

Japan-United States-Australia Trilateral Exercise “Southern Cross 26”

On July 9, General MORITA Takehiro, Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai (JASDF) visited Australia and observed Japan-United States-Australia trilateral exercise “Southern Cross 26 (SC 26)” in Darwin. Joined by Air Marshal Stephen Chappell, Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force and General Kevin B. Schneider, Commander, Pacific Air Forces, United States Air Force at the media engagement and he emphasized the importance of SC 26, trilateral cooperation, preparedness and opportunities that the exercise offers. The three key leaders also affirmed the expansion of operational cooperation on F-35A and further enhancement of interoperability.

SC 26 is among the three F-35 exercises highlighted in trilateral joint statement issued at Japan-United States-Australia Trilateral Ministers’ Meetings in 2024 and 2025. It marks the third iteration of trilateral exercise, following Cope North 25 in the United States and Bushido Guardian 25 in Japan, and is the first to be conducted in Australia.

