

DISCLAIMER:

Both questions and answers are subject to change based on mission priorities, legal constraints, budgetary limitations, and changing circumstances. This FAQ will be adjusted as needed to reflect new information as it surfaces.

Family Housing

[Policy and Privileges](#)

[Exterior Maintenance](#)

Unaccompanied Housing

[Parking](#)

[Policy and Privileges](#)

Force Support Squadron

[Fitness Center](#)

Dining Facilities

[Other Dining Options](#)

Various Facilities

[PME Facility](#)

[Lodging](#)

[Sports/Extracurricular Activities](#)

[Base Theater](#)

[School System](#)

[Big Voice/Notification](#)

Leisure Time

[Curfew & Alcohol Constraints](#)

[Travel](#)

Driving In Misawa

Security Forces Squadron

AAFES

DECA

Medical Group

-Q&A-

Question: *Is it possible for the base to hold a town meeting that specifically addresses what is expected of the families during an attack, when to know when we should evacuate or what the protocol should be after a SIP?*

Answer: Our dedication to your safety is at an all-time high during these tense times in the region, and you will be the first to know if we have concerns.

If there were an attack, shelter in place protocol consists of hunkering down in your homes, or getting to the nearest building to stay in if you are caught outside, until the “All Clear” is issued. Shelter in place means the same whether it is a typhoon or a missile launch—just stay inside.

You would know when to evacuate immediately if the State Department issued the order; this would come through your chain of command by phone call or whatever communication means necessary where we can receive a positive acknowledgment from the members and their families. If we had reason to believe your families should be evacuated, then it would already be in effect. However, at this time there is no cause for concern.

This is a good time to bring up the fake NEO message sent out to some USFK members in September—it showed up on their phone as a text message. Please stay wary of unofficial notification traffic such as this and check with your chain of command to confirm before acting. Additionally, if you receive any suspicious communications in general, contact your chain of command.

Also, our Force Support Squadron offers visits to units or groups to educate on the NEO requirements, expectations, and processes, which may be a good avenue for you to learn more from various support agencies such as AFRC.

Finally, I’d like to foot stomp that there is no cause for concern at this time. We will put out more frequent messages from my office on the official Misawa Facebook page, the Commander’s Access Channel, and through the unit leadership, so look to these places for up-to-date information you can trust.

- Family Housing –

Q: *When is A/C coming to the main base?*

A: Our first phase of A/C installations, completed in July 2015, added A/C to 384 homes. Our second phase, completed on 19 Jul 2017, adding another 208 homes. Our third phase include 594 homes, and is scheduled for work between Oct 2017 and Oct 2020. We understand this is a very

wide window of performance. However, until after award of the project, we do not currently have an accurate schedule of which units will come first and which will go last.

Q: *Why can't CE purchase temporary A/C units like they do for washers and dryers? *

A: The estimated upfront unfunded cost for temporary air conditioning for base personnel is \$1.64M and \$40-60K yearly for maintenance, replacement, and disposal. Misawa receives funding according to requirements outlined in JTR and AFI 32-6001, which does not include temporary air conditioning units. CE ensures on-hand mandatory assets (washers, dryers, stoves, and refrigerators) and storage is readily available for entitled personnel. Additionally, funding is not fiscally beneficial (storage and manpower credit is not provided), and CE must ensure entitlements remain available for mandatory assets for authorized personnel in contrast to seasonal assets that historically show usage for 1-2 months in the late summer.

Policy and Privileges:

Q: *How many days are authorized in TLF?*

A: Currently, TLF is authorized for the 10 initial days OR until the first available quarters in the member's entitlement becomes available. However, this can be extended if housing is not available. This is rare as we have many vacant units in most categories. Up to 10 days is also authorized for outbound members.

Q: *What housing entitlements are authorized upon arriving on base?*

A: Housing entitlements vary depending on grade, family size, and sometimes duty position (i.e., Wing and Group Commanders). AFI 32-6001 has tables, which specify the entitlements based on these factors. Newcomers are encouraged to visit the Air Force Housing web page at <http://www.housing.af.mil/home/> as soon as they get Orders. By selecting the base the member is going to, he/she can see what is available for him/her. Many Frequently Asked Questions are also addressed on this page. Additionally, members can contact the Misawa Housing Management Office at housing@us.af.mil to get a direct answer from a counselor. A copy of PCS Orders should be attached to the email to allow an accurate answer to any entitlement questions.

