Published for the first time in 1970, the Defense of Japan white paper has been published annually since 1976. This year marks the 50th anniversary of its first publication. The objective of Defense of Japan is to provide a widespread awareness of the current state of our nation’s defense, as well as related issues and initiatives, thereby gaining the understanding of readers both within Japan and overseas. To achieve this, various approaches have been devised in order to ensure that as many citizens as possible can obtain a copy of Defense of Japan. Efforts will continue to ensure that this publication is comprehensible, readable, and user-friendly, to promote understanding of the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces.

- This year’s edition features columns highlighting the voices of around 50 SDF personnel deployed in various settings both within Japan and overseas (about twice as many voices as last year)
- There are also QR codes that you can scan to watch related videos immediately!
Heisei

First use of color diagrams and feature columns

Color photographs first appeared in the 1983 edition

CD-ROM included (until 2002)

Began to be published in a more readable A4 format
Overall visual appearance enhanced, with pictures of equipment on the cover
Special features first published at the beginning

The first Defense of Japan special feature, "Towards 2000," was published.

Digest first published
Columns highlighting the voices of personnel first published
Publication on the MOD website began

Compact edition published (until 2009)

The digest began to be published at the beginning. The idea was that reading the digest would provide an overview of the whole white paper.

Images:
- Photographs (black and white) begin to be used
- Color photographs first appeared in the 1983 edition
- Smartphone edition first created
- First published as an e-book
- TOPICS "Defense Chronology" first appeared