

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 204

REQUESTING THE STATE AND COUNTIES TO PRIORITIZE EXPENDITURE OF FEDERAL
HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDS ON INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

PRESENTATION TO THE

COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

AND

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT G. F. LEE
ADJUTANT GENERAL/DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENSE

April 18, 2006

Chair Ige, Chair Inouye, and Committee Members:

I am Major General Robert G. F. Lee, Adjutant General and Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. I am providing written testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 204.

We support the intent of the resolution. Achieving a statewide communications interoperability capability involving all levels of government continues to be a high priority objective for State and county emergency response agencies. To date, \$8 million (approximately 10% of Homeland Security funding from 1999 to present) have been planned for the purchase of P25 compliant communications systems and ancillary support equipment. Approximately \$1.8 million of Homeland Security funds have been allocated to provide communications systems and support systems at the State level. Nearly all of the Urban Areas Security Initiative Grant funds for the City and County of Honolulu (\$13 million) have been directed to the purchase of interoperable systems.

To assist the State, county, and federal agencies to achieve communications interoperability capabilities, we established the Hawaii Wireless Interoperability Network (HWIN) in 2004. HWIN is a formal organization comprised of members representing county mayors, police

chiefs, State Civil Defense, Hawaii National Guard, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Pacific Command. The HWIN Executive Committee meets on a quarterly basis to review progress and interoperability projects.

The State application for the Fiscal Year 2006 Homeland Security Grant Program included communications interoperability as one of 15 investment justifications. The application specifically addressed communications interoperability needs in establishing a cooperative regional deployment of a shared land mobile radio system for responders. If approved, the application will provide radio coverage to areas that support 55% of the population. Specifically, the application contains a proposal to address the first phase of an interoperable 700 MHz P25 compliant trunk radio system development effort in the neighbor island population centers of Hilo, Kailua-Kona, and Wailuku and extending back to interface with the State Law Enforcement Coalition 700 MHz radio system. This interagency effort is being undertaken on a cooperative basis among the Counties of Hawaii and Maui and State Departments of Accounting and General Services, Public Safety, Transportation, and Defense.

Future year phases will be required to build out island wide coverage statewide and integrate the County of Kauai, and include the remaining State responders in the Departments of Health and Land and Natural Resources.

The City and County of Honolulu also has an initiative under the Urban Areas Security Initiative that will continue the enhancement of their communication interoperable program based on their Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan. The City and County of Honolulu P25 development efforts are currently focused on upgrading their 800 MHz trunk radio system.

Since federal fiscal year 1999, Office of Justice Program and Department of Homeland Security Grant funding has supported the development of a statewide communications interoperability capability. Planning, budgeting, and purchase of communications systems that are P25 compliant have continued to receive favorable consideration at the State Department of Defense level and funding priorities at the State and county levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 204.