

## 4. Achieving e-Local Government

The Local Government Wide Area Network (LGWAN), which is an administration-dedicated network connecting local governments, was connected with the intranets of prefectures and ordinance-designated cities in October 2001 and with the Kasumigaseki WAN in April 2002, and by mid-2003 all local governments were participating.

Also, in August 2002 the Network System for Basic Resident Registers went into operation, making it possible to have a common national personal identification information consisting of name, address, date of birth, gender, residence certificate code, and changes in this information. Thus, it became possible to provide personal identification information to any administrative organization. At the same time, the requirements to attach a copy of the certificate of residence when applying for a passport and to submit notification of current status when receiving a mutual-aid pension were abolished. In August 2003 the Basic Resident Registers Network

System went into full-scale operation with the beginning of wide-area issue of residence certificate copies, the simplification of procedures relating to moving residence, the issue of Basic Resident Register cards, etc. Furthermore, a public personal certification service utilizing the system was begun in January 2004. Thus, the system is playing an important role as the basis of e-government and e-local government.

The Basic Resident Register card, the issue of which began in August 2003, is an IC card that is issued by the mayor to those who want one. As well as serving as a public identification certificate, the card can be used in a variety of ways that take advantage of the high-level security functions and information processing functions of IC cards. For example, the card can be used as a secret key for public personal certification services and as a means of preserving an electronic certificate, as well as for automatic certificate-issuing services allowed by municipal ordinances and everyday administrative services, such as the booking of public facilities.

## Section 6

# Promoting Network Contents Distribution and Developing Human Resources

## 1. Promoting the Production, Distribution, and Preservation of Network Contents

The Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters, which was set up in the government in March 2003 on the basis of the Basic Law on Intellectual Property, pointed out the importance of contents in the realization of a state based on intellectual property and established, under the headquarters, the Task Force on Content, which conducted multidimensional studies on such subjects as promoting the creation, protection, and distribution of contents and issued a report in April 2004. The “Bill concerning Promotion of Creation, Protection and Exploitation of Content” was submitted to the 159th session of the Diet as legislation submitted by Diet members and was enacted in May 2004.

Regarding the facilitation of processing copyrights and other rights, which has become an issue relating to contents, and the establishment of safe, definite, and diverse distribution technology, under the cooperation of the public and private sectors, the MPHPT since fiscal 2002 has been conducting trials on the development and demonstration of a copyright clearance mechanism and the development and demonstration of broadband con-

tents distribution technology.

Also, in response to the increase of illegal and harmful information on the Internet, in order to enable users to easily judge the safety of information, the MPHPT from fiscal 2004 is carrying out surveys and research with the aim of promoting the establishment of a Contents Safety Mark system (tentative name) so that site operators can indicate the safety of their own sites.

## 2. Developing Human Resources

The field of information and communications is a rapidly developing field with a high degree of technological power. In order to maintain and strengthen the international competitiveness of existing industries by utilizing information and communications, high-level information and communications engineers are essential.

In fiscal 2001 the MPHPT introduced the Supporting System for Training of ICT Human Resources with the aim of developing human resources with expert knowledge and skills in the information and communications fields. Also, with the aim of ensuring and improving the safety and reliability of networks, the MPHPT in fiscal 2004 introduced the Business of setting up information communications security personnel training centers.