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DoD Simulates Spill Recovery at Red Hill

From Commander, Navy Region Hawaii

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – The Navy, with observers from the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) present, completed a complex spill response exercise today which simulated the recovery of a fuel oil spill from fuel lines within at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. This represents a significant milestone in the Department of Defense’s (DOD) ongoing preparations to safely defuel and close the facility.

Today’s full-scale exercise tested the DoD’s emergency spill response capabilities, and its ability to work with multiple agencies to respond to a fuel oil release during the removal of fuel from pipelines at the Red Hill facility. The drill was the culmination of weeks of training, coordination and scaled exercises that included representatives from the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the Department of the Defense.

“Demonstrating that our personnel have the ability to quickly and appropriately respond to a release or spill at Red Hill is crucial in our continued effort to safely and expeditiously defuel the facility,” said Rear Adm. Stephen Barnett, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii, who led the exercise. “We remain committed to working closely with our partners in the Department of Health and Environmental Protection Agency to protect our community and our aquifer.”

Today’s exercise was developed in cooperation with the DOH, EPA and other regulatory agencies. The Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center (FLC) Pearl Harbor’s Fuel Department conducts annual oil spill training to meet requirements of the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program outlined in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

Throughout execution of the defueling plan, the DoD will continue to coordinate with DOH and the EPA to meet the requirements and timelines established in the State’s superseding Emergency Order, ensure compliance with environmental safeguards, and safely defuel Red Hill in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

More information on the defueling work, including the updated plan, can be found at: www.navy.mil/jointbasewater.

Video and still images of the exercise can be found at: www.dvidshub.net/unit/C-NRH