# Navy Logistics supports Japan disaster drill

**By Sky M. Laron**
**NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka,**
**Corporate Communications**

Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center (FLC) Yokosuka Site Atsugi personnel assisted Japan's Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) with relief supply operations Aug. 27 onboard Naval Air Facility Atsugi in preparation for a full-scale disaster drill that took place in and around Tokyo Sept. 1.

"FLC Atsugi held an instrumental role in the Tokyo Metro Government Disaster Drill between multiple commands and the Tokyo Metro Government in coordinating the receipt and delivery of all humanitarian aid and disaster relief from local government units to HSL-51 squadron for helicopter airlift to Haneda Airport and other disaster drill areas," said Lt. Cmdr. James Venckus, NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka Site Atsugi director.

Pallets of relief supplies from TMG were delivered by truck to NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka Site Atsugi employees who then offloaded the supplies and ensured successful delivery to rotary wind aircraft operators who could make the much needed humanitarian deliveries to the affected areas during the earthquake disaster drill scenario.

Japanese military and other emergency personnel take part in the annual training exercise to better prepare themselves for major disasters, particularly if an earthquake where to hit the Tokyo area.

**Ryo Ozawa, Forklift Operator, Material Division, NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka Site Atsugi, offloads humanitarian relief supplies Aug. 27 onboard Naval Air Facility Atsugi in preparation for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Disaster Drill.**

**Photo by Yohsuke Onda**

"This successful training evolution not only enhanced disaster relief preparedness capabilities throughout the AOR (area of responsibility), but continues to strengthen the U.S. – Japan bond in bi-lateral coordination between our two nations," said Venckus.

Most disaster drills in Japan occur around the anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake, which took place on Sept. 1, 1923 and caused the death of approximately 140,000 people.

More recently the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake, tsunami and subsequent Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster were tragic reminders for everyone living in Japan that natural disasters are a very real and present danger that emergency personnel and residents alike must remain equipped and ready to respond against.

Operation Tomodachi, the joint U.S. and Japanese humanitarian effort following the 2011 earthquakes and tsunami highlighted the partnership between the United States and Japan in a time of emergency.

Many of Japan's city governments hope to demonstrate a strengthened relationship with neighboring U.S. military bases by expanding participation of U.S. forces in the disaster drills.

"Taking care of people is a big part of what we do," said Capt. Craig Doyle, commanding officer, NAVSUP FLC Yokosuka. "The recent exercise with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government shows that through strong relationships with our host-nation partners we can maximize our assets and put our people to work in a very constructive way that can save lives in the future."

# *USS Blue Ridge* concluded initial IRAT

**By MCSN Michael Hendricks,**
***USS Blue Ridge* Public Affairs**

Inspection and Readiness Assist Team (IRAT) came aboard U.S. 7th Fleet flagship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) for its initial of the ship's operating equipment.

IRAT is a team of highly qualified and experienced personnel who travel from ship to ship throughout the Navy. Their main purpose is to assist the ship's crew by educating and training them on what it will take for the ship to have a successful Board of Inspection Survey (INSURV).

All inspections are broken down into warfare areas, such as deck, communications, operations, damage control, engineering, etc. The IRAT team has specifically trained members for each of the required areas to closely inspect all the items that will be on the INSURV inspection lists.

On this visit seven IRAT team members came aboard to inspect engineering equipment.

IRAT is not limited to just one area of responsibility; they go onto ships across the world helping to assist shipboard crews and point out any discrepancies.

According to Jim Reid, this gives Sailors a jump start in the right direction and makes a significant impact.

"Since we started doing pre-inspections with IRAT about two years ago, there has not been a single ship that has failed INSURV," Reid said.

"To increase our effectiveness we try to observe INSURV while it is in progress," Reid said. "This gives us information on how they grade and inspect and enables us to bring this information with us to the next ship we go to. Through this knowledge, they can be better prepared."

IRAT comes aboard well in advance to find as many discrepancies as possible to give the ship enough time to order new parts and fix anything that is out of order or working improperly.

On the first day of inspection one of the areas IRAT inspected was the ship's Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, (SCBA's).

"IRAT is a huge help," said Damage Control Fireman Allison Lance, the repair parts petty officer for the damage control shop. "They brought a few things to our attention that we can fix going into ship's restricted availability."

INSURV is coming up in January 2013 and is a congressionally mandated inspection to help maintain the Navy's Fleets around the world.

According to the IRAT Report, "The overall condition of the main engineering spaces was outstanding and the level of attention to detail and overall observation of good engineering practices was immediately evident in cleanliness and attitude of the crew."