Special Feature 2

2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

The earthquake that struck the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture on January 1, 2024, caused extensive damage to many lives, houses, and lifelines, mainly in the same region. The extent of the damage also spread far into Niigata and Toyama prefectures. Many affected people are still forced to live in shelters (as of April 1, 2024). The government continues to support the affected people under the “Disaster Management Headquarters for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake”, established on January 1. It is making concerted efforts toward the recovery and reconstruction of the affected areas under the “Headquarters for Supporting Recovery and Reconstruction from the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake”, established on January 31. In the future, efforts will be made to verify and identify lessons learned in relation to the recent disaster. In this Special Feature, Chapter 1 describes the damage caused by the earthquake, and Chapter 2 summarizes the situation and response, mainly during the first three months after the disaster, including the initial response, support for the affected people, and recovery and reconstruction efforts, while Chapter 3 discusses future disaster risk management in the wake of the earthquake.

Chapter 1 Overview of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake and the Damage Caused

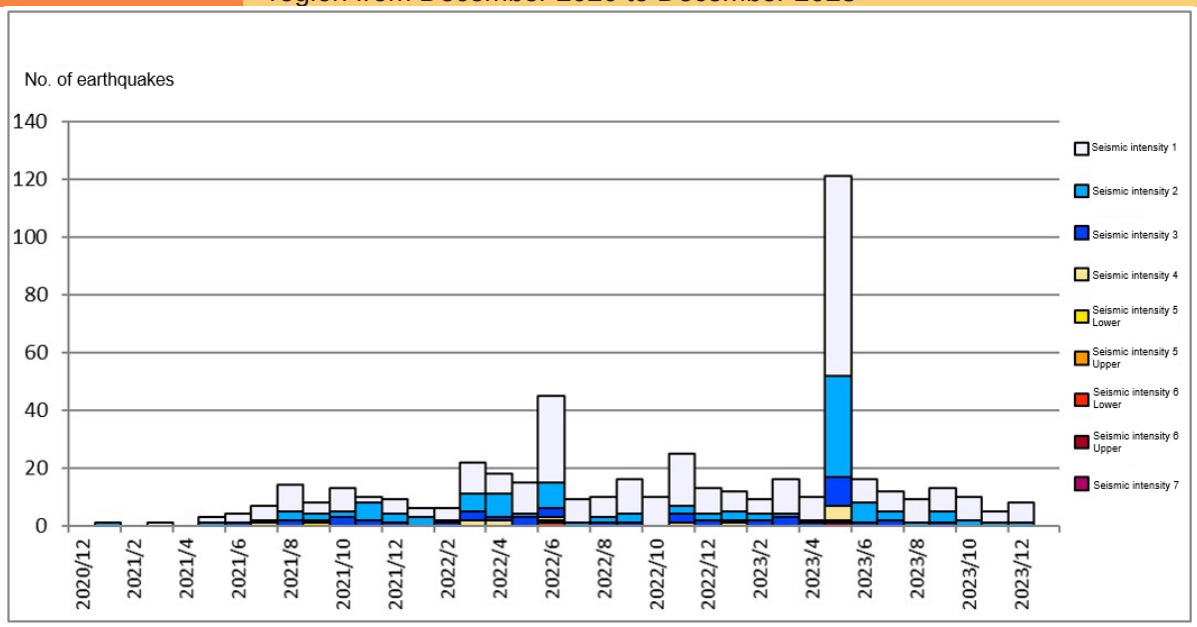
Section 1 Overview of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

(1) Overview of Earthquake

At 4:10 p.m. on January 1, 2024, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 (provisional value) on the Richter scale occurred, with its epicenter at a depth of 16 km (provisional value) in the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture (hereinafter referred to as “the earthquake” in this Special Feature). A seismic intensity of 7 was registered in Wajima City and Shika Town in Ishikawa Prefecture, while seismic intensities ranging from 6 Upper to 1 were registered from Hokkaido to the Kyushu region. On the same day, the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) named this earthquake and the series of seismic activities since December 2020 as “The 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake”.

Seismic activity in the Noto region has been on the rise since December 2020, with 506 earthquakes with a seismic intensity of 1 or higher occurring between December 1, 2020, and December 31, 2023 (Fig. 1-1). On May 5, 2023, a magnitude 6.5 (provisional value) earthquake occurred at a depth of 12 km (provisional value) off the Noto Peninsula, with a seismic intensity of 6 Upper observed in Suzu City, Ishikawa Prefecture, causing human casualties and damage to buildings, mainly in Ishikawa Prefecture. After that, the number of earthquakes decreased over time until this earthquake occurred on January 1, 2024 (Fig. 1-2).

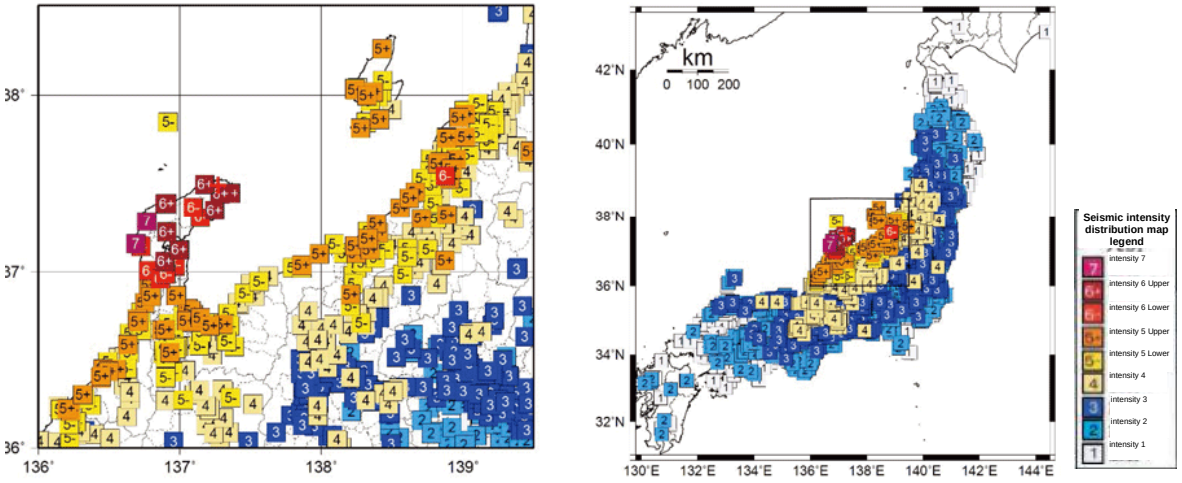
Fig. 1-1 Number of earthquakes by month and maximum seismic intensity in the Noto region from December 2020 to December 2023



*Earthquakes with a seismic intensity of 1 or higher. The number of earthquakes is subject to change as a result of careful examination.

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

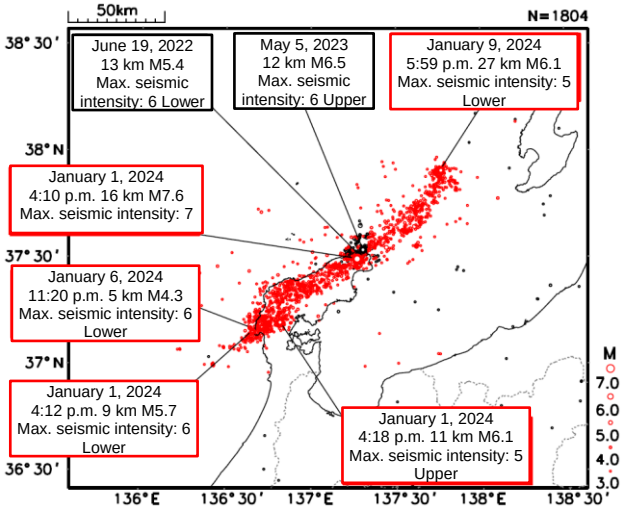
Fig. 1-2 4:10 p.m., January 1, 2024, seismic intensity distribution map of the earthquake in Noto region, Ishikawa Prefecture



Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

Until December 2023, the seismic activity was generally within a 30 km square area in the northeastern region of the Noto Peninsula, but immediately after the earthquake on January 1, the seismic activity spread over an area of about 150 km extending from the northeast to the southwest (Fig. 1-3). Around the epicenter of the earthquake, an earthquake of magnitude 5.7 (maximum seismic intensity of 6 Lower) occurred at 4:12 p.m., followed by an earthquake of magnitude 6.1 (maximum seismic intensity of 5 Upper) at 4:18 p.m. on the same day, which was followed by an earthquake of magnitude 4.3 (maximum seismic intensity of 6 Lower) at 11:20 p.m. on January 6 and an earthquake of magnitude 6.1 (maximum seismic intensity of 5 Lower) at 5:59 p.m. on January 9. Earthquakes of similar extent are still occurring (as of April 1, 2024), with 1,772 earthquakes of seismic intensity 1 or higher being observed between 4:00 p.m. on January 1 and 12:00 a.m. on April 1 (Fig. 1-4).

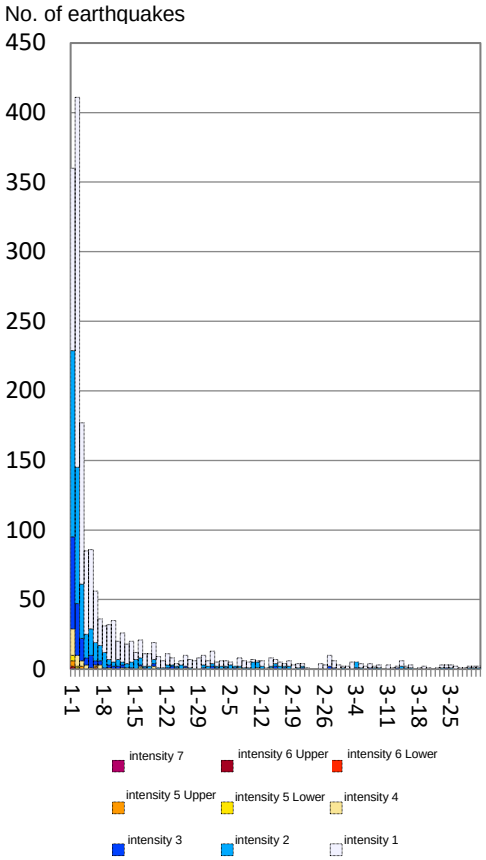
Fig. 1-3 Epicenter distribution map of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake



*December 1, 2020 to April 1, 2024 12:00 a.m.
*Depth 0 to 30 km, M3.0 or higher
*Earthquakes from January 1, 2024 onward are shown in red
*Earthquakes with a maximum seismic intensity of 6 Lower or greater or M6.0 or higher have been labelled

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

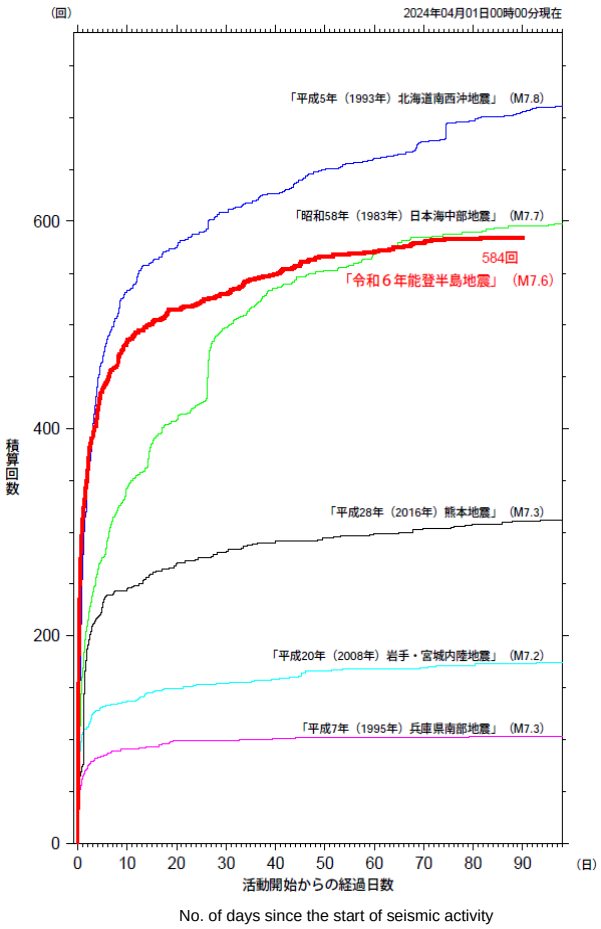
Fig. 1-4 Daily earthquake frequency by maximum seismic intensity for the "2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake"



*January 1, 2024 to April 1, 2024 12:00 a.m.
*Daily number of earthquakes with a seismic intensity of 1 or higher

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

Fig. 1-5 Comparison of earthquake numbers for major seismic activities on continental plates (Magnitude 3.5 or more)



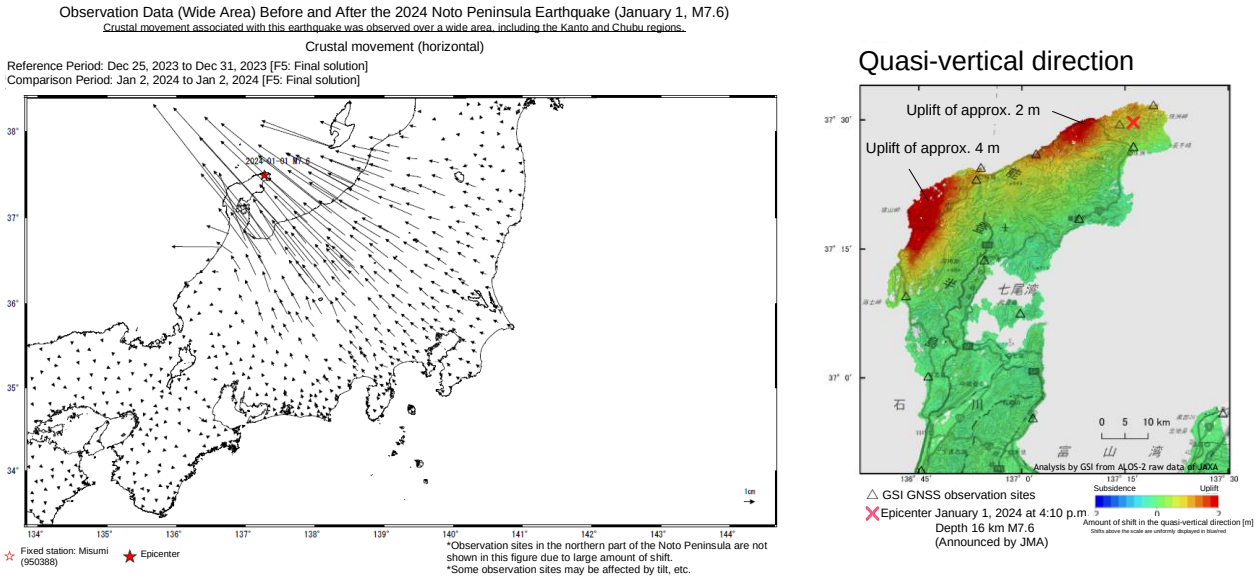
No. of days since the start of seismic activity

This is preliminary data and subject to change with future surveys.
The magnitude of this earthquake is the largest to date.
Note 1: Counting started from the earthquake at 4:10 p.m. on January 1, 2024 (M7.6). Note 2: Counting started from the earthquake at 9:26 p.m. on April 14, 2016 (M6.5).

