Section 2 Public Relations Activities, Information Disclosure, and Related Activities

1 Various Public Relations Activities

As the activities of the MOD/SDF cannot be carried out without the understanding and support of the Japanese people, it is important to be proactive in undertaking easily comprehensible public relations activities and to gain the trust and cooperation of the public.

According to a “Public Opinion Survey on the Self-Defense Forces and Defense Issues” conducted by the Cabinet Office (in January 2018), the public expectations and evaluations towards the SDF have been increasing as the scope of MOD/SDF activities has expanded both domestically and internationally. In light of this result, the MOD/SDF will continue to conduct a variety of PR activities, thereby striving to ensure better understanding of the current status of the MOD/SDF.

In addition, given that understanding and support from foreign countries are also of utmost importance for the SDF to conduct its missions successfully, it is essential that the MOD strengthens efforts to provide information to foreign countries about MOD/SDF initiatives, including about SDF activities abroad.

Information Communication for Domestic and International Audiences

The MOD/SDF conducts PR activities using the Internet such as official websites, video distribution, and social media (Social Networking Service) as well as actively distributes information through various means including television broadcasting, large-sized billboards, and the showing of PR videos on trains.

The MOD has also been making great efforts to provide accurate information in a more extensive and timely fashion, by creating brochures, PR videos, and “Manga-Style Defense of Japan (Comic),” as well as providing assistance in editing the PR magazine “MAMOR” and cooperation on media coverage.

Furthermore, based on the increasing interest in the MOD/SDF initiatives by the international community, the MOD has been striving to gain the understanding of people in other countries by publishing the monthly English magazine, “Japan Defense Focus(JDF).” It is proactively transmitting information to the international community through efforts such as providing international media with opportunities for press coverage, enhancement of the English section of the MOD website, publishing English versions of the defense white paper and brochures, as well as producing PR videos.

2 Events and PR Facilities

The MOD/SDF conducts activities to widely inform nationals of the current circumstances of the SDF. These activities include the GSDF Fuji Fire Power Exercise, cruises to experience MSDF vessels, and demonstration flights and boarding experiences on aircraft. In addition, at camps and bases throughout the country, events including equipment exhibitions and unit tours are held on occasions such as the anniversary of a unit’s foundation. In some instances, they also hold parades throughout the cities, with cooperation from the local communities. Furthermore, as part of the commemoration of the SDF anniversary, the SDF Marching Festival is held at Nippon Budokan arena every year. The festival attracted approximately 40,000 visitors in total in 2017.

Concerning annual reviews by the SDF, a troop review, a fleet review, and an air review are hosted in rotation by the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF respectively. In 2017, an air review was planned to be held by the ASDF at Hyakuri Airbase in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the reorganization into the MOD.
but was called off due to stormy weather caused by the approaching Typhoon No. 22. In 2018, a troop review by the GSDF is planned to take place.

The MOD/SDF also actively opens PR facilities to the public. For instance, the number of visitors on the facility tour at the PR facilities in the MOD at Ichigaya district (Ichigayadai Tour) reached 420,000 as of the end of March 2018. Each SDF service also has a large-scale PR facility in addition to PR facilities and archives at the

SDF camps and bases open to the public. Furthermore, the MOD/SDF provides cooperation for shooting films and TV programs.

### 3 Trial Enlistment Programs

The MOD/SDF offers SDF Life Experience Tours for undergraduate and graduate students as well as women and Enlistment Experience Programs for groups,

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2 Information on the Summer Tour/Spring Tour for College Students, Ms. Parsley Tour (trial tour for women in their 20s); and One-Day Visit to SDF for Women, etc. is available on the MOD/SDF website.
companies and other organizations.\(^3\)

These programs are intended to promote participants’ understanding of the SDF by offering opportunities to experience the daily life and training of the SDF, as well as to have direct contact with SDF personnel. In FY2017, approximately 150 people participated in SDF Life Experience Tours. From the private sector, the SDF received approximately 1,900 requests for Enlistment Experience Programs, and approximately 24,000 employees experienced SDF life.

