

The Challenges Japanese Ombudsman Has Faced After the Great East Japan Earthquake

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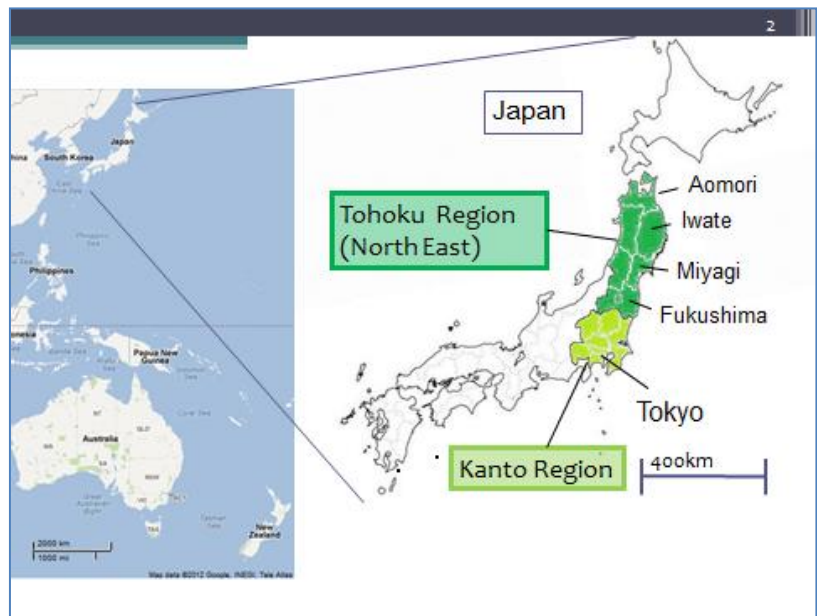
<Overview of the Great East Japan Earthquake>

The Great East Japan Earthquake, the largest earthquake observed in Japan's history with its magnitude of 9.0, occurred on March 11th of 2011. Strong tremors were observed throughout the Tohoku (North East) region and the Kanto region of Japan.

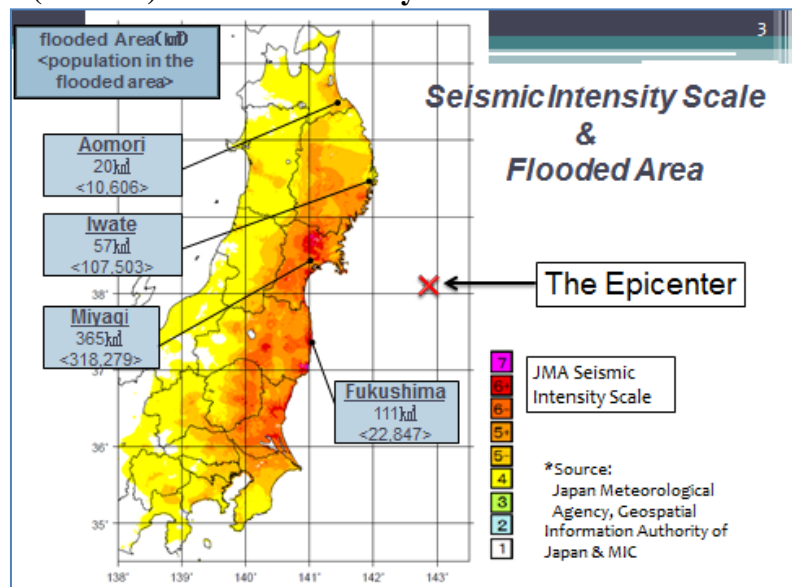
After the quake, a high tsunami hit the coastal areas and several kilometers inland. In modern history Japan has experienced several gigantic earthquakes but this Quake was exceptional in the size of the devastated area.

The area flooded by tsunami totalled about 561km², which is the equivalent of twice area of Wellington city. The number of people who lived in those flooded area was 459,235 in 4 prefectures in Tohoku, and that is 16.8% of their total population. In Kanto region 534,900 people lived in the flooded area.

(Chart 1) : Map of Japan



(Chart 2) : Seismic Intensity Scale & Flooded Area



(Table 1) : Casualties

As of March 11, 2012

	Total				
	(No. of people)	Iwate	Miyagi	Fukushima	Other Pref.
Killed	16,278	4,671	9,544	1,997	66
Missing	2,994	1,249	1,688	53	4
Injured	6,179	198	4,133	182	1,666

Source : Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Japan


(Table 2) : Damaged Properties (Residential Buildings)

As of March 11, 2012

	Total				
	(No. of buildings)	Iwate	Miyagi	Fukushima	Other Pref.
Total Collapse	129,198	20,185	84,728	20,160	4,125
Half Collapse	254,238	4,562	147,156	685,412	37,108
Partially Damaged	715,192	7,723	221,885	148,229	337,335

Source : Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Japan

(Table 3) : Situations of Evacuees (No. of people)

	March 14 2011	 June 07 2012
Evacuation Shelters	Around 468,600	234
Hotels and other Similar Facilities	n/a	6
Others (ex. Houses of relatives/friends etc.)	n/a	16,895
Houses away from original homes (ex. Temporary housings, public housings, hospitals)	n/a	329,852
Total	n/a	346,987

Source : Reconstruction Agency, Cabinet Office, Japan

(Table 4) : Damage in Stocks (Estimate)

Buildings, etc. (ex. Housing, offices, plants, machinery)	10.4 trillion yen
Lifeline Utilities (ex. Water & sewage, gas, electricity, communication & broadcasting facilities)	1.3 trillion yen
Public Infrastructure (ex. Rivers, roads, harbours drainage, airports)	2.2 trillion yen
Others (ex, agriculture, forestry and fisheries)	3.0 trillion yen
Total	16.9 trillion yen = US\$ 211 Billion

Source : Reconstruction Agency, Cabinet Office, Japan

Table 1 to Table 4 show the damages that the Quake and Tsunami caused. Due to the quake and the tsunami, over 18,000 people have died or are missing. And over 380,000 buildings have been fully or half

destroyed. Around 470,000 people had to evacuate after the quake, and even as of June 2012, over 340,000 people live away from their original homes. The evacuees include those who took refuge - after the incident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

Material damage from the quake and the tsunami is estimated to be 16.9 trillion yen, or over 200 billion US dollars, including lifeline infrastructures such as electricity, water and gas lines were severely damaged by ground shaking, liquefaction of the ground, and the tsunami. Telephone lines and base stations for mobile phones were damaged, thus limiting means of communication. The traffic network was disrupted, hindering supplies of fuel such as gasoline and kerosene, and that made transport within the area even more difficult.

