

## **JNES Creates New Seismic Safety Division**

**On October 10, the Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization (JNES) established the Seismic Safety Division to strengthen its capacity on seismic safety at nuclear power plants (NPPs).**

The new division was created to integrate the power of experts and specialists – formerly spread among multiple divisions – in the areas of quake resistance and structures. The new division will exercise comprehensive and centralized control over all matters related to seismic safety, and also contribute to strengthening the organization. It will make concerted efforts together with the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) to improve reliability in seismic safety.

Its three main activities are as follows: (1) carrying out analytical evaluations related to seismic back checks, various tests and research, (2) gathering, developing and providing data related to seismic safety, and (3) cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in issuing international seismic safety standards.

The Seismic Safety Division consists of six groups: (1) planning, (2) earthquake and tsunami evaluation, (3) building and civil structure evaluation, (4) equipment and system evaluation, (5) aging and stress evaluation, and (6) seismic test and information. Initially, the division consists of 46 staff members, meaning that about 10% of all JNES employees are dedicated to seismic safety-related activities.

At present, in the wake of damage to the Kashiwazaki Kariwa Nuclear Power Station caused by the Niigata-Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake, NPPs and other nuclear related facilities are undergoing back checks in accordance with Japan's Examination Guide for the Seismic Design of Nuclear Power Reactor Facilities. The demand for evaluations and confirmations of seismic safety and other related matters is expected to increase substantially by 2008. Interest in seismic safety is also increasing in other countries, and JNES hopes to play the role of an international center in the seismic safety field.

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