

Okinawa Two Years Later



By Irene Smith

Defense Logistics Agency Energy officially assumed strategic bulk fuel and quality control missions on Okinawa, Japan, from the Army's 505th Quartermaster Battalion in 2013.

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Command war's reserve fuel objective on Okinawa.

"Unlike most DFSPs which receive its supply of petroleum via commercial pipelines direct from the refineries, tank and rail trucks belonging to the DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa DFSP receive fuel replenishment via tanker ships using our deep-sea piers and tanker discharge facilities," DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa's Commander Air Force Major Mata Robinson said. "These critical facilities allow us to supply our warfighters and ensure [PACOM] war

A Military Sealift Ship is moored at one of the two deep water piers at the White Beach Port Facility Okinawa. DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa's strategic location and close proximity to mainland Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, China and Korea plays a role in supplying fuel to the Navy's Seventh Fleet ships. Photos courtesy of DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa

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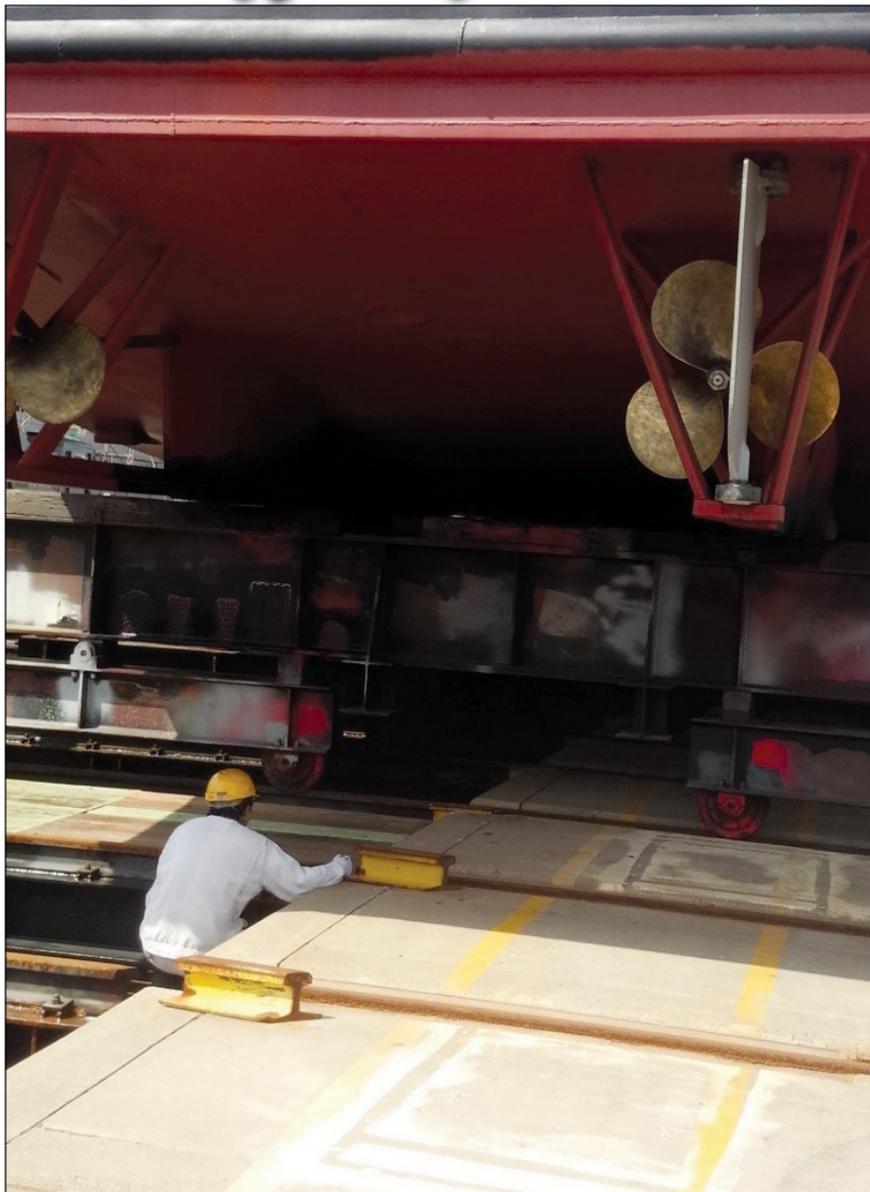
Okinawa's strategic location and close proximity to mainland Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, China and Korea plays a role in supplying fuel to the warfighter.

