



Media Release

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“Malama na Koa”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii – A munition containing an unknown liquid was discovered on a former Schofield Barracks impact area, June 27. Workers encountered the munition while conducting routine ground excavations on a remote training area.

Initial identification by Schofield Barracks Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel concluded that the round is a World War I era, liquid filled, 4” Stokes mortar. This type of round is capable of containing a variety of liquids, including chemical agents.

“The health and safety of those who live and work on Schofield Barracks, as well as in our surrounding communities is our primary concern” said Col. Matthew T. Margotta, commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii. “We have the technical experts on site to assist in the safe handling and storage of this round until its disposal, and are coordinating with state and local officials to ensure appropriate safety procedures are implemented.”

On Tuesday, a team of specialists from Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., conducted a non-destructive assessment using a Portable Isotopic Neutron Spectroscopy (PINS) to determine its content.

Tests indicate the round likely contains phosgene, an industrial chemical used to make pesticides and plastics, which was used as a choking agent in World War I chemical warfare munitions.

This round was found in the same area as the previous recovered legacy chemical munitions, which were safely destroyed in the spring of 2008. Like those munitions, this round was safely removed and is now secured in an ammunition containment facility pending destruction.

“Our installation has a long history of training our brave men and women,” said Margotta. “There is always the possibility that we will encounter legacy munitions on our ranges. The important thing is how we react.”

“We have proven that we are very adept at handling, removing and disposing of legacy chemical munitions safely, without endangering the environment or community. Our responses will continue to be quick, efficient and, most importantly, centered on safety and well-being.”