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NOAA Survey Ship Rainier Arrives in American Samoa

“With climate change and the damages to our shores and coral reefs, we are grateful to see that NOAA continues to study our waters to help us better understand its livelihood and its resiliency.”



National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ship Rainier arrived at the Pago Pago Harbor on March 23rd, 2023 with a total of 55 crewmembers. An official tour of the ship was conducted by Commanding Officer Hector Casanova on March 24, 2023 for the following local leaders: Secretary of Samoan Affairs Paramount Chief Mauga T. Asuega, Manu’a District Governor Paramount Chief Misaalefua Hudson, Swains Island Representative Su’a Alexander E.

Jennings; Leasina District Representative Ape Mike Asifoa, and Manu'a District #2 Representative Tiaoalii Fauagiga Sai.

Commander Casanova and crew discussed the plans, daily operations, and NOAA's mission to conduct surveys to map the ocean floor and collect information on corals, fish, and changing ocean conditions. The scientists on board presented different types of measuring and monitoring methods, collection and processing of water samples, and an analysis of coral reef photographs.

Secretary Asuega commended the crew for their work in American Samoa: "On behalf of Governor Lemanu and Lieutenant Governor Talauega, together with the people of American Samoa, we welcome you and support the missions you must complete here. With climate change and the damages to our shores and coral reefs, we are grateful to see that NOAA continues to study our waters to help us better understand its livelihood and its resiliency."

According to NOAA National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa, these surveys are non-invasive, and do not involve taking any marine life. This information will be shared and used to update nautical navigation charts and to improve scientists and resource managers' understanding of the islands' coral reefs, also contributing to the goals of the United States Ocean Policy Committee to fully map United States' waters.

NOAA Ship Rainier is commissioned for seven months to survey the waters around American Samoa and the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIA). The ship will be offshore around the territory until September 2023 and their expeditions will be on the islands of Tutuila, Ta'u, Ofu, Olosega, Swains Island, and Rose Atoll.









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