

MEMORANDUM


STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Office of the Commissioner



TO: Deputy Commissioner Keith, Personnel Assigned to Typhoon Halong Response and Recovery

DATE: March 9, 2026

FROM: Ryan Anderson, P.E., Commissioner 

SUBJECT: Continuation of Typhoon Halong Response and Recovery Activities

Typhoon Halong and subsequent storm surge events impacted more than 50 communities across Western Alaska, many of which are off the road system and rely on rural aviation or seasonal marine access. On October 9, 2025, Governor Mike Dunleavy issued a State Disaster Emergency declaration for the West Coast Storm under AS 26.23.020, authorizing emergency procurement and response actions. DOT&PF activated a statewide Incident Command Structure and mobilized personnel, contractors, and suppliers to stabilize transportation infrastructure and restore access to affected communities. The President issued a major disaster declaration on October 22, 2025, enabling reimbursement through FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program.

The current State Disaster Emergency declaration is expiring, and the administration is working with the legislature on an extension. While the timing of legislative action is uncertain, we anticipate that any extension will ultimately be adopted and may be made retroactive. In the interim, I am directing that response and recovery operations continue. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide operational guidance to DOT&PF personnel and contractors so that ongoing work continues within clearly established statutory and contractual authorities while protecting the Department, its employees, and its contractors.

Many response activities currently underway were initiated under the Governor's disaster declaration pursuant to AS 26.23.010–26.23.220. If the declaration expires, the special emergency authorities provided by those statutes will no longer apply to the initiation of new actions. However, contractual obligations, projects, and response activities that were lawfully initiated under the declaration may continue, provided they remain within the scope of existing contracts, appropriations, and funding arrangements. Accordingly, DOT&PF will transition the response structure

from reliance on disaster emergency authority to continuation of authorized response operations and contract administration.

Deputy Commissioner Katherine Keith will continue to lead the department's Typhoon Halong response and recovery effort. Personnel assigned to this work should continue to coordinate through the established response structure and follow existing project management, procurement, and documentation practices.

Continuation of Existing Contracts and Work Scopes

All projects, task orders, and construction activities that were initiated under the disaster declaration may continue. DOT&PF personnel shall continue administering existing contracts, overseeing construction activities, and managing contractor performance. New projects or scopes of work that rely on disaster-specific authorities may not be initiated unless separate statutory authority exists.

Transportation Infrastructure and Boardwalk Corridors

Work restoring community transportation corridors—including boardwalk systems that function as primary circulation routes connecting airports, docks, schools, clinics, utilities, and other public facilities—may continue as transportation infrastructure stabilization activities.

Critical Infrastructure Stabilization

Stabilization and repair work already underway on essential public systems—including water treatment plants, power generation and distribution systems, sewage infrastructure, public buildings, and erosion protection measures—may continue where such work is being performed under existing contracts or authorized response activities. Project staff should ensure that work remains limited to stabilization and restoration activities already underway and does not expand into new scopes without appropriate authority.

Logistics and Distribution of Essential Supplies

Distribution of critical supplies—including food, water, fuel, and other essential materials—may continue where such activities are conducted under existing contracts, funding arrangements, or logistics operations previously authorized under the disaster response.

Access Routes and Transportation Corridors

Transportation corridors and access routes established during the disaster response may continue to be used for ongoing operations. However, new access routes may not be established

under disaster-related waivers if the declaration expires. Any new access must follow standard authorization processes.

Debris Removal

Debris removal operations may continue under applicable statutory authority, including AS 26.23.110. Removal from private property requires documented authorization from the property owner and appropriate indemnification agreements.

Access to Private Property

Entry onto private property for response activities requires documented authorization from the property owner, tribal authority, or local government where applicable. Personnel and contractors should not rely on disaster emergency authority for property access while the declaration is expired.

Procurement and Contracting

Emergency procurement may continue under the Alaska State Procurement Code (AS 36.30.310–36.30.320) where necessary to protect public health, safety, or essential government services. Such procurements must include written determinations documenting the emergency conditions and justification for the procurement method and follow standard alternative procurement processes.

Financial Controls

All response activities must remain within the scope of the legislatively approved disaster financing plan, existing appropriations, federal disaster funding, or other authorized funding sources.

The department's work over the past several months has been essential to restoring access and supporting communities across Western Alaska during an extremely challenging recovery effort. Additional guidance will be provided as further direction regarding the disaster declaration extension becomes available.