[Administrative and Organizational Collaboration]
2409B Research Project

Research on Accelerating the Adoption of Japanese-Style Roundabouts

Project Leader: Hideki Nakamura (Nagoya University)









2409B Project Members



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Background and Awareness of the Issue: The Need for Accelerated Dissemination



- ➤ Since initiating a project on roundabouts (RAB) at IATSS in 2009, continuous research has been conducted

 → Introduction studies to social experiments, social implementation, and full-scale development following legal amendments.
- At present, there are over 160 RABs nationwide, but the level of dissemination is still only beginning compared to advanced countries.
 - A few locations in each prefecture are far from being a familiar presence.
 - In other countries, dissemination has been exponential (e.g., approximately 10,000 locations in the United States over 20 years).
- In the face of ongoing tragic accidents at at-grade intersections and the expected introduction of automated vehicles, it is necessary to disseminate RABs suitable for Japan from an international perspective.

Aiming to make RABs a familiar presence for urban and regional development

Identification and resolution of issues hindering dissemination are necessary





Objectives of the Research Study



Purpose of the Research Project

To contribute to accelerating the dissemination of roundabouts (RAB) in Japan by examining specifications and methodologies unique to our country for addressing issues such as space-saving, cost-effectiveness, simplified design, diverse user considerations, and consensus-building processes, which are considered particularly important in Japan, and actively disseminating these findings.

> Identify and eliminate factors hindering dissemination

1. Promote awareness

- Awareness survey and factor analysis
- Conduct seminars in regions with low awareness
- Enhance the RAB database (DB)

2. Space-saving and cost-effective small roundabouts

- Demonstration and data collection through social experiments on auxiliary arterial roads and local roads
- Presentation of specifications for small roundabouts

Functional hierarchy of roads





Research Plan (3 Years)



2023 2309A Project:

- 1) Survey of administrative needs on issues related to RAB implementation in Japan
- 2) Overseas trends survey related to these issues
- 3) Organization of issues and specification study of Japanese-style RABs
- 4) Database update and seminar preparation



2024 2409B Project:

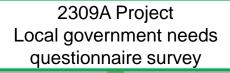
- 1) Organization of issues and specification study of Japanese-style RABs
- 2) Exchange of opinions through **seminar organization**
- 3) Coordination of candidate locations for cost-effective RAB social experiments
- 4) Social experiment preparation and implementation
- 5) Database update

> 2025

- 1) Demonstration through continuous social experiment implementation, data collection, and analysis
- 2) Social experiment evaluation and exchange of opinions through seminar organization
- 3) Study of Japanese-style roundabouts based on social experiment results
- 4) Database update
- 5) Summary of Japanese-style RABs

Main Items of the 2409B Project





Awareness and need survey

Hearing surveys



2. RAB Seminar Organization

1. Issue Organization



Exchange of opinions and consensus building

3. Social Experiment and Implementation

Evaluation of Japanese- style and small RABs

Evaluation

4. Technical Study

Database information provision

Overseas trend survey



1. Issue organization based on hearings

Nationwide local government survey (November 2023)



Questions tailored to the status of RAB consideration and implementation (A, B, C) of each administrative agency

[A] Implemented	(B) Considerabut not imp		【C】 Not considered				
 Awareness of "roundabouts" (RAB) Browsing experience of reference material I Browsing experience of reference material II RAB travel experience 							
Effects expected from RAB implementation Effects that can be expected from RAB implementation							
Requirements for RAB utilization and development							
	Stage and reasons for abandoning implementation						



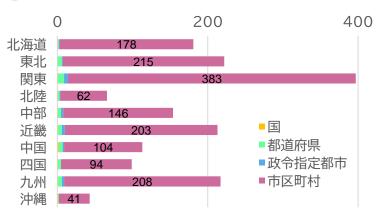
Reference Material I:
"Concerning Desirable
Roundabout Structures"
(August 2014, Notification
from the Director of the
Road Bureau, Ministry of
Land, Infrastructure,
Transport and Tourism)



Reference Material II: "Recommendations for Roundabouts" (October 2022, Road Bureau, Ministry Land, Transport Infrastructure, and Tourism Traffic Bureau, National Police Agency)

- Number of responses received: 1,728 (1,705 valid)
- Breakdown of valid responses by organization * By region

