

## **Chapter 2 Relationship between the Japanese People and the Ministry of Defense and the SDF**

In order to exert their defense capabilities with the maximum effectiveness, it is vitally important that the Ministry of Defense and the SDF enhance and strengthen the human foundation that underlies these capabilities. The various activities of the MOD and the SDF are not possible without understanding and cooperation from every individual of the public, as well as local governments and others. We need to deepen mutual trust between local communities, the people, and the SDF.

### **Section 1 Human Foundation and Organization that Supports the Defense Force**

#### **1 Recruitment and Employment of Personnel in the MOD and the SDF**

The MOD and the SDF need highly qualified personnel in order to fulfill their missions. Uniformed SDF personnel and other personnel of the MOD and the SDF are recruited and employed under various systems.

*See ▶ Reference 64 (The Breakdown of the Personnel of the Ministry of Defense)*

#### **1 Recruitment**

In recent years, expectations and support from the public for the MOD and SDF have risen higher than ever. In Japan, however, due to the declining birthrate and increasing university enrollments the recruitable population has been decreasing in size, and the general recruitment climate for SDF personnel has been becoming increasingly severe. As a result, due to the nature of the SDF's mission of defending Japan, it is necessary to widely recruit personnel nationwide with superior abilities and a strong desire to enlist from among those with an interest in the SDF or who wish to become SDF personnel, after carefully explaining to them the role of defending the country, the duties and training, the particular lifestyle (life on base, etc.), and personnel management systems (early retirement fixed-term service, rank systems).

*See ▶ Fig. IV-2-1-1 (Changes in the Number of People Eligible to Join the SDF)*

For this reason, the MOD and the SDF have enhanced their recruitment activities in response to the changing times, by holding recruiting meetings at schools and placing advertisements in job information magazines. Specifically, they maintain Provincial Cooperation Offices in 50 locations throughout Japan (four in Hokkaido, and one in each prefecture) to which SDF personnel with unit assignment experience in the GSDF, ASDF, and MSDF are deployed as PR

officers to respond in detail to the individual needs of applicants, with help in the form of understanding by educators and support from recruitment counselors.

Moreover, local governments are also required to carry out some of the administrative recruitment activities, such as announcing the recruitment period and promoting the SDF as a workplace, for which the MOD allocates them the requisite budget. In order to secure high-quality personnel, it is essential to further enhance recruitment activities with the cooperation of local governments through their close ties with the community.

## 2 Employment

### (1) Uniformed SDF personnel

Based on a voluntary system (individuals join of their own free will), uniformed SDF personnel are recruited under various categories namely General Officer Candidates and General Enlisted Candidates (Upper)<sup>1</sup>, Candidates for Enlisted (Lower)<sup>2</sup>, students of the National Defense Academy and High Technical School<sup>3</sup>, etc.

*See ▶ Fig. IV-2-1-2 (Overview of Appointment System for SDF Regular Personnel)*

Due to its uniqueness as a career, personnel management of uniformed SDF personnel differs from that of other civilian government employees<sup>4</sup>. Among these differences, what greatly sets the SDF apart from other government organizations is that in order to ensure a powerful SDF, it has introduced an “Early Retirement System,” and “Fixed Term System.” Upon employment, uniformed SDF personnel who enlist in each SDF service complete their basic education and training in a training unit or at a school belonging to the respective service. Each individual is assigned a branch of service job appropriate to their choice or aptitude during education and training. After they have completed their course, they are appointed to units and positions all

---

<sup>1</sup> Until FY2006, the SDF had two “enlisted (upper)” recruitment systems for candidates between the ages of 18 and 27

<sup>2</sup> Fixed-term SDF personnel, prior to their formal employment as a private (GSDF), seaman apprentice (MSDF), or airman third class (ASDF), will be employed as candidates for uniformed SDF personnel and receive education and training to foster their sense of mission, responsibility, unity, discipline, and compliance. This system was adopted from July 2010.

<sup>3</sup> System to recruit those who expected to graduate from junior high schools to become SDF personnel who can respond with confidence in international community, while using and operating systematized equipment with enhanced functions at the GSDF in the future.

Starting with those employed for FY2011, a recommendation test system was adopted in which, in addition to the general test, suitable applicants would be chosen to be technical high school students from among those who had received a recommendation from the principal of the lower secondary school.

