

**U.S. NAVAL AIR FACILITY  
MISAWA JAPAN**



**NOMINATION FOR**

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY  
AWARD  
(ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
OVERSEAS INSTALLATION)**

**FISCAL YEAR 2000-2002**

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## Commanding Officer's Comments

As Commanding Officer of Naval Air Facility Misawa, it gives me great pleasure to nominate NAF Misawa for the SECDEF/CNO Environmental Award for Overseas Installations. As guests of the citizens of Japan, we recognize the importance of our role as stewards of the environment and scarce resources provided by the U.S. Navy.

NAF Misawa is the first Pacific command to fully implement an Environmental Management System (EMS) required by OPNAV 5090. We have a comprehensive outreach program that includes both our on-base community and off-base environmental events in ten local communities, some more than 50 km from the installation.

My environmental team initiated and nurtures a partnership program with the 35<sup>th</sup> FW to operate the only “purple” hazardous materials management program resulting in significant cost savings for both services. We continue to talk with our customers and change processes when there is evidence that the change will make the system more user friendly. Additionally, this partnership with our host has eliminated the cost of duplicate management plans, allowed us free access to the base geographical information system (GIS) and reduced our training cost.

Improving partnerships, process improvement, and the resolution of problems at the lowest level are just a few of the initiatives employed by my environmental team to provide the highest level of customer service. Our Air Force hosts are constantly amazed at the support provided to them and the base by my environmental team. They support a “one team, one base” concept of operations because it is “the right thing to do”. The combination of successful and well-focused programs deserves the special recognition afforded by the Environmental Quality Award for Overseas Installations.

Respectfully submitted.

R. D. HIGH  
Commanding Officer

Additional information required by CINCPACFLT email (N465HA) of 29 Oct 02

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Concise summary of achievements:

NAF Misawa has a focused environmental program that meets or exceeds OPNAV requirements. Misawa has fully implemented an Environmental Management System (EMS) including the use of electronic documentation and tracking, cross-trained to provide both land and water spill response, and operates the only "Purple" hazardous materials/waste program in the Pacific theater. Program initiatives have reduced the authorized user list by 50% saving \$50,000.00 in less than five years, instituted a free issue program saving an estimated \$10,000.00, and partnered with the host environmental flight to save an estimated \$10,000 per year in training cost. Additionally, NAF Environmental has one of the most successful outreach programs in Japan with more than 10 environmental activities per year. NAF Misawa's program management is in the highest traditions of the U. S. Navy.

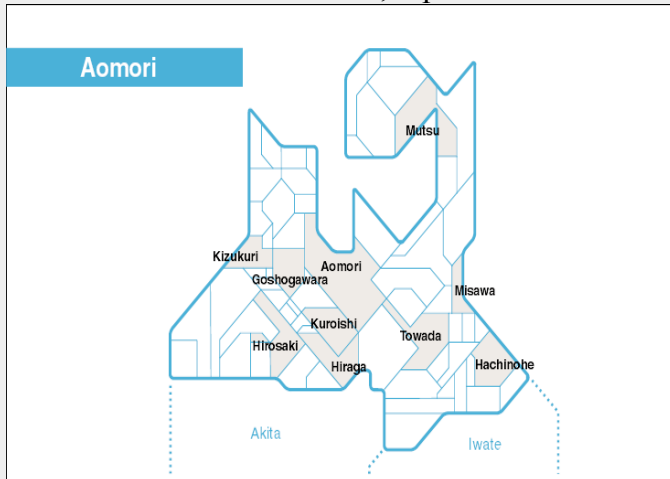
## Introduction

The mission of Naval Air Facility Misawa (NAF Misawa) is to provide aviation logistics support to Department of the Navy tenant activities and deployed patrol and reconnaissance squadrons operating in the Pacific Theater.



Additionally, NAF Misawa is the Naval Forces Japan, Northern Area Coordinator, responsible for the regional coordination and environmental compliance of all units operating in Northern Japan (North of Sendai). As such, NAF Misawa provides environmental oversight for over 1.2 million square feet of facilities, including the Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Fuel Depot at nearby Hachinohe port and 13 naval commands with a total population of 875 enlisted, 132 officers, 13 US civilian and 149 Japanese local national employees.

Misawa Air Base is located in Aomori Prefecture, 400 miles north of Tokyo on the northeastern coast of Honshu, Japan's main island. Misawa City, located adjacent to



Misawa AB is the seventh largest city in Aomori Prefecture with a population of approximately 50,000 people. Agriculture and fishing is the primary occupation of the local community. The local government consists of a Mayor and a 24 member Assembly elected every four years. This parliamentary government is the instrument of consultation and resolution regarding budget matters, city ordinances, and city services. The Assembly meets

four times a year with four standing committees: general affairs and documentation; industry and economics; construction; and public welfare. The base makes a critical contribution to the economy of both the city and the region with an annual payroll of over \$200 million. The importance of our contribution to the local economy becomes increasingly important with the unemployment in Japan at a record high, a declining farm population and Japanese youth leaving rural areas for employment opportunities in the larger more industrialized cities.

