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To all parties concerned

The International FORUM of Fire Research Directors is a group of heads of fire research laboratories around the world, with equal member representation from the three major global sectors: Asia-Pacific, Europe-Africa, and the Americas. As such, the FORUM is the preeminent organization representing fire research activities on a global basis. Our purpose is to collaborate on topics of common research interest, either by sponsoring and conducting the research directly or by supporting it indirectly through the publication of position papers.

In recent years, the FORUM has witnessed an increasing loss of valuable fire research capability and effort around the world. The NRIFD has been a key contributor to world knowledge in this area, and a solid participant in the International FORUM. The NRIFD has also acted as a gateway for new and innovative knowledge and solutions developed elsewhere in the world. Although it is not being privatized or commercialized as other national fire laboratories, the proposed changes appear to produce the same result, i.e., a significant diminution of fire research capability and effort.

Fire research needs in the world are expanding, not diminishing. Problems relating to more flammable materials and products, fires following earthquakes, and terrorist events – all areas important to Japan – need to be addressed with technically-sound, in-depth expertise. The NRIFD can now bring such expertise to these issues. A reduction of its research capabilities will make it much more difficult for Japan to cope with future accidental, natural and intentional disaster events.

The International FORUM strongly urges reconsideration of the NRIFD role as a positive, proactive contributor through fundamental and applied research to the fire safety of Japanese society, one worthy to retain and expand.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Paul A. Croce
Chair, International FORUM of Fire Research Directors