



# Correspondence



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## Introducing our new Director, Yasuhiko Tanabe



It is a great honor to introduce myself as the seventh director of the Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney). Established in 1994, our mission has been to help develop the relationship between Japanese local governments and those of Australia and New Zealand. As the new director, I would like to do my best to foster sister city and sister school relationships, exchange information about challenges local governments are facing, and support former and future JET (Japan Exchange Teaching) program participants.

If you are interested in any of these matters, please feel free to contact us.

I entered the Ministry of Interior (now Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) twenty years ago. For half of my career, I have worked for the central government, and for the rest of it, I worked for local governments.

During my time as a government official, I have been involved in many ways with disaster response.

In 1995, after the Great Hanshin Earthquake happened, I was delegated to CLAIR New York to research the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) system.

In 2004, just after the Great Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami occurred, I was dispatched to Phuket, Thailand, as team leader of the Japanese Helicopter Rescue Team.

In 2011, when the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami struck Japan, I was Director General of Aomori prefecture which was severely hit by the tsunami. Headed by the Governor, we worked hard to rescue and help the victims and to reconstruct our communities with the kind support from all over the world including Australia and New Zealand.

I would like to share with you what we have learned through these tremendous disasters.

Since my wife and I came to Sydney, we have been enjoying various kinds of delicious dishes and spectacular views. Above all, we are very happy with the warm hospitality we have received from the local people here.

My recent career is as follows:

- Apr 2009 - Mar 2012 Director General of General Affairs,  
Aomori Prefectural Government
- Apr 2007- Mar 2009 Planning Director, Local Tax Bureau,  
Ministry of Internal Affairs and  
Communications (MIC)
- Apr 2004 - Mar 2006 Disaster Management Specialist, Fire and  
Disaster Management Agency, MIC
- Apr 2002 - Mar 2004 Director of Finance  
Tottori Prefectural Government

Again I am very happy to work with you here and looking forward seeing you soon.

Yasuhiko Tanabe  
Director



# Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

## Delegation from Aichi Prefecture

From the 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of July a delegation from Aichi Prefecture lead by Governor Hideaki Ohmura visited Sydney and Melbourne as part of an official tour of Thailand and Australia. Aichi Prefecture, with more than seven million residents, forms one of Japan's three major metropolitan areas. CLAIR Sydney held a briefing for the delegates on Australian local governance and the Australian economy, and also coordinated various site visits and provided on-ground support for the delegates in Sydney.



Governor Ohmura currently serves as the president of Nagoya Port Authority, a role which alternates between the Mayor of Nagoya every two years. The Port of Nagoya is the largest port in Japan in terms of total cargo output (reaching 186 millions tonnes in 2011), and is recognised as one of Japan's five major ports. In 2010, Nagoya Port Authority and Sydney Ports Corporation signed a sister port agreement. During the visit, the Governor and delegates were welcomed at Sydney Ports by CEO Mr. Grant Gilfillan, and senior marketing manager, Mr. Jason McGregor who briefed the delegates on Sydney Ports and their activities, before participating in a site visit of Sydney Ports' facilities around the harbour.



Aichi Prefecture itself has a sister state relationship with Victoria, and the delegates also visited the Governor and other leaders of Victoria during the visit. Central Japan International Airport (Centrair) is located within Aichi Prefecture but currently does not have any direct flights to or from Australia. The delegates took the opportunity to promote Centrair at the Qantas office in Sydney and the Jetstar office in Melbourne and to ask both airlines to consider re-establishing direct flights to Aichi.



## Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

### 30th Anniversary of the Manly – Taito Sister City Relationship



Manly council has a sister city relationship with Taito, Tokyo and this year marks the 30th Anniversary.

Delegates from Taito, including the Mayor and Chairpersons of the City Assembly visited Manly from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of July. At the mayoral welcome reception at the council function room, the delegates enjoyed Manly's warm hospitality, and later performed the official city dance and song called 'Taito Ondo'.

The delegates from Taito somehow danced along by copying each other, and the room was filled with excitement as guests watched the spectacle.

In commemoration of the 30th anniversary, an exhibition, the complete series of **Utagawa (Ando) Hiroshige's Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido** is being held at the Japan Foundation Gallery until the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2012. At the opening night on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, many attendees enjoyed the Japanese woodblock prints, a rare treat especially outside of Japan.

The strong sister-city relationship between Manly and Taito will surely continue henceforth to contribute to the advancement of friendly relations between Australia and Japan.

