

The JCAM Cultural Properties Rescue Operations as Seen by the JCAM Administrative Office

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The cultural properties rescue operations that were carried out after the Great East Japan Earthquake were conducted primarily by the Committee for Salvaging Cultural Properties and Other Materials Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Related Disasters (referred to hereafter as the Rescue Committee) and the rescue organizations in the affected prefectures, with the cooperation of an extremely large number of groups and individuals involved with areas housing cultural properties. The Japanese Council of Art Museums (referred to hereafter as JCAM), one of the organizations that made up the Rescue Committee, carried out the rescue of artworks in several disaster sites, including the Ishinomaki Cultural Center (Miyagi prefecture) and the Rikuzen-Takata City Museum (Iwate prefecture). Once those works were given emergency treatment in a temporary holding area, they were transferred to storage at JCAM member museums and universities with conservation departments. Today conservation work and transfer of the items remains an ongoing process. The cultural properties rescue operations in Fukushima prefecture that began in 2012 were conducted under particularly difficult circumstances, given the radiation contamination from the nuclear accident, yet these operations continued as part of long term planning for the area. After the disbanding of the Rescue Committee, JCAM joined the Cultural Properties and Other Materials Rescue Operation in Fukushima Prefecture Disaster Areas conducted in fiscal 2013, and will possibly participate in future projects as necessary.

In this manner the rescue operation is still in progress and will not be finished until the rescued works are returned to their owners. And thus, this paper is not a summation of the operation, but rather should be seen as an interim report. The operations carried out in the disaster zone from the end of April 2011 onwards are described in detail in sections I: General Statements, II: Reports by Rescue Participants and III: Reference Materials of this report compendium.

This paper reports on the six weeks of administrative work carried out from the time of the disaster to the beginning of rescue operations, and then in its main section, touches on some of the various issues related to the management of rescue operations.

1. Administrative Office Work until the Start of Rescue Operations

This is not the first time that JCAM has been involved in organized activities when a major disaster struck. After the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995, the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the National Art Museum worked in coordination with JCAM to form an Art Work Rescue Team that was dispatched to the disaster zone three weeks after the earthquake, where they surveyed affected facilities and carried out emergency treatment on objects. Then, based on requests made to the Agency for Cultural Affairs, rescue operations were carried out under the auspices of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Cultural Properties and Other Materials Rescue Committee. After this committee was disbanded, a comprehensive survey of affected facilities was carried out independently by JCAM, with the results published in the *Report on the Combined Survey of Art Museums and Museums Affected by the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake*. (vols. 1 and 2). Based on these experiences, the 47th JCAM Annual Meeting, held in June 1998, decided on disaster reaction protocols *A Summary of Responses in the Time of Disaster and Elements for Implementations* (hereinafter referred hereafter to as the Protocol). The Protocol's clarification of what to do in the time of disaster is extremely important preparation, and I would like to express my gratitude to those involved in the formation and approval of the Protocol. When the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, the JCAM administrative office was set up basically in line with this Protocol, with its activities as noted below.

1) Gathering and Distributing Information

(1) Establishment of Communications Head Office

In line with the Protocol, a communications head office was established by the administration office on March 11th, and emails sent to all member museums requesting status reports on disaster effects. The JCAM administration office is located within the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, (referred to hereafter as NMWA). On the day of the disaster staff members assisted museum visitors who were stranded onsite in the aftermath, along with carrying out inspections of facilities and artworks. Thus it was not until the morning of the 12th that the JCAM administrative office was able to confirm the status of other museums. A further damage survey was conducted by phone on the 12th and the 13th. However, in addition to phone contact and email responses from various museums, the Conservation Study Group and other JCAM study groups also gathered information, allowing us to ascertain a status of member museums in Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto and Northern Shinetsu regions, with some exceptions, within a few days. We compiled that information and on the 16th posted the first report on member museum damage and conditions on the JCAM website. Further, we received a phone call from Kurihara Yuji, then director of Fine Arts Division of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, and exchanged information on damage done to art museums.

