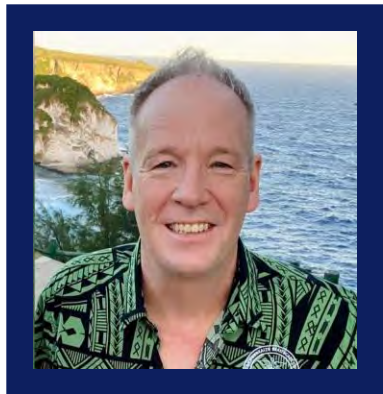




A Regional Approach to Addressing Specialty Gaps

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Healthcare Coalition



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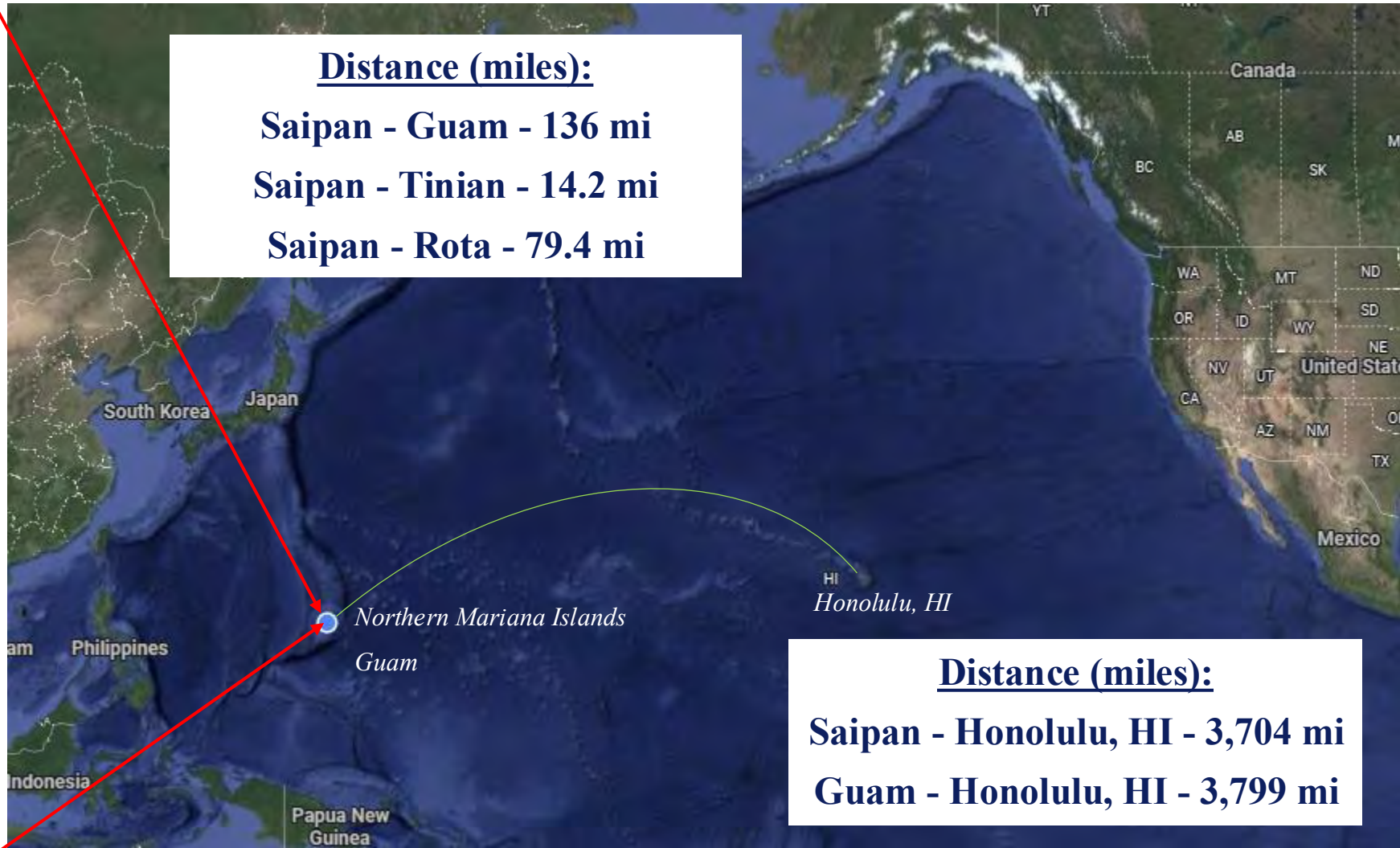
Daniel R. Suel
Fire Captain, State EMS Director
CNMI Department of Fire and
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Overview

