

Section
3

Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake

1 Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

At 14:46 on March 11, 2011, a major earthquake occurred off the coast of Sanriku in the Tohoku region that measured 7.0 on the Japanese scale (magnitude 9.0, making it the largest observed in Japanese history). The massive tsunami triggered by the earthquake engulfed settlements located along an extensive section of the coast of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima Prefectures, and damaged the nuclear reactors at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, causing a radiation leak. In terms of the extent of the area affected and the immense damage caused, it was a major disaster without precedent in Japanese history.

Directly following the earthquake, at 14:50, the Ministry of Defense established an Emergency Headquarters and commenced information gathering operations using aircraft and other means. At 15:40, the Emergency Headquarters¹ held its first meeting and at 18:00 and 19:30 the Defense Minister ordered SDF units to dispatch to respond to the earthquake and the nuclear power station accident, respectively. In response to these orders, the SDF dispatched approximately 8,400 personnel on the day of the earthquake and commenced activities. GSDF Camp Tagajo and ASDF Matsushima Airbase were damaged in the earthquake and their aircraft and vehicles were submerged underwater, but the SDF dispatched as many personnel and as much equipment as possible amid these difficult circumstances, implementing a swift, large-scale initial response in order to save the lives of disaster victims.

In order to further strengthen arrangements for disaster relief operations and undertake more effective activities in the disaster area, on March 14 a joint task force for the Great East Japan Earthquake was formed under the overall command of the Commanding General of the GSDF Northeastern Army, which included the participation of a GSDF disaster relief unit under the command of that Commanding General, an MSDF disaster relief unit under the commandants of the MSDF Yokosuka Districts and an ASDF disaster relief unit under the command of the ASDF Air Defense Commander. This joint task force uniting the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF carried out various activities to support those affected by the

disaster, including searching for missing persons. Furthermore, approximately 500 GSDF, MSDF and ASDF personnel under the overall command of the Commanding Officer of the Central Readiness Force were mobilized to deal with the nuclear disaster resulting from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, spraying the plant compound with water. These activities marked the largest mobilization of personnel and equipment in history, and close cooperation was carried out between the military of the United States and other countries, the various headquarters of the Government, related ministries and agencies, local governments, and others. This also marked the first time that ready reserves and reserves were summoned based on the Self-Defense Forces Law other than in exercises. Thus, the SDF employed full-scale efforts in order to ensure the safety of disaster victims and stability for the lives of those in the region.

Having received an order from Prime Minister to make preparations to dispatch 100,000 personnel, the number of dispatched SDF personnel surpassed 100,000 by March 18. When numbers were at their largest, the number of personnel reached approximately 107,000 (including ready reserves and regular reserves²), about 543 aircraft, and nearly 54 ships. Under this posture, bases and camps in the disaster area and other areas provided major logistic support in order to assist the smooth activities of dispatched units, including receiving units and providing them with shelter and procuring large amounts of needed food, clothing, and equipment on an emergency basis. In this way, the bases and camps in the disaster area played a vital role in the provision of assistance.