While we had accumulated relatively detailed information on the damage to member museums, on the chart posted on the JCAM website we only provided basic information in three levels, "No Damage," "No Major Damage," "No Loss of Life, Details to Follow." For those museums whose status was unconfirmed, we noted, "Gathering Information." The second report was published on March 18th, with an English edition also posted on March 31st thanks to assistance from the Website Group. Only the Ishinomaki Cultural Center remained in the "Gathering Information" column. We received information about that facility at the end of March from Asaka Hiroshi of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Then on April 7th we received a phone call from Sasaki Atsushi, manager of the Ishinomaki Board of Education providing direct information on their status, and we amended their status in the third bulletin posted on April 18th to, "Applied for Assistance."

(2) Questionnaire Sent to JCAM Member Museums in the Disaster Zone

On March 26th, we faxed a questionnaire to 29 member museums in the Tohoku and northern Kanto regions in order to confirm if they needed rescue operations. However, other than the Ishinomaki Cultural Center, which we could not contact, and the Rias Ark Museum of Art, Miyagi prefecture, whose building was damaged, and thus was awaiting a full-scale survey of status, the majority of the museums responded that they did not require assistance and could manage with their own resources. Only a few of the museums contacted us about conservation of specific artworks and other requests.

Around the same time that the questionnaire was being sent out, we had direct phone contact with the curatorial managers at affected museums. By the last week of March the facilities in coastal regions had not yet provided detailed reports to their prefectural art museums located in the interior. In addition to the issues of resources and transport, this period saw continuing strong aftershocks, and naturally it meant that the staff members of each museum were dedicating themselves to grappling with the recovery of their own respective facilities. However, by the beginning of April, there was a sense that the situation for core museums in each prefecture had calmed down a bit, and then they were able to report on the actual conditions in the facilities located on the Sanriku coast. It is of special note that by this point in time the historical materials network and local museums in each area had already begun their own rescue operations. However, in order for the starting of full rescue operations involving teams dispatched from outside of the disaster zone, the core museums in the affected prefectures had to become a bit more stabilized, so they could turn their attention to damage in their surrounding area, and reach a state where they could receive outside assistance.

2) Arranging Structure

The Administrative Office's main job from the end of March through the first week of April was to prepare a system of long-term rescue and support operations. On April 6th, an extraordinary board meeting was called with board members contacted by fax on four issues, namely, "contact network organization," "establishment of a countermeasures headquarters," "establishment of a support committee" and "should we participate in cultural properties rescue operations?" The board approved these measures on April 11.

(1) Reorganization of the Contact Network Organization

The Protocol had stipulated that the entire country be divided into nine regional blocks, and that rescue operations would be based on a contact network organization in the central museum and sub-central museums within each block. In the decade that had passed since the formulation of the Protocol, it had become unclear what constituted the central museums within each block. This issue was raised at a meeting of study group directors in November 2010, but then disaster struck soon after that group had acknowledged the need for reconsideration. While delayed, we contacted the core museums in each region and asked them to act as central and sub-central museums, so that we could reorganize our communications network. Given the situation of this disaster, the number of blocks was increased to 11, the five major disaster-affected prefectures (Miyagi, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Tochigi and Gunma) were combined into one block and an administrative office appointed. However, the rescue operations were carried out on a by-prefecture basis, and since contact was made to all member museums nationwide in a single email, this contact network organization was not used to a great degree during the current operations. A reconsideration of the communications network remains a topic for the future.

(2) Establishment of a Countermeasures Headquarters

The Protocol states that JCAM will establish a Countermeasures Headquarters (hereafter referred to as the CH) upon receiving "Requests for Assistance" from disaster-affected facilities. While no requests had been received from member museums by the time of the extraordinary communications from the board on April 6th, we sought confirmation of the establishment of a CH so that operations could begin depending on circumstances. On April 7th we received a request for assistance on the phone with Mr. Sasaki of the Ishinomaki Board of Education, and this request led to the startup of the CH.

