

**Comprehensive Countermeasures against Crime
in Japan and the New Approach**

By

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Abstract:

The Japanese government's all-out efforts to combat crime have paid off. Comprehensive measures for public safety have halved the annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police in Japan in ten years. The number, after peaking at 2.85 million in 2002, an all-time record since the end of World War II, declined steadily to 1.38 million last year (2012).

The number of Penal Code offenses known to the police in Tokyo also decreased during the same period, from some 302,000 to about 172,000. Behind this significant drop was the effort by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), whose jurisdiction covers the capital of Japan. Notably, the MPD has been working with the authorities concerned as well as local residents and volunteer groups to build safe and secure communities.

The decreasing number of Penal Code offenses known to the police has not dispelled public anxiety about public security in Japan as much as expected. For example, the socially vulnerable, such women, children, and senior citizens, are at greater risk, and cybercrime is growing in spite of the successful results of the comprehensive anticrime measures taken in this country.

Looking ahead, a new approach is required in addition to the traditional one that focuses mainly on the physical environment. The new approach involves two major aspects. One involves cross-sectoral measures that focus on the realms that might serve as a breeding grounds for crime (e.g., unfavorable family environments as well as cyberspace). The other aspect involves proactive crime intervention that encompasses acts that disrupt public order (including those that may lead to crime) with a view to reducing social risks that may result in crime.

Keywords:

Comprehensive countermeasures against crime, the socially vulnerable, cybercrime, a new approach, realms that might serve as a breeding ground for crime, reducing social risks

I. The Recent Crime Situation in Japan

Public safety is now at a critical level in Japan. The annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police recorded an all-time high of 2.85 million in 2002 after a year-on-year increase for the seven consecutive years after 1996. It began to increase in the 1990s after hovering around 1.4 million during the 1980s. Meanwhile, the clearance rate for Penal Code offenses fell as low as 20%. Now the public feels considerable anxiety about public safety. Behind the deteriorating crime situation lie a number of factors. These may include a wider mobility range and globalization of society, the spread of information technology (IT), the waning disciplinary power of local communities, and the stagnant economy.¹ These circumstances prompted not only the police and other law enforcement authorities but also the government as a whole to recognize anew the importance of implementing anticrime measures. In September 2003 the government established the Ministerial Meeting Concerning Measures against Crime, which was chaired by the prime minister and made up of all members of the Cabinet. In December 2003 the Meeting formulated the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime,² which was updated in December 2008 as the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008.³ Under these and other plans, the entire government has implemented a comprehensive range of measures with three major pillars: (1) crime prevention with public participation (efforts by society as a whole), (2) situational crime prevention (creating a social environment where crime is discouraged), and (3) collaboration with other authorities concerned in Japan and coordination with competent authorities in other countries (in the fields of investigation and crackdown). These comprehensive measures for public safety have paid off. The annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police has declined for the ten consecutive years since 2003. It stood at 1.38 million in 2012, on par with the levels recorded in the 1980s. This figure represents less than half the peak level.⁴

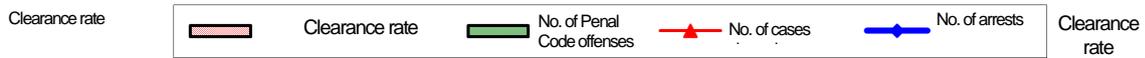
¹ There is no established theory as to the cause of the deteriorating crime situation in Japan. Different academics have proposed different hypotheses.

² Recognizing the stern reality that public safety is now at a critical level, the 2003 Action Plan lays out three perspectives: (1) supporting the activities of the people to secure their own safety, (2) creating a social environment where crime is discouraged, and (3) strengthening anticrime measures centering on border control. The plan then identifies five priorities: (1) to deter familiar offenses that threaten the daily lives of citizens, (2) to deter juvenile offenses with community involvement; (3) to address threats that transcend national borders; (4) to protect the economy and society from organized crime; and (5) building foundations for restoring public safety. Under these five priorities, a total of 148 individual measures are proposed.

³ Due in large part to the efforts following the 2003 Action Plan, the public safety situation steadily improved. However, it failed to regain the levels recorded in the stable period of the 1980s, when the annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police hovered around the 1.4 million mark. In the face of a succession of remittance frauds and heinous crimes, public anxiety about crime was not alleviated. This situation led to the formulation in December 2008 of the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008. The 2008 Action Plan is designed to implement a wider range of policies in an integrated and sustained manner for the purpose of crime deterrence. Taking over the three perspectives from the 2003 Action Plan, the 2008 Action Plan identifies anew seven priorities in response to the salient trends in the current crime situation: (1) building a society that is resistant to familiar offenses, (2) building a society that does not foster criminals, (3) responding to the internationalization of crime, (4) tackling antisocial elements, including crime syndicates, (5) creating a safe cyberspace, (6) addressing terrorist threats, and (7) building foundations for restoring public safety. Under these seven priorities, a total of 172 individual measures are proposed.

⁴ The significant reduction was made possible largely by a sharp drop in the annual number of larceny offenses known to the police from 2.38 million in 2002 to 1.04 million in 2012. The annual number of street crimes (including street robberies, purse snatchings, and thefts of auto parts as well as violent offenses and sex offenses on the street) plunged from 1.63 million to 0.6 million during the same period. Street crime is a major focus of the comprehensive anticrime measures that have been taken since 2003.

