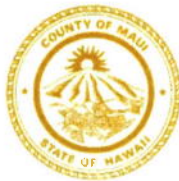


RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Managing Director

BRADFORD K. VENTURA
Fire Chief

GAVIN L.M. FUJIOKA
Deputy Fire Chief



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 DAIRY ROAD
KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732
www.mauicounty.gov

March 22, 2023

Honorable Richard T. Bissen Jr.
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard T. Bissen Jr.", written over a green horizontal line. Below the line, the word "Mayor" is printed in green. To the right of the signature, the date "3/22/23" is handwritten in black ink, and the word "Date" is printed in green below it.

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Tamara Paltin
Chair, Disaster, Resilience, International Affairs, and Planning Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

Dear Chair Paltin:

SUBJECT: MARITIME DISASTERS (DRIP-2(1))

The Department of Fire & Public Safety is in receipt of your letter dated March 20, 2023. As requested, we are providing the following responses to your request:

1. Please describe your Department's responsibilities and protocols for responding to shipwrecks.

We have SOGs, rules and regulations and a manual of operations that guide our response to emergency calls. We do not have specific guidance to respond to shipwrecks or vessels that run aground but our response decisions are based on the incident priorities of Life Safety, Incident Stabilization and Property Conservation. Those incident priorities flow directly from the mission statement of our Fire Department which is "To Protect and Preserve Life, Environment and Property." So when we respond to a vessel that has run aground, our first priority is the safety of our personnel and that of the public. This involves effecting any required rescues and ensuring everyone stays out of harm's way. We also will ensure that DLNR and the USCG have been notified and apprised of any updates to the situation.

After making sure all life safety concerns have been addressed, we then prioritize stabilizing the incident and protecting the environment by preventing, and if

possible stopping, any hazardous materials leaks. Our abilities here may be limited, but we will do what we safely can. With small vessels, we may also be able to use one of our rescue boats and/or rescue water craft (jet skis) to move the vessel out of the surf zone if there is the threat of it breaking loose and crashing into the shoreline. Again, though, our capabilities here are limited.

Once we have addressed any immediate life safety threats and done what we can to stabilize the incident and protected the environment, we would expect to hand the scene over to the USCG and DLNR.

2. Please share any data the Department has related to shipwrecks, including how many shipwrecks have been responded to in the last year.

Our Records Management System (RMS) does not currently incorporate a data point for grounded vessels, so we are not able to track them. We have a number of different incident type codes that could possibly be used for these types of incidents. We would have to ask each each shift at each coastal station if they can remember the number of incidents with loose vessels or grounded vessels that they may have responded to, or else manually scan each incident report with potential for a grounded vessel to see if one was mentioned in the narrative. My guess would be that we have responded to about 10 – 20 incidents of this type within the last year.

3. What are the Department's biggest challenges when responding to shipwrecks? What opportunities does the Department foresee to remedy those challenges?

The greatest challenge for MFD when responding to these type of incidents involves what happens after we have completed our role and it has been transferred over to the next agencies with jurisdiction (DLNR and USCG). Our function and authority at this point—if any—are not always clear, and yet the public still has expectations that their fire department will solve the problem. The only remedy I can think of is coming up with some clear objectives and guidelines for our department which can be addressed in our SOGs when responding to these type of incidents as well as having clear and timely communications between agencies in the transferring of these maritime incidents.

4. What suggestion, if any, does your Department have to better collaborate with the United States Coast Guard and State Department of Land and Natural Resources to prevent and respond to shipwrecks?

We should sit down together, continue to develop positive relationships, and discuss clear roles and responsibilities of each organization, including clarification of applicable regulations, statutes and ordinances that would govern our response decisions. This collaboration would also help us to create and update our Standard

The Honorable Tamara Paltin, Chair

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applicable regulations, statutes and ordinances that would govern our response decisions. This collaboration would also help us to create and update our Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) to give our personnel the guidance they need for training, communications and response to this type of incidents.

5. Please share any suggestions for the Council to assist your Department in responding to future shipwrecks.

The Council can continue to support our department in funding for personnel, equipment and training.

If you have any further questions or require clarification, please contact my office at (808) 270-7561.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Fujioka', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

GAVIN L.M. FUJIOKA
Deputy Fire Chief