

Overhauling the “Long-range Research Initiative (LRI) on the Effects of Chemical Substances on Human Health and the Environment” — “New LRI” to Address Issues with Solutions—

Japan Chemical Industry Association (JCIA, Chairman Kenji Fujiyoshi) is overhauling its existing approach to the “Long-range Research Initiative (LRI) on the Effects of Chemical Substances on Human Health and the Environment” and will launch the “**New LRI**” in FY2012. The new program will focus more on meeting social needs by providing specific solutions to address critical issues that the chemical industry is faced with. JCIA will strive to further improve the public confidence in chemical substances through the NEW LRI.

The LRI is a project led by the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), consisting of chemical associations around the world, with the chemical industries in Japan, the US and Europe collectively investing more than one billion yen (approximately \$12 million USD) per year in the program. JCIA began its participation in the program in 2000, and has worked to develop simple chemical safety testing methods, proposals on international testing guidelines to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other organizations, and has conducted research projects succeeded to be adopted as national ones by the Japanese government.

In general, international trends on chemical management have significantly changed in recent years. Managing chemicals based on risk assessment is an approach that has been agreed on internationally, and chemical management regulations have been established or reinforced around the globe, including the European REACH regulation and Japan’s revised Law Concerning Examination and Regulation of Manufacture, etc. of Chemical Substances. At the same time, there is an increasing social interest in the safety of chemicals. Additionally, the Japanese chemical industry is globalizing, and business models have changed from commodities to high-grade and value-added products. Given such changes, it is an important task for the Japanese chemical industry to respond to the new trends in Japan and internationally, and to maintain competitiveness by evaluating the safety of chemical substances based on scientific approach, and handling chemical substances more safely and more appropriately.

Aiming to achieve these tasks, the “New LRI” will conduct research in the following areas, focusing primarily on “problem-solving type research.”

- 1) Development and evaluation of new risk assessment methods
 - Developing and evaluating testing methods based on exposure assessments, genetic technology, information technology and policy proposals

- 2) Safety of new chemical substances, including nanomaterials
 - Evaluating the safety of new chemical substances in response to future technological developments
- 3) Effects of chemical substances on children, seniors, and genetic diseases
 - Including clarification of the critical cause for multiple chemical sensitivity and sick building syndrome and the impact assessment of chemical substances
- 4) Impact assessment of chemicals on environment, including animals and plants
 - Examining waste problems in developing countries and environmental impact assessment of potentially harmful chemical substances
- 5) Other issues requiring an urgent response
 - Providing responses to urgent issues of social and/or international importance

After review, the managing organization for LRI will also be revitalized to better define the responsibilities and division of labor, in addition to strengthening program planning. An external advisory committee comprised of experts will also be established.

With new members and developments and planning efforts already underway, the new LRI program is on track to begin research activities in September 2012.

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