

防衛白書

2025 DEFENSE OF JAPAN Pamphlet



MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

On the Publication of “Defense of Japan 2025”

NAKATANI Gen
Minister of Defense

中谷 元



The international community is now facing its greatest trial since the end of World War II.

The existing order of world peace is being seriously challenged, and Japan finds itself in the most severe and complex security environment of the post-war era.

China has been swiftly increasing its national defense expenditures, thereby extensively and rapidly enhancing its military capability in a qualitative and quantitative manner and intensifying its activities in the East China Sea, including around the Senkaku Islands, and the Pacific. North Korea has concentrated its efforts on enhancing its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, and pushing ahead with the launch of ballistic missiles and others. Russia has been conducting intensive military activities in the region encompassing the Northern Territories, alongside continuing its aggression against Ukraine. Russia has also been observed engaging in joint activities with China involving aircraft and vessels.

Amid this security environment, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are fundamentally reinforcing Japan's defense capabilities with independence and initiative, in an effort to protect the lives and peaceful livelihoods of Japanese people and resolutely defend Japan's territorial land, waters, and airspace, as expressed in the three strategic documents.

Specifically, we are building future core defense capabilities such as stand-off and Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD). Furthermore, we are bolstering our unmanned defense capabilities, cross-domain operation capabilities, and command-and-control and intelligence-related functions. Enhancing mobile deployment capabilities together with sustainability and resiliency is also important. Japan is expediting efforts to improve equipment operational rates, secure ammunition and fuel, and promote investments to improve the resiliency of defense facilities.

In addition to Japan's own efforts, cooperation and collaboration with our ally and like-minded countries is critical. The Alliance with the United States is a key pillar of our national security policy and the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Through my meetings with U.S. Secretary of Defense Hegseth, and as part of the upgrading of the respective command and control frameworks, the upgrading of U.S. Forces Japan to a joint force headquarters has commenced in step with the establishment of the JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC). We are also discussing other

initiatives to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance, such as expansion of bilateral joint presence in the southwestern region of Japan and the promotion of defense equipment and technology cooperation, including co-production, development, and sustainment.

Promoting multilayered defense cooperation with like-minded countries is also essential. I visited Indonesia and the Philippines since the beginning of the year. We shared views on the mutual challenges facing the region and discussed deepening cooperation in a range of areas, including operational cooperation. During my visit to India in May, I suggested to proceed the collaboration as “Japan India Defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region (JIDIP),” and we concurred to enhance synergy through the coordination of initiatives led by each country and support regional peace and prosperity from the defense side.

At the Shangri-La Dialogue, on May 31, I proposed the spirit of One Cooperative Effort Among Nations: Perspective for the Indo-Pacific (OCEAN).ⁱ I stated that the spirit of OCEAN is grounded in a shared spirit—a collective commitment among defense authorities to restoring the rules-based international order, strengthening accountability, and advancing the international public good through cooperation, openness, inclusivity, and transparency. The spirit of OCEAN underscores the importance of countries sharing common values and interests to take a broad and panoramic view of the Indo-Pacific, to generate synergy through enhanced cooperation and collaboration among their respective initiatives, and to create new values and benefits. I pledged that Japan will continue to remain a partner of choice for all nations committed to these efforts, working together for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific in the field of defense.

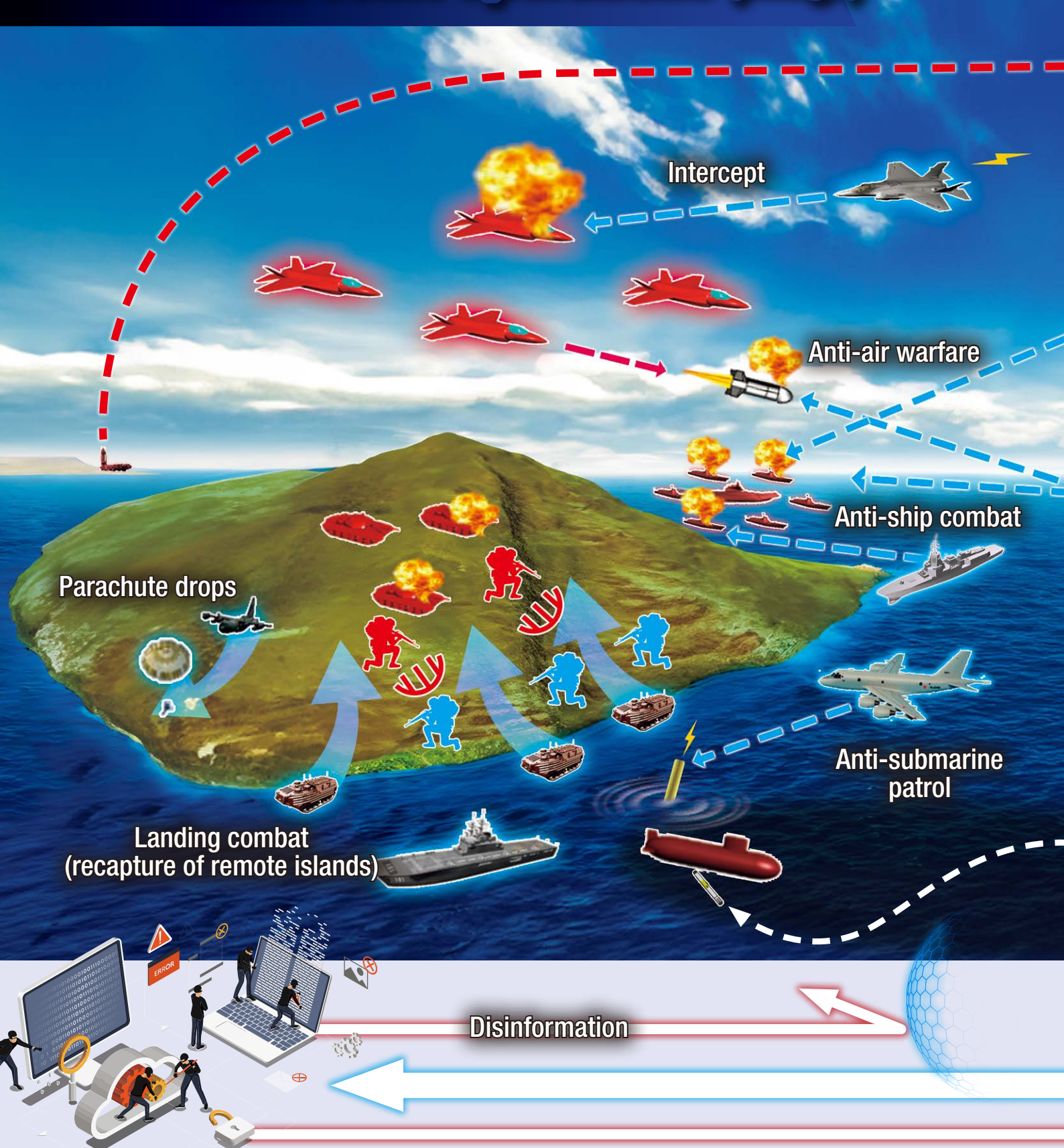
The MOD is now undertaking efforts to reinforce the human resource base, including improving the treatment and working environments of the SDF and establishing lifetime career plans covering recruitment and assistance.

“The people are your stone wall, the people are your castle.” The MOD/SDF is an organization where people matter and where people make a difference. Each and every SDF personnel constitutes the greatest pillar of our defense capability. Stably securing personnel is an utmost priority, and it is essential to establish arrangements so that they can dedicate themselves with pride, honor, and a strong sense of mission to national defense, a duty critically important to the nation. With this in mind, the Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel was convened under the Prime Minister’s leadership, and necessary measures are being promptly implemented based on the basic policy compiled by the Ministerial Meeting. Furthermore, the reinforcement of defense production and technology bases, which are a virtually integral part of defense capability itself, is indispensable. We will continue to vigorously drive the implementation of the measures to reinforce these bases under the Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases and other policies.

“Defense of Japan 2025” discusses the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts of the MOD/SDF as have been outlined above. It comprehensively explains our progress towards the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities of Japan, including modifications and related topics. The opening pages contain a special feature article to give people an image of joint operations following the establishment of the JJOC, as well as a special feature article about the basic policy on improving the treatment and working environments of SDF personnel that was mentioned earlier. In addition to the articles, personnel have shared their reflections and perspectives. I hope this white paper will help as many readers as possible to better comprehend the security environment surrounding Japan and the efforts made by the MOD/SDF.

i One Cooperative Effort Among Nations: Perspective for the Indo-Pacific: It signifies that, from an Indo-Pacific perspective, nations with shared values and interests unite to create powerful synergies through cooperative initiatives.

JSDF Joint Operations Command and Joint Operations (Image)



JSDF Joint Operations Command and Joint Operations

(Voices of SDF Personnel Executing Cross-Domain Operations)

Joint Operations Command, Ready to Go!

The JJOC was newly established in late March this year as the only unit in Japan capable of seamlessly conducting cross-domain operations at all phases from peacetime to contingencies. With the establishment of this new Command, the command and control over the SDF operations can be centralized under the C-JJOC even in peacetime, within the scope of orders from the Minister of Defense, enabling quicker and smoother responses to various situations than ever before.



The author in front of the JJOC banner

As a specific illustration of command, when a certain situation arises, the C-JJOC, upon receiving an order from the Defense Minister, assigns specific missions to be carried out to the commander best suited to conduct the operation. If multiple operations are underway at the same time, the C-JJOC considers the balance of the entire operation, reallocates units and other resources to individual operations, and controls the flow of the operations to accomplish the assigned mission.

To protect Japan's peace and independence, the JJOC will do its utmost from this moment forward to fulfilling its heavy responsibility of accomplishing assigned missions through central command of SDF operations.

Lieutenant Colonel (GSDF) OKAMOTO Chikara

1 JJOC Readiness Office, Planning Division, Defense Plans and Policy Department, Joint Staff Office (at the time)

2 MOD Ichigaya Area (Shinjuku, Tokyo)

3 -

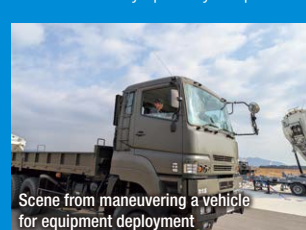
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Voices of Personnel Engaged in Space Domain Awareness

Many countries are accelerating activities in the space domain, where there is no concept of national borders. The role of the Space Operations Group is growing more important than ever, with the MOD also planning to launch a Space Domain Awareness (SDA) satellite in FY2026 alongside other activities.

I used to work as a transporter, but wanted to challenge myself in a new field, and switched my specialty to space.

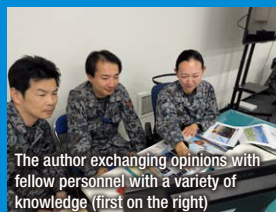


Scene from maneuvering a vehicle for equipment deployment

Having initially served for one year in the Space Operations Squadron (now the 1st Space Operations Squadron) at Fuchu Air Base, I was assigned to the 2nd Space Operations Squadron at Hofu Kita Air Base, where I am now in my second year.

The monitoring and surveillance of space is becoming increasingly important, and our mission is evolving day by day, requiring us to take on and overcome unknown challenges as pioneers.

We believe that our efforts will come to fruition, enabling us to fulfill our mission with pride.



The author exchanging opinions with fellow personnel with a variety of knowledge (first on the right)

I have been involved in the operation of space-related systems and equipment to monitor interference against Japanese satellites in both squadrons.

Technical Sergeant (ASDF) TANAKA Tomo

1 2nd Space Operations Squadron, Space Operations Group

2 Hofu Kita Air Base (Hofu, Yamaguchi)

3 Space

1

3

The Role of Air Defense Missile Units in Joint Operations



The author during training to load missiles on a launcher

The Fire Unit operates the Patriot system, and its main mission is to defend Japan against airborne threats such as aircraft and ballistic missiles under joint operations.

I participated in a Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercise conducted

last year and realized the importance of joint operations and the difficulty of multilateral coordination. Moreover, during live-fire training conducted in the U.S. last year, I participated in a joint live-fire exercise with the GSDF and experienced firsthand the nerves from using real ammunition while working under close cooperation.

In light of the recent situation, and amid the growing importance of joint air missile defense, I will engage in training each day and strive to complete missions as a member of a fire missile unit playing a part in these efforts.

Staff Sergeant (ASDF)

MIYAZAKI Tomohiro

1 24th Fire Unit, Northern Air Defense Missile Group

2 Naganuma Sub Base (Naganuma, Hokkaido)

3 Air defense operations



The author during air defense combat training inside equipment

Hear from personnel executing cross-domain operations under the command and control of the JJOC.

