

# Part 1: Special Feature and Topics

## Special Feature: Police Activities in an Aging Japanese Society

### Introduction

The special feature of this year's white paper is "Police Activities in an Aging Japanese Society."

As of October 1, 2019, Japan's aging rate (percentage of population aged 65 and older in total population) reached a record high of 28.4%, and it was at the highest level among developed countries. The aging in Japan is presumed to continue to grow even further due to an increase in the population aged 65 years and older while the total population has decreased. In light of this situation, the Special Feature Section addresses the recent security situation and state of police activities by detailing two themes: "Police Initiatives to Protect the Elderly from Crimes and Accidents" and "Preventing and Responding to Crimes and Accidents by the Elderly."

The total number of penal code offenses known to the police in 2019 was 748,559, and although, same as in 2018, this number was the smallest one since World War II, the percentage of cases involving damage to the elderly has consistently increased among all penal code offenses since 2009. In particular, approximately 80% of the all victims of special fraud are the elderly. As society gets older, prevention of these crimes has become an urgent mission.

To protect the elderly from crimes and accidents, police promote many activities such as preventing special fraud and illicit commercial practices that target the elderly, preventing traffic accidents by senior pedestrians, and finding the lost elderly with dementia.

Meanwhile, based on the fact that the ratio of the penal code offenses by the elderly has increased in recent years, preventing crimes committed by the elderly and the appropriate treatment of senior detainees have become more important.

There is also an urgent need to promote measures to prevent traffic accidents by senior drivers. The police are working on establishing an environment that makes it easy for the elderly concerned about driving motor vehicles and motorized bicycles to voluntarily return their driver's licenses. Also, in response to the occurrence of tragic traffic accidents by senior drivers, the license system for senior drivers has been reviewed.

The necessity and importance of police activities in response to an aging society will become more and more crucial. We hope that this special feature will deepen public understanding of police efforts in an aging society and help people to think about what measures are needed to keep our society safe.