

## 2 Volume of postal items

A total of 25.00433 billion (a 2.3% decrease from the previous fiscal year) of domestic and international postal items were processed in fiscal 2004.

While the number of domestic postal items dropped to 23.4935 billion (a 5.3% decrease from the previous fiscal year), the number of postal parcels processed was 1.42975 billion (a 104.8% increase over the previous fiscal year). In fiscal 2003, the number of outgoing international postal items was 84.17 million (a 9.6% decrease from the previous fiscal year) and the number of incoming international postal items was 237.71 million (a 10.7% decrease from the previous fiscal year).

Looking at the total volume of mail handled by country in fiscal 2002, Japan ranked second after the United States. However, in terms of per capita annual mail volume, Japan ranked 16th worldwide, accounting for about 31% of the volume in the United States.

## 3 Post office network

As of the end of fiscal 2004, 24,678 post offices (a 0.1% decrease from the previous fiscal year) offered mail-handling facilities. By type, there were 1,308 ordi-

nary post offices (a decrease of two from the previous fiscal year), 18,923 special post offices (a decrease of 12 from the previous fiscal year), and 4,447 postal agencies (a decrease of 23 from the previous fiscal year). Dividing ordinary and special post offices by collection and delivery and non-collection and delivery facilities, there were 4,726 collection and delivery post offices (a decrease of 66 from the previous fiscal year) and 15,505 non-collection and delivery post offices (an increase of 52 over the previous fiscal year).

In addition, a cooperative framework with private forwarders was established in June 1998 under which packages (mainly refrigerated packages) are delivered as postal parcels using the post office network. At the end of fiscal 2004, private forwarders engaged in such business collaboration totaled 16.

## 4 Correspondence delivery business

At the end of fiscal 2004, the number of carriers engaged in special correspondence delivery business totaled 111. During fiscal 2004, 70 carriers entered the special correspondence delivery business.

# Section 5

## Contents

### 1 Market size of the mobile contents industry

In 2004, the market size of Japan's mobile contents industry, consisting of the mobile contents market and the mobile commerce market, was 461.6 billion yen (a 31.1% increase over the previous year). By market, the size of the mobile contents market in 2004 was 260.3 billion yen (a 22.0% increase over the previous year) and that of the mobile commerce market was 201.3 billion yen (a 45.0% increase over the previous year).

The mobile contents market, which is the market of digital contents (ring-tone melodies, wall paper, etc.) traded through the mobile phone Internet, has continued to make steady expansion since the launch of the service.

The mobile commerce market, which is the market of mail-orders other than mobile contents, ticket sales, acquisition of stock trading commissions, etc. using the mobile phone Internet, has been rapidly expanding since the launch of the service.

# Section 6

## Human Resources Development

### 1 ICT education in public schools

In fiscal 2003, there was one computer for every 8.8 pupils in public schools. The Internet connection rate of public schools reached 99.8% in fiscal 2003, so almost all public schools are connected to the Internet. High-

speed Internet connections at 400 kbps or over were available in 71.5% of all public schools, allowing smooth transmissions of large-volume moving images, while 37.2% of regular classrooms had LAN installations, and 67.4% of schools have their own Website.

In order to provide ICT education to children, it is essential that teachers acquire the ability to utilize ICT in teaching. In fiscal 2003, 93.0% of teachers at public schools knew how to operate a computer, and 60.3% of teachers were able to use computers to conduct their classes.

## 2 Development of ICT experts

The difficulty of establishing security measures is mentioned by 66.8% of companies as one of the problems with using information and communications networks in companies. Many companies also feel anxious about the lack of employee awareness and lack of operational and managerial personnel. In-house ICT training is offered by 48.1% of companies, with the most common contents being “in-house ICT-related education and

training programs ” at 19.7% and “participation in external ICT-related education and training programs ” at 19.4%.

According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 15,706 people obtained master’s degrees in an ICT-related field in fiscal 2003, with 1,924 obtaining doctoral degrees.

# Section 7

## Digitization of Homes and Companies

### 1 Digitization of homes

As of the end of 2004, household penetration rates for information and communications equipment were 91.1% for mobile phones, 77.5% for PCs, 52.9% for facsimiles and 33.5% for car navigation systems (Figure 2-7-1).

Annual spending per household on information and communications services (the total of telephone communication charges plus broadcast reception charges) totaled 145,332 yen (a 2.8% increase over the previous year). Of this, fixed line telephone communication charges came to 48,829 yen (a 4.3% decrease from the previous year), mobile phone communication charges to 73,624 yen (a 8.7% increase over the previous year), and broadcast reception charges to 22,879 yen (a 1.3% increase over the previous year). While household consumption expenditure increased by 0.5% over the previous year, the proportion of information and communications charges within household expenditure increased to 4.0% (a 0.1 point increase over the previous year). Internet connection charges in 2004 came to 13,609 yen (a 29.4% increase over the previous year), and the proportion of information and communications charges including this figure within household consumption expenditure was 4.4% (a 0.2 point increase over the previous year).

### 2 Digitization of companies

At the end of 2004, 73.7% of companies using the Internet (companies with 100 or more full-time employees) had introduced CATV lines, DSL lines, FTTH lines (optical lines), or wireless access (FWA, etc.). The maximum communication speed exceeded 1.5 Mbps in 60.7% of companies.

Of all companies, 2.5% had a full-time Chief Information Officer (CIO: an officer who controls and adjusts the management strategy and the information and communications strategy) at the end of 2004. When part-time CIOs are also included, 16.0% of companies had a CIO.

At the end of 2004, 8.5% of companies (a 0.9 point decrease from the previous year) implemented teleworking.