Corporate Governance

The Company aims to make everyone involved in Hirata content and to contribute to society through technology. To achieve this, we believe that it is essential to build and effectively operate a management system that enables transparent, fair, prompt, and resolute decision-making. We will thus work to strengthen corporate governance as one of our most important tasks.

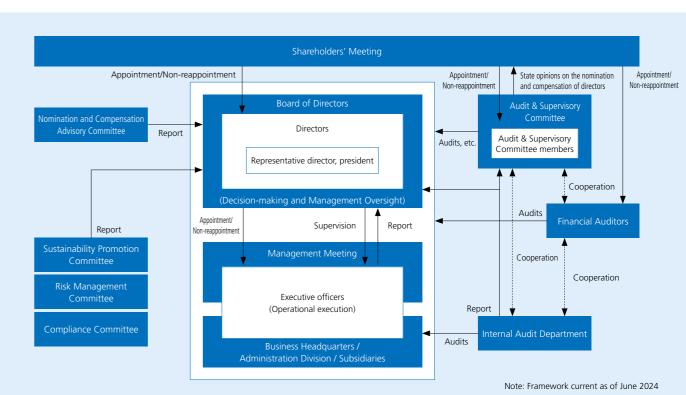
Basic Stance -

As a company that targets the global marketplace, Hirata Corporation has promoted sound and effective management activities with an emphasis on corporate governance to fulfill its social responsibilities. Hirata is thus working to enhance its compliance system, continuously strengthen its business competitiveness, and further improve its corporate value. From the standpoint that a company is an entity that bears public responsibility, public interest, and social responsibilities, Hirata believes that the maintenance of good relationships with all stakeholders will lead to improved shareholder value over the long term.

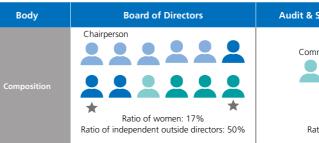
Changes to Corporate Governance

2005	Introduction of executive officer system Management Meeting established
2006	Stock listed on JASDAQ Securities Exchange
-	
2014	 Appointed one independent outside director Abolition of executive retirement benefits system
-	
2016	Appointed two independent outside director
-	
2017	 Stock market listing changed to First Section of Tokyo Stock Exchange Establishment of independence standards for outside directors Introduction of stock options Began evaluations of Board of Directors' effectiveness
2018	Establishment of voluntary Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee
-	
2019	 Shortened director term of office from two years to one year Independent outside directors to account for at least one-third of those present at Board of Directors' meetings
-	
2021	 Policy decisions on executive compensation, etc. Introduction of performance-linked compensation system
-	
2022	 Moved to Tokyo Stock Exchange, Prime Market Appointed two female directors Appointed one female Audit & Board member Skills matrix disclosure
-	
2023	Transitioned to a Company with a company with audit and supervisory committee

Governance Framework



💄 Internal director 💄 Outside director (Audit & Supervisory Committee member) 💄 Independent outside



Note: In June 2023, we transitioned to a company with audit and supervisory committee organizational design.

Operational Status of Board of Directors, Audit & Supervisory Board/Audit & Supervisory Committee, Discretionary Committees Board (FY2023)

Body	Board of Directors	Audit & Supervisory Board/Audit & Supervisory Committee* ²	Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee
	13 times	Audit & Supervisory Board 5 times Audit & Supervisory Committee 14 times	12 times
	Average attendance rate: 99.3% (Directors and Audit & Supervisory Board members*1)	Average attendance rate: Audit & Supervisory Board: 100% Audit & Supervisory Committee: 98.2% Total: 98.7% (Audit & Supervisory Committee members*1)	Average attendance rate: 100% (All committee members)
l of Meetings l in FY2023	Main Themes • Progress of the Medium-Term Management Plan • Capital policy • Status of business execution • Goals and status of activities related to sustainability promotion	 Main Themes Status of the development and operation of internal systems in line with the transition to company with audit and supervisory committee Status of ESG management and sustainability promotion Status of initiatives designed for achieving Medium-Term Management Plan targets Status of the development and operation of the Group Quality Management System Status of initiatives to improve recommendations provided in previous fiscal years 	 Main Themes Nomination of and compensation for directors and executive officers, as well as determination of related policies Development of succession plan Other matters to be consulted on by the Board of Directors

