



FY 2017 Secretary of Defense

Environmental Awards

Cultural Resources Management – Small Installation
Yokota Air Base

Introduction

Yokota Air Base (AB) is the headquarters for the 5th Air Force, the US Air Force's oldest continuously serving Numbered Air Force, and home of the 374th Airlift Wing. The Air Base is responsible for tactical air-land, airdrop, aeromedical, and distinguished visitor airlift. As the primary Western Pacific airlift hub for peacetime and contingency operations, the Wing provides airlift for the movement of passengers, cargo, and mail to all Department of Defense (DoD) agencies in the Pacific area of responsibility and provides transport for people and equipment throughout the Kanto Plain and the Tokyo metropolitan area.

The Wing is composed of four groups, each of which manages several of the installation's 17 squadrons. More than 3,500 military members and American and Japan civilian employees make up the 374th Airlift Wing work force, which supports 32 tenant units and a base populace of 14,400. The Wing includes the 36th Airlift Squadron, which flies the C-130H Hercules, and the 459th Airlift Squadron, which flies UH-1N helicopters and the C-12J Huron. In total, the Wing has more than 20 aircraft.

Yokota AB is also home to US Forces Japan, a joint service headquarters coordinating matters affecting US and Japanese defense relations, and the 5th Air Force, whose

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mission is to enhance the US deterrent posture and, if necessary, provide fighter and military airlift support for offensive air operations. Yokota AB hosts several tenant units, including the 515th Air Mobility Group, which manages air mobility operations throughout the Western Pacific, and the Japanese Air Defense Command.

Yokota AB is located on the island of Honshu, Japan, approximately 28 miles northwest of Tokyo. The base is surrounded by densely populated urban areas. It occupies 1,750 acres of land and lies within the political boundaries of five municipalities. With the exception of approximately 15 acres of open field on the North boundary of the installation, the entirety of Yokota AB has been urbanized.



Yokota Army Air Base

Yokota's original buildings were constructed by the Imperial Japanese Army in the 1940s as Tama Airfield. During World War II, Yokota became the center of Japanese Army Air Forces flight test activities. In September 1945, the facility was renamed Yokota Army Airfield, and was later named Yokota Air Base.

Background

The 374th Civil Engineer Squadron Environmental Element is responsible for environmental stewardship at Yokota AB as well as 17 Geographically Separated Units (GSUs) within Japan. The Environmental Element is responsible for 2,600 acres and

supports 32 units and \$4.3 billion in infrastructure.

In order to ensure minimal mission impact, cultural resources at Yokota are considered early in the planning process. The Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) includes procedures for incorporating cultural resources considerations in the environmental evaluation process. Standard procedures have been developed for cultural resource management and additional procedures have been developed for addressing special concerns, such as discovery of new cultural properties or buried human remains.

The two largest installations covered by Yokota's Cultural Resources Management Program and those with the most known cultural resources are Yokota AB and Tama Service Annex. These Installations have their origins as World War II facilities with construction by the Imperial Japanese Army beginning in 1938 and 1939. Yokota was an important location for testing newly developed aircraft and analyzing captured aircraft for training aircraft maintenance crews. Six structures remain from the original base. Installation development plans call for all remaining structures to eventually be demolished. Three of the six have been found to be historically significant.

Fourteen historic structures remain from the 1945 to 1953 period of Allied occupation following World War II. Ten of these structures have been evaluated, and three have been found to be historically significant. Two of the three are scheduled for demolition. Yokota AB, in coordination with Fussa City, ensures structures are recorded to host nation standards before demolition occurs.

Specific cultural resources managed on Yokota AB include:

- Six historic structures at Yokota AB
- 27 cultural monuments at Yokota AB
- 24 historic structures at Tama Service Annex
- Nine archaeological sites at Tama Service Annex
- Intact archeological resources at Itazuke Auxiliary Airfield.

Cultural Resources Management Goals

In keeping with Air Force cultural resources management goals and Air Force Instruction 32-7065, *Cultural Resources Management*, Yokota AB cultural resources must be managed in such a way that they receive maximum protection without compromising the military mission. The following is a summary of ICRMP goals:

- Comply with DoD, Japan Environmental Governing Standards, and Overseas Environmental Baseline Guidance Document criteria for cultural resources
- Consider cultural resources concerns early in the planning process
- Complete an inventory of cultural resources at Yokota AB and associated GSUs
- Train personnel on appropriate cultural resources management practices
- Maintain communications with local and prefectural boards of education
- Effectively review projects and work proposals
- Survey historical architecture at Yokota AB
- Manage World War II-era structures
- Evaluate the historical context for structures built during the Cold War
- Determine the status of GSUs in Australia

- Maintain cultural resources Geographical Information System layers

To achieve these goals, cultural resources issues are considered as early as possible in the planning process for base development, maintenance, and other actions.



Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan

The most efficient way to account for cultural resources at Yokota AB with minimal mission impact is to consider the resources early in the planning process. The ICRMP includes procedures for incorporating cultural resources considerations into the environmental evaluation process.

The Cultural Resources Manager

The Cultural Resources Management Program is overseen by the 374th Civil Engineer Squadron's Cultural Resources Manager. The Cultural Resources Manager is responsible for identifying and managing cultural resources at Yokota AB and its associated GSUs. The Manager ensures that cultural resources inventories, including archaeological, historical, and traditional Japanese resources are conducted, and completes cultural resources site reviews for all construction or repair projects. He retains

records of cultural resources site reviews and receives reports of newly discovered cultural resources. The Cultural Resources Manager coordinates the evaluation of newly discovered resources with the US Forces Japan Environmental Coordinator, Government of Japan cultural property authorities, and any necessary outside experts. He also provides cultural resources information for the environmental evaluation process, and ensures that the ICRMP is updated annually.

Through reviewing installation work orders, dig permits, and engineering designs, the Cultural Resources Manager is able to ensure the protection of cultural resources at Yokota AB. He also maintains communication with local Boards of Education to ensure proper documentation of historic structures and no delays to base projects.

Summary of Accomplishments

The strength of Yokota's Cultural Resources Management Program lies within its joint community relations and knowledgeable staff. Through working with the community and sharing the rich history of this installation, Yokota AB is able to build strong community relations and lasting bonds that assist with bilateral engagements in future endeavors. Accomplishments that exemplify community partnering in action include:

- Maintained 30,000 historical images which are key resources for joint history research
- Translated 70 years of Yokota Air Base history and published articles in the base newspaper
- Promoted base development through designing and building a historic monument community park to protect seven historic monuments, including the priceless Kennedy Memorial. The park has room for more

memorials if future construction plans put other monuments at risk

- Created a Cherry Trees preservation plan, removing aging trees in a controlled process and ensuring the sustainability of this culturally significant natural resource
- Identified and documented 24 historic structures at Tama Service Annex
- Sustained archaeological sites at Itazuke Auxiliary Airfield and Yuki Comm Station, and supported continuing research studies
- Completed multiple erosion control projects, preventing deterioration of historic World War II shrines

Overall Cultural Resources Management

Yokota's Cultural Resources Management Program is constantly evaluating projects to identify any possible impact to historic structures, monuments, and archaeological sites. During the accomplishment period, the Cultural Resources Manager reviewed over 1,000 work orders and 150 engineering projects, ensuring no impact to valuable resources. The Manager ensured the ICRMP was maintained and in line with the Japan Environmental Governing Standards. This management resulted in zero environmental compliance inspection findings from the Air Force Audit Agency or from internal Air Force Inspections.

Historic Buildings and Structures

Tama Service Annex was a munitions production and storage facility during World War II. The Annex and surrounding area were intentionally left wooded to avoid detection and were therefore not bombed by Allied forces. Parts of Tama remain relatively undisturbed. Archaeological sites as well as historically significant structures remain there. Additionally, these sites are protected through erosion control mechanisms. During the accomplishment

period, a \$60,000 retaining wall was installed along the Yato River shoreline, mitigating erosion of priceless archaeological and historic sites, and protecting the cultural integrity of historic sites in the area.

Awareness and Education

Every year the Cultural Resources Management Program offers local residents tours showcasing Yokota's cultural history and biodiversity. During the accomplishment period, Yokota hosted 12 tours fostering lasting relationships with over 250 visitors. A recurring tour program for Inagi City residents was so impressive that nearby Tama City is now coordinating with Yokota AB Public Affairs to schedule regular tours of the Tama Service Annex. The number of tours provided by the Cultural Resources Management Program to local residents increases every year. Those tours are now being arranged. Currently, the Cultural Resources Manager hosts five tours a year for city officials, city residents, and school-age children.



Historic Tour of Tama Hills Recreation Area

Yoshitaka Yamaguchi, 374th Civil Engineer Squadron Environmental Flight, leads an eco-tour of the 250-acre Tama Hills Recreation Area for citizens of Inagi City. Yokota civil engineers lead, at minimum, five historic tours each year for citizens of Inagi City and Tama City. Officials maintain site biodiversity and have erected historical plaques identifying bunkers, foundations and tunnels.

