



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

**COVID-19 AWARENESS
MAY 6, 2020**



COVID-19 Awareness – May 6, 2020

Region and MIDPAC Ohana,

During some of the many briefings I receive on our operations during COVID-19, I have heard the term “silver linings” used. We cannot downplay the negative impacts we have experienced due to this unseen opponent, but at the same time, many positives have emerged. These will improve the way we conduct all our operations as we move forward. COVID-19 has forced us to take a hard look at the way we resource our operations due to social distancing and other restrictions. As an example, we have already implemented teleworking processes that could become necessary during a severe weather scenario like the one we are simulating and preparing for during HURREX 2020.

There continues to be positive signs that your hard work in implementing policies and processes are making a real difference in minimizing the spread of COVID-19 in Hawaii. Soon we will be able to resume some of the on-base services we had to suspend. This will be done gradually and in a manner consistent with state and local authorities. While we may want to flip the switch from “off” to “on” and resume all normal operations at the same time, we will be using a dimmer switch, gradually increasing these services only when we are confident it is safe to do so.

Our Chief of Naval Operations released a message to the Fleet today, and I encourage you to read it either on our Region Facebook page or here - https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=112881. Admiral Gilday emphasizes our Navy’s unique role as the forward deployed force of our country. This is why we continue to focus on the health of our Force – our people and their families – while remaining prepared for operations at sea.

You have heard me say more than once that now is not the time to be complacent and it still applies. As we see some indications of things returning to normal, there could be a tendency to let our guard down. Helping us to keep our guard up should be acknowledging the fact that a second wave of infections is possible, if not likely and will greatly depend how we respond moving forward. While we are currently looking to reduce our measures, we must also be ready to move back in the direction of more restrictive operations. You have shown remarkable resilience and flexibility, and I ask you to continue to take actions to protect yourself and those around you by continuing to use protective measures. Protecting our people has remained a priority from the start. We must continue to take prudent measure to limit COVID-19’s spread, while also ensuring our people are trained and ready to defend the nation.

The light at the end of the tunnel seems to be getting brighter, but we must keep focused. Many great resources can help you to stay up to date on the latest information related to COVID-19. Check in often to the CNRH COVID-19 webpage at <https://www.cnrc.navy.mil/regions/cnrh/om/coronavirusdisease-2019.html>. Stay up to date by following the CNRH Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NavyRegionHawaii/>. If you have questions you’d like to ask, go to the JBPHH Facebook page May 7 to participate in the next leadership virtual town hall meeting, at <https://www.facebook.com/JBPHH/>.

And don't forget that in addition to COVID-19, the threat of hurricane season is something you should keep in mind. Make your plans so you will be ready to react before, during and after a severe weather event. Plenty of tips can be found here - <https://www.ready.navy.mil/>.

For me, your exceptional performance during these challenging times is the true "silver lining" of COVID-19. I encourage you to share your ideas, concerns, lessons, or questions as they relate to our current campaign.

I remain very proud of all of you. Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

V/r, Robb

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