*1 As a result of the transition to a Company with a company with audit and supervisory committee organizational design in June 1, 2023, they became a director and Audit & Supervisory Committee member, shifting from their former position of Audit & Supervisory Board member.
 *2 The results of meetings of the Audit & Supervisory Board (before the aforementioned transition) and the Audit & Supervisory Committee (after the transition) are shown.

director 💄 Independent outside director (Audit & Supervisory Committee member) ★ Woman					
Supervisory Committee	Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee				
nmittee chair	Committee chair				
atio of women: 25%	Ratio of women: 33%				

Evaluations of Effectiveness of Board of Directors' Meetings (Fiscal 2023)

To improve the effectiveness of its Board of Directors' meetings, the Company has evaluations of their effectiveness conducted by a third-party organization. Based on the results of the evaluations, the issues are shared and countermeasures discussed at Board of Directors' meetings.

Method of Evaluation	Anonymous questionnaires and individual interviews for all directors, including Audit & Supervisory Committee members, conducted by a third-party organization (individual interviews held every other year)
Main Evaluation Question Items	 The role, composition, operation, discussion, and monitoring of the Board of Directors Director performance Support system and training for directors Dialogue with shareholders (investors) Operational status of discretionary committees, etc.

FY2022 Evaluation Results (Issues)	FY2023 Initiatives	FY2023 Evaluation Results (Issues)	Future Initiatives
 Formulation and follow-up of management strategies for medium- to long-term improvement of corporate value and strengthening of monitoring functions Formulation of human resource strategies consistent with medium- to long-term strategies Strengthening of Board of Directors' secretariat functions Establishment of an internal control system for the entire Group and sufficient supervision of its operation etc. 	 Regular discussions on priority agenda items identified in the annual schedule Discussions on measures by the Sustainability Promotion Committee, etc. Continuous improvement, such as early provision of materials for the Board of Directors Commencement of discussions on the role of Group governance and formulation of basic internal policies 	 Discussions on medium- to long-term strategies and the Medium-Term Management Plan Discussions on human capital and intellectual property Strengthening of Group governance Creation of ways to enhance discussions among directors Effective succession plan implementation etc. 	 Enhancement of opportunities for and quality of discussions toward the formulation of the next Medium-Term Management Plan Review the approach to explaining agenda items to directors in advance of Board of Directors' meetings Deepening of discussions during Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee meetings and appropriate reporting to the Board of Directors

Appointment/Non-reappointment of Directors

Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee

The Company established the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee as a voluntary advisory body to the Board of Directors. The purpose of this committee is to deliberate important matters, such as the nomination and compensation of directors and executive officers, and to thereby ensure the objectivity and transparency of these matters and to further strengthen the corporate governance system.

Committee Chair: Ryoko Ueda (Independent Outside Director)* Members: Yuichiro Hirata (Representative Director, President), Satoru Ogawa (Independent Outside Director)

* Appointed as chair of the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee in July 2024

Appointment/Non-reappointment of Directors

To ensure transparency and fairness in the nomination of both director candidates and executive officers, the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee, in which independent outside directors, one of whom serves as chair, form the majority, deliberates the criteria and policies for nominating the candidates as well as candidate nomination proposals. The results of those deliberations are reported to the Board of Directors, which makes the decisions after receiving reports from the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee on the basis of the candidates' knowledge, experience, ability, performance evaluations, and other factors.

In addition, with respect to the nomination of candidates for director who are not members of the Audit & Supervisory Committee, the right of the Audit & Supervisory Committee to state its opinion on the nomination shall be properly exercised, and with respect to the nomination of candidates for director who are members of the Audit & Supervisory Committee, the consent of the Audit & Supervisory Committee shall be obtained.