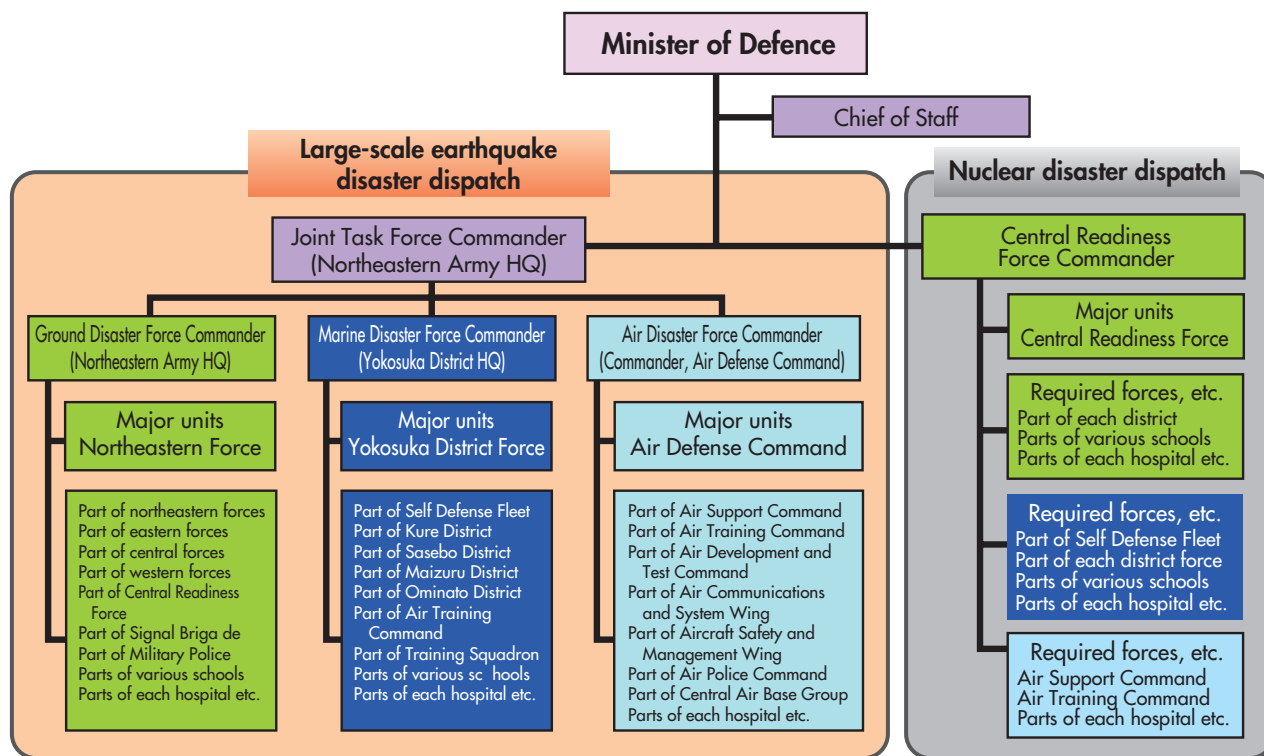
(See Fig. III-1-3-1)

About three and a half months after the disaster occurred, on July 1, the joint task force was dissolved, as the arrangements for the Government and local authorities to provide support for the livelihoods of people in the disaster-stricken areas were being put in place; the disaster relief units of the GSDF, MSDF and ASDF switched to collaborative activities and the large-scale disaster relief deployment in response to the earthquake was concluded on August 31. On July 19, responsibility for

¹ Large-scale disaster dispatch is conducted by order of the Defense Minister based on the Self-Defense Forces Law and Article 14 of the Order concerning SDF Disaster Dispatch (1980 Defense Agency Order 28). Commanding Generals, Self-Defense Fleet Commanders, Commanders of Regional District, or Air Defense Command Commander serve as the commanding officer of the disaster relief dispatch unit and units are dispatched.

² In response to the great disaster in East Japan, 2,210 ready reserves (actual number: 1,373) and 496 reserves (actual number: 317) were summoned for the first time other than for a training purpose, and most of them served for 1 to 2 weeks at a time.

Fig. III-1-3-1 Posture of the MOD and SDF at the Great East Japan Earthquake



the disaster relief operation in response to the nuclear disaster was transferred from the Commanding Officer of the Central Readiness Force to the Commanding Officer of the GSDF disaster relief unit (Commanding General of the North Eastern Army).

On December 6, 2011, the Ministerial Meeting on Decontamination and Special Waste Treatment took place and, based on the awareness that carrying out decontamination as a matter of urgency was a pressing issue for the whole Government, in order to facilitate at the earliest possible date the reconstruction of the areas contaminated by radioactive material discharged due to the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, it was decided that the GSDF would undertake decontamination activities, with the cooperation of bodies such as the Ministry of the Environment. For two weeks from the

following day, approximately 900 troops, consisting mainly of personnel from the 44th Infantry Regiment and the 6th Artillery Regiment, carried out work at the municipal offices in Naraha, Tomioka, Namie and Iitate, which were due to be the bases for the full-scale decontamination activities to be implemented under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Environment from January 2012. The troops decontaminated the areas by removing sludge and collecting fallen leaves from gutters around the offices, and using high-pressure washers to decontaminate surfaces, such as the asphalt in the car parks, thereby putting in place the infrastructure to enable the Government and local authorities to carry out decontamination in the area.

