

May 8, 2020
Mitsui Chemicals, Inc.

Message for All Employees of the Mitsui Chemicals Group

As the novel coronavirus continues to spread around the world, we find ourselves in an environment of drastic change. And this has included a raft of sudden changes that we are unable to control ourselves – such as delays in the transit of both people and goods, a demand slump in various sectors and a plummeting crude oil price. Japan declared a state of emergency on April 7 and has since made the decision on May 4 to extend this further. And in prefectures where particular vigilance is being recommended, the government is making a number of strong requests, including that people hold back on leaving their homes.

At Mitsui Chemicals, we first of all made the move on March 4 to implement a general policy of telecommuting for staff at our Head Office in Shiodome. More recently, we have extended the scope of this policy to also cover all domestic plants, branch offices and research facilities, making for a thorough policy aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19. And with the state of emergency now being prolonged, we have decided to extend these telecommuting measures to stay in effect through to the end of May.

I realize that with the telecommuting period being extended, many employees are unable to carry out their usual face-to-face communication, leading to a number of hardships in our day-to-day duties. Further, I am aware that those of you who work on the factory floor – or in other such roles where telecommuting is difficult – are working every day toward safe, stable operations despite shouldering unusually high anxiety as a result of the pandemic. And looking overseas, I would like to acknowledge our employees who are striving to keep up operations even in countries and regions that are facing urban lockdowns and other such restrictions even more severe than those of Japan. So I would like to express from the bottom of my heart just how enormous my gratitude is for all of our workers who are – despite the difficult situation – coming together as One Team and helping to maintain and continue the business activities of the Mitsui Chemicals Group.

The general belief is that it will take quite some time for the COVID-19 pandemic to come to an end. In an effort to help out here, the Mitsui Chemicals Group is making a wide range of contributions, including boosting our production of nonwovens for masks and isolation gowns, as well as providing a stable supply of isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

Indeed, the current situation is bringing about an increasing recognition both of the role that the chemical industry must fill in society and of its overall importance. To properly meet these social obligations, it is essential that the Mitsui Chemicals Group has safe, stable operations – and this is something that is supported by the health of you and your families. So I ask you all once again to be as thorough as you can in following policies to help prevent the spread of the virus.

While the business environment we find ourselves in poses all sorts of difficulties – including the demand slump for automotive materials – it is important that we take the initiative in preparing for the risks here, such as by downsizing our inventory, minimizing nonessential and nonurgent expenses, and expanding our fundraising framework. These efforts are what will allow us to carry out steady operations that can give a sense of security to all our stakeholders.

We do not yet have a clear idea of how this COVID-19 crisis will evolve going forward or when things will return to normal. Further, it is possible that the world will be forever changed after the pandemic has passed – due to both the adoption of new lifestyles as well as shifts in demand composition, supply chains and more. But it is precisely because we are in such uncertain times that it is important to be able to act and to have a positive outlook that is not bound by conventional ideas.

We intend this fiscal year to take another look at our VISION 2025 long-term business plan – and if anything, I think now is a particularly good time in which to do so, as we look toward a new stage. I would like for you all to work together with me as One Team, without faltering, as we look to get through these tough times and bring about even greater advancement and growth for the Mitsui Chemicals Group.

HASHIMOTO Osamu
President & CEO
Mitsui Chemicals, Inc.