
Special Topic – Establishment of the JTSB Mission, Principles and Duty Improvement Action Plan

The Japan Transport Safety Board (JTSB) was established in October 2008 under Article 3 of the National Government Organization Act. It is an independent professional investigation agency formed by the merger of the Aircraft and Railway Accidents Investigation Commission (ARAIC) and the Japan Marine Accident Inquiry Agency (JMAIA), which investigated marine accidents. The agency's purpose is to conduct scientific investigation into the causes of aviation, railway, and marine accidents or incidents from impartial and neutral standpoint so as to contribute to prevent the occurrence of accidents and mitigate the damage by them.

However, in September 2009, it came to light that a member of the ARAIC leaked information on the investigation of the train derailment accident on the West Japan Railway Company's Fukuchiyama line in 2005 and that undermined the public's confidence in our investigation. After verification of this regrettable event, the JTSB established a mission, principles and the Duty Improvement Action Plan in March 2012 to promote its reforms so that the JTSB can achieve truly needed investigation and greater social confidence by improving the issues identified through the verification.

1. Duty improvement review process

(1) In order to verify the reliability of the Final Report on the JR Fukuchiyama line accident which was publicized in June 2007, including whether the information leakage had any influence on the report, a verification meeting consisting of the victims, their families and experts (the Verification Members) was formed in November 2009. The verification was subsequently conducted over the next one and a half years.

The verification concluded that the Final Report was not influenced by the leakage, but the Verification Members pointed out other issues and challenges the JTSB faced, and compiled a proposal on the future of the JTSB (the Proposal). The Proposal pointed out key areas that require improvement, such as ensuring transparency in accident investigation, enhancing the provision of information to victims, and various other issues. It recommended that the JTSB address the issue of duty improvement by setting up a panel of external advisors to review and improve the Board's duties where necessary in future.

The Proposal on the future of the JTSB (excerpt)

10. JTSB Duty Improvement Policy

Taking the regrettable event as a lesson, the JTSB is in the process of reviewing the work processes. It should continue to proactively review its duties so as to achieve truly needed investigation and greater social confidence, exploiting the Board's great capabilities. To this end, the external advisors should be invited to set up a panel to identify specific organizational and duty improvements to address the key issues raised in the Proposal and others necessary.

(2) In July 2011, the Advisory Meeting for the duty improvement of the JTTSB was established. The members and the meetings held are as follows:

Members of the Advisory Meeting

Mr. Seiji Abe	Professor, Kansai University
Mr. Takemune Sato	Attorney at law, Secretary-General of the TASK (Railroad Safety Promotion Conference)
Mr. Shigeru Haga	Professor, Rikkyo University
Mr. Kunio Yanagida	Writer
Mr. Hiroyuki Yamato	Professor, Graduate School, the University of Tokyo

• First Meeting

- Date : July 27, 2011 (Wed)
Venue : JTTSB Board Room
Agenda : (i) Current initiatives
(ii) Scope of review on JTTSB duty improvement
(iii) Introduction to concrete efforts in investigation reports
(iv) Others



• Second Meeting

- Date : March 19, 2012 (Mon)
Venue : JTTSB Board Room
Agenda : (i) JTTSB Duty Improvement Action Plan (Draft)
(ii) Others



(3) In December 2011, a meeting on duty improvement was held among the advisors and the JTTSB to exchange opinions on various issues. A meeting was also held with the Verification Members of the JR Fukuchiyama Line accident report to hear their comments.

2. Mission and Principles

As part of the duty improvement process, the mission of the JTSB and its guiding principles were established. The mission and principles are displayed at the Tokyo Headquarters and eight regional offices nationwide to remind each and every staff member to bear this in mind while carrying out their daily work.

(1) JTSB Mission

We contribute to

- preventing the occurrence of accidents and
- mitigating the damage caused by them,

thus improving transport safety while raising public awareness, and thereby protecting the people's lives by

- accomplishing appropriate accident investigations which thoroughly unveil the causes of accidents and damages incidental to them, and
- urging the implementation of necessary policies and measures through the issuance of safety recommendations and opinions or provision of safety information.

(2) JTSB Principles

1. Conduct of appropriate accident investigations

We conduct scientific and objective accident investigations separated from apportioning blame and liability, while deeply exploring into the background of the accidents, including the organizational factors, and produce reports with speed. At the same time, we ensure that the reports are clear and easy to understand and we make efforts to deliver information for better understanding.

<Key efforts>

- To thoroughly probe into the background of accidents such as organizational issues and conduct accident investigations on a scientific and objective basis that is separate from apportioning blame and liability.
- To improve the investigation process and promptly publish reports so as to contribute to prevent the occurrence of accidents and mitigate the damage by them.
- To conduct accident investigations independently that is separate from apportioning blame and liability.
- To strive to compile reports that are easy to read and understand.