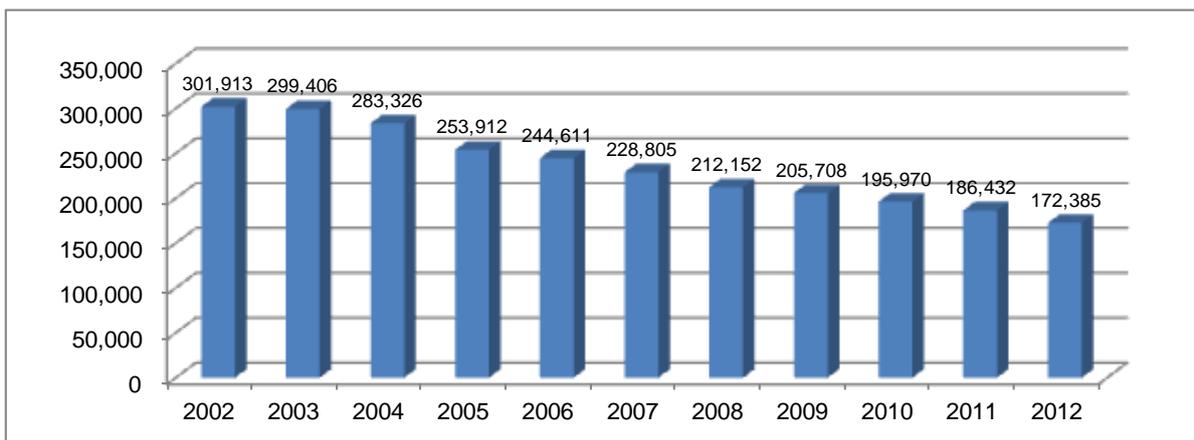
Changes in the annual number of Penal Code offenses known to police



II. Initiatives by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)

The annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police for Tokyo followed a similar path to the national figure. After rising for six years in a row starting in 1997, the figure for the capital of Japan peaked at an all-time high of some 302,000 in 2002. Since 2003, however, the figure has continued to fall for ten consecutive years. It reached to about 172,000 in 2012.

Changes in the annual number of Penal Code Offenses known to police in Tokyo



Given that the theme of this meeting is “metropolis policing,” the following sections of this chapter introduce major initiatives that have been taken by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)—whose jurisdiction covers the capital of Japan—to build safe and secure communities, among other measures it took under the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime.

1. Establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) ordinance for safe and secure community development and efforts to build safe and secure communities in cooperation with the authorities concerned as well as local residents

Starting in 2002, prefectures and municipalities in Japan began to establish their own ordinances for community safety that are designed to support local residents in their voluntary activities for crime prevention and promote crime prevention through environmental design.⁵ Tokyo is no exception.⁶ In October 2003, the TMG established an ordinance for safe and secure community development. In accordance with this ordinance, the TMG has been working together cohesively with relevant authorities, business operators, and residents of Tokyo to build communities that discourage crime.

The TMG ordinance defines its basic principles and the responsibilities of the TMG, Tokyo residents, and business operators based in Tokyo. Other provisions address a range of aspects, including (1) establishing an operational structure, (2) encouraging voluntary activities for crime prevention by Tokyo residents and other Tokyo-based entities, (3) improving the security performance of residential buildings, (4) improving the security performance of roads, parks, and other public facilities, (5) improving the security performance of commercial and other facilities, (6) securing public safety and security in entertainment districts and other bustling areas, and (7) securing the safety of children at school.⁷ The ordinance provides that guidelines on preventing crime and those on securing public safety and security be developed with respect to these aspects. As part of the operational structure under the ordinance, the TMG set up a council on building safe and secure communities in Tokyo.⁸ The

⁵ As of April 1, 2012, there were 44 prefectures and some 1,500 municipalities that had such an ordinance.

⁶ The TMG has been pressing ahead with two types of measures: comprehensive measure toward the wholesome development of youth, and measures designed to secure the public and traffic safety of Tokyo residents. The Office for Youth Affairs and Public Safety (OYAPS) plays a pivotal role in this initiative. The bureau-level unit is staffed with not only TMG employees but also officials on loan from central government offices concerned—including the National Police Agency (NPA); the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; and the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau—and those who assume concurrent posts both at the OYAPS and their original office (MPD or the Office of Education of the TMG). In short, the OYAPS boasts a wide range of staff with different areas of expertise and backgrounds. Since its launch, the OYAPS has been headed successively by ex-officials of the NPA.

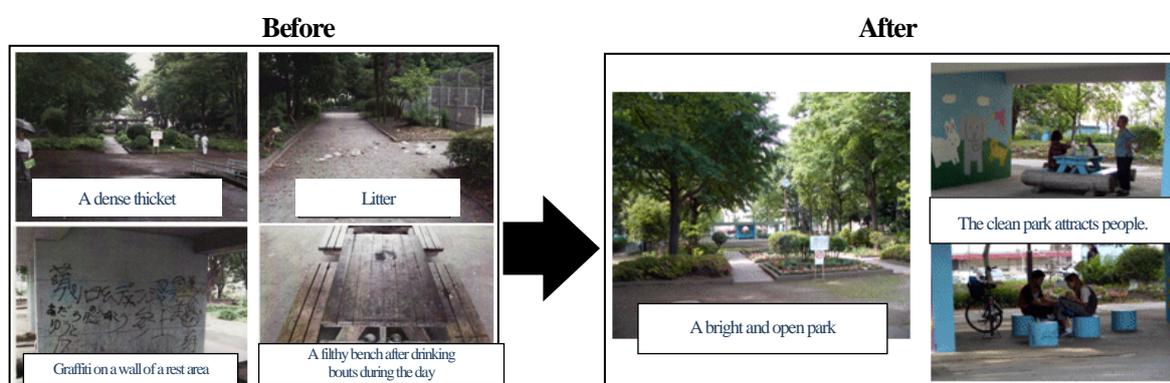
⁷ A succession of killing sprees, including the one in Akihabara, Tokyo, in the summer of 2008, undermined the confidence of Tokyo residents in the safety of entertainment districts in the capital. This situation prompted the TMG to commission a panel of academics and experts to come up with a report on ways to secure the safety of entertainment districts in Tokyo so that people can enjoy their time there day and night with a sense of security. While noting that the police and other authorities concerned should play the central role, the report stressed the need for various stakeholders to join forces to take effective security measures. One such measure is to establish an operational structure that allows business operators, local residents, and community-based volunteer groups to play a role in a voluntary and sustained manner. Another measure is to involve people who visit entertainment districts. In line with the report, the TMG amended the 2003 ordinance by adding provisions for securing safety and security in entertainment districts and other bustling areas.

