

# Crimson Sky

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U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Cameron Russell, left, and Staff Sgt. John Gegato, both 36th Fighter Generation Squadron F-16 avionics craftsmen, perform maintenance on an F-16 Fighting Falcon during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. The training strengthened coordination between installations while ensuring Airmen can rapidly reposition and continue generating sorties during contingency operations.



## Osan Airmen Disperse to Kunsan for ACE Operations During Freedom Shield

By Senior Airman Rome Bowermaster  
51st Fighter Wing

**KUNSAN AIR BASE, Republic of Korea** -- U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 51st Fighter Wing operated out of Kunsan Air Base in support of exercise Freedom Shield 26, a combined U.S. and Republic of Korea exercise designed to strengthen readiness and enhance the alliance's ability to respond to regional threats, March 7-13, 2026.

Freedom Shield integrates U.S. and ROK forces

across multiple domains to train defensive and contingency operations across the Korean Peninsula. The exercise allows allied forces to work together in realistic scenarios while strengthening coordination and operational effectiveness in a dynamic security environment.

During the exercise, Airmen from Osan trained on Agile Combat Employment by operating from Kunsan Air Base, refining their ability to rapidly reposition aircraft, personnel and equipment while sustaining combat

operations away from their primary operating location.

"ACE is the Air Force's doctrine to increase survivability through the dispersal of equipment and personnel," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Alexander Strickland, 51st Logistics Readiness Squadron mission generation force element-base operation support integrator lead. "It allows us to proactively or reactively maneuver within threat timelines while still generating combat power."

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# DAF announces updates to Military Leave Program

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) -- The Department of the Air Force released an update to DAFI 36-3003, Military Leave Program, on Feb. 26. The revision incorporates changes mandated by the Department of War and streamlines leave policies to ensure Airmen and Guardians are fully aware of their entitlements.

The updated instruction aligns with DoDI 1327.06, Leave and Liberty Policy and Procedures, formally incorporates previously issued guidance, and introduces several key modifications to the military leave program.

### Key Policy Changes

#### Maternity and Parental Leave

Inactive Duty Parental Leave is a new non-chargeable leave allowance for the Air Reserve Component and Space Force Active Status-Not on Sustained Duty members. IDPL authorizes the birth and non-birth parent to use 12 IDPL periods after a qualifying birth event, adoption of a minor child or placement of a minor child with them for adoption or long-term foster care. IDPL is retroactive for members with a qualifying event between October 1, 2024, and August 7, 2025, providing a one-year window from August 7, 2025, to August 7, 2026, to utilize this benefit. This change more closely aligns with active-duty service member allowances to support both parents in uniform.

With the new IDPL allowance, Reserve Component Maternity Leave has been adjusted from 12 to 6 Inactive Duty Training periods to align with active-duty service member allowances of convalescent leave. More information on IDPL can be found here (for CAC-enabled users).

#### Non-covered Assisted Reproductive Technology

To align with DoDI 1327.06, Military Leave, Liberty, and Administrative Absence, the terminology for "Non-covered Reproductive Health Care" has been updated to "Non-covered Assisted Reproductive Technology." The full list of approved services under this leave allowance can be found in the updated DAFI.

#### Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program

The Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program, a

leave allowance for designated overseas locations, is now integrated into LeaveWeb. This streamlines the former manual process to increase trackability and efficiencies for the member, commanders, and other offices to track online.

#### Permanent Change of Station Moves

As previously announced through command channels, this DAFI incorporates recent changes to expand Permissive TDY usage during PCS moves. PTDY is now authorized incrementally between gaining and losing duty stations, as well as for packing and unpacking household goods, to best suit the service member's needs. In addition, the instruction clarifies members are authorized to use at least 30 days of their existing leave en route to their new PCS to ensure service members and their families are allowed time to adjust to their new location.

#### Reduced Special Leave Accrual Cap

Also previously announced through command channels, Airmen and Guardians are reminded of the changes to Special Leave Accrual that are now in effect. The transition period for these changes ends on September 30, 2026.

- **Reduced Cap:** As mandated by the Fiscal Year 23 National Defense Authorization Act, the SLA carryover cap is permanently reduced to 30 days. The standard annual leave carryover cap remains at 60 days.
- **Use-or-Lose Deadline:** The maximum combined leave that can be carried over into the new fiscal year is 90 days (60 days annual + 30 days SLA). Any leave balance exceeding this 90-day total on Oct. 1, 2026, will be forfeited.
- **SLA Sell-Back Option:** Enlisted members at risk of forfeiting leave have a one-time option to sell back up to 30 days of their SLA. This will count toward the career 60-day sell-back limit. Members should contact their local servicing Military Personnel Flight to initiate this process.

All personnel are encouraged to review their leave balances and plan accordingly to avoid forfeiture.

## Did You Know?

**H**onoring "The Star-Spangled Banner" is a sign of respect for our nation and the sacrifices made for our freedoms. Extending that same honor to the anthems of our allies is a powerful sign of our commitment to them. When outdoors during the U.S. and ROK national anthems, uniformed personnel are required to render a salute, while civilians should stand with their right hand over their heart. If you are in a vehicle on base, safely pull to the side of the road and stop until the music concludes. These customs are a daily opportunity to show honor for our country and our allies.

**T**he military salute is a tradition of respect believed to date back to medieval knights, who would raise their visors to identify themselves and show an empty weapon hand. Today, this custom continues as a vital sign of mutual respect between allies. U.S. military personnel are required to render proper salutes to superior officers of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Armed Forces, and ROK forces extend the same courtesy in return.

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# The Wolf Pack executes during Freedom Shield 26



By Senior Airman Landon Gunsauls  
8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Navy aircrewmembers 1st Class Jayden Buford, assigned to Commander, Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 "Blackhawks," prepares for takeoff during a joint medical evacuation training as part of exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. ▲

**KUNSAN AIR BASE, Republic of Korea --** The 8th Fighter Wing was generating combat airpower and preparing mission ready Airmen to defend the base, accept follow-on-forces and take the fight north during exercise Freedom Shield 26, March 9-19, at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea.

FS26 is an annual combined joint all-domain exercise that's defensive in nature designed to strengthen alliance between the U.S. and ROK, enhance our combined defense posture, and improve joint readiness.

"Wolf Pack Airmen know they're a part of something bigger than just the Wing. Freedom Shield 26 provided our Wolf Pack an opportunity to align our tactical objectives with Seventh Air Force and U.S. Forces Korea's mission priorities," said U.S. Air Force Col. Kathryn "Wolf" Gaetke, 8th FW commander. "At the local level, we practiced defending the base, accepting follow-on forces and generating combat power, and that readiness is an important part of U.S. strategy."

Airmen built on multiple iterations of ability to survive and operate exercises flexing



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 8th Civil Engineer Squadron conduct airfield damage repair training during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 11, 2026. Hands-on training strengthens the squadron's ability to rapidly transition from damage assessment to repair, preserving operational momentum across the airfield. ▲

A U.S. Air Force firefighter assigned to the 8th Civil Engineer Squadron responds to a simulated fire at the 8th Communications Squadron building during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 9, 2026. Firefighters ensured Airmen from the 8th CS safely evacuated the facility while rescuing casualties, providing emergency medical care and extinguishing the simulated fire. ►



to operate in a contested environment while augmenting the 8th Security Forces Squadron through a ready reserve force and manning defensive fighting positions across the Wing.

This Freedom Shield featured the return of medical airlift to Kunsan AB. With the U.S. Naval Station Norfolk, Commander, Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron HM-15 "Blackhawks".

Between rapid airfield damage repair, augmenting security forces, and supporting casualty collection Airmen banded together to do whatever it takes to defend the Korean Peninsula.

Whether it was assisting in medical evacuations, repairing runways, or defending the base, every Wolf Pack member worked to make Freedom Shield 26 a success. Ensuring that our rock-solid operational partnership with the Republic of Korea and joint operations through USFK continue to endure.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Madison Plangger, 8th Health Care Operations Squadron paramedic, assesses a simulated casualty during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 9, 2026. Airmen from across the Wolf Pack came together during FS26, sharpening crisis management skills and preparing themselves for any scenario. ▲



U.S. Air Force Maj. Danielle Presley, 8th Medical Group flight surgeon, coordinates with U.S. Navy aircrew for a medical evacuation training as part of exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. FS26 provides a demanding training environment designed to enhance combat readiness and joint response capabilities. ▲



A U.S. Air Force Airman assigned to the 8th Communications Squadron guards against threats while evacuating a simulated fire during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 9, 2026. Mission Ready Airmen honed a diverse set of expeditionary skills during FS26, forging the agile, lethal force required for a contested environment. ▲

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Japeth Yap, 8th Civil Engineer Squadron pavement and equipment supervisor, spreads cement mix over spalling for rapid airfield damage repair training part of exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 11, 2026. FS26 provides a demanding training environment designed to enhance combat readiness and response capabilities. ►



# Distributed operations enable Seventh Air Force to sustain airpower during Freedom Shield 26



U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. David Iverson, center left, Seventh Air Force and Combined Air Component Command commander, and South Korea air force Lt. Gen. Jun Sun Cha, center right, South Korea Air Force Operations Command and CACC deputy commander, host a meeting during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, South Korea, March 13, 2026. The CACC integrates U.S. and South Korea airpower to plan, direct and execute combined air operations across the Korean Peninsula. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brenden Beezley) ◀

By Senior Airman Brenden Beezley  
Seventh Air Force Public Affairs

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea (AFNS) -- During exercise Freedom Shield 26, the Seventh Air Force tested its ability to command and control airpower in the event its primary Air Operations Center is no longer available, forcing personnel and capabilities to operate from multiple dispersed locations.

Known as distributed operations, this approach allows the AOC to continue planning, directing and executing airpower across the theater even when personnel and systems are physically separated in contested environments.

"In this exercise, we are practicing what happens in a wartime scenario where the AOC is no longer usable and we still have to get the job done somewhere else," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Kathleen Dickerson, Seventh Air Force A1 Manpower, Personnel and Services deputy director. "This exercise gives us an opportunity to practice doing that in new ways."