GSDf

MSDf

ASDf

Rank Name

1 Working unit

3 Field / Position

2 Location



Missions of the Amphibious Operations Unit

I work for the Mine Warfare Force, which is responsible for amphibious operations of the MSDf. Amphibious operations involve landing squadrons from the sea when necessary, with operations carried out in cooperation with the GSDf and ASDf. Meanwhile, at the outbreak of a disaster, we are also engaged in activities such as delivering relief supplies by water to isolated disaster areas using landing craft air cushions (LCACs) and other similar means. Last year, when we participated in Indo-Pacific Area deployment training, we visited Tahiti and Hawaii to carry out training in amphibious operations and disaster relief with other countries' militaries.

I feel that a "joint mindset" of taking pride in one's own unit while respecting other units and cooperating together to succeed in missions has taken root in each of the ground, maritime, and air units that conduct amphibious operations, and by doing so, we can combine the capabilities of the different organizations to achieve our goals. I believe that spreading this awareness throughout the SDF will contribute to the development of joint operations.



The author cooperating with the GSDf and other countries' militaries (left)



GSDf helicopter landing on an LST, followed by an LCAC

Lieutenant Commander (MSDf)

AOYAMA Kohei

1 Mine Warfare Force Headquarters

2 Yokosuka Area (Yokosuka, Kanagawa)

3 Amphibious Warfare Staff B

4

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For Improving Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities

In joint operations, on top of integrated ground, maritime, and air operations, coordination with space, cyberspace, and electromagnetic domains is important, and thus, improving cross-domain operation capabilities has become essential. Electronic warfare units collect and analyze radio wave information and reduce or nullify the capability of the other side's communications (the mouths and ears in human terms) for command, control, and information sharing, and radar (the eyes in human terms) for early detection of the SDF's actions, thereby ensuring the defense of Japan even when our capabilities in other areas are inferior. I have been analyzing collected radio wave information and making the necessary adjustments and examination with maritime and air electronic warfare units through several training exercises. Feeling strongly about the importance of integrated electromagnetic spectrum operations among the GSDf, MSDf, and ASDf, I hope to play a part in strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations under the new structure through the newly established JJOC. I will forge ahead with my mission by focusing on military technologies and trends that continue to evolve day by day.



The author reporting on collected and analyzed radio wave information



Exchanging of ideas with the ASDf's electronic warfare unit

Captain (GSDf) HASHIMOTO Yukihiro

1 Electronic Warfare Operations Unit

2 Camp Asaka (Nerima, Tokyo)

3 System & Signal

6

As the Front Line of Defense for Cyberspace



The author attending the opening ceremony (far left)

As a member of Security Operation Center (SOC) personnel at the JSDF Cyber Defense Command, I am currently working to counter various types of cyberattacks.

I had the opportunity to participate in a capacity building program in the field of cybersecurity as an instructor in Vietnam last year. This is an activity aimed at enhancing knowledge and technology related to a wide range of cybersecurity issues together with several Asian countries including those from ASEAN, along with strengthening cooperation among participating countries. By training personnel working in cybersecurity from different countries, I was able to gain deeply valuable experience in communicating specialist knowledge in English and learning how much each country values cybersecurity.

While having no knowledge of cybersecurity or English language skills when I enlisted, I have acquired these skills through my education at the SDF, and have been able to apply them during overseas missions, too.

I will continue to work with the goal of protecting cyberspace as the front line of defense.

Sergeant First Class (GSDf) Undisclosed

1 JSDF Cyber Defense Command

2 Undisclosed

3 Undisclosed



The author giving technical instruction to participants from ASEAN countries (far left)

Improving the Treatment and Working Environment and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans

The following is an example of the “Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Force (SDF) Personnel,” which was compiled in FY2024 after four sessions of the “Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel” established by the order of Prime Minister Ishiba.



3rd Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel [Photo provided by the Cabinet Public Affairs Office]

1 Improvement of Treatment for SDF Personnel

Example

It is necessary to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa era, in order that SDF personnel can work with pride and honor. Accordingly, it has been decided to **newly establish or raise the amounts of over 30 different allowances, etc.**, which is an unprecedented change

Improving wages

- **Planned revision to SDF salary schedule**
- **Enhanced allowances for special operations**

New

Allowance for SDF personnel responsible for air traffic control operations (Air Traffic Controller Allowance)
[Example] O-3: Approx. **32,000 yen**/month etc.

Improving treatment of enlisted personnel (privates, seamen, and airmen)

- **Establishment of a new type of fixed-term SDF personnel**
- **Enhancement of higher education support benefits and SDF Scholarship Program**

New

Benefits for new personnel living in barracks or on board a ship (Designated Place Living Adjustment Allowance)

200,000 yen paid annually for the first six years following employment for a **total amount of 1.2 million yen over six years** etc.

Improving treatment of SDF Reserve Personnel and others

- **Raising allowances**
- **Support and system development to facilitate participation in training**

Raise

Increase amount paid over one term (three years) by raising SDF Reserve Allowance and Training Call-up Allowance

(Current) Approx. 270,000 yen ➡ (After revision) **Approx. 680,000 yen** etc.



See details of
initiatives here!

2 Improvement of Living and Working Environments

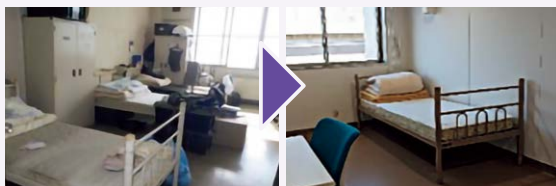
Example

Creating rewarding working environments by improving job satisfaction and working conditions, along with developing living and working environments aligned with the lifestyles of the younger generation

Installation of individual spaces for personnel in barracks

In consideration of privacy, promote the installation of individual spaces for personnel using partitions and similar; the GSDF aims for completion of facilities by FY2025, while the MSDF and ASDF aim for completion by FY2028

etc.



Shared rooms

After introducing individual spaces (image)

Promoting the development of the communication environment

Along with expanding wireless LAN coverage at camps and bases, we will install communication environments to enable Internet access on major Japanese ships by FY2027

etc.



Crewmember watching a program on his cell phone on board a Japanese ship

Personnel using the wireless LAN network for study

3 Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans

Example

Secure and raise post-retirement income of SDF personnel, who retire at a younger age than civil servants in regular services, and establish a more fulfilling lifetime career plan than ever before so that SDF personnel can devote themselves to their mission of national defense with peace of mind

Expansion of re-employment opportunities leveraging acquired knowledge, skills, and experience

- **The MOD and relevant ministries and agencies will work together** to expand re-employment opportunities by **reaching out to companies in a wide range of industries and economic organizations**, thereby enabling smooth re-employment and enhanced wages following re-employment
- **Further promotion of employment in various public sectors** such as the police, fire departments, coast guard, correctional departments, etc.

etc.

Compensation level from the government for SDF personnel following early retirement

Consideration **toward raising Compensation for Retirees under Young-Age Retirement,*** aiming for implementation from FY2026, based on the opinions of external experts, while also expanding re-employment opportunities and enhancing wages following re-employment, etc.

*Policy compensation provided to SDF personnel after retirement to compensate for any disadvantages arising from the early retirement system

etc.

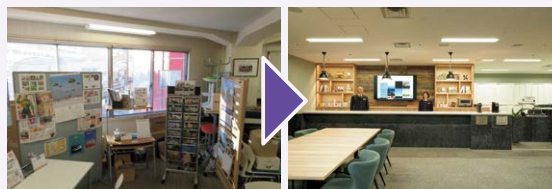
4 Others

Example

Enhancing public relations and recruitment to promote employment of SDF personnel

Promotion of recruitment PR via social media, etc., and enhancement of Provincial Cooperation Offices' approach

etc.



Relocation of recruiting office to a more effective location

Improving the Treatment and Working Environments, and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of SDF Personnel (Voices of Personnel on the Ground)

Hear from SDF personnel on the ground discussing the current situation of improvements to living and working environments in recent years.

1 How Major Specific Measures Will Be Implemented in Future

| | FY2024 | FY2025 | FY2026 | FY2027 | After FY2028 |
|--|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Improvement of treatment | Examination of legislation on establishing Designated Place Living Adjustment Allowance | Examination on revision to SDF personnel salary schedule by external experts | Examination of legislation | | Enforcement of salary schedule |
| | Revision of Cabinet Order on raise of lump-sum allowance for enlisted SDF personnel | Payment of compensation (Designated Place Living Adjustment Allowance) to help with unfamiliar conditions living in barracks, etc. | | | |
| | Examination of legislation toward establishment of a new type of fixed-term SDF personnel | Raise of lump-sum allowance for enlisted SDF personnel | | | |
| | | Preparation of a new system | Employment of a new type of fixed-term SDF personnel (abolition of SDF Personnel Candidate System) | | |
| Improvement of living and working environments | | Trialing management capacity building training and engagement survey | Improvement based on trial | Continual organizational culture reform | |
| | | Introduction of individual spaces in living areas of existing barracks (Planned completion: GSDF by FY2025; MSDF, ASDF by FY2028) | | | |
| | Revision to regulations for relaxing criteria for permission to live outside barracks | | Relaxing of criteria for permission to live outside barracks | | |
| | | Installation of wireless LAN network in all barracks at GSDF camps | | | |
| | | Development of communication environments on major vessels | | | |
| | | Establishment of women's quarters and separate bathrooms and bathing facilities for women (increase in ratio of female SDF personnel to 12% by FY2030) | | | |
| Establishment of new lifetime career plans | | MOD and relevant ministries and agencies work together to expand re-employment opportunities by reaching out to companies in a wide range of industries and economic organizations | | | |
| | | Expansion of employment of retired SDF personnel at disaster prevention and crisis management departments of local governments, ensuring stable employment and treatment | | | |
| | | Establishment of system to enable assistance for re-employment up to the age of 65 | System development | Begin assistance | |
| | | Examination on raising retirement age from FY2028 | | | Raising of retirement age |
| | | Examination on early retirement compensation by external experts | Examination of legislation | Raising of early retirement compensation level | |
| | Establishment of office responsible for reinforcing the human resource base | Validation and follow-up to measures by office responsible for reinforcing the human resource base | | | |

3 Voice of MSDF Personnel on Improvement of Living and Working Environments



Scene of training on the Training Squadron (1)

I participated in an overseas training cruise conducted in FY2024 as an officer trainee. The training environment has changed significantly from a classroom-based officer candidate school to practical training-oriented training cruises. I repeatedly underwent various types of training, including shiphandling and navigational duties on a training vessel specialized for practical training, becoming accustomed to life on a Japanese ship at sea for long periods of time and acquiring the necessary skills for working in a unit. Outside of the training, I was able to spend my time in a well-balanced way, such as carrying out physical education onboard and participating in events. During the training cruise, I learned new things from all aspects of my training and daily life, spending many productive days onboard.

I participated in an overseas training cruise conducted in FY2024 as an officer trainee. The training environment has changed significantly from a classroom-based officer candidate school to practical training-oriented training cruises. I repeatedly underwent various types of training, including shiphandling and navigational duties on a training vessel specialized for practical training, becoming accustomed to life on a Japanese ship at sea for long periods of time and acquiring the necessary skills for working in a unit. Outside of the training, I was able to spend my time in a well-balanced way, such as carrying out physical education onboard and participating in events. During the training cruise, I learned new things from all aspects of my training and daily life, spending many productive days onboard.

In addition, Starlink communication was installed as a trial run this year, allowing us crewmembers at sea to keep in touch with our

I am committed to fully utilizing the experience I gained through this enhanced training environment in my future work so that I can contribute to national defense.

Lieutenant Junior Grade (MSDF)

NOJIMA Yukiko

1 Destroyer JS Kirishima

2 Yokosuka Area (Yokosuka, Kanagawa)

3 Communications



Scene of training on the Training Squadron (2)



See details of
initiatives here!

2 Current Situation of Improvements to Living and Working Environments of GSDF Personnel



The author sitting around the table in the well-equipped kitchen (left)

I have been serving at Camp Yao since 2022 and live in the women's SDF personnel barracks within the camp.

Since 2023, the barracks have been renovated to improve shower and washroom facilities, along with heating, cooling, and other utilities.

In addition, furniture in living areas has been updated to more stylish options, and the carpets and wallpaper have been replaced to match the furniture, making rooms more to our liking.

Moreover, we can use the provided Wi-Fi for personal development through online lectures.

It seems that the MOD and all branches of the SDF

will continue to make improvements to living and working environments in order to make each personnel member feel comfortable. Improving living environments enables us to focus on our missions with a high level of motivation, on top of making our private lives more comfortable.

