

**ISSUE: 04. WINTER SERVICE MANAGEMENT**

**SUB-ISSUE:** Road user safety

**Session:** ( )

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**Room:**

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**Presentation title:**

TRIAL COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST POOR VISIBILITY CAUSED BY DRIFTING SNOW

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**Summary:**

Niigata Prefecture in northwestern Japan, facing the East Sea, is one of the heaviest snowfall regions on the earth for its geographical features; spine of mountains in winter capture much of icy clouds brought by northwesterly strong seasonal wind, which are formed in the process of passing across the sea. In 2011, there was approximately 8 meters of snowfall, and it was up to 730 thousands of kilometers that we, East Nippon Expressway Company Limited, carried out snow-removal operation on expressways over the region for safety, reliability, and comfort service in winter months. We have also taken measures over the past years, such as; collecting weather information (e.g. amount of snowfall, wind velocity, and temperature) from apparatuses installed along expressways; providing them to drivers by VMS, radio, and etc. Drifting snow by strong seasonal winds, however, often reduces visibility on coastal sections. In severe cases, it forces our expressways to be closed, which has been made enormous impact on social activities and economy. For an example, there were three times of long period closure in 2011 in the region, extended to approximately half a day.