Q: Will the option of allowing accompanied members to move off base become available in the future?

A: We recognize disparities exist between on- and off-base housing and who may live where. Military Family Housing and Unaccompanied Housing are governed by two different sets of rules. These rules include DoD directives, Air Force Instructions (32-6001, Family Housing Management and 32-6005, Unaccompanied Housing Management), and USFJ's "On Base First" policy. In many cases, the Wing Commander has no authority to vary from those directives. In addition, much of our housing is constructed by the Government of Japan (GoJ) at little to no cost to the U.S. government. As such, we have a responsibility to respect and honor their investment. Finally, any costs associated with moving and living off base are governed by those same directives outlined earlier. The Base Housing Office and Finance are your best sources of information regarding potential costs and entitlements.

Q: What was the reason behind moving all the singles off base then forcing families to live on base? Singles are living like college kids- 4 or 5 to a home- collecting money. The commander should do a windshield tour to see current status; the houses were pristine when the families were off base.

A: The same justifications mentioned above apply to this question, too. However, the statement that Airmen are collecting money due to the housing guidance isn't founded in fact. Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is not like Basic Housing Allowance (BHA) at CONUS bases—any money not used to pay rent is kept by the government when stationed at Misawa Air Base.

Q: Why is housing tracking/accountability so poor? There are plenty of houses open, yet we are made to wait.

A: Comprehensive and detailed tracking of housing availability is maintained by the Housing Management Office, and is reviewed in-depth on a weekly basis to prepare for inbound arrivals. Housing vacancies are affected by multiple factors, to include: Change-of-Occupancy maintenance (repainting & refurbishing homes between tenants), scheduled renovations and A/C construction, and up-and-coming divestitures of housing assets directed by Headquarters AF. For the last three years we have been successful in housing nearly 100% of all on-base families

within one week of arrival at Misawa AB. Commonly, the only reason members are forced to wait is if they request an Exception to Policy, as it must be routed for consideration and approval

Q: *We have 4 kids, 1 boy and each of the girls are 7 years apart. The youngest being 1 year and the others are school aged. We were told our youngest 2 girls should share a room, but that doesn't make sense when our 1 year old wakes up constantly. Would we qualify for the exception of policy waiver for a 5/6 bedroom home.*

A: AFI 32-6001 is the directive that dictates bedrooms, and it goes by the age of the children, not how far apart they are in age. The table specifies that children of the opposite gender 6 years old or older may not share a bedroom, and that children 10 years or older are authorized a bedroom. Any member has the freedom to request something via an Exception to Policy which will be evaluated and approved or disapproved at the appropriate command level. Approval is at 35 CES/CC level, disapproval is at the 35 MSG/CC level.

That being said, there are some legitimate exceptions to policy both the Base Housing Office and the Wing take into account on a case-by-case basis. Those who would like to pursue an exception to policy should consult the Base Housing Office and route a request.

Exterior Maintenance:

Q: *New recycling containers; what do I do with the old ones?*

A: Members who do not want to use the recycling containers issued may send an email to housing@us.af.mil requesting pickup, and we will schedule to have them picked up and stored at our facility for future use.

Q: *When are playgrounds getting replaced / fixed?*

A: Playgrounds fall under a different federal funding stream which CE maintains. Presently Main Base has 5 ongoing projects and North Base has 3 to repair playgrounds. Base housing playgrounds are centrally funded and awarded at AF level; updates are provided at local Town Hall meetings as it becomes available. 35 CES just completed a Dinosaur Park on 14 September

near the youth softball fields for children ages 2 – 12. Yoiko Child Development Center and Cheli School Age Programs have playgrounds in place with plans to upgrade them with AF-standard playground equipment in FY16 or FY17 pending approval and funding. Additionally, the Cheli School Age program was given \$10K to expand to its existing playground.

Q: *Will there be new dog parks around pet friendly towers?*

A: At this time, no additional Dog Parks are planned. If residents have an idea for a dog park, we are open to evaluate it. Please contact the Housing Management Office in Bldg. 656 for any suggestions.

Q: *"Why don't you enforce the housing snow shoveling policy? Especially on Thunderbolt Ct. we have a few pregnant women and hurt people. There are people that have not shoveled all year."*

A: We ask that members of the Misawa AB housing community first respectfully engage with their neighbors to discuss these concerns. However, if matters cannot be resolved at this level, we encourage you to visit the Housing Office to report any unwanted behavior or failure to meet Community Standards. Our Housing Inspectors will validate these concerns through a site visit, and, if necessary, engage with the member and/or their First Sergeant to resolve your concerns.

