

The Latest News on the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces

JDF

JAPAN DEFENSE FOCUS



Jul. / 2020

No. 125



SPECIAL FEATURE

Launch of the Space Operations Squadron

Recent Telephone Conferences/
JGSDF Hand Washing Video

Salute Flyover by JASDF Blue Impulse

Dispatch of the Second Deployment Surface Force for Information Gathering

Fuji Firepower Exercise 2020

JASDF Bilateral Training Exercises

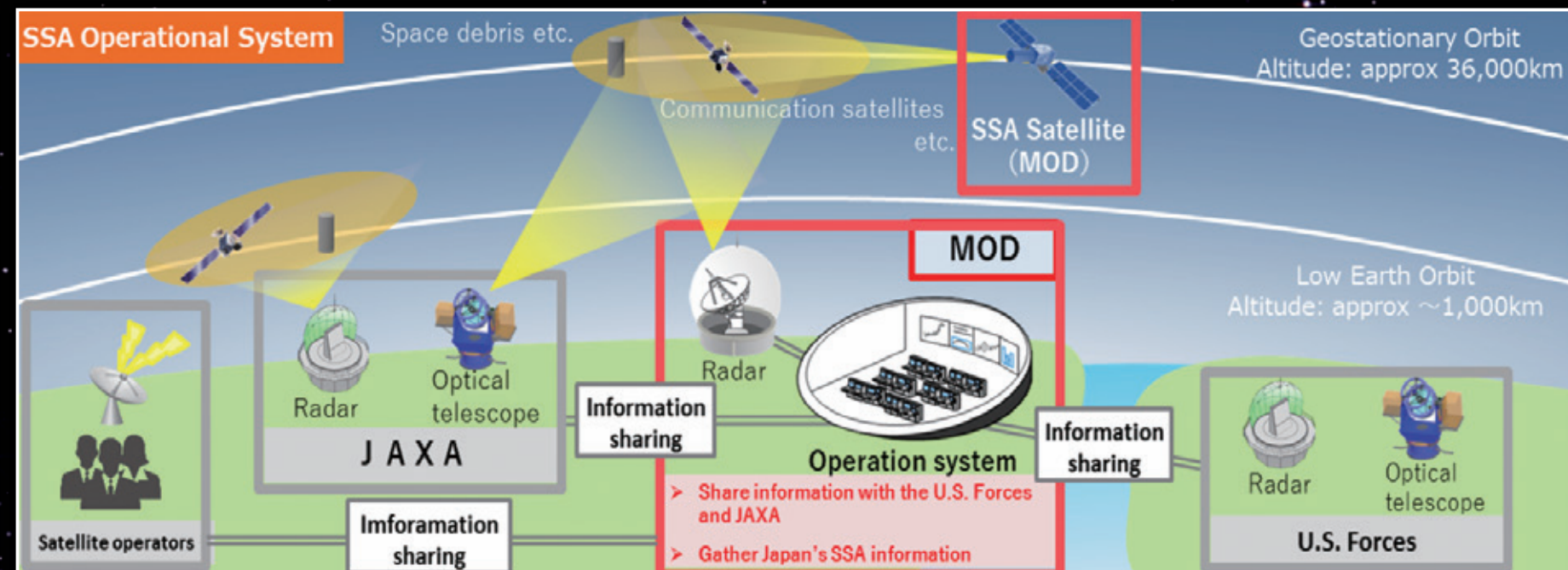
Cover Photograph :
Salute Flyover by JASDF Blue Impulse



MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/

航空自衛隊 宇宙作戦隊 Space Operations Squadron



Launch of the Space Operations Squadron

On May 18th, the squadron flag handover ceremony was held for the Space Operations Squadron, which was launched as the first space domain mission unit of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), and Defense Minister Kono conferred the official flag of the squadron on its commander. Minister Kono conveyed words of encouragement to the squadron, stating "It is important that Japan ensures superiority in new domains, including space, as well as the land, sea and air. I ask the first commander to exert himself as a pioneer of the new domain, and live up to the great expectations and mandate from the public. And I ask the squadron personnel to work hard on your mission with great pride and morale."

The Space Operations Squadron is composed of approx. 20 personnel, stationed at Fuchu Air Base. It has been launched with the main mission of operating the Space Situational Awareness (SSA) system, in order to monitor such things as space debris or suspicious satellites, which could pose a threat to Japanese satellites. With an eye to ensure Japan's superiority in the space domain, the MOD/JSDF will keep reviewing the squadron's operations in the space domain, nurture human resources with knowledge of the space domain, and build a system to cooperate with the United States, towards the start of a full-scale SSA operation from FY2023.

