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## COMMUNICATIONS NEWS

Biweekly Newsletter of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, Japan

# “Roundtable Conference on the Future Aspects of Broadcasting in the Broadband Age” Compiles “Second Action Plan for the Promotion of Digital Broadcasting”

Looking toward the development of broadband in info-communications networks with a view to debate from a wide variety of viewpoints the various broadcasting issues in the age of broadband, MPHPT has been holding the “Roundtable Conference on the Future Aspects of Broadcasting in the Broadband Age” (chaired by Mr. AKIYAMA Yoshihisa, Chairman of Kansai Economic Federation and Kansai Electric Power Co., Inc.) since November 2001.

On January 29, 2003, the Roundtable Conference compiled the “Second Action Plan for the Promotion of Digital Broadcasting.”

## “Second Action Plan for the Promotion of Digital Broadcasting”

January 29, 2003

## “Roundtable Conference on the Future Aspects of Broadcasting in the Broadband Age”

Within the government, the IT Strategic Headquarters adopted the “e-Japan Priority Policy Program - 2002 (June 18, 2002),” stating “in order to promote digitalization of broadcasting comprising infrastructures of the IT Revolution, and start terrestrial digital broadcasting in the three major metropolitan areas of Kanto, Kinki and Chukyo by the end of 2003, and other areas by the end of 2006, the government takes measures for change of analog frequency in line with the digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting.”

And, the “Second Section (Strategy for Revitalization of the Economy),” of the “Basic Policies for Economic and Fiscal Policy Management and Structural

Reform 2002 (Cabinet Decision of June 25, 2002),” describes “to create various IT businesses, including e-commerce from homes with interactive TV programming, through promoting digitalization of broadcasting infrastructures which support the IT Revolution at home.”

As shown in the above-mentioned Cabinet Decisions, digitalization of broadcasting will bring about revolutionary changes in ways of watching programming, namely a shift from a one-way/passive mode to a two-way/positive mode. Through provision of unprecedented, advanced and multifaceted services (high-definition pictures, programming with captions and descriptions for the elderly and people with disabilities, reservation services via the Internet, TV reception via mobile terminals, server-type broadcasting, etc.), viewers will be able to greatly benefit from digitalization of broadcasting. At the same time, since the digitalization has unprecedented significance in terms of ICT policy, all relevant parties will make concerted efforts to implement the following measures to promote the swift diffusion of digital

broadcasting.

## I. Concrete measures to be implemented by relevant parties

### 1. Terrestrial TV broadcasters

1) In accordance with the plan to start

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terrestrial digital broadcasting in the three major metropolitan areas of Kanto, Kinki and Chukyo by the end of 2003, other areas by the end of 2006, complete the transition from analog to digital broadcasting in 2011 and terminate analog broadcasting in the same year, all relevant parties will make efforts for smooth implementation thereof.

- 2) In particular, in keeping pace with progress in measures for change of analog frequency after the start of digital broadcasting, **will make efforts** to accelerate diffusion of terrestrial digital broadcasting through continuous expansion of service areas.
- 3) **Aim at** high-definition broadcasting for more than 50% of the weekly broadcasting hours during the initial period after the launch of the service, and after that period, aim at increasing the ratio, in particular, at prime time (four hours from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.).
- 4) **Aim at** introducing broadcast programming with the advantages of digital broadcasting including supplementary data broadcasting, interactive programming, etc. one after another to increase the number of programs, in parallel, developing broadcasting services in compliance with mobile reception and introducing these at the earliest possible stage.
- 5) **Will enhance** broadcasting services friendly to the elderly and people with disabilities, such as captioned broadcasting with merits of digital broadcasting.

## 2. Terrestrial digital radio broadcasters

Commercial test broadcasting will be started in autumn 2003 in Tokyo and Osaka, with the purposes of forecasting a future demand for mobile reception of broadcasting and of contributing to commercialization thereof.

## 3. BS TV broadcasters

- 1) **Will further diffuse** BS digital broadcasting, by airing attractive broadcast contents and the implementation of joint campaign to publicize the merits of digital broadcasting such as high-definition and interactive programming.
- 2) **Aim at** broadcasting BS digital programs using a transmission capacity of more than 22 slots, fully utilizing

the merits of digital broadcasting, for more than 75% of prime time (four hours from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.) by the end of 2003. These programs are mainly high-definition programs, and among the others are interactive programs and program-based data broadcasting.

