

# Elements that Sustain Defense Capability

## Section

## 1

## SDF Training

## 1

## Training and Exercise by Each Self-Defense Forces (SDF)

Training and exercise conducted by units in each service can be broadly divided into training for individual SDF personnel to improve the necessary proficiency for their respective fields, and training and exercise for units to enhance their systematic capabilities. Training for individuals is conducted one-on-one in stages based on the specialties and abilities of individual personnel. Training and exercise for units is conducted depending on the size of unit, from small to large; meanwhile, large-scale comprehensive training including coordination between units is also conducted.

In order to effectively respond to various contingencies and enhance its deterrence effectiveness, based on the Mid-Term Defense Program (FY2019-FY2023; MTDP), SDF's joint training and exercises and Japan-U.S. bilateral training and exercises are to be conducted in a tailored and visible way. While leveraging the lessons learned from these training and exercises, the SDF is conducting regular studies and reviews of its plans to address contingencies.<sup>1</sup> The SDF also strives to further enhance amphibious operation capability by the

implementation of joint training by the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) and Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) in collaboration with U.S. Marines. The SDF will strive to enhance the effectiveness of the swift and continuous deployment of units and strengthen their presence on a steady-state basis by organically coordinating such training and exercises that utilize training environments in Japan and abroad.

Also, seeking to respond to various situations with a whole-of-government approach, coordination with relevant agencies including the National Police Agency, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, and Japan Coast Guard will be reinforced. The SDF will also actively utilize the opportunities presented by the joint training and exercises of the SDF and Japan-U.S. bilateral training and exercises as a way not only for developing and verifying plans for the actual SDF operations, but also for comprehensive issues including civil protection.

## 2

## Training Environment

SDF training has been planned and conducted under conditions that are as close as possible to actual combat situations, yet many restrictions remain. Therefore, the SDF will conduct effective training and exercises by expanding the establishment and utilization of the training areas in Hokkaido and elsewhere in Japan based on the National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2019 and beyond (NDPG). For example, the GSDF newly organized a Support Group for Training Assessment in March 2020 and started operations related to regiment-level field counter-attack exercise using a maneuvering ground in Hokkaido. Furthermore, the SDF will also facilitate expanded joint/

shared use of U.S. Forces facilities and areas with the SDF while accounting for relations with local communities. Furthermore, the SDF will facilitate the use of places other than SDF facilities or U.S. Forces facilities and areas, and the utilization of excellent training environments overseas, such as the U.S. and Australia, and introduce simulators actively.

<sup>1</sup> Training includes SDF Joint Exercises, Japan-U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercises, and Ballistic Missile Response Training, which are to prevent and repel direct threats to Japan. Other additional training includes International Peace Cooperation Exercises, which assume SDF's international peace cooperation activities.



Newly joined members of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF conducting basic training

### 3 Initiatives to Safety Management, etc.

The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/SDF constantly strive as one for safety management, such as by implementing the highest level of safety measures and precautions during routine training.

Despite these efforts, in September 2019, during the maintenance of P-3C Patrol aircraft at MSDF Kanoya Air Base (Kagoshima Prefecture), an engine fell from the aircraft, and directly hit and killed one SDF personnel.

The MOD/SDF is thoroughly implementing measures to prevent another such accident and expending all possible

means to ensure safety.

Any accident that can cause injury to the public, damage to its property, or the loss of life of SDF personnel, must be avoided at all costs. The MOD/SDF as a whole is making its utmost effort to prevent recurrence of such accidents by thoroughly investigating their causes and making sure each member has recognized the importance of safety management once again.