The disaster relief operation in response to the nuclear disaster was concluded on December 26.
(See Fig. III-1-3-2 & 3)

2 Overview of the Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

The Great East Japan Earthquake was a complex situation in which a nuclear disaster occurred, in addition to a major earthquake and tsunami. An overview of the response to this disaster by the Ministry of Defense and SDF is provided below, focusing on the following three categories.

1 Response to the major earthquake and tsunami

Due to the immense scale of the earthquake, the districts stricken by the Great East Japan Earthquake were spread over a wide area, from the Tohoku to the Kanto regions, while the functions of many local authorities located in coastal areas were

Fig. III-1-3-2

Overview of the Main Course of Events Following the Great East Japan Earthquake

Date	Overview of Major Developments
Mar 11	14:46 Earthquake occurs
	14:50 Ministry of Defense Disaster Response Headquarters established, intelligence gathering commences
	18:00 Large-scale earthquake disaster relief deployment order issued
	19:30 Nuclear disaster relief deployment order issued
Mar 14	Joint task force for disaster relief formed (Commanding Officer: Commanding General of the GSDF North Eastern Army)
Mar 16	GSDF ready reserve personnel and reserve personnel disaster mobilization order issued (in force until August 26)
Mar 17	Water spraying commences at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant
Apr 15	MSDF and ASDF reserve personnel disaster mobilization order issued (in force until August 26)
Jul 1	Joint task force for disaster relief disbanded
Aug 31	Large-scale earthquake disaster relief deployment ends
Sep 9	Bathing support in Fukushima Prefecture ends
Dec 7	Decontamination work carried out at the municipal offices in Iitate, Namie, Tomioka and Naraha, Fukushima Prefecture (until December 19)
Dec 26	Nuclear disaster relief deployment ends

reduced because of the tsunami. As a result of this situation, the Ministry of Defense and SDF formed a joint task force that not only represented the largest-ever mobilization of troops in the SDF's history, exceeding 100,000 personnel, but also marked the first time that such a task force had been formed in response to a disaster; not only GSDF, MSDF and ASDF units, but also reserves worked together in responding to the disaster.

Moreover, in some disaster-afflicted areas, the troops were involved not only in the shipping of relief supplies, but also provided support for the transport of the mortal remains of the deceased.

2 Response to the nuclear disaster

Amid an unexpected situation, the Ministry of Defense and SDF played a central role in dealing with the nuclear disaster, determining the guidelines for spraying water at the plant and carrying out the work, and provided a unified response in partnership with other ministries and agencies.

Troops worked without regard for the danger of exposure to radiation, and contributed to averting a critical situation due to the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. In addition, they also contributed to radioactive material

Fig. III-1-3-3

Achievements by the Self-Defense Forces in the Aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake

	Activity	Total
Rescue, etc.	Lifesaving	19,286 people
	Recovery of deceased	9,505 bodies
	Transportation of deceased	1,004 bodies
Transportation	Transportation of goods	13,906 t
	Transportation of medical teams, etc.	20,240 people
	Transportation of patients	175 patients
Livelihood assistance	Water supply assistance	32,985t (maximum of approx. 200 locations)
	Food assistance	5,005,484 servings (maximum of approx. 100 locations)
	Fuel assistance	1,606 KL
	Bathing assistance	1,092,585 people (maximum of 35 locations)
	Sanitation assistance	22,653 people



GSDF troops providing decontamination support (Fukushima Prefecture)

decontamination, monitoring the air dose rate, etc., and providing support for the evacuation of residents living in the vicinity of the plant.

