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August 1, 2003

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: New Information; IB Docket No. 03-115

Dear Ms. Dortch:


To ensure that neither national security nor public safety in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands ("CNMI") is compromised, the Office of the Governor provides the enclosed new information in order to update the record in the above-referenced proceeding.

In recent weeks, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has been conducting training exercises in the CNMI in order to prepare the people of the CNMI for the possibility of terrorist attacks. The enclosed articles published on July 23, 2003 in the *Saipan Tribune* and *Marianas Variety* include statements made by Herbert Marshall, Exercise Program Manager for the Office of Domestic Preparedness, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, expressing concern over the possibility of a terrorist attack on the CNMI, given its proximity to Asia. According to Mr. Marshall, "the CNMI and other U.S. islands could even be more vulnerable to terrorist attacks as they are closer to Asia, where the Al-Qaeda network and other terrorist groups are based."¹

¹ Agnes E. Donato, *Insular Areas Not Immune to Terror Attacks*, *Marianas Variety*, July 23, 2003.

The above statement and others contained in the attached press reports underscore and further support the national security and public safety arguments raised by the Office of the Governor in the above-referenced matter,² including concerns over the CNMI's location being "within a relatively close distance to regions where U.S. national security could be jeopardized in the future."³

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas K. Crowe
Gregory E. Kunkle,
Counsel for the Office of the Governor
of the Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

Enclosures

cc: Attached Service List

² Petition to Deny, or, in the Alternative, to Designate for Hearing, filed on June 9, 2003 at 18-31 ("Petition").

³ Petition at 30.

Anti-terror response training held in NMI

Story by John Ravelo

Reporter



Suppose a boat explodes on Saipan's harbor, resulting in mass casualties, how should different government agencies respond to the emergency?

Such was the hypothetical scenario presented during a workshop attended mostly by local emergency responders at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

In the example cited, Herbert Marshall said that casualties will have to be brought to health facilities, but the facilities should not be contaminated, should the explosion involve chemical weapons. Decontamination should take place, but those involved with this process should not destroy possible pieces of evidence once the police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation step in.

Marshall, an exercise program manager from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness, stressed the need of enhancing coordination among responders from the different government agencies during times of disaster.

Homeland Security has allotted around \$1.487 million to the Commonwealth for domestic preparedness, Marshall said. Some \$262,000 of the money is intended for program exercises, including the "tabletop" and brainstorming exercises conducted yesterday. About \$70,000 is allotted for training, while planning aspect for the CNMI's domestic preparedness got an appropriation of \$105,000.

The biggest chunk of the CNMI's share in the \$3.5-billion budget for national domestic preparedness is \$1.05 million, Marshall said. The money has been appropriated for equipment acquisition.

Marshall said the Homeland Security Department considers terrorist threats seriously, preparing all U.S. states and territories for such a scenario.

"It's very possible. It's close to mainland Asia," he said of a potential terrorist attack on the CNMI.

CNMI.

Participating agencies in yesterday's workshop included the Emergency Management Office, the departments of Public Health and Public Safety, the divisions of Fire and Environmental Quality and the Commonwealth Ports Authority, among others.

Representatives from Rota, Tinian, Guam and the American Samoa also joined the workshop.

Dawn Alailima, Samoa's counter-terrorism and HAZMAT (hazardous materials) manager, expressed gratitude to the Homeland Security Department for the "funding to bring Pacific territories together." She underscored the need for Pacific territories to network on anti-terrorism efforts.

Alailima, who was with two other Samoa representatives, also thanked CNMI homeland security adviser Jerry Crisostomo and EMO director Rudolfo Pua for inviting them to the workshop.

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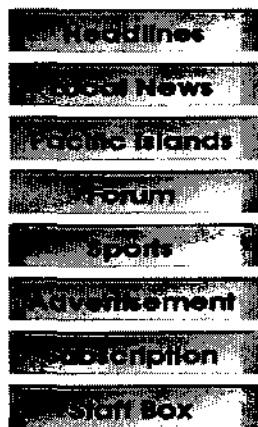
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'Insular areas not immune to terror attacks'

*By Agnes E. Donato
Variety News Staff*

AMERICA'S insular areas in the Pacific are "not immune" to possible terrorist attacks, an official of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said.

Herbert Marshall, exercise program manager for the Office of Domestic Preparedness, said the CNMI and other U.S. islands could even be more vulnerable to terrorist attacks as they are closer to Asia, where the Al-Qaeda network and other terrorist groups are based.

Marshall and four other representatives from the Office of Domestic Preparedness headed an anti-terrorism preparedness training for CNMI, Guam and American Samoa government officials and staff at the Hyatt Regency Hotel yesterday.

It was the first training conducted by the office in the CNMI.

The Office of Domestic Preparedness was given a budget of \$4 million for conducting training exercises in the U.S. insular areas in the Pacific.

"If you look back historically — on what has been happening to American states and territories in the past 10 to 15 years — you'll know that (a terrorist attack) is going to happen sometime in the future," Marshall said.

The region, he added, could be a target for groups that are out to "hurt the economic interests or the population of the U.S."

In an interview, Marshall said the training aimed to instruct government officials on how to respond to, and recover from, a possible chemical weapons attack at the seaports.

Marshall said that aside from preparedness, the training also aimed to teach measures in preventing chemical attacks.

"We also like the word 'prevention' because if you can prevent a terrorist attack from occurring, you'll save lives and property," Marshall said.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Sandra Safro, a legal assistant with the Law Offices of Thomas K. Crowe, P.C., certify that on August 1, 2003, a copy of the foregoing *New Information; IB Docket No. 03-115*, was served by first class United States mail, postage prepaid upon the parties listed below.

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