Vigilant Guard / Makani Pahili 2015

HONOLULU - With above normal activity predicted for the 2015 hurricane season by the National Weather Service Forecast Office, nothing can be more timely than the Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili hurricane preparedness exercises which took place in Hawaii.

More than 2,200 National Guardsmen, active duty and civilian personnel recently participated in a disaster preparedness exercise in the state of Hawaii called Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015. About 700 of those Guardsmen were from out-of-state. The multifaceted exercise, sponsored by the U.S. Northern Command and National Guard Bureau, combines the Vigilant Guard regional exercise, the first conducted in Hawaii, and the Makani Pahili hurricane preparedness exercise, led by the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), formerly called State Civil Defense.

With over a year of planning behind them, the various agencies were ready to challenge the participant’s collaborative proficiencies in regards to emergency preparation, coordination, response, and recovery management during National Guard domestic operations and catastrophic events.

Brig. Gen. Bruce Olivera, Joint Task Force 5-0 commander, explained that “a Category 4 Hurricane will hit the state of Hawaii” as part of the simulated exercise initiating other “complex scenarios such as mass casualty, collapsed structure, and cyber infrastructure.”

The scenarios took place at various locations across Hawaii. Locations on Oahu included the Hawaii National Guard Headquarters, the Regional Training Institute in Waimanalo, the Queen’s Medical Center - West Oahu, Pier 29, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. On Hawaii Island, training occurred at the Keaukaha Military Reservation. On Maui training was held at the Hawaii Army National Guard Puunene armory and the Maui Fire Department training area. On Kauai, training was at the Vindiha Stadium and the HIARNG Hanapepe armory.

Olivera’s leadership abilities were put to the test as a dual-status commander (DSC) where a single commander, usually a National Guard officer, is given tactical control of both state- and federal forces. During natural disasters, the governor has overall control and can request support from the DSC as needed.

The exercise also involved civilian first-responders such as the police and fire departments as well as National Guard units (on Title 32 status) and active duty forces (on Title 10 status). National Guardsmen from other states including California, Oregon, Utah, Nevada and Guam also participated in the exercise.

“We have observers from seven Asia-Pacific countries here to observe and see what we do,” Olivera said. The foreign delegates have previously observed and some have participated in training during past Makani Pahili exercises.

Hawaii has experienced natural disasters in the past and has responded well due in large part to the multi-agency cooperation facilitated by the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 provides a unique opportunity to combine these experiences with a new arrangement to have federal active duty troops incorporated into a major storm scenario.
Hawaii community partners to exercise its Alternate Port Concept for first time
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (Hawaii)
Story by Capt. Christine Rosalin
Friday, June 6, 2015

HONOLULU, Hawaii - Participants from federal, state and local agencies, and private industries demonstrated the “Alternate Port Concept” for the first time in Hawaii on June 5 as a part of the Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 exercise.

The demonstration included pre-positioning of the crane and associated equipment, arrival and mooring of transport barge, and unloading and distribution of cargo.

The purpose of the full-scale crane demonstration is to prepare federal, state and local partners for their respective roles during a disaster that requires activation of an alternate port in Pearl Harbor due to Oahu’s main ocean ports being disabled.

“This is significant because this is the first time the Navy base in Hawaii will open its port to civilian traffic, and this is critical because we have a single point of failure, the Port of Honolulu, for bringing cargo into the State of Hawaii,” said Doug Mayne, Administrator of Hawaii Emergency Management Agency.

The Port of Honolulu serves as the hub for cargo distribution throughout the State of Hawaii, with more than 80 percent of Hawaii’s consumable goods being transported through it. This means it could potentially become the single point of failure in the chain of supplies coming into Hawaii should a catastrophic event close the harbor.

“In the event of a natural disaster the Department of Defense has a core mission to provide support to the civil authorities, said U.S. Navy Capt. Rob Espinosa, Navy Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer for Navy Region Hawaii.

The Navy worked with several private companies including Young Brothers, Matson, Horizon Lines, and Hawaii Stevedores to make APC a reality.

“The Navy’s role was to provide the real estate to the State of Hawaii,” said Espinosa. “While we have the capability perform this mission, the intent is to get the private industry back to work.”

“They are less than five miles away with personnel and equipment so why not turn over the mission to our industry partners who this day-to-day and do it best,” said Espinosa. “The fact that we’re exercising this plan today sets us up for success later.”

“We’ve been working to develop this plan for about seven years, and it’s been a great partnership from the whole community working to ensure we can provide supplies to the State of Hawaii in the event of a disaster,” said Mayne.
HONOLULU - Recently, the federal government had fallen victim to a cybersecurity breach of its computer networks, leaking personal information of millions of federal employees. The hackers of today are more skilled and use more sophisticated methods, which increases the scope of targets they can attack.

