

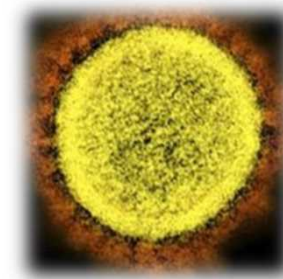
Conducting **Disaster Relief** in the **COVID** Pandemic



November 2020
Japan Ministry of Defense

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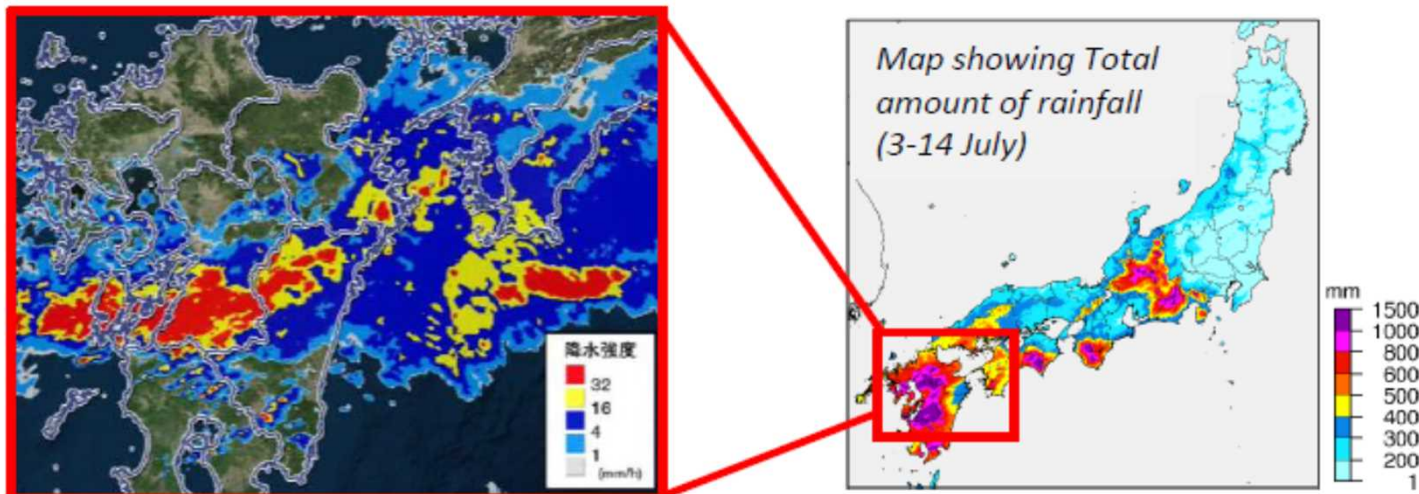
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Disaster Relief Operations during the COVID Pandemic – Case Study 1

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- Response to torrential rain (July-August 2020)
 - Flooding (including flooded houses) and landslides in the wake of record-breaking rainfall in Western Japan (Kyushu) in July 2020
 - 78 dead, 3 missing, 95 injured
 - 16,195 houses damaged (as of September 3, 2020)



- The scope of the SDF contingent
 - 20,000 members at a time,
approx. 350,000 person in total
 - 270 aircraft, 13,000 vehicles



Disaster Relief Operations during the COVID Pandemic – Case Study 1

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- Response to torrenrial rain (July-August 2020)
 - SDF units on the ground, at sea and in the air, conducted search and rescue operations, removed debris/ sediment/ driftwood, cleared roads and provided **life support assistance** (i.e. water/food transportation, water supply and bathing facilities).
 - Rescued people: approx. 1,780 in total
 - Removed debris, sediment, driftwood, etc.: approx. 5,830t in total
 - Total length of cleared roads: approx. 25km
 - Transported water, food, etc.: approx. 230t in total
 - Water supply support: approx. 290t in total
 - Bathing support: approx. 8,370 people in total



- Approx. 20,000 SDF personnel directly contributed to relief activities for roughly one month; no member was infected with COVID.

