

## On the Fifth Anniversary of the JTSTB



This October marks the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Japan Transport Safety Board (JTSTB) since it was inaugurated through the merger and reorganization of the Aircraft and Railway Accidents Investigation Commission and the cause finding part of the Japan Marine Accident Inquiry Agency on October 1, 2008.

Just after the establishment of the JTSTB, the overall number of investigations substantially increased because marine accidents and incidents were included in its field. Therefore, we had to devise ideas to conduct investigations and deliberations efficiently. However, while maintaining our position as a specialized accident investigation agency, we endeavored to thoroughly clarify the causes of aircraft, railway and marine accidents and incidents and to make and publish investigation reports as quickly as possible. Based on the results of the investigations, we also made recommendations or stated opinions, as the occasion demanded, for administrative organizations and the parties relevant to the cause of the accidents and incidents, thus calling for efforts to prevent a recurrence of similar accidents and incidents in the future.

In carrying out our day-to-day investigation activities, we made efforts to enhance the knowledge and expertise necessary for accident investigations while exchanging views with foreign accident investigation organizations in order to improve our accident investigators' knowledge while keeping in step with the continuous development of new technologies and at the same time, actively taking part in seminars and other meetings involving experts.

In these circumstances, the alleged disclosure of information in the course of the investigation of the Train Derailment Accident between Tsukaguchi and Amagasaki Stations on the Fukuchiyama Line of the West Japan Railway Company came to light in 2009. Consequently, public confidence in the investigation report and our investigations was undermined.

After one and a half years of verification efforts by victims of the accident and their families, bereaved families and experts, it was confirmed that the information leakage had no influence on the investigation report. However, in order to deal with the problems revealed in the verification process, we launched the Advisory Meeting for Duty Improvement in July 2011 and, in line with recommendations from these experts, we also came up with the Duty Improvement Action Plan in March 2012 which specified the missions we must pursue as an organization and four action principles. In this way, we endeavored to improve our duties by combining all of our resources. In March 2013, we reviewed the contents of the Action Plan in light of the progress of efforts made under the initiative. At present, we are making further efforts to improve our activities.

In order to release information in an appropriate and timely manner, we established a regular press conference featuring the chairman starting in August 2011. Through this press conference, we provide a broad range of information mainly about the progress of accident and incident investigations, and the achievements of our duty improvement efforts. From the point of view of better dealing with the voices of accident victims and other related parties, we established the Victims and their Families Liaison Office in April 2012 in order to ensure effective two-way communication by providing victims and their families with information mainly about accident investigations whenever necessary.

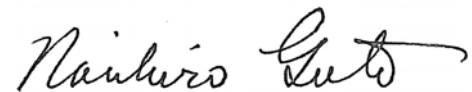
We have also made efforts to issue more detailed information about our investigation activities to help prevent the recurrence of accidents and incidents. For example, we started providing JTSB Digests and launched a web-based marine accident map on which users can easily search for investigation reports. We are also striving to make our website easier to read and use.

Now, after the first five years of the JTSB, the range of accidents and incidents we are required to investigate is expanding and at the same time, we have noted an increase in requests to and expectations of the JTSB. In response to these expectations, while keeping in mind the social responsibilities we shall fulfill from now on, we intend to strengthen our activities even more actively for the purpose of enhancing transport safety.

The JTSB Annual Report 2013 is designed to introduce our activities as broadly as possible and it includes summaries of our accident and incident investigation reports published in 2012 on each of the transport modes of aircraft, railway and marine, as well as summaries of accidents and incidents which occurred in 2012, with related statistics and materials and columns by our investigators.

We hope that this Annual Report will enable you, the readers, to have a better understanding of what the JTSB is and that it will also contribute to improving the safety of international transport.

Your understanding of, and cooperation with, our activities is deeply appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Norihiro Goto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Norihiro Goto  
Chairman  
July 2013