JMSDF Ship Supply Depot commanding officer visits FISC

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Ship Supply Depot Commanding Officer Capt. Hirotora Takenaka visited U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC), Yokosuka Jan. 30. Takenaka recently assumed command of the Ship Supply Depot and was interested in learning about its U.S. counterpart, FISC Yokosuka.

During Takenaka's visit to FISC Yokosuka he received a familiarization brief and a tour of the facility.

In a meeting with FISC department heads, Takenaka learned about FISC's structure, area of responsibility (AOR), systems and processes. FISC Yokosuka Executive Officer Cmdr. Jeffery Rathbun answered Takenaka's questions after the brief and escorted him during the facility tour.

"The opportunity to meet with Capt. Takenaka from the JMSDF Ship Supply Depot was very important. The meeting gave us the opportunity to explain to him what FISC Yokosuka does, what our role is in supporting forward-deployed naval forces as well as transiting units and shore commands within the 7th Fleet AOR. Part of that importance is the understanding that is gained with the Ship Supply Depot," said Rathbun.

Better operational understanding between the JMSDF Ship Supply Depot and FISC Yokosuka creates the opportunity to further develop a mutually beneficial partnership.

"Meeting with our JMSDF counterpart provides the venue to build upon the camaraderie that we've developed over the years and allows us to have a better understanding of each other's systems and capabilities," said Rathbun. "Working together allows us to leverage our assets for mutual benefit. Also, in this environment of ever reduced budgets and limited resources, our logistical interaction becomes more and more critical."

(Left) FISC executive adviser Kumiko Toi translates a conversation between FISC Executive Officer Cmdr. Jeffery Rathbun and recently appointed JMSDF Ship Supply Depot Commanding Officer Capt. Hirotora Takenaka. During Takenaka's visit to FISC Yokosuka, he received a familiarization brief and a tour of the FISC Yokosuka facility Jan. 30.

One of the programs developed through the partnership between the JMSDF Ship Supply Depot and FISC Yokosuka, the ACSA (Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement), was discussed during the meeting.

"In today's meeting with Capt. Takenaka, we had a lot of promising discussion regarding the ACSA, which is an agreement that allows countries to efficiently share resources when necessary. As we develop our collective understanding and use of the ACSA program, I am hopeful that we will be able to put it to better use, not only to save our taxpayers' money, but to help support the JMSDF as well," said Rathbun.

FISC Yokosuka hopes to extend its, primarily, social relationship with JMSDF Ship Supply Depot, involving events such as mochi-pounding ceremonies, climbing Mount Fuji and sporting events, into a more multifaceted professional relationship involving activities such as contracting and ship support.

"I think we have a wonderful opportunity here with new commanding officers at FISC Yokosuka and the Ship Supply Depot. We have new ideas and renewed excitement about our closer relations. There's a desire to spend more time together getting more of our officers together with their officers and our senior enlisted to discuss the interaction and interoperability between logistics systems and really compare notes," said Rathbun. "Now, we're starting to open doors in the professional realms, whether it's in contracting or in ship support. This is something that hasn't been done much in the past. I think there's a lot we can do to take our relationship to greater heights. I see the interaction that we have with our local JMSDF counterparts in Yokosuka only getting better."

FISC Yokosuka anticipates Navy warehouse transfer initiative

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

In anticipation of an upcoming Navy warehouse transfer initiative, U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC), Yokosuka prepares for a two-week site visit from the Navy warehouse transfer team in June.

During the visit, the team will assess the various functions performed by FISC Code 450 (Material Services Division) and determine if transfer of some functions, currently performed by the Material Services Division, to Defense Distribution Depot Yokosuka, Japan (DDYJ) would be cost effective and streamline services for customers.

FISC Material Services Director Bill Frazier expects little, if any, changes implemented as a result of the Navy warehouse transfer initiative. "Overall, we're talking about a really small impact as far as transfer of bodies and materials," said Frazier. "This warehouse transfer is really just a second assessment of an older initiative by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)."

In 1999, in an effort to consolidate the physical distribution functions performed by FISC and DLA, the Department of Defense mandated a warehouse transfer initiative in Yokosuka called Defense Management Review Decision-902 (DRMD-902). "The result of the 1999 initiative was the formation of DDYJ. It has been 10 years; so, we are again looking at those functions that should only be performed by one entity on the base,"said Frazier.

(Left) FISC Regional Manager of Material Handling Equipment (MHE)Division CM1 David Pruitt prepares to load test a forklift bound for *USS Denver* (LPD 9) Feb. 3. MHE is one of the FISC functions that will be assessed during the June site visit.

FISC's Material Services Division is the only division potentially affected by the Navy warehouse transfer. The functions performed by the Material Services Division under consideration for transfer to DDYJ include: accommodation storage of items for afloat commands; distribution and warehousing of materials supplied to afloat commands; transportation of HAZMAT (hazardous materials); and management of Material Handling Equipment, such as forklifts. The transfer of the selected services and functions to DDYJ will reduce FISC Yokosuka's core functions allowing for increased efficiency and greater concentration in other areas.

The Navy warehouse transfer initiative is the result of both the Navy and DLA carefully assessing their core capabilities in order to streamline efforts to better serve customers.

The Navy warehouse team visiting FISC Yokosuka will consist of Commander Fleet and Industrial Supply Centers and Defense Distribution Center personnel with additional members appointed from FISC Yokosuka.

FISC Yokosuka is the fifth FISC to be assessed in connection with the current Navy warehouse transfer initiative. All FISC locations in the U.S. have been reviewed and are individually transferring selected functions between co-located depots.

Once the June 2009 review in Yokosuka is complete, the selected functions will be announced for transfer to DDYJ. The transfer process is scheduled to be completed by fiscal year 2010.

FISC Yokosuka Sailors prepare for new Navy working uniform

(Left) U.S. Pacific Fleet Master Chief Tom Howard addresses FISC Yokosuka Sailors' questions about the new Navy working uniform (NWU) Jan. 23. The NWU will be available at the Yokosuka Navy Exchange uniform shop October 2010.

Photo by Blake Vives