

*MAR 7 - Hardtack*

REPOSITORY NARA College Park  
COLLECTION RG 326 51-58 Secretary  
BOX No. 182 (NN3-326-93-010)  
FOLDER MRA 7 Hardtack V4

This document consists of 2 pages  
No. 1 of 1 Copies, Series B

June 25, 1958

408831

Dear Mr. Durham:

On February 13, 1958, I wrote you concerning the establishment of the danger area surrounding the atolls of Bikini and Eniwetok in connection with Operation HARDTACK.

In the interim period it has become necessary to move the firing site for the two very high altitude shots to Johnston Island in order to insure that all safety criteria for these shots can be completely met. Therefore, it becomes necessary to establish a surface danger area surrounding Johnston Island which it is planned will be publicly announced on June 26, 1958, and which will become effective on July 25, 1958. It is hoped that the Johnston Island danger area can be disestablished on or about August 17, 1958, shortly after the firing of the last shot at Johnston Island.

The surface danger area, as defined in the attached proposed notices, was determined after extensive studies of the eye damage problem which is associated with high altitude, large yield detonations. There is little or no radiological fallout problem associated with this type of shot.

The operation at the Eniwetok Proving Ground will still be active during the period that the Johnston Island danger area is effective; hence, there will be two Pacific danger areas concurrently effective for an approximate three to four week period.

Attached for your information is a proposed Notice to Mariners and a proposed public release on this subject. The Civil Aeronautics Administration will be advised by the Commander, Joint Task Force SEVEN when an air hazard exists requiring the interruption of aircraft flights. This procedure will permit maximum use of the affected area during period when no danger exists.

|                           |                       |        |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| SPECIAL REVIEWING OFFICER | <i>Joe Don</i>        | 5/1/58 |
| DEPARTMENT                | <i>William Sencer</i> | 5/1/58 |
| ORIGIN                    | <i>Bill J. Hume</i>   | 5/1/58 |

*Handwritten signature and date 2/2/58*

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Hon. Carl T. Durham

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An amendment to the Atomic Energy Commission regulation prohibiting vessels such as the Golden Rule from entering the Eniwetok Proving Ground, which includes the Johnston Island area, will be considered shortly by the Commission to be published concurrently with, or shortly after, a public announcement thereon about June 27, 1958.

Sincerely yours,

Chairman

Attachments:

1. Proposed Public Release
2. Proposed Notice to Mariners

Honorable Carl T. Durham  
Chairman, Joint Committee on  
Atomic Energy  
Congress of the United States

PROPOSED PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

AEC ANNOUNCES DANGER AREA FOR JOHNSTON ISLAND NUCLEAR TESTS

As part of the safety precautions for the forthcoming nuclear tests at Johnston Island, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission today issued public notice of a surface danger area which will be established surrounding the island effective July 25, 1958.

On May 2, 1958, it was announced that certain short-range defensive missiles with nuclear warheads would be fired from Johnston Island, as part of the HARDTACK series of nuclear tests in the Pacific. Johnston Island is located some 540 statute miles southwest of the nearest inhabited island of the Hawaiian chain and some 900 statute miles from the nearest other inhabited island.

Effective July 25, all ships are cautioned to remain clear of an area bounded by a circle of 400 nautical mile radius centered at the following geographic coordinates:

Longitude  $169^{\circ} 30' 53''$  West

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 39' 26''$  North

These coordinates are five nautical miles to the South of Johnston Island. It is estimated that the surface danger area will remain in effect for a period of approximately three or four weeks. This notice is being given the widest possible distribution through marine and international organizations.

An air danger area will be established by warnings to aircraft issued by the Civil Aeronautics Administration shortly before the firing time planned for each test. This will permit maximum utilization of the area by normal air traffic.

[REDACTED]

PROPOSED NOTICE TO MARINERS

NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN - Johnston Island - Surface Danger Area - Information. Effective July 25, 1958, the following defined surface area will be dangerous to all ships and personnel until further notice. This surface danger area is a circle of 400 nautical mile radius centered at the following geographical coordinates:

Longitude 169° 30' 53" West

Latitude 16° 38' 26" North

Grave hazards, as a consequence of tests of military weapons, will exist in the area and all mariners are cautioned to keep clear.

All possible precautions will be taken to insure against the incidence of injuries to human life or to property within the area. It is not anticipated that there will be any such hazards outside the area. In the unlikely event that these test activities create such hazards outside the area, appropriate warning will be given.

*Handwritten signature and date:*  
J. H. ...  
DEC 27/53

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