

# Fukushima: Power cut doomed fallout computer

Tuesday 3 May 2011, by [Japan Times](#) (Date first published: 3 May 2011).

The nation's system for predicting the volume of radioactive materials to be released into the environment failed amid the nuclear crisis at the Fukushima No. 1 power plant due to the power supply cut following the March 11 earthquake and tsunami, sources said Monday.

The Emergency Response Support System is designed to collect data about the state of a plant's nuclear reactors, such as pressures and temperatures, from remote locations and to analyze the suspected development of a nuclear accident to predict how much radioactive material will be released.

The malfunction of the ERSS, coupled with "insufficiencies" attributed to SPEEDI, the System for Prediction of Environmental Emergency Dose Information, which projects the dispersal of radioactive fallout based on ERSS forecasts, is likely to have delayed the evacuation of Fukushima residents. Japan sent SPEEDI data to the U.N. but withheld it from the public.

The failure of the '28 billion systems casts further doubt on Japan's disaster-prevention policy, which states the two systems are to be used to analyze and predict the amount and spread of radioactive fallout in the environment in a nuclear crisis.

The two systems cost a combined ¥28 billion to develop and maintain.

ERSS is managed by the Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization, under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. It had never been used since its development in 1987 because past accidents were less serious than what is required to activate its use.

The system would have been put to the test this time but proved useless because the twin disasters were larger than expected. It is still unable to collect any data on reactors No. 1 to No. 5.

**The Japan Times**

---

---

**P.S.**

\* The Japan Times, Kyodo, Tuesday, May 3, 2011  
<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110503a3.html>