

1 March 2011 **The Government of Tonga has been informed officially by SURVIVOR last Friday that the production scheduled to take place in Vava'u in 2011 has been move elsewhere. According to SURVIVOR, 'they have not been able to secure the necessary logistics especially with regards to the necessary hotel accommodations'.**



According to Leisa Francis Co-Executive Producer of SURVIVOR, she has advised 'therefore I regret to inform you (Prime Minister) that it has been decided to move the 2011 installment of SURVIVOR elsewhere'.

The Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Samiu Vaipulu said today that this is a major marketing and economic blow for the country especially to Vava'u during these difficult times. The government has done everything possible to keep SURVIVOR in Vava'u through incentives and concessions as well as support through the Ministry of Tourism and a Special Parliamentary Bill to meet their special requirements. The Deputy Prime Minister added, the Government also set up a Cabinet Subcommittee to oversee this project and have met SURVIVOR management and hotel owners in Neiafu.

The Deputy Prime Minister said, the government has delivered SURVIVOR all its requirements and it only got involved in the accommodation negotiation when it was informed in the eleventh hour that negotiation had collapsed between SURVIVOR and the two main hotels in Vava'u. 'After joint consideration of various accommodation options we could not found a solid reliable solution and they ran out of time to do so', said Leisa Francis of SURVIVOR.

SURVIVOR told the Government that their in-country spending will be USD\$6 million (TOP\$10 million +) and they have already spent a considerable amount since November last year through their assessment team and management visited. The international crew would have generated over USD\$1 million in tourism spend. The total rooms nights required over the period of the shoot was 25,000 room nights which would have worth over USD\$2 million to the local accommodation in Vava'u, excluding the use of domestic airlines, local land and water transport, over 150 local labor, fuel, food, water, restaurants and bars, shopping and private homes.

US Survivor to relocate

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SURVIVOR has been produced in more than ten countries worldwide and is screened to an audience of 14 million in the US every week and distribute to 154 countries. The Ministry of Tourism, said that from a marketing point of view, this kind of publicity reach is just enormous especially in the USA which is our third important market. The value of this publicity is beyond the budget of the Ministry of Tourism.

Despite this huge setback, SURVIVOR told the Deputy Prime Minister, that they are still very committed to have the opportunity to return to Vava'u in the future to make the show.

ENDS

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