3 Joint operations involving Japan and the U.S.

During Operation Tomodachi, the U.S. military deployed



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Q&A

A Message from Mr. Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi

The Ministry of Defense and the SDF received a powerful message from Mr. Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi, a popular singer who provided strong support for disaster relief activities in areas hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake as well as other activities by the Ministry of Defense and the SDF.



Mr. Nagabuchi receiving a special letter of appreciation from the Minister of Defense (December 2011)



Cheering SDF personnel in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture (April 2011)



Giving a live performance at the ASDF Matsushima Base to cheer SDF personnel (April 2011)



Giving a live performance at the Ministry of Defense facility (Ichigaya) to cheer SDF personnel (November 2011)

approximately 16,000 troops, not to mention the aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan; as well as assisting tirelessly with rescue operations in the disaster-afflicted areas, they provided cooperation and support in various forms in regard to the nuclear disaster¹. In doing so, the Ministry of Defense (Ichigaya), U.S. Forces, Japan (Yokota Base) and the joint

task force headquarters (Sendai; GSDF North Eastern Army Headquarters) established bilateral coordination centers and close collaboration took place between the Ministry of Defense and SDF, and the U.S. military, enabling us to reaffirm the strong links forged through the Japan-U.S. Alliance, even in the midst of a state of emergency.

3 Lessons Learned from the Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

The response to the Great East Japan Earthquake implemented by the Ministry of Defense and SDF was on an unprecedentedly large scale, so lessons have been learned from it that will contribute to strengthening not only responses to future disasters, such as earthquakes, but also our ability to respond to

a range of situations, including military emergencies affecting Japan. The various lessons learned are shown in Fig. III-1-3-4¹.

Moreover, the status of deliberations concerning these lessons and their reflection in policies and procedures is shown in Fig. III-1-3-5.

² - ¹ In response to the nuclear disaster, the U.S. military dispatched a specialist unit from the Marine Corps - the Chemical Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF); this marked the first time that the unit had been deployed overseas.

³ - ¹ The Ministry of Defense and SDF are striving to reflect these lessons in their policies and procedures; on March 28, 2012, the Ground Staff Office held a briefing to provide concrete details of the lessons learned on the ground, at the unit level, in order to disseminate these to SDF units and ensure that they serve as a point of reference in the running of military affairs involving SDF units in the future.

Fig. III-1-3-4 Lessons Learned from the Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