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

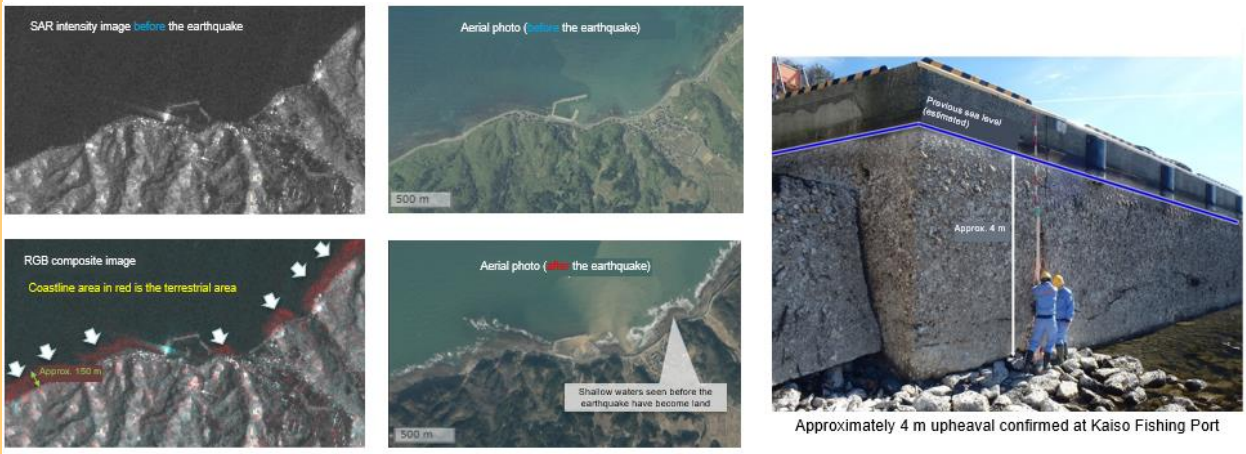
The crustal movement has been observed since around December 2020. However, with the occurrence of the earthquake, the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan's electronic reference stations detected significant crustal movement, mainly in the Noto Peninsula, including a southwestward shift of 2.0 m and an uplift of about 1.3 m at two observation sites in Wajima. In addition, a crustal movement in the northwest-to-north direction was observed over a wide area, not only along the Sea of Japan coast, such as Niigata Prefecture, but also in the Kanto and Chubu regions. According to the analysis of synthetic aperture radar images observed by the Advanced Land Observing Satellite "DAICHI-2," an uplift of up to 4 m and a westward shift of up to 2 m were detected in western Wajima (**Fig. 1-6**). This uplift changed the coastline over a wide area along the northern coast of the Noto Peninsula, and aerial photographs and field surveys confirmed a landward shift (**Fig. 1-7**). Damage due to liquefaction was also observed over an extensive area, particularly in the coastal areas of Ishikawa, Toyama, and Niigata prefectures.

Fig. 1-6 Crustal movement associated with the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake (magnitude 7.6 that struck on January 1) based on analysis of electronic reference station data and "DAICHI-2" observation data



Source: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan data

Fig. 1-7 Coastline changes before and after the earthquake

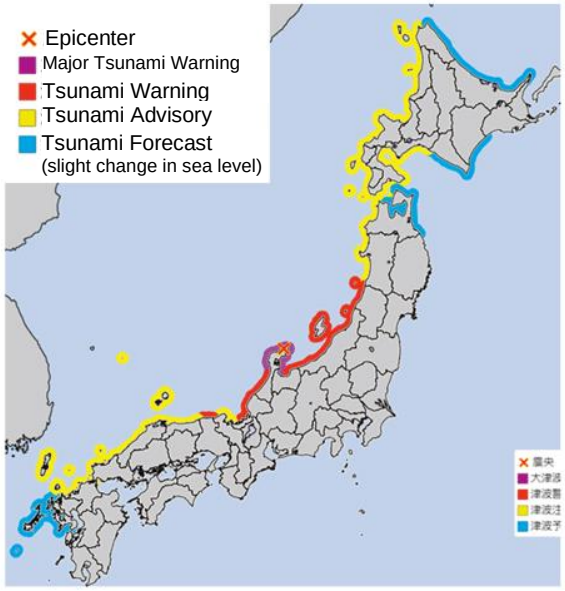


Source: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan data

(2) Overview of Tsunami

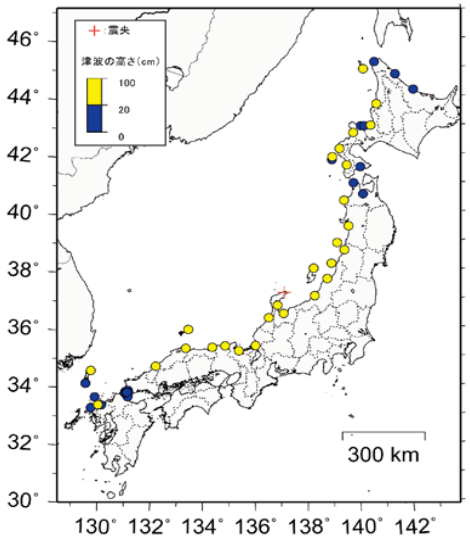
The earthquake led to the issuance of a major tsunami warning for Noto, Ishikawa Prefecture, and the issuance of tsunami warnings from Yamagata to Fukui Prefectures and the northern part of Hyogo Prefecture (Fig. 1-8). Tsunamis were observed mainly along the Sea of Japan coast from Hokkaido to the Kyushu region, including one measuring 80 cm at the Kanazawa observation site (Ports and Harbours Bureau) and one measuring 0.8 m at the Sakata observation site (Japan Meteorological Agency) (Fig. 1-9). In addition, aerial photographs and field observations showed that the tsunami inundated a large area, including the Noto Peninsula. Field surveys confirmed tsunami inundation heights of 4 m or higher in Suzu City and Noto Town in Ishikawa Prefecture and run-up heights of 5 m or higher in Joetsu City in Niigata Prefecture.

Fig. 1-8 Announcement of tsunami warnings, etc. (Announced at 4:22 p.m. on January 1)



Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

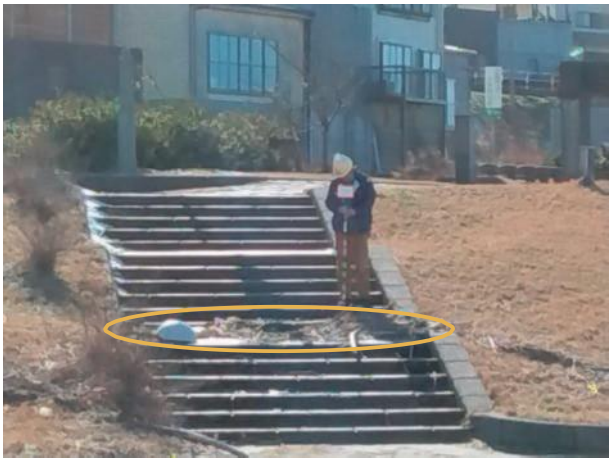
Fig. 1-9 Tsunami observation status



Source: Japan Meteorological Agency document

Sites where traces of the tsunami or washed-up debris were found during the on-site survey

Noto Town Shiramaru (Ishikawa Prefecture): 4.7 m inundation location



Funami Park, Joetsu City (Niigata Prefecture): Run-up height: 5.8m location

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency documents

Section 2 Overview of the Damage

As mentioned in the previous section, the earthquake that occurred on January 1 caused extensive damage to many lives and homes. Fig. 2-1 compares the damage caused by the “Noto Peninsula Earthquake” with the damage caused by the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the Kumamoto Earthquake.

Fig. 2-1 Comparison of damage caused by the “Noto Peninsula Earthquake” with other earthquake disasters

	Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake	Great East Japan Earthquake	Kumamoto Earthquake	Noto Peninsula Note 1 Earthquake
Date of occurrence	5:46 a.m. on January 17, 1995	2:46 p.m. on March 11, 2011	Foreshock: 9:26 p.m. on April 14, 2016 Main shock: 1:25 a.m. on April 16	4:10 p.m. on January 1, 2024
Seismic intensity	Magnitude 7.3	Moment Magnitude 9.0	Magnitude 6.5 Magnitude 7.3	Magnitude 7.6
No. of dead/missing (including disaster-related deaths)	6,437 persons (including around 900 persons)	22,325 persons (including around 3,800 persons)	276 persons (including around 220 persons)	263 persons (including 30 persons Note 2) *Provisional value as of May 28
No. of completely destroyed houses	Approx. 105,000 houses	Approx. 120,000 houses	Approx. 9,000 houses	Approx. 8,000 houses *Provisional value as of May 28

Note 1) The “Noto Peninsula Earthquake” column contains information on the largest in the series of earthquakes (the earthquake that struck the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture at 4:10 p.m. on January 1, 2024).
Note 2) The “disaster-related deaths” of the Noto Peninsula Earthquake is a provisional value as of May 28, 2024, when deaths were recognized as caused by the disaster in accordance with the “Act on Provision of Disaster Condolence Grant” (Act No. 82 of 1973), due to worsening injuries from such disaster or illness caused by physical strain from evacuation life, etc.

Source: Prepared by the Cabinet Office based on documents from the Cabinet Office, National Police Agency, Reconstruction Agency, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Japan Meteorological Agency, Headquarters for Emergency Disaster Control, Extraordinary Disaster Management Headquarters, Ishikawa Prefecture, Hyogo Prefecture, and Kumamoto Prefecture confirmed as of May 28, 2011

(1) Human casualties

The earthquake caused many houses to collapse and left 263 people dead or missing. The majority of the fatalities were reported from Ishikawa Prefecture, with 112 victims in Wajima City (3 missing persons), 111 in Suzu City, 20 in Anamizu Town, 9 in Noto Town, 5 in Nanao City, 2 in Shika Town, and 1 in Hakui City (as of May 28).

Information from the National Police Agency (as of March 31. The number of fatalities (excluding disaster-related deaths) announced by Ishikawa Prefecture includes 228 deaths that were handled by the police) reveals that about 40% of the victims were crushed to death and 20% died due to suffocation or respiratory failure. Many people are believed to have been trapped under collapsed buildings. In addition, just over 10% of the victims died from hypothermia or freezing to death due to the extreme cold. By age, the largest number of fatalities were in their 70s (62 persons), followed by 51 persons in their 80s and 27 persons in their 90s, altogether accounting for approximately 60% of the fatalities. Four fatalities were under the age of ten, and eight were in their teens.

(2) Building damage

Damage to residential buildings occurred in 5 prefectures (Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, and Nagano), with 8,459 houses destroyed (8,108 in Ishikawa Prefecture, 245 in Toyama Prefecture, and 106 in Niigata Prefecture), 115,324 houses half or partially destroyed (72,799 in Ishikawa Prefecture, 23,361 in Niigata Prefecture, 18,555 in Toyama Prefecture, 591 in Fukui Prefecture, and 18 in Nagano Prefecture (only partially damaged)), and 25 houses flooded above or below floor level (14 in Niigata Prefecture and 11 in Ishikawa Prefecture), resulting in a total of over 120,000 houses damaged across the affected areas.

(As of May 28). Additionally, around 26,000 non-residential buildings were damaged in Ishikawa Prefecture (as of May 28[1]).