<Pictures of Tsunami Damages>

Here are some pictures taken by our staff which highlight the tsunami damage.



Otsuchi, Iwate Prefecture



Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture



Kesenuma, Miyagi Prefecture

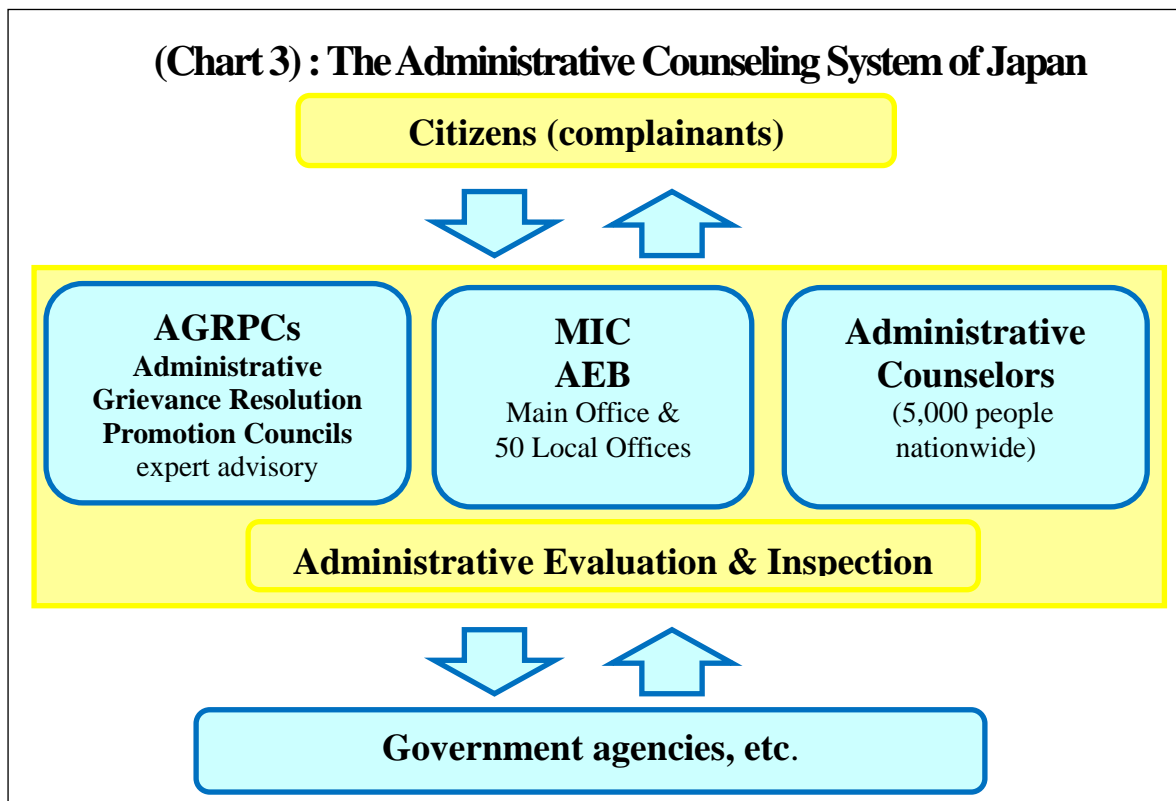


Rikuzen-Takata, Iwate Prefecture

In such terrible circumstances, to help and support people affected by the disaster, great efforts were made by the Government of Japan as well as local governments, NGOs, many organizations from abroad, and affected people themselves. My colleagues, especially those of Tohoku Regional Administrative Evaluation Bureau, and administrative counselors joined in the efforts with firm determination.

<Overview of Japanese administrative counseling system>

Chart 3 shows the images of Japanese Administrative Counseling System. To resolve complaints from citizens on public services, we at the Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications work together with about 5,000 Administrative Counselors, who are civil volunteers appointed nationwide, and expert advisory committees called “Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Councils”. This tripod structure of our Administrative Counseling System systematically handle on a daily basis a wide range of complaints by maintaining close mutual cooperation and provide functions equivalent to those exercised by ombudsmen in other countries.



The AEB has a main office and 50 local offices all over Japan and in all about 1,300 staff. Its main responsibility is to ensure that the system of administration operated by ministries and government agencies is effective and efficient in its capacity as an impartial third party and an independent governmental organ coordinating overall ministerial policies. About 250 staff are engaged in administrative counseling, receiving about 185,000 complaints, requests or inquiries every year directly from people or through administrative counselors. For every complaint received, the AEB conducts the necessary investigations and hopes to provide satisfactory solution by mediating with the relevant authorities.

Administrative counselors are commissioned private citizens. They act as unpaid volunteers and receive people’s complaints regarding administrative action. They give advice to complainants, convey the issues raised to the appropriate administrative agencies of the government. They function as go-betweens between local people and the administration, and it is therefore highly desirable that they have deep roots within the community where they live and are perceived by local residents as congenial and approachable.

The third part of our Administrative Counseling System is the Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council (AGRPC). The AGRPC is an advisory body for the Minister for MIC composed of seven magisterial experts from non-governmental circles, i.e. judicial, academic, journalism and so on. In order to expedite solutions for the more difficult issues arising from grievances received via administrative counseling, the Council has the function and capacity to reflect its own opinion on the mediation carried out by AEB. The judgments of the Council are based on freely-expressed ideas which derive from common sense and are not subject to the restrictions imposed by mazy administrative practice.