Leading Private (GSDF) MINAMI Norie

1 Middle Air Group

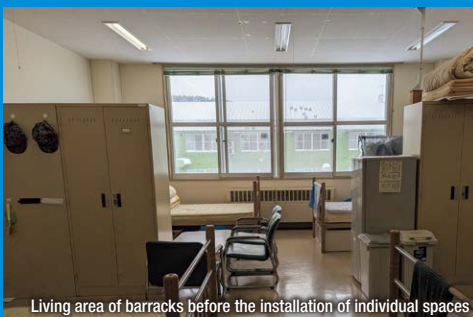
2 Camp Yao (Yao, Osaka)

3 Aviation



The author using the Wi-Fi to study

4 Initiatives for Improvement of Living and Working Environments at Shariki Sub Base



Living area of barracks before the installation of individual spaces

I was assigned to the Shariki Sub Base in 2018. When I got the assignment from Technical School, my honest impression was, "Where's Shariki?" At my new post, I was confused and didn't know anything, but seniors at the base welcomed me warmly. However, I was very concerned about the deteriorating facilities and equipment. When I asked, they told me that some facilities had been in use since 1980, when the base was established. The facilities were not exactly attractive. It was also difficult for me to get used to living together with several other people in one room.

Now, around seven years later, the Shariki Sub Base is being regenerated. The living and working environments are being improved: first, partitions have been added to the living quarters of barracks to ensure that each person can have a private space, enabling them to concentrate on their studies and hobbies. In addition, Wi-Fi is now available, which makes life a lot more comfortable. And, although the recent summer heat in

Aomori Prefecture has been extremely severe, the living and working environment has been greatly improved by the installation of air conditioners.

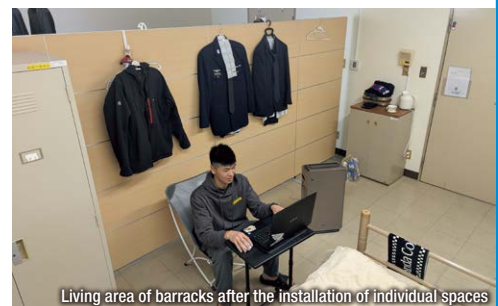
While I am very grateful for the private space, we all communicate with each other and create a cheerful and pleasant atmosphere so that personnel living in the same barracks do not feel distant from one another. Just like the seniors who gave me a warm welcome, I will devote myself to my work with the aim of creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere at the Shariki Sub Base.

Staff Sergeant (ASDF) OMURA Sora

1 21st Fire Unit, Northern Air Defense Missile Group

2 Shariki Sub Base (Tsugaru, Aomori)

3 Missile equipment maintenance



Living area of barracks after the installation of individual spaces

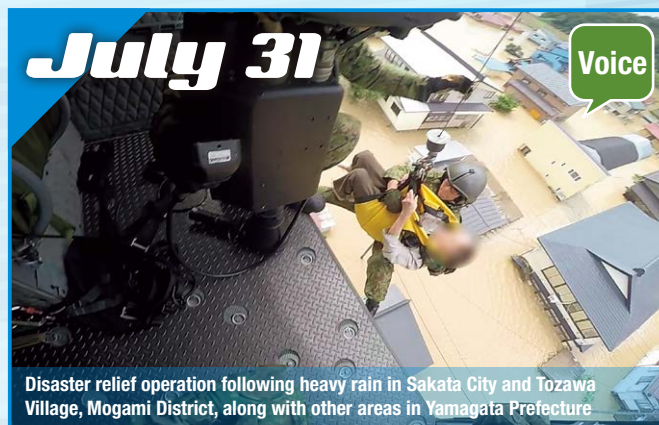
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This Year in Defense

(National and International Events in FY2024)

“This Year in Defense” takes a look back on the harsh security situation in and around Japan in FY2024, as well as responses and initiatives by the MOD/SDF.



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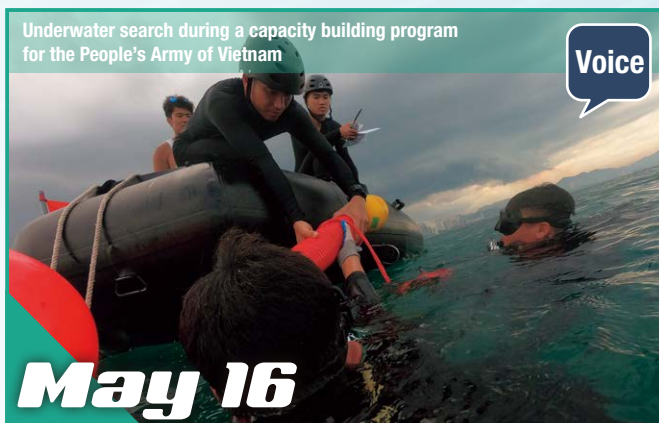
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GSDF

MSDF

ASDF

Administrative
officials, etc.

**September
to November**

Voice

JGSDF Exercise 2024

October 31

Chairman Kim Jong-un observes a ballistic missile launch

10

11

12

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Transportation of Japanese nationals and others
from the Lebanese Republic

Voice

October 4

First successful landing of F-35B on JS Kaga

Voice

October 20

Prime Minister Ishiba carries out Troop Review during the 70th Anniversary of
the Establishment of the MOD and SDF

November 9

Inauguration of President Trump

Voice

January 20

May 16

Participating in a Capacity Building Program (Underwater Unexploded Ordnance Clearance Field) in Vietnam

I provided guidance and advice on searching for, identifying, and clearing underwater unexploded ordnance to instructors from the Vietnam People's Navy, improving their capabilities and enabling the safe clearance of unexploded ordnance and similar devices submerged during the Vietnam War.

As an explosive ordnance disposal diver and SDF member, I am proud to have completed my mission in an environment of differing language, customs, and culture, while contributing to building trust and strengthening relations bilaterally.

Amid growing global instability in the international situation, I felt strongly that building trust between people through programs

such as this activity would create a pathway to future cooperation in the international community.

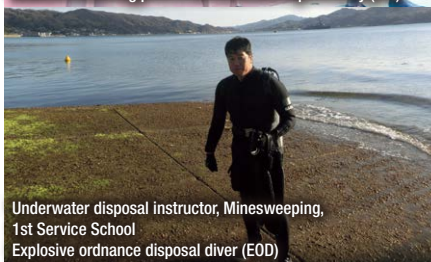
Petty Officer First Class (MSDF)

NASU Hayato

- 1 Minesweeping, 1st Service School
- 2 Etajima Area (Etajima, Hiroshima)
- 3 Explosive ordnance disposal diver



The author conducting diving drills with officer trainees at an outdoor swimming pool of the Vietnam People's Navy (left)



Underwater disposal instructor, Minesweeping, 1st Service School Explosive ordnance disposal diver (EOD)

July 26 to August 12

Captain (GSDF) **TAKATANI Daichi**

- 1 Wrestling Section, SDF Physical Training School
- 2 Camp Asaka
- 3 Transportation (Nerima, Tokyo)
- 4 Silver medal in Wrestling Freestyle 74kg

Petty Officer Second Class (MSDF)

SATO Taishu

- 1 Modern Pentathlon Section, SDF Physical Training School
- 2 Camp Asaka
- 3 Physical trainer (Nerima, Tokyo)
- 4 Silver medal in Modern Pentathlon

First Lieutenant (GSDF) **NIIZOE Saki**

- 1 Judo Section, SDF Physical Training School
- 2 Camp Asaka
- 3 Transportation (Nerima, Tokyo)
- 4 Silver medal in Judo Mixed Team

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July 31

Engaged in Disaster Relief Operation Following Heavy Rain in Sakata City and Tozawa Village, Mogami District in Yamagata Prefecture

I work as a relief worker for the 20th Infantry Regiment. Following heavy rain hitting Sakata City and Tozawa Village, Mogami District, along with other areas in Yamagata Prefecture in July 2024, I was engaged in disaster relief operations in the area. As a relief worker, I accompanied the 3rd Company, which confirmed the safety of people in isolated areas

of Sakata and transported relief supplies. When I was ordered to

be dispatched, as a female SDF personnel member, I headed to the area with the desire to quickly bring relief to people, especially the women, children, and elderly who had been affected by the disaster. Through my activities at that time, I realized that I was fulfilling my role as an SDF member by providing health care support to the people affected and other SDF personnel. I hope to leverage this experience for my own personal growth and to continue to pursue my duties as a member of the medical team.



The author during training at the camp



The author carrying out health checks on other personnel

Sergeant First Class (GSDF) **SATO Masaki**

- 1 20th Infantry Regiment
- 2 Camp Jinmachi (Higashine, Yamagata)
- 3 Medical

(Note) Rank and workplace are correct as of March 31, 2025

Success of SDF Physical Training School Medalists, and Their Experiences and Thoughts on Winning a Medal

After securing my place in the Paris Olympics, I focused on meeting daily targets rather than aiming for a medal. I valued the new version of myself that emerged through a process of thinking about what I lacked and what I needed to work on, and working on those points. I realized that I was able to perform at wrestling thanks to the help of many people, which once again imbued me with a sense of gratitude.

Rather than keeping this experience just for myself, I want to keep working hard so that many others can benefit from this experience and leverage it in various situations.

What ignited the fire inside me most was the time I was a modern pentathlon official at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics while still an active athlete. Watching the athletes competing on the grand stage right in front of my eyes instilled a strong desire to compete myself the next time and win a medal as a representative of Japan. There were many ups and downs between 2021 and the 2024 Paris Olympics, but as a result of training daily with a deadly fervor and repeated hard work, I qualified for the Paris Olympics, even managing to win a silver medal in Paris.

I would like to thank my family and team who supported me all the way, as well as each and every person who has cheered me on and stood by me.

The Paris Olympics was a bittersweet time for me. I had been preparing to win the gold medal since being selected for the national team a year prior to the Olympics, but I was not able to achieve the results I was hoping for in the individual competition. Although I was feeling completely miserable, I was able to rouse my spirits in the team competition to help win the silver medal.

On my return to Japan, I was warmly welcomed home by my SDF colleagues, feeling relief after having missed out on a medal in the individual competition. At the same time, I felt proud once again to have competed as an SDF athlete. I would like to leverage this experience in my efforts to train future SDF athletes.



Won by technical superiority over Cuban athlete in the second round [KYODO NEWS]



Winning the modern pentathlon (fencing, show jumping, swimming, cross-country running, pistol shooting) [KYODO NEWS]



Scene from match in which the author won by ippon against an athlete from Serbia in the Mixed Team Quarter-Finals [KYODO NEWS]

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September to November

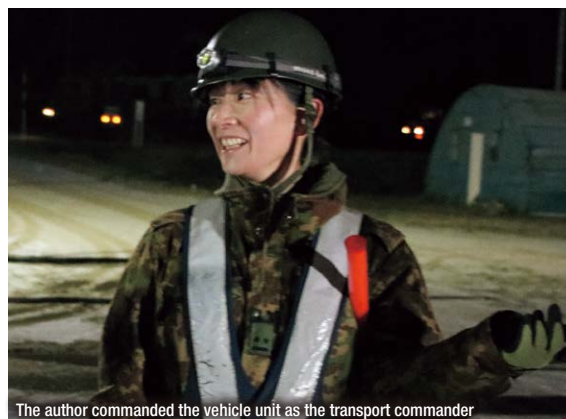
Alongside Fellow Personnel

The JGSDF Exercise 2024 was the first field training exercise for all units of the GSDF in three years, since 2021. The Ground Staff Office and units under the Ground Component Command carried out training as a sequence of actions from the operations preparation stage to the operations stage on a national scale. In particular, field training included the mobile deployment of divisions and brigades, the establishment and maintenance of a logistics support posture, and similar activities. I participated in the exercise as a transport commander. Normally, I am engaged in transportation within Hokkaido island, but in this exercise, I was responsible for transportation across the sea to Honshu island. Our unit is responsible for transporting

tanks and other large pieces of equipment, which requires high-level maneuvering skills. The unit actively transports equipment overnight between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. I am proud that I was able to complete the transportation mission while sharing the highs and lows with my fellow personnel.



A vehicle unit that transports tanks and other equipment at night



The author commanded the vehicle unit as the transport commander

First Lieutenant (GSDF)
TAKAHASHI Rinka

- 1 314th Transportation Company, Northern Army Transportation
- 2 Camp Higashi-Chitose (Chitose, Hokkaido)
- 3 Transportation

September 23

Overview of Quick Reaction Alert against Airspace Intrusion at the Time

On Monday, September 23, 2024, a Russian IL-38 patrol aircraft intruded into Japanese airspace north of Rebun Island, Hokkaido three times. As a fighter pilot tasked with the mission of airspace intrusion countermeasures, in close coordination with the weapon controller on the ground, I gave the warning using flares for the first time as part of the ASDF.

