

Chapter 2

Promotion of Employment and Labour Measures that Respect Working People

Section 1. Support for People to Overcome Difficulties and Seek Reemployment and Stable Employment

1. Creation of “Emergency Human Resource Development and Employment Support Fund”

Amid the recent deteriorating employment/unemployment situation, there is a concern about prolonged period of unemployment for non-regular workers who were forced to leave their jobs due to employment adjustment or other reasons. Accordingly, the FY 2009 Supplementary Budget is allocated to creation of “Emergency Human Resource Development and Employment Support Fund” to comprehensively support vocational training, reemployment and daily-lives for non-recipients of employment insurance benefits for three years by the end of FY 2011.

More specifically, vocational training will be provided for 350,000 non-recipients of employment insurance benefits during three years. In addition, “Training and Daily-Life Support Benefit” will be provided to guarantee the livelihood of people under vocational training through encouragement from Hello Work, etc. and meet the requirements such as a) family’s principal breadwinner b) household annual income lower than a certain level.

Furthermore, reemployment support for those seeking job in inexperienced field through employment for the purpose of training or work-experience tour, reemployment support for the long-term unemployed, and reemployment as well as housing-and daily life support for those having trouble finding a job due to the loss of their homes.

2. Promotion of Public Job Training

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Employment and Human Resource

Development Organization of Japan, and prefectures have been establishing and operating public facilities for vocational capability development in order to providing a) training for job losers to facilitate their reemployment by providing job seekers with skills and knowledge required for new jobs, b) training for employees to provide them with high-level skills and knowledge required to cope with technological innovation and changing industrial structure, and c) relatively long-period training for graduates of junior and senior high schools to develop young skilled workers by providing them with skills and knowledge required for their jobs.

In FY 2008, in addition to the original plans, in order to stop the worsening economy from exerting an increasingly adverse effect on the employment situation, the government provided additional training for job losers in areas facing particularly severe employment/unemployment situations in the form of private education and training institutions. Public job trainings were provided to the total of 254,000 persons consisting of 132,000 job losers, 102,000 employees, and 20,000 new school graduates (preliminary number). With regard to training for job losers, after providing career consulting, the best course are being selected taken into account each jobseeker's desire, ability and qualifications. In addition to training at public facilities for vocational capability development, the opportunities for training to satisfy diverse needs for human resources has been provided by making the best use of private education and training institutions including special training schools, universities, graduate schools, specified nonprofit corporations, and companies seeking workers. Commissioned training programs have been provided to 92,000 persons among 132,000 job losers (preliminary number).

3. Support for Job Losers Who Have Lost Home

Amid the recent slowing economy around the world, dismissal or employer's refusal to renew employment contract of dispatched workers or contracted workers have been increasing especially in the automobile industry and other manufacturing industries across the country. In accordance with this trend, some job losers have lost their homes, for instance by being forced to leave from their corporate dormitories. The existence of unstable workers has been pointed out, who have lost

their homes and stay overnight at Internet cafe, etc. Once they lose their homes, they will have trouble finding a new job and reemployment to a stable job. Hence, it is necessary to secure their homes immediately in order to support their reemployment.

Accordingly, since December 2008, the loan to finance housing-related moving-in startup costs has been provided to secure their homes and stable employment.

Moreover, housing support benefits for job losers was created in February 2009 to support employers that continuously provide housings or pay housing expenses for dispatched workers and period contract workers after losing their jobs.

4. Support for Dispatched Workers and Non-Regular Workers

Securing stable employment of dispatched workers has become an important issue, and as measures for so called “2009 Problem”, employers might refuse to renew their employment of dispatched workers when the contract expires because of difficulty in direct employment despite the demand for workers. Then, dispatched workers might lose their jobs. Accordingly, as the temporary measures until FY 2011, “Special Grant to Stable the Employment of Dispatched Workers” was established to provide subsidies to an employer, who directly hires dispatched workers before the termination of dispatch contract. The system aims to reduce the impact on the employment of dispatched workers and contribute to stable employment.

As for the measures for non-regular workers, a “Non-Regular Worker Employment Support Center” has been established in urban areas where non-regular workers are concentrated (Hokkai-do, Tokyo, Aichi, Osaka, and Fukuoka), and “Non-Regular Worker Employment Support Corner” has been created at Hello Work in the prefectures which do not have the Support Center. In accordance with the needs and abilities of job seekers, various supports have been provided by counselors in charge through one-stop assistance services, including attentive employment support, housing and daily life support, and consultation for dispatched workers about direct employment at the companies accepting dispatched workers.

