

USCG LORAN STATION GESASHI

GENERAL INFORMATION

Coast Guard Loran Station Gesashi was commissioned on November 15, 1963. Until 1945 the unit was located at Ikeshima northwest of Okinawa. Okinawa is an island in the North Pacific Ocean 250 miles south of Kyushu, the southernmost island of Japan.

Okinawa is the largest island in the Ryukyu Island chain and had been under the control of the United States from the end of WWII until May 15, 1972, at which time, civil administration reverted it back to Japan. The island's largest city is Naha, and it is the main port. The island consists of a sloping bed of volcanic ash over older rocks. The flatter area is to the south surrounded by coral reefs and the northern area is three quarters rugged and mountainous. The higher elevation on Okinawa is about 1,650 feet. The island covers 454 square miles in total, is 75 miles in length and varying from 2 to 10 miles in width.

The loran station is northeast of Okinawa. Its grounds cover approximately 180 acres. It is situated on a hilly terrain extending northwest to the transmitting antenna. The antenna is located approximately 120 miles above sea level.

CLIMATE

The climate is similar to that of the Gulf Coast States. The annual temperature is 72 degrees but the thermometer may dip to the low 40's in the winter and rise above 90 in the summer. Average annual rainfall is 82 inches. Humidity averages 76 percent.

LORAN

The term Loran is an abbreviation for long-ranging aid to navigation. The new station has the latest type of radio transmitting equipment and is twice as powerful as the old unit, which at that time had a range of about 1100 miles. Gesashi is part of a Coast Guard network of Loran facilities located on Iwo Jima and Marcus Island in the central Pacific, and Hokkaido in northern Japan. Since the commissioning of this unit, another loran station has been posted on the island of Yap in the Southwest Pacific.

COMPLEMENT

Loran Station Gesashi has a complement of two officers (normally a lieutenant junior grade as commanding officer; and a chief warrant officer as executive) and approximately 19 enlisted men. There are no women assigned to the unit, however Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. is considering it.

SUPPLIES FOR THE UNIT

Supplies are normally delivered to the Port of Naha or to the Naval Air Facility at Kadena Air Base, to be picked up by the station's logistics runs. Air shipments are normally delivered to Naha Airport through Flying Tigers Airline Company. The distance between the loran station and Naha takes about 2½ hours to travel.

MORALE FOR THE TROOPS

Although the loran unit is operated 24 hours a day, there are certain things for the off-duty crew to do. Besides basketball, softball and other sports activities, the unit is provided with a video recorder to watch movies. Also 16mm movies are sent in and a movie is shown every night. Liberty is granted on weekends commencing of Friday for off duty personnel after 12 p.m. Because Gesashi is not as isolated like Iwo Jima and Marcus, the crew can go to various clubs in town. Also on occasion, the USO will come to unit and put on some time of show. For those with birthdays or leaving the unit, the commanding officer will often authorize a party. Liquer is unauthorized at the unit, however for certain occasions, the commanding officer can authorize beer.

All of the Coast Guard loran units pride themselves on how well they are accepted with the Japanese community. Quite often, members from the nearby town are invited to the unit's cookouts, going away parties etc., or for a friendly game of softball.

LOCAL INFORMATION

The Ryukyans are a mixture of several races, probably including Malay, Mongul and Ainu. The Ainu, a primitive race whose modern descendants live in Japan, are of caucasian stock with light colored skin. The first settlers in the Ryukyus probably came from the Pacific Islands to the south, and eventually many others from China and mainland Japan. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Sugar cane and pineapple fields can be seen all over the island. Since the war, commercial fisheries have developed, the supply of fish is increasing. Approximately 40,000 Ryukyans are employed by the U.S. Armed Forces in various jobs.

Though all personnel assigned to the loran station are required to have a full seabag when reporting, it is recommended that they wear civilian attire when on liberty. Their clothing must conform to the highest standards.

Whether on a military facility or not, Japanese law has precedence over military law. Customs and Japanese law are normally explained to a new arrival at the unit.

