ITARDA



Institute for Traffic Accident Research and Data Analysis
A Public Interest Incorporated Foundation

Preventing Traffic Accidents and Mitigating Their Consequences



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In March 2026, the Institute for Traffic Accident Research and Data Analysis (ITARDA) marked its 34th anniversary.

When ITARDA was established in 1992, Japan was experiencing what was often called its “second traffic war.” Road traffic fatalities—deaths within 24 hours of an accident—had declined steadily from 1970 under measures implemented pursuant to the Basic Act on Traffic Safety Measures. After reaching a low in 1979, however, fatalities began to rise again, exceeding 10,000 in 1988.

Established in response to these challenging conditions and designated as a traffic accident research and analysis center under the Road Traffic Act, ITARDA has conducted comprehensive, scientific research into traffic accidents from three perspectives: people, roads, and vehicles. Through this work, we have supported the development and implementation of traffic safety measures by both public and private organizations to prevent accidents and mitigate their consequences.

In 2020, road traffic fatalities fell below 3,000 for the first time. Although fatalities subsequently rebounded after the sharp decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, they began to fall again in 2024 and reached a record low of 2,547 in 2025.

The 12th Fundamental Traffic Safety Program sets out Japan’s comprehensive, long-term policy framework for traffic safety. Its targets include reducing fatalities within 24 hours of an accident to 1,900 or fewer by 2030. We will continue to contribute to these goals through statistical analysis using data from the Japan Traffic Accidents General Database, J-TAD (macro), expansion and enhancement of our Japan Traffic Accidents In-Depth Database, J-TAD (micro), and the provision of relevant, accurate traffic accident data to organizations responsible for traffic safety measures.

12th Fundamental Traffic Safety Program (National Council for Traffic Safety Measures, March 27, 2026) (Excerpt)

Part I, Chapter 1, Section 3, II. Measures to Be Taken
8. Enhancement of Research and Development and Investigative Research
(2) Strengthening Comprehensive Research into the Causes of Road Traffic Accidents

To gain an accurate understanding of traffic accidents and support the development of effective, detailed traffic safety measures to further reduce deaths and injuries, efforts will be made to strengthen the work of the Institute for Traffic Accident Research and Data Analysis (ITARDA) in developing macro databases, conducting in-depth investigations and undertaking related activities. Greater use will also be made of ITARDA’s capabilities to analyze traffic accidents comprehensively from the perspectives of people, roads, and vehicles. In addition, traffic accident databases will be enhanced and their use promoted through collaboration between medical and engineering specialists, including partnerships with emergency and critical care institutions. The use of in-depth accident data in traffic accident analysis will also be promoted by enriching the data collected from in-vehicle recording devices, such as event data recorders (EDRs), video-recording dashcams, and Data Storage Systems for Automated Driving (DSSADs).

Background and Purpose

- ITARDA was established as a public interest corporation in March 1992 with authorization from the National Police Agency, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Construction.
- Since its inception, ITARDA has been dedicated to fostering a society with safe, efficient, and orderly traffic systems. We accomplish this by conducting comprehensive traffic accident research focused on three key elements—people, roads, and vehicles—and by making the findings widely available to support the implementation of effective traffic safety measures in both the public and private sectors.
- In April 2012, ITARDA became a public interest incorporated foundation.

Designation by the National Public Safety Commission

- In June 1992, the National Public Safety Commission designated ITARDA as a traffic accident research and analysis center under Article 108-13 of the Road Traffic Act.
- Under this designation, police station chiefs and other relevant officials may, at ITARDA's request, provide the information necessary for its investigations and other activities.
- To ensure the secure management of the information obtained, ITARDA has established the necessary rules and obtained approval from the National Public Safety Commission. Furthermore, all officers, employees, and relevant personnel at ITARDA are subject to confidentiality obligations under the Road Traffic Act.

