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**BUTSURI-TANSA(Geophysical Exploration)**

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[\[Image PDF \(1592K\)\]](#) [\[References\]](#)**Current status of high-level radioactive waste disposal program and growing expectations for geophysical technology**Kazumi Kitayama<sup>1)</sup>

1) Nuclear Waste Management Organization of Japan (NUMO)

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**ABSTRACT** Reprocessing of spent fuel is used to separate re-usable uranium and plutonium from the radioactive waste in Japan. The resulting liquid containing high-level radioactive waste (HLW) is vitrified in stainless steel containers. In accordance with the national program, vitrified HLW is completely isolated from the human environment in storage facilities for 30 to 50 years for cooling, and will be safely disposed underground deeper than 300m, based on the Specified Radioactive Waste Final Disposal Act (Final Disposal Act), promulgated in June 2000. Repository operation will be then started around 2033~2038.

In October 2000, The Nuclear Waste Management Organization of Japan (NUMO) was established as an implementing organization of HLW disposal, based on the Final Disposal Act and started to solicit openly for volunteer municipalities for selection of Preliminary Investigation Areas in December 2002.

This paper describes Japanese HLW disposal program focusing on the current activities of NUMO. Furthermore the outline of the site investigation is shown, and the item which NUMO expects geophysical exploration technology is stated.

**Key words:** high-level radioactive waste, geological disposal, preliminary investigation

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