COMMUNITY SAFETY

1. Community Police

A. Community Police Officer

Community police officers maintain vigil day and night, and they are the first responders to emergency calls from citizens. Through neighborhood patrols and routine home visits, community police officers keep a close distance with citizens. Their actions ensure the safety and peace of the community by preventing crimes, apprehending criminal suspects, controlling traffic, offering juvenile guidance, protecting lost children and inebriates, and providing counseling to citizens in trouble.

B. Koban and Chuzaisho

Koban and Chuzaisho are at the heart of police activities in Japan. Koban (police box) is a place where community police officers mainly carry out their work by a relatively small number of police officers (3-5 officers). There are also residential police boxes called Chuzaisho usually staffed by a single officer.

Each Koban and Chuzaisho covers specific areas and they are situated as a branch of the police station. They are responsible for maintaining the safety of the respective areas by figuring out each security situation and taking requests and concerns of residents into consideration.

There are approximately 6,300 Koban and 6,400 Chuzaisho in Japan. The existence of Koban and Chuzaisho provides a sense of reassurance to the residents.

Koban has attracted a great deal of attention worldwide, and in fact, countries such as Singapore and Indonesia have introduced Japanese-style Koban.

C. History of Koban and Chuzaisho

In the Meiji Era (1868-1912), Japan rapidly built the modern nation state. Under this process, Japan introduced the modern police system. Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department that was established in 1874, introduced the original Koban, and this was adopted by other prefectures. Furthermore, the government ordered the prefectures (except for Tokyo) to establish residential police boxes (Chuzaisho) in 1888. Subsequently, they have developed into the current Koban.

D. Community Police Activities

(1) Vigilance at the Koban

Vigilance at the Koban and Chuzaisho is performed by standing in front or sitting inside, enabling police officers to respond immediately to any incident.

While keeping a constant watch, they conduct a myriad of routine tasks, such as receiving crime reports from citizens, handling lost and found articles, and providing counseling to citizens in trouble.

(2) Patrol

Police officers patrol either on foot, by bicycle or by car in order to tackle and reduce crime. While on patrol, they question suspicious persons, warn citizens in high crime areas, offer juvenile guidance, and protect lost children and inebriates.

(3) Routine Visits to Homes and Workplaces
Community police officers assigned to Koban and Chuzaiso make regular visits to houses and offices. During these visits they give advice on crime and accident prevention, listen to residents' concerns and welcome suggestions for improvement of police services. They also inquire about the family composition and how to contact the resident in an emergency.

(4) Consultation Services for Citizens

A general contact desk for consultations has been established in the Police Administration Department to enable police to carry out swift and certain organizational response to consultations from citizens. In light of the consultation content, the police respond with collaboration among relevant departments, and take necessary steps to relieve the anxieties of persons seeking consultation, including giving warnings to, and arresting, the persons in question.

(5) Koban (Chuzaiso) Liaison Council

There are about 12,000 Koban (Chuzaiso) Liaison Councils nationwide. Each council consists of community residents from various walks of life. Council members express opinions, make requests, and study and discuss community issues with the police to promote community safety activities.

E. Mobile Units of Community Police

Radio-equipped patrol cars are deployed at each PPH, police station, Koban and Chuzaisio. Police officers use them for routine patrol and emergency response. These cars remain in constant radio contact with their police station and the communications command center of the PPH. When an emergency is reported, this rapid response capability plays a major role in the quick resolution of such incidents.

Also, community police deploys boats and helicopters.

F. Emergency Response "Dial 110"

(1) Communications Command Center (CCC)

Reacting to emergency calls such as "Dial 110", CCC in each PPH dispatches police officers at Koban and Chuzaiso, patrol cars, and other mobile police units.

(2) Current State of "Dial 110"

The number of "Dial 110" calls has decreased annually. In 2016, the police received about 9.1 million calls nationwide. This means that on any given day the CCC receives a call about every 3.5 seconds. (Refer to Police Info-Communications on page 36 about Communications Command Systems.)

2. Crime Prevention

Although 2002 was the worst year on record with 2,850,000 reported Penal Code offenses, the number has decreased by 65% as a result of enhanced crime prevention measures carried out by the police along with the efforts of society.

However, the function of neighborhoods as a crime prevention has