

Aiming for continuous contribution to fostering a culture of transportation safety



During the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on the accident investigation activities of our committee, as we have been required to take thorough measures to prevent the spread of infection, such as the avoidance of enclosed spaces, crowding, close proximity, and prevention of droplets, when conducting on-site investigations and interviews with those involved in accidents. However, 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 last year.

Although society and the economy have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of accidents and serious incidents in aircraft, railway and marine has not decreased drastically. Even under these circumstances, the transportation safety that has been cultivated in Japan must not be impaired. By investigating the causes of accidents and serious incidents, and recommending measures to prevent recurrence and to mitigate damage, we hope to steadily fulfill the important role of the Japan Transport Safety Board (JTSB), which is the key to protecting transportation safety, from a fair and neutral standpoint.

With this mission in mind, the JTSB has independent authority to manage personnel affairs as an external organ of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, and independently and continuously recruits not only accident investigators but also administrative and technical staff as needed. Three staff members were hired in FY 2021, and the same number of staff members are expected to be hired in FY 2022 and beyond. Even if staff members are not hired as accident investigators, we are working to develop human resources by preparing a career advancement route for them to become accident investigators by gaining various experiences in the secretariat. In addition, with the enforcement of the revised Civil Aeronautics Act and other acts enacted last year, the JTSB will newly conduct accident investigations involving unmanned aircraft such as drones, whose

use is expected to expand in the future. For this reason, two new aircraft accident investigators have been hired, and we are prepared to respond well to accident investigations in this new field.

By the way, some of the accidents and incidents that we handle are high-profile, and we have been steadily investigating the causes of these cases and making recommendations for the prevention of similar accidents and mitigation of damage. On the other hand, the importance of all accidents and incidents subject to investigation remains unchanged for the purpose of contributing to the prevention of accidents and mitigation of damage.

For example, in the aviation mode, when there are incidents involving small aeroplane operated by individuals, such as ultralight plane and gliders, or when passengers and cabin crew are injured due to aircraft turbulence, we believe that it is also important to contribute to the safety of the aviation sector by carefully investigating each accidents and serious incidents, clarifying the cause, and providing useful information to prevent similar accidents so that people can enjoy aviation leisure and air travel safely.

In the railway mode, focusing on fatal accidents at class 3 and class 4 level crossings without automatic barrier machine, the JTSB has set up a section on our website, entitled "To Prevent Level Crossing Accidents," where we provide information obtained through investigations and examples of efforts to abolish class 3 and class 4 level crossings and replace them with class 1 level crossings. There are still many fatal accidents at the approximately 3,200 class 3 and class 4 level crossings, and the JTSB will continue to investigate the causes and make recommendations for accident prevention based on appropriate investigations, as well as make efforts to disseminate information, including by enhancing the website.

In recent years, the marine mode has been using quantitative collision risk analysis and assessment methods based on the AIS (Automatic Identification System) records of the ships involved to determine the causes of collisions. We will also continue to actively utilize quantitative analysis from the perspective of enhancing more scientific research. In addition, the eight regional offices of the JTSB investigate and publish reports on hundreds of marine accidents and incidents every year. Accidents related to pleasure boats and other marine leisure activities

continue to occur, and we intend to continue our efforts to contribute to accident prevention by utilizing the results of the regional office's investigation.

The JTSB will contribute to the prevention of accidents and mitigation of damages by steadily accumulating facts on each case, conducting more scientific and objective analysis such as quantitative assessment, compiling a report at an early stage, and making recommendations as needed, as well as actively contributing to the fostering of a culture of transportation safety in Japan by providing information necessary for safety.

Your understanding, support and cooperation would be highly appreciated.

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