



TORII LEGAL ASSISTANCE

OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE



WATCH YOUR SPEED!

Watch Your Speed! Speed Kills! Slow Down! We have heard these warnings before. As a Safety Officer and an attorney for the Staff Judge Advocate, I look at speeding from both a Safety and a Legal Perspective. Please take this opportunity to remind yourself to watch your speed and to avoid the temptation to speed by giving yourself plenty of time to get to work or to make appointments (always expect that traffic will be congested, the traffic signals will be red, and plan accordingly) .

Speeding on Okinawa is different than speeding in the United States. In both places it is dangerous and against the law, but on Okinawa speeding in excess of 29 KPH (18 MPH) above the speed limit changes from being a traffic violation to a criminal offense.

Speed laws are made for a reason – SAFETY. And even though Soldiers are great drivers, they, like everyone else, are expected to not exceed the speed limit. As we know, speed was a factor in the recent death of Paul Walker of “Fast and Furious.” We have had Soldiers die here on Okinawa as a result of speeding. If the safety of yourself and others is not enough to persuade you, consider the legal consequences of speeding.

Speeders on Okinawa can face a fine of up to 100,000 Yen (About \$1000.00) or six months hard labor by a Japanese court. On the military side of the equation, speeders can have their license revoked for 12 months and be compelled to de-register their vehicles (this includes Department of the Army Civilians and Family Members). The revocation could also result in the loss of authorization to operate military vehicles.

Speed Limit on Base –

- ❖ The maximum speed limit on base is 40 kilometers per hour (unless otherwise posted).
- ❖ The speed limit in school zones is 25 kilometers per hour. Look for flashing yellow lights.

Speed Limit Off-Base –

- ❖ The speed limits off base range from 25-40 kilometers per hour in residential areas and up to 80 kilometers per hour on the expressway. Speeders get caught speeding on Okinawa by cameras, radar, police officers and by witness reports.
- ❖ Speeding is against the law! Knowing that you can be caught on camera or reported by a witness should act as an incentive to follow the law, especially when you know the legal consequences.