Q: *Will all homes get fences, patios, and storage?*

A: Yes, CE is pursuing FW/CC's Quality of Life initiative, which began in 2013. As a result family housing units received fences (where applicable; five buildings were identified with areas too small, backyard with a steep incline or backyard occupied by mechanical features and could not support a fenced backyard), covered patios (targeted for completion in 2016), and exterior storage units to meet allowable space requirements. In addition to the three QoL initiatives mentioned, covered parking is also included. Covered parking is substantially complete, with only a few housing units identified as incompatible or lacking enough space. Current housing QoL projects under construction include 11 projects to provide energy efficient hot water and 6 projects to resurface roads, repairs curbs, and repair sidewalks as needed.

Q: *What is the purpose of the overhang being built above the overhang in my backyard?*

A: Overhangs provide additional protection from rain, snow, and falling icicles. This ultimately extends the available, and useable, exterior space adjacent to the home and increases the overall safety.

Q: *Can we get the mirrors fixed coming off eagle drive onto freedom drive?*

A: This issue has been brought to Civil Engineering's attention, and they will be addressing it in the coming weeks. If anyone on base sees these kinds of problems on base, CE wants to know! Please call 226-9675 to report any kinds of issues involving the safety of Misawa members!

Q: *Why do the mowing contractors tear up the yards and common spaces? If we did that we would have to pay to fix it. (Received 3 Oct, retrieving data a/o 1300 4 Oct)*

A: If you see mowing contractors tearing up yards or common spaces, call the housing office at 226-3200. The housing inspector can then take a look at the damage to report to CE for further action.

Q: *Are there plans to update/fix the BX bathrooms and e-club bathrooms? They are stinky and non-functional.*

A: The only work task CE is currently tracking is a leaky pipe at the club as the clogged toilet work task was closed. However, if you think the bathrooms aren't up to snuff at any location on base, ask to talk to the facility manager or building custodian, who can put in a work task for CE to handle.

- Unaccompanied Housing -

Parking:

Q: *Can the dormitories have more parking?*

A: Yes, CES provided an additional 103 parking spaces near dorm 543, specifically intended to alleviate the reduced parking near many of the dorms. Additionally, CES created additional parking near the Grissom Dining Facility to alleviate congestion at FSS due to construction.

Policy and Privileges:

Q: *Why can't Airmen move into the newly renovated dorms?*

A: Dorm 673 is the only newly renovated dorm. A package is being worked to request authorization for each Airman in this dorm and Dorm 672 to have a private bathroom. This entails requesting a waiver from Headquarters Air Force (HAF) to exceed the maximum amount of floor space that E-4 and below are authorized. Occupying this dorm is on-hold pending the outcome of this request to HAF.

Q: *Are SrA able to move off base?*

A: Yes, WEASEL NOTAM dated 31 Oct 2016 authorizes SrA with over 3 years-time-in-service (TIS) to reside off-base if they meet the conditions identified within the NOTAM and have 6 months or more time remaining on station. However, accompanied members are required to live on base IAW 27 Aug 2009 35 FW/CC On-Base First Family Housing Policy.

Q: *Why would all Misawa AB leadership push to move all eligible SrA off base to fill the houses in the community, but not lend appliances and/or furniture since FMS only supports E4 with a line number and higher ranking?*

A: Moving additional unaccompanied Airmen to off-base residences provides the dual benefit of offering improved living conditions and properly stewarding the scarce dormitory space available. Unfortunately, at this time, the Furnishings Management Section is over \$500K short on the appliances necessary (Refrigerator, Range, Washer & Dryer) to provide full coverage of SrA moving off-base. Fortunately, the Housing Management Office, up to this point, has a 100% success rate when requesting that off-base landlords provide appliances for the length of their

tour. Appliances are provided for E5+ and civilians. Appliances for E-4 and below, IAW WEASEL NOTAM – 35 FW-16-09 “Off-Base Moves for Airmen” are not provided.

Q: *When is the next dorm renovation and will it include A/C?*

A: Next dormitory renovation is Building 539. The contract was awarded in September, and the design includes A/C. The project started in April 2016.

