

April 3, 2020

TO: Senate Special Committee on COVID-19

FR: Linda Chu Takayama

RE: Information Exchange State System

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss some of the inputs that support the complex management of the State's COVID-19 activity. To engage in the battle against the Novel Corona Virus, now known as COVID-19, the Governor established an Incident Command, headed by Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara. For purposes of the COVID-19 effort, the general also oversees the work of 5 major sections, as illustrated in the attached charts. He has direct command of uniformed and civilian staff in both the Hawaii National Guard and the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. Please note that I cannot speak to the General's organizational structure or day-to-day operations. I understand he is holding a confidential briefing for senior officials later this afternoon when it would be appropriate to raise operational questions. I do know that the Command's activities are the result of feedback and implementation by organizations and individuals from federal, state and local sources, both public and private. The focus has generally been categorized by prevention, care and recovery.

It has been gratifying to witness the tremendous support and sacrifice that so many people businesses are making to ensure the success of our efforts. This disease is large enough to bring entire countries to shut down, so it is clear that it will take all of us working together to defeat it.

Incident Command provides direction and leadership, but is supported by the entirety of the Executive Branch of State Government. Through a variety of methods, constant communication and networking, issues related to this dynamic situation are raised, analyzed and resolved on a daily basis. All are united in a resolve to ensure the health and safety of the community, working unstinting hours to that end.

Designated groups meet several days a week. Some are held daily and include the Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) of each county. The information exchanged at these meetings are highly instructive and invaluable to

the implementation of policies adopted by the Command. Each sector reports out, raises concerns and gets feedback. Like most organizations, some decisions are made on the spot; others require more extensive consultation and research.

These sectors include executive branch departments which serve important support functions. For instance, the Attorney General provides legal assistance; the Health Department provides public health expertise and recommendations; the Department of Transportation planned and operates the airport quarantine program.

Additionally, all departments deal daily with the consequences of the policies implemented because of COVID-19. The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) is facing record unemployment insurance claims due to business closures; the Department of Agriculture is dealing with finding new markets for farm produce while pleading with shippers to continue moving cattle to the Mainland; the Department of Human Services is experiencing a higher demand for Medicaid and food stamps (SNAP); the Public Safety Department is frustrated with overcrowded facilities that prevent the social distancing required by health protocols.

Out-of-state influences include the governors of 50 states and all the territories, who meet weekly to share best practices, worst mistakes and greatest frustrations. The White House weighs in with the President and the Vice President, who chairs the federal Corona Virus Task Force. Federal policies dictate whether certain practices are allowed or restricted. Federal assistance (or lack of it) can determine if states have access to funds, supplies or equipment. For instance, Hawaii was recently granted Title 32 status, providing that the Federal government would pay for the activation of national guard in the state to support COVID-19 duties.

The Congress passed the CARES Act, which provides unprecedented funding for programs related to COVID-19. Hawaii is expected to receive more than \$4 billion for expansion of established programs, such as Unemployment Insurance. An additional \$1.25 billion is available to be shared between state and Honolulu county.

Non-governmental support has also been a significant factor. Many businesses have opted to maintain employees on the payroll in full or on furlough, paying for benefits, while allowing them to file for unemployment. Others have offered hotel rooms to healthcare workers or first responders; changed a rum distillery into a manufacturer of hand sanitizers; offered free cargo shipping; made

and delivered meals to shut-ins, etc. These offers are fielded by Incident Command through [COVIDkokua@Hawaii.gov](mailto:COVIDkokua@Hawaii.gov)

Sadly, just as many countless companies and individuals have come forward with offers of goods and assistance, there have been as many who have stepped forward with desperate pleas for help. Some are businesses needing tax relief or an exemption. Some are individuals who are just confused by changing regulations or looking for direction to social services. Last month we asked AUW to reactivate the coalition of social services agencies that was once tied to 2-1-1. Questions related to exemptions are fielded at [COVIDexemption@Hawaii.gov](mailto:COVIDexemption@Hawaii.gov). Concerns and trends arising from these sources are funneled back to Incident Command for further action as needed.

Legislators have been weighing in individually on matters of concern and ideas for improvement. Recognizing it may not be easy during this period while the Capitol is closed, we encourage you to direct your questions, concerns or requests for information to the Governor's Legislative and Policy Director, who will respond or direct your inquiry to the appropriate agency.

Kym Sparlin: 586-0794 or [Kymberly.M.Sparlin@Hawaii.gov](mailto:Kymberly.M.Sparlin@Hawaii.gov)

As a reminder, information on COVID-19 news and activities is available on the DoH website: <https://health.hawaii.gov/news/covid-19-updates/>

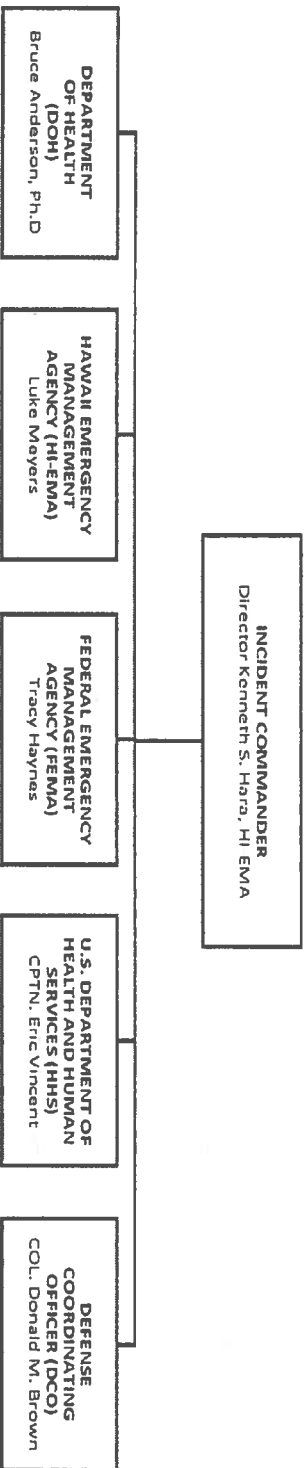
Looking beyond the immediate public health crisis, business, cultural and nonprofit sectors will have to join together in an economic recovery effort that will result in a renewed Hawaii. We look forward to working with you to make it happen.