Disaster Relief Operations during the COVID Pandemic – Case Study 2

- Response to Typhoon #10 (September 2020)
 - SDF undertook disaster relief in response to Typhoon #10 in September 2020 in the vicinity of Kyushu area
 - Casualties: 117 dead/missing/injured people
 - Damage: 894 total or partially collapsed dwellings

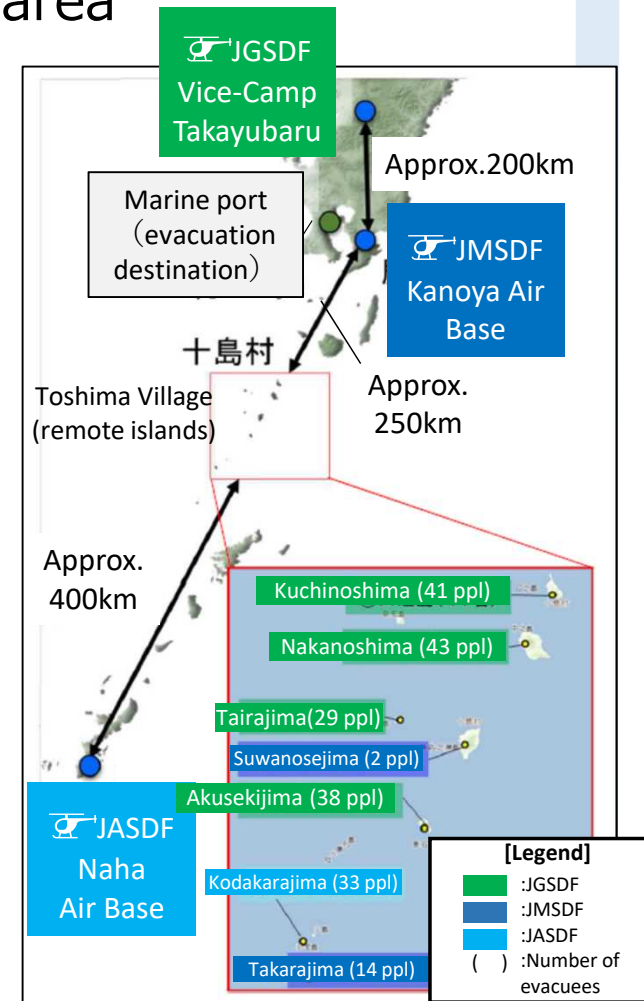


- SDF supported evacuation as the typhoon approached; transporting approx. 200 residents from 7 remote islands to the mainland using 8 SDF helicopters (e.g. CH-47, UH-60).

Residents arriving in the mainland of Kagoshima prefecture (Marine port)



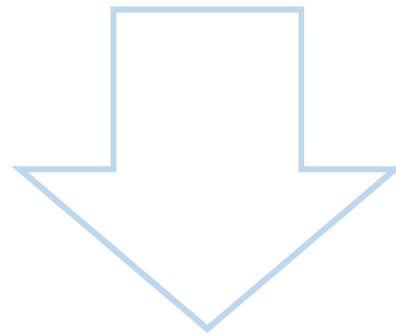
Residents evacuating at Toshima Village (Nakanoshima)



Infection Prevention Measures during Disaster Relief Operations

When engaging in HA/DR activities, there are occasions on which many evacuees and affected persons will have to gather in one place; therefore, both of the following measures are necessary:

1. Preventing the transmission of infections from SDF dispatched personnel; and
2. Avoiding the spread of infection among evacuees and affected persons



In specific terms?

Infection Prevention Measures among Evacuees and Affected Persons

(Transportation Assistance)

- SDF supported evacuation measures ahead of the typhoon, transporting approx. 200 residents of 7 remote islands to the mainland with SDF helicopters.
- SDF asked local governments to check for cold-like symptoms among evacuees. Additionally, SDF ensured evacuees wore facial masks, and coordinated with local governments to confirm body temperatures, before boarding. SDF personnel also sanitized evacuees' hands before boarding.

