

**Administrative Inquiry  
Conducted by Maxie Hamilton, Equal Opportunity Manager  
Pacific West Region**

**Background:**

I was requested by the Regional Directorate and Chief of Workforce Management to visit the “World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument” to assess the work environment of the Park because concerns were raised about the work environment in the Park. Upon my meeting with employees, other concerns and issues arose regarding the tour ticketing process for the Park and facility/grounds maintenance. Although these additional issues may not be considered work environment concerns, I gathered information on those subjects because they appear to have been a contributing factor to the in the low morale expressed by the employees interviewed.

**Interviews (highlights):**

In writing this report, I provide summaries of my conversations, sectioned off by major discussion topics, with each major topic representing a common concern that was raised throughout the interviews. Below each major topic, individual comments that are representative of the general tone of the meetings are provided, followed immediately by my summary of the issue.

During the course of my two-week visit, I spoke to 38 employees, two Pacific Historic Parks Board members and one Pearl Harbor survivor. I initially planned to take signed statements, but many employees expressed reluctance to speak if their names were used, for fear of reprisal [REDACTED]. Therefore, I gave each employee the option not to use his or her name but advised that if further follow-up occurs from this report, employees will be required to come forward and give a statement. I shared with each person that my report will reflect the common issues or concerns that were shared during the course of the interviews.

**Findings:**

- **Leadership of Park (Superintendent, Paul DePrey):**

[REDACTED]

- Tension between divisions (leadership and employees); feel that divisions are pitted against each other.

[REDACTED]

- Paul is never in uniform or rarely wears it; always in Hawaiian shirt or arrowhead polo shirt.
- Employee feels that no one cares, in reference to the leadership team of the Park
- No one is held accountable, for example, chronic absenteeism.
- It is more about the leadership versus employees.
- He makes decision and does not share with employees.

[REDACTED]

- He does not attend important events and mission-related activities, such as change of command functions, promotion ceremonies, etc.
- See Paul only once a week, mostly on Thursday; we are told he is mostly working from home.
- Only at building 416 one or two times a week.
- See him 3 or 4 days out of 5 during week.

Comment:

As stated above, I spoke to 38 employees

Interviewees consistently commented that the

Superintendent makes all decisions without any input;

EX6

employees reported that decisions are made about operations and they are not asked for opinions. A  
EX6 employees interviewed do not feel comfortable going to the Superintendent with problems, expressing the feeling that either they will not be heard or nothing will be done. Employees reported feeling that if an employee tries to raise a concern in a meeting, he or she will be chastised or browbeaten.

Many employees reported feeling that although they are the people working on the frontline dealing with visitors every day, most decision are dictated to them without discussion. When they are asked for opinions, it is just an exercise but no one listens to their suggestions.

Employees almost universally reported that the Superintendent is never on site at the visitor center or even the Park. They reported that when he is on site, he mostly stays upstairs in his office and never comes over to the visitor center area or walks the grounds. In most case the employees in the Park do not know where he is or when he is working. The Hawaii Regional Office reports having received numerous calls from the Park looking for him. I asked employees whether the Superintendent was present at Building 416 on the Naval base, but just not out in the Park. Employees reported that he is only there (Building 416) one or two days a week, mainly when they have weekly staff meetings. It is understandable that employees may not know where he the Superintendent is at all times, but the biggest problem employees reported is that they cannot reach him. EX6 stated that he was around the Park more often than not, and that he is available for employees. EX6

EX6 Additional concerns were raised that Paul does not attend the military functions that occur at the Park or on the Naval base. Employees of the Park have been asked by the Naval Public Information staff why he is not there. They report that more often than not, they will not have an answer. The staff reported that when Paul rarely attends events, he does not wear a uniform.

Several people expressed concern that the Superintendent was planning to cancel military ceremonies in the Park. I asked the Superintendent about this concern, and he stated that he was not going to cancel them, but due to sequestration, he may have to begin charging for use of the Park where in the past they have not.

Comment [SS1]: What does this mean? Needs clarification.

- **Interpretation and Interpretation Leadership (Chief, Eileen Martinez and Education Program Manager, Frank Middleton):**

- Operation Supervisor (Eileen Martinez) not around much.
- She (Eileen) delegates a lot.
- She (Eileen) is not in the office a lot; only three out of ten days she is in the office.

- This is not a nice place to work.

- Mostly Operations does telework; why and how are they allowed?
- Eileen never has meetings.
- You do not receive any orientation in the interpretive staff.

- Lead rangers run the staff.