In addition, to help daily dispatched workers to find secure jobs, special counseling desk has been provided at Hello Work to offer supports for stable employment

through consistent and attentive career counseling by counselors in charge, job placement services, and trial employment, and to implement post-placement guidance for job retention.

5. Support to SMEs that hire people having trouble finding a job

As the employment measures for those having trouble in finding a new job, such as the elderly or the people with disabilities, efforts have been made to expand employment opportunities for these people through providing the employers who hire these workers with introduction by a public job placement office, etc. with the Subsidies for Specialized Employment Applicants for Developing Employment (Subsidies for SEADE) to subsidize part of the wages paid by the employers. There has been a concern that the economic crisis in the world started in 2008 and other factors might lower the willingness of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to hire workers having trouble in finding a new job because SMEs' corporate strength is weaker than that of large companies. Accordingly, since February 2009, the measure has been taken to increase the amount of the subsidies for SMEs to employ workers having trouble in finding a job by 50 percent.

6. Measures Taken by Standards Administration Under the Severe Economic Conditions

Under the severe economic/employment conditions, employment adjustment and dismissal have been made targeting so-called non-regular workers including dispatched workers and period contract workers. In addition, reporting and asking advices to the Labor Standards Supervision Office have also been on the increase and the environments surrounding corporations has becoming severer. Under any economic conditions, working conditions stipulated by the laws such as the Labour Standards Act should be secured. In addition, because dismissal or refusal to renew employment contract and downgrading working conditions will cause significant impacts on the workers' lives, it is important to properly handle these matters taken into account the Labor Contract Act, and the court cases, etc.

For this end, a regional labour bureaus in each prefecture and the labour standards supervision offices have been¹ implemented enlightenment and guidance at every possible opportunity with use of brochures in order to enforce compliance with the Labor Standards Act and to make sure that these matters are properly handled by referring to the Labour Contract Act and court cases; a) established special consultation desks at the labour standards supervision offices across the country in order to provide attentive consultation services to workers and employers; and b) explained employers that execute massive layoffs to carefully consider the ways other than dismissal and at the same time, provided guidance about compliance with regulations .

In order to enforce the Labour Standards Act, especially concerning prior notice of dismissal and payment of wages/retirement allowances, extensive guidance and supervision have been provided to the employers that violate the Labour Standards Act.

In addition, with the aim of giving relief to workers who were dismissed without receiving their wages due to bankruptcy, a system to pay unpaid wages on behalf of employers has been promptly and properly operated, while paying attention to preventing fraudulent recipients.

Section 2. Creation of the Job-Card system

1. Overview of the Job-Card System

There is a need for creating a society where everybody has the opportunity to develop their skills and display their abilities. With regard to people that graduated from educational institutions during the so-called “job-finding ice age”, women who finished raising children and mothers of lone parent families, quite a few of them failed to become regular workers and have to remain as non-regular workers.

The Job-Card system targets these job-hopping part-timers (Freeters), women who finished raising children, and mothers of lone parent families, who are limited opportunities for vocational ability development. The system is designed to be used for job hunting activities and career development through:

- a) Enlightening awareness and identification of problems in developing careers through using a Job-Card and providing attentive career counseling;
- b) Providing practical vocational training combining practical training in a corporate site and classroom lectures at education and training institutions (vocational ability development program); and
- c) Compiling after-training evaluation of their vocational abilities and other information including their employment record .

This system is expected to help these people to raise awareness of their own career development, and thus promote their obtaining stable employment by improving their abilities.

