

The JFTC filed a criminal accusation on the price-fixing cartel over galvanized steel sheets

<Tentative translation>

November 11, 2008

Japan Fair Trade Commission

The Japan Fair Trade Commission (“JFTC”) has conducted a criminal investigation into a price-fixing cartel over galvanized steel sheets. As a result of the investigation, the JFTC found a criminal violation of the Antimonopoly Act (“AMA”), and filed a criminal accusation with the Prosecutor-General against three companies including Nippon Steel & Sumikin Coated Sheet Corporation in accordance with Article 74 (1) of the AMA.

Outline of the accusation is as follows:

1. Accused Companies

Name of Accused Companies	Representative Directors
Nippon Steel & Sumikin Coated Sheet Corporation	Atsushi Takeda
Nisshin Steel Co., Ltd.	Hideo Suzuki
Yodogawa Steel Works, Ltd.	Yoshitsugu Kokubo

2. Ground of Criminal Accusation

(1) Fact

The above three companies conduct business manufacturing and selling hot-dip 55% aluminium-zinc alloy-coated steel sheet and strip (including both pre-painted and non-pre-painted products. hereinafter “the products at issue”) for an unspecified number of customers. Employees of the companies, with employees of companies that engage in business of manufacturing and selling the products at issue, during the time period between around April 2006 and around June 2006, by having meetings concerning the products at issue in Tokyo and other means, agreed to raise the sale price of the products at issue which were shipped after July 1st 2006 by 10 yen per kilogram from the sales price of each company as of June 2006. And thereby, these companies, as for the products at issue, in cooperation with one another, contrary to the public interest, substantially restrained competition in the

field of trade on sales for the product at issue by mutually restricting their business activities.

(2) Applicable articles

Article 89 (1) (i), Article 95 (1) (i), and Article 3 (prohibition of unreasonable restraint of trade) of the AMA