General Category	Subcategory	Lessons, etc.
Decision-making	Decision-making by the Ministry	○ Intra-ministerial bureaus, the Joint Staff and individual staff offices, etc. united to assist the Minister ● Further consideration of the response guidelines is required through exercises, etc.
	Relationship with the Government	○ Provided an effective response, in general, to requests from a variety of directions ● Further consideration of the priority level of responses to requests is required
Operations	Initial response	○ Provided a rapid response through the voluntary deployment of units, etc.
	Joint operations	○ Implemented smooth joint operations, overall ● Further consideration of approaches to the operational coordination functions of the Joint Staff is required ● Further consideration of the plan for responding to multiple disasters is required
	Search & rescue	○ Positive results were achieved to some degree through a swift, systematic response ● Further consideration of the guidelines for collaboration with reinforcement troops from across the country, etc. and local authorities is required ● It is necessary to secure manpower through guidelines for the concentration of units in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and by improving the vacancy fill-rate for front-line units
	Daily life support	○ Full-scale activities were carried out based on requests from local authorities affected by the disaster ● Further consideration of the role played by the Ministry of Defense and SDF when the administrative functions of local authorities are impeded is required
	Transport of supplies	○ Supplies were transported rapidly due to the construction of a scheme for the transport of supplies ● Further consideration of approaches to and coordination guidelines for collaboration with local authorities and the utilization of civilian sector transport capacity is required
	Response to the nuclear disaster	○ The best response possible with existing equipment was achieved ● Revisions of the nuclear disaster response plan, etc. are required ● The introduction of equipment that is effective in a radioactive environment is required
	Other	● Revisions of various disaster response plans are required ● In order to ensure the agile deployment of GSDF units, further consideration of the strengthening of transport capacity, and the utilization of the transport capacity of the U.S. military and the civilian sector is required
Cooperation with other countries	Joint Japan-U.S. Operations	○ The activities carried out jointly by Japan and U.S.A. were a major positive achievement ● The augmentation of the Japan-U.S. bilateral coordination center system and the clarification of its functions are required ● The development of a government-wide framework for Japan-U.S. coordination is required
	Other countries	● Further consideration should be given to guidelines for smooth coordination with the military forces of other countries
Communications	Strengthening information & communications functions	○ In general, existing equipment was used and all necessary communications were carried out smoothly ● The strengthening of collaboration with civilian communications operators is required in regard to the restoration of telecommunication lines ● The strengthening of connectivity between SDF branches in the field is required ● The strengthening of means of sharing intelligence with relevant institutions in the field is required
	Other	○ The frequencies required for operations were secured swiftly through collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
Personnel & education	Personnel-related measures	● The promotion of radical reforms of human resource infrastructure is required
	Education & training	○ The impact on education was minimized through various responses
	Reserve personnel & ready reserve personnel	○ This was the first mobilization that was not a practice drill, but reasonably positive outcomes were achieved ● In light of the guidelines for coordinating reporting for duty and the impact on employers, further consideration of approaches to the mobilization period is required
	Mental health	○ Various measures relating to mental health were implemented, with reasonably positive outcomes ● In order to deal with the increased psychological burden, further strengthening of the arrangements relating to mental health is required
	Medical activities & healthcare, etc.	○ Medical officers, etc. played an active role through the provision of hygiene support and technical advice ● Further cultivation of medical officers with advanced expertise is required ● Long-term management relating to the exposure doses of troops is required
	Temporary childcare for children of staff called to work in an emergency	○ Temporary childcare was provided for the children of staff called to work on an emergency basis, with reasonably positive outcomes ● The establishment of a proper implementation structure and its enhancement through collaboration with local authorities is required
PR	PR systems & guidelines, etc.	○ In general, appropriate dissemination of information took place, via various means ● The construction of a unified PR process and consideration for the dissemination of information overseas is required
Intelligence	Sharing of intelligence with relevant ministries & agencies, etc.	○ In general, the sharing of intelligence with relevant ministries and agencies took place smoothly ● Further development of intelligence-sharing channels and means of sharing information is required
	Sharing of intelligence with local authorities	○ In general, the dispatch of liaison staff to local authorities, etc. and intelligence gathering functioned effectively ● Further consideration of the guidelines for transmitting information in the event that telecommunication lines are disrupted is required
Facilities	Disaster response functions of facilities	○ Military camps and bases, etc. played an important role in supporting the activities of public institutions and aiding those affected by the disaster ● Further deliberations are required concerning the strengthening of the infrastructure functions of bases in preparation for a disaster ● The renovation of dilapidated facilities is required, as are earthquake-proofing measures and tsunami countermeasures, etc.
Equipment	Equipment, etc.	○ Existing equipment, etc. was utilized, with reasonably positive outcomes ● Research & development concerning equipment that can deal with hitherto-unforeseen situations is required
	Supplies	● Further consideration of approaches to the stockpiling of the requisite fuel, etc. for activities is required
Organizational operations	Approaches to organizational operations	○ Intra-ministerial bureaus, individual staff offices and various institutions worked together to facilitate a smooth response ● Further consideration of the strengthening of functions is required, in order to respond to the increased workload of the Joint Staff ● From the perspective of strengthening joint operations, various deliberations are required concerning approaches to command and control functions and duties
	The functions of bases, etc.	○ Military camps and bases, etc. functioned as operational bases and support hubs for the SDF ● In order to enable military camps and bases, etc. to function as operational bases and support hubs for the SDF, further consideration of such matters as approaches to outsourcing to the civilian sector is required, including the capacity of civilian sector providers and the maintenance of capacity within the SDF

○ Aspects generally carried out smoothly; ● Aspects where further deliberations or improvements are required

Fig. III-1-3-5 Consideration and Reflection of Lessons Learned from the Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