<sup>4</sup> SDF personnel must perform duties such as defense operations as specified in the Self-Defense Forces Law. They are, therefore, designated as special national government employees under Article 2 of the National Civil Service Law, and personnel management of SDF personnel is conducted independently from that of general civilian government employees.

around the country.

*See ▶ Reference 65 (Authorized and Actual Strength of Self-Defense Personnel); Reference 66 (Status of Recruiting and Employing SDF Regular Personnel (FY2013))*

*See ▶ Fig. IV-2-1-3 (Rank and Retirement Age of SDF Regular Personnel)*

## (2) SDF Ready Reserve Personnel, SDF Reserve Personnel, and Candidates for SDF Reserve Personnel

The number of SDF uniformed personnel should be expanded promptly in the event of a crisis, to meet the needs of each contingency. To fulfill such needs promptly and systematically, the MOD maintains three systems: the SDF Ready Reserve Personnel system, the SDF Reserve Personnel system, and the system for Candidates for SDF Reserve Personnel<sup>5</sup>.

*See ▶ Fig. IV-2-1-4 (Overview of Systems Related to SDF Reserve Personnel)*

### a. SDF Reserve Personnel System

SDF Reserve Personnel become SDF personnel in cases such as the issue of muster orders for defense, and serve as personnel for logistical support and base guard duties.

SDF Reserve Personnel can be employed from retired SDF personnel based on their application, or can be employed after they complete all of the SDF Reserve Personnel Candidates' training. They remain engaged in their own jobs as civilians in peacetime and maintain preparedness by mustering for five days of training per year.

### b. SDF Ready Reserve Personnel System

SDF Ready Reserve Personnel introduced into the GSDF become SDF personnel in cases such as the issue of muster orders for defense, and carry out their mission together with active-duty SDF personnel as part of pre-designated frontline units.

SDF Ready Reserve Personnel are selected from retired SDF personnel based on their application. They muster for a total of 30 days of training per year at the designated unit to maintain the necessary proficiency while working in their own jobs as civilians in peacetime.

### c. SDF Reserve Personnel Candidate System

The SDF Reserve Personnel Candidate system was established to strengthen and expand the foundation of defense for those with no experience as SDF personnel to secure a stable source of SDF reserve personnel, and to make good use of competent technical specialists from the

---

<sup>5</sup> Many countries other than Japan also have reserve personnel systems.

civilian sectors, with expertise in areas such as medicine and foreign languages. There are two employment categories in this system; general and technical. In the latter category, medical professionals and qualified personnel in such fields as foreign languages, information processing, legal affairs and radiation control are recruited. SDF Reserve Personnel candidates are assigned as SDF Reserve Personnel after completing the necessary education and training to work as SDF personnel.

#### d. Measures for SDF Reserve Personnel

##### (a) Cooperation with Companies Employing Reserve Personnel

As SDF Reserve Personnel are involved in their own civilian jobs during peacetime, they need to participate in muster for exercises to maintain the required level of skills by either adjusting their work schedule or taking days off from work. In the event of a crisis, the SDF may have to engage in necessary activities for a long time, and accordingly, SDF Reserve Personnel are likely to be mustered for a long time or several times. Therefore, understanding and cooperation from the companies that employ these SDF Reserve Personnel are essential for the smooth operation of the program. In particular, SDF Ready Reserve Personnel are supposed to attend training for 30 days per year, so the necessary cooperation with respect to their employees, such as allowing Ready Reserve Personnel to take leaves of absence, is required.

To enable reserves to participate in training sessions without any constraint, the MOD has taken into consideration the burden on companies employing Ready Reserve Personnel, providing a special subsidy to companies which take the necessary steps to allow such employees to attend training sessions.

##### (b) Further application of SDF reserve personnel, etc.

The new National Defense Program Guidelines state that in order to support the continued operation of forces in diversifying and longer-term situations, SDF reserve personnel should be applied more widely over a range of fields, and measures should be implemented to increase the rate fulfillment of actual SDF personnel. For example, MOD will employ retired ASDF pilots currently working as pilots for private airlines as SDF reserve personnel. In FY2014, MOD will promote PR activities for the SDF Reserve Personnel system since the year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the system.