FEMA ICS FORM 207  
ORGANIZATION CHART

1. FEMA Disaster Number:

2. Operational Period:  
03/26/2020 0600 HST to 04/02/2020 0600 HST

ICS 207  
Organizational Chart 1: Unified Command Group (UCG)



4. Prepared by: Dylan P. Armstrong, Resource Unit  
Date/Time: 03/25/2020 2108 HST

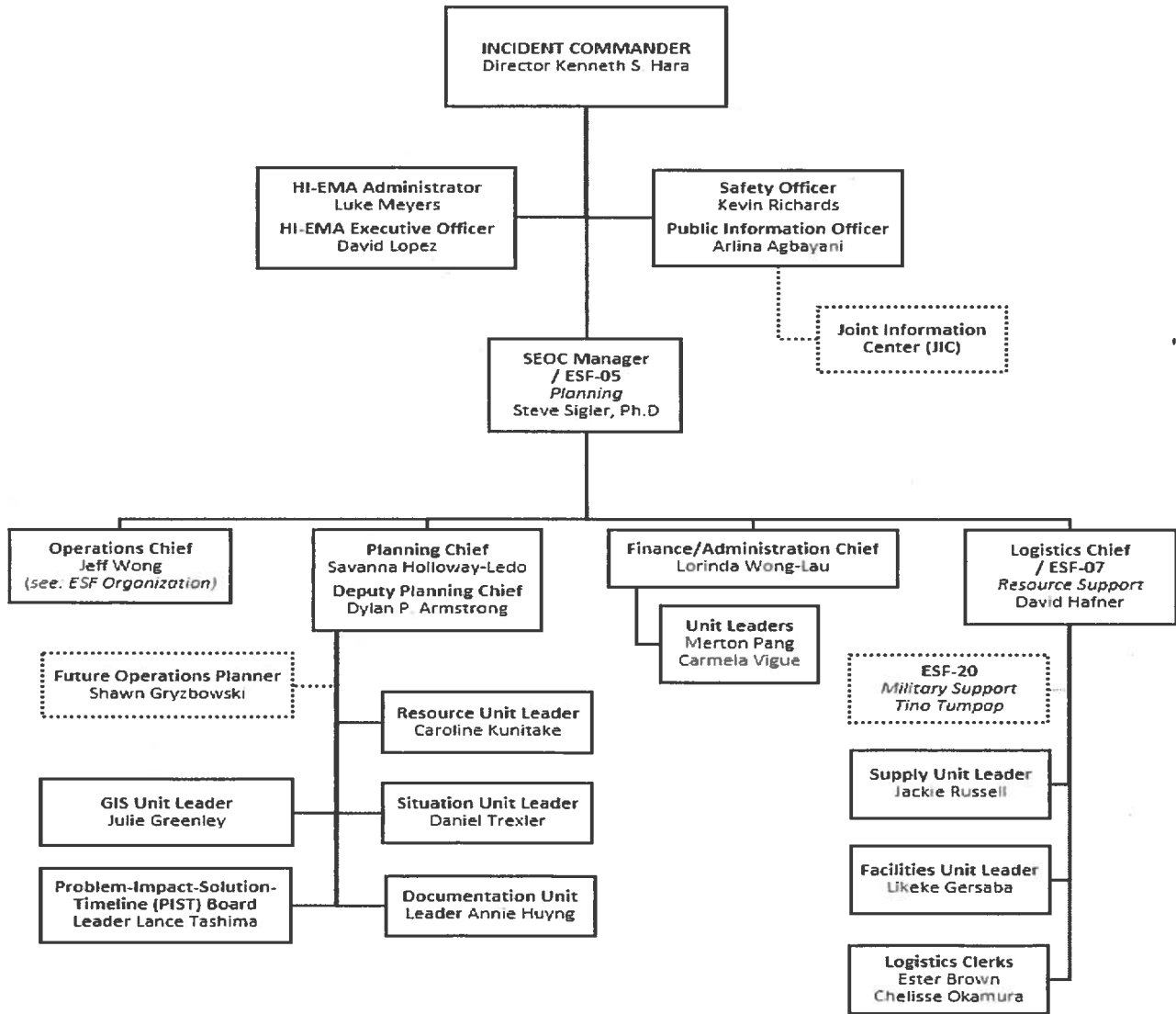
5. Reviewed by: Dylan P. Armstrong, Planning Deputy  
Date/Time: 03/25/2020 2108 HST

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ICS 207  
Organizational Chart 2: Incident Management Staff



**4. Prepared by:** Dylan P. Armstrong, Resource Unit  
**Date/Time:** 03/25/2020 2108 HST

**5. Reviewed by:** Dylan P. Armstrong, Planning Deputy  
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# STATE GOVERNMENT OF HAWAII

## PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

