Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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U.S. Navy Senior Enlisted Advisor, JMSDF MCPOM visit CFAY

Story and photo by Greg Mitchell, CFAY Public Affairs

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, Warrant Officer Yoshihiro Obata, and MCPOM Master Chief Petty Officer of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Osamu Natsume conducted a site visitation of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) June 5.

An infantryman by trade, Obata became the senior enlisted advisor this year, while Natsume, a gunners' mate, has been the MCPON since 2011.

(Left) Master Chief Petty Officer of the Maritime Self-Defense Force Osamu Natsume, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Command Master Chief, CMDCM (AW/SW) Martin King and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, Warrant Officer Yoshihiro Obata a tour of CFAY facilities June 4. King provided a tour for his peers during their visit to Yokosuka Base.

Both men were honored guests of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Command Master Chief, CMDCM (AW/SW) Martin King.

"It is a great honor to have our host nation service members aboard Fleet Activities Yokosuka," said King. "To have our host nation's forces come here helps to continue to maintain our alliance with Japan over the last 52 years."

During their visit, Obata and Natsume toured facilities at CFAY, which included the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation uniform shop and gym, as well as the Navy College office.

"I can see that the United States Naval forces do their best to provide facilities to create a comfortable environment for Sailors and their families while living away from their own country," said Obata. "The generous support to a [service member] and family working in a foreign country reduces stress and helps the [service member] to perform their duties better knowing that their families are taken care of."

The tour then proceeded to Port Operations for a demonstration of tug boat movement evolutions by Port Operations Department Leading Chief Petty Officer, Boatswains Mate Senior Chief Petty Officer Billy Brown and Boatswains Mate Chief Engineman Charles Le aboard USS Menominee (YT 807).

Both men were surprised that tugboats were driven by enlisted personnel. The Japanese Navy only permits officers to drive tugs.

*See **Visit** pg. 12*

George Washington celebrates 150,000 safe arrested landings

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class William Pittman, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

PACIFIC OCEAN – The U.S. Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) celebrated a significant milestone in the ship's history June 13.

George Washington conducts more daily, flight sorties and recoveries than any other aircraft carrier in the fleet, allowing the ship to conduct its 150,000th safe arrested landing since its commissioning July 4, 1992.

"Because we are part of the forward-deployed naval force, we reached this milestone faster than most carriers," said Lt. Chris Denton from Angleton, Texas, *George Washington*'s arresting gear branch officer. "We launch more aircraft and have fewer no-fly days than anyone else in the fleet."

The Sailors that maintain *George Washington*'s arresting gear work around-the-clock to ensure that the arresting gear cables can safely catch aircraft from its embarked air wing, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5.

"Our operational tempo has a heavy impact on the arresting gear, and our Sailors that work in the gears are feeling it," said Denton. "We fly more than 100 daily sorties, and they work tirelessly to ensure that we can conduct our operations safely. Say what you will about our catapults, the ship can't maintain a warfighter-ready stance without a fully-functioning arresting gear."

George Washington's aviation boatswain's mates (equipment) work 16-22 hours daily in the arresting gear engine rooms, monitoring the gear cables, communicating between the gear rooms and the flight deck, and conducting daily maintenance.

"When the wing is not flying, we are still working," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) Airman Brittany Hearne from Colorado Springs, Colo., one of the Sailors working on the arresting gears. "We are constantly doing maintenance on our equipment. We have to take readings on anything that gets used, and inspect it to make sure that the equipment doesn't fall apart to wear and tear."

According to Hearne, the milestone nearly went by unnoticed, because for the Sailors', it was 'business-as-usual.'

"Today was just another day for us down in the engine rooms, until we heard the number mentioned," said Hearne. "We fly so often that it's no surprise that we've hit this 150,000 mark so soon."

Arresting gear Sailors, along with *George Washington* and CVW-5 senior leadership, attended a cake-cutting ceremony in honor of the milestone. Lt. Cmdr. Colin Price, from Brandon, Fla., assigned to the "Diamondbacks" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 102, the pilot who conducted the 150,000th landing, and Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) 3rd Class Eric Brown, from Brigham City, Utah, the engine operator who caught Price's aircraft, had the honor of cutting the cake.

"Because we're so busy, I would've never known about this milestone if it hadn't been mentioned to me," said Brown. "We catch aircraft day in and day out; we had no reason to believe that today was special. This is truly something for the history books and something I can pass down to tell my children that I took part in something so significant."

(Left) ABE3 Eric Brown, from Brigham City, Utah and Lt. Cmdr. Colin Price, a pilot from Brandon, Fla. assigned to the "Diamondbacks" of Strike Fighter Squadron 102, cut a cake celebrating the 150,000th arrested landing aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) June 13. Price flew and landed a F/A-18F Super Hornet, and Brown was the engine operator that directly contributed to this milestone event.

INSIDE

USS Blue Ridge offers ship tours in Tokyo

TOKYO – Nearly 3,000 visitors toured U.S. 7th Fleet flagship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) while the ship was moored in Tokyo June 17.

Pg. 4

101 Critical Days of Summer Program guides summer safety planning

Summer is here and for service members and their families, having a plan for the upcoming months will be a key component of staying safe during these hot months.

Pg. 10