*See ► Part II, Chapter 4, Section 3 (Details of the New National Defense Program Guidelines); Part II, Chapter 5, Section 1 (Reemployment of SDF Pilots)*

##### (3) Administrative Officials, Technical and Engineering Officials, Instructors, and Other

## Civilian Personnel

There are approximately 21,000 civilian personnel — administrative officials, technical and engineering officials, instructors, and others — in addition to uniformed SDF personnel in the MOD and the SDF. Civilian personnel are mainly employed from among those who have passed the Examination for National Public Officials for either career track or general staff run by the National Personnel Authority (NPA), and those who have passed the Examination for Defense Ministry Professional Civilian Officials run by the MOD. After participating in the common training course, civilian personnel recruited in this process undertake a wide range of work.

Administrative officials are engaged in policy planning in the Internal Bureau, and analysis and research at the Defense Intelligence Headquarters as well as a variety of administrative work (general affairs, personnel affairs, budget, public relations, military facilities-related activities, etc.) at the SDF bases, the Regional Defense Bureaus, and other locations throughout the country.

Technical and engineering officials are engaged in constructing various defense facilities (headquarters, runways, magazines, etc.), carrying out R&D and effective procurement, maintenance and improvement of a range of equipment, and providing mental health care for SDF personnel at the Internal Bureau, Technical Research and Development Institute, and Equipment Procurement and Construction Office, as well as at the SDF bases, the Regional Defense Bureaus, and other locations throughout the country.

Instructors conduct advanced research on defense-related issues and provide high-quality education to SDF personnel at the National Institute for Defense Studies, the National Defense Academy, the National Defense Medical College, and other organizations.

## **2 Daily Education and Training**

Education and training are crucial for the SDF to strengthen its ability to accomplish its missions by developing its human resources. The SDF is making efforts despite various constraints to educate its personnel and train its units to develop them into powerful personnel and forces, while paying careful attention to safety, in areas such as accident prevention.

### 1 Education of Uniformed SDF Personnel

Enhancing the ability of the individual SDF uniformed personnel who comprise SDF units is essential to the execution of the units' duties. At its schools and training units, therefore, the SDF provides opportunities for systematic and phased education according to rank and duties,

in order to nurture the necessary qualities and instill knowledge and skills.

For instance, to train and educate pilots and air traffic controllers takes a long period of time, and this training and education also requires instructors with special skills, equipment and educational facilities. Thus, considerable investment in terms of personnel, time, and funding from the MOD and the SDF is necessary in order to provide this training. In the event that personnel need to further improve their professional knowledge and skills, or it is difficult for them to acquire them within the SDF, they may study at external educational institutions<sup>6</sup>, including those abroad, as well as domestic companies or research institutes.

*See ▶ Reference 67 (Outline of the SDF Educational System)*

In recent years in particular, in order to strengthen joint operation structure, the SDF has set up a joint educational program system, mainly at the Joint Staff College<sup>7</sup>, where SDF officers who will become senior unit commanders and senior staff can receive a joint education, thereby enriching the system of joint educational program at the respective educational facilities for the GSDF, MSFD and ASDF<sup>8</sup>, including the Joint Staff College itself.

## 2 SDF Training

### (1) Training by Each SDF

Training conducted by units in each service can be broadly divided into training for individual SDF personnel to improve the necessary proficiency for their respective fields, and training for units to enhance their systematic capabilities. Training for individuals is conducted one-on-one in stages based on occupational classification and individual ability. Training for units is conducted by size of unit, from small to large; meanwhile, large-scale comprehensive training including coordination between units is also conducted.

*See ▶ Reference 68 (Major Exercises Conducted in FY2013)*

In addition to such training for national defense, enhanced training is given in response to the diversified roles required of the SDF in recent years, such as peacekeeping operations and large-scale disaster relief operations. Moreover, in order to strengthen joint operational capabilities and to better respond to various situations, efforts are being made to expand the

---

<sup>6</sup> Such external educational institutions in FY2014 include the Tokyo Institute of Technology and Waseda University in Japan, and the National Defense University (United States) and Harvard University (United States) overseas; etc.

<sup>7</sup> The Joint Staff College is attached to the Joint Staff Office, and educates SDF officers on joint operations.