In the field of security in the space domain, military forces in major countries are actively involved in outer space activities and utilizing a variety of satellites. Major countries are making efforts to enhance the capabilities of various satellites and to launch them for the purpose of enhancing C4ISR functions (command, control, communication, computer, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance). Such satellites include image acquisition satellites for reconnoitering military facilities and targets, early warning satellites for detecting the launch of ballistic missiles, satellites for gathering radio signals, communication satellites for communications between military units, and positioning satellites for navigating naval vessels and aircraft and enhancing the precision of weapons systems. In outer space, various countries are thus rapidly developing their capabilities to ensure their military superiority.

From the viewpoint of ensuring superiority in the space domain, there are movements that various countries are developing and improving their capabilities to impede each other's use of outer space. For example, the ability to destroy a satellite with a ground-launched missile, or an anti-satellite weapon (ASAT) that does not directly hit and destroy a satellite with a missile, thus creating less space

debris, are thought to have been developed. These ASATs under development include a "killer satellite" to approach a target satellite and utilize a robot arm to capture the target and disable its functions. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that not only missiles and killer satellites but also jammers for interfering with communications between target satellites and ground stations, and laser weapons for attacking target satellites with directed energy, are being developed.

As the above illustrates, the risk to the stable use of outer space has become one of the critical security challenges for countries, thus it has become necessary to deal with this risk effectively in an effort to ensure stability in the use of outer space.

Against this backdrop, countries are working on SSA by monitoring solar activity with a potential impact on satellites and electronic equipment on the Earth, and threats caused by meteors reaching the Earth, in addition to threats posed by anti-satellite weapons and space debris to space assets.

For the MOD/JSDF, the threat to the stable use of outer space is increasing. Based on the mid-term defense

program, the MOD/JSDF will work to enhance capabilities to ensure superiority in use of space at all stages from peacetime to armed contingencies. The efforts include (1) establishing an SSA system in order to secure the stable use of space; (2) improving various capabilities that leverage space domain including information-gathering, communication and positioning capabilities, and; (3) building the capability to disrupt the C4I (command, control, communication, computer, and intelligence) of opponents with combined use of the electromagnetic domain. In so doing, the JSDF will (4) work to enhance cooperation with relevant agencies, including the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and with the United States and other relevant countries.

In line with these trends, the Space Operations Squadron has been launched as a specialized unit to operate the SSA system, and a specialty dedicated to the space domain has been newly established. At the squadron flag handover ceremony, representatives of the United States Space Command, U.S. Forces Japan, the Space Command of France (Commandement de l'Espace), the Royal Australian Air Force, the German Space Situational Awareness Center and JAXA also offered their congratulations.

Recent Telephone Conferences/ JGSDF Hand Washing Video



Defense Minister's Telephone Conferences

Canada/Australia/India/Philippines/New Zealand/Singapore/Indonesia/Italy/Mongolia

Minister Kono had telephone conferences with the Hon. Harjit Singh Sajjan, Minister of National Defence of Canada on May 1st, Senator the Hon. Linda Reynolds, Minister for Defence of Australia on May 7th, H.E. Rajnath Singh, Minister for Defence of India on May 8th, and H.E. Delfin N. Lorenzana, Secretary of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines on May 12th. Minister Kono then had a video teleconference with the Hon. Ron Mark, Minister of Defence of New Zealand, followed by telephone conversations with H.E. Dr. Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Defence of the Republic of Singapore and H.E. Prabowo Subianto, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia respectively on May 19th. Furthermore, he also had a telephone conversation with the Hon. Lorenzo Guerini, Minister of Defence of Italy on May 20th, and a video teleconference with H.E. Nyamaa Enkhbold, Minister of Defence of Mongolia on June 1st. In these conversations, Minister Kono and

the respective ministers exchanged views on issues such as the roles to be played by the defense authorities given the global spread of COVID-19. Minister Kono explained the JSDF activities on the cruise ship Diamond Princess, border control measures and operations to prevent community infection, as well as the infection-preventative measures undertaken in the JSDF operation and analysis of cases examined at the SDF Central Hospital, among other topics, by using a presentation document. Each of the ministers explained the situation with COVID-19 and measures taken by the military in their respective countries. The ministers of each country agreed to share information, knowledge and lessons learned about the measures towards overcoming COVID-19. In addition, the ministers exchanged views on the regional situation. Minister Kono also expressed the importance of continuing and strengthening defense cooperation and exchange with each country.

