

Basic Guidelines for Implementing Policy Evaluation

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In Japanese administration, policy evaluation system has been introduced as part of the central government reform, recognizing the urgent issue of enhancing the objective policy evaluation function, considering changes in internal and external socioeconomic situations, and reflecting evaluation results in policies, from the viewpoint of the public. Policy evaluation system provides information that contributes to policy planning and implementation by measuring or analyzing the effects of policies using scientific knowledge and rational methods, making objective judgments based on certain criteria. Furthermore, policy evaluation system is positioned to reflect the results in policies, continuously review and improve, and thereby promote efficient and high-quality administration focused on results, while also ensuring accountability to the public in administration.

The basic principle of policy evaluation is that ministries conduct evaluations of the policies under its jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, as an independent specialized evaluation organization from individual ministry, conducts unified or comprehensive evaluations of policies across ministries to ensure the holistic and further precise policy evaluations beyond the framework of individual ministries, and to guarantee the objective and rigorous implementation of policy evaluations.

Policy evaluation conducted by individual ministry and those conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications are intended to ensure the accurate implementation of policy evaluations under the oversight of the Cabinet by effectively fulfilling their respective roles and responsibilities.

Japan has enacted the Government Policy Evaluations Act (Law No. 86 of 2001, hereinafter referred to as the "Act"), to provide policy evaluation system with a clear framework and improve its effectiveness, as well as to further increase public trust. The Act enunciates the obligation of administrative organs to evaluate policies before and after implementation, and specifies the details of policy evaluations, conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, including procedural aspects.

Subsequently, under this Act, the government has been tasked with promptly assessing the effectiveness, conducting necessary evaluations based on this assessment, and promoting policy reviews and improvements for administrative organ's policies.

Basic Guidelines for Implementing Policy Evaluation specifies the matters that shall serve as guidelines for the basic plans specified by the heads of individual administrative organ pursuant to the provisions of Article 5, clarify the principles that shall be fundamental to the government's policy evaluation activities, in order to systematically and steadily promote policy evaluation under the Act.

I Guidelines for Basic Plan for Policy Evaluation

1. Basic Policy on Conduct of Policy Evaluation

(1) Basic Approach to Implementation of Policy Evaluation

Policy evaluation is distinct from policy decision-making. It involves individual administrative organ promptly understanding the effects of the policies under its jurisdiction. Based on this understanding, policy evaluations are conducted by the administrative organ itself to provide important information for accurate policy planning and activities based on the policy's necessity, efficiency, and effectiveness, as well as other relevant aspects according to the characteristics of the policy. Policy evaluation is incorporated as a system institutionalized within the management cycle of policies, which includes the key elements of "Plan," "Do," "Check," and "Action." Furthermore, policy evaluation ensures objective and rigorous implementation, and by publicly disclosing a series of information related to policy evaluation, including evaluation results, it aims to continuously review and improve policies and therefor to ensure the government's responsibility to remain accountable to the people.

By incorporating policy evaluation into the policy management cycle and ensuring the effective functioning of this cycle, it leads to the improvement in the quality of policies. Additionally, it promotes the enhancement of the government's policy-making capabilities and the reform of civil servants' awareness. As a result, it paves the way for the realization of an efficient and high-quality administration focused on the interests of the public and results-oriented administration from the public's perspective. Furthermore, by disclosing a series of information related to policy evaluation, the government's responsibility to remain accountable to the people is ensured. Consequently, transparency in policies and activities is guaranteed, ultimately leading to an increase in public trust in the administration.

With the rapid changes in socioeconomic conditions, the challenges that Japanese administration must address are constantly evolving, sometimes in unexpected directions, and becoming increasingly complex and challenging. In order to address these challenges, it is considered effective to adopt an agile and flexible approach to policy development by understanding the current state of policies, evaluating progress to date, and making necessary adjustments.

Achieving agile and flexible policy development requires the accurate understanding of the progress of policies and the reflection of results in the consideration and implementation of improvement measures. These are inherent functions of policy evaluation, and utilizing policy evaluation to actively engage in new challenges and positive course corrections shall be aimed at being highly valued as a desirable behavior that is not bound by the infallibility of administration.