Previous exercises have focused on relocating operations to a designated alternate AOC. During FS26, planners expanded that approach by testing a distributed operations model that spread personnel and capabilities across several facilities, forcing teams to operate while separated from their normal workspaces and, in many cases, their existing support networks.

"In the past we've gone to an alternate AOC, and at this point we know how to do that," Dickerson said. "This time we wanted to show we could set up somewhere else entirely and still operate."

Executing this capability required significant communications planning to ensure teams operating in separate locations could still access mission systems and maintain connectivity required to coordinate air operations.

"When we started capturing requirements for the exercise, there was no time for additional procurement, so we had to work with what we

the combined battle staff and Seventh Air Force to continue planning, executing and disseminating the air tasking orders from dispersed locations, relying solely on communications capabilities."

The communications preparation also required coordination beyond U.S. systems alone, as teams worked through their South Korea counterparts to identify requirements and ensure systems and capabilities were aligned across dispersed sites.

Supporting that combined environment required more than basic network access. Long explained that some locations needed both U.S. and South Korea systems and additional communications support for combined workflows, while differences in how each side installs and manages systems added another layer of complexity.

"We had to account for both U.S. and ROK systems at some of these locations, which meant coordinating requirements and making sure everything was in place to support how both sides operate," Long said. "Even simple things like printers or how systems are installed can be different, so we had to plan for that as we built out each site."

In a distributed environment, that coordination becomes essential. Long said teams must rely entirely on communications systems to share information, synchronize actions and maintain alignment across multiple locations without the benefit of face-to-face interaction, making reliable connectivity critical to sustaining command and control.

By testing distributed operations during major combined exercises like Freedom Shield, Seventh Air Force can identify limitations, refine procedures and strengthen its ability to command and control airpower in contested environments, reinforcing the combined defense posture on the Korean Peninsula.

"As long as we can still produce the products we need and get the information to the commander so he can make decisions, that will be a success," Dickerson said. "If everyone walks away with at least one lesson learned that improves the process next time, then the exercise did its job."

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# Architects of the exercise: Bringing the space domain to life for Freedom Shield 26



By First Lt. Jimmy Nguyen  
Seventh Air Force

U.S. Space Force Maj. Dillon Hagerty, U.S. Space Forces – Korea director of force development, works alongside exercise control group members during exercise Freedom Shield 26 in the Pacific Air Simulation Center at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. The exercise control group enhances readiness by providing realistic training to exercise participants through simulated products and data. ▲

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea (AFNS) -- While thousands of service members train across multiple warfighting domains during exercise Freedom Shield 26, a small team from U.S. Space Forces – Korea is working behind the scenes to bring the space domain to life.

Freedom Shield 26 is a recurring exercise between South Korea and the United States, in collaboration with the United Nations Command, ensuring continuous preparedness for military forces on the Korean Peninsula. For SPACEFOR-KOR, the exercise is an opportunity to rehearse theater-relevant operations across all Space Mission Areas, stress-test procedures and sharpen

Ryan Bonacci, right, an exercise control group member attached to U.S. Space Forces - Korea, works with U.S. Space Force 1st Lt. Roman Ocampo, SPACEFOR-KOR chief of exercise development, during exercise Freedom Shield 26 in the Pacific Air Simulation Center at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. The PASC's space component produces a variety of simulated products and data to construct a realistic, data-driven training environment for exercise participants. ►



Ryan Bonacci, an exercise control group member attached to U.S. Space Forces - Korea, speaks to U.S. Space Force Maj. Dillon Hagerty, SPACEFOR-KOR director of force development, during exercise Freedom Shield 26 in the Pacific Air Simulation Center at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. Simulation-based training provided by the PASC allows exercise participants to receive near real-time feedback based on real-world scenarios and challenges. ►

the command's ability to scale operations rapidly.

A core focus of Freedom Shield 26 is to provide a demanding training environment to enhance combat readiness and response capabilities. Across the warfighting domains – ground, air, naval, space, cyber and information – the space fight is being exercised digitally.

In the months leading up to the exercise, the SPACEFOR-KOR S7 directorate, responsible for force development, training and exercises, worked to develop a robust space environment to meet the command's objectives.

"Our primary objective is to ensure we're rehearsing the theater-relevant [operational plans]," said U.S. Space Force Maj. Dillon Hagerty, SPACEFOR-KOR director of force development. He added that additional objectives include validating the space operations planning cycle, testing command and control capabilities, and conducting partnership engagement.

Achieving those objectives was no easy task, with planning beginning long before the exercise started.

Building the scenarios under normal conditions, the S7 directorate operates as a small four-person team responsible for extensive coordination across higher headquarters and supporting commands, as well as detailed planning and scenario development.

Hagerty explained the small team manages a heavy workload that includes administration, logistics, personnel coordination, exercise planning and scenario design.

To develop scenarios and simulated data, the S7 directorate works with the Pacific Air Simulation Center at Osan Air Base, the Korean Battle Simulation Center at Camp Humphreys and other simulation centers in the United States. These partnerships allow the team to create a more realistic and responsive training environment for exercise participants.

"Our role here is a lot of coordination between the different simulation centers to make the space scenario work for these exercises as realistically as possible," said U.S. Space Force 1st Lt. Roman Ocampo, SPACEFOR-KOR chief of exercise development.

During exercise execution, the directorate transforms into a 24-hour operation known as the Exercise Control Group, or ECG. This team scales to more than a dozen members, including subject matter experts from across the Space Mission Areas and liaisons from the South Korean Air Force's Space Operations Group.

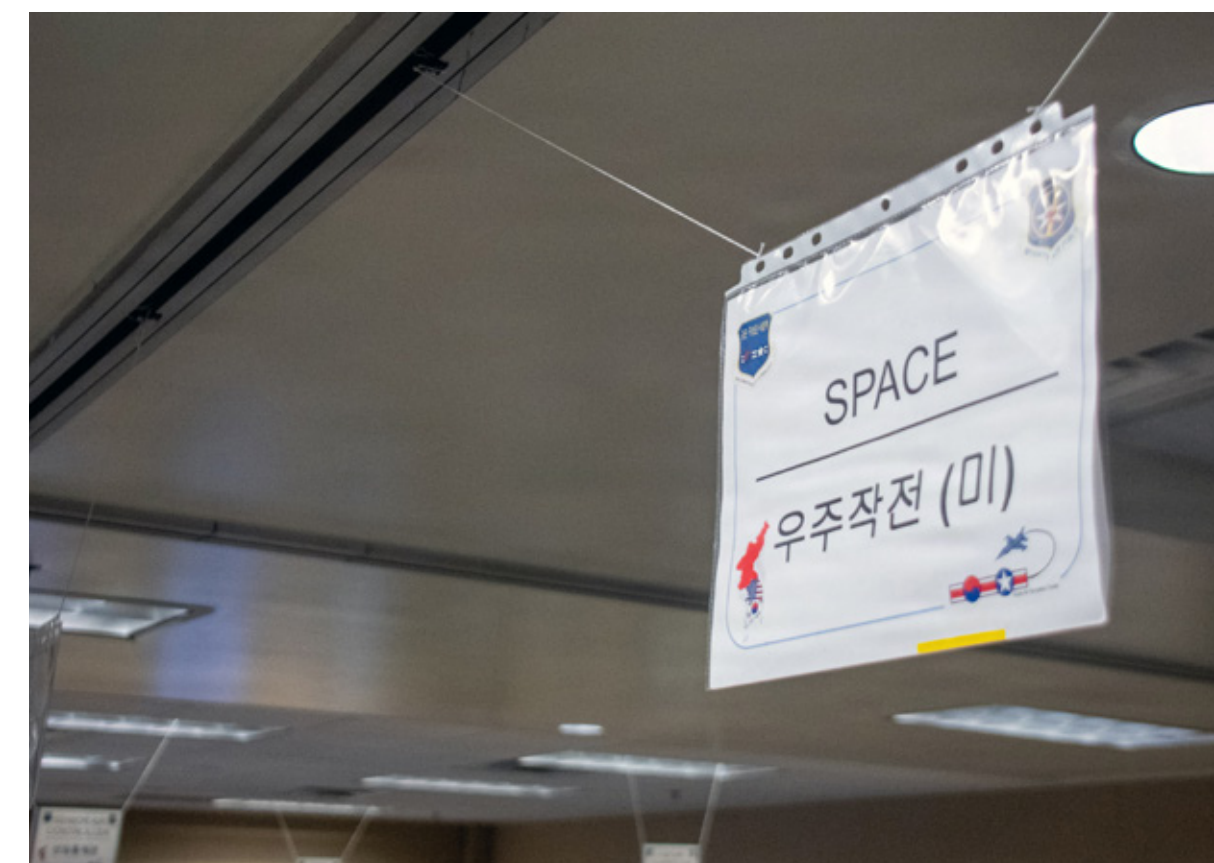
Together, the ECG executes and manages the scenarios that drive the space portion of the exercise forward.

"We are the controllers for the entire space domain for the exercise," Ocampo said.

That responsibility spans a wide range of Space Mission Areas, including Missile Warning, Space



A space component sign hangs in the Pacific Air Simulation Center at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. The PASC's space exercise control group leverages permanent party and surge forces to deliver round-the-clock simulated data. ▼



Domain Awareness and scenarios involving degraded space-enabled effects that support combined operations. By building those mission areas into the exercise, the group creates a more realistic contested environment for participants.

Much of the group's operations take place at the Pacific Air Simulation Center, the only center in the Korean theater of operations that provides integrated air and space simulation, wargaming capabilities and continuous simulated data. Inside the center, the space-focused ECG works alongside its air component counterparts to synchronize efforts and integrate space operations.

But the group's role does not end once a scenario is launched.

"One of the big jobs that the [exercise control group] has to perform is monitoring player actions in order to keep the scenario running," Ocampo said, explaining how U.S. members track U.S. forces actions while South Korean

counterparts monitor how their forces are responding to the space scenarios introduced in the exercise.

As the exercise unfolds, the ECG assesses how U.S. and South Korea forces respond to simulated adversary threats, then adjusts the scenario to allow participants to see the impact of their actions. This process sharpens shared understanding, improves coordination and reinforces how space operations support combined defense in the Korean theater of operations.