Although the intrusions by the Russian aircraft were limited to approximately 30 seconds to one minute each, we were able to take action without hesitation because we usually conduct airspace intrusion countermeasure missions and flight training based on our understanding of relevant laws and regulations. I am sure that all pilots in the unit I belong to would have certainly been able to respond in the same way.

As we conducted the airspace intrusion countermeasure mission carried

out in an orderly fashion, including the use of flares as a warning, we will demonstrate both domestically and internationally the MOD/SDF's willingness and ability to resolutely protect the peace and independence of Japan.

Undisclosed Undisclosed
 1 Northern Air Defense Force
 2 Undisclosed
 3 Pilot



The photograph is for illustrative purposes only.

10

11

12

October 4

Engaged in Mission to Transport Japanese Nationals and Others Overseas

In October 2024, I was assigned as a loadmaster of a C-2 transport aircraft to transport Japanese nationals and others from the tense situation in the Lebanese Republic to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Considering the feelings of evacuees, I wanted to be there for them so that I could relieve some of their anxiety and help them feel at ease on board the aircraft. With this in mind, I guided them through the flight and worked to complete the mission while taking care of their physical condition during the mission. When I arrived at our destination in Jordan and received words of gratitude from them, I felt a sense of relief and accomplishment.

Many female SDF personnel were assigned to this mission

and actively contributed with their unique perspectives and approaches as women. As the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative further expands the opportunities for female SDF personnel to play an active role in their duties, I will continue to strive for daily training to complete future missions to be assigned.



The author (right) discusses guidance for Japanese nationals on board the aircraft



Female SDF personnel engaged in the mission (front row) and C-2 transport aircraft

Staff Sergeant (ASDF) EZAWA Kiho
 1 403rd Tactical Airlift Squadron, Flight Group, 3rd Tactical Airlift Wing
 2 Miho Air Base (Sakaiminato, Tottori)
 3 Air transport (tactical transport)

October 20

Completed F-35B Shipboard Operational Testing

From October to November 2024, I was engaged in F-35B shipboard operational testing as Aviation Officer on board the JS Kaga. Tests were conducted in the waters around San Diego, U.S., with the support of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and others. We collected various types of data, not only on short take-off and vertical landing on the vessel, but also on all aspects of shipboard operations, including transfers from the flight deck to the hangar. As Aviation Officer, I worked with U.S. officials in the air traffic control center during testing to ensure the testing was carried out safely and smoothly, building a strong bond of trust with the U.S. side through repeatedly coordinating together. I also gave various instructions on Japan-U.S. aircraft operations. As someone who was actually there on the ground, I would be delighted if the results of this testing lead to the on-board operation of F-35Bs on Izumo-class destroyers, which the ASDF has plans to introduce, and to enhancing Japan's defense capabilities, in addition to strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Commander (MSDF) KUROGI Michitaka

1 JS Kaga

2 Kure Area (Kure, Hiroshima)

3 Rotary-wing pilot



1

2

3

January 20

Facing the Turbulent U.S. at the Front Lines

I have been working at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. since June 2024. As new policies are introduced one after another under President Trump, I spend my days exchanging opinions with the Pentagon, along with various related parties including think tank experts, members of the U.S. defense industry, and congressional staff, in an effort to explore the background behind the policies and think over how Japan should respond to them.

Through my interactions with such “Washingtonians,” I have come to understand firsthand the high expectations for Japan in respect of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and I am keenly aware of the enormity of Japan's responsibility as part of the international community. Facing the turbulent U.S. at the front lines, I would like to do my utmost, however minor, toward achieving a “new golden age of Japan-U.S. relations.”

Councillor KAWAI Junya

1 Embassy of Japan in the United States of America

2 Washington D.C.

3 Political Section



With the White House in the background



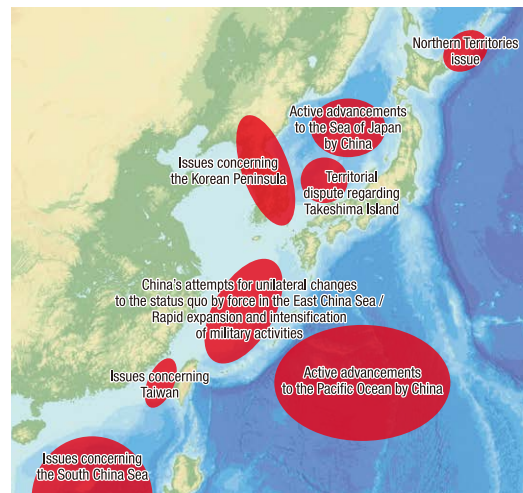
Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Overview

Chapter 1

International Society Faces Its Greatest Trial of the Postwar Era

- States that do not share universal values or political and economic systems based on such values are expanding their influence. Unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts represent a serious challenge to the existing international order. The international community is facing its greatest trial since World War II and entering a new era of crisis. The global balance of power is shifting dramatically and competition among states continues. In particular, the inter-state competition between the United States and China is likely to intensify even further in future.
- Rapid developments in science and technology are fundamentally changing the paradigm of security. Countries are striving to develop innovative technologies that can become so-called game changers. The traditional military structure is undergoing fundamental changes, as are warfare tactics and strategies.
- Risks in cyberspace and other domains are becoming more serious and other security-related global issues such as information warfare and climate change are emerging.
- Gray zone situations involving territorial disputes are constantly occurring. The use of hybrid warfare, which combines military and non-military means, may become even more sophisticated.



Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Increasingly Severe Security Situation in the Indo-Pacific Region

- Such global security environment conditions and challenges are particularly prominent in the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is located, and are likely to intensify still further in future.
- It cannot be ruled out that a serious situation similar to the aggression against Ukraine may occur in the Indo-Pacific region in future, particularly in East Asia.

Russia's Aggression and Defense by Ukraine

Chapter 2

- Russia's aggression against Ukraine undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It is a serious violation of international law prohibiting the use of force and of the United Nations (UN) Charter. Such unilateral changes to the status quo by force have shaken the very foundation of the international order, including in Asia.
- This situation, in which a permanent member of the Security Council, which is supposed to take primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, openly engages in military actions challenging international law and the international order, claims innocent lives and repeatedly uses language and actions that can be interpreted as threats involving nuclear weapons, is unprecedented. If such aggression is tolerated, it could send out the wrong message and implication that unilateral changes to the status quo by force are also acceptable elsewhere. Accordingly, the international community, including Japan, should never tolerate Russia's action.
- In addition to Ukraine's strong resistance, the international community has united to implement strong sanctions and other measures. As an ally of the United States — a NATO member — and a country located on the opposite side of Europe across the Eurasian continent, Japan must closely monitor future changes in the European situation, including their strategic impact, acknowledging that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable.



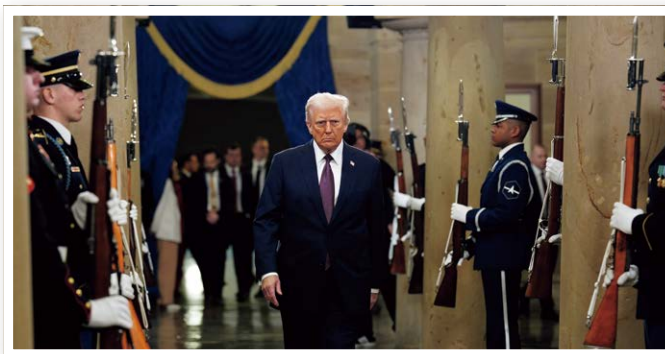
Damage in Kharkiv, Ukraine (January 2024) [AFP/Jiji Press]

Defense Policies of Countries

Chapter 3

The United States - Establishment of the Second Trump Administration

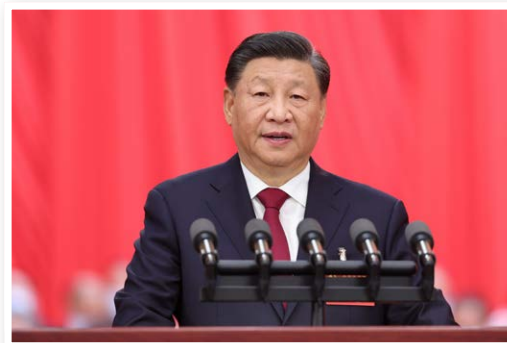
- As a result of the U.S. presidential election held in November 2024, former President Trump was elected again as the 47th president. The second Trump administration was established in January 2025.
- Even prior to taking office, President Trump had been making statements on security issues such as the situations in Ukraine, the Middle East, and Taiwan. Since the establishment of his second administration, President Trump has been actively engaged in a variety of efforts along with the Secretary of Defense and others.
- Developments in the field of U.S. security have a significant impact on the security environment of the Indo-Pacific region, where Japan is located, and future developments will continue to draw close attention.



President Trump's inauguration ceremony in January 2025 [EPA/Jiji]

China - Intensifying Unilateral Changes to the Status Quo by Force and Such Attempts

- China's external posture, military activities, and other activities are a matter of serious concern for Japan and the international community and present an unprecedented and the greatest strategic challenge which Japan should respond with its comprehensive national power and in cooperation and collaboration with its ally, like-minded countries, and others.
- For more than 30 years, China has sustained high-level growth of its defense budget without transparency, engaging in broad and rapid improvement of its military power in qualitative and quantitative terms with focus on nuclear, missile, naval and air forces.
- China has been intensifying its activities across the entire region surrounding Japan, including in the East China Sea, particularly in the area around the Senkaku Islands, the Sea of Japan, and the western Pacific Ocean, extending beyond the so-called the first island chain to the second island chain.
- In 2024, a series of incidents occurred, including a Chinese military aircraft intruding into Japan's territorial airspace in August, and the navigation of a Chinese Navy aircraft carrier through a maritime area close to Japan's territorial waters in September. China's intensified military activities have created a situation that could seriously impact Japan's security, which is a cause of grave concern.
- In May 2025, a helicopter intruded Japan's territorial airspace after taking off from a China Coast Guard vessel that was intruding into Japan's territorial waters near the Senkaku Islands. China has been relentlessly continuing its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force around the Senkaku Islands, leading to a matter of grave concern.
- China has intensified its military activities around Taiwan. China conducted military exercises in the sea and airspace several times. It is believed that through the series of activities, China seeks to create a fait accompli where the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is operating, and improve its actual combat capabilities.
- China has intensified its activities in the South China Sea based on assertions, which are conflicting with existing orders of the seas, and promoting the establishment of military bases. Such actions to further promote unilateral change of the status quo by force and turning it into a fait accompli are serious concerns to Japan. Issues surrounding the South China Sea are directly connected to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and represent a legitimate concern, not only for Japan, which has major sea lanes in the South China Sea, but also for the entire international community.
- China is further strengthening its cooperation with Russia, including in military activities. It has also conducted joint bomber flights and naval navigations with Russia in the vicinity of Japan. These repeated joint activities are clearly intended for demonstration of force against Japan and are a grave concern from the perspective of the national security of Japan.



Xi Jinping, currently in his third term as general secretary [EPA/Jiji]



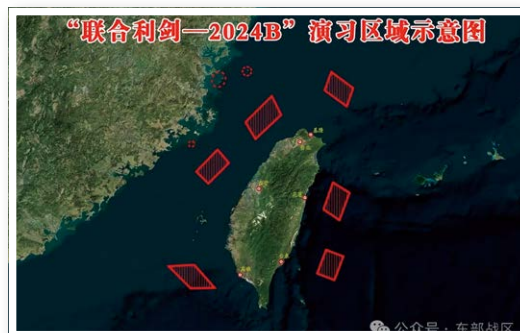
Image released by China at the time of the ICBM launch (September 2024) [EPA/Jiji]



Security Environment Surrounding Japan

U.S.-China Strategic Competition Escalates; Tension Grows in Taiwan

- The political, economic, and military competition between the U.S. and China has become even more evident in recent years due to various concerns such as changes in the balance of power caused by China's growth and various pending issues.
- The overall military balance between China and Taiwan is rapidly tilting in China's favor.
- Regarding Taiwan, China firmly maintains the principle that Taiwan is part of China and that the Taiwan issue is its internal affair. China has repeatedly stated that it has not renounced the use of force. China has further intensified its military activities around Taiwan.
- There is growing concern over China's pursuit of unification through gray-zone military activities. Some point out that military intimidation, blockades, and other such means are currently China's main options to be used against Taiwan. In the event of a blockade of Taiwan, there is a possibility that China will deploy its coast guard at the forefront to carry out the blockade within the gray zone.