- Eileen is never in uniform.

- There is no formal training or SOP's for interpretive staff to follow. There is no consistency.
- No employee has had first aid training; no one knows how to use the AED device out at the monument.

- I can reach her (Eileen) when needed.

- He (Frank) is friends with the head of VIP tours and plays golf with him.

- (Frank is) Never in uniform.

Comments:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As an example, several employees reported that Ms. Martinez was absent the week of the Secretary's visit and that she was not at work the Tuesday and Wednesday before the Secretary's arrival on that Friday. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Employees report that higher-graded Interpretation employees are allowed to telework, and lower-graded Interpretation employees are not, with the exception of Lau (GS-5 student).

[REDACTED] Ms. Martinez is never in uniform.

I asked Ms. Martinez about her attendance; she stated that she is on site every day and teleworks occasionally, since she lives [REDACTED] EX6 [REDACTED] When I brought the teleworking concerns to her attention, she confirmed that they do not have access to her work / telework schedule but felt [REDACTED] Regarding the concern about the lack of training, she confirmed that there has been no formal interpretation training provided to staff. She said the training is "pretty much throw you to the fire and you find out on your own." She stated that this is like on the job training; she also confirmed that there are no standard operating procedures. [REDACTED]

Employees consistently commented that Mr. Middleton only works from 10am -2pm every day.

[REDACTED] When asked about his schedule, Mr. Middleton stated that he is on a maxi-flex tour and that he is here during his core hours. He confirmed that employees do not have access to his schedule and do not always know his whereabouts, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When asked about the ticket program in the Park, he stated that he has a good handle on the ticket situation. He is trying to make it more convenient for the tour companies. The ticket system is set up to reward those who pre-plan; he would prefer to move away from the walk-up ticket process. The program allows for less congestion in the parking lot and cuts down the lines in front of park. He (Mr. Middleton) communicates with the tour companies on a daily basis. He feels [REDACTED]

- **Staff is only paid compensable time and not overtime.**

- Employees are not given the option.
- This occurs at most major events.
- If asked to work late all you get is compensable time. One employee took a month off due to illness, and it was all compensable time.

Comments:

Employees expressed concern that they are not given the choice to work overtime and are given comp time. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Staff are told that budget is why overtime is not paid. I spoke with the Administrative Officer and was told there are occasions where management can request employees to work comp time only. The requirement to work comp time was in place before sequestration.

- **Employee Morale:**

- Morale is very low in this park.
  - Mostly an adversarial atmosphere with [REDACTED] EX6 [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Enjoy working at Park; felt accepted when brought into Park
  - Employee feels unappreciated by leaders of this park.
  - Park employees not very happy
  - When problems arise, they (leadership) are never in Park.
  - No opportunities to move up in the Park.
  - [REDACTED] when he (superintendent) got his GS-14; he threw it in everyone's faces.
  - Management (Paul) makes decisions without asking workers; we are the ones who do all the work and are never asked for our opinion.
  - Lack of personnel a big problem.
  - If funds are a problem, why do members of the leadership team get to go to Maui resort for a training/meeting?
  - No opportunity to promote.
  - No recognition of hard work done on site.
  - Feel we are not valued.
  - There is no "us" on this park. They Leadership needs to pull us back together.
  - Some division chiefs have been in office too long.
- [REDACTED]
- Paul told snack shop not to give employees' discount.
  - Viewpoint survey was not taken seriously; we were told only 11 people completed it, so it could not reflect how folks feel. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- There have been times where Park has been run by three people.
  - Management just hangs out in the office.
  - Management hypocritical, questions our leave and attendance, but never here.

- Employees have been told that if they cannot stay healthy they should not work here.
- Feels like a dictatorship.
- If it were not for volunteers, Park would not run.

- Students are hired to run Park.
- Promises are made and not kept
- Students are not getting to do work in their area of studies.
- Looked at as cheap labor.
- No rhyme or reason to hiring.

Comments:

There were numerous issues raised in regard to employee morale. It is safe to say that it is very low and there are no signs of it improving, based on my conversations of the course of two weeks. Non-employees also commented on the bad morale in the Park. The comments, above, give a representative sample of how interviewed employees were feeling. Employees made reference to the OPM survey. Although it was only completed by 11 employees, it reflects that conversations I had with employees and others. I have attached a copy of the survey with this report. Employees were dismayed when the superintendent did not take it seriously, by stating that it was only a few disgruntled employees and not the feeling of most employees in the Park, despite employees telling him that it reflected their feelings.