Any exceptions, either to the AFI or the NOTAM, should be routed through the Airman's chain of command for consideration. The Wing is willing to consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Q: *Why is it that airmen who get pregnant are forced to move from the dorm are responsible for moving them self without any assistance from housing? They are not authorized to move until they are 8 months, it very dangerous having them doing that on their own.*

A: For this situation, AFI 32-6001, Table 11.1 establishes whom is authorized Local Drayage...in other words whom is authorized a Gov-Funded move. A member moving from the Dorms to MFH is a "member relocating due to increase in family size". The local Housing Office does not decide this, it is clearly in AFI 32-6001.

Q: *What was the reason behind moving all the singles off base then forcing families to live on base? Singles are living like college kids- 4 or 5 to a home- collecting money. The commander should do a windshield tour to see current status; the houses were pristine when the families were off base.*

A: The same justifications mentioned above apply to this question, too. However, the statement that Airmen are collecting money due to the housing guidance isn't founded in fact. Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is not like Basic Housing Allowance (BHA) at CONUS bases—any money not used to pay rent is kept by the government when stationed at Misawa Air Base.

- Force Support Squadron -

Fitness Center:

Q: *Potter Fitness Center: Will A/C be installed in all rooms?*

A: Yes, the Potter Fitness Center will have A/Cs installed in phase 2 of the renovation (2017 timeframe). Due to the distribution of funds from HHQ, phase 1 (planned for 2016 funding) will involve renovating the fitness center to ensure safety is met. This includes updating to a modern fire suppression system, upgrading the electrical system to handle the additional A/C load, and other structural repairs needed to safely continue use. Following in late 2017, the main renovation will commence, with a complete remapping of the facilities layout.

Q: *"Why doesn't the FW consider rebuilding the Potter Fitness Center where the old frame shop is being torn down? The Pool can be tied into the new design without any impact on the facility. Plus, the current location can be used until the upgrade is finished."*

A: The site of the former Arts and Crafts Center is insufficient in size to accommodate the construction of a new gym. The Air Force Services Facilities Design Guide, and the Misawa AB manning document, regulates the new construction of a Health and Physical Training Facility. Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. David L. Goldfein, toured the Potter Fitness Center during his visit to Misawa in Nov 2016. He was able to see, first hand, the condition of the existing facility and better understand the need to advocate for a new Health and Physical Fitness facility at Misawa Air Base. A MILCON project, submitted in December 2016, includes a 25-m indoor swimming pool and an elevated 1/8th mile indoor running track. The design includes: reception area, lobby, juice bar, retail store, administrative areas with staff work room, classrooms, support areas, equipment storage, men's and women's locker rooms, DV men's and women's locker rooms. Additionally, a gymnasium sized for two full size basketball courts and marked for volleyball, stretching areas, cardiovascular areas, free weight area, select motorized equipment area, fitness assessment room, and three racquetball courts are included in the planning stage. Funding for the project has not been provided at this time.

Q: *Is there a way to implement stricter standards within the fitness centers? Including enforcement of wearing shower shoes in the stream or sauna rooms. Additionally, members are literally throwing weights around in the gym, can we enforce stricter safety concerns?*

A: Both fitness centers are aware of these issues and they are being addressed. Unfortunately, fitness center personnel can't be everywhere at all times, so we strongly encourage patrons to police themselves and each other. With that said, if you see something dangerous happening, please call it out.

-Dining Facilities-

Q: *If charged a flat rate why are Airmen limited to a strict amount of food? (i.e. 2 meat items per meal, no seconds etc.)*

A: There is no flat rate for food. The AF uses an A La Carte system where each person is charged for the items they consume. HQ AFPC restricts the amount of food to cut down on plate waste and to deter eligible patrons from giving food to ineligible patrons (IE: Meal Card Airmen giving food to BAS).

Q: *Can the healthy lunch cycle be shorter?*

A: All Air Force Dining Facilities run on a standard, 21-day menu cycle that programs all healthy heart items. Additionally, the salad bar is offered for lunch, dinner, brunch and supper meals.

Q: *Is there a way to broaden a variety of meal choices so not to have the same mundane food?*

A: All Air Force Dining Facilities run on a standard, 21-day menu cycle, Grissom Dining Facility and Falcon Feeder expand their menus with daily/weekly specials and offer a larger grill/made to order menu. In July of 2014 a team of professionals installed the new CAFÉ system at Misawa that introduced 32 new recipes to the 21-day menu cycle.