The Protocol stipulates that JCAM member museum staff members can be part of the CH, in addition to the members of the JCAM administrative office. Former JCAM chairman Aoyagi Masanori was named CH director, with JCAM vice chairman Yamanashi Toshio (National Museum of Art, Osaka) named CH deputy director, with seven office members participating from member museums in the Kanto, Tokai and Kinki regions, in addition to members of the JCAM administrative office. The JCAM administrative office staff has responsibilities towards its own museum, and thus cannot focus solely on JCAM activities. The author was involved in the Ishinomaki Cultural Center rescue work until June, but with preparations needed for an exhibition I was in charge of opening in October, I asked three members of the CH to work on the Rikuzen-Takata City Museum rescue operation that began fully in July. In cases like this one where the rescue operations occur over a lengthy time period, it is essential that core members located in various areas share information and divide responsibilities as needed. As rescue and assistance operations continue, at times new members were added to the CH staff.

(3) Establishment of a Support Operations Committee

Damage from the disaster occurred over a large area in eastern Japan, and the circumstances of art museums differed by region. In a certain prefecture, we heard that in late March the art museum's operational budget was cut overall in order to give priority to recovery work. Further during this period the issue arose of whether or not in addition to the direct damage caused by the earthquake and tsunami, the effects of the nuclear accident at the

Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant meant that that museums throughout eastern Japan and indeed the country could be affected. The rolling electrical blackouts held for two weeks starting on March 14th meant that some museums were temporarily closed. Because overseas artwork loans were suspended during this time, exhibitions were canceled or rescheduled, and there was the fear that limited use of electricity during the summer would mean smaller displays and worsening of art protection environment. While the Administrative Office continued to collect information about damage and state of recovery during the latter half of March through April, they also consulted with various sources regarding these problems, held information sessions and gathered opinions as they sought a response to these issues. These factors indicated that, in addition to the “rescue” of disaster-affected facilities and artworks, it was also necessary to consider “support” to museums so that they could continue their museum activities while handling the various issues generated by the disaster.

As a result, and while not stipulated in the Protocol, we proposed establishing a Support Operations Committee made up of the directors and curators of disaster-affected prefectural art museums as well as JCAM functionaries. From April to September the rescue operations were given priority, and then in October efforts were shifted to the holding of a charity auction. This meant that the first full meeting of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Disaster Recovery Response Committee was held on November 11, 2011. Since then this committee has used the funds gathered through JCAM’s solicitation and donations, and profits from the auction, to plan and carry out various work related to the restoration and display of rescued artworks, support operations for museums in the disaster zones and the compilation of records of the disaster. This report compendium and the *Repercussions of the Great East Japan Earthquake on Museums – A General Survey Report by The Japanese Council of Art Museums* published in May 2014 are publications edited by a subcommittee of this committee.

(4) Participating in the Cultural Properties Rescue Operations

On March 30, 2011, the Agency for Cultural Affairs decided to implement Rescue Operations for Cultural Properties and Other Materials Affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Related Disasters (referred to hereafter as the Cultural Properties Rescue Operation), and that same day sent a letter to JCAM requesting our participation in the Rescue Committee. Participation in the Rescue Committee was a preliminary condition for effectively carrying out rescue work in tandem with local involved and other groups. Thanks to receiving the agreement of the JCAM board to the above-named four articles, JCAM’s rescue and support system was officially determined.

3) Preparations for Staff Dispatch

The JCAM administrative office received a request for assistance from the Ishinomaki Culture Center on April 7th. As soon as the Rescue Committee was up and running, they immediately began preparations to participate in the rescue of that center, all while exchanging information with the JCAM CH staff and the Agency for Cultural Affairs Fine Arts Division. A meeting of CH was held at Hyôgo Prefectural Museum of Art on April 10th. On the 15th the Rescue Committee departed, and from the 27th through 29th the JCAM-dispatched team began to assist with the Ishinomaki Culture Center operations. Regarding that process, see the author’s report titled “Ishinomaki Culture Center Art Division Rescue Operations”.

In the compendium Kotani Ryusuke (then Miyagi Board of Education) notes that JCAM informed him of the days that the artworks would be rescued from the Ishinomaki Culture Center, but in fact, based on how rubble removal, begun on April 20th, was progressing at the center, we were contacted by the Agency for Cultural Affairs who stated they wanted to remove artworks starting on April 27th. Upon that notice JCAM then assembled its dispatch team. During this rescue preparation process we worked at coordinating communications between the Agency, Rescue Committee, and Miyagi Museum of Art, the disaster area’s core museum. However at that stage there was a lack of mutual understanding with the Miyagi Board of Education that was part of the regional rescue

organization, and the e-mail exchange in the midst of this lack of agreement reflected this inadequacy.

2. Various issues in Rescue Operations

(1) Cooperation with Other Groups

Because JCAM worked as one of the groups making up the Rescue Committee, the rescue activities we participated in over the two years from the date of the disaster were but one element of the Rescue Committee's cultural properties rescue operations. However, given that the JCAM Protocol includes the possibility for independent rescue operations by JCAM, some member museum staff began to urge such action in late March. Compared to the case of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, when troops were sent quickly to the disaster zone, it is true that considerable time elapsed in this event prior to dispatch. However, when the author considers the scale of the disaster and the state of recovery, I believe that it was good to watch what the Agency was doing, wait for the creation of the Rescue Committee and plan to work in cooperation with other organizations. Or, it may also have been true that we did not have the self-confidence to start our own independent operation.

In any event, this cultural properties rescue was both a volunteer action and something that bore the responsibility of handling the property of other organizations and individuals. Further, there was a certain amount of risk operating in the disaster zone where aftershocks continued. Thus there had to be the gaining of trust between both those who were being aided and those who were being dispatched to aid. However, the voluntary organization JCAM was able to relatively easily and quickly determine action when compared to other groups. Conversely, there were limitations to the scope for which we could take responsibility. In order for operations to proceed smoothly, it was essential to have the official backup of a request for permission to cooperate from the Agency and participate in Rescue Committee. The disaster zone was both diverse and massive in scale, and given that the rescue operations were going to be lengthy in term, this experience made it clear that it was all the more important that we worked in coordination with other groups, such as the rescue organization made up of the Agency, Rescue Committee administrative office, constituent groups and rescue organizations in the disaster-affected prefectures.

(2) Transportation of Artworks and Their Management

The objects of this rescue operation were tsunami-hit facilities, and the majority of the artworks and materials rescued had been soaked in seawater and covered in mud. While some of the Ishinomaki materials, rescued six weeks after the disaster, had developed mold, the situation was worse at Rikuzen-Takata, whose works were not rescued until four months after the disaster. As a result, both instances required massive efforts in the emergency treatment process after they were removed from the disaster zone. This was a huge difference with the rescue operation carried out in the Hanshin-Awaji disaster. One of the biggest problems for the rescue operation was securing a site for this huge number of works that required emergency intervention.

The tsunami-affected works could not be transferred as is to the storage areas or conservation studios of other museums. Their temporary destinations had to have the space to carry out three processes, namely pre-treatment, treatment, and post-treatment. In other words: (1) a temporary holding space where a large number of disaster-affected works could be held in spite of their dirty state, like a warehouse space; (2) a place where emergency treatment could be carried out, namely a place with at least a minimal amount of water, electricity and lighting, a room where dirt could be handled and an easily ventilated space; and (3) the space needed for post-handling storage of the items had to be a place where a stable environment could be maintained, and if possible, with climate control systems in place. Of course the other problems that could not be overlooked were the question of the security of the items and the ease of access for the rescue staff that were visiting the area from throughout the country.