⁸ The council is chaired by the Governor of Tokyo with the Superintendent-General of the MPD serving as acting chair. Appointed as deputy chairs are the Vice-Governor of Tokyo, who is responsible for security measures as well as members of five specific groups: the Metropolitan Tokyo Mayors Council, the Tokyo Association of Mayors, the Tokyo Town and Village Association, the Tokyo Crime Prevention Association, and the Tokyo Federation of Societies of Commerce and Industry. The council is made up of seven governmental entities, 29 community-based organizations, and 30 associations of Tokyo-based business operators. Established under the council is a meeting for liaison and coordination among the Office of Education, the MPD, and the bureaus and departments under

council develops an annual action policy and program. The various measures promoted by the council include implementing a subsidy program for the installation of security equipment as well as nurturing community-based volunteer groups for crime prevention who patrol their communities and watch over the safety of children.

Case study of the model community crime prevention program

Kita Ward is one of the model areas designated under the model community crime prevention program, a joint initiative between the MPD and the TMG. A park in the ward was a source of security concern: a dense thicket of trees, litter, unlawful graffiti, and drinking bouts by the homeless during the day. The cleanup project under this program removed the graffiti and pruned the trees in the park. The project achieved a measure of success. The number of juvenile delinquency cases, including midnight loitering and smoking, plummeted from 43 to 3. The numbers of cases of burglary theft and vehicle contents theft also dropped.



2. Promoting voluntary crime prevention activities by Tokyo residents and other entities

(a) Providing information useful for promoting effective crime prevention activities

The TMG ordinance for a safe and secure community development requires the chief of a police station to provide necessary information—including the crime situation within its jurisdiction—that allows Tokyo residents and other Tokyo-based entities to carry out their voluntary activities for crime prevention appropriately and effectively. Accordingly, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) has been taking necessary steps, including drawing up and publicizing the “crime prevention information map” and offering an e-mail delivery service called “Mail Keishicho.”

i. Crime prevention information map

On its website, the MPD has posted a crime prevention information map of Tokyo, which is color-coded according to the cumulative number of Penal Code offenses (purse snatchings, burglary thefts, vehicle contents thefts, motor vehicle thefts, motorcycle thefts, bicycle thefts, and violent offenses). Taking advantage of the Geographic Information System (GIS), this map provides a means to facilitate voluntary activities for crime prevention by Tokyo residents and other entities.

the direct control of the governor. This meeting supports integrated operation. At the municipal level, district councils on building a safe and secure community implement measures that are fine-tuned to accommodate local needs. As of the end of 2011, there were 53 out of the 62 municipalities (wards, cities, towns, and villages) in Tokyo that had such councils.



ii. Mail Keishicho

The MPD provides an e-mail delivery service whereby information on local crime occurrence and other information necessary for crime prevention are sent to registered subscribers. Subscribers can select three-hour receipt time periods. The selective geographical areas covered match the jurisdictions of the 97 police stations in Tokyo except the island area. Subscribers can also select the types of information they want to receive. The options are (1) information on crime occurrence and clearance (random street killings; purse snatchings; offenses against children; robberies; cases of a suspicious man saying something to a woman on the street; indecency in public; frequent cases, i.e., burglary thefts and vehicle contents thefts; cases subject to special or coordinated investigation; hit-and-run cases; etc.); (2) information for crime prevention; and (3) miscellaneous information (information on traffic accidents, policing, various social events, phone calls from remittance fraud perpetrators, etc.). Subscribers can send feedback on the incoming information on cases and suspicious individuals. The information delivered via this service is also posted on the website of the MPD.



(b) Supporting volunteer activities of various kinds

Volunteer crime prevention groups play an increasing role in combating purse snatching and burglary theft.⁹ The MPD supports these groups by, for example, offering training and lending special uniforms and armbands.

⁹ As of the end of 2012, the number of these groups is 3,980 and the total number of these groups' members is 159,000.

Volunteer crime prevention groups in Tokyo



3. Securing safety and security in entertainment districts and other bustling areas

Efforts to support community-based voluntary activities have been made at the central government level as well. In June 2005, the Ministerial Meeting Concerning Measures against Crime and the Urban Renaissance Headquarters held a joint meeting to endorse the Nationwide Plan for Building Safe and Reassuring Communities. The idea was to roll out the public-private initiative to build safe and secure communities throughout the country. The joint meeting also authorized the urban revitalization project titled “The Rebuilding of Safe and Reassuring Urban Areas through Coordination and Cooperation between Crime Prevention Measures and Community Planning.” The combination of the Nationwide Plan and the revitalization project was designed to address the issue of crime prevention and public safety in entertainment districts and other bustling areas from both the infrastructural and institutional aspects. The urban revitalization project designated 11 entertainment districts across the country as its model districts. They were Susukino (in Sapporo City), Ikebukuro, Kabukicho, Shibuya, Roppongi (Tokyo), Kannai-Kangai (Yokohama City), Sakae (Nagoya City), Kiyamachi and vicinity (Kyoto City), Minami (Osaka City), Nagarakawa-Yagenbori (Hiroshima City), and Nakasu (Fukuoka City).