Major commands include USAF 35<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, Naval Support Group Activity, Misawa, Headquarters for the Japanese Northern Air Defense Force, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Wing of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF). NAF Misawa, as the senior naval command, supports 13 naval commands in our operational area of responsibility. Misawa Air Base is the only combined, joint service installation in the western Pacific.

The Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Activity and our Supply Department provide maintenance and logistics support for Pacific Theater deployed VQ and VP squadrons. This is the last such unit providing intermediate level P-3 logistics and maintenance support for operational missions in the Middle East and East Asia. The Environmental Department provides hazardous material management, operation of a joint use Pharmacy, hazardous waste disposal and recycling services.

## **Background**

NAF Misawa faces three significant environmental challenges. First, we must coordinate our environmental management actions with the host command, the 35<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing. This effort is essential to prevent costly duplication of effort in the development of environmental management processes. The second challenge is how to best invest limited fiscal and personnel resources to support the mission. The third challenge is providing user-friendly customer services in an environment where the force posture changes quickly.

The 35<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing (35 FW) is the primary Class I (land) and II (property/facilities) manager. They have the primary responsibility for host environmental services, e.g., drinking water testing and operation of waste water treatment plants. Both services, as a minimum, must comply with the U. S. Forces Japan (USFJ), Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS). The JEGS are a compilation of US environmental law and Japan environmental standards as negotiated by the staff of USFJ, the US State Department and the Environmental Agency of Japan.

Since both the Air Force and the Navy have command responsibilities for the health and safety of their personnel as well as environmental stewardship, without coordination we would each be creating separate plans, e.g., Hazardous Materials Management Plan, PCB Plan, or the Air Inventory, etc. To avoid this, both services share information into a common GIS database, work together to develop hazardous materials/waste plans and coordinate emergency response and pollution prevention efforts. The end result is that both services are able to meet environmental management commitments with limited staffs, conserve resources and avoid costly duplication.

Each service retains its command integrity and responsibilities to higher authority while collaborating on common environmental problems. Our co-existent approach to independent but joint management has proven highly successful and could be useful as a model for other activities serving on a joint base. NAF Misawa and 35 FW

environmental staffs participate in joint environmental audits and work together to resolve identified discrepancies, greatly reducing effort and cost for each service.

As the Naval Force Japan Northern Area Coordinator, NAF Misawa also coordinates environmental management and emergency response efforts for Naval Security Group Activity, Misawa (located 6 kilometers from main base) and the Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC), Fuel Depot, Hachinohe (located 25 kilometers from main base). In particular, the FISC fuel pipeline crosses 10 rivers prior to reaching NAF main base.

NAF Misawa's environmental team is organized as a department with direct access to the Commanding Officer for those items requiring his immediate attention. While the Environmental Department maintains a close working relationship with facilities support functions at NAF Misawa, it also maintains direct interface with the 35<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineer Environmental Flight, facilitating the sharing of information between staffs. The NAF Misawa environmental staff consists of one U.S. civilian Environmental Protection Specialist as the Director, three Japanese Master Labor Contract (MLC) employees and four U.S. military personnel assigned for general duties with limited environmental backgrounds.

Significant environmental plans for NAF Misawa include the General Plan for Misawa Air Base Japan (1998 with new updates since 1999 being incorporated into the base GIS), the Misawa Spill Prevention and Response Plan (1998 and currently being jointly updated), the Hazardous Waste Management Plan (2000 and updated yearly), and the Environmental Management Plan (2000 and updated yearly).

NAF Misawa co-chairs the Misawa AB Environmental Protection Committee (EPC) and the Hazardous Materials Management (HMM) Committee. The focus of the Misawa EPC is on environmental compliance, audit and the tracking of discrepancies to resolution. The charter of the HMMP Committee is to identify safer hazardous materials and assist commands with gaining approval for their use. The HMM Committee function is critical as chemicals for aviation use cannot be changed without program sponsor approval to ensure the safety of the airframe and the flight crews. The Committee provides the preliminary research and documentation used to forward recommended changes up the service specific chain of command.

Additionally, our Safety and Environmental departments have joined forces to co-chair the NAF Misawa Environmental/Safety Committee. The focus of this Committee is to share information with all Misawa Navy commands. Their efforts reduce board or committee meetings by 50%.

## **Program Summary**

The objective of the NAF Misawa Environmental program is to:

- Meet or exceed all regulatory compliance requirements;

- Seek out and implement pollution prevention opportunities through the use of CINCPACFLT and NAVAIR study teams to reduce disposal cost and reduce the risk to workers;
- Expand our environmental community service projects through partnerships with base residents and the 10 local communities within the Misawa commuting area.

Naval Air Facility Misawa was recognized with the 1998 SECNAV/CNO and CINCPACFLT Pollution Prevention Award for team effort, a Certificate of Achievement for the White House “Closing the Circle Award”, and winner of the 2000 CNO Environmental Stewardship Flagship Award for small overseas command.

