

# **Basic Principles of this Program**

## **1. Achieving a Society with No Traffic Accidents**

Japan has entered the start of a new, previously unexperienced period of a declining birthrate and super-aging society. In addition, in regard to the choice of means of transportation, the consideration of global environmental issues is required. In order to overcome these unprecedented, significant societal changes and to build a truly prosperous and vibrant society, it is crucial to ensure the safety and security of the people.

Given the fact that the number of victims of traffic accidents is overwhelmingly higher than that of natural disasters or crimes, traffic safety is an important factor for realizing such a safe and secure society.

Therefore, while recognizing its importance, various countermeasures against traffic accidents have been taken so far and a certain level of success has been achieved. However, since the number of traffic accidents still remains at a high level, the implementation of additional measures is needed.

Based on the principle of respecting human life, as well as the consideration of the significant social and economic losses arising from traffic accidents, we should aim to ultimately achieve a society with no traffic accidents. Needless to say, a society with no traffic accidents cannot be built in a short period of time, but it is presently necessary to make new steps toward the eradication of traffic accident tragedies.

## **2. Traffic Safety Concept of Prioritizing People**

A civilized society must show consideration and kindness to those in a weaker position. In terms of traffic, it is necessary to further secure the safety of pedestrians, who are vulnerable in relation to cars, as well as the safety of those particularly vulnerable, such as the elderly, the disabled, and children, when they use any type of transportation. This basic concept of “prioritizing people” for traffic safety policy should be implemented in every possible measure.

## **3. Three Components Forming the Traffic Society**

This program sets numerical objectives to be attained within the period of the program and clarifies the measures that should be taken for achieving these objectives for the following respective traffic sectors: (i) road traffic; (ii) railway traffic; (iii) traffic at railway crossings; (iv) maritime traffic; and (v) air traffic.

Specifically, with respect to the three components of traffic society, namely: people, means of transportation including vehicles, vessels, and aircrafts, and the traffic environment that serves as the platform of their activity, and while giving consideration to their mutual relationship, the Government shall strengthen and improve efforts in the scientific investigation and analysis of traffic accidents, develop more effective policy evaluation systems, set specific performance goals where possible in formulating various measures, and vigorously promote these measures with the understanding and cooperation of citizens.

### **(1) Safety measures relating to people**

In order to ensure safe driving and transportation operation, to improve the knowledge and skills of drivers and operators, to raise their traffic safety awareness, to enhance the qualification systems for them, to strengthen administrative guidance and enforcement, improving the management of driving and operation, and to ensure appropriate working conditions, as well as to secure the safe passage of pedestrians by raising the traffic safety awareness of pedestrians and intensifying traffic safety guidance, the strengthening of leadership should be promoted. Furthermore, as it is extremely important for each and every citizen in traffic society to reform their attitudes toward traffic safety, the education as well as awareness raising activities on traffic safety should be substantially enriched. In this case, in order to raise awareness of safety, it is also effective to increase the opportunities to listen directly to the opinions of traffic accident victims

(survivors or victims of traffic accidents and their families, hereinafter the same). In addition, in order to change the awareness of the citizens themselves, residents and local area organizations can set specific goals and policies to recognize their own local issues, for citizens to visit or to be directly involved in various activities related to traffic safety, to create a system, in which people are actively involved in the formation of a safe and secure transportation society, depending on the circumstances of each local government, such a system needs to be devised. Given this situation, in the preparation of prefectural and municipal road safety plans, there is also a need to devise these to fully reflect the wishes of local residents and take into account the country's road safety master plan, with due consideration to characteristics, such as traffic conditions and the social situation in the region.

(2) Safety measures relating to means of transport

Based on the assumption that people can never avoid making errors, work that prevents human errors from leading to accidents, more specifically, improving the safety of the transportation structure, facilities, and equipment through constant technological development, taking necessary measures to ensure that transportation maintains a high level of safety, giving due consideration to the social functions and characteristics of the respective transportation sectors, shall be fulfilled, and in addition, frameworks for implementing necessary inspections shall be established and strengthened.

