

## Exodus From Japan Begins

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As the situation in Japan worsens following last week's triple disaster of a 9.0 earthquake, a tsunami and the steadily deteriorating status of a major nuclear power plant, the U.S. State Department has warned Americans in the country to consider leaving. Through its embassy in Tokyo, the department announced today that it will be arranging for charter flights to evacuate U.S. citizens to "safe haven" locations in Asia, where they will be able to book flights back home. Since the crisis began last Friday, many companies have sent corporate aircraft to Japan to extract executives and workers, and private jet providers have received thousands of inquiries from people eager to escape. "We probably do something in Japan once a month or so," said Ben Schusterman, president of Los Angeles-based private charter broker ElJet Aviation Services. "We've had 25 to 30 inquiries over the past week." Amid the growing demand for lift out of Japan, Schusterman has noted a spike in the region's charter prices. "I would say probably 30 percent above normal," he told **AIN**. "It's expensive to charter in Asia to start with, way more expensive than the U.S., but their prices have definitely increased and they are not even being shy about it."