

Why Yokohama?

—Company Interview Series—

Hiho Metal Japan Co., Ltd.

From the new office that we set up in Shin Yokohama, we hope to approach more clients and solidify our business in Japan



Mr. Kwangok Kim, Managing Director



We were fortunate to have been able to use the Yokohama World Business Support Center for three years

We are the Japanese subsidiary of South Korea's Hiho Group, which covers a wide range of businesses from the mining of non-ferrous metals such as aluminum and copper to the manufacturing of end products such as aluminum parts for automobiles. In early 2000, we began approaching Japanese carmakers to sell aluminum wheels. We have gradually established credibility in the industry, and after about 10 years we became recognized as a tier-1 supplier (a primary supplier that provides products directly to the manufacturer). With the increasing volume of business with carmakers with their head offices in Yokohama, we decided it was time to set up a Japanese subsidiary in October 2012. In preparation for setting up the company, we received various support from JETRO Yokohama and the city of Yokohama including a cost-free office, and we were able to open an office at Yokohama World Business Support Center (WBC). It was a tremendous help to be able to use an office in such a convenient location as Minato Mirai. Also, we were allowed to use meeting rooms and communal areas inside the WBC facilities for free, and were fortunate to receive various advice and assistance regarding business activities, such as legal and tax issues. We stayed for the entire period of three years that the office was available to us, and then moved to a serviced office in Shin Yokohama in 2015.

I am enjoying not only work but also living in Yokohama, an international port town with many sources of inspiration

The new office is in a great location, just three minutes by foot from Shin Yokohama Station. There is good access to the Shinkansen, and the commute is not stressful. And above all, it is a huge advantage for us to be located close to our most important clients. The role of the Japanese subsidiary is to deliver products manufactured in our factories in South Korea and China to carmakers in Japan, as well as to provide technical support. The auto industry demands not just high-quality products but also punctual delivery and prompt technical support. Shin Yokohama is an ideal location for us, since there is good access not only to Yokohama and other parts of Kanagawa prefecture, but also to our clients around the country. In terms of living standards, I believe Yokohama has a culture that is open to foreigners, with a cosmopolitan atmosphere. On a personal note, I have a daughter who attends an international school in Yokohama. We would never have thought of it if we didn't live in Yokohama. I am enjoying not only work but also living in this international port town of Yokohama with my entire family.

Interviewed by Yokohama World Business Support Center, 2/1/2017