

JAPANESE INDUSTRY AND POLICY NEWS

December 2016

LEGISLATION AND POLICY NEWS

METI Compiles an Illustrated Guide on Handbook for Trade Secret Protection

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) published a Japanese language guide for using the handbook on trade secret protection on 5 December. The guide explains essential points of the handbook which is more comprehensive with 140 pages of volume.

The guide contains example of trade secret related trouble cases and their countermeasures, using a lot of illustrations for easy understanding.

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/12/20161205001/20161205001.html>

(Japanese language only)

<http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/economy/chizai/chiteki/pdf/hbtebiki.pdf> (Japanese language only)

Business Succession Guidelines Formulated

The Small and Medium Enterprise Agency (SMEA) released on 5 December the Business Succession Guidelines, a compilation of key points concerning succession, including the importance of early and well-planned preparation, measures for overcoming challenges, and future directions for enhancing systems for supporting smooth business succession.

As the number of business owners nearing retirement age among SMEs has been growing, over the coming five to ten years many will enter the period for business management transfer to the next generation. In this situation, smooth succession is an extremely important challenge that SMEs must overcome in order to transfer business value that they have accumulated, including knowhow and skills, to the next generation, and to further revitalize SME business.

The highlights of the guidelines are the following three points:

- (1) Emphasizing the importance of early and well-planned preparatory actions for business succession, with the introduction of a specialized diagnosis.
- (2) Presenting five steps that SME business owners should take for business succession from recognition of actual situation to establishing business

succession plan.

- (3) Enhancement of business succession supporting systems in the local community.

SMEA hopes SME business owners and supporting organizations with a close relationship to such business owners, e.g., associations and financial institutions, to utilize the guidelines and ensure the transfer of valuable businesses to the next generation.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1205_001.html

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/12/20161205002/20161205002-2.pdf>

(Japanese language only)

JPO-ROSPATENT Cooperation to Advance in the Field of Industrial Property

The Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the Federal Service for Intellectual Property of the Russian Federation (ROSPATENT) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) in the field of industrial property on 16 December. The JPO said that it would continue to further make efforts, in cooperation with the ROSPATENT, to establish the environment in which Japanese companies can obtain IP rights smoothly and their IP rights are protected properly in Russia. In the MOC, the JPO and the ROSPATENT confirmed that they would cooperate in a variety of fields such as sharing examination experience and protecting intellectual property rights with related ministries and agencies. Japanese companies file a growing number of patent applications with the ROSPATENT, reaching around 1,600 applications in 2014, which is approximately a fivefold increase from around 300 a decade ago. The JPO and the ROSPATENT have been advancing a variety of cooperative efforts, including the commencement of the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) program in 2009.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1219_001.html

SURVEY AND BUSINESS DATA

MHLW Annual Survey Reveals More Companies to Raise Wages than Previous Year

According to the annual survey of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

(MHLW) published on 1 December, a total of 86.7% of responding companies said they had raised or would raise wages in 2016. The ratio was 85.4% in the previous year.

Average increase of monthly wages is calculated at 5,176 yen which is slightly less than 5,282 yen recorded in the previous year. The number of respondents in the 2016 survey was 1,709, each of which had more than 100 permanent employees.

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/itiran/roudou/chingin/jittai/16/dl/09.pdf> (Japanese language only)

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/itiran/roudou/chingin/jittai/16/dl/10.pdf> (Japanese language only)

COMPANY NEWS

Unicharm to Start Experiment of Recycling Used Diapers

Unicharm Corporation announced on 6 December that it would start recycling used diapers on experimental basis in Shibushi city in Kagoshima prefecture. Unicharm developed the technology to recover pulps from used diapers by ozone using treatment. According to the company, quality of recovered pulps are equal to “virgin pulp”. Experiment in Shibushi includes separate collecting of used diapers and reuse of recovered pulps. Shibushi city is known for high level of recycling used resources.