Therefore, to strengthen the function of understanding the progress and effects of policies, more emphasis is to be placed on evaluation from the standpoint of effectiveness, and public administration shall work more proactively than ever before to acquire and analyze the effects of policy. Moreover, the use of information obtained through policy evaluation shall be promoted in the decision-making process, including policy review and improvement.

To enhance evaluations from the perspective of effectiveness, it is necessary to set indicators and select methods of analysis based on the characteristics of the policy. Therefore, it is important to explore new methods of evaluation that are in line with the changing times, without being confined to traditional ones, considering the utilization of data and analysis methods that have become newly available due to advancements in digital technology.

Therefore, the term of the first basic plan which the heads of individual administrative organ formulate after the modification of these basic guidelines will be positioned as a trial term, allowing room for innovative ideas in individual administrative organ, such as the introduction of new policy evaluation methods and trial initiatives in the utilization methods in the decision-making process.

In addition, based on the implementation, results, trends of surveys, research, development, on policy evaluation methods, and the discussions at the Policy Evaluation Council (hereinafter referred to as the “Council”), the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications will organize and share methods for understanding and analyzing policy effects and their use in the decision-making process to individual administrative organ. From the viewpoint of enhancing the quality of policy evaluation, the PDCA cycle of the policy evaluation system shall play a role in promoting continuous improvement of policy evaluation efforts in individual administrative organ.

To achieve the purpose of the policy evaluation system through government-wide efforts, the government shall ensure the government-wide enforcement of the system on the basis of the Act, these Basic Guidelines, etc., encourage individual administrative organs to do effective policy evaluations through focusing and streamlining according to the characteristics of their respective policies, and improve and further develop the system through implementation of policy evaluations.

(2) Policy Evaluation Schemes

To effectively fulfill the role expected and to ensure efficient implementation of policy evaluation, methods, including the “Project Evaluation Method,” the “Performance Evaluation Method,” and the “Comprehensive Evaluation Method” (Appendix), shall be used pertinently in conducting policy evaluation, depending on the characteristics of the policy and their purposes.

Evaluation methods shall be constantly reviewed while referring to past evaluation methods, including changes in the combination of the components of the above methods, so that useful information for decision-making can be obtained based on the characteristics of the policy, etc.

2. Basic Matters Related to Standpoints of Policy Evaluation

When conducting a policy evaluation, appropriate standpoints shall be chosen and specified according to the characteristics of the policy to ensure concrete and comprehensive evaluation. In this regard, as mentioned above, more emphasis is to be placed on evaluation from the standpoint of effectiveness, and work more proactively than ever before to acquire and analyze the effects of policy to better fulfill the function of understanding the progress and effects of policies.

Standpoints of policy evaluation include necessity, efficiency and effectiveness as specified in Article 3, paragraph 1, of the Act. Policy evaluation based on the standpoint of necessity aims to determine whether the administrative objective of the policy is valid considering the needs of the public or society or higher administrative objective in view of the effects of policy and whether the policy concerned needs to be implemented by an administrative organ in view of desirable ways of administrative involvement. The evaluation from the perspective of efficiency aims to be conducted by clarifying the relationship between the effectiveness of the policy and the costs of activities based on that policy. Policy evaluation based on the standpoint of effectiveness is intended to be carried out by clarifying the relationship between the desired policy effects and the actual or expected policy effects obtained through activities based on that policy.

Other possible standpoints that may be chosen according to the characteristics of the policy include equity and priority. Policy evaluation based on the standpoint of equity aims to determine whether the effects of policy and cost burdens are, or are planned to be, equitably distributed considering the administrative objective. Policy evaluation based on the standpoint of priority aims to determine whether the policy concerned shall be given preference over other policies considering the results of evaluation undertaken from the above standpoints.

The basic approach to the application of standpoints of policy evaluation shall be specified in each basic plan.

