



THE NORTHERN LIGHT

Monthly Newsletter
And Spotlight

Proudly serving the People of Misawa Air Base, Japan

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U.S. Air Force Col. Jesse J. Friedel, the 35th Fighter Wing and Misawa Air Base installation commander, hosted a commemoration ceremony with Japan Air Self-Defense Force and local civic leaders to honor of the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake at Misawa Air Base, Japan, March 11, 2021.

The ceremony honored more than 15,000 people who lost their lives to the historic earthquake and tsunami. It also highlighted the efforts of American and Japanese forces, under Operation Tomodachi, to provide humanitarian assistance to thousands of civilians affected by the disaster.

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Leadership

CSAF CHARLES Q. BROWN JR.

The Air Force announced new Total Force officer stratification guidance March 1 for officers in the grades of O-2 through O-6 effective on any officer performance report that closes out April 1 or later.

“As we execute Action Order A (Airman), we must remain focused on a culture of transparency,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr. “By strengthening our officer stratification policy, we are meeting that intent. This step is necessary to give officers a full understanding of where they stand amongst their peers as well as help better inform our talent management decisions.”

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Around the Wing



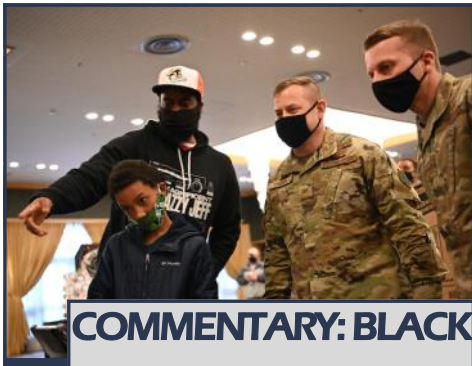
CMSGT MCCOOL
ENLISTED ALL CALL

CMSgt Kathleen McCool, 5th AF command chief, hosted an Enlisted All Call, here at Misawa Air Base. McCool, recognized Airmen for their outstanding performance and took questions from the audience.



WILD WEASEL WALK-
THROUGH

Col. Jesse J. Friedel, 35th Fighter Wing commander, and Chief Master Sergeant Joey R. Meininger, 35th Fighter Wing command chief, conducted their weekly Wild Weasel Walk-through and met with members of the 35th OSS



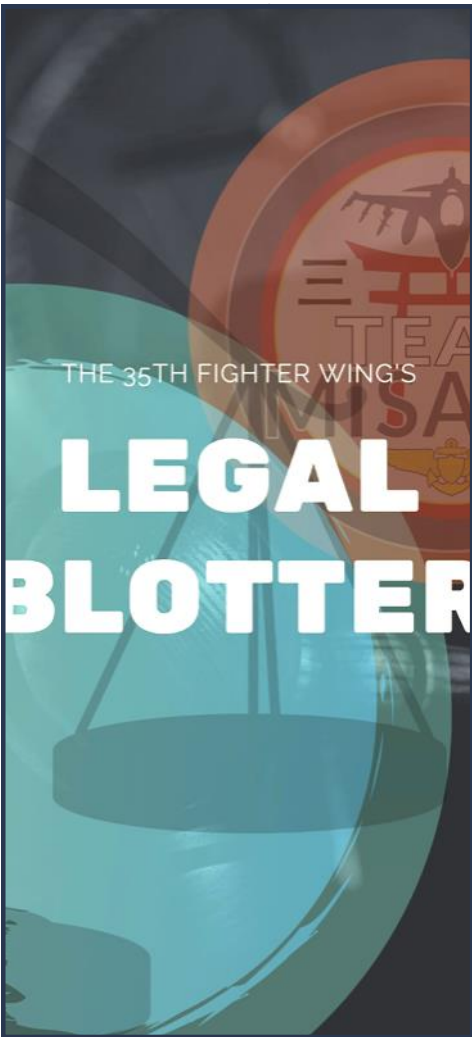
COMMENTARY: BLACK
PRIDE?

Thinking back to my childhood, there was never a time I can recall being proud of my dark skin. It felt more like an undesired rap sheet than an indication of racial distinction. Is that a strange thing to say? It's my truth. Visit MISAWA.AF.MIL for the full story!



MORE

Check out the Misawa Air Base Facebook for more information!



Legal Blotter

The following personnel at Misawa AB were punished under the Uniform Code of Military Justice in FEBURARY 2021(UCMJ):

Nonjudicial Punishments (Article 15):

A Senior Airman from the 35th Security Forces Squadron received an Article 15 for unlawfully striking another airmen on the chest and buttocks. The member received reduction to Airman First Class, suspended forfeitures of \$1,185.00 pay for 1 month, and a reprimand.

A Senior Airman from the 35th Security Forces Squadron received an Article 15 for disobeying a verbal lawful order by Security Forces, driving drunk, and driving in a reckless manner. The member received reduction to Airman First Class, suspended reduction to Airman, forfeitures of \$1,000.00 pay per month for 2 months, and a reprimand.

The following personnel at Misawa AB were administratively separated:

Discharges:

An Airman First Class from the 35th Civil Engineer Squadron was involuntarily separated for Pattern of Misconduct: Discreditable Involvement with Military or Civil Authorities and received a General service characterization.

