



# Media Release



## **25th Infantry Division & U.S. Army, Hawaii America's Pacific Division**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Depleted Uranium Found on Schofield**

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii** – In August 2005, 15 tail assemblies from spotting rounds made of D-38 uranium alloy, also called depleted uranium (DU), were recovered by a contractor clearing a range impact area of unexploded ordnance and scrap metal.

Tail assemblies were recovered by Zapata Engineering, the contractor conducting the range clearance operation. U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii officials confirmed that the items have low level radioactivity and represent no danger.

The recovered items are approximately four inches in length and an inch in diameter.

The tail assemblies are sub-component remnants from training rounds associated with an obsolete weapon system which was on Oahu in the 1960s.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services stated in its Toxicological Profile for Uranium, "[n]o human cancer of any type has ever been seen as a result of exposure to natural or depleted uranium."

In addition, a 1999 RAND study concluded, "there are no peer-reviewed published reports of detectable increases of cancer or other negative health effects from radiation exposure to inhaled or ingested natural uranium at levels far exceeding those likely in the Gulf."

The DU was used in the spotting rounds because of its high density and weight. The DU was not intended to increase the kinetic energy of the round as is the case of the armor piercing rounds for the Abrams tank and the Bradley fighting vehicle.

Other than the armor piercing rounds for the Abrams and Bradley, there are no other weapons in the current U.S. Army inventory that use Depleted Uranium. Furthermore, there is no record of the Abrams and Bradley DU rounds ever being stockpiled in Hawaii or being fired on Army ranges in Hawaii.

All fifteen items are triple bagged, stored in a metal container, segregated, and secured pending disposition instructions from the responsible Army agency.

After the recovery, Zapata Engineering added radiological screening to their procedures for the screening the scrap metal recovered from the range.

The unexploded ordnance and scrap metal cleanup being performed by Zapata is in preparation for the construction of a new Battle Area Complex on Schofield Barracks where Stryker Soldiers will practice dismounted maneuvers, mounted 50-caliber machine gun and MK-19 grenade launcher firing, and, eventually, a 105mm Stryker mobile gun system.

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**The cleanup area has been an ammunition impact area for decades. Because the training area is being expanded, the unexploded ordnance removal is both necessary and consistent with the Army's commitment to the environment.**

**"The recovery of these items demonstrates the importance of the range clearing project and the Army's commitment to being a good environmental steward," said Col. Howard Killian, commander, U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii. "These assemblies had been in the impact area for decades. Now they are secured and will be disposed of in the proper manner. Although they did not pose any environmental threat, it is better that we have removed them.**

**"The Army has never intentionally misled the public concerning the presence of DU on Army installations in Hawaii. This is an isolated incident and should not be considered as an attempt to misinform the public," Killian concluded.**

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***(MEDIA NOTE: For more information, contact Kendrick Washington or Stefanie Gardin at 808-655-4815/8729 or cell 808-497-7336.)***