If a director or executive officer breaks the law or acts in a manner contrary to the Articles of Incorporation or internal regulations, or should it be recognized that there is a difficulty to perform duties properly due to physical or mental breakdown or a lack of ability, in such cases the Board of Directors will consider dismissal after having received a report from the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee.

Executive Training and Support System for Outside Directors

We are working to deepen our understanding of the Company through training for officers, providing and explaining support systems for outside officers, and visiting production sites. Additionally, the Company provides support for outside officers to fulfill their roles, such as holding preliminary briefings for outside officers prior to meetings of the Board of Directors and providing opportunities for interviews with key executive officers and employees.

Skills Matrix of the Company's Directors

For the Board of Directors to fulfill its responsibilities of realizing sustainable growth and supervising business execution, the Company has defined the key skills and areas of experience required of its directors—corporate management, industry knowledge, technology and research and development, global perspective, risk management, finance and accounting, and ESG expertise—and aims to maintain a Board of Directors that is well balanced in terms of its composition.

Name	Corporate Management	Industry Knowledge	Technology and Research and Development	Global Perspective	Risk Management	Finance and Accounting	ESG Expertise
Directors (Excluding	Directors Who Are	Audit & Supervi	sory Committee M	embers)			
Yuichiro Hirata	•	•	•	•			
Shojiro Hirata	•	•	•				
Shigeru Maeda	•	•	•				
Masaru Kozaki	•	•		•			
Hideki Ninomiya	•				•	•	•
Satoru Ogawa (Outside Director)	•			•	•		
Ryoko Ueda (Outside Director)					•	•	•
Kenjiro Tadakuma (Outside Director)		•	•				
Directors Who Are A	udit & Supervisory	Committee Men	nbers				
Naokuni Motoda (Outside Director)	•				•	•	
Ken Imamura (Outside Director)	•				•		
Yasuhiko Endo (Outside Director)	•				•	•	
Asako Okabe (Outside Director)	•					•	

Note: The above shows the knowledge, experience, and capabilities particularly expected of each individual and is not a complete list of all the expertise possessed by said individuals.

Corporate Management

In order to achieve the sustainable growth of the Hirata Group and increase its corporate value over the medium to long term, directors who have the ability to set a vision and make decisions to establish a strategy in order to determine the major direction of management strategies, taking into account the management issues faced and future business opportunities, are required. We need directors who can make strategic proposals and make decisions in light of changes in the business environment, such as politics, the economy, society, and technology, taking into account business trends and risks, and business conditions within the Group.

Industry Knowledge

Directors who have knowledge of our business, business models, and trends in the market environment and who can make proposals and make management decisions regarding business strategies and marketing are required.

Technology and Research and Development

With diverse knowledge in cutting-edge technologies, products, and services from a global perspective; we regard solutions to social and business issues as new innovations, business opportunities, and research themes as vital. Thus, it is necessary to have directors who can judge the appropriateness of the research from an objective perspective.

Global Perspective

In order to expand the support system for our global expansion and local production, we need directors who have a global perspective and a broad perspective to judge global business strategies and have a certain understanding of business practices and regional characteristics in multiple countries with abundant overseas business experience. Since we are promoting One Hirata, an integrated Group management initiative, we need directors who can make decisions from a global perspective in an optimal overall manner.

Risk Management

Legal risks are always associated with our management and business activities, and it is essential not only to mitigate and eliminate them, but also to assess the severity of the risks and take risks. Also, in order to establish an optimal governance system, it is important for us to focus on a Companywide risk management system that takes into account management strategies, management issues, and future visions. Based on the above, it is necessary to have directors with specialized knowledge of legal affairs, internal control, and compliance.