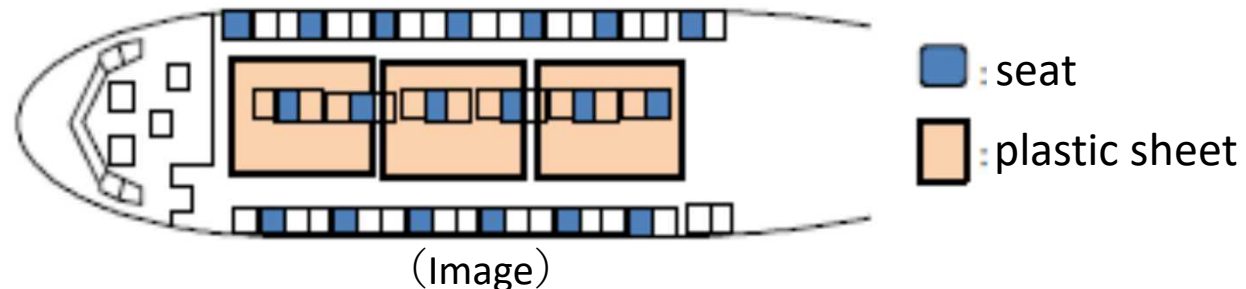


Infection Prevention Measures among Evacuees and Affected Persons (Transportation Assistance)

- When SDF transported infected patients by air, the aircraft was sanitized to prevent transmission between infected patients and non-infected passengers.



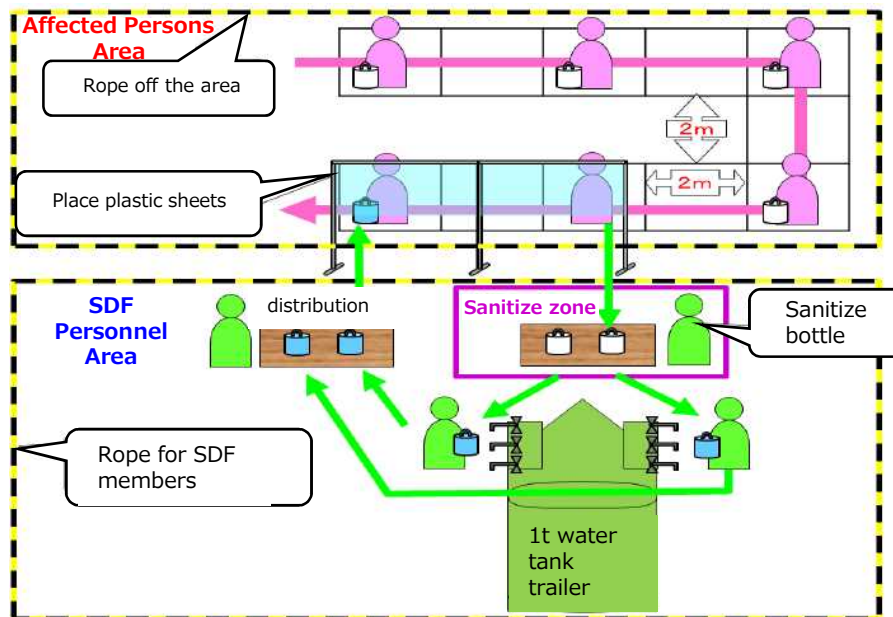
- Each passenger was required to sit more than two seats away in staggered rows, separated by plastic sheet.



Infection Prevention Measures among Evacuees and Affected Persons

(Water Supply Support)

- Provided a supply of water totaling 290 tonnes during response to the heavy rain in July 2020.
- SDF units took separate routes from evacuees and affected persons, placing plastic sheets between SDF members and affected person in order to prevent infection.
- Maintained 2 meters distance between each affected person.
- Sanitized bottles before filling with water.



