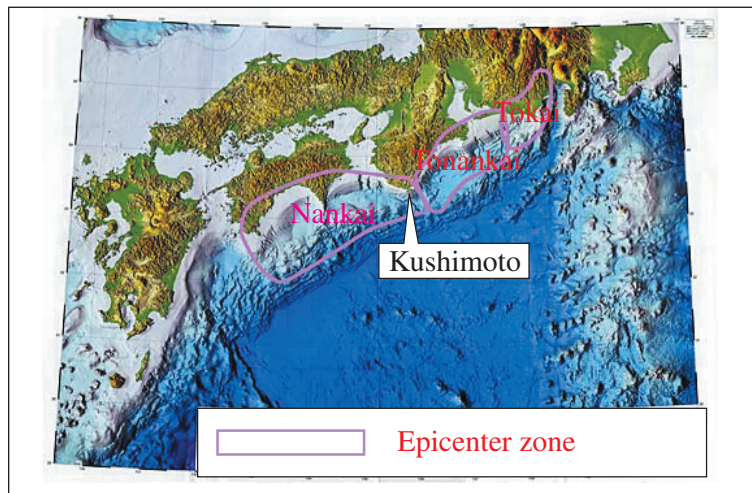


Voluntary Disaster Reduction Activities of Omisaki District (Kushimoto Town, Wakayama Prefecture)

Japan

- Main Story

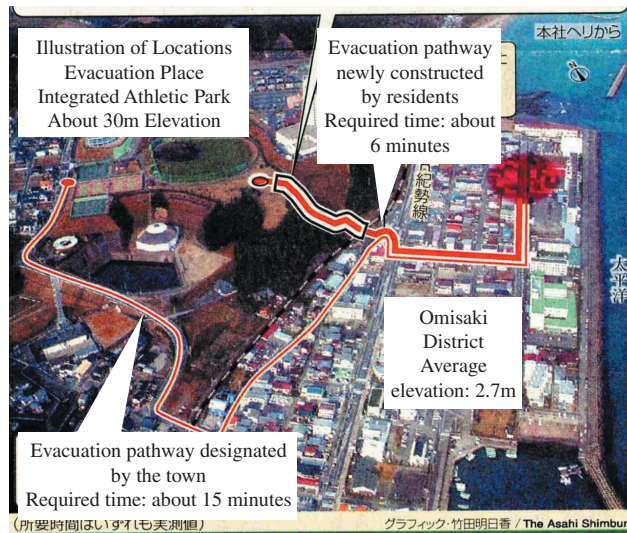
Omisaki District of Kushimoto Town is located at the east side of the root area of Cape-Shionomisaki located at the southernmost part of the mainland Japan. Most of the district was created by land reclamation in 1968 having population of about 690 people and households of about 330. The entire east side of the district faces the sea and the most part of the land is 3m or less above sea-level, and the district is one of the areas in Kushimoto Town where tsunami damage is most concerned.



Tokai/Tonankai/Nankai Seismic Zone

A lecture presentation by the town mayor of Okushiri Town which had catastrophic tsunami damage in 1993 Hokkaido-Nansei-Oki Earthquake was held in 1994. Residents of Omisaki district who participated in the lecture felt uneasy after hearing the lecture concerning damages of Okushiri Town which is topographically similar to Omisaki. In addition, they heard “Damage came off with a small level since many evacuation pathways had been provided.”

It took about 15 minutes for taking shelter if they use the evacuation pathway to the upland so far designated by the town, and they were driven by necessity to build a new evacuation pathway that enables evacuation in much shorter time. They continued to request the town to construct the evacuation pathway, and in 1999, they established the Executive Committee for Evacuation Pathway Construction and made further continued request. However, a JR railway existed on the shortest-distance route connecting the district and the upland, which became a large bottleneck for construction of the evacuation pathway. The town accepted the request and had discussions with JR many times, but things would hardly advance toward construction. In addition, in 2000, many residents participated in the “Training for Developing Leaders of Voluntary Disaster Reduction Organization” organized by Wakayama Prefecture and they had an opportunity to confirm necessity of evacuation pathway again by performing Disaster Imagination Game (DIG).



Each required time is of actually measured value.

Under such circumstances, residents volunteered to construct a bridge over the marshland spending two years. The town mayor, being affected by passions of residents after making inspection of the bridge, decided to construct the footsteps over the slope and pathway beyond the bridge at the cost of the town. Thus, respective zones constructed by residents and the town were integrated to complete the new evacuation pathway.

This is a good example showing that improvement in disaster reduction capability of the district through mutual understanding and cooperation between residents and administration.



Completed Evacuation Pathway

- Background

In July 1993, Hokkaido-Nansei-Oki Earthquake occurred, and tsunami attacked Okushiri Island and various areas of the Oshima Peninsula causing catastrophic damages. Since Kushimoto Town has the land form similar to the Island, many residents thought as if the disaster was their own, and, in December next year, the Kushimoto Town Junior Chamber held a lecture for reporting the disaster inviting the Okushiri Town Mayor.

Being triggered by this lecture, residents acknowledged that they had no pathway to the upland allowing them to take shelter within a short period of time, despite that most parts of their habitation

area are 3m below the sea level and could be damaged directly by tsunami and they also had strong sense of danger. As a result, due to opinion raising and energy of the residents, it was decided to construct an evacuation pathway.

- Objective

To secure an evacuation pathway that allows residents to take shelter within a short period of time.

- Term/Time Frame

Section to be voluntarily constructed:	2000 to 2001
Section to be constructed by the town:	2002
	3 years in total

- Activities undertaken

- Lecture for reporting the disaster held by Kushimoto Town Junior Chamber inviting the Mayor of Okushiri Town which sustained damages from Hokkaido-Nansei-Oki Earthquake
- Review of improvement in resident awareness/sense of danger of disaster reduction, and existing evacuation pathways.
- Establishment of the Executive Committee for Construction of Evacuation Pathway by residents and their activities
- Discussions with entities involved (Town, JR)
- Construction of evacuation pathway by volunteers
- Inspection by the town mayor and cooperative supports by the town

- Major achievements

Completion of a new evacuation pathway that allows residents to take shelter within six minutes (In 2003, the “Award of Minister of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications of Disaster Prevention Town Building Grand Prize” was awarded)
(In 2004, the “Commendation of Persons of Merit for Disaster Prevention by Prime Minister” was received)

- Total Budget

Section to be constructed by volunteers	: 500,000 yen
Section to be constructed by the town	: 4,990,000 yen
Total	: 5,490,000 yen

- Contact details

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