Finance and Accounting

In addition to having knowledge of finance, accounting, and tax affairs, directors are required to have a full understanding of our business and to be able to grasp and make judgments on management figures in accordance with products and business characteristics. In terms of strategy, directors who can make proposals and make management decisions regarding capital procurement and dividend policies for growth investments and business strategies that contribute to the sustainable enhancement of our corporate value are necessary.

ESG Expertise

In order for us to realize ESG management that integrates sustainability into management, it is essential to establish a perspective that balances corporate growth and the resolution of social issues, as well as an optimal governance system. Based on this point, it is necessary to have directors who can make decisions from the perspective of medium- to long-term ESG management without sticking to short-term profits.

Executive Compensation — Executive Compensation Policy

The Company's decision-making policy with regard to executive compensation and associated matters is decided upon by the Board of Directors. The main basic policies are as follows:

- To achieve sustainable growth and increase corporate value over the medium to long term, directors' compensation shall involve a system that functions as an incentive and at an appropriate level based on position and responsibility.
- Specifically, in addition to their basic compensation, executive directors will receive executive bonuses and stock compensation as performance-linked compensation, the ratios of which shall be approximately 1:0.5:0.3 (if performance indicator targets are achieved).
- Outside directors who are primarily responsible for supervisory functions shall receive only basic compensation.

Process for Determining Compensation

Regarding individual remuneration for directors (excluding Audit & Supervisory Committee members), the Board of Directors delegates specific details to the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee.

In delegating such authority, we respect the Audit & Supervisory Committee's right to state opinions regarding remuneration and take measures to ensure that such authority is properly exercised.

The remuneration of individual directors who are Audit & Supervisory Committee members is determined through discussion among directors who are Audit & Supervisory Committee members.

Composition of Executive Compensation

Details of Performance-linked Compensation

Intended to raise awareness of improving performance each fiscal year, the bonuses in performance-linked compensation shall be regarded as cash compensation that reflects performance indicators. Such bonuses are calculated in accordance with the level of achievement of the consolidated ROE targets for each fiscal year.

By sharing the profits and the risks of stock price fluctuations with shareholders, stock compensation is intended to raise awareness of contributing to improving medium- to long-term business performance and increasing corporate value. Stock compensation shall be paid via a stock delivery trust mechanism. For each fiscal year, points are awarded according to position and length of tenure of office as well as according to the level of achievement of the target values for evaluation indicators (consolidated ROE and consolidated operating profit ratio)in the settlement of accounts. At the time of retirement, stock equivalent to points shall be delivered.

The performance indicators and their target values for performance-linked compensation are reviewed based on recommendations from the Nomination and Compensation Advisory Committee depending on changes in the business environment and other factors.

0.8 1 Basic compe erformance-linked co **Executive Directors** (In the event that **Basic Compensation** Performance-linked Bo performance indicator ock Com targets have been achieved) Medium- to long Short-term incentive 0.5 0.3 Fixed compensation Outside Directors **Basic Compensation**

Executive Compensation Breakdown (Fiscal 2023)

	Total Amount of	Total Amount by Type of Compensation, etc. (Thousands of Yen)				- Number of
Director Classification	Compensation (Thousands of Yen)	Basic Compensation	Performance- Linked Stock Compensation	Bonuses	Of the Items on the Left, Non-Monetary Compensation, etc.	Basic Eligible Directors
Directors (Excluding Audit & Supervisory Committee members and outside directors)	271,847	169,000	38,074	64,773	38,074	7
Directors (Audit & Supervisory Committee members) (Excluding outside directors)	-	-	-	-	_	-
Audit & Supervisory Committee members (Excluding outside Audit & Supervisory Board Members)	-	-	-	-	_	-
Outside directors	68,650	68,650	-	-	-	7

Group Governance –

Group Structure

The Hirata Group consists of Hirata Corporation and 12 consolidated subsidiaries with the Group developing its businesses at bases in Japan, North America, Europe, Southeast Asia, China, and Taiwan.

