FISC Yokosuka Marine participates in Cobra Gold exercise

By Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

A U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Marine recently traveled to Thailand to participate in Cobra Gold, an exercise designed to improve the combat readiness of U.S. and coalition forces.

The combined field training exercises included elements of the armed forces of Thailand, Japan, Singapore and Indonesia and focused on interoperability training and combat readiness.

The mission of Cobra Gold was to integrate Thai and U.S. combat capabilities and strengthen combined staff actions through; sharing and exchanging tactics, techniques and procedures, and executing combined amphibious operations.

"I think Cobra Gold impacts fleet readiness by ensuring the experiences and new ideas between junior and senior military personnel (generated during the exercise) are thoroughly reviewed, analyzed and revamped for current and future missions," said Staff Sgt. Allan Cayabyab.

(Right) Staff Sgt. Allan Cayabyab stands in front of a recently loaded LCAC at Hat Yao Beach, Thailand Feb. 12 during the training exercise Cobra Gold. Cayabyab was one of three FISC Yokosuka employees selected to participate in the exercise.

Photo by Yufen Shane

Cayabyab was one of three FISC Yokosuka employees selected to travel to Thailand for the training exercise. They supported Cobra Gold by linking supply pipelines and providing communication between the Marines, Navy and civilian contractors in every exercise.

"I feel proud to have been a part of Cobra Gold. Working together to provide solutions to daily logistics challenges makes me feel proud to be in today's U.S. military," Cayabyab said. "The exercise only made us better and I can honestly say giving 110 percent was worth the time and energy."

The Marine flight crew of a CH 46 medium-lift helicopter drops off and receives supplies bound for the *USS Essex* (LHD 2) as a part of the multi-lateral training exercise Cobra Gold in U-Tapao, Thailand Feb. 13. During the exercise FISC Yokosuka Marine Staff Sgt. Allan Cayabyab was responsible for receiving and distributing material for the units participating.

Photo by Allan Cayabyab

During the exercise, Cayabyab was responsible for receiving and distributing material for the units participating. Issues such as cargo weight, delivery method, the priority of the material and forklift support are vital elements of the material movement process.

"My mission was to tackle any problems that arose and I sometimes had to find creative solutions to get the material to its customers in a timely manner. Also, informing the commander was the most important element of this exercise, so he could make the right decisions," he said.

Throughout the high-tempo exercise Cayabyab faced many challenges. "The biggest challenge I faced during the exercise was the sudden and urgent delivery of high-priority material quickly turned over to the *USS Essex* (LHD 2) via helicopter flight of opportunity."

During the scheduled landing of a landing craft, air cushioned amphibious vehicle (LCAC) delivering cargo and supplies to the *USS Essex* (LHD 2), Cayabyab observed an amphibious assault exercise. "I arrived early that day and was surprised to watch the Marines perform an exercise at Hat Yao Beach. I saw helicopters dropping cargo and Marines with amphibious assault vehicles (AAV) crossing the beach and F-18s flying by. It was awesome," said Cayabyab.

Cobra Gold concluded with the safe and successful execution of all multi-lateral training exercises.

Cross-cultural seminar increases workplace understanding

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka conducted a seminar recently to develop greater cultural understanding in the workplace among Japanese and American employees Feb. 19 and 20.

The two day seminar was lead by Dr. Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, a psychologist, writer and consultant on diversity and cultural understanding.

"Understanding others is important but we must also learn to view ourselves," said Murphy-Shigematsu. "We are all human beings who are similar and as cultural beings who are both similar and different."

Goals of the workshop included; learning about Japanese and American cultural differences and their impact on the working environment, learning ways to recognize and overcome hidden cultural assumptions which could impede communication and becoming aware of culturally acceptable and unacceptable behavior in order to prevent cultural misunderstandings.

FISC Commanding Officer Capt. Michael J. Arnold opened the seminar with a few remarks.

"We interact with different cultures every day here at FISC Yokosuka and we're very lucky to have Dr. Shigematsu here to help increase our cultural understanding. I think this seminar is very valuable for those of us from different cultures who work closely together," said Arnold. "My perspective is as a military member who is only in Japan for a just few short years and I look forward to gaining insight into how I can better understand and work with Japanese culture. I think this seminar will help people like myself better understand and appreciate this great country that we are guests of."

FISC Personnel Administration Manager Lori Jackson attended the seminar to enhance her knowledge of Japanese communication styles and customs.

(Left) FISC employees Hatsumi Sugawara, from the Atsugi Detachment, and Akira Yamamoto, from the Yokosuka Personal Property Office, discuss what they hope to learn during a recent cross-cultural relations seminar Feb. 19. The purpose of the seminar was to develop greater cultural understanding in the workplace among Japanese and American employees.

"This is my first management position with (Japanese) Master Labor Contract (MLC) staff and I want to be aware of how they perceive me and how I can approach them more efficiently and without being so direct," said Jackson.

Lawrence Wong, a seminar participant originally from New Zealand, learned new details about both American behaviors and Japanese culture.

"Having a positive attitude and having an open mind about everything is how I approach different cultures," said Wong.

MLC employee Hatsumi Sugawara, who works in administration and planning, traveled from the FISC Atsugi Detachment to attend the seminar. "I am here to get to know more people at FISC Yokosuka and I believe it will be a good experience for me," said Sugawara.

With life experience in Japan and the U.S., Murphy-Shigematsu has specialized on improving workplace understanding between Japanese and Americans for more than 20 years.

For more information about seminar instructor Murphy-Shigematsu and cross-cultural understanding visit www.MulticulturalLeadership.com.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Post Office schedule change

The financial services section of the FISC Yokosuka and Ikego Post Offices will not open until 11:30 a.m. March 3.

The time change will allow military personnel to attend a briefing about the upcoming merger between the postal clerk and storekeeper rates to the new logistics specialist rate.

Thank you to our valued customers for your patience and understanding during the hours the finance section is closed. Parcel pick-up will still be available during normal hours from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Yokosuka Post Office is located in Building 1258, next to Berkley Field and the Pack and Wrap. The post office provides services in support of the 7th Fleet, including 11 forward-deployed ships, 64 tenant commands and approximately 24,000 military and civilian personnel and their family members.