



Joint Press Release

February 06, 2025

Japan Airlines Co., Ltd.
Amami Island Drone Co., Ltd.
Setouchi Town
National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience
University of Tsukuba

“Resident Services Utilizing Drones for Normal and Emergency Situations in Setouchi Town, Amami Oshima” Wins the 7th Japan Open Innovation Award “Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Award”

- The Initiative Aiming for Sustainable Town Development has been Highly Evaluated for its Collaboration Between Industry, Government, and Academia -

Japan Airlines Co., Ltd. (hereinafter "JAL"), Amami Island Drone Co., Ltd. (hereinafter "AID"), Setouchi Town in Oshima District, Kagoshima Prefecture (hereinafter "Setouchi Town"), the National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience (hereinafter "NIED"), and the University of Tsukuba have jointly undertaken the initiative "Resident Services Utilizing Drones for Normal and Emergency Situations in Setouchi Town, Amami Oshima" (hereinafter "this initiative"). On February 5, 2025, this initiative was awarded the "Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Award" at the 7th Japan Open Innovation Awards hosted by the Cabinet Office.

The Japan Open Innovation Prize recognizes initiatives with high leadership and originality that are expected to serve as role models to further promote open innovation in Japan. It honors exemplary initiatives with significant social impact and sustainability, with minister's awards and other awards presented in various fields.



This initiative has been highly evaluated for its pioneering efforts in addressing regional issues such as disaster response and logistics on remote islands, contributing to the sustainable town development that Setouchi Town aims for, where "A Town Everyone Wishes to Live In". It has also been recognized for its potential to serve as a model for other remote islands, aging regions, and isolated areas during disasters.

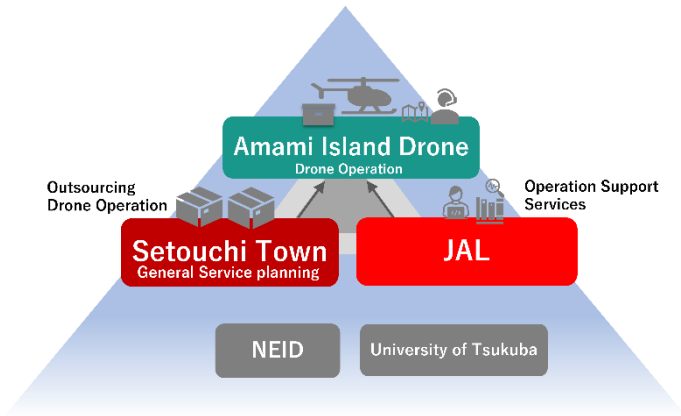
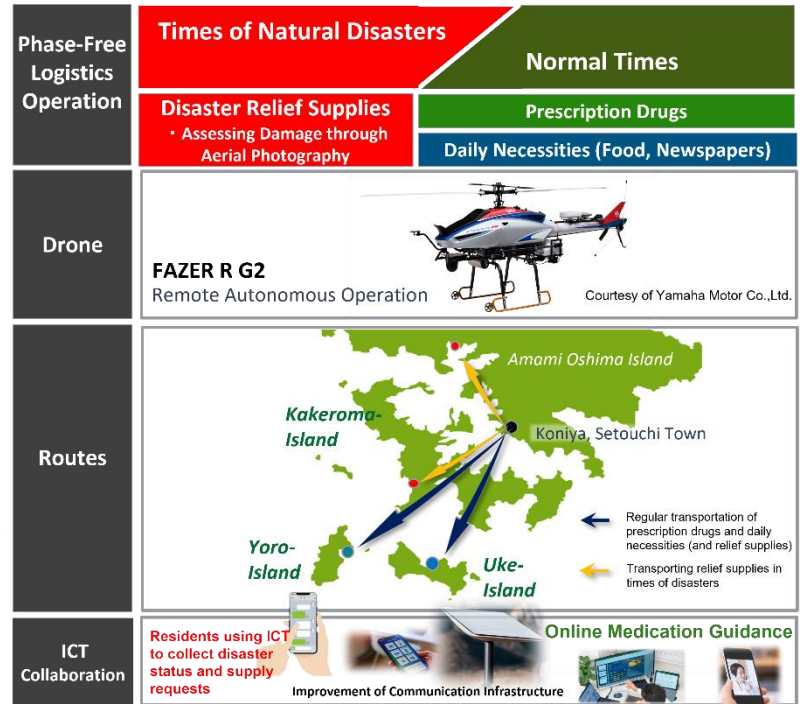


Drones Supporting Island Life in Setouchi Town During Both Normal and Emergency Situations

About This Initiative

Overview

Setouchi Town and JAL jointly established the drone operation company AID to provide administrative services to residents using drones and ICT technology. To address issues ranging from disaster response to daily logistics, they have built a phase-free drone logistics infrastructure that does not distinguish between disaster and normal times. Through ICT collaboration involving residents, they aim to maintain remote medical services and contribute to sustainable town development through industry-government-academia collaboration.



Background and Details

Due to its geographical conditions, Setouchi Town faces regional issues such as isolated settlements during natural disasters like typhoons and heavy rains, and delays in transportation relying on ships even during normal times. In 2020, Setouchi Town, aiming for sustainable town development where "A Town Everyone Wishes to Live In" signed a partnership agreement with the JAL Group to address these regional issues using drones and digital technology. (*1) They have conducted joint studies and demonstrations involving local residents in collaboration with NIED and Tsukuba University.

In November 2023, Setouchi Town and JAL jointly established the drone operation company AID, which began regular operations in February 2024. (*2) They provide administrative services to residents using drones and ICT collaboration, covering areas from disaster response to daily logistics. AID uses large logistics drones with excellent range and payload capacity, supported by JAL's expertise in drone operation and safety management, to build a phase-free operation system for Yoro-Island and Uke-Island during both normal and disaster times.

These efforts to utilize drones and ICT collaboration are reflected in the regional disaster prevention plan and contribute to maintaining medical services in remote areas through the introduction of online medication guidance, thereby contributing to sustainable town development.



Utilizing Drones for Regional Disaster Prevention



Resident Participation Workshop on the Utilization of Drones and ICT



Efforts will continue to build on the safe and secure drone operation business by AID, aiming to expand this initiative as a community-based social implementation model utilizing drones and ICT to the entire Amami Islands.

Japan Open Innovation Awards (Cabinet Office HP) – Japanese only
<https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/openinnovation/prize/index.html>

(*1) Press Release Oct 14, 2020
Setouchi-cho, Japan Air Commuter, JAL, Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance, MS&AD InterRisk to Collaborate in Drone Utilization on Remote Islands
<https://press.jal.co.jp/en/release/202010/005815.html>

(*2) Press Release Feb 29, 2023
Amami Setouchi Town and JAL Establish Joint Drone Operation Company "Amami Island Drone Co., Ltd."
<https://press.jal.co.jp/en/release/202402/007942.html>