During the accomplishment period, the Cultural Resources Manager translated 70 years of Yokota AB history from English to Japanese. The resulting product was printed as a weekly series in the *Fuji Flyer*, an on-base newspaper. The Cultural Resources Manager not only translated base records, but also fact-checked the information off of local historic data. He added additional information, including well-known local stories, to help time-stamp the data. His efforts were shown to be well worth the time, and the praise and thanks that were offered from local personnel was high and often. Japanese Nationals were happy to be able to read for themselves about Yokota AB history. This information will remain available through the base history office and public affairs office archive.

Community Relations

As an integral part of the Itsukaichi Avenue Enlargement project, the Yokota AB Cultural Resources Manager teamed with the Fussa Board of Education to conduct archaeological resource surveys of World War II bunkers. In coordination with local archaeologists, nine archaeological sites were identified at Tama Service Annex and documented for preservation. The Cultural Resources Manager also presented World War II Japanese Hangars to the Board of Education, supporting their historical evaluation. Some of these buildings were scheduled for demolition. Proper coordination with the Board of Education allowed for zero demolition project delays.



1977 Aerial Photo of Yokota Air Base

A 19 April 1977 aerial photo of Yokota's east side depicts the scope of Kanto Plain Consolidation Plan development. Apart from the hangars and small buildings located center-left and the metal building at the bottom, all of the structures in this view were newly built under the Consolidation Plan. The body of water in the center, today the location of a park, was an old sump used for rainwater runoff that was filled in soon after this photo was taken.



World War II Munitions Bunker

Ammunition bunkers like this one at Tama Hills Recreation Area were used by the Japanese Imperial Army to store munitions prior to and during World War II. The facilities were built according to German specifications and resemble those found in Bavaria. Shortly before Japan's surrender, soldiers saturated most of the area with a highly poisonous chemical; the US Army brought in decontamination and demolition teams to clear the site and check for unexploded ordnance.

Kofu Rock commemorates the 1944 visit of Emperor Hirohito (Showa) to Tama Army Airfield to inspect the facility and boost the spirits of personnel stationed there. The monument marks the spot where the emperor stood to review the troops. The garden in front of Building 703, through which new arrivals to Yokota AB must pass, has been expanded and Kofu Rock now stands within it. Kofu rocks are a type of volcanic rock, often seen in the Yamanashi Prefecture as a symbol of Japanese solidarity. The protection of Kofu Rock is of utmost importance as Yokota AB experiences on-going construction.



Kofu Rock

Kofu Rock is arguably the most significant historic marker on base, dating from the last years of World War II. It marks the spot on the flight line where Emperor Hirohito stood on 10 April 1944, to inspect the latest aviation developments of the Japanese Army and to encourage the troops and civilians working on the base.

Earth Day has been another key community relations event. Celebrations include tours, educational events for over 100 students and base residents, tree plantings, trash clean-ups along the installation fence line, and poster contests at on-base schools. The events bring the entire community together.

The Cultural Resources Manager is also highly involved with the local government construction project teams and provides them valuable historical data upon request.

Looking through historic photographs assists in analyzing the construction site is free from environmental contamination. This assists the construction teams to determine a budget and obtain construction approval through local municipalities.

Mission Enhancement

2016 was also a year to remember in that the plans for a Cultural Resources Memorial Park finally came to fruition. With \$195 million in construction on-going at Yokota in 2016 alone, the need to preserve historic monuments became paramount. This was both to preserve Yokota's rich history, but also to avoid any possible mission delay and prevent any negative political or public relations issues as a result of impacting an important resource. Leading up to this large volume of construction, it became very obvious that a collective plan would be necessary to preserve the number of historic monuments on display throughout the base. The Cultural Resources Manager worked in conjunction with the base historian and community planner to design and develop a community park where the base memorials and historic monuments could be on display.

Seven monuments include such icons as the Japan-America Centenary of Friendship memorial, the Memorial to Veterans of all Wars, the Killed in Action and Mission in Action Prisoners of War memorial garden, the Air Force Medal of Honors Recipients memorial, and the John F. Kennedy Memorial.

This community park was a win for the community in multiple aspects. Because of this proactive planning and cross-organizational coordination, the base mission will not suffer any delays due to possible impacts on historic monuments. Additionally, the monuments are now located in a community park designed and built specifically for their display, so they are safe from future construction projects. Being located in a centralized location and right next to the base library, the park will serve as an educational tool to the whole base populace. With its expansive lawns, beautiful cherry trees, and educational displays, the community park is sure to bring people together and educate numerous personnel on the rich history that is Yokota Air Base.