



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE PACIFIC AIR FORCES

7 August 2014

Dear Men and Women of the Kadena Air Base community

We take the concerns of our Kadena community seriously, especially those pertaining to our children. We remain committed to ensuring their health and well-being as well as keeping parents and school employees informed. In keeping with my promise, below is an update of the excavation in the Okinawa City soccer field.

Okinawa City and the Okinawa Defense Bureau (ODB) have released their analysis of the excavation site on their soccer field. Kadena health and environmental experts met with ODB and the Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) to discuss these results to ensure mutual understanding of each report analysis. Kadena, ODB and OPG experts agree there is no health risk to the local population from the excavation site; our children are safe.

Results from the excavation site indicate that some soil samples collected had elevated levels of arsenic and fluorine. Most results were below the Japanese standard's (Soil Contamination Countermeasures Act) upper limit for naturally occurring levels. According to judgment criteria in the Act, ODB and OPG believe these levels are consistent with naturally occurring soil throughout Okinawa and not influenced by the excavated material.

An insecticide (DDT) and petroleum hydrocarbons (like gasoline and diesel) were also detected in the soil at levels above Japanese standards. Additional studies on these components will be conducted by ODB, and excavation and disposal of the soil will occur. ODB is working to start further excavation in October of this year.

An agriculture herbicide (2,4,5-T) was detected. It was widely used internationally until restrictions started in the early 1970s and was banned in Japan in 1975. A byproduct of its manufacturing, 2,3,7,8-TCDD, was also detected. In addition, the herbicide 2,4-D was detected for the first time but only in stagnant water on the site. This component is found in many commercial weed killers today. For example, 2,4-D is easily available in Okinawa at Make-man, San-sea and Sakumoto stores and nationwide home improvement stores in the United States. Finally, the dioxins found are below Japanese soil standards, and the contaminated soil is at a depth where the local population would not have had direct contact.

Test results indicate the substances from the excavation area have not migrated off site. Our bioenvironmental experts have collected soil and air samples from the Bob Hope Primary School and Amelia Earhart Intermediate School grounds on two separate occasions to ensure Kadena was not impacted in any way from the excavation site. These samples were measured against samples taken from the Stearley Heights Elementary School and Boy Scout Hut as a baseline comparison. The results, confirmed by an independent lab, found the substances in the soccer field are not on school grounds.

OPG verified the soccer field storm water discharge, which is not used as a drinking water source, meets industrial wastewater standards. Additionally, Kadena's drinking water is drawn from commercial sources unrelated to the site and is tested monthly throughout the distribution system and quarterly to evaluate contaminate levels. The reports have consistently been compliant with Japanese and American standards. We will continue to regularly monitor the water and post the annual Kadena Air Base Consumer Confidence Report on the base webpage.

We will continue to monitor the environment for hazards on Kadena during future excavation phases and will take appropriate measures should we become aware of any potential substantial impact to health or safety.

ODB expects further excavation to take place October 2014 through March 2015. We are actively engaged with the responsible host nation organizations that are conducting this investigation and will continue to do so. For detailed information on the sample results, please visit our reading room on the Kadena webpage at <http://www.kadena.af.mil/library/okinawacitysoccerfieldexcavation.asp>. Any new pertinent information will be brought to your attention.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James B. Hecker', written in a cursive style.

JAMES B. HECKER
Brigadier General, USAF
Commander, 18th Wing