Status of Group Management at Headquarters

Having established a Basic Policy for Establishing an Internal Control System, the Board of Directors is implementing Group controls. In addition, based on the Affiliated Company Management Regulations established by the Company, we are working to strengthen Group controls by monitoring qualitative management conditions, involving the Company in important decision-making, and ensuring that serious incidents, such as compliance violations, are reported to the Company.

As part of Group management control, the management status report meetings of each affiliated company are held regularly (quarterly for domestic affiliates and semiannually for overseas affiliates) to discuss management risks and opportunities, and to monitor business performance. Furthermore, we have established a meeting body that brings together executives from overseas affiliates to create opportunities for dialogue with each division at Headquarters. The activities and policies of Headquarters are communicated, and opinions are exchanged to promote the operation of the entire Group.

Initiative theme	
(1) Formulate and disseminate basic policies for group governance	Formulate guidelines guidelines for strength
(2) Determine the framework for the level of the Company's involvement with affiliates regarding governance	Clarify definitions of t understanding
(3) Restructure the positioning and roles of affiliates for business	Re-examine the missic history to develop a vi
(4) Restructuring of the governance foundation	Re-examine the neces with the level of contr
(5) Review and enhance the government functions of Group Headquarters	Formulate policies to s function, carry out the
(6) Formulate highly effective Group strategies through management strategies in the next period	Consider Group strate of focus into the next

Cross-shareholdings

(1) Approach to Cross-shareholdings

In working to maintain medium- to long-term relationships and expand transactions with its business partners, the Company's basic policy is to hold only those stocks that contribute to the enhancement of its corporate value.

(2) Verification of Crossshareholding Suitability

In line with the basic policy, verification of aspects such as the benefits and risks associated with the holdings and whether to continue with them is undertaken at Board of Directors' meetings. The Company shall consider selling shareholdings that are judged to have low rationality.

Group Audit System and Its Status

In audits, the Company's Audit & Supervisory Committee members and other committee members conduct audits of affiliates, and the Group Company Audit & Supervisory Committee Members Liaison Meeting is held on a regular basis to enhance the effectiveness of audits of affiliates by sharing the audit status of Group companies and riskrelated matters.

The Internal Audit Department also regularly conducts audits of affiliated companies and reports to the Board of Directors and the Audit & Supervisory Committee in a timely manner.

Status of Activities for Strengthening of Group Governance at Headquarters

In fiscal 2023, with the aim of substantially strengthening group governance, we established the Basic Group Governance Policy and policies addressing the level of the Company's involvement with affiliates regarding governance. With regard to strengthening group governance, among a wide range of items to be considered, in fiscal 2024 we are focusing on the following themes.

Description

s pertaining to the overall design of the Group and policies that serve as thening various types of governance

the level of control over each affiliated company by perspective and foster common

sion and positioning of each affiliate in terms of business strategy based on past vision

essary management items and redevelop the monitoring system in accordance trol of affiliates addressed in (2)

b strengthen the governance functions of Group Headquarters. For each he detailed design and operation of management, support, etc.

tegies while examining items indicated in (3) and incorporate them as points t Medium-Term Management Plan

(3) Criteria for Exercising Voting Rights Related to Cross-shareholdings

With regard to the voting rights related to shareholdings, these will be exercised in an appropriate manner with the sustainable growth of the issuing company as an evaluation criterion and on the premise that they will contribute to the improvement of the Company's corporate value.

Compliance

Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group

We established the Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group in January 2024. Our prior code of conduct was established as part of our Compliance Charter, which focuses on compliance with laws and regulations. However, we have revised it so that each officer and employee can contribute to the realization of a sustainable society. The Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group sets forth the actions that all employees of the Company should take and is positioned as an important code that forms the foundation of the Company. • Main Content of the Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group

1. Relationship with persons and employees

2. Relationship with customers and suppliers

4. Relationship with shareholders and investors

Disclosure of management information, etc.

6. Reporting of and measures against violations

Compliance with laws, regulations and social norms, etc.

