

Activities of JAPIA

The 13th Background and Aims of Establishing “Health and Safety Subcommittee” Report: Health and Safety Subcommittee

Subcommittee activities started this year, providing various information and measures to achieve "Zero Workplace Accidents" for member companies

Subcommittee activities started this year to provide various Information and measures to aim for "Zero Industrial Injuries" in member companies. JAPIA has newly established Health and Safety Subcommittee this fiscal year to disseminate information to all member companies with the aim of reducing industrial injuries to zero. In recent years, in addition to efforts to prevent industrial injuries, attention has also been focused on the diversified mental health and health measures of workers as one of the roles that companies should fulfill. Mr. Michiaki Tanabe (Senior Expert, Safety & Health Section, EHS Department, Sustainability Promotion Office, NOK CORPORATION), Chairperson of Subcommittee, and Mr. Chihiro Kouyama (Senior Advisor, Safety & Environment Department, CSR & Safety Division, KYB Corporation), a member of Survey and Research Working Group (WG), introduce their efforts in this session.

Themes List for Safety and Health Convention Presentations (since FY2010)		
Fiscal year	JAPIA Group A	JAPIA Group B
2022	Investigating the causes of past disasters and preventing future occurrences	Effective use of VR in safety education."
2021	Working environment management and improvement surveys in welding work - Consideration of law revisions related to welding fumes	Considerations on safety management for managers and supervisors: To watch safety in their own workplaces closely.
2020	Safety management of premises consignment/contracting, delivery and removal operations	Considerations on ensuring the safety of foreign workers as workplace companions in production activities
2019	Consideration of fall accident prevention	Considerations for reducing the incidence of heat stroke
2018	Safety activities utilizing disaster information	Workplace-based health and safety activities
2017	Prevention of fall injuries among older workers	Consideration of human error and investigation of preventive measures
2016	Consideration of measures to deter risk-taking	Safety Activities of Managers and Supervisors Recommendations for improving "unsafe behavior, lack of confirmation of conditions"
2015	Traffic accident prevention ~Deterring unsafe behavior and raising awareness of safe driving	Prevention of accidents due to handling of tools
2014	Consider hazard sensitivity	A Study of safety and health education for the prevention of industrial injuries
2013	What kind of health and safety staff are needed today?	Activities to reduce industrial injuries in non-routine work - Creation of safety management guidelines for non-routine work
2012	Developing people who can think and act on their own for safety Part II	Creating rules that can be followed - Results of the survey
2011	Developing people who can think and act on their own for safety	Creating rules that can be followed - Developing a rule-making model
2010	Case study for improving safety management through risk assessment - How to deal with risk	Creating rules that can be followed - Understanding the current situation and identifying issues

Engaging in measures against work-related accidents and activities to improve mental health beyond the boundaries of the company in the spirit of "no boundaries in health and safety"

Mr. Tanabe, Chairperson

Labor relations in the automobile industry have been handled by Automotive Industry Managers Federation (Jikei-ren), an organization of the automobile industry under Japan Employers Federation (Nikkeiren), and has been active in the industry as a member of automobile manufacturers, automobile parts suppliers, and auto body manufacturers. However,

when Nikkeiren merged with Keidanren in 2002, and Jikeiren merged with Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA), JAPIA established "Personnel and Labor Affairs Research Society" to receive parts manufacturers separated from the activities of JAPIA, the 26 companies that were members of the former Jikei-ren have continued their activities.

"Personnel and Labor Affairs Research Society" includes Labor Policy Subcommittee, International Human Resources Subcommittee, Health and Safety Subcommittee, Survey and Research WG, and Health and Mental Health Subcommittee, which have been conducting activities on individual themes. In FY2022, the activities of Labor Policy Subcommittee and International Human Resources Subcommittee were transferred to Human Resources and Labor- Management Relations Subcommittee at Headquarters, and the activities were continued as "Safety and Health Research Society" specializing in safety and health activities, however, since safety and health activities are important activities common to all JAPIA members, "Safety and Health Research Society" was dissolved in FY2022, and a new "Safety and Health Subcommittee" was established in FY2023 to develop activities for all member companies.

Health and Safety Subcommittee regularly holds plant tours and other events as part of its efforts to eradicate industrial injuries and protect the physical and mental health of employees at member companies, and actively provides opportunities to exchange opinions and share good practices. Also, under Subcommittee there are Survey and Research WG, which conducts surveys and research to resolve issues related to health and safety, and Health and Mental Health Subcommittee, which promotes networking and information exchange among industrial health staff (public health nurses and nurses) to improve the level of mental health activities.

The phrase "safety and health have no boundaries" has left a strong impression on me as I have participated in JAPIA's safety and health activities. There are many companies that compete with each other in their core business, and in some cases, it is difficult to share information, but all companies have the same attitude toward safety, even if they are rivals. I would like to provide a place where members can actively share information about safety and health without barriers.

