

## AOPA-Japan Relief flights to Fukushima (RJSF)

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AOPA-Japan Pilots flew relief flights to Fukushima (RJSF) Airport from 18<sup>th</sup> March.

Our first pilot, Mr. Yamamura, an AOPA-Japan pilot, flew from Yao Airport (RJOY) in Osaka to Fukushima Airport (RJSF) carrying full load of medical supplies in his Malibu cabin. It was not easy for AOPA-Japan pilots to get permission to land at Fukushima Airport after the Quake & Tsunami disaster (and the Nuclear Power Plant accident near Fukushima Airport) where full of Japan Self Defense and The US Army & Marines rescue missions arrive, one of our AOPA-Japan pilot based in Fukushima, Mr. Hashimoto, negotiated with the government and we started relief flight from 18<sup>th</sup> March, a week after the disaster.



Departed YAO Airport in OSAKA (RJOY) to Fukushima Airport (RJSF)



Full of Medical Supplies in Malibu cabin



Arrived at Fukushima Airport



Full load of Medical Supplies were picked up by local ambulance

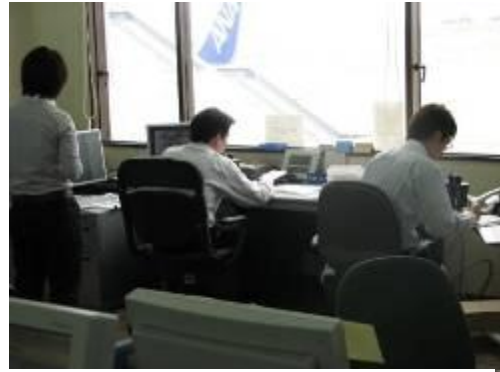


Finished our mission before sunset

Our second pilot, Dr. Shioyasu, an AOPA-Japan pilot and a medical doctor (also an aviation medical examiner), flew from Honda Airport (near Tokyo) to Fukushima Airport (RJSP) filling his C210 cabin with precious cargo that could help to heal the injured and save lives. It was 20<sup>th</sup> March, 9 days after the magnitude 9.0 earthquake rocked the whole country with 100 feet Tsunami over the coast line including Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant. When he landed at Fukushima, he noticed that the tower with broken window and found that controllers working on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the building without any view of the runway.



The tower with broken window



Controllers were moved down to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor



Only 40 min. flight from Honda Airport to Fukushima. Behind is JSDF C1 freighter



Local ambulance picked up the supplies



Our second mission went smother



Back to Honda Airport (near Tokyo)

Our third pilot, Mr. H. Sakuma and his brother, Tetsuya, both are among the youngest AOPA-Japan pilots, received an SOS call from an evacuation camp in Fukushima and they requested food supplies since they were not receiving any food supplies due to the Nuclear accident. Sakuma's run into local supermarket and secured enough food to fill his Mooney which is based in Honda Airport near Tokyo.

They took off Honda Airport on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and after 40 min. flight, landed at Fukushima Airport, there waiting Mr. Hashimoto in his Toyota Prius to carry all of the food supplies to the camp.

Sakuma's wanted to take more food but there was not enough space in his Mooney. (They own a Malibu also but they lost it in Sendai Airport (RJSS) while receiving annual inspection and Tsunami hit the airport washed away all aircraft including 6 other AOPA-Japan member aircraft, plus Citation's, C90's, and more) Sakuma's were very disappointed after they found their loved Malibu was washed away, but fortunately, their Mooney was safe at Honda Airport, and they wanted something to help victims suffering from Tsunami & the Nuclear Accident.



At local supermarket



Full of food supplies in their Mooney



Now ready to fly back to Honda with quick goodbyes



Full of Food Supplies in a Prius



As we begin to learn more about the extent of the destruction and bad effect of the Nuclear Power Plant Accident, hear about the staggering death toll, and see heartbreaking images coming from the area, we all want to fly up to help. But government officials say that's not the best way to help now. Many AOPA-Japan pilots requested relief flight to Hanamaki Airport (RJSI) and Yamagata Airport (RJSC) where the closest to the major destroyed area after 3.11 (the 11<sup>th</sup> March), because of the large number of relief flights already taking place by military aircraft and humanitarian agencies to get into the area and begin the relief effort, the best thing pilots can do for now is donate money and stay clear of the area. Many AOPA-Japan members donated money and some were used for the relief flights to Fukushima Airport (RJSP). As of 12<sup>th</sup> April, the effect of the Nuclear Plant Accident continues, and we are standing by now for our next flight in near future.



Sendai Airport (RJSS)

Last Saturday , we've received a sad news from wife of our precious member, Mr. Nakano, telling his body was found near Sendai Airport. Mr. Nakano worked for Boeing for long time and also contributed to build a firm bridge between GA in the U.S. and Japan. At the time of the quake, he was in Sendai, starting up a project to build an FBO in Sendai Airport, there hit by the quake and Tsunami. His wife, living in Seattle were trying to contact him after she saw the news on TV but without any reply, she finally visited Sendai last week and found husband's body. She cried , 'It's so regrettable he could not die in the sky, because he loved flying so much.....'. We mourn for loss of a SAMURAI with gentle American spirit.

Our GA community is relatively small in Japan, but our spirit of cooperation is very strong. Compare to the large number of relief flights already taking place by military aircraft, our hands are very small, but we would like to continue our relief flights as long as possible..