Based on the result of experiment, Unicharm will decide by March 2017 if they proceed to larger scale recycling, considering also possibility of commercial base operation from 2020.

http://www.unicharm.co.jp/company/news/2016/1205007_3942.html (Japanese language only)

http://www.unicharm.co.jp/company/news/2015/1201622_3936.html (Japanese language only)

Honda and Waymo Enter Discussions on Technical Collaboration of Fully Self-driving Automobile Technology

Honda R&D Co., Ltd., the R&D subsidiary of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. announced on 22 December that it would enter into formal discussions with Waymo, an independent company of Alphabet Inc., to integrate its self-driving technology

with Honda vehicles. This technical collaboration between Honda researchers and Waymo's self-driving technology team will allow both companies to learn about the integration of fully self-driving sensors, software and computer into Honda vehicles.

As part of the discussion on technical collaboration, Honda could initially provide Waymo with vehicles modified to accommodate Waymo's self-driving technology. These vehicles would join Waymo's fleet, which are currently being tested across four U.S. cities.

If both parties agree to enter into a formal agreement, Honda R&D engineers based in Silicon Valley, California and Tochigi, Japan, would work closely with Waymo engineers based in Mountain View, California and Novi, Michigan. Waymo is a self-driving technology company, building on software and sensor technology developed in Google's labs since 2009.

<http://world.honda.com/news/2016/c161222aeng.html>

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Reducing Energy Consumption of an Indian Hospital by 30% Using ICT

The New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) announced on 1 December that it reached agreement with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India (MOHFW) and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) to jointly carry out a project for reducing energy consumption at a hospital and effectively using medical data based on information and communications technology (ICT). A memorandum of understanding for the project was concluded among NEDO, MOHFW and AIIMS on November 30, 2016.

In the project, utility facilities, including a photovoltaic power generation system, and ICT will be introduced, and a system network will be established at AIIMS, India's national hospital combined with a higher education institution for medicine. The project aims to reduce AIIMS' power consumption by 30% from its 2014 level by using an energy management system to optimize energy use. According to the NEDO, it will be possible to develop optimal operation plans for utility facilities in the future by forecasting energy demand based on facility and weather conditions, which will also save energy. Moreover, various types of medical data will be integrated by using high-efficiency IT solutions with the aim

of further improving the efficiency of medical services and curbing increased energy use at AIIMS.

http://www.nedo.go.jp/english/news/AA5en_100139.html

Outline of the 2020 World Robot Summit and Its Challenges Announced

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) announced on 2 December an outline of the World Robot Summit (WRS) and its challenges to be held in 2020. WRS which consists of a robot competition and a robot exhibition will be held in accordance with the goals set in the “New Robot Strategy” compiled in 2015. WRS aims to bring together the most advanced robot technologies from all over the world and overcome the limits to solve challenges that arise.

A total of 7 challenges are planned to be held under the World Robot Challenge, with 6 challenges under 3 categories of Industrial Robotics, Service Robotics and Disaster Robotics, and 1 Junior Challenge.

WRS 2020 will be held at Aichi International Exhibition Center (provisional name) located in Aichi Prefecture. Some of the challenges in the Disaster Robotics Category that require special facilities will be held at the Robot Testing Field located in Fukushima Prefecture.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1202_003.html

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/pdf/1202_003a.pdf

First Japanese Company Obtained Certification for Appropriately Protecting Personal Information under the APEC CBPR System

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced on 20 December that IntaSect Communications, Inc. was certified by the Japan Institute for Promotion of Digital Economy and Community (JIPDEC), an accountability agent under the APEC Cross Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) system, for the first time in Japan. CBPR is a framework meant to appropriately protect personal information transferred across national borders.

APEC has developed and operates the CBPR system in order to appropriately protect personal information in cross-border transfers. Under this system, companies and other entities conduct self-assessments of their own rules and frameworks concerning personal information protection in cross-border transfers, and the details are examined and certified by an independent

accountability agent that has been recognized under the APEC CBPR system. In 2014, APEC approved Japan's accession to the system, and in January 2016, APEC recognized JIPDEC as an accountability agent for the CBPR system as the first agent in Japan.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1220_002.html

<http://en.intasect.com/company/>