1) Career Counseling with Use of Job-Card

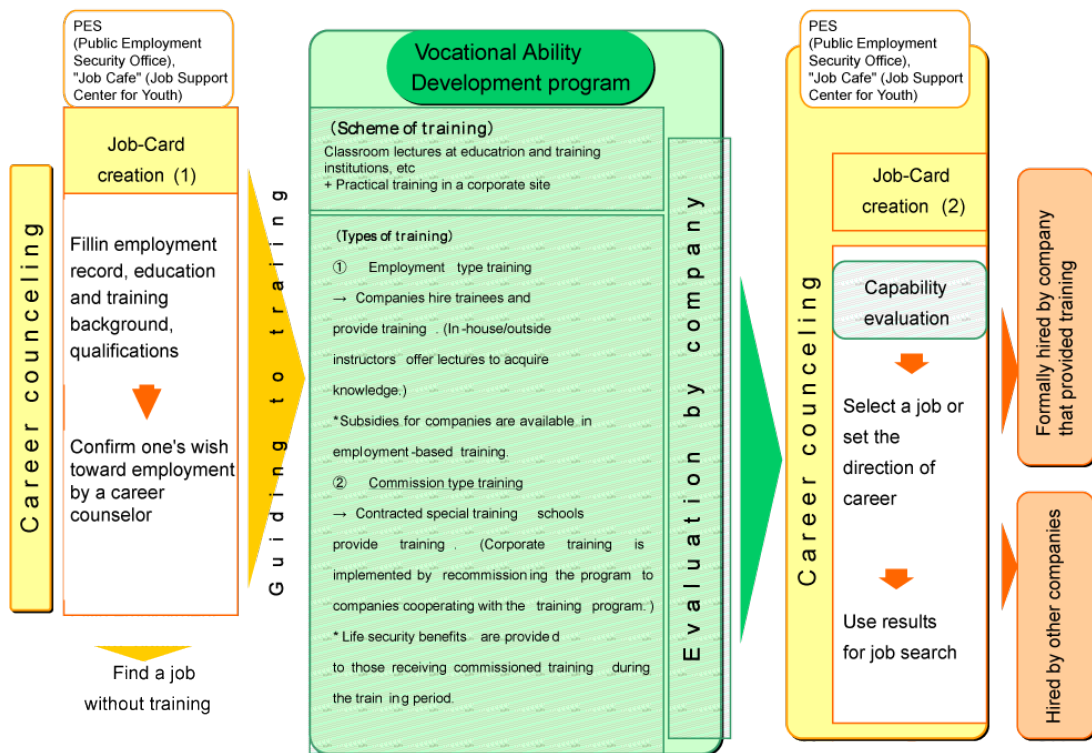
A Job-Card consists of following 6 files: overview table, employment record, education and training background ,certificates qualifications, career sheet and evaluation sheet. This system is a useful tool to prepare résumé for job hunting activity, and support career development.

A Job-Card can be prepared after filling out the form, receiving career counseling at Hello Work or Job Café, etc. and summarize one’s strengths such as qualifications and abilities as well as challenges.

During this career counseling, when the people is judged to require practical vocational training in order to find a stable employment, he or she will be introduced to take vocational ability development program after going through selection.

A Job-Card can be issued by career consultants (registered career consultants), who took the Job-Card seminar to learn the methods of career counseling with use of Job-Card, etc. Through this seminar, registered career consultants are nurtured.

Figure 2-2-1 Overview of the Job Card system



2) Vocational Ability Development program

Practical vocational training under the system of Job-Card consists of employment type training in which companies hire trainees and provide training and commission type training in which contracted private training schools provide public job training.

Employment type training is made up of:

- a) the fixed-term on-the-job training program : practical training for three to six months designed for the workers without sufficient experience as full-time

employees, including freeters; and

- b) practical human resource development system: training for six months to two years designed mainly for new school graduates in order to develop core workers at workplaces.

Trainees can participate in the training program while receiving wages from the trainee companies. This training is also useful to convert part-time workers into full-time employees.

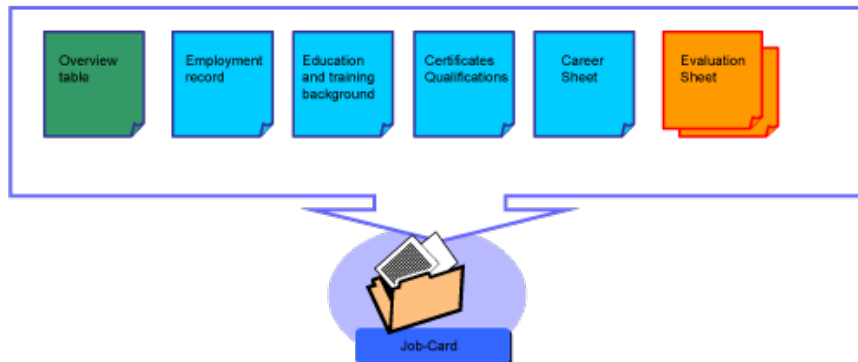
The trainee companies can receive subsidy called the Career Development Promotion Grants.

Commission type training consists of:

- c) the Japanese Dual System: training commissioned to contracted private training schools for three to four months targeting freeters and women who finished raising children; and
- d) the training system based on corporate on-the-job training: training for three to four months for old freeters to experience corporate on-the-job training prior to necessary follow-up training.