Exercise area in the vicinity of Taiwan announced by the Chinese military (October 2024) [Jiji]

North Korea - Making Advances in Nuclear and Missile Development

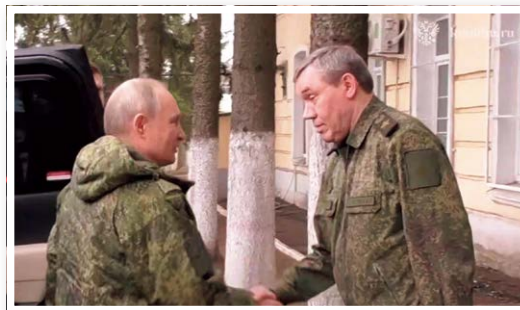
- North Korea's military activities are posing an even more grave and imminent threat to Japan's security than ever before. They seriously undermine the peace and security of the region and the international community. They also represent a serious challenge to the entire international community with regard to non-proliferation of weapons including weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).
- North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests in the past and is believed to possess the technological capability to mount a nuclear warhead on its ballistic missiles with their range covering the Japanese Archipelago and to strike Japan.
- In recent years, North Korea has continuously pursued missile development at an extremely rapid pace, launching ballistic missiles that fly with irregular trajectories as well as so-called "hypersonic missiles." North Korea is also pursuing operationalization of long-range cruise missiles designed to carry a nuclear warhead.
- Since 2023, North Korea has conducted launches of the solid-fuel propelled intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-class "Hwasong-18" and "Hwasong-19" as well as launches using ballistic missile technology for the purpose of a satellite launch. North Korea is focusing on qualitatively improving its nuclear and missile capabilities, such as diversifying its equipment systems and acquiring intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) means that complement its nuclear and missile operational capabilities.



Image released by North Korea when it launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile "Hwasong-19" [Jiji Press Photo]

Russia - The Strategic Alliance between Russia Embracing the "Strong State" Model and China

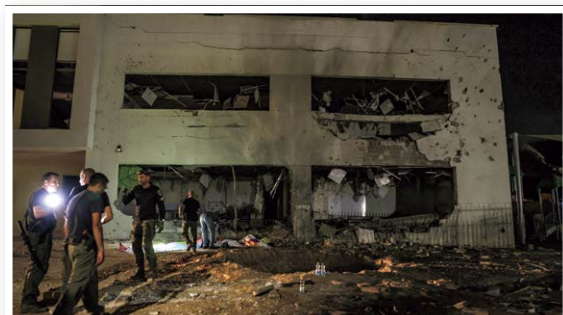
- The Russian military is continuing active military activities in the vicinity of Japan and its surrounding areas, showing its tendency to deploy the latest military equipment in the Far East. Russia's military activities in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, coupled with its strategic partnership with China, are posing a strong security concern.
- Russia has been developing and deploying various new weapons under its "strong state" model. Since the start of its aggression against Ukraine, it has also been moving to increase troop numbers and expand and reorganize its military units.
- Russia is continuing active military activities in the Northern Territories, which are inherent territories of Japan, under illegal occupation. As well as the ongoing construction of facilities for its troops in the region, Russia has deployed new military equipment such as coastal (surface-to-ship) missiles belonging to its Navy and fighter jets belonging to its aerospace forces. It also conducts large-scale exercises in the surrounding seas and airspace.



President Putin (left) during his visit to Russia's Kursk oblast (March 12, 2025) [AFP/Jiji]

Other Regions

- Following the outbreak of conflict between Israel and Hamas, clashes also erupted between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and others. In 2024, a series of attacks and retaliation occurred between Israel and Iran, and heightened tensions between the two sides are ongoing today.
- In Syria, anti-government forces led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham launched an offensive against the Syrian government military and seized control of the capital city of Damascus in December 2024. The Assad regime collapsed, and it was agreed that governmental authority would be provisionally transferred to the "Syrian Salvation Government."



A school building in southern Israel heavily damaged by an Iranian missile strike (October 1, 2024) [AFP/Jiji]

Trends and Challenges Facing the International Community Concerning the Space, Cyber and Electromagnetic Domains and Information Warfare

Chapter 4

Trends in Science and Technology that Are Expanding to Information Warfare and Elsewhere

- The creation of science, technology, and innovation are what underpin Japan's economic and social development. Using these technological capabilities appropriately is essential, not only for security but also to address global-scale issues like climate change.
- To ensure technological superiority, each country is focusing its efforts on the research, development and military applications of AI, quantum technology, next-generation information and communication technology and other advanced, potentially game-changing technologies that could dramatically change the future character of warfare.
- Information warfare by spreading disinformation and other means is ongoing.

Trends in the Space, Cyber and Electromagnetic Domains

- Space-based technologies and information and communication networks have become core infrastructures in people's everyday lives and for the military. Meanwhile, it has been pointed out that countries such as China and Russia are strengthening their capabilities to interfere with other countries' use of space and that their governments and militaries are involved in cyberattacks.
- Countries are working to improve their capabilities in space, cyber and electromagnetic domains; aware that they represent methods of warfare that effectively deter enemies from demonstrating their war potential.



Pyongyang General Control Center of the National Aerospace Technology Administration [Korean Central News Agency - Jiji]

Transfer and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

- The transfer and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and the missiles delivering them, have been a grave threat since the end of the Cold War.
- In recent years, as competition and confrontation among states have intensified and as the current international security environment becomes complex and severe, there is concern that it is becoming difficult for the international community to rally together in taking on common challenges such as arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.



NATO cyber exercise [Website of NATO]

Basic Concepts of Japan's Security and Defense

Chapter 1

- The first priority in protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people of Japan should be the development of active diplomacy. It is essential to coordinate with like-minded countries and promote multilateral cooperation with the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a cornerstone.
- At the same time, diplomacy needs to be backed by defense capabilities. As part of its strategic approach, Japan will actively pursue diplomacy under the vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) and promote the fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities, including the possession of counterstrike capabilities.
- Adhering under the Constitution to the basic precepts of maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses threats to other countries, Japan ensures civilian control and observes the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.



Defense Minister Nakatani inspects the special guard of honor at his inauguration (October 2024)

The Three Documents, including the National Security Strategy of Japan

Chapter 2

National Security Strategy (NSS)

- The NSS is Japan's supreme national security policy document. It provides strategic guidance for policies in wide-ranging security-related areas, including not only diplomacy and defense, but also economic security, technology and intelligence.
- Japan will take the necessary measures to ensure that the budget level in FY2027 for both the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities and complementary initiatives reaches 2% of FY2022's GDP (approximately 11 trillion yen).

National Defense Strategy (NDS)

- The NDS comprehensively presents Japan's defense objectives and approaches and the means by which Japan accomplishes those objectives.
- The most consequential responsibility of the Government of Japan (GOJ), and the basis of Japan's national security, is to resolutely defend the lives of Japanese nationals and their peaceful livelihoods as well as Japan's territorial land, airspace, and waters. The international community, including Japan, is facing serious challenges and has entered into a new crisis. Japan needs to squarely face this grim reality and fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities, focusing on opponent capabilities and new ways of warfare.
- In fundamentally reinforcing its defense capabilities, Japan focuses on seven capabilities: (i) stand-off defense capabilities, (ii) integrated air and missile defense capabilities, (iii) unmanned defense capabilities, (iv) cross-domain operation capabilities, (v) command and control / intelligence-related functions, (vi) mobile deployment capabilities / civil protection and (vii) sustainability and resiliency.
- The NDS calls for the possession of counterstrike capabilities that mainly capitalize on stand-off defense capabilities, which are key to deterring invasion of Japan.

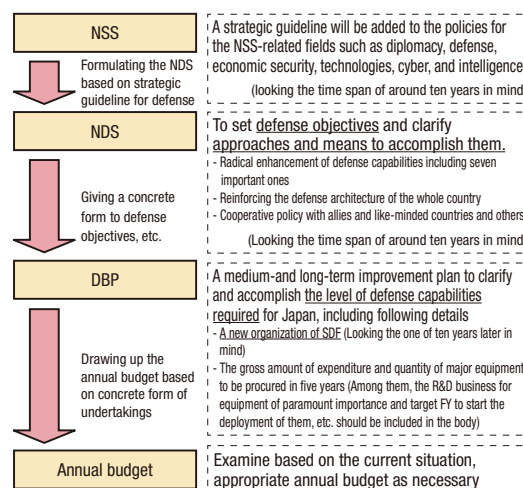


Fig. II-1-3-1 (Relationship among the NSS, the NDS, the DBP, the Fiscal Year Budget)

Defense Buildup Program (DBP)

- The DBP indicates the level of defense capability Japan should possess to fundamentally reinforce its defense capabilities under the NDS. It also sets out total expenditure and the quantity of major equipment to be procured to achieve this end.
- By FY2027, five years after the formulation of the DBP, Japan will strengthen its defense capabilities to a point where it will be able to take primary responsibility for countering any invasion of its nation and disrupt and defeat such threats while gaining the support of its ally and others. Further efforts will be made approximately 10 years after formulating the DBP to better ensure that these defense objectives have been met and reinforce Japan's defense capabilities so that any invasion of Japan can be disrupted and defeated earlier and at places further afield.
- The expenditure target for the buildup of defense capability required under the implementation of the DBP for the five years from FY2023 through FY2027 shall be approximately 43 trillion yen.

Defense Buildup and the Budget

Chapter 3

- With the basic understanding that Japan is facing the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, GOJ has continued to allocate the necessary and sufficient budget for the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities in FY2025.
- On an annual expenditure basis, the GOJ steadily increased the budget, taking into account project progress and budget execution status, with a total of 8,474.8 billion yen.
- On a contract basis, the GOJ allocated 8,433.2 billion yen by adding up the projects scheduled to begin in FY2025.
- The seven fields for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities continue to be advanced. Priority was given to the buildup of various stand-off missiles, the construction of a satellite constellation, and the development of the next-generation defense communications satellite.
- Based on the “Basic Policy on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel,” the FY2025 budget allocates the necessary expenses for related projects.
- To reinforce defense capabilities, efforts will be made to secure financial resources, including tax measures.
- The total amount of expenses for the Defense Buildup Program and its “complementary initiatives” in FY2025 is set at 9.9 trillion yen, equivalent to 1.8% of Japan’s GDP at the time of the formulation of the NSS (FY2022).








| | |
|--|---|
| (1) Stand-off Defense Capabilities | <p>•Strengthening the defense capabilities to oppose invading forces from a safe distance where we will not be attacked</p>  |
| (2) Integrated Air and Missile Defense Capabilities | <p>•Strengthening our capabilities to respond to increasingly diverse and complex airborne threats such as missiles</p>  <p>Shipbuilding of an Aegis System-Equipped Vessel (Note)</p> |
| (3) Unmanned Defense Capabilities | <p>•Strengthening our capabilities, e.g., via intelligence gathering and combat support with unmanned assets</p>  <p>Preparation of UAV for reconnaissance (for mid-range) (Note)</p> |
| (4) Cross-Domain Operation Capabilities | <p>•Strengthening space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, land, sea and air capabilities necessary for combat by fusing all capabilities</p>  <p>Development of Stand-off Electronic Warfare Aircraft (Note)</p> |
| (5) Command and Control and Intelligence-related Functions | <p>•Strengthening command and control and intelligence-related functions to accelerate and refine decision-making</p>  <p>Acquisition of Signals Intelligence Aircraft (Note-2)</p> |
| (6) Mobile Deployment Capabilities/ Civil Protection | <p>•Strengthening maritime and air transport capabilities to quickly maneuver and deploy the necessary forces •Implementing civil protection by utilizing the above capabilities</p>  <p>Acquisition of transport vessels</p> |
| (7) Sustainability and Resiliency | <p>•Preparation of necessary and sufficient ammunition, guided missiles and fuel from an early stage •Securing expenditures for acquiring equipment parts, equipment repairing and improving the resiliency of facilities</p>  <p>Securing the ammunition storage facilities (Note)</p> |

Fig. II-2-2-2 Seven Functions and Capabilities on which to Focus in Fundamentally Reinforcing Defense Capabilities and Their Images

Organizations Responsible for Japan’s Security and Defense

Chapter 4

- The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/Self-Defense Forces (SDF) develops and executes policies based on the fundamental stance discussed at the National Security Council, which is a part of the Cabinet.
- To fulfill the duties of the SDF rapidly and effectively, the MOD/SDF has adopted a joint operations system that operates the Ground SDF (GSDF), the Maritime SDF (MSDF) and the Air SDF (ASDF) integrally.
- The “JSDF Joint Operations Command (JJOC),” headed by the Commander of the JSDF Joint Operations Command, was established in Ichigaya in March 2025 to build a system that enables seamless cross-domain operations at all stages from peacetime to contingency, with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of joint operations of each SDF service.
- This will allow the unification of the command of joint operations by the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF, as well as building of capacity for cross-domain operations on a daily basis.