As SPACEFOR-KOR continues to grow its role in Freedom Shield, the command is making the space domain a more operationally relevant part of the training environment. For the S7 team, that means continuously expanding the complexity, realism and scope of the space fight so combined forces are better prepared for real-world operations on the Korean Peninsula. In that effort, the space domain is not just represented but fully integrated into the fight.



A U.S. Air Force HH-60W Jolly Green II releases flares during combat search and rescue training with Swedish air force rangers as part of Cold Response in Norway, March 13, 2026. The exercise was designed to strengthen rapid response capabilities and resilient sustainment in the high north, reinforcing NATO's collective defense. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Brooke Rogers) ▲

## US, allied forces strengthen Arctic readiness during exercise Cold Response 26

By Senior Master Sgt. Megan Crusher  
U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces  
Africa Public Affairs

**BARDUFLOSS AIR STATION, Norway (AFNS)** -- U.S. Air Force Airmen, alongside Norwegian and allied partners, successfully concluded participation in exercise Cold Response 26, a Norwegian-led multinational training event designed to enhance collective defense, sharpen warfighting skills and reinforce deterrence capabilities in the high north.

The exercise brought together more than 25,000 military and civilian personnel from over a dozen NATO nations across all domains operating from locations throughout Norway, Sweden and Finland. U.S. Air Force forces integrated with allies to execute high-intensity scenarios that tested interoperability and readiness in harsh Arctic conditions.

"During Cold Response, we are able to help strengthen the alliance by practicing and integrating with the other partners, from the mission planning to the actual execution at the



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jose Maldonado Cruz, 493rd Equipment Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintenance craftsman, and a Finnish Air Force pilot, discuss flying a Finnish Air Force F/A-18C Hornet aircraft at Ørland Air Force Station, Norway, March 13, 2026. Exercise Cold Response 26 leveraged decades of combined experience, mutual understanding and the long-standing partnership between allied nations to seamlessly integrate forces. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff. Sgt. Elizabeth Davis) ▲

A U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II takes off for exercise Cold Response at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom, March 5, 2026. The exercise is designed to strengthen U.S. and allied combat power, sustain lethal forces, deter hostile actions and contribute to global security. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Sierra Casteel) ▶

squadron level," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Dustin Merritt, 493rd Fighter Squadron commander.

F-35A Lightning IIs from the 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom, operating out of Ørland Air Force Station, Norway, flew alongside Royal Norwegian Air Force F-35s assigned to the 123rd Luftving, integrating advanced fifth generation fighter capabilities across allied forces. Together they conducted demanding training, including complex night operations, to strengthen collective combat capability.

The air combat picture was further enhanced by Finnish Air Force F/A-18 Hornets, from the 21st Fighter Squadron, and Swedish Air Force JAS 39 Gripen from Karelia Air Wing, expanding the scope of multinational integration and reinforcing allied interoperability in complex and challenging scenarios.

Enabling these sustained air operations, KC-135 Stratotankers assigned to the 100th Air Refueling Wing, based at RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom, provided aerial refueling support, extending the range and endurance of U.S. and allied aircraft.

"Air-to-air refueling is an inherently a dangerous job because you're flying two or more airplanes very, very close together in proximity, so it takes a lot of preplanning, mission planning and coordination prior to, and good communication with our NATO allies and partners," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Jeff Chae, KC-135 pilot, with the 100th ARW. "Overall, I think the exercise really helps us to practice what we play and strengthens the NATO alliance, making us a more cohesive and capable force."

Complementing this capability, HC-130J Combat King II aircraft assigned to the 23rd Wing, stationed at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, also conducted in-air refueling with Swedish Air Force



JAS 39 Gripens, expanding the reach and flexibility of multinational combat air operations.

In addition to refueling, HC-130J crews also supported combat search and rescue missions alongside Airmen assigned to the 56th and 57th Rescue Squadrons, from Aviano Air Base, Italy. From Bardufoss Air Station, these units trained with Swedish Air Force Rangers to execute personnel recovery operations in austere Arctic conditions. Using HH-60W Jolly Green IIs from the 56th RQS, the integrated team conducted hoist, rappelling and simulated recovery missions, strengthening their ability to locate, treat and extract isolated personnel.

Sustaining U.S. Air Force operations, maintainers across all participating units ensured aircraft survivability and mission readiness despite extreme Arctic conditions. Working in freezing

temperatures, high winds, rain and snow, they kept aircraft mission-capable across the Arctic, enabling aircrews and rescue crews the ability to execute complex missions.

Together, these efforts demonstrated NATO's ability to rapidly deploy, integrate and sustain combat-ready forces in the high north, reinforcing a unified and capable defensive alliance. By strengthening stability in a vital region of the European theater, Cold Response enhances the ability to defend the homeland by deterring potential threats before they reach U.S. borders.

"By exercising in Cold Response, the ability to execute missions rapidly and flexibly is one of the byproducts of this," Merritt said. "It sends a message that we're ready as part of NATO to deter and defend whatever we need to when the time arises."



A U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II assigned to the 48th Fighter Wing conducts low level operations during exercise Cold Response 26 over Kopparen Mountain, Norway, March 17, 2026. The unique Norwegian climate provided an opportunity for NATO allies and partners to enhance cold-weather capabilities and demonstrate the ability to operate at all times and in all conditions. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Davis) ▲

# Rush Park: Turning Dirt into Readiness during Freedom Shield 26



By Staff Sgt. Sarah Williams  
51st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force personnel in-process augmentees during Freedom Shield 26 at Rush Park on Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 10, 2026. Rush Park allows Osan to quickly accommodate additional service members when demands increase for contingency operations. FS26 presents augmentees with realistic scenarios to strengthen defense capabilities. ▶

**OSAN AIR BASE, Republic of Korea**  
-- To many, Rush Park may appear to be an unassuming collection of connexes surrounded by open dirt, but to Osan Air Base, Rush Park is much more. Rush Park serves as a critical capability that strengthens the base's ability to receive and support follow-on forces during contingency operations.

Designed as a flexible staging and support area, Rush Park allows Osan to quickly accommodate additional service members when operational demands increase, such as for this year's iteration of the combined defensive exercise, Freedom Shield 26.

"Rush Park gives us the flexibility to rapidly receive follow-on forces and keep

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Clarence Baton, 3rd Audiovisual Squadron command support staff, processes redeployments during Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 20, 2026. Rush Park helps meet the demands of increased follow-on forces by being equipped with tents and expeditionary support infrastructure. ▶



U.S. Air Force Airmen board a bus after Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 20, 2026. Ensuring the installation can rapidly receive and sustain additional forces through Rush Park strengthens the Korean Peninsula's ability to respond quickly if operational needs arise. Osan plays a vital role in maintaining regional stability and supporting the U.S.-ROK Alliance. ▶

them ready," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Tae Kyung Lee, Rush Park camp mayor. "From tents to communications and basic services, everything here is designed to help Airmen transition quickly from arrival to mission execution."

During contingency operations, installations across the Indo-Pacific must be prepared to quickly increase operations and support incoming units tasked with reinforcing the mission. Follow-on forces may arrive to support a wide range of mission-sets including logistics, maintenance and communications. Ensuring these personnel have the infrastructure and resources necessary to transition quickly into mission execution is essential to sustaining operations, particularly as the Air Force continues to implement Agile Combat Employment, emphasizing speed, flexibility and distribution operations.

Rush Park helps meet that demand by being equipped with tents and expeditionary support infrastructure designed to accommodate incoming forces. The area also includes quality of life amenities, such as an indoor gym, helping service members maintain readiness while operating in a contingency environment.

Rush Park also supports large-scale exercises such as Freedom Shield, where the base practices receiving and integrating additional forces in support of combined U.S.-Republic of Korea operations. These exercises allow Osan to test ACE capabilities to expand operations, coordinate resources and ensure personnel can quickly support rapidly changing mission requirements.


"Rush Park is a key part of how Osan prepares for surge operations," said U.S. Air Force Col. Jeff Elliott, 51st Mission Support Group commander. "It allows us to quickly receive and support additional personnel while ensuring they have the resources they need to integrate into the mission and maintain readiness."

Osan plays a vital role in maintaining regional stability and supporting the U.S.-ROK alliance. Ensuring the installation can rapidly receive and sustain additional forces strengthens the Korean Peninsula's ability to respond quickly if operational needs arise.

"Rush Park is an important part of how we maintain our readiness posture and ensure we can scale operations when required," said Elliott. "By creating spaces that can support an influx of personnel, we strengthen Osan's ability to remain ready to operate alongside our ROK partners and Fight Tonight."

As Osan continues to enhance its readiness posture, areas like Rush Park remain an essential part of the installation's ability to receive follow-on forces, support large-scale exercises and sustain operations in support of regional stability.




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 Rev. Donald L. Brown, Pastor

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

Sunday School ..... 10:00 AM  
 Morning Worship ..... 11:00 AM  
 Wednesday Bible Study ..... 6:30 PM  
 Lord's Supper ..... 1st Sunday  
 Missions Sunday ..... 4th Sunday  
 Men's Fellowship ..... 2nd Sat 8:00 AM  
 Women's Fellowship ..... Last Fri 6:00 PM

Zoom meeting ID: 422 616 0881  
 Zoom Passcode: fcfc  
 Church email: fcfc@fcfc.org  
 Web: www.fcfc.org  
 Waze: Faith Christian Fellowship Church: https://waze.com/ul/hwyd670hps

We are located 0.5km from Camp Humphreys Main Gate. FCFC, Songhwa-ri, 60-1, Paengseong-Up, Pyongtaek-si

For more information, call 010-4854-8783.

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)

## Fire Extinguisher Safety

Fire extinguishers are crucial safety devices that can prevent small fires from turning into devastating blazes. Understanding how to use them properly and maintaining them regularly is vital for ensuring safety in homes, offices, and public spaces.

