Why are we forcing people into base housing in overseas commands such as Yokosuka and Sasebo? Many sailors with Japanese nationals as wives simply do not want to live on base as it is a major inconvenience for the lifestyles of their family. It adds home stress to their already stressful lives.

Commander, United States Forces Japan (USFJ) was concerned that facilities funded and provided to the United States DOD components in Japan by the Government of Japan (GOJ) via the Japanese Facilities Improvement Program (JFIP) were being underutilized. In March of 2012, DOD Installations in Japan were directed by USFJ to implement a 90% occupancy rate for Military Family Housing (MFH) which is funded under JFIP.

COMNAVREGJAPANINST 11101.12Q was signed on April 15, 2013, establishing 90% as a minimum occupancy rate. A summary of this instruction is noted below. (Note: COMNAVREGJAPANINST 11101.12Q was updated in 2016).

We use involuntary assignment for military personnel if we are unable to attain 90% occupancy through voluntary assignment. When suitable MFH is available as determined by the Installation Commanding Officer (ICO), and a valid offer is refused by eligible uniformed or civilian members, Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) and Living Quarters Allowance (LQA) may be disallowed. Installation assignment policies will not place eligible personnel in jeopardy of choosing between assignment to a MFH unit and entitlement/allowances that will result in hardship. Valid offers consider family size, unit type, and other special circumstances that are approved by the ICO. Civilian employees normally will be expected to rely on surrounding civilian communities for housing support.

Circumstances when civilians are eligible to use MFH:
- Personnel designated as “key” and “essential” by their command and approved by the ICO.
- If the ICO determines that appropriate and adequate community services and support facilities do not exist.
- If the ICO determines a MFH excess exists after assigning all eligible military personnel into MFH.
- Condition of employment. Approval must be obtained from ICO prior to including government housing as a condition of employment.

Will there be better MWR funded concerts? There's usually only 2-3 a year and the bands are unheard of.

Installations in Japan receive entertainment from a variety of sources including Navy Entertainment, Armed Forces Entertainment, and USO, as well as by procuring local entertainment for smaller events and activities. MWR does not usually have input regarding the types of entertainment that these agencies provide, but we do ensure that the entertainment provided attracts a variety of customers.

In the last 18 months, we have presented:
• 3 Days Grace (Rock)
• Kelly Bell Band (R&B/Jazz)
• Paint U (Dance)
• Front Men (Country)
• Natalie Imbruglia (Pop)
• Shaggy (Reggae/R&B)
• Garry Carson (Magic)
• Olympic Weight Lifters (Meet & Greet)
• MMA Fighters (Meet & Greet)
• Harlem Globetrotters (Sports)
• Summit Racing Drivers (Meet & Greet)
• Aaron Lewis (Rock)
• Lecrae (Hip-Hop)
• Adam Devine (Comedy)
• Halestorm (Rock)

Upcoming entertainment acts include:
• Comics On Duty (Comedy)
• Edwin McCain (Rock)
• Trio (Dance)
• Imagination Movers (Kids)
• Murder Mystery (Play)
• Super Bowl Tour NFL Alumni Players (Meet & Greet)
• DL Hugley & George Lopez (Comedy)
• JoJo (Pop)

Is there something in place to expedite security clearances that have expired?

If new check-ins report with an investigation that is out of scope, a new periodic investigation (PR) will be initiated by the Region/Command Security Manager. If the current out of scope investigation of the individual is within the two year mark and the individual does not have a break in service, the individual’s current eligibility and access will be reinstated once the new PR is opened by OPM and the information is shown in JPAS. In such cases, an individual’s eligibility and access will remain valid until the PR is completed, closed and adjudicated.

If the individual is pending a priority assignment or DOD NAVY School/Training attendance, a request to expedite the process can be submitted to OPM.

One Sailor provided a suggestion that N1 work with DTMO on COLA survey methodology and messaging.

This is already happening. CNFJ/CNRJ currently actively consults with DTMO and USFJ when conducting COLA survey and messaging.
Spouse hiring and the HR office – it’s a confusing and lengthy application process and applicants don’t receive timely feedback on their applications.

Human Resources Office (HRO) has taken the following steps to clarify the application process for spouse/family members:

- CNRJ HRO provides quarterly briefings to military spouses and family members (MSP/FMP) to educate them about the overseas hiring process. There is a special emphasis on demystifying the usage of military spouse and family member preference in the overseas theater. HRO also offers this service to individuals by appointment as needed.
- CNFJ HRO partners with non-appropriated fund (NAF) HRO to provide briefings so that applicants are aware of any differences in NAF vs appropriated fund (APF) processes.
- CNFJ HRO gives presentations at all area orientation briefings (AOBs) to inform potential MSP/FMP candidates of the process.
- CNFJ HRO representatives attend local job fairs and community outreach events in order to inform the public of the process.
- CNFJ HRO has an official Commander, Navy Region Japan Human Resources Office Facebook page with information about briefings, featured vacancy announcements and other important information.

Regarding timely feedback from the application process, the USA Staffing System sends out notifications to applicants when the certificate list is sent to the hiring manager. For example, once a certificate has been issued, all applicants are informed if they were or were not referred to the hiring manager. If they were not referred, they will be informed of the reason for not being referred. Next, notification is made when selection is made. The person selected will be notified either by phone or email of the selection. Those who were not selected will receive a notice when the selected person accepts their selection. If a candidate has not been notified, they can always request an update regarding their application through the Employment Information Center via email (DONEIC@navy.mil) or phone (800-378-4559).

Sailors have to request advance pay to be able to settle into FDNF-JPN assignments and housing (up to $20k, but average $12k for those who do so) – this makes it hard for Sailors, especially E4 with under 4 years of service – to ever catch up.

