

Chapter V Building Foundations for a Comfortable Living Environment

1 Urban residential development policies aimed at benefiting persons with disabilities.

In order to build a life environment concerned with "universal design" and where it is easy for anyone to comfortably live, "barrier-free" transformations of the following living spaces are being encouraged: housing, buildings, public transportation, pedestrian spaces, etc. The establishment of "barrier-free" status in these structures within set areas and the unified and continuous "barrier-free" transformation of routes linking them together are being encouraged.

Carefully-considered disaster measures concerning various aspects of disaster prevention—paying special attention to people requiring assistance during a disaster—are being developed: diffusion of disaster prevention knowledge, information supply at the time of a disaster, methods of evacuation, etc.

While crime prevention measures addressing the concerns of persons with disabilities are being developed, measures to lessen the difficulties they might encounter when dealing with the police and to prevent accidents and crimes committed against persons with disabilities are being developed.

【Main Measures】

- In order to build a supply of housing accessible to persons with disabilities, the "Elderly Housing Design Guideline" demonstrates an effort to create, from the moment of design, housing in which a person may continue living even as their physical capacities diminish. The expansion of housing adapted to persons with disabilities is also being encouraged.

- Regarding "barrier free" standard housing, and under the Quality Housing Acquisition Support System, The Japan Housing, Finance Agency (JHF), has been working to lower loan interest rates.

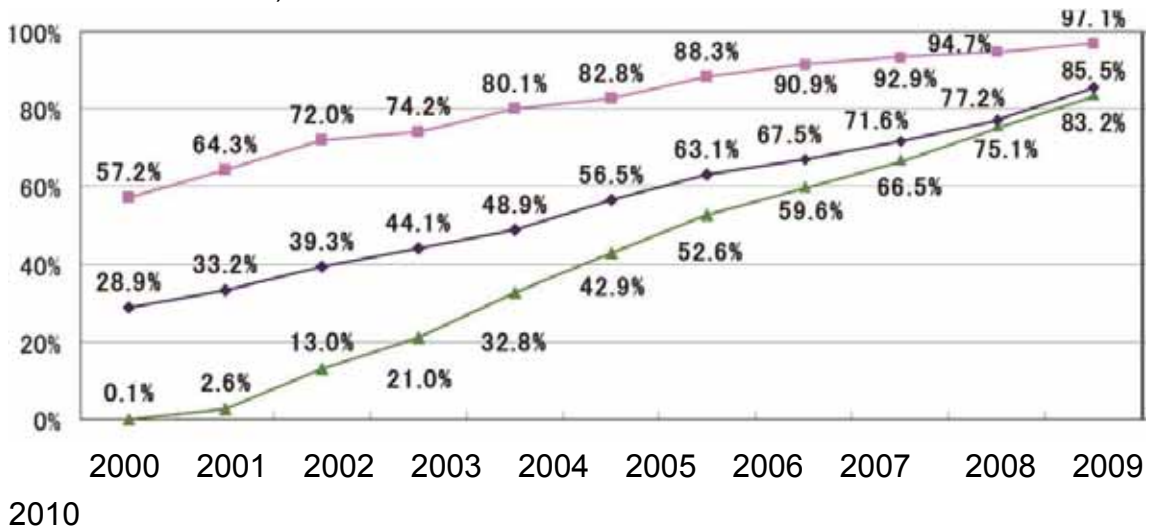
- Concerning the housing of persons with disabilities, in the tax system revision of fiscal 2009, in cases where a predetermined amount of "barrier-free"

renovation work is done, exceptional, income tax-reducing measures are prolonged (in the case of mortgaged lodgings). Along with tax-reducing measures, a new tax deduction measure was also created, which allows a fixed income tax deduction in cases where a predetermined amount of "barrier-free" renovation work has been done in cases where no mortgage has been taken. In addition to that, the fiscal 2010 tax system revision prolongs the fixed assets tax reduction system concerning housing where persons with disabilities live in cases where a predetermined amount of "barrier-free" renovation work has been done.

- The Act for Developing the Construction of Special Buildings that Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly are Able to Smoothly Use (the "Heart-Building" Act) and the Act for Promoting Barrier-free Transport for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (the Public Transport Barrier-free Act) were combined and enlarged into the Act for Promoting Barrier-free Transport and Facilities for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (the New Barrier-free Act). The creation of a "barrier-free" environment in public institutions is being pursued, based on the Basic Policies for Smooth Movement, a basic guideline of the steps that managers need to follow when establishing any new facility taking as a goal the move towards "barrier-free."

