



## Newsletter on the Latest Technologies Developed by RTRI

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# Railway Technology Newsletter

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## Japan's International Standardization Efforts

### Hiroshi TANAKA

Director, Railway International Standards Center

With the advent of market globalization trends in recent years, international standardization has increasingly become a matter of critical importance in the railway field. Since the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, maintaining accordance with international standards has become a key to success in marketing and is a basic requirement in the distribution of products and services in the railway industry. It is increasingly important for a railway operator to have a good understanding of international standards, and to aggressively take actions for observing and sustaining them when appropriate.

To facilitate these efforts, the Railway International Standards Center was established within the premises of the Railway Technical Research Institute in 2010 under the guidance of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, in order to centralize and facilitate the implementation efforts for international standardization in the railway field. The Railway International Standards Center has organized and is conducting efforts to assist a total of 131 domestic railway related associations and enterprises in their international standardization activities.

That said, the first step in international standardization activities has just been taken by Japan. Europe already has a long history of experience with standardization. On top of that, Europe has worked extensively on promoting International standards. In the years ahead, Japan should endeavor to create an environment where Japan's important technologies will be incorporated into existing international standards. Japan should also promote activities to help develop international standards in those technical fields



where Japan can play a substantial role. Moreover, in the railway field, although product standards have occupied a predominant position, generic standards prescribing the linkage and management across different systems are presumed to emerge for international standard. Thus railway operators will have to take leadership positions in formulating these generic standards.

Standards setting organizations exist, including the IEC/TC9 (Electrical equipment and systems for railways) that has been active since 1924, and the ISO/TC269 (Railway applications) that was established in 2012. Thus the basis mechanisms now exist for effectively conducting the development of international standards for a wide range of technological sectors in the railway field. Japan should embrace these international standardization activities without delay and contribute to the sustainable development of the railway in the world and to the enhancement of reliability and safety.