

The 2022
White Paper on Measures to Prevent Karoshi, etc. [Summary]

FY2021 Summary of Death and Injury from Overwork in Japan and the Implementation of Measures the Government Has Taken to Prevent It

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Labour Standards Bureau, Office for Policy on Karoshi Prevention

## "White Paper on Measures to Prevent Karoshi, etc." of the 2022

- ➤ The White Paper on Measures to Prevent Karoshi, etc. is a statutory white paper to be reported to the Diet based on the Act Promoting Measures to Prevent Death and Injury from Overwork. The 2022 edition is the 7th in the series (Cabinet decision and the Diet report).
- ➤ Key Points of the 2022 White Paper
  - In addition to the relationship between working hours and sleeping hours, the White Paper includes the results of a survey and analysis of the effects of telework, a new work style and the COVID-19 pandemic, based on the "Outline of Measures to Prevent Death and Injury from Overwork" (Cabinet Decision on July 30, 2021).
  - ≪Reference≫ Act Promoting Measures to Prevent Death and Injury from Overwork (Act No. 100 of 2014) (Annual Reports)
    - Article 6 Every year, the government must submit to the Diet a report giving a summary of death and injury from overwork in Japan and describing the implementation of measures that the government has taken to prevent it.

#### **Structure of the White Paper**

# Chapter 1 Status of measures for working hours and mental health, etc.

- 1 Status of working hours
- 2 Status of measures for mental health in the workplace
- 3 Status of suicide with workplace problems as one of the causal motives

#### Chapter 2 Current Status of Karoshi, etc.

- 1 Status of compensation for work accidents involving karoshi, etc.
- 2 Status of compensation for occupational accidents of national public employees
- 3 Status of compensation for occupational accidents of local public employees

#### Chapter 3 Survey and analysis results on karoshi, etc.

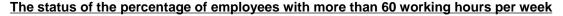
- Analysis of claims for which workers' compensation was decided (approved) and survey results of labor and social sectors
- (1) Analysis of the cases of grant decision (approval) of workers' compensation benefits
- (2) Survey results of labor and social sectors
- (3) Results of surveys and analysis of the construction industry
- (4) Results of surveys and analysis of the IT industry
- 2 Results of analysis of claims for which public employees' compensation was decided (approved)
- 3 Analysis of epidemiological studies, etc.

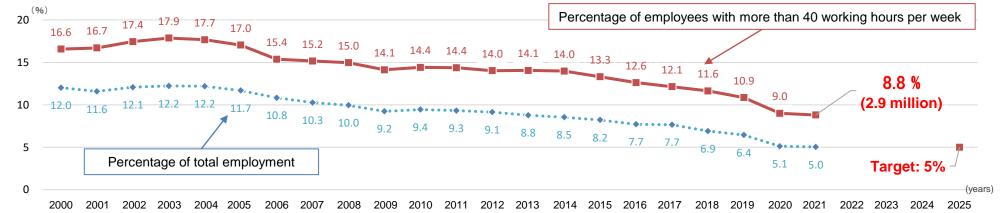
#### Chapter 4 Status of implementation of measures to prevent karoshi, etc.

- 1 Measures taken by labor administrative agencies, etc.
- 2 Survey and research, etc.
- 3 Enlightenment
- 4 Improvement of consultation system, etc.
- 5 Support for private organizations' activities

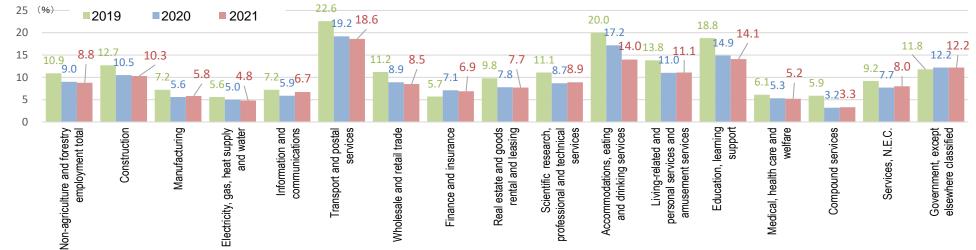
## Chapter 1 Status of measures for working hours and mental health, etc.

- 1 Status of working hours (Percentage of employees with more than 60 working hours per week)
- The percentage of employees with more than 60 working hours per week has been decreasing.
- By industry, this proportion declined sharply in 2020 (possibly due to the impact of COVID-19), although it did increase in some industries in 2021.