3. Basic Matters of Understanding Policy Effects

- A In understanding the effects of policy, it is important to clarify the correspondence between policies targeted for policy evaluation and what means are to be used under what objectives, and it is therefore fundamental to clearly state the policy structure in advance. If a policy within the jurisdiction of an administrative organ is linked to another policy (with a higher objective) involving multiple administrative organs, efforts shall be made to clarify its relationship with the policy involving multiple administrative organs in advance.
- B Appropriate methods shall be used to understand the effects of policy, taking into account the characteristics of the target policy, as applicable, and also the cost of understanding the effects of policy and the accuracy of the analysis of the results obtained. In this regard, to identify information useful for policy improvement and to set it appropriately as an indicator, efforts shall be made from the planning stage to clarify the pathways for the realization of effects expected to be obtained from policy implementation and to examine methods for acquiring those effects.

Regarding the method of understanding policy effects, methods that allow for quantification to the extent possible shall be used. In this regard, it is important to ensure that setting and measuring indicators do not become a purpose of evaluations, but rather serve the purpose of obtaining information that contributes to achieving policy objectives. Furthermore, if qualitative methods are considered to be reasonable for understanding the advancement of the policy in question, alternatives or combinations using these methods shall also be considered.

In addition, rather than uniformly applying high-level and rigorous methods from the beginning, even simple methods shall be applied if their usefulness is recognized, and efforts shall be made to improve the quality of policy evaluations by accumulating knowledge through the process of conducting policy evaluations and advancing the sophistication of methods.

- C The basic approach to understanding the effects of policy shall be shown in each basic plan.
- D When understanding the effects of policy, utmost efforts shall be made to consider the characteristics of the policy and strive to understand the effects and impacts in relation to the broader objectives of government activities.
- E With regard to understanding the effects of policy, prior consideration shall be given to information gathering and reporting methods, so that information, data and facts necessary for understanding the effects of policy can be effectively and efficiently obtained through implementation of activities based on the policy concerned. In cases where there is a need to request cooperation from other parties, efforts shall be made to ascertain the effects of policy as appropriately as possible to the extent that their understandings can be obtained.
- F In cases where responsible entity is other than an administrative organ, utmost efforts shall be made to obtain understanding and cooperation from that entity to the extent that it is necessary for the appropriate ascertainment of the effects of policy, by, for example, showing them the effects of policy to be ascertained, and the method to be used for that purpose.

4. Basic Matters Related to the Conduct of Ex-Ante Evaluation

- A An ex-ante evaluation shall be conducted prior to policy decision-making for providing information useful for selecting the most suitable policy or determining whether it shall be implemented on the basis of the effects of policy expected to be obtained from operations based on that policy. In this regard, efforts shall be made to clarify the processes of selecting a suitable policy from multiple options and improving and reviewing to the extent possible.
- B Regarding ex-ante evaluations, even for policies not mandated for implementation based on Article 9 of the Act, those falling under Article 1 of the same article, active research and development on methods for understanding policy effects shall be promoted, and based on this situation, efforts shall be made to progressively work towards implementation.

- C When conducting an ex-ante evaluation, the desired effects, ex-post evaluation methods shall be specified, and when the effects of policy manifest themselves, the results of the ex-ante evaluation shall be verified, with the knowledge and insight obtained through this process utilized in future ex-ante evaluations.
- D Policy directions for the implementation of ex-ante evaluations, including the basic approach to the application of evaluation methods to them, shall be specified in each basic plan.
- E Ex-ante evaluations of research and development shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the General Guidelines on the Evaluation of Research and Development by the National Government (decision of Prime Minister of December 21, 2016), in addition to those specified in the Act and these Basic Guidelines.
- F When conducting regulatory ex-ante evaluations, it is strongly recommended to conduct ex-ante evaluations spontaneously for regulations which are not mandated in the Act.
- G Regarding ex-ante evaluations for policies pertaining to special taxation measures for national taxes and measures to alleviate local taxes, etc. (hereinafter referred to as "special taxation measures"), based on the principles of fundamental review of special taxation measures, which were clarified in the 2010 Tax Reform Outline (Cabinet decision on December 22, 2009), it is strongly recommended to conduct ex-ante evaluations positively and spontaneously also for policies pertaining to measures other than special taxation measures which are mandated (hereinafter referred to as "specified special taxation measures") (limited to measures to alleviate or defer taxes for the purpose of achieving a specified administrative objective).

