Week 8 of 15

Getting Around Safely

Whether you’re walking, riding a bike, or driving a car; being safe means knowing and following the rules. Here in Japan, that means learning some new ones and making some adjustments.

Driving your Car

- Speeds are much slower here than in the US. Plan ahead so you don’t have to rush.
- Stay alert for motorcycles, bikes, and pedestrians popping up on your left side.
- Watch for school children. Off-base they will raise their hand or use yellow flags when crossing the street.
- You must stop at ALL train crossings before proceeding over the tracks.
- You cannot turn left on a red light.
- Watch for buses at bus stops. They will use their blinkers to show when they are pulling out. Always give way to them.
- Always give way to emergency vehicles. Note that police cars often drive with their lights on even when not responding to a call. If they want you to pull over, they will get your attention.
- If you get in an accident, you must call PMO yourself or wait for the Japanese police to do so. Do not leave the scene until they arrive.
- Do not drink and drive. For all practical purposes, Japan has a zero-tolerance policy. Not One Drop!
- Stay off your cellphone! Even just holding your cellphone while driving is against Japanese law.
- Obey the law, remain calm, and be courteous to other drivers and people around you!

Drinking and Driving in Japan

- Not One Drop!
- Limit is 0.03 which means you could be above the limit after a couple of sips of your drink.
- Passengers will be prosecuted as well as the driver.
- Rules are the same for bicycles. You will get a DUI.
- OPTIONS:
  - Designated Driver
  - Taxi
  - Daiko service (they drive your car home)
  - Walking

You may have seen these stickers on Japanese cars. Each has a different meaning: 1 & 2 Elderly driver, 3 Beginner driver, 4 Hearing impaired, 5 Handicapped. These stickers are readily available in many stores. However it is illegal for SOFA drivers to drive with 1&2 Elderly driver and 3 Beginner driver stickers on their car.
Per MCASO 5560.8B, the wearing of head-phones, earphones, or other listening devices while running, jogging, walking, or within 3 feet of any traveled portion of any street, roadway, highway, avenue, or parking lot is prohibited on-base except at approved locations. The only approved locations aboard the base are the seawall, sports tracks, and the Atago sports center.

Questions? Contact the MCAS Iwakuni Station Safety Center.