



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
JOINT REGION MARIANAS
PSC 455 BOX 211
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SUBJECT: COVID-19 MESSAGE TO MILITARY AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

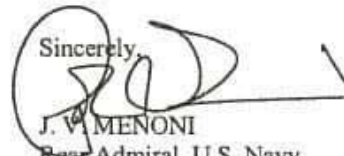
The past six weeks has been a dynamic and stressful time for all of us here on Guam, in the CNMI and across Oceania. We all watched the COVID-19 outbreak and its spread around the globe with concern and trepidation. As international governments worked hard to develop a response, locally your Military leadership has been in constant communication with Government of Guam leadership concerning a synchronized, island-wide response. We have been transparent concerning possible military cases on our installations and within our operational units, which thankfully, were all negative. We have worked to communicate concerns about bringing vessels with large populations that could potentially introduce a transmission vector for this virus to our island that would have placed significant stress on our medical systems. Today we continue to share information and plans across our fence lines to ensure we can respond in the best manner to any outbreak on our island.

This openness and transparency, though, has a second order effect of adding additional information to the facts, rumors and fiction we are bombarded with every day. The effect is to add to the stress we are all feeling and our own individualized fears that may be developing as we work through this crisis. This stress, which is not localized to any one person or group of people, threatens to fracture the Guam civilian-military team. We cannot let that happen - we are all in this together.

As we work through this crisis together, we must all realize that as much as we try to align and support across local government and military lines, we each have different tasks and missions that we are responsible to accomplish. The military is working hard to continue to take care of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Guardsmen, Coast Guardsmen and Reservists, doing its best to ensure it does not contribute to the spread of the virus, and, most importantly, to preserve our Warfighting Readiness in order to be prepared to respond to a crisis which requires military force. In order to accomplish these tasks and best mitigate the risk of spreading the virus, we have had to control access to our bases (including critical facilities like the Commissary and Hospital), and limit some of our non-essential services -- measures that are consistent with the guidelines issued by the Governor in the Public Health Emergency declaration. It is important to note that this cannot and will not devolve into an "us" versus "them" distinction. We must all remember that these measures and inconveniences, borne by all groups, are a necessary step to minimize and stop the further transmission on our island. These measures may break the chain of transmission which could prevent an infection and possibly save the life of a family member, shipmate, friend or neighbor. Small actions, such as the 14-day isolation/restriction-of-movement that I am personally observing, though inconvenient and irritating, are the key to beating this enemy and saving lives.

As the Region Commander, I continue my commitment to open and transparent communications, to work with the Governor and local leaders on solutions with an eye towards what is best for Guam as a whole, and to continue to preserve the fighting readiness of our forces so they can do their jobs.

Si Yu'os Ma'ase

Sincerely,

J. V. MENONI
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander