

## Our Aim: Ultimate Safety

Public interest in railway safety has never been so high in Japan as major incidents grip the industry. In October 2004, a Joetsu Shinkansen train was derailed by the Niigata-Chuetsu Earthquake, and six months later in April 2005, another train derailment occurred, this time on the JR West Fukuchiyama Line. Preventing the loss of life and preventing the loss of customer and public confidence are the highest priorities of JR East management, and also constitute a large part of our responsibility to society.

The train derailment on the Joetsu Shinkansen was the first ever derailment of a Shinkansen train in operation, and as the main party involved, JR East is investigating the mechanisms behind the derailment. At the same time, we are working on seismic upgrades such as on pillars supporting elevated railway tracks as well as enhancing early detection systems for earthquakes.

We are learning from other companies' mishaps. We do not see the Fukuchiyama Line derailment simply as someone else's problem, and are taking the matter very seriously – this was an accident that could also happen to us. We await the findings of the Aircraft and Railway Accidents Investigation Commission as to the cause of the accident. Meanwhile, as it has been suggested that the train in question entered a curve at a speed far exceeding the speed limit, JR East has decided to expand its program of installing ATS-P and ATS-Ps equipment to prevent speeding at curves, points and crossings, and terminals, which was underway as a measure to prevent train collisions. In the future, when the cause of the accident is clear, we will take any further measures necessary.

At the same time, safety requires uncompromising commitment of employees to work in strict compliance with the rules. ATS-P and ATS-Ps devices are mere backups for human

fallibility. Railway safety is ensured by the interaction of *humans* (employees), *equipment*, and *rules*. It is important to routinely confirm that this interaction is being properly respected and improved upon, and to ensure that each person properly understands the safety framework and is performing the basic procedures of the job appropriately.

JR East has formulated and implemented four five-year Safety Plans since the company was formed in April 1987. During the 18 years before fiscal 2004, besides investing about 1.6 trillion yen in safety measures, we have also run the organization, revised regulations and rules, investigated accidents, and set a corporate environment that supports safety awareness. As a result of our efforts to make a safe railway system, safety measures have steadily improved – to the point that railway accidents have dropped to about one-third the level of when JR East was established in 1987.

We are taking steps to further improve our safety record, with the launch in fiscal 2004 of *Safety Plan 2008*, our fourth such plan, which has the target of "zero customer and employee fatalities and injuries" (including employees of Group companies). We are working to improve safety from many related perspectives, including ATS-P devices and safety equipment at railway crossings and station platforms; prevention of major accidents by upgrading equipment to deal with large earthquakes; efforts to ensure smooth operations based on the fact that accidents are more prone to happen during train delays; and safety initiatives for management and for each employee.

Safety is the first precondition of all railway businesses. We aim for "ultimate safety" by ensuring that all employees consistently observe the basic principles, and endeavor to achieve even higher levels of safety.

### Safety Plan 2008: Back to Basics and Renewing Safety Strategies