It was not easy, however, to secure a site that met these requirements within the disaster zone. Buildings with large open spaces were being used as evacuation centers or storage areas for rescue supplies. In the case of the Ishinomaki rescue, thanks to the decision made by the Miyagi Museum of Art, a space within their facilities could be

used for the emergency treatment, and we must not forget the great responsibility they took on in offering this space given that they were already inundated with huge amounts of effort involved in the recovery and reopening of their own museum. On the other hand, in the case of the Rikuzen-Takata rescue, Iwate prefecture offered the 4-story empty the former Iwate Prefectural Sanitation Research Laboratory in Morioka city, but since the building had not been used for a decade, it required preparations before it could be used as an emergency treatment location, including installing water and electricity facilities and cleaning and equipment installation. The rescue coordinator for that project Hamada Takushi (Wakayama Prefectural Museum of Modern Art), and the various members of the Iwate Museum of Art had to put in a great amount of effort to make the site ready right up until the transfer of the affected works. See Hamada's report.

These sorts of issues can be envisioned in the event of any future major disaster. Thus it would be desirable if a survey were conducted in each region of Japan to consider where large numbers of disaster-affected areas can be stored and handled in the event of such need.

(3) Staff

One of the fundamental problems faced by art museums in Japan is the extremely small number of conservation specialists in the country. During this rescue work there was a wholehearted participation by the conservators at JCAM member museums, along with a diverse variety of cooperation and assistance provided by the professors and students of conservation studies programs at art universities and conservators operating in the private sector. It goes without saying that the emergency treatment carried out at the temporary holding areas was mainly performed by these conservation specialists. Further, it was also desirable that the teams carrying out rescue work in each disaster-affected facility include at least one conservator. The late Tanaka Chiaki (Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art) was involved in the rescue work at the Ishinomaki Culture Center while Itô Yūmi (Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura and Hayama) carried out the initial survey and was involved in the rescue operation in Rikuzen-Takata. The fact that they were able to see the conditions at the disaster-affected site and that of the affected works greatly assisted them in determining the treatment plans after they were removed from the disaster area.

However, as indicated by the participants whose comments are included in the compendium, in addition to these conservators, a large number of staff responsible for all manner of different work was required to carry out these rescue operations. Given that the temporary handling sites were not ideal environments plans had to be made to maintain a stable temperature and humidity, along with pest control, all from the conservation studies standpoint. Further, photographs and records were needed during the treatment process, the works had to be moved, wrapped and their positioning managed, along with of course the massive amount of data management required. I heard that there were curatorial staff who decided to not participate in the rescue work, in spite of a desire to help, because they lacked conservation knowledge. In fact, the majority of the work that was carried out in the disaster sites themselves and in the temporary handling sites was no different from the work done everyday by curatorial staff. The rescue coordinator and administrative office roles also consisted of contacting all the different people involved, planning the movement and management of art works, arranging for people to do the work, arranging for transportation and materials. These jobs in essence can be said to be just like those carried out by those who arrange and organize art exhibitions. Thus cultural properties rescue operations are by no means just the work of conservators, but rather can make use of the experience of all different members of an art museum staff.

(4) Funding

The funding for JCAM's rescue operations came from donations from various related groups and from the public appeal held in May 2011 at the suggestion of the JCAM Education Research Group. Many of the JCAM member museums cooperated with this appeal by distributing appeal leaflets at their museums and setting up contribution boxes. The Charity Auction to Benefit the Reconstruction after the exhibition *The Great East Japan Earthquake: Art of Our*

Time was organized by JCAM, the Art Dealers Association of Japan and the Agency for Cultural Affairs and held at the Tokyo Art Club on October 5–9, 2011.

The funds gathered for the rescue and support operations from the appeal, donations, and auction profits totaled approximately 150 million yen. The use of those funds was considered by the Great East Japan Disaster Recovery Response Committee upon applications from member museums or the administrative office, and determined by the JCAM board of directors.