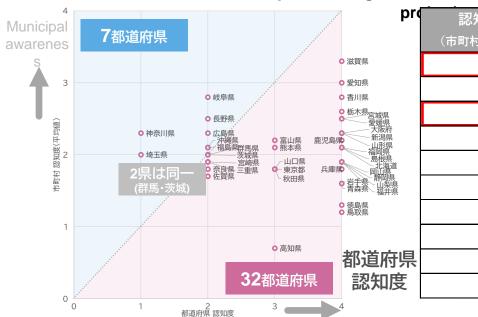
Туре	Number	Percentag e
National Government (Regional Development Bureau, National Highway Office)	10	1%
Prefectural Governments	41	2%
Designated Cities	20	1%
Municipalities (Cities, Towns, Villages)	1,634	96%
Total	1,705	100%



Basic Data for Selecting Hearing Target Locations



▼ Difference in awareness between prefectural governments and municipalities (Analysis results from the 2309A



rc	認知度の差 (市町村 – 都道府県)	都道府県名	
	-2.8	Tottori	
	-2.7	Tokushima	
	-2.4	Aomori	.
	-2.4	Iwate	No s
	-2.3	Kochi	k
	-2.2	Hyogo	r
	-2.1	Fukui	5
	-2.1	Yamanashi	Г
	-2.1	Shizuoka	
	-2.1	Okayama	L
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		

ote: Tokushima Prefecture had the second-highest difference in awareness between the prefecture and municipalities nationwide, but was excluded from the survey as the RAB seminar was held in Kochi in July 2024.

were no staff who understood the content at the time and there were no

Local Governments that Conducted Hearings

[Legend] Local Governments that **Conducted Hearings**

▼Stage at which RAB implementation was abandoned (Target: Hokkaido, Fukushima, Chiba Prefectures)

▼Number of local governments (prefectures) that abandoned RAB implementation Hokkaido							
【凡例】		2					
5							
4		40					
3	.*						
2	1	Fukushima					
1							
0		Chiba					
	61						

Stage	Hokkaido	Fukushima	Chiba	
Planning drafting stage (concept stage)	SapporoWakkanaiBiei	KoriyamaKitakaMinamiso maTadami	Narashino	[Legend] Local Governmenthat Conducted
Survey / Planning stage (study stage)	Mori	Yabuki	KisarazuMinamibo sopTako	Note: Abandoned as there were no staff who understood the content a
Design Stage			Kimitsu	the time and there were
Construction Stage				materials from the implementation study

Local Government Hearing Results



	Survey Purpose					
Questions	1. Review of awareness improvement measures (information dissemination methods)	2. Considerations for implementation and dissemination (response to local governments that abandoned implementation)	Other (private businesses)			
Information dissemination methods to municipalities, awareness of director notifications and leaflets	0					
Reasons why RAB implementation is not progressing within prefectures	0					
Basic information on intersections where implementation was studied (background, objectives, traffic volume, etc.)		0	0			
Circumstances and reasons for abandoning implementation, and other relevant information		0				
Incentives for RAB implementation and installation (promotion, etc.)			0			
Difficulties and issues experienced during RAB implementation and installation		0	0			
Future policies for promoting RAB implementation (issues, initiatives, necessary support, etc.)	0	0	0			
Effects (expectations) regarding small RABs under consideration	0	0	0			

Local Government Hearing Results



Items	Issues	Future Initiatives
Public Relations, Human Resource Development	 Shortage of civil engineers, low awareness Financial difficulties, hindering training-related business trips Knowledge resets with each personnel transfer Lack of RABs in the surrounding area, unfamiliar to residents 	 Awareness improvement Provision of information on issues at implementing local governments Examples of other municipalities that implemented RABs using the Comprehensive Social Capital Development Grant Presentations on RABs at prefectural training sessions Increase in RAB implementation examples on national and prefectural roads
Study Process	 Lack of information on study content, processes, and timelines Insufficient basis for making RAB studies mandatory in manuals, etc 	 Descriptions in prefectural design guidelines, cost estimation standards, etc Organization of extraction conditions for suitable implementation locations
Cost	Difficulties with land acquisition and house compensation	RABs that can be installed within existing intersection land
Technology • Safety	Concerns about reverse driving and anxieties regarding elderly adaptation	 Forums for dialogue related to RABs, such as seminars Consultation points are necessary as many consultants lack design experience
Challenges in Snowy and Cold Regions	 Difficulties in snow removal in snowy and cold regions Road markings invisible during winter 	 Information dissemination of solutions to issues expected in winter (snow removal, road markings, etc.) Design manuals tailored to snowy and cold regions
Maintenance and Management	Management of plantings and weeds	

