

Activities of Japanese Government Committees related to Earthquake Research

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After major devastating earthquakes, the Japanese government has set up committees to promote seismological research and to reduce future earthquake damage. I will review the activities of current government committees related to earthquake research. Two committees, Coordination Committee for Earthquake Prediction (CCEP) and Earthquake Assessment Committee (EAC) for Areas under Intensified Measures against Earthquake Disaster have made efforts to assess possible precursors for large earthquakes with particular emphasize in Tokai region, but such short-term deterministic prediction is now considered difficult in the seismological community. The Headquarters of Earthquake Research Promotion (HERP), established after the 1995 Kobe earthquake, promoted to expand the geophysical observation network, made long-term and probabilistic forecast of earthquakes on active faults and subductions zones, predicted strong ground motion from such earthquakes, and made national seismic hazard maps including probabilistic estimation of ground motion. Earthquake Research Committee (ERC) under HERP made long-term forecast and ground motion prediction for Futagawa/Hinagu faults before the 2016 Kumamoto earthquake, but the results were not fully utilized by local governments or general public to prepare for potential earthquake. Central Disaster Management Council (CDMC) under Cabinet Office has estimated the maximum possible earthquakes along the Nankai Trough and around the Tokyo metropolitan area, estimated the building, human and economic losses from such earthquakes, and made policies to reduce such damage.

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