

# Efforts to Build Public Confidence

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# Japan Atomic Energy Commission

The Japan Atomic Energy Commission is set up in the Cabinet Office and its mission is to conduct planning, deliberations, and decision-making regarding basic policy for research, development, and utilization of nuclear energy, including the formulation of the Framework for Nuclear Energy Policy. When the JAEC deems it necessary as a part of its assigned mandate, JAEC can recommend and demand reports of the head of relevant administrative organization through the Prime Minister.

Members : 3 (appointed by Prime Minister with the consent of House of Representative and House of Councilors)



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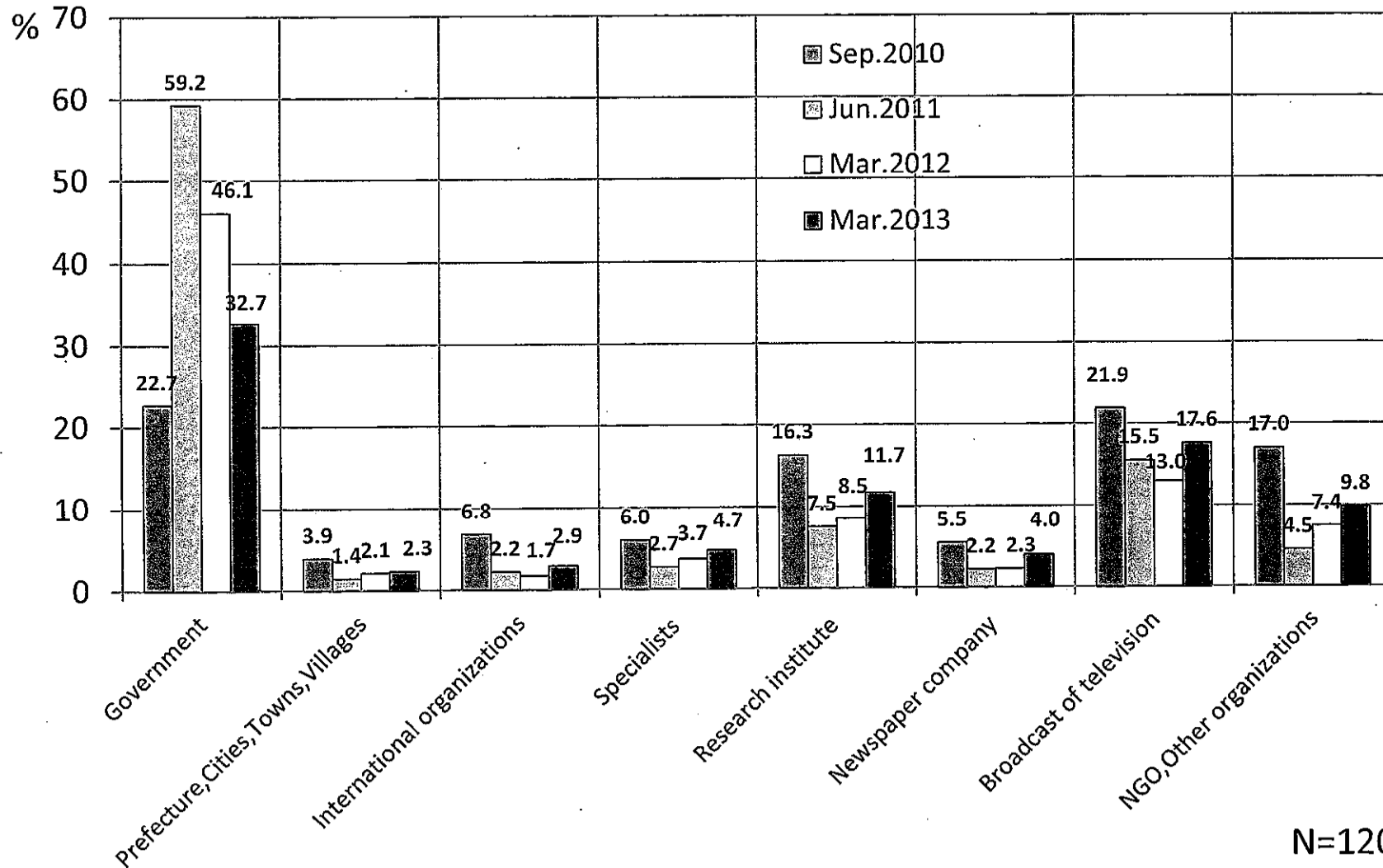
# Exacerbated public distrust of nuclear energy.

