

March 31, 2026
Japan Meteorological Agency

Guidelines on Application of the Meteorological Service Act to Foreign Corporations, Organizations, and Individuals Performing Forecasting Services

The Act Partially Amending the Meteorological Service Act and the Flood Prevention Act (Act No. 86 of 2025) clarifies regulations concerning forecasting services¹ performed by foreign corporations, organizations, and individuals.

In conjunction, the Japan Meteorological Agency's "Guidelines on Application of the Meteorological Service Act to Foreign Corporations, Organizations, and Individuals Performing Forecasting Services" address related considerations as specified below. The original Meteorological Service Act (MSA) was promulgated as Act No. 165 of 1952.

1. Application of the Meteorological Service Act to foreign corporations, organizations, and Individuals performing forecasting services

The MSA applies to foreign corporations, organizations, and individuals performing forecasting services in Japan, or performing such services from an overseas location for users in Japan.

Comprehensive assessment of the following criteria is used to determine whether services from overseas locations are intended for users in Japan:

(1) The services have particular characteristics as exemplified below.

- 1: Provision is made in Japanese.
- 2: Currencies accepted for service payment include Japanese yen.
- 3: Advertising relating to goods or services primarily offered for the Japanese market is included within the services.
- 4: Forecasts for particular locations are presented using regional and locational classifications commonly referenced in Japan.
- 5: Emergency warnings, warnings or advisories issued by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) are provided alongside the services.

(2) The provider promotes its forecasting services to users in Japan as exemplified below.

- 1: Publishing online, on television, in newspapers, in magazines or via other media in Japan, or distributing advertising materials such as flyers or pamphlets in Japan.
- 2: Causing forecasting functions to be pre-installed as standard on smartphones, tablets, PCs or other electronic devices distributed in Japan.
- 3: Providing smartphone apps through app stores targeted in Japan.

¹ A "forecast" is defined in the MSA as "the announcement of prediction of a phenomenon based on the results of observation." The term "forecasting services" refers to the ongoing provision of such, either on a regular or non-regular basis.

(This document is a provisional English translation. In the event of any inconsistency between the Japanese and English versions, the Japanese version shall prevail.)

2. Forecasting service licensing

- Foreign corporations, organizations, and individuals intending to perform forecasting services as described in 1 must apply for licensing (MSA Articles 17 and 17-2) as required under the MSA.
- For details of the application process and post-licensing procedures, see “Guide to Applications for Forecasting Service Licensing.”

3. Designation of a domestic representative or domestic agent

- Any foreign corporation, organization, or individual applying for forecasting service licensing must designate a domestic representative or domestic agent (referred to here as a “designated domestic representative”) and identify the individual to the JMA Director-General. If the designated domestic representative is replaced, the foreign corporation, organization, or individual must inform the JMA Director-General of the change.
- The designated domestic representative must, on behalf of the foreign corporation, organization, or individual, have the authority to receive (i) notifications regarding administrative dispositions to be imposed by the JMA Director-General under the MSA, and (ii) notifications from the JMA Director-General pursuant to the provisions of Article 53 of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the MSA.
- The designated domestic representative should serve as a contact point for various communications between JMA and the foreign corporation, organization, or individual in relation to the provisions of the MSA.
- In light of the above, the designated domestic representative must (i) reside in Japan, (ii) be able to interact in Japanese, and (iii) be able to maintain a framework for interaction with JMA.

4. Applicable MSA provisions

- In principle, the specific provisions of the MSA applicable to the foreign corporation, organization, or individual match those applicable to domestic corporations, organizations, or individuals performing forecasting services, except for designation of the designated domestic representative described in 3.
- Major applicable regulations include those listed below. For procedural details, see “Guide to Applications for Forecasting Service Licensing.”
 - License for forecasting services and application procedures (Articles 17, 17-2)
 - Standards for License (Article 18)
 - Approval for Change (Article 19)
 - Staffing and Services of Certified Weather Forecasters (Article 19-2)
 - Obligation of Explanation of a Person Obtained a License for Forecasting services Including Specified Forecasting Services within their scope (Article 19-3)
 - Transmission of Warning Matters (Article 20)
 - Order to Improve Services (Article 20-2)
 - For specific standards, see “Standards on Adverse Dispositions for Entities Holding a License for Forecasting Services.”
 - Revocation of license, etc. (Article 21)
 - For specific standards, see “Standards for Adverse Dispositions for Entities Holding a License for

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Forecasting services.”

- Suspension and Abolition of Forecasting services (Article 22)
- Conditions Attached to License (Article 40-2)
- Reports and Inspections (Article 41)
- Publication of Name of a Person That Has Committed an Act in Violation of a Law or Regulation (Article 42-2)

For standard details, see “Standards for Publication of Personal Names under Article 42-2 of the Meteorological Service Act.”