Draft Action Plan Based on Hearings



Items	Short-Term Initiatives (Draft)	Mid- to Long-Term Initiatives (Draft)
Public Relations, Human Resource Development	 Seminar Planning Collection and organization of issues related to introductory studies and operation 	 Exploring public relations strategies targeting the general public (using video distribution, information dissemination via SNS, etc.) Creation and distribution of materials detailing the process from planning to implementation
Study Process	 Compilation of Introduction History, etc. (e.g., 2014 H2645 Project Report) 	Creation of guidelines specifically describing the comparative study, selection, etc., of intersection control methods
Cost	 Organization and dissemination of information on small roundabout cases, social experiments, and research results 	Creation of collections of implementation examples utilizing subsidies
Technology · Safety	Organization of extraction methods for suitable introduction areas	Preparation of readily available contact points for inquiries (primarily targeting local governments, etc.)
Cold Regions	 Collection and compilation of solutions (FAQs) for anticipated issues during winter periods Information dissemination utilizing websites, etc. 	 Creation of a manual that goes in line with cold regions Conducting seminars, etc., targeting local governments in snow/cold regions

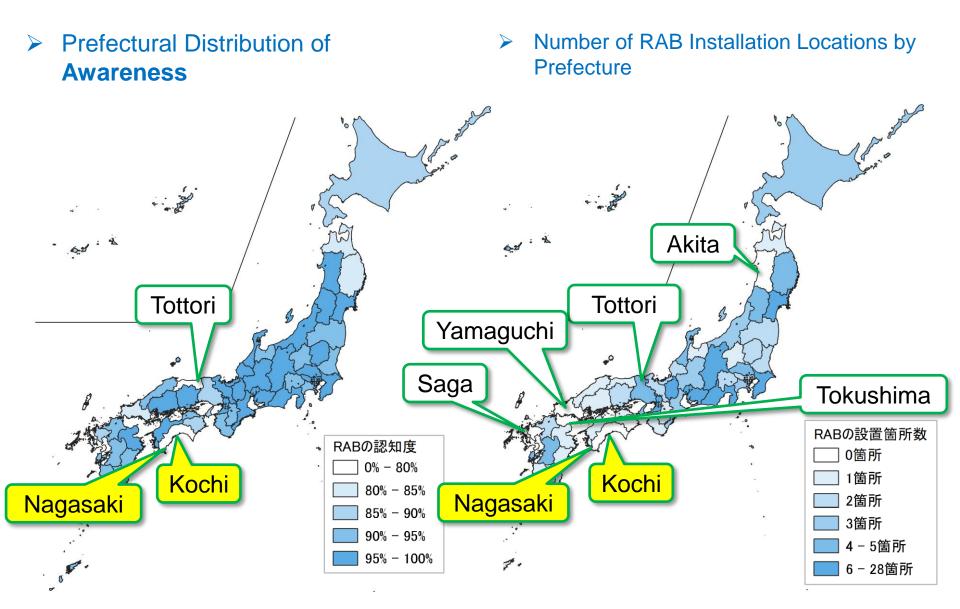
- It is desirable that the implementing entities for these initiatives (draft) be organized and specified in the future.
 - Implementing entities: Academic societies, road-related associations, national government, prefectural governments, municipalities, police, construction consultant associations, etc



2. Promotion of Awareness and Exchange of Opinions through Roundabout Seminars

Awareness of Roundabouts and Number of Installation Locations





Kochi Seminar (Kochi City, July 19, 2024)



> Participants: Road administrators and police from the Shikoku region, 70 people



- 1. Information provided by the National Government (1)MLIT
 - Introduced the expected effects of RAB and nationwide implementation examples from "Recommendations for Roundabouts."

(2) National Police Agency

- Introduced traffic methods for roundabouts, trends in the number of nationwide installation locations, reduction effects in accident occurrence rates, and introduction examples of small RABs, etc.
- 2. Keynote Speech (Professor Nishiuchi, Kochi University of Technology)
 - Explained the potential and significance of RAB implementation in Kochi Prefecture, based on roundabout implementation examples and characteristics in Shikoku and overseas.

3. Explanation of Roundabouts

 Explained the role of roundabouts in road networks based on domestic and international implementation examples, the role of RAB in improving performance in WISENET 2050, and planning/design and traffic operation points







Traffic accident occurrence situations in roundabouts (National Police Agency data)



Comparison Before and After Roundabout Introduction

Accident numbers reduced by approximately 65%

(Incidents)

	Before Introduction**				After introduction***			
	Overa				Overa			
	II	Death	Severe Injury	Minor Injury	II	Death	Severe Injury	Minor Injury
Overall* (119)	26	0	1	25	9	0	0	9

^{*} Target: 119 locations with available comparisons before and after introduction

Roundabouts experience fewer major accidents

Annual Accident Occurance

(Incidents)

	Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Þ	Fatal Accident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Injury Accident	Severe Accident	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
nt	Minor Accident	3	4	6	9	10	6	7	14	6
	Total	3	4	8	9	10	6	7	14	7
	eference) Locations	55	65	75	87	101	126	140	155	161 1

^{**} Before Introduction: Accident occurrence numbers in the year before roundabout introduction

^{***} After Introduction: Accident occurrence numbers in the year following roundabout introduction

Exchange of Opinions (Kochi)



- Round Table Meeting Format
 - Participants divided into 3 groups, exchanging opinions based on actual examples.
 - Project members facilitated.





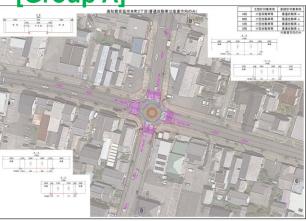


Exchange of Opinions (Kochi)

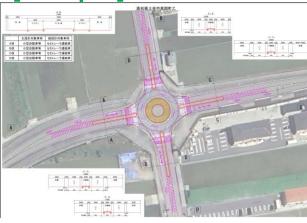


- Each group presented planning diagrams of 2 candidate introduction locations
 - While deepening the explanation contents of the seminar, participants exchanged opinions on points to consider during introduction
- Main Opinions/Discussion Points
 - Issues related to the characteristics of roadside facilities at each candidate location, traffic flow management methods, etc., and solutions.
 - Methods for consensus building with residents/users through social experiments.

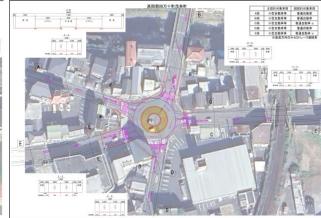
[Group A]



[Group B]



[Group C]









Nagasaki Seminar (Isahaya City, July 26, 2024)



- Participants: Road administrators and police from Nagasaki Prefecture, 61 people
- Following the seminar, a round table meeting was held
 - Shared recognition and direction of related road administrators/prefectural police regarding 3 candidate introduction locations, and consensus building









Source: Nagasaki Prefectural Housing Corporation

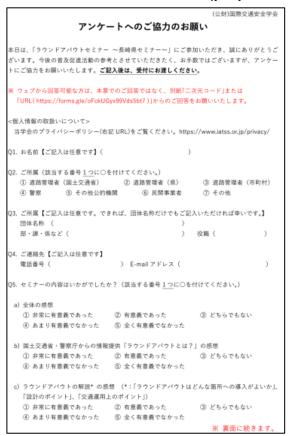


Seminar Participant Questionnaire Survey



Voluntary questionnaire surveys were conducted targeting participants of roundabout seminars held in Kochi and Nagasaki

▼Questionnaire forms (paper-based)



