Section 6

Promoting Network Contents Distribution and Developing Human Resources

1 Promoting the Production, Distribution and Preservation of Content

As the construction of an advanced info-communications infrastructure proceeds with the spread of optical fiber and the start of digital broadcasting, finding ways to promote the use of this infrastructure has become a major issue. It was thus addressed in the "e-Japan Priority Policy Program 2004," the "Intellectual Property Strategic Program 2004" and in other initiatives drawn up by the Government's IT Strategy Headquarters and Intellectual Property Strategic Headquarters.

Further addressing these issues, the MIC has developed multi-content multi-use technology aimed at appropriately protecting content-related rights in the various scenarios of use, while securing high levels of freedom and convenience for the use of content on personal communication networks. The MIC also engaged in R&D related to technologies that enable efficient and secure editing and the distribution of high-quality video content of 8 megapixels such as digital cinema over networks, building and testing technologies and systems capable of archiving Web information and promoting their use (such information, which is a particularly valuable asset as it encompasses knowledge and culture in digital form, is easily deleted or lost during daily updates), and so on. In addition, in order to create an environment in which users can easily assess the safety of content, the MIC is actively promoting the establishment of a system, tentatively named the "Content Safety Mark," as a way for Web site builders to demonstrate that their sites are free of illegal or harmful content.

2 Developing human resources

The MIC implements the "Support System for Info-communications Human Resources Training Projects" for subsidizing public-private ventures and public-service corporations that implement information and communications training programs, with the aim of developing personnel with expert knowledge and skills in the information and communications fields. Also, in order to effectively and intensively develop personnel who can appropriately deal with ICT security incidents such as unauthorized access and cyber attacks, the MIC started the "Support System for the Opening of the Info-Communications Security Human Resources Training Centers" in fiscal 2004 for financially assisting facility development of public-private ventures that develop practical training facilities.

Furthermore, from fiscal 2005, the MIC is investigating and studying the abilities required for high-level ICT personnel, such as project managers and CIO, who can engage in strategic digitization in companies, and the practical method for developing such personnel under industry-university-government cooperation. At the same time, the MIC is engaged in "Development Advanced Info-Communications Human Resources Training Programs" in which model educational programs for fostering these personnel are developed.

Section 7

Protecting Information and Communications Users

1 Consumer administration in telecommunications services

(1) Measures against spam

The MIC set up the Study Group on a Framework to Handle Spam in October 2004, and has been conducting an extensive study on the necessary measures for restraint/prevention of spam distribution, such as law enforcement by the government, self-regulation by telecommunication carriers, technical solutions, awareness and international cooperation.

Based on the discussions in this study group, the MIC promoted the consideration to amend the current law, and submitted a bill partially amending the Law on Regulation of Transmission of Specified Electronic Mail to the 162nd session of the Diet in March 2005. The bill included expansion of the scope of specified e-mail, expansion of the scope of prohibited transmission of e-mail to a fictitious e-mail address, prohibition from transmitting e-mails by using false sender information,

and introduction of direct penalties for the offenders. The bill was approved in the Diet in May of the same year.

(2) Measures against billing frauds

In order to eliminate the anonymous nature of pre-paid mobile phones, which is the cause for the frequent use of these mobile phones for offenses such as billing frauds, the MIC repeatedly considered new measures to reinforce personal identification in June 2004, along with mobile phone carriers, etc. As a result, the respective mobile phone carriers and the MIC announced their new measures in November of the same year and started operation from April 2005.

Moreover, in order to eliminate the anonymous nature of prepaid and other mobile phones and prevent their misuse, the mobile phone carriers and PHS carriers were obligated to confirm personal identification of the subscriber upon conclusion/transfer of a subscription contract. In addition, the Law on Confirmation of Personal Identification of the Subscribers, etc. by Voice Mobile Communications Carriers and Prevention of Misuse of Voice Mobile Communications Services was proposed to the 162nd session of the Diet as a bill presented by a Diet member, and the bill was approved in April 2005. This law punishes acts including the following: an act of declaring a false name or address upon subscription, etc.; an act of commercially transferring mobile phones or PHS to others for value without the consent of the mobile phone/PHS carriers; an act of commercially lending mobile phones/PHS to others for value without confirming the name and address of the borrower; an act of transferring mobile phones/PHS owned by others.

(3) Measures against illegal and harmful contents

In October 2004, the MIC and telecom groups worked together to revise the "Guidelines Related to Libel and Privacy" which were prepared by the Conference on Examining Guidelines for the Provider Liability Law, consisting of industry organizations, etc., adding a procedure in which the human rights organization of the Ministry of Justice (Director of a Legal Affairs Bureau or a District Legal Affairs Bureau) asks the Internet service provider (ISP) to remove certain information when the distribution of the information on the Internet seriously abuses human rights and when it is difficult for the injured party to recover from or prevent the damage by themselves. The MIC also made efforts to publicize the revision.

The distribution of imitation and pirated copies at Internet auction sites has also been a growing problem recently. Hence, in December 2004, the "Working Group Related to Trademark Rights" was launched by telecom carriers, groups of rights holders, and others to study new guidelines governing methods for providers to respond.

