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## **Navy, regulators discuss Red Hill Tank Upgrade Alternatives**

(JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM) – Rear Adm. Brian Fort, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, issued the Navy’s tenth “stakeholder letter” as part of an ongoing initiative to provide transparency to the public. The letter offers pre-decisional information on the Navy’s intention regarding the Tank Upgrade Alternative (TUA), which is being discussed with the State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

“The EPA and DOH approved our TUA report in May of this year and, in accordance with the Administrative Order on Consent (AOC), we are now in the TUA Decision Meetings with the EPA and DOH,” said Fort. “I assure you Red Hill has the attention of our leaders both in Hawaii and in Washington, DC. Commander, Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chris Aquilino toured Red Hill shortly after his change of command in May, and then he personally led our Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Richard Spencer, on a tour of the facility just last month.”

“In addition to meeting with many neighborhood boards this year, we also hosted an open forum in March where we publically presented the possible Red Hill upgrades for the first time,” said Fort. “Both regulators, the EPA and DOH, were in attendance, as were other members of the public to include many from the Sierra Club. Open and professional dialogue is an important aspect of my command of Navy Region Hawaii and this particularly applies to Red Hill,” Fort added.

“I was very pleased that the Governor’s office championed an additional engagement meeting on Red Hill to include both the Board of Water Supply and the Sierra Club. At all of these engagements, I took the opportunity to not only talk about the strategic importance of Red Hill, but also our commitment to ensure we never spill another drop of fuel,” said Fort. “Most importantly, these engagements, like the one at the Governor’s office, allow stakeholders the opportunity to speak with each other, not just to each other. That’s the spirit of Aloha,” Fort added.

The Navy and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) will continue with sustainment/maintenance of the existing tanks in accordance with current procedures as the Navy’s initial best available practicable technology decision submittal. Plans also include a proposed pilot project for regulatory approval of application of an interior epoxy coating to one tank to determine feasibility of this unproven coating method, and funding a new upgrade to the leak detection system.

The Navy continues to address with engineers and regulators the feasibility and concerns regarding each of the alternatives, and expressed its ongoing commitment to protecting the environment. “The bottom line is that the same drinking water my family and I drink continues to be safe and in compliance with all federal and state standards,” Fort said.

Fort concluded, “We remain committed to protecting our environment and drinking water while at the same time maintaining Red Hill as part of critical infrastructure, both in the event of conflict and in vital support to all of our islands and humanitarian missions.”

A copy of the stakeholder letter with pre-decisional information is available on our website at: [www.cnmc.navy.mil/redhill](http://www.cnmc.navy.mil/redhill).