- Nuclear professionals formerly stressed the minimal potential for releasing large amount of radioactive materials into the environment, even during accidents such as earthquakes, because nuclear power plants are sufficiently earthquake-proof and committed to nuclear power safety based on “defense in depth” concept. However, accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP of TEPCO have impaired trust in these explanations and exacerbated public distrust of nuclear professionals.



# Change of the public opinion involving nuclear energy (2010-2013)

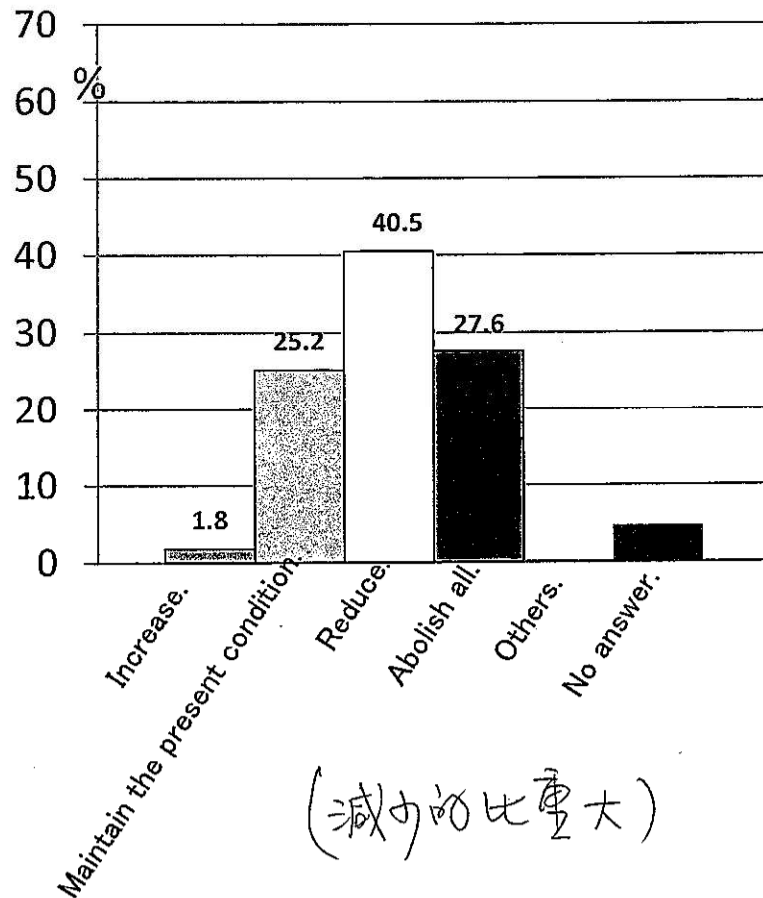
Question: The sources of information which are most unreliable about a disaster



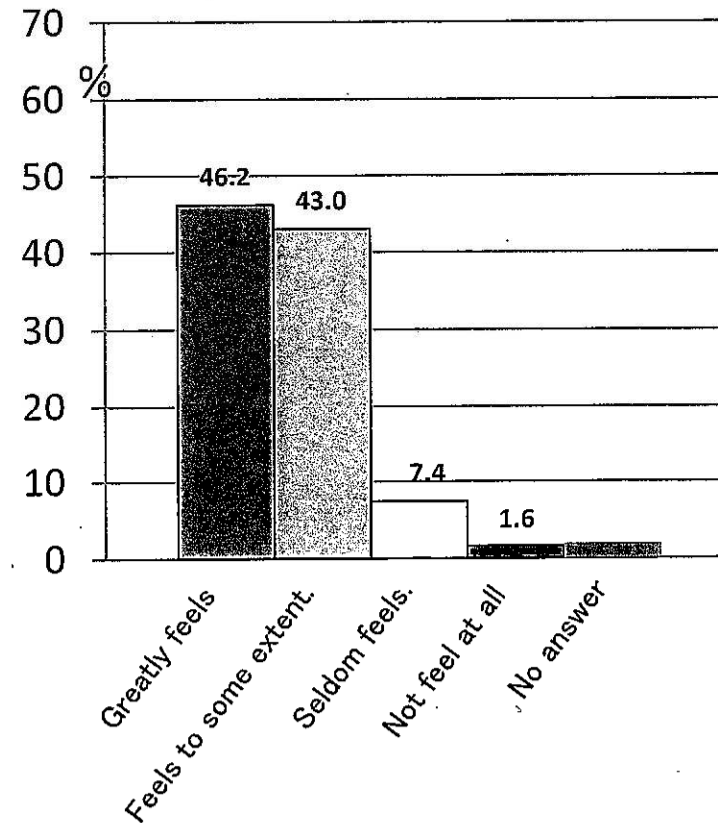
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# The opinion poll about a nuclear power plant and energy (Mar.2013)

