

Research Trends and Results

Evaluation of traffic related public works projects in foreign countries —Present situation in England—

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1. Introduction

The NILIM has been conducting survey research to advance and improve public works project evaluation methods, but many past surveys prioritized parameter setting and other detailed features of evaluation methods, so beginning in FY2013, it will focus its survey on the interrelationships of public works project planning systems, decision-making methods, and project evaluations. In FY2013, it surveyed traffic related public works project evaluations in England, the United States, and Germany, but this report will introduce the present situation in England divided into four levels for simplified comparison with Japan.

2. Policy level

At the level—Aiming in the overall direction which the government has proposed, inducing the government's series of linked decision making (Plan, Program, Project decisions)—it is a level corresponding to “forming a network permitting use from throughout the country in about 1 hour”, which is a basic concept of the High Standard Arterial Road Network Plan in Japan's Fourth Comprehensive Development Plan (1987). In England, after the establishment of the Cameron government in 2010, the Public Services Transparency Framework was adopted as a new framework for policy evaluations, and every ministry has prepared a Business Plan that includes a vision, allied priority matters, structural reform plan, ministry expenditures, and transparency. The Department for Transport complied with this in 2010 by preparing the Business Plan 2011-2015, which is a concrete mid-term plan that includes road and railway investment program, expenditures plan etc.

3. Plan (basic planning) level

The level—Strategies and concrete plans enacted to define the policy in detail and move to its implementation—is a level corresponding to Japan's High Standard Arterial Road Network Plan (14,000k). In England, the Department for Transport announced Investment in Highway Transport Schemes in 2010 concerning large-scale road projects, and while it is

not as long term a plan as Japan's, it corresponds to the Plan level. The Schemes present plans for implementation of large-scale road projects in detail from the medium to long term, and specifically presents plans for projects which should be started in the period (2010 to 2015), projects which should be started after 2015, projects whose implementation will be studied, and projects whose start-up is postponed. The priority of large-scale road projects is set from four perspectives: public's value for money, strategic value, feasibility, and effects incalculable in monetary terms.

4. Program level

At the level—Schedule with coherence: plan is detailed and consists of promises, methods, and actions that advance it to implementation—it corresponds to Japan's Priority Plan for Social Infrastructure. In England, the Business Plan 2011-2015 mentioned above corresponds to this level. The expenditure plan in the Business Plan is based on Departmental Expenditure Limits, decided through negotiations with HM Treasury.

5. Project level

This is the level which corresponds to Japan's new project adoption stage. In England, the Department for Transport's project adoption process is stipulated in detail by the Project Control Framework Handbook. This process consists of 7 steps from the policy option formation to project completion, and at times important for the construction decision, the Minister of Transport and the HM Treasury must approve it. The results of project evaluations are organized in the Appraisal Summary Table, that includes a variety of quantitative and qualitative items other than B/C, and it reflects public comments or opinions voiced at public hearings. Reports summarized in it are used by the Minister of Transport for decision-making.