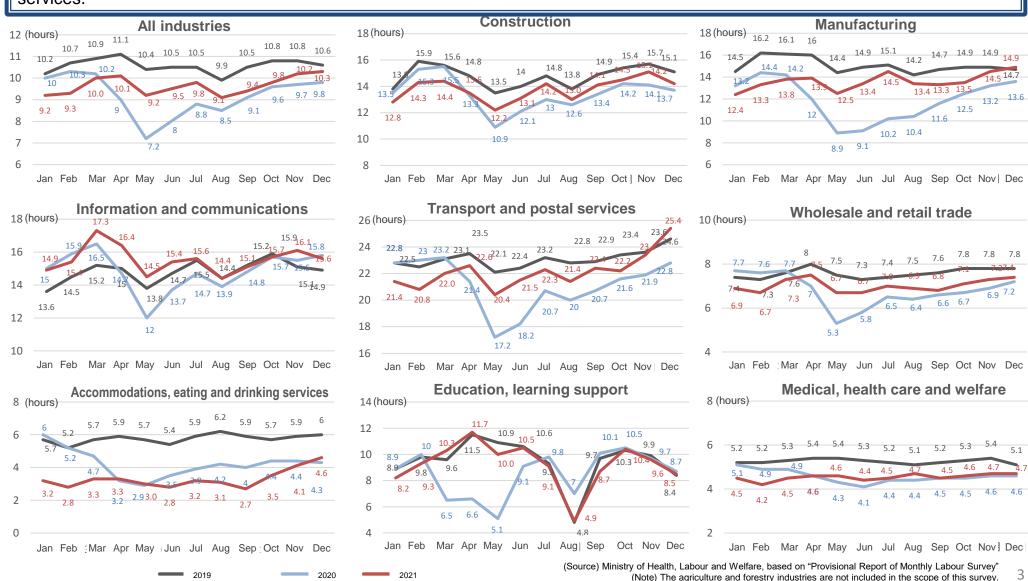


#### The percentage of employees with more than 60 working hours per week among those with more than 40 working hours per week by industry (2019-2021)



# Chapter 1 Status of measures for working hours and mental health, etc. 1 Status of working hours (Overtime working hours)

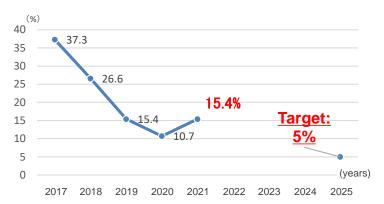
Overtime working hours for 2021 generally tended to exceed the level in 2020, except for "accommodations, eating and drinking services."



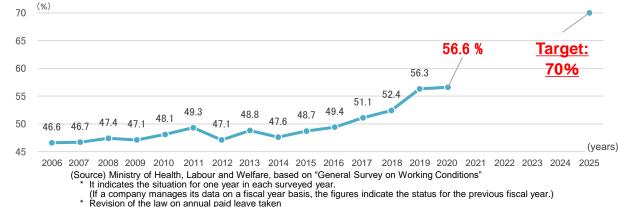
# Chapter 1 Status of measures for working hours and mental health, etc. 1 Status of working hours (status of work-interval system and annual leave)

The percentage of companies that have introduced the work-interval system and the rate of annual paid leave taken improved compared to the previous year. The percentage of companies that answered "do not know about the work-interval system" increased.

# Changes in the percentage of companies that answered "do not know about the work-interval system"

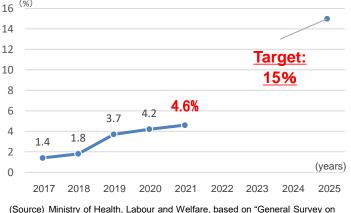


#### Changes in the rate of annual paid leave taken



- The number of days granted was increased in 1999 (The number of days granted per year was increased (by two days) for each year of continuous service exceeding two years and six months.)
- From April 2019, employers were required to designate the timing of annual paid leave of five days per year.

# <u>Changes in the percentage of companies that have introduced work-interval systems</u>



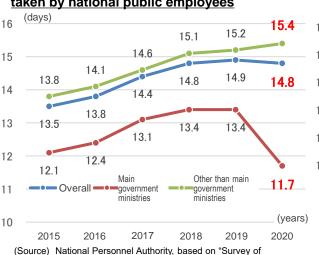
Working Conditions"

\* The "work-interval system" refers to setting a certain number of hours of rest

between the end of the workday and the beginning of the next workday.