**General Fire Extinguisher Requirement**

- Fire extinguishers will not be blocked or obstructed and shall remain readily accessible at all times. Directional arrows marking the location of fire extinguishers will be posted when extinguishers cannot be seen clearly in warehouses, industrial activities, and facilities where the volume of storage impairs or prohibits extinguisher visibility.
- Fire extinguishers will be permanently mounted on walls using approved brackets or in approved fire extinguisher cabinets.
- Fire extinguishers will not be used as doorstops, repositioned, or removed from their designated location without the approval of OSAN AB Fire Prevention Office.
- Fire extinguishers will be inspected monthly and documented by the facility manager. Monthly extinguisher inspection records shall be affixed to each extinguisher (OSAN AB Form 25). If you need the OSAN AB Form 25, please contact Fire Prevention Office (784-3370).

**Types of Fire Extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are categorized based on the types of fires they can effectively combat:

- Class A: For ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, and cloth.
- Class B: For flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, and paint.
- Class C: For electrical fires from appliances, wiring, and circuit breakers.
- Class D: For flammable metals like magnesium and titanium.
- Class K: For cooking oils and fats commonly found in kitchens.

Multi-purpose extinguishers, labeled as A-B-C, are suitable for use on multiple types of fires and are commonly found in homes and workplaces.

**Proper Usage**

Knowing how to use a fire extinguisher correctly can make a significant difference during an emergency. The PASS technique is a simple acronym to remember.

- Pull the pin to unlock the operating lever.
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- Sweep the nozzle from side to side, covering the area of the fire.

Always ensure there is a clear escape route before attempting to extinguish a fire. If the fire becomes uncontrollable or the room is filled with smoke, evacuate immediately and call emergency services.

Fire extinguisher safety is a critical component of overall fire safety strategy. By understanding the types of extinguishers, knowing how to use them, and maintaining them properly, you can protect lives and property from the devastating effects of fire.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Fire Prevention Office at 784-3370/ 4741.

## Are You Saved?

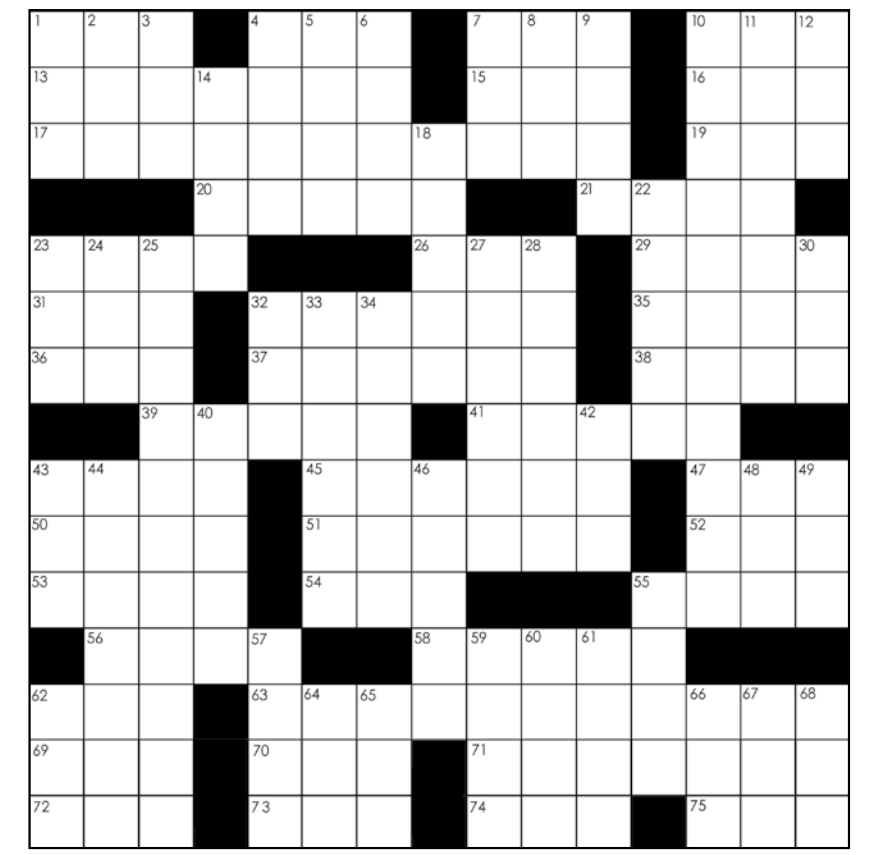
Jesus Saves!

**Romans 10:13** For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. [See: **Romans 3:10, 3:23, 5:12, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10**, and pray & ask The Lord to save you.]

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## The Crossword

By Jon Dunbar



- ACROSS**
- 1 System \_\_\_\_\_ Down
  - 4 Cry
  - 7 Airlift for \_\_\_\_ Servicemen
  - 10 "The Big Bang Theory" character
  - 13 Type of warship
  - 15 Korea's closest partner
  - 16 Sheeran and Helms
  - 17 Type of rescue worker
  - 19 Palindromic K-pop girl group
  - 20 Blanchard or Thompson
  - 21 Tombstone's Wyatt
  - 23 Supermodel Kate
  - 26 Hyundai Motor's affiliate
  - 29 Actor Jared
  - 31 Computer brain
  - 32 Shenanigans
  - 35 Got a perfect test score
  - 36 Plug and play port
  - 37 Loner
  - 39 President Syngman
  - 41 Law violation
  - 42 Swiss particle physics lab
  - 45 Philippine strait
  - 47 Vinyl records
  - 50 German luxury car brand
  - 51 Neverending Story hero
  - 52 Mineral vein
  - 53 Three-piece band
  - 54 LA Dodgers pitcher Hyun-jin
  - 55 Skier's need
  - 56 Actress Hathaway
  - 58 Belonging to a navy
  - 62 Airport security
  - 63 Rash, Zitz, and Pimple's game franchise
  - 69 Louse egg
  - 70 Before
  - 71 Opposite of solution
  - 72 \_\_\_\_ kwon do
  - 73 Japanese money
  - 74 Hammington or Waterston
  - 75 Bruce or Byung-hun
- DOWN**
- 2 After Thurs
  - 3 Goes with raid or Korean
  - 4 Small vault
  - 5 Elevator company
  - 6 Pleads
  - 7 Opposite of in
  - 8 Utilize
  - 9 Not common
  - 10 Safe behind the frontlines
  - 11 Korean baby sent overseas
  - 12 Found at Panmunjom
  - 14 It \_\_\_\_ better
  - 18 Egyptian rifle
  - 22 Type of clock
  - 23 DCU competitor
  - 24 Goes with special or black
  - 25 Underling
  - 27 Hanging ice
  - 28 To be led off the path
  - 30 \_\_\_\_ to Joy
  - 32 Skater Viktor or composer Eaktae
  - 33 Flower's juice
  - 34 International peace agreement
  - 40 Workers' group
  - 42 Transfer station on Seoul Metro lines 4, 7
  - 43 Garfield or Grumpy
  - 44 Largest continent
  - 46 Main force of a blow
  - 48 Opposite of con
  - 49 Stitch up
  - 55 Messy person
  - 57 E-commerce website
  - 59 European mountain range
  - 60 Aloe \_\_\_\_
  - 61 Component of molecule
  - 62 Explosive
  - 64 Number of birthdays
  - 65 Heavy weight
  - 66 ALL
  - 67 Billy \_\_\_\_ Williams
  - 68 Not a chaebol

**Answers to Previous Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- 1 NINA
- 5 HALLA
- 10 JAWA
- 14 OSAN
- 15 AHEAD
- 16 ALEX
- 17 ALDA
- 18 MOTOR
- 19 VORE
- 20 HEALTHY
- 22 SEAWOOD
- 24 YOU
- 25 NRA
- 26 VAESONG
- 30 BAKLAVA
- 34 OUST
- 35 GRAIL
- 37 KWAI
- 38 RNC
- 39 ENG
- 40 ADS
- 41 ETAT
- 43 MEDOC
- 45 BIEL
- 46 ASPIRIN
- 48 THEATRE
- 50 SON
- 51 HEALTHY
- 52 AIRSHIP
- 56 ARIRANG
- 60 BLEU
- 61 SINEW
- 63 AWOL
- 64 BLUE
- 65 UTERO
- 66 GENE
- 67 ASPS
- 68 BATON
- 69 EDEN
- 6 AHoy
- 7 LET
- 8 LAOS
- 9 ADRENAL
- 10 JAYWALK
- 11 ALOE
- 12 WERE
- 13 AXED
- 14 NOAH
- 15 ISLE
- 16 NADA
- 17 ANALYST
- 18 HAMHUNG
- 27 AUNTS
- 28 ESCAP
- 29 GREEN
- 30 BIGOT
- 31 AWAIT
- 32 YADER
- 33 AISLE
- 36 AND
- 42 TISSUES
- 43 MINISUB
- 44 CHORWON
- 45 BARRAGE
- 47 ROH
- 49 EPI
- 52 ABBA
- 53 ILLS
- 54 RELUP
- 55 PITA
- 56 AERO
- 57 AWED
- 58 NONE
- 59 GLEN



**J**oint power: A B-2 Spirit conducts an integrated maritime strike training exercise with U.S. Navy F-35C Lightning II and F/A-18E Super Hornets from Carrier Air Wing 11 off the coast of California, Feb. 12, 2026. Counter-maritime exercises improve interoperability and demonstrate the ability of joint forces to operate in contested environments. (U.S. Navy photo by Katie Archibald) ▼

**A**rctic watch: Military working dog Zzakira, assigned to the 673rd Security Forces Squadron, stands after participating in a ship-to-shore medical evacuation exercise during exercise Arctic Edge 2026, Feb. 26, 2026, in Kodiak, Alaska. The NORAD and U.S. Northern Command-led exercise strengthens homeland defense and Arctic interoperability. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jack Rodgers) ▲



**H**oist rescue: An HH-60W Jolly Green II hoists a simulated survivor during an aerial demonstration for Saluting Our Aviation Roots, Feb. 25, 2026, at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. The demonstration highlighted combat search and rescue capabilities for students and families. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman Bre Lewis) ▲

**M**issile defenders: A 37th Helicopter Squadron UH-1N Huey lands as 90th Missile Security Operations Squadron Tactical Response Force defenders prepare to board at Launch Facility E-10 at Pine Bluffs, Wyo., Feb. 19, 2026. The UH-1N supports missile security operations by transporting tactical response forces and providing aerial security and surveillance across the 90th Missile Wing intercontinental ballistic missile complex. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Michael A. Richmond) ◀



## Kunsan

**- KUNSAN PHOTO CLUB -**  
Interested in sharing your photography experience with others and exploring Korea along the way? Have a camera, but want to learn how to use it more completely? Then join the Kunsan Photo Club as they delve into the finer qualities of photography where the key concept is: "It's not the camera that makes a great photo, but the photographer." If interested in joining, the group can be found on Facebook, just search for "Kunsan Photo Club."