At the prefectural level, the TMG has been taking a range of security measures in its entertainment districts in cooperation with the MPD and other authorities concerned, business operators, and local residents. These measures include establishing crime prevention organizations (councils), installing security cameras and other security equipment, subsidizing the efforts to build a crime-resistant environment such as patrolling by volunteers, and encouraging voluntary activities for crime prevention. The MPD, for its part, has introduced a street security-camera system of its own and put in place cleanup measures for the four major entertainment districts in Tokyo: Ikebukuro, Kabukicho, Shibuya, and Roppongi.

(a) The street security-camera system

The MPD-operated street security-camera system is designed to prevent crime and thus protect potential victims in entertainment districts and other bustling areas that are highly susceptible to crime. In this system, security cameras are installed in public spaces to monitor and record the scene continuously. The system is now in operation in six districts in Tokyo (as of May 2013):¹⁰

¹⁰ In addition, the TMG and municipalities in Tokyo have subsidized or fully funded the installation of street security cameras. As of February 2012, there were 3,920 subsidized units in 245 districts in the 23 wards and four cities, as well as 590 units that were fully funded by municipalities in 34 districts. Moreover, there are numerous street security cameras in place with funds coming from business operators and local communities.

- Kabukicho district: 55 units (put into operation in February 2002)
- Shibuya district: 20 units (put into operation in March 2004)
- Ikebukuro district: 49 units (put into operation in March 2004)
- Ueno 2-chome district: 12 units (put into operation in February 2006)
- Roppongi district: 44 units (put into operation in March 2007)
- Kinshicho district: 15 units (put into operation in March 2013)

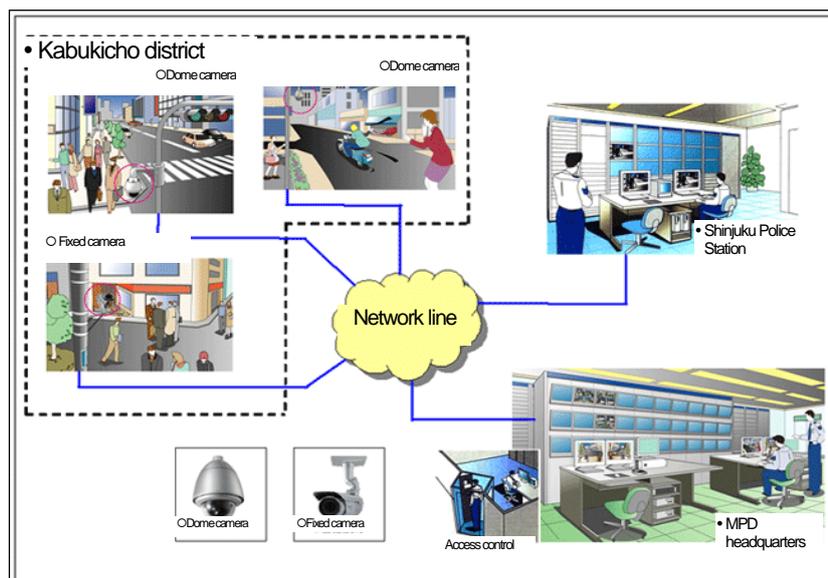
i. Management

(1) Strict management

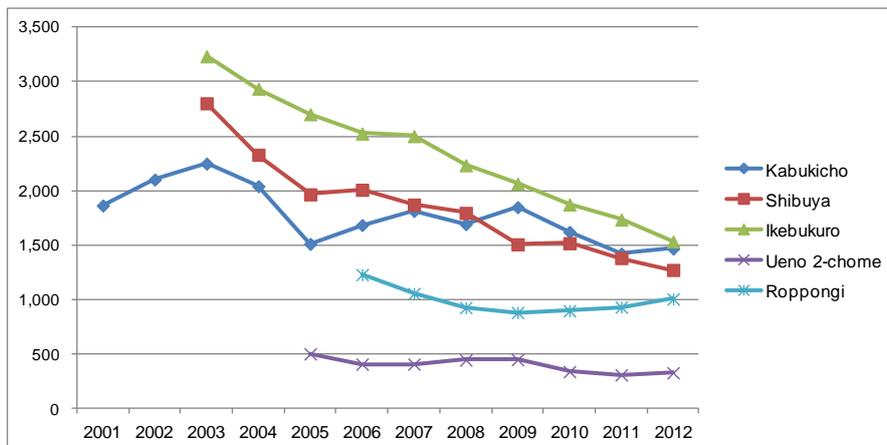
The MPD carefully manages the street security-camera system so that the rights of the people will not be improperly infringed on in accordance with the rules set by the Tokyo Metropolitan Public Safety Commission (TMPSC), to which it reports. The management is under the strict control of the specially designated manager. Signboards are in place that show that street security cameras are in operation nearby. Every month, the MPD reports the usage of the video data to the TMPSC.