5. Management and protection of corporate assets and information

Management of confidential information and personal information, etc.

Fair competition and transactions, etc.

Respect for human rights, etc.

3. Relationship with society

7. Responsibility of management

Fundamental Principles

In implementing the Sustainability Basic Policy, we (Hirata Group officers and employees) have established the Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group to comply with international rules, and laws and regulations applicable to the relevant countries and regions, and act in good faith in accordance with high ethical standards.



e details on each of these ite ww.hir<u>ata.co.ip/en/sustaina</u>

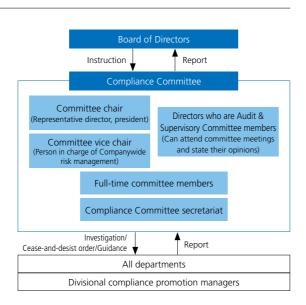
Compliance System

Compliance Promotion Framework

The Company has established a Compliance Committee, chaired by the president, under the Board of Directors to formulate compliance measures, investigate and analyze cases of compliance violations, and formulate measures to prevent recurrence, in order to strengthen compliance. The Compliance Committee met six times in fiscal 2023. The committee also reports twice a year to the Board of Directors on matters such as the implementation status of each measure and the operational status of the internal whistleblowing system.

Efforts to Improve Compliance Awareness

In conjunction with the establishment of the Code of Conduct of the Hirata Group, we conduct training to familiarize each and every employee with the code. The Company provides compliance training for employees when they join the Company, and themebased training and job-rank-based training, which for example, covers the Act against Delay in Payment of Subcontract Proceeds, Etc. to Subcontractors, security export controls, and harassment prevention, is conducted as appropriate for Group employees.



In addition to training, we regularly distribute digital documents and other information on compliance via the Company intranet based on compliance violation cases in an effort to raise compliance awareness. Furthermore, we conduct annual compliance surveys to identify compliance-related risks, such as scandals and misconduct, and reflect the results in various measures and training.

Whistleblowing System

The Company has established a whistleblowing system in order to guickly identify compliance violations and take appropriate measures. In addition to an internal hotline, we have established an external hotline for reporting to third-party outsourcing companies that enables anonymous reporting in local languages and a supplier hotline that can be used by suppliers. Each hotline has a system in place that complies with the Revised Whistleblower Protection Act, and regulations stipulate the duty of confidentiality of whistleblower information and the prohibition of disadvantageous treatment to whistleblowers.

Reports received are handled in accordance with said regulations and reported to the Board of Directors through the Compliance Committee secretariat.

FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
8	12	16

Risk Management

Risk Management System

The Company has established a Risk Management Committee under the Board of Directors, which conducts Companywide risk management in accordance with the Risk Management Rules, to deal with events that may affect the achievement of business goals or sustainability management.

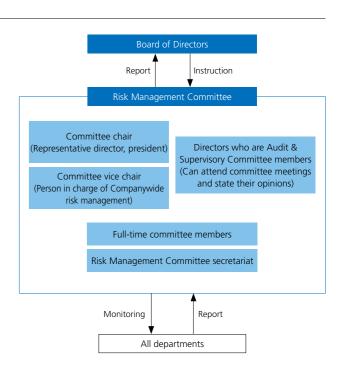
In the Company's risk management system, the director of the Administration Division is responsible for Companywide risk management and conducts such management. In addition, the Risk Management Committee, chaired by the president, has been established as a deliberative body for risk management. The Risk Management Committee comprehensively grasps and evaluates risks that occur throughout the Group from the perspective of the entire organization and conducts activities to maximize corporate value, prevents risks from occurring, and minimizes losses after they occur. The committee met three times in fiscal 2023.

The department in charge of each risk item identifies risks, evaluates them, and implements countermeasures. The department in charge of risk management summarizes Companywide risks and monitors the implementation status and effectiveness of countermeasures, and the Internal Audit Department audits the effectiveness and response status.