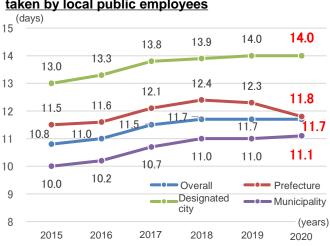
\* The survey was conducted based on the status as of January 1.

# Average number of days of annual leave taken by national public employees



Remuneration of National Public Employees"

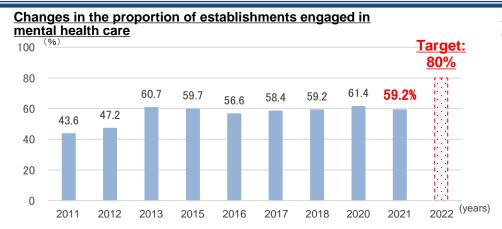
# Average number of days of annual paid leave taken by local public employees

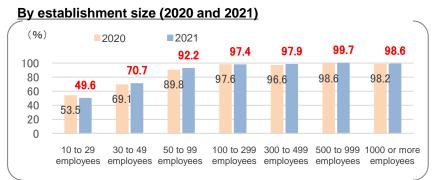


(Source) Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, based on "Survey on Working Conditions, etc. of Local Governments"

# Chapter 1 Status of measures for working hours and mental health, etc. 2 Status of measures for mental health in the workplace

The proportions of "establishments engaged in mental health care" and of "establishments that analyzed the results of stress checks for each group and utilized the results" showed sluggish growth. Conversely, the proportion of "workers who have a place to consult about their worries, concerns, or stress at work, including resources outside the workplace" increased.

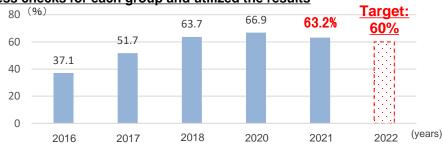




(Source) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, based on "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (actual condition survey) (Note that the 2011 data is from the "Survey on the Prevention of Industrial Accidents" by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the 2012 is from the "Survey on State of Employees' Health" by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.)

\* In 2014 and 2019, a "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (Survey on Labour Environment) was conducted, which did not cover this matter.

# Changes in the proportion of establishments that analyzed the results of stress checks for each group and utilized the results

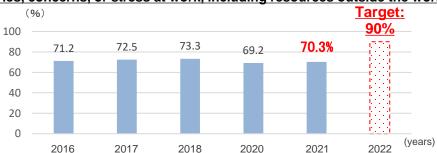


(Source) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, based on "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (actual condition survey) (special tabulation for 2016)

\* The survey covers establishments with 50 or more workers that have conducted stress checks.

\* In 2019, the "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (Survey on Labour Environment) was conducted, which did not cover this matter.

# Changes in the percentage of workers who have a place to consult about their worries, concerns, or stress at work, including resources outside the workplace



(Source) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, based on "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (actual condition survey)

- \* In 2019, the "Survey on Industrial Safety and Health" (Survey on Labour Environment) was conducted, which did not cover this matter.
- \* The data for 2016 are the results of a special tabulation by Industrial Health Division, Industrial Safety and Health Department of the Labour Standards Bureau.

#### <Reference>

- (1) Percentage of departments working on measures for mental health in local governments (FY2020): 89.8%
  - \* Percentage of departments in each local governments that are working on measures for mental health.
- (2) Utilization of group analysis results of stress checks in local governments (FY2020): **73.4%**(Source) Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, based on "Survey on Working Conditions, etc. of Local Governments"

## **Chapter 2: Current Status of Karoshi, etc.**

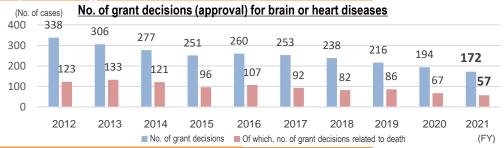
Regarding the number of approved cases of karoshi, etc., in recent years, the number for brain or heart diseases has been decreasing, while the number for mental disorders has been increasing (suicide remained unchanged).

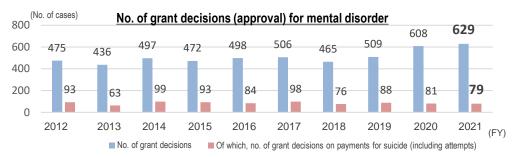
(Reference) Approved cases per million people (Est.) (private organization workers and national public employees for FY 2021, local public employees for FY 2020) Brain or heart diseases: 3.0 cases for private organization workers, 0 cases for national public employees, 8.0 cases for local public employees Mental disorders: 10.9 cases for private organization workers, 22.4 cases for national public employees, 21.7 cases for local public employees

- \*1 Number of private organization workers estimated based on MIC "Labor Force Survey"
- \*2 Number of national public employees estimated based on Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs "The statistical table of national public employees in the regular service tenure of office conditions"
- \*3 Number of local public employees estimated based on certified cases and number of workers related to full time employees (including some part time employees) from the MIC "Survey of Local Public Employees Salaries.

