

**RESOLUTION OF PROTEST CALLING FOR THE SAFETY CONTROL
AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST ACCIDENTS
AND
THOROUGH ENFORCEMENT OF DISCIPLINE TO U.S. SERVICE
MEMBERS, SOFA-STATUS CIVILIANS, AND OTHER PERSONNEL**

On January 15, an incident occurred in the surrounding areas of Idesunajima Range, Tonaki Village, where an AH-1W helicopter from MCAS Futenma dropped equipment weighing 200 kilograms, including its missile launcher, into the seas.

Since last year, there have been a string of incidents of items being accidentally dropped from US forces' aircraft. There were nine (9) incidents last year, and following the abovementioned incident this year, there was an incident on January 23, when the end of a communications cord was dropped from an HH-60 helicopter from Kadena US Air Force Base; on February 4, a vertical stabilizer fell from a Kadena-based F15; and on February 12, a metal panel was dropped from an EP3 electronic reconnaissance aircraft also based at Kadena Air Force Base.

Damages incurred in these accidents have not been confirmed, however, such incidents can lead to serious events involving the lives and properties of the people in the Prefecture. With a vast area in the Prefecture hosting US military bases, the people of Okinawa live their lives next to these facilities on a daily basis, and such incidents are matters of great concern to the citizens and they should not be happening.

Furthermore, on December 9 of last year, the US Forces Japan reviewed the guidelines of off-duty actions of the members of the four military branches in Okinawa regarding off-duty outings and drinking off base (Liberty Policy), and relaxed the said policy. With the frequent occurrence of alcohol-related incidents and accidents involving US service members and/or other personnel, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly and other relevant organizations have expressed great concern over the restriction alleviations, and even now, these alcohol-related incidents and accidents still continue. Already this year, there have been apprehension of US service members and/or other personnel, over incidents such as a residential trespassing on January 1 in Okinawa City; another residential trespassing on January 19 in Nago City; refusing to take a breathalyser test on January 25 in Chatan Town; driving under the influence of alcohol on January 30 in Uruma City; and driving under the influence of alcohol on February 7 in Ginowan City. Among those arrested have included an officer, a captain, who is in a position and rank to lead.

Whenever incidents that involve equipment, parts, and others falling from US military aircraft have occurred, and/or when incidents and accidents that involve US military personnel and other SOFA-related persons occur, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly has repeatedly called for thorough preventive measures, implementation of discipline, and providing education and training for relevant persons. Despite our calls,

it is regrettable that such incidents and accidents have taken place and we cannot help but question the US forces in their efforts in prevention, the nature of safety control in training and exercises, as well as the training and education provided to military personnel as these incidents are not acceptable.

From the standpoint of protecting the lives and properties of the citizens of Okinawa, we, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, solemnly protest against the recent incidents and accidents, and strongly demand that the following four items be carried out expeditiously.

1. Thoroughly investigate the cause of these accidents and promptly disclose the findings to the citizens of the Prefecture.
2. Conduct a thorough review of the maintenance and inspection of aircraft, and work for aircraft safety control and prevention against accidents.
3. Make full compensation and apologies to the victims and their families.
4. Call for discipline among US military personnel and other SOFA-related persons, and for the implementation of effective regulations and guidance.

The above is resolved as stated on this 25th day of February, 2015.

Okinawa Prefectural Assembly