

### Topic III: Working towards the Realization of Orderly Bicycle Traffic

When riding a bicycle, let's bear in mind that the bicycle is a vehicle and observe the rules. Also, drivers of motor vehicles and pedestrians should also be aware of bicycle rules, so that we can all be considerate towards each other and focus on safety.

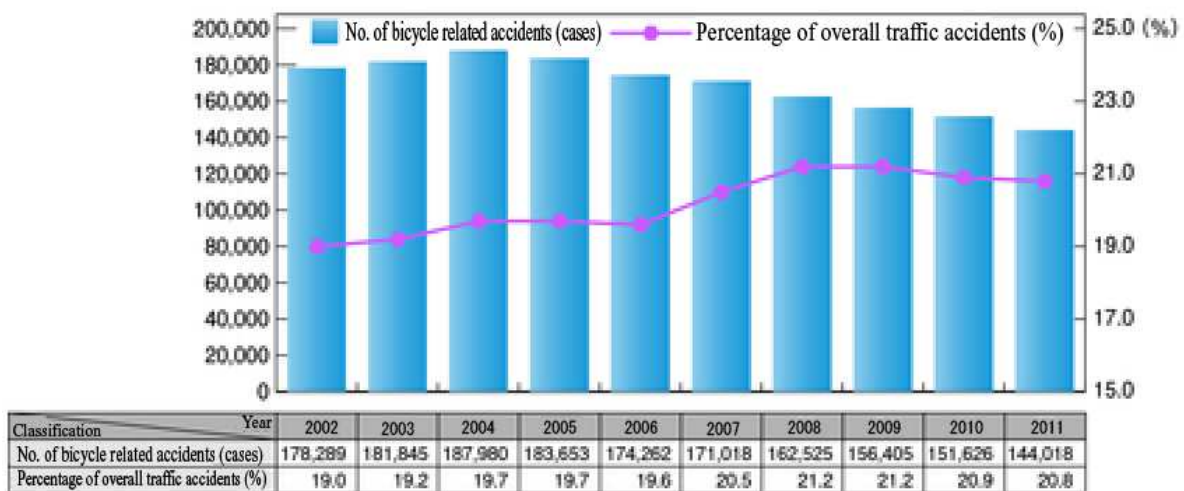
Bicycles are used by a wide range of people from young to old, and more recently, with the disruption to traffic and other matters caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake, bicycles have come under the spotlight as a means of getting to and from work as well as other purposes. However, on another note, accidents involving bicycles account for over 20% of total traffic accidents, and there is an endless stream of criticism from the public regarding the traffic rule violations and manners of bicycle users, while at the same time, the development of the traffic environment for bicycle users is insufficient.

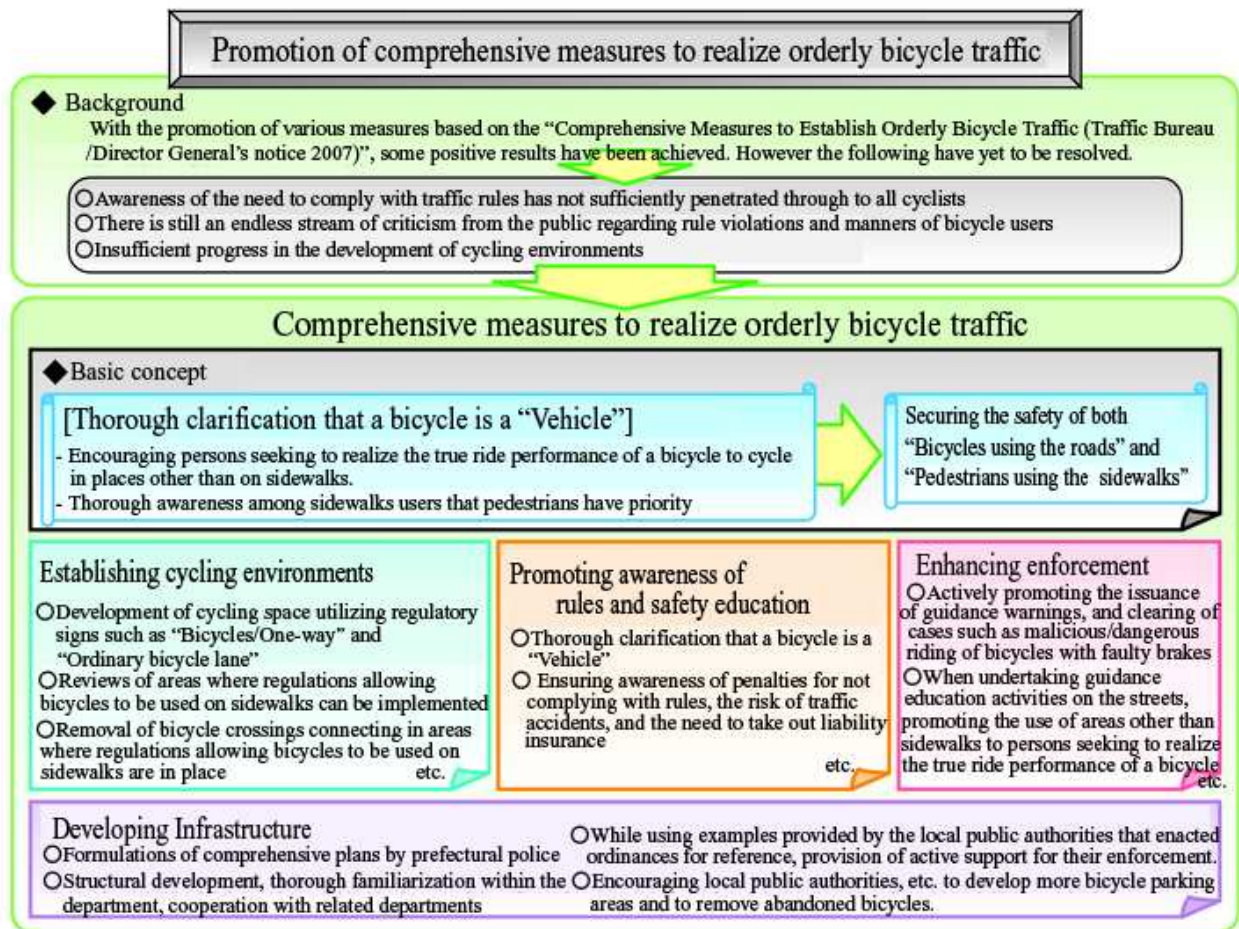
In view of this situation, the NPA issued a notice entitled "Promotion of Comprehensive Measures to Realize Orderly Bicycle Traffic" in October 2011, and are now fully engaged in measures for bicycles in cooperation with related agencies, organizations, and others.