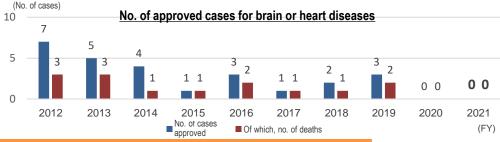
# 1 Status of compensation for work accidents of private organization workers

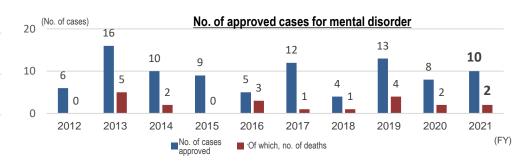
In FY 2021, the number of approved cases for brain or heart disease related to COVID-19. (\*) was 4, while the number of approved cases for mental disorder was 18. \*The claimant alleged that there were incidents related to COVID-19 at his/her work.



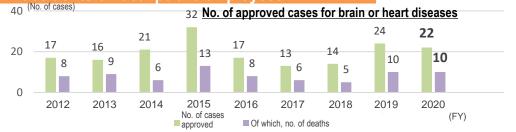


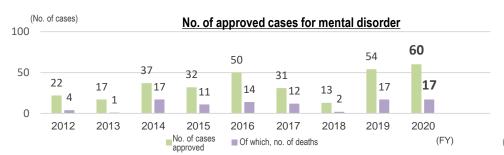
# 2 Status of compensation for occupational accidents of national public employees





# 3 Status of compensation for occupationa accidents of local public employees

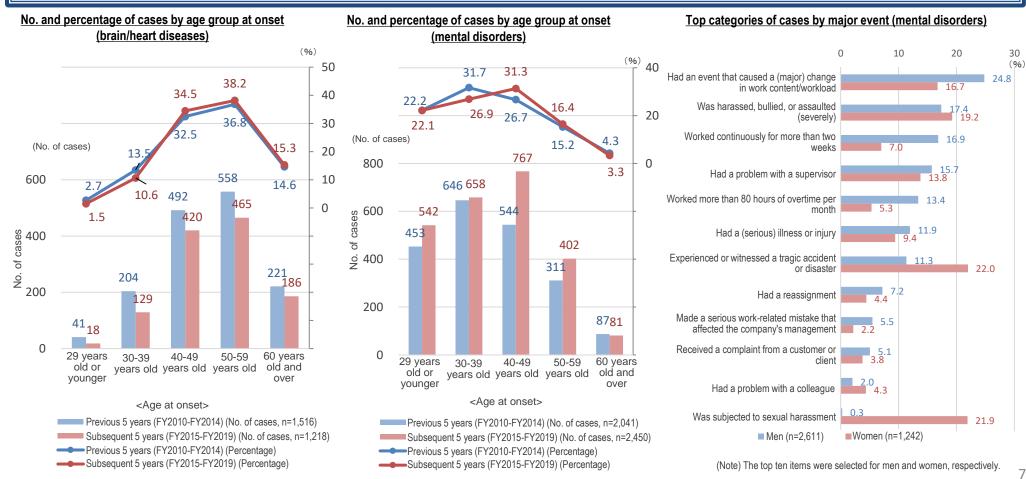




# Chapter 3 Survey and analysis results on karoshi, etc. 1 (1) Analysis of the cases of grant decision (approval) of workers' compensation benefits

(Source) Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders, based on "Comprehensive study for the current status and preventive strategies of overwork-related disorders in FY2021"