With regard to the training system based on corporate on-the-job training, trainees can participate in the program without anxiety because life security benefits are provided to trainees even if they cannot receive employment insurance benefits.

Figure 2-2-2 Details and targets of the Job-Card



Call whole file "Job - Card"
It is created on the occasion of career counseling through confirmation and recording by the career counselor.

Those who have completed the vocational capability development program will receive an "Evaluation Sheet."

3) Evaluation after Training

After completing vocational ability development program, a trainee company issues an evaluation sheet. This sheet is prepared by each trainee company based on the vocational capability evaluation standards developed by the government for each industry and occupation or the model evaluation sheet based on this standards, and objectively indicates the knowledge and skills that the trainee acquired during the program. In addition, the model curriculum has been prepared, which is useful for trainee companies to develop training implementation planning in advance.

2. Diffusion and Promotion of a System of Job-Card

It is necessary to diffuse the system and increase the number of companies to participate in the training programs for the purpose of offering stable employment to as many people as possible with use of the Job-Card system. Accordingly, a regional Job-Card center (support center) was established at the chambers of commerce across the country. Efforts are actively being made to diffuse and

promote the system in cooperation with Hello Work and the Employment and Human Resources Development Organization of Japan.

Diffusion and promotion of this system has been implemented in close collaboration among related organizations, including regional Job-Card center in each prefecture working as the administrative body, and through “Operational Headquarters of Regional Job-Card” established with participation from labor-management organizations, the labour departments, prefectures (departments of vocational capability development, the boards of educations, and welfare-related departments), and education and training institutions.

Efforts will be continued to actively diffuse and promote the Job-Card system so that it will be firmly established in our society.

Section 3. Support for Securing Human Resources for Small- and Medium Enterprises and Promotion of "Nation founded on Manufacturing"

1. Support for Human Resources and Expansion of Employment Measures aiming at Enhancing Productivity of Small and Medium Enterprises

The current national employment/unemployment situation has been severe across the country, while regional differences still remain with some regions lagging in terms of improvement. In order to cope with these situations as the medium- and long-term issues, it is necessary to take community-based voluntary measures in a creative manner to create employment in the future, while urgently remedy the current shortage of employment opportunities for the time being.

(1) Medium- and Long-term Measures for Local Employment

In partnership with prefectures and related organizations, support for starting business, etc. has been implemented through establishment of subsidies as of special measure for support business operators starting businesses in important fields in regions where the employment/unemployment situation is not improving as expected (21 prefectures), and subsidies for promotion of local employment development for the approved employment development promotion regions (Incentive for employment of local job seekers since April 2009).

In order to create local employment, concerned local parties should take voluntary measures for employment creation in a creative manner. Accordingly, with the aim of further promoting employment creation properly by developing the core of regional revitalization, efforts are being made to further expand "local employment creation promotion programs (New package program)". At the same time, to more effectively create employment, local employment creation realization program and incentives for employment creation and pioneering start-up are being utilized.

(2) Securing the Emergency Local Job Creation

In the FY 2008 secondary budget, the subsidies were created; and based on which, the funds were set up in prefectures to implement the program for job creation.

More concretely, following funds were created: “Hometown Employment Revitalization Special Grant (250 billion yen) to support stable employment creation for local job seekers; and “Creating the Emergency Job Creation Program” (150 billion yen) to support the efforts to create temporary employment/job opportunities for non-regular workers who were forced to lose their jobs or job losers mainly of middle-aged and older people. These funds are expected to help to create employment for 250,000 people for three years. The Emergency Job Creation Program was amplified in the FY 2009 supplementary budget (300 billion yen) aiming at strengthening local job creation.

(3) Promotion Programs to Secure Human Resources for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been played the role to stimulate the Japanese economy and create employment. In order to secure SME’s workforces and create employment opportunities, support has been implemented for the efforts to secure and develop human resources of SMEs, and retain them at workplace, and measures to improve their employment management have been taken. Furthermore, amid shrinking population, enhancement of SME’s productivity has become an urgent issue.

In consideration to such situations, in FY 2008, the measures for enhancing employment environments which will contribute to productivity improvement and for securing human resources such as hiring workers were promoted. The measures were also taken to improve support projects for SMEs to implement vocational capability development. The overview of the new measures is as follows.

1) Payment of Grant for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises to Realize Capabilities of Human Resources

SMEs which in particular in need of productivity improvement are subsidized when they improve productivity by enhancing their employees’ vocational capabilities, improve employment environments by exploiting IT to retain their employees, and hire new employees.

