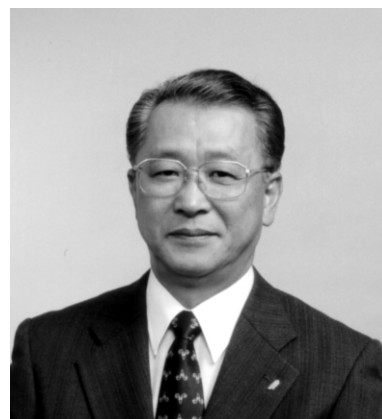


Foreword

Publication of a special issue compiling
NKK's technological advances

Executive Vice President, Sumiyuki Kishimoto



In the foreword to the first issue of the NKK Technical Report published in 1949, former President Kawada of NKK wrote “Publishing this first issue of the NKK Technical Report by mobilizing all of NKK’s engineers is an epoch-making event in NKK’s history of research and development. Starting this publication also has significant value today when quality improvement and production rationalization are urgently needed”.

Since that time, the NKK Technical Report has continued to introduce the Company’s research and development in Japan, as well as in overseas countries, for more than half a century.

The first issue was published in a period when Japan had barely recovered from the devastation caused by World War II, and the economy was still in a chaotic state with the future of its manufacturing sector uncertain. Under these circumstances, President Kawada foresaw the arrival of the era of international free competition, and proudly declared the policy of “the production of high-quality, low-cost products that can satisfy the strictest international standard and beat any international price fluctuation” in the same foreword.

Since then, the Japanese annual steel production expanded from several million tons to a level exceeding 100 million tons in line with the Japanese economic growth. During the same period, NKK firmly established its position as a world-leading, integrated steel producer. In the engineering sector, another important business field for NKK, the Company has continued to supply products that respond directly to current social requirements, while establishing a unique position in the industry.

However, the business environment around NKK has not always been favorable. The social circumstances have been dramatically changing ever since the collapse of the bubble economy in early 1990’s. Throughout changing eras, NKK’s engineers have always maintained the spirit of pursuing customers’ needs by proposing innovative solutions. I believe our customers have valued highly the relentless, sincere efforts exerted by our engineers.

The unique, unparalleled technologies developed by our engineers and researchers lie behind our customers' high regard. Although the history of these technological developments will be detailed in this issue, it can be said that each generation of NKK's engineers and researchers has successfully maintained the bright history and heritage that originated from Dr. Kaichiro Imaizumi, the founder of NKK's technology. The NKK Technical Report has fully performed the role of a living witness to the development of these technologies.

Although NKK transformed itself into JFE through the business consolidation with Kawasaki Steel in September 2002, the spirit expressed by the words of former President Kawada quoted above will be upheld continually during the changing eras in the future. As the last person in charge of administering NKK's research and development, I hereby express my deep appreciation to all of the authors who contributed papers to the NKK Technical Report for more than 50 years. I hope that this last issue will help readers to understand the essence of the technology developed by NKK to date.

Note:

The Japanese version was first issued in 1949 under the title of "Nippon Kokan Giho" and later the English subtitle of "NKK Technical Report" was added to it.

The English version was first issued in 1963 as "Nippon Kokan Technical Report Overseas", which was later changed to the current title of "NKK Technical Review".