

3 Convergence of communications and broadcasting

On the basis of the “Law Concerning Promotion of the Development of Technologies for Communications and Broadcasting Convergence,” which went into effect in November 2001, the MIC grants subsidies to private developers of technologies used for services that converge communications and broadcasting, and it establishes telecommunications systems for the common use

of such developers, thereby supporting the developers of such technologies and accelerating and promoting the development of services that converge communications and broadcasting.

Section 4

Promoting ICT in Private Companies

1 Measures for improving credibility of electronic data

(1) Promotion of use of time business

The time business, which involves time distribution services (distribution of accurate time information on networks) and time certification services (certification of the time at which the electronic data existed and non-tampering thereafter by certifying the validity of the time stamp attached to the electronic data), is becoming increasingly important recently for improving the credibility of distributed or stored electronic data in various fields such as e-commerce. The MIC is making active efforts to promote the use of the time business by, for example, formulating and releasing “Guidelines on Time Business” in November 2004, which would enable users of private-sector time businesses to use their services with confidence.

(2) Digitization of documents obliged by statute to be stored

The statutory obligation on private business operators, etc. to store documents on paper had been an impeding factor for increasing the efficiency of business activities and operational management in the private sector. Therefore, it was set forth in the e-Japan Strategy II Acceleration Package (decided by the IT Strategic Headquarters in February 2004) to enact a uniform law, which basically allows electronic storage of documents and account books in the private sector, while ensuring the accuracy, readability, etc. according to the content or nature of the documents. In response to this, the Law for the Use of Information Communications Technology for the Storage of Documents by Private Sector Companies and the Law on Improvement of the Related Laws in Line with Entry into Force of the Law for the Use of Information Communications Technology for the Storage of Documents by Private Sector Companies (e-Document Law) were established in November 2004 and

entered into force in April 2005.

2 Establishment of environment for promoting the creation and growth of ICT venture companies

The creation of new businesses is believed to be important for achieving sustainable development of the Japanese industry and stimulating the Japanese economy. On the other hand, many recently started ICT venture companies face such problems as a lack of business accomplishments, lack of established technical evaluation, and lack of physical collateral and credibility, and often have difficulty in procuring funds, securing staff, and finding clients, which makes it hard for them to turn an excellent technology into a new business. Therefore, in order to promote the startup and growth of ICT venture companies, the MIC provides various support measures in the areas of fund supply, human resources, know-how, and so on in cooperation with the related ministries and agencies.