



JRCS Nuclear Disaster Response Basic Training Session for the Fourth Block (FY 2016)

On November 26, 2016, the Japanese Red Cross (JRC) Osaka Chapter held a FY 2016 JRCS Nuclear Disaster Response Basic Training Session (Nuclear Disaster Training Session) for the Fourth Block at the chapter.

Based on the lessons learned from the response by the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, this training has been held as one of the JRCS's efforts to strengthen its nuclear disaster preparedness since FY 2014. In fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the training session was held twice, respectively. This was the fifth training session. In order to make it possible for JRCS staff to act quickly if any disaster occurs near their JRC chapters and hospitals, the JRCS divides the country into six operational blocks (zones). Starting with the fifth training session, the JRCS has positioned its response to nuclear disasters as part of its existing disaster relief services, and the training session has been organized by each block to tailor to the location of each nuclear power plant and the situations of each JRC chapter and hospital. This training session targeted the physicians, radiological technologists, nurses and administrative staff working at JRC hospitals and staff of JRC chapters in the Fourth Block (Prefectures of Shiga, Kyoto, Hyogo, Nara, Wakayama and Osaka), who are JRCS relief team members.

At Nuclear Disaster Training Sessions, JRCS radiation emergency medical care advisors (REMC advisors) serve as lecturers and facilitators. The JRCS has appointed 24 REMC advisors from JRC hospitals designated as radiation emergency hospitals. Some of the advisors working at JRC hospitals in the Fourth Block (JRC Nagahama Hospital and JRC Maizuru Hospital) and other hospitals near the block were lecturers for this training session. In the event of a nuclear disaster, the REMC advisors play an important role of developing activity plans for relief teams while taking protection measures for them and ensuring their safety. The training session is expected to serve as an opportunity to build a direct relationship between the advisors and the JRCS relief team members.

The training program includes explanation of [the JRCS Nuclear Guidelines for Preparedness, Response and Recovery](#), basic knowledge about radiation, collaboration with the REMC advisors in the event of a nuclear disaster, practice for using radiation protection equipment and case studies in groups. "Characteristics of radiation and its effects on human bodies" and "Basic protective methods from radiation" are unfamiliar subjects to staff except for physicians and radiological technologists. However, this knowledge is necessary for each JRCS relief team member to work in the event of a nuclear disaster and therefore all of the participants studied these subjects. During the training session, there were many questions and answers with regard to radiation protection approaches taken by other medical relief organizations and how to put on/take off a protection gear in the safest way. This suggested that the participants were very much interested in these subjects. In the second half of the training, the participants were divided into several groups and worked on planning for relief activities of a relief team based on an assumed scenario of an accident at the Takahama Nuclear Power Plant located close to the Fourth Block area and evacuation order zones designated by Maizuru City in case of a nuclear accident.

[Training program \[PDF\]](#)

Comments from some participants:

Physician: The training was practical and very helpful. This training made me confirm that the collaboration with radiological technologists will be important when providing relief activities in the event of a nuclear disaster. The program included exercises for how to use radiation protection equipment and measurement devices, and I felt that enough equipment and materials have been already prepared in the JRCS. On the other hand, I thought that the training needs to be provided on a continued basis. I hope more JRCS relief team members to receive this training.

Nurse: I had already roughly understood the current situation of the JRCS's nuclear disaster preparedness efforts. By participating in the training, I was able to improve knowledge about radiation. What interested me most was: (1) Deployment of a certain number of radiation measurement devices to each JRC chapter; (2)



How to use the devices; and (3) Lecture 4: Report and recording of each JRCS team member's personal cumulative radiation dose. In the future, each relief team may need to take at least one radiation measurement device (to measure radiation level in their activity area) even in the event of a general disaster. I would like to suggest that each JRC hospital should conduct an exercise for how to use the device to prepare for possible nuclear disasters.

Radiological technologist: What interested me most was a group work (case study) to make a relief activity plan on a scenario of an assumed accident. Some part was difficult to understand only through lectures but the group work compensated the lack of the understanding by having discussion among the group members based on a prepared scenario. The group work allowed us to consider the difficulty and danger in actual relief activities. So, it was very useful. However, the training provided very few opportunities to learn about the actual flow of relief activities and collaboration in the field. Therefore, it is going to be much better if a nuclear disaster operational exercise can be conducted with the participation by radiological technologists as well as physicians and nurses.

Administrative staff (working at a JRC chapter): What interested me most was a group work in which we discussed a case study by taking air radiation dose into consideration. Based on needs for relief in the field scenario and personal cumulative dose of each relief team member, we discussed activities which could benefit survivors. After the group works, each group shared a presentation and that was very helpful. In the way forward, in order to prepare for possible nuclear disasters, operational relief exercises may be necessary.

Administrative staff (working at a JRC hospital): What interested me most was a lecture explaining the JRCS activity area for relief activities in the event of a nuclear disaster and the safety standard for each relief member's cumulative dose and how to measure it. In a group work, we considered personal radiation dose limit in making a relief activity plan for a day and discussed the plan. I think that the discussion was very meaningful. The training was held at the JRC Osaka Chapter for the JRC personnel working in the Fourth Block and I was able to discuss nuclear disaster relief activities with the participants from other JRC chapters and hospitals located in this block. This was helpful to me.

The Nuclear Disaster Response Basic Training Sessions were held for the Second, Fourth and Sixth Blocks in FY 2016, and will be held for the remaining blocks—the First, Third and Fifth Blocks—in FY 2017. The JRCS will continue to train and develop staff who can respond to nuclear disasters.