Besides receiving peoples' complaints, the AEB conducts "Administrative Evaluation and Inspection" as one of its statutory duties. Some issues, arising out of complaints of a repetitive or similar nature via the Administrative Counseling System, may be taken up by the AEB as part of its Administrative Evaluation and Inspection function, which involves conducting surveys and notifying the results and remedies to other government ministries and agencies when they indicate a need for improvement. Although the AEB is technically itself part of the government, it maintains a strictly independent and impartial stance with other governmental departments. Its object is to improve the democracy and efficiency of all government departments through scrutiny of their performance.

<Activities by Japanese Ombudsman after the Great East Japan Earthquake>

<Activities by AEB's local office>

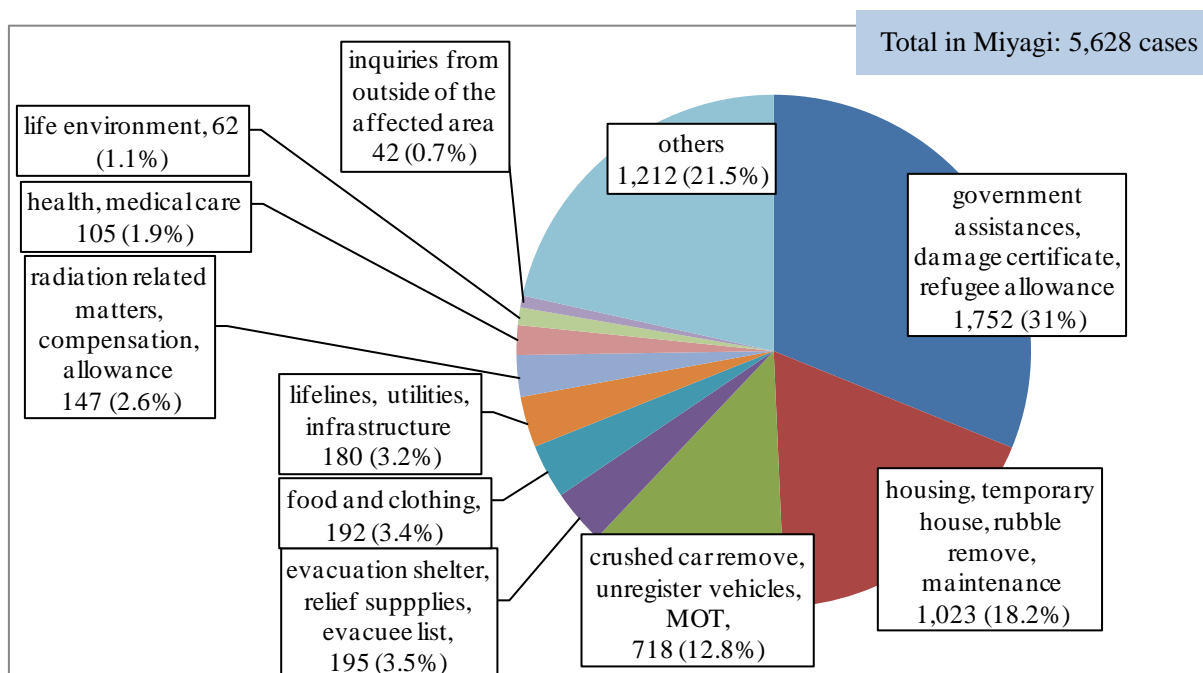
Just after the Quake, AEB local offices in Tohoku region offered the administrative counseling service everyday including weekends and holidays. They also opened a toll-free telephone service to receive complaints from people on matters related to the quake. Both services could be accessed at night-time via answer-phone services.

Some municipal government buildings were washed away, others in danger of collapse or were unable to work normally owing to the Tsunami. Thus, the AEB's toll-free telephone service played the role of a help desk, supplementing some of the functions of municipal governments.



The AEB's local offices provided general information on government support measures, as well as on basic services delivery such as electricity, gas, and water supplies. Many calls were inquiries about recovery policies, including issuance of a Damage Certificate which required the victim to apply for certain official dispensations. Chart 4 below shows complaints via toll-free counseling service by administrative area in Miyagi Prefecture.

**(Chart 4) : Complaints via Toll-free counseling service
by administrative area in Miyagi Prefecture (23 Mar 2011 – 31 Jan 2012)**



With limited means of communication, wall newspapers or leaflets were very effective tool for information. Important announcements and information from the government were put together, but people were in desperate need of more detailed and localized information.

Our local offices edited information directory on government services, tailored as much as possible to meet local needs. The brochures were distributed through municipal governments, administrative counselors, and places such as local shops.

In addition, they prepared so-called ‘Packages of procedures’ leaflets which showed victims a list of all documents and procedures they might need, plus references to the authorities responsible for applying government measures.

<Operation of special administrative counseling booths>

The AEB made use of its nationwide network by holding more than 150 “One-day Special Administrative Counseling Booths” in city/town halls and on visits to evacuation shelters. Representatives of various government agencies such as the Legal Affairs Bureau, the Taxation Bureau, the Japan Housing Finance Agency, prefectures, municipalities as well as private sector professionals including lawyers and specialists in radiation, mental health and financial advice were invited to attend the booths, in order to provide a ‘One-stop’ service.