2 Initiatives for Information Disclosure and Document Management

1 Necessity of Appropriate Operation of the Information Disclosure System

Democracy is founded on the principle that the public has access to accurate information, thereby making appropriate judgment and exercise of sovereignty. Administrative documents held by the government are of utmost importance for the public’s access to accurate information, and it is an important responsibility for the government to manage them in an appropriate manner and respond to the public’s information disclosure requests properly. Information held by the MOD/SDF is no exception to this, the MOD/SDF bears this important responsibility under the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs.

See Reference 69 (Record of Information Disclosure by the Ministry of Defense (FY2017))

2 Results of the Special Defense Inspection Regarding Daily Reports of PKO in South Sudan, and Initiatives for Recurrence Prevention

The background of the issue over daily reports written by SDF engineering units dispatched to South Sudan is as follows. Concerning an information disclosure request made on October 3, 2016, the MOD initially refused the request after receiving the response submitted by the Chief of Staff of the GSDF, with the explanation “not disclosed because the corresponding documents do not exist.” Later, however, the daily reports in question were found within the Joint Staff Office through the second search conducted at the instructions from the Defense Minister on December 26, 2016. Therefore, the MOD publicly announced the fact on February 6, 2017, and withdrew its initial decision, issuing a disclosure decision (partial disclosure decision) instead on February 13.

Later, on March 15, the media reported that the daily reports in data format had been retained in the GSDF, but the fact, which was inconsistent with the initial explanation, had never been released, even though disposal of the relevant data was instructed. Based on the decision by the Defense Minister that normal investigation would not be enough considering the situation, a special defense inspection was initiated by the Inspector General’s Office of Legal Compliance on March 17 and its result was announced on July 28.

The result of the special defense inspection identifies improper conducts, including those leading to a violation of MOD/SDF personnel of the Information Disclosure Act. The MOD/SDF considers this result severe and regrettable and should reflect upon it.

The MOD considers that the underlying causes of these problems were that there were not enough levels of awareness on the importance of information disclosure is within the MOD/SDF, and that there were not enough levels of communication among relevant departments and agencies within the ministry. In order not to repeat such a case ever again, the MOD/SDF will be fully committed to implementing measures to prevent the recurrence of similar cases regarding information disclosure and document management, while encouraging the personnel to change their mindset, fostering transparent and open culture in the organization and further enhancing the collaboration among departments and agencies. In this way, everyone at the MOD/SDF must work together and make the utmost effort to regain the public confidence.

a. Results of the Special Defense Inspection and Relevant Matters

At the instruction of Defense Minister, the Inspector General’s Office of Legal Compliance had strictly and fairly conducted a thorough investigation on the management status of these daily reports\(^4\) over the period of four months starting from March 17, 2017, from a highly independent standpoint, led by a former superintendent prosecutor of a high public prosecutor’s office and also served by active prosecutors, which ended with the announcement of the result on July 28, 2017.

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\(^3\) Tours to experience the daily life of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF. They are implemented upon request from private companies and other organizations through the Provincial Cooperation Offices.

\(^4\) The scope of this special defense inspection is the management status of the daily reports written for a period between July 7 and 12, 2016 (local time) by the engineering unit dispatched to South Sudan, for which information disclosure request in accordance with the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs (Act No. 42 of 1999) was sought on October 3, 2016. To read the body of the report, see http://www.mod.go.jp/igo/inspection/pdf/special04_report.pdf.
On the same day, the MOD imposed strict disciplinary measures against the relevant persons.

Reference 70 (Results of the Special Defense Inspection (Overview))

b. Measures to Prevent the Recurrence

In response to what was pointed out in the results of this special defense inspection which was announced on July 28, 2017, the MOD/SDF has taken the following measures to prevent the recurrence of similar cases.

