



# U.S. TROOP REALIGNMENT

The **USFJ**, or United States Forces Japan, is a collective term referring to United States military activity and presence around Japan. Since World War II, the United States has maintained bases from the “mainland” of Honshu to Okinawa in the south, with a **significant concentration of USFJ in Okinawa**.

The United States’ military presence in Japan has gained a lot of attention recently due to controversy surrounding **realignment projects** under the Defense Policy Realignment Initiative (**DPRI**). These had their genesis under President Bill Clinton, were further developed under President George W. Bush, and are key components of the Obama Administration’s Asia Rebalance. Supporters of the projects believe that the USFJ presence is key to upholding U.S. commitments to defend Japan. Opponents argue that, among other things, it is a reminder of Japan’s Occupation by the U.S., an imposition on Japanese sovereignty, and a symbol of American imperialism.

## Relocation and Controversy

While there are other DPRI projects on the mainland, such as the relocation of U.S. Navy aircraft from Atsugi near Tokyo to **Iwakuni** in Yamaguchi Prefecture, the most attention is given to Okinawa. Currently, U.S. military facilities occupy approximately 18% of the largest island in Okinawa prefecture. Mounting pressure from locals led to a decision to decrease the number of U.S. troops on Okinawa and relocate the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station in **Futenma**. Almost two decades later, the transition is still in its beginning stages.

A total of **9,000 Marines** will be relocated with **4,700 going to Guam**.

In December 2014, Congress removed restrictions on funds for construction projects in Guam related to the relocation, releasing approximately **\$227 million** in funds.

Japan is bearing a significant portion of the relocation costs, pledging **\$3.1 billion**, out of a projected **\$8.7 billion**.

In 2006, **Guam** was chosen as the relocation site for many U.S. marines but the transfer of troops is not expected to begin until the early 2020’s. The base in **Futenma** will be moved to a new site – currently under construction – at the existing Camp Schwab in the less populated area of **Henoko**, Okinawa. This move will only take place once the Henoko facility is fully operational around the year 2022.

The local opposition to U.S. forces in Okinawa has grown so strong that politicians opposing the relocation won all major elections in 2014. This has led to major tensions between the Abe Administration and Okinawa prefecture as the local politicians work to prevent the building of new facilities and transfer of troops.

## U.S. Forces Japan in Numbers

- 7** U.S. bases/ports on mainland Japan
- 8** military facilities
- 28,000** U.S. military personnel
- 43,000** dependents
- 5,000** DOD civilian employees
- 25,000** Japanese workers

## U.S. Forces in Okinawa