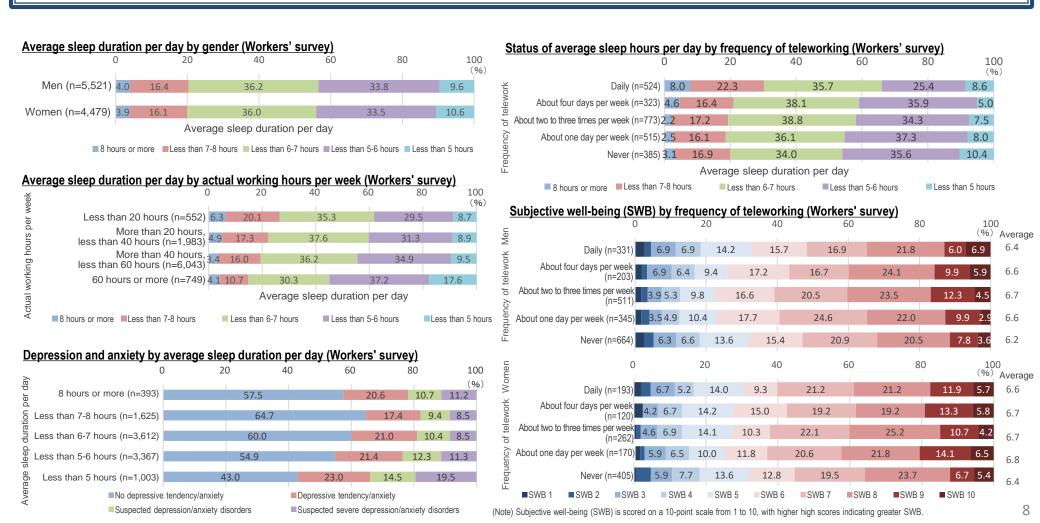
- The analysis focused on a comparison of the ten-year period from FY2010 to FY2019; the five-year period up to FY2014 and the five-year period after that.
  - (1) The number of cases of brain/heart diseases decreased in each age group at the time of onset. The proportion of cases decreased in the age groups of "29 and below" and "30-39."
  - For cases of mental disorders, the peak of the age group at onset shifted from "30-39" to "40-49." In particular, the increase in the "40-49" age group was significant. Regarding the percentage of incidents by major event, "Had an event that caused a (major) change in work content/workload" was higher among men, whereas "Experienced or witnessed a tragic accident or disaster" and "Was subjected to sexual harassment" were higher among women.



# Chapter 3 Survey and analysis results on karoshi, etc. 1 (2) Survey results of labor and social sectors (Questionnaire survey) 1)

(Source) Social Science and Occupational Health Research Group, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health based on "Labour and social survey and study for the current status of overwork-related disorders in FY2021"

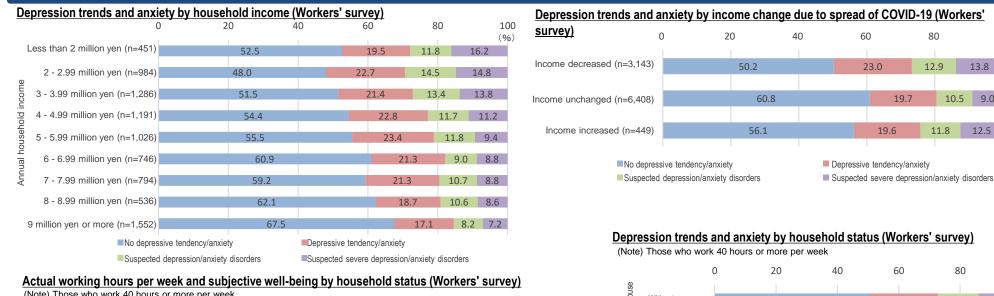
- No significant difference in average daily sleep duration by gender. As actual hours worked per week increased, sleep duration decreased. The percentage of those with depressive tendencies/anxiety was lowest among those who slept "fewer than 7-8 hours," whereas those with depressive tendencies/anxiety increased as sleep duration became shorter.
- As the frequency of teleworking increased, sleep duration increased. Subjective well-being was higher among both men and women who teleworked "about one day per week" or "two to three days per week" than among those who "never teleworked."



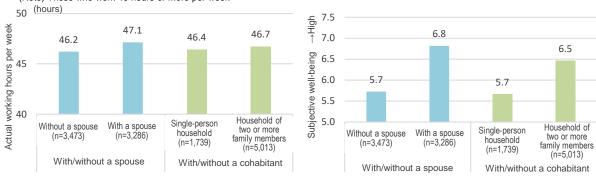
# Chapter 3 Survey and analysis results on karoshi, etc. 1 (2) Survey results of labor and social fields (Questionnaire survey) 2)

(Source) Social Science and Occupational Health Research Group. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health based on "Labour and social survey and study for the current status of overwork-related disorders in FY2021"

- The percentage of those with depression tendency/anxiety was generally higher in the group with lower annual household income. Also, about 30% of the respondents in the "income decreased" group were depressed or anxious due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the percentage of those with depression tendency/anxiety was higher than in the group whose income remained the same.
- By household status (with/without a spouse, with/without a cohabitant), the actual hours worked per week were similar; however, the "with a spouse" and "household of two or more family members" groups showed a higher percentage of subjective well-being and a lower percentage of those with depressive tendencies/anxiety.



