection services until the 31st of March 2021 for unpaid water bills. In addition to this WAF has continued its Free Water Scheme targeting families whose income threshold falls below FJ \$30,000.00.

A drop in non-residential water demand due to the closure of many business has resulted in almost a 50% reduction in payment collection impacting its bottom line. WAF has also been impacted with increases in procurement costs with the delivery of PPE material including chemical stock, gases, etc.

The financial impact of COVID-19 has also resulted in a reduced budget allocation for the 2020/2021 financial year. The reduced financial allocation has required that strict budget control measures be enforced. The Water Authority of Fiji is working with a Hand in Pocket (HIP) approach, this will be important to drive operational efficiency maximising every dollar spent in continuing to deliver consistent and reliable supply of water.

Social media presence

In this age of information and technology, the reach and influence that a strong social media platform provides cannot be overlooked. WAF has engaged Fijian owned Strategic Communications firm 'Vatis' to build the WAF brand and develop a strong social media presence, this has resulted in an 800% increase in social media reach.

As the sole water and wastewater utility in Fiji, a strong social media presence allows WAF to not only raise awareness on important topics such as water conservation and environmental stewardship but provides a platform to educate the public on the works and challenges that the Water Authority deals with on a daily basis.

Public education and communication has been a focal point of Mr. Omundson. A better educated public is more understanding and appreciative of the work being carried out by the Water Authority of Fiji. This has been reflected in the recent positive feedback provided through WAF's social media platforms.





**SOLOMON WATER IS PLEASED
TO HOST DELEGATES FROM THE
PACIFIC TO THE 13th PACIFIC
WATER & WASTE WATER
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AND
EXPO AND 6TH MINISTERIAL
FORUM IN SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
AND SAVE THIS DATE
"5-9 July 2021"**

PACIFIC WATER AND WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION SECRETARIAT

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