<sup>8</sup> Institutes of each SDF service where SDF officers of each service and others receive education on security, defense strategy, and other subjects.

scope of bilateral and multinational exercises engaged by the individual SDF services<sup>9</sup>.

## (2) Training Environment

SDF training has been planned and conducted under conditions that are as close as possible to actual combat situations, yet many restrictions remain. To deal with these restrictions, each SDF branch makes maximum use of its limited domestic training areas. The new National Defense Program Guidelines and Mid-Term Defense Program state that units across the country will make further use of the prime training environment of Hokkaido. They also strive to carry out more practical combat training by conducting live-firing training and joint exercises in the United States and surrounding sea and airspace where they can secure training conditions not available in Japan.

*See ▶ Reference 69 (Results of Fire Training and Related Training by Dispatch of Each of the Self-Defense Forces to the United States(FY2013))*

## 3 Safety Management Initiatives

Because the primary mission of the SDF is to defend Japan, SDF training and activities are inevitably accompanied by risk. However, various accidents that cause injury to the public or damage to its property, or the loss of life of SDF personnel, must be avoided at all costs. Therefore, during routine training for warship and aircraft operation or target practice, for example, the MOD and SDF make a united effort to ensure the constant management of safety through the utmost mindfulness of ensuring safety.

The MOD and the SDF cooperated to the fullest extent in an investigation by the Japan Coast Guard into the cause of an incident which occurred on January 15, 2014 when an MSDF “Osumi” transport vessel and a small ship collided. In response to this incident, both the MOD and the SDF plan to dedicate themselves to ensuring that the causes of accidents are investigated and recurrence prevented in the future, based on the results of the Ministry of Defense Accident Countermeasures Committee and other considerations.

## **3 Measures Aimed at Ensuring Effective Use of Human Resources**

In order to provide an appropriate response to such recent challenges as the declining birth rate, the growing tendency for young people to enter higher education, and the diversification of the duties of the SDF, the MOD and the SDF are promoting various measures to make effective use

---

<sup>9</sup> Training includes SDF Joint Exercises, Japan–U.S. Bilateral Joint Exercises, and Ballistic Missile Response training which are to prevent and repel direct threats to Japan. Other training is that such as International Peace Cooperation Exercises that assumes SDF’s international peace cooperation activities and Joint International Humanitarian Operation Training, in which the handling of prisoners is practiced.

of the human resources which form the foundations that enable Japan to demonstrate its defense capabilities.

#### 1 Deliberation on Personnel Measures

With regard to the personnel structure of the SDF, while the total number of personnel has been decreasing since the enactment of the 1995 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), SDF units and other offices have been facing the need for further skilled and professional personnel in order to respond to the sophistication of equipment as well as the diversification and internationalization of SDF activities.

As a result of these circumstances, the new National Defense Program Guidelines call for appropriate assurance of the strength of the SDF, and the implementation of measures for personnel system reform, so that human resources can be utilized effectively under constrained financial circumstances. Accordingly, measures will be employed to ensure an appropriate composition of ranks and age distribution taking into account the various missions and characteristics of each branch of the SDF. Specifically, the new Mid-Term Defense Program states that the retirement age of 60 will be reviewed, that an early retirement system will be proactively employed, and that more suitable personnel management will be implemented for private/seaman/airman, as measures to make the age distribution more appropriate in the respective officer, warrant officer, sergeant/petty officer, and private/seaman/airman ranks. Measures will also be implemented to allow aircraft pilots to be re-employed in the private sector. Furthermore, the final promotion rates of officers, warrant officers and sergeant/petty officers will be reviewed, and in order to maintain the strength of the SDF, more appropriate personnel management will be employed that takes into account physical attributes.

*See ► Part II, Chapter 5, Section1 (Column: Reemployment of SDF Pilots)*

#### 2 Enhancement of Pay and Conditions

The duties of the SDF make no distinction between night and day. The work assigned to uniformed SDF personnel can be extremely demanding, involving various operations onboard aircraft, long-term service on ocean ships or submarines, or parachuting. To instill SDF personnel with pride and allow them to concentrate on their duties without anxiety, the MOD and the SDF strive to provide salaries and allowances, medical care, welfare, and other benefits that reflect the special nature of their duties. Furthermore, the new National Defense Program Guidelines and new Mid-Term Defense Program state that measures relating to awards and honors will be pursued, beginning with the expansion of the system of Defense Meritorious Badges.