- In order to realize a "barrier-free heart" society where every citizen would recognize the difficulties encountered by the elderly and persons with disabilities as their own problem and would actively collaborate to enable their participation in society, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism is opening a, "barrier free" class room.

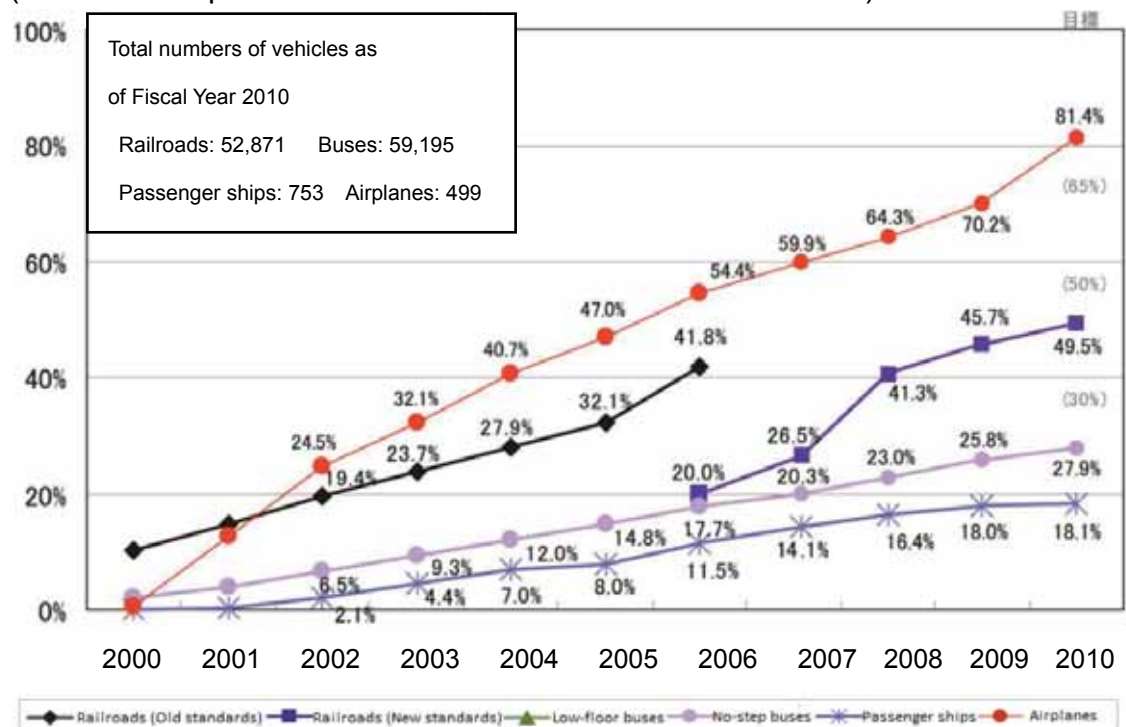
■Chart 33 The barrier-free system in travel facilities (From the “Report on the Enforcement of Smooth Movement”)



Legend: Removing steps (black diamond), Guide for the Visually-impaired (pink square), Restrooms for the Disabled (green triangle)

Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

■Chart 34 The transition to the barrier-free system in public transportation (From the “Report on the Enforcement of Smooth Movement”)



(Note) Based on the New Barrier-free Law, the following content was added to the smooth movement standard (new standard) regarding railroad vehicles: the vehicle number, etc. should be displayed in letters and in Braille on doors inside the vehicles.

Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

- The National Police Agency and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism developed the "omnibus town vision" to support municipal administrations and programs of related persons that aim to create an urban environment that gives full credence to the social significance of buses. The practical quality of bus travel is increasing through the introduction of no-step buses, lift-equipped buses, etc., as well as the installation of bus stops oriented towards persons with disabilities and other types of people in danger on the roads. By the end of fiscal year 2010, fourteen cities have been designated as, "omnibus towns."

- The National Tourism Agency is doing research on work being done throughout the nation regarding tourism based on the notion of universal design. Also, the agency is conducting a thorough review on the diffusion of this work, the promotion of this kind of thinking and the proper channels of information transmission necessary to achieve cooperation on these efforts.

- Publicity and information regarding hearing-impaired markers are being distributed in police departments. Meanwhile, in collaboration with relevant organizations, police departments are working to improve the comprehensiveness of instruction at the time of obtaining driver's licenses, in order that the hearing-impaired can safely drive their cars. The police are also working on safety education concerning matters that drivers need to pay attention to when in the vicinity of hearing-impaired person.

