



July is
Health Innovation
& Research Month

Eagles migrate north for bilateral training



Capt. David Neville, a 13th Fighter Squadron F-16 Fighting Falcon pilot, banks right during a flight across Northern Japan, July 12.

By Staff Sgt. Deana Heitzman

35th Fighter Wing Public Affairs
7/18/2017 - MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — Some birds migrate north for the summer, and over the last week this was the case for a unique flock of eagles welcomed onto Misawa Air Base for a training exercise with the 35th Fighter Wing and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force.

These birds, or F-15C Eagles, assigned to Kadena Air Base, joined F-16 Fighting Falcons and JASDF F-2s in blue skies to enhance interoperability between airframes and nations while also strengthening partnerships during a routine aviation training relocation.

“We do not fly with the eagles on a regular basis,” said Capt. Ben Walters, a 13th Fighter Squadron F-16 Fighting Falcon pilot. “This training is critical because you don’t want the first time integrating with an asset that is supposed to provide coverage to be on the first day of a war. It has to be during training.”

Due to its strategic location in Northern Japan, Misawa AB is a hub for contingency oper-



▲ Staff Sgt. Christian Ruiz, left, an 18th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron aircraft electrical and environment technician, Senior Airman Devin Ross, center, an 18th AMXS crew chief, and Staff Sgt. Wesley Martinez, left, an 18th Component Maintenance Squadron aircrew egress systems craftsman, conduct preflight procedures on an F-15C Eagle at Misawa Air Base, July 13.

ations for airframes and units forward deployed across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. It is important during training such as these to test the abilities of the pilots and maintainers who

work cohesively alongside the aircraft.

“Training here in Misawa is important because it forces us to be in a different environment and overcome different adver-

saries we wouldn’t normally have at home station,” said Senior Airman Hugh Palmer, an 18th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron dedicated crew chief. “Working here also highlights

our downfalls during a relocation and gives us the opportunity to work with our Japanese counterparts and allies to ensure we are proficient if we ever have to operate out of Misawa.”

In addition to operating alongside U.S. assets, both fleets worked with JASDF, or Koku-Jieitai, closely to empower bilateral partnerships and clearly understand their mission sets.

“We have to train with the Koku-Jieitai and be familiar with the way they do business so we can effectively integrate the way we are supposed to if anything were to kick off here,” said Walters.

Overall, pilots from all three units worked together to solidify air-to-air coverage, offensive counter air, suppression of enemy air defenses and escort procedures.

“As pilots, training like this just makes us better,” Walters concluded. “As professionals, it enhances our ability to integrate bilaterally with the JASDF, as well as with different weapon systems. We will exponentially grow more as pilots and as people the more times we conduct exercises like these.”

JOINT HAHO JUMPS AT TALISMAN SABER



A U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion jumpmaster puts on his helmet on in preparation for high altitude, high opening (HAHO) jump operations July 11, over Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia during Talisman Saber 2017. The training exercise conducted between the U.S. Air Force and Marine Corps strengthens joint interoperability and working relationship between the armed services.
(U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. Jessica Tait)