



Confirming the situation of Fukushima with their own eyes

A training course for JAEA's new employees

On April 11, eighty-three new employees entering the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) in this spring participated in the training in Fukushima Prefecture. This training was one of the series of training course for JAEA's new employees. The purpose of this training was to know the efforts of JAEA for the restoration of Fukushima by watching the current situation of Fukushima with their own eyes.

The bus with the new employees left the Headquarters of JAEA in Tokai Village, Ibaraki Prefecture, and headed to Tomioka Town first. There, new employees witnessed the trace of the disaster with their own eyes. Houses collapsed by the earthquake and cars washed away by the tsunami still remained as they had been at that time. The new employees listened seriously to the explanation about the disaster by the tsunami, and the situation at the time of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident. On the bus, JAEA staff working in Fukushima explained the decontamination works after the accident and the current efforts in Fukushima Prefecture towards the restoration.

The place they headed next was the Community Center of Kawauchi Village. There, they listened to the lecture about the efforts of Kawauchi Village and JAEA towards the restoration.

Kawauchi Village is known as the first local government that declared “returning home” after the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, and is positively making efforts to let the residents return home. Mr. Yokota (photo on the right), Assistant Manager of the General Administration Division, Kawauchi Village, has been supporting the restoration work since just after the disaster as an Assistant Manager for Decontamination, Recovery and Reconstruction Division at that time.



Mr. Yokota made a lecture with a title of "Decontamination and radiation dose management for returning home after the entire evacuation by the nuclear accident". He explained that the number of people coming back to the village was now increasing owing to the efforts to take care of people just after the accident and support them returning home. Mr. Yokota continued, “Tears still come



into my eyes when I remember the time we left the village and went to the evacuation area by bus three years ago”.

Dr. Yui, Director of Fukushima Environmental Safety Center, JAEA, gave an instruction to the new employees, “Everyone in JAEA should engage in the work with the intention for the sake of Fukushima” .



After that, the new employees moved to Ogi-dam located at the east part of Kawauchi Village. There, JAEA has been conducting the “long-term assessment of transport of radioactive contaminant in the environment of Fukushima (F-TRACE)”. The new employees were guided to the forest, river, and dam where the

research has been carried out. At each place, they listened to the explanation about the contents of the investigation. They also visited a mobile laboratory which was developed to measure the taken samples at the site. After the explanations, there were lots of questions and answers, indicating their deep interests.

Around the dam, they experienced the radiation dose measurements using a gamma-plotter which was developed by the Sector of Fukushima Research and Development, JAEA. Carrying the gamma-plotter, air dose rates at 5 cm and 1 m from the ground can be measured at the same time. In addition, the gamma-plotter is equipped with GPS function, so the measured data can be checked at real time. The new employees looked at how the dose rate changes on the roads and in the forest with interest.

One of the employees participating in the training said "It was the first time for me to visit the disaster area. Before visiting here, I knew the situation as information. But I was shocked to see that the restoration from the disaster has little progressed in these three years. Also I felt a fear against tsunami as a power of nature. After listening to the real voice of the staff of Kawauchi Village Office, I thought that we should never allow the accident like the one at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station to occur again. Also I made up my mind that we have to restore the situation as early as possible, and regain the peace for the residents. From now, I will work with this spirit. ”.

TOPICS Fukushima No.48

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