The JJOC activation ceremony (March 2025)

Framework for the SDF Activities

Chapter 5

- Under the SDF law and other laws and regulations, the SDF defends Japan and also maintains public order, responds to important influence situations, and engages in international peace cooperation activities.



Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

Chapter 1

Responses to Invasion of Japan

- Surrounded by water and possessing an extensive coastline, Japan has numerous remote islands far from the main island, a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and a broad continental shelf. It is a challenge to defend to the end the lives, physical well-being, and property of its people, as well as its territorial land, airspace, and waters, and abundant resources widely distributed in these areas. In addition, as Japan relies on overseas trade for much of its resources and food, it is essential to reinforce the free and open maritime order and ensure the freedom and safety of navigation and flight.
- The MOD/SDF organically integrates operational capabilities across land, sea, and air domains, as well as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. By coordinating GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF units to conduct joint operations, they deter and eliminate invasions of Japan.
- Moreover, in addition to responding to invasions as well as unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts, the MOD/SDF is also continuously conducting intelligence and surveillance from peacetime to maintain a posture to respond swiftly and appropriately to any airspace violations and territorial intrusions.
- In FY2024, ASDF aircraft scrambled 704 times, including 464 times for Chinese aircraft and 237 times for Russian aircraft. In response to airspace violations by Chinese aircraft in August and Russian aircraft in September 2024, as well as airspace violations by Chinese aircraft in May 2025, ASDF aircraft scrambled and took appropriate action.
- Furthermore, necessary measures are taken by the Defense Intelligence Headquarters, which plays a central role in addressing integrated information warfare with special regard to the cognitive dimension. This type of warfare influences people's perceptions, impacts public opinion, and affects government decision-making through means such as the spread of disinformation and the spread of information aimed at eroding trust in government and dividing society.
- In addition, Japan continues efforts to respond to North Korea's "illicit ship-to-ship transfers" in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions. The MOD/SDF also continues its efforts on counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and on the safety of Japan-related vessels in the Middle East, in order to ensure the stable use of critical sea lines.



ASDF fighters engaged in a scramble



MSDF destroyer directly escorting a vessel in the Gulf of Aden (in the background of photograph)

Fundamental Reinforcement of Japan's Defense Capabilities

- Japan's defense capabilities going forward will be fundamentally reinforced with an emphasis on seven fields to enhance deterrence and response capabilities, focused on adversaries' capabilities and new ways of warfare. These seven fields are as follows: stand-off defense capabilities, integrated air and missile defense capabilities, unmanned defense capabilities, cross-domain operation capabilities, command and control and intelligence-related functions, mobile deployment capabilities/civil protection, and sustainability and resiliency.
- To bolster stand-off defense capabilities, which enable responses to invading vessels and landing forces from outside their threat zone, the FY2025 budget includes the deployment of Upgraded Type-12 SSM (surface-launched variants) and the acquisition of U.S.-made Tomahawks. In addition, Japan will begin building a satellite constellation to gather target information necessary for operating these missiles.
- To respond to increasingly diverse, complex, and sophisticated aerial threats, integrated air and missile defense capabilities will be strengthened. This includes the construction of Aegis System-Equipped Vessels and the start of Japan-U.S. cooperative development of a Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI) to counter Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs).
- With regard to unmanned assets which can be operated in a dangerous environment and continuously for a long period of time, Japan decided to introduce the MQ-9B (SeaGuardian) long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle in FY2024. Japan is also planning to develop unmanned aircraft that will accompany and support its next-generation fighter aircraft, which are currently being co-developed with the United Kingdom and Italy.



Signing of the Project Arrangement concerning Japan-U.S. cooperative development of GPI (May 2024)

- With regard to cross-domain operation capabilities, Japan will reinforce its Space Domain Awareness (SDA), including the establishment of the Space Operations Wing (tentative name) in FY2025. Cyberattack response capabilities will be further strengthened in coordination with whole-of-government initiatives. Japan will also continue to reinforce its electronic warfare capabilities and electromagnetic spectrum management functions.
- For command and control and intelligence-related functions, Japan will develop the MOD Cloud (tentative name) to enable unified command and control for the SDF services, and also conduct a large-scale remodeling of the ASDF's Japan Aerospace Defense Ground Environment (JADGE). Efforts will also be made to build a seamless information gathering system by appropriately using various means, including the deployment of defense attachés.
- For mobile deployment capabilities, Japan is advancing the deployment of necessary units particularly in the southwestern region and promoting the acquisition of transport vessels and aircraft. In FY2024, Japan newly established the Self-Defense Forces Maritime Transport Group (in March 2025) as a joint force of the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF.
- With regard to civil protection, the MOD/SDF will cooperate with various relevant ministries and agencies, including the police, fire departments, and the Japan Coast Guard, assess the damage, save lives, and support the evacuation of residents.
- As initiatives to reinforce sustainability and resilience, Japan promotes efforts to secure ammunition and fuel, increase the number of operationally available equipment, and improve the resiliency of defense facilities.



Participation in the multilateral space exercise "AsterX" (March 2025)
[Courtesy of the French Air and Space Force]



The Maritime Transport Group's LCU Nihonbare (October 2024 at the time of its launch)

Reinforcing the Defense Architecture of the Whole Country

- In addition to fundamentally reinforcing defense capabilities, the GOJ builds an overall architecture for national defense by integrating its national power, which includes diplomatic, intelligence, economic and technological capabilities and systematically combining all policy measures.
- To this end, the Government is working to advance reinforcement of comprehensive architecture for national defense by promoting initiatives in four fields: research and development, public infrastructure development, cybersecurity, and international cooperation to enhance the deterrence capabilities, etc. of Japan and like-minded countries.
- In addition, continuous peacetime monitoring and surveillance, initiatives related to the space domain, and responses to large-scale disasters and the rescue and transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas (R/TJNO) are also efforts that require the full power of the nation. Thus, the MOD/SDF will carry out various activities in close cooperation with relevant ministries, agencies, and others.
- With regard to cybersecurity, in response to the enactment of the Cyber Response Capability Strengthening Act and necessary arrangement of relevant Acts in May 2025, the MOD/SDF will actively contribute to the Government's efforts in cooperation with related ministries and agencies.
- Furthermore, with regard to disaster relief operations, in FY2024, the SDF continued its operation in response to the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, and also cooperated with related ministries and agencies in disaster relief efforts for heavy rain, landslide, and forest fire disasters.
- For prompt and appropriate implementation of rescue or transportation of Japanese nationals and others overseas, the SDF maintains readiness to dispatch its units swiftly. In FY2024, the SDF transported Japanese nationals and others from the Lebanese Republic.



Aerial firefighting operation in response to a forest fire in Ofunato City, Iwate Prefecture (February 2025)

Training and Exercises to Reinforce Japan's Own Architecture for National Defense

- The MOD/SDF actively conducts various high-level bilateral/multilateral training and exercises, and various exercises involving other ministries, agencies and local governments to further improve deterrence and response capabilities.
- From September to November 2024, the JGSDF Exercise 2024 was conducted with participation from GSDF units across the country. Through a series of actions rehearsed by various units from the operations preparation stage to the operations stage, the exercise aimed to improve mission capabilities and operational effectiveness, and contributed to enhancing deterrence and response capabilities.



JGSDF Exercise 2024 (October 2024)



Three Approaches to Achieve the Defense Objectives

Japan-U.S. Alliance

Chapter 2

Outline of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

- Japan will maintain its peace, security, and independence centered on the Security Arrangements with the world's dominant military power, the U.S., with which it shares basic values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and a capitalist economy, as well as interest in maintaining the peace and security of the world; and has strong economic ties.

Strengthening the Joint Deterrence and Response Capabilities of Japan and the U.S.

- Japan's NDS and the U.S. National Defense Strategy are consistent in prioritizing the prevention of unilateral changes to the status quo by force through integrating all approaches and means.
- Japan will further deepen discussions with the U.S. on each country's respective roles, missions, and capabilities to further reinforce Japan-U.S. joint deterrence capabilities.



Japan-U.S. Defense Ministerial Meeting (March 2025)

Enhancement of Alliance Coordination Function

- Japan and the U.S. established the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) to seamlessly and effectively implement a well-aligned Japan-U.S. response.
- Japan and the U.S. have coordinated closely while utilizing the ACM in response to situations such as the Kumamoto Earthquake and the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, North Korea's ballistic missile launches, and Chinese activities in the waters and airspace surrounding the Senkaku Islands.

Strengthening of Joint Response Foundation

- Japan will fundamentally reinforce efforts related to information security and cybersecurity so that Japan and the U.S. can strengthen information sharing at all levels.
- Japan will further reinforce defense equipment and technology cooperation through joint analysis and joint research on cutting-edge technology, joint development and production of defense equipment, improvement in mutual interchangeability, shared use and reinforcement of various networks, expansion of production and maintenance capabilities of U.S. military equipment in Japan, and reinforcement of supply chains.

Initiatives for the Stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan

- It is necessary to maintain the presence of the U.S. Forces in Japan (USFJ) and its readiness to make rapid and agile responses in case of emergency in Japan and its surrounding areas, so that the Japan-U.S. Alliance can sufficiently function as deterrence contributing to the defense of Japan and regional peace and stability.
- Japan will steadily advance efforts toward the realignment of the USFJ to further reinforce the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, while also mitigating the impact on local communities such as Okinawa.



Japan-U.S. joint press conference by General Yoshida, Chief of Staff, Joint Staff of Japan, and Admiral Stephen Koehler, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (October 2024)

Japan-U.S. Bilateral Training and Exercises

- The Japan-U.S. Alliance is essential to Japan's national security, and Japan-U.S. bilateral exercises play a significant role in enhancing Japan's deterrence and response capabilities.
- The SDF has been consistently conducting bilateral training involving each services as well as Japan-U.S. bilateral joint exercises (field training exercises and command post exercises) to improve the SDF's tactical skills and strengthen collaboration with the U.S. Forces, demonstrating the unified commitment and capacity of Japan and the U.S. for achieving peace and stability in the region.



FY2024 Japan-U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercise "Keen Sword 25" (October 2024)

Collaboration with Like-Minded Countries and Others

Chapter 3

Strategic Promotion of Multilateral and Multilayered Defense Cooperation

- To create a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force, it is extremely important to reinforce collaboration, not only with the ally but also with as many countries as possible. The MOD/SDF will promote multilateral and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges to realize FOIP.
- The MOD/SDF advances high-level exchanges, bilateral/multilateral exercises, capacity building, and defense equipment and technology cooperation with countries in various regions, including the Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.
- The MOD/SDF will also further advance the establishment of institutional frameworks such as the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), and the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, with like-minded countries and others.
- Japan continues to promote its initiatives on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at both the domestic and international level, and contributes to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and, by extension, to the international community as a whole.
- For Japan as a maritime nation, strengthening a free and open maritime order and ensuring the freedom and safety of navigation and flight are essential. The MOD/SDF will promote initiatives related to maritime security, including the monitoring of maritime situations and counter-piracy operations.



The 11th ADMM-Plus (November 2024)



Japan-UK-Italy Defense Ministerial Meeting (October 2024)



Dispatched SDF personnel operating at the UNMISS force headquarters

Initiatives for International Peace Cooperation Activities

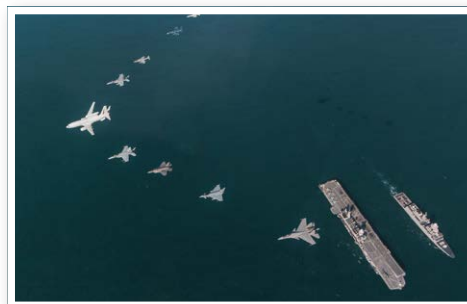
- The MOD/SDF continues to dispatch personnel to the Headquarters to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) tasked with monitoring the ceasefire between Egypt and Israel and to the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).
- The MOD/SDF actively contributes to UN initiatives for international peace by dispatching SDF personnel to the UN Secretariat and PKO training centers and provide various types of support to the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (UNTPP).
- The SDF always maintains a posture to respond to urgent requests from affected countries for international disaster relief activities.