Infection Prevention Measures among Evacuees and Affected Persons (Bathing Facility Support)

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- Provided bathing facilities for a total of 8,370 persons during response to the heavy rain in July 2020.
- SDF units ensured all persons sanitized their hands and checked body temperatures before bathing.
- Decided whether to use a bathtub or to have a shower only based on a discussion with the local government. In the case of using a bathtub, ensured to keep the level of free residual chlorine concentration to greater than 0.4 mg/L.



Infection Prevention Measures among SDF dispatched Personnel

- Checked SDF personnel and their family's health condition by body temperature measurement and interviews before choosing the personnel to dispatch.
- Ensured to check body temperatures before commencing disaster relief operations, sanitized the operation area, and wore facial masks and disposable gloves.
- Conducted an antigen test on dispatched SDF personnel, including SDF reserve personnel who had contact with one or more infected persons after the operation.




















Lessons Learned from Disaster Relief Operations

In preparation for disaster relief operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to obtain and stockpile the following items in advance.













(⇒ see slides 13 and 14 for details)

- Items to prevent the spread of infection among SDF personnel at the temporary camp (e.g. protective curtains, duckboards, small air circulators for ventilation, wet wipes)
- Items to protect SDF personnel at the disaster relief operations area (e.g. face shields, disposable gloves, hand sanitizer, portable loudspeakers)

Items Required at Temporary Camps for SDF Personnel Dispatched to Disaster Relief Operations

	Pattern A		Pattern B	
Type	Social Distancing Type (Curtain off the space inside the temporary tent)		Individual Protection Type (Protect each individual's bedding)	
	Item	Purpose of Use	Item	Purpose of Use
Anti-COVID Items	Plastic sheet 	Droplet infection prevention	Portable face tent 	Droplet infection prevention
	Hanger rack (to hang the plastic sheet) 			
	Duckboard 		Small air circulator 	Air ventilation and cooling
	Small air circulator 	Air ventilation and cooling	Sanitizer 	Disinfection
	Sanitizer 	Disinfection	Wet wipes 	Virus eradication
	Wet wipes 	Virus eradication	High pressure washer 	Cleaning
	High pressure washer 	Cleaning	Tarpaulin 	Heat shield
Others	Tarpaulin 	Heat shield	Tarpaulin 	Heat shield
	Lactobacillus tablets 	Maintain health of service members	Lactobacillus tablets 	Maintain health of service members

Items Required at the Disaster Relief Operations Area

	Life-Saving and Disaster Waste Disposal		Life Support Assistance			
			Providing Food and Water		Providing Public Bathing Facilities	
Anti-COVID Items	Item	Purpose of Use	Item	Purpose of Use	Item	Purpose of Use
		Droplet infection prevention and heatstroke prevention	Face shield 	Droplet infection prevention	Face shield 	Droplet infection prevention
			Disposable gloves 	Infection prevention	Disposable gloves 	Infection prevention
		Command, control and safety management	Sanitizer 	Disinfection	Sanitizer 	Disinfection
	Portable loudspeaker 	Command, control and communication	Portable loudspeaker 	Command, control and communication	Portable loudspeaker 	Command, control and communication
					Plastic sheet 	Droplet infection prevention

Personal Reflections of a SDF Member engaged in the Mission

I coordinated closely with the members of the local government to fully prepare for the evacuation. When the local residents and I were waiting for the helicopter to arrive, the wind was blowing so hard and I realized that they were becoming worried. I wanted them to feel better, so I talked to the residents with a smile and carried the elderly residents on my back to help them get on board the helicopter.

As this evacuation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, I recommended the residents sanitize their hands to ease their anxiety as much as possible.

During the flight, I talked with the children in a friendly way so that they would not become overly worried. After we reached our destination, I checked their health condition and passed the evacuees over to designated officials in the Kagoshima Prefectural Government. Everyone on board said “Thank you.”

As I look back, the evacuation flight took place at night, over water, and amid the pandemic, and the passengers included expectant mothers, babies, and the elderly. It was truly a tough mission on which I was not allowed to make even a single mistake. I felt that the mental strength and skills that I gained through everyday training greatly contributed to the accomplishment of the mission.

I will keep training hard to get ready for my next mission.