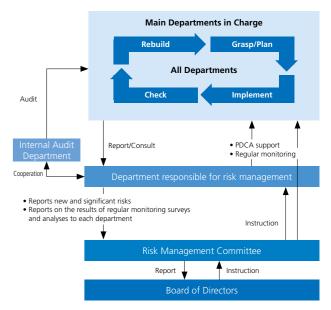
Ascertaining of and Responding to Risks

The Company has created a Hirata Risk Map that broadly classifies 70 risk items into four categories: management process risks, which include governance; external factor risks such as market changes; indirect business process risks that cover human resources and IT systems; and direct business process risks related to business activities such as production. Based on the Hirata Risk Map, the Company has established the main department in charge of each risk item and put in place a mechanism whereby the information collected on assumed and incurred risks is aggregated by the department responsible for risk management.

From the aggregated risk information, the department responsible for risk management comprehensively evaluates the likelihood of the occurrence, magnitude of the impact, and priority of the risk. The Risk Management Committee then determines major risks and related measures, monitors the status of measures, and reports to the Board of Directors.



Companywide Risk Management Flow



Business Continuity Plan

We have formulated a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) to ensure business continuity or restore business operations in a short period of time in emergency situations. Through measures such as checking the safety of employees, confirming the damage status of buildings and information infrastructure at our business locations, investigating the damage status of suppliers, and ensuring the provision and review of procedures, as well as securing stockpiles at business sites, we aim not only to ensure the safety of employees but also to minimize the impact on our customers' businesses, thereby contributing to our stakeholders. Furthermore, we conduct regular drills to confirm and improve the effectiveness of our initial response.

In fiscal 2023, we expanded our BCP procedure manual and conducted on-site earthquake scenario drills. Furthermore, by conducting such drills, we are working to promote understanding of the BCP among employees and others while ensuring the effectiveness of procedures, etc., to improve effectiveness.

Flowchart for Implementing BCP



BCP Policy

To as much as possible avoid circumstances that could endanger business continuity due to unexpected disasters or problems, we plan to continue business by extracting risks in advance and defending ourselves against and mitigating those risks and to restore business operations in a short period of time in emergency situations.

• Give top priority to the lives and safety of employees and their families

• Minimize any negative impact on our customers' businesses • Assist our stakeholders

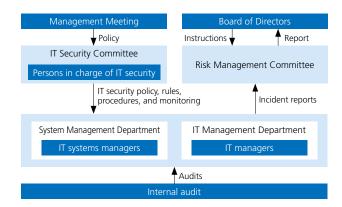
We review our BCP on a regular basis for continuous improvement.

IT Security

IT Security Management

In recent years, with the widespread adoption of cloud services, IoT devices, and the innovative development of AI, significant changes have occurred in corporate management. Amid these changes, the risks of information leakage and business interruptions due to cyberattacks have increased, making information security measures even more important.

To protect information and information assets, including IT equipment, from threats such as leakage and damage as well as to conduct its business activities safely and securely, the Company established an IT Security Basic Policy and formulated IT security management regulations.



To act as a management system, we have established an IT Security Committee, which is chaired by the officer responsible for information systems, and review policies and regulations, conduct risk analysis, and monitor IT security measures, including those of affiliates and the supply chain, incorporating the latest trends in related guidelines and security measures in Japan and overseas in accordance with ISO 27001. In the event of a security incident, we form a response team in accordance with set procedures specified in the Information Security Incident Response Procedures so that we can respond swiftly.

Efforts to Strengthen IT Security

To ensure the safety of the IT assets handled by the Company, we have implemented a raft of measures from both system and human resource perspectives. As an example of one such system, we have introduced an endpoint detection and response (EDR) service to quickly implement appropriate countermeasures against new threats, such as previously unknown computer viruses and targeted threat emails. We are working to improve IT security literacy by providing our employees with IT security education and targeted threat e-mail training. Additionally, we support our suppliers in conducting security training sessions and targeted attack e-mail drills to improve security throughout the supply chain.