

Assessment of DOCARE Response Chain focused on Community Violation Reports

Engagement with General Public – Kahana Bay

Project Background

There has long been community and public perception that when natural resource violations are observed and reported to DOCARE, there is no response, and no follow up with the community. This perceived delay in officer incident response and report follow-up has also been identified in the Makai Watch(MW) Observation and Compliance Project. This project conducted an analysis of perceived “gaps” in the existing observation and compliance through interviews with the MW Advisory group, community members, and individuals with experience with MW or observation and compliance.

The Kahana community, including long-time resident fishers of the area, have growing concerns with the increased recreational use of the Kahana bay, specifically with Jet Skis. The community has been gathering and discussing these issues through friendly events such as “fish frys”, where community members can share their concerns while enjoying and eating fish.

The acting Kahana community coordinator has been in communications with the State Makai Watch coordinator inquiring about the creation of a Makai Watch program in Kahana Bay. The community coordinator attended a Makai Watch Strategy presentation and talk story at the UH Law school, where these issues were discussed and noted.

During a recent presentation by DOCARE Chief Awo, the coordinator was able to talk with Chief Awo about the growing concerns in the Kahana bay area. Chief Awo explained that DOCARE engages with all communities the same way, and that communities can receive training by DOCARE in how to collect valid and useful information that can be used to respond and follow-up with. As a way to engage the community of Kahana, DOCARE, committed to a sit down meeting with the community and DOBOR to discuss and clarify Kahana bay rules and regulations.

Response Chain Pilot Project

As a way to address the community concerns and to assess the DOCARE response chain, Chief Awo has created an opportunity to pilot a response chain that DOCARE would use as a model of response and follow-up when receiving violation reports from the public or community volunteers. This project will use the Kahana community as a pilot site and the DOCARE administrative office to facilitate the response chain. This project will build community capacity to collect information and report to DOCARE, as well as assess internal capacity to assure a response back to the community.

DOCARE will provide training and tools that are needed in order to provide efficient information to follow up on with the Kahana community. Once training is complete, the MW site coordinator will compile and send violation reports to the State MW Coordinator. The State MW coordinator will compile and pass on to the DOCARE chief and (training supervisor), who will assist in organizing and building grounds for a prosecutable violation.

Once the DOCARE administrative office has compiled a prosecutable violation, a meeting with the Oahu Branch chief will be held to explain the project, and how the Oahu branch will respond, including assignment to officer, and follow-up with the Administration office and community.

The Oahu branch will then implement the response chain. The officer assigned will follow-up and investigate the incident using the information provided by community volunteers. If additional information is needed, the community volunteer and coordinator can be contacted for questions or clarifications. The officer will investigate case to the extent possible, and report back to the administrative office. The administrative office will provide the community with the follow-up.

Community Benefits

Trained in collecting information and reporting violations to DOCARE

Engagement with DOCARE officers in area during training

Increased awareness and knowledge of management layers in Kahana Bay

DOCARE Benefits

Engagement opportunity with community

Assess capacity to follow-up with community

Assess validity of public perception of response and follow-up