- 3) With regard to analog broadcasting, **will adequately inform** viewers in a correct and ascertained manner of the time schedule that analog Hi-Vision broadcasting will be terminated in 2007 and other BS analog broadcasting by the end of 2011 in line with the termination period of terrestrial analog broadcasting.

## 4. CS TV broadcasters

- 1) (Omitted)
- 2) (Omitted)
- 3) **Will make efforts** to improve picture quality through standard definition broadcasting utilizing broadband and introduce high-definition broadcasting, according to broadcast programming.
- 4) **Will provide** information on CS digital broadcasting and conduct dissemination thereon, through joint efforts between platforms, cooperation with BS digital broadcasters and TV manufacturers, for making CS digital broadcasting services easily understood by the public.
- 5) Platform operators will develop guidelines for improving services and make them public, for facilitating multifaceted CS broadcasting and for ensuring benefits of viewers, through implementation of more adequate and efficient services toward program-supplying broadcasters, etc.

## 5. Cable TV operators

- 1) (Omitted)
- 2) The target level on retransmission of terrestrial digital broadcasting by cable TV operators will be deliberated upon at an early date.
- 3) Based on the specifications for retransmission of terrestrial digital broadcasting to be developed by Japan Cable Laboratories by the end of April 2003, relevant manufacturers will swiftly put set-top boxes in compliance with the specifications into the market, and cable TV operators will actively introduce these.

## 6. Manufacturers of receiving sets and

## retailers

- 1) (Omitted)
- 2) In keeping pace with the start of terrestrial digital broadcasting, and in compliance with high-definition broadcasting, **will swiftly put** common receiving sets for satellite and terrestrial digital broadcasting into the market and facilitate supply of lower-priced digital broadcast receiving sets.
- 3) (Omitted)
- 4) During the initial period of terrestrial digital broadcasting, in order to facilitate transition of analog TV broadcasting to digital broadcasting, **will make efforts** to install a function enabling receiving terrestrial analog TV broadcast on terrestrial digital TV broadcast receiving sets and promote sales thereof.
- 5) Upon sales of receiving sets, in line with the schedule of transition to digital broadcasting and termination of analog broadcasting under the Basic Broadcasting Plan, **will make efforts** at an adequate timing to inform consumers (the public) of the schedule of terrestrial broadcasting and BS analog broadcasting termination periods in a correct and ascertained manner, for instance, including the schedule in catalogs, affixing of seals to receiving sets, posting of notice at shops.
- 6) With respect to numerical targets for TVs, etc. compliant with digital broadcasting, a working group for deliberations on diffusion, consisting of relevant specialists involved in digital broadcasting, will compile an interim report by the end of March 2003. To this end, the working group is deliberating on the numerical targets at 2011 and timely points before 2011, taking into consideration the current status that there are more than 100 million terrestrial analog TV sets in all households (about 48 million) and various receiving sets, etc. are in use according to a large variety of viewing modes.

## 7. Local public organizations

- 1) Upon promotion of e-local governments, local public organizations will make the most of terrestrial digital broadcasting (e.g., for PR programs of local public organizations).
- 2) (Omitted)

## II. Promotion of publicity campaigns, etc.

- 1) All relevant parties will make efforts in cooperation to conduct publicity activities, such as efforts listed in the Action Plan of Publicity Campaigns for Terrestrial Digital Broadcasting (Annex).
- 2) (Omitted)

## III. Efforts of the government

In order to contribute to smooth implementation of the above-mentioned efforts, the government will implement measures, such as publicity activities for the public on merits and schedules of the digitalization as a national policy, active support measures that facilitate the digitalization, promotion of digitalization of cable TV and common receiving facilities, and research on and study of the provision of administrative services utilizing terrestrial digital broadcasting, which will contribute to promotion of e-local governments, in a timely and appropriate manner.

## IV. Establishment of an organization for promoting digital terrestrial broadcasting and follow-up of the Action Plan

With regard to terrestrial digital broadcasting in the implementation stage, an organization for promoting terrestrial digital broadcasting consisting of top leaders from various fields will be set up by the spring 2003, with the purpose of facilitating the digitalization of broadcasting. Follow-ups to the Action Plan on a regular basis are required.