There is a feeling of “us versus management” in the Park, and there is gap between the GS-9 and above and the GS-5 and below. This could be due to the fact that employees reported there are no GS-5/6/7/8 positions currently staffed in the Park. The perception is very strong among staff that there is no upward mobility in the Park.

Employees mentioned numerous times that there are no employee activities, for example holiday parties and get-togethers. The impression is that management is not supporting them and that when they have an employee event, the employees come up with the idea and management does not participate. My perception is that it is not necessarily a lack of having parties, but employees feeling under-appreciated; employees feel that they are just cogs in a wheel. A common comment was that it would be nice for a manager to stop and say, “Thanks for the hard work.” Employees acknowledge that there is absenteeism problem, which they attributed to employee burn-out, not abuse of the leave process. It was not uncommon for employees to tell me that they used to enjoy coming to work, but now it is hard. Some employees reported taking leave for their own health and well-being. In addition, employees reported feeling that it does not seem fair that some employees in the Park are not held accountable.

- **Conditions of Facility/Park**

- The monument is not being cleaned as it should.
- The museum is being cleaned about one time a week.
- The understanding is that there is no maintenance budget.
- The Maintenance staff do not carry radios, making it difficult to contact them when there is a need.
- Ground looks bad for a Park where the remodeling work is only that is three years old.
- We are told that we do not have the budget to buy the supplies we need.
- There is no Maintenance plan/strategy for the Park.
- No weekly meeting.

- Some work can be done here without budget.
- Park increased from 3.3 acres to 9-15 acres.
- Chief of Maintenance was given orders not to water grass.

**Comment [SS2]:** Don't understand this comment. The Park is more than three years old.

- This park should be the Emerald of the Pacific.

**Comment:**

Employees expressed a major concern about the condition of the Park; they believe it is not being maintained to what seem to be basic standards. These comments were received from all employees interviewed, as well as one of the Board Members from the PHP. There appears to be no clarity on who should be maintaining the museum. Maintenance employees reported being told they are not to go into the museum or monument; Interpretation employees reported thinking that Cultural Resources should maintain the museum. The Park's Chief Historian established a group of volunteers to clean museum at least once a week. Many employees questioned how a new facilities only three years old can reach such a rundown state in such a short period of time. I was taken around the Park and shown some of the needed repairs; I took pictures, which are included with this report. The pictures show the condition of the grounds (weeds, brown patches), walls in the museum needing repair and painting, bird-dropping accumulation around facilities, even in areas where the public sits. I took pictures on the memorial, about which employees conveyed concerns that maintenance does not come out a regular basis to clean the monument and cleaning supplies not available on site to deal with any accidents. It was noted in numerous interviews about the USS Arizona bell that it is heavily covered with bird droppings and was only cleaned due to Secretary Jewell's visit. The consensus among most interviewees was that if the Secretary had not come, it would not have been cleaned. Members of the Board with whom I spoke with felt that the grounds were an embarrassment, compared to what it once was. Boat Operators expressed concerns regarding to conditions of the Ready Room. They reported being told that it was the Navy's responsibility to maintain the Ready Room, but stated it was not clear who is required to maintain the ready room and it is not being maintained. The crew cleans the room and, as of the time of my visit, the water faucet for the sink had not been repaired.

**Comment [SS3]:** Again, this Park is older – please clarify.

- **Distribution of Tickets:**

- Questioned Frank Middleton about new ticket policy; response was, "Do what you are told."
- Tour group calls in the morning requesting tickets from front desk, when told they do not have any reserved. When told no, the tour group says, "I will call Frank." Soon after, Frank will call and tell the employee to give the tour group the tickets.
- PHP takes a large amount tickets for 8 am – 12 noon and uses them as inducement to for visitors to buy audio headsets.
- The following companies seem to get extra tickets: VIP tours, Discover Hawaii, Polynesian Adventure, China International, and Robert's Tour.
- Employees are told it is an effort to bring in more tourists, so PHP can make more money, which will flow to the Park.
- Frank pulls ticket from VIP list a lot.
- We have gotten away from first-come, first-served.
- Tour companies get all of the early tickets.
- Tour companies never bring back unused tickets. Guides have started a stand-by line process, to fill in empty seats.
- Park guides have to deal with fallout when tickets run out, especially when visitors have been waiting in line since 5 am or earlier and tickets run out at 7:15 am.
- One visitor paid \$89 dollars for USS Arizona tickets.
- A person working for Royal Hawaii was outside in Park's parking lot selling tickets for \$30 dollars. The Park is still giving that same person from Royal Hawaii tickets.
- PHP should not be involved with tickets.