Our Activities

- ITARDA undertakes the following activities to prevent traffic accidents and mitigate their consequences:
  - Traffic accident investigations (in-depth investigations of accident cases)
  - Analysis of traffic accident data
  - Traffic accident research
  - Dissemination of analysis and research findings
  - Information exchange with traffic accident research institutes overseas
- The Japanese Government's current 12th Fundamental Traffic Safety Program calls for the enhancement of ITARDA's activities (see page 1).

Contributors to the Founding Endowment

- The following organizations contributed to ITARDA's founding endowment.

(Names are those used at the time of contribution; listed in no particular order.)

Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Inc.
The Marine and Fire Insurance Association of Japan, Inc.
Sagawa Traffic Society Foundation
Japan Road Contractors Association
Japan Trucking Association
Organizations affiliated with the Japan Civil Engineering Consultants Association
Kyoei Fire Traffic Safety Foundation
The Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan
National Mutual Insurance Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives
Steel Barrier Association
Road Facilities Association
The Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Associations of Japan
Japan Automobile Federation
Japan Automobile Service Promotion Association
Automobile Inspection and Registration Association
Japan Automobile Dealers Association
Japan Traffic Safety Association
Japan Federation of Authorized Drivers School Associations
Japan Cement Association
Japan Mini Vehicles Association
Traffic Control Facilities Association
Japan Contractors Association of Traffic Signs and Lane Markings
Expressway Technology Center
The Real Estate Companies Association of Japan
Japan Used Car Dealers Association
Japan Motorcycle Safety Association
Japan Road Traffic Information Center
Japan Automobile Driving Education Association
Association of Japan Window Film Manufacturers
Japan Society of Traffic Engineers
Japan Road Association



In-depth Traffic Accident Investigations

ITARDA conducts in-depth investigations of traffic accident cases to scientifically identify their causes. These investigations comprehensively examine human factors, including the psychological state of those involved, as well as the road traffic environment, vehicles, emergency response and rescue, and medical care. The findings are compiled into a database.

General In-depth Investigations

(Comprehensive Investigations of Traffic Accident Cases)

Conducted on an ongoing basis, these investigations comprehensively examine road traffic conditions, drivers' circumstances and conditions, vehicle conditions, injuries sustained by those involved, and other matters relating to traffic accidents.



Targeted In-depth Investigations

(Investigations of Traffic Accident Cases for Specific Purposes)

Conducted as needed, these investigations focus on particular accident types, circumstances or other features to support analysis and research into their causes and related factors.

Examples of Our Work

- In-depth investigations of traffic accidents involving the D-Call Net automatic emergency notification system, through collaboration between medical and engineering specialists
- In-depth investigations of wrong-way driving incidents on expressways
- Provision of data on pre-crash vehicle behavior and related factors (PCM*)

* Pre-crash Matrix

Investigation Items

In-depth investigations generally cover the following items from the perspectives of people, roads and vehicles. Targeted in-depth investigations include additional items appropriate to their specific objectives.

General Information

- Accident details, date and time of occurrence, location, accident type, etc.

People

- Age, gender, driving history, physical and mental condition, human errors, evasive actions, etc., of the parties involved in the accident (drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and others)

Road Traffic Environment

- Road configuration (intersection, road section, etc.), road width, road alignment, road surface condition, traffic safety facilities, traffic conditions, etc.

Vehicles

- Vehicle specifications (type, use, body style, etc.), impact direction and location, deformation of the vehicle body and passenger compartment, seat belt use, airbag deployment, recorded vehicle data, etc.



Injuries and Medical Information

- Injured body regions, injury severity, cause of death, anatomical sites of injury, whether the injured person underwent surgery or was hospitalized, etc.

Emergency Response and Rescue

- Time of arrival at the scene, first aid provided, factors hindering rescue operations, etc.

Investigation Offices and Areas Covered

As a general rule, each investigation office conducts in-depth investigations and related activities for traffic accidents occurring within its assigned area, with the aim of identifying accident causes scientifically.