- **Handling of daily reports**
  - **Review of the retention period of daily reports (to be retained for 10 years)**
    Ensure that all daily reports written by SDF units, including those written by the engineering unit dispatched to South Sudan will be retained for 10 years. After the retention period expires, they will be transferred and archived under the management of the National Archives of Japan.
  - **Central management under the Joint Staff Councilor**
    Ensure that the Joint Staff Councilor is responsible for central management of these daily reports by organizing and storing them in data format, and also for centrally handling all subsequent information disclosure requests.
  - **Strengthening structure attached to the Joint Staff Councilor**
    To appropriately respond to information disclosure requests, assign officials in charge of operating information disclosure to the position attached to the Joint Staff Councilor.

- **Information disclosure operation**
  - **Strengthening check function by establishing a new post “Information Disclosure Inspector”**
    To evaluate the appropriateness of the judgement in a strict manner regarding all cases for which disclosure was rejected due to the absence of requested documents, establish a new post of Information Disclosure Inspector who is responsible for interviewing persons involved and carry out on-site inspection at a division that may possess the said document.
  - **Regular verification of the whole information disclosure operation by the Inspector General’s Office of Legal Compliance**
    Ensure that the whole information disclosure operation at the MOD/SDF is regularly inspected and verified by the Inspector General’s Office of Legal Compliance.
  - **Thorough review of all cases for which disclosure was rejected due to the absence of relevant administrative documents**

Appoint “a person in charge of information disclosure” at each organization with a document controller in place. Ensure that accurate judgment is made in document identification through multiple reviews and searches, even in cases where it was decided that there was no corresponding document subject to an information disclosure request.

- Ensuring close cooperation and information sharing among each of the Staff Offices, internal bureaus and Administrative Vice Chief of Staff of Joint Staff, etc.
  - Considering the possibility that the document subject to a disclosure request might be retained in other organizations, each of the Staff Offices work closely with relevant internal bureaus and try to share information and further improve the accuracy of document search and identification.

- **Extensive and improved education and training to raise personnel awareness**
  - Raise awareness of the personnel by developing subjects regarding information disclosure operation for the personnel (senior officials in particular) in various personnel training programs and make such subjects mandatory, as well as prepare and distribute the “Information Disclosure Handbook” describing the procedures for information disclosure in an easy-to-understand manner.

- **Management of administrative documents**
  - **Review of retention period for documents including reports regarding the SDF’s actions**
    Retain reports of actions based on various orders, irrespective of domestic or overseas deployment that will contribute to the decisions by the Minister of Defense and senior officers for a period of 3 to 30 years depending on the document type, and after the retention period expires, transfer them to the National Archives of Japan.
  - **Ensuring the appropriateness of document management of the entire ministry**
    Require each organization to consult with the supervising document controller (Director-General of the Secretariat) about preparing or modifying its guidelines for standard document retention periods. Also implement measures, including appropriate labeling of handling types of administrative documents, thorough management of appropriate access control, clarification of an expiration date of a retention period, and clear definition of a responsible department in the case of administrative documents shared by two or more departments.

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5 The Joint Staff Councilor was the title then. It was divided into Principal Joint Staff Councilor and Joint Staff Councilor on April 1, 2018, responsible for centrally managing all documents including daily reports.
Chapter 5

Interaction with Local Communities and Japanese Citizens

4 Daily Reports in Iraq and Relevant issues

In the efforts to achieve centralized management for all regular reports, including daily reports, under the Joint Staff Councilor, as part of the recurrence prevention measures which resulted from reflections on the South Sudan PKO daily report issue. Extremely inappropriate handling over the daily reports in Iraq was also identified.

Among them, with regard to the background of the reports found at the GSDF Ground Research and Development Command (the department of the time, hereinafter the same shall apply), it has found that the daily reports in Iraq were found on March 27, 2017, to be kept at the GSDF Ground Research and Development Command, just when the re-searching had been underway at the instruction by the Defense Minister from February 22, 2017, and nevertheless, said discovery had not been reported to the Defense Minister (which was announced on April 4, 2018). As there was the possibility that this case entailed a grave problem that might affect civilian control, at the instruction of Defense Minister Onodera, the MOD decided on April 4, 2018 to initiate an investigation by the “investigation team on ‘Daily Reports’ of GSDF in Iraq” which was head by Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defense Ohno Keitaro. Furthermore, in this process, the investigation on the background of the cases in (b), (c) and (d) listed below had also been put in place.