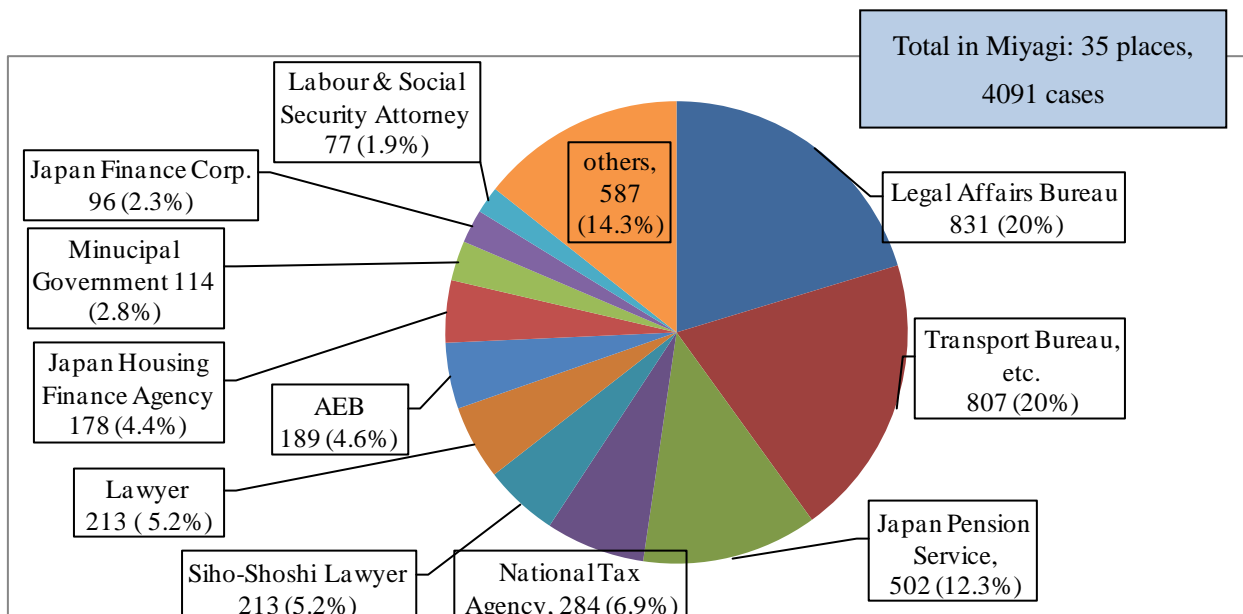


In the very early phase after the quake, local offices operated shuttle buses between the locations of special administrative counseling booths and the evacuation shelters, because many people did not have any means of transport other than walking.

From April 2011 to the end of March 2012, the AEB operated 151 special administrative counseling booths and received 8,199 complaints, requests or inquiries. There were a lot of inquiries relating to the registration of properties, and procedures for the application of various support measures. Chart 5 below shows Complaints lodged at the Special Administrative Counseling Booths by administrative agencies in Miyagi Prefecture.



(Chart 5) : Complaints via Special Administrative Counseling Booths by administrative agencies in Miyagi Prefecture (01 Apr 2011 – 31 Jan 2012)



<Cooperation with other Ministries and Agencies>

It is estimated that more than 410,000 cars were crushed or washed away by the Quake and Tsunami. We received a lot of complaints regarding procedures to unregister motor vehicles which, in the normal situation, required a visit to the District Transport Bureau to submit various documents. The AEB encouraged the Ministry

Regular process

- Must be filed at District Transport Bureaus
- Submission of documents such as vehicle registration certificate required

➔

Special process

- Could be filed at temporary booths
- Accepted even when some required documents are missing

of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT) to waive normal procedures and allow simplified documentation to be accepted at the special administrative counseling booths.

<Administrative Counselors' activities>

After the Quake, administrative counselors leveraged their existing roles and strengths quite spontaneously. Some administrative counselors, though themselves disaster victims, offered administrative counseling services immediately after the quake on their own initiative. They could listen to the true voice and needs of the afflicted people. A counselor in Kesenuma started his counseling service on the 12th March, that was the day after the Quake, in an evacuation shelter and transmitted evacuees' requests for food, water, clothes, tissues and bicycles. When he got a complaint of a shortage of relief supplies, he himself went to the municipal office and conveyed the supplies to the complainants. He also went to the Legal Affairs Bureau, Bank and Post Office to obtain necessary information for the people.



<Cases via the Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council>

One example the Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council giving an opinion after the Quake was related to the public telephones. Owing to the spread of mobile telephones, the number of public telephone had of course been decreasing in recent years. However, public telephones are an important tool in an emergency situation as they have precedence in connections over fixed and mobile phone lines, and they provide a free service. There were many complaints that it was very hard to find a public telephone after the Quake.

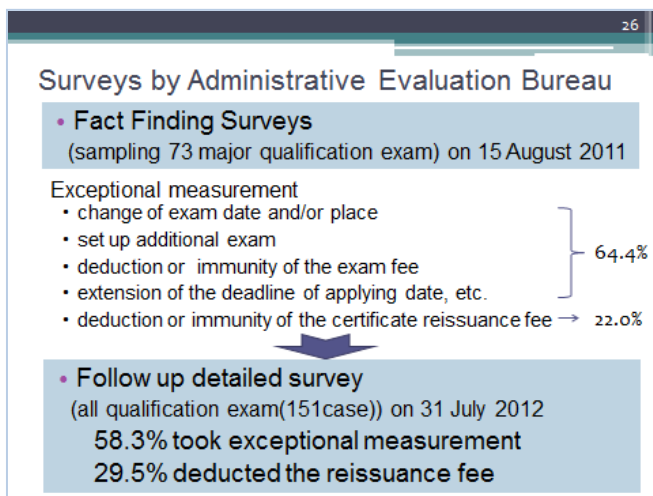
The AEB investigated and found there were often fewer public telephones than should be provided by law. The AGRPC recommended that the proper number of public phones be immediately installed at user friendly places. There has, therefore, been an increasing the number of public phones and some in-house phone have been



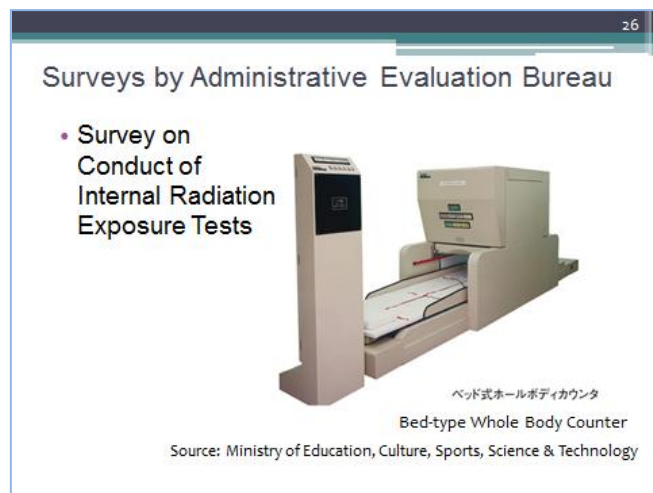
removed to outside so that they may be used for 24 hours. In addition, people can retrieve installation location via internet to notice the location of public phones around their home or offices beforehand.