5. Basic Matters Related to the Conduct of Ex-Post Evaluation

- A An ex-post evaluation of a policy shall be conducted after a certain period from its decision-making for ascertaining the effects of policy and, on that basis, for providing information useful for the review or improvement of that policy or the planning and development of new policies and their implementation as well.
- B An ex-post evaluation shall be conducted on a unit deemed reasonable from the viewpoint of reflecting its results in the policy, with the relationship between the administrative objective and means considered. Even when it comes up the purpose and the duties of the administrative organ or fundamental major plans inseparable from them, it is useful to understand that an evaluation shall be undertaken considering this principle.
- C An ex-post evaluation shall be conducted at the appropriate time, taking into consideration, among other things, the need to review and improve the policy according to the changing socioeconomic situation, the status of the effects of policy, etc.
- D Policy directions for the implementation of ex-post evaluations, including the basic approach to the application of evaluation methods to them, shall be specified in each basic plan. Policies to be targeted for an ex-post evaluation in each implementation plan shall be determined

according to the subparagraphs under the paragraph 2 of Article 7 of the Act.

- E Ex-post evaluations of research and development shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the General Guidelines on the Evaluation of Research and Development by the National Government, in addition to those specified in the Act and these basic guidelines.
- F The head of an individual administrative organ is supposed to establish policies for major administrative objectives that the relevant organ shall achieve based on socioeconomic circumstances in order to fulfil its duties, as policies to be targeted for ex-post evaluations in its basic plan. Ex-post evaluations shall be conducted for the following policies as specified respectively in the following items.

- (i) Policies pertaining to special taxation measures: Based on the principles of fundamental review of special taxation measures, which were clarified in the 2010 Tax Reform Outline, the head of an individual administrative organ must specify policies pertaining to special taxation measures (limited to measures to alleviate or defer taxes for the purpose of achieving a specified administrative objective) under jurisdiction of the relevant organ in its basic plan as policies to be targeted for ex-post evaluations.

In this case, policies pertaining to specified special taxation measures must be clearly indicated in the basic plan without fail, and the head shall endeavor to also include policies pertaining to other measures in the targets for ex-post evaluations positively and spontaneously.

- (ii) Policies pertaining to regulations: The Regulatory Reform Implementation Plan (Cabinet decision on June 2, 2016) provides that the ministries and agencies responsible for regulations shall, upon preparing regulatory sheets, conduct an ex-post evaluation for the costs and benefits estimated at the time of an ex-ante evaluation as well as any unexpected effects of regulations, and that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall check the ex-post evaluation results. Therefore, the head of an individual administrative organ shall specify policies pertaining to regulations for which an ex-ante evaluation had been conducted as the targets for ex-post evaluations in its basic plan.

In this case, policies pertaining to regulations for which an ex-ante evaluation is mandated must be clearly indicated in the basic plan without fail, and the head shall endeavor to also include policies pertaining to other regulations in the targets for ex-post evaluations positively and spontaneously. Additionally, regulations for which the time to conduct a review is approaching shall also be included in the targets for ex-post evaluations in the implementation plan.

6. Basic Matters of Utilizing the Insights of Experts with Relevant Knowledge and Experience

The utilization of the insights of experts with knowledge and experience as stipulated in Article 3, paragraph 2, item (ii) of the Act in accordance with the characteristics of a policy shall be conducted in an appropriate manner according to the characteristics of a policy targeted for evaluation and the content of the evaluation, based on the utilization of high-level insight, advanced professional knowledge and ability, and practical knowledge regarding the relationship of the policy to people's daily lives and socioeconomics, in order to ensure objective and rigorous implementation of the policy evaluation. In this regard, attention shall also be paid to the perspective of strengthening the functions for understanding and analyzing the effects of policy and promoting the use of information obtained from evaluation-related work, such as policy evaluation and review of administrative programs, in the decision-making process. The basic concept and methods of utilizing knowledge in accordance with the characteristics of the policy shall be indicated in the basic plan.

