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Asian Automotive Environmental Forum attracts 200 visitors from Japan and overseas

The 8th Asian Automotive Environmental Forum (AAEF), an international platform for people involved in Asia related to automotive recycling, took place on Oct. 1-3 in Akita Prefecture. The three-day event was organized by the non-profit organization Japan Automotive Recyclers Association (NPO-JARA) and attracted about 200 participants from Japan and overseas. At the event, various reports of automotive recycling in each country were presented.

AAEF has been held every year in



Factory tour of proper steps for dismantling ELVs



Daiko Corporation President Goro Domon welcomes visitors from Japan and overseas

Asia since 2008 and this year's holding marked the second time the event was held in Japan. Automotive recycling-related groups and people attended representing Japan, South Korea, China, Malaysia, Australia and Mongolia, making the event a global platform for sharing information on how to reduce the environmental impact, as well as on how to contribute to the realization of a recycling-based society.

On the first day of the AAEF program, participants visited the Kariwano recycling plant of Daiko Corporation, in Daisen City, Akita, where they were shown the proper steps of proper automobile dismantling and recycled parts production. A demonstration of car dismantling using an electric-powered nibbler machine made by Kobelco Construction Machinery Co., Ltd. was also given. Participants then visited Daiko's headquarters and the base of its agricultural business, Deco Farm, in Katagami City. President Goro Domon, who also serves as vice chairman of

CO₂ Reduction Effect (based on Super-Line System)

The use of Reuse Parts saved
3,285 tons of CO₂ emissions
in September 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.

NPO-JARA, welcomed participants by saying, "I would be very thankful if you find your visiting useful. Let's learn about the automotive recycling industry together."

On the second day, a conference was held at a hotel in Akita City, where lectures on the latest developments and information were presented from each group and Toyota Motor Corporation. After the conference, a dinner party was held at the hotel, attended by many guests, including Akita Prefecture Governor Norihisa Satake, Akita Automobile Dealers Association Chairman Hiroki Miura, Akita Auto Service Promotion Association Chairman Kiyosshi Miura, and JU Akita Chairman Kanichi Fujiwara, who offered words of congratulations for the successful holding of the forum in Akita. (*Daily Automotive News, Oct. 9 issue*)

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METI, MOE to push for taking thorough guidance, as airbag resales continue

There seems to be no end to the resale of airbags. Under the Automobile Recycling Law, airbags taken from ELVs should be collected and disposed. Despite that, reporting required under the law is somehow manipulated, and airbags thought to be those taken from used cars, can be found for sale on the Internet. Although reuse of airbags is not illegal, automakers and many recycled parts producers exercise self-restraint concerning such of reuse because they cannot guarantee that such an airbag will be properly deploy in an accident. MOE and METI see this as question and are planning to ask local governments to be thorough in providing guidance and in conducting onsite inspections.

An airbag system consists of an inflator and a bag, among other components. New ones come with a price, in the case of a passenger car, of about 45,000 yen for a driver's front airbag and about 70,000

yen for a front passenger front airbag. However, such airbags are selling on the Internet for about 20,000 yen to 25,000 yen. The Automobile Recycling Law requires one of two methods of airbag disposal for airbags of ELV, --even if such airbags have never been deployed: they should be disposed of still attached to the vehicle as "specified goods for collection", or they should be detached from the vehicle and then disposed. However, it seems that falsified reporting on the number of deployed airbags in ELVs is enabling the resale of ELV airbags. According to the Japan Auto Recycling Partnership (JARP), which is the designated airbag acceptance authority, numerous cases of inappropriate actions have been disclosed at so-called "airbag remove and collect operators," who are not required to be licensed, unlike "onboard deployment operator," who are required to be licensed.



Proper disposal is required by law for airbags of ELVs.

The law does not apply to the resale of airbags taken form used vehicles. It requires disposal of airbags of ELVs because older airbags use toxic substances, in addition to the risk of explosion during vehicle shredding. The stance of Internet auctioneers is that responsibility lies with the seller and buyer. Many airbags are put up for auction in the name of individuals, making it difficult to identify the business entity of the sellers.

Not only do airbags sometimes make the difference between life and death, they are precise components that require only 0.2 seconds from the point of impact to deployment. The risk in their reuse is simply too high. For both manufacturers and recycled parts networking companies, changing the mindset of sellers such airbags, who just want to make easy money, as well as that of buyers, who are drawn in by the low prices, seems will become an issue that needs to be tackled. *(Daily Automotive News, Sept. 24 issue)*



METI's office building, left, and MOE's building, right, both located in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo.



Number of dismantlers down by more than 10% in FY2014

The number of dismantling businesses has been declining. According to data released recently by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) of businesses registered under the Automobile Recycling Law, the number of dismantlers fell by 13.4 percent from a year earlier to 4,928 as of the end of fiscal 2014 (March 2015). Of that, dismantlers that reported actual transactions totaled 3,931. "Many

dismantlers (who had no transaction in the previous year) might not have updated their registrations as their expiration dates drew near," said MOE. This could be an indication of a rightsizing in the actual number of dismantling businesses.

In terms of the total number of locations of businesses registered under the law, including fluorocarbon collection facilities and shredding operations (pressing, shearing and shredding), the number declined 13.4 percent to 53,316 locations. By recycling step, acceptance businesses fell by 15.3 percent to 35,814 locations. Fluorocarbon recovery businesses also declined by 7.7 percent to 11,455 locations, while shredding businesses fell by 6.3 percent to 1,119.

MOE and the Ministry of Economy,

Trade and Industry see the reason for the decline being that many dismantlers did not update their registrations, even when they expired in fiscal 2014.

Meanwhile, according to the Japan Automobile Recycling Promotion Center (JARC), ELV acceptance businesses almost halved to 27,202 locations, suggesting that the reduction may be due to other factors. The automotive recycling industry is facing hard times due to difficulty in ELV acquisition and lowering market prices for scrap steel and other resources. More than a few recyclers have begun to experience difficulties in making ends meet, so weaker companies are beginning to disappear. *(Daily Automotive News Oct. 8 issue)*

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