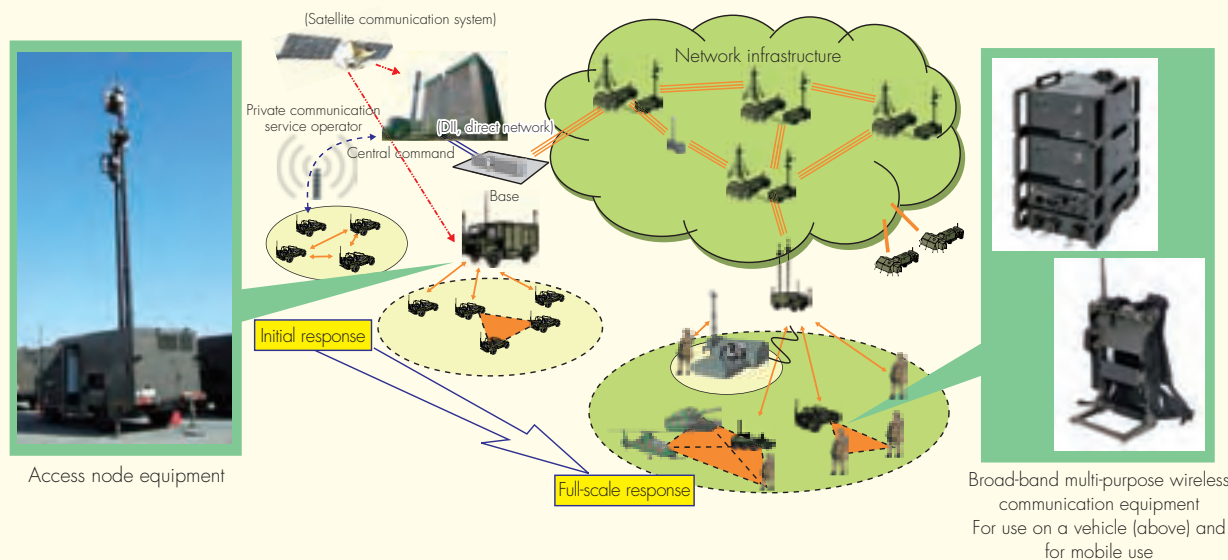
Category	Consideration & Reflection of Lessons
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementing more practical disaster prevention practice drills (integrated SDF disaster prevention exercises) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding meetings of the Ministry Disaster Response Headquarters with the participation of Ministry of Defense officials, including the three most senior Ministry officials • Deliberations aimed at enhancing the participation in exercises of relevant ministries and agencies and representatives of local authorities
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening unit transport capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of transport aircraft (C-2), construction of helicopter destroyers (DDH), and acquisition of transport helicopters (CH-47JA) and minesweeping and transport helicopters (MCH-101) (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Deliberations concerning the proactive use of private sector transport capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of civilian vessels in the FY11 joint long-distance mobilization exercise ○ Securing personnel for front-line units, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployment of 109 personnel to front-line units as a result of the redeployment of personnel through such initiatives as the introduction of part-time logistics staff (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Deliberations concerning collaboration with local authorities and the role that the Ministry of Defense and SDF should play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion by the Council on Disaster Countermeasures Promotion of the Central Disaster Prevention Council ○ Introduction of new equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of unmanned aircraft and unmanned vehicles, and deliberations concerning their effectiveness, etc. (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget) • Introduction of NBC reconnaissance vehicles and personal protective equipment, etc. (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget and the FY12 budget) ○ Improvement of disaster response capabilities, including the strengthening of cooperation with other countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the new post of Director of the Disaster Prevention Policy Planning Division in the Bureau of Defense Policy, in order to improve ability to deal with disasters, including strengthening cooperation with the U.S.A. and other countries in relation to dealing with radiation, etc. (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Revision of the Ministry of Defense disaster prevention operations plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisions focused its synchronization with the content of SDF activities stipulated in the Government's plan (responding to complex disasters, considering the guidelines for joint activities with the U.S. military, and greater participation in disaster prevention drills by local authorities and the United States Forces Japan) ○ Strengthening collaboration with relevant organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the new post of Director of the Crisis Response Coordination Division in the Bureau of Operational Policy, in order to strengthen coordination functions to facilitate collaboration with relevant organizations and smooth operations by units (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Use of various means of transport, particularly helicopters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of transport practice drills using the heliport at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (FY11 Government Comprehensive Disaster Prevention Drill)
Cooperation with other countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Japan-U.S. coordination and the acceptance of support from other countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with relevant organizations concerning such matters as the positioning of support from other countries, including the U.S. military, within the Government's disaster prevention plan, and greater participation by the U.S. military in disaster prevention drills • Promotion of participation in a range of drills, from those at the national level (SDF Integrated Disaster Prevention Exercise) to those at the regional level (disaster prevention drills organized by each prefecture) • Establishment of the new post of Director of the Japan-U.S. Operational Coordination Division in the Bureau of Operational Policy (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) • Promotion of discussions in the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defense Working Group concerning the strengthening of Japan-U.S. partnership and cooperation in dealing with radiation, etc.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening of connectivity between each branch of the SDF in the field and improvement of communication capability once units have been deployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of broadband multi-purpose wireless equipment (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget) • Provision of an outdoor communication system (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Maintenance and strengthening of collaboration with civilian communications providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion of an agreement concerning the strengthening of collaboration with civilian communications providers in June 2011 ○ Provision of means for sharing intelligence with relevant organizations in the field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new disaster prevention wireless equipment that will contribute to collaboration with relevant organizations (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget)