### 3 Initiatives for Further Utilization of Female SDF Personnel

The MOD and the SDF open their doors wide not only to men but to women to fulfill their duties. At the end of March 2014, the number of female personnel is about 13,000 (about 5.6% of total SDF personnel). Compared with ten years ago (end of March, 2004, at around 4.6% of total SDF personnel), this is a rise of 1.0, indicating that the ratio of female personnel has been on an increasing trend in recent years. While there are still limitations to certain assignments, due to the requirement for protecting motherhood and securing privacy (excluded from assignment to tanks, submarines, fighters, etc.), female SDF personnel engage in boarding escort vessels and piloting antisubmarine patrol aircraft and transport aircraft, and their roles are expanding even at the nucleus of the SDF, such as the staff offices and headquarters.

In order to continue the further expansion of recruitment and promotion of female SDF personnel, the MOD and the SDF drew up the “Basic Plan for Gender Equality in the MOD (FY2011-FY2015)”<sup>10</sup> in March 2011. The plan calls for the consideration and implementation of numerous measures to allow female SDF personnel to lead a balanced life between work and family without having to quit their job, and to further expand the range of activities available to them. For example, ongoing initiatives include the active participation of female SDF personnel in core operations, in the SDF headquarters for example, further use of female SDF personnel in international peace cooperation activities, and the proactive operation of a program for replacement personnel for child care leave.

Similarly, the new National Defense Program Guidelines and new Mid-Term Defense Program state that female SDF personnel will be engaged further, in order to ensure more effective utilization of human resources, and note that the MOD will continue to make multilayered initiatives to utilize female SDF personnel in the near future.

### 4 Promotion of Measures to Support Child-Raising

Based on the “Action Plan to support a good work-family balance of the personnel of the MOD” (FY2010– FY2014) formulated in March 2010, the MOD presently implements measures aimed at actively encouraging male personnel to take child care leave and other special leave relating to child-raising, such as compiling a handbook for personnel in senior position and male personnel, and holding lectures to educate them about these leave systems.

---

<sup>10</sup> The plan calls for expanded recruitment and promotion of female administrative officials in addition to female SDF personnel, as well as the consideration of measures for the involvement of male staff in child-raising and nursing.

Internal crèche facilities will be established to respond to the need for special working arrangements within in the SDF, in addition to which the required conditions are being enhanced on an ongoing basis, to facilitate the temporary care of children when personnel must suddenly attend to duties, such as when dispatched to a disaster area.

#### 5 Initiatives to Support Families

Measures such as exchanges between units and personnel's families, as well as between family and family, will be pursued as routine initiatives. Furthermore, specific welfare services for SDF personnel deployed overseas for international peace cooperation or anti-piracy operations include facilitating direct communication between SDF personnel on deployment and their families in Japan by means such as e-mail and video conference systems, in order to enable them to maintain close bonds with their families. In addition, troops and their families exchange recorded video correspondence. Moreover, briefing sessions for families of the dispatched personnel are held to provide them with a variety of information, and family support centers and family counseling rooms have been established to respond to various questions raised by the families.

#### 6 Discipline-related Initiatives

The MOD and the SDF make initiatives on a daily basis to increase compliance with laws and other regulations, as well as raising awareness of these. Also, in March 2012, the MOD and the SDF distributed the "discipline reference material," which explains the gist of instructing subordinates in order to develop well-disciplined personnel.

Moreover, campaigns such as the "Anti-Drug Abuse Month" and the "Self-Defense Forces Personnel Ethics Week" have been established, with the objective of instilling in personnel an awareness of compliance with the law.

#### 7 Initiatives to Prevent Suicide among SDF Personnel

The same is true for the SDF, and while a record was set in FY2004, with 94 SDF Regular Personnel suicides, subsequent figures have shown a decline, with 78 suicides in 2011, 79 suicides in 2012, and 76 suicides in 2013.