2. Timely and appropriate feedback

In order to contribute to the prevention of accidents and mitigation of the damage caused by them, we send messages timely and proactively in the forms of recommendations, opinions or factual information notices nationally and internationally. At the same time, we make efforts towards disclosing information in view of ensuring the

transparency of accident investigations.

<Key efforts>

- To send messages such as recommendations, opinions, and factual information nationally and internationally in a timely and proactive manner.
- To strive to disclose information to maintain transparency of investigation.

3. Consideration for victims

We think of the feelings of victims and their families, or the bereaved appropriately, and provide them with information regarding the accident investigations in a timely and appropriate manner, and respond to their voices sincerely as well.

<Key efforts>

- To provide information to victims and their families in a timely and appropriate manner.
- To respond to feedback from victims and their families with respect.

4. Strengthening the foundation of our organization

We take every opportunity to develop the skills of our staff, including their comprehensive understanding of investigation methods, and create an environment where we can exchange opinions freely and work as a team to invigorate our organization as a whole.

<Key efforts>

- To strive to improve individual capability, including a comprehensive understanding of investigation methods.
- To strive to create an environment where we can exchange opinions freely and work as a team to invigorate our organization as a whole.

3. Duty Improvement Action Plan

The Duty Improvement Action Plan comprising 31 specific items was established in line with the four principles as stated in the mission.

(1) Conduct of appropriate accident investigations

(Main items)

<p>Describing Chapter 4 “Conclusions (Probable causes)” in investigation reports</p>	<p>The conclusions of investigation reports shall clearly include critical safety items identified during the investigation in an easy-to-understand manner, including all risk factors that need to be improved, even if there is no or unclear causal relationship with the accidents involved.</p>	<p>To be implemented in investigation reports deliberated from April 2012 onwards</p>
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Addition of synopsis and flow charts	Investigation reports shall be easy to read and understand by adding a synopsis and flow charts.	Implemented in May 2012
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(Others)

- Development of accident investigation manuals for practical use, detailed procedure for getting relevant parties to participate in the investigations based on a convention (aviation), ways to acquire appropriate professional knowledge, and enhancement of training for capacity building.
- Schedule management for investigations, application of simplified methods for some accident investigations (aviation and railway).
- Smooth conduct of accident investigation (relationship between accident investigation and criminal investigation).
- Review the description method of statements, easy-to-understand description of occurrence type (aviation), insertion figures and photos in the text of the report, better expression and wording.

(2) Timely and appropriate feedback

(Main items)

Ways of information dissemination for the prevention of recurrence	Recommendations and opinions shall be issued to related agencies and parties in a timely and proactive manner so as to contribute to prevent the occurrence of accidents and mitigate the damage by them.	In progress
Regular information dissemination by the Chairman	In the monthly press conference conducted by the Chairman starting in August 2011, progress of investigations and safety information for accident prevention have been provided. Questionnaire surveys shall be done for further improvement of the conference.	Survey was done in February, 2012

(Others)

- Provision of information immediately after accidents causing public concern, improvement of our webpage with public release of media briefing material on each accident, and review and enhancement of newsletter and other information tools.
- Disclosure of basic data on accidents, and further improvement of the transparency of the Board's deliberations.

(3) Consideration for victims

(Main items)

Provision of information to victims	Information regarding the accident investigations shall be provided in a timely and appropriate manner, while feedback from victims shall be reported at the deliberation of the Board.	In progress
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(Others)

- Enhancement of training for capacity building.
- Appropriate actions for victims' opinions.

(4) Strengthening the foundation of our organization

(Main items)

Enhancement of training for capacity building	Training on human factor analysis and communication skills for interview shall be carried out to improve staff skills and investigation capabilities.	To be implemented
Strengthening the activities of the regional offices	Aiming to strengthen the activities of regional offices, training shall be conducted to improve the skills of staff members and the investigation process at regional offices. Analysis reports written at the regional offices shall be improved, and outreach activities shall be carried out more proactively.	To be implemented

(Others)

- Conducting simulation training assuming the occurrence of particularly serious accident.
- Establishment of the mission and principles of the JTSB, logo, and exchange of information across all modes.

4. Continuous duty improvement

The JTSB will diligently implement the Duty Improvement Action Plan and review the plan on a timely and appropriate basis, while action items shall be followed-up during the Advisory Meeting.