Q: *Why is the policy that food can't be taken to go in civilian clothes? Are there any exceptions to this policy?*

A: Carryout service is limited to those meal card holders who cannot sit down in the dining facility to eat due to operational requirements mandating their immediate reporting for, or return to, duty IAW Dining Facility Manager's Handbook. In addition, materials required to support carryout service are extremely costly, require APF funding, and impact Grissom Dining Facility's ability to conduct essential operations, including providing quality food to our Airmen. IAW Weasel NOTAM – 35 FW-15-01 "Grissom carryout service is only authorized for active duty military, Essential Station Meal (ESM) card holders in military uniform (IAW AFI 36-2903). This includes military physical training wear. Military members receiving basic allowance for subsistence (BAS) and civilian guests are not authorized carryout service." "Falcon Feeder Dining Facility carryout service is authorized for all members on duty in the controlled area of the flight line and are authorized to eat in the dining facility." There are no exceptions to this policy.

Q: *Is it possible to get WIFI installed?*

A: Although it is possible, it is not likely in the near future. Grissom Dining Facility has the capability for WIFI, but it must be funded with APF funds at \$60 per month (\$720 per year). Budget constraints and mission priorities do not currently support this added expenditure. Falcon Feeder does not have the required infrastructure to support WIFI and would be costly for Allied Telesis to connect. In this instance, use of AF resources to install WIFI is not authorized.

Other Dining Options:

Q: *Is there a possibility to get a real restaurant on base like Chili's, Outback, or some other form of food service?*

A: No. Headquarters Air Force Services Agency sent their Brinker's contract representative to Misawa in August to review our facilities and demographics. It was determined that a Chili's operation would cost approximately \$850K for the initial investment and our base population

would not support a successful Chili's operation. If we took the risk, it was noted that we would be required to close all other food facilities, such as the Club Buffet, Lake View Grill, Bumpers Grill and Café Mokuteki. In lieu of a Chili's, FSS leadership is devising a plan to open an American Style dining option in the Club called Wild Weasel's Bar and Grill.

-Various Facilities-

PME Facility

Q: *Is the testing area for CDCs, Course 15 etc. ever getting upgraded?*

A: 35 CES completed combining testing rooms 213 & 214 a few months ago. We recently received new desk and replacement computers to outfit the entire room. We are working to get the full room operational but we must do it in phases as to not interrupt scheduled testing. Please contact the Education & Training Office at 226-4201 for questions.

Lodging

Q: *Why are the DVs TLFs 3-Bedroom and the majority of the others only 2 bedroom? Typically DVs only need one bedroom when they visit Misawa, but the majority of families could use a third bedroom.*

A: (FSS Answer) All TLFs and DV Quarters are in Building 118. Our TLFs exceed the Air Force Lodging Standards and each have two bedrooms, a sleeper sofa, plus the availability of rollaway beds and air mattresses. Our DV Quarters have two bedrooms, plus an empty room that is to be used as an office/storage area. Many of our DVs come as part of multi-base trips and require work areas

Sports/Extracurricular Activities

Q: *Is there a plan for alternative means to reserve basketball/volleyball courts when Edgren High School and Potter Fitness Center are unavailable in the summer?*

A: Edgren High School will not open their gymnasium during the summer months if their

athletic staff and/or coaches are on vacation. The Potter Fitness Court is in high demand and reservation requests are approved on a case-by-case basis. Potter Fitness Center staff standardized free play times on Sundays (Volleyball is 0900 – 1330 and Basketball is 1400 – 1700).

Q: *Can the asphalt track be upgraded to a rubberized surface (since it is an official AFPFT site)?*

A: Yes. As an official AF Physical Fitness Testing site, our asphalt track can be upgraded with a rubber coating to minimize joint injuries. An AF Form 332 has been submitted.

Q: *Can more lighting be installed on the turf for night activities?*

A: Yes. A work order was submitted to 35 CES to add lighting to turf field which is under review.

Q: *Can civilians use the JASDF pool while Himberg is closed?*

A: Yes! JASDF pool hours are more limited, but we compiled the info and posted it on our FSS website.

Q: *Can fundraising for private organizations be more than three per quarter?*

A: Based on the current AFI's dictating private organizations, we cannot authorize private organizations to have more than two per quarter. Per AFI 34-223:

10.9.1. The installation commander may authorize (may delegate to the Mission Support Group Commander or the FSS/CC/CL) continuous thrift shop sales operations and occasional events for fundraising purposes (e.g., bake sales, dances, carnivals, car washes, or similar functions) which the PO or unofficial activity conducts directly, through a third party, or its media. Approval is required for POs or unofficial activities whether the fund raiser is conducted on or off installation. "Occasional" is defined as not more than two per calendar quarter.