U.S.

On May 15th, Minister Kono had a teleconference with U.S. Defense Secretary Esper. The two ministers exchanged views on the response to COVID-19, the situation in the Indo-Pacific region including North Korea, and stable stationing of U.S. Forces in Japan. The MOD/JSDF will further deepen defense cooperation and exchange with each country, and develop bilateral/inter-regional foundation of security.

Date	Country	Name of the Counterpart
May 1	Canada	Hon. Harjit Singh Sajjan, Minister of National Defence
May 7	Australia	Senator the Hon. Linda Reynolds, Minister for Defence
May 8	India	H.E. Rajnath Singh, Minister for Defence
May 12	Philippines	H.E. Delfin N. Lorenzana, Secretary of National Defense
May 15	U.S.	Hon. Mark T. Esper, Secretary of Defense

Date	Country	Name of the Counterpart
May 19	New Zealand	Hon. Ron Mark, Minister of Defence
May 19	Singapore	H.E. Dr. Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Defence
May 19	Indonesia	H.E. Prabowo Subianto, Minister of Defense
May 20	Italy	Hon. Lorenzo Guerini, Minister of Defence
June 1	Mongolia	H.E. Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, Minister of Defence

JASDF Chief of Staff's Telephone Conferences

General Marumo, Chief of Staff, Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) had teleconferences with Air Marshal Mel Hupfeld, Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force on May 11th, Lieutenant General Kevin B. Schneider, Commander, Fifth Air Force / United States Forces Japan, and Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston, Chief of the Air Staff, Royal

Air Force on May 27th respectively. In each of these talks, the air senior leaders exchanged views on the impacts of COVID-19 and regional security issues. In addition, the air senior leaders also confirmed their commitment to developing defense cooperation, exchange and collaboration between the respective air forces.

Video on Preventing Infections of the JGSDF

The JSDF carried out a series of operations against COVID-19, such as activities on the cruise ship Diamond Princess in which a mass infection occurred; accepting infected patients at the SDF Central Hospital; disaster relief activities to provide medical and other support in response to requests from local governments, etc. Throughout these activities, no infections have been reported from the deployed JSDF personnel. Accomplishing zero infection throughout the operations was possible because the JSDF has been actively working on infection prevention measures on a daily basis. The JSDF has implemented various measures by making use of the know-how accumulated from such efforts in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The JGSDF made and posted videos on the YouTube channel of the MOD

that fully introduce the JSDF-style infection prevention measures in order to instruct private business persons, medical staff and local government staff who respond to COVID-19, as well as to inform people about these measures. The videos that feature sneezing and coughing etiquette, proper way to wear masks, and hand washing techniques are particularly very popular, as these can be easily put into practice at home.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/modchannel>

Washing hands

Manners when sneezing and coughing

Wearing a Mask



Salute Flyover by JASDF Blue Impulse

On May 29th, the JASDF aerobatic demonstration team, Blue Impulse, performed an approx. 20 minute flyover in the sky above central Tokyo to honor and thank those currently responding to COVID-19. A lot of people, including medical staff, are currently working to fight against COVID-19 nationwide. The MOD/JSDF arranged the flight performance in order to express their respect and appreciation to those people. Blue Impulse was blessed with clear skies on the day, as it made two flyovers above central Tokyo. The flights

were held in perfect order, first in delta formation, then in phoenix formation. Minister Kono also observed the Blue Impulse flight performance from the MOD head office. Blue Impulse gave strength and smiles to many people. The MOD will continue to provide necessary support to the medical staff battling against COVID-19 and all the people working hard to prevent the spread of infection.

BLUE IMPULSE

A specialized team of the JASDF which performs spectacular aerial acrobatics at JASDF airshows and large national events, such as the Olympic ceremony. Their official name is the 11th squadron of the 4th Air

Wing, based at Matsushima Air Base, Miyagi Prefecture. The flight performance by six planes colored blue and white is highly praised both at home and abroad as beautiful, majestic, splendid and precise.





JS Kirisame (back)
JS Takanami (front)

Dispatch of the Second Deployment Surface Force for Information Gathering

On May 10th, JS *Kirisame* of the 8th Escort Division departed the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Sasebo Base to engage in information-gathering activity for ensuring the safety of navigation for Japan-related vessels in the Middle East region, as the second Deployment Surface Force for Information Gathering (DSIG).

The deploying unit consists of approx. 200 personnel. Due to the spread of COVID-19, all onboard personnel took PCR tests after leaving Japan. They then remained in around Japanese waters for two weeks, during which they conducted training. After confirming that there were no cases aboard, JS *Kirisame* left for the Middle East on May 25th.

