

June 28 , 2024

Commander U.S. Forces, Japan

APO AP 96328-5068

Dear Lieutenant General Ricky N. Rupp,

As concerned citizens and groups of Yokosuka and surrounding communities, we are writing this joint letter regarding the highly concentrated PFAS discharged from the wastewater treatment plant at the U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka.

As you know, the harm of PFAS to humans is recognized publicly. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has also tightened regulatory standards for PFAS since last year.

We learned that the foam extinguishing agents used by the U.S. military in the past contains PFAS. If the PFAS discharge continues from the U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka into surrounding waters, it will cause immediate negative impact on the health of the people who eat locally harvested marine products as well as the U.S. military personnel, and the U.S. civilians living at the US Naval Base in Yokosuka and the PFAS contaminated site. This also creates long-term impact to the people and the marine biodiversity in the Pacific.

We request the Commander to recognize the urgency of the issue as soon as possible and to arrange a meeting with us directly to hear the voice of the citizens.

Please respond to each item.

1. We demand the immediate completion and release of the command investigation report by the U.S. Yokosuka Naval Base. We also demand the disclosure of the cause of this PFAS contamination to general public including the citizens, the City of Yokosuka, and the Japanese government.

One of our members requested to release the command investigation report through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

On this November he asked the commander of the Yokosuka Naval Base when this report will be completed and released, the commander answered that they had made this report already and sent it to your command for your review.

We believe that your command is ready to release that report.

We know that the U.S. military command had already prepared and released their investigation reports on PFAS at the Kadena and the Iwakuni, and accordingly we demand to release the Yokosuka report on PFAS immediately.

Our concern grows as it has been more than eighteen months since the PFAS was initially detected. However, the citizens of Yokosuka are still excluded from the discussion, not even knowing the cause of the contamination.

Please dispel our anxiety by immediate release of this report.

2. We demand the immediate release of the most recent analysis data of PFAS detected from the waste water sample at the entrance and exit of the treatment plant of the U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka.

Since the January of 2023, any new result had not been published. We believe that it is crucial to continue informing the public with the most recent data since it is the basis of trust relationship between the Japanese local community and the USFJ.

3. We demand the release of the analysis data particularly of the post October 2023 PFAS detected from the waste water sample at the entrance and exit of treatment plant at the U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka.

We learned that the granular activated carbon filters installed from November 2022 were deactivated from October 2023.

However, we are not informed the reason for deactivating them as of October 2023.

Prior to the filter installation in November 2022, the amount of PFAS detected in the effluent at the entrance and exit of the treatment plant exceeded the environmental standards of both Japan and the United States.

The inadequate closure of information lead us to suspect this deactivating of filters may brought back the amount of PFAS, and currently it is being discharged into the surrounding water.

If you cannot disclose the results of PFAS tests for wastewater after October 2023, please reactivate the filters or install new filters immediately. We demand immediate halt on discharging the waste water unless the data is disclosed and filters are reactivated.

4. We demand the approval of Yokosuka City officials to enter the U.S. Naval Base Yokosuka to conduct sampling and analysis at the entrance and exit of the wastewater treatment plant on the authority by The Article 3 of the Japan-U.S . Status of Forces Agreement through the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee.

It is inevitable to include local government to dispel the fears of the citizens based, immediately allow Yokosuka City Officials to be part of the process.

We will appreciate you taking time to hear our voice, considering the matter, and further working on this to solve the issue.

We are very looking forward to hear from you soon.

As for your response and question, please contact the below Attorney at law,

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Sincerely,

Tetsuya Komatsubara, Fisherman of the Eastern Fisheries Cooperative Association,  
Yokosuka City

Fusa Tomoe, The Yokosuka Citizen Article 9 Group

Mari Matsumoto, Yokosuka Peace Note

Tomiko Hagiwara, The Yokosuka Peace Committee

Shigeki Suzuki, Yokosuka Peace Squadron

Kazuhiko Ichihara, No Nuclear Aircraft Carrier

Akiyoshi Funaki, March for Peace and War Prevention Constitutional Amendment

Kimie Takigawa, Yokosuka Office of Kanagawa Network

Mamoru Funada, Kanagawa Peace Movement Center

Masahiko Goto, The Association for Protection of the Peace Constitution

Masahiko Goto, Citizens' Association to Concern Yokosuka Homeporting  
Nuclear Aircraft Carriers

Yasuo Niikura, Miura Peninsula Liaison Committee of Miura Peninsula to  
Prevent the Homeporting of Nuclear Aircraft Carrier

Hiroko Inoue, Yokosuka Branch, Woman's Association of New Japan

Hiroshi Niikura, Campaign for Citizens Declaration Against Nukes

Miwako Nakai, Peace Move Yokosuka

Shigeo Kimoto, Fight Kanagawa for No to All Bases

Hiroo Morita, Miura Peninsula Labor Center

Takeshi Kojima, Union Yokosuka Committee