Defense Department gears up for U.S. 2010 census

By Jordan Reimer,
American Forces Press Service

The Defense Department is working with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure that all military personnel are accounted for in the 2010 census, a defense official said in Washington, D.C., March 19.

All service members and their families, whether stationed domestically or overseas, must be counted and attributed to their proper place of residence, Mary Dixon, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center, said in an interview with the Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service.

"The important thing is making sure that state and federal governments are allocating funds to those communities where our bases are located, so they can properly support our military members," she said.

The constitution mandates that the government take a census of U.S. residents every 10 years. All residents, regardless of citizenship or legal status, are legally required to take part in the census.

Census information is primarily used to reapportion the number of seats allotted to each state in the House of Representatives. The government also draws on the data to distribute about $400 billion in aid for programs such as Medicaid. States use the records to determine how to allocate funds to cities and neighborhoods for critical projects such as infrastructure, hospitals and schools.

The Defense Department and the Census Bureau established a joint working group in 2004 to coordinate the process of counting military members and their families. All four military services and the Coast Guard are included. The Defense Manpower Data Center, which collects, archives and maintains manpower and personnel data, represents the Defense Department in the committee.

"This group works together to figure out what that process is going to be, making sure we have all the designated points of contact, so that the census will run smoothly during the course of the census process," Dixon said.

Defense officials said the department is on track to submit the count forms to the bureau ahead of the July 2010 deadline.

All service members who receive a census form are required to fill it out and mail it back. The data of military members stationed overseas, who will not receive a form, will be processed administratively.

Service members who are not U.S. citizens will be counted in the census. Service members stationed overseas still are considered U.S. residents because they normally reside in the United States but are assigned abroad.

Census Bureau enumerators in 1970 were only sent out to collect information from non-responding residents, as it was the first census to operate on a true mail-out mail-back system. The Defense Department is working with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure that all military personnel are accounted for in the 2010 census.

Archive photo courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau

The Chief asks:

"Did you know, the first census began more than a year after the inauguration of President George Washington in 1790? Then Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson was the chief administrator of the first census. Jefferson certified the results reported by marshals and assistants in the original 13 states plus the districts of Kentucky, Maine, Vermont and the Southwest Territory (Tennessee). A total of 3.9 million people were counted in the first census.

"Following the abolition of slavery in 1865, ex-slaves were named in the 1870 census for the first time. Before then, they were simply recorded numerically by age.

"In 1870, more than 6,500 marshals and assistants counted the U.S. population, which had grown to more than 38 million. It wasn't until 1880 that specially trained enumerators carried out the census.

"If you didn't know, now you know." - MCC(SW/AW) Eric Hannah, CFAY Public Affairs

Kinnick, fellow Kanto Plain all-stars play in exhibition game

By Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

All-star football players from Nile C. Kinnick High School (KHS), Yokota High School, Zama American High School, the American School in Japan and four high schools from the Kawasaki area played in an exhibition game, the Camellia Bowl, at Kawasaki Stadium March 23.

The Americans racked up more than 500 yards of offense and scored on eight out of 11 possessions leading to a lopsided 61 to nothing victory in front of more than 1,000 spectators, including former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, U.S. Ambassador to Japan John V. Roos, Commander Battle Force 7th Fleet Rear Adm. Kevin Donegan and Kawasaki Mayor Takao Abe.

Taylor Myers, one of the seven KHS football team members who played in the game, attributed the victory to solid play on both sides of the ball. "We came out strong, played tough defense and they had a tough time making first downs. Our offense executed really well," said Myers.

According to KHS Football Coach Gary Wilson, the win was nice but the overall experience of playing in a big game in front of a large crowd in a big-time environment was truly special.

"The kids were pretty excited about it," said Wilson. "There were people wanting to take pictures with our kids, just random people who would stop and want to get their pictures taken with them, and that was really nice."

KHS senior Joshua Robertson, who played defensive lineman during the game, was especially appreciative of having the chance to play in the game.

"The U.S. ambassador was also there. I don't think there was a coach or anyone else that wasn't nervous. It was something I can take back to the states and tell people something they'll never believe," Robertson said.

The game was made possible by the Yokota Striders, a private non-profit running club in Yokota, which provided the funding for everything from bus transportation to uniforms for the American players.

The success of the game will hopefully make an annual event of the match-up between the Kanto Plain football teams. According to Wilson, the experience was something that all of the kids and spectators involved with the game would like to repeat.

"It was neat to see the dignitary box up above the stadium with Admiral Donegan, and the former prime minister and all these people just hanging out together and watching football," said Wilson. "Watching the kids, talking to them after the game, the kids really enjoyed it and I think they would all love to do it again."

(Right) Team USA tight end John Allen, attempts to catch a pass during an exhibition game, the Camellia Bowl at Kawasaki Stadium March 23. Team USA racked up more than 500 yards of offense and scored on eight out of 11 possessions leading to a lopsided 61 to nothing victory in front of more than 1,000 spectators, including former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso and U.S. Ambassador to Japan John V. Roos.

Photo by Vicky Gibbons