- In December of fiscal year 2012, in order to alleviate the financial burden for persons with visual impairments that require the aid of a seeing eye dog and also to help improve the overall quality of life their lives, a section of the, "Road Traffic Act Regulations" was amended. As thus, the handles of the dog leashes shall be made to include the ability to adjust the length of the handles of the leashes so that the users may have less difficulty using them, regardless of their reach.

- In fiscal year 2009, meetings of municipal administration leaders were organized in thirteen places around the country, in which they exchanged points of view on municipal measures for people requiring assistance in the event of a

disaster. Of which, overall evacuation support plans were discussed. Meanwhile, an "investigative group on evacuation measures for people requiring assistance in the event of a disaster" was created. Also, by assembling an anthology of examples of advanced programs throughout the country, the municipality leaders were able to improve their own initiatives on the municipal programs.

○ In fiscal 2010, in order to ensure effective safety measures for persons with disabilities, in keeping with universal design, the use of fire alarm provisions and such devices is being promoted. Meetings on, "Review on Proper Warning Systems for the Hearing Impaired" are being held. At these meetings, the creation of policies that would include measures to promote the use of fire alarms with warning systems beyond just sound based provisions. Accordingly, they would include light and vibration warning systems as well.

General Support measures for victims of the Great East Japan Disaster of March 2011

The following is a general outline of the support policies being enforced for the disaster area and disaster victims of the March 11th 2011 Great East Japan Disaster.

○ The following is outlines various flexible support policies the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in enforcing in order to decrease operation costs for operation administrators that offer welfare services to persons with disabilities.

(1) Regarding response measures for benefit recipients

- Following the earth quake disaster, in the case that benefit recipients may not meet the deadline period to apply for benefit coverage, they will be supplied with disaster victim welfare services. Furthermore, the grant period of services for victims of the 3/11/2011 disaster previously had ended on 8/30/2011. According to the act, measures have been put in place to ensure the overall benefits protection of disaster victims. As such, the previously mentioned benefit grant period has thus been extended.
- In the event that potential benefit recipients do not have proof of benefit coverage, they will still be eligible for disaster victim welfare services.
- For disaster victim benefit recipients who are experiencing difficulties baring benefit expenses, deferment of such payments and payment reduction steps

may be taken. Additionally, in the event that benefit recipients are experiencing difficulties bearing prosthetic device expenses, similar steps previously mentioned may be taken.

(2) Regarding disaster victim welfare service provision

- In the event of a disaster in which response facility staff levels and provisions do not meet required levels to properly respond to the situation, such facilities shall receive proper reimbursement in order that they may temporarily hire on more staff and outfit themselves with the proper level of supplies to properly respond to the situation.
- Due to unavoidable circumstances, in the event that at benefit recipient shelters, service is offered to the maximum level possible in order to console said disaster victims and ensure their safety, the previously mentioned measures shall be considered the appropriate welfare service remuneration steps.
- Additionally, via disaster shelters, remunerations for home-care services shall be provided.
- Disaster victim welfare services for disaster victims will also be provided via temporary response facilities and other such disaster relief facilities.

(3) Regarding of care workers service providers dispatching and receiving disaster victims and various operations

- In the event at various operations throughout the country were experiencing care workers shortages, either via the national government or the prefectural government, it will be possible for said organizations to receive such staffing from other such operations.
- In the event of a disaster in which disaster victims would choose to be placed in disaster victim relief shelters, either via the national or the prefectural government, provisions shall be made to ensure the security of such disaster victims at the appropriate response facilities.

(4) Re-commencement of disaster victim welfare services at disaster sites

- Via government sponsored programs, restoration support is being carried out to re-establish disaster victim support service outfits in the case of disasters.
- In the event of an extensively reaching disaster, in order to ensure stabilized levels of service provisions, service response operations will be places in all the affected prefectures.

A) Via disaster victim vocational support facilities, support to ensure the

existence of and support for the expansion of market routes is in effect

- B) According to the Persons with Disabilities Independence Act and Child Welfare Acts, there will be support for a transition to new systematic services.
- C) Counseling and leadership shall be provided in order to help meet the needs of children with developmental disabilities and persons with developmental disabilities.
- D) Budget calculations were made for measures to support efforts to assist the re-establishment of at-home care taking and nursing operations.