- Where is the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)?
- CNMI HCC History and Governance
- CNMI HCC Preparedness & Response Capabilities
 - Workforce Training and Development
 - Patient Movement and Distribution
 - Workforce Training and Development



Where is the Northern Mariana Islands?



Distance (miles):
Saipan - Guam - 136 mi
Saipan - Tinian - 14.2 mi
Saipan - Rota - 79.4 mi

Distance (miles):
Saipan - Honolulu, HI - 3,704 mi
Guam - Honolulu, HI - 3,799 mi

Flight Time:

Saipan – Guam – 30 mins | Saipan – Rota – 30 mins | Saipan – Tinian – 15 mins | Guam – Hawaii – 8 hrs

CNMI Healthcare Coalition (HCC)

Mission

- To discuss issues of importance of our healthcare organization.
- To establish priorities for strategic planning; to approve policies, plans, or other products of the HCC.
- To identify gaps and define priorities that build disaster response capacity to serve the community and DAFN populations, address Health Disparities and Equity.
- To develop a surge patient tracking and transport process, a process for coordinating patient surge across the healthcare system, and finalization of draft plans for government-authorized alternate care sites.

Healthcare Coalition Objectives

Strengthen and Improve:

- Incident Management and Coordination
- Information Management
- Patient Movement and Distribution
- Workforce
- Resources
- Operational Continuity
- Specialty Care
- Community Intergration



CNMI Healthcare Coalition Core Members

Core Members

- **Esther L. Muña,**
CHCC Chief Executive Officer
- **Warren F. Villagomez**
CHCC Chief Preparedness & Response Officer
- **Dr. Marty Rohringer,**
CHCC Deputy Chief Medical Officer
- **Heather S. Pangelinan**
CHCC Director of Public Health Services
- **Reyna M. Saures**
CHCC Community Guidance Center Director
- **Vanessa Quitugua**
RHC Resident Director
- **Kieth Nabors**
THC Resident Director
- **Franklin R. Babauta**
HSEMA Special Assistant
- **Daniel R. Suel**
DFEMS EMS/EMSC Director
DFEMS-EMS Director



General Members

- **John M. Tagabuel**
EHDP Director
- **Anthony I. Macaranas**
DPS Commissioner
- **Juan Diego Rebueng**
CPA Assistant Chief of Police
- **Francisco M. Rabauliman**
DCCA Secretary
- **Pamela C. Sablan**
CDD Executive Director
- **Susan Satur**
CLI Executive Director
- **Lawrence F. Camacho**
PSS Commissioner
- **Others**

Notable Disasters

- Natural Disasters: Typhoons
 - Soulder (2015)
 - Super Typhoon Yutu / Mangkut (2018)
 - Mawar (2023)
 - Bolaven (2023)
- COVID-19 Pandemic





Preparedness & Response Capabilities

- National Incident Management System
- CNMI State Emergency Operations Center
- Information Management
- Patient Movement and Distribution
- Workforce Training and Development



Medical Aspects of the CNMI Healthcare Coalition

- **Medical Director of the CNMI Healthcare Coalition**
 - Coordinate and share medical resources across key entities to ensure comprehensive healthcare coverage throughout the Commonwealth.
 - Manage resources for Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) and its satellite clinics,
 - Rota Health Center and Tinian Health Center
 - Collaborate with the EMS division of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Movement of Patients and Medical Staff in a Disaster / Mass Casualty Event

Saipan Island

- In all cases the patients are routinely transferred by ground ambulance to the only hospital in Saipan. There is no helicopter service, medevac or otherwise, available to assist in transporting patients from scene to the hospital.
- In many cases, those with minor injuries will travel by private vehicle as EMS will preferentially take more serious cases based on on-site triage; or they will have to wait on scene for ambulance availability.
- On-call medical staff are called in to hospital after an unforeseen disaster (e.g. Plane crash) or in advance of a foreseen disaster (e.g. Approaching serious typhoon).