<Cases via Administrative Evaluation & Inspection of AEB>

One of our surveys after the Quake was about the administration of official qualification examinations. It was conducted as of 31 July 2011, which was four and half months after the Quake. We found that although many ministries and agencies had initiated exceptional measures, such as changes of exam dates and deduction of license or certificate reissuance fees and so on, some exams including meteorologists' and tax accountants' had not considered any exceptional treatment to the disaster victims. We publicly announced the result on 15 August 2011, and requested to the relevant agencies to take into account the actions taken by other exam administrators.



Another survey was relating the incident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station on the conduct of internal radiation exposure tests of Fukushima residents, including evacuees from Fukushima. The demand for the tests was high, but sufficient number of people could not take the test because Fukushima prefecture could use only 5 usable “whole body counters”, which are the machines needed for such tests. Through a survey, we found that there were nearly 30 machines held by medical facilities nationwide but only a few were used for testing Fukushima residents. We notified the Cabinet Office so that they could recommend Fukushima to better utilize the national fund set up for health management of their residents, and conduct more tests using additional machines.



<Conclusion>

I have given you a few glimpses of how the Japanese ombudsman and its system altogether sought to respond to the needs of the victims of the Quake in a helpful and timely manner. I reaffirmed that administrative counselors were very near to the people and could work spontaneously. I think we were able to leverage our existing roles and strengths.

Although the recovery process has not been easy, there has been steady progress, and we continuously look for ways in which our distinctive role and reach in Japanese society, as well as our expertise, can be used to see that it continues.

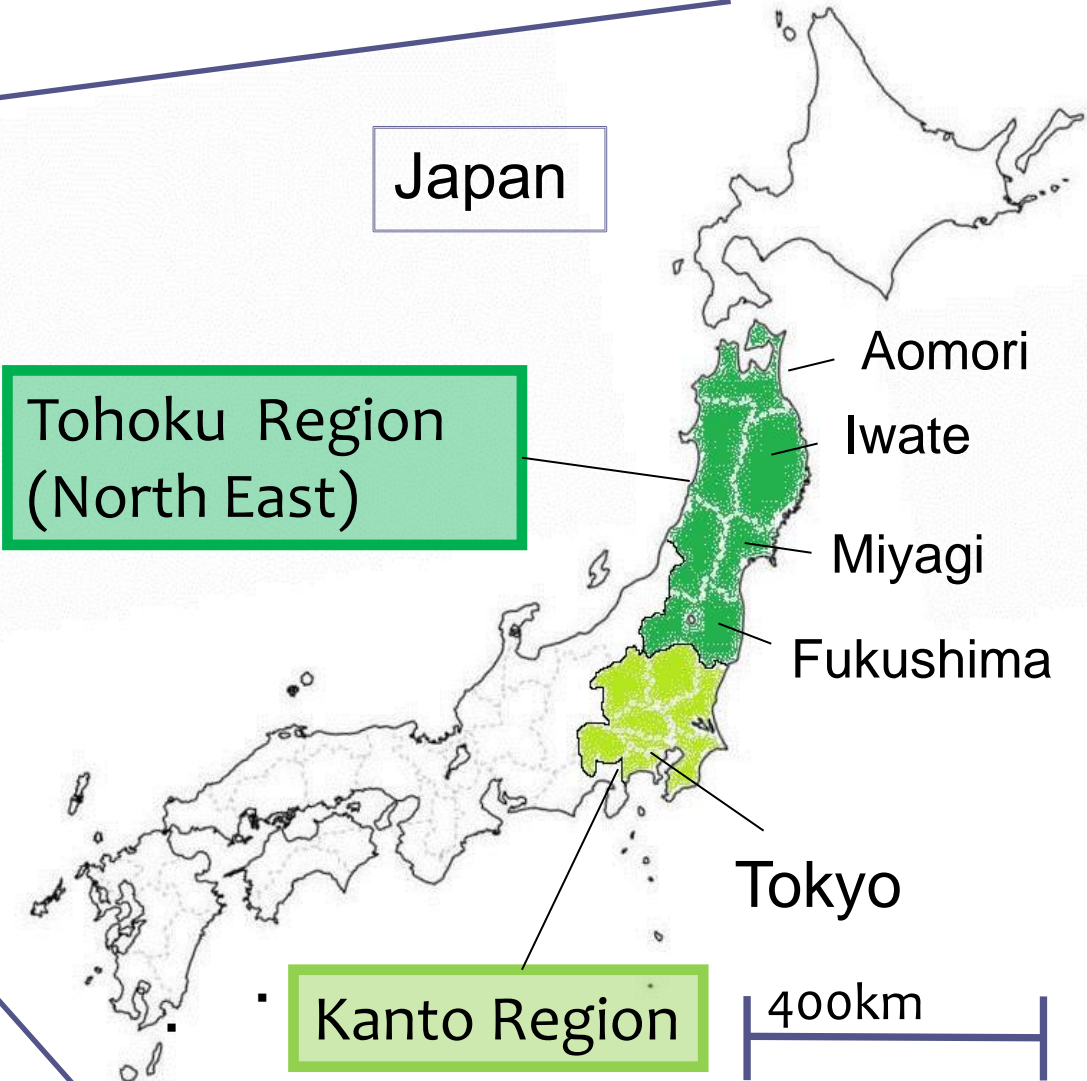
Challenges the Japanese Ombudsman Has Faced After the Great East Japan Earthquake

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Agenda

1. Overview of the Great East Japan Earthquake
2. Japanese administrative counseling system
3. Activities by Japanese Ombudsman after the Great East Japan Earthquake
4. Conclusion