**- WOLF PACK LODGE -**  
Lodging Space A Policy  
Need a break? Got family visit-

ing and no room to house them? You can book lodging rooms on a space available basis up to 120 days in advance for a maximum of 30 days depending on availability. You can also book reservations for the holiday season (November and December) up to 30 days in advance for a maximum of 15 days. (Depending on availability) Book now for all of those relatives coming for the holiday!  
Reservations – Front Desk-DSN 782-1844 or Commercial (82)63-470-1844 FAX: DSN 315-782-0633 Commercial (82)63-470-0633

**- SPONSOR TRAINING -**

Learn creative ways to assist newcomers reporting to Kunsan AB. Registration required. Class is held at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. Call 782-5644 for more information, dates or to sign up.

**- PING PONG TOURNAMENT -**  
Free to all. Prizes for first and second places. Prizes include Wolf Pack Won. To sign up, dates or for more information, call the CAC at 782-5213 or 4679.

**- SUNDAY SONLIGHT DINNER -**  
Every Sunday, volunteers from a specific unit cook dinner for their fellow Wolf Pack members at the

Sonlight Inn. The dinner begins at 6 p.m. following grace led by a chaplain. Meals range from "breakfast for dinner" to "Italian cooking" to "Southern style." For more information or to volunteer, contact the chapel at 782-HOPE.

## Osan

**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
Every Tuesday and Thursday | 1700-1800 | Building 769, Resiliency Center Training Room  
For additional information and a point of contact, visit the AA in Korea website at aainkorea.org

**Tobacco Cessation Classes**  
Every Thursday | 0900-1100 | Building 1419, Human Performance Center (The building right behind the fitness center)  
Osan AB offers free tobacco cessation classes to all DOD id members. The health promotion coordinator is available to help you break this habit, through counseling, educational materials, and health coaching. Please make an appointment via her email, Troisha Busano, troisha.d.busano.civ@health.mil.

**Ultimate Frisbee**  
Saturdays | 0900 | Mustang Field (Across from Outdoor Rec)  
Open to all AD, CIV, and Dependents w/ base access. Please join us on the field for 60 minutes of cardio-vascular exercise. All ages and experience levels welcome, even if you have never touched a frisbee. POCs – David Brittain 010-8354-1576, SSgt Ethan Troutman, ethan.troutman@us.af.mil, DSN 315-784-5657, CELL 010-5793-2467

**Osan Air Base Honor Guard**  
Every Monday & Wednesday | 1630-1730 | Bldg. 936 Rm. 211  
The Osan Air Base Honor Guard covers ceremonies across the peninsula ac-

knowledging the achievements of our fellow members in uniform and their families. An amazing way to serve the members in your community and build lasting connections between other service members. For any questions, comments, or concerns please reach out to OsanHonorGuard@us.af.mil

**Wingmen Helping Airmen Get Home**  
Saturdays | 2300-0400 | SED  
WHAGH is a new program inspired by AADD, whose purpose is to ensure the safety and well-being of Airmen within the Songtan Entertainment District by escorting members to their residences. The WHAGH team is looking for volunteers this weekend. There's no rank requirement to volunteer. All are welcome to help. If interested or for more information, please email 51fw.whagh.1@us.af.mil.

**Osan Air Base Rugby**  
Mondays and Wednesdays | 1700-1800 | Mustang Field  
Whether you're rugby-curious and want to learn, or a veteran player who wants to throw the ball around, come out to the Mustang Field for some fun touch rugby. Sessions will include basic drills, explanations of the game, and plenty of time to play, build camaraderie, and have fun! POC: Maj. Magana 784-9446

**Volunteer Opportunities**  
Mustang community, if you are looking to volunteer checkout our newsletter for opportunities and use the QR code titled "Volunteer Form"

Organizations that are looking for volunteers, you can request them using the QR code titled "Organization Form." With the same form, you can put down your upcoming events/programs to be added into next month's issue.  
POC: Any questions or suggestions please email osan.afrc@us.af.mil

**Osan Air Base Soccer**  
Every Tuesday and Thursday from 1800-2000 and every Sunday from 1800-2000 | Mustang Soccer Field  
Osan Varsity Soccer wants you to join the fun of playing with us every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Open to players of all skill levels. We're focused on having a great time and developing camaraderie, all while we hone our skills and build our team to compete in the premier Seoul Saturday Soccer League. Follow the Osan Varsity Team on Facebook for daily updates. Open Tryouts. We want to see the Messi in you as we build a team to compete in the Seoul Saturday Soccer League. Our season begins August 30th. POCs: SrA Jacob Carey and A1C Logan Gibson

**Kickstart Korea**  
2nd Thursday of the Month | 0900-1330 | PDC, Bldg 788  
POC - TSgt. Deans: 51FSS.OsanUni. CommandSection@us.af.mil or Sarah Reeves: reevespd55@gmail.com  
Signup (encouraged, but walk-ins welcome): <https://tockify.com/osanu/detail/5/1762995600000/2>  
Whether you're new to Osan or just

sick of the SED, Kickstart Korea is for everyone! This fast-paced crash course shortens the learning curve of adjusting to your 'home away from home', so you can explore with confidence. You'll learn how to navigate neighborhoods in Pyeongtaek and beyond, discover your favorite new shopping and dining spots, and choose YOUR next adventure...from Art Museums to Zip Lines! You'll also explore the Community Directory (over 3000+ categorized pins) and plug into over 200 interest and hobby networks, making personalized memories that will last a lifetime. On-site and alternate scheduling available for flights/units on request.

**Volunteers Needed for Unit Sports Day**  
Apr 10 | 0700-1600 | Softball fields, Osan AB  
Looking for highly motivated individuals for the following volunteer positions: Football referee, Soccer referee, Kickball referee, Tug of war referee, Hotdog Eating Contest Referee, Face Painter, Master Chef, set up and Tear down Committee, On site "Medical tent", and DJ.  
We will be hosting monthly Sunday meetings (snacks and drinks provided) to go over the planning for this event. Meeting Dates: Second and Fourth Sundays of the month. Feb 8th and 22nd // Mar 8th and 22nd // April 5th  
Last planning day  
If interested please Email SrA Magaña, Hailey at Hailey.magana@us.af.mil

Emergency Services	911		
Off Base/Cell Emergency	063-470-0911	Nurse Advice Line	1-800-723-8255
Crime Stop: (to report a crime)	782-5444	IG Complaints FWA Reporting:	782-4850 (duty hours) 782-4942 (anytime)
Base Locator: (after duty hours)	782-4743	Chaplain (After duty hours)	782-6000
Law Enforcement desk	782-4944	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)	782-7272
Emergency Leave / Red Cross		782-4601 (on base) 1-800-733-2761 (anytime)	

Emergency Services (Fire, Medical, Security Police)	911	Commander's Hotline	784-4811
Off Base/Cell Emergency	031-661-9111	Crime Stop: (to report a crime)	784-5757
Emergency Room:	784-2500	IG Complaints FWA Reporting:	784-1144
Base Locator: (after duty hours)	784-4597	Emergency Leave	784-7000
Force Protection Information Hotline:	115	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)	784-7272
Chaplain (After duty hours)	784-7000	Security Forces Control Center	784-5515

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U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons prepare for takeoff during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 11, 2026. Airmen practiced generating sorties from a dispersed location to ensure combat airpower can be sustained during potential conflict scenarios. ▲

# Osan Airmen Disperse to Kunsan for ACE Operations During Freedom Shield

< Continued from Front Page >

*ACE exercises demonstrate our commitment to protecting shared interests with our allies while showing potential adversaries that we can disperse quickly, survive, and continue generating combat power.*

—Capt. Alexander Strickland

Coordination between installations such as Osan and Kunsan is critical to successfully executing ACE operations. Through exercises like Freedom Shield, units train interoperability and learn the capabilities each contingency location can support. This allows planners to tailor future dispersal plans based on available infrastructure and resources, ensuring aircraft can continue launching and recovering from alternate locations during a conflict scenario.

Operating from a different installation requires Airmen across multiple career fields to adapt quickly and operate with a smaller footprint while maintaining

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Devin Tigner, 36th Fighter Generation Squadron F-16 Fighting Falcon crew chief, changes a tire during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 11, 2026. Training during Freedom Shield tested the 51st Fighter Wing's ability to disperse aircraft, personnel, and equipment to alternate locations while maintaining mission readiness. ▶



A U.S. Air Force Airman assigned to the 8th Logistics Readiness Squadron logs added fuel during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 12, 2026. The exercise reinforced the wing's ability to rapidly reposition forces and continue operations in support of the defense of the Republic of Korea. ▲



U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 51st Logistics Readiness Squadron reverse park a refueling truck during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 11, 2026. Training scenarios challenged Airmen to sustain flight operations under simulated wartime conditions while maintaining mission readiness. ▲

U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 36th Fighter Generation Squadron, installs a missile during exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 12, 2026. Maintainers and pilots worked together to launch and recover aircraft while operating in Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear during simulated wartime scenarios. ▶

