



Disaster Response HQ Difficulties: Collecting & Sharing Information

Due to continued aftershocks of seismic intensity 5 and higher, elevators within the prefectural offices were stopped, meaning staff had to take the stairs to the disaster center on the 10th floor of the new building. Other problems included the National Emergency Disaster Local Response HQ (New Building 2F) being located on a different floor and inadequate space allocated for Self-Defense Forces and lifeline workers.

Improvements:

A new Disaster Prevention Center was constructed, with the operation room located on a lower floor and adequate space available for national agencies, Self-Defense Forces, lifeline workers, etc.

Inadequate Supplies and Info Due to **Difficulty Understanding Current Conditions**

Due to the foreshock and main shock being seismic intensity level 7 earthquakes, and due to subsequent aftershocks, many residents evacuated to places they felt safest. This resulted in a significant number of evacuees who took refuge in their cars or roofed outdoor areas.

Improvements:

Support initiatives for evacuees outside of designated shelters were assessed, including adding details to the Kumamoto Prefecture Disaster Prevention Plan on taking refuge in cars, reducing evacuees outside of designated shelters, and instructing municipalities on how to efficiently understand the current state of affairs.

Inadequate Experience with Disaster Waste Disposal

There were difficulties in finding disposal sites because there was a lack of personnel with knowledge and experience in the practical and technical aspects of waste management, and because local municipalities had not selected sites for temporary disaster waste storage beforehand.

Regular sessions to train personnel were held throughout the prefecture, and support was provided to municipalities to formulate their own disaster waste management plans for selecting temporary storage sites, disposal methods, etc.



2016 Kumamoto Earthquakes

Supply Distribution Issues Due to Lack of Personnel & Sorting/ Managing Know-How

Due to a lack of personnel and knowledge about sorting and managing supplies, issues arose in "last mile" distribution after the earthquake, as supplies were left stranded at municipal supply centers. Additionally, the prefecture's supply center was damaged in the earthquakes and it was difficult to find alternative facilities.

Improvements:

Agreements were signed to secure distribution networks and equipment such as forklifts, and the prefecture's supply distribution center (Grandmesse Kumamoto) was reinforced to withstand earthquakes better.



Ensuring Suitable Housing for Disaster Victims

Among the disaster victims living in temporary housing, many wished to ndependently rebuild their homes. However, issues arose regarding lack of information about home reconstruction loans and home construction contractors available to evacuees.

Improvements:

Information was provided to disaster victims by publishing a guidebook for "Kumamoto-style recovery housing" (high-quality, low-cost housing built by local construction companies) and exhibiting model homes. Multiple home reconstruction initiatives were implemented, including **Reverse Mortgage Interest Subsidy Program for those** aged 60 and over, and a Home Reconstruction Interest Subsidy Project to assist a wide variety of households, including those raising children, in rebuilding their homes.



July 2020 Heavy Rains

Damage to Government Buildings Critical for Disaster Response

Due to flooding damage in government buildings, emergency generators and fire pumps were unusable, and there were disruptions to power and communications.

Improvements:

Improvements were made to government buildings, e.g., raising the height of emergency power generators, and communication methods were diversified and strengthened by deploying third-generation satellite communication equipment to all municipalities.

Victims with Special Needs

Even with individual evacuation plans for people with special needs, these plans cannot be implemented in certain circumstances, like when those providing support are also disaster victims. There were also cases where special needs facilities lacked or had inadequate evacuation plans.

Improvements:

Individual plans for people needing evacuation support and evacuation plans for special needs facilities were put together and revised, and disaster-specific training is being done.



Some residents resorted to vertical evacuation at home as, because water levels rose and roads flooded rapidly, communication was only possible between neighbors and evacuation routes were already impassable.

Improvements:

The prefecture promotes its "My Timeline" initiative, which makes clear what every resident should do to evacuate in a disaster. Residents are also encouraged to pay attention to local disaster weather and evacuation information, and evacuate early before conditions get worse.









Strengthening Coordination During Disasters

In order to protect the lives of residents during a disaster, it is extremely important for prefectural and municipal governments to work closely together and to share information with the police, fire department, and self-defense forces, etc.

Improvements:

We hold repeated practical training to practice disaster response procedures and to strengthen coordination with other organizations.



Disaster drill (Kumamoto Prefectural Offices)

Staff Shortages at Municipal Volunteer Centers

Volunteer recruitment was limited to within the prefecture due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a shortage of personnel and experience.

Improvements:

The Kumamoto Volunteer Office was set up and, to get more volunteers, local companies and organizations were contacted to match volunteers with locations and volunteer buses were put into operation.