The investigation indicates that the MOD/SDF had not responded to the instruction of Defense Minister in an appropriate manner, made inappropriate responses to questions, document requests, information disclosure requests from the Diet members, and failed to promptly correct such actions thereafter. The MOD regards them as a problem to be reflected upon.

The investigation has not identified any inappropriate intentions in performing paperwork in connection with the instructions by the Defense Minister or questions at the Diet. The daily reports in question were found and publicly announced while taking the recurrence prevention measures under the instruction of the Defense Minister. In addition, it is not considered that there was any conduct that constitutes violation of any resolutions.

6 Regular reports produced for senior officers (including command headquarters) by units carrying out actions based on deployment orders that will contribute to the decisions by the Minister of Defense and the senior officers.
7 See footnote 5.
8 This case was triggered by the fact that a part of the Iraq daily reports were found at the Ground Staff Office’s medical department and the Research and Development Command (which was announced on April 2, 2017), but with regard to the said reports, the Defense Minister previously responded in the Diet that the MOD searched for retained daily reports of the unit in Iraq but failed to find any of them.
9 The Ground Research and Development Command was reorganized into Japan Ground Self Defense Force Training Evaluation Research and Development Command on March 27, 2018.
10 At a later date, the MOD decided to conduct an investigation with assistance from a lawyer, a former superintending prosecutor of the Tokyo High Public Prosecutors Office. The investigation team visited the Japan Ground Self Defense Force Training Evaluation Research and Development Command to collect documents and other materials and check computers of relevant officials and files of administrative documents. In addition, the team conducted interviews with approximately 70 people and questionnaires to approximately 400 people. The team held 34 meetings in total until the investigation team’s report was published.
or approvals in the Diet. With such things considered the MOD concludes that there was no issue that could undermine civilian control itself. That said, the MOD must take it seriously that the case in question gave rise to concerns and distrust for civilian control among the public. The results of each investigation were announced on May 23, 2018, and are summarized as follows:

a. Investigation on Daily Reports in Iraq

When the special defense inspection on the daily reports of the PKO unit in South Sudan had been underway, the existence of the daily reports from Iraq retained at the GSDF Ground Research and Development Command was identified. As for this matter, the investigation found that the e-mail that notifies the instructions about researching by the Defense Minister was not clear enough for the recipients to understand the message as intended. In addition, it was also found that sufficient searches had not been conducted in response to the information disclosure request, and appropriate paperwork had not been performed. For such reasons, the existence of the daily reports in Iraq was not reported to the Defense Minister. As a result, this indicates that the MOD/SDF did not properly respond to the instruction of the Defense Minister, and took inappropriate responses to questions, document requests, and information disclosure requests from the Diet, and failed to promptly correct such response thereafter. This is extremely regrettable.

b. Background of the Report to Minister by Joint Staff Councilor and Others Regarding the Daily Reports from Iraq

Regarding this matter, the investigation has found that: Since the Joint Staff Office identified the existence of the daily reports from the units dispatched to Iraq on March 2, 2018, the Joint Staff Councilor and relevant departments had taken all the necessary steps, including close examination of the reports found, coordination with relevant departments in connection with matters to be reported to Defense Minister, double-checking for any daily reports left unsearched, and confirmation on response status about document requests and information disclosure requests from Diet members. After all these steps on March 31, the MOD provided the explanation to the Defense Minister. In retrospect however, if such a problem was identified, the MOD should have immediately informed the minister thereof. Accordingly, this response is not considered appropriate.

c. Background of the Discovery of Daily Reports at the GSDF International Peace Cooperation Activities Training Unit