▼Leaflets requesting participation in web questionnaire



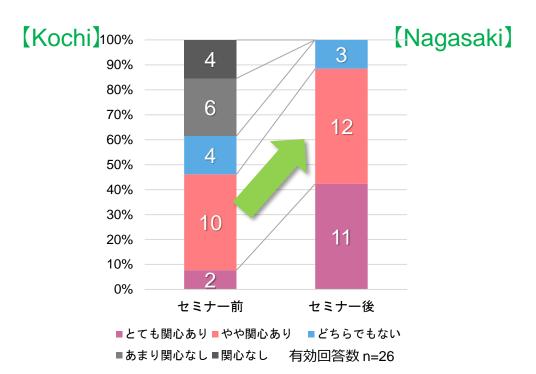
▼Web questionnaire format

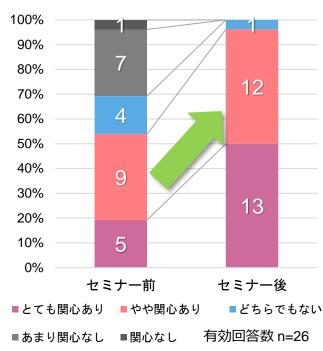


Effects of Roundabout Seminars



- Degree of Interest in RAB (Comparison before and after seminar participation)
 - Interest increased in both Kochi and Nagasaki after the seminar





Effect

- Kochi: Feasibility Study (FS) for roundabout conversion started at one of the candidate introduction locations discussed in the exchange of opinions.
- Nagasaki: Social experiment of small RAB implementation conducted in Isahaya City.



3. Implementation and Deployment of Small RAB Social Experiment

Decision to Implement Japanese-Style Small RAB (Roundabout) Social Experiment in Isahaya City

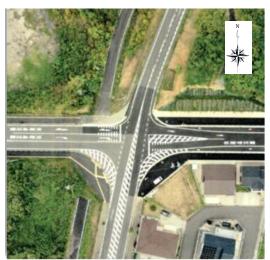


Current Situation

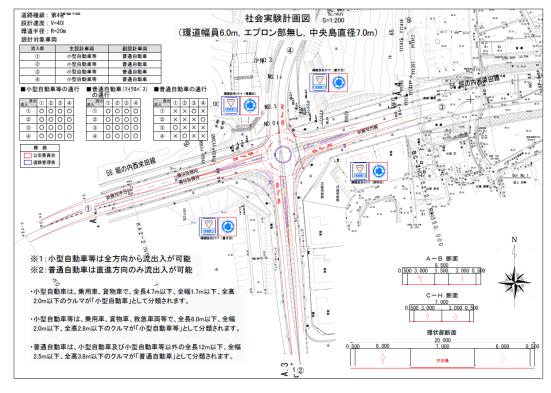
- Within the Seibu-dai residential area in Isahaya City
 - (developed by Nagasaki Prefectural Housing Supply Corporation)
- An unsignalized four-way intersection on a city road



- Small RAB on a local residential street
- 20-meter outer diameter (maximum within road right-of-way)
- Friday, February 14, 2025, 12:00 PM







Preparation activities for Isahaya City small RAB social experiment



- Collaboration between Isahaya City, Nagasaki Prefectural Police, and 2409B research project
 - Press releases by Isahaya City and Nagasaki Prefectural Police (Outline of roundabout social experiment)
 - Distribution of flyers on Isahaya City and Nagasaki Prefectural Police websites, etc. (Outline of roundabout social experiment, traffic rules)
 - Publication of social experiment outline in Isahaya City public relations magazine.
 - Isahaya City and Nagasaki Prefectural Police Resident Briefing (RAB Social Experiment Overview and Traffic Rules)





February 14, 2025 (Friday) Morning: Preparation for social experiment start









Progress in Warigoi Town, Isahaya City on February 14 (Friday)











Future Challenges for the Isahaya City Small RAB Social Experiment



- Confirmation that D=20m functions adequately
 - This is sufficient for residential areas.
- Traffic guidance for right-turning vehicles from the former priority side
 - Installation of a left-turn arrow sign at the inflow section's front
- Control of straight-ahead trajectory and speed in the former priority side, south to north direction, is needed
 - Due to the RAB center's eastward eccentricity
- Thorough enforcement of roundabout vehicle priority
 - Installation of signs at the inflow section
- Thorough enforcement of exiting vehicle left-turn signal indication.
 - Installation of signs at locations where exiting vehicles can be observed.



Future Plans

- Post-experiment survey on March 24, with speed and trajectory data collection
- Comparative analysis of pre- and post-experiment data in the 2025 project
- Geometric structure modification and main design planning



4. Technical Analysis of Compact RABs and the RAB Database

Consideration of structural requirements (specifications) for Japanese-style RABs

ATISS

Outer diameter: 26m or less

Differentiate between auxiliary arterial roads and residential roads

Central island

- Principally install (do not consider foreign "mini-RABs")
- Make it smaller, considering turning radius
- Consider the central island's landscaping

Apron

Do not install, especially if the outer diameter is small.

