



Impact of Tourism and Military Populations in Relation to the State of Hawai'i's Disaster Preparedness

Version 1.2

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Submitted to the
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division
Hawai'i State Department of Health

Summary: This demographic review was conducted to show the percentage of tourists who arrive here, from what markets and an analysis of spending. The demographic review was also conducted to show the percentage of U.S military personnel on these islands, based on what branch of service. This review was conducted to give a broader perspective on disaster response for these two populations in terms of resources needed to support the entire state population during a disaster. Also addressed is the impacts to socio-economic-political status of the Indigenous population by militarization and tourism as social determinants of health.

Background

In order to fully contextualize the impact tourism and militarization has had on Hawai'i in terms of over-population, drastic mismanagement of precious resources and the State of Hawaii's disaster preparedness, here is an in depth approach to the historical context. We know Native Hawaiians have struggled with historical and current trauma as a result of the over militarization of our islands since their first presence here. That trauma is further exacerbated by the constant threat to the very way of life due to the massive mismanagement of the Red Hill Fuel Tanks and the 2021 catastrophic fuel contamination of fresh water to Navy personnel and their families, and the continual use of the islands for military war practices that poison the land, air and ocean.

Historical Trauma is defined as “a type of psychological wounding experienced by Indigenous communities because of past and present transgressions.” (Kaholokula, 2019) They include interpersonal violence, forced displacement from ancestral lands, cultural and language loss, compulsory

acculturation strategies (e.g., forced removal of children to boarding schools), and overt and covert discrimination (Sotero, 2006 in Kaholokula, 2019)

Transmitted from one generation to the next (e.g., cross-generational cycle of trauma) and relived by many Indigenous persons in both narrative forms and through their lived experiences of stigmatization (e.g.; drunk or lazy native) and other prejudices and violence directed toward them by others.

Historical and current trauma is the result of years of colonization through the violent acts against our peoples, our land and our water.

Methodology

In creating the complete picture of population and resource management in relation to disaster response in Hawai'i, demographic insight is needed to know how much tourism and military personnel are present. To find the most accurate idea, data was gathered from the month of September 2019 and compared with September 2021. 2020 was not addressed due to COVID-19. The evidence synthesis was created from a combination of data

from Hawai'i Tourism Authority and Hawai'i Defense Economy. Present here are interviews with Jerry Dolak, Director of Security and Safety at Hilton Hawaiian Village and President of the Hawai'i Visitor Industry Security Association as well as Chairman of Honolulu's Citizens Advisory Commission on Civil Defense. And Michael Vincent is the Supervisor for the Civil Recoveries Division, Department of the Attorney General and the department's representative concerning emergency response. Michael also works very closely with the State Department of Defense on emergency response and has made a personal commitment to preparedness in his daily life.

Discussion

In our discussion with Jerry Dolak, Director of Security and Safety at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, he highlighted some of the aspects of disaster preparedness hotels have in order to protect and provide for hotel guests during a natural disaster.

- Tourists typically do not come on vacations with supplies for a disaster so the hotels are responsible for their guests. They do advise the guests to get their own provisions in the event of an oncoming hurricane. And they are required to shelter in place.
- Hotels are mostly concerned with having enough emergency power, food, water and fuel. Hotels are not allowed to keep too much diesel on property due to fire codes. So they must be self-sufficient.
- All hotels have emergency generators.

- During a tsunami, tourists on floors 1st thru 4th are required to evacuate to floors above the 4th floor. Hotels with only 5 levels are required to evacuate completely and are then added to the general population and sent to shelters. Guests are given an option to evacuate during a tsunami but there is no plan in place for where they're to go. They may be added to the burden of joining residents also needing to evacuate.
- AirBnBs and lower end hotels are without resources to aid their guests so they are added to the general population of the residents and sent to shelters during a hurricane. There are no shelters during a tsunami..
- Issue with shelters is that they are few and have limited space, resources and restrooms.

Dolak advised when preparing for a disaster personally, to prepare enough resources for a month, not two weeks because it'll take about two weeks for supplies to arrive and longer to supply everyone.

During an evacuation off island, he advised airlines will take ticketed passengers before anyone else, and emergency power, to power devices containing electronic tickets necessary for travel.

Staffing can become an issue depending on each employee's personal situation at home, their level of personal preparedness and the duration of the event.

VASH (Visitors Aloha Society of Hawai'i) is an organization that assists tourists in need of help when facing tragic circumstances or

personal emergencies such as unexpected deaths, thefts, accidents etc.

In our discussion with Michael Vincent, the Supervising Deputy Attorney General Civil Recoveries Division he presented a lot of information about emergency management for residents and visitors.

- He warned that being the most isolated land mass in the world means we must take disaster preparedness seriously.
- The biggest issue people panic about is loss of electricity, and people who are on ventilation should have a generator on hand for themselves.
- Be prepared with adequate food and water, you also want to have stored the food you typically eat, so if you're a healthy eater, and a disaster strikes, you don't want to be left with can goods and crackers or dried fruits, things that will upset your stomach when the water's not running or if you get dehydrated from these foods and have limited water.
- The outer-islands are in better shape to deal with disasters as they are more community based, 'āina focused and are able to fish and hunt to supplement.
- When electricity fails, do not open your refrigerator unnecessarily as it can stay cold for up to 24 hours. Electricity is often restored by then.
- Check on your neighbors! Do you know your neighbors? It's good for

the community to know your neighbors, live in a sense of aloha.

