

Chapter 1: Police Organization and the Public Safety Commission System

Section 1: Police Organization

1 Public Safety Commission System

The Public Safety Commission System serves a significant role in ensuring the democratic operation and political neutrality of the police, and the National Public Safety Commission (NPSC) was set up on a national level to supervise the NPA, while Prefectural Public Safety Commissions (PPSC) were set up at prefectural levels to supervise the prefectural police. In addition, the Minister of State is appointed as the Chairman of the NPSC in order to coordinate the two requirements of ensuring the political neutrality of the police and clarifying the administrative responsibilities of the Cabinet in relation to public safety.

2 National and Prefectural Police Organization

In contrast to the prefectural police that assume centralized enforcement duties, the NPA, as a national agency, formulates police systems and also conducts police operations regarding cases involving national public safety, undertakes the administration of matters which form the foundation of police activities such as police education and training, police communications, criminal identification as well as the development of police administration. In addition, as of April 1, 2013, along with police headquarters, police academies and other facilities, there were 1,173 police stations in the 47 prefectural police forces.

Section 2: Public Safety Commission Activities

1 National Public Safety Commission (NPSC)

In accordance with the Police Act and other laws, the NPSC supervise the NPA by indicating all-encompassing policies and undertaking administrative tasks that fall within the scope of its authority, such as the establishment of NPSC Regulations, appointment of or taking disciplinary action against local senior police officers (officers among prefectural police organizations ranked Assistant Commissioner and higher), confirmation of the relevancy of practical objectives and requirements when designating a designated Boryokudan (organized crime group), etc. It also gives guidance to the NPA concerning measures to prevent the various cases of misconduct by police personnel. During 2012, the NPSC established 14 NPSC rules including the “Regulations concerning the Partial

Revision of Enforcement Regulations governing the Act on Prevention of Unjust Acts by Organized Crime Group Members”.

Although the NPSC usually convenes regular meetings every week on Thursdays, other than regular meetings, extraordinary meetings, such as the meeting held on September 1, 2012 to discuss FY2013 NPA budget request proposals, are also convened. In addition, the NPSC strives to maintain an understanding of the state of public safety and police operations through the mutual exchange of views between members of the commission, and by listening to reports from the NPA, conducting visits by NPSC members to nationwide locations, exchanging views with PPSC members and conducting on-site inspections of police activities.



Regular meeting of the NPSC

Case: In January 2013, the Chairman of the NPSC visited Fukuoka prefecture to inspect the site of an attempted murder incident involving the use of firearms in Kita-Kyushu city. The Chairman offered words of encouragement to officers of dispatch units from various prefectural police forces engaged in measures against organized crime, and exchanged views with the Prefectural Governor, the Mayor of Fukuoka City, the Mayor of Kita-Kyushu City and other officials.



NPSC Chairman (left) encouraging dispatch unit officers

2 Prefectural Public Safety Commission (PPSC)

Prefectural Public Safety Commissions supervise the prefectural police by undertaking many administrative tasks in relation to citizens' lives such as issuing drivers' licenses, regulating traffic, awarding benefit payments to victims of crime, supervision of various types of business such as antique dealing, and by receiving reports from Chiefs of Police at regular meetings and other assemblies and giving guidance on incidents and accidents occurring within the jurisdiction, incidence of disasters and subsequent efforts made by the police, the state of public safety and the various police policies implemented in view of the state of public safety, organizational status, personnel management, etc.

PPSCs generally convene three or four regular meetings a month and also strive to maintain an understanding of the state of public safety and police operations through participation in Police Station Councils, discussions with relevant organizations such as the board of education, and on-site inspections of police activities, etc.

Case: In August 2012, members of the Tottori PPSC held a meeting for an exchange of views with the Tottori Prefectural Board of Education on "Cooperation between the police and the Board of Education regarding bullying issues", in which views on the status of progress against bullying and how future cooperation should be conducted were exchanged.



Members of the Tottori PPSC (farside) exchanging views with members of the Tottori Prefectural Board of Education

3 Mutual Communications between Public Safety Commissions

The NPSC and all PPSCs hold various liaison conferences in order to maintain constant close communications. During 2012, two liaison meetings between the NPSC and all PPSCs nationwide were held, in which views were exchanged concerning the status of police supervision by the PPSCs and other matters.

Additionally, during 2012, in each Regional Police Bureau and in Hokkaido, a total of fourteen liaison meetings were held between jurisdictional public safety commissions, and between the Hokkaido Public Safety Commission and the Area Public Safety Commission of Hokkaido. Members of the NPSC also attended these meetings which involved reports concerning the state of public safety and the efforts of each prefecture, and exchanges of views.

Furthermore, exchanges of views between PPSCs and liaison meetings between the PPSCs of the designated prefectures including Tokyo, Hokkaido, Kyoto, and Osaka were also held.

Case: During 2012, members of all PPSCs visited Fukushima prefecture. These visitors inspected the status of police activities in the affected areas and offered words of encouragement to dispatch unit officers and specially assigned personnel. In addition, taking advantage of these opportunities, views on how PPCS activities should be conducted in the event of large-scale disasters were exchanged with members of the Fukushima PPSC.



Exchange of views between Fukushima and Shizuoka PPSC members