Personnel & education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening capacity concerning the smooth, swift mobilization of reserve personnel, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the Reserve Personnel Unit as a new department within the Bureau of Personnel and Education, in order to strengthen planning and coordination functions relating to smooth, swift mobilization ○ Strengthening functions relating to mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the new post of Director of the Mental Health Planning Division within the Bureau of Personnel and Education and an increase in the number of clinical psychologists, in order to strengthen policy-making functions relating to the promotion of psychological care for deployed troops, etc. (funding for both allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ More appropriate healthcare for troops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of integrated storage of records of exposure doses as part of personnel records, in order to manage the exposure of troops to radiation ○ Temporary childcare, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of equipment for temporary childcare facilities • Commencement of coordination aimed at providing support in collaboration with local authorities, such as the dispatch of nursery teachers by local authorities
Public relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effective, strategic PR and reporting and the dissemination of information overseas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of initiatives aimed at ensuring close collaboration within the Ministry (headquarters and regional branches; including the sharing of experience at various levels, concerning PR in the event of a major earthquake), and strengthening and enhancement of international PR measures through various media, concerning the initiatives being undertaken by the Ministry of Defense and SDF (switching to monthly publication of our English-language newsletter)
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening of systems for sharing intelligence with relevant ministries & agencies, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of systems within the Bureau of Operational Policy, in order to consider guidelines for communications equipment and collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies and civilian sector businesses, in light of activities in the event of a disaster
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measures aimed at dealing with disasters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earthquake-proofing of SDF facilities and barracks is being rolled out • Raising of the aircraft parking apron, etc. at Matsushima base and of the peripheral road surrounding Camp Tagajo (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget). Emergency tsunami countermeasures are also being put in place at various other military camps located on the coast • Deliberations concerning how SDF facilities would cope with a major tsunami and promoting the formulation of guidelines for tsunami countermeasures (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget and the FY12 budget)
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responses to nuclear disasters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research into remotely operated CBRN response vehicle systems, remotely operated small reconnaissance systems, and CBRN threat assessment system technology (funding allocated in the FY11 supplementary budget and the FY12 budget) • Provision of NBC warning devices and new dose rate meter sets (funding allocated in the FY12 budget)
Organizational operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening of the Joint Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the new post of Deputy Director, Operations Department within the Joint Staff, in order to put in place a system that can respond effectively to complex crises and long-term operations (funding allocated in the FY12 budget) ○ Strengthening of disaster relief deployment functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of personnel dealing with disaster relief deployments in the Bureau of Operational Policy and the Joint Staff Operations Department ○ Deliberations concerning approaches to civilian sector outsourcing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberations by the Committee for the Promotion of Structural Reform for Improving the Effectiveness of Defense Capabilities



