

HAWAII NEWS

State's chief of airport operations resigns post

By Gregg K. Kakesako • Aug. 11, 2010

The head of airport operations for the state resigned Friday, but state Transportation Director Brennon Morioka declined to comment yesterday on whether controversy over several issues raised by a Senate committee this month led to the departure.

Morioka told reporters that Brian Sekiguchi, deputy transportation director for airports for seven years, submitted his resignation a week and half ago. It became official on Friday.

"Brian has decided to move on," Morioka said.

Earlier this month Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, chairwoman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, blasted state transportation officials for spending more than \$4 million to sublease space in a building it owns near Honolulu Airport.

Kim's committee held a series of hearings to investigate employee and contractor complaints about Department of Transportation contracts and personnel issues.

She also probed the department's efforts to hire a civil service airports administrator when the position had not been authorized or funded and whether the job requirements were tailored to fit Sekiguchi's resume.

The committee also raised questions on the timing and cost of the acquisition of 31.2 acres of land for \$16.5 million from Grove Farm on Kauai to expand Lihue Airport's heliport.

Morioka said Sekiguchi did "a tremendous job" pulling together the state airports' modernization program.

Sekiguchi was a division director in charge of construction for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command at Pearl Harbor when he was appointed by Gov. Linda Lingle in October 2003. He also was in charge of procurement and administration for all Air Force construction, architect and engineer contracts in Hawaii and the Pacific.



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