(2) Operational process

Specially designated officers monitor the cameras 24 hours a day in shifts. They use the video data chiefly to cope with crimes and accidents based on emergency calls to the police and to dispel illicit street solicitors and vendors. The MPD headquarters records the video data on hard disk or magnetic tape and stores it for one week under strict controls. Data that expires after the one-week storage period is automatically overwritten so that the original data is erased. The chiefs of police stations may receive the necessary minimum amount of video data only on justifiable grounds.



ii. Annual number of Penal Code offenses known to police in districts where the street security camera system is in place



	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Kabukicho	1,865	2,103	2,249	2,042	1,513	1,686	1,815	1,694	1,850	1,623	1,424	1,470
Shibuya			2,802	2,330	1,967	2,009	1,873	1,797	1,509	1,519	1,383	1,274
Ikebukuro			3,233	2,936	2,702	2,525	2,501	2,234	2,065	1,875	1,736	1,535
Ueno 2-chome					505	411	411	449	452	342	313	332
Roppongi						1,231	1,057	929	884	900	934	1,008

iii. Usage of the video data

For 2013, there have been 378 pieces of video data recorded at the MPD headquarters that have been provided to the chiefs of police stations for the purpose of arresting suspects. Of the 378 pieces, 170 have been used as part of the evidence to build criminal cases against these suspects.

(b) Special initiative (cleanup campaign) for the four entertainment districts

The MPD has been stepping up its cleanup initiative for Shinjuku-Kabukicho, Ikebukuro, Roppongi, and Shibuya in cooperation with other authorities concerned, local residents, and community-based volunteer groups. Since these four areas represent the entertainment districts not only of Tokyo but also of Japan as a whole, a successful cleanup campaign there will have symbolic meaning for other entertainment districts.

i. Pories

Given the need to dispel the public perception of these districts as being dangerous or filthy, the special initiative focuses on three priorities:

- (1) preventing and cracking down on nuisances and criminal acts;
- (2) cracking down on unlawful fund-raising activities by the Boryokudan and international crime syndicates, including unjust demands for protection money and acts of gambling; and
- (3) promoting a range of cleanup measures that are designed to secure public safety and security and achieve community building at the same time (including organizing crime prevention councils that involve local communities, business operators, and the authorities concerned; and working closely with community-based volunteer groups to guide or crack down on illicit street solicitors).

Cleanup campaign



ii. Activities

(1) Background: adult entertainment businesses

The four districts are brimming with adult entertainment and related businesses. The following shows the approximate number of such business by type and district as of December 2010:

- Adult entertainment businesses such as *kyabakura* and “bars”
 - Shinjuku-Kabukicho district: 1,070
 - Ikebukuro district: 340
 - Roppongi district: 200
 - Shibuya district: 210

- Sex-related special businesses such as dispatch-type “fashion health” massage businesses
 - Shinjuku-Kabukicho district: 410
 - Ikebukuro district: 120
 - Roppongi district: 20
 - Shibuya district: 280

- Late-night liquor-serving bar businesses such as “snacks”
 - Shinjuku-Kabukicho district: 1,970
 - Ikebukuro district: 520
 - Roppongi district: 1,330
 - Shibuya district: 930

(2) Cracking down on nuisances and unlawful acts

Illicit adult entertainment and related businesses serve both as an important fund-raising source and as a breeding ground for different types of crime, including the act of forcing foreign women staying in Japan to engage in prostitution. The degradation of the adult entertainment environment plays a major role in undermining public safety. Accordingly, the MPD is working hard to expose such businesses¹¹ and prevent the opening of new illicit

¹¹ In Kabukicho, for example, rampant acts of aggressive solicitation for sex-related massage shops on the street represent a traditional source of grave concern for visitors as well as local residents. A few years ago, a new type of solicitor began to appear on the street.

shops. In particular, the MPD is dealing with the owners of commercial buildings that house illicit shops as tenants.¹²

Removing illegal signboards



Crackdown on street solicitors



(3) Crackdown on the Boryokudan

The four districts are also home to the offices of many Boryokudan groups that are engaged in unlawful fund-raising activities, including illegal gambling, prostitution, and drug trafficking. The MPD mobilizes all its resources to clamp down on Boryokudan members and related individuals. In fact, it has already arrested many of them. The MPD promotes the four basic principles of the TMG ordinance for ostracizing the Boryokudan¹³, which took effect on October 2011: (1) don't be afraid of Boryokudan; (2) don't give money to the Boryokudan; (3) don't make use of the Boryokudan; and (4) don't be associated with the Boryokudan. In accordance with the ordinance, the MPD focuses on: (1) gathering information from bars, restaurants, adult entertainment shops, and other businesses that is necessary for crackdowns; (2) mounting information campaigns for the ostracization of the Boryokudan; (3) supporting activities aimed at ostracizing the Boryokudan by community-based councils for crime prevention; and (4) carrying out patrols of the entertainment districts with its motor patrol unit and detached police unit.

Known as *karasuzoku*, these people entice women into working for such shops. In response, the MPD worked to amend the Anti-Nuisance Ordinance in succession so that it can crack down on these new acts of nuisance. Kabukicho is also home to obscene DVD shops. At one time, more than 100 such shops were operating in multitenant buildings in the district. To escape the police crackdown, some of these shops resorted to sophisticated and pernicious ways of doing business. For example, they stored the obscene DVDs in warehouses separate from their shops. When a customer placed an order, the shop owner contacted his or her colleague at the warehouse and a carrier delivered the order to the customer. The MPD fully anticipated these moves and clamped down on them in an intermittent and concentrated manner.

¹² In Kabukicho, for example, the owners of rental buildings often live away from their buildings. In the past, they tended to sign leases with future tenants without carefully checking their backgrounds. The tenants often turned out to be illicit business operators. As a result, many buildings came to serve as part of what may be called “crime infrastructure.” These circumstances prompted the MPD to work to amend the competent ordinance. The amended ordinance includes an advisory provision that the owner of a rental building shall not provide space for illegal sex-related businesses. Another provision stipulates that if the building is found to be used for selling illicit DVDs or massage services, the owner shall terminate the lease and take measures to prevent a recurrence, and that if there is a recurrence and a yet another recurrence is expected, the owner shall put up a sign designed to prevent a recurrence at the entrance of the building.

