



**COMMANDER, NAVY REGION HAWAII/
NAVAL SURFACE GROUP
MIDDLE PACIFIC**

**COVID-19 AWARENESS
August 19, 2020**



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Region and MIDPAC Ohana,

This week marked the beginning of the biennial Rim of the Pacific Exercise, which we all know better as simply RIMPAC. Ten nations are participating in this year's RIMPAC, which has evolved since 1971 into the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise.

This year's exercise, which runs from August 17 - 31, will include several realistic, high-end warfighting training events where all nations will function as interoperable task forces. It's one of the most important training exercises not only for the United States, but also our partner Navies, as we collaborate to strengthen our critical warfighting skills.

Unfortunately, like so many other events during 2020, RIMPAC has been impacted by COVID-19. This year's exercise will run only half as long as 2018, with fewer than half as many ships. Of necessity, the exercise is being conducted exclusively at sea, eliminating the ashore portion of the exercise that has traditionally benefited not only the participating Navies, but also the local economy.

Although COVID-19 forced the smaller scale nature of the event, Region and MIDPAC level of support to the exercise has adapted. We have employed innovative means to meet the logistical needs of ships involved in the exercise as we have continued our most important mission – support fleet operations.

This serves as an excellent reminder of why it is so important for each of us to exercise personal responsibility in exercising good judgement. We cannot afford to let down our guard, because if we do, the consequences can be far-reaching. In the days to come, we may need to once again adjust the way we conduct our business. You should have seen or heard that Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell announce targeted restrictions Tuesday aimed at slowing the alarming growth in the number of new cases on Oahu. For example, people cannot gather in groups more than five, no social gatherings are allowed indoors or outdoors, all social gatherings at offices are prohibited with common eating areas closed, and more. These restrictions take effect Thursday. We are watching these announcements and will continue to evaluate the measures we have implemented on our installations.

In the meantime, it is up to each of you to continue to do your part. Remain mindful of your surroundings to ensure that responsible social distancing is in effect and face coverings are used when appropriate. We often remind ourselves of the importance of taking care of our shipmates. Never has this been more important than it is now. If you have a question or if you see something that you think we are missing, don't hesitate to bring it up with your chain of command.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

V/r, Robb

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