1 Ishikawa Prefecture website “Damage Situation (135th Report)”
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/saigai/documents/higaihou_135_0528_1400.pdf)

Chapter 2

Response to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

Section 1 Initial Response

(1) Initial response and establishment of a headquarters system

The government, in response to this earthquake, established the Prime Minister's Office Crisis Response Center at 4:11 p.m. on January 1, 2024. At 4:15 p.m., Prime Minister Kishida issued the following instructions: 1. Provide timely and accurate information to the public regarding the tsunami and evacuation, and thoroughly implement measures to prevent damage, such as resident evacuations; 2. Promptly ascertain the damage situation; and 3. Closely coordinate with local governments and, under the policy of prioritizing human life, work as a unified government to fully engage in emergency disaster response measures, such as rescuing and aiding the victims. The Authorized Disaster Management Headquarters was established at 5:30 p.m. and was upgraded to the Emergency Disaster Countermeasures Headquarters at 10:40 p.m. The first meeting of the Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters was held at 9:15 a.m. on January 2, 2024.

In addition, at 8:00 p.m. on January 1, 2024, a cabinet office investigation team was dispatched to the Ishikawa prefectural office. Furthermore, at 11:22 p.m. on the same day, the On-site Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters (hereinafter referred to as the "On-site Disaster Management Headquarters", headed by Koga, State Minister of Cabinet Office, was established at the Ishikawa Prefectural Office. The on-site disaster management headquarters established four teams focused on infrastructure, relief supplies, livelihood support, and livelihood reconstruction and worked closely with the Ishikawa Prefectural Office. Specifically, the infrastructure team formed groups with stakeholders from the road, electricity, communications and water supply sectors within the on-site disaster management headquarters since road traffic disruptions caused by landslides, fallen trees, and toppled utility poles partially hindered the restoration of infrastructure. The team coordinated efficient road clearance by clarifying the restoration priorities for damaged infrastructure facilities. Additionally, liaison officers from the Cabinet Office and relevant ministries and agencies were dispatched to six cities and towns in the heavily damaged Noto region (Nanao City, Wajima City, Suzu City, Shika Town, Anamizu Town, and Noto Town) to assess the situation in the affected areas and facilitate communication and coordination with the affected cities and towns.

First meeting of the Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters
Source: Prime Minister's Official Website

On-site Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters of the Prime Minister's Office Crisis Response Center (Within Ishikawa Prefectural Office) (January 14)
Source: Cabinet Office

(2) Rescue and relief activities

After the earthquake occurred, the police, fire-fighters, Japan Coast Guard and Self-Defense Forces coordinated to carry-out large-scale rescue and relief operations, prioritizing the saving of lives.

The police dispatched units from the national police force, including the Wide-Area Emergency Assistance Team, immediately after the disaster. These units, in coordination with the Ishikawa Prefecture police, carried out various police activities such as rescue and relief operations and searching for missing persons. By April 1, 2024, approximately 90,000 police personnel had been dispatched to the disaster-affected region. They rescued 114 people through operations such as rescuing and evacuating individuals from collapsed houses and conducting hoist rescues using police helicopters.

The Fire and Disaster Management Agency dispatched an emergency firefighting assistance team of approximately 2,000 personnel immediately after the disaster. The emergency firefighting assistance team, along with the local fire department headquarters, totaling about 70,000 personnel, carried out fire extinguishing, rescue operations from collapsed homes, rescue operations from isolated villages using firefighting and disaster prevention helicopters, and transfers from hospitals and elderly care facilities.

As a result, 435 people were rescued, and 3,500 people were transported by emergency medical transport (cumulative total from the earthquake on January 1 until March 5, as of April 1). By April 1, the Japan Coast Guard deployed 1,453 patrol vessels, 306 aircraft, 18 special rescue team members, and 316 mobile rescue personnel to carry out emergency medical transport and search operations for missing persons.

Immediately after the disaster, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) began collecting damage information and conducting search and rescue operations using aircraft in the parts of the peninsula where the road network was cut off. On January 2, MOD formed a joint task force, with a maximum of 14,000 personnel responding to the situation. From the outset, SDF helicopters were intensively used to save lives, and offshore vessels were used as bases to transport relief supplies, as well as heavy machinery, vehicles, and equipment required for road clearance. By fully utilizing the capabilities of the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces, approximately 1,040 people were rescued (including the transport of evacuees) as of April 1.

Hoist rescue by police aircraft (Wajima City)
Source: National Police Agency

Nighttime activities at the site of a collapsed house (Suzu City)
Source: National Police Agency

Firefighting efforts by fire-fighters and fire corps volunteers (Wajima City)
Source: Fire and Disaster Management Agency

Emergency medical transport of elderly people by emergency firefighting rescue teams (Wajima City)
Source: Fire and Disaster Management Agency

Self-Defense Forces carrying out rescue operations (Suzu City)
Source: Ministry of Defense

Lifesaving efforts by the Self-Defense Forces and fire-fighters (Wajima City)
Source: Ministry of Defense

(3) Fire outbreak and firefighting activities

There were eleven incidents of fire in Ishikawa Prefecture, five in Toyama Prefecture, and one in Niigata Prefecture, where local fire departments and fire corps volunteers engaged in firefighting activities. In particular, in Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture, a fire broke out at Wajima Morning Market, one of three of Japan's largest morning markets, immediately after the earthquake, damaging approximately 240 buildings and covering an area of about 49,000 square meters. The fire occurred in a densely packed wooden area, where it could spread easily. The local fire department and fire corps volunteers extinguished the fire under difficult conditions, as fire hydrants could not be used due to the water supply being cut off and some water tanks used for firefighting were rendered unusable due to collapsed buildings following the earthquake. The fire was suppressed at 7:30 a.m. on January 2 and was extinguished at 5:10 p.m. on January 6.


Fire at Wajima Morning Market
Source: Kyodo News

(4) Response at Shika Nuclear Power Plant

In the wake of the earthquake, the government established the Nuclear Regulation Authority/Cabinet Office Nuclear Accident Joint Alert Headquarters at 4:19 p.m. on January 1 to disseminate information regarding the Shika Nuclear Power Station of Hokuriku Electric Power Company. At the Shika Nuclear Power Station of Hokuriku Electric Power Company, although overflowing of water due to a rippling phenomenon (sloshing) in the spent fuel pool and oil leaks due to some transformer failures occurred, it was confirmed that the necessary safety functions, including the cooling of spent fuel and power supply, were secured.

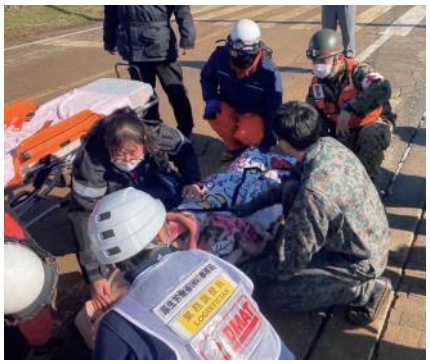
In addition, although measurements could not be confirmed at some of the surrounding monitoring posts, no anomalies were observed in the values indicated by the monitoring posts near the site, and it was confirmed that no issues affecting the safety of the power plant had occurred.

(5) Emergency medical activities

After the disaster, many medical institutions in the affected areas were damaged. In addition, even at medical institutions that suffered minor building damage or were spared from partial or total destruction, there were disruptions in staff attendance, patient transport, and the delivery of medical supplies and other items. Therefore, to provide medical support to the victims, Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (hereinafter referred to as “DMATs”), Disaster Psychiatric Assistance Teams (hereinafter referred to as “DPATs”), Japan Medical Association Teams (hereinafter referred to as “JMATs”), and disaster support nurses were sent to medical institutions and shelters from across the country to carry out emergency medical activities, such as lifesaving measures. In addition, health and sanitation support teams consisting of medical officers, nurses, and other personnel from the Self-Defense Forces conducted mobile medical consultations, mainly in isolated areas.

To date, the teams dispatched to the affected areas include 1,139 DMATs, who transported injured and sick, evacuated hospitalized patients, and provided hospital support; 196 DPATs, who provided psychological care to evacuees through shelter visits; and 1,008 JMATs, who provided medical support in affected cities, towns and secondary evacuation centers. In addition, 3,040 disaster support nurses from the Japanese Nursing Association were dispatched to shelters and medical institutions in the affected areas (as of April 1).

Furthermore, experts in infectious diseases provided advice on infection control in shelters. The Disaster Health Emergency Assistance Teams (hereinafter referred to as “DHEATs”) dispatched from prefectures and designated cities outside the affected prefecture provided support for the command and coordination functions at healthcare centers, etc., and provided healthcare for affected people living in shelters and at homes, etc., by conducting visits based on the list of residents prepared in each city and town by public health nurses dispatched from each local government.



DMAT Patient Transport
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

(6) Procurement and transportation of relief supplies

Immediately after the disaster, following the Prime Minister's instructions, the government started "push-type support", providing essential relief supplies for the lives and living conditions of disaster victims without waiting for requests from the affected areas. On January 2, the first shipment of relief supplies arrived at the wide-area relief supplies transportation hub in Ishikawa Prefecture.

The specific relief supplies included food, drinking water, infant formula and liquid milk, blankets, portable toilets, and other urgently needed relief supplies. In addition, winter clothing, heating devices, and fuel were also provided to address the cold weather. Sanitary products, baby wipes, and infant diapers were also distributed, considering the needs of women and households with children in shelters. In addition, support was provided based on the needs of the affected areas, such as compression stockings to ensure the health of victims, cardboard beds needed to improve the environment in shelters, and relief supplies such as simple laundry kits and washing machines to meet laundry needs during prolonged water outages. In addition, with the cooperation of private logistics business operators, the Self-Defense Forces and the Ishikawa Prefecture Truck Association primarily handled transport from the wide-area relief supplies transportation hub to local governments in the affected areas. Furthermore, at the relief supplies transportation hubs in affected cities and towns, logistics business operators in each city and town were in charge of transporting terminals to shelters, etc., and specialized volunteer groups handled sorting operations.

Wide-area relief supplies transportation hub (Ishikawa Prefectural Industrial Exhibition Hall)
Source: Cabinet Office

Loading work at Wide-area relief supplies transportation hubs with the cooperation of private logistics business
Source: Cabinet Office

Air transport of supplies by Self-Defense Force helicopter (Wajima Sub-Base)
Source: Ministry of Defense

[Column]
Information Gathering Satellite, Publication of Processed Images

The Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center of the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office (hereinafter referred to as the “Satellite Center”) develops and operates Information-Gathering Satellites with the primary objective of collecting information necessary for security in areas such as diplomacy and defense and crisis management in response to large-scale disasters. Outputs, including images created based on information obtained by Information-Gathering Satellites, are distributed to the Prime Minister’s Office and ministries and agencies that use them and are utilized to assess the situation and make policy decisions.

As part of these activities, the Satellite Center not only distributes images from Information-Gathering Satellites, which are processed such that they do not reveal the satellite capabilities (hereinafter referred to as “processed images”), to the Prime Minister’s Office and the ministries and agencies that will use the images, but also makes the images public when the images are deemed to be useful in the early detection of the damage situation and for the rapid rescue and evacuation of victims in the event of a disaster or accident causing large-scale damage within Japan. After starting to release images in 2015, the Satellite Center has released processed images for nine disasters, including large-scale floods, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes, until FY 2023.

Twenty-one processed images of the affected areas were made public on the Cabinet Secretariat website during the Noto Peninsula earthquake that occurred on January 1, 2024. In addition, by providing the images to relevant government ministries and agencies, the Satellite Center contributes to the elucidation of the disaster situation, disaster relief and recovery operations.

Areas affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake
Left: Wajima City center (fire outbreak location), Right: Suzu City Kamito Town (river clogging due to landslide)
Source: Cabinet Office website (Reference: https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/houdou/240111csice.html)

Section 2 Policy Responses Since the Occurrence of the Disaster

(1) Application of support systems, etc.

1. Application of the Disaster Relief Act

The “Disaster Relief Act” (Act No. 118 of 1947) was applied to 35 cities, 11 towns, and 1 village in Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa, and Fukui prefectures (Date of application of the Act: January 1). The National Treasury made it possible for each prefecture to implement emergency relief measures (such as setting up and running shelters and providing emergency temporary housing).

2. Designation of Disaster of Extreme Severity

On January 11, based on the “Act on Special Financial Support to Deal with the Designated Disaster of Extreme Severity” (Act No. 150 of 1962), a Cabinet Order was passed designating this disaster as a Disaster of Extreme Severity (a major disaster not limited to a specific region).

As a result, a total of 12 measures were applied (including additional designation by the Cabinet decision on February 9), including special financial assistance for disaster recovery projects for public civil engineering facilities, special measures for subsidies for disaster recovery projects related to agricultural land, and special provisions for disaster-related guarantees under the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Credit Insurance Act.

3. Designation of specific emergency disasters

On January 11, based on the “Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Rights and Interests of Victims of Specified Disaster” (Act No. 85 of 1996), a Cabinet Order was passed designating the disaster caused by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake as a Specified Disaster and applied the following measures to this Specified Disaster: Extension of the expiration date pertaining to administrative rights and interests, Exemption from the responsibilities pertaining to unfulfilled duties, Exception of orders of commencement of bankruptcy proceedings for corporations on the grounds of insolvency, Exception for the period for accepting or renouncing inheritance, and Exception of the fees for filing of a petition for conciliation under the Civil Conciliation Act.

4. Designation of a Major disaster under the Large-Scale Disaster Reconstruction Act

Based on the “Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters” (Act No. 55 of 2013; hereinafter referred to as the “Large-Scale Disaster Reconstruction Act”), a Cabinet Order was passed on January 19 designating disaster caused by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake as an Extreme Disaster. This enabled the government to carry out recovery work on affected ports, airports, coastlines, and other areas, acting on behalf of local governments.

