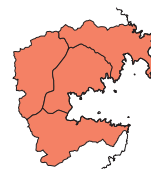


## Preparing Land for Temporary Housing



▲ Minamisanriku has little flat land, so it was necessary to develop new land for the construction of temporary housing.  
The Ground Self-Defense Force Northern Army took on the site preparation work.

Many Minamisanriku residents were looking forward to moving into temporary housing facilities as soon as possible. However, the ria coastal topography of Minamisanriku means that very few areas of flat land suitable for residential use exist, thus putting the issue of land development on the agenda. In terms of flat land, outside of school grounds there were only agricultural fields, where the ground had to be leveled in order to prepare it for residential construction.

Meanwhile, local construction companies were busy clearing rubble. They had neither the machinery nor the manpower available to do land development work. The mayor pleaded to the Self-Defense Forces for help, even though he was aware that site preparation work for temporary housing was outside the scope of their disaster relief operations. The engineering battalion commander of the Northern Army negotiated with senior units, who agreed to take on the site development work.

The battalion commander said to the mayor: "In exchange, I have one request." This was that each time the site development for a housing complex is completed, the mayor makes a visit to the site to say "thank you" to the team members.

Self-Defense Forces engineering companies were divided and assigned to different locations, and the steady work of clearing and leveling the narrow tracts of land continued without pause. Although conditions were not always favorable, the Self-Defense Forces used reliable technology and worked quickly to prepare the land for the construction of temporary housing facilities.



▲ Engineering commanders checking a site earmarked for temporary housing and discussing the land preparation plan.

Needless to say, the mayor visited all the sites to show his appreciation, always saying: "I want to express my gratitude to everyone for their efforts. Thank you." The construction of temporary housing facilities would have been impossible without the support of the Self-Defense Forces.

Photo courtesy of Ground Self-Defense Force Northern Army