

Summary of Meeting of the Radio Regulatory Council (No. 911)

1. Date and time

November 8, 2006 (Wednesday)

15:00 to 16:58

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), Takeo Inokuchi (Vice-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), Suzuki (Director-General of the Information and Communications Policy Bureau), Kawauchi (Director-General of the Radio Department), Nakata (Deputy Director-General of the Minister's Secretariat), and others

4. Minutes of the Meeting

(1) Regarding the draft ministerial ordinance that partially amends the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law and the Ordinance Regulating Radio Equipment as well as the proposed change to a part of the Frequency Assignment Plan

(Consultation No. 23 and No. 24 of September 13, 2006)

Having deliberated the draft ministerial ordinance in the title that deals with the introduction of active tag systems using frequencies of the 433 MHz band, as well as the proposed changes to a part of the Frequency Assignment Plan, based on the written opinion and protocol submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over procedures for inviting public comments (refer to the post-hearing opinion from the 416th Radio Regulatory Council's written opinions), the Council concluded that they were appropriate and returned an affirmative reply.

(2) Regarding the draft ministerial ordinance that partially amends the ministerial ordinance concerning the survey, etc. of actual radio spectrum usage

(Consultation No. 25 of September 13, 2006)

Having deliberated the draft ministerial ordinance that partially amends the ministerial ordinance concerning the survey, etc. of actual radio spectrum usage to improve the efficiency of this survey, which MIC conducts every year, based on the written opinion and protocol submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over procedures for inviting public comments (refer to the post-hearing opinion from the 417th Radio Regulatory Council's written opinions), the Council concluded that the draft was appropriate and returned an affirmative reply.

(3) Regarding the draft ministerial ordinance that amends each part of the Regulations for Enforcement of the Broadcast Law, the Ordinance Regulating Radio Equipment, the Essential Standards for Establishing Broadcasting Stations, the Regulations for Enforcement of the Law

Concerning Broadcast on Telecommunications Service, and the Ordinance for Standard Transmission Systems for Digital Broadcasting among Standard Television Broadcasting, etc.

(Consultation No. 27 of September 13, 2006)

Having deliberated the draft amendment to relevant ministerial ordinances for adding an advanced narrowband transmission method to CS digital broadcasting, based on the written opinion and protocol submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over procedures for inviting public comments (refer to the post-hearing opinion from the 418th Radio Regulatory Council's written opinions), the Council concluded that the draft were appropriate and returned an affirmative reply.

(4) Regarding changes to the FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting issued to the Japan Broadcasting Corporation

(Consultation No. 34)

Concerning the consultation about changes to the Order to Conduct International Broadcasting that was issued as of April 1, 2006, to the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (hereinafter called NHK), the secretary reported the contents of the following requests and overtures:

(i) "Overtures for Deliberation on Order to Conduct International Broadcasting Issued to NHK" from Media Research, Inc., etc.

(ii) "Statement against Order to Conduct International Broadcasting Issued to NHK" by Japan Congress of Journalists

(iii) "Request for Thorough and Transparent Deliberation Process on Order to Conduct International Broadcasting Issued to NHK" by Osaka Citizen Group, Japan Congress of Journalists, Society for Discussing Broadcasting, Citizens for Responsible Media, Society for Defaulting NHK Receiver's Fee, NHK Issue Kyoto Liaison Meeting, NHK Issue Sapporo Liaison Meeting, and Society for Citizens to Consider Altered NHK Programs

(iv) “About Deliberation on Order to Conduct International Broadcasting Issued to NHK” by Society for Considering NHK Issues (Hyogo)

(v) “Request” by 10 lawyers in joint names

MIC then explained the changes and provided a questions-and-answers session as described in the following sections a. and b.

a. Explanation by MIC

MIC asked the Council to deliberate on the FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting to be issued to NHK in March of this year and the Council regarded it as acceptable. MIC issued the order on April 1. This consultation deals with MIC’s intention to change this order.

Reference (2) includes a table for comparing the former items with the new items in the International Broadcasting Order, in which table the former items relate to the current FY2006 International Broadcasting Order. What MIC specifically asks the Council to deliberate is that MIC wishes to include the former items in the new items under a new sub-section (2) within section 1. Broadcasting Matters, and stipulate that NHK must pay special attention to the issue of Japanese persons abducted by North Korea when broadcasting the matters under section 1. MIC explained the reasons why MIC must issue the change order, based on “Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34” (Reference: Reference to NHK President press conference and Reference 5) and Reference (1).

