

2 Volume of postal items

A total of 25.00433 billion (a 2.3% decrease from the previous fiscal year) of domestic and international postal items were processed in fiscal 2004.

While the number of domestic postal items dropped to 23.4935 billion (a 5.3% decrease from the previous fiscal year), the number of postal parcels processed was 1.42975 billion (a 104.8% increase over the previous fiscal year). In fiscal 2003, the number of outgoing international postal items was 84.17 million (a 9.6% decrease from the previous fiscal year) and the number of incoming international postal items was 237.71 million (a 10.7% decrease from the previous fiscal year).

Looking at the total volume of mail handled by country in fiscal 2002, Japan ranked second after the United States. However, in terms of per capita annual mail volume, Japan ranked 16th worldwide, accounting for about 31% of the volume in the United States.

3 Post office network

As of the end of fiscal 2004, 24,678 post offices (a 0.1% decrease from the previous fiscal year) offered mail-handling facilities. By type, there were 1,308 ordi-

nary post offices (a decrease of two from the previous fiscal year), 18,923 special post offices (a decrease of 12 from the previous fiscal year), and 4,447 postal agencies (a decrease of 23 from the previous fiscal year). Dividing ordinary and special post offices by collection and delivery and non-collection and delivery facilities, there were 4,726 collection and delivery post offices (a decrease of 66 from the previous fiscal year) and 15,505 non-collection and delivery post offices (an increase of 52 over the previous fiscal year).

In addition, a cooperative framework with private forwarders was established in June 1998 under which packages (mainly refrigerated packages) are delivered as postal parcels using the post office network. At the end of fiscal 2004, private forwarders engaged in such business collaboration totaled 16.

4 Correspondence delivery business

At the end of fiscal 2004, the number of carriers engaged in special correspondence delivery business totaled 111. During fiscal 2004, 70 carriers entered the special correspondence delivery business.

Section 5

Contents

1 Market size of the mobile contents industry

In 2004, the market size of Japan's mobile contents industry, consisting of the mobile contents market and the mobile commerce market, was 461.6 billion yen (a 31.1% increase over the previous year). By market, the size of the mobile contents market in 2004 was 260.3 billion yen (a 22.0% increase over the previous year) and that of the mobile commerce market was 201.3 billion yen (a 45.0% increase over the previous year).

The mobile contents market, which is the market of digital contents (ring-tone melodies, wall paper, etc.) traded through the mobile phone Internet, has continued to make steady expansion since the launch of the service.

The mobile commerce market, which is the market of mail-orders other than mobile contents, ticket sales, acquisition of stock trading commissions, etc. using the mobile phone Internet, has been rapidly expanding since the launch of the service.

Section 6

Human Resources Development

1 ICT education in public schools

In fiscal 2003, there was one computer for every 8.8 pupils in public schools. The Internet connection rate of public schools reached 99.8% in fiscal 2003, so almost all public schools are connected to the Internet. High-

speed Internet connections at 400 kbps or over were available in 71.5% of all public schools, allowing smooth transmissions of large-volume moving images, while 37.2% of regular classrooms had LAN installations, and 67.4% of schools have their own Website.