

Section 4

Promotion of Informatization of Administrative Services

1. Realization of e-government

(1) Promotion of broad-based optimization of governmental duties and systems

Regarding the promotion of e-government, the MIC has thus far been implementing a wide variety of measures based on the e-Government Construction Program (determined by the Liaison Conference for Chief Information Officers (CIO) of Respective Ministries in July 2003, partially revised June 2004). In addition to optimization of the duties and systems of various individual government agencies, in the future further broad-based optimization of the functioning of the entire government will be sought. In order to clarify the future vision in this regard, and deliberate on issues and initiatives surrounding the development of a shared governmental platform serving as the base for integration and centralization of governmental information systems and coordination of data, since June 2009 the MIC has held the Study Group on the Status of Development of Governmental Information Systems, and compiled and released interim results in August 2009 and a final report in April 2010.

In terms of procurement procedures (excluding public works projects, etc.), with regard to an electronic system for bid tendering and bid opening procedures, currently each individual government agency develops and operates such systems as needed. In order to optimize systems and procedures for governmental procurement (excluding public works projects), based on the Basic Policy (August 2008, decided by the Governmental Liaison Committee for the Promotion of Adoption of Electronic Government Procurement Procedures [excluding public works projects]), the Plan for Optimization of Procurement Procedures and Systems was formulated and decided by the Liaison Conference for Chief Information Officers (CIO) of Respective Ministries in August 2009. Henceforth, existing electronic bid tendering systems independently maintained and operated by individual governmental agencies for bid tendering and bid opening procedures will be abolished, and operations progressively transferred to a centrally managed and operated electronic procurement system.

(2) Efforts to promote balanced development of online services

While past e-government initiatives have greatly expanded the transfer of administrative procedures to an online format, to the extent that as of the end of FY 2008, online application, reporting etc. is now possible for 92% of the targeted procedures, there are still a large number of procedures where online applications are not taking place or their use is extremely limited.

Based on the Action Plan for Online Usage Expansion (decided by the IT Strategy Headquarters in September 2008), steps are being taken to promote online usage by boosting the benefits and improving the user-friendliness of online procedures, particularly those widely conducted by Japanese citizens, as well as revising strategies for online procedures that are hardly used and have little hope of improvement, including shutdown of systems, taking into account the cost-benefit analysis and existence or non-existence of alternative procedures.

2. Realization of e-local governments

(1) Construction of an e-local government infrastructure

e-local governments aim to upgrade administrative services and simplify and streamline administration through the use of ICT. In the future, with the advancement of ICT utilization including ASP and SaaS technology, even in local governments that have independently constructed and operate their own information systems, there will be a demand for a paradigm shift from “possession” to “utilization” of ICT, and construction and operation of more efficient information systems making active use of recent technological innovations in the ICT field, such as cloud computing, etc.

(2) Local government clouds

In order to promote the further centralization and shared utilization of local government information systems through construction of community clouds on the Local Government Wide Area Network (LGWAN), since FY 2009 the MIC has implemented the Local Government Cloud Development Verification Project, and is striving for more user-friendly administrative services and reduced costs. Based on the results of the verification project currently underway, the MIC will promote measures on a nationwide basis, such as construction of a comprehensive promotional framework through conclusion of agreements between central and local government, and formulation of standard specifications to ensure effective linkage between organizations operating local government clouds and governmental systems, etc., so as to advance the construction of an e-local government infrastructure.

(3) Thorough personal information protection and information security measures in e-local governments

Personal information protection and information security measures are vital issues concerning the realization of e-local governments. All prefectures and municipalities in Japan had already passed personal information protection ordinances by the end of FY 2005. Henceforth, the MIC will continue providing support for the implementation of information security measures by local governments, and providing advice and guidance as needed to local government CEPTOAR (Capability for Engineering of Protection, Technical Operation, Analysis and Response), a council engaged in sharing of information on security-related topics among local governments. Also, in line with the Second-Term Information Security Basic Plan formulated in February 2009 and the Information Security Strategy for the Protection of Citizens formulated in May 2010, the MIC is taking steps aimed at ensuring that appropriate information security measures are taken in all local governments, no matter how small.

3. Utilization of the Resident Registration Network System

As a local government system, the Resident Registration Network System aims to connect Basic Resident Registers of communities in a network, facilitating the supply of personal identification information (name, address, date of birth, gender, resident registration code, and any changes to this information) to administrative bodies, as well as procedures related to the Basic Resident Register extending across municipal borders.

The amount of information provided to administrative bodies by the Resident Registration Network System is steadily increasing year by year, with 110 million units of information provided between August 2008 and July 2009. For example, with regard to as yet un-integrated pension records, cross-checking to confirm addresses using the personal identification information in the Resident Registration Network System is helping to restore pension records. Also, sparing no effort to protect personal information, the MIC has been taking steps such as reconfirming checklists for every municipality, as per the recommendations of the Resident Registration Network System Review Committee in place since September 2002.

4. Public Certification Service for Individuals by local governments

As it is difficult to verify authorship of digital documents published on the Internet, dangers including impersonation, unauthorized modification and denial of transmission exist. Since January 2004, the Public Certification Service for Individuals by Local Governments has been offered, based on the Law Concerning Local Government Certification Services related to Electronic Signature (Law No. 153, 2002), so as to promote the availability of online administrative procedures, overcome said problems and realize e-government at both the national and local levels.

The electronic certification provided through the Public Certification Service for Individuals is valid for three years, with a 500-yen fee for issuance, and is encoded on an IC card such as a Resident Registration Network System card issued to the user after a thorough confirmation of the individual's identity at the municipal office. Procedures, such as applications, that can be conducted using the Public Certification Service for Individuals include filing tax returns, applying for property deeds, etc., and as of April 2009 these procedures were being conducted in 13 government agencies, the 47 prefectures of Japan, and some municipalities.