7. Basic Matters Relating to Reflection of Policy Evaluation Results in Policy Planning and Development

There is a need to ensure that the results of a policy evaluation are appropriately reflected in that policy through their use in administrative organs as important information for policy planning and development work (e.g. budget estimation including personnel quotas, request for a tax revision, and the introduction, modification or abolition of a legal institution) whenever necessary at individual administrative organ. For this purpose, a mechanism etc. aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the reflection of policy evaluation results in the relevant policies shall be established under the leadership of the organizational unit in charge of policy evaluation, particularly by promoting the compilation of results of policy evaluations conducted by competent departments, bureaus etc. and the incorporation of such results into the relevant policies and securing close collaboration with the departments, bureaus etc. in charge of compiling budgets requests, taxation, drafting laws etc. according to the actual circumstances of individual administrative organ. The details shall be specified in each basic plan.

To strengthen coordination between policy evaluation and budget & audit and between policy evaluation and taxation, necessary efforts shall be made with the intentions of related cabinet decisions, etc taken into account.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall take the necessary measures to promote individual administrative organs' efforts directed towards the reflection of policy evaluation results into the relevant policies.

8. Basic Matters Related to Publication of Information related Policy Evaluation via Internet and Other Means

- A In an evaluation report as specified in Article 10, paragraph 1, of the Act, all items prescribed in the subparagraphs of the same paragraph shall be included in as concrete and clear as possible, in view of the importance of ensuring that policy evaluation results can be verified by outside parties. In this regard, the direction towards reflecting evaluation results in the relevant policies shall also be clarified, with the source data and assumptions used in the evaluation, external factors, etc. specified.
- B The summary of an evaluation report shall aim to clearly present the results of the evaluation by succinctly describing the main content of the evaluation report.
- C When making an evaluation report public, sensitive information in considering national security, public safety, personal privacy, corporate secrets, etc. shall be handled appropriately in accordance with the intentions of the Law concerning Access to Information Held by Administrative Organ (Law No. 42 of 1999).
- D The status of the reflection of policy evaluation results in the relevant policies shall be publicized in as concrete a manner as possible, covering policy evaluation results and details (e.g. content, publication timing and future plans) of the measures taken or to be taken based on them.
- E When disclosing evaluation reports, the reflection of policy evaluations on policies, and other relevant information shall be done through appropriate means such as posting on the website, press releases, placement at public relations bases, distribution at counters, etc., to ensure that the public can easily understand the content, and specific methods for disclosure shall be outlined in the basic plan.

9. Other Important Matters Related to Policy Evaluation

(1) Organizational Framework of Implementing Policy Evaluation

To ensure the objective and rigorous implementation of policy evaluation, individual administrative organ shall establish organizational framework that enables addressing organizationally integrated policy evaluation based on an appropriate division of roles between the organizational unit in charge of policy evaluation and the departments, bureaus, etc. in charge of individual policies according to its organizational circumstances. The details of such framework and roles of the organizational unit in charge of policy evaluation shall be specified in each basic plan.

To ensure the effective and efficient functioning of organizational framework, active efforts shall be made to secure adequate human resource assigned to policy evaluation, including those belonging to the organizational unit in charge of policy evaluation, and improve their evaluation capability.

(2) Establishment of Contact Points to Receive Opinions and Requests from the Public

Individual administrative organ shall establish a contact point to receive opinions and requests regarding policy evaluation from the public, with its details specified in its basic plan. In addition, active efforts shall be made to disseminate such information through the Internet, etc. Opinions and requests received shall be appropriately processed or utilized by relevant departments, bureaus etc.

