Expert advice helps prioritize permanent change of station moves

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

Moving experts at U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Personal Property Office (PPO) want to share a few tips learned from years of moving experience. They understand when making a permanent change of station (PCS) move there are many things to keep in mind and it can be difficult to prioritize.

"The biggest concern when shipping your household goods and unaccompanied baggage should be the weight of the shipments and the cost associated with an overweight move," said FISC PPO Director Herb Elam. "I can tell when someone new moves into base quarters because there are always personal property items thrown away."

An overweight household goods move could be costly for the customer, especially moving to the U.S. from Japan.

"Moving from Yokosuka to Norfolk with a household goods shipment that is 500 pounds overweight would cost approximately $600 in shipping and storage costs," said Elam.

Suggestions to prevent an overweight shipment include: having a moving yard sale, discarding or giving away unwanted items, planning ahead to consume canned goods by move date and donating books to the library.

AG2 (SW) Travis Muth discusses his unaccompanied baggage shipment packout from his apartment in Yokosuka with FISC Yokosuka Personal Property Office Packing Inspector Keiko Ito. Moving experts at the FISCPPO advise staying within weight allowance to avoid excess moving costs during a permanent change of station move.

A general pre-move guide for estimating moving weight, according to the Department of Defense, should be to estimate 1,000 pounds for each room. The moving weight estimate provided by a carrier is used to estimate the amount of packing material required not the actual weight of the shipment. If a shipment is overweight a reweigh should be requested.

"What a shame it would be if you shipped your personal property to its destination, threw items away, and received a bill for being overweight," said Elam.

Other key advice from the FISC PPO includes tips for the day of the move.

"If you have children, have someone babysit for you," said FISC PPO Quality Control Manager Paul Bauer. "On your scheduled moving day, let the move be your focus; do not schedule appointments on your moving date."

Keeping your pets in a safe place while a packout is conducted should be a priority on moving day.

"There is at least one recorded case this summer where a cat unfortunately slipped into a shipping container and did not survive the move," said Elam. "We also had a dog bite [incident] in 2008 during a packout because the dog was not leashed."

The FISC PPO advises identifying items that should not be moved with household goods ahead of time.

"Items that you don't want packed, such as passports, valuable jewelry, irreplaceable items and important documents should be locked in a closet or even placed in the car until the moving company departs," said Bauer. "Also, do not pack uniforms in your personal property; shipments can be delayed and may occasionally be misplaced."

For assistance call Paul Bauer at 243-6324 or Herb Elam at 243-6311. "If you are experiencing difficulties with your move don't hesitate to call the FISC PPO anytime," said Elam.

Pacific Fleet deputy visit helps strengthen working relationship

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

U.S. Pacific Fleet Deputy, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Fleet Supply and Ordnance Capt. Greg Stroh paid a visit to U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka June 23.

The puropose of Stroh's visit was to familiarize himself with the area and FISC operations, according to FISC Yokosuka Executive Officer Cmdr. Jeff Rathbun.

"Capt. Stroh's visit was important in a number of ways," he said. "Capt. Stroh now has a better understanding of our operations, responsibilities and the people we have supporting U.S. Pacific Fleet requirements."

Stroh also visited FISC Yokosuka sites and detachments in Iwakuni, Sasebo and Guam in order to become acquainted with the outlying operations.

FISC Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. Michael Arnold appreciated the opportunity to discuss FISC's close relationship with the fleet. "We have a good working relationship and great communication with the Pacific Fleet staff," Arnold said during a leadership meeting with Stroh. "We're very proud to be an integral part of fleet operations in this AOR [area of responsibility]."

FISC Yokosuka also benefited from the meeting with Stroh. "We had the chance to get acquainted with Capt. Stroh and gain valuable insight as to what concerns one of our largest and most valued customers, the U.S. Pacific Fleet," said Rathburn.

During his visit, Stroh received an in-depth brief about FISC Yokosuka's functionally aligned operational matrix and how it assists in fostering productivity across its many sites and detachments spread throughout the pacific AOR.

Stroh also took the time to tour FISC Yokosuka's Hakozaki Fuel terminal on Azuma Island.

"The tour included our fuel labs, storage tanks, general infrastructure and layout of our facility," said Fuel Department Director Lt. Cmdr. Matt Holman. "Usually people are impressed by the amount of fuel that we store: about 12-13 percent of the Department of Defense's inventory."

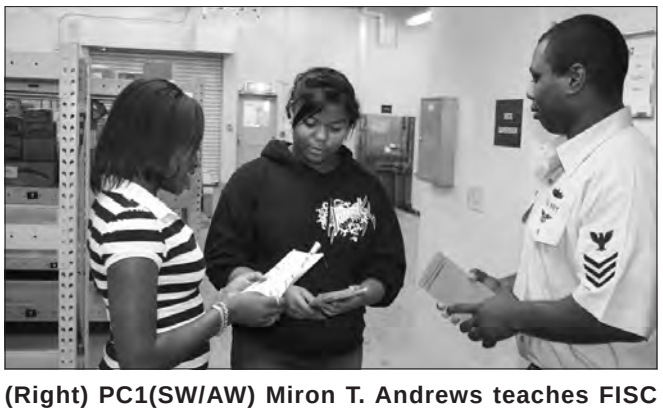
(Left) COMPACFLT Deputy DCOS for Logistics, Fleet Supply and Ordnance Capt. Greg Stroh meets with FISC Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. Michael Arnold. The meeting familiarized Stroh with FISC and helped FISC determine the emergent needs of a primary customer, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Summer hires help deliver first class postal service for FISC Yokosuka

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

Next time you pick up a package from the U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Military Post Office you might be greeted by the smiling new face of a summer hire.

Every summer, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) Regional Human Resources Office (HRO) provides employment experience opportunities for civilian and military family members aged 14-21 through the Summer Hire Employment Program.



(Right) PC1(SW/AW) Miron T. Andrews teaches FISC summer hires Jader Godsey and Chasmine Bias the system for leaving package notices in post office boxes June 24. The summer hires gain work experience and help with the workload at the post office.

"CNFJ HRO told us there were so many applicants this summer for the summer hire program that we will actually have two sessions to give them all a chance to work," said FISC Yokosuka Administrative Specialist and Summer Hire Point of Contact Kyoko Kiriu.

For the first session, FISC welcomed aboard five summer hires at the Yokosuka Post Office, one at the Ikego Post Office and three at its Regional Support Services Department.

"The post office is always busy and the student workers really help the Sailors out," said Kiriu. "I think it is a good place for them to learn about providing customer service and to get to know the postal system; they may even want to be a postal worker after their experience."

At the post office, the summer hires work a full day performing duties including pitching mail, staging packages and providing customer service at the parcel pickup window.

"My favorite part about the summer hires is their enthusiasm and willingness to learn," said Summer Hire Supervisor Postal Clerk 1st Class (SW/AW) Miron T. Andrews. "They are hands-on with everything and they are always where we need them."

The additional hands help ease the workload at the post office but the opportunity also benefits the summer hires. "I want the summer hires to learn confidence, professionalism, customer service and job accomplishment," said Andrews. "I don't know what they are going to do after they graduate but if they ever work with customers again they will know that this training was very valuable."

Earning their own spending money was a primary motivator for many of the summer hires but some had a more profound incentive.

"I am a summer hire because I wanted to make money and do something with my summer break," said Yokosuka Post Office Summer Hire Chasmine Bias. "I also want to learn how to be independent and get ready for the real world and I think this experience will help."