(3) Safety measures relating to traffic environment

Measures such as establishing road networks with appropriately assigned functions, developing traffic safety facilities, improving traffic control systems, promoting effective traffic regulations, enhancing the provision of information about traffic, and measures for aging facilities shall be taken. In addition, when developing the traffic environment, based on the idea of prioritizing people, it is important that measures to eliminate the risk of collisions attributable to mixed traffic, including separation of pedestrian walkways from the routes for transportation for things such as automobiles and railways, shall be developed and implemented. In road traffic, in particular, it would be significant to further promote prioritizing people traffic safety measures for school routes, community roads, and thoroughfares in urban areas, such as actively developing pedestrian walkways.

#### **4. Utilization of IT**

As the link among these three components of traffic society as well as the enhancement of the effects of measures for the respective components, the role of information is important. In the rapidly progressing information society, it is important to utilize information in order to build a safe and secure transportation society, in particular, the use of information and communications technology (IT) supplements such capabilities and activities such as human perception and judgment, counteracts inadvertent human errors, and can be furthermore expected to make a significant contribution to road safety, by minimizing the damage caused by such errors. Given this situation, the efforts of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and the usage of automatic identification systems (AIS) are being actively promoted. Moreover, in order to take effective and appropriate road safety measures, aiming to enhance and strengthen the comprehensive investigation and analysis of traffic accident causes, as a basis for such measures, the required research and development shall be promoted.

#### **5. Enhancement of Rescue and Emergency Activities and Victim Assistance**

In order to save the lives of the injured and minimize the damages when traffic accidents occur, it is essential to reinforce expeditious rescue and emergency medical care activities, and to improve the quality of medical treatment for the injured. In light of the enactment of the Basic Act on Crime Victims (Act No. 161 of 2004), there shall be commitment to further improvement of support for victims in the area of traffic safety as well.

## **6. Promotion of Participation and Collaborative Traffic Safety activities**

In order to prevent traffic accidents, it is important that the country, local governments, and private organizations concerned with promoting measures under close cooperation, actively promote the independent road safety activities of nationals, to create a system where people can participate from the planning stage to the measures for the safety of transportation through efforts by national and local governments, road safety comprehensive inspection that people do voluntarily, due to efforts according to the characteristics in each region, and participate to promote collaborative traffic safety activities.

## **7. Effective and Efficient Implementation of Measures**

Although at present, the national and local governments are in a difficult financial situation, it is necessary to advance the efforts to be able to ensure traffic safety, aiming towards the eradication of tragedies of car accidents, also taking into account the financial circumstances of these traffic safety measures. Therefore, depending on the actual situation with local traffic, we should be conscious on focusing on measures that strive to achieve the maximum effect with a small budget, making such efforts as maintaining budget execution efficiency, while predicting the life cycle cost of the traffic lights and other machines.

Moreover, while the measures for the safety of traffic extend to various fields, they are closely related to each other, therefore it is essential for them to work organically, and to be implemented comprehensively and effectively. In addition, it should be attempted to flexibly adapt these measures to changes in social conditions such as the declining birthrates and aging population and globalization, as well as to changes in traffic accidents and traffic conditions, while selecting, upon consideration of their effects, appropriate measures to implement in a focused and effective manner.

Furthermore, because traffic safety is closely associated with transportation demand and the extent of smoothness and comfortableness of transportation, it should be also attempted to give sufficient consideration to alleviating these factors by restraining the growth of automobile traffic volume. Moreover, when designing the traffic safety measures, due attention should be given to roadside land use and road use as well as to disaster prevention against earthquakes and tsunamis.

## **8. Further ensuring the safety of public transportation**

In addition, to support the daily lives of citizens, to ensure the safety of public transport in case a major traffic accident occurs and to prevent further damage, while striving to enhance and strengthen the security check, to build and improve the unified safety management system operators, the Government shall enhance and strengthen the transportation safety management evaluation to confirm its implementation status.