First, MIC will elaborate on “1. Change Reasons” in Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34. The Japanese government established the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue chaired by Prime Minister Abe on September 29 of this year.

The purpose of the establishment is to promote a comprehensive policy to approach, and discuss this issue.

MIC prepared an excerpt from the policy speech Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made to the current session of the Diet on page 18 in the reference. The Prime Minister clearly declared his determination to resolve the issue in his policy speech: “In order to advance comprehensive measures concerning the abduction issue, I have decided to establish the “Headquarters on the Abduction Issue” chaired by myself, and to assign a secretariat solely dedicated to this Headquarters.”

Concerning the “Headquarters on the Abduction Issue”, page 24 in the reference describes the establishment of the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue decided in the cabinet meeting on September 29 of this year.

Finally, the system for the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue has been established whereby the Prime Minister is the chairperson, and the minister in charge of the abduction issue, who was appointed for the first time, is the vice-chairperson, and other cabinet ministers and ministers of State are its regular members.

In this move, the first meeting of the Headquarters was held on the 16th of last month, which is mentioned in section 2 in “Change Reasons” of the Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34, as explained previously.

This first meeting decided on the policy for future countermeasures that the government as a whole must carry out to rescue all of the abduction victims alive, based upon the recognition that the abduction issue is a grave problem that concerns the national sovereignty of Japan and the life and safety of its people.

An overview of the policy is stated in section 3 in the Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34. As you see in page 25 in the reference, the policy for the future countermeasures that

was decided in the first meeting of the Headquarters is clearly established in this way. The first paragraph on page 25 writes similarly that the issue of the Japanese abducted by North Korea concerns the national sovereignty of Japan and the life and safety of its people and that North Korea has been approaching the issue in an extremely insincere manner. In various moves related to the issue, the government has made a decision that the government shall resolve the abduction issue as early as possible by approaching it as a whole. In the wake of this decision, the third paragraph stipulates policies 1 to 6 as follows: Policy 1 states that the Japanese government must ensure the safety of all the abducted victims and continue to demand that North Korea must immediately return them to Japan. Policy 4 determines that the government must promote the prompt consideration of measures towards resolving the issue with the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue as the driving force. Policy 6 states that the government shall further strengthen international cooperation with the aim of resolving the issue through the meetings of organizations such as the United Nations, and close collaboration with relevant countries. The first meeting of the Headquarters of the Abduction Issue confirmed these policies as countermeasures. The government has declared that the resolution of the abduction issue is one of the most critical problems and it commits itself to promoting the enforcement of these countermeasures. In the Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34, mentioned earlier, section 4 of “Change Reasons” explains that the government intends to drive forward these comprehensive measures concerning the abduction issue in this situation.

The measures mean that the government must address the issue as it creates close cooperation with other countries on an international basis. In the middle of these moves, the international broadcasts offered by NHK are extremely important sources of information transmitted from

Japan for the abductees themselves. In addition, as proclaimed in the basic policy explained above, it is necessary to further deepen international understanding of the abduction issue when endeavoring to resolve it. In this respect, the international broadcasting on which NHK is working is expected to play a large role. From this viewpoint, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications wishes to ensure that NHK pays special attention to the issue of the Japanese abducted by North Korea when delivering broadcasts related to “current events,” “important governmental measures,” and “the government’s opinions on international issues,” listed as broadcasting matters in FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting issued to NHK based on Article 33-1 of the Broadcast Law.

By taking this opportunity, MIC wishes to give a short, additional explanation regarding the history and background of the enforcement order system for mandatory broadcasting.

Page 1 in the reference is an overview of the system, as explained earlier. Page 2 in the reference explains the status of international broadcasting in the Broadcast Law. Article 3 of the Broadcast Law proclaims the freedom of the compilation of broadcast programs. The article stipulates that “broadcast programs shall never be interfered with or regulated by any person, except in the case where it is done through invested powers provided by law,” which means that the freedom of compilation of broadcast programs is guaranteed in principle. However, the part, “except in the case where it is done through invested powers provided by law,” clearly states that some exceptions or restrictions may be imposed on this freedom. Other laws also stipulate provisions relevant to the article. The Broadcast Law includes corresponding provisions pertinent to international broadcasting. One such provision is Article 44-(4) of the Broadcast Law, which stipulates the matters that NHK must observe in compiling broadcast programs or the general program standards concerning international broadcasting that NHK voluntarily conducts, such as cultivating and popularizing the correct recognition of our country by

introducing our civilization, industry and other state of things and providing appropriate entertainment to our nationals in foreign countries.