#### (1) The Basic Concept of Measures for Bicycles

In view of the revision of the Road Traffic Act in 2007, police have been engaged in a variety of measures aiming to establish orderly bicycle traffic. However, in addition to the continued promotion of measures hitherto, the basic concept of the notice issued this time also places a particular emphasis on raising awareness among all persons who comprise the "traffic society", that bicycles are also vehicles, in a bid to secure the safety of both cyclists and pedestrians.

Trend in the No. of bicycle related accidents and percentage of overall traffic accidents





## (2) Measures for the Realization of Orderly Bicycle Traffic

Under the previously mentioned basic concept, police are comprehensively promoting measures such as the establishment of bicycle traffic environments, promoting full awareness of rules and safety education among cyclists, and reinforcing enforcement against cycling related offenses.

### 1) Establishing Bicycle Traffic Environments

To enable those who comprise the bulk of traffic, pedestrians and cyclists and others, to make their journeys safely and co-exist appropriately, police are striving to secure the safety of cyclists and pedestrians by coordinating with road administrators to develop dedicated cycling spaces (bicycle lanes<sup>4</sup> and bicycle paths<sup>5</sup>) and by undertaking reviews of areas where traffic regulations that allow “ordinary” bicycles<sup>6</sup> to be used on footpaths can be implemented.



Example of a bicycle lane  
(Yokohama City, Kanagawa)



Example of a bicycle path  
(Kagoshima City, Kagoshima)

<sup>4</sup>: Dedicated vehicular lane for bicycles specified under traffic regulations

<sup>5</sup>: Dedicated cycling space separated from pedestrians using curb lines or fencing, etc.

<sup>6</sup>: Bicycles or tricycles that conform in size and structure to specific standards that are not being used to pull other

vehicles.

## 2) Ensuring Cyclists are Fully Aware of Cycling Rules

In coordination with local public authorities, schools, bicycle related businesses, etc. police are working to ensure full awareness of bicycle traffic rules among a wide range of cyclists such as children, students, the elderly, and housewives using the “Traffic Safety Education Guidelines”, and the “Five Rules of Safe Cycling” and other relevant materials.

**Five Rules of Safe Cycling**

- 1 For bicycles, roads are the rule, sidewalks are the exception
- 2 Stay on the left hand side of roads
- 3 Give pedestrians right of way on sidewalks and ride slowly on the side nearest the road
- 4 Follow the safety rules
  - Cycling under the influence of alcohol, two persons using a single-seat bicycle, cycling side-by-side is prohibited
  - Use lights at night
  - Comply with traffic lights, stop signs and safety checks
- 5 Children should wear helmets

## 3) Promoting bicycle safety education

Through coordination with schools and other institutions, the police are promoting bicycle safety education for children and students, endeavouring to provide enriched educational content including accident re-enactment with stuntmen and bicycle classes involving participation, hands-on experience, and practice using bicycle simulators. During 2011, about 30,000 bicycle classes were held across Japan for children, students, the elderly, etc. which were attended by about 4.4 million persons. In addition, police are endeavouring to implement education from the perspective of motor vehicle drivers, covering points for consideration in order to secure bicycle safety, etc. by making use of every driver education opportunity, such as courses during license renewal.



Stuntmen re-enacting an accident

## 4) Enhancing Enforcement against Bicycles

Focusing on priority areas and routes<sup>7</sup> for bicycle guidance education, police are reinforcing guidance and warning activities against violations such as riding with no lights, two persons on a single seat bicycle, ignoring traffic lights, and failing to stop at stop signs, and also taking strict steps including enforcement of regulations such as the issuance of traffic tickets against persons riding bicycles with faulty brakes (no brakes, etc.) and other malicious or dangerous traffic violations that have resulted in specific damage or injury to other vehicles or pedestrians or that have repeatedly violated the rules and ignored previous guidance and warnings.



Police officers enforcing regulations regarding bicycles with faulty brakes

<sup>7</sup>: In view of the incidence of traffic accidents between cyclists and pedestrians, and complaints and requests from local residents, police are promoting on-street guidance education activities targeting cyclists at 1,860 sites nationwide (as of January 1, 2012).