1. Overview of the Great East Japan Earthquake



flooded Area(km²)
<population in the
flooded area>

Seismic Intensity Scale & Flooded Area

Aomori
20km²
<10,606>

Iwate
57km²
<107,503>

Miyagi
365km²
<318,279>

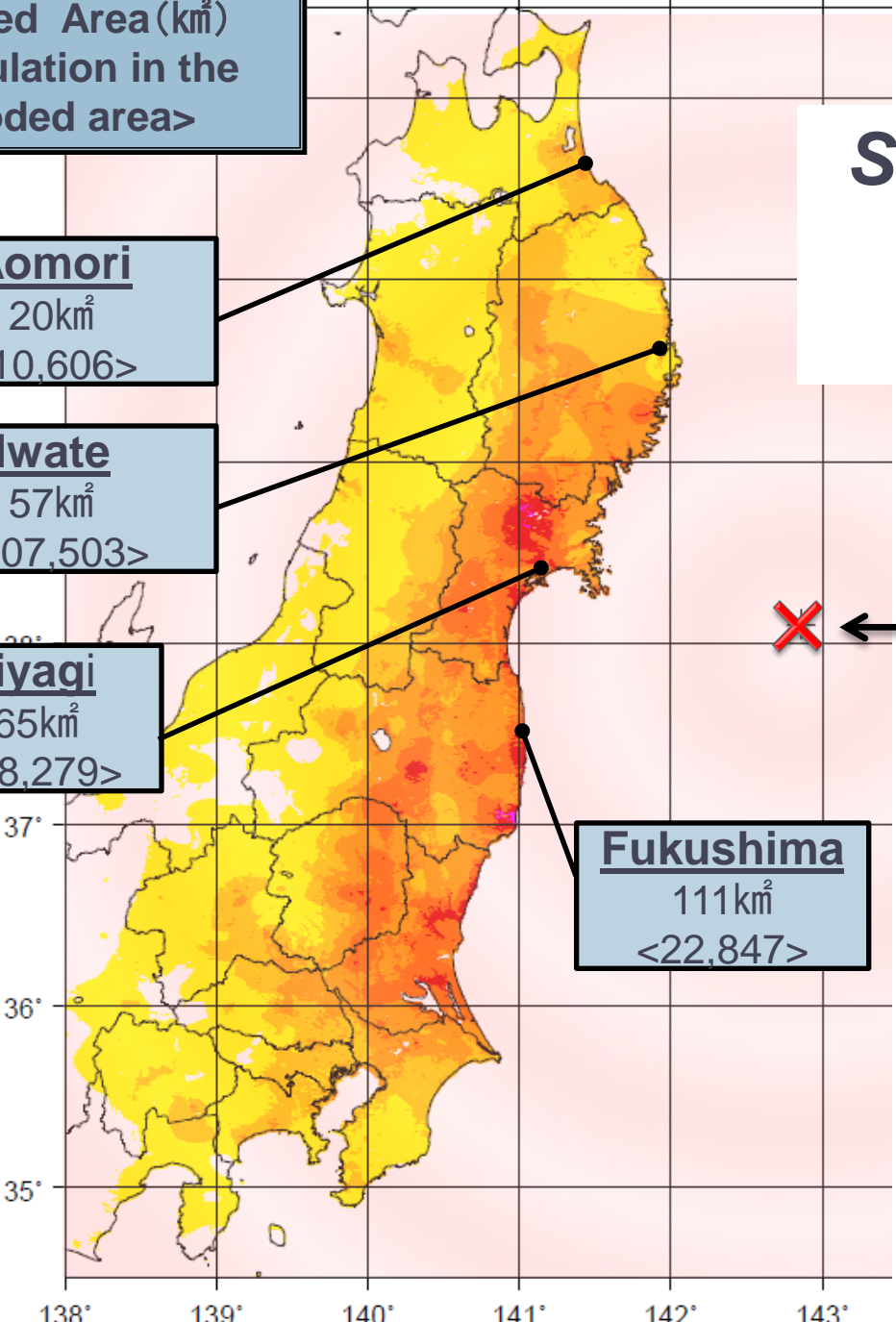
Fukushima
111km²
<22,847>

The Epicenter



JMA Seismic
Intensity Scale

*Source:
Japan Meteorological
Agency, Geospatial
Information Authority of
Japan & MIC



Tsunami Damage



Minami-Souma, Fukushima Prefecture

Tsunami Damage



Otsuchi, Iwate Prefecture

Tsunami Damage



Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture

Tsunami Damage



Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture

Foreign assistance and rescue efforts



US Navy/US Pacific Command
(Operation Tomodachi)

Tremendous support from the
international community

Assistance offered from

- 163 countries and regions
 - 43 international organizations
- (As of October 21st 2011)

Rescue teams were dispatched from
29 countries, regions and
international organizations

(As of October 21st 2011)



