

JAIF and Others to Sponsor International Aseismicity Symposium in February

On December 3, the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum (JAIF), the Japan Nuclear Technology Institute (JANTI), and the Central Research Institute of the Electric Power Industry (CRIEPI) announced that they would jointly sponsor an international symposium in February 2008 in Kashiwazaki City (Niigata Prefecture). The symposium will deal with the subject of the aseismicity and reliability of nuclear power plants (NPPs), in the wake of the extensive damage sustained by the Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS of the Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) last July in the Niigata-Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake.

Currently, studies, analyses and evaluations are being made of the impact of the earthquake on the NPS. Japan's nuclear industry decided to hold the symposium so as to bring together Japanese and foreign experts in the field, as well as ordinary citizens, in a single venue, as part of its efforts to (1) collect technical knowledge and information about the maintenance, management and operational management of facilities so as to effect improvements in the aseismicity and reliability of NPPs, and (2) provide information and explanations to residents in the area, as well as to the Japanese public as a whole, in a way that contributes to greater understanding.

The symposium will be held over a two-day period -- February 26 and 27, 2008 -- in Kashiwazaki City. Simultaneous interpretation will be available in both English and Japanese. No admission fee will be charged, but those who want to participate will have to register in advance. The maximum number of participants is 400.

Though the program of the symposium is still tentative, most of the speeches have been set already. The keynote address will be delivered in the morning of the 26th, with Diet member Tokio Kanoh slated to speak on the topic of earthquakes and NPPs. That will be followed by an address by a representative from the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) on the safe operational management of NPPs, and a special lecture by TEPCO Vice President Ichiro Takekuro, who will report on the effects of the earthquake and the state of the response taken afterward.

In the afternoon of the 26th, Shojiro Matsuura, adviser to Japan's Nuclear Safety Research Association (NSRA), will preside over a session including reports by the following organizations: (1) the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) on its methods of evaluating structural strength vis-à-vis earthquakes, (2) TEPCO on the results of its inspections and analyses of the main equipment at the Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS, (3) JANTI on the progress of deliberations by its reactor soundness evaluation committee concerning major nuclear equipment at the same NPS after the July earthquake, and (4) the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) of the United States, and its evaluation of reactor soundness.

On the second day of the symposium, February 27, two sessions will be held, one on the effects of ground deformation and measures to be taken, and the other on fire and disaster protection. JANTI President Michio Ishikawa will preside over the sessions, which will feature speeches, panel discussions, and questions from the audience.

For information, please contact JAIF's Department of International Cooperation & Industrial Infrastructure Development, at +81 3-6812-7107 (or call 03-6812-7107 from within Japan).

Editor: Noriyuki Ishii, JAIF