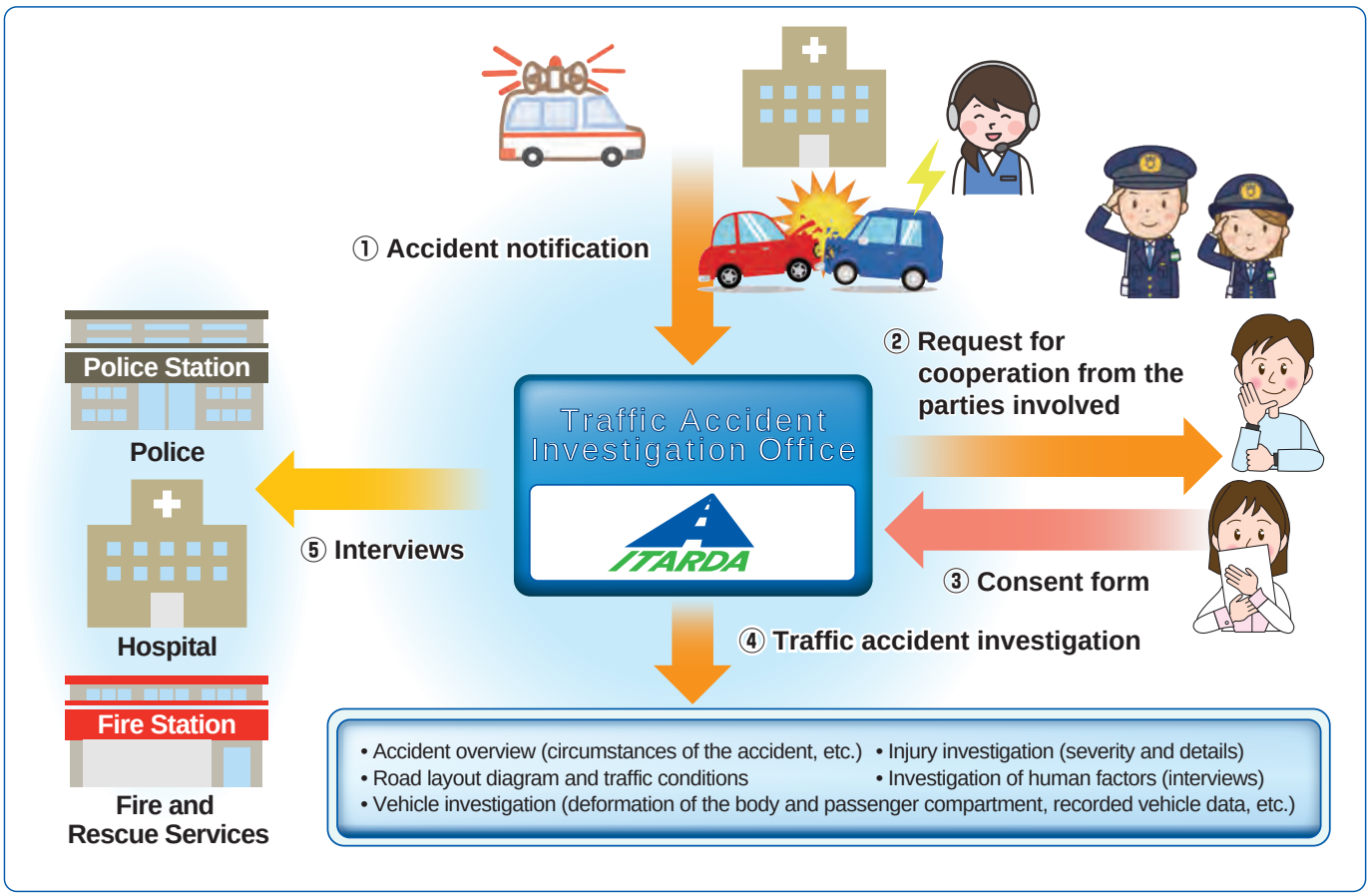
Office	Location	Area Covered*
Tsukuba Traffic Accident Investigation Office	Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture	Ibaraki Prefecture and surrounding areas
Tokyo Traffic Accident Investigation Office	Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo	Tokyo and surrounding areas

* Targeted in-depth investigations may be conducted anywhere in Japan.