### (Annex)

## Action Plan of Publicity Campaigns for Terrestrial Digital Broadcasting

Terrestrial digital broadcasting will realize unprecedented, highly-convenient, advanced and multifaceted services utilizing its high-quality pictures, interactivity and storage capacity, and become infrastructures with which the public will be able to participate in and benefit from the ICT society via close-by and convenient TVs.

In addition, terrestrial digital broadcasting will contribute to Japan's industrial invigoration and economic revitalization through preparation of ubiquitous ICT infrastructures, including realization

of mobile communications, as well as creation, etc. of diversified ICT businesses in conjunction with expansion of the ICT consumer electronics market and the Internet. Terrestrial digital broadcasting will become a driving force for constructing a New ICT society generated by Japan, thus having a significant importance in Japan's ICT strategy.

Terrestrial TV broadcasting has been the media being the closest and reliable one for viewers and the public. Thus, upon implementing its digitalization, it is vital to provide consumers with sufficient and necessary information.

Accordingly, all relevant parties in cooperation will make the most of effective combination of easy-to-understand and familiar methods, utilizing the diversified media of broadcasting, newspapers, posters, leaflets, etc., including various methods, such as campaigns of events, utilization of characters, storefront PR, hands-on exhibitions, etc. It is essential to obtain wide-ranging understanding of the public through repetition of various publicity campaigns with the purpose of swiftly providing the public with the following information:

- 1) The above-mentioned social significance and concrete merits for consumers of terrestrial digital broadcasting (refer to Ancillary Annex)
- 2) Total schedule indicating the termination period of analog broadcasting (2003, 2006 and 2011)
- 3) Each start point of digital broadcasting in each area and expansion schedules of broadcast areas (for the time being, the three major metropolitan areas)
- 4) Methods of viewing terrestrial digital broadcasting
- 5) Necessary measures to be taken by owners of analog TV sets after 2011 analog broadcasting is terminated (installation of digital set-top boxes, antenna changes, etc.)
- 6) Needs for measures for change of analog frequency

To this end, all relevant parties including broadcasters, manufacturers of receiving sets, retailers, local public organizations, the government, etc. will strengthen tie-ups as well as cooperation and forcefully promote the following efforts:

### 1. Efforts of broadcasters

- 1) Via TV program guides, etc., broad-

casters will provide viewers on a timely basis with the necessary information on significance of digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting, a start-up time and area expansion schedules of terrestrial digital broadcasting, concrete measures including implementation of measures for change of analog frequency.

- 2) Within areas where measures for change of analog frequency are needed, broadcasters will provide households needing the measures with concrete information on channels to be changed, channels after changes, termination period of old channels, etc. via broadcasts with superimposing methods, etc.
- 3) Broadcasters will carry out multifaceted information publicity campaigns through various events, production and distribution of leaflets, posting and utilizing of homepages and dedicated websites, etc.
- 4) Broadcasters will actively respond to a variety of inquiries and consultations from viewers on terrestrial digital broadcasting through utilization of consulting offices for viewers, etc.

### 2. Efforts of manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers

- 1) Manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers will carry out easy-to-understand and effective publicity activities at various event campaigns, storefront displays, hands-on exhibitions, etc., by making the most of point of purchase advertising, such as posters, leaflets, display panels as well as VCRs, DVDs.
- 2) With relevant parties manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers will provide area residents with opportunities to experience demonstrations of digital broadcasting using TV sets, etc. at marquee areas such as station plazas, department stores, public facilities, etc.
- 3) Manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers will hold training courses for salespersons at sales offices on an area-by-area basis, in order to improve consumer relationship, such as response to inquiries and consultations concerning terrestrial digital broadcasting.
- 4) Toward purchasers of analog TV receiving sets, manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers will provide appropriate information and expla-

nations by affixing seals to receiving sets, containing user's manuals, which describe schedules of the termination period of analog broadcasting and information that analog TV receiving sets will require digital set-top boxes, etc. after 2011.

- 5) Retailers in areas where there is a need to conduct measures for change of analog frequency will, in response to requests for cooperation from regional TV reception support centers, will make efforts to provide consumers at the store with measures for change of analog frequency and respond to inquiries from local residents.
- 6) In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, manufacturers of receiving sets and retailers will actively carry out publicity activities through various media, such as leaflets, websites, etc.