2) Subsidies for Securing Core Human Resources for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

In addition to the conventional subsidies related to foundation of business and entering into a different industry, subsidies will be paid when core human resources are newly employed for the purpose of improving productivity.

3) Subsidies for Employment Creation and Human Resource Development for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

Higher subsidy rate will be applied when small-sized business operators in particular among small- and medium-sized enterprises pay costs and wages required to provide vocational training, etc. to their employees.

(4) Maintaining Employment of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

When employers have no choice but to scale down their business operations, due to economic reasons, such as business cycle fluctuation and changes in the industrial structures, in order to prevent unemployment and stabilize employment, the Employment Adjustment Subsidy has been paid to support the employers who provide their employees with a temporary suspension of business operations, or education/training. In December 12, 2008, the Immediate Employment Security Subsidy for SMEs was established to maintain employment of SMEs by expanding supports through relaxation of requirement for the payment of the conventional Employment Adjustment Subsidy and increase in subsidy rates for SMEs, which need additional supports.

Furthermore, in March 2009, the Immediate Employment Security Subsidy for SMEs was created to provide subsidies for employers who maintain their employment by reducing overtime.

After the establishments of the Employment Adjustment Subsidy and the Immediate Employment Security Subsidy for SMEs, following revisions were made:

- relaxation of production volume requirement;
- elimination of requirement for scale of suspension, etc.;
- elimination of waiting period;

- increase in limit to the number of days of payment;
- additional application of short-time suspension by individual workers on an hourly basis (special short-time suspension);
- expansion of the eligible workers: all those who are covered by employment insurance, regardless of the duration of the insured period;
- increase in the subsidy rates for employers avoiding dismissal of their current employees to maintain employment
- increase in education /training subsidies targeting large firms (from 1,200 yen to 4,000 yen); and
- increasing in the subsidy rate for people with disabilities for their suspension of business operations/loan to other firms

As a result, the use of the Employment Adjustment Subsidy and the Immediate Employment Security Subsidy for SMEs have been rapidly expanding; By March 2008, 46,558 implementation plans for suspension of business operations, etc. were received, and the eligible people totaled 2,379,069.

(5) Implementation of Joint Employment Support Projects by National and Prefectural Governments

In 21 prefectures facing severe employment/unemployment situations, “Regional Joint Employment Support Center” was established to offer lectures, job interview sessions and work-experience tours in close collaboration with the career counseling and placement services provided by the central government and original employment measures of prefectural governments.

2. Promotion of a “Nation founded on Manufacturing”

(1) Reinforcement of Skills Competitions

Efforts are being made to provide skilled workers with the goals to improve their skills, broaden the base and enhance social recognition of skilled workers through holding various types of skills competitions; and at the same time, to deeply disseminate attractiveness and importance of manufacturing skills in every layer of people, especially young people, and to develop a sentiment that respects

manufacturing skills. In FY 2008, following three events took place.

1) Youth Monozukuri Skills Competition

Youth Monozukuri Skills Competition has been held for those aged 20 or younger, who are currently leaning skills at a public institution for vocational capability development, an accredited vocational training institution, or a technical high school. In August 2008, the 3rd Competition was held in Sagami-hara City, Kanagawa Prefecture, and Kodaira City, Tokyo. In this competition, 208 participants in 14 categories competed for their skills.

2) National Skills Competition

The National Skills Competition has been held for young skilled workers aged 23 or younger to compete for the highest skill level in Japan. In October and November, the 46th National Skills Competition was held mainly in Chiba City in Chiba Prefecture with the 953 participants in 39 categories to compete for their skill proficiency.

3) Skills Grand Prix

Skills Grand Prix has been held for extremely highly-skilled workers with 1st grade (including non-classified grades) of National Trade Skill to compete for the highest skill proficiency in Japan. In March 2009, the 25th Grand Prix was held mainly in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture, where 554 in people in 31 categories participated to compete their skills.

(2) Promotion of Enlightening Importance of Skills and Manufacturing

1) Project to Disseminate the Results of “International Skills Festival for All, Japan 2007”

The project is designed to raise awareness of “Monozukuri (manufacturing)” and “skills” among young people such as junior and senior high school students in order to further develop a sentiment that respect manufacturing skills, which was enhanced through “International Skills Festival for All, Japan 2007” and to promote the understanding of manufacturing and skills. At the same time, the project also

aims to actively offer community-based opportunities for manufacturing and to enlighten attractiveness and importance of manufacturing.

