



FIRE REDUCTION STRATEGY

**Fire & Emergency Services Authority
GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA April 2017**





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1. Introduction

The intent of this short paper is to set out the components required to implement a national fire reduction strategy including arson.

This strategy sets out to facilitate and guide the implementation of fire reduction activities within the country complementing and work in conjunction with relevant existing strategies and legislations.

Legislations	Fire and Emergency Services Act 2007 Disaster and Emergency Management Act 2007
Strategies	Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016-2020 National Forest Fire Strategy 2013

Plans and Policies National Disaster Management Plan
National Fire Plan 2008

The strategy strongly emphasized that Responsible Agencies undertake fire investigation and analysis (FIA) to identify causes of fires to:

- Identify criminal or other illegal activities
- Develop community safety strategies
- Reduce impact on national GDP due to preventable fire activity
- Safeguard the environment and standards of living

This national fire reduction strategy involves three main strands aimed at reducing fire activity caused by human activity including arson.





2. Scope of FIA Requirements

1. Environment.

This strand aims at removing the opportunity for human caused fires and arson to take place through the elimination of potential objects and targets that are likely to cause a fire and by enforcing fire prevention initiatives and strengthening the understanding of the causation of fires resulting from human activity. This can be achieved through:

- Strengthening enforcement and implementation of fire prevention and reduction initiatives on private property, communities and business premises.
- Research and analysis of fire reports and records.
- Capacity Building and providing resources to support the implementation of initiatives to reach targeted fire resistance levels.

2. Investigation analysis and detection.

Building and strengthening fire and emergency services, police and judiciary with the resources and support to assist them in the reporting, detection and investigation of arson and in the successful prosecution of arson offenders. These aspirations can be achieved through the:

- Development of the concept of a multi-agency approach to arson reduction
- Co-ordination of investigations at major or serious fires
- Identification of patterns and trends
- Strengthening the legal provisions in Fire and Emergency Services Act as well as other relevant legal mechanism such as the processes of building permit and certifications of fire protection equipment (alarm certification, riser mains certification)

3. Education.

Educating children, youth and the community in the dangers of this activity and that it is socially unacceptable. Also aimed to educate offenders and other identified at risk groups in order to remove or minimise the development of the motivation for engaging in fire related offending.

- Produce a clear picture as to the extent of children and youth involvement in fire lighting activity.
- Develop a program designed to meet the needs of children and young persons who are at risk of fire lighting activity.
- Work in partnership with the Education Sector and the Law and Justice Sector to develop and design fire safety programs
- Accreditation of Fire (Emergency) Wardens training for higher recognition and certifications (should also be legally incorporated and reflected)

The technical aspects of fire investigation and analysis (FIA) are only one component of a three-part fire reduction strategy.

Successful FIA requires capability and capacity for:

Investigation

All fires are recorded, investigated and a cause determined – fire causation is progressed to prosecution or remedial strategies.

Forensic

Investigation findings are easily supported and confirmed by strong local forensic technical capabilities.

Prosecution

The judicial and legal system understands, supports and successfully prosecutes offenders who use fire against society.

Implementation includes introducing additional functions including:

- Law sector (prosecution and judiciary) awareness – (arson is traditionally seen as a difficult crime to prosecute).
- Statute reform
- Authorising environment – statutes, legislation
- Co-ordination
- Incident reporting and recording

- Analysis and reporting to influence further action and reform
- Review and reforming of existing legislation and policies that reflects applicable practise like procedures of investigation, evidence management and other mediations.

Apart from the technical functionality - successful FIA requires:

- The closest of co-operation and interoperability of police, fire and emergency services, forensic services and the legal system.
- Not owned by one agency – rather a partnership of agencies that share staff and resources using a standardised process.
- Strong leadership, advocacy, research and messaging to turn learnings into remedial actions.

The Pacific region has additional issues that require a slightly modified approach to take into consideration:

- Weaker fire safety and building construction and conformity to building codes.
- Different fire initiators to western jurisdictions for example mosquito coils, mats and attitudes to fire.
- Weaker investigation, forensic and prosecution capabilities

Technical expertise can be achieved through comprehensive training and accreditation, however the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) is also looking at ways to capture and share the learning and experience that assist in better understanding these regional issues.

Support to build and strengthen FIA is available within the region through:

- The Pacific Islands Fire and Emergency Services Association (PIFESA) have already endorsed a consistent regional approach to FIA.
- Current bilateral partnership arrangements – each AFAC partner has the ability to teach, mentor, guide, deliver competencies and assist with accreditation and currency.
- AFAC have a standing working group that can assist with guidance in relation to new standards, methods, policies and approach. This is an opportunity for the Pacific to be represented in the broader regional and global FIA arena.
- PIEMA's existing partnership with Pacific Island Chiefs of Police (PICP) and the opportunity to encourage that organisation to endorse a consistent regional approach.
- Prosecution and forensic expertise available through existing Australian Federal Police and New Zealand Police programs.
- Regional law and judicial forums that could be approached to embrace a regional 'joint agency' FIA policy and approach.