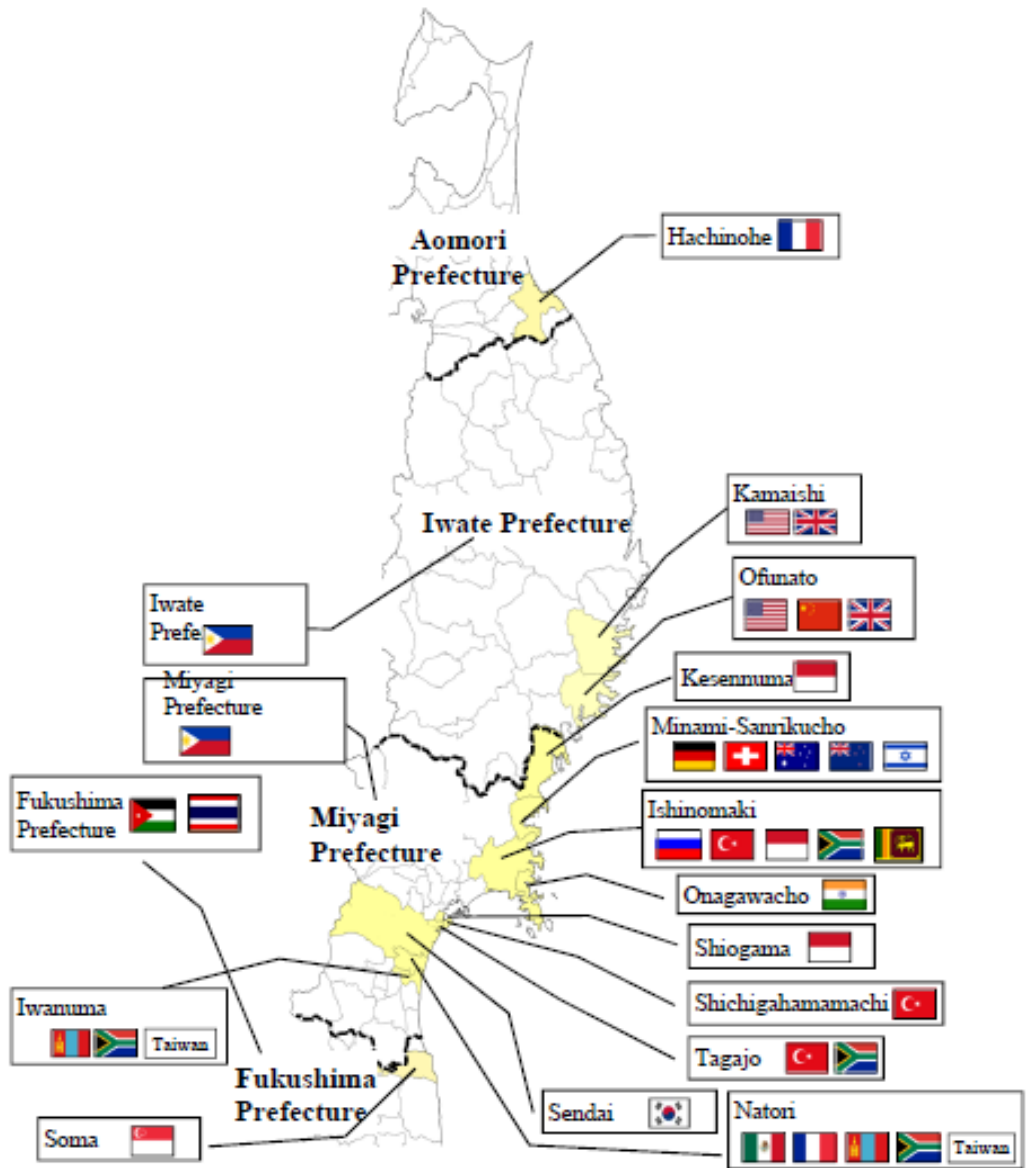
Ministry of Defence

Source: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Source: National Policy Unit, Japanese Government

Foreign assistance and rescue efforts

Outline of Operations of Rescue Teams from Foreign Countries and Regions



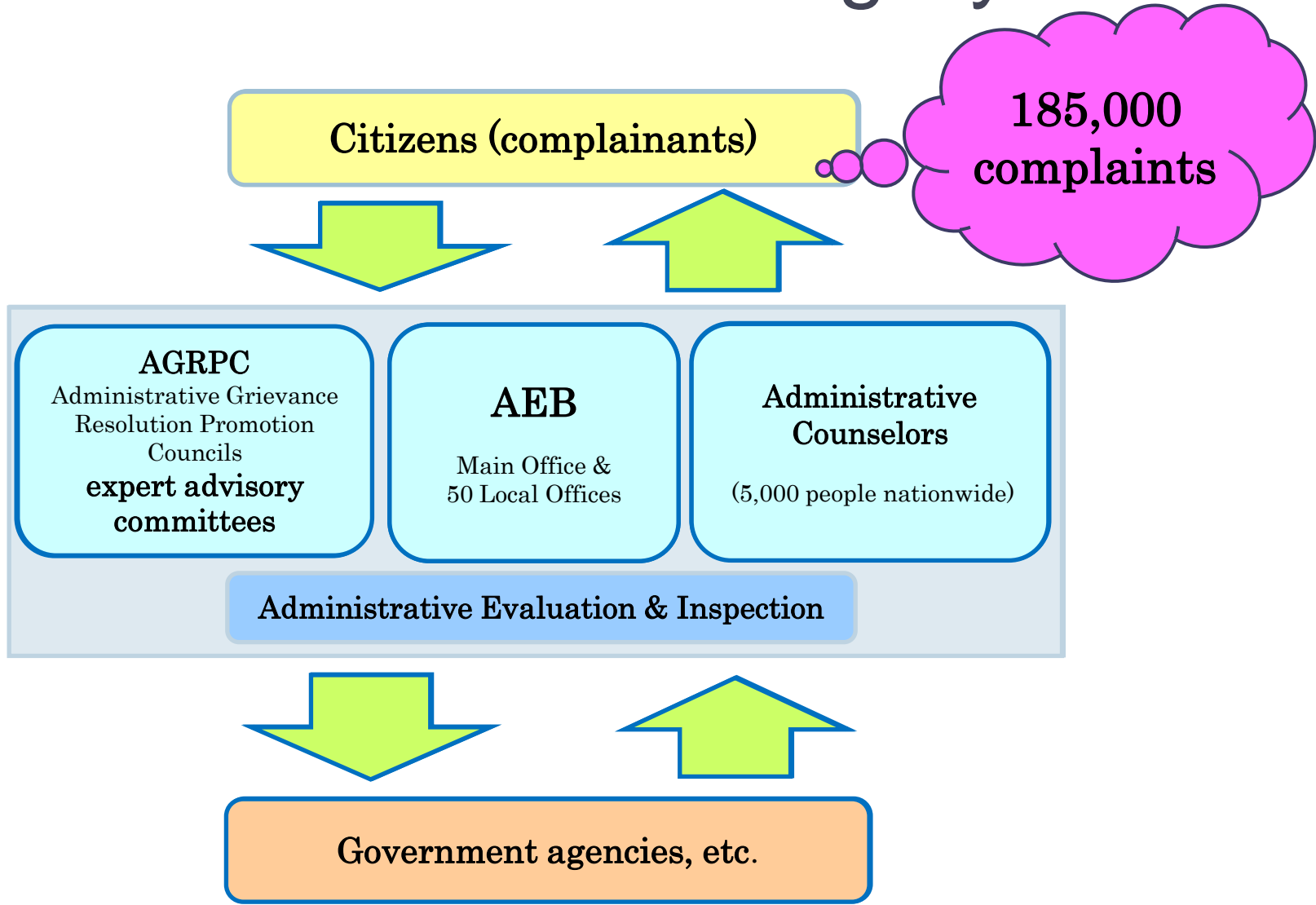
- Republic of Korea (12th - 23rd March) Team of 107 rescue members, 2 rescue dogs
- Singapore (13th - 15th March) Team of 5 rescue members, 5 rescue dogs
- Germany (14th - 15th March) Team of 41 rescue members, 3 rescue dogs
- Switzerland (14th - 16th March) Team of 27 rescue members, 9 rescue dogs
- U.S. (15th - 19th March) Team of 144 rescue members (including 12 rescue dogs)
- China (14th - 20th March) Team of 15 rescue members
- U.K. (15th - 17th March) Team of 77 rescue members (including 8 reporters), 2 rescue dogs
- Mexico (15th - 17th March) Team of 12 rescue members, 6 rescue dogs
- Australia (16th - 19th March) Team of 72 rescue members, 2 rescue dogs
- New Zealand (16th - 18th March) Team of 52 rescue workers
- France (16th - 23rd March) Team of 134 rescue members (including 11 Monacans)
- Taiwan (16th - 18th March) Team of 28 rescue members
- Russia (16th - 18th March) 75 rescue members in Team 1, 80 rescue members in Team 2
- Mongolia (17th - 19th March) Team of 12 rescue members
- Turkey (20th March - 8th April) Team of 32 rescue members
- Indonesia (19th - 23rd March) Team of 11 rescue members, 4 members (official and medical staff)
- South Africa (19th - 25th March) Team of 45 rescue members
- Israel (29th March - 10th April) Team of 53 medical staff
- India (29th March - 6th April) Team of 46 relief members
- Jordan (25th April - 12th May) Team of 4 medical staff
- Thailand (8th May - 3rd June) Two teams of 2 medical staff
- Sri Lanka (12th May - 1st June) Team of 15 recovery assistance staff (Staff of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights)
- Philippines (28th June - 11th July) Team of 3 medical staff

