

Section 4 Disaster caused by Heavy Snowfall since December 25 of 2021

(1) Overview

From December 25 to 28, 2021, a strong winter pressure pattern around Japan caused heavy snowfall from north to east Japan on the Sea of Japan side and some parts of the Pacific Ocean side – for example, 162 cm of periodic snowfall (from midnight of December 25 to 7:00 a.m. of December 28, 2021) in Tadami Town, Minamiaizu County, Fukushima Prefecture, 136 cm in Minakami Town, Tone County, Gunma Prefecture, and 135 cm in Tsunan Town, Nakauonuma County in Niigata Prefecture.

The heavy snowfall caused 2 deaths (1 in Hokkaido, 1 in Niigata Prefecture), 6 seriously injured (2 in Iwate, 2 in Niigata, 2 in Gifu Prefectures) and 20 slightly injured (2 in Aomori, 5 in Niigata, 3 in Toyama, 2 in Fukui, 2 in Mie, 4 in Shiga, 1 in Tottori, 1 in Shimane Prefectures) (Source: Fire and Disaster Management Agency information, as of December 30, 2021).

In addition, there was damage to transportation infrastructure such as the Hokuriku Expressway, Tohoku Expressway, and other expressways were closed, and railroad operations were suspended (Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, as of December 28, 2021).

In winter of 2021 (from November 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022), snowfall caused 97 deaths, 580 seriously injured and 1,014 slightly injured (Source: Fire and Disaster Management Agency information, as of April 12, 2022).

(2) Response by the Government

The government established an Information Contact Office in the Prime Minister's Office at 12:00 p.m. of December 24, 2021, and held an Inter-Agency Disaster Alert Meeting.