5. Measures for the Reconstruction of Livelihoods

On January 6, Ishikawa Prefecture decided to apply the “Act on Support for Reconstructing Livelihoods of Disaster Victims” (Act No. 66 of 1998) to all areas (19 municipalities). Subsequently, Toyama Prefecture (all areas (15 municipalities)) and Niigata Prefecture (all areas (30 municipalities)) also decided to apply the Act. Based on this Act, if a house met certain requirements, such as being destroyed or otherwise damaged, the affected family living in that house was to be paid a basic support grant (up to 1 million yen) and an additional support grant (up to 2 million yen) depending on the damage to the house and the method of rebuilding the house.

Six cities and towns in the Noto region (Nanao City, Wajima City, Suzu City, Shika Town, Anamizu Town, and Noto Town) are facing particularly severe damage compared to other areas. Many people have been forced to evacuate from their homes due to the geographical constraints of the peninsula, such as a severe shortage of land suitable for building houses, as well as a significantly high proportion of elderly people. Given the circumstances and the characteristics of the region, where significant and complex challenges need to be overcome for the revitalization of local communities, Ishikawa Prefecture has introduced a new grant system (Temporary Special Grant for Supporting Regional Welfare Promotion) of up to 3 million yen for households with elderly or disabled people whose houses have been half-destroyed or worse, and households that are likely to have difficulties in borrowing or repaying their loans in the relevant area.

In addition, based on the “Act on Provision of Disaster Condolence Grants” (Act No. 82 of 1973), disaster condolence grants were provided to the families of those killed in the disaster and disaster disability relief grants were provided to individuals who have suffered severe disabilities due to the disaster. Furthermore, disaster assistance funds were provided to heads of households who fulfilled the requirements.

(2) Wide-area support for disaster-affected areas and local governments

In this disaster, many organizations from outside the affected areas have rushed to the aid of victims and local governments in the affected areas.

As mentioned in the previous section, various units, including the police (Police Disaster Dispatch Team), fire department (Emergency Firefighting Assistance Team), Self-Defense Forces, and the Japan Coast Guard units, were dispatched to the affected areas for emergency and rescue operations. In addition, many medical and welfare professionals, including DMAT, DPAT, JMAT, the Japan Disaster Dental Assistance Team (JDAT), the Japan Disaster Rehabilitation Assistance Team (JRAT), DHEAT, the Disaster Infection Control Team (DICT) established by the Japanese Society for Environmental Infectious Diseases, the Japan Dietetic Association - Disaster Assistance Team (hereinafter referred to as “JDA-DAT”), and the Disaster Welfare Assistance Team (hereinafter referred to as “DWAT”), along with disaster support nurses, public health nurses, and care workers, were dispatched to the affected areas to provide medical care and welfare support.

The TEC-FORCE (Technical Emergency Control Force of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; hereinafter referred to as the “TEC-FORCE”) was dispatched to support disaster recovery projects and transport, such as emergency transport of evacuees and transport of emergency supplies, and to assess the level of emergency risk of damaged buildings, in addition to road clearance. In addition, specialized organizations were dispatched by various ministries and agencies, including MAFF-SAT (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Support and Advice Team), to assist with disaster recovery in various fields and support the disaster victims.

Confirmation of assessment targets by TEC-FORCE (Suzu City)
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

TEC-FORCE filling out and attaching assessment stickers (Anamizu Town)
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

MAFF-SAT installs blue tarps on damaged reservoir (Shika Town)
Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

Inspection of agricultural village drainage facilities using MAFF-SAT (Noto Town)
Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

Wide-area support is also being provided on a large scale by local governments across the country to affected local governments. A general adviser team was dispatched to the six affected cities and towns in the Noto region to support the disaster management of the affected local governments. By April 1, 62 prefectures and cities had decided to dispatch support teams (personnel in charge of disaster response tasks such as running shelters and issuing disaster damage certificates) to 14 cities and towns in Ishikawa Prefecture, three cities in Toyama Prefecture, and one city in Niigata Prefecture under the counterpart method, which are currently engaged in support operations. In addition, for the emergency response and restoration of infrastructure and lifelines, support teams from across the country were dispatched to restore water supply, electricity, and communications. Since the water supply in the affected areas was disrupted for an extended period, water tankers and toilet trailers were also sent by local governments and other organizations nationwide.

After the occurrence of the disaster, many supporters, including personnel from supporting local governments, recovery business operators, and volunteers, entered the affected areas and provided a wide range of support. However, hotels and inns in the affected areas also suffered severe damage, and there was a shortage of accommodation. For this reason, Ishikawa Prefecture and other areas came to the aid of supporters by securing and improving accommodation facilities for them, using special tax allocation measures and the temporary facility development support program by the Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, JAPAN.

Fig. 2-2 Key initiatives and support for affected local governments and supporting organizations

Key initiatives and support	Main supporting organizations
Lifesaving and search operations	Wide-Area Emergency Assistance Team (National Police Agency), Emergency Firefighting Assistance Team (Fire and Disaster Management Agency), Self-Defense Forces, Japan Coast Guard
Medical support Health activities Infectious disease measures	DMATs (Disaster Medical Assistance Teams), DHEATs (Disaster Health Emergency Assistance Teams) DICT (Disaster Infection Control Team of the Japanese Society for Infection Prevention and Control), Self Defense Forces, etc.
Disaster management support	Dispatch of local government officials (general adviser team), etc.
Operation of evacuation centers (support for meals and bathing) Support for issuance of disaster damage certificates Material management and transportation support	Dispatch of local government officials (support teams), Self-Defense Forces, etc.
Water supply support Infrastructure survey and restoration support Support for restoration of the Noto Railway Nanao Line Farmland and agricultural facility surveys, etc. Fishing port facility surveys, etc.	Japan Water Works Association, TEC-FORCE (Technical Emergency Control Force of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), Self-Defense Forces, RAIL-FORCE (Railway Disaster Investigation Force of the Japan Railway Construction, Transport and Technology Agency), National Institute for Land and Infrastructure Management (NILIM), National Research and Development Agency Public Works Research Institute (PWRI), Building Research Institute (BRI), Port and Airport Research Institute, National Federation of Land Improvement Associations, Fisheries Infrastructure Development Center, MAFF-SAT (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Support and Advice Team), etc.
Emergency risk assessment for damaged buildings Risk assessment of affected residential areas	National Council for Emergency Risk Assessment for Damaged Buildings, dispatch of local government officials, TEC-FORCE (MLIT), etc.
Disaster waste treatment support	Disaster waste treatment support system (human resources bank) D. Waste-Net (Disaster Waste Treatment Support Network), etc.
Support for school reopening (Dispatch of school counselors and teachers)	Japanese Society of Certified Clinical Psychologists Board of Education of each prefecture and designated city
Support for affected pets	Japan Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA), dispatch of local government officials

Source: Cabinet Office data

(3) Support Package, Financial Measures, and Tax Responses

On January 2, by decision of the Prime Minister, the government established the “Team to Support for Reconstructing Lives and Livelihood of the Affected due to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake” led by the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary and comprising vice ministers of various ministries and agencies, to provide swift and seamless support for the reconstruction of the lives and livelihoods of those affected by the disaster. On January 25, based on the results of discussions by the support team and others, the government announced2 the “Package for the Restoration of Lives and Livelihoods of the Affected” (approved by the Emergency Disaster Management Headquarters for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake; hereinafter referred to as “the Support Package”), compiling emergency measures that the government should take in the areas of “reconstruction of lives”, “reconstruction of livelihoods”, and “disaster recovery, etc.”[1].

In addition, the government responded flexibly to changing financial needs by utilizing the general reserve fund, etc., from the FY 2023 budget, which had a remaining balance of over 460 billion yen at the time of the disaster. Specifically, on January 9, the Government decided to use the reserve fund (approximately 4.74 billion yen) to provide financial support for immediate push-type material support. Next, as a financial measure necessary for the implementation of the measures in the Support Package, the government decided to use 155.3 billion yen on January 26 and 116.7 billion yen on March 1 from the reserve fund. Furthermore, in order to be able to respond seamlessly and flexibly according to the stage of recovery and reconstruction in FY 2024 as well, on January 16, a decision was made to increase the general reserve fund in the FY 2024 budget by 500 billion yen to a total of 1 trillion yen. On April 23, a decision was made to use 138.9 billion yen of the reserve fund as a financial measure necessary to implement the measures in the Support Package.

As a local financial measure for the affected local governments, on January 9, it was decided to advance the payment of a portion of the special tax allocation (26.14 billion yen) due in March to 51 organizations in Ishikawa Prefecture and 17 cities and towns within the prefecture, while a similar decision was taken on February 9, for Ishikawa Prefecture and 7 cities and towns within the prefecture, in order to facilitate their short-term cash flow. On March 22, a decision was made regarding the payment of the special tax allocation for FY 2023, of which 40.2 billion yen was allocated for disaster-related expenses for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake.

1 Cabinet Office website “Package of Measures to Support the Daily Lives and Livelihoods of Disaster Victims”
(Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/pdf/240125_shien.pdf)

In addition, new special tax allocation measures were implemented for the cost of securing accommodation for support staff and other personnel centrally in Ishikawa Prefecture, and local financial measures were upgraded for disaster recovery projects for water and sewage and the "Residential Land Liquefaction Prevention Project", which is an area-wide liquefaction countermeasure that includes neighboring residential areas.

In terms of the taxation system, in addition to extending the deadline for filing and paying income tax, etc., based on the "Act on Temporary Special Provisions of the Income Tax Act and Act on Reduction or Release, Deferment of Collection and Other Measures Related to Tax Imposed on Disaster Victims of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Disaster" (Act No. 1 of 2024), which was enacted on February 21 (promulgated and enforced on the same day), measures were implemented to enable the application of miscellaneous loss deductions in the calculation of income tax for the year 2023 and individual inhabitant tax for the year 2024 for losses on assets such as housing and household goods, income tax reduction and exemption for the year 2023 under the Special Provisions of the Disaster Exemption Act, and inclusion of losses from business assets as necessary expenses for the calculation of income tax for the year 2023.

In addition, households, including those affected by the disaster whose individual inhabitant tax has been fully exempted, were made eligible for price inflation support for tax-exempt households (a total of 100,000 yen/household, with an additional 50,000 yen/person for children).

(4) Response to the generous support for the affected areas

Since the disaster occurred, more than 270 specialized volunteer organizations, including NPOs focusing on disaster victim support, have entered the affected areas and are engaged in activities such as managing shelters and removing debris with heavy machinery. In addition, starting January 2, the Japan Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (JVOAD) entered the Ishikawa Prefectural Government Office to share information and coordinate activities through information-sharing meetings with specialized volunteer organizations, the government, and the Council of Social Welfare.

In addition, disaster volunteer centers have been set up in each city and town, led by the Council of Social Welfare of the affected areas, which accept applicants for volunteering, match volunteers with the ever-changing needs of disaster victims, and conduct activities such as cleaning up damaged houses and sorting and transporting disaster debris. In particular, in the wake of the recent disaster, Ishikawa Prefecture and other prefectures asked general volunteers to refrain from entering the affected area directly due to traffic congestion caused by limited access roads to the affected areas and a shortage of accommodation within the areas at the beginning of the disaster. As a result, general volunteers were required to enter the affected areas primarily by volunteer buses departing from places like Kanazawa City. Additionally, as many victims were evacuated outside the region for secondary evacuation, it became difficult to assess the need for volunteers, due to which the number of volunteers was limited compared to past disasters. In response, Ishikawa Prefecture, in collaboration with the national government and relevant agencies, worked on securing accommodation bases within the affected areas and improving the working environment for volunteers and other supporters. Until May 6, approximately 90,000 volunteers had participated in volunteer activities in Ishikawa, Toyama, and Niigata Prefectures (according to Ishikawa Prefecture's data[2] and a study by the National Council of Social Welfare).

Ishikawa Prefecture established the Ishikawa Prefecture 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Disaster Donation Distribution Committee to fairly distribute the donations (approximately 56.4 billion yen as of April 1) received in sympathy for those affected by the disaster. Since the first committee meeting on February 1, the distribution plan has been decided step by step. As a result, by the second committee meeting, Ishikawa Prefecture had decided to distribute donations of 1 million yen for the dead and missing, 100,000 yen for the seriously injured, and 1 million yen for households whose houses were destroyed (donations, including initial and secondary allocations)[3]. Similarly, Toyama Prefecture has also decided to distribute donations based on the decision of its Donation Distribution Committee, and similar distribution has been planned in Niigata and Fukui Prefectures.

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2 Ishikawa Prefecture website "Governor's press conference (May 8, 2024)"
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/chiji/kisya/r6_5_8/documents/0508_kisyakaikensiryou.pdf)

3 Ishikawa Prefecture website: "2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Disaster Relief Fund Distribution Comm...
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/kousei/gienkinbussi/r6notohantoujishingienkin.html)

Organization performing emergency food distribution
Source: OPEN JAPAN

Volunteers who carry out the cleaning of residences
Source: Ishikawa Prefecture

(5) Establishment of 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction Support Headquarters

On January 31, the government established the "2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction Support Headquarters" headed by the Prime Minister and comprising all Cabinet members to expedite and strengthen the recovery and reconstruction from the Noto Peninsula earthquake through close collaboration between relevant ministries and agencies. Specifically, following the compilation of the Support Package on January 25, the Headquarters was tasked with 1. confirming the progress of recovery and reconstruction efforts by each ministry and agency, 2. ensuring that measures are aligned across ministries, and 3. liaising and coordinating on the execution of the reserve fund and other related matters. The Headquarters has held five meetings[4] since February 1 (as of May 8), and, responding to the needs of the affected areas, has been promoting recovery and reconstruction through efforts such as restoring infrastructure and lifelines and supporting disaster victims and affected business operators, by flexibly and dynamically utilizing the reserve fund and other resources.