Of course there were sure to be economic issues in the midst of a rescue operation. At first the rescue committee planned that each organization would pay the travel costs of the people they dispatched, and because the majority of participants up until around June received travel expenses from their museums, this meant that the funds raised by JCAM could be used to pay for the workers and vehicles supplied through the cooperation of the JCAM contributing member Katolec Corp., materials provision and the travel fees for non-museum based conservators. However, the lengthy duration of the rescue operations meant that there were an increasing number of cases where JCAM also bore the travel expenses of staff from member museums. Given these circumstances, there were some fears that funds would not be secured by the time the Rikuzen-Takata rescue operation was carried out in July, and the cost saving efforts of the coordinator Hamada greatly helped alleviate those worries. From August onwards the Rescue Committee received assistance from the Agency for Cultural Affairs who paid for staff travel expenses, but while fears about resources drying up were alleviated, clearly it is desirable for there to be some form of national funding from an early period in order to continue stable rescue operations in such instances.

And yet, in order for rescue operations to proceed effectively and flexibly, it is essential that JCAM have its own funds separate from those of the national government and the Rescue Committee. Donations cannot be immediately gathered, and thus it is important that at least two to three months of operational funds are available in the beginning. As part of the planning for future disasters, shouldn't we investigate how these JCAM funds can be used for rescue operations in the time of disaster.

3. Issues for the Future

(1) Nationwide Cultural Properties Disaster Preparedness Network

From January to February 2013, the Rescue Committee finished its two years of work and was dissolved. At that time the Committee held three public discussion meetings regarding a summary of the Committee's activities and the issues that remain for the future. The contents of these meetings were compiled in the *Let's Talk! The Public Report by the Cultural Properties Rescue Committee*, published online in June 2013. The final day of the meetings saw a discussion of what the experiences in the rescue operations this time around might suggest for cultural properties disaster preparedness in the future. Based on the Rescue Committee structure, made up of groups from different cultural properties disciplines, such as art, history, ethnography, archaeology and history of natural science, these groups all shared an awareness of a need for setting up a standing disaster risk mitigation system on a nationwide level.

In response to these voices, in June 2013 the Agency for Cultural Affairs established a Cultural Properties Disaster Response Committee. This committee is on a standing basis, investigating measures that can be taken regarding disaster risk mitigation for cultural properties, and taking responsibility for determining what rescue work will be taken in the event of a disaster. Further, in September 2014, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage established a Headquarters for the Promotion of a Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network.

The aim of this headquarters was to conduct surveys regarding disaster risk mitigation. In all, 19 groups, including the constituent members of the former Rescue Committee, formed an "Executive Committee of the National Task Force for CH-DRM Net".

In this manner, based on the experiences in the current disaster, great advances have been made in forming a CH-DRM network that involves groups and institutions from throughout Japan, based on a core of the Agency for Cultural Affairs and National Institutes for Cultural Heritage. We can anticipate that this will mean a more timely provision of a national rescue structure when the next disaster arises. JCAM is one of the member groups and through that participation will seek to maintain connections with groups from other disciplines.

(2) Cultural Properties Risk Mitigation Networks at the Prefectural Level

In tandem with the coordination of various groups on a nationwide scale, there is also a movement to form cultural properties risk mitigation networks at the regional level. The Kyushu-Yamaguchi region formed the “Everyone Protects Museums Project” in fiscal 2014, with its administrative office located in the Kyushu National Museum. This group brings together museums from nine prefectures including Okinawa and Yamaguchi, as it carries out joint surveys and studies on cultural properties risk mitigation. This group involves both the prefectural museums and art museums, along with the prefectural cultural properties divisions, and this is noteworthy for its efforts to develop cultural properties risk mitigation that brings together both cultural facilities and government agencies. In constructing this broad ranging network, it is the presence of a core institution such as the Kyushu National Museum that can develop its leadership role in the region. And yet, even in areas without national museums, networks can be formed on a prefectural basis in any of the various prefectures of Japan.