Booklets and DVDs which compiled the outstanding results of the participants for “International Skills Festival for All, Japan 2007” were produced and 18,000 copies were distributed mainly to junior high school and industrial high school. In addition, in order to provide the opportunity to experience skills, which can hardly available in daily life and to make them more familiar, the manufacturing-related events were organized. For instance, the National Skills Competition medalists gave live performance and talk show, and also instructed at skills experience at the events held at their alma maters or in the community.

2) Promotion of Manufacturing Experience through Opening of Factories/Training Institutions

Efforts have been made to develop a society familiar with manufacturing through the establishment of “manufacturing experience promotion councils” in each prefecture which comprise economic organizations, trade organizations, and enterprise, and opening factories/training institutions to public to provide young people with opportunities to experience manufacturing.

(3) Skill Succession Exploiting Group of Skilled Workers including the Baby-Boom Generation

The skilled workers of the baby-boom generation that have been such support at manufacturing workplace with their expert skills and know-how are in the process of retiring. Maintenance and succession of proficient skills have become serious issues since those skills are indispensable for manufacturing high-precision products and developing new products.

Nevertheless, many companies, small- and medium-sized enterprises in particular, have not taken necessary measures. Instead, they are only temporarily coping with the current situation. If the issue of passing along proficient skills remains unsolved, it might lead to the loss of skilled workers’ proficient skills and decline of Japan as a nation founded on manufacturing.

Hence, following measures were implemented to maintain and succeed excellent

skills and to strengthen the foundation for manufacturing.

1) Promotion of Registration of Skilled Workers and the Project to Utilize the Registration System

The database was made to store information on skilled workers with instruction ability such as highly-skilled workers, and “Comprehensive Network for Utilizing Proficient Skills” was developed to compile various information on skill successions. Highly-skilled workers, who are registered with “Comprehensive Network for Utilizing Proficient Skills” are dispatched in order to support small- and medium-sized enterprises for their skills succession and development of young skilled workers.

2) Information and Consultations being Available to Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

Information and consultations regarding the succession of skills and human resource development are being made available at “skills succession support centers”, established in each prefecture, to any small- and medium-sized enterprises that are lagging with their succession of skills.

Section 4. Stabilizing Employment and Lives of Young People and Improving their Motivation to Work

With regard to employment situation of young people, it has been improving. For instance, the unemployment rate of those aged 24 or younger peaked in 2003 and then started decreasing. The unemployment rate of job-hopping part-timers (“freeters”) has been decreasing for the 5 consecutive years since 2003 when the number of unemployed freeters peaked at 2,170 thousand. However, there are still many issues to face such that many of those who have engaged in job seeking activities during the so-called “job-finding ice age”, a period when the employment situation for new graduates were extremely severe, failed to become regular workers and became freeters (long-term freeters aged 25 to 34) and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Moreover, those who could not find full-time position during “job-finding ice age” are now becoming in their mid-thirties. Therefore, it is necessary to stabilize their employment immediately. For this end, ‘promotion of “New Strategies for Employment”’ established in the “2008 Basic Policies for Economic and Fiscal Reform” has been implemented aiming at turning a million young people into regular workers in three years, and various measures including the “Regular Employment Plan for Freeters” has been actively promoted.

Furthermore, due to the serious economic crisis started in the latter half of 2008 has been deteriorating employment situation for new school graduates, causing corporate withdrawal of employment offers to new school graduates. Measures such as guidance to corporations to prevent withdrawal of their employment offers, and employment support for school graduates who are still unable to find a job are being strengthened.

These initiatives aim to create a society where the young people who will lead the future of Japan work satisfactorily without anxiety and fully display their motivation and abilities.

1. Promotion of the “Regular Employment Plan for Freeters”

In FY 2008, about 268,000 freeteres (preliminary number) obtained full-time

position as a result of implementation of various measures as follows in the most effective and efficient manner along with support from Hello Work.

(1) Implementation of Regular Employment Support for Older Freeters

1) Implementation of a regular employment support for freeters at Hello Work

In order to support freeters who wish to be employed as regular workers, special counters have been established at Hello Work to provide continuous support for regular employment including by providing consultations and guidance on job search, supplying information on job openings, holding job interview sessions, implementing career counseling and placement services, as well as guidance on adaptation to workplaces after being employed.

Furthermore, a regular employment support for old freeters has been implemented through starting Job Meetings to provide opportunities for mock interviews, etc. with HR personnel from SMEs, and also increasing the sites to hold seminars and group work, etc. under the “Job Club” scheme.

