

# Mayor tries to dispel rumors

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Staff Writer

LIHU'E—Mayor JoAnn Yukimura on Monday tried to dispel rumors about the military which have been circulating about disaster relief efforts.

The mayor said the rumor that she does not want troops on the island is an "absolute falsity." She said she had requested military assistance even before Hurricane Iniki had passed over the island.

However, she said officials have

been concerned about logistics and support. "In these kinds of things its really important to assess our needs nad plan our actions carefully, especially when communications is primitive or nonexistent," she said. "That's why we did not want to ask more military on the island than we needed."

She described the military deployment as "methodical and orderly."

"We knew we needed the guard

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immediately for security. As the problems became more clear we called in more military."

The mayor also said that she is not sending the National Guard back to O'ahu. She said the guard has been operating on a rotation system. As troops leave, others arrive.

"The men came here with the expectation of staying here for three days. They need to go back to their families and check their places of work and get refreshed," she said.

About 6,000 troops are currently

on the island. Approximately 3,000 are taking part in Operation Garden Sweep, the hurricane cleanup effort.

Yukimura also emphasized that while communications are down, it is important that residents cooperate "and not send rumors widely around this community."

"I want to thank the people who have come up to me and asked me these questions rather than repeating these rumors as if they were facts."