(3) Collaboration and Cooperation with Local Governments

When implementing a policy evaluation, the National Government shall seek appropriate collaboration and cooperation with local governments by exchanging information and views necessary to ensure the objective and rigorous implementation according to the characteristics of the policy, keeping in mind that the National Government and local governments are expected to engage in their respective administrative activities and ascertain and evaluate their effects in cooperation with each other, playing appropriately divided roles.

II Matters Related to Measures Based on Provisions of Articles 20 to 22 of Act

1. Measures Based on Provisions of Article 20

(1) Promotion of research, studies and development

In promoting research, studies, and development, based on the characteristics of a policy, administrative organs shall focus on the development of methods for understanding the effects of policy and other evaluation methods, research and studies on the reliability and accuracy of methods for understanding the effects of policy, and research and studies on the standardization of evaluation indicators and methods for understanding the effects of policy among similar projects, etc.

Information exchange between administrative organs regarding the results of such study, research and development efforts shall be promoted.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall play a role in promoting continuous improvement of policy evaluation efforts at individual administrative organ by further emphasizing evaluation from the standpoint of effectiveness, and by promoting research and study on methods for understanding the effects of policy, with reference to examples of efforts at individual administrative organ and based on discussions at the Council, as well as by organizing and sharing the knowledge and methods obtained.

(2) The Acquisition of Capable Personnel and Enhancement of Staff Capability

Regarding securing personnel and enhancing qualifications of staff, various efforts, including the employment of certified public accountants and other persons with specialized practical knowledge through the application of the Act concerning the Appointment of Regular-Service Fixed-Term Personnel and Exceptions in the Remuneration Scheme (Law No. 125 of 2000), utilization of retired government employees through reappointment, etc., public and private-sector interaction in the field of evaluation, exchange of personnel assigned to Policy Evaluation and educational activities aimed at raising personnel awareness, shall be made. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall provide personnel assigned to policy evaluation in individual administrative organs with systematic and continued training with the cooperation of their respective Organs.

In planning training programs conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, attention shall also be paid to promoting the utilization of information obtained from evaluation-related activities such as policy evaluation and review of administrative programs to enhance the understanding and analysis of policy effects and to encourage the utilization of information in the decision-making process.

2. Measures Based on Provisions of Article 21

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall study ways of promoting the utilization of information necessary for the implementation of policy evaluation etc. and develop a system aimed at facilitating the sharing of such information among administrative organs.

Furthermore, in anticipation of the increased need to utilize statistical data, administrative records, big data, and other information due to advancements in understanding policy effects in individual administrative organ, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall work on providing technical support for the development of statistics and the utilization of data for understanding and analyzing policy effects in individual administrative organ.

3. Measures Based on Provisions of Article 22

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall enhance its clearinghouse function, designed to allow easy and centralized search for information regarding the locations of policy evaluation information with the cooperation of individual administrative organs from the viewpoint of contributing broadly to the convenience of the public.

Efforts shall be made to make such information available at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, regional administrative evaluation bureaus, and other sites to increase convenience.

III Matters Relating to Other Measures Necessary for Smooth and Steady Implementation of Policy Evaluation

1. Holding of Liaison Meetings

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall host liaison meetings comprising representatives from individual administrative organs so as to foster close communication among them, ensure the smooth and efficient enforcement of the policy evaluation system and promote initiatives relating to policy evaluation, with a view to improving the quality of policy evaluation.

In addition, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall formulate and revise or abolish necessary guidelines through liaison and consultation at the liaison meetings to contribute to the smooth and efficient implementation of policy evaluation.