Base Theater

Q: *When will the Base Theatre be fixed?*

A: Unfortunately, not anytime soon. The ceiling could cave in at any moment, making it unsafe for anyone to enter the facility. We did not receive funding to tear the theatre down and completely rebuild for FY17. We will continue to attempt to receive this money each year, but we do not see it happening for a long time. Meanwhile, FSS puts on great movies at the Mokuteki. You can buy food at the Mok and bring it into the movie, and the movies are completely FREE!

Q: *When the theater was renovated a few years back, how come the damage to the structure wasn't noted? If the integrity of the building was in question, why was so much money spent on the new entrance, seating, etc.?*

A: The front entrance theater project did not require an inspection of the roof/rafters. There was no stress/strain of this project to the roof/rafter infrastructure therefore no inspection was conducted. It was not until an HVAC project (duct work in the rafters) was conducted several years ago that the structural integrity came into question. Consequently, the HVAC project findings generated two successive inspections on the facility resulting in the closure of the facility permanently as relayed during the Town Hall.

School System

Q: *Why is AC in the schools not a priority?*

A: As with A/C projects in Military Family Housing (MFH), there are multiple regulations dictating the addition of A/C in schools. Funding is through DoDEA rather than with local authority. Also, an evaluation of the power grid capabilities would need to be assessed prior to installation.

Big Voice/Notification

Q: *Why doesn't the big voice reach all base residences? Is there a way to ensure the big voice may be heard inside? When the windows and doors are shut, the message is muffled and once you open the door and stand to listen to the message it could be too late. Can we adopt a J Alert system for the base?*

A: We are aware of the difficulties in hearing the giant voice system. We are working to get an engineering team out here from Tinker AFB to test audibility and clarity of all poles and areas on base. Then, they will be able to give us a cost estimate to upgrade the system.

The giant voice capability is mainly focused on outdoor emergency notification. However, it can be activated to broadcast in certain buildings, and we are looking into which ones have this capability fully functioning. We will also have the communications team look into increasing the availability of this in additional buildings and housing, because it is vital for the base members to be aware of what is going on.

However, if you do hear the giant voice system sound off, I would encourage you to turn on the Commander's Access Channel, check the base Facebook page, or the base website. Additionally, sign up for At-Hoc, which is a notification system the Air Force has already established to alert Misawa members of emergency events.

Finally, the Misawa Connects App is now available for Droid and iPhone users, which has been designed to inform members of base events, to include emergency notifications. We're currently working to be able to push notifications directly to your phone in these types of scenarios.

Ultimately, we recognize some of the shortfalls in this giant voice system, and trust us when we say we are aware and doing all we can to improve them.

Q: *Can the base make sure to sound an all-clear after a SIP so we know for certain that danger has passed? Not only via social media and AFN but through the big voice too?*

A: The base sounds an "all clear" every time a shelter in place has ended. This is through the giant voice system, plus all other outlets of communications. There was no "all clear" notification during the last missile launch because a shelter in place was never ordered for the base.

Q: *Why can't the base respond to incidents like the missiles from N Korea in a timelier manner and address the concerns of the base community? For example, the last missile warning came through on everyone's Japanese cell phones via J-Alert but the base did not have response in a timely manner.*

A: During the last J-Alert missile warning, the base put out its “no threat, all clear” alert at the exact same time as the J-Alert “shelter in place” alarm. Base leadership determined there was no threat immediately and put the notice out on Facebook, AFN and Commander’s Access Channel.

Q: *Is Facebook the official notification for Misawa AB? It appears that all formal notifications are posted on Facebook here. What about those that chose not to have a Facebook account, how will they be notified in a timely manner (weather, missiles, etc...)*

A: Misawa AB has multiple notification avenues in order to reach as much of the population as we can. This includes Facebook, Commander’s Access Channel, ATHOC, giant voice, and the new Misawa Connects App. If you do not have a Facebook account, we recommend you use the other communication sources to get updates in a timely manner. Additionally, if you have other ideas on ways we should disseminate information, please let us know. We have been dedicated to figuring out ways to get to the entire base populace, and won’t stop until we are confident we have achieved this.

Q: *Why are taps not played at 2200? (Received 3 October, working to retrieve background a/o 1300 4 Oct)*

A: The decision to not play taps is based on the work schedule of the Airmen who don’t work during daytime hours. We are trying to eliminate any disruptions to Airmen’s sleep, ensuring the health and wellness of our Airmen and the mission.