Question: What do you think you should do from now on about the nuclear power plant?



Question: Do you feel uneasy that an accident which affects the residents of the circumference of it may occur in a nuclear power plant?



## Efforts to Build Public Confidence ①

JAEK considers it necessary to sincerely accept distrust, anxiety, and concern of the public.

## Efforts to Build Public Confidence ②

Based on this acknowledgment, the national government and operators should carefully explain actions to be taken for those forced to leave their homeland, improvements/remedies taken to secure safety in future and the concept on which they are based, and furthermore the way to realize the commitment to the world's highest level of nuclear power safety based on recommendations made by the various Accident Investigation Committees for accidents at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. They should also show new approaches in handling spent nuclear fuel and seek cooperation.

# Fundamental elements for building public confidence

## **(Accountability)**

It is important to reveal the mission of individuals/organizations tackling such challenges to public interests, for what, why, and how they do it.

## **(Correct Information Disclosure)**

It is important to remember that these explanations should be provided based on sufficient and correct information to the public on a timely basis.

## **(Transparency/Fairness and Public Involvement in Decision Process)**

It is important to design a fair decision-making process, as the basis for various administrative decisions, and while making the process open, to provide opportunities for public participation in the process.

## **(Easy to Understand Explanations)**

Public explanations should be clear and plain, with accuracy a prerequisite.



# Transparency/Fairness and Public Involvement in Decision Process

It is important to design a fair decision-making process, as the basis for various administrative decisions, and while making the process open, to provide opportunities for public participation in the process. In this case, the parties concerned should deeply appreciate that securing transparency means the public can view the decision-making process related to their interests, access information related to their interests, and make remarks on the same. Based on this acknowledgment, the greater the public interest in a decision, the more carefully we should notify the public at the earliest possible stage before making it. We should strive to give the public opportunities to express their views.

Although it is currently discussing of a new basic energy plan in Japan, JAEC expects strongly to care about the fundamental elements for building public confidence, when using atomic power based on basic energy plan.

# Two-way communication①

It is important to sincerely listen to public opinion and questions by striving to provide more opportunities to engage with the public and try to understand each other through communications. In other words, when the national government and operators explain their own actions to the public, they should not do so on a one-sided basis. Rather, they should engage in two-way communication to deepen mutual understanding and develop a relationship built on trust through conversation.

## Two-way communication ②

The use of experts capable of promoting such communication neutrally and fairly is considered helpful. In addition, it is also important to seek experts' opinions on issues that are the subjects of debate. In this case, we consider it proper to seek diversified opinions of experts, considering the fact they may be biased. To achieve this, we should not only devise a method to seek opinions of experts in the engineering area, but also those of the arts and science.

# Information sharing for residents①

For individual nuclear facilities, we need approaches based on the understanding that there are greater interests from those closer to the applicable facility.

For example, in the case of nuclear power plants, based on NRA studies, in compiling a plan related to measures concerning nuclear emergency preparedness at power plants, information on actions to ensure safety and projects in the nuclear power plant should be regularly provided to local authorities and their residents in the “urgent protective action planning zone (UPZ)” (zones within roughly 30 kilometers of a nuclear power plant) and a platform should be developed for two-way communications between national government/operators and local authorities/their residents.

# Information sharing for residents②

- It is important plotting and institutionalizing an organization for such a measure.
- We should consolidate them with safety agreements concluded between local authorities and operators in Japan.
- We should start developing a full-scale system immediately based on experiences gained from the above-mentioned actions for the time being.