### 3. Efforts of local public organizations

- 1) Considering that the digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting is part of efforts to promote digitalization of local communities and contributes to the promotion of e-local governments, open to everyone in each community, through familiar and convenient TVs, sections in charge of ICT promotion and PR at local public organizations will carry out in cooperation publicity activities concerning digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting in each area.
- 2) In particular, local public organizations in areas where there is a need to conduct measures for change of analog frequency will, in conjunction with the publicity activities of regional TV reception support centers, implement various publicity activities for measures for change of analog frequency for local residents in a timely manner through their PR publications, bulletin boards, etc.

### 4. Efforts of the government

- 1) The government will ongoingly carry out necessary publicity activities on the significance of and necessity for digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting, digitalization schedules including a termination of analog broadcasting, through production and distribution of posters and leaflets, the government's publicity media (periodicals, newspapers, etc.), websites,

provision of VCRs and DVDs explaining the schedules, etc. at various events, meetings, etc.

- 2) The government will hold various events with the purpose of disseminating information on terrestrial digital broadcasting and make efforts to install and improve facilities for publicity activities.
- 3) The government will prepare reception consultation systems concerning terrestrial digital broadcasting in response to inquiries and consultations from viewers.
- 4) With respect to measures for change of analog frequency, the central government will, about three months prior to starting up said measures, provide households that need to take the measures with the necessary information on said measures through public notices and distribution of leaflets, etc. The government will, in conjunction with the efforts of relevant parties, win the prior and necessary understanding and cooperation from those households on the significance of digitalization, the need for measures for change of analog frequency, details of changes and work in areas where those households are located, the time period of the work, application procedures for subsidy, etc.

### 5. Other efforts

- 1) In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, all relevant parties will make concerted efforts to deploy strengthened publicity campaigns taking advantage of the following opportunities. In particular, during the Info-Communications Month, relevant parties will hold demonstrations, exhibitions of equipment, seminars, etc. in every region of the country.
  - a) Info-Communications Month (May through June)
  - b) Events such as Digital Fairs, including CEATEC JAPAN (October), Hi-Vision Fair, etc.
  - c) Various efforts toward start of receiving set sales and broadcasting services (launch of test broadcasting, various CM, notices, ceremonies, etc.)
- 2) Council for Promotion of Terrestrial Digital Broadcasting in each region, the TV Reception Improvement Committee, the Receiving Environment Improvement Association, etc. will make concerted efforts to share the

necessary knowledge and information among relevant parties, through the holding of various seminars, training courses, etc. concerning reception technologies, etc.

### (Ancillary Annex)

## Merits for Viewers of Digitalization of Terrestrial Broadcasting

### 1. Broadcasting services with clear and high-quality pictures and sounds and realistic sensations will become available.

- 1) High-definition TV broadcasting services that terrestrial analog broadcasting cannot realize will become available.
- 2) The aspect ratio will change from the conventional 4:3 to 16:9 which is considered to be the optimal ratio of wide screen. Clear pictures with realistic sensations on a wide screen will become available.
- 3) Broadcasts with clear and high-quality sounds comparable to CDs are realized. Broadcasting services offering voices and sounds from all directions will surround viewers with realistic sensations will become available.
- 4) Clear reception without "ghost" (an image doubled on the screen), mainly caused by delayed signals reflected by tall buildings, etc., will be realized.

### 2. Various and unprecedented highly convenient broadcasting services with functions to obtain a variety of information and interactive functions will become available.

- 1) In addition to conventional TV programming, viewers will be able to access various information through the unique advantages of data broadcasting via terrestrial digital broadcasting on weather, daily living, administrative services, medical care, etc.
 

In cases of emergency such as disasters, through data broadcasting, viewers can obtain detailed local life-line information and traffic information anytime, and when using portable terminals to be mentioned later, they can stably access such information from anywhere.
- 2) With simple operation of a remote control, viewers will be allowed to obtain necessary information through

[Examples]

TV program	Interaction	Internet
Travel program ⇔	Select a hot-spring inn with a remote control ⇔ [Detailed information on type of rooms, prices, etc.]	Make reservations on the screen

links from TV programs to relevant detailed information, make various reservations and enjoy TV shopping through interactive functions with the Internet, apply for the presents offered by TV programs, and participate in interactive TV programs which support active viewer participation, such programming as quiz shows, customer or questionnaire surveys.

