TOKYO – Japanese printed circuit board fabricators reported September revenues fell 4.7% year-over-year as flooding in Thailand and competition from Taiwan continues to take its toll.

Total revenue for the month was 52.8 billion yen, up 12.8% from August, traditionally a slower month.

Total production volume was 1.484 million sq. meters, up 9.1% sequentially, but down 13% year-over-year, says the **Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry**.

Overall business is still trending downward, the trade group says, citing increased pricing pressure and lower production.

Year-to-date revenue through September was 462 billion yen, down 14.9% year-over-year. Year-to-date production volume totaled 12.56 million m^2, down 10.2% compared to 2010. The rate of decline in revenue is steeper than the rate of decline in volume, signaling pricing pressures.

Buildup rigid boards and rigid modules, key products for the PWB industry in Japan, did show signs of a rebound in September compared to August, but volume is still off by double digits compared to the same month last year, says METI.

The numbers are better for flexible circuit board shipments during September. Revenue shrunk 4.3%, but volume increased 10.5% compared to the last year. Manufacturers are lowering prices to maintain volume: The average price decrease for single-sided flexible circuit boards is almost 25%.

The flood in Thailand has caused many of the Japanese flexible circuit board manufacturers to temporarily halt production. Most of their plants are located in the hardest hit areas of the flooding, and it may take several months before they are back online, says METI.