



BEST holds New Year party

The BEST Recyclers Alliance, consisting of four major groups of recycled auto parts businesses, held its New Year party in Tokyo on Jan. 28. Coordinated activities by alliance members are well afoot and include mutual transactions of each company's inventory and joint educational seminars and training courses. At the party, the alliance, which adopted a division-based structure last year, announced its intent to increase its sales of rebuilt parts by 25 percent in the coming fiscal year from April.

It was also announced that mutual transactions among BEST groups increased 8.81 percent from a year earlier to 2.37 billion yen in fiscal 2014, year-on-year increase for eight consecutive years, going back to the time of the alliance's establishment. In the rebuilt parts business, the alliance intends to achieve its goal by launching a combined lineup that includes new parts and by building closer ties with new parts wholesalers.

The alliance's business report outlined the results of each division, as well as thoughts on future development. In field of training, the alliance plans to continue

hosting in 2015 its Automotive Technology Company-Focus Seminar, which was held twice last year. Although the handlings of hybrid vehicles is the planned theme of the first holding this year of the seminar scheduled for March 1, lecture content will cover a wide spectrum in an aim to heighten participants' technical skills. As for public relations, the alliance will continue to run advertisement in newspapers and magazines, while carrying out efforts to increase awareness through its website. It will also continue to publish an information leaflet.

In the parts distribution division, the alliance will encourage members to share the contents of lectures from its periodical Automotive Recycled Parts Logistics Study Meeting.

BEST will also endeavor to continue holding meetings by representatives of member groups, as well as to resolve inter-group issues. It aims to raise its organizational power as a whole and will continue to host the BEST All Women Gathering (Joshikai), which is designed to put to use the power of female personnel. (*Daily Automotive News, Feb. 5 issue*)

Current status and issues for auto recycling (Part 1)

To serve as a discussion platform for the

CO₂ Reduction Effect (based on Super-Line System)

The use of Reuse Parts saved
3,148 tons of CO₂ emissions
in January 2015

The reference figure represents the difference of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions at the vehicle repair using genuine (new) parts and recycled parts.*

*: Based on "Green Point System", which was jointly developed by the Japan Automotive Parts Recyclers Association and Waseda University Environmental Research Institute using a life cycle assessment (LCA) technique.

automotive recycling businesses, the Nikkan Jidosha Shimbun Co. held "The 1st Auto Recycling Summit" in Tokyo on Jan. 29. At the summit, 16 groups explained their challenges and issues, and discussed the industry's future direction. The participants issued a declaration stating their groups will join forces to help build a "recycling society" in Japan.

The summit was the first time for nearly all of Japan's automotive recycling groups to be represented at a joint event. The main topics centered on responses to external industry issues, such as globalization, how to increase awareness of the automotive recycling industry to other industries, as well as on internal matters, such as how to increase the use of recycled parts. As Japan's law on automobile recycling law marks its 10th anniversary this year, the industry is now at a turning point.

Before discussions commenced, keynote speeches were given by two government officials—Makoto Kanazawa, chief of the

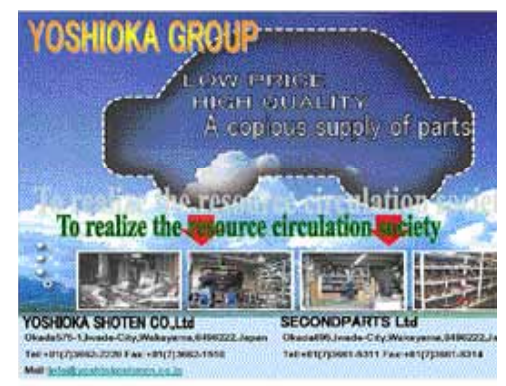
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**Interview with Makoto Kanazawa,
chief of Automobile Recycling Policy
Office, Automobile Division,
Manufacturing Industries Bureau,
Ministry of Economy, Trade and
Industry, METI**

METI, jointly with the automobile recycling industry, is working to help achieve the sound development of the recycled auto parts market. Last year, it successfully set out a direction for establishing quality standards for such parts through a study group. It also conducted out a survey to determine the actual condition of dismantlers. Daily Automotive News interviewed the chief of METI's Automobile Recycling Policy Office Makoto Kanazawa, concerning the current status of the recycled parts industry and the future.

How do you see the industry today?

Kanazawa: Ten years are about to pass since the automobile recycling law went into effect. Thanks to support from the industry and all people, the level of our Japanese model (of managing automobile recycling) has significantly risen. It has earned a certain level of praise for its transparent in operations, as well as for its response to calls for to “visualization”. At the same time, we recognize the fact that new issues are arising.

Are the joint meetings for reviewing the law making progress?