- Never let your gas tank go below ½ tank of gas.
- Work with the federal government to suspend the Jones Act (1925) during an emergency like Guam.

Findings for Tourism:

State of Hawai'i Summary: Visitor Arrivals - Total visitors &% change Year-Over-Year (YOY) (Sep. 2021 vs. Sep. 2019) 505.9K - 29.5 % 723.34K

Table 1- Visitor arrivals by Island (Sep. 2021 vs. Sep. 2019)

Island	Total visitors Sep. 2021	Total visitors Sep. 2019
O'ahu	246.2K	360.4K
Maui	172.8K	212.4K
Hawai'i Island	80.4K	111.8K
Kaua'i	77.3K	94.3K

Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic and Hawaii quarantine requirements for travelers, the State of Hawai'i achieved record-level visitor expenditures and arrivals in 2019 and in the first two months of 2020. Comparative September 2020 visitor spending statistics were not available as the Departure Survey could not be conducted last September due to COVID-19 restrictions. September 2021 visitor spending was lower than the \$1.25 billion (-15.4%) reported for September 2019. Total

estimated population of the State of Hawai'i in July 2019: **1,415,872**

Findings for Military:

There are 12 key military installations and bases across the State of Hawai'i that support the U.S. Armed Forces. Hawai'i, especially O'ahu, is one of the few places with all the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces represented.

water of 93,000 members of the Navy active personnel and their families. Kāpukākī, the ancient name for Red Hill, was once the significant source of life for all of Moanalua, and is now the major source of drinking water for O'ahu's most densely populated

Military Populations				
	U.S. Army	U.S. Coast Guard	U.S. Marines	U.S. Navy
Military Affiliation	Active Duty: 15,662 Civilians: 5,158 Reserves: 5,501 Total: 26,321	Active Duty: 1,311 Reserves: 119 Total: 1,430	Active Duty: 7,090 Civilians: 683 Reserves: 265 Total: 8,038	Active Duty: 12,832 Civilians: 11,460 Reserves: 732 Total: 25,024
Key Commands	USARPAC (U.S Army Pacific Command Armed Forces in the Asia and Pacific region) U.S Army Corps of Engineers in Honolulu	Fourteenth Coast Guard District	MARFORPAC (U.S Marine Forces Pacific)	U.S Pacific Fleet Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard
Key Facilities	Schofield Barracks Fort Shafter Pōhakuloa Training Area Tripler Army Medical Center	USCG Base Honolulu Air Station Barbers Point Station Maui	Marine Corps Base Hawai'i Camp Smith	Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam Pacific Missile Range Facility Barking Sands

Current socio-economic-political status of Native Hawaiians and all of O'ahu residents, tourists and military personnel continue to be extremely threatened by the Red Hill Fuel Tank fuel spill that contaminated the

areas. Wayne Tanaka, JD, executive director of The Sierra Club of Hawai'i explained in his presentation during our Food Security Webinar the history and the current threat to life, "100' above Moanalua

aquifer, within a mile of Hālawā shaft. Tanks were built in the early 1940s over the Southern O‘ahu Aquifer. Tank walls when new were ¼” thick; now corroded to less than 1/3 of that in some places, and multiple “through-holes” have been detected and ~150-180 million gallons of petroleum fuel stored in 14-15, 12.5 million gallon- capacity tanks (note: 4 tanks currently empty for inspection, repair), 180,000 gallons (likely conservative) spilled since the 1940s; petroleum components have been found in the groundwater”.

Moving Forward

Hawai‘i is underprepared to respond to disasters for its residents, let alone to prepare and care for the thousands of tourists that visit the islands. The number of tourists that visit annually can surpass half the residents in the State of Hawai‘i. Disasters can range from natural catastrophes like typhoons, to global pandemics, and even policy decisions that can alter someone’s life’s trajectory overnight.

Individual responses to disasters can differ culturally between tourists and residents. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders meet disasters with beneficence. In hard times, culturally, we are taught to come together to take care of each other. Often, tourists do not share the values of the locals, nor do they know and respect the rules of land and traditions of the people. Though well-established hotels are responsible for their guests, visitors in accommodations like AirBnBs or smaller hotels have minimal response plans. These guests are left to fend for themselves and add to the exacerbation of the already limited supplies and resources.

There are several shortcomings such as no assistance for Airbnb, VRBO and hotel guests in hotels and the strain that can add to what the residents are already experiencing. During the pandemic, even as travel restrictions eased for visitors, state restrictions for locals remained. Families were not able to gather to engage in cultural practices, however, tourists were allowed to have weddings, work retreats, and other gatherings. These examples of being treated as second rate citizens can attest to the growing acrimony of the local people of Hawai‘i.

It is presumed that the Department of Defense has the means to handle disasters as they are often who the state agencies will call upon in the wake of a natural disaster. The cumulative military population is around the same as the number of annual visitors to O‘ahu in 2021. However, the military has the means and assumes the responsibility to care for all its people during a disaster.

Disaster Tourism

Disaster tourism is also an issue with guests traveling here and not adhering to the rules, signs, cultural significance and will go in the ocean during an impending tsunami, or rush to see the lava flowing, not realizing the danger, or surfing during floods etc. This behavior adds an additional strain to our emergency responders and resources. We as residents must take disaster preparedness seriously and be ready because we cannot rely on the state of Hawai‘i.

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