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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

STATEMENT OF

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RED HILL BULK FUEL STORAGE FACILITY: THE CURRENT CRISIS, THE RESPONSE,
AND THE WAY FORWARD

BEFORE THE

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January 11, 2022

Chairman Garamendi, Ranking Member Lamborn and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Department of the Navy's response to the contamination of the Navy's drinking water system on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. I appreciate the hard work of the Members and Staff of this Committee to provide the Navy the support we need to continue to take care of our people, restore safe drinking water, and restore faith and confidence in the Navy water system. The Navy's focus has been and continues to be the health and welfare of our personnel and their families.

As Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC), I am responsible for worldwide U.S. Navy shore installation management, as well as designing and developing integrated solutions for sustainment and development of Navy shore infrastructure. With respect to the Navy's response to the Navy water system contamination, I am part of a team assembled by Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CPF) on Oahu to:

- 1) Support the base community, residents and families;
- 2) Continue ongoing efforts to flush the Navy's water distribution system at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) to ensure safe drinking water;
- 3) Lead environmental compliance and regulatory coordination actions;
- 4) Remediate the Red Hill well to protect the aquifer; and
- 5) Re-establish public confidence in the Navy water system.

Specifically, to address and resolve the Navy water system contamination, CPF designated CNIC as the lead for planning to execute task numbers 1 and 3 above; to support execution of task

numbers 2, 4 and 5 above; and to coordinate operations and communicate actions with clarity and transparency.

This is my top priority and has my full attention and commitment.

The following is an update of CNIC's actions taken as of Dec. 28, 2021:

- **Supporting the Base Community, Residents and Families:** I would first like to address what we are doing to support our base residents and their families. Out of the 8,086 privatized housing units serviced by the Navy water system, we have enabled temporary lodging at 12 local hotels for families who requested temporary relocation, and are processing allowances for those affected families who chose to remain in their homes. The Navy has distributed approximately 684,325 gallons of water (239,736 gallons of bulk water and 444,589 gallons of bottled water) to affected families, schools, childcare centers, and barracks across seven distribution centers and 43 delivery locations. The Navy also established, with the tremendous support of the U.S. Marine Corps, two expeditionary shower facilities and six laundry facilities that remain available at various locations on the installation. The Navy surged medical support for screenings, walk-in clinics, and a registry to record potential exposure to contaminated water. We established an Emergency Family Assistance Center (EFAC) and a dedicated call center for residents to obtain information and receive answers to their questions. The EFAC also provides affected base residents with information about water safety, entitlements, claims, as well as counseling for those seeking help to address stress. JBPHH is offering expanded recreation opportunities for service members and families. The most recent event was a holiday party held at the Army's Hale

Koa Resort for impacted base residents and their families. We have also provided additional free weeks of care for those currently enrolled at the Navy Child Development Centers.

These and many other services and support have been made available to attempt to alleviate the impact of the Navy drinking water system contamination.

- **Supporting Environmental Compliance:** Coordination with inter-agency partners at the federal, State, and local levels, such as the Hawaii Department of Health (DoH) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), remains a critical focal point as the Navy complies with environmental and regulatory requirements. Through an Interagency Drinking Water System Team, led by Rear Admiral John Korka, Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, along with the Hawaii DoH and EPA, the Navy and our partners have worked together to develop and implement a water system flushing plan, a water system sampling plan, and Red Hill well remediation efforts. As water sampling and testing continue, the Navy has also partnered with EPA to identify additional certified laboratory services to support timelines. It is our continued goal to ensure we work alongside our Hawaii partners as the Navy performs flushing operations, conducts water sampling and testing, and analyzes data.
- **Supporting Transparent Communication:** In order to provide timely, accurate information to the public, base residents, service members and families, we also established a Joint Information Center (JIC). The JIC executes daily press releases/news releases, responds to media queries and posts social media updates. The JIC also manages a web site (www.navy.mil/jointbasewater), which provides the latest updates on Navy efforts to restore safe drinking water, in addition to upcoming events, resources and contact information. Finally, the JIC coordinates a daily Facebook Live event at www.facebook.com/JBPHH that

is held to sustain effective and transparent communication with residents and the local community.

The greatest source of readiness and the strength of our force will always be those who wear the uniform, who comprise our civilian workforce, and the families who support and serve alongside them. I am committed to restoring safe, drinkable water to JBPHH, taking care of our people, and remediating the Red Hill well, and I will do so by working with my Navy and Service counterparts alongside our partners at the Hawaii Department of Health, EPA, and other State and federal entities. Again, I wish to thank the leadership and members of this Committee for your ongoing commitment to resolve the Navy's drinking water contamination at JBPHH. It is an honor to work with each of you, and I look forward to your questions.