(Note) Those who work 40 hours or more per week



100 (%) Without a spouse 13.1 14.1 (n=3,473)With a spouse 61.3 20.8 10.0 7.9 (n=3,286)20 100 (%) Single-person household 50.9 20.6 14.2 14.3 (n=1.739)Household of two or more 57.3 22.0 10.7 10.0 family members (n=5,013)No depressive tendency/anxiety ■ Depressive tendency/anxiety ■ Suspected depression/anxiety disorders ■ Suspected severe depression/anxiety disorders

100

13.8

9.0

12.5

12.9

11.8

10.5

19.7

(%)

### Chapter 3 Survey and analysis results on karoshi, etc.

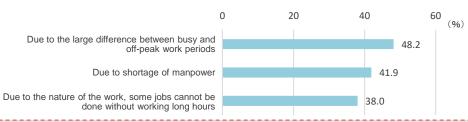
# 1 (3) (4) Survey results and analysis of priority industries and occupations (Construction and IT

industries)

(Source) Social Science and Occupational Health Research Group, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health based on "Labour and social survey and study for the current status of overwork-related disorders in FY2021"

- An interview survey was conducted to clarify the specific background of the reasons for overtime work in the construction and IT industries, as indicated by the results of the questionnaire survey.
  - (1) In both construction and IT industries, respondents indicated that contractors (clients) require overtime work due to the need to strictly adhere to deadlines and the risk of having to pay for delays in preceding work processes.
  - (2) In the IT industry, respondents indicated that sudden changes in specifications, etc., occur due to lack of understanding of the work process by the client.

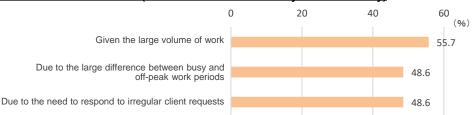
#### Reasons for overtime work (Construction industry/workers' survey)



#### [Examples of interview survey responses]

- Clients insist that deadlines are met.
- The delivery deadlines for public works projects and orders from major general contractors are concentrated at the end of the fiscal year, which is the closing period of accounting.
- Workers engaged in construction management work must complete reports, process control and other administrative work after returning to the office from the job site.

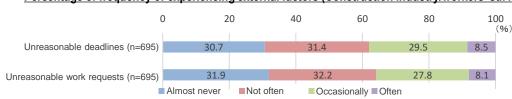
#### Reasons for overtime work (Information services industry/workers' survey)



#### [Examples of interview survey responses]

- Delivery date is prioritized, therefore as the delivery date approaches, the workload on workers increases, resulting in a shortage of manpower and overwork.
- Hardware comes first in product manufacturing and software is implemented at the end of the work process, which puts a strain on the software industry.
- Our clients require changes in conditions and specifications, but do not respond to changes in delivery dates.
- Few clients understand the work process.

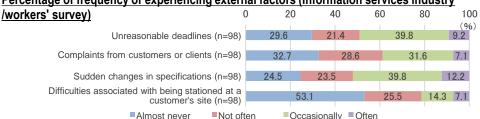
#### Percentage of frequency of experiencing external factors (Construction industry/workers' survey)



#### [Examples of interview survey responses]

- If the client is a government agency or municipality, due to a single-year budget, they
  require an unreasonable deadline so that the construction period does not exceed the
  fiscal year.
- If subsidies are received for educational facilities, etc., construction deadlines are always established.
- If the client is a general contractor, the contractor must strictly adhere to the overall
  construction schedule, even if other upstream companies or processes delay the schedule,
  meaning builders in later processes must pay for the delays.

## Percentage of frequency of experiencing external factors (Information services industry



#### [Examples of interview survey responses]

- For large companies, etc., postponement of new product release is prohibited, while delivery date is prioritized.
- The client has already decided on the handover (delivery date).
- The work process is often not understood and specification changes often occur with "a word from the top" from the client's management.

