

National Meeting on Standardization and Quality Control 2007

The National Meeting on Standardization and Quality Control is an annual event hosted by JSA as a forum for various organizations as well as corporate executives, managers, and engineers from throughout Japan engaged in the work of promoting standardization and quality control, addressing diverse issues brought to light through an increasing awareness of the business environment around us and direction for the future. In addition to serving as a learning experience through lectures, presentations, and other activities, the Meeting furnishes a place where attendees may gain the motivation and knowledge needed for personal progress and the advancement of the organizations to which they belong.

For this year, the event was held on two days, October 15 and 16, at the Toranomon Pastoral Hotel under the title "National Meeting on Standardization and Quality Control 2007."

With the main theme "Challenges to Safety and Security, a Better Environment, and Higher Quality" serving as the point of focus, sessions were held according to the sub-themes of safety and security, the environment, quality (i.e., products through craftsmanship), human resources (i.e., the development of human resources through the conveyance of skills), and standards.



Opening greetings from the JSA President

The first day of the Meeting, October 15, began with opening greetings from Mr. Hiroshi Shima, President of JSA, followed by talks by special guest speakers Mr. Masao Horiba, Supreme Counsel of Horiba, Ltd., and Mr. Tamotsu Nomakuchi, Chairman of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, sharing with participants through highly informative talks about their approaches to the concept of human resources

development and international standardization as part of their organizations' managerial strategies.



The guest speaker and the audience

Day 2 of the Meeting, October 16, saw as many as 20 individual sessions consisting of talks by specialists from diverse fields in line with the foregoing sub-themes. Of particular interest in the talks were environmental issues, now of growing concern throughout society. The topics included case studies of businesses addressing these issues, environmental regulations as implemented (with reference primarily to Europe), and criteria and methods of evaluation concerning safety and security. Also included among the talks were discussions of approaches and improvements to R&D processes and how to ensure reliability in R&D work with reference to case studies. Quality improvements were discussed in this regard, as well as suggestions on how to pass on craftsmanship and skill in connection with the development of human resources.

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Participants also listened to views on how international standards ought to be formulated to be useful as tools for the implementation of business tactics indispensable to the reinforcement of market competitiveness. Participants also heard reports on trends in various international standards and the new JIS Mark certification.

The Meeting was attended by approximately 850 participants in total over October 15 and 16, marking a milestone in ongoing efforts to address the various issues now being defined in Japan's current business environment and to consider its future direction. In this sense, the Meeting may well be said to have attained its objective, serving as a site where attendees could gain the motivation and knowledge needed for organizational improvement. Specific comments to this

effect are now being heard from the participants on the usefulness of the many case studies, on their desire to adopt the new ideas in their own companies, and on their now-deeper understanding of the topics through question-and-answer sessions with the guest speakers, to cite a few.

JSA is hosting, in addition to the two-day Meeting, what is referred to as the "Local Meeting on Standardization" in eight districts nationwide: Hokkaido, Tohoku, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa.

Following this year's successful Meeting, JSA will soon commit itself to the preparation of a "National Meeting on Standardization and Quality Control 2008" for the next year, so that the event may enjoy still greater participation.

JSA Standardization Contribution Award 2007

During a commendation ceremony preceding the National Meeting on Standardization and Quality Control 2007 held on October 15, 2007, JSA presented its Standardization Contribution Award 2007 to five individuals and two organizations.

The annual Award is given to (1) individuals who have made distinct contributions to the development of JIS/international standards or to the execution of associated activities while demonstrating promise of continued contribution to standardization efforts, and to (2) organizations that have made outstanding contributions in supporting standardization efforts and other pertinent activities.

The following individuals and organizations were

selected for the year 2007 and accordingly recognized with the Award:

- * *Mr. Kiyoshi Ogawa, Information Technology Research Office, Electronics and Information Department, Nagoya Municipal Industrial Research Institute*
- * *Mr. Yoichi Kato, Lecturer, Tokyo University of Science*
- * *Mr. Tomokazu Takada, Department of Language Research, National Institute for Japanese Language (Field 1)*
- * *Mr. Kazuhiko Noguchi, Research Executive, Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc.*
- * *Mr. Yoshinari Horimoto, NEC Design, Ltd.*
- * *Okinawa JIS Association*
- * *Food and Agricultural Materials Inspection Center*

Standardization Lectures on Demand

Among the various services provided by JSA is the Standardization Lectures on Demand program, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and offered nationwide to schools throughout Japan, including elementary schools, junior high and high schools, and technical colleges. A typical program session would cite an assortment of standards that now play roles in our daily lives - for example, standards on dry batteries or milk cartons - thereby inspiring students to learn how standards add comfort and convenience to our lives.

During 2007, JSA accommodated requests from five of the 13 total schools applying from around the country. Between July and November, a team of sea-

soned and initiate staff members from JSA Headquarters and its local offices paid a round of calls to lead classes at the selected schools. The program has drawn favorable response. Feedback given in response to post-lecture surveys by students and school teachers alike indicates how successfully the program contributes to building awareness of the role played by standards in our lives.

Based on high expectations for the nation's youth, JSA pursues its activities to help instill in students a deeper understanding of the importance and role of standards in our lives, and broaden student interest in standardization activities.

Consumer Participation in Standardization Workshop Seminar

The seminar working group set up by METI/JSA for the promotion of consumer participation in standardization efforts is engaged in the planning and hosting of seminars intended for consumers. Following is a report on the seminar offered in July and August of 2007.

1. Introduction

The ongoing series of standardization workshop seminars for consumer participation was brought into being as a result of training sessions conducted under the theme of consumer participation in standardization efforts held during the ISO/COPOLCO (Committee on Consumer Policy) Plenary Meeting in Toronto, Canada in 2005. An ad-hoc group was organized as a subordinate body of Japan's COPOLCO Mirror Committee in 2005 and later transformed into an independent working group in 2006 as a result of its accomplishments. The current fiscal year marks the group's second year since inception.

In 2006, the seminar working group held a "Consumer Participation in Standardization Introductory Workshop Seminar" in three cities (Osaka, Nagoya, and Tokyo), attended by a total of 90 participants, in collaboration with the consumer organizations of these cities. The seminar was followed this year by the "Advanced Workshop Seminar: See and Handle the Product to Learn! Guide to Interpreting and Developing JIS Standards" as the next step following the previous year's introductory seminar. The advanced seminar included practical studies on how to interpret and prepare JIS standards and was offered in the two cities of Tokyo and Osaka with 31 and 27 participants, respectively, taking part.

2. Particulars of the Seminar Content

[Morning Session]

The seminar consisted of lectures and group discussions formulated under the general themes of acquiring a basic knowledge on the development of standards and learning how to interpret standards, both from the point of view of consumers. While some of the content may have been challenging for attendees as general consumers because of the technical knowledge and orientation needed in taking part in JIS drafting committees, lively exchanges of views, questions, and answers were noted throughout.

[Afternoon Session]

In Exercise 1, the participants handled and operated actual products (vacuum cleaners) and discussed in groups required standards from the point of view of consumers.

In Exercise 2, the participants read the actual standard for vacuum cleaners (JIS C 9108) and compared them with the standards they put forth during Exercise 1, expressing such frank views as "the JIS standards are hard to read!" In the course of the exercises, specialists from manufacturers of vacuum cleaners joined individual groups to respond to questions from participants.

The day ended with a session in which the results of Exercises 1 and 2 were shared through presentations by individual groups that in turn led to the promotion of exchanges of information and opinions by all participants.



Participants handle a vacuum cleaner

3. Impressions Expressed by the Participants

The responses given in the post-seminar survey noted a marked willingness of respondents to continue to participate in standardization efforts as consumers, and reflected an overall sense that the seminar met the expectations of its participants.

The format in which the participants think about standards while handling actual products and listening to specialist discussions (possibly the first time such a format has been employed anywhere) also drew favorable comments in the survey, to the effect that comprehension was facilitated through contact with specific products and standards as well as through discussions, pointing to the accomplishment of the seminar's objective in deepening understanding and interest in the development of standards on the part of its participants.

Cultivating a New Generation of Human Resources for International Standardization Activities

The International Standardization Comprehensive Strategy released in December 2006 by the Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters (established under the Japanese government's Cabinet Office) addresses the importance of cultivating world-class standardization specialists as one of its principal tactical objectives. In response to a FY2007 commission from METI, the International Standardization Activities Support Center of JSA is currently formulating programs and plans for hosting workshop aimed at training individuals involved in the development of international standards. These programs are characterized as follows:

1. International Standards Development Workshop

This workshop is intended to develop individuals with competence in developing international standards. The target individuals will include those involved in the drafting of international standards as part of Japan's ISO/IEC-related activities. The program will consist of a two-day event scheduled for December 3 and 4, 2007. The first day will be devoted to training on detailed procedures for the development of standards as addressed in Part 1 of the ISO/IEC Directives, while the second day will be devoted to instructions on the applicable formats and preparatory methods of standards as discussed in Part 2 of the Directives. In addition to discussions on how the development of international standards may differ from that of national standards and consideration of ISO and IEC model documentation, the program is expected to include lectures based on case studies as well as sessions on how to prepare "New Work Item Proposals" and to prepare and review "Commenting Templates".

2. International Standardization Leadership Workshop

Formulated to foster individuals highly competent in the arena of international conferences, this workshop imparts a body of knowledge conducive to the improvement of abilities relating to general management as well as management of meeting proceedings and adoption of comments. The target individuals here will consist of those likely to be active in such roles as Japanese representatives at ISO/IEC meetings, as chairperson of techni-

cal committees or subcommittees (TC/SC), secretaries, conveners, project leaders, or experts. The program will last for three days from January 22 through 24, 2008. Day 1 will consist of lectures on the use of Part 1 of the ISO/IEC Directives and on topics of importance that relate to the development of standards, as well as lectures by individuals with extensive experience as a chairperson of TC/SC, secretary, convener, project leader, or expert. On Days 2 and 3, the participants will be divided into two groups for further lectures by individuals with standardization experience and for trial international meetings to be conducted in role-playing format, to be attended by Mr. Kevin Knight, convener of the WG on Risk Management. A great deal of attention is being paid to the preparation of the role-playing sessions to offer topics of varying interest so that not only those involved in risk management related activities but also other participants may take part, leading the organizing office to expect particularly substantial results from the sessions.



ISO TC Server Workshop

The foregoing workshops are also scheduled for the next fiscal year, and care will be taken to provide enhanced content by improving on this year's results. Concurrently with the hosting of these workshops, the Center is initiating a variety of training programs, for example, an "Introduction to International Standardization" and an "ISO TC Server Workshop" (for training on the use of ISO servers), with a view to providing participants with a solid understanding of ISO/IEC-related activities and the standardization policies of the Japanese government.

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