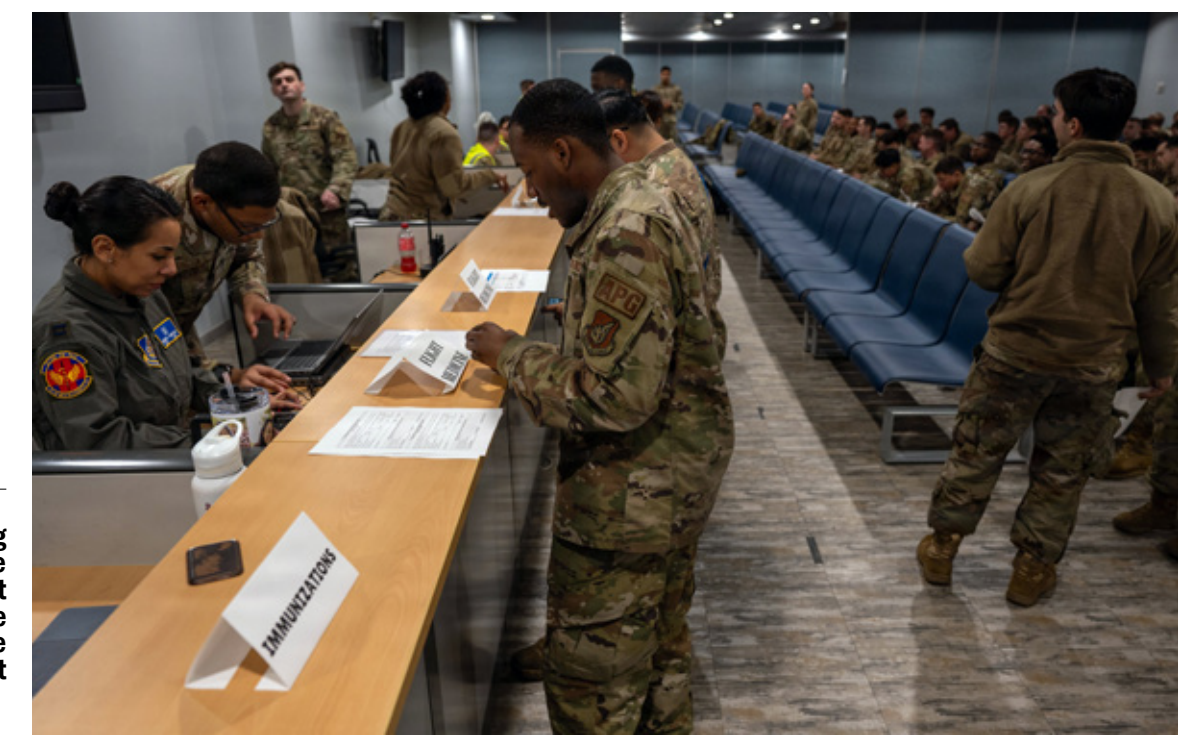
mission effectiveness. Maintenance, logistics and operations personnel work together to ensure aircraft remain mission-ready and capable of supporting exercise objectives.

“Every Airman selected for an ACE movement is chosen because of a unique skillset that helps generate airpower,” said Strickland. “Without that capability in the package, a critical function needed to sustain operations would be missing.”

Training events like Freedom Shield help refine the tactics, procedures and coordination necessary to maintain combat readiness across the theater. By training ACE concepts during the exercise, Airmen strengthen their ability to operate flexibly and sustain airpower in support of the defense of the Republic of Korea.

By executing ACE movements during Freedom Shield, Airmen reinforce the United States’ commitment to defending the Republic of Korea while demonstrating the ability to disperse and sustain combat operations across the region. The training strengthens partnerships with allied forces and signals the Air Force’s ability to adapt, survive and project combat airpower in support of regional security.

U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 51st Fighter Wing conduct a final inspection with base organizations before leaving to participate in exercise Freedom Shield 26 at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, March 6, 2026. The personnel deployment function line ensures members are ready to depart Osan to begin the Agile Combat Employment movement at Kunsan AB, ROK. ▶



The Warfighter's Spirit

The Grief Rucksack



By Chaplain, Rich

My years in the military have taught me that carrying grief, is much like carrying weight in a Rucksack. In the Army long distances, heavy packs, and uneven terrain was a regular part of my life. Rucking teaches you quickly that how you carry weight matters just as much as how much weight you carry. You can't cheat gravity, and you can't wish a heavy

rucksack away, the only way forward is to grow stronger and pack wisely. I believe carrying grief is the same.

We often talk about "closure" after loss or trauma, as if grief were a box we could neatly shut and place on a shelf. This is not reality. When grief strikes, it's less like closing a chapter and more like new weight added to your rucksack. That weight doesn't disappear. Theologically speaking, it won't fully be removed until eternity. What changes is us.

Imagine a 45-lb/22kg plate suddenly dropped into your pack. For a while, you stumble under the weight. Your pace slows. For weeks, maybe months, everything feels harder. And depending on the size of the grief, it may take years before you're moving at full speed again.

That delay doesn't mean you've failed or you're weak. It means you're learning how to walk with the new emotional weight you now carry.

One of the first lessons you learn in ruck marching is that the heaviest items should be packed high and close to your body. If the weight hangs low or shifts around,

it throws you off balance. When packed correctly, even a heavy ruck becomes manageable.

Emotionally, we do something similar. In the early seasons of grief, we carry our heaviest losses close to the heart. They are tender, central, and unavoidable. Over time, as strength increases, the weight doesn't get lighter—but it feels different. The load that once dominated every step becomes integrated into the way we move through the world.

But here's where many of us struggle: rucks need to be repacked.

Anyone who has marched long enough knows that you need to periodically take a knee, set your ruck down, and reorganize the load. If you don't, pressure points form, and eventually you break down. Emotional rucksacks are no different.

If we never take time—once or twice a year—to intentionally unpack and repack our grief, something goes wrong. Old losses remain jumbled. Unacknowledged pain shifts unpredictably. And

then, when someone near us experiences a grief of their own, instead of kneeling helpfully beside them, we trip and spill our own grief all over them.

When grief is well packed, however, something remarkable happens. Those heavy weights—the losses that once slowed us to a crawl—become tools. Out of a carefully organized emotional rucksack, we can reach for empathy, patience, silence, or wisdom. We can kneel beside someone else and say, "You're not crazy for walking slow right now. I've been there." This is one of the quiet gifts of grief. The weight never leaves, but it can be redeemed.

There may never be closure in the way we're sometimes promised, grief doesn't ask us to get over it; it asks us to grow strong enough to carry it. If we learn to pack our rucks well—to honor the weight, tend it carefully, and carry it with intention—we may find ourselves able to help others keep walking, even when the weight suddenly feels impossibly heavy.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

KUNSAN AIR BASE

Weekly Worship Services @ Bldg #501

Catholic Holy Mass

Sunday at 0900 (Chapel)

Weekday Masses - Tuesday-Thursday at 1138 (Blessed Sacrament Room inside Chapel)

Protestant Worship

Sunday at 1100 (Chapel)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Sunday at 1300 (Chapel)

Point of Contact:

Kunsan Chapel, 782-HOPE

Visit us on SharePoint:

<https://kunsan.eis.pacaf.af.mil/8FW/HC>

OSAN AIR BASE

Osan AB Chapel (Building 780)

Protestant Service

Sunday Worship Service

Sunday @ 0930

Children's church

Sunday @ 0945

Halftime Bible Study

Monday - Friday @ 1100 (Classroom 5)

Catholic Mass

Catholic Sunday Mass

Sunday @ 1130

Confession

Sunday @ 1100-1125 (Blessed Sacrament Room)

Catholic Daily Mass

Monday - Thursday @ 1130 -1200 (Blessed Sacrament Room)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Come to me class

Thursday @ 1900

Fellowship

Friday @ 1900

Earth-Based Meeting

Wednesday @ 1830 (Classroom 6)

For the most current updates and announcements, Please visit our "Osan AB Chapel" Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OsanABChapel>

HUMPHREYS

PROTESTANT

Sundays -

0900 Christ The King Liturgical Service - Pacific Victors Chapel

0930 & 1100 Agape (Contemporary Service) - 4CMC

1000 Burning Bush Gospel Service - Warrior Chapel

1100 Church of Christ - Pacific Victors Chapel

1100 Common Ground (Traditional Service) - Freedom Chapel

1300 Apostolic Pentecostal (Oneness) - Warrior Chapel

1330 Spanish Service - Pacific Victors Chapel

Wednesdays -

1200 Christ The King Eucharist Service - Pacific Victors Chapel

1800 KATUSA Service - Pacific Victors Chapel

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (LDS)

Sundays -

1400-1600 Worship Meeting - Freedom Chapel

POC: CH Droge; 010-8685-2976; shawn.a.droge@mail.mil

RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND MINISTRY AUXILIARIES

MON/WED 1830 Catholic Men of the Chapel - Freedom

TUES 1000-1200 Korean Ladies Bible Study (KLBS) - Freedom

TUES 1800-2000 Club Beyond Christian Youth Group - 4CMC

\* Summer Break until 30 August

WED 0930-1145 Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC) - 4CMC

\* Summer Schedule: 1800-2030 (until 28 August)

1830-2030 PWOC Evening Study - 4CMC

WED 1000-1200 Korean Catholic Women Bible Study - Freedom

1730-1930 Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC) - Freedom

WED 1830-2000 Church of Christ Mid-Week Bible Study - Pacific

THUR 0915-1130 Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC) - Freedom

THUR 1800-2000 Protestant Men of the Chapel (PMOC) - 4CMC

\* POC: CH Underhill 010-8520-7217

1st SAT/Month 0830 Knights of Columbus - Freedom

CATHOLIC - Freedom Chapel

1600-1700 Adoration (Saturdays)

1600-1700 Reconciliation/Confession (Saturdays)

1640 Rosary/Benediction (Saturdays) \* 1730 Vigil Mass (Saturdays)

0900 Mass (Sundays) \* 1730 Daily Mass (M-F)

POC: usaghcatholiccoordinator@gmail.com

JEWISH

2nd and 4th Fridays - 4CMC

1800-2100 Shabbat Evening Service

POC: CH (CPT) Daniel Kamzan; daniel.j.kamzan@mail.mil

ISLAMIC - Pacific Victors Chapel

Fridays: 1200-1330 Jumah Service

Sundays: 1300-1500 Islamic / Arabic classes

POC:CPT Anouar Bencheqroun 010-3382-7231 anouar.k.bencheqroun.mil

PAGAN Traditions

Fridays: Freedom Chapel Rm 110 / 1800-1900 Pagan Fellowship

POC: CPT Ryan S. Robinson; ryan.s.robinson14@mail.mil

BUDDHIST

Tuesdays - Warrior Chapel / 1800-1900 Buddhist Service

POC: CH (CPT) Somya Malasri; 010-7460-1281; somya.malasri@mail.mil



Arctic dominance: An F-22 Raptor assigned to the 3rd Wing takes off during a training sortie on Feb. 20, 2026, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. Alaska-based F-22s provide rapid air dominance and defend North American airspace. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Theodore Gowdy) ▲



