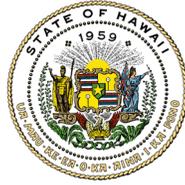


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August 1, 2020

Senate Special Committee on COVID-19
Hawaii State Senate
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Committee Members:

This letter is in response to your letter dated July 31, 2020. Responses to the Committee's questions are bolded.

1. Confirm that the Hawai'i National Guard is currently conducting contact tracing and if so, how many Hawai'i National Guardsmen are trained and conducting contact tracing throughout the State of Hawai'i.

Currently, the Hawai'i National Guard (HING) is not conducting contact tracing. However, within the past few days, I offered HING support to the Hawai'i-Department of Health (HI-DOH), which it accepted. The HING support will be phased, commences on Monday, and will provide research and statistical support, contact tracing, administrative support, and potentially investigatory and logistical support.

2. Confirm that the DOH closely collaborates with the Hawai'i National Guard regarding contact tracing and in what capacity that collaboration has occurred and when that has occurred since the Hawai'i National Guard Joint Task Force on COVID-19 was established in early April 2020.

Although the HING is not currently performing contact tracing, Task Force Medical of the HING Joint Task Force, since activation, has been in close coordination with the HI-DOH. Through this coordination, Task Force Medical, with the approval of Dr. Sarah Park, was able to train almost 90 medical personnel in basic contact tracing. Note, however, that as of August 1, 2020, the number of trained contact tracers in the HING has been reduced due to downsizing caused by reduced requirements for medical personnel.

3. What are the procedures, protocols and training required for a member of the Hawai 'i National Guard to properly assist the tracking and tracing of potentially

infected COVID-19 individuals within the State of Hawai'i while still protecting that individual's identity, privacy and medical information?

As mentioned in question 2, training was determined by Dr. Park. Additional training and protocols for their, and other capabilities, are being coordinated now. The aforementioned phased support begins this Monday, August 3, 2020.

4. If the Hawai'i National Guard is not conducting active contact tracing, what DOD organizations, units or commands in the State of Hawai'i is Dr. Park referring to?

In Dr. Park's response to you she was referring to the Active Duty, Title 10, Department of Defense; not the State of Hawaii, Department of Defense. The Active Duty here in Hawaii conducts its own testing, contact tracing, and investigations. They do however, provide findings to the Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) of the HI-DOH.

5. What would be your recommendations to the committee to quickly establish, scale up and operationalize a robust contact tracing center within the State of Hawai'i to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19?

The HI-DOH has accepted the HING's offer to provide immediate support to increase the capability and capacity of current DOCD efforts, which include contact tracing for purposes of clinically evaluating the disease activity in our community but also other public health responses. In my opinion, I believe the Committee should allow the HI-DOH to focus on the increase in COVID-19 infections, both through its contact tracing program but also through other public health efforts including public outreach. Inundating the division with emails, calls, and requests for information detracts from its ability to respond effectively. HI-DOH is now committed to accepting help.

Sincerely,

KENNETH S. HARA
Director/Incident Commander
Hawaii Emergency Management