2. Policy Evaluations Implemented by Individual Administrative Organs and Those Implemented by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(1) Division of Roles Between Evaluations Conducted by Individual Administrative Organs and Those Undertaken by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

To help bring about the realization of efficient and high-quality citizens-first public administration, a shift to citizens-focused results-oriented public administration and the fulfillment of administrative accountability to the public as the purposes of the policy evaluation system, it shall be ensured that policy evaluations implemented by individual administrative organs and those implemented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications as an independent specialized evaluation organization fulfill their respective roles. To this end, individual administrative organs as a policy planner, designer and implementer shall evaluate the policies within its jurisdiction from the viewpoint of properly fulfilling its duties and reflect evaluation results in its policies. In addition, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications as the independent specialized evaluation organization shall evaluate the policies of individual administrative organs or with a special attention to ensuring government-wide consistency or comprehensive implementation, and the objective and rigorous implementation of policy evaluations by individual relevant administrative organs. It shall then notify its opinions to individual administrative organs on the basis of the evaluation results and make recommendations as necessary. In this manner, policy review and improvement within individual administrative organs based on their own perspectives and policy review and improvement within the government aimed at ensuring consistency and comprehensiveness shall be promoted for the government-wide realization of more appropriate policies.

Within the above institutional framework, individual administrative organs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall engage in their respective evaluation activities in a focused and planned manner as specified below so as to ensure effective and efficient evaluation operations, taking into consideration the organizational framework of evaluation, workload, urgency etc. as well as policy priorities of the Cabinet. In this regard, evaluation activities shall be undertaken in a government-wide comprehensive and integrated manner according to the objectives of individual policy evaluations etc., so as to meet the expectations of the public.

(2) Evaluation Activities by Individual Administrative Organs

Individual administrative organ shall conduct focused and planned evaluations on the policies within its jurisdiction as specified below.

- (i) Main policies within the jurisdiction of the administrative organ concerned that fall into what the Cabinet has identified as a priority area in the Prime Minister's policy speeches etc.;
- (ii) Main policies deemed in need of a review or improvement according to changes in the internal or external socioeconomic situations;
- (iii) Policies deemed in need of an evaluation because of its high demand from the public;
- (iv) Policies that the responsible administrative organ has decided to implement as its top priorities.

(3) Evaluation Activities by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall, as an independent specialized evaluation organization, engage in evaluation activities as specified below from the viewpoint of effectively and efficiently implementing evaluations that cannot be conducted by individual administrative organs or that are designed to make up for the inadequacy of policy evaluations by individual administrative organs.

A Evaluation Activities Aimed at Ensuring Cohesiveness and Comprehensiveness

- (A) Evaluations conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to ensure cohesiveness or comprehensiveness shall conform to a certain direction to be followed by the Government towards ensuring and comprehensiveness for the policies of individual administrative organs. In this regard, common aspects of the policies of individual administrative organs shall be evaluated in a cross-cutting manner from a unified viewpoint, while policies encompassing the jurisdictions of multiple administrative organs shall be evaluated as a whole from the standpoint of promoting their comprehensive implementation. Any policy that involves wide-ranging programs shall be evaluated after breaking it up into policy units deemed reasonable from the viewpoint of reflecting evaluation results in the policy.
- (B) On the basis of the above, the policies specified below shall be evaluated in a focused and planned manner. (For the selection of these subjects, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications shall follow the research and deliberation of the Council.)
 - (i) Policies of individual administrative organs relating to a major issue or problem for which government-wide efforts are required by law, ordinance, cabinet decision etc.;
 - (ii) Policies that utilize an administrative framework or system common across administrative organs;
 - (iii) Policies which are under the jurisdictions of multiple administrative organs and for which the objectives, measures to be taken, etc. in relation to the ensuring of their comprehensiveness have been specified by law, ordinance, cabinet decision etc; or;
 - (iv) Other policies deemed in need of urgent and flexible evaluation with regard to cohesiveness and comprehensiveness because of its high demand from the public, as comparable to those listed from (i) to (iii) above
- (C) When conducting an evaluation, attention shall be given to the status of the implementation of policy evaluations by individual administrative organs, while efficient operations on the basis of close communication shall be pursued particularly by effectively utilizing information and other resources collected by individual administrative organs in the course of their own evaluations.

