

# Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney)



## Correspondence

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Australia – Japan Partner for Tourism Exchange 2013

### Introduction to Mt. Hakkoda: A Sacred Place of Deep Powder Snow

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**Aomori** is located in the northeast region of Japan and is the northernmost prefecture on main island, Honshu.

Aomori is well known as the largest producer of apples, the tastiest Tuna, the World Heritage Site, “Shirakami Mountain Range”, and Mt. Hakkoda, which is famous as one of the best places for deep powder snow. In fact, many enthusiastic skiers and snowboarders from all over Japan visit Mt. Hakkoda for a chance to ride down its beautiful

powder slopes. This February, Sukayu Hot Spring, located at the foot of Mt. Hakkoda, recorded 566cm of snowfall, breaking its previous record. The news surprised people across Japan, and it is still fresh in our memory.

Mt. Hakkoda has several slopes which amount to 7km of sliding distance, originating from a ropeway mountaintop station. The large snow covered trees in Japan, as shown in the picture to the right, are called “Snow Monsters”, and the best time to see them is from January to February. You can enjoy skiing and snowboarding while looking at the magnificent scenery of the snow covered trees.



We recommend you join the backcountry tour to Mt. Hakkoda. Weather permitting, a guide leads you through the backcountry area which differs from the ski slopes. The tour offers a better chance of encountering fresh deep snow.

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After you have fun skiing and snowboarding, please enjoy our variety of revitalising hot springs and have a taste of Aomori's fresh seafood from the nearby sea.

Access to Mt. Hakkoda is about one hour by bus from Aomori airport and Aomori station. The location is one of the most accessible ski-resorts with deep powder snow in Japan. Since the opening of all lines of the Tohoku Shinkansen in 2010, many skiers and snowboarders have been visiting from Tokyo.

The Snow & Travel Expo 2013 is in Sydney on 26 May, and Mt. Hakkoda will be introduced there at a Tohoku Tourism Promotion Organization booth. Please visit us at the booth.

- The Hakkoda Ropeway (English): <http://www.hakkoda-ropeway.jp/lang/en.html>
- Aomori Prefectural Tourism Information HP (English): <http://en.apinet.jp/>

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## *Greeting from Tsuyoshi Ito, Our New Deputy Director*



**G'day, mate!** Hello, my name is Tsuyoshi Ito. I'm from Nagoya city. Before being transferred to CLAIR Sydney, I had worked for the city of Nagoya for 27 years.

Nagoya is located in the centre of Japan. It is positioned to the east of the fertile Nobi Plain, which is formed by the Kiso, Ibi, and Nagara Rivers. Ise Bay is located to the south of Nagoya, by the Port of Nagoya. The topography is generally flat with gentle hills in the Eastern part of the city, which connect to distant mountains in the Chubu region of Japan. The population of Nagoya is approximately 2.2 million, and the area is 326.45km<sup>2</sup>. Toyota City is located near Nagoya, as well as other cities related to the automotive manufacturing industry, forming a leading

industrial production base in Japan.

For more information on Nagoya, please see the following link:

<http://www.city.nagoya.jp/en/index.html>

**Sydney-Nagoya Sister City Affiliation:** Our cities have shared a very special friendship since the signing of the Sydney-Nagoya Sister City Agreement by Mayor Motoyama and Lord Mayor Meers on 16 September, 1980. Over the past 32 years, Sydney and Nagoya have worked diligently to carry out meaningful exchange activities in diverse fields. I deeply appreciate the opportunity to work on enhancing this relationship during my stay in Sydney, and I look forward to meeting everyone affiliated with this initiative.

Our task at CLAIR Sydney will be to make the most of the opportunities afforded to us, and to consolidate and further develop comprehensive

bilateral exchange on all levels, including grassroots citizen exchange and local, state and national level exchange.

In terms of grassroots and local level exchange, which includes sister city relationships, and is of course the most relevant to us here today, I think the biggest challenge will be to ensure the continuing strength and benefit of exchange activities in today's highly globalised and competitive society.

Through my new role at CLAIR Sydney, I look forward to working with many new people. Finally, I'd like to offer my best wishes for the health and prosperity of all, and for the development of bilateral exchange between Australia and Japan, on all levels.

Many thanks,

Tsuyoshi Ito

### *Introducing Rick Seymour, currently on an internship at CLAIR*



**Hello**, my name is Rick Seymour and I am currently on an internship at CLAIR. Born and raised here in Sydney I am an avid world traveller with a strong interest in Japan. Presently

I am a full time student at UTS in the penultimate year of my international studies bachelor and I have chosen to undertake a work placement at CLAIR as I am very interested in the organisation's involvement in facilitating various international exchanges on local levels. Through my time here at CLAIR I have gained a lot of insight into how the different levels of the Japanese government operate and I am now looking forward to up-coming events such as the Sydney-Nagoya Sister City

Committee Meeting, where I will be able to further my understanding of local government international exchanges. Upon completion of my studies I aim to work in International Relations and my time here at CLAIR is proving invaluable in preparing for my future.

Previously I have been a participant in the Sutherland Shire – Chuo Ku Sister City Exchange and have since studied in Germany and travelled extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. When I'm not studying or travelling you'll often find me swimming or jogging around Sydney's southern suburbs or simply just hanging out with friends over some dim sum or over a beer in one of Sydney's great pubs.



Please also visit our website: [www.jlhc.org.au](http://www.jlhc.org.au)

## Looking to form a Sister School Exchange?

At CLAIR Sydney, we encourage Sister School Exchanges between Japan and Australia/New Zealand. Through a Sister School Exchange, students from both countries are able to gain new experiences and opportunities. We are happy to assist any municipalities or schools interested in establishing a Sister School Exchange.

On our website, we have a list of schools that are interested in forming a Sister School Exchange (list as of February 2013). If you would like to know more about a school on this list, please contact our office or get in touch with the school directly. Also, if you would like to have your school listed on our website, please let us know by filling out the [application form](#) online.

At the moment, Matta High School in Osaka is looking for a sister school in Australia or New Zealand. For more information, please check the URL below as well as our website.

Matta High School (Japanese Website)  
<http://www.osaka-c.ed.jp/matta/>

CLAIR Website

<http://www.jlgc.org.au/international-exchange-2/sister-school-exchange/australia-%e3%83%bbnew-zealand/>

Again, if you are looking to form a Sister School Exchange with a school in Japan, please feel free to contact us. We hope to see more Sister School Exchanges being established in the future.

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### *From The Director*

#### **Constitutional status of Japanese local government**

As the national election approaches, I often read discussions about the referendum for Constitutional recognition of local government. While the system of local governments is different between Japan and Australia in terms of unitary system or federal system, their importance is recognised the same way because they are the nearest government bodies to citizens.

Japan's local government is based on the Constitution of Japan. It regards local autonomy as indispensable to democracy, clearly placing local governments within the national government structure and guaranteeing their autonomy. Chapter 8 of the Constitution contains four articles which guarantee local autonomy and describe its basic nature and principle.

I am going to attend ALGA National General Assembly in June and look forward to hearing further discussions on this very important topic for the local government sector.



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