The most important aspect of our program is the cost effectiveness of joint service operations with a strong emphasis on customer service to the fleet. Both our hazardous materials pharmacy and hazardous waste storage area are joint operations. Single point issue and receipt reduces the potential of spills or releases occurring, overall threat to the base and danger areas that the Fire Department must respond to in an emergency.

We have reduced the hazardous materials in our joint USAF/USN authorized user list by 50% within the past two years with an estimated savings of over \$50,000. Only trained and certified hazardous materials personnel may receive issues from our joint HAZMART Pharmacy. All requests for new products must be justified by the requesting command and reviewed by Environmental and Safety personnel. Additionally, we have developed a “free issue” area where units may come and draw small quantities of hazardous materials when they do not need to use the product more than once. This seemingly small customer orientated service has saved an estimated \$10,000 over two years.

The NAF environmental team has reduced the total number of hazardous waste accumulation points from thirty-five to twelve without mission impact. Additionally, we have created a single hazardous waste storage area to receive accumulated hazardous waste that is transported by the environmental team from the individual command generating the waste. This customer service practice saves our tenant commands as much as 200 man-days and a cost savings of approximately \$15,000 per year.

The Environmental Division has taken the initiative and fostered partnerships with the 35<sup>th</sup> FW Fire Department, Disaster Preparedness office and the Base Inspector General (IG) to participate in weapons of mass destruction (WMD) exercise, hazardous materials response events and mass casualty drills. This partnership has saved Navy training dollars while at the same time expanded our response capability. Additionally, we have conducted land and on-water exercises with the FISC Hachinohe Fuel Depot Facility Response Team with all department members qualified to operate all on-water spill response boats expanding both commands response capability.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- NAF Misawa has fully implemented an Environmental Management System (EMS), the first within the region. Our program is being reviewed by the 35<sup>th</sup> FW for use on Air Force bases. We rely on the CNO provided Automated Compliance Evaluation (ACE) software to document and manage all elements of the program. Additionally, we provide assistance to the other four Navy commands within the region on the implementation of their program. We meet quarterly with all hazardous materials and hazardous waste personnel to review problems and develop solutions at the lowest level.
- We have diverted over 18,000 gallons of waste POL from being processed as a hazardous waste to being recycled for energy recovery. This was accomplished by using the HM/HW team to analyze the processes in our shops to identify how to reduce cross contamination of POL products that would make them a hazardous waste. Shop specific SOP's were developed and included in our training program. To date we have saved \$10,000.00 in disposal cost.
- We have reduced hazardous waste generation by consolidation of accumulation points and eliminated 5 accumulations points. The result is that fewer people require training (22 vice 46), the size and complexity of the shop standard operating plan is reduced, and the safety of our workforce is improved. Additionally, we saved \$10,000.00 for off island trainers.
- NAF Misawa has cross-trained with both the 35<sup>th</sup> FW Emergency Response Team and the FISC Hachinohe Fuel Depot Facility Response Team and have the



capability to respond to land and water spill events. These partnerships have resulted in more than \$20,000.00 in training cost.



- During the recent Air Force Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health (ESOH CAMP) there were 75 major findings for the improper disposal of hazardous waste. Housing residents who completed self-help projects, winterized their cars, or were leaving for a new assignment did not have a mechanism to properly dispose of their generated hazardous waste. NAF Misawa, as a member of the base Environmental Protection Council, took the lead to resolve the



problem and developed a solution that provided housing residents procedures to properly dispose of tires, batteries, propane cylinders and waste paint. Spot checks by AF and Navy have verified that the solution is working. NAF was commended by the Commanding General for their initiative to help all base residents.

- Within the last two years, NAF Misawa has partnered with the 35<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and local civic authorities in the northern region of Japan to develop an extremely



successful outreach program designed to promote environmental awareness through clean-up projects and affirmative procurement activities. Projects such as the Annual American Recycling Day held in November of each year, promotes the purchase of biodegradable materials and recycled products.

Environmental clean-ups of the Oriase Gorge recreation area, Misawa fishing port, and the Miss Veedol Beach involve several hundred local Japanese citizens as well as personnel from the Japan Air Self Defense Force. The outreach program truly serves as a model for other commands where involvement is needed from both local citizens and local government.



Over the past two years, NAF's recycling effort has recycled approximately 95,963 lbs of corrugated cardboard, 93,750 lbs of office paper and over 2,900 pounds of aluminum cans from our work areas, deferring over 144 tons of solid waste from local landfills. Additionally, this effort has generated approximately \$6,000 per year

to fund participation in the annual clean-up programs at Oirase Gorge, Misawa City Fishing Port, and the Miss Veedol Beach.



NAF Misawa's environmental team has done an outstanding job of integrating their efforts with the USAF resulting in the promotion of good will and environmental stewardship in all environmental areas; program management, reduction of waste and associated disposal cost, recycling, the protection of cultural, historical and natural resources and involvement with the community. We strive to be customer service specialists, dedicated to providing world-class service to our customers.



The NAF Misawa Environmental Team continues to meet or exceed CNO environmental standards. Their outstanding job deserves the special recognition afforded by the CNO Environmental Award for Overseas Activities.