

Relationship with Customers

■ Service quality reform

Service quality

JR East sets “Service Quality Reform” as one of the eternal missions in its “JR East Group Management Vision V”, and views the reform as an important pillar in business management. In order to become a group that is chosen by customers and the local communities, JR East will strive to reform service quality with a cross-divisional and cross-sectional teamwork to attain the highest customer satisfaction unequaled in the railway industry. Specifically, we will further improve our “Transport Quality” by preventing transport disruptions, resuming train operation quickly after disruptions, minimizing the effects of disruptions and enhancing information communication. We will also improve the economic situation of every lineside area, will offer services which elderly customers can use comfortably, and ensure that we have a customer-friendly railway service through various measures to prevent injuries and crimes.

Projects for improving service quality

The “Service Quality Improvement Project”, designed to identify potential needs by expanding two-way communication with customers, to improve service quality promptly, and to transmit information, was begun on the Musashino and Saikyo lines in March 2013 and on the Yokohama Line in June. We will implement the “Service Quality Improvement Project” in many lineside areas, and provide information about our service quality reforms via various media.

Service Quality Coordinator

For overall improvement of railway service quality focused on team efforts for service improvement and for providing reliable railway transport, we stationed Service Quality Coordinators in district and branch offices beginning in October 2011. The coordinator’s job is to supervise the area-wide improvement of service quality, as well as to support and promote solution of cross-organizational problems. In this way efforts will be made to improve service quality rapidly from the front-line field operations.

Service Quality Meetings

To improve our service quality further with field operations, branch offices and the head office working as a team, we instituted Service Quality Meetings, in which senior executives from our head office visit field operations and exchange views with field supervisors. In the fiscal year ended March 2013, the subjects of these meetings were implementing turnback operations on longer railway lines in the Tokyo Metropolitan area and communications in an emergency outside that area. JR East identifies the problems faced by each railway section and area and strives to improve quality of service by means of teamwork, without being constrained by the organizational framework of the company.

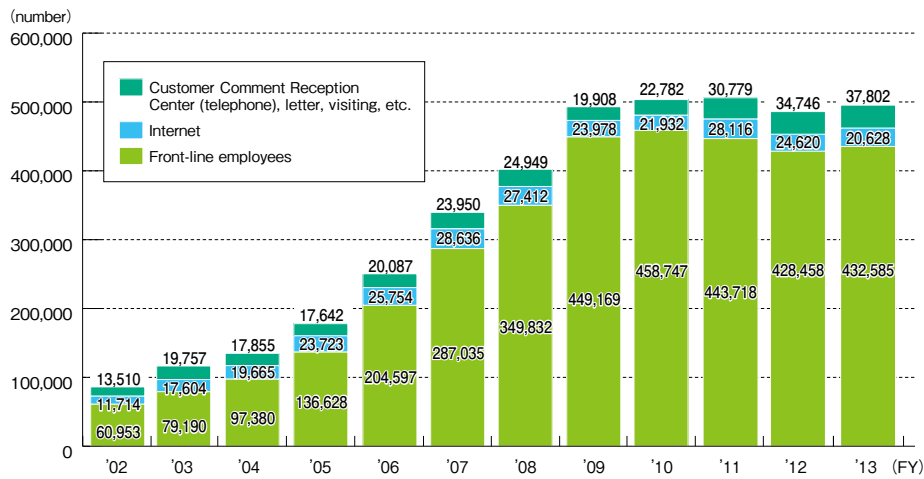
Customer Comments at the Core of Policy

Customer comments

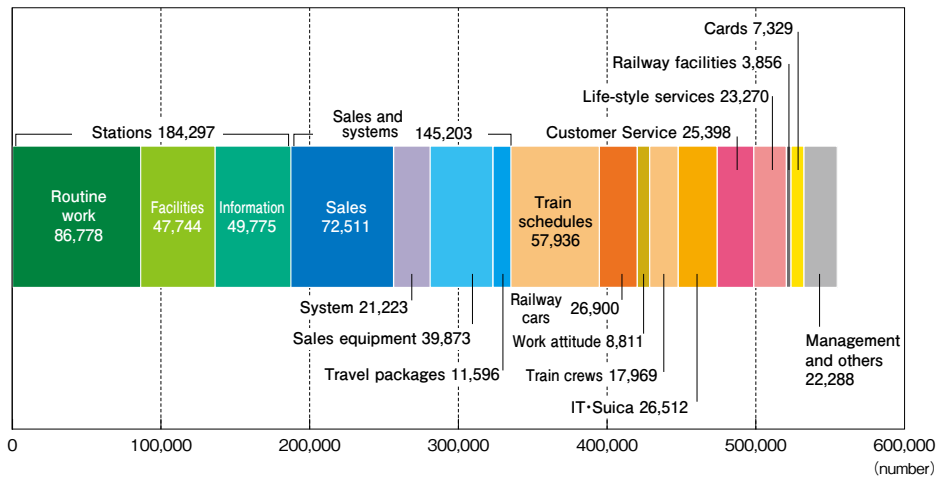
The core of improved quality of service in JR East has been our constant attention to customer comments, and we will continue to monitor customer desires and quickly introduce service quality reforms in line with their expectations. To constantly improve our services it is vital for us to listen carefully to customer comments, including their interest and complaints, and then promptly respond to their requests through service improvements.

JR East has various methods of collecting large numbers of customer comments on a daily basis, including those passed directly to front-line employees, those posted on the Internet, and those given over the telephone. All of these comments are quickly shared and analyzed on a companywide basis, and form the core of our improvements. We believe that each and every individual customer comment contributes to the core of improved customer satisfaction.

■ Trends in the number of customer comments by channel(FY 2002~)



■ Customer opinions (Total 549,769)



* The chart shows the number of comments on each subject. Some customers commented on more than one subject.

Two-way Communications

JR East considers it necessary not simply to await information from customers, but also to be active in ascertaining what they really need. We therefore strive to discover their potential opinions by making use of social media. The “JR East Official Facebook”, launched in May 2012, will provide information about our various campaigns and proposals.

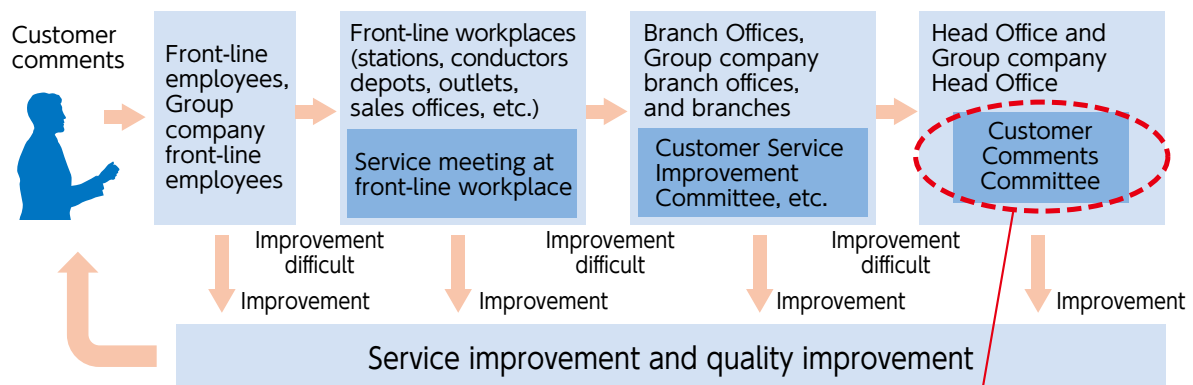
As the times and environment change, customers’ demands change constantly. To address such changing needs, we learn about customers’ demands from their comments and use this information to develop specific improvements. It is through such two-way communications with our customers that we endeavor to upgrade our service quality.