JS *Kirisame* started engaging in the activity necessary to ensure the safety of Japan-related vessels on June 9th, replacing JS *Takanami* that had been operating on site since February this year. JS *Takanami* completed its

mission successfully and contributed to ensuring the safety of navigation for Japan-related vessels navigating through the region. As of the end of May, the first deployed surface force has confirmed 7,617 vessels in total, and no particularly unusual event for Japan-related vessels has been confirmed up to now.

Besides JS *Kirisame*, patrol aircraft engaging in anti-piracy measures in the Gulf of Aden have also been gathering information related to safe navigation of vessels.

Since Japan is dependent on the Middle East for approximately 90% of its crude oil imports, it is extremely important for Japan to ensure the safety of navigation of Japan-related vessels.

The MOD/JSDF will continue to work to thoroughly ensure the safety of navigation of Japan related-vessels in the region.



Stalwart firing by Type10 Tank

Fuji Firepower Exercise 2020

On May 23rd, the annual Fuji Firepower Exercise “Educational Drill” was conducted at East Fuji Maneuver Area in Gotemba City, Shizuoka Prefecture. Due to the impact of COVID-19, it was not opened to the public this year.

Approx. 1,800 personnel from JGSDF Fuji School and other units participated in the exercise with approx. 40 artileries and approx. 30 armored vehicles/tanks. Approx. 1,000 students from JGSDF Fuji School, Military Intelligence School and the Eastern Army Combined Brigade observed the exercise.

The first part of the exercise involved live firing using major equipment such as Type 16 mobile combat vehicles

(MCV), Type 87 reconnaissance combat vehicles (RCV), Type 10 tanks, Type 74 tanks and Type 90 tanks. The second part of the exercise was conducted with the scenario of “dealing with the enemy attempting to invade the territory including the islands of our country.” A joint operation among the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces to repel the invading enemy force was conducted in three stages: 1. halting enemy advance by defense units, 2. attacks by Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade and other units, and 3. attacks by reinforced landing units.

The exercise was recorded by aerial drones and broadcasted online.



Type74 Tank firing



Nighttime firing by Type16 Mobile Combat Vehicle



Type19 155mm Self-Propelled Howitzer



Type12 Surface-to-Ship Missile



Reconnaissance Motorcycle



JASDF Bilateral Training Exercises

On April 22nd, May 12th and May 27th, the JASDF held bilateral training exercises with the U.S. Air Force in the area and airspace over vicinity of Okinawa and the Sea of Japan.

During the training exercise on April 22nd, four F-15 fighters from the 6th Air Wing (Komatsu Air Base) and four from the 9th Air Wing (Naha Air Base), three F-2 fighters from the 7th Air Wing (Hyakuri Air Base), and four of the same (F-2) fighters from the 8th Air Wing (Tsuiki Air Base) conducted the training. From the U.S. Air Force, a B-1B Lancer from the 28th Bomb Wing (Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota) and four F-16 fighters from the 35th Fighter Wing (Misawa Air Base) participated in the training. Through conducting navigation and formation training, the JASDF and U.S. Air

Force contributed to enhancing the Japan-U.S. bilateral response capabilities and improving tactical skills.

On May 12th, four F-15 fighters from the 5th Air Wing (Nyutabaru Air Base) and four from the 6th Air Wing (Komatsu Air Base), four F-2 fighters from the 7th Air Wing (Hyakuri Air Base), and four from the 8th Air Wing (Tsuiki Air Base) conducted training with a B-1B Lancer from the U.S. Air Force.

Furthermore, during the training exercise on May 27th, four F-15 fighters from the 5th Air Wing (Nyutabaru Air Base), four from the 6th Air Wing (Komatsu Air Base) and eight F-2 fighters from the 8th Air Wing (Tsuiki Air Base) conducted navigation and formation training together with two B-1B Lancers from the U.S. Air Force.



JDF NEWSLETTER Be the first to receive updates!

Send us a blank message at jdfmod@mod.go.jp to sign up for our newsletter.



For inquiry, contact following office:

Public Affairs Division, Ministry of Defense, Japan TEL: +81-3-3268-3111 (switch board) Web: <https://www.mod.go.jp/e/index.html>



www.facebook.com/JapanGov

[@JapanGov](https://twitter.com/JapanGov)

We Are Tomodachi
-Magazine to our friends around the world-



May 2020: "We Are Tomodachi Early Summer 2020" Released