

Summary of Meeting of the Radio Regulatory Council (No. 910)

1. Date and time

October 11, 2006 (Wednesday) 15:00 to 15:35

2. Location

Meeting Room of MIC (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

(Meeting Room No. 1002 on the 10th floor)

3. Attendees (Honorifics omitted)

(1) Members of the Radio Regulatory Council

Mitsutoshi Hatori (Chairperson), Junichi Hamada, Kashiko Kodate, and Hatsuko Ukikawa

(2) Hearing Examiner of the Radio Regulatory Council

Shuichi Nishimoto

(3) Secretary

Ikko Mitsui (Deputy Director of the General Affairs Division, Telecommunications Bureau)

(4) MIC (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

Mori (Director-General of the Telecommunications Bureau), and others

4. Minutes of the Meeting

(1) Regarding the draft ministerial ordinance that partially amends the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law, the Ordinance Regulating Radio Equipment, and the Regulations Concerning Technical Standards Compliance Certification, etc. of Specified Radio Equipment

(Consultation No. 31)

As this matter was related to Consultation No. 32, MIC explained it and provided a questions-and-answers session in conjunction with Consultation No. 32.

(2) Regarding the proposed change to a part of the Frequency Assignment Plan
(Consultation No. 32)

As this matter relates to Consultation No. 31, MIC explained it and provided a questions-and-answers session in conjunction with Consultation No. 31.

Note that as Article 99-12 (1) of the Radio Law required that MIC hear public comments on Consultation No. 31 and as MIC concluded that it was appropriate to ask the opinions of the Council about Consultation No. 32 in conjunction with Consultation No. 31, MIC decided to subject them to the public hearing process as one set, and appointed Shuichi Nishimoto as the hearing examiner who would preside over procedures for the public hearing.

a. Explanation by MIC

The purport of this ministerial ordinance amendment is that MIC intends to add new frequencies to introduce a 5 GHz-band wireless LAN for indoor or outdoor use that require no license.

Originally, wireless LAN gave a basic technology image to the public as one that was used to build a cable-less Internet environment at home or in an office. However, recently, the technology has been more widely used as wireless spots in public places where people gather, and the number of such public wireless spots reached 15,000 as of June 2006, which is almost twice the number of one year ago. In addition, recently, an increasing number of municipalities have utilized wireless LAN for developing Internet subscriber lines to take measures to resolve the “digital divide.”

The frequencies that wireless LAN use most belong to the 2.4 GHz band. As they do not require

any licenses and can be used outdoors, the environments for them are overcrowded in offices and wireless spots in the urban areas and transmission speeds are getting slower. Some frequencies in the 5 GHz band have been added for wireless LANs. However, as there are restrictions, such as requiring licenses or being limited to indoor use, the public has strongly demanded easier-to-use frequencies that are available for indoor or outdoor use and do not require licenses.

This was the reason why the World Radiocommunication Conference held in 2003 decided to distribute frequencies of 5470 to 5725 MHz to the world as those for wireless LAN that were available for indoor or outdoor use and did not require licenses.

In Japan also, the Telecommunications Council issued a report on this matter in November 2004. As the parties with which the frequencies were shared are ship radars, etc. used worldwide, the report recommended that MIC address the conditions for measuring DFS (Dynamic Frequency Selection) that was a function that avoided interference with radars, based on the international trends. Therefore, MIC wishes to ask the Council to deliberate on the draft ministerial ordinances by referring to the DFS measurement conditions announced in the US on June 30, 2006.

MIC intends to amend three ministerial ordinances in this consultation. The first amendment is that MIC adds this frequency band to the frequencies for use with radio stations requiring no licenses (low-power data communication systems) in the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law. Next, MIC will define the technical standards for wireless LAN using the frequency band of 5470 to 5725 MHz that MIC is introducing now in the Ordinance Regulating Radio Equipment. The third amendment is that MIC will add the wireless LAN that MIC is introducing now to the specified radio equipment in the Regulations Concerning Technical Standards Compliance Certification, etc. of Specified Radio Equipment.

Note that MIC plans to enforce three finalized ministerial ordinances in January 2007.