# [Column] Importance of the Quantity and Quality of Breaks for Workers to Recover from Fatigue

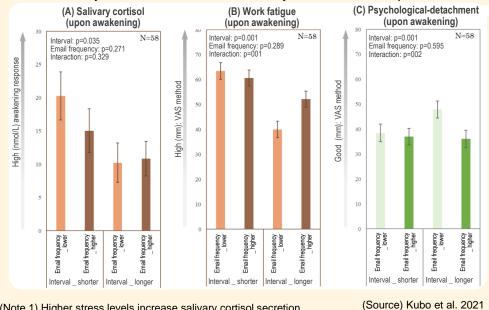
(Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health)

What is the opposite of work? I, as this column's author and a Senior Researcher, often ask this question to the participants at the beginning of my own lectures. In Japan, the most common answer given at all venues was "rest." Conversely, when I gave lectures in Europe, "play" was the most common answer, whereas no one answered "rest." I consider this difference to be very interesting when considering the work culture in Japan. In other words, since "work is tiring" in the minds of Japanese people, the answer "rest" probably comes to mind as the opposite word. Conversely, Europeans, who value their personal time, work with a clear distinction between "working for a living and taking off for pleasure," so they are likely to answer "play" more often.

Conventional industrial fatigue research assumes that workers recover from fatigue once leaving the workplace because they are free from work-related restraints. However, with the development of IT and communications equipment and the spread of telework due to COVID-19, workers are increasingly subject to psychological restraints caused by their work, even after they leave the workplace.

Over a period of one month, 58 IT workers were repeatedly measured for length of work-intervals, frequency of work emails outside of work hours and fatigue-related indicators. First, the secretion of salivary cortisol (a biomarker of stress) tended to be higher in the group with shorter work intervals (A), which can be considered a finding that reaffirms the importance of securing work-intervals.

Furthermore, when the work-interval is long (originally when the work-interval is short, the distance from work is not sufficiently secured and the effect of email frequency is less likely to appear), higher email frequency was found to carry over work fatigue (B, right) and decrease psychological-detachment (C, right), a finding that suggests the utility of the "right not to connect," the right to refuse work contact outside work hours.



(Note 1) Higher stress levels increase salivary cortisol secretion. (Source) Kubo et al. 202 (Note 2) Psychological detachment: Being psychologically detached from one's work.

As information and communication technology develops, the number of work styles blurring the line between on-work and off-work is

As information and communication technology develops, the number of work styles blurring the line between on-work and off-work is likely to increase even more in future. It will thus be crucial to ensure, through organizational and individual efforts, an environment in which employees can not only physically leave work, but also psychologically leave the restraints of work.

# Chapter 4 Status of implementation of measures to prevent karoshi, etc.

#### 1 Measures taken by labor administrative agencies, etc.

#### Thoroughly implementing measures to reduce long work hours

> Thoroughly supervising and instructing companies suspected of working overtime exceeding 80 hours per month

Taking measures to prevent health problems caused by overwork, as well as measures for mental health and prevention of harassment

2 Survey and research, etc.

\* Results are shown in Chapter 3.



(Poster for enlightenment month of karoshi prevention)

#### 3 Enlightenment

Disseminating and enlightening through various media, including posters, pamphlets and social networking services (SNS)

Disseminating information and enlightening students at universities, high schools, etc. about labor-related laws and regulations, etc.

#### Promoting the introduction of the work-interval system

Promoting the introduction of the work-interval system by using the "Manual for Introduction and Operation of Work-Interval Systems," holding symposiums and utilizing subsidies

Encouraging companies to review their work styles and promoting the use of annual paid leave

Disseminating information and enlightening the public about mental health measures

#### Disseminating information and enlightening the public to prevent workplace harassment

Preparing a "Corporate Manual on Measures against Customer Harassment," leaflets and enlightenment posters in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies, as part of measures to prevent terrible nuisance behaviors from customers (so-called customer harassment)

#### Responding to telework and other new work approaches in the living with- and post-COVID Era

Promoting the spread of high-quality telework, improving the environment for side/concurrent jobs and creating a safe working environment for freelancers

Promoting efforts based on business practices, work environment, etc.

Promoting efforts for young workers, elderly workers, workers with disabilities, etc.

Disseminating information and enlightening public employees



(Corporate Manual on Measures against Customer Harassment)

# Chapter 4 Status of implementation of measures to prevent karoshi, etc.

#### 4 Improvement of consultation system, etc.

#### Establishing consultation services for working conditions and health care

- Providing consultations on working conditions, such as illegal overtime work, through the "Labour Standards Advice Hotline" (free telephone consultation service on weekdays, nights, weekends and holidays)
- Providing consultation on mental health issues and health problems caused by overwork via SNS, email and telephone at "Kokoro-no-mimi" (Ear of mind), a portal site for workers' mental health
- Providing consultation services for workers who have problems with harassment at the "Harassment Counseling Room"
- Providing consultation services on problems between freelancers and clients through "Freelance Problems Dial 110"

