

Contributing for fostering a culture of transportation safety



It has been two years since I was appointed to the chairperson of the Japan Transport Safety Board (JTTSB). Last year, due to the restrictions imposed by impact of the COVID-19, we were faced with a situation that we were not able to carry out our investigation activities in the same way as before. Initially, there were some obstacles, such as difficulties in conducting direct interviews with the relevant people, but thanks to the steady efforts and ingenuity of the accident investigators and the secretariat that supports them, we have been able to continue our investigation activities close to normal. The number of accidents and serious incidents in the transportation field has not decreased much under the COVID-19 pandemic. Japanese transportation safety must not be damaged in such a situation. I deeply feel the great responsibility of JTTSB more fully than ever before which plays an important role in Japanese transportation safety from a fair and neutral standpoint to prevent aircraft, railway and marine accidents and incidents and also mitigate the damage caused by them.

From the initial investigation of the time of occurrence of an accident or an incident, accident investigators repeat analyses of the accident or the incident through the interview to the people concerned with the accident or the incident and summarizing the factual information. And they prepare the draft report, attend deliberation on the Board, hear opinions from the parties relevant to the cause and publish the final report. They are working energetically with a sense of responsibility in spite of their heavy burden. As the chairperson, I am proud to make it up accident or incident investigation reports that contribute to improving transport safety by studies and discussions detail with the all Board Members.

Society's expectations for the JTTSB, which was established in October 2008 as an organization to investigate accidents across three modes (Aircraft, Railway and Marine) are keeping high, and I believe that we need to step up our efforts further in 2021. Although the background and features of accidents or incidents or incidents differ for each of the three modes, the purpose of cause investigation and developing safety actions to prevent recurrence of the accidents or incidents are common. On the other hand, there are many common issues on human factors, structural and destructive analysis, digitalized operation management and monitoring systems, and automated and unmanned systems and so on. It is important to value the unique safety culture that has been cultivated in the three modes, and to mutually enhance each other acknowledging each advantage. I would like

to contribute to improve Japanese Transportation Safety by facilitation of learning other mode by each mode well.

In addition to the early release of accident investigation reports, interim reports and factual information, we analyze the accident investigation reports we have been accumulated to date and publish the "JTSA Digest" in order to help raise awareness of accident prevention. The eight regional offices publish regional analyses collections, mainly on fishing vessels and pleasure boats. This year, we will continue to widely disseminate the safety measures taken based on careful examination and analysis of past survey results and useful suggestions for responding to social situations, etc., and promote their use in workshops and seminars at businesses, government agencies, educational and research institutions, etc.

When a cargo ship grounded in the Republic of Mauritius in July last year, we dispatched a five-member investigation team to investigate this accident. Although this was the first case in terms of investigating an accident involving a non-Japan-flagged ship that occurred off the coast of another country, I believe that it is significant that we were able to achieve international cooperation based on the Convention. On the other hand, I believe that we need to continue to contribute to the development of rules related to safe transportation at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), international cooperation and exchange of opinions, including the International Transportation Safety Association (ITSA) Chairperson's Meeting and provide technical training for railway accident investigations to support for improving railway safety of Asian countries, even though it is difficult to do so in a situation where international traffic is restricted.

The JTSA will make every effort to contribute to fostering a culture of transportation safety in Japan by contributing to the prevention of accidents by steadily accumulating factual information, conduct more accurate analysis in the accident investigation, compiling a report at an early stage and providing information necessary for safety as needed. Your understanding, support and cooperation would be highly appreciated.

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