Separation island

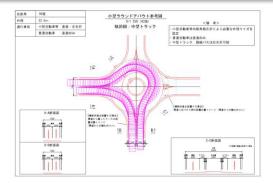
- Omit if connecting road width is small, considering low approach speeds
- Devices (road studs, zebra markings, etc.) replacing separation islands are acceptable due to inflow/outflow land constraints

Pedestrian crossing

- Individual consideration based on pedestrian flow and demand
- May not be needed in residential areas
- Do not install if there is no sidewalk in the single road section

Passing vehicles:

- Confirm the presence of large vehicle restrictions on roads near the RAB
- If there are no restrictions, design a structure that allows large vehicles to travel straight
- When considering large vehicle turning, design based on the large vehicles expected to pass through the RAB, and do not make vehicle restriction regulations (12m vehicle length) an absolute condition.



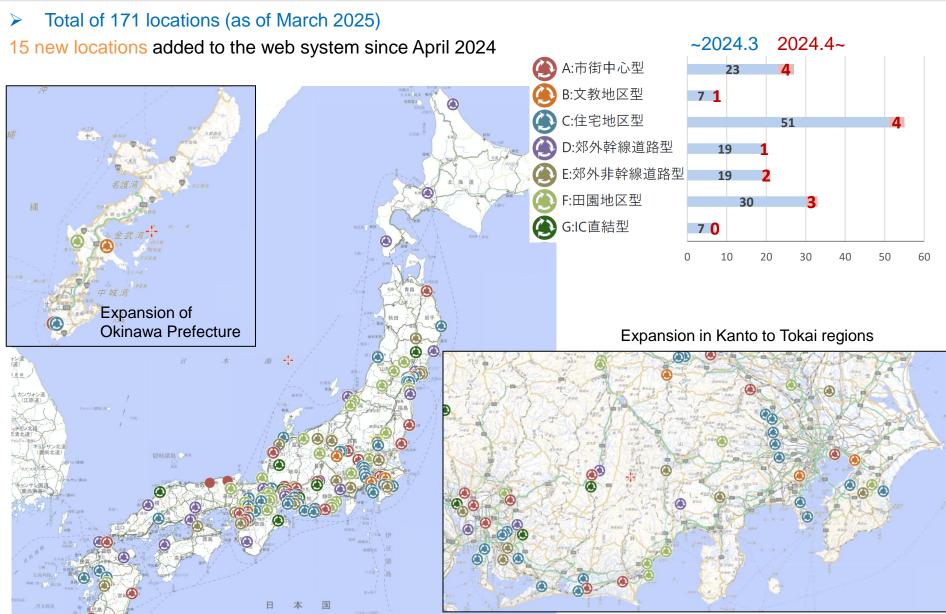






Domestic Distribution Status of RABs by Location Characteristic Classification





IATSS RAB Database and Web Publication System



Please visit the website



https://www.iatss.or.jp/research/roundabout.html https://rabmap.trpt.cst.nihon-u.ac.jp

Summary of the 2409B Project



Needs survey on issues related to RAB implementation

- Based on the results of the 2023 local government needs questionnaire, conducted studies on measures to improve RAB awareness, conducted hearing surveys, and organized issues
- Confirmed the need for small, cost-effective structures and awareness promotion activities

Seminar organization and its outcomes

- Held RAB seminars in Kochi City (July 19) and Isahaya City (July 26). At round table meetings with participating government officials and engineers, discussions were held on candidate locations within each prefecture
- In Kochi Prefecture, a feasibility study for roundabout conversion of an existing signalized intersection was started
- In Isahaya City, a small RAB social experiment (February 14, 2025-) was realized through the project's proposal

Study on specifications for Japanese-style RABs

- Conducted a survey on cost-effective RABs in the revised technical guidelines of the US and South Korea
- Examined the possibility of introducing cost-effective RABs (social experiment) (2 locations), and structural requirements (specifications) for Japanese-style RABs
- Started implementing small RABs as a social experiment and prepared for data collection.

2025 Policy:

- Japanese-style RAB specification verification through social experiment follow-up, opinion collection, and data collection analysis.
- Awareness improvement through seminar organization.
- Organization for accelerating the spread of Japanese-style RABs.



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