Section 3 Response to Damage of Infrastructure, Lifelines, etc.

(1) Infrastructure-related

1. Roads

Many roads, including National Route 249, the main artery of the Noto Peninsula, were damaged due to collapses, slope failures, cracks, and steps. In Ishikawa Prefecture in particular, up to 93 prefectural roads, including the Noto-Satoyama Kaido, National Route 249, the Suzu Doro, and the Nanao-Wajima Line, were closed to traffic (as of January 5), and the entire Okunoto region was cut off, making access difficult. Since many roads in the Noto Peninsula were closed, the influx of traffic to the affected areas was concentrated on certain roads, causing traffic congestion in many areas and hindering the transport of relief supplies and recovery operations. In addition, up to 3,345 persons (as of January 5) in 33 districts were isolated due to road closures, unable to receive assistance and making the restoration of access to isolated communities an urgent issue.

Therefore, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) began emergency restoration of trunk roads on January 2 and established a 24-hour system to carry out emergency restoration operations successively, mainly with the support of local construction industry associations and the Japan Federation of Construction Contractors. Since a number of affected areas were identified, particularly along the coast, MLIT, in cooperation with the SDF, also proceeded with emergency restoration in a comb-like pattern from both the inland and seaside, securing roadways in 13 directions. Thanks to these restoration efforts, about 80% of the trunk roads in the peninsula were reopened to traffic on January 9, and on January 15, this percentage further increased to about 90%. As a result, on January 19, access was established practically with all communities. The emergency restoration continues based on requests for supply of water and electricity, as well as requests from the local governments of affected areas, with various duties assigned to road administrators and also shared among the national, prefectural, and municipal governments. On January 23, the national government decided to carry out full-scale restoration on behalf of Ishikawa Prefecture, and the restoration work is now underway.

4 Cabinet Office website "Headquarters for Supporting Recovery and Reconstruction from the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake" (Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/updates/r60101notojishin/hukkyuhonbu.html)

Nakaya Tunnel on National Route 249 (Wajima City)
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Noetsu Expressway (Anamizu Town)
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Road cut off due to slope failures
Source: Kyodo News

Road to an isolated community in Wajima City
Source: Kyodo News

GSDF personnel providing evacuation support for isolated residents
Source: Ministry of Defense

Evacuation of residents from isolated communities using SDF helicopter
Source: Ministry of Defense

2. Landslide disasters/coastal damage

As of March 28, 440 landslide disasters had occurred (409 in Ishikawa Prefecture, 18 in Niigata Prefecture, and 13 in Toyama Prefecture), with river clogging confirmed in six rivers (at 14 locations), particularly in Ishikawa Prefecture. The national government, in cooperation with Ishikawa Prefecture, has established a surveillance system, which includes surveys by TEC-FORCE and the installation of surveillance cameras. The Government also supports alert and evacuation systems by providing surveillance images to local governments. The national government is also implementing emergency measures against landslide disasters in areas along the Kawarada and Machino rivers and coastal areas along National Route 249 in Ishikawa Prefecture, where sediment and driftwood have accumulated in streams and on slopes in an unstable state, presenting a high risk of secondary disasters occurring due to rainfall in the future.

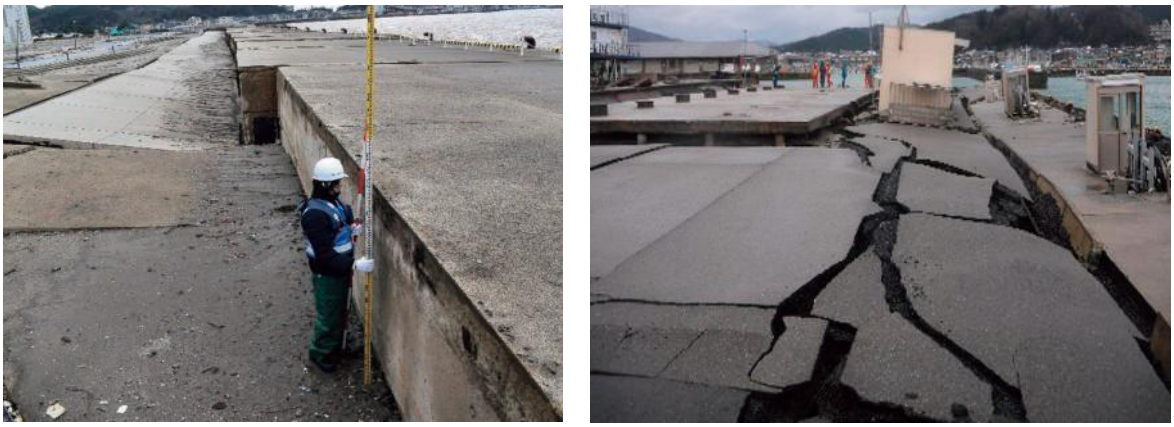
Damage to levee revetments and other facilities was confirmed at twelve coastal locations in Ishikawa Prefecture. MLIT has taken over recovery work on the Horyu Shoin Coast, ensuring conformity with local Reconstruction and Community Development Plans.

3. Railways

Immediately after the disaster, railway operations were suspended in the affected prefectures. However, the Hokuriku Shinkansen and JR Hokuriku Line resumed operations on January 2. The JR Nanao Line (from Tsubata to Wakuraonsen), which suffered damage that included warped rails and tilted support pillars, resumed operation between Takamatsu and Hakui on January 15, between Hakui and Nanao on January 22, and between Nanao and Wakuraonsen on February 15. On the third-sector Noto Railway Nanao Line (from Wakuraonsen to Anamizu), which suffered extensive damage, including a large inflow of sediment and extensive roadbed damage, TEC-FORCE and the Railway Disaster Investigation Force (RAIL-FORCE) of the Japan Railway Construction, Transport and Technology Agency were dispatched to the affected sites to survey the damage situation and provide technical advice to the business operators. Additionally, at two locations severely affected by sediment inflow, the prompt commencement and facilitation of sediment removal were made possible through coordination with road restoration work on National Route 249. As a result of these efforts, operations between Wakuraonsen and Noto-Nakajima stations resumed on February 15 and on the entire line on April 6. Until the resumption of operations, information on alternative transport services was shared on the official website of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, etc., to ensure convenience for users.

4. Ports and coasts around ports

Damage to wharves and breakwaters was confirmed at 22 of the 29 ports in Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa, and Fukui Prefectures (including the ports of Nanao, Wajima, and Iida). From January 2, partial management of port facilities at the six ports of Nanao, Wajima, Iida, Ogi, Ushitsu, and Anamizu in the Noto region, which suffered particularly heavy damage, was taken over by MLIT at the request of Ishikawa Prefecture, in accordance with Article 55-3-3 of the Port and Harbour Act (Act No. 218 of 1950). Since then, emergency restoration of damaged facilities has been underway at each port, and ships have been deployed to conduct disaster relief activities.



Damage situation at Wajima Port
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

On February 1, at the request of Ishikawa and Toyama Prefectures, as well as Nanao City, it was decided that MLIT would carry out full-scale recovery work of certain damaged port and coastal facilities in accordance with the “Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters” at a total of eight ports and two coasts, including the six ports mentioned above plus the ports of Fushiki-Toyama and Wakura, and the coasts around Wakura and Iida ports. Efforts are being made to complete the recovery work within approximately two years.

5. Aviation

Noto Airport was closed from the beginning of the disaster due to numerous small cracks in the runway, damage to lights, etc. However, the airport began to receive rescue helicopters the day following the disaster and fixed-wing aircraft of the SDF on January 12, after the hours for receiving rescue aircraft were extended and the runway was emergency restored.

Civil aircraft operations between Noto and Haneda resumed on January 27, with one round trip per day (two round trips per day before the disaster) three days a week and one round trip per day every day from April 15 (as of the end of April).

Hereafter, MLIT will take over and carry out full-scale recovery work through the application of the “Act on Reconstruction from Large-Scale Disasters”.

(2) Lifelines

1. Power

Up to approximately 40,000 households within the service area of Hokuriku Electric Power Transmission & Distribution Company were left without power on January 1 due to collapsed utility poles and snapped wires. Since the beginning of the disaster, Hokuriku Electric Power Transmission & Distribution Company received support from electric power companies and partner businesses, including workers and power supply vehicles, and thousands of people were involved in responding on a daily basis. By deploying construction vehicles and personnel to priority areas in conjunction with the progress of road clearance, the Company has endeavored to quickly resolve power outages at shelters, etc., where power outages have continued, through priority work to restore power lines and commencement of alternative supply using power supply vehicles, etc. Thanks to such recovery efforts, as of April 1, the supply of electricity has been restored except to houses, etc., where electricity cannot be used for safety reasons (safety measures have been implemented by Hokuriku Electric Power Transmission & Distribution Company).

Utility poles that collapsed due to the earthquake
Source: Hokuriku Electric Power Transmission & Distribution Company

2. Gas

Although the supply of city gas was temporarily suspended in some areas due to pipeline damage caused by liquefaction in the initial stage of the disaster, for gas producers and general gas pipeline business operators, the damage and supply disruptions were resolved on January 5.

Supply has been resumed for retail gas businesses (formerly known as Community Gas), except in areas where recovery is difficult due to collapsed houses.

Although there were some equipment failures at supply bases and filling stations for LP gas, there were no supply disruptions due to alternative deliveries from other locations and the use of cylinders in stock in the affected areas.

3. Water supply and sewerage

Up to approximately 136,440 households in 29 cities, 7 towns, and 1 village across the six prefectures of Ishikawa, Niigata, Toyama, Fukui, Nagano, and Gifu had their water supply cut off due to broken distribution pipes and pipelines. As of May 8, approximately 3,110 households in two cities in Ishikawa Prefecture (Wajima City and Suzu City) were still subject to suspension of water supply. In addition to damage to water purification plants, water pipes, including non-seismic resistant, as well as earthquake resistant pipes, suffered ruptures, such as joints coming loose.

In response to the suspension of the water supply, water trucks and tankers were first dispatched from all over Japan to the affected areas as part of emergency water supply activities. As of January 31, about one month after the disaster, a total of 147 water trucks, including 98 from the Japan Water Works Association (JWWA), 41 from the SDF, and 8 from MLIT, had been dispatched[5] to the affected areas 6. Portable water purification equipment of the Japan Water Agency was installed in Suzu City, and the Japan Coast Guard also supplied water to SDF water trucks and tankers from patrol vessels that were docked at the wharves of Nanao and Wajima ports. The restoration of water supply facilities was difficult due to the extensive damage to facilities and the difficulty of providing support in the Noto region, which had limited access and accommodation facilities. However, engineers from water utilities are dispatched to the affected sites one by one to survey the damage situation and draw up restoration plans, and recovery work is progressing steadily.

Emergency water supply activities by the Bureau of Waterworks Tokyo Metropolitan Government
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Discussion between Osaka Municipal Waterworks Bureau and Noto Town
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Sewerage officials from local governments and private business operators (such as the Japan Sewer Collection System Management Association) across Japan assisted with the restoration of sewerage pipelines from January 5. From January 7, the Japan Sewage Works Agency provided emergency support to sewage treatment plants and pumping stations that had suspended operations. As of April 1, sewage treatment plants and pumping stations that had suspended operations in six particularly hard-hit cities and towns in the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture had already resumed operations. To ensure that there are no delays in the restoration of water supply, currently, support is being provided for the early restoration of both water supply and sewerage, with the transfer of water administration from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) to MLIT in April 2024. In addition, recovery operations are underway in conjunction with community drainage facilities and septic tanks.

Restoration of water supply pipes in Wajima City
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

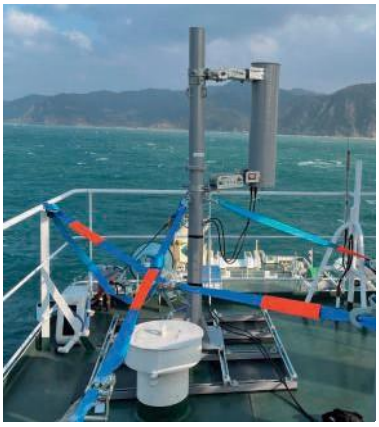
Laying of temporary pressure feed pipes in Suzu City
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

5 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website “Earthquake with Epicenter in Noto Region of Ishikawa Prefecture (60th Report)” (attachment)
(Reference: https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/001200995.pdf)

4. Communication

Equipment failures and power outages resulted in the suspension of cell phone base station operations. On January 3, a total of 839 base stations owned by four carriers were out of service. In Ishikawa Prefecture, in particular, disruptions occurred in eight cities and towns immediately after the disaster. The communication coverage in the six most affected cities and towns (Nanao City, Wajima City, Suzu City, Shika Town, Anamizu Town, and Noto Town) was reduced to 20 to 30% of its pre-disaster level at the peak of the disruption. On January 18, the four carriers announced that except in difficult-to-access areas, emergency restoration had been largely completed, thanks to the use of mobile base stations (shipboard base stations, portable satellite antennas, wired power drones, and vehicle-mounted base stations). Each carrier is proceeding with full-scale restoration by restoring commercial power, replacing optical fiber, repairing base stations, etc. In areas where communication infrastructure had not been restored, carriers provided satellite communication equipment to shelters, etc., through coordination with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), which were used for Internet communication.