Silent tribute: U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 353rd Special Operations Wing render honors during a memorial flight over the crash site of STRAY 59 off the coast of the Philippines, Feb. 26, 2026. The flight commemorated the 23 service members who died when a 1st Special Operations Squadron MC-130E Combat Talon I, call sign STRAY 59, crashed during an exercise in 1981. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Arnet Tamayo) ◀

Mission loading: Air Force Reserve Airmen assigned to the 482d Fighter Wing walk toward a C-130 Hercules at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., March 8, 2026. The Airmen departed with equipment and supplies for Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., to participate in exercise Patriot Forge 26. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Lionel Castellano) ▼



Airborne allies: A Japan Ground Self-Defense Force paratrooper assigned to the 1st Airborne Brigade conducts a static-line jump from a U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules assigned to the 36th Airlift Squadron over the East Fuji Maneuver Area, Japan, March 2, 2026, during exercise Airborne 26. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps personnel trained alongside JGSDF members to strengthen interoperability and operational readiness. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class David S. Calcote) ◀

# Camp Humphreys airfield drill tests emergency responders, sharpens coordination



U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys emergency responders lift a Soldier during an accident exercise involving a simulated UH-60 Black Hawk emergency landing at Desiderio Army Airfield, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11, 2026. The exercise included three Soldiers and four manikins acting as mock casualties and tested garrison firefighters, medical, and emergency response procedures to improve coordination, readiness, and response capabilities during airfield emergencies. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Duong Le) ▲

By Sgt. Estevan Hidalgo

## CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea —

Emergency responders from U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys trained for a simulated aircraft incident during a pre-accident drill at Desiderio Army Airfield, March 11, 2026.

The scenario centered on a UH-60 Black Hawk emergency landing with Soldiers portraying injured personnel inside the aircraft. After the initial radio call, fire, medical, and emergency response teams raced to the airfield to secure the area, assess hazards, and begin casualty response procedures.

Because the event was part of a planned training event, responding vehicles operated with emergency lights but without sirens.

“Exercises like this are critical,” said Larry Maxey, airfield safety officer at Desiderio Army Airfield. “They allow multiple agencies, both from Camp Humphreys and local emergency services to train together under realistic conditions.”

Planners employed a smoke machine under the aircraft and assigned each Soldier a specific injury to simulate in order to make the scenario



U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys emergency responders talk to Observer/Controllers during an accident exercise involving a simulated UH-60 Black Hawk emergency landing at Desiderio Army Airfield, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Duong Le) ▲

A U.S. Soldier portraying an injured passenger lays on the ground next to a UH-60 Black Hawk during a simulated emergency landing at Desiderio Army Airfield, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Duong Le) ▶

more realistic.

As responders arrived, three role players remained inside the helicopter and acted out their conditions while firefighters and medical teams positioned equipment and prepared to enter the scene.

Manikins functioned as four additional role players outside the aircraft, simulating other life-threatening injuries.

Firefighters established a water line as part of the aircraft hazard response, while personnel also used a drone to identify risks around the landing site.

At the same time, responders organized a triage area nearby to receive and treat casualties once they were safely removed from the aircraft.

“Readiness at Desiderio Army Airfield is the backbone of our mission. As a primary hub, we cannot afford delays during an emergency,” said Vince Kannair, airfield operations chief at Desiderio Army Airfield.

“This training is essential because it moves us from theory to practice, ensuring our responders have the muscle memory to act instinctively when a real-world aircraft incident occurs.”

Once evaluators confirmed that the fire response portion had been completed to standard, emergency personnel shifted their focus to patient extraction. Responders assessed each mock casualty, determined the nature of the injuries, and chose the safest method for removing Soldiers from the airfield.

Some role players were able to exit with minimal assistance, while others portrayed more serious trauma, including fractures and internal injuries.

Medical personnel from Camp Humphreys' Brian D. Allgood Hospital transported injured personnel to the hospital and those with more serious conditions were medevac-ed to a Korean hospital in Cheonan.

Although planning for the event took place over several weeks, the full drill was completed in less than a few hours.

The training event demonstrated participants' increased readiness, ability to coordinate across departments, and quick adaptation to dynamic conditions. Airfield safety personnel will continue developing future scenarios designed to strengthen emergency response coordination and readiness at Camp Humphreys.

“Training at this high level ensures the installation remains reliable, providing the security and continuity needed to support the entire Korean theater,” Kannair said.

“No single entity can manage an airfield incident alone. Realistic training allows us to bridge the gap between airfield ops, fire and emergency services, and garrison PAO before a crisis occurs, ensuring seamless communication when seconds count.”

U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys emergency responders inspect a Soldier during an accident exercise involving a simulated UH-60 Black Hawk emergency landing at Desiderio Army Airfield, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11, 2026. ▶



U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys emergency responder examines a casualty role player during an accident exercise involving a simulated UH-60 Black Hawk emergency landing at Desiderio Army Airfield, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Estevan Hidalgo) ▲





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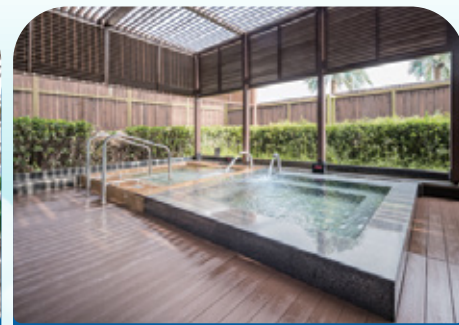
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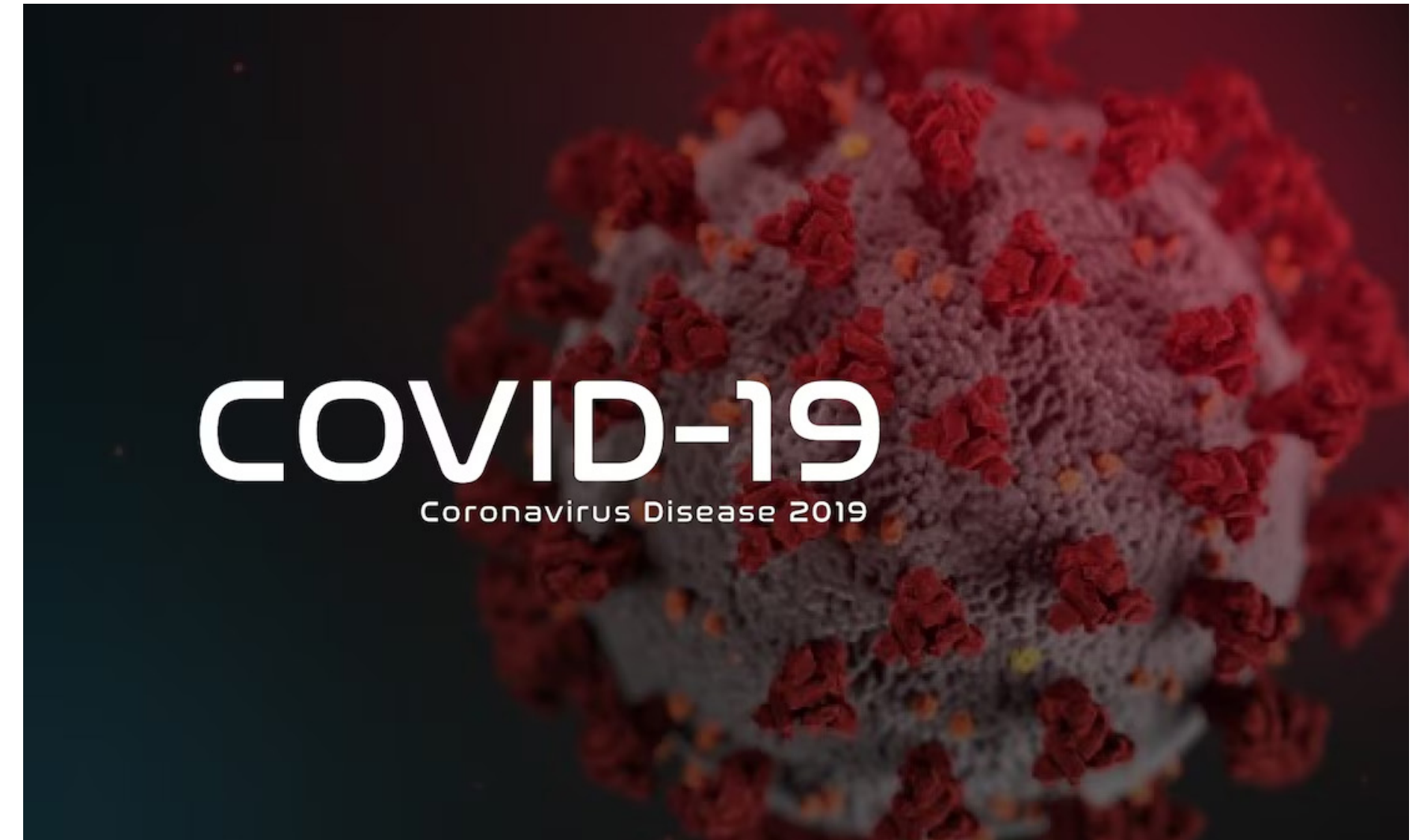
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English website



Korean website



# DAF completes records review for COVID-related separations

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) -- The Department of the Air Force recently conducted a proactive review and upgrade of personnel records, identifying 377 who were involuntarily discharged solely for declining the COVID-19 vaccination. This effort ensured individuals who met the eligibility requirements now receive the full amount of post-service benefits, such as a VA home loan and the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The Air Force Review Boards Agency announced completion of its review nine months ahead of the required deadline, demonstrating a commitment to the Secretary of War's guidance to "restore honor to service members separated under the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccine Mandate," in a Dec. 6, 2025, memorandum.