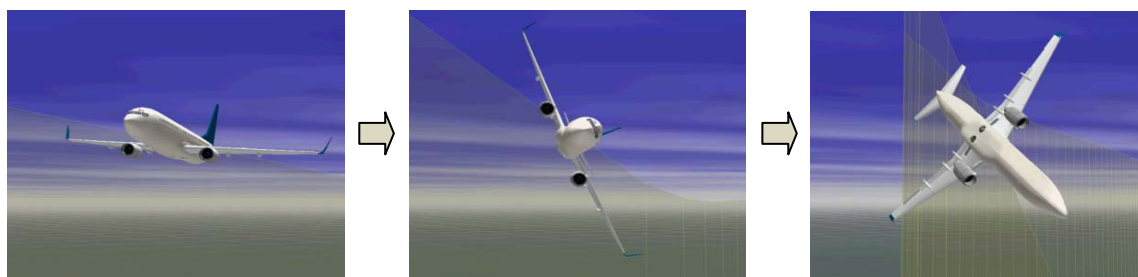
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Commencement of regular press conference by the Chairman

As one of the Duty Improvement Action Plan, a regular press conference by the Chairman was conducted from August 2011 with the aim of releasing information timely that is useful in preventing the occurrence of accidents. The press conference is held on the fourth Wednesday of every month (two days before the publication of investigation reports).

During the conference, the progress of accident investigations causing public concern is given in view of ensuring the transparency of the investigation process and safety information is provided to prevent the occurrence of accidents even before the completion of investigation. In addition, actions that have been taken in accordance with the recommendations and opinions issued by the Board are also introduced to the press.

In the September 2011 conference, the progress of investigation on the serious incident which occurred over south of Hamamatsu-City, Shizuoka Prefecture on September 6 was provided. The passenger aircraft experienced a steep descent and two crewmembers were injured in the incident. The situation of the incident, in which the aircraft entered an abnormal flight attitude and descended about 6,300 ft (1,900 m), was presented using the animation based on data from the DFDR (Digital Flight Data Recorder). This case was widely reported by media such as newspapers, television, and overseas magazines.



[The animation based on data from the DFDR]

Provided information at the conferences conducted in fiscal year 2011 are; progress of investigations:13, safety information provided to relevant authorities:4, actions taken in accordance with the recommendations:4, as well as matters concerning our duties improvement, the publication of annual report, and others.

In addition, we conducted a questionnaire survey on the press conference for the media. According to the result of the survey, comments such as "The prompt release of information soon after the occurrence enabled us to report on accidents before public concern has declined," and "The presentation manner which is visually easy to understand, such as computer graphics, can be evaluated" were received.

We will continue to provide information proactively to further improve air safety.



"Victims and their Families Liaison Office" was established in April 2012

Accident investigations have a variety of roles to play.

The most important one is to unveil the cause of the accident to prevent recurrence of the accidents. At the same time, when taking into consideration the wishes of the victims and the bereaved "to know how the accident occurred" and "that similar accidents will never occur again", the role of providing them with information becomes even more important.

Therefore, we believe that we are required to release the progress report of the investigation and factual information even before the completion of the investigation, and to carefully listen to the victims' perspective and integrate it into analyses relating mitigation of the damage. Moreover, we are also expected to make the reports more easily understandable and convincing to the public.

Last April, we gave an assignment to one official as a contact point to provide information to victims and this April the Victims and their Families Liaison Office as stipulated in the official directives was established and increased the number of staff (additional post) in conjunction with the movement of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

The Victims and their Families Liaison Office's role is to put into practice the principle "Consideration for victims" of the JTSB Principles. In light of the opinions of victims and experts, we strive to ensure mutual communications with victims by carefully listening to their perspective and concerns besides simply providing information.

Communications with victims are mainly through the Victims and their Families Liaison Office in the Tokyo Headquarters. In order to have even closer communications, staff were assigned to the eight regional offices in Hakodate, Sendai, Yokohama, Kobe, Hiroshima, Moji, Nagasaki, and Naha, so that more comprehensive support can be provided together with the Headquarters.

We, the Victims and their Families Liaison Office, shall make our best efforts to build trust with the victims as the contact points for them.

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The logo of the Japan Transport Safety Board

Upon the completion of the verification for the Final Report on the JR Fukuchiyama line accident in April 2011, we decided to create an appropriate logo for making a new start.

We invited our staff to offer their idea about a logo and a design by a female staff was adopted.

The logo adopted and its meaning by the designer are as follows.

Our logo and its meaning



A sphere expresses;

- determination to sustain fairness and independency,
- will to carry out investigation into the causes of accidents, and promote prevention of the occurrence of accidents and mitigation of the damage, and global activities to contribute to worldwide transport safety through international cooperation.

Three lines respectively express air, land and sea.

The color of the sphere is an intermediate color between blue and green, which expresses safety.