Kanazawa: Although discussing a conclusion is something that we will do going forward, both the meeting members and the persons concerned are clearly aware of issues

related to promoting the 3Rs and improving quality. In terms of precise dismantling and utilization of the resources, there is room for further improvement. Toward the stable and efficient carrying out of the law, we will have discussions with local government bodies and the Japan Automobile Recycling Promotion Center.

What about measures for hybrids and fuel cell vehicles?

Kanazawa: With regard to next-generation vehicles, new materials have already been used in FCVs. To address that issue, we need to conduct thorough discussions at council meetings on what to do with when. For FCVs, we need to find a shared understanding with the industry and even carmakers of that should be taken in each of two stages of FCV diffusion—pre-diffusion and ongoing diffusion period. That move will involve not only local government bodies, but also other ministries and agencies. The automobile recycling industry has a system that governs car recycling technician. Through that system, raising the quality of training so that sound businesses can represent the automobile recycling industry will make it easier for us to communicate.

How about standards for recycled parts?

Kanazawa: In mid-August of last year, an interim report was compiled by our study group. At present, the industry is implementing self-initiated actions, and we are helping. It's difficult, because there is no precedent and the issues faced are different from those involving ordinary new parts. We will provide as much support as possible. In addition to serving as a tool for providing information to users, I think that the law is

playing a key role in terms of securing recycled parts that are safer and offer greater piece of mind.

It seems that groups and individual recycling companies are entering overseas markets.

Kanazawa: We often received numerous inquiries from certain countries and, sometimes, we gave aids and introduce recyclers to them. Besides these moves, the industry in Japan is aggressively extending its businesses abroad on various levels. Some companies invested in China and the Middle East and even established local standards for overseas markets. We at METI will also exchange information related to automobile recycling with countries in the ASEAN region, where Japanese vehicles are widespread. In some ASEAN countries, the establishment of new rule is making progress. Although it depends on the country, the experiences of Japan and other developed countries could serve as reference. If such a market clearly develops and Japanese recyclers decided to do business in it, the result would be improved quality of recycling overall. I think it's time for the industry to be more interested in what's going on in other countries.

What are the industry-wide issues?

Kanazawa: As we were already moving forward with this, we will further promote the provision of information to end-users, not limited to businesses. I think there is room for improvement in even how companies engaged in ELV delivery and acceptance provide information. Also, how to improve the quality of automobile recycling is to be discussed at the coming meetings. (*Daily Automotive News, Jan. 15 issue*)

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Automobile Recycling Policy Office, Automobile Division, Manufacturing Industries Bureau, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and Masanori Shoji, chief of the Office of Recycling Promotion, Waste Management and Recycling Department, Ministry of Environment (MOE). The officials talked about the government's efforts and the current status of the automobile recycling industry.

Looking back on the automobile recycling businesses up until now, Kanazawa said: “The automotive industry has been one of Japan's leading industries. But if you consider whether the automobile recycling industry has really been in the spotlight or not, I'd have to say it hasn't.” And he stressed, “Although I understand that efforts taken by individual companies and groups are important, there are many that need to be tackled by the industry as a united whole.”

Shoji introduced MOE's efforts, which

focus on three points: promotion of “reuse” and “reduce,” sophistication of recycling, and shifting from recycling quantity to recycling quality.

For their part, representatives of the automobile recycling industry shared their thoughts under the three-pillar of “Further promotion of 3Rs inside the industry”, “Expansion of recycled auto parts” and “The progression of globalization in automobile recycling”.

A tough and common hurdle in the industry is how to get end-of-life-vehicles (ELVs) to recycling sites. “The situation is a clear that we have to buy ELVs from auto auctions even at higher price”, pointed out NGP Chairman Toshihiko Hasegawa. Those words were reinforced by Big Wave President Atsushi Hattori, who said: “The shortage of ELVs for parts creation will inevitably get worse”. Other group representatives also expressed their concerns about the shortage of ELVs.

In recent years, ELV acquisition has been a

headache for recyclers. Japan ELV Recyclers Association Chairman Nishio Kawamura pointed out: “Many old vehicles 14 years or older are flowing out of Japan to overseas due to exporters. I think the brakes need to be applied to a certain extent for our industry to grow”. A drastic solution has yet to be found. On the other hand, many recyclers suggest that each company should accept the situation and move forward by undertaking self-initiatives. “Guidelines for handling ELVs were established under the automobile recycling law, but they are no more than empty words today. I am sure that self-help is the only way to overcome this situation”, said TCR Group Chairman Takehiko Ohashi. “Buy expensive ELVs at auto auctions and sell recycled parts at higher prices. I think we need that kind of Samurai-like mental readiness to do so”, said Japan Parts Association Chairman Ichiji Hayakawa. It is important for each group to tackle the problem squarely, as it is not avoidable. (*Daily Automotive News, Feb. 5 issue*)

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