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Source: National Policy Unit, Japanese Government

2. Japanese administrative counseling system

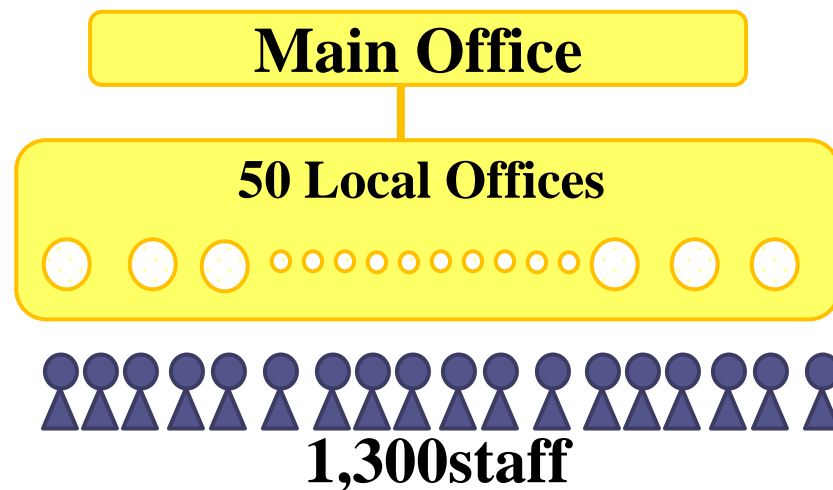
Administrative Counseling System



3. Activities by Japanese Ombudsman after the Great East Japan Earthquake

3-1. Activities by AEB's local office

Administrative Evaluation Bureau



Activities by AEB's Local Office

Toll-Free Administrative Counseling Telephone Service



Information Provision in the Devastated Area - Wall Newspaper in Evacuation Shelter –



Special Administrative Counseling Booths Set Up in the Affected Areas



Miyako, Iwate Prefecture

Special Administrative Counseling Booth Set Up in the Affected Areas



Radiology Expert
in Minami-Souma, Fukushima Prefecture

3-2. Cooperation with other Ministries and Agencies

Special Process for Unregistering Motor Vehicles



3-3. Administrative Counselors' Activities

Administrative Counselors
5,000 people nationwide



- ✓ **Commissioned private citizen**
- ✓ **Unpaid Volunteers**

Administrative Counselor in an Evacuation Shelter



March 28, 2011 Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture

Administrative Counselor in a Devastated Area



Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture

3-4. The Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council

Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council expert advisory committees



**7 magisterial experts
from various
professions**

3-5. Cases via Administrative Evaluation & Inspection of AEB

**Administrative Evaluation Bureau's
investigating function**



**Administrative Evaluation
&
Inspection**

Surveys by Administrative Evaluation Bureau

- Fact Finding Surveys on Official Qualification Exams
(sampling 73 major qualification exam) on 15 August 2011

Exceptional measurement

- change of exam date and/or place
 - set up additional exam
 - deduction or immunity of the exam fee
 - extension of the deadline of applying date, etc.
 - deduction or immunity of the certificate reissuance fee → 22.0%
- } 64.4%



- Follow up detailed survey
(all qualification exam(151case)) on 31 July 2012
58.3% took exceptional measurement
29.5% deducted the reissuance fee

4. Conclusion

Administrative counselors:

- ✓ Near to the people
- ✓ Work spontaneously
- ✓ Unpaid
- ✓ Humanitarian activities



Steady Recovery



Children's dance



Temporary housing
and cosmos flowers

Thank You!