2) Implementation of fine-tuned employment support at Job Cafes

As voluntary local measures, one-stop service centers (Job Cafes) can be established by prefectures to provide continuous employment support for young people from counseling through to training. On request from prefectures, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare sets up a Hello Work next door to a Job Café to provide placement services. In addition, programs such as holding presentation sessions for enterprises and various seminars (community-linked programs for young people) are being entrusted. Efforts are being made to facilitate effective employment support according to the actual situation in the region through supporting measures for prefectures in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

In FY 2008, Job Cafés were opened at 87 locations in 46 prefectures. Hello Works were set up next door to Job Cafés in 40 prefectures. A total of 1.67 million people visited Job Cafés with 85,000 gaining employment in FY 2008. These figures clearly indicate that the Job Cafés have been successful.

3) Employment Promotion based on Subsidy programs such as the Youth Trial

Employment System

Trial employment programs for young people are being implemented to support enterprises that offer short-term trial employment to unemployed young people, including freeters and never employed graduates, with regular employment afterwards. In the FY 2008 first supplementary budget, the eligible age was extended from below 35 to below 40. In FY 2008, 79.4% of 37,605 people who had completed their trial employment were employed as regular workers. This program has been contributing to the promotion of stable employment of young people.

In the FY 2008 second supplementary budget, the Special Grant to Promote Regular Employment was established, aiming at intensively securing job opportunities for older freeters, etc. (ages 25-39) in the next 3 years by offering a Special Grant to Promote Regular Employment among the Youth (1 million yen per person for SMEs; 0.5 million yen for large firms) to employers actively hiring older freeters, etc. as regular employees.

(2) Enhancement of Corporate Functions for Familiarization, Public Relations and Consultations Concerning Expansion of Job Application Opportunities for the Youth

Based on the “Employment Measures Law” and the “Guidelines for Proper Implementation of Measures to Secure Employment Opportunities for Young People by Business Operators”, efforts are being made to thoroughly inform and provide guidance to employers about expanding job application opportunities for the youth; to supply employers collection and analysis of best practices by corporations, etc.; and to enhance counseling services for employers who are taking measures to increase job application opportunities in cooperation with organizations of business owners.

(3) Support for Vocational Capability Development for Young Job Seekers

1) Promotion of “Dual System in Japanese Style”

The government has been promoting the introduction of a Dual Japanese Style System for use in developing professional workers through programs that integrate practical workplace training with classroom training at vocational schools. This

system aims to give young people the opportunity to acquire practical competence that will satisfy the advanced needs of businesses as well as prevent them from becoming job-hopping part-timers or unemployed.

Concerning the number of people who took these programs in FY 2008, approximately 33,000 people (preliminary number) received training at entrusted private education/training institutions and about 400 people (preliminary number) participated in training with special curriculums and regular training.

2) Establishment of a Self-Support Ability Development System for Older Freeters

A training system is being implemented where on-the-job training is initially provided, follow-up training as required, and ability evaluations made by recipient enterprises at the end of training. In addition, measures to turn older freeters into regular workers are being strengthened through promoting a “Self-Support Ability Development System for Older Freeters” in developing and implementing training courses in line with industry’s requirements for employment.

3) Implementation of Programs for Non-Regular Workers, etc. that Serve as a Bridge to Practical Job Training

Basic and introductory training programs that serve as a bridge to practical job training has been provided to those who do not have sufficient working experience and lack in opportunity for vocational capability development if they have difficulty in immediately receiving practical job training, etc.

2. Community-based Support for Challenges of Young People who Need Assistance

(1) Expansion of the Project of “Local Youth Support Stations”

In order to help support the self-sufficiency of young people such as NEETs, comprehensive support including motivating them to work and social adjustment is required in addition to basic human resource development. That support needs to be implemented continuously in accordance to the individual situation.

In consideration of this, in partnership with local authorities, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare established a network comprising the organizations to support young people in community. To provide core services for the network, “community youth support stations” was established, and since FY 2006, the Ministry has been implementing community youth support station project to offer various menu for employment support. In FY 2008, the number of locations was increased to 77, and efforts were made to expand the project for instance by implementing three model program projects including outreach services to directly support people I need by visiting them.

In FY 2009, the number of locations was increased to 92, network functions with local authorities and educational institutions, etc. are being enhanced, and the “any-time and anywhere support model project” has been implemented to actively encourage young people and their guardians.

