



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

March 31, 2016

This correspondence is in response to your email regarding concerns of the possibility of radioactive materials being released from the Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) during the recent brush fires.

Neither Army training activities nor brush fires are expected to generate DU that could present a health issue. Both the Army's and the NRC staff's analyses, as discussed in the Safety Evaluation Report (SER ML16039A230), conclude that potential DU exposures and corresponding doses from training activities with high explosives (HE) would be much larger than any potential exposures and doses from range fires in DU-containing areas. This applies to both people on the ranges and members of the public offsite. Both the Army's and NRC staff's analyses show offsite airborne DU material from HE activities is highly unlikely to exceed strict NRC dose limits of 10 mrem per year. It is safe to assume that any potential DU doses from range fires will be far below regulatory limits. In addition, the current brush fire is not occurring in any radiologically-controlled area (RCA) on PTA.

The Department of Health (DOH) is addressing concerns on radiation levels around PTA by conducting ambient radiation measurements around this area. On December 15, 2015 and March 30, 2016, the DOH conducted ambient radiation measurements with results indicating levels consistent with normal background radiation. Subsequent surveys will continue on a periodic, no-notice basis. Please be aware the DOH does not have the authority to conduct radiological sampling on Army reservations, and secondly, Depleted Uranium (DU) is under the sole authority of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

Thank you again for your comments and concern involving the safety of the people of Hawaii. Should you have any questions, please contact the Department of Health's Radiation Section at (808) 586-4700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia Pressler, M.D.".

Virginia Pressler, M.D.
Director of Health