Although fixed-line telephone services were restored relatively quickly after the disaster compared to other lifelines, as of April 1, some parts of Wajima City were still unable to access fixed-line telephone or optical communications line-based Internet services.



Ship base station
Source: NTT DOCOMO, Inc.

Satellite communication equipment
Source: KDDI CORPORATION

5. Broadcasting

In terms of broadcasting infrastructure, operations of terrestrial TV and radio services were suspended in some areas due to the depletion of fuel for the auxiliary power supply that had been in operation after the commercial power supply was cut off at the beginning of the disaster. To ensure access to reliable information for all affected people, measures that included coordinating with the SDF for fuel resupply to relay stations at which the commercial power supply had not yet been restored, the use of satellite broadcasting to air programs of NHK Kanazawa Broadcasting Station, and the installation of TVs and antennas at evacuation shelters, were implemented. Following the restoration of commercial power supply, broadcast disruptions were eliminated across the entire region by January 24. Since the affected areas are highly dependent on cable TV (96.4% in Noto Town, 70.1% in Suzu City, etc.), the recovery of the main center facilities has been expedited, and the restoration of transmission lines with snapped cables and other damage is progressing.

(3) Public facilities, etc.

1. Educational facilities

Thirty-two national schools, 888 public schools, 102 private schools, and 761 social education, sports, and cultural facilities reported material damage (as of April 1), mainly in Niigata, Toyama, and Ishikawa prefectures. In Ishikawa Prefecture, which was particularly hard-hit, 86 public schools closed temporarily on January 9 after the winter break was over (by February 6, all schools had resumed some educational activities, making use of shortened classes and online learning). Junior high schools in Wajima City, Suzu City, and Noto Town were mass evacuated to facilities in Kanazawa City and Hakusan City. Many schools were also used as shelters.

2. Medical care - Social welfare facilities

As of April 1, up to 26 medical facilities, including 19 in Ishikawa Prefecture, were confirmed to have suffered damage, and two medical institutions had buildings in danger of collapsing (patients inside the buildings were already transferred). Three facilities experienced power outages and 23 facilities suspension of water supply. However, as of April 1, all medical institutions in Ishikawa Prefecture had their water supply restored. Essential medical functions at the four public hospitals in the northern region of Noto, which played a central role in securing the healthcare system in the affected areas, were maintained immediately after the disaster through the provision of medical care and wide-area evacuation support by DMAT, etc., and the dispatch of nurses to provide assistance.

As for social welfare facilities, up to 307 facilities for the elderly, including 191 facilities in Ishikawa Prefecture, were confirmed to have suffered damage, with 30 facilities without power and 161 facilities having their water supply cut off. As of April 1, water supply was still suspended at 71 of these facilities. In addition, up to 48 facilities for people with disabilities, including 41 facilities in Ishikawa Prefecture, were confirmed to have been affected, with six facilities experiencing power outages and 30 facilities without water supply. As of April 1, one facility was still under electrical blackout, and 28 facilities were subject to suspension of water supply. Taking into account the prolongation of evacuation life, etc., DMAT and other teams took the lead in transporting the elderly and persons requiring special care from facilities for the elderly in the affected areas to medical institutions and facilities for the elderly outside the affected areas, as well as to level 1.5 evacuation centers (see next section). In addition, nursing care personnel were dispatched for assistance to facilities for the elderly and persons with disabilities in the affected areas to provide the support necessary to ensure the provision of nursing care and welfare services for the disabled.

3. Cultural Properties

A total of 401 cultural properties (including two national treasures (buildings), 55 important cultural properties (buildings) and six arts and crafts) were damaged, mainly in Niigata, Toyama, and Ishikawa prefectures. Damage to four World Heritage sites and 40 Japan Heritage sites was also confirmed (as of April 1). Workshops and stores of Wajima lacquerware, an Important Intangible Cultural Heritage of Japan, were also severely damaged.

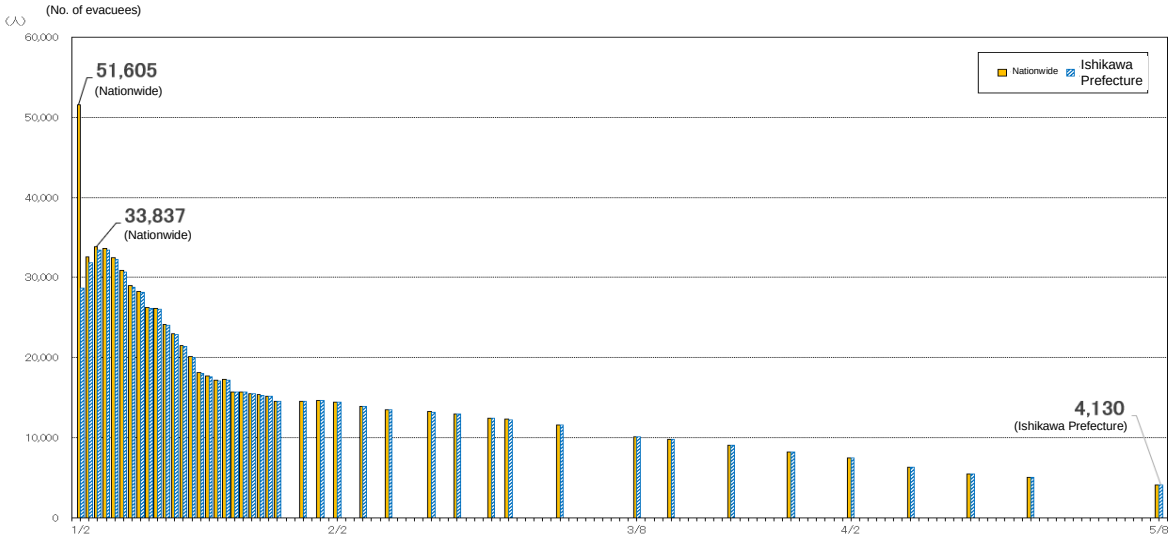
Section 4 Livelihood Support for Victims, etc.

(1) Evacuation life (including secondary evacuation)

As more than 120,000 houses were damaged in the affected areas, many affected people were forced to live in shelters over extended periods immediately after the disaster. Approximately 1,300 shelters were opened in eleven prefectures (1 regional prefecture, 1 urban prefecture, and 9 prefectures) immediately after the disaster, and the number of evacuees exceeded 50,000 (as of 5:00 a.m. on January 2). At 6:00 a.m. on January 3, approximately 480 shelters had been opened in Niigata, Toyama and Ishikawa Prefectures, where approximately 30,000 people evacuated. Food, clothing and other daily necessities, cardboard beds, partitions, temporary toilets and other materials necessary to improve the shelter environment were delivered through push-type support. Also, since the water supply was cut off, toilet trailers were dispatched, and water-recycling-type shower facilities were installed. Welfare shelters were also installed for older adults, persons with disabilities, infants, and others requiring special attention (hereinafter referred to as “persons requiring special care”), who were likely to find it difficult to live in ordinary shelters.

Local government staff in the affected areas, who took charge of the management of shelters, were supported by local government staff dispatched for assistance from across the country and specialized volunteer organizations, such as NPOs that had entered the affected areas. Many trailer houses and container houses were sent to the affected areas, where they were used to provide better accommodation to relief workers, including those who managed shelters. The number of evacuees in Ishikawa Prefecture, which had suffered severe damage, was approximately 30,000 immediately after the disaster, which subsequently reduced to approximately 4,000 evacuees as of May 8, living in 275 shelters (including secondary evacuation, etc.) of Ishikawa Prefecture (**Fig. 2-3**).

Fig. 2-3 Changes over time in the number of evacuees in shelters



Note 1: Days for which no reports on damage situation, etc. were received from the Emergency Disaster Management Headquarters have been left blank.
Note 2: The number of evacuees includes evacuees in secondary shelters such as hotels and inns, evacuees in Level 1.5 evacuation centers, and those in wide-area evacuation at other local governments.

Source: Compiled based on the report “Damage Caused by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake” by the Disaster Management Headquarters (As of May 8)
(Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/updates/r60101notojishin/r60101notojishin/index.html)

Installation of partitions (Noto Town)
Source: Cabinet Office

Kitchen car (Dispatched from Osaka Prefecture)
Source: Cabinet Office

Toilet car (Dispatched from Uwajima City, Ehime Prefecture)
Source: Cabinet Office

Prime Minister Kishida's visit to a shelter in Wajima City (January 14)
Source: Cabinet Office

Minister of State for Disaster Management Matsumura and State Minister of Cabinet Office Koga visiting a shelter in Shika Town (February 10)
Source: Cabinet Office

To secure hotels, inns, etc., to accommodate evacuees, the Tourism Agency took the lead in coordinating with the travel industry and accommodation for around 5,000 people was secured on January 9, and for 31,000 more people in other parts across the country by the end of February.

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At Level 1.5 evacuation centers, a medical care system has been established, care workers and other staff have been dispatched, a daily life consultation helpdesk has been set up (through the Livelihood Welfare Fund Loan System), and arrangements have been made for the admission of elderly evacuees living in the Level 1.5 evacuation centers to welfare facilities within and outside the prefecture so that persons requiring special care, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities, can live safely and comfortably.

The number of evacuees has decreased as lifelines are restored and temporary housing is built in the affected areas. As of May 8, 64 people (1,495 in total) were still living in Level 1.5 evacuation centers and 1,729 people (10,999 in total) in secondary shelters (**Fig. 2-5**).

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6 Ishikawa Prefecture website, "27th Disaster Management Headquarters Members Meeting" (p21, 28)
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/saigai/documents/0121shiryo.pdf)

7 Ishikawa Prefecture website, "16th Disaster Management Headquarters Members Meeting" (p 25)
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/saigai/documents/0109kaigisiryou.pdf)

8 Cabinet Office website, "Verification Team for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake (3rd Meeting)" (Document 2, p 1)
(Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/updates/r60101notojishin/pdf/kensho_team3_shiryo02.pdf)

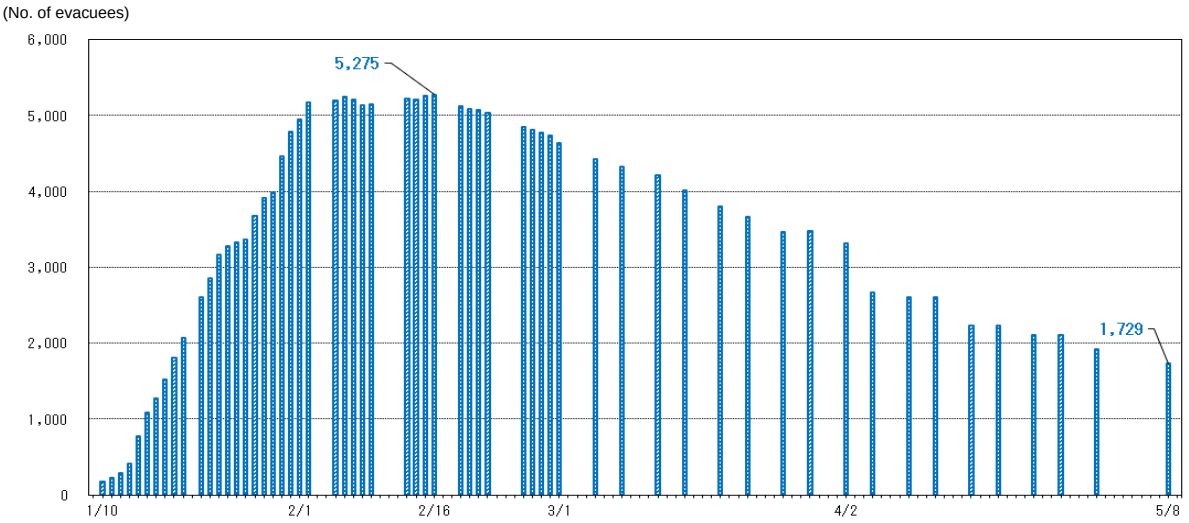
Fig. 2-4 Major secondary shelters (February 16)

*This map does not illustrate the situation at all secondary evacuation sites as of February 16.

Level 1.5 Evacuation Center

(Ishikawa General Sports Center)
Source: Cabinet Office

Fig. 2-5 Changes over time in the number of evacuees in secondary shelters in Ishikawa Prefecture



Note: This graph consists of data from January 10. Days for which no reports on damage situation, etc. were received from Ishikawa Prefecture have been left blank.

Source: Compiled based on the report “Extent of Damage, etc.,” by Ishikawa Prefecture (as of May 8)
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/saigai/202401jishin-taisakuhonbu.html#higai)

To provide medical support to the affected people, medical support teams (DMATs, JMATs, etc.) have been assessing the medical needs and providing hospital support and medical assistance in the affected areas. In addition, DHEATs dispatched from prefectures and designated cities outside the affected prefectures have been providing support for the command and coordination functions at healthcare centers, etc., as well as providing healthcare for affected people living in shelters and at home by conducting door-to-door visits based on the list of residents prepared in each city and town by public health nurses and registered dietitians, etc.

JDA-DAT has set up a base (Special Nutritional Food Stations) to provide necessary foods to those who have special nutritional needs (foods for people with swallowing difficulties, allergen-eliminated foods, liquid milk, etc.), as well as to conduct continuous individual nutritional assessments for persons requiring special care in shelters (including Level 1.5 evacuation centers) and at home, and provide nutrition and dietary support based on the results of these assessments.

