



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

**COVID-19 AWARENESS
July 30, 2020**



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Region and MIDPAC Ohana,

We have been through a lot in the last week. From increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in Hawaii, to a serious threat from Hurricane Douglas, we had plenty to manage and plan. I encourage all of us to pause and review what we learned with the challenges that we faced, ensuring that we are better prepared next time.

Though we expected a direct hit from Hurricane Douglas, a fortunate shift to the north turned what could have been a dangerous storm into essentially a non-story. Most important was that we took the storm seriously, applying lessons learned from the recent HURREX training and the lessons of past storms, to ensure we were ready for the worst. Our Region staff and installation emergency managers skillfully coordinated preparations for the storm's arrival. Our ships sortied smoothly, and each department took the necessary steps to ensure the continuity of the mission and the safety of our people. Well done to you all – I could not be more proud.

With the storm in our rear view, it is time for us to think about what we learned during our preparations. We did a lot of good things, effectively responding to the hurricane, while in the COVID environment, but there is always room for improvement. If you can't find a lesson learned, you are not looking hard enough.

Even as we prepared for the hurricane, COVID-19 did not let up. We have continued to see rising case numbers in Hawaii and have had consecutive days with new highs. Today was highest single day yet with 124 new cases. State health officials reported the inconsistent use of face coverings and a failure to comply with social distancing guidelines directly affected clusters of new cases. We cannot ignore that the increasing percentage of infections of the total population is growing. The State is considering options, including shutting down bars and limiting group numbers to 10. Navy Leadership continues to monitor the situation closely and I will keep you posted of any changes to our current posture. Regardless, the threat remains and is very much alive and vigilance needs to remain our watch-word.

We are still in the early stages of hurricane season, and COVID-19 remains a persistent threat. I ask you to build on best practices, provide feedback via your chain of command if you have questions or concerns, and stay safe.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

V/r, Robb

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