(2) Implementation of “Youth independence private school” programs

The “Youth independence private school” programs started in FY 2005 at 20 locations nationwide to help young people who have lost the confidence to work for various reasons with employment through camp-style workshops that provide training in daily living and work experience to acquire the confidence and motivation to work again. Support activities through this program were implemented for improving young people’s self-sufficiency in employment at 25 locations in FY 2006 and 30 locations in FY 2007.

(3) The Minister’s Award for organizations successful in self-sufficiency support for young people

The Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Award is awarded to organizations or individuals with remarkable achievements in realizing the employment independence of young people and aims at encouraging and spreading superior measures and raising public sentiment regarding self-sufficiency support in employment for young people throughout society by disseminating successful cases to people.

(4) Supporting development of motivation to work at schools

In order to provide support for young people to choose suitable jobs and prevent them from easily quitting jobs or switching careers, it is important to develop motivation to work at an early stage at schools. For this end, following supports have been implemented in cooperation with schools, etc.

1) Supporting development of elementary and junior/senior high school student's motivation to work

Development of motivation to work has been supported at an early stage in cooperation with elementary and junior/senior high schools through various programs, including junior internship implemented as part of the “integrated study”, a program for exploring the possibilities of careers featuring instructors sent from enterprises lecture on the realities of work and industry, and the significance of working, so that students can understand and think about these things themselves. In addition, career guidance for high school students to promote understanding about work and provide training for job search method has been implemented, incorporating the programs aiming at preventing them from becoming freeters for instance by explaining the actual situation with differences in wages and living between freeters and regular workers.

2) Supporting development of the motivation to work in university students

Seminars are being held for university students in cooperation with universities to facilitate self-understanding on choosing an appropriate career path. In addition, programs to find accepting enterprises for internships are being entrusted to employers' associations.

3) Education for labour-related legal systems

Amid the changing environments surrounding worker due to increase in non-regular workers and diversified types of employment, there is a growing awareness of the necessity to correctly understand the labour-related legal systems and to secure workers' rights. Accordingly, it is an urgent issue to improve the situation that information and knowledge about labour-related legal systems have

not been diffused sufficiently. Hence, in February 2009, the “Report on the Study Group about Education for Labour-related Legal Systems” was compiled to suggest the education to provide basic knowledge, while efforts will be made to further enhance the functions for information provision and counseling system.

3. Employment Support for New School Graduates including Measures against Corporate Withdrawal of Employment Offers

(1) Enhancement of Employment Support, etc. for Students who have been Withdrawn Job Offers

Amid the serious economic crisis, deteriorating environments surrounding companies caused corporate withdrawal of employment offers. With the aim of preventing corporate employment offer withdrawals, the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Employment Security Act was revised to enable Hello Work to consolidate information on corporate withdrawal of employment offers, and to identify items to be reported from employer to Hello Work. These measures have enabled to thoroughly provide guidance to companies and to disclose the names of companies which withdrew their employment offer in order that this information is used for appropriate career choice by students.

As an exceptional measure, the eligibility for the Employment Adjustment Subsidy, etc. was extended to those employers who maintain employment by subjecting newly hired school graduates to forced temporary leave, education/training, or transfer to other firms. In addition, in the FY 2008 secondary budget, it was decided that an employer that hires new school graduates who have been denied employment offers and are still unable to find a new job is exceptionally entitled to the special financial incentive program for supporting older freeters. Moreover, based on the FY 2009 supplementary budget, efforts have been made in cooperation with universities, etc., to grasp the situations for students' employment and corporate withdrawal of their employment offer, along with holding job interview sessions with local employers focusing mainly on manufacturing companies, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and nursing care service providers, etc., targeting students who have not found jobs including those having been withdrawn job offers.

(2) Supporting employment for new high school/university graduates

To help new high school graduates seamlessly find appropriate jobs supporters for young people are being stationed at Hello Works across the nations. Continuous support according to each stage of the employment procedure has been provided, for instance, by visiting high schools, organizing workplace visit for school graduates so that they can gain knowledge on professions at an early stage, offering private career consultation services, holding job interview sessions, and also providing support to ensure that they can adapt to work environments after being employed.

Employment support for new university graduates has been provided through Student Employment Centers (6 locations) and Student Employment Consulting Desk at Hello Work (40 locations) along with the Comprehensive Support Center for Student Employment (1 location), which is the core institution. Working in cooperation with universities, these centers provide employment supports such as career guidance, employment consulting, vocational aptitude test, extensive information on employment, seminars, and job interview sessions. In FY 2008, efforts were made to expand job application opportunities for young people through negotiating with enterprises to include non-new graduates.