The suicide of a member of the SDF is truly a great tragedy for both the persons who committed suicide and their bereaved families, and it represents a great loss to the MOD and the SDF in terms of the loss of capable personnel. The MOD and the SDF are taking on-going measures to prevent suicide, including the following initiatives:

- Expansion of the counseling system (internal/external counselors, a 24-hour telephone counseling hotline, assignment of clinical psychotherapists at camps and bases, etc.)
- Promoting education among commanders and education aimed at raising enlightenment, such as mental health education for enlisted personnel
- Establishing a campaign period for enhancing mental health measures, ensuring thorough initiatives by commanders to closely monitor the mental condition of subordinates whose environment has been changed due to personnel transfers, etc. , and providing various reference materials

#### 8 Commemorating Personnel Perished in the Line of Duty

Since the establishment of the National Police Reserve in 1950 and through its evolution via the National Safety Force and the Coastal Safety Force into the SDF today, SDF personnel have been striving to accomplish the noble mission of protecting the peace and independence of Japan. They have accomplished this by devoting themselves unstintingly to training, day and night, to live up to the expectations and trust of the Japanese citizens, regardless of danger, and with a strong sense of responsibility. During this time, however, more than 1,800 personnel have lost their lives in the line of duty.

In the MOD and the SDF, funeral ceremonies are carried out by each SDF unit to which the personnel who perished in the line of duty belonged, in order to express condolences. Moreover, in order to eternally recognize the achievements of the SDF personnel who perished in the line of duty, and to express deep honor and condolences, memorial ceremonies are carried out in various forms, such as the Memorial for SDF Members Killed in the Line of Duty conducted with the participation of the Prime Minister<sup>11</sup>.

#### 9 Dealing with Retirement and Outplacement of SDF Personnel

An early retirement system and a fixed-term service system is in place for SDF uniformed personnel, in order to maintain the strength of the forces. Therefore, unlike civilian government

---

<sup>11</sup> The Monument for SDF Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty was constructed in 1962 in Ichigaya. In 1998, the Memorial Zone in its current form was completed by combining this monument with other monuments located in the same area. A memorial ceremony for SDF personnel who perished in the line of duty is held annually by the MOD. This ceremony is attended by surviving family members of the honored dead, and also attended by the Prime Minister and high-ranking officials of the MOD and the SDF including the Minister of Defense, former Directors-General of the Defense Agency, and others. At the Monument for SDF Personnel who Perished in the Line of Duty in the Memorial Zone, there is an iron plate containing the names and other information of personnel who perished in the line of duty. When foreign dignitaries such as Defense Ministers visit the MOD, they make offerings of flowers, expressing their respect and condolences to personnel who perished in the line of duty. Memorial ceremonies are also held at individual SDF posts and bases.

employees, many SDF uniformed personnel retire by their mid-50s (personnel serving under the early retirement system) or their 20s (most uniformed personnel serving under the fixed-term service system), and many of them need to find another job after retirement in order to secure their livelihoods.

It is the responsibility of the Japanese government (the MOD) as the employer to support this re-employment. This is of the utmost importance both for resolving any concerns that SDF uniformed personnel may have about their future so they can work diligently without any worries while in service, and for boosting morale and securing high-quality human resources; support measures such as training helpful to re-employment is provided for this reason. Measures to ensure the re-employment of retired SDF personnel is also important from the perspective of enabling them to serve society with their various skills, thereby reinforcing human resources infrastructure in society.

As the MOD is not authorized to work as an employment agency, the SDF Personnel Support Association has permission from the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism to provide free job consultations to retired SDF personnel.

Each retired uniformed SDF personnel possesses excellent abilities in planning, leadership, faculty, cooperativeness and, responsibility gained through work performance and education and training across a wide range of duties and fields. Furthermore, they have various qualifications and licenses acquired through their work or occupational training. For these reasons, they are active in a broad range of sectors, including the manufacturing and service industries, in addition to the finance, insurance, real estate, and construction industries, where they are highly evaluated by their employers regardless of their duties or field during active service. These personnel are also employed by local governments as staff in charge of risk management and disaster prevention. Based on the new NDPG, the MOD is trying to improve the reemployment situation for retired SDF personnel by developing measures to increase incentives for private companies to hire them, and by further promoting their appointment to positions in the public sector.

Furthermore, with a view to creating an environment where SDF personnel can devote themselves to their duties without any worry, the MOD has a reappointment system that enables SDF personnel to be appointed for fixed terms of up to three years before the age of 60 (for SDF administration officials and others, up to one year).