Initiatives for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

- The proliferation of WMDs and missiles that could serve as their means of delivery, as well as that of weapons, goods, and sensitive technologies that could be adapted for military use, poses an imminent challenge to international peace and stability.
- The MOD/SDF will actively participate in the development of international systems and training related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Training and Exercises with Like-Minded Countries

- As efforts toward realizing FOIP, Japan will actively promote bilateral/multilateral exercises with allies and like-minded countries throughout the Indo-Pacific region.
- In particular, Japan will work to create a security environment that does not tolerate unilateral changes to the status quo by force and such attempts, by maintaining and improving the capabilities and skills of each country through common efforts such as bilateral/multilateral exercises with allied and like-minded countries, and by strengthening deterrence and response capabilities through collaboration and cooperation, thereby creating a synergistic effect.



"Pitch Black 2024" Multilateral Exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (July 2024)



Reinforcing the Foundation for SDF Personnel, the Core Element of Defense Capability, to Demonstrate Their Abilities

Ministerial Meeting on Improving the Treatment and Working Environments and Establishing New Lifetime Career Plans of Self-Defense Forces Personnel

Chapter 1

Improvement of Treatment for SDF Personnel

- To truly realize the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, it is essential to stably secure outstanding SDF personnel. To this end, it is necessary to establish treatment appropriate for the Reiwa period, in which the generations, who will be responsible for Japan's future defense capabilities, can perform demanding duties with peace of mind and take pride and honor in choosing a career as SDF personnel.
- In light of this situation, a variety of measures are being implemented, such as improvement of compensation by accounting for the unique nature of the duties and working environment; enhancement of conditions for securing a wide range of personnel including enlisted personnel; and improvement of treatment for SDF Reserve Personnel and others, including the unprecedented introduction and raising of more than 30 allowances, and a review of appropriate conferment for distinguished service with decorations.

Improvement of Living and Work Environments

- To enhance the overall performance of the SDF as an organization, it is essential to build an environment that improves both job satisfaction and ease of working, where each SDF personnel member feels a sense of purpose in their work.
- To this end, the MOD/SDF will take initiatives that include reforming organizational culture, converting shared quarters in barracks into private rooms, improving the living and working environments of ship crews, improvement of housing environments, promoting the development of the communication environment, and improving access to bases and garrisons located in areas with limited public transportation.

Establishment of New Lifetime Career Plans

- Given that many SDF personnel retire at the age of 56 due to the early retirement system, eliminating anxiety about post-retirement life is a key issue for securing personnel. It is essential to establish a fulfilling lifetime career plan that ensures and increases the post-retirement income of SDF personnel who leave service at a young age, allowing them to devote themselves to their duties with peace of mind.
- To this end, the MOD/SDF will consider the expansion of re-employment opportunities, the raise of the mandatory retirement age, the raise of the amounts of Compensation for Retirees under Young-Age Retirement, and the utilization of retired SDF personnel as external human resources.

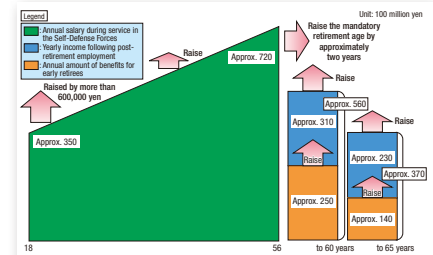


Fig. IV-1-1 Increase in the lifetime income of SDF personnel (image) Model case of the current income for a member who enlisted as a private and retired as a sergeant major

Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 2

- In July 2024, the Expert Panel on Fundamentally Reinforcing the Human Resource Base, chaired by the State Minister of Defense, was established. Taking into account various social issues stemming from population decline and recent technological trends including AI, the Expert Panel released an interim report outlining measures to reinforce the human resource base essential for fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities.
- The report presented three directions for initiatives: (i) Enhancing the appeal of the profession, including in terms of treatment, (ii) Enhancing unit capabilities through labor-saving and more unmanned systems utilizing AI and other such means, and (iii) Utilizing external human resources, including retired personnel and the private sector.

Various Measures for Reinforcing the Human Resource Base

Chapter 3

Initiatives to Reinforce the Human Resource Base

- The core element of defense capability is SDF personnel. To demonstrate defense capability, the MOD/SDF will secure the necessary personnel and reinforce the human resource base to create an environment that enables all SDF personnel to demonstrate their own abilities while maintaining high morale and pride.
- As a new initiative, the MOD/SDF has newly established the Officer Candidate Sergeant position, for which individuals are recruited to become future officers after serving approximately five years as enlisted personnel. Its recruitment has begun in 2025. Furthermore, with regard to fixed-term SDF personnel who are appointed for two- or three-year terms, the existing SDF Personnel Candidate System will be abolished. A new type of fixed-term SDF personnel will be established, for which individuals will be recruited as SDF personnel from the outset. Its recruitment is scheduled to begin in FY2026.

- To improve the treatment of SDF Reserve Personnel and others, measures include an increase in allowance, expansion of the Continuous Service Incentive Allowance, and the establishment of new subsidies for SDF Reserve Personnel and others who run their own businesses such as sole proprietors.
- To ensure that salaries reflect the special nature of the duties and working environment of SDF personnel, there is the aim to revise the salary schedule for SDF personnel. In addition, to improve treatment in order to secure enlisted personnel and others, new subsidies will be introduced for general candidates for enlistment (upper) and candidates for SDF personnel to support barracks life and other expenses. As a measure that lasts until the new type of fixed-term SDF personnel is established, the lump-sum allowance for enlisted SDF personnel will be increased.

Securing the Cyber Workforce

- The environment surrounding the human resources recruiting of the MOD/SDF is becoming increasingly difficult, while cybersecurity is a common challenge for the entire world. In light of the increased importance of a cyber workforce, it is essential to integrate cyber workforce development initiatives with national initiatives.
- To this end, the MOD/SDF will (i) ensure consistency in policies related to recruitment and development of human resources and promote consideration of human resources measures and cross-organizational cooperation related to human resources, and (ii) clarify the view on the cyber workforce, proactively engage individuals aspiring to join the MOD/SDF as well as external cyber professionals, and develop and deepen cooperative relationships with external entities to secure the cyber workforce.

Further Promotion of Work-life Balance and Women's Participation

- Ensuring preparedness to consistently respond to various situations requires creating an environment in which staff are both mentally and physically healthy, and can fully demonstrate their abilities while maintaining high morale and pride. To that end, the MOD/SDF is promoting working from home and creation of paperless work environments, implementing stringent management of work hours, encouraging male personnel to take parental leave, and establishing a comfortable work environment for all personnel, etc.
- In order to promote the participation of female personnel, the MOD/SDF is undertaking efforts that include expanding the recruitment and promotion of women, development of educational infrastructure, and creation of female-only quarters in barracks and MSDF vessels, and the like with a view to increasing the number of female SDF personnel.

Developing an Environment with Zero Tolerance for Harassment of Any Kind

- The MOD/SDF is working on the response to harassment cases and prevention measures with a sense of urgency. These efforts include disseminating regular messages from the Minister of Defense, reviewing education, and raising awareness of SDF personnel by using education opportunities, as well as establishing standard disciplinary actions across the MOD to ensure transparency and fairness in these disciplinary actions. Continued efforts will also be made to expand the counseling systems and raise awareness of contact information for these systems.

Support for Personnel and Their Families

- The MOD/SDF will promote various mental health measures with a view to preventing suicide among personnel. In the event of large-scale disasters and other events, the MOD/SDF will cooperate with relevant external groups and others to support SDF personnel families, which will include receiving cooperation in confirming the safety of the family members of personnel and providing them with assistance in their livelihoods.

Other Initiatives

Chapter 4

Transformation of Medical Functions

- The SDF medical force needs to be transformed into an organization that not only maintains the health and fitness of SDF personnel but also saves their lives from the perspective of sustainability and resiliency.
- To this end, the MOD/SDF promotes the strengthening of medical functions to improve the combat trauma care capabilities with (i) Reinforcement of seamless medical care and transportation systems from the frontlines to the final rear destination, (ii) Reinforcement of joint operation readiness for medical, and (iii) Fundamental management reform of the National Defense Medical College as the three pillars. In particular, the MOD/SDF will promote studies to establish a system for administering blood transfusions during combat trauma care, and establish a new system to autonomously secure and stockpile blood products.

Reinforcement of Policy-making Function

- For the SDF to respond to the increasingly severe, complex, and fast-paced strategic environment, strategic and agile defense policy planning and making are required.
- The MOD/SDF will closely cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies, private research institutions, and private companies centered on the defense industry. In addition, the MOD/SDF will reinforce its intellectual base by reviewing and reinforcing research systems of the MOD/SDF, including the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS).



Bases and Initiatives Necessary to Maintain and Reinforce Defense Capabilities

Reinforcing Defense Production and Technology Bases as a Virtually Integral Part of Defense Capability itself

Chapter 1

Reinforcing the Defense Production Base

- Currently, the SDF can fully demonstrate its capabilities and accomplish its mission of defending Japan only by using equipment that incorporates advanced technologies. Defense production and technology bases are indispensable foundations for securing superior equipment etc.; they are a virtually integral part of defense capability itself, and their fundamental reinforcement is essential.
- Japan's defense industry is responsible for each stage of the life cycle of defense equipment (research, development, production, sustainment and maintenance, supply, decommissioning, etc.). In this context, defense equipment and the defense industry are inseparable. The Act on Enhancing Defense Production and Technology Bases was enacted in 2023 in order to take necessary measures to maintain and enhance the capabilities of the defense industry to produce advanced defense equipment and ensure high operational rates.
- The MOD has announced the basic policy based on the Act. According to this policy, in addition to the measures stipulated in the Act, the MOD is promoting initiatives to reinforce defense production and technology bases, such as revitalizing the defense industry, building a resilient supply chain, and strengthening defense industrial security.
- In addition, based on the recognition that it is important for the defense business to become one of the core businesses within each company, the MOD is considering the development of a defense industrial strategy that sets out the desirable medium- to long-term direction of the defense industry in order to lead the industry toward becoming stronger and more sustainable.

Reinforcing the Defense Technology Base

- In order to acquire defense equipment required for the new ways of warfare, the use of our domestic technologies is extremely important. The development of scientific technologies and innovations based on Japan's advanced technological capabilities is at the source of its economic and social development and constitutes a key element of its comprehensive national power integral to security. In addition, the active utilization of Japan's advanced technological capabilities developed by both its public and private sectors over the years in the area of national security without being held back by existing approaches is an essential activity for strengthening Japan's architecture for national defense.
- Under the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) announced in December 2022, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy will jointly develop an advanced fighter that ensures future air superiority by bringing together their technologies. The GCAP International Government Organisation (GIGO) was established in December 2024 to form an efficient trilateral cooperative framework while sharing development costs and risks.
- The Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute was established under the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) in October 2024 to fundamentally reinforce capabilities that create defense innovations and groundbreaking equipment that can transform the very nature of society. The Institute conducts breakthrough research to create new functions and technologies from a variety of rapidly evolving science and technology by actively introducing new approaches and methods.



Image of a next-generation fighter aircraft



Opening ceremony of the Defense Innovation Science & Technology Institute (October 2024)

Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation and Promoting Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology

- The transfer of defense equipment and technology is a key policy instrument to ensure peace and stability, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, to deter unilateral changes to the status quo by force, create a desirable security environment for Japan, and provide assistance to countries that are subject to aggression in violation of international law, use of force, or threat by force.
- Japan is improving the capabilities of partner countries' armed forces and maintaining and strengthening medium- to long-term relationships with partner countries by strengthening initiatives for defense equipment and technology cooperation, including the transfer of defense equipment and international joint development. In FY2024, Japan and the U.S., in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, held a Forum on Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition and Sustainment (DICAS), co-led by Japan MOD and the U.S. Department of Defense. The purpose was to leverage each country's industrial base to meet long-term critical capability needs and maintain readiness.

Equipment Optimization Efforts

- In order to acquire sufficient capabilities for cross-domain operations in view of the aging population with a declining birth rate and the severe fiscal situation, it is essential to further promote initiatives to optimize equipment structure.
- In the underwater and other domains, research began in FY2024 on stealthy, combat-supporting, multi-purpose unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) that selectively carry functions such as warning and surveillance and launching of anti-ship missiles to support manned vessels. In addition, the development of unmanned amphibious vehicles that can act autonomously in amphibious operations and perform missions, including transportation of supplies from the sea to the vicinity of troops, began in FY2024, along with research and development on combat support UAVs that will be collaborating with manned aircraft such as the next-generation fighter aircraft.
- Next, in equipment acquisition, Japan will ensure the necessary quantity and quality for its defense capabilities by appropriately combining the introduction of new, high-performance equipment with the life extension and improvement of existing equipment. In doing so, it will strive to reduce costs and improve cost-effectiveness by enhancing project management throughout the life cycle of equipment, including research and development. In addition, by incorporating advanced civilian technologies, the MOD/SDF will steadily realize acceleration of defense equipment deployment for areas that could directly affect the SDF's current and future ways of warfare and are particularly urgent and significant from a policy perspective.
- In response to the issues identified in the interim report of the special defense inspection on submarine repair contracts published in December 2024, a review was conducted to further enhance the effectiveness of cost and system inspections and to expand the scope of contracts requiring the submission of authentic documentation. Through these efforts, the MOD is working to prevent the recurrence of misconduct, enhance fairness and transparency in procurement, and ensure proper contracts.