3) A single channel can simultaneously receive multiple TV programs. This function will enable a wider choice of TV programs, multiangle viewing services that will allow viewers to select one angle from many angles of live sport event broadcasts, etc. and 3D TV programs (using 3D glasses, etc.).

**3. Stable use of broadcasting services will become available with cell phones and personal digital assis-**

**tants (PDAs).**

- 1) New modes of TV watching with cell phones and PDAs will be enabled. For instance, viewers will be able to watch a ball game on one's way home or on a street, obtain flash reports on ongoing ball games at other ball parks via data broadcasting, watch missed scenes with download functions, and participate in a live quiz show.
- 2) Stable use of broadcasting services will become available even while traveling in cars, trains and buses.

**4. Improved services friendly to the elderly and people with disabilities**

- 1) Since digitalization increase the volume of information to be transmitted, enhanced programming with captions and descriptions will be enabled.
- 2) In cases where narrations are too fast to here, viewers will be able to con-

trol the speed of narrations to the degree clear for them.

**5. Easy selection of programs and watching favorite programs any-time become available.**

- 1) Easy selection of programs will be enabled through use of an electronic program guide (EPG) which lists available TV programs and TV program information on the screen.
- 2) Through provision of server-type broadcasting services, viewers will be able to watch their favorite programs, retrieve information anytime in an easy manner by means of automatic recording of TV programs for one to two weeks. Viewers will also be enabled to watch only their favorite or highlighted scenes, and digested dramas and movies.

# "Global Information Summit 2003" Held

On February 18 and 19, 2003, the "Global Information Summit 2003" sponsored by Nihon Keizai Shimbun Inc. was held.

At this Summit, under the theme of "From Net to Mesh: Building the Next-Generation Business Infrastructure," deliberations on future potentials and challenges were made toward the development of the digital economy entering into a new stage.

Mr. KATAYAMA Toranosuke, Minister for Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (MPHPT), at the beginning of the second day, gave a special speech on the latest major efforts of MPHPT in the ICT field.

The Minister unveiled the results of Japan's national strategy, the "e-Japan Strategy." Minister KATAYAMA also explained that considering the current status in which actual use of broadband platforms is still in its infancy, toward

realization of an "information society originated from Japan," Japan will strive to realize a ubiquitous networked society by making the most of Japan's strengths in such areas as consumer electronics with embedded IT features, etc. In addition, based on changes of network structures from POTS to the Internet, etc., he mentioned that the government is to submit a bill to amend the Telecommunications Business Law to the 156th Ordinary Diet Session.

Minister KATAYAMA also referred to deregulation on telecommunications equipment, promotion of effective use of radio spectrums,

digitization of broadcasting, policy for information security, etc.

He added that Japan is to further strengthen cooperative ties with Asian countries/economies, including China and the Republic of Korea, in the ICT field, stressing collaboration with governments, private-sector entities, NGOs and international organizations.



# Number of Subscribers to DSL Services Hits the 6-million Mark

The number of subscribers to DSL services surpassed the 6-million mark, reaching 6.12 million, as of the end of January 2003.

The number of subscribers to DSL services as of the end CY2002 was 1.52 million. This surge in the number of subscribers can be thought to be a result

of the preparation of an environment such as rate reductions, etc. that has been in progress, based on expectations for broadband networks in Japan.

Henceforth, it is also anticipated that DSL subscribers and its use will grow as a driving force for deploying broadband platforms toward more effective

use of the Internet.

Note: this information on subscriptions is renewed on a monthly basis, and available on the following website:

[http://www.soumu.go.jp/joho\\_tsusin/eng/Statistics/dsl/index.html](http://www.soumu.go.jp/joho_tsusin/eng/Statistics/dsl/index.html)

### Information about Diffusion of DSL Services (Prompt report as of the end of January 2003)

	NTT West Area	NTT East Area
Number of DSL lines provided by NTT East and NTT West	1,014,968 lines	1,242,546 lines
Number of DSL lines provided by other carriers through use of NTT line facilities	1,601,730 lines	2,260,639 lines
Subtotal	2,616,698 lines	3,503,185 lines
Total	6,119,883 lines	

**Note: All lines in the table above are provided via terminal circuits of NTT East and NTT West.**