"Being a DFSP with bunkering capability on the island, we're able to provide greater flexibility for

transiting [the Navy's] Seventh Fleet ships to refuel in this particular region of [PACOM's] area of responsibility," Mata said. "We fuel the warfighter."

He said they do this by safely providing the highest quality fuel to customers and partners.

"We pump a monthly average of 5 million gallons of



A Landing Craft Mechanized vessel undergoes repair work, including propeller restoration, installation of fuel gauges and parts, sandblasting and new primer (anti-rust) paint at the Shin-Itoman Ship yard in Okinawa. As the only DLA Energy-operated defense fuel support point in the Pacific, DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa's mission is to support all Defense Department activities on Okinawa and to manage U.S. Pacific Command war's reserve fuel objective on Okinawa.

JP8 jet fuel to Kadena Air Force Base," Mata said. "We deliver a monthly average of 200 thousand gallon of JP5 jet fuel to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and Marine Corps bases throughout the island," he added. "We also provide bunker support that average 500 thousand gallons of F76 marine diesel fuel to transiting Navy and contracted ships."

The Okinawa DFSP is operated and manned with DLA Energy personnel, a first of its kind for DLA.

"Since the mission transfer and assuming DLA Energy

Okinawa's new role, civilian and military positions have been added while retaining local national personnel," Mata said. "We are currently the largest DLA Energy entity in the Pacific."

DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa real estate assets include two deep-sea piers and two tanker discharge facilities. The command oversees six fuel terminals with 56 million gallons of bulk fuel capacity, 78 miles of pipelines, pump houses, truck fill stands, maintenance facilities and a state-of-the-art petroleum laboratory.

"The piers and tanker discharge facility already exist and have been in use since the 1980s," Mata said. "The operations of these facilities were essentially absorbed by DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa from the 505th Quartermaster Battalion in 2013 to continue the mission of providing bulk fuel support to U.S. military and other Department of Defense agencies on the island."

Since DLA Energy officially assumed strategic bulk fuel and quality control missions on Okinawa, Japan, a three phase Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization process is underway to improve the fuel facility and equipment on Okinawa.

Ed Guthrie, deputy director for the Okinawa office explained how the SRM projects and materiel improvements were necessary to improve the aging fuel infrastructure.

"Since assuming the bulk fuel mission from the Army, we have renovated and reopened the petroleum laboratory and established a new maintenance contract, which will add a recurring maintenance contractor to the team in Okinawa for facility sustainment," Guthrie said. "The maintenance contract will enhance our in-house maintenance crews and allow for quicker resolution of maintenance issues on the fuel systems as well as decrease the maintenance/repair times of the facilities and equipment and maintain the fuel support capability for DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa to meet warfighter demands for petroleum support."

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A Japanese shipyard worker checks on the installation of a new fresh water pump and two hydraulic pressure pumps on a landing craft mechanized vessel at the Shin-Itoman Ship yard in Okinawa. Defense Logistics Agency Energy officially assumed strategic bulk fuel and quality control missions on Okinawa, Japan, from the Army's 505th Quartermaster Battalion in 2013 and is the largest DLA Energy entity in Pacific with 125 authorized personnel including 103 local national personnel.

The first improvement phase was the \$4.2 million sustainment, renovation and modernization project on the petroleum lab.

"The lab had been out of commissioned for six years," Guthrie said. "The HVAC system and all the support equipment were well past their life expectancy. In January 2015, we held a ribbon cutting ceremony reopening the lab."

Phase Two is a \$17 million SRM improvement to the command structures in facilities in the Chimuwan compound and 17 other facilities within the six tank farms and maintenance facilities around the island.

"These buildings were built in the 1980's and had outlived their usefulness," Guthrie said. "The buildings are being renovated to include improved communications and electrical upgrades to bring the building back to full use. The design phase began in April 2015 with construction planned to begin in early fiscal year 2016."

Phase Three is a \$10 million planned upgrade of all the fuel systems in the six geographical areas, including the fuel terminals and four maintenance operation terminals.