**Comment:**

This appeared to be a very big concern among employees in the Park. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The concern is that tours are receiving unfavorable advantage over walk-in visitors. Tour companies can come as they please and acquire more tickets to meet their needs, which in most cases leaves fewer tickets for walk-up visitors. It is not uncommon for visitors to stand in line before opening, yet receive tickets for later in the day or not at all, and this occurs before 7 am. Employees reported sharing their concerns with Frank Middleton but are told to mind their own business. Employees feel that PHP, especially Carlton, has too much say so in the ticketing process. Employees say that he (Carlton) is allowed to acquire tickets for more desirable time slots and use them as enticement to purchase audio headphones. For example, a visitor may have tickets for 1 pm tour, but if they purchase an audio tour they will be given an earlier tour time. I asked for a list of the tour companies that have an agreement with the Park and the VIP list, and it appears that consistently the same tour companies received additional tickets compared to the total number of the companies with an agreement. Please refer to the list of commercial use agreements and the Park's VIP list.

- **Visitor Experience**

- Ticketing is a big problem here.
  - Tour companies are grabbing all of the ticket, especially walk-in tickets being given to tour companies.
  - Tickets are looked at as just another commodity.
  - Feel Park is losing fulfillment of visitor experience.
  - Programs have been canceled due to lack of staff.
  - Getting away from what Park stood for, less dignified and more like Disneyland.
  - Allowed a peace ceremony during working hours where drummers and loudspeaker were disrupting to the site. It could have been done as an after-hours activity.
- [REDACTED]

Comments:

Concerns were continually raised that the visitor experience is changing for the Park. Employees expressed feeling that the Park is moving away from what it was intended to be, which is a memorial for the USS Arizona. I was given the following examples: visitors are allow to enter the Park and go on the memorial dressed inappropriately, such as women wearing revealing clothing, men not taking off hats, visitors speaking loudly. Outside of the audio tour, there are no true interpretive talks being provided to visitors. Employees believe that this is not a place to come have fun, but to reflect. I spoke to the Superintendent and Chief of Interpretation, and they are aware of employees' concerns but feel they cannot police or dictate a dress code for the Park. They expressed that visitors are allowed to do what they want, for example, to sit on or lie down on the grass. Again, these concerns were raised by employees [REDACTED] EX6 [REDACTED] who reported hearing comments from visitors on the site. Employees report that staffing levels are a factor, since there are times when there are not enough employees on site to handle the large crowds. Employees expressed concern that the last two exhibits, Fred Korematsu and Japanese Cranes, were handled as a major story of the Park rather than just one of the stories of the World War II experience.

- **Budget:**

- Do not know where all the money goes.
  - Always told that budget is the reason for not hiring, facility not being kept up.
  - Leadership team only told that they would have the same budget as last year.
  - Paul rejects budget meeting, won't have one.
  - Installed a \$50,000 gate, and no one knows why.
- [REDACTED]
- Money has been taken away from Maintenance division, not sure where money went.



- Due to budget, Park does not pay overtime or night/Sunday differential.

**Comments:**

An underlying current throughout this report and throughout my interviews is that budget is always the reason cited for whatever is happening in and to the Park. Employees expressed disbelief, that budget cannot be the cause of everything that is happening. If budget is a problem where is the money going or how is it being impacted? These budget concerns appear linked to the problem with employee morale, because employees are not told what is going on. I heard from members of the leadership team that they have no input on budget formulation and are just told what their funding will be for the year. They reported that there is no budget meeting held by the leadership team to discuss the overall budget for the Park; money is moved and they are not sure why. I was continually told about a \$50,000 gate (picture attached with report) that was installed and no one knows why, especially when it has not kept people from walking on the dock. It is clear that there is a lack of communication in regard to funding for the Park.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion,

It is conservative to say that 75% of the interviewees were skeptical that anything would come from my interviews, or feeling that sharing their concerns may be a waste of time. It does appear that morale is very low and employees are not optimistic that things will improve.

There are clearly different, sometimes conflicting philosophies regarding how the Park should be managed. Employees recognize that the Superintendent is ultimately in charge, but employees do not feel they have the autonomy to do their jobs or do not feel trusted to manage as needed.

/s/Maxie Hamilton  
Maxie Hamilton

11/12/1313  
Date



Photo 1: Wall inside of  
Museum.