Column

VOICE
Commentary
Q&A

Reflecting on the Lessons of the Response to the Earthquake (Field Communication System)



The field communication system has been developed as a replacement of communication equipment currently used by the Ground SDF, in order to ensure continuous field communication necessary for the command, control of and communication of information to army groups and divisions.

The new system enables the provision of a broad-area, high-speed network environment from the central command to individual personnel through the use of communication networks linking Ground SDF garrisons, field communication networks and private networks.

Moreover, the new system enables direct communication between each force of the SDFs as well as between the SDF and relevant external organizations through the use of software wireless technology. That is expected to facilitate information sharing with relevant organizations, the importance of which was learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake.

4 Evaluation of the Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

In an opinion poll carried out by the Cabinet Office in January 2012, 97.7% of respondents answered that they “have a high opinion”¹ of the SDF in relation to their disaster relief mission associated with the Great East Japan Earthquake. Moreover, many messages of encouragement, hope and thanks have been

received through various media from people - including those affected by the disaster - in response to the activities of the Ministry of Defense and SDF in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

¹ The figure for “have a high opinion” is the total for the responses “I have a very high opinion of them” and “I have a fairly high opinion of them”.



Column

VOICE

Commentary

Q&A

An Array of Messages Sent to MOD/SDF

Messages sent from all over the country including the disaster-affected areas were a strong source of support for MOD/SDF to carry out support activities.

We really appreciate these messages.

"I learned activities of SDF personnel on the internet. Thank you. I can do nothing but express my gratitude to young SDF personnel. They were working for the people even though their own family members also suffered from the disaster. Each of your activities touched our heart. Your activities will continue in difficult situations but each member of the nation that you protected will think of this. I truly hope that you will return to your family safely and with smiles."

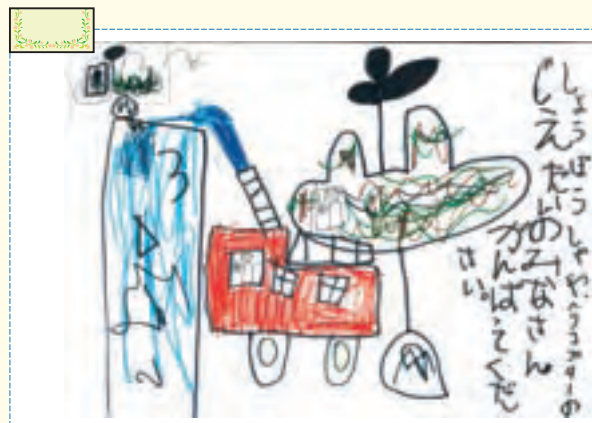


Many letters sent to MOD/SDF

"I appreciate very much for your diligent daily activities and am profoundly grateful for your families who support you. Please take good care of yourselves as I expect difficult days are yet to continue. All Japanese people are cheering for you and are proud of you! I, too, will look for what I can do and take action.

Hold out Tohoku, Hold out Japan!

Let us all Japanese help to each other toward reconstruction and bring smiles to the disaster areas.



"At the Great East Japan Earthquake... I am deeply grateful for you all who went into actions at the risk of your own lives as well as for your families. Thank you so much. We will also do our best whatever we can. I wish you well. Thank you."



"It has been nearly three months since the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred on March 11. The degree of damage in the afflicted areas is becoming visible almost every day and a large number of people are cooperating toward reconstruction. The other day I saw SDF personnel working in protective clothing on television. Looking at the personnel trying hard to find missing persons and family mementos out of piles of things that had been swept from inside of houses by tsunami, I grieved at the scene. However, SDF personnel who are actually working for reconstruction there must be feeling far greater sadness than mine. Living together in Japan, I will do my best in what I can do now, even if small things, together with SDF personnel."