

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT

## *Meeting the highest possible standards of service and quality*



(Standing from left)

**Kenji Murai**  
Managing Director

**Ryuichiro Irie**  
Managing Director

**Hiroshi Kume**  
Managing Director

**Tohru Terai**  
Managing Director

(Seated from left)

**Isao Takeuchi**  
Executive Vice President

**Tadashi Mano**  
Chairman and President

**Masataka Hidaka**  
Executive Vice President

Nippon Kaiji Kyokai has entered its 99th year of operation in a strong position, but also in one which demands ever greater efforts on our part to meet the growing expectations and needs of our clients. In June 1997, the tonnage of vessels on the Society's register surpassed the significant 100 million gross ton mark, and ClassNK thus became only the second classification society to exceed this figure. While we feel that this achievement is very much a reflection of the dedication and integrity of the Society's staff worldwide, it must be said that its chief significance is in the new responsibilities that it places upon the Society to meet the highest possible standards of service and quality in everything that we do.

As I have always maintained, the principal role of the classification society is to act as an independent, non-profit, third party organisation dedicated to the principles of ensuring safety at sea and preventing pollution of the marine environment. Therefore, even though the scale and scope of the Society's work is developing into new areas, we remain steadfastly committed to these principles

which serve to define what we are and which must always be held paramount over other considerations or pressures that might arise in the course of our work.

While it is essential for us to honour the long traditions and support the principles upon which classification societies are based, there is also an ever-present need to move forward and to continue developing the range and quality of the services that we provide to be ever more responsive to the needs of the marine industry. The measure of success for a classification society should not be gauged strictly by the amount of tonnage under class or number of certificates issued, but more importantly, by the level and quality of services and support that it provides to clients worldwide.

With this in mind, I am pleased to report that apart from the classification figures, ClassNK also had a very successful year in 1997 in other areas. Not only have the efforts of the Society contributed to a significant number of shipowners and managers meeting the requirements for ISM Code certification

prior to the 1 July 1998 deadline for compliance, but ClassNK has also played an active role in the development and adoption of measures to improve bulk carrier safety by IACS and the IMO. The implementation of these two sets of comprehensive measures should prove instrumental in helping to reduce ship casualties and accidents by improving the safe operation of ships and encouraging a greater safety culture within the maritime industry.

The information services provided by the Society have also been supplemented in response to client needs. The Society continues to pursue a strong and active research and development program which has borne fruit, particularly with regard to the development of the PrimeShip group of systems and services. This past year saw the completion of such leading systems as PrimeShip ASSAS – the Advanced Ship Structural Analysis and Support System; PrimeShip Crank-C – a sophisticated program which enables designers to analyse crankshaft vibrations; and CS-BOSUN – a version of our time-proven scantling design program, PrimeShip BOSUN, which has been developed especially to meet the needs of naval architects and others engaged in the design of smaller ships. In the area of information technology, ClassNK has enhanced the means by which it provides information to the industry this past year, with the launch of NK-SHIPS, our on-line secure classification and survey record database, and more recently, the release of the ClassNK *Register of Ships* on CD-ROM.

Another essential part of the role of the Society is the relationship it maintains with flag and port state authorities. Although we have already received authorisation from 94 Administrations to perform various classification and statutory services on their behalf, ClassNK continually works and cooperates with governments, various organisations and other sectors of the marine industry to accomplish the shared goals we all have to promote and ensure safer ship operation and cleaner seas. This is particularly important given that the single most significant event facing the shipping industry in 1998 will be the

enactment of the ISM Code. Considerable and laudable efforts are being undertaken by every facet of the shipping industry to develop a safety culture which meets the objectives of the ISM Code. The close working relationship the Society has with shipowners and managers on the one hand and Administrations and other concerned interests on the other has been instrumental in facilitating the successful implementation of this and other safety initiatives.

On a more general note, the plunge of many Asian economies into financial crisis during the latter half of 1997 has had far-reaching effects in global markets and has already affected regional and world shipping. Although these circumstances are inevitably a matter of concern to us, class societies overall may expect to continue to benefit from record levels of newbuilding orders in world shipyards. This being said, however, our chief concern and hope is that our clients and friends in the industry will not be seriously affected by the recent turmoil, and that at this time next year, I will be able to write to you under more favorable economic circumstances.

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Society, I would once again like to thank you, and request that you continue to lend your support to the Society as we face new and exciting challenges in the future. As ClassNK approaches its centenary and the world approaches a new millennium, I believe that the more things change in the industry, the more our essential values must stay the same. Without these values, without our commitment to continue to improve our services and without your support, we could not have achieved our position as a world leader in ship classification.

March 1998



Tadashi Mano  
Chairman and President