The process for a Sailor to move off base is the following:

1. Request via command to move off base.
2. Service member attends a housing brief. This brief is designed to explain entitlements available to the service member and the process they will need to complete to be able to move off base.
3. After the brief, the service member has two options to find a house or apartment - the individual can either see what is offered by the housing office or use an agent to help them find an off-base residence.
4. After selecting a home, the service member returns to housing to have the contract approved and requests one month overseas housing allowance (OHA) and move-in housing allowance (MIHA).
Once a service member has selected an off-base residence, expected fees include:

- One month rent
- Security Deposit (equal to one month rent)
- Landlord fee (equal to one month rent)*
- Agent fee (equal to one month rent)*

*Note: The landlord fee and agent fee are reimbursable through PSD. Advanced OHA and MIHA can be used to offset other expected fees.

**Maximum number of hours any child can be left in care of CDC is 12 (limited by law?) – Master-at-Arms work day is usually 12 hours, so this presents challenges for them.**

CNIC did begin a program to increase the hours of operation at various CDC's across the enterprise beyond the standard 12 hour day. However, parents at those locations were informed that the 12-hour maximum per child per day was still in place. The Child and Youth Program (CYP) team responded that they had no intention of relaxing the 12 hour maximum time a child can spend at a CDC.

According to CYP, research has shown there may be negative impacts resulting from children remaining in institutionalized group settings (even quality ones) for extended periods of time. Research also shows that the total number of hours a child is without a parent, from birth through preschool, matters. Currently, under the fee policy, families may use programs for 60 hours a week. The current policy of 9 to 12 hours a day, five days a week, is very difficult for young children and, in their best interest, the Navy implemented the twelve hour requirement to ensure children were not being left in programs for longer than needed. This policy is in place to ensure the well-being of children and to support healthy growth and development.

**COLA, which apparently went from $1600/month to $800/month in the past year – could surveys be sent to spouses as well? (region CMC later said that surveys are mailed to Sailors’ homes.)**

Surveys are not mailed to Sailor’s homes. All service members in Japan are highly encouraged to take the Retail Price Schedule Survey once every year and the Living Pattern Survey (LPS) once every three years either at work or at home with their families. These surveys are disseminated widely through command channels and are used to help set local COLA rates. The last LPS survey was taken in May 2015. Completing these surveys ensures service members have an opportunity to share information related to this entitlement. Service members should inquire through their chain of command to get information on the timing of the next survey.

**DoD schools don’t have enough qualified teachers and many school staff are “just volunteers.”**

The notion of having volunteers serve in any instructional delivery capacity in the absence of a vetted DoDEA employee is not accurate. When someone is interested in becoming a Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) teacher or substitute, each candidate is subject to a thorough background investigation. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which stipulates the required procedural and investigative requirements for not only DoDEA, but
also for other federal agencies, is currently experiencing a backlog with pending investigations. DoDEA continues to address this issue with OPM.

However, it has been brought to our attention that in some isolated instances, locally hired teachers volunteered to teach pending the final clearance of background checks. This is a practice that is not sanctioned by DoDEA. We commend those DoDEA employees who sought to implement personnel solutions to help alleviate the burden on our schools but this practice should no longer be occurring.

Despite these circumstances, what we can say is that every single person serving as a teacher or substitute has met the prescribed requirements. Furthermore, DoDEA would not sacrifice the safety and well-being of our military-connected students by having unqualified and unvetted personnel serving in any official capacity.

Medical and mental health services are limited on Yokosuka Naval Station. One attendee noted that a woman who becomes pregnant with twins will get sent back to CONUS (SVMB remains at assignment) due to lack of adequate medical facilities.

USNH Yokosuka is a Tier 3 hospital, which means we do not have the same capabilities as Tier 1 or 2 facilities such as those found in Okinawa or San Diego. As such, we are unable to provide certain medical services such as cardiology, endocrinology, or neo-natal intensive care (NICU). A NICU is required to offer delivery/infant care for mothers with a multiple fetal pregnancy such as twins. If you are already pregnant with multiples, you are precluded from being assigned to Japan (AD/ADFM). If you become pregnant with multiples while assigned here, you will be transferred at 20-22 weeks to Okinawa. If Okinawa cannot accommodate, the patient is then MEDEVAC’d to Tripler Army Medical Center (Hawaii) or to CONUS. Patients have requested to be sent back to CONUS instead of Okinawa/Tripler because of family support issues. However, Okinawa is the first facility offered for care/delivery.

Is Navy is developing in-home-care options (CDH) vice just child development centers (out-of-home care)?

The Navy does have an in-home care option, Child Development Homes (CDH), with the same limit of 60 hours of child care/week. CDH is often more flexible for parents who work different shifts or night work. This program is dependent on families who are willing to complete the necessary training and who are also willing to open their homes to children on base. Due to the size of the homes, the number of spaces is very limited. We currently have homes available in Yokosuka, but we have been unsuccessful in recruiting home providers in Atsugi and Sasebo, most likely due to the readily available spaces in the CDC at those locations.

Base CDC costs twice as much as child care in town.

It is possible that there are some types of child care available off-base that costs less than the care provided on base. Typically, this care does not meet the same level of standard as we have in our centers on the installation. The centers on base have strict standards for background checks for all workers and the direct care staff complete required training to help support the development of the children. The service provided at the CDCs is much more than just
babysitting, it is truly child development to help ensure the success of the children as they grow. The fees that are charged at the Child and Youth Programs are mandated by DOD. These fees are graduated fees so that families with higher total family income pay more in fees than those with lower income levels. The Child and Youth Programs are funded with a mix of the money collected from the parent fees and from money appropriated by Congress designated for these programs. As such, the cost of child care spaces is subsidized by the government between $4,000 to $8,000 per child per year, depending on location and income level.