Investigation Team

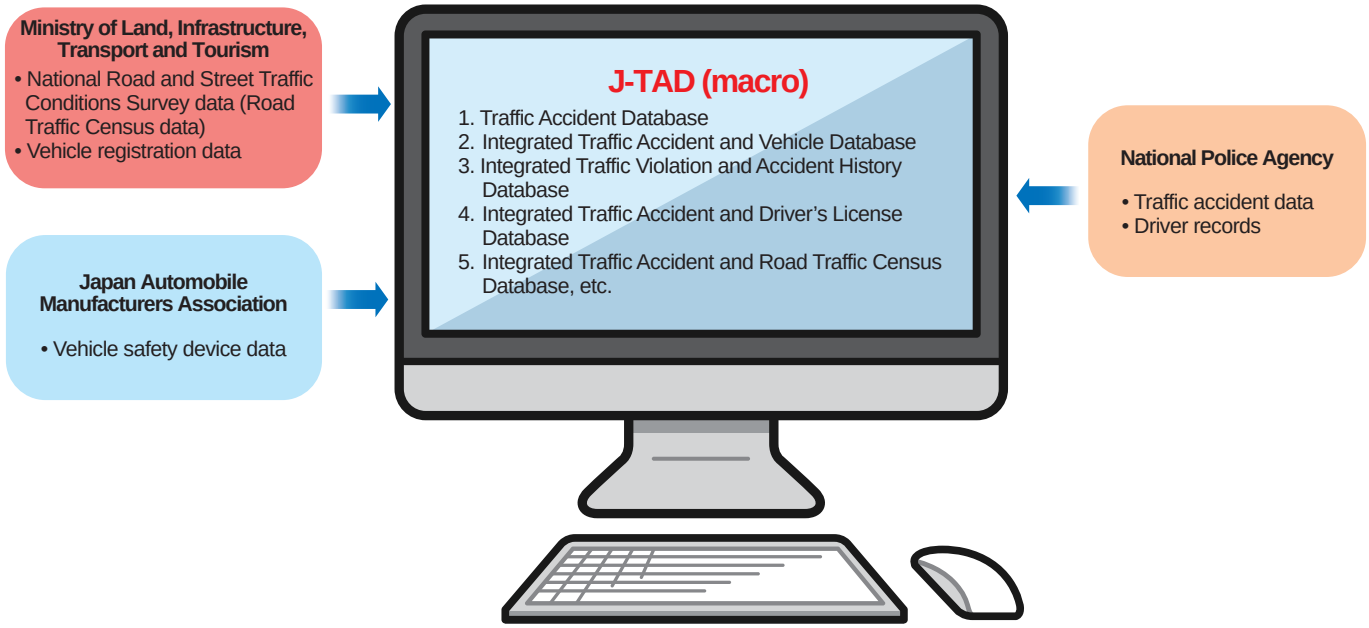
In-depth investigations are conducted by qualified investigators, who are required to carry identification and present it on request. The team includes ITARDA staff, personnel seconded from the police, automobile manufacturers, research institutes and other organizations, and retirees from such organizations.

Investigation Process



Analysis of Traffic Accident Data

To help prevent traffic accidents and mitigate their consequences, ITARDA collects relevant information from the organizations concerned and develops and maintains the Japan Traffic Accidents General Database, J-TAD (macro). To make more effective use of its in-depth investigation findings, ITARDA has also developed the Japan Traffic Accidents In-Depth Database, J-TAD (micro). Recent enhancements include the incorporation of EDR and dashcam data.
The results of analyses using these databases are made widely available to organizations that need them for accident prevention and other traffic safety activities.