¹³ The ordinance defines basic policies for activities designed to ostracize the Boryokudan. These policies include preventing the Boryokudan from interfering with the business of the TMG, supporting the education of youth, encouraging withdrawal from the Boryokudan, and protecting those who have left the Boryokudan. It also defines the roles of Tokyo residents and other Tokyo-based entities with regard to youth, festivals, business contracts, and real property transfers. Moreover, the ordinance includes provisions prohibiting: (1) the Boryokudan from opening and operating its offices; (2) the Boryokudan from letting youth in its offices; (3) the Boryokudan from disturbing citizens; (4) the Boryokudan from using the name of someone else; and (5) business operators from giving payoffs to Boryokudan members and related individuals.

A rally for eliminating the Boryokudan by residents of Toshima Ward



(4) Cleanup activities and community building

The MPD works with other authorities concerned, local residents, and community-based volunteer groups to build a Tokyo where people can lead safe and secure lives. To this end, the MPD focuses on: (1) cleanup activities such as street cleaning, removal of illegal signboards from the street, and crackdown on illicit street vendors; and (2) community-building activities such as the “operation cleanup,” joint patrols, and the installation of security equipment.¹⁴

Street cleanup activity



Joint patrol



Sticking a warning sign on illegally parked bicycles and motorcycles



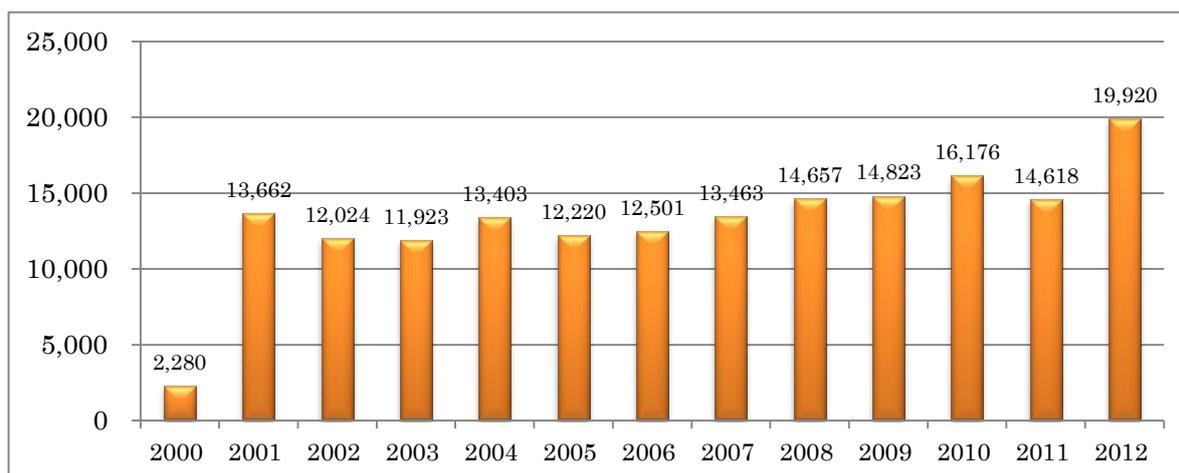
¹⁴ A case in point is the Kabukicho district. The district established the Kabukicho renaissance promotion council in January 2005. To rejuvenate the district, the council has launched four projects: (1) the “operation cleanup” project, (2) the community revitalization project, (3) the community-building project, and (4) the Kihei project. The first project is designed to clean up the district based on the broken windows theory. Starting 3 p.m. every Wednesday, the project carries out “operation cleanup,” which involves street cleaning, prevention of illegal garbage dumping, and the removal of illegal signboards from the street. The second project is designed to improve the public perception of Kabukicho from being an anonymous community to being a familiar community. To this end, the project organizes social events and disseminates information on its website. The third project aims to build a healthy and attractive community while stressing the nonphysical, rather than physical, aspect of community building. The fourth project is named after Kihei Suzuki, a resident who played a central role in the reconstruction of the district from the ashes of World War II in his capacity as district head. It aims to lure new talent for community building. In fact, it has already invited a major entertainment agency to use the building of a shuttered elementary school for its office.

III. Challenges Ahead

1. Qualitative change of the crime situation

The government’s comprehensive countermeasures against crime have been successful at both the national and regional levels. The annual number of Penal Code offenses known to the police decreased by half from the peak year of 2002, as has been already discussed. However, the figures for specific types of crime, including assault, intimidation, and indecency in public have not improved from the 2002 levels. As far as the socially vulnerable, such as women, children, and senior citizens, are concerned, the situation has even deteriorated in some respects. Women and children are more vulnerable to violence and sex offenses, while senior citizens are more susceptible to fraud, especially remittance fraud.¹⁵ Moreover, information and communication technology (ICT), such as the Internet and cell phones, plays an increasing role in making cybercrime a more serious problem as ICT develops. This in turn makes police investigations more difficult. As a means of communication for perpetrators, ICT also serves as part of the “crime infrastructure” that facilitates crime.

