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The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Disaster: Investigating the Myth and Reality

By The Independent Investigation on the Fukushima Nuclear Accident



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When the Nuclear Safety Commission in Japan reviewed safety-design guidelines for nuclear plants in 1990, the regulatory agency explicitly ruled out the need to consider prolonged AC power loss. In other words, nothing like the catastrophe at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station was possible?no tsunami of 45 feet could swamp a nuclear power station and knock out its emergency systems. No blackout could last for days. No triple meltdown could occur. Nothing like this could ever happen. Until it did?over the course of a week in March 2011.

In this volume and in gripping detail, the Independent Investigation Commission on the Fukushima Nuclear Accident, a civilian-led group, presents a thorough and powerful account of what happened within hours and days after this nuclear disaster, the second worst in history. It documents the findings of a working group of more than thirty people, including natural scientists and engineers, social scientists and researchers, business people, lawyers, and journalists, who researched this crisis involving multiple simultaneous dangers. They conducted over 300 investigative interviews to collect testimony from relevant individuals. The responsibility of this committee was to act as an external ombudsman, summarizing its conclusions in the form of an original report, published in Japanese in February 2012. This has now been substantially rewritten and revised for this English-language edition.

The work reveals the truth behind the tragic saga of the multiple catastrophic accidents at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. It serves as a valuable and essential historical reference, which will help to inform and guide future nuclear safety and policy in both Japan and internationally.



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Editorial Review

Review

"In a subject area beset by controversy and seemingly interminable disagreements, The Bulletin has long served to provide highly reliable analyses of things nuclear. The Fukushima Dai-ichi disaster is a case in point, with numerous – often conflicting – reports on what went wrong and what went right, who did what, and who did not... and this book does a great job of distilling the principal issues, and providing a clear-headed analysis of what actually transpired. While there is still much to learn about, and from, this nuclear disaster, the interested reader will not find a better current analysis, and I urge all with a stake in learning how to do better in the nuclear power arena to read this book." – *Robert Rosner, former director of Argonne National Laboratory, William E. Wrather Distinguished Service Professor, Astronomy and Astrophysics and Physics at University of Chicago, and Co-Director, Energy Policy Institute at Chicago, USA.*

"A primary lesson of the text is that the time to be responsive to threats, natural or human-made, and to bridge understanding between business and government's need to regulate in the public interest, is before a disaster. The story stands as a stark warning to highly specialized businesses that believe in a myth of safety, and to governments who fail to regulate in the public interest. It is written with a vital style that is suspenseful and immediate. This book offers insight for businesses planning for emergency responses in technical environments, readers interested in studying the interactions of business and government in crises, and students of emergency management, while also providing general readers an inside view of one of the greatest technological disasters of our time." – *Christopher L. Atkinson, Ph.D., Global Business Review, Florida Atlantic University, USA*

"The English version of this volume goes beyond a simple translation; the authors expended significant efforts to update and edit their chapters. The first chapter in particular, an overview of the crisis as it unfolded, is one of the most detailed while easily accessible accounts of the disaster available." – *Social Science Japan, Kenji E. Kushida, Stanford University*

About the Author

By the Independent Investigation Commission on the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Accident

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