

# *Chuzai*sho as a "Window and Mirror" for Security and Governance

– Investigation using interviews regarding the function and role of community policing –

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Bailey (1975) maintains that the *koban*, the Japanese word for Japan's "police box" system, is one of the factors why Japan is considered one of the safest countries in the world. In recent years, this system has been adopted by foreign countries. A *chuzai*sho, or a live-in *koban* in rural areas, belongs to the community section of a police organization. From it, certain activities are performed, such as patrols, house-to-house census surveys, and initial action when accidents occur or when police presence is necessary. A *chuzai*sho is managed and lived in by a police officer, along with his family members, who are considered private citizens.

This study investigates why a *chuzai*sho is useful for the maintenance of the peace and order of local communities. For this study, the author performed a semi-structured interview with five police officers and their wives. The following findings were obtained: a police officer from a *chuzai*sho can prevent the onset of local problems because they are locally on the ground and see changes coming; and, a police officer can build relations with residents by engaging in local activities for community outreach (sometimes in capacities that seem to fall outside the realm of the regular duties of a police officer). The presence of a *chuzai*sho also serves as a guarantee of the community's safety. This paper portrays the use of a *chuzai*sho as a window through which we can see Japanese society and as a mirror that reflects the country's peace and order.