- (D) The Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications shall notify opinions to relevant administrative organs regarding understanding of the status of the effects of policy, issues relating to the policy, contribute to the future planning and developing the relevant policies. If an administrative organ is deemed in need of taking a concrete measure in relation to the policy considering certain direction to be followed by the Government to ensure cohesiveness and comprehensiveness, the Minister shall also make recommendations to the head of the administrative organ concerned.

B Evaluation Activities Aimed at Ensuring Objective and Rigorous Implementation of Policy Evaluation

A series of evaluation activities aimed at ensuring objective and rigorous implementation of policy evaluation shall be undertaken in a focused and planned manner as specified below.

- (i) Examination of policy evaluations conducted by individual administrative organs in terms of, for example, the level of objectivity and rigor to be ensured with regard to their implementation framework, including the implementation procedure.
- (ii) Determination of the need for the implementation of a fresh evaluation in place of the unsatisfactory policy evaluation by the relevant administrative organs or evaluation due to changes in the socioeconomic situation etc. (Such need shall be determined with the studies and deliberations by the Council taken into account. In this regard, the Council shall provide the administrative organ concerned with an opportunity to explain and answer questions regarding the allegedly determined need to conduct a fresh evaluation.)
- (iii) Implementation of an evaluation where an administrative organ has been notified of the need to implement a fresh policy evaluation based on the outcome of the step described in (ii) above but ensuring objective and rigorous implementation is deemed impossible if left to the administrative organ (Such evaluation shall be conducted with the studies and deliberations by the Council taken into account. In this regard, the Council shall provide the administrative organ concerned with an opportunity to explain and answer questions regarding the allegedly determined impossibility of ensuring objective and rigorous implementation.)
- (iv) When it is recognized that it is necessary to conduct an evaluation jointly with the administrative organs if requested by the administrative organs.

3. Review of Basic Guidelines

These Basic Guidelines shall be reviewed as necessary, based on the status of the implementation of policy evaluations, outcomes and trends of study, research and development regarding policy evaluation methods, including means to study and acquire the effects of policy.

Supplementary Provisions

(1) For basic plans established based on Article 6, Paragraph 1 of the Act before the enforcement of these Basic Guidelines, until the first basic plan is formulated after the enforcement of these Basic Guidelines, the provisions of the previous practice will continue to apply, regardless of the provisions of these Basic Guidelines.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the heads of individual administrative organ may, until the first basic plan is formulated after the enforcement of these Basic Guidelines, stipulate the matters in the basic plan under Article 6, paragraph 2, item (vi) of the Act and in the plans for implementation of ex-post evaluation under each item of Article 7, paragraph 2 of the Act, based on the provisions of this Basic Guidelines in the plan for implementation of ex-post evaluation.

[Project Evaluation Method]

"Project Evaluation Method" is designed to evaluate a policy for implementing certain projects or programs prior to its adoption particularly in terms of the validity of its objective in light of the needs of the public or society, or a higher objective, the necessity of its implementation by an administrative organ in view of desirable administrative involvement, and the prospect of obtaining effects in comparison with estimated costs from the policy implementation, for facilitating the policy decision-making process. This method is also used to verify the actual effects of a policy after its implementation based on the content of the evaluation undertaken in advance, as necessary.

Note: The term "projected evaluation" is sometimes used to denote an ex-ante or ex-post evaluation of an individual public works project.

[Performance Evaluation Method]

"Performance Evaluation Method" is designed to evaluate a policy after its adoption in terms of the achievement of effect-oriented targets preset on the basis of the relationship between the policy objective and the means employed for its attainment, by measuring the level of performance on a regular/ongoing basis and summing up overall results, including efforts made and final achievements, at the end of the target period, for promoting constant policy reviews and improvements.

[Comprehensive Evaluation Method]

"Comprehensive Evaluation Method" is designed to evaluate a policy with emphasis on one or more specific themes in a comprehensive manner after a certain length of time from its adoption particularly by conducting an in-depth analysis on the status of the effects of policy relating to the themes in question from a different angle, identifying problems associated with the policy, and analyzing their causes, for facilitating policy reviews and improvements through the provision of various information conducive to the resolution of such problems.