"Completing this review in record time is more than just an administrative update; it's how we restore trust and honor the commitment of those who raised their hand to serve," said the Under Secretary of the Air Force Matt Lohmeier. "This is one way we show how much we value your service and reflects our best effort to make things right."

The comprehensive review by the AFRBA ensured eligible veterans were entitled to the

following upgrades, among other administrative items, to enable a return to service without a waiver if they wish to serve again:

An "Honorable" service characterization, indicating individuals met all standards of acceptable conduct and performance of duty while in uniform.

A reentry code, indicating individuals are eligible for immediate reenlistment provided they meet enlistment standards.

A "Secretarial Authority" narrative reason for separation, indicating the discharge from service was not for misconduct or failure to meet standards.

In addition to the 377 cases that met the initial proactive review eligibility criteria, the AFRBA also reviewed an additional 218 involuntary discharge cases, addressing individuals whose separation fell outside the original scope. In total, these upgrades effected 595 active-duty and Air National Guard service members, ranging in rank from Airman 1st Class to Master Sergeant.

"Our team has worked tirelessly to upgrade nearly 600 cases for those previously given a 'General' discharge to now an 'Honorable'

discharge, whose involuntary separation precluded their reentry to service or mischaracterized their discharge as anything other than COVID-related," said Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Richard L. Anderson.

"This work expresses how the Department of the Air Force went above and beyond the requirements given by the Office of the Secretary of War to take care of our veterans impacted by the now-rescinded COVID-19 vaccine mandate," Anderson said. "Today, we are reaching out to each individual to ensure they are aware of their updated records and take full advantage of the service benefits they deserve."

As an additional effort to support individuals who left service based on the previous COVID-19 vaccine mandate, the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness Anthony J. Tata, announced on March 13, 2026 that the Department of War is extending the deadline for service members to return to service until April 1, 2027, with more details to soon follow.

For more information, visit the DAF COVID Reinstatement website or contact SAF.COVID.TaskForce@us.af.mil.

# 2026 GUIDE TO KOREA'S BEST SPRING BLOOM DESTINATIONS: TOP SPOTS FROM MARCH TO MAY



Spring in Korea lasts from early March to early May, with flowers blooming one after another across the country. Looking for the best places to enjoy the season? From Seoul to Jeju, here are must-visit destinations to see Korea's spring flowers at their peak. If you're visiting in spring 2026, use this guide to find the perfect spot to take in the season's beauty.



### Gurye Sansuyu Village: Korea's Largest Sansuyu Grove (Mid to Late March)

Gurye Sansuyu Village is known for its yellow sansuyu (cornelian cherry) blossoms, which herald the arrival of spring in Korea. In Sandong-myeon, nestled at the foot of Jirisan National Park, about 117,000 sansuyu trees form a vast grove that produces nearly 70% of Korea's sansuyu fruit. During the Gurye Sansuyu Festival, held from March 14 to 22, 2026, visitors can enjoy a variety of hands-on activities, including sansuyu tea tastings and a sansuyu fruit-peeling contest.

• Address: 45 Sangwan 1-gil, Sandong-myeon, Gurye-gun, Jeollanam-do

### Everland, Yongin: A Spectacular Tulip Festival at Korea's Largest Theme Park (Mid-March to Late April)

Every spring, Everland—one of Korea's most iconic theme parks—hosts its colorful Tulip Festival, with this year's festival spanning from March 20 to April 30, 2026. The centerpiece is the Four Seasons Garden, a 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>-space filled with about 1.2 million spring flowers, including more than 100 varieties of tulips, daffodils, and muscari. Spend the day enjoying the vibrant floral displays along with rides, attractions, and the safari tour, then stay into the evening for the park's dazzling parade.

• Address: 199 Everland-ro, Pogok-eup, Cheoin-gu, Yongin-si, Gyeonggi-do



### Jeonnon-ro Cherry Blossom Road, Jeju: A Tunnel of King Cherry Blossoms Overhead (Late March)

Jeonnon-ro Cherry Blossom Road in Jeju is a 1.2-kilometer stretch lined with king cherry blossom trees, about a 10-minute drive from Jeju International Airport. Native to Jeju, king cherry blossoms are known for their larger, showier petals than those of typical cherry blossoms. The trees arch over both sides of the two-lane road, creating a stunning tunnel of blossoms overhead. In late March, during the Jeju Cherry Blossom Festival, the road is closed to traffic so visitors can walk beneath the drifting petals.

• Address: Samdo 1(il)-dong, Jeju-si, Jeju-do

### Icheon Sansuyu Village: An Ideal Spring Flower Day Trip from the Greater Seoul Area (Late March to Early April)

Icheon Sansuyu Village is a well-known spring flower destination in the Seoul metropolitan area, home to around 17,000 sansuyu trees—many of them more than 100 years old. At the foot of Wonjeoksan Mountain, five villages are filled with bright yellow blossoms, and their stone-walled paths make for a pleasant spring walk. During the Icheon Baeksa Sansuyu Flower Festival held from April 3 to 5, 2026, visitors can enjoy local specialties such as sansuyu makgeolli, as well as traditional games and hands-on activities.

• Address: 17 Wonjeok-ro 775beon-gil, Baeksa-myeon, Icheon-si, Gyeonggi-do



< Continued on Page 31 >

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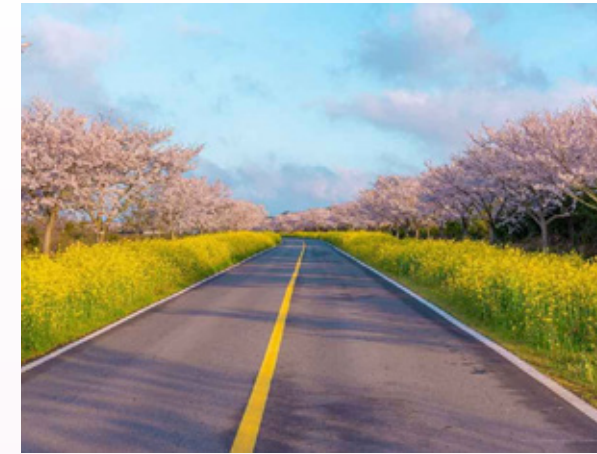
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**Noksan-ro Canola Flower Road, Jeju: A Scenic Drive with Canola Flowers and Cherry Blossoms (Late March to Early April)**



Noksan-ro Canola Flower Road in Jeju stretches for about 10 kilometers and is one of the island's best-known spring driving routes, even having been named one of the "100 Most Beautiful Roads in Korea." From late March to early April, bright yellow canola flowers and soft pink cherry blossoms bloom along both sides of the two-lane road, creating a picturesque scene where two iconic spring flowers can be enjoyed at once. White wind turbines rising above the flower fields add to the view, making it a great spot for scenic photos. You can also pair your visit with the Jeju Canola Flower Festival, held from April 4 to 5, 2026 at nearby Jeju Horse Park.

• Address: 45 Sanggwan 1-gil, Sandong-myeon, Gurye-gun, Jeollanam-do

**Azalea Hill, Bucheon: A Popular Azalea Hiking Spot (Early to Mid-April)**

Azalea Hill in Bucheon, near Bucheon Stadium Station on Seoul Subway Line 7, is home to the largest azalea colony in the Seoul metropolitan area. In early April, around 70,000 deep pink azaleas cover the slopes of Wonmisan Mountain (167 meters). The Wonmisan Azalea Festival takes place during this time, and this year's festival is planned to take place from April 4 to 5, 2026. The trail, part of Bucheon Dulle-gil Course 1, is fairly gentle, so even a short 30-minute hike is enough to enjoy the flowers and reach the summit.

• Address: San 21-1 Chunui-dong, Wonmi-gu, Bucheon-si, Gyeonggi-do



**Jinhae Gunhang Village, Changwon: 360,000 Cherry Blossom Trees in Bloom (Late March to Early April)**



Jinhae, a coastal district of Changwon, is Korea's premier cherry blossom destination, where some 360,000 cherry blossom trees turn the city pink each spring. Key spots include Yeojwacheon Stream, famous for its 1.5-kilometer cherry blossom tunnel, and Gyeonghwa Station, where rows of cherry trees line an 800-meter stretch of railway track. Yeojwacheon Stream's wooden walkway and evening illuminations also make it a wonderful place for a spring stroll. With more than 60 years of history, the Jinhae Gunhangje Festival, taking place from March 27-April 5, 2026, offers special programs such as temporary access to the Korea Naval Academy and the Military Band & Honor Guard Festival.

• Address: Jungwon Rotary, Jinhae-gu, Changwon-si, Gyeongsangnam-do

**Yeouido Cherry Blossom Road, Seoul: Seoul's Iconic Cherry Blossom Spot (Early April)**

Yeouido Cherry Blossom Road runs for 1.7 kilometers along Yunjung-ro and is one of Seoul's best-known cherry blossom spots. Around 1,800 cherry blossom trees bloom in soft pink along the Hangang River, making it easy to enjoy both the blossoms and a stroll through Yeouido Hangang Park in the heart of the city. During the Yeongdeungpo Yeouido Spring Flower Festival, from April 3 to 7, 2026, traffic is restricted along the main section, so the easiest access is via Yeouinaru Station (Seoul Subway Line 5) or National Assembly Station (Seoul Subway Line 9).

• Address: Yeouiseo-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul



**Seosan Gaesimsa Temple: Double Cherry Blossoms at a 1,300-Year-Old Temple (Late April to Early May)**



With a history spanning more than 1,300 years, Gaesimsa Temple is a popular late-spring destination for viewing double cherry blossoms, which bloom here into early May. The temple is home to several nationally designated cultural treasures, but in spring, it is the deep pink double blossoms that draw the most attention. These blooms open about two weeks later than typical cherry blossoms, reaching their peak from late April to early May. In front of Myeongbujeon Hall, rare green cherry blossoms also bloom, making it a favorite photo spot.

• Address: 321-86 Gaesimsa-ro, Unsan-myeon, Seosan-si, Chungcheongnam-do



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