For example, in Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures, the Miyagi Prefecture Damaged Cultural Properties and Other Materials Preservation Council and the Fukushima Prefectural Disaster-Affected Cultural Properties and Other Materials Rescue Head Office were formed to unify rescue operations. And, even after the dissolution of the Rescue Committee, cultural properties rescue operations continued in both prefectures. Both of these groups center on the cultural properties offices of their respective prefectural Boards of Education and the prefectural museums and art museums, and bring together the local Boards of Education, cultural facilities, along with universities and history networks, as organizations that bind cultural properties-related individuals within the prefecture regardless of institutional affiliation or field. In the future if other prefectures can take these examples as models and create their own cultural properties risk mitigation networks, then they can link with the national level organization centered on the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, and organizations from each discipline, such as JCAM. Then we can hope that there will be more effective rescue work done in the time of disaster.

In the case of the cooperation between this prefectural-level network and JCAM, it is the prefectural art museums in both prefectures that stand as the focal point. In fact, the prefectural art museums of Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima prefectures played enormous roles in the current round of rescue operations. Beginning with the provision of information about the circumstances within their prefectures and the art works in disaster-affected facilities, they also coordinated with local related individuals, participated in rescue operations, and managed artworks after the emergency treatment process. Indeed it was thanks to this active cooperation on all fronts by the prefectural art museums that the JCAM-dispatched teams were able to be effective in the field. If the prefectural art museums, along with the prefectural boards of educations and prefectural museums become the core groups within each prefecture’s cultural properties disaster risk mitigation structure, then JCAM will also be able to more smoothly involved in related rescue work.

While there is the general tendency to think that cultural properties rescue operation is the purview of museums not specializing in art, such as history museums, on the basis of our experiences, it is clear that the creation of a connection structure between the art museums, other museums and institutions from other fields in each region is important for future cultural properties disaster risk mitigation. For that reason, if the prefectural art museum is under the direction of the prefectural governor’s office, then it is desirable to connect to the cultural properties officer of the prefectural Board of Education, and in the case where the designated manager system has been implemented, there is the need to position the rescue operation outside of the museum in the time of disaster. These and other issues

must be considered. Further “cultural properties risk mitigation and rescue” must be considered for inclusion in each prefecture’s disaster mitigation planning.

(3) Issues for JCAM

As noted above, issues for JCAM include the reconsideration of the action plan in the event of a disaster as stipulated in the Protocol, based on our experiences in the current disaster, such as the rescue structure consisting of an administrative office = Communications Head Office and block network. In the event that a major disaster occurs across a wide region, as in the case of the Great East Japan Earthquake, it is impossible for the block’s main museum and subsidiary museum to cover the entire disaster zone. The author thus thinks that the previously noted prefectural-level disaster risk mitigation network and JCAM organization can use the prefectural art museum in each affected region as the point of contact. Further, given that it is not unusual for such disasters to occur in Japan, we can imagine that there will be instances when the JCAM administrative office is unable to function based on damage to its own location, and thus I believe that we should consider a structure in which central points for rescue operations are located in several different regions.

However, we must also not forget the museum staff members who were lost in this disaster. JCAM and each art museum and museum must consider their own risk mitigation system in the future, as needless to say it is important for each institution to protect the safety of museum visitors, local residents and their staff and employees.

The cultural property rescue operations carried out after the Great East Japan Earthquake were the largest scale operations carried out by JCAM since the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995. More than 100 curatorial staff from member museums nationwide participated in operations within the disaster zone, and several times that many other museum staff members and related individuals supported the rescue operations in many forms. I would like to express my great appreciation to each of those individuals for their participation and support. We ask for your ongoing cooperation until the rescued works and materials can be returned to their owners. I am also deeply thankful to the authors who provided texts for the compendium and to the members of the Reports Division of the Recovery Response Committee who took on the huge task of editing the 526-page volume. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the late Tanaka Chiaki who led the rescue operations of the team dispatched to Ishinomaki.