"Once that gets done we will have built a state of the art, 21st century fuel system, Guthrie said. "We're doing all this without military construction."

Prior to the transfer of mission, a business case analysis was conducted and it was determined to be more cost effective to operate the organization with DLA employees, he said.

"The DLA expansion in Okinawa strengthens DLA's capability to support the warfighter in the region," Guthrie said. "Since DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa assumed the bulk fuel mission, it allowed for a better evaluation of all terminals, including the ability to increase the storage capabilities in Okinawa, should there ever be a need."

The significant expansion in mission and size of DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa, especially with the DFSP management business unit, has led to infrastructure upgrades and improvements, notably the tanker discharge operations at the Tengan Petroleum Handling Facility.

“The tanker discharge facilities consist of a single point mooring buoy and a three-legged mooring system,” Mata said. “At Tengan, we offload JP8 and JP5 fuel from medium to large tanker vessels which is then stored in our tank farms in the Chimuwan and Kuwae district of Okinawa.”

Mata added the current three-legged-mooring system will be demolished and the land returned to the Japanese Fisherman’s Union.

“DLA Energy plans in conjunction with the Japanese Facilities Improvement Program to upgrade our single point mooring system from one to two single point mooring systems.”

A single point mooring system is a floating buoy that is permanently anchored offshore to allow handling of liquid cargo such as petroleum products for tanker ships. It is used in areas where a dedicated facility for loading or unloading liquid cargo is not available.

The benefits to using a single point mooring are the ability to handle extra-large vessels and single point mooring doesn’t require ships to come into port, saving fuel and time, Mata said.

Guthrie explained how the planned improvements to the White Beach pier in Okinawa will support the rebalance of fuel assets in the Pacific.

“The project that will install a second single-point mooring system is a Japanese Facilities Improvement Program project backed up with a sustainment, restoration and modernization military construction project to procure a third single point mooring buoy,” Guthrie said.

The DLA project point of contact, Jerry Vesey, has been working closely with Japanese Facilities Improvement Program engineers on the project, as well as with the supporting Sustainment Restoration Modernization military construction engineers at DLA headquarters and is being worked through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Omaha.”

The upgrade is projected to begin in 2017.



A newly renovated LCM craft is part of DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa Defense Fuel Support Point capabilities. The Okinawa DFSP provides JP8, JP5 and F76 to the Kadena Air Force Base, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, U.S. Navy Command Fleet Activities Okinawa at White Beach and the U.S. Army 10th Regional Support Group

Guthrie noted that DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa has been tasked to evaluate and submit projects to add to the already existing additive injecting system to allow DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa to receive Jet A1 petroleum product more readily available in the commercial supply chain in the region.

“This is a new initiative bringing in Jet A,” Guthrie said. “We will inject the additives as the product is being pumped to the warfighter.”

“We ensure the high quality on-specification fuel through our quality assurance and quality surveillance program,” Mata said. “Our quality assurance program ensures fuel quality before delivery at the refinery and ensures quantity upon delivery. Our quality surveillance, on the other hand, ensures that fuel is on-specification through testing and sam-

pling. The testing is done in our state-of-the-art laboratory which can perform C through B2 level testing in accordance with Military Standard 3004.”

Mission growth has led to personnel growth, he said. The rebalancing of assets in the Pacific region has increased some operational tempo, but the overall mission for DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa has allowed personnel to get facility projects processed and executed to some degree.

“The majority of our Japanese employees only speak, read and write Japanese, so documents and forms have to be translated in Japanese to include our standard operating procedures, work order forms, manuals, and emergency response procedures,” Mata said. “The communication barrier also presents a challenge in daily command and control

of our operations. Because of this, we have established a control center or control room to act as the nerve cell of the daily operations. Control room personnel on-duty consist of both English and Japanese speaking controllers. We’ve also implemented a weekly in-house English class program that is made available to our local national employees taught by fellow team members who speak English.”

“Since DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa came to life, the organization continues to improve relations with our warfighter customers, Guthrie said. “We do this through site visit exchanges to better familiarize them in what DLA Energy Pacific at Okinawa does to support the warfighter’s petroleum energy needs as well as improve facility capabilities to meet any future demands our customers require in Okinawa.” **ES**