During the statewide hurricane preparedness exercise private, commercial and government agencies in Hawaii defended against cybersecurity breaches on critical infrastructures and services.

Critical infrastructures, such as those within the energy sector, would prove to be a viable target for cyber-criminals. This is why "we are focusing on the energy sector as a critical infrastructure" in this year's exercise, says Jodi Ito, information security officer for the University of Hawaii and primary coordinator for the Po'oihe Cyber Security Exercise 2015.

"One of the things in Hawaii is that we are very dependent on critical infrastructures, because we do not have alternative sources. The ability to be able to drill and protect these [resources] in a protected network environment makes for better learning experience preparing us for an actual crisis," said Ito.

The Po'oihe exercise is sponsored by the Hawaii National Guard and was integrated into Vigilant Guard 2015, a regional annual exercise, and Makani Pahili 2015, a state annual hurricane preparedness exercise. In the exercise scenario, a
HONOLULU - National Guard service members from several states participated in a rubble pile search and rescue exercise at the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team headquarters in Kalealoa, Hawaii, June 4 as a part of the Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 exercise.

The purpose of the exercise was for the National Guard, the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, and active duty military components to rehearse responding to a number of disaster scenarios involving chemical spills and collapsed structures.

In the event of a natural disaster in Hawaii, there is a high likelihood that other states would be called in to provide assistance, said Col. Peter B. Cross, the commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade from Fairfield, Calif. and commander of the FEMA Region IX Homeland Response Force.

The California HRF brought about 150 soldiers to Hawaii to participate in the exercise, and Cross’s mission was to command almost 900 Soldiers and Airmen for the duration of VG/MP15. The soldiers were divided up into four Civil Support Teams and eight chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear emergency response force packages, said Cross.

Soldiers and Airmen responding to the simulated disaster were faced with over 50 role players exhibiting various injuries strewn about the rubble pile, as well as a simulated chemical spill, said Capt. Manuel J. Arino, commander of the 330th Military Police Company, a unit in the California HRF.

The National Guard soldiers were presented with various situations intended to accurately represent an actual disaster, said Arino.

“We’ve been doing rehearsals for the last three days, so we’ve run through three or four different scenarios,” said Arino. “We’ve had a contaminated suit, we’ve had a soldier pass out from heat exhaustion, and we also had another scenario with a different chemical.”

An Army National Guard soldier escorts a disaster victim role player away from the rubble pile at the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team headquarters in Kalealoa, Hawaii, on June 4, 2105. The presence of role players acting as victims contributes significantly to the realism of the exercise.

Increasing cooperation for disaster response
69th Public Affairs Detachment
Story by Sgt. Brianne Roudebush
Monday, June 6, 2015

OAHU, Hawaii - More than 150 California Army and Air National Guard members from across the state participated in Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 on the Hawaiian Islands May 31-June 8.

VG/MP15 is a large-scale, multi-agency training exercise designed to improve collaborative efforts in response to domestic emergencies. The scenario, a hurricane that wreaked havoc on four of the Hawaiian Islands, required National Guard units from multiple states to team up with local, state and federal agencies in order to protect life, property and critical infrastructure and to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the wake of the hurricane.

“The reason it’s important [to conduct this type of training] is that if there is a state emergency of this magnitude, we can almost certainly bet that we will request help from other states,” Col. Peter Cross, the commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade (Homeland Response Force), said. “It fosters and builds relationships and simulates what will really happen if there is a disaster.”

The 9th Civil Support Team out of Los Alamitos, California assessed the threats and resources needed at the different training sites, the 330th MP Company Casualty Assistance and Support Element out of Ontario, California provided security for the contaminated areas, and the 49th MP Brigade (HRF) out of Fairfield, California provided the mission control element over the CSTs, CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Packages, and the CASE.

In the HRF’s tactical operations center, Soldiers and Airmen manning phones and computer monitors...
Vigilant Guard / Makani Pahili 2015

199th Weather Flight reports real-time battlefield weather conditions for Exercise Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015

154th Wing Public Affairs
Story by Airman 1st Class Robert Cabuco
Wednesday, June 6, 2015

HONOLULU - Among the many agencies that represent the brick and mortar that supports command elements during the Exercise Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 in Hawaii, the 199th Weather Flight represents a keystone that provides critical weather forecasts to decision makers.

The Hawaii Air National Guard 199th Weather Flight’s primary mission is to provide weather forecasts for the Hawaii Army National Guard’s 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Represented by Hawaii Air National Guard, Maj. Dana Uehara, the weather flight "predicts weather conditions at a point in time that will determine when command will launch recovery and relief efforts. They will plan the mission based on the information the weather flight provides.”