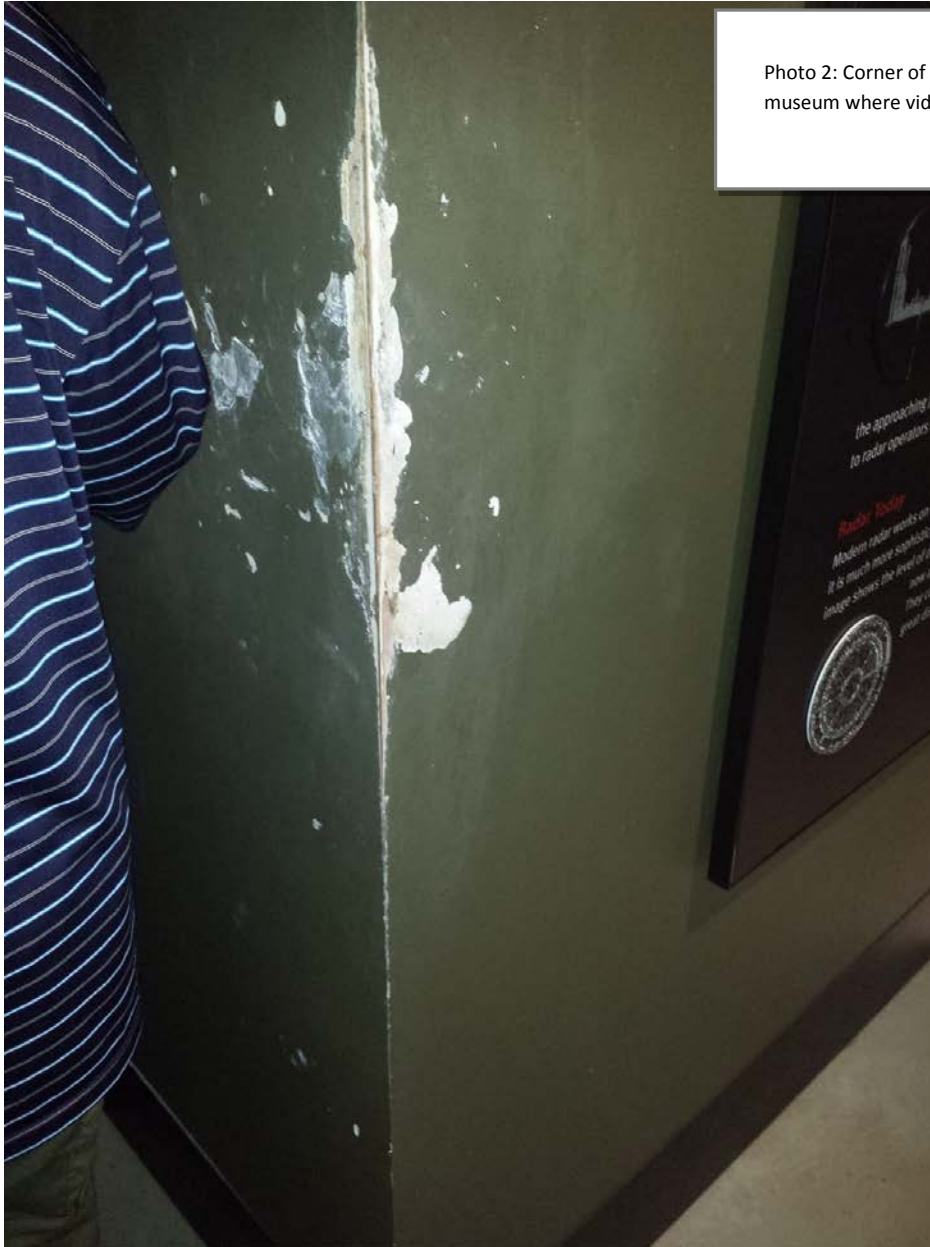


Photo 2: Corner of Wall in  
museum where video is shown.



Photo 3: Picture is of Entrance to Park. Normally park Power washed area at least once a week, but has not been washed in a while.



Photo 4 and 5: Two areas of park that have an accumulation of bird droppings due to lack of power washing.



Photo 6 : A picture of ceiling of the Navy's ready room located behind the theater. Maintenance does not occur and sink is need of repair.





Photo 7 and 8: The picture to the left is a base of one the metal stand on the Memorial. The picture below is on the landing as visitors arrive to the Memorial.





Photo 9 and 10:  
These are the  
pictures of the  
gate, where  
concerns were  
raised as to why  
was \$50,000  
expended. Note  
the fencing on the  
edge of the lawn  
was part of the  
construction.