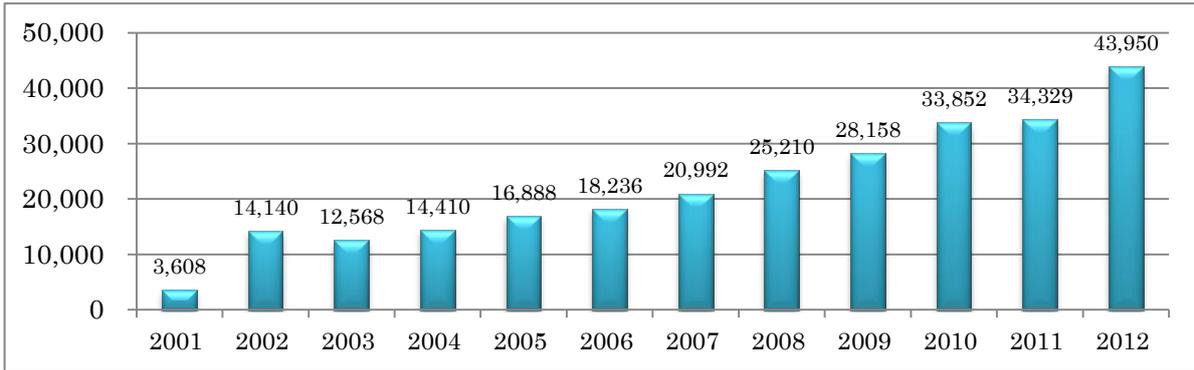
Annual number of stalking cases known to police



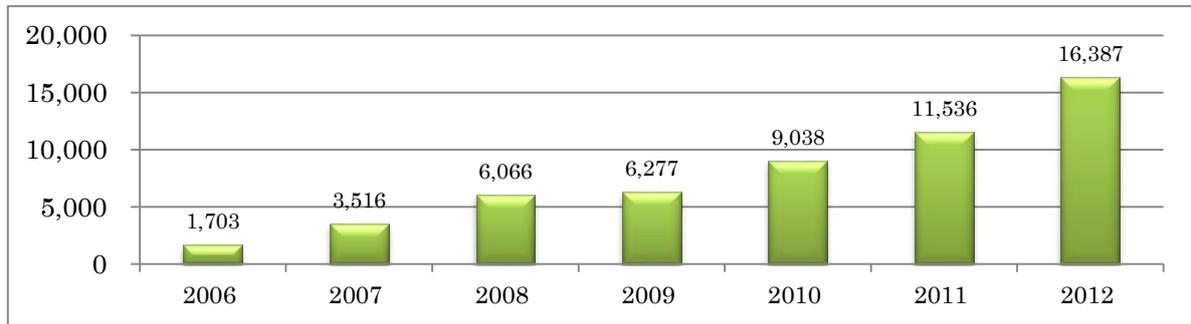
¹⁵ The 2012 statistics suggest the following trends:

- Women account for an increasing proportion of the victims of violent offenses.
- The fall in the annual number of sex offenses known to the police is smaller than the reduction in the total figure for Penal Code offenses.
- The number of stalking and domestic violence cases known to the police has remained high.
- The decrease in the number of cases in which children are victimized is smaller than the drop in the total figure for Penal Code offenses.
- The number of cases of both indecency in public and illegal arrest and imprisonment are on the rise.
- The number of cases of both child pornography and child abuse are on the rise.
- The elderly make up a majority of the victims of cases of special fraud and investment fraud.

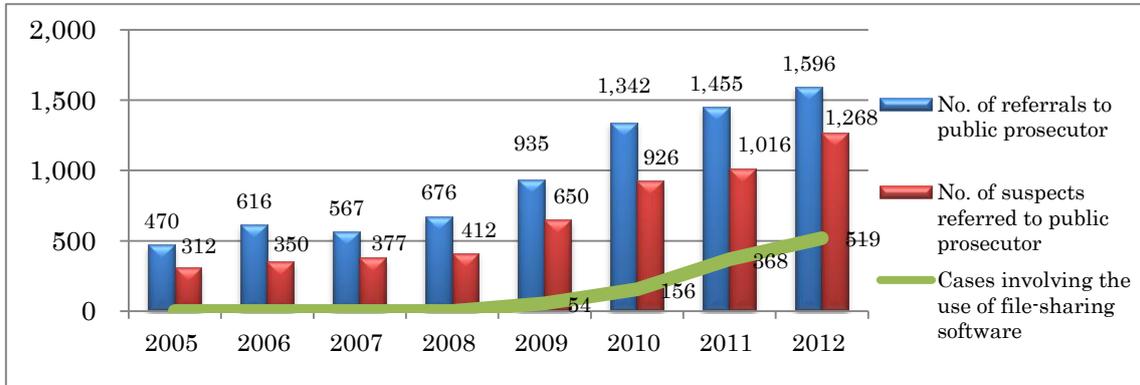
Annual number of cases of violence by a spouse known to police



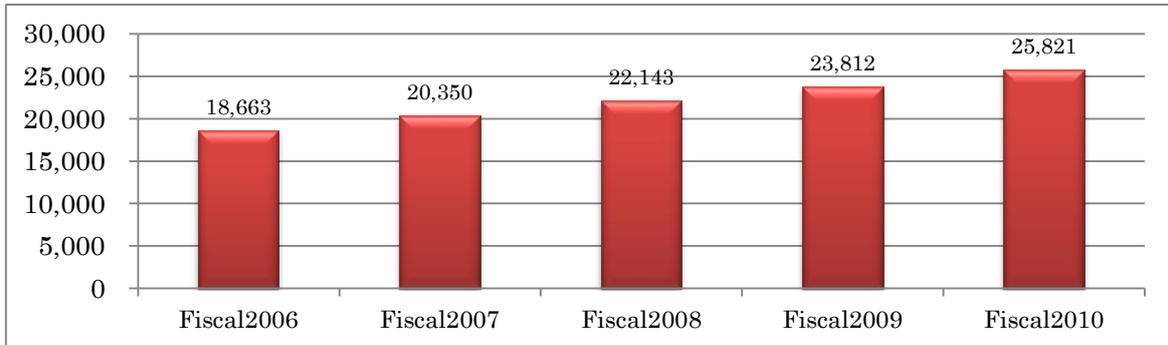
Annual number of child-abuse cases reported to police



