CNRJ provides suicide prevention training

Story and photo by MC3 Andrew Ryan Smith, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

Representatives from Commander Naval Region Japan (CNRJ) and Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka's (CFAY) Chapel of Hope, provided training to CFAY residents on suicide awareness and prevention April 26-27.

The two-day event, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), was held for Sailors and personnel in order to better educate them on how to spot suicidal tendencies as well as help others in those situations.

Among the attendees were 27 Sailors from various CFAY commands. Navy chaplains and representatives from CFAY's Chapel of Hope lead the training.

"The ASIST training is unlike other programs, in that it teaches students how to intervene when they identify suicidal behavior rather than just identify and report," said CNRJ Chaplain Capt. John Swanson. "In 2011 there were 51 active-duty Sailors who committed suicide. This is a very real problem and Sailors need to identify these individuals so they can get help."

The training included group sessions that identified potential causes for suicidal behavior as well as individual sessions on how to communicate with someone who may be considering suicide.

"A big part of this training is to give Sailors the skills they need to show someone who might be considering suicide that someone is there for them and willing to listen," said Swanson.

As many as one third of all personnel who committed suicide told others of their plans, but were not stopped.

"After the training I feel much better prepared to help someone who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide," said Religious Program Specialist 3rd Class (SW) Blaine Benavente. "As someone who works along side a Chaplain this is important training, but everyone would benefit from it."

Lt. Cmdr. Bill Stewart, Destroyer Squadron 15 chaplain, gives an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) presentation to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) community members. The ASIST class ran form April 26-27 at CFAY's Community Readiness Center, with the goal of educating Sailors how to intervene in the event of a suspected suicide.

Chaplains and personnel from U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka aboard CFAY and CNRJ are not only to provide treatment but also are ready and willing to assist commands with training.

Security: "Everyone's Responsibility"; CFAY's Annual Security Training

Story and photo by MCSN Declan Barnes, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

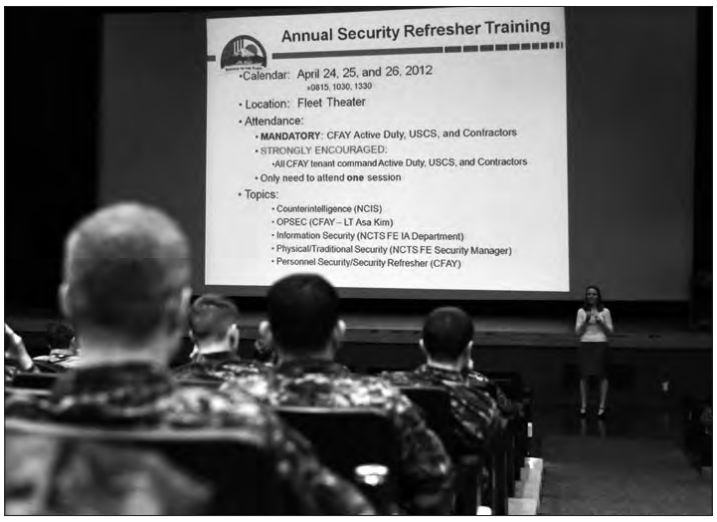
Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka's (CFAY) Annual Security Refresher Training was held for all CFAY military, civilians and contractors at the base Fleet Theater, April 24-26.

The training utilized many different security representatives to cover different aspects of the subject, including topics such as espionage, operations security (OPSEC), physical security and information awareness.

"This brief brings all the different security specialties together in one place, so Sailors can see how they are all inter-related," said Tara Houlden, CFAY security manager. "Specialties, like OPSEC, information assurance or physical security, work together to build a strong security program across a command."

Agents from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service briefed Sailors about the serious crime of espionage, and the dangers and consequences it causes.

The act known as "The Navy' biggest betrayal," espionage involves a government or individual obtaining information that is considered secret or confidential without the permission of the holder of the information. It is a severe crime that can cost the lives of Sailors and civilians.



Sailors stationed at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) listen to Tara Houlden, CFAY security manager, during their Annual Security Refresher Training at the base Fleet Theater. The brief covered a wide variety of security aspects, including operational, physical and informational security procedures.

Lt. Asa Kim, CFAY OPSEC officer, stressed the importance of safeguarding classified or sensitive material in every aspect of life, ranging from letters sent home to social media websites.

"We need to think like a wolf and look where the adversary looks to prevent critical information from getting leaked," said Kim. "I want Sailors to understand what is considered critical information and how to prevent the enemy from gaining access to our information, whether it's personal or mission related."

Kim urged Sailors to be careful when posting personal information on their social media outlets, and avoid posting sensitive facts like their date of birth, hometown, address and family members.

The security awareness training is an annual requirement directed to all commands by the Chief of Naval Operations.

Anyone who has been eligible to have access to classified material is held accountable for any classified information they may have come across for 70 years.

"Security is ultimately everybody's responsibility," said Houlden. "I don't want any sensitive information to be lost and adversely hurt any of the Sailors afloat, down range, or the logistics and missions of the Navy around the world."