

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 216

Establishing a Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Response Team in Palau

WHEREAS, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) was identified last November and the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have categorized the disease as a serious health hazard and have issued a world-wide alert in March of 2003; and

WHEREAS, SARS is known to have started in Guangdong, China and has spread to Hong Kong and then to other Asian and North American countries resulting in a rising toll of death; and

WHEREAS, SARS has recently spread to the Republic of China, Taiwan and the Republic of the Philippines, both countries which have direct flights in and out of the Republic of Palau; and

WHEREAS, there is no confirmed treatment for SARS except supportive care and isolation; and

WHEREAS, SARS is considered to be highly contagious with prolonged contact and, to date, all of the exact modes of transmission are unknown;

WHEREAS, Palau's defense against SARS depends on a comprehensive program of port monitoring, patient quarantine and treatment, and public education as well as coordination between appropriate government agencies and the public and private sector,

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the Republic of Palau, pursuant to the Constitution and applicable laws of the Republic, it is hereby ordered that a SARS Response Team be created to coordinate a nation-wide response to the worldwide SARS epidemic, as follows:

Section 1. Duties and Functions. The SARS Response Team shall have the following duties and functions:

- 1) To establish a nation-wide public and private sector strategic plan to respond to the dangers to the Republic inherent in the world-wide SARS epidemic, and to convey the same to the President for approval;
- 2) To coordinate the monitoring of Palau's borders against the entry of SARS;
- 3) To compel comprehensive quarantine measures, if and where necessary;
- 4) To recommend and implement appropriate public education programs to reduce the potential spread of SARS;

- 5) To continually investigate the potential impact of SARS in the Republic of Palau and to report the same to the President, appropriate government agencies and private businesses;
- 6) To review and issue travel advisories for international travel to and from SARS associated countries; and
- 7) To require assistance from other government ministries and agencies if and when needed.

Section 2. Membership. The SARS Response Team shall have the following members:

- The Minister of Health, who shall serve as the Director;
- A representative from the Ministry of Education;
- A representative from the Bureau of Public Health;
- A representative from the Bureau of Hospital and Clinical Services;
- A representative from the Bureau of Immigration;
- A representative from the Bureau of Revenue Customs and Taxation;
- A representative from the Bureau of Public Safety;
- A representative from Quarantine within the Bureau of Agriculture;
- A representative from the Office of the President;
- A representative from the Bureau of Budget and Planning;
- A representative from the Division of Transportation;
- A representative from each domestic Shipping Agent;
- A representative of the Chamber of Commerce;
- A representative of the Palau Visitor's Authority; and
- A representative of Continental Airlines, Far Eastern Airlines, Palau Trans Pacific Airline and Japan Airlines.

Section 3. Administrative Support. Administrative Support to the SARS Response Team shall be provided by the Ministry of Health and such other government agencies as deemed necessary.

3. Meetings. [sic] The Response Team shall meet at least weekly. The initial meeting of the Response Team shall be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 16, 2003 in the Office of the President.

4. Reporting. The Response Team shall report, at least on a weekly basis, to the President.

5. Strategic Plan. The Response Team shall prepare an initial strategic plan on necessary activities to:

- Prevent the entry of SARS into Palau;
- Establish the necessary measures, including a comprehensive quarantine plan, to

- combat SARS if it does enter the country; and
- Develop a comprehensive public education program on SARS.

6. Term. The Response Team shall remain in existence until terminated by the President.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 13th day of May 2003, at the State of Koror, Republic of Palau.

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau