Post office announces 2009 holiday mailing deadlines

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Military Post Office recently released a message announcing holiday mailing deadlines.

"It is never too early to begin planning to mail your holiday packages, cards and letters," said FISC Yokosuka Regional Postal Manager Dale Pinchart. "The post office personnel work long hours during the holiday to ensure packages arrive on time; so, mail your packages according to the appropriate dates to ensure delivery before Dec. 25."

Holiday packages bound for the United States from Yokosuka and surrounding post offices should be mailed by the following dates to guarantee arrival by Dec. 25:

- Nov. 13: Parcel Post (mailing to Japan)
- Nov. 28: Space-Available Mail (SAM)
- Dec. 4: Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL)
- Dec. 11: Priority Mail, First-Class (letters and cards)
- Dec. 18: Express Mail Military Service (EMMS)

"Our advice to customers is to shop early, use enough tape to make sure your package is secure and use extra packing material inside for protection," said Logistics Specialist 1st Class (SW) Maria Roldan. "Also, we recommend you have all required customs forms completed neatly and correctly when you arrive at the customer service counter; that will help keep the lines down during this period of increased mailings."

During the holiday, FISC takes extra steps to ensure a quick trip to the post office, according to Pinchart. The steps include increasing manning and the number of trucks delivering mail to the airport. Customer service hours and operational hours are even extended on Christmas Eve to deliver last-minute packages.

"We will work 12-hour days during the season and we are here late on Christmas Eve to deliver packages," said Roldan. "This is our time to deliver excellent customer service."

Customers should be aware that certain mailing restrictions apply to military mail. Packages must not be mailed in boxes that have markings related to any type of hazardous material, such as bleach, alcohol or cleaning fluids. Parcels labeled as such will not be accepted by finance clerks at the post offices and if found by the U.S. Postal Service, will not be processed.

Certain items are prohibited from shipment through military mail. Some of these items include the mailing of alcohol, knives, swords, pornography, counterfeit items and items that violate copyrights. Any of these items found by the U.S. Postal Service, will be confiscated.

The U.S. Postal Service advises customers to visit www.usps.com/clicknship/ and print and fill out labels and customs forms in advance of their postal visit for even faster holiday service.

According to FISC, EMMS is available from selected military post offices including Yokosuka, Ikego and Negishi Post Offices. However, the post office cannot accept these items if mailed to another APO/FPO address.

(Left) LS1 (SW/AW) Miron T. Andrews transports mail with a fellow LS from the NEX Pack and Wrap to the FISC Yokosuka Post Office. During the holiday mailing season the Pack and Wrap is flooded with customers. In an effort to shorten wait times, the post office established a customer service counter inside the Pack and Wrap to process parcels.

PAL is a service that provides air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis. It is for parcel post items not exceeding 30 pounds or 60 inches in length and width combined. The applicable PAL fee must be paid in addition to the regular surface rate of postage for each addressed piece sent by PAL service.

SAM refers to parcels mailed to APO/FPO addresses at parcel post rates, transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air travel when space is available. From overseas locations, items mailed at parcel post rates are sent to the continental United States by air on a space-available basis. The maximum weight and size limits for these parcels are 70 pounds and 130 inches in length and width combined.

For further information on size restrictions and correct customs declaration forms call: 243-6711 in Yokosuka; 242-4114 in Negishi; and 246-8058 in Ikego.

FISC Contracting Department achieves fiscal success

Story and photo by Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

Pursuing, brokering and managing contracts with outside venders to provide support services in order to execute the mission of the 7th Fleet and beyond, is the daily job of U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Far East Contracting Department.

Taking time out to reflect on achievements and the future is essential in this non-stop work environment

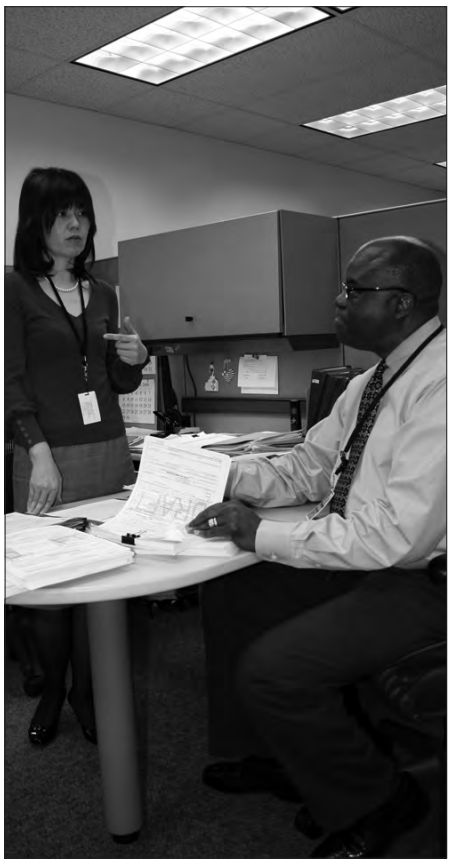
In 2009, FISC awarded approximately 10,000 contracts valued at nearly $200 million. According to FISC Far East Contracting Deputy Director Charles Dupray, the contracting team values quality over quantity.

"What the department is keenly focused on is whether we are meeting the customers' requirements efficiently and effectively as well as providing them the best value procurement solutions to meet their mission or goals," said Dupray. "Having the vast majority of our customers come into our office and walk away from the complex and puzzling world of [U.S.] Federal Government contracting with a great customer experience is far more important to us than any workload metric."

According to Dupray, 2009 will be recorded as a successful year in the FISC books.

"It was another challenging year but our 90 plus contracting professionals located at FISC Yokosuka and throughout seven detachments and sites did an outstanding job enabling the success of our customers," said Dupray. "I'm very proud of the department, especially the way everyone goes about doing their jobs, with high ethical and performance standards they've set for themselves."

Dupray emphasized the scope of his department is wide and varied.



(Left) FISC Contract Specialist Junko Nishio and Carrier Support Contract Team Lead Eddie Nelson discuss the ship repair and maintenance contract for the *USS George Washington* (CVN 73). Awarding this contract is one of the FISC Contracting Department goals for fiscal year 2010.

"Not many people realize it but FISC Yokosuka's Far East Contracting Department serves almost every Navy organization in the Western Pacific in some capacity, whether it is contracting with local industry for ship repair or aircraft maintenance... servicing other military services and joint commands... or providing supplies and services for almost all major humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts that occur anywhere in Asia."

FISC Contracting Department goals for 2010 include awarding regional ship logistics contracts for the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean; and awarding a major ship repair and maintenance contract for *USS George Washington* (CVN 73).

FISC Yokosuka stands ready

U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Regional Services Department Sailors stand at attention for uniform inspection. The inspection ensures Sailors have their winter uniforms ready for the new season. The precision and preparation demonstrated during the inspection reflect the Navy logistics and supply command's motto, "ready, resourceful, responsive."

Photo by Yohsuke Onda