See ► Fig. IV-2-1-5 (Main Measures for Reemployment Support); Fig. IV-2-1-6 (Overview of Reappointment System)

## 10 Regulations on Reemployment of Retired SDF Personnel

Meanwhile, reemployment of SDF personnel is regulated<sup>12</sup> in order to ensure public service impartiality. When SDF personnel get jobs at private companies within two years of retirement, and if that company had a contract with the MOD within five years before that SDF member's retirement, the approval of the Minister of Defense or other delegated authority must be sought in accordance with the regulation. In 2013, the MOD approved 98 cases (97 individuals) of reemployment of SDF personnel by private companies.

## 4 Enhancement of Medical Functions

### 1 Introduction of a Four-year Nursing Course at the National Defense Medical College

The MOD and the SDF have been facing an increasing need to train high-quality nurses equipped with the expertise and skills required to fully respond to the diversification and internationalization of duties, and the sophistication and complication of medical technology, and also equipped with well-rounded humanity and the ability to make accurate judgments. For this reason, a four-year "nursing program" was introduced for the training of public health/registered nurses at the National Defense Medical College, Faculty of Nursing, in April 2014.

The nursing program consists of two courses, one for education and training of nurses who will be SDF officers (1 year course, 75 attendees; hereinafter "SDF officers' course"), and the other for education and training of nurses who will be technical officers working at the affiliated hospitals (1 year course, 45 attendees; hereinafter "technical officials' course"). The SDF officers' course will also provide education and training as required for becoming senior SDF officers. Among graduates of the nurse training program, those who have completed the SDF officers' course will be assigned to work at SDF medical units and SDF hospitals after finishing the necessary training at the Officer Candidate Schools, while those who have completed the technical officers' course will be assigned to work at the National Defense Medical College Hospital, which deals with cases that require advanced medical technology.

### 2 Enhancement of Education of Medical Officers and Nurses

SDF medical personnel are required to have appropriate discernment and quality as SDF personnel according to the respective ranks and positions and display leadership in the medical field. Furthermore, they are also required to have the ability as a clinician in comprehensive

---

<sup>12</sup> "Seclusion from private companies" is stipulated in Article 62 of the SDF Act.

medicine. Furthermore, they are engaged at all times toward the objective of maintaining and increasing their abilities.

However, the fill rate of SDF medical personnel is currently at a low level, and in particular, it is considerably low for the middle level personnel who are supposed to play a central role in international peace cooperation activities. Such low sufficiency is caused by medical officers leaving the SDF, one of the major reasons of which is the lack of opportunity to engage in training and medical practice.

The MOD and the SDF will make efforts to prevent medical officers from leaving the SDF by providing them with more opportunities to engage in training and medical practice so that they can acquire, maintain, and improve specialist skills, while increasing motivation for their work and loyalty to their organization. At the same time, the MOD and SDF will take various measures as soon as possible to train medical officers who are capable of performing diverse duties properly.

Furthermore, based on the new Mid-Term Defense Program, the system of training for nurses and emergency medical personnel will be strengthened, and efforts made to ensure the availability of staff possessing more specialist and high-level skills.

### 3 SDF Hospitals as Hub Hospitals with Enhanced Functions

SDF hospitals are required to play the role of hospitals that are to admit SDF personnel injured while in service in response to various emergency events, and in normal circumstances, these hospitals are also required to play a role in providing medical treatment for SDF personnel and their families, etc. and educating medical staff to maintain and improve their skills.

For this reason, based on the new National Defense Program Guidelines and new Mid-Term Defense Program, SDF hospitals will be centralized, consolidated, and their performance levels increased; a network will be created between hospitals and medical offices; and an active contribution made to local medical care, in addition to which an efficient and high-quality medical care system will be established, including an improvement of the operation of the National Defense Medical College Hospital and other such institutions.

The required considerations will be made, including examination of the systems themselves for responding to contingencies, so that the aid capabilities are in place to provide the highest level of lifesaving for SDF personnel injured on the front line, while the arrangements for prompt

onward transfer of patients will be improved. In addition, the functioning of the National Defense Medical College will be strengthened to make it a center of training and research for defense medicine, with features one cannot find in general medical schools.