In addition, the first change in modifying the Frequency Assignment Plan is that MIC adds a new entry for low-power operations (low-power data communication systems) in the “Purpose of Radio Station” column in the frequency assignment table in the 5470 to 5725 MHz band, enabling the introduction of the 5 GHz-band wireless LAN requiring no licenses and available for indoor or outdoor use. MIC will also add the frequencies that can be used in the frequency band to the frequency table for radio stations for these systems.

The second change concerns the extension of a temporary use period for 5 GHz-band wireless access systems. As no Microwave Landing System for aircrafts has been deployed on the frequency band of 5030 to 5091 MHz that has been reserved for them, MIC decided that this frequency band should be made available to 5 GHz-band wireless access systems until November 30, 2007 on a temporary basis. MIC intends to prolong this temporary use period by five years to November 30, 2012.

b. Main contents of the Q&A session

- The following question was asked:

Does installing DFS mean that it will be installed in new devices such as personal computers?

MIC answered as follows:

It is necessary that an access point installed on a ceiling or wall must be equipped with DFS, and personal computers can then utilize this access point.

- The following question was asked:

MIC explained that personal computers could be left as they were. Will wireless LAN devices installed in offices or homes need to support DFS in future?

MIC answered as follows:

Only radio equipment that meets these new technical standards are allowed to use this frequency band. MIC imagines that manufacturers must produce and sell devices in a way that they will install DFS in a base station for such devices when the new frequency band is implemented.

- The following question was asked:

I think ad-hoc networks include wireless LANs that conduct direct communications between personal computers without using a base station. I wonder if one of such personal computers must have DFS in that case.

MIC answered as follows:

MIC does not accept any configuration that allows communications to be conducted between child stations only because MIC does not think DFS works in such configurations.

(3) Regarding the blanket license for specified radio stations that belong to KIA Information & Telecommunications Network Co., Ltd.

(Consultation No. 33)

MIC explained the application submitted from KIA Information & Telecommunications Network Co., Ltd. for approval for a blanket license concerning land mobile stations for digital airport radio communication systems and provided a questions-and-answers session as follows.

The Council deliberated this matter and replied indicating that the Council regarded it as acceptable.

a. Explanation by MIC

In a large airport, various players such as the Land, Infrastructure and Transportation Ministry, airline companies, and airport-related companies are conducting a range of airport-related services in addition to air traffic control services. Airport radio communication systems are used as vital communication means to help such organizations to smoothly and efficiently conduct

these services. They are also capable of simultaneously issuing evacuation instructions from a control tower and conducting other operations such as prioritizing calls between those involved in fire-fighting operations in the event of an emergency, such as an accident at an airport.

The airport radio communication system has been gradually installed at airports in different parts of Japan since the analog type was installed at Narita International Airport in June 1990.

As the recent tendency of increasing air traffic volume and airport services also increases demand for required radio communications, the digital type of airport radio communication systems that make particularly effective use of the radio spectrum and which enable voice communications as well as data communications, etc. have been installed since December 2004.

This consultation asks the Council to deliberate on whether MIC can grant a blanket license for land mobile stations that will be mainly used at the Kansai International Airport as KIA Information & Telecommunications Network Co., Ltd. wishes to install a new digital airport radio communication system at the airport.

What the application requests is that KIA Information & Telecommunications Network Co., Ltd. plans to establish radio stations whose purpose is to conduct telecommunication services, use 59 wavelengths in the frequency band of 415.525 to 416.975 MHz in steps of 25 kHz, and operate up to a maximum of 1600 stations. As a result of examining these items in the application in the light of the feasibility of the allotment of frequencies, etc., MIC recognizes that it meets every particular in Article 27-4 of the Radio Law. Once MIC receives a reply indicating that the Council regards this matter as acceptable, the Telecommunications Bureaus in Kinki will grant the blanket license for the land mobile stations to the company. The company plans to conduct a trial operation from December 2006 and launch the service in March 2007.

b. Main contents of the Q&A session

- The following question was asked:

Were the analog systems used for telephone calls only before switching to the digital type? Or, were they used for data or fax communications?

MIC answered as follows:

They were not used for data communications, but for voice calls only.

(The Radio Regulatory Council Secretariat is responsible for the wording of this document.)