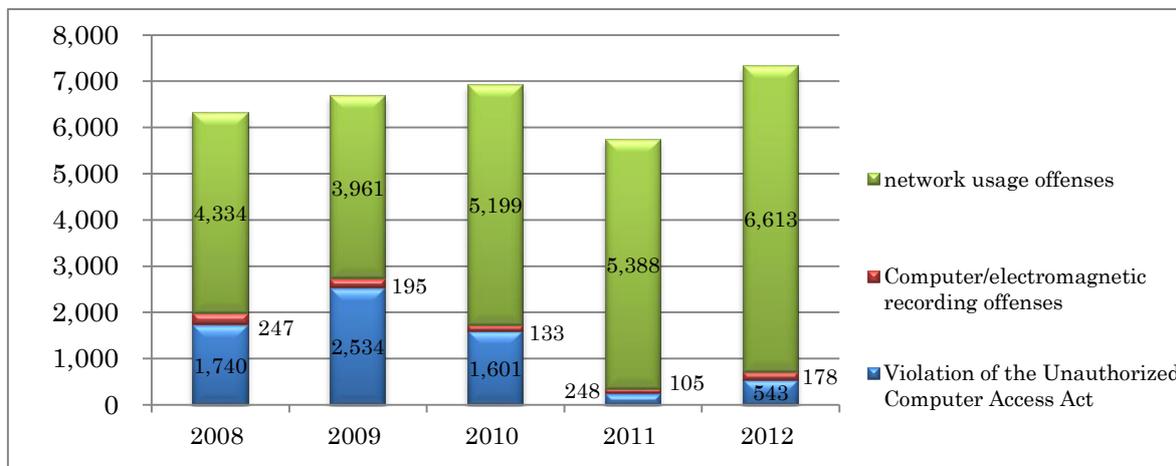
Number of arrests in connection with child pornography



Number of reports to police in connection with abuse of the elderly



Number of arrests in connection with cybercrimes



The decreasing number of Penal Code offenses known to the police has not dispelled public anxiety about public security in Japan as much as expected. In a public opinion poll on public safety conducted by the Cabinet Office in 2012, more than 80 percent of the respondents said public safety was worse now than a decade ago (2002).

2. Measures to be taken

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the formulation of the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008. In June last year, the Association for the Study of Security Science (ASSS)¹⁶ launched a study group to explore future public security strategies for society as a whole, including sustainable measures to be taken. The group, called the Study Group on Public Safety and Security in the Future,¹⁷ involves the participation of experts and academics with various backgrounds (law, economics, public administration, statistics, city planning, and nonprofit organizations). The Police Policy Research Center is also involved, providing necessary support for the study group. The group will soon compile the results of the discussion into a set of recommendations. The recommendations will call for, among other measures, a policy that focuses on the realms that might serve as breeding grounds for crime (e.g., unfavorable family environments as well as cyberspace) in addition to the traditional approach that focuses mainly on environmental factors. They will also stress the need for appropriate intervention by society as a whole—including the public and private sectors—both before and after the fact.

¹⁶ ASSS was established in June 1998 as an academic society for the purpose of promoting interdisciplinary and international research on public safety, including academic exchanges. It is made up of academics specializing in the Penal Code and administrative law as well as police officials. ASSS publishes a journal called *Security Science Review* and organizes symposia and forums.

¹⁷ This study group was established under the supervision of the crime-prevention legislation section of ASSS. The idea behind the launch of this group is the awareness of two needs. The first need is to review the traditional approach that analyzes the crime situation with focus on the number of Penal Code offenses known to the police as the central indicator and develops countermeasures based on this analysis in light of the recent crime situation. The second need is to explore new anticrime strategies for Japan and rethink what public safety and security should be in the contemporary context. The study group is made up of 16 members. They include experts at ASSS who specialize in the Penal Code and administrative law as well as external experts specializing in constitution studies, public administration, economics, community safety system studies, city planning, and the safety of children. To date, the study group has met 12 times.

(a) The need for measures that focus on the realms that might serve as breeding grounds for crime

The deteriorating crime situation surrounding the socially vulnerable may not be addressed fully by the traditional approach that devises quick, responsive solutions to specific types of crime. What is required now is an inclusive and effective crime-prevention approach that takes into account the characteristics of the groups that are vulnerable to crime.

This new approach should explore cross-sectoral measures that focus on the realms that might serve as breeding grounds for crime that victimizes the socially vulnerable, in addition to focusing on specific types of crime (legally protected interest) as in the past.

(b) The need for reducing social risks that may result in crime

Given that public safety will be achieved by minimizing the risks involved, it may be necessary to draw an analogy between anticrime measures and measures to reduce social risks. This analogy points to the need to study ways to address minor offenses and acts that disturb public order as social risks that should be reduced. Acts that disturb public order here encompass acts regulated by ordinances and those that may not lead to crime. The latter include acts that should be nipped in the bud because they may lead to crime if left unaddressed and those that provoke anxiety among the public. Hence, it is necessary to explore ways to proactively cope not only with crime but also with acts that disturb public order and those that may lead to crime. It is also necessary to study who should carry out this process.