POLICY UPDATES

PT test pushed to July, updates to scoring, physical components ahead



Physical fitness assessments will now resume for Airmen on July 1. When assessments resume, the three-component fitness test (1.5 mile run, 1 minute of pushups and sit-ups) will be reset with scores calculated on a new three component scoring table. In addition, work is underway to separate scoring into five-year age groups as opposed to the previous ten. For example, age groups will start at <25, 25-29 years old, 30-34, years old, etc.

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Develop

“In Japan, there is a saying that goes ‘Disaster comes when we have forgotten about it,’” said Misawa City Mayor Yoshinori Kohiyama. “In recent years, with large scale disasters in Japan and around the world, we have come to recognize disaster can strike at any moment. Misawa City has developed with the support of many people in times of disaster and hardship.”

The ceremony included a Moment of Silence at 1446, the time the 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred approximately 43 miles off the Oshika Peninsula; video remarks from Kohiyama and former Misawa Air Base installation commander retired Maj. Gen. Michael D. Rothstein; a speech from Friedel; and a symbolic renaming of the Officer’s Club ball room to the “Tomodachi Room.”

“As a lasting tribute to the thousands of citizens who tragically lost their lives 10 years ago, and to recognize the combined efforts of U.S. and Japanese forces during Operation Tomodachi, I hereby officially rename this room as the Tomodachi Room,” said Friedel. “As one of Misawa’s major event venues, this room will continue to serve as a site for U.S. and Japanese citizens to forge friendships and deepen the U.S.-Japan alliance for decades to come.”

Days after the Great East Japan Earthquake hit, Misawa AB became a regional hub for support and logistics to Japan. Early reports of deaths, missing and injured people neared 5,000, mostly in the Miyagi Prefecture. Misawa AB’s relative proximity to the disaster site made it the best suited reception point for international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams.

“When you enter the main gate of Misawa Air Base and drive onto Friendship drive there is a larger electronic sign that states – ‘Together, We Are Stronger,’” said Friedel. “This saying holds true, from the establishment of U.S. forces at Misawa Air Base after World War II, to the support we provided to Japanese citizens under Operation Tomodachi ten years ago, to our combined efforts to deter regional threats, and combat the spread of COVID today.”



Readiness

Stratifications used in the Officer Performance Report (AF Form 707) and Letters of Evaluation (AF Form 77) will be limited to the following peer groups: grade, command position and duty position.

Department of the Air Force Grade: The grade peer group includes only officers in the same grade. Grade stratifications can be further broken down by developmental category (e.g., #1/12 LAF-C Capts).

Command Position: The command position peer group refers to officers filling command positions. Command position stratification statements for individuals below the grade of O-6 may also include their grade with the stratification statement (e.g., #2/6 Maj Sq/CCs).

Duty Position: The duty position peer group refers to the officer’s duty position type, level and scope of responsibility (e.g., section chiefs, flight commanders, branch chiefs, action officers, instructors, pilots, etc.). Officers may be stratified against civilian personnel in equivalent duty positions. However, in order for an evaluator to use the duty position peer group, evaluators must first stratify officers by grade to ground the statement and communicate the clearest depiction of where an officer stands (e.g., “#1/2 Capts, #1/40 Analysts).

Officers assigned or attached to a joint position may be stratified against officers of the same grade, regardless of service affiliation, within an evaluator’s scope of rating authority. In addition, senior raters may stratify officers within Reserve participation category within the senior rater’s scope of authority (e.g., #1/6 IMA O-6s; #2/5 VLPAD Majs).

Once an officer is selected for promotion, they can only be stratified against others selected for promotion to the same grade (i.e., a major select can only be stratified against other major selects).

“We owe our officers a clear understanding of their performance relative to their peers. Airmen need and deserve feedback on their strengths and weaknesses and on the skills they may need to improve to truly maximize their capability,” said Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. “This interim stratification guidance assists with this goal ensuring a standardized practice across the Air Force. It also provides us with a bridge and culture transformation tool as we work toward a new officer evaluation system focused on increased transparency, more direct feedback, and increased performance delineation to support various talent management decisions.”

Second lieutenant, company grade officer and field grade officer stratifications are no longer permitted.

“Similar to what we do for our newest enlisted Airmen, we want our newest officers to singularly focus on learning their jobs and our Air Force culture,” Kelly added.

Officers may not be stratified based on additional duty positions and may not be stratified against enlisted personnel. Stratification statements based on awards (e.g. #1/50 as Sq CGO of the Quarter) and the use of percentages in lieu of a defined numerator and denominator are no longer authorized (e.g. Top 5%/121 Capts). Additionally, the use of stratification statements from anyone other than the rater or additional rater are prohibited. Stratifications from senior raters can still be quoted as long as they are signing in the reviewer block. Stratifications from deployed commander Letters of Evaluation may also be quoted.

Evaluators should only use stratification numerators approximately once per 12-month period, but no more than once per six-month period.

AFI 36-2406 is a Department of the Air Force Instruction applicable to both the Air Force and Space Force. Space Force will follow these policies until service-specific evaluation and promotion policies are developed and fielded.