

IRC Emergency Plan - Questions and Responses

- 5) **If the bridge is close for security reasons, can essential personnel access the island?**
Yes, the essential personnel can still access the island during a security event similar to emergency responders.
- 6) **What are the transport options if the bridge is closed for storms or security events?** *Navy has agreed to provide water taxis "gray boats" from Ford Island to the main base. Once at the main base the Navy and NOAA will provide bus transport to the Arizona Memorial Site and public transportation.*
- 7) **If a storm knocks out the bridge, are the small boats in danger of begin capsized?** *No, small boats will not be allowed to operate in the harbor is the water conditions are unsafe. The JBPHH Commanding Officer in consultation with the Pearl Harbor Port Captain will make this determination. Evacuations will occur either before or after the storm event by either vehicle or water taxi.*
- 8) **If the big Navy ships are not safe in the harbor, why would small water taxis be safe?** *The Navy will evacuate its ships out of the harbor for tsunamis and hurricanes to avoid damage and loss of life. These decisions will be made in advance of the either event prior to unsafe conditions in the harbor. As indicated above, any evacuation using gray boats will be made prior or after the storm events and depending on the warning lead time for the event.*
- 9) **Are their practice drills planned for these boat evacuation procedures?** *No, we are not planning practice drills for boat evacuations. All employees will receive mandatory safety training that will provide instructions. The low likelihood of occurrence and the risk to employee safety is the primary reason for not conducting practice drills. Practice drills will occur for shelter in place and facility evacuations on a regular basis.*

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- 1) **How often does the bridge retraction fail and how often are the tests?**
Since its construction in 1998, the bridge has been fully operational and traffic has not been blocked due to a mechanical issue. The Navy has considerable military assets on Ford Island including the Pacific War Fighting Center and a secure Telecommunications Center. As a result, significant resources are invested to ensure the bridge is fully operational. The Navy tests the bridge one every 3 months. The test last approximately 90 minutes and the date and time are communicated well in advance.
- 2) **How often and for what reason does the Navy restrict access?**
The Navy restricts access during the quarterly test and for either storm related evacuations or security events. Since NOAA's arrival at the site in 2006, access has been restricted on a couple of occasions for less than an hour for security related events and for one tsunami event. During these events, essential personnel had access to the island. In addition, when security levels are increased, gate guards have switched to 100% ID checks for all passengers which can result in minor delays at the security gate during peak entrance times in the morning and lunch time.
- 3) **If the bridge fails, what is the plan for evacuating employees?** *It depends on the anticipated length of the outage. For outages extending beyond the workday, the Navy will facilitate evacuations via the 150 passenger gray boat water taxis. Once at the dock on the main base, the Navy and NOAA will provide buses to the Arizona Memorial Site for access to public transportation or pickup by POV. Government employees can also obtain IDs for their spouses to facilitate pickup on the main base.*
- 4) **If the bridge is down and a tsunami occurs, what is the plan? Can we broaden the definition of essential personnel to assist with the tsunami event?** *The likelihood of a tsunami impacting the IRC facility is extremely low. Since the bridge has never experienced a failure impacting traffic operations, the likelihood of the two occurring at the same time is even lower. With recent advances in modeling, most large scale tsunami and hurricane events can be predicted with hours of lead time which will allow for vehicle evacuation. Depending on the timing of the event, IRC will either evacuate using personal vehicles, Navy gray boats, or shelter in place. IRC will defer to the NWS Regional Office for a final list of essential personnel to assist with a tsunami event*