

1. Summary of the Accident

About 8:03 am on December 3rd, 2012, at the east-bound Sasago Tunnel on the Chuo Expressway, concrete panels installed for ventilation ducts fell from the ceiling. A total length of panel collapse was 130m. A portion of the fallen panels crashed 3 vehicles traveling in the tunnel, and 9 passengers in these vehicles found dead and 2 injured.

2. Outline of Sasago Tunnel

- 1) Length: 4,784m (East-bound), 4,717m (West-bound)
- 2) Number of Lanes: 2 lanes in each direction (4 lanes in total)
- 3) Width of Lanes: 8.5m (0.75m + 3.5m + 3.5m + 0.75m)
- 4) Purpose of the Concrete Panels: Ventilation
- 5) Structure of the Concrete Panels: Pre-cast concrete
- 6) Thickness of the Concrete Panels: 80mm and 90mm
- 7) Date & Year of Opening: December 20th, 1977 (Approx. 34 years since the opening)

3. Investigation for the Accident

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) established “Investigation and Examination Committee for the Tunnel Ceiling Panel Collapse” on December 4th. The committee, consisted of 6 external experts, led by Dr. Konda, professor emeritus of Tokyo Metropolitan Univ. in engineering, has launched the on-site investigation immediately (currently under investigation).

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This document has been made based on the press releases published by either Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism or NEXCO-Central, and news reports for information sharing purpose with related personnel or organizations overseas. Since the cause of the accident is now under investigation, the whole or a part of the contents may be modified, deleted or added according to the said investigation or any other factors without notice.

4. Emergency Inspections

Due to the instruction by MLIT, emergency inspection is being conducted on expressways and national roads(maintained by MLIT) by each administrative organization including NEXCO-Central.

1) Objects to be Inspected:

- * All facilities equipped with anchor bolts (lightings, traffic signs, warning signs, noise barriers that have not yet inspected this fiscal year).
- * Heavy facilities such as a jet-fan (urgent inspection needed)

2) Inspection Methods: Visual observation, hammer test and palpation to anchor bolts, nuts, joints and surrounding equipments.

3) Report: The results from this inspection and ordinary inspection implemented before the accident are to be reported together by the end of fiscal 2012. As for the heavy facilities, report must be done by December 26th.

5. Expected Time of Recovery

The west-bound Sasago Tunnel is expected to be opened by the end of 2012 upon removal of concrete ceiling panels. This tunnel is planned to be used in two-way traffic system (1 lane for each direction).