Last year, Survey and Research WG conducted research on the theme of "Effective Use of VR in Safety Education" and shared effective examples of VR use at member companies and in different industries. The aim of using VR is to have the younger generation in particular visually experience workplace hazards and to prevent safety education from getting stuck in a rut. VR technology is in the process of growing, and functional improvements and cost reductions are progressing year by year. Since "promotion of DX in safety and health measures" is included in the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's 14th Industrial Accident Prevention Plan for the current fiscal year, the number of companies using VR is gradually increasing.

This is something I personally feel as well, recently, dangerous situations have been eliminated as much as possible in our daily lives (which is a very good thing), and on the other hand, there seem to be fewer situations where we can sharpen our sense of danger, such as

near-misses and "KY"(Kiken-Yochi : hazard prediction). Comparing it to driving a car, if recognizing situations where accidents are likely to occur and points to pay attention to leads to safe driving, it is important to understand in advance situations where accidents are likely to occur and sources of danger to pay attention to at work sites as well, in order to prevent work-related accidents.

Mr. Kouyama

Survey and Research WG decides on several themes each year and conducts research on safety and health issues. The results of the research are presented at the annual automobile industry safety and health convention (co-hosted by JAPIA and JAMA) held every fall, and are disseminated not only to all member companies but also to related and cooperating companies. It is also presented at the following year's National Industrial Safety and Health Convention, and research cases are deployed to many companies. This year, as one of our research themes, we are tackling the topic of spur-of-the-moment KY (Kiken-Yochi: hazard prediction). In ordinary production work, the sources of danger are clearly identified through a series of repetitive tasks, and the frequency of workplace accidents is low. However, in non-routine tasks such as returning to work due to machine trouble, repairs, and maintenance, the sources of danger are not fully identified, and the possibility of workplace accidents is high. In such work, accidents occur as a result of attempts to proceed quickly based on one's own rule of thumb, simplified work, spontaneous actions that result in a quick hand, and failure to recognize sources of danger that would normally be understood. To eliminate such cases, it is important to be aware of hazards on a daily basis. We study the root causes and countermeasures while sharing information about failures and good practices at other companies.

The revision of the law on voluntary control of chemical substances has been a major topic of discussion this fiscal year. One of JAPIA's major roles is to compile member companies' knowledge on how to respond to laws and regulations and make recommendations for future actions. In FY2021, we worked on the theme of "Consideration of Legal Revisions in Welding Fumes." This was a revision of the law to protect workers from fumes generated during welding. We worked on how to properly understand the content of the law and how to respond to it, including points for improving workplaces, wearing protective equipment, and requiring fit tests to confirm that dust masks are properly fitted. At that time, it was not clear what the law was and what exactly should be done, and it was not clear what the appropriate measures were, as there were differences in understanding and interpretation among the companies. The WG members surveyed the working environment and response status of each company, compiled recommendations for future measures, and presented them at the Automobile Industry Safety and Health Convention as well as at the National Industrial Safety and Health Convention.

Since each manufacturing process is different among the member companies, it is an opportunity to gain knowledge that one's own company does not have. We also conduct plant tours to different industries other than automobile manufacturing (e.g., railroads, chemical

manufacturers, electronics manufacturers, etc.), which provides a valuable opportunity to learn about the initiatives of other companies.

On the subject of welding fumes, I visited a welding equipment manufacturer and was particularly impressed by their approach to legal revisions from a different perspective. In addition, through visits to different industries, we learned that each company has a different view of product life, and that manufacturing from a life cycle perspective was interesting and instructive.

Mr. Tanabe, Chairperson

Employee mental health care is also becoming increasingly important. At Health and Mental Health Subcommittee, experts provide guidance on preventive measures to protect the mental health of employees. In mental health care, "self-check" by employees themselves and "line care" by managers and supervisors are important before seeing a specialist. In order to recognize mental health problems as soon as possible, it is important for employees to be aware of their own behavior on a daily basis and to carefully observe the behavior of employees around them. We provide opportunities for the occupational health staff of each company to support this and enhance their skills as professionals.

Mr. Kouyama

I believe that one of the challenges for the future is to take into account the diversification of the workforce (age, gender, nationality, etc.). I feel that there is a difference in awareness of danger between younger workers and senior workers. If they cannot imagine "what will happen if I put my hand out here," it could lead to an industrial accident. Even if seniors are aware of the danger, they may suffer unexpected accidents such as falls due to omitted behaviors such as "this much is OK" or physical decline. In addition, the number of foreign employees has been increasing recently, and we feel it is difficult to share the values of Japanese-style manufacturing and safety awareness. We believe that the need to respond to the diversification of employees will increase in the future.

Mr. Tanabe, Chairperson

In the future, as automation makes machines intrinsically safe, we can expect to see a reduction in risks at work sites. However, it is human beings who operate the machines, and it is essential to manage on-site safety and health/mental health in consideration of diversification. It is the mission of the manufacturing industry to create an environment in which employees can work with peace of mind in terms of both of these aspects. "Zero industrial injury" is the eternal theme of our member companies. Through Subcommittee, we will continue to contribute to improving the level of safety and health management at each company.