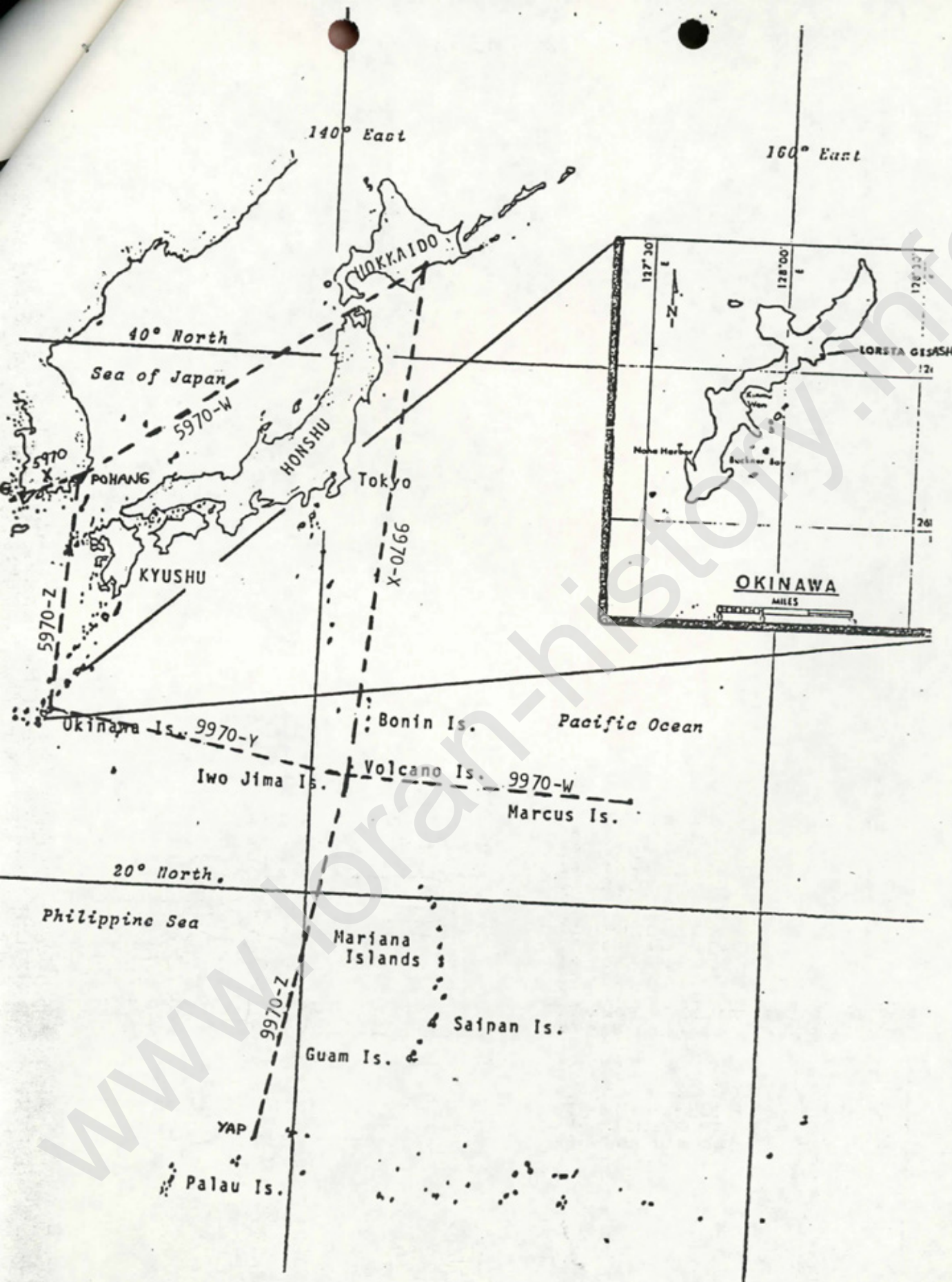
GESASHI 3-3-3-3

MAIL

Mail is delivered through the Navy Post Office and is picked up when making a logistics supply run. About once a week., The address for the unit is:

NAME
US COAST GUARD LORAN STATION GESASHI
CG BOX
FPO SEATTLE, WA 98770

www.loran-history.info



140° East

160° East

40° North

Sea of Japan

HOKKAIDO

HONSHU

KYUSHU

Tokyo

POHANG

9970-X

5970-Z

Okinawa Is. 9970-Y

Bonin Is.

Pacific Ocean

Iwo Jima Is.

Volcano Is.

9970-W

Marcus Is.

20° North

Philippine Sea

Mariana Islands

Saipan Is.

Guam Is.

YAP

Palau Is.

OKINAWA

MILES

LORETA GISHASHI

Naha Harbor

Buckner Bay

137° 30'

128° 00'

126° 30'

12° 30'

12°

26'