Dissemination of Research Findings and International Exchange

Sharing Findings and Knowledge

- Research symposia
- Publication of ITARDA Information
- Online dissemination of research findings
- Distribution of research reports, statistical publications, other books and CDs
- Provision of lecturers, presentations at academic conferences, contributions to publications and media outreach
- Customized traffic accident data tabulations





International Exchanges and Information Sharing

ITARDA exchanges information and expertise with traffic accident investigation and analysis institutes overseas to improve its methods and analytical work. As a member of the OECD's International Road Traffic and Accident Database (IRTAD), ITARDA also conducts comparative analyses using accident data from other countries. We actively respond to requests from organizations in Japan and overseas for study visits, technical cooperation and other forms of collaboration.



Traffic Accident Research

ITARDA conducts a range of research projects that combine data from J-TAD (macro) and J-TAD (micro) to help prevent traffic accidents and mitigate their consequences.

Joint Research

ITARDA undertakes joint research on topics that can benefit from combining the data in its databases with the specialist expertise of external research institutes and organizations.



Examples of Our Work

- Research on applying new crashworthiness and crash avoidance assessment methods in Japan
- Research on preventing accidents involving older drivers using data from older-driver training courses
- Research on reducing motorcycle accidents through analysis of their characteristics

Independent Research

ITARDA's individual researchers select their own topics and conduct investigations, analyses, and research to contribute to traffic safety in various fields.

Examples of Our Work

- Research on the accident-reduction effects of Advanced Safety Vehicles (ASVs)
- Analysis of accident factors affecting vulnerable road users
- Analysis of accident factors using the Integrated Traffic Violation and Accident History Database

Commissioned Research

ITARDA undertakes commissioned traffic accident analysis and research for national and local governments, universities, private organizations, and other clients, helping them improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their traffic safety measures.

Examples of Our Work

- Research on injury trends among vehicle occupants in recent traffic accidents
- Traffic accident analysis and examination of countermeasures for specific areas
- Research on traffic accident patterns as part of SIP*

* Cross-ministerial Strategic Innovation Promotion Program

Investigation, Analysis and Research by Accident Investigation Committees

With growing expectations for the practical deployment of automated vehicles, ITARDA convenes expert committees to investigate accidents involving these vehicles, as well as serious commercial vehicle accidents that attract considerable public attention. The committees identify accident causes and recommend measures to prevent similar accidents.