(4) Measures against phishing

The problem of phishing, which is an act of obtaining personal information on the Internet by fraud, has also been surfacing in Japan since around the autumn of 2004. Because e-mail and Websites are serving as core tools for phishing, since January 2005 the MIC has convened the Liaison Group for the Promotion of Phishing Countermeasures, mainly consisting of telecommunications carriers providing Internet access services, to share information and consider effective countermeasures.

2 Promoting measures for information security and privacy protection

(1) Government-wide information security measures

The government's information security policy was drastically reviewed by setting up a Committee for Essential Issues on Information Security in the Information Security Special Investigation Council in July 2004. Based on the decision of the IT Strategic Headquarters ("The Review of the role and functions of the government in terms of measures to address information security issues" December 2004) given in response to the committee proposals, the National Information Security Center was established in April 2005 in order to reinforce uniform and cross-sectoral comprehensive adjustment of information security measures across the entire government. Also, in March 2005, the Information Security PolicyConference, which is capable of formulating basic strategies on information security policy and conduct ex ante and ex post facto evaluation of information security policy, was established within the IT Strategic Headquarters.

(2) Protecting personal information in the information and communications field

Regarding the protection of personal information, which comprehensively covers all fields, in May 2003 the government promulgated the Law Concerning the Protection of Personal Information. This law went into full effect in April 2005.

With regard to further measures for protecting personal information in the information and communications field, the MIC revised the "Guidelines on the Protection of Personal Information in the Telecommunications Business" and enacted "Guidelines for Protecting Personal Information of Broadcasting Receiver, etc." in August 2004 based on the examination at the Study Group Concerning Information Privacy in the Telecommunications Business Field and the Study Group on Protecting Personal Information in the Field of Broadcasting and Satellite Broadcasting in the IT Age in order to more strictly ensure appropriate handling of personal information. These guidelines have been applied since April 2005.

The above study groups also examined legislative measures for protecting personal information in the

information and communications field, and concluded that it is appropriate to consider development of a legal system that can punish acts of leaking personal information in a cross-sectoral manner in their reports released in December 2004 and February 2005 respectively.

3 Overcoming the digital divide

In the process of examination conducted by the Study Group on Putting in Place Balanced Nationwide Broadband Platforms since June, it was recognized anew that local governments that are making progressive efforts are playing a certain role in developing local broadband infrastructures in an increasing number of cases. In light of this, the "Plan for Eliminating Zero Broadband Areas"—an interim report mainly consisting of the Plan for Accelerating the Installation of a Regional Broadband Infrastructure, which summarize the challenges and measures in developing broadband infrastructure for reference by local governments—was compiled in February 2005.

4 Improving the environment for radio spectrum use

Along with the rapid spread and upgrading of radio spectrum use including mobile phones, concerns have been raised that the radio waves might cause adverse effects on the human body or cause malfunctions to medical equipment, such as the heart pacer. To ease such concerns and to develop an environment that allows people to use radio spectrum safely and confidently, the MIC has formulated adequate criteria and implemented researches.

Moreover, to protect radio equipment from electro-magnetic interference from other equipment, the MIC has contributed to the establishment of international standards at CISPR and introduced domestic standards in compliance with the international standards.

In addition, in order to increase the volume of information that can be transmitted on the power line communication system, there have been demands in recent years to expand the frequency range that can be used (2-30MHz to be added). The MIC has set up the "Study Group on High-Speed Power Line Communications" and has been investigating possibilities and conditions for the coexistence of high-speed power line communications with radio uses since January 2005.

Section 8

Promoting R&D

1 Developing R&D policies in the information and communications field

(1) Future R&D promoting strategy

In order for Japan to achieve sustainable economic development and for the Japanese people to lead safe lives with peace of mind, it is necessary to make active and strategic investments in selective areas of science and technology and to maintain and develop the competitiveness of industry through the promotion of research and development. From this perspective, the Second-Term Science and Technology Basic Plan (approved by the Cabinet in March 2001) placed special priority on four fields of science and technology, including the information and communications field, and stipulated that R&D resources should be allocated to these fields in a preferential manner.

With the aim of actively promoting R&D in the information and communications field toward achievement of a future ubiquitous network society, the MIC set up the R&D Strategic Committee within the Telecommunications Council and examines strategies on the priority R&D fields, the roles of the national government and public organizations, and methods of strengthening the international competitiveness and internationally expanding Japan's information and communications technology.

(2) Developing R&D environment

An open test-bed network environment would be required to realize next-generation advanced networks at an early stage under collaboration of Japanese and overseas industries, universities, governments, and communities, revitalize the Japanese economy and society, as well as to strengthen Japan's international competitiveness.

The cutting-edge R&D test-bed network (JGN II) operated by the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology governed by the MIC supports R&D at the light wavelength level by introducing state-of-the-art optical switching, and provides access points in all prefectures nationwide. It is used as the infrastructure for industry-university-government collaboration and regional collaboration around the nation by universities, research institutes, private companies, and local governments. The pioneering efforts concerning