PIEMA is in a perfect position to co-ordinate the funding and development of FIA programs at the country and regional level.



3. Implementation Logframe

The table below indicates broad steps, outcomes and activities and estimation of costs that may vary considerably dependent upon individual circumstances. Steps can be undertaken concurrently but would highly recommend that steps 1, 3 and 4 are taken in order.

Steps	Outcomes	Activities	Estimated cost \$AUD
1. Develop, agree and approve strategy	Fire reduction strategy that fits into existing National Fire and Disaster Risk Management strategies and plans	Stakeholders consulted	\$5k
		Multi agency FIA structure and responsibilities determined	
		Draft strategy developed	
		Strategy approved	
		Potential legislation changes identified and submitted for amendment.	

<p>2. Implement reporting process in place</p>	<p>Fire and incident reporting process adopted that conforms to Australasian fire and Incident Reporting Standards (AIRS) in place for responsible local agencies.</p> <p>Infrastructure and resources in place to input, analyse and report on data gathered from fire and incident reports that provide the evidence for remedial programs to be developed</p>	<p>Adopt AIRS and develop process</p>	<p>\$5k</p>
		<p>Training programs for operational personnel</p>	
		<p>Infrastructure and equipment</p>	<p>\$500k</p>
		<p>Database adopted and implemented on local systems</p>	<p>\$5k</p>
<p>3. Build core FIA capability</p>	<p>One or two middle level officers have accredited technical investigative FIA expertise and the ability to lead a team/department responsible for FIA within their own country.</p>	<p>Complete training and accreditation to Australian or New Zealand FIA qualifications</p> <p>Medium term attachment to partner agency to work in their FIA department (say 3 months)</p> <p>Build networks, contacts and partnerships to support local programs</p>	<p>\$60k (without wages)</p>

4. Build functional leadership and co-ordination	On return from overseas attachment – establish framework for a FIA capability appropriate for the country. Seconded support from AFAC partner provides a highly competent FIA officer to assist and mentor local officer to develop national FIA capability in country.	Local conditions, activity and capabilities assessed and reviewed to establish changes to local arrangements to provide for FIA capability. (Based on overseas experiences)	\$60k (without wages)
		Consult with police, judiciary and other stakeholders	
		Management structure, manning and FIA capacity	
		Submit a report recommending appropriate FIA capability to government/management	
5. Build capacity	Responsible agencies have sufficient capability and capacity to undertake FIA activities that meet regional standards. Assistance provided by AFAC partner	Conduct local FIA investigator courses and accredit/provisionally accredit successful participants	\$20K
		Successful participants attend the forensic competency components in Australia/New Zealand.	\$11K
		Ongoing refresher and currency training programs developed.	\$50k

6. Embed expertise into different disciplines.	Police and judiciary have skills, experiences and competency to undertake their responsibilities for fire reduction and arson investigation and prosecution. Investigations result in successful prosecutions	FIA team determines appropriate activities based on observations, experiences, need and consultations	100k
		Training programs developed and delivered	
		Relationships are built to support a national approach to FIA	
	Additional secondments for police prosecutors and judiciary	\$60k	
7. Develop remedial programs from statistics and experiences.	Statistics and data gathered from fire and incident reports inform government and agencies and provide evidence for remedial programs. Targeted programs are developed and delivered. The number of fires and arson related activities is significantly reduced	GIS, data and reporting systems are available to analyse data	\$100k
		Developed systems and expertise to provide capability to translate data into remedial programs.	
		Deliver community and targeted fire reduction programs.	
		Remedial programs are analysed over time to determine effectiveness.	

8. Establish networks	Internal and external personal and agency relationships are developed to support the interoperable multi agency approach to fire reduction.	National fire reduction steering committee established.	\$50k
		Attend regional fire reduction conferences and forums.	
	Internal systems recommend changes to legislation and statutes based on evidence.	Maintain strong linkages with AFAC partner FIA team	
		Participate in regional sharing of information, experiences, case studies and examples of good practice.	
9. Review and audit	Responsible agencies have confidence in their ability to deal with arson and human caused fires.	Invite external review of FIA activities (by AFAC partner)	\$20k
	Responsible agencies conduct activities in accordance with regional standards.	Conduct annual national forums to discuss performance and strategic direction.	