Automated Vehicle Accident Investigation Committee

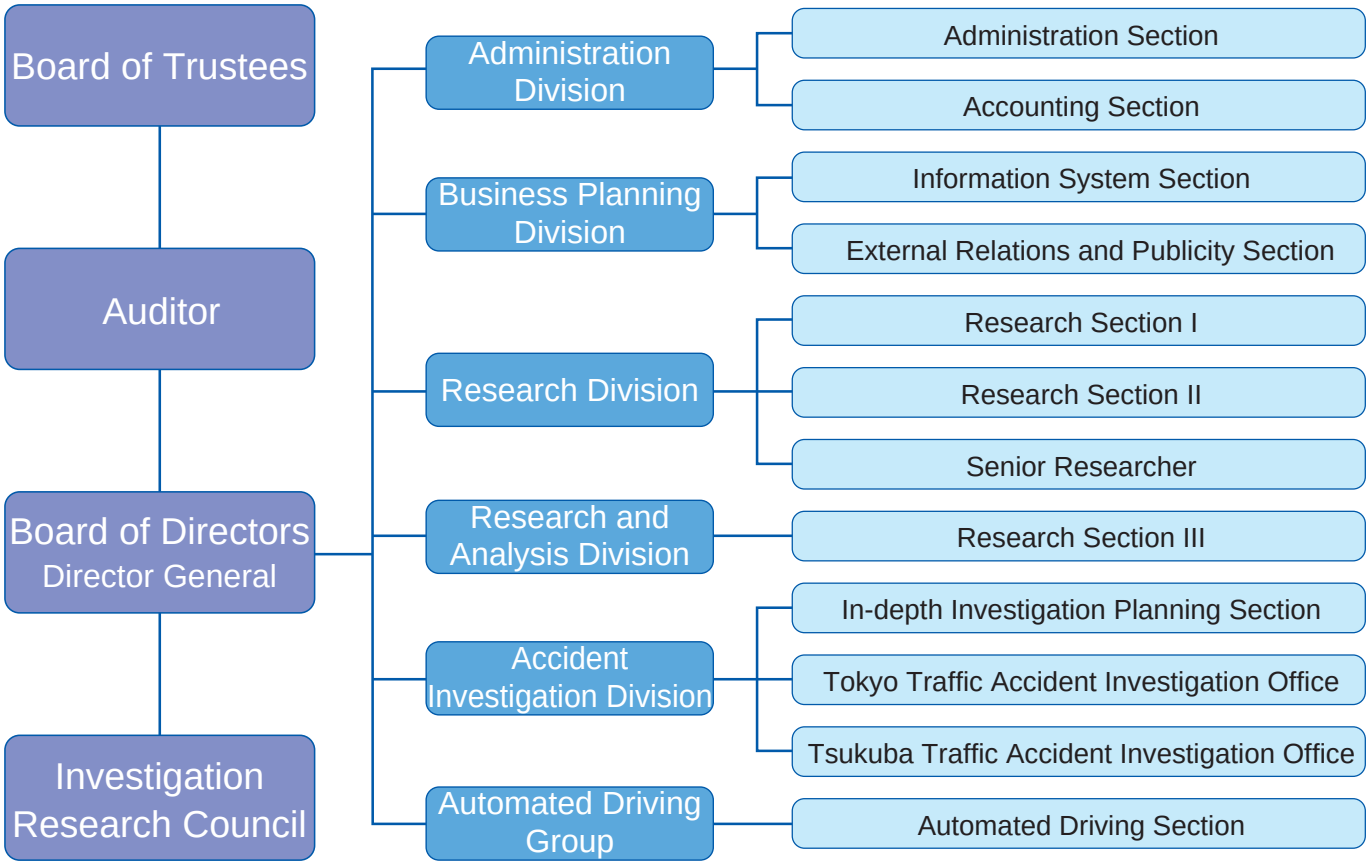


Commissioned by the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, ITARDA investigates and analyzes traffic accidents involving automated vehicles. Recommendations developed through committee deliberations support the safe introduction of automated driving into society.

Commercial Vehicle Accident Investigation Committee

Commissioned by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, ITARDA investigates and analyzes serious accidents involving commercial vehicles such as trucks and buses. Recommendations developed through committee deliberations help prevent serious accidents.

Organization



Name and Locations

Institute for Traffic Accident Research and Data Analysis (ITARDA)
A Public Interest Incorporated Foundation

- Headquarters / Tokyo Traffic Accident Investigation Office
  8th Floor, Sumitomo Suidobashi Building, 2-7-8 Kanda-Sarugakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0064, Japan
  Tel: +81-3-5577-3977 (main) Fax: +81-3-5577-3980
- Tsukuba Traffic Accident Investigation Office
  c/o Japan Automobile Research Institute, 641-1 Nishi Ohashi, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-0831, Japan
  Tel: +81-29-855-9021 Fax: +81-29-855-9131
- Website: https://www.itarda.or.jp/
- Email: koho@itarda.or.jp

ITARDA's logo features a road and its centerline extending into the distance. It symbolizes safe road travel and reflects ITARDA's founding mission: to prevent traffic accidents and mitigate their consequences.