Uehara is a staff weather officer for the weather flight as a traditional guardsman and also serves as a civilian satellite analyst for the 17th Operations Weather Squadron on the active duty side. Before the Guard, Uehara had served 10 years of active duty as a weather analyst in Travis Air Force Base, Korea, U.S. Army, Pacific (USARPAC) and finally the Air Force Weather Agency in Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska.

The observations generated by Uehara are derived from Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF) reports released by the National Weather Service and the Central Pacific Hurricane Center. Uehara decodes the TAF data and extracts wind speed and direction, temperature, and weather elements such as showers, thunderstorms and lightning. These factors are used to determine when to begin relief efforts, send out surveillance teams to assess damage, and release air reconnaissance and recovery teams.

Aviators specifically request visibility conditions, cloud heights and ceilings to assist in determining flight plans. Uehara reports the storm’s current position and path, determines impacted areas, and the strength of tropical storm force winds.

Last year, Uehara was activated for the state active duty in response to the real-world threat of Hurricane Anna. He set up shop at the Joint Operations Center (JOC) and put to use what he is now practicing in the Exercise Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015.

There are many challenges when interpreting the various models produced by the data. “Each forecast begins with an analysis of the hurricane’s current location and intensity. If the models give different results, the forecaster has to decide which one to use for the official forecast or compute a median result,” says Uehara.

The JTF 5-0 gathers information from many agencies to make decisions during catastrophic events. The 199th Weather Flight provides critical input that will guide leadership’s decisions and keep everyone safe through the storm.

Hawaii Air National Guard Maj. Dana Uehara, 199th Weather Flight, discusses weather forecasts with leadership during exercise Vigilant Guard/Makani Pahili 2015 at the Joint Task Force 5-0 command center in the Hawaii National Guard (HNG) Diamond Head Headquarters, Hawaii, June 2, 2015. Uehara interprets Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs) released by the National Weather Service and the Central Pacific Hurricane Center to produce his assessment. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Robert Cabuco)
Departmental News
Hawaii Emergency Management Agency Presents Annual Arthur N. L. Chiu Award for Hurricane Preparedness to Glenn James with Pacific Disaster Center

HONOLULU - Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) awarded the 2015 Dr. Arthur N. L. Chiu Award for Hurricane Preparedness to Glenn James, Senior Weather Specialist for the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC).

The Dr. Arthur N. L. Chiu award is presented annually at the National Weather Service Hurricane Season Outlook to honor an individual, organization, or business that has demonstrated innovation or excellence in hurricane preparedness for the community. Dr. Chiu was an internationally recognized expert in structural engineering that provided guidance and support in hurricane preparedness through the Hawaii State Hurricane Advisory Committee.

Glenn James was selected as the Dr. Arthur N. L. Chiu recipient by the Weather Impacts Advisory Committee, which fulfills the functions of the Hawaii State Hurricane Advisory Committee as the multi-agency and private sector advisors to emergency management on technical and practical solutions to Hawaii’s hurricane hazards.

Glenn’s many contributions to hurricane preparedness in Hawaii include his work on PDC’s Weather Wall, a blog combining and explaining data from multiple meteorological sources, and his meteorological reporting on the website, Hawaii Weather Today. Hawaii Emergency Management Agency is pleased to have had the opportunity to honor Glenn at today’s hurricane season outlook news conference.

During this year’s annual training the 1/487 Soldiers conducted the following training events: They held unit movement operations of personnel and equipment via LSV and C-17 to and from Hawaii County. The unit’s firing batteries qualified their howitzer sections and their fire direction control sections in the delivery of fires with mission ranging from fire for effect, illumination, hip shoots, out of traverse, high angle and low angle missions. 487th conducted over 100 fire missions and expended over 2000 rounds of ammunition. Fire Support Team - Support Cells where certified in planning and executing fires in support of maneuver operations. Fire supporters conducted over 100 fire missions. Fire supporters were also able to successfully conduct fire support operations using the ruggedized hand-held computer that allowed rapid mission processing and accurate target location from sensor to shooter. 487th achieved 100% digital mission processing for all fire missions. They also conducted a mass casualty training exercise that allowed 487’s Medical Platoon to exercise its triage and treatment process as well as incorporating casualty and medical evaluation operations. The medical exercise was a joint exercise that included Navy Corpsmen. The exercise certified medical sections in their medical tasks and also provided an atmosphere for both services to share medical TTPs.

Youth Challenge Academy Class 42 Graduation
Memorial Day 2015

Under the auspices of the Office of Veteran Services, a division of the State of Hawaii Department of Defense, Gov. David Y. Ige hosted the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe on Monday, May 25. The theme for this year’s event was: “Remember Their Sacrifices for the Freedom of Others.”