- Furthermore, regarding mental and emotional care, in accordance with the Disaster Relief Act, a specialized team of professionals was assembled consisting of: psychiatrists, nurses, and mental health welfare professionals. Through connections with municipalities nation-wide, this specialized team of experts was dispatched to disaster relief centers.

As people affected by the disaster's living place would transfer from disaster relief facilities to their private places of residence, it was projected that many would continue to suffer indefinitely from PTSD, depression and anxiety disorders. As such, in order to cope with this, in fiscal year 2011 the third provision correction budget was drafted; in which, "Mental Health Care Centers" were established in Iwate Prefecture, Miyagi Prefecture and Fukushima Prefecture. In order to ensure long term continuation of such mental health care, nurses, mental health welfare specialists and clinical psychologists are being dispatched to temporary relief aid centers and residents to deliver mental health care to those in need.

- On the other hand, for transition support for employment, near the end of March of 2011, Hello Work established a, "Disaster Relief Consultation Window." Through which, it consoles all disaster victims on vocational acquisition. Additionally, in April of the same year, at the local disaster relief center, a, "Consultation Window" was established; at which, consultation on the continual employment of disaster victims takes place.

- At MEXT, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, in order to ensure educational opportunities for both children who are and who are not disabled alike, certain requests were made to the boards of education

throughout the nation. MEXT has requested as flexible as possible acceptance of kindergarten children and elementary school students and additionally, the provision of necessary aid to help the children victims of disasters. Furthermore, MEXT has adopted a flexible approach to the provision of textbooks to children at compulsory education schools.

- Moreover, in order to provide fiscal support for special needs education schools and special needs education school classes and young children of such classes, as well as children disaster victims that were experiencing difficulty with student enrollment due to the disaster, and in order to provide mental health care support, school counselor emergency dispatches were added to the first provisions budget draft of fiscal year 2011. In fiscal year 2011 for the third provisions budget draft, special support efforts to aid in the continual study of affected children at institutions outside of the special education needs schools and efforts to support the assurance of schooling opportunities for children disaster victims is under way.

- The National Institute of Special Needs Education produced, “The Children Disaster Victim Support Teacher’s Handbook ~ Regarding Child with Developmental Disabilities Response Measures.” The institute placed the publication on their website, (<http://www.nise.go.jp/cms/6,3758,53.html>) and distributed it to related institutions.

- MEXT is working to better understand the conditions of and support children victims of disasters. In the event that either a school board or school becomes aware that a certain child is in need of aid, after confirming the consent of the primary care-takers of the child, the next step would be to contact the child with disabilities aid center and the related education and welfare agencies through the varying municipalities. It is being requested that this information is spread from the child disabilities consultation window to the varying boards of education at the appropriate national regional municipality and child disability welfare aid center.

- The Japanese Cabinet Office has mandated that on the persons with disabilities webpage, an easily accessible link containing information pertinent to persons with disabilities, as well as a corner concerning information pertinent to

the Great East Japan Disaster.

2 Measures to Secure Information and Communication for Persons with Disabilities

In order to correct the discrepancies in opportunities for persons with disabilities to use information and communication technology, research and development concerning information and telecommunications equipment and systems that respond to the needs of persons with disabilities have been promoted. Meanwhile, there are also efforts under way to distribute such equipment and systems: an accessibility guideline was created; the compliance with JIS and international standards was improved along with the accessibility of web sites, etc.

The diffusion of information to persons with disabilities is being enhanced through the promotion of Telework, the strengthening of the information network, the upgrading of the system that provides information through the production of video materials with subtitles, etc, and the promotion of subtitled broadcasting, etc. Meanwhile, the framework of communications support for persons with disabilities has been strengthened through the promotion of sign language and Braille transcription, as well as through the standardization of pictures and communicative symbols.

【Main Measures】

- Local livelihood support groups administer "IT support centers for persons with disabilities" that act as bases for all services of IT-related organizations with the goal of expanding the use of information and communication technology by persons with disabilities. A "task force on comprehensive development of IT for the persons with disabilities" was created, comprehensively and uniformly enforcing measures related to IT such as the training and dispatching of "PC volunteers."

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications organized the "Study group on Ensuring/Improving Accessibility in the Public Sector." In December 2005, this study group issued an application model, called "operational models to improve accessibility of public websites," for the concrete maintenance and improvement of web accessibility. Later in August of 2010, a reform of the web contents occurred. Furthermore, in fiscal 2010, a revision of this application