Section 5

Promoting ICT in Administration and Public Services

1 Promoting ICT in local areas

In December 2003, the MIC convened the "Study Group on the Promotion of IT in the Regions" to investigate the current status of local digitization, systematically sort out matters such as an ideal future public network connecting municipalities, prefectural governments, and the national government, and ideal applications for upgrading administration by using this public network, and it considers the measures for fiscal 2005 onward. The study group compiled a report in March 2005. The report included proposals on the following in order to further promote ICT use in local areas in the future based on the above current status: (i) implement public applications on the national public network; (ii) develop next-generation local information platforms; (iii) reform legacy systems in local governments; and (iv) develop frameworks for promoting ICT in local areas including resident participation programs. The MIC intends to continue studies toward achieving an introduction of ICT in local areas to suit a ubiquitous network society, based on the proposals in this report.

2 Accomplishing e-government

As for application and notification procedures of national administrative organs, about 13,000 procedures (96%) were conducted online by March 2004. Efforts will be made to provide secure one-stop administrative services thorough a single gateway on the Internet <www.e-gov.go.jp>. In addition, in order to reduce users' burdens, we are working on simplifying and rationalizing the administrative procedures, including prioritizing those with at least 100,000 applications per year.

3 Achieving e-local governments

(1) Constructing e-local governments

As of April 2005, an ICT security policy has been formulated by all prefectural governments and 2,236 municipalities (92.5%), and a personal information protection ordinance has been enacted by all prefectural governments and 2,368 municipalities (97.9%). The MIC will provide support such as fiscal measures for local governments so that all local governments conduct ICT security audits from the perspective of organizational and comprehensive ICT security management. At the same time, it will study ways to evaluate the ICT security level of the local governments and develop/demonstrate systems adopting technology for reinforcing personal information protection.

(2) The Public Certification Service for Individuals (JPKI)

An electronic certificate from the JPKI service is valid for three years and is issued at 500 yen. It is issued by being stored in a smart card such as the Basic Resident Register card after a strict personal identification process at the municipality desk. Then the resident can file an online application with an administrative organ while accompanying strict personal identification, by taking an electronic signature procedure through the use of the private key stored in the smart card and sending the electronic signature along with the electronic certificate.

As of April 2005, the procedures subject to the JPKI service were procedures of eight national government offices, 29 prefectural governments, and some municipalities, such as declaration of national taxes, and application for issuance of a passport. The use of the JPKI service is expected to be expanded to various other procedures of the national government and local governments in the future.