Leisure Time:

Curfew & Alcohol Constraints

Q: *Why do issues that happened at Yokota and Kadena impact us here at Misawa?*

A: We are here as guests of our host nation and the Japanese people. As members of both Fifth Air Force and US Forces Japan, we have a responsibility to act as good ambassadors on behalf of our nation and the American people. When issues arise in one area, our host nation partner and its citizens view that as an American issue, not a particular base issue. As such, we collectively address issues as a force when circumstances require it.

Travel

Q: *What do you recommend for Airmen to enjoy their OCONUS experience with high operation tempos and costly ITT trips?*

A: Airmen should program their leave with their units/supervisors well ahead of time. Misawa ITT offers numerous opportunities (approximately 15 per month) for sightseeing and adventures throughout Japan; many are seasonal and/or festivals. All their upcoming tours are outlined here: www.35fss.com/misawa_itt/tours.php

Q: *Can ITT plan trips for teenagers similar to those offered for SAV and SUNS?*

A: Specific programs for teens are available through the Teen Center if they are a member. Unfortunately, we cannot advertise for ITT teen trips specifically, because teens are required to have a sponsor. However, ITT can work out custom trips if this is something a group would be interested in. The ITT day trip age policy is "All participants other than active military must be 18 years of age unless accompanied by their sponsor or have a current special power of attorney from the sponsor designating an adult participating on the tour/trip responsible for their actions and safety."

Q: *What is the process for getting morale priority for Space A? Is there any way to get an exception for us to travel via rail pass since we are so remote? The expense to travel adds to the sense of isolation.*

A: The Environmental Morale Leave (EML) Program is offered to all active duty military personnel, all DoD civilians with travel agreements, command sponsored dependents, and those categories of personnel who are designated by the Combatant Commanders. Designated/Authorized EML destinations are also the responsibility of the Combatant Commanders. There are two types of EML, Unfunded EML (UEML) and Funded EML (FEML). EML orders are good for 90 days from the date EML orders are issued. The MPS can provide you a worksheet to request for Environmental Morale Leave (EML) leave. Once complete, take the worksheet, leave authorization (from LeaveWeb), Travel Orders assigning you to Misawa (from vMPF), and ID Card and Passport of any dependent (traveling with you or unaccompanied) to MPS for final submission.

Please visit this site for more information: <http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site/EML-Program-Guidance/>

The second part of question 1 is a question of SOFA status. Those of us on SOFA status are not eligible for the Rail Pass that is available for Tourists. United States Forces Japan is attempting to secure approval for SOFA-status personnel to use rail passes, but this will require the approval of the Japanese government.

- Driving In Misawa -

Q: *Why does a dependent need to be 18 to drive with a non-related passenger?*

A: Operating a vehicle is not a simple skill and for anyone to become proficient it must be practiced for a long time. The Center for Disease Control website https://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/Teen_Drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html identifies that "teenagers' lack of driving experience, together with risk-taking behavior, puts them at heightened risk for crashes." Therefore many states have moved to a graduated driver licensing program that requires longer practice periods and limiting driving under high risk conditions (i.e. number/age of passengers) just to name a few. Research suggests these graduated programs can be directly linked to reduction in fatal crashes and crashes in general of younger drivers. With this in mind Misawa AB developed a similar graduated driver licensing program.

Q: *Why are the building numbers so hard to see?*

A: Building number locations are outlined in AFI 32-9005, Real Property Accountability. According to the document, building numbers must allow facilities to "be identified at the usual vehicle approach side of the facility and must be easily read from the street or parking lot" with the building number being "compatible with installation architecture standards." Real Property is aware that there are some buildings without numbers, and they are currently working to resolve the issue.

Q: *Where exactly can children with permits drive? Is it anywhere on base with a parent or is it*

just on Falcon Loop and Security Hill as AFI-31-218_35FWSUP says in para 2-1.e? The driving instructor says anywhere on base, but thats not usually how AFI's work.

A: IAW HQ USFJ Instruction 31-205 "Parents, friends and relatives who are not certified professional driving instructors cannot serve as a fulfillment of the classroom and hands-on driving requirement. However, installation procedures may allow for parental or adult hands-on instruction within specially designated areas away from traffic areas as designated by the installation commander." Here at Misawa the area designated is Falcon Loop and Security Hill. The Certified Driving Instructor is authorized to use the entire installation, the restriction on location only applies to non-certified instructors.