Initiatives on Coexistence with Local Communities and the Environment

Chapter 2

Measures Concerning Harmony with Local Communities

- Implementing various activities of the MOD/SDF will not be feasible without the understanding and cooperation of the Japanese people and local governments. Therefore it is necessary to further deepen mutual trust between local communities, Japanese people, and the SDF.
- For seamless stationing of the U.S. Forces in Japan, which is an extremely important element in securing the safety of Japan, it is essential to gain the understanding and cooperation of the local communities.



Explanation of the Defense White Paper by Regional Defense Bureaus to local governments

Responding to Environmental Issues Such as Climate Change

- The MOD/SDF will address and contribute to resolving environmental issues such as climate change. In addition, the MOD/SDF will promote initiatives that focus more on the coexistence of the SDF/USFJ facilities/areas with the surrounding areas.
- By the end of September 2024, the MOD/SDF had completed the replacement and disposal of all aqueous film-forming foam containing PFOS in their possession.

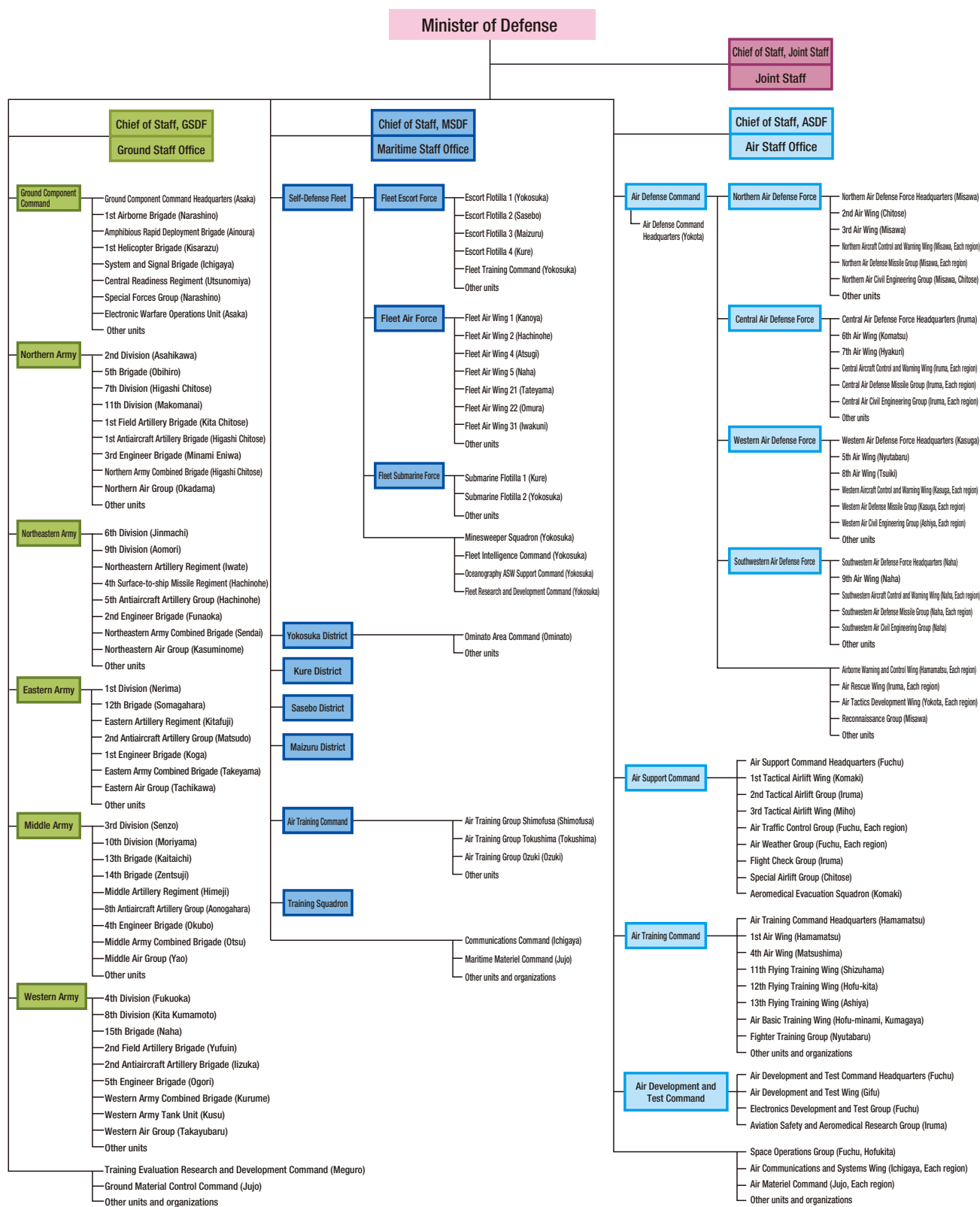
Public Relations Activities, Public Records and Archives Management, Disclosure of Administrative Documents, etc.

- The MOD/SDF is actively conducting PR efforts so that the public can understand its activities and initiatives in various ways, including through the official websites, social media, video streaming, cooperation in editing the PR magazine "MAMOR," coverage support for media outlets, and various events and PR facilities.
- In addition, efforts are also being made to promote the digital management of administrative documents and to appropriately handle administrative document management and responses to information disclosure requests.

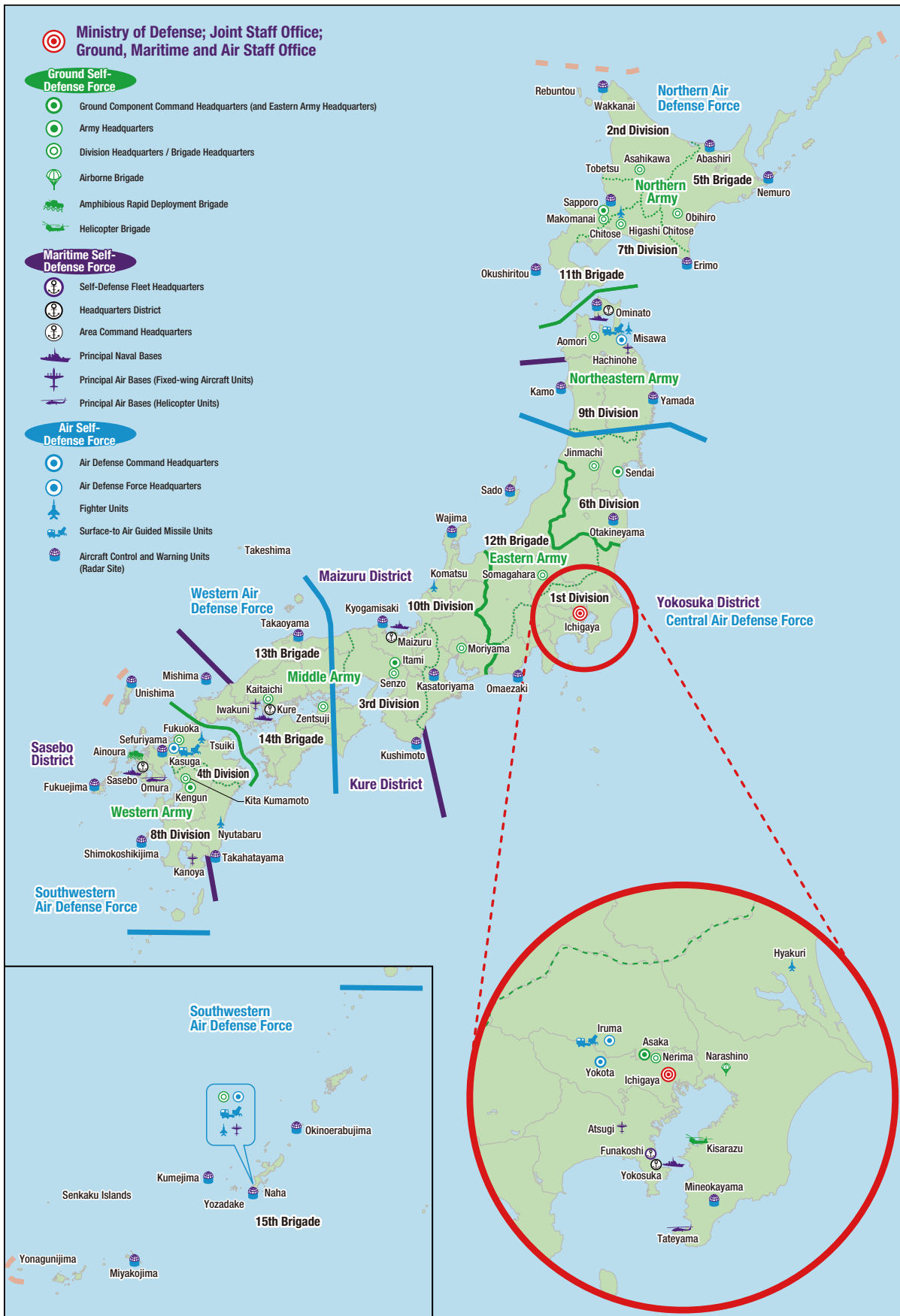


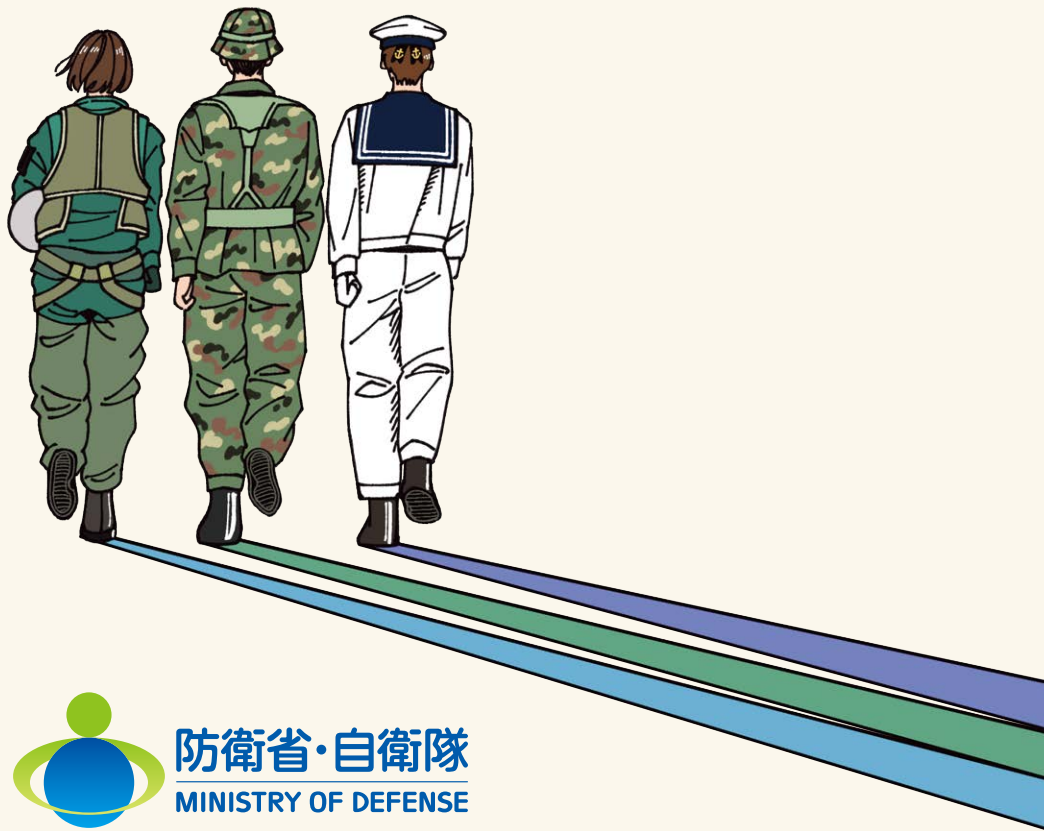
The SDF Marching Festival, which is held as part of the commemorative activities for the SDF's anniversary (November 2024)

Organizational Diagram of the Self-Defense Forces



Location of Principal SDF Units [for illustrative purposes] [As of March 31, FY2024]





防衛省・自衛隊
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE