

Abolishment of the Iwaizumi Line

Since announcing a policy on March 30, 2012 to abandon restoration of the Iwaizumi Line as a railway line, and instead secure transportation for the region with buses, East Japan Railway Company (JR East) had been explaining the particulars that led up to the abandonment in detail to residents of nearby communities.

While fostering mutual understanding with them, negotiations began after JR East on September 5, 2013 renewed a proposal for alternative transportation and other terms upon abolishing the line with Iwate Prefecture and the neighboring municipalities of Miyako City and Iwaizumi Town.

Those negotiations were duly concluded today for JR East to announce the following agreement that was reached with relevant parties on the alternative transportation and other terms for abolishing the Iwaizumi Line.

JR East will also promptly file a notice on abolishing the line with the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism from November 8, 2013 onward.

East Japan Railway Company
November 7, 2013

(Details of the Agreement)

[Alternative Transportation]

1. JR East shall bear the responsibility for operating alternative bus transportation in conjunction with abolishment of the JR Iwaizumi Line (from Moichi Station to Iwaizumi Station).
2. From the perspective of promoting local employment and close communities ties, a local bus company shall operate the alternative bus transportation.
3. Operating segment of the alternative bus transportation shall be based on the distance of the Iwaizumi Line as it stood (between Moichi Station and Iwaizumi Station).
4. Negotiations shall begin with relevant parties to base the service content of the alternative bus transportation (including the frequency, stops and fares, etc.) on the level of railway services as they stood.
 - Frequency of bus operations shall be based on the level of railway line services as they stood (at four round trips a day).
 - In principle, the buses shall stop at each of the existing stations along the Iwaizumi Line, with the service extended to include areas near the hamlet of Okawa, and the center of Iwaizumi Town (including Iwaizumi Senior High School, etc.).
 - The bus fare between Moichi Station and Iwaizumi Station shall be set at the same level as they stood with the railway line.
 - Connecting fares with the JR Yamada Line at Moichi Station shall be discontinued. However, as a remedial measure, the difference in student commuter passes shall be subsidized over the next three years.

[Community Contribution]

5. Some part of railway facilities and land of the abolished Iwaizumi Line shall be transferred free of charge to Iwate Prefecture and the local municipalities. This includes the Oshikado Tunnel (approx. 3 km) to Iwate Prefecture, the segment between Moichi Station and Iwate-Wainai Station (approx. 10 km) to Miyako City, and the segment between Asanai Station and Iwaizumi Station (approx. 7.4 km) to Iwaizumi Town. In addition, JR East shall also provide part of the funds for a road upgrade project that Iwate Prefecture has planned for the Route 340 ordinary national highway at Oshikado Pass.
6. JR East shall continue to cooperate with the community, contributing to the development of local industry and tourism in areas neighboring the Iwaizumi Line.

[Next Step]

7. JR East shall file a notice on abolishing the line, pursuant to the Railway Business Act, with the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.