Regarding this matter, the investigation concluded that it was considered inappropriate that adequate search had not been conducted in response to the document request from the Diet member, and thus the response was provided to the effect that the MOD did not retain the daily reports; and it was also considered inappropriate that even when the reports were found through the special defense inspection and the information disclosure request, any necessary effort to correct the response provided to the document request or the answers to the Diet questions had not been made thereafter.

d. Background of the Discovery of the Daily Reports from Iraq at the Air Staff Office

Within the ASDF, any daily reports from Iraq were not found in the searches conducted in February, August, and March 2018, but in April 2018, the daily reports from Iraq for 3 days were found. This is not considered appropriate as daily reports in its procession were not fully understood by the ASDF.

e. Measures to prevent the recurrence

Based on the facts made clear through the investigation, the MOD publicly announced the investigation report on May 23, 2018, imposed strict disciplinary measures against Administrative Vice-Minister of Defense and 16 relevant subordinates concerned, and also announced the following measures to prevent the recurrence of similar cases. In the meantime, at the meeting of Cabinet members regarding the ideal management of public documents held on June 8, 2018, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe instructed the Cabinet members to lead the initiative in taking all possible measures to ensure proper management of public documents. Accordingly, the MOD will fully implement these measures to prevent the recurrence and do every effort to regain the public’s confidence in the MOD/SDF.

- Strengthening of Structure in Charge of Performing Minister’s Instruction and Order
  - Specify in writing important instructions and operational orders, etc. from Defense Minister, and senior officials.
  - Require the above instructions, etc., to be notified to the division chief or official in the equivalent position, as well as require relevant responses to be approved by the division chief or official in the equivalent position.
  - If such instructions, etc., are made, a responsible department or bureau to notify the Minister’s Secretariat of implementation and coordination status is required.

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11 To read the body of this investigation team’s report, see http://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/news/2018/05/25a_1.pdf
12 To read the body of the report on (b), (c) and (d) herein, see http://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/news/2018/05/25a_2.pdf
13 For the summary of the measures to prevent the recurrence, see http://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/news/2018/05/25a_3.pdf
appropriate response to administrative document management and information disclosure by maintaining such documents as electronic files.

- Accelerate the transition to an electronic approval system
- Require all the personnel to notify a responsible person at a division in charge, etc., of the response status
- Reinforce the check system for administrative document management and information disclosure
- Establish a new organization responsible for inspection of administrative document management and information disclosure
- Build a framework to receive instructions and advising from external experts
- Reform a mindset of individual SDF personnel regarding administrative document management and information disclosure
- Develop extensive training programs designed to help SDF personnel improve necessary judgment in performing operations
- Consider designating administrative document management and information disclosure as part of criteria for personnel performance appraisal

Create an organization capable of the prompt and accurate response to information disclosure, etc.
- Examine a system to centrally retain and control administrative documents in the electronic format.
- Reinforce exclusive structure, particularly at the Joint Staff Office. As part of this, reemploy retired SDF personnel with expertise on administrative document management and information disclosure for daily reports and other documents as part-time officials.

Minister of Defense Onodera delivering a special address to the SDF personnel nationwide (April 2018)

3. Initiatives for Policy Evaluation

1. Engagement in Policy Evaluation

The MOD has been conducting the evaluation of various policies based on its policy evaluation system. In FY2017, the MOD conducted policy evaluations of R&D programs and projects concerning taxation special measures as well as the major policies and programs of the NDPG and the Mid-Term Defense Program (MTDP).

2. Promotion of Evidence-Based Policy Making

In order to promote Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM), the MOD has worked on the establishment of the structure for promotion of EBPM within the ministry, including the establishment of a new position, “Director-General for Evidence-based Policymaking,” who plays a central role of the EBPM in FY2018.

3. Initiatives for the Personal Data Protection System

In light of respecting individual rights in line with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information Held by Administrative Organs, the MOD takes measures to ensure the security of the personal information under its control, and discloses such information upon request.

4. Appropriate Operation of the Whistleblower Protection System

The MOD sets up a system to handle whistleblowing made by its officials, employees and outside workers, establishing internal contact desks to deal with whistleblowing and to protect whistleblower.