【Reference: Inspection Manual for Tunnel regulated by 3 NEXCOs. (Extract)】

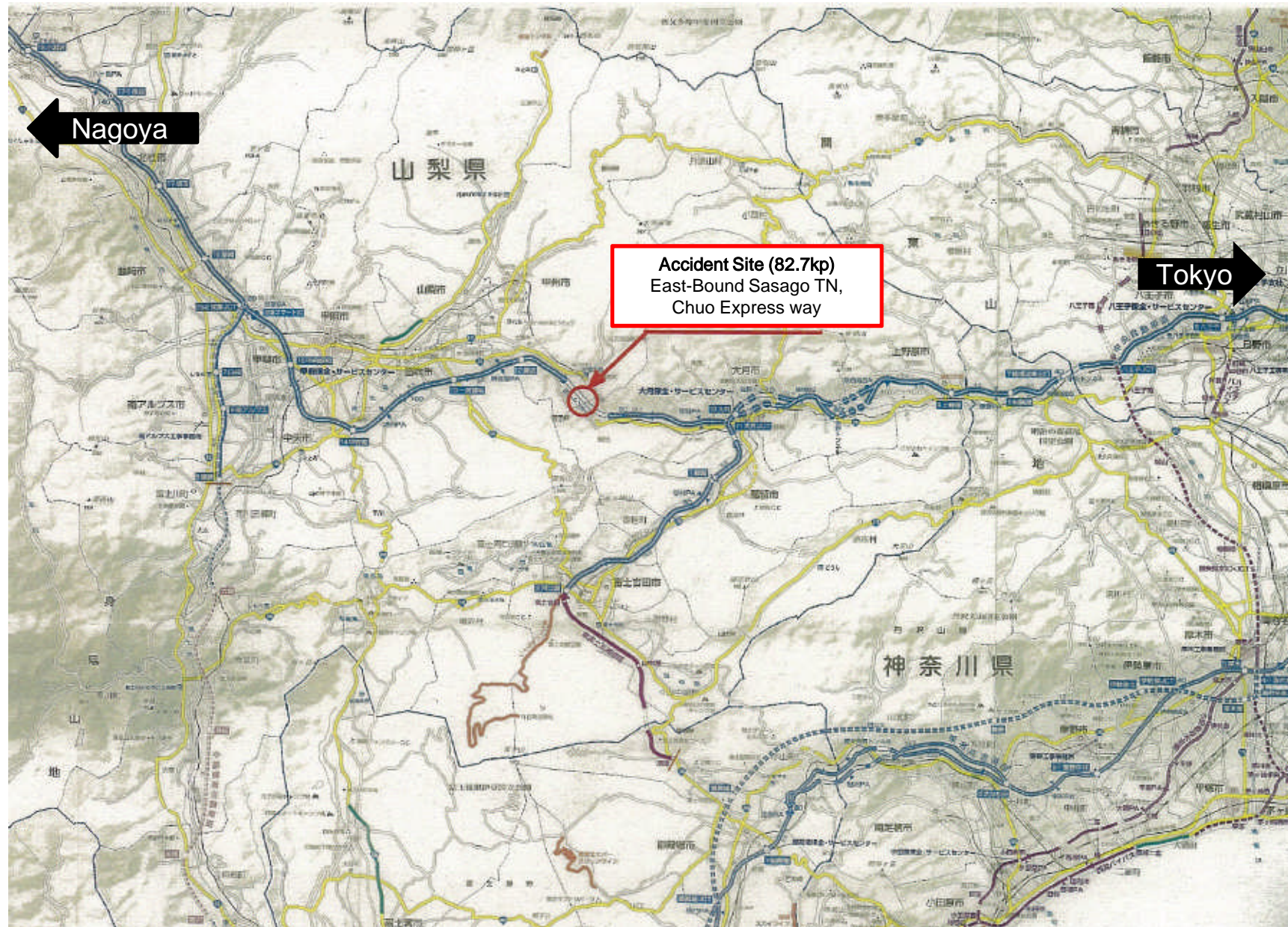
(4) Notice for Ceiling Panels

- (a) Since extra attention for erosion and damage in suspension rods must be highly paid, inspectors are required to climb to the upper part of the ceiling panel for visual inspection in case of maintenance works in a tunnel.
- (b) In case of inspection for ceiling panels, inspectors should check if the ceiling panels are firmly fixed to the ceiling, and degradation in materials of ceiling panels to prevent panels from falling onto the lanes. In addition, inspectors also should check if there are any deformations, shearing or cracks in metal fittings of ceiling panels or tie rods accompanied by external deformation.

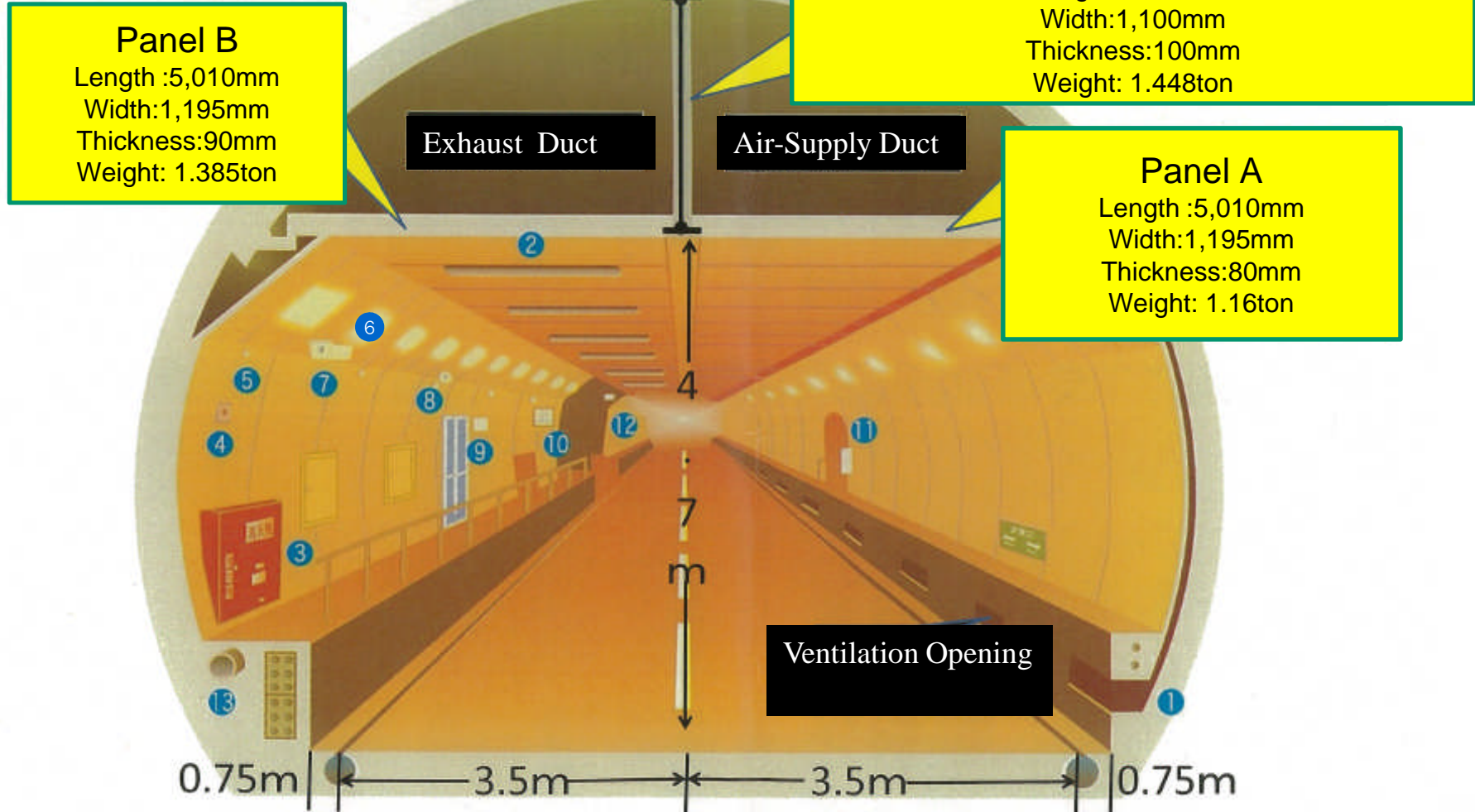
Accident at Sasago Tunnel on the Chuo Expressway

As of Dec. 11, 2012

NEXCO



Sasago Tunnel Facilities



Opening for Air-Supply	Opening for Exhaust	Fire Extinguisher	Fire Detector	Sprinkler	Lighting
CCTV Camera	Loudspeaker	Emergency Telephone	Emergency Parking	Evacuation Passage	Message Signboard