In addition to providing support for well-being in shelters (including Level 1.5 evacuation centers), DWATs provide consultation to evacuees at home in the vicinity of shelters on difficulties in daily life. For the elderly and persons with disabilities, etc., who are home-based, specialized welfare teams, such as caregiving support specialists and consultation support specialists, make individual visits with public health nurses to check on the evacuees.

To protect the affected people from crimes that take advantage of disasters and to ensure their safety and security, the police dispatched special units from across the country to patrol the affected areas with patrol cars and other vehicles and to guard shelters, as well as to provide consultation and crime prevention guidance, and install security cameras at shelters.

Medical assistance by a DMAT (Wajima City)
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

“Helpdesk for Comprehensive Consultation on Well-being” set up by a DWAT in Level 1.5 evacuation center
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Door-to-door visit by public health nurses (Wajima City)
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

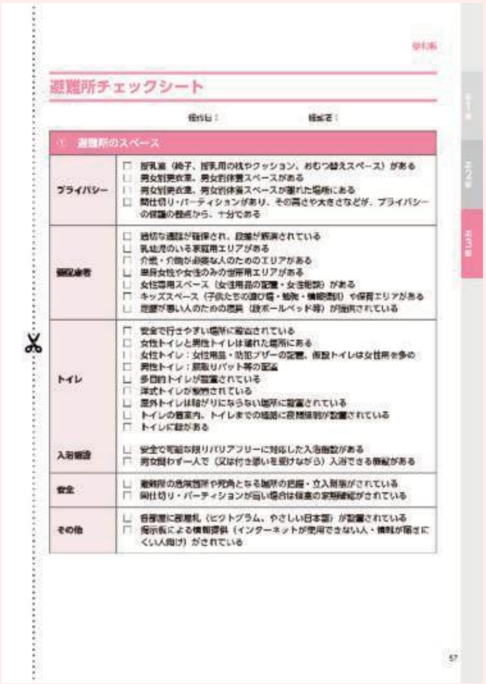
Public health nurse providing healthcare (Wajima City)
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

[Column]

Initiatives Based on the Perspective of Joint Participation by Men and Women During Noto Peninsula Earthquake

In past disasters, women's participation in disaster management decision-making processes and on-site disaster response was inadequate, giving rise to problems such as the different needs of men and women not being adequately addressed. From this perspective, immediately after the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office requested that local governments of the affected areas take measures based on the "Guidelines for Disaster Preparedness and Reconstruction from the Perspective of Gender Equality". In addition, staff from the Bureau were dispatched to the On-site Extreme Disaster Management Headquarters to provide support for the establishment and operation of shelters from the perspective of gender equality. Specific efforts in Level 1.5 evacuation centers included the placement of sanitary products in women's toilets and the installation of rest areas, children's spaces and nursing rooms for female evacuees, with the cooperation of Ishikawa Prefecture, based on the "Evacuation Shelter Check Sheet" in the Guidelines. In addition, the prefecture took the initiative to promote the participation of women in the operation and management of shelters and assigned female staff to be in charge of distributing relief supplies.

To prevent sexual crimes, sexual violence, spousal violence, and other such acts at shelters, etc., Ishikawa Prefecture conducted awareness-raising activities, including the display of posters prepared by the prefecture, the dissemination of information on consultation helpdesks for victims, using SNS and awareness-raising cards, and the distribution of crime prevention buzzers (4,200 buzzers distributed through push-type support) to the affected cities and towns.



避難所チェックシート

記入日：　　記入者：

① 避難所のスペース	
プライバシー	□ 授乳室（椅子、授乳用の枕やクッション、おむつ替えスペース）がある □ 男女別更衣室、男女別休養スペースがある □ 男女別更衣室、男女別休養スペースが離れた場所にある □ 間仕切り・パーティションがあり、その高さや大きさなどが、プライバシーの保護の観点から、十分である
要配慮者	□ 適切な通路が確保され、段差が解消されている □ 乳幼児のいる家庭用エリアがある □ 介護・介助が必要な人のためのエリアがある □ 単身女性や女性のみの世帯用エリアがある □ 女性専用スペース（女性用品の配置・女性相談）がある □ キッズスペース（子供たちの遊び場・勉強・情報提供）や保育エリアがある □ 足腰が悪い人のための寝具（段ボールベッド等）が提供されている
トイレ	□ 安全で行きやすい場所に設置されている □ 女性トイレと男性トイレは離れた場所にある □ 女性トイレ：女性用品・防犯ブザーの配置、仮設トイレは女性用を多め □ 男性トイレ：尿取りパット等の配置 □ 多目的トイレが設置されている □ 洋式トイレが整備されている □ 屋外トイレは暗がりにならない場所に設置されている □ トイレの個室内、トイレまでの経路に夜間照明が設置されている □ トイレに鍵がある
入浴施設	□ 安全で可能な限りバリアフリーに対応した入浴施設がある □ 男女問わず一人で（又は付き添いを受けながら）入浴できる機能がある
安全	□ 避難所の危険箇所や死角となる場所の把握・立入制限がされている □ 間仕切り・パーティションが高い場合は複数の定期巡回がされている
その他	□ 各部屋に部屋札（ピクトグラム、やさしい日本語）が設置されている □ 掲示板による情報提供（インターネットが使用できない人・情報が届きにくい人向け）がされている

57

Children's space in Level 1.5 evacuation center (Ishikawa General Sports Center)
Source: Cabinet Office

Source: "Guidelines for disaster preparedness and reconstruction from the perspective of gender equality" Part 3 Convenience Accounts "Evacuation Shelter Check Sheet"
(Reference: https://www.gender.go.jp/policy/ saigai/fukkou/pdf/guidelene_07.pdf)

(2) Securing housing

More than 120,000 houses were damaged in the affected areas, because of which securing housing for the affected people became an urgent issue. In particular, in the Okunoto region that suffered severe damage, efforts were made to secure housing amid limited availability of flat land suitable for constructing emergency temporary housing, few accommodation bases for construction workers, and time-consuming restoration of lifelines such as water supply.

To conduct damage assessment surveys and issue disaster victim certificates, which are prerequisites for reconstructing houses, the Cabinet Office, on January 13, presented points to be noted regarding the application for disaster victim certificates and the implementation of damage assessment surveys (e.g., simplified surveys for external appearance, assessment using photographs, etc., and faster assessment by collectively assessing affected buildings that are destroyed, using aerial photographs, etc.), and advised the relevant municipalities in Niigata, Toyama and Ishikawa Prefectures to ensure that damage assessment surveys and issuance of disaster victim certificates are carried out promptly and appropriately after that[9]. In addition, helpdesks have been set up even at Level 1.5 evacuation centers to facilitate the issuance of disaster victim certificates, and online application is being promoted by various local governments, allowing the applicants to apply for the issuance of disaster victim certificates using the My Number Card via Mynaportal and other such means[10].

Concerning support for emergency housing for evacuees, which includes “emergency temporary housing (construction-type)”, “rental emergency housing (vacant private homes used for temporary shelter)”, which is provided by renting private homes, and “provision of public housing”, Ishikawa Prefecture has been liaising and coordinating with local governments within and outside the prefecture and the national government, and providing emergency temporary housing, while comprehensively taking into account the actual situation in the region and the time required to provide such housing.

1. Emergency temporary housing (Construction-type)

Construction of emergency temporary housing (construction-type) began on January 12 in Wajima City and Suzu City and on January 15 in Noto Town and Anamizu Town. As of May 8, 5,771 construction of emergency temporary housing (construction-type) had been started, of which 3,557 had been completed. Various types of emergency temporary housing are being built, including moving houses, trailer houses, prefabricated houses and wooden structures (row house-type). In addition to promoting conventional construction, Ishikawa Prefecture has been scaling up “community development-type” construction of wooden row houses, taking into account the Satoyama and Satoumi landscape, and also promoting “return to hometown-type” construction of individual wooden houses to enable disaster-affected people who have left their local villages and are living in rental emergency housing (vacant private homes used for temporary shelter), to return to their hometowns.

Moving houses (Suzu City) Trailer houses (Shika Town)

Prefabricated houses (Wajima City) Community development-type (Wajima City) Hometown return type (Image)

Source: Cabinet Office data

9 Cabinet Office website, “Points to be Noted for the Prompt Issuance of Disaster Victim Certificates Related to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake” (Announced on January 13, 2024)
(Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/updates/r60101notojishin/pdf/tsuuchi_r60113_seirei.pdf)

10 Digital Agency website: “[The 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake] Online Application for Disaster Victim Certificates”
(Reference: https://www.digital.go.jp/2024-noto-peninsula-earthquake#ishikawa)

2. Rental emergency housing (Vacant private homes used for temporary shelter)

Ishikawa Prefecture has been securing rental emergency housing (vacant private homes used for temporary shelter) using private rental homes. Approximately 4,500 homes have been secured in Ishikawa Prefecture, with 3,549 homes decided to be occupied as of May 8. The houses available in Niigata, Toyama and Fukui Prefectures are 1,000, 1,500, and 1,200 homes for those who move from Ishikawa to a neighboring prefecture.

3. Provision of public housing

As of April 1, MLIT had secured approximately 9,300 ready-to-occupy public housing units across all prefectures, with approximately 800 units already occupied. In addition, 300 units of UR Rental Housing had been secured across the country, with “lifestyle support advisers” assigned to provide various consultations to ensure elderly people can live safely and comfortably.

According to the information by the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the number of ready-to-occupy National Public Officers’ housing units provided in four prefectures of the Hokuriku region, as of April 1, was - 107 units in Niigata Prefecture, 188 units in Toyama Prefecture, 139 units in Ishikawa Prefecture, and 101 units in Fukui Prefecture. In response to a request from Ishikawa Prefecture, the MOF had allowed the use of 105 National Public Officers’ housing units in Ishikawa Prefecture.

(3) Disaster waste treatment, etc.

The total amount of rubbish cleared from houses damaged due to the earthquake and disaster waste generated from demolishing completely or partially destroyed buildings is estimated to be approximately 2.44 million tons in Ishikawa Prefecture alone[11].

The damaged houses need to be demolished as soon as possible for the recovery and reconstruction of the affected areas, and publicly funded demolition is underway, where cities and towns demolish and remove buildings on behalf of their owners based on applications. Management support is provided by officials of the Ministry of the Environment and local governments, who have knowledge and experience in disaster waste treatment, and support for accepting applications, etc., is also provided by personnel dispatched from supporting local governments to accelerate the process of receiving applications and contract formalities for publicly funded demolition in the six particularly hard-hit cities and towns in Ishikawa Prefecture (Nanao City, Wajima City, Suzu City, Shika Town, Anamizu Town, and Noto Town). Under the “Subsidy for Disaster Waste Disposal Project Expenses”, which supports the disposal of disaster waste in disaster-affected municipalities, aid is provided for publicly funded demolition and removal of damaged houses, including destroyed houses and also half-destroyed houses as a special case. In addition, 95% of the local share of the state aid is funded by local allocation tax. As an exceptional case, a fund set up by the prefecture is used to reduce the local burden when the financial burden of disaster waste disposal is particularly excessive given the financial strength of the affected municipality, thereby supporting smooth and speedy disposal of disaster waste. In the affected cities and towns, demolition was carried out at public expense, starting with houses that were in danger of collapsing and had a high priority for demolition. As of May 5, 356 houses in Ishikawa Prefecture had been demolished. In April, about 100 teams of demolition contractors arrived at the site one by one. From May onwards, about 500 to 600 teams are working to accelerate demolition work with the aim of completing the work in October 2025, the target year in the Ishikawa Prefecture Disaster Waste Disposal Action Plan.

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11 Ishikawa Prefecture website, “Ishikawa Prefecture Disaster Waste Disposal Action Plan for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake (February 29, 2024)” (p 5)
(Reference: https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/haitai/documents/jikkoukeikaku.pdf)

Publicly funded demolition
(AnamizuTown)
Source: Ministry of the Environment

Disaster waste being carried to a temporary storage site (Anamizu Town)
Source: Source: Ministry of the Environment

Section 5 Support for Reconstruction of Livelihoods, etc.

(1) Support for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Small/Micro-Enterprises

Many manufacturing companies and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small/micro-enterprises in the Hokuriku region, concentrated in the Ishikawa Prefecture, suffered damage to their buildings and facilities. As of April 1, more than 90% of the industries that could affect supply chains outside the affected areas have resumed or are on track to resume production, while about 20% of textile and craft companies have not yet set a target date for resuming production. In particular, traditional industries, such as Wajima-Nuri (Wajima lacquerware), significant local industries in the affected area, suffered extensive damage. The earthquake tremors and the fire on Wajima Asaichi Street destroyed many stores and workshops.

To support the reconstruction of the affected businesses, the government designated the disaster as a “Disaster of Extreme Severity” (a severe disaster not limited to a specific region) on January 11, applied special provisions for disaster-related guarantees under the “Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Credit Insurance Act” (Act No. 264 of 1950), and compiled a support package including measures for the reconstruction of livelihood on January 25. The Small and Medium Enterprise Agency and related organizations are providing various forms of support for affected business operators. These include the Small and Medium Enterprise Specified Facility Disaster Recovery Subsidy (Nariwai Reconstruction Support Project), which provides up to 1.5 billion yen in Ishikawa Prefecture and up to 300 million yen in Niigata, Toyama, and Fukui Prefectures for disaster recovery costs for facilities and equipment; subsidies of up to 2 million yen through the Small Business Sustainability Subsidy for costs related to business reconstruction; support for the restoration of arcades and streetlights in shopping districts in affected areas and the organization of customer-attracting events; and financial assistance through the Japan Finance Corporation and other financial institutions. In addition, amid the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the May 2023 earthquake on businesses, the “Noto Peninsula Earthquake Reconstruction Support Fund” was established to address the problem of double debt caused by pre-existing loans. Furthermore, the “Noto Industrial Reconstruction Consultation Center” was established to provide various consultation services, including financial support for the recovery and reconstruction of business operators affected by the earthquake and to facilitate the debt purchase support offered through the above fund. In addition, support is being provided to make additional guarantee fees zero when changing repayment conditions for interest-free, unsecured loans (private zero-zero loans) provided by private financial institutions during the COVID-19 Crisis. Furthermore, support is being provided for the revival of traditional industries by establishing a temporary Wajima lacquerware workshop and subsidies of up to 10 million yen for the cost of tools and raw materials necessary for business continuity.

