



Top Message

Our role as a railway operator and starting anew

Restoration and “Creative Reconstruction” from the Great East Japan Earthquake

First of all, please allow us to offer our deepest sympathies for all of the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, and to offer a solemn prayer for those who lost their lives.

The Great East Japan Earthquake brought unprecedented damage to countless places within our service area, and caused severe damage to our railway facilities. Due to this damage, both Shinkansen and conventional lines in the devastated areas had no choice but to suspend operations for an extended period of time. In addition, parts of the Group’s shopping centers, hotels, and other facilities were also forced to suspend their operations due to the damage to their buildings and others.

Following the earthquake, as a result of the enormous support we received from everyone concerned, and the concerted restoration efforts of the JR East Group as a whole, we were able to resume train operations one after another, with the exception of the railway sections running along the Pacific Ocean, which received particularly catastrophic damage due to the tsunami. These achievements could not have been accomplished without the efforts of all of the people who so unselfishly devoted themselves in the early days and nights of restoration despite the intermittent aftershocks. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one you who lent your support during the time we required to resume our services.

By April 29th, 2011, we were fortunate to have been able to resume operations for all railway sections of the Tohoku Shinkansen lines. On that day, I boarded the first train to resume service between Sendai and Morioka and participated in an event for the reconstruction of the area around Hirosaki. I was so pleased to see so many happy faces in Aomori, Hirosaki, Morioka, and Sendai, with people walking together and smiling with their families and friends. We have also received many voices of support from our customers for our efforts to resume service of all Tohoku Shinkansen lines. In observing the anxiety and inconvenience the damage to our railway facilities created for our customers first hand, we were able to better understand the significant impact that “Connecting Rails” have on our customers’ spirit, and reaffirm our company’s ultimate mission to realize the uninterrupted service of our railways, something indispensable for the local people and for society in general.

The JR East Group is committed to its continued restoration efforts for the damage resulting from the Great East Japan Earthquake, and will approach this undertaking together as a group and as a principal issue. For the restoration of the railway sections alongside the Pacific Ocean, we plan to proceed cooperatively, restoring the area as a whole and in the planning of the area’s urban development. Moreover, in order to fulfill our social responsibilities as a corporate group with business foundations in the eastern Japan area, we intend to continue our hard work to restore the areas impacted by the disaster through such efforts as the creation of tourism through the excavation of local resources, distribution of more information, and the hosting of farm fresh markets at our major terminal stations for the sales of products from quake-hit areas.



“Inaugural year for service quality reforms” – Our customers’ voices as our guide

JR East Group has been working to date on improvements to customer services and on the provision of safe and comfortable operations, upholding the “rigorous pursuit of customer satisfaction” as one of the basic management policies outlined in our “JR East 2020 Vision - *i do mu* -.”

Additionally, to further improve customer satisfaction, JR East Group has decided to allocate this year as the “inaugural year for service quality reforms” in an effort to continue its work to better enhance the service quality of our group as a whole by making our services accessible to as many customers as possible, despite being immersed in a severe business environment. Based on our “Service Quality Reform Medium-Term Vision” 5-year plan beginning from this year, we aim to improve the railway environment in which our customers can safely and comfortably use our services. Through improvements to our transport quality, we seek to prevent transport interruptions, resume operations with limited delay in the case of an interruption, and enhance our systems for the distribution of information.

Our ceaseless pursuit of Extreme Safety Levels

Based on the accumulated experience from past disasters, JR East Group aims to further enhance its safety in operations under its 5-year safety plan “2013 Safety Vision.” More specifically, we plan to promote our disaster countermeasures, including the seismic reinforcement of elevated bridges and other structures, and an increase in the number of seismometers. Moreover, through our investigations of the handling of operations after the Great East Japan Earthquake, we plan to devise an inventory of areas in need of improvement, and cite the lessons learned from this disaster in our future countermeasures. Furthermore, for major accidents such as the level crossing accident on the Iiyama Line, we are committed to continuing our comprehensive investigations into the origins of such accidents and the prevention of their recurrence, and continue our never-ending challenge to achieve Extreme Safety Levels in our railway operations.

Our continued endeavors toward the global environment: the utilization of new technologies

Following the accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, the Government of Japan is currently reevaluating its policies on energy.

Consequently, the roles of railways with their low CO₂ emissions and high energy efficiency are continually growing. We also anticipate that the importance of our accumulated efforts to reduce the environmental burden of the JR East Group will similarly be further increased. Regrettably, based on the current trends in national energy policy, we have had no choice but to reexamine the total CO₂ emission targets upheld in our “JR East 2020 Vision - *i do mu* -.” Nevertheless, we will remain steadfast in our efforts to address global environmental issues, and in our desire to promote technological developments from a wider viewpoint, including those regarding the utilization of new energies such as wind and solar power, and the introduction of railway systems employing rechargeable batteries.

We consider this disaster and the subsequent accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant to hold high potential in the changing structure of Japan’s economy. With this year marking the 25th year since the JNR privatization reform, JR East Group is once again aiming for a “Creative Reconstruction,” promoting management reforms with a firm resolution to start once again from scratch, though it is expected that the severe management environment will be with us for quite some time.

Satoshi Seino
President and CEO
East Japan Railway Company