# 

("Kokoro-no-mimi (Ear of mind)" poster)

#### Establishing a consultation system for public employees, etc.

- Establishing a "Counseling Room For Mental Health" for national public employees (online counseling will be available from FY2022), which can be used by employees and family members of each ministry and agency; a "Counseling Room for Mental Health-Related Return to Work" where specialist physicians provide consultation on returning to work and preventing recurrence of mental health problems among employees who have taken long-term sick leave due to mental health issues
- Providing local public employees with free health counseling by telephone at the Mutual Aid Association of Prefectural Government Personnel. Also, in cooperation with the Japan Local Government Employee Safety & Health Association, establishing a free consultation service at the Fund for Local Government Employees' Accident Compensation for employees of local governments and other organizations overseeing measures for mental health

#### 5 Support for private organizations' activities

#### Organizing symposiums on promotion of prevention measures for karoshi, etc.

In cooperation with private organizations such as the National Center for Preventing Karoshi, the National Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi and the National Defense Counsel for Victims of KAROSHI, organizing symposiums on promotion of prevention measures for karoshi, etc. by the national government in all prefectures (48 symposiums)

#### Organizing exchange programs for the bereaved children from karoshi

In cooperation with the National Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi, heal the physical and mental health of the bereaved children through the event and hold a social event for the bereaved children and their guardians to provide counseling, etc.



(Posters of symposiums on promotion of prevention measures for karoshi, etc.)

1	Examples of corrective actions at workplaces with long work hours Inspection Division, Labour Standards Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
2	Physical fitness science research at the Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders  [Contribution] Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
3	To improve the working environment for people working in the arts and entertainment industries [Contribution] Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
4	The Union's efforts on "Zero Karoshi, etc." [Contribution] Japanese Trade Union Confederation
5	Keidanren's efforts to promote work-style reform [Contribution] Japan Business Federation (Keidanren)
6	Dispatching bereaved families of karoshi victims and experts on labor issues as lecturers to schools - In 2021, the sixth year of the program, 16,705 students participated in the 196th session - [Contribution] Yutaka Iwaki, Executive Director, National Center for Preventing Karoshi
7	[Efforts by Companies] Case studies of work-style reforms that have led to reductions in long work hours -Kit Seiko Corporation-
8	Importance of the quantity and quality of breaks for workers to recover from fatigue [Contribution] Tomohide Kubo, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Overwork-Related Disorders, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
9	[Efforts by Companies] A case study of measures for mental health by active involvement of industrial physicians -SAEILO JAPAN, INC
10	[Efforts by Companies] Aiming to establish a telework environment where workers can engage in telework with confidence -CADCAM Co., Ltd
11	[Efforts by Companies] Case study of work-style reforms related to car drivers and the establishment of a work promotion system that takes advantage of the characteristics of workers -CX Cargo Co., Ltd
12	[Efforts by Companies] Case study of the development of a work environment that takes into account the needs of people with disabilities -JOB SUPPORT POWER CO., LTD
13	"Kokoro-no-mimi (Ear of mind)," a portal site for workers' mental health Industrial Health Division, Industrial Safety and Health Department, Labour Standards Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
14	Report on the overall symposiums on promotion of prevention measures for karoshi, etc. and Tokyo Central Venue  [Contribution] Kazunari Tamaki, Executive Director, National Defense Counsel for Victims of KAROSHI
15	FY2021 Exchange programs for the bereaved children from karoshi -Exchange programs for the bereaved children from karoshi and their parents in Shiga Prefecture- [Contribution] National Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi Shinobu Watanabe, Coordinator, Exchange Group for Bereaved Children from Karoshi
16	Efforts of the National Defense Counsel for Victims of KAROSHI (KAROSHI Hotline National Network)  [Contribution] Lawyer, Executive Director, Hiroshi Kawahito, National Defense Counsel for Victims of KAROSHI
17	Association for Bereaved Families - Efforts to deal with occupational accidents for public employees -  [Contribution] National Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi In charge of occupational accidents for public employees: Shoko Kudo
18	Introduction of Association for Bereaved Families of Karoshi Victims [Contribution] Hokkaido Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi, Yuriko Murayama; Yamanashi Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi, Yoshihito Fukazawa; Osaka Association of Bereaved Families for Examining Karoshi, Yoshie Nishioka
19	Japan Society for Karoshi Research [Contribution] Kenichi Kuroda, Professor Emeritus of Meiji University, Representative Director, Japan Society for Karoshi Research