Prime Minister Kishida holds a roundtable discussion with Wajima lacquerware artisans (February 24)
Source: Prime Minister's official website

(2) Support for agriculture, forestry and fisheries

In addition to the damage to farmland, farm roads, irrigation and drainage channels, reservoirs, and other agricultural facilities, the disaster also caused damage to cattle sheds, agricultural greenhouses, common-use facilities, and many agricultural and livestock machinery. In the forestry sector, the earthquake caused widespread mountain area collapses, damage to forest roads, and damaged timber processing and distribution facilities and special-purpose forestry promotion facilities. Concerning fisheries, the tsunami and ground upheaval caused extensive damage, including capsizing, sinking, and grounding of fishing vessels, and damage to fishing port facilities and common use facilities. In particular, ground upheaval caused damage to the Shiroyone Senmaida Rice Terraces, recognized as a World Agricultural Heritage site and a symbol of "Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi," and to many fishing ports, including the Kaiso Fishing Port in Wajima City, known as a base for squid fishing boats, as a result of which, fishing boats are still unable to go out to sea. This situation exemplifies the symbolic damage to the primary industry, a major sector in the affected area.

Small cracks in the ground at Shiroyone Senmaida
Source: Cabinet Office

Prime Minister Kishida visits the Shiroyone Senmaida Rice Terraces (February 24)
Source: Prime Minister's official website


Ground upheaval at Kaiso Fishing Port (Wajima City)
Source: Fisheries Agency

To support agriculture, forestry and fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is providing subsidies for the reconstruction and repair of machinery, greenhouses, cattle sheds, etc., subsidies for securing seeds and seedlings to either continue rice farming or switch to other crops, introducing production materials for the resumption of farming, such as agricultural greenhouse materials, and for outsourcing farm work, subsidies for the restoration of fishing boats and fishing equipment as well as the restoration and maintenance of timber processing and distribution facilities, and subsidies for the recovery and development of collapsed mountain areas and the restoration of farmland and agricultural facilities. In particular, the restoration of farmland and agricultural facilities is highly subsidized by the National Treasury due to the designation of the disaster as a "Disaster of Extreme Severity" (a severe disaster not limited to a specific region)

Large-scale mountainside collapses occurred in Wajima and Suzu cities, and seven locations in the Oku-Noto area that sustained severe damage are receiving support from disaster recovery projects under the direct control of the national government, with ongoing support toward full-scale recovery.

As for fisheries, the earthquake affected 60 of the 69 fishing ports in Ishikawa Prefecture, and several instances of ground upheaval were observed, mainly in Wajima City and Suzu City. In addition to conventional recovery efforts, for fishing ports with particularly severe damage due to ground upheaval (approximately 20 fishing ports), it was essential to divide recovery into two phases: temporary restoration for short-term resumption of livelihoods and full-scale restoration (dredging of anchorage, offshoring of vessels to adjacent areas, etc.) for medium- to long-term functional improvement. The Cabinet Office has been supporting recovery operations, including construction work for the Fisheries Agency (the coast of Ukai Fishing Port, Noroshi Fishing Port, etc.) under the "Act on Reconstruction after Large-Scale Disaster." In addition to using salvage vessels to move fishing boats (approximately 200 vessels) that were stuck at Wajima Port due to seabed upheaval, the Cabinet Office is also supporting the efforts of fishermen to restore fishing grounds, including surveys of the damage situation, removal of drifts and sediment, and restoration and recovery of the fishing grounds environment.

In the future, the Cabinet Office will support the study of reconstruction policies with a vision for the future of the region, improvement of farmland and agricultural facility functions in conjunction with recovery, restoration of terraced rice fields in consideration of the landscape, creation of sustainable Satoyama in conjunction with tourism, forest control measures and forest management in affected areas at high risk of mountain disasters, and improvement of the functions of fishing port facilities, such as the promotion of the marine industry and utilization of Satoumi resources.

(3) Support for Recovery of Tourism, etc.

The disaster also significantly impacted the tourism industry, which is one of the region's major industries. As of April 1, most accommodation facilities in the Noto region have suffered severe damage and are not in operation. While accommodation facilities elsewhere in Ishikawa Prefecture, including those in the Kanazawa and Kaga areas and Niigata, Toyama, and Fukui Prefectures, are operating, many have canceled or are not taking reservations. The Wajima Morning Market, a major tourist attraction in the Noto region, has yet to be reconstructed after a major fire caused by the earthquake destroyed approximately 240 stores and an area of 49,000 m^2.

While over 20 traditional inns and hotels in Wakura Onsen (Nanao City), one of Japan's most famous hot spring towns, suffered damage, some facilities are being used to lodge the people, providing relief and aid.

To support the recovery of the tourism industry, in addition to measures to support small and medium enterprises and small/micro-enterprises, such as support for the reconstruction of livelihoods and ensuring the employment of employees of affected businesses through special provisions for employment adjustment subsidies, the Japan Tourism Agency (JTA) and other organizations have been working to restore tourism demand and economic activities while dispelling harmful rumors, taking advantage of opportunities such as the opening of the Hokuriku Shinkansen between Kanazawa and Tsuruga on March 16, as well as by disseminating accurate information about the Hokuriku region, including the affected areas, and conducting promotional activities to contribute to the recovery of tourism in the affected areas and attract visitors to the entire Hokuriku region since January 26.

In addition, to stimulate travel demand, the government is implementing “Hokuriku Ouenwari” (a program offering a subsidy rate of up to 50% per person, a maximum of 20,000 yen/night) from March 16. It will consider more generous measures to stimulate travel demand for the Noto region while monitoring the recovery situation. In addition, sales of local specialty products, travel, etc., will be promoted through the hometown tax system.

Source: Hokuriku Support Discount Portal Site (Reference: https://oen.hk.campaign-management.jp/)

Section 6 Town Planning for Reconstruction

(1) Support for Reconstruction and Community Development

The Cabinet Office has been discussing reconstruction and community development in affected municipalities, mainly in the Oku-Noto area, which suffered significant damage. To support reconstruction and community development in the affected municipalities, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) conducted successive surveys starting in March, which included assessments of the damage situation and questionnaires for residents to support the formulation of reconstruction and community development plans in seven municipalities (Nanao City, Wajima City, Suzu City, Shika Town, Nakanoto Town, Anamizu Town, and Noto Town). Since April, MLIT has provided ongoing support for reconstruction and community development, from the planning stage to the project stage, by assigning district officials from the Ministry, providing technical support through the Urban Renaissance Agency (URA), and offering cross-sectoral support through cooperation with related ministries and agencies.

In addition, on February 22, the Cabinet Office and the Cabinet Secretariat compiled and published the “Reference Materials for Reconstruction and Community Development,” which includes ideas and tips for reconstruction and community development and points to keep in mind when advancing projects for the same, for use by disaster-affected local governments when considering reconstruction and community development.

(2) Measures against Liquefaction

Since the disaster, MLIT has conducted on-site surveys using TEC-FORCE and provided information on support systems and case studies of measures against liquefaction through meetings between the national and prefectural governments and affected municipalities. In areas where particularly significant liquefaction damage was concentrated due to so-called “lateral flow,” which is lateral movement of the ground surface caused by liquefaction, efficient countermeasures and construction methods must be considered based on topographical and geological conditions.

In addition, the subsidy rate for “Projects for the Prevention of Residential Land Liquefaction,” which stipulates measures to be implemented by local governments to counter the liquefaction of public facilities and adjacent residential land comprehensively, will be increased from the usual 1/4 to 1/2. Under effectiveness promotion projects, the national and local governments are strengthening support measures and encouraging initiatives by affected municipalities by demonstrating that the national and local governments can provide subsidies of up to 2/3 of the total cost when affected persons receive support from their local governments to restore damaged ground and housing foundations, etc., which can hinder the implementation of projects for the prevention of residential land liquefaction.

To achieve smooth recovery and reconstruction of the affected areas, the government must implement measures to prevent the liquefaction of residential land through projects to prevent residential land liquefaction. To this end, the national government will provide technical support to affected local governments using the knowledge gained from direct surveys. It will promote community development to prevent liquefaction damage from occurring again by supporting the early commercialization of measures in as many areas as possible.

Liquefaction damage observed in Uchinada Town
Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

Visit by Minister of State for Disaster Management, Matsumura, to the site of liquefaction damage in Toyama Prefecture (January 20)
Source: Cabinet Office

Chapter 3 Future Disaster Management Measures

The recovery and reconstruction support for the areas affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake is still ongoing and needs to continue in the future. At the same time, it is important to constantly review the disaster response based on the experiences and lessons learned from the recent disasters. In the case of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, it is necessary to identify measures to overcome the challenges that emerged when reviewing the series of disaster responses, and also identify new technologies that are deemed effective in disaster response. Those aimed at strengthening initial response and emergency countermeasures should be reflected in future measures.

To this end, a “Verification Team for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake”, chaired by the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, with senior officials from relevant government ministries and agencies as members, was convened to collect and organize the experiences of personnel involved in the disaster response after the occurrence of the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, including support to local governments, shelter management, and procurement and transportation of supplies[1].

The verification team conducts inspection activities aimed at identifying points to appraise and improve the recent disaster response and making use of these in future disaster response, including in affected areas where recovery work is still ongoing. The team has inspected the disaster response under three areas, namely, support to local governments, shelter management, and procurement and transportation of supplies, conducted in collaboration with various government ministries and agencies through the establishment of the “Team to Support for Reconstructing Lives and Livelihood of the Affected due to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake”. The inspection activities were also focused on the new technologies from startups that contributed significantly to the initial response and emergency countermeasures under difficult circumstances compared to previous disaster responses due to the geographical constraints of the peninsula.

In addition to the independent inspection by this verification team, the experiences and lessons learned from the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake will be discussed with experts, with the goal of improving institutional and operational aspects and applying these improvements to future disaster response.

1 Cabinet Office website “Verification Team for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake” (Reference: https://www.bousai.go.jp/updates/r60101notojishin/kensho_team.html)

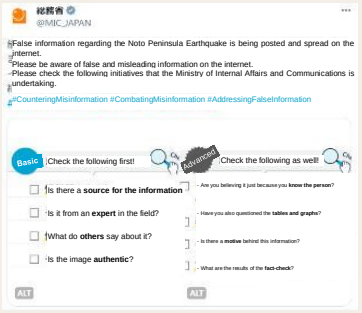
[Column]
Countermeasures Against False and Misleading Information on the Internet during Disasters

The circulation and spread of false and misleading information on the Internet during a disaster can hinder prompt lifesaving and rescue operations and smooth recovery and reconstruction activities and can also lead to crime. Therefore, addressing this issue is important alongside other responses such as lifesaving, rescue, recovery, and reconstruction.

It has been pointed out that during the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake, posts with uncertain authenticity were circulated, for example, “unauthentic posts calling attention to suspicious persons or vehicles” and “posts with unauthentic calls for rescue, such as those containing nonexistent addresses”. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) has been raising awareness to prevent people from being misled by false and misleading information through the use of SNS, etc. In addition, MIC has requested digital platform operators of major SNS to take appropriate measures in accordance with their terms of use, such as deleting information that is clearly false and may potentially cause social confusion.

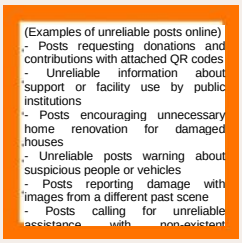
In the “Package for the Restoration of Lives and Livelihoods of the Affected”, measures such as awareness-raising with multi-layered combinations of various communication methods for residents of the affected areas and the general public and utilizing technologies for countering false and misleading information are being promoted under the “Countermeasures Against False and Misleading Information on the Internet in Affected Areas”.

In addition, the “Study Group on How to Ensure Soundness of Information Distribution in Digital Space (Chaired by Joji Shishido, Professor, Graduate Schools for Law and Politics, University of Tokyo)” organized by MIC, has been examining various countermeasures by considering international trends and taking into account various rights and interests, including freedom of expression, while also considering the opinions of a wide range of stakeholders, including digital platform business operators. In addition, the Study Group has prepared and published educational material for awareness-raising, titled “How to Navigate with the Internet – Avoid Deception by False and Misleading Information”.



Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Official X (1) (January 2, 2024)

Government PR



Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Official X (2) (January 15, 2024)

Awareness-raising educational material

(Reference: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications website https://www.soumu.go.jp/use_the_internet_wisely/special/nisegojouhou/)[1]
(Reference: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications website https://www.soumu.go.jp/use_the_internet_wisely/special/fakenews/)[2]
(Reference: Government public relations online useful articles https://www.gov-online.go.jp/article/202403/entry-5920.html)[3]
(Reference: Government public relations online X https://x.com/gov_online/status/1749982855172595722?s=46)[4]

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