Prompt service quality improvements with customer comments at the core

Customer comments are considered at various levels within the company. Initially, a decision as to whether or not some action of improvement is necessary is made at the level that initially received the original customer comments. The action will reflect this decision. If action is difficult to take at that level, then the comments are passed on to higher levels, where potential improvements can be discussed.

At the very top level, we have also established the Customer Comments Committee, chaired by the president, which considers the possible implementation of improvement measures based on collected customer comments. Through this system, we are constantly striving for the attainment of improved customer services.

■ Systematic improvements based on customer comments



What is the Customer Comments Committee?

Chaired by the president, the committee discusses the necessity of improvements requested by customers and specific solution measures that will ultimately lead to speedy improvements.

SQ Network

Based on one of the three pillars of the Medium-term Vision for Service Quality Reforms, “Prompt improvements in the quality of our services that reflect customer comments, with the entire Group working as a single team,” our Company and group companies closely involved in transport service established the SQ (Service Quality) Network in October 2011. The SQ Network holds meetings of representatives of JR East and group companies at stations, branch offices and the head office, to share customers’ comments and devise solutions and improvements, through teamwork that goes beyond individual departments or group companies. In this way the JR East Group as a whole can dedicate itself to enhancing customers’ satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

We conduct customer satisfaction surveys via our JR East Customer Questionnaires to enable us to gain an understanding of how customers evaluate our services that we cannot get simply through customer feedback and to quantitatively check levels of customer satisfaction. The survey results are used to decide which issues JR East should most urgently address as well as to confirm the efficacy of previous measures.

Wayside monitors

We instituted a Wayside Monitors System beginning in FY2012 to gain a more specific understanding of the needs of our customers and of the way they use our services on each of our railway lines. This is in addition to customers' comments we receive daily and our JR East Customer Questionnaires. We have recruited the monitors from among our customers who live along our railway lines, and sought their views through questionnaires on the Internet and interviews to understand their needs from different perspectives, so that we can increase the attractiveness of living alongside or near our railway lines. (Surveyed sections: Yokohama, Saikyo and Keiyo lines in the fiscal year ended March 2012 and the Musashino Line in the fiscal year ended March 2013.)

■ Quality services that reassure customers

Creation of a safe environment

The provision of safe and reliable transport is the basis of service quality. To achieve this, JR East works constantly to increase service reliability and creating an environment in which passengers can travel free of worry.

Improvement in transport quality

JR East constantly works to prevent transport disruption, to improve our post-disruption response abilities, and to provide passengers with better information.

Prevention of transport disruptions

To increase service reliability, we are implementing physical measures designed to prevent transport disruptions, including railcars with dual systems*, track switches of next-generation design, equipment to reduce lightning strike damage to electric facilities, and windbreak fences.

* Railcars with dual systems: Railcars with increased reliability through duplication of major equipment.

Early resumption of operations after transport disruptions and prevention of disruption on connecting lines

For early resumption of operations, we maintain our preparedness for quick responses at all times, including drills to deal with fatal accidents and rescue passengers.

To prevent transport disruption impacts on other sections, we are adding facilities for turning trains back so that normal schedules can be maintained where there is no direct effect from the cause of the disruption.

Turnback Operation

When a transport disruption has occurred, we try to turn trains back before they enter the disrupted section, so that the impact of the disruption will not extend to other sections.

We will work also to reduce the impact of disruption on transport by readying necessary equipment, utilizing existing equipment and reviewing rules to enable turnbacks.

Learn lessons from transport disruptions and use the lessons at the worksite level

When a disruption has occurred, each worksite involved reflects on how it was dealt with, learns the lessons from this, and uses the knowledge to study and implement measures to prevent recurrences. These measures at different work sites are widely disseminated to other worksites so that individual employees may improve their knowledge.

Information Enhancement

We are developing methods so that if there is a transport disruption, we can provide our customers with prompt and accurate information at frequent intervals, while we work to restore normal service. We are taking steps to provide our customers with faster and better information about service when there are accidents resulting in casualties. The anticipated time at which the service should be resumed will be announced within ten minutes of the suspension having occurred, with subsequent updates depending on the situation. In the meantime, we will continue to install emergency information displays (as of the end of FY2013, such displays were installed in 151 stations) as tools for providing our customers with transport information. In addition, we provide information through varied media, such as through onboard LED and liquid crystal displays, the JR East home page on the Internet, and cell phone service. Our homepage now provides details of service suspensions of Express trains on conventional lines, as well as supplying other operation-related information. We are endeavoring to provide a wider range of information and extend the time in which delay certificates can be issued on major lines in the Tokyo Metropolitan area. These services will form part of the more comprehensive information system that we are developing with the aid of ICT (Information and Communication Technology).



Information display during transport disruptions



Information on the website

Problem prevention measures taken by the facilities section

We are working to lessen the impact of transport disruptions with priorities on a reduction in the actual number of incidents, rapid restoration of services when incidents do occur, and the provision of accurate customer information. In the facilities section in particular, in order to reduce the severity of problems and failures, we are strengthening or duplicating facilities to make them less likely to cause problems, established a restoration base, and increased our supply of replacement parts for essential equipment. These initiatives have resulted in a downward trend of transport disruptions in the Tokyo metropolitan area. We will continue to strive for a reduction in transport disruptions by analyzing past occurrences and by facility strengthening measures, including both tangible and intangible aspects.

Transport Services Improvements

We are continuously striving to enhance the convenience of both Shinkansen and conventional lines and to reduce rush-hour congestion through introduction of wider-bodied cars.

In September 2012, journey times were shortened by increasing the maximum speed of Yamagata Shinkansen Tsubasa trains to 275 km/h. In March 2013, Tohoku Shinkansen Hayabusa trains began operating at the country's highest speed of 320 km/h, while the Akita Shinkansen Super-Komachi, utilizing the new E6 Series, now travels at 300 km/h. Improvements made to our services on conventional lines have included the replacement of all Joban Line Limited express trains with the new E657 Series, increases to the frequency of operations and the number of trains stopping at Urawa on the Shonan-Shinjuku Line, increased train frequency during the day on the Musashino Line and in morning commuting hours on the Keiyo Line, and increasing the number of Yokohama Line trains that run through onto the Negishi Line in the Tokyo Mega Loop*. In the fiscal year ended March 2013 the average level of in-train congestion during morning commuting hours was 177%, 61 percentage points below the rate in the fiscal year ended March 1988. We will continue our efforts for reliable transport by reducing transport disruptions and by other means, to meet customer needs.

* **Tokyo Mega Loop**: the loop formed by the Musashino, Keiyo, Nambu and Yokohama lines in the Tokyo metropolitan area that have many connections with other JR lines and lines of other railway companies.

Personal greetings campaign

We are carrying out a campaign in which our employees personally greet those customers with disabilities, elderly customers, and others who require particular attention, to make sure that they can use our stations and other facilities safely and with a sense of security. The purpose of this campaign is to inspire society as a whole to watch out for and support such people with special needs. Our employees are instructed to greet and support, to the extent possible, when they spot customers who may need special care. This campaign is being expanded to include employees of other JR East group companies as well as our own employees.

Service Managers

JR East is allocating service managers who make rounds of stations and are in position to assist elderly customers and those not used to traveling. They provide relevant and timely information and guidance and other fine-tuned services, using tablet computer terminals, in times of emergency as well as during regular operations. (As of April 1, 2013, 183 service managers are allocated at 50 stations.)

Barrier-free Stations

JR East has been working with local governments and other entities to install elevators at stations in accordance with the Barrier-Free Transportation Law. As of the end of March 2013 we had completed the installation of elevators in 489 stations.



Chuo Line (Rapid Service) platform in Shinjuku Station



Jujo Station up-direction train platform

Barrier-free Railcars

To improve accessibility for persons with vision impairments, in the fiscal year ended March 2006 we installed Braille maps and stickers indicating the passenger's current location and the locations of various facilities on all Shinkansen trains. On conventional lines we also are placing Braille stickers identifying car numbers and door locations.

In December 2006, the new universal design E233 series railcars started being introduced sequentially to the Chuo Rapid, Keihin Tohoku, Keiyo, Tokaido and Saikyo Lines.

Spacious toilet rooms capable of accommodating advanced electric wheelchairs with handles were introduced on new Narita Express E259 series cars in October 2009; on the new high-speed Shinkansen E5 series "Hayabusa" in March, 2011; on the new limited-express E657 series trains on the Joban Line in March 2012; and on the new Akita Shinkansen E6 series railcars in March 2013.

Increased Escalator Safety

To prevent injuries to customers when they use escalators, we are carrying out safety enhancements including measures that will prevent sandals from getting caught, prevent falls during emergency stops, and prevent steps from descending when escalators stop.

JR East, together with other railway companies, is carrying out a campaign with posters and stickers to draw the attention of customers to the safe use of escalators.

A vigorous campaign beginning in July 2013 concentrated people's attention upon the safe use of escalators and upon caring those who, for various reasons, are able to stand only on the right side of the escalator steps, which are normally used by people who are walking while on the escalator. Office buildings, shopping centers and the JR East Group are collaborating in the production and use of these campaign posters.



"Escalator Safety" campaign

Baby Stroller Safety Measures

In order to guarantee the safety of passengers with baby strollers, we have been working to improve the detection ability of railcar doors if baby stroller frames get caught. We are also carrying out a joint campaign with other railway companies, baby stroller manufacturers, local governments, and nonprofit organizations (NPOs), under the slogan "Let's Protect Babies," that urges passengers with baby strollers to be extra careful, as well as asking other passengers to pay attention to potential accidents. In the campaign launched in March 2013, about 400 visitors participated in a "Safe Use of Baby Stroller Class in Teppaku" (the Railway Museum) and enjoyed learning how to use baby strollers safely on trains.



"Let's Protect Babies" campaign



Safe Use of Baby Strollers Class in Teppaku

Placement of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

AEDs are medical electroshock devices for the treatment of ventricular fibrillation caused by cardiac arrest. The devices have been widely used in the United States and Europe since around 2000. JR East has been placing AEDs near ticket gates at stations that have many customers, and, as of the end of May 2013, 354 stations have been equipped with one or more AEDs (500 AEDs in total). In addition, we started placing AEDs on Shinkansen trains in February 2009; on new Narita Express trains in October, 2009; on Nikko Kinugawa trains in June 2011; and on new limited express trains of series E657 on the Joban Line in March 2012. There were 190 AED units installed on trains as of March 31, 2013.

Total Smoking Ban in Tokyo Metropolitan Area Stations and Trains

For several years in line with customer requests and an increasing general public aversion to smoking, JR East has worked to eliminate passive smoke. In April and October 2009 we removed all smoking areas from platforms at major Tokyo metropolitan area stations, and went one step further by initiating a limited smoke-free station interior policy, which was widened in June 1, 2011, again in line with customer requests. All smoking was banned on JR East's Shinkansen and limited express trains from March 2007 and on some trains providing through services with other companies from June 2009. Also, with the revision of the timetable effective March 2012, smoking was banned in the dining cars on Cassiopeia and Hokutosei limited express trains, which are through services that operate on JR East and JR Hokkaido.



Total smoking ban covering most of the Tokyo metropolitan area



All-times smoking ban in limited express dining cars

Improvements in Station Toilets

In order to dispel the image of station toilets as dark, dirty, and malodorous and to enable customers to be able to use them comfortably, since its establishment JR East has been steadily upgrading its toilet facilities. Measures taken include a change to western-style toilets, improved ventilation and the use of larger floor tiles.

The upgrading also includes water-saving type toilets and automatic faucets in the washbasins, to reduce water consumption.

During this fiscal year ending March 2014, we will renovate the toilets in approximately 10 more stations, as a way to increase customer comfort and satisfaction.



Tokyo Station (Keiyo Line B-1F)

Installation and Usage of WiMAX Base Stations

Since February 2009, UQ Communications Inc. has been offering an Internet connection service using UQ WiMax. In conjunction with this service, we have been setting up WiMAX base stations that enable Internet connection in station concourses where connection had previously been difficult or impossible. As of June 30, 2013, easy connections are now available at 156 stations. Furthermore, taking full advantage of the system's broadband capabilities, WiMAX is now being used to provide transport disruption information to some station displays.

More Comfortable On-board Air Conditioning

JR East is working on improvements to railcar air conditioning (cooling and heating) to make railway travel more comfortable. On new railcars (E231, E233, and E5 series) fully-automatic air-conditioners are installed. On other cars, continuous efforts are being made to provide the most comfortable environments possible by having conductors carry out frequent temperature checks, thermostat changes and other adjustments, and by other actions appropriate for the different conditions on individual railway lines.

Women-only Cars

In order to enhance the safety of female passengers we introduced women-only cars on the Saikyo Line during late night operations (July 2001), and then extended their use to morning rush hours (April 2005). Currently women-only cars are also operating during morning rush hours on the Chuo Rapid Line (September 2005), the Joban Local Line (May 2006), the Sobu Local Line (November 2006), and the Keihin Tohoku and Negishi Lines (April 2010).

Measures against Female Molestation

In addition to adding women-only cars during certain hours, and with the aim of enabling female passengers to travel stress-free, we have been installing SOS buttons on major Tokyo metropolitan area lines that women can use to alert train crews if they are improperly touched or otherwise molested. Furthermore, in cooperation with police and other railway operators we are actively conducting a campaign to eliminate on-train molestation and have significantly increased security surveillance on trains and in stations. As a further step in the discouragement of female molestation, we have installed on-board security cameras in the leading cars on all Saikyo Line trains.

Improvement of onboard service in the new limited express trains, E657 series, on the Joban Line and crime prevention measures

As part of improvement of onboard service, we are providing up-to-date information via WiMAX. Inside the new E657 series limited express trains that started commercial operation in March 2012, we have installed LED displays in full color showing newscasts through WiMAX as well as destinations and other transport information. Customers can also avail themselves of Internet connections on these trains through WiMAX and WiFi.

As part of our crime prevention measures, in addition to Car No.1 of each of the trains on the Saikyo Line, surveillance cameras are installed in Series E259 and E657 limited express trains on the conventional lines and in the two-level green cars on the Tokaido, Tohoku, Takasaki and Joban lines, and in new railcars of E3 series in the 2000s and E5 and E6 series Shinkansen railcars.

Suicide Prevention Measures

JR East has constantly supported NPOs in their efforts to prevent suicides. For example, in March 2013, in conjunction with the government's "Suicide Prevention Enhancement Month" we carried out a campaign named "JR East ♥ Life Assisting Month" to aim at reducing the number of suicides by strengthening our efforts to provide life support. These measures included the provision of information regarding consultation services through posters and other media, the operation of Support Life Trains, and the introduction of telephone counseling in collaboration with the Federation of Inochi no Denwa Inc. We have conducted a "Personal Greeting" campaign, in which former JR East employees and consultants of Japanese Mental Health Services, a non-profit organization, jointly patrolled stations and talked to customers.

Creation of a Think and Act by Yourself Culture

Human resources development to enhance service quality

With the goal of achieving even more service improvements, we hold regular service quality training sessions and symposiums, and are working to create a workplace environment in which employees think and act by themselves.



Service quality symposium



Service quality training sessions

Hospitality

We have also encouraged our employees to qualify for Service Assistance certification, with the aim of instilling in them a spirit of hospitality. As of the end of March 2013, approximately 8,200 employees had received level two certification.

JR East's Life-style Business

JR East's Life-style Business

JR East operates a broad range of life-style businesses and provides services to support the everyday lives of our customers in their various lifestyles and life stages. These services include retail stores within station buildings, hotels, office buildings and fitness clubs that benefit from their locations near stations, advertising in stations and on trains, childcare support in areas adjoining railway lines, and housing.

■ Appeal to Overseas Visitors

Products that Appeal to Overseas Visitors

We now offer the “JR East Pass” which allows unlimited travel within the JR East service area, and the “JR KANTO Area Pass” which allows unlimited travel within the KANTO area. Other passes that make it easy to travel to and in Tokyo include the Suica & N’EX package and the Suica & Monorail package. In the summer of 2012 we offered a “Mt. Fuji Round Trip Ticket” to promote demand for trips to Mt. Fuji, and the “GALA Optional Ticket” which was used in addition to the “JR Kanto Area Pass” for the visitors to enjoy snow in Japan. With these highly convenient seasonal travel products, we propose different train trips in our service area.

Free Public Wireless LAN Service for Overseas Visitors

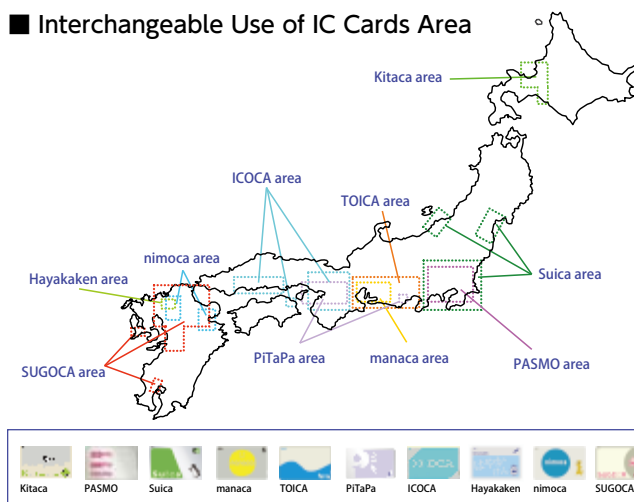
As free public wireless LAN services are currently installed only in major airports such as Narita and Haneda, overseas visitors can feel at a disadvantage. We have installed LAN services at 13 stations, mainly on the Yamanote Line, as well as in the JR East Travel Service Center, and these are used by many visitors from abroad. The service is operated in four languages: English, Chinese, Hangul and Japanese.

■ Suica Business

As an IC Ticket

Ten IC cards used in public transport throughout the country were made interchangeable in March 2013. This has made Suica interchangeable with “manaca” (Nagoya City Transportation Bureau) and “PiTaPa” (Surutto Kansai Council). Suica has also become usable in the service area of RYUTO (Niigata Kotsu Co., Ltd.) in March and in the service area of SAPICA (Sapporo City Transportation Bureau) in June 2013. The number of Suica cards issued reached approximately 43.55 million at the end of June 2013.

■ Interchangeable Use of IC Cards Area



A symbol of nationwide interchangeable use

As Electronic Money

The number of places where Suica can be used as electronic money has been increased, to include shops not inside but outside stations such as Family Mart, Lawson, Seven Eleven and other convenience stores, AEON, Ito Yokado and other supermarkets, Coca-Cola vending machines and taxi companies such as Daiwa Motor Transportation Co., Limited. On-line shopping sites such as Rakuten Market and Amazon have begun to offer Suica internet payment services.

As of the end of June 2013, Suica cards are usable in about 220,160 shops and the maximum number of uses per day reached approximately 3.62 million.

Responding to Diverse Needs

In December 2012, there were more than 3 million users of Mobile Suica, which combines the functions of a Suica card and a smartphone. As a result of our efforts to increase the membership shops and companies with which points can be exchanged, the membership of "Suica Point Club" reached around 1.69 million as of June 2013. "View Suica", combining the functions of Suica and View cards, was issued to meet the broader needs of our customers. It is also used as a new tool in our business to obtain information about card holders, which will be used to provide marketing data, such as consumption patterns by customer attribute.

JR East will continue to develop Suica as an easy-to-use and convenient IC card.



Mobile Suica



Suica Point



View Suica Card