Additionally, FSS coordinates several trips and tours for our Single Airmen/Sailors under the SAX/SUNS program. They offer approximately 7 discounted trips per month and their office is located in the Weasel's Den.

-Security Forces Squadron-

Q: *Please justify decision to close two main gates then limit access to Gettysburg to only 4 hours a day. It's not like the tire shredders are a new issue.*

A: We identified a lot of projects based on our mission. We tried to focus primarily on the safety and security of the base populous. The projects have needed to be done for a long time. The tire shredders for instance are not a new issue, and we identified many problems with them damaging vehicles. We had to get it done. Closing the two main gates was not the original intent, but security became a huge concern for us, which we had to balance with our priority of putting people first. There was a safety issue we discovered at the main gate and we could not proceed knowing there was a concern not being addressed, which moved the timeline for construction forward. Because of this, we were put in a tough situation faced with the convenience of accessibility verses installing proper equipment for our 35th Security Forces Squadron defenders to properly defend and execute their primary mission on base. These projects were incepted years prior and a lot of money was allotted for these projects. Additionally, if we would have waited until the winter months, the ground would be too hard, which would have incurred more costs to properly conduct construction.

Limiting Gettysburg Gate to 4 hours was an efficiency issue. One of things we noticed, after peak traffic hours, in the morning and the afternoon, the traffic flow decreased to only two to three cars per hour. Only 70 cars passed through the gate during peak hours—that is not a lot compared to the main gate, which can see more than 100 cars during peak hours. Asking for more augmentees, requesting additional manpower to guard these gates when we were moving into an exercise period, was not an efficient choice. It was limited to 4 hours because we had to make a cautious decision to go for a bit of inconvenience in efforts to ensure safety and security of those coming on and off base.

Q: *Why are two major gates under construction at the same time and why do we not have enough gate guards for more options to get on/off base? Did the falcon gate guards transfer to a new gate?*

A: Falcon Gate was closed for some long overdue upgrades to its weather protection and security systems. It had been planned for over a year and was a high priority because it was a security concern. The tiger teeth at the main gate have been causing issues for base personnel for quite some time, which is why Friendship Gate had limited operations.

We had to fix the main gate at the same time as Falcon, because the Falcon contract could not be changed, and if we waited until Falcon was complete, the ground would be too cold to fix the tiger teeth.

Gettysburg access was limited to morning and evening hours to help alleviate traffic during inbound and outbound work schedule traffic. Once the main body is on base for work, gate operations slow to only a couple vehicles per hour. There was not a need for opening Gettysburg Gate longer hours. Additionally, only 150 people use the Gettysburg Gate during the short amount of time it is open.

The good news is our amazing CE team finished early and the main gate opened on Sept 28th for normal operations!

-AAFES-

Q: *Why does Baskin Robbins close at 1700? Lots of people would eat ice cream later. Close Dunkin at 1700, keep Baskin open until 1900. (Received 3 Oct, working to retrieve background a/o 1300 4 Oct)*

A: Dunkin Donuts is designed to cater to breakfast times. Not only that, but their sales reports show that after 1700 they would lose money if they stayed open past that time, which would result in DD being closed permanently.

-DECA-

Q: *Both Yokota and Kadena Air Base have commissary hours from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. 7 days a week. Can we extend hours here?*

A: Yokota and Kadena Air Bases are much larger and generate more sales, allowing them to be open 7 days a week. They're classified as K-5 stores; for reference, Misawa is a K-2 store. We just don't serve the same number of customers or generate the sales needed to remain open 7 days a week.

-Medical Group-

Q: *What is being done to improve medical services? Like it or not we DODEA teachers are here. Been given the excuse of how remote Misawa is for years. If we are so remote then Medical Wing needs to insist that only tenured MDs be assigned. No more 6-month residents, billing also needs improvement.*

A: We offer the services you would normally find in a small hospital in rural U.S. As many know, there is a rigorous process to pre-screen active duty and families prior to travel. The data gathered in that process helps us know what is the best thing to add to Misawa, if we get the opportunity. In a similar manner, the MDG is working with DODEA to understand what services would be most utilized, so trying to add that into what the active duty population needs. That helps both populations, if we can combine the demand, that may be more persuasive in getting a permanent increase in capability. In the meantime, we are focused on providing the

care we do in the best manner possible, and if a transfer is necessary, assisting with medical or translation professions to get the patient to a high level of care.