Movement of Patients and Medical Staff in a Disaster / Mass Casualty Event

Tinian Island

- Patients are commonly transported to Tinian Health Center (THC) for secondary triage as any serious cases need to be transferred to Saipan for treatment. This health center does not have a fully equipped emergency department level of care.
- Transfers to Saipan are largely done with chartered fixed wing aircraft that have no medical equipment on board (after transfer to the airport by EMS).
- It is impractical to send medical staff to support THC because it does not have inpatient services nor any advanced diagnostic equipment.



Movement of Patients and Medical Staff in a Disaster / Mass Casualty Event

Rota Island

- Patients are commonly transported to Rota Health Center (RHC) for secondary triage as any serious cases need to be transferred to Saipan or Guam for treatment. This health center does not have fully equipped emergency department level of care.
- Transfers to Saipan are largely be done with chartered fixed wing aircraft that have no medical equipment on board (after transfer to the airport by EMS).
- Transfers to Guam are usually done through the Coast Guard on rotary aircraft which have some monitoring medical equipment.
- It is impractical to send medical staff to support RHC because it does not have inpatient services nor any



CNMI DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMS

- ❖ Emergency Service
- ❖ Fire Prevention/Arson Investigation
- ❖ Logistics/Supplies
- ❖ Administration
- ❖ Office of EMS



CNMI FIRE SERVICE

- Saipan 110 Personnel
- Tinian 22 Personnel
- Rota 27 Personnel



CNMI DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMS ROLES IN DISASTERS

- Collaborate with other emergency response agencies
- Coordinate type of response
- Provide support for non-traditional fire service operations
- Communicate needs of responders



EMERGENCY SERVICE

- Fire Suppression
- EMS/Rescue
- HazMat
- Wildland Fire
- 911 System



SUPPORT SERVICE

- Fire Prevention/Arson Investigation
- Logistics
- Office Of EMS



CHALLENGES FACED WHEN AID IS NEEDED ON TINIAN AND ROTA BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER DISASTER

1. Personnel and Equipment Deployment Capabilities/Possibilities
2. Which Island(s) Requesting (Note: response time difference ex: via sea or air.)
3. Personnel Burnout/Rest Period (Note: Explain factors with limited personnel availability)

SOLUTION TO THE CHALLENGES

1. Personnel and Equipment Deployment:

- Personnel/equipment deployed to augment Emergency Services or to assist with other non-fire tradition operations

2. Which island requesting:

- Island of Tinian is about 45 minutes via sea vessel
- Island of Rota is about 45 minutes via air vessel or 4 hours by sea

3. Personnel Burnout/Rest Period:

- Personnel rotation from Saipan

FUTURE PLAN SUPPORTING THE CNMI HEALTH COALITION

- Coordinate with CNMI office of EMS to provide EMT's when the hospital emergency room reaches its patient surge capacity
- Coordinated efforts by the fire department, office of ems and the hospital to assign emt's at the health clinic on the islands of tinian and rota



Achievements and Success Stories

- Established strong HCC Partnership and collaboration with Local, Jurisdictional, Regional, and DoD partners.
- Enhanced HCC partners knowledge and skills through RITN & CBRNE TTX.
- Medical providers enhanced skills and knowledge in pediatric surge VTTX.
- June was proclaimed as the CNMI Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) month by the CNMI Governor Arnold I. Palacios
- Chemical Surge VTTX in collaboration with USAPI, HHS, ASPR partners.



Challenges within the Islands

Addressing Staffing Shortfalls

- Utilizing Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers

Transporting resources between islands promptly

- Identify other resources; (i.e DPS/CPA/Customs & Biosecurity/DFEMS sea vessels)



Workforce Trainings and Developments











2024 Pacific Islands CBRNE Workshop



Chemical Surge Tabletop Exercise TTX



Triennial Airport Disaster Drill



Pediatric Surge Virtual Tabletop Exercise



HazMat Training

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