

Challenges & Changes

TUNNELLING ACTIVITIES IN JAPAN 2012

JAPAN TUNNELLING ASSOCIATION

PREFACE

I feel really privileged to be given this opportunity to address tunnel engineers throughout the world on the occasion of the publishing of the 2012 edition of Tunnelling Activities in Japan, biennial publication of Japan Tunnelling Association. Despite the fact that in recent years tunnel construction projects in Japan are on the downturn, our country remains one of the outstanding global leaders in terms of tunnel construction volume.

Increase in tunnel length and expansion of tunnel cross section are two specific features in mountain tunnels of recent tunnel projects in Japan. The advancement in tunneling technologies in recent years has made it possible to construct economically long tunnels and large section tunnels in the complex and wide-ranging ground conditions in Japan. As a result, it has become possible to choose the shortest routes and higher standards in railway and road projects.

In construction of urban tunnels, on the other hand, there are many cases in which construction work is implemented in the proximity of existing structures in areas where there is a convergence of underground structures such as subways, utility lines, etc. In addition, urban tunnels must be constructed to meet strict demands for reducing the impact on the surrounding environment. These factors have fueled the progress in the development of design and construction methods and shield machines that can fulfill the specific requirements for construction of urban tunnels.

Based on such recent specific examples, this booklet presents a selection of some typical examples representative of the numerous tunnel projects and technological developments in Japan. I will be pleased if these articles prove useful for tunnel engineers around the world.

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CONTENTS

01. Multiple Bench Cut for Excavating a Large-section Station Cavern – The Tozai Line of the Sendai-City Rapid Railway –	2
02. Development of the SENS and Application to Tunneling in Unconsolidated Ground	3
03. Excavation in the West Zone of the Tawarazaka Tunnel on the West Kyushu Route of the Kyushu Shinkansen Line	4
04. Tunneling with Preliminary Ground Improvement – Kamikita and Akahira Tunnels on the Tohoku Shinkansen Line –	5
05. A Shinkansen Tunnel in an Abandoned Quarry – Shin-Moheji Tunnel on the Hokkaido Shinkansen Line –	6
06. Chuo Shinkansen	7
07. Large-scale Improvement of a Subway Line with Track Shift – Sannomiya Station on the Hanshin Electric Railway Line –	8
08. Mountain Tunneling close to an In-service Railway Tunnel – Shin-Kureha-Yama Tunnel on the Hokuriku Shinkansen Line –	9
09. Large-section Shield Tunneling and Construction Methods for Shield Tunnel Expansion at Diverging/Merging Sections – Metropolitan Expressway, Central Circular Shinagawa Route –	10
10. Completion of Large-section Tunnels on the Shin-Tomei Expressway (Between Gotenba JCT and Mikkabi JCT)	12
11. Completion of Long Tunnels on the Hokkaido Transverse Expressway	14
12. Tunneling in a Poor Geology Section under Plastic Earth Pressures, and Monitoring of the Lining after Completion	15
13. Observational Construction Practice of Early Section Closure – Nanao Tunnel on the No-Etsu Highway –	16
14. Tunnel Excavation in Ground Containing Heavy Metals – New Tomei Expressway Gakudosan Tunnel –	17
15. Extremely Large-section Tunneling in Unconsolidated Shirasu – Shin-Takeoka Tunnel on the Route 3 Bypass –	18
16. Cut-and-cover Tunnel through a Densely Congested Area – Construction of the Hanshin Expressway Kobe-Yamate Route (South Extension) –	19
17. Construction of a Sewerage Main Tunnel with Compact Shield – The Second Toyama Sewerage Main Project –	20
18. Construction of a Deep Long-distance Shield Tunnel in Soft Ground	21
19. Tunneling with Continuous Belt Conveyor – Scour Tunnel for the Koshiyama Dam –	22
20. Excavation of Long Penstock Inclined Shafts with TBMs	23
21. Rapid Construction of a Long Shield Tunnel Crossing below a Seabed – Gas Pipeline Installation under the Ise Bay –	24
22. The First Test Facility in Japan for Verifying High-pressure Natural Gas Storage	25
23. URUP, Shield Tunneling Technique that Enabled Start and Arrival on the Surface, First in Japan – Oi Area Tunnel on the Central Circular Shinagawa Route –	26
24. Tunnel Disaster Earthquake off the Pacific Coast of Tohoku, 2011	27
Innovations in Technology	
25. Research and Development of Medium-fluidity Concrete	28
26. On-site Visualization for Tunnel Engineering	28
27. A Multi-path Radar Inspection Car for Lining Concrete Diagnostic System	29
28. A New Non-open Cut Construction Method for Underpasses (Ground cutting JES method)	29
General Aspects of Tunneling in Japan	30
List of Members	31