

# Learning from the Past

The JAL Group is using the tragedy of flight 123, which crashed into Mount Osutaka on August 12, 1985, and the lessons that can be learned from this disaster to raise group-wide staff awareness of the importance of safety through a range of activities. These include tours of the Safety Promotion Center and seminars featuring presentations by staff members who were directly involved in the accident.



Staff personally involved with flight 123 at Mount Osutaka relate their experience of the disaster.

## Employee Education

In July 2002, the JAL Group implemented the education and training of staff to support those who have lost family members in group-related accidents — a move that took place against the backdrop of global trends relating to family assistance in postaccident situations (see below). This project has its origins in the educational program for facilitators tasked with supporting families of victims of disasters such as the flight 123 accident, and it has now developed into a program for training personnel in the Accident Prevention Division. We are also conducting educational activities that emphasize learning from the

past. These activities are directed at staff throughout the entire group and include sessions where employees can listen to the recollections of veteran staff who were personally involved in postaccident support after flight 123.

Sessions for junior employees to hear the stories of these veteran staff have been held on four occasions since fiscal 2005, and 694 people have participated so far. Through these sessions, JAL Group employees can come to understand the grief of the victims' families and the suffering of those who were connected with the accident, while also becoming aware that this is not some past event without direct relevance to the present. We believe it vital that staff emerge from these sessions with a renewed sense of safety awareness and a determination to do everything to prevent such accidents from happening again.

## Value of Firsthand Accounts

The facilitator training program, which commenced in 2003, was originally a training program using accident-related materials. There are limitations, however, to what can be achieved with such sessions. To learn more about the reality of air disasters, it is necessary to hear the words of those who have experienced such events. It was while gathering this kind of narrative material that I realized we should not use it just in training specialist personnel but should share it with all staff.

I learned a lot while meeting people at various work sites, including former employees, and in listening to their stories. It is over 20 years since the accident on Mount Osutaka, and many people who were involved with the accident then are no longer with the company. One way for the JAL Group to take this negative legacy and use it in a positive manner is to pass on the lessons of the horror of aircraft disasters as well as the pain suffered by the victims' families and those connected with the accident, both inside and outside the company.

**Akemi Hamazaki**  
Aviation Security and Risk  
Management Group,  
Corporate Safety Division



## Family Assistance

In 1997, the United States passed the Foreign Air Carrier Family Support Act, which applies to all airlines serving the U.S. This act makes stipulations for the provision of systematic support for the victims of air disasters and their families. In response, airlines around the world have established family-assistance guidelines.

## Safety Promotion Center

Following recommendations of the Safety Advisory Group and families of the victims to exhibit the wreckage of JAL flight 123 so that such a terrible accident should never recur, the JAL Group established the Safety Promotion Center in April 2006.

In addition to the aft pressure bulkhead, vertical stabilizer and aft fuselage, recovered from the crash site, the center exhibits records of the flight route as well as materials related to aircraft disasters in Japan and overseas. In June 2006, the center added messages written by passengers on flight 123 just before the crash and aircraft parts collected by members of the bereaved families who climbed to the crash site on Mount Osutaka.

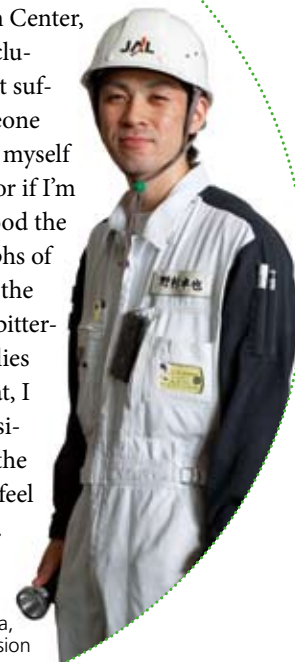
The center is used as a research facility so that the lessons learned from the accident will never be forgotten, to increase safety awareness among our employees and so that each member of the JAL Group can understand the importance of flight safety. The center is open to anyone with an interest in aviation safety as well as to people engaged in safety-related jobs, and it can be visited by appointment. Over 20,000 people, both from within and outside the company, visited the center in the year following its opening. The JAL Group intends to continue using this facility as a foundation for safety.

## The Weight of Responsibility

By making a tour of the Safety Promotion Center, I was able to rethink a number of things, including my daily work, the tasks I fail to carry out sufficiently well and my personal attitude. As someone who comes into direct contact with aircraft, I ask myself whether I'm making sufficient efforts in my work or if I'm fully aware of all aspects of it. I felt I truly understood the horror of the flight 123 disaster from the photographs of the survivors being rescued by helicopter and from the wreckage itself. And I was struck by the feelings of bitterness and anger from members of the victims' families as expressed in the exhibits. When I reflect on that, I become keenly aware of the tremendous responsibility that my job carries. In future, I will take the opportunity to revisit the center whenever I feel that I'm losing sight of my responsibilities.

### Takuya Nomura

JAL Aircraft Maintenance Narita,  
Flight Check Maintenance Division



## Lessons for Future Generations

The majority of JAL Group employees have no direct connection with flight 123, and many staff now in their 20s were only children when the accident occurred. The significance of this center is in communicating to this younger generation the reality of the disaster, not just through words and photos but through the flight wreckage, and having all staff ask themselves what they can do to prevent disasters like this from being repeated. Visitors are appalled when they look at the seat plan and realize how many people lost their lives. It's important that visitors leave the exhibits with such feelings. Sharing the pain that was suffered then and passing on the lessons of that accident to future generations lie at the very core of safety awareness.

### Yutaka Kanasaki

Safety Promotion Center chief,  
Corporate Safety Division



Vertical stabilizer exhibited at the center

## Guide to Safety Promotion Center

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**Address:** Daini Sogo Building 2F, 1-7-1 Haneda Kuko, Ota-ku, Tokyo 144-0041

**Access:** Five minutes' walk from Seibijo Station on the Tokyo Monorail

**Open:** Monday to Friday (closed holidays and during the year-end holiday period)

**Tours:** Conducted five times a day at 10:00, 11:00, 13:00, 14:00 and 15:00. Each tour takes approximately one hour. Tours conducted by appointment only