Another provision is relevant to mandatory broadcasting that exactly concerns this consultation.

Article 33-(1) of the Broadcast Law stipulates that the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications may order NHK to conduct international broadcasting by designating Broadcast Service Area, broadcasting matters and other relevant matters.

According to the letter of the law, no restrictions are imposed on the minister as to specifically how the minister specifies such matters. For this reason, it is possible for the minister to designate specifics as far as the interpretation of the article goes. From the fact that the minister asks the Council to deliberate on this matter every year, it is clear that the minister defines a framework or specifies items only generally, and leaves specific program's contents to NHK's compiling to improve broadcasting effects by blending the mandatory programs and the programs that NHK creates voluntarily. The minister has been operating the system of the enforcement order in the past by following this working method.

When issuing any enforcement order to NHK, the minister is expected to first ask the Council to deliberate on an enforcement order and issue the order after receiving an affirmative reply.

In conjunction with the provisions, the cost required for the enforcement of mandatory broadcasting shall be borne by the government. Only if all these presuppositions are satisfied, can the minister order NHK to conduct international broadcasting.

The part to the right of the figure on this page describes the parts of NHK international broadcasting or shortwave radio broadcasting that are causing a problem now and this is what MIC is asking the opinions of the Council about. Currently, NHK also conducts international

TV broadcasting through satellites. The minister can regard the broadcasting as a mandatory target to which Article 33-(1) of said law can apply, but such orders have never been issued yet. Next, page 10 in the reference describes the background to the enforcement orders in the past. This page shows whether enforcement orders have ever been changed in the middle of a fiscal year, as for this order. Section 1 on the page indicates five additional enforcement orders in the middle of a fiscal year in the past. It became necessary to extend the broadcast time for mandatory programs because MIC thought that it was necessary to improve and enhance safety information for our nationals in foreign countries, especially since the Gulf crisis and the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, as listed in section (5). Due to such factors, some orders that were issued at the beginning of the fiscal year could hardly be covered with the budget allotted by the government and consequently, in the past, the minister has issued additional orders after the government compiled supplementary budgets for them in the middle of a fiscal year.

In addition, section 2 on page 10 in the reference explains cases of administrative guidance, which are different from the case of this administrative sanction, where MIC gives written instructions to NHK by following steps or so-called administrative advice procedures based on the Administrative Procedures Act.

Administrative guidance means that it is up to the instructed party (here, NHK) whether it accepts the instructions, or the cooperative stance of NHK determines whether the actions stated in the guidance will be adopted, as it is not an administrative sanction. Page 11 in the reference lists the changes of broadcasting matters designated by such past orders.

In the international broadcasting that was resumed after the war, the first enforcement order based on the Broadcast Law was issued on January 26, 1952, and the designated broadcasting matters included news and news analysis programs and others, such as music programs, when

the necessity arose. Then, celebration programs for the birthday of each country, such as those listed in (iii), were added to the designated broadcast matters in 1958. In 1960, according to (iv), programs that could contribute to the promotion of international friendship, the development of economic interchange with foreign countries, and the appropriate entertainment to our nationals in foreign countries were added to the broadcast matters. The designated broadcasting matters that we are seeing today were fixed on April 1, 1984. As this reference describes, the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, and later the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, required NHK to deliver the designated broadcasting programs based on the proper judgment of the minister in the light of the times and current international situation. This is the background to the changes being made to the broadcasting matters.

In addition, the Law requires that the government bear the cost for programs, etc. necessary for executing such an order by assigning a budget for them, and page 12 of the reference shows the changes to the budgets over the past five years.

The Information column indicates the cost for the entire NHK international radio broadcasting for each year, and the figure enclosed in parentheses indicates the amount of the budget MIC allotted for these orders.

Page 13 and the following pages are particularly relevant to the FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting issued to NHK, about which MIC asked the opinions of the Council this March.

With item 8 in this enforcement order, the minister requires NHK to report on two items, as explained on page 15 of the reference.

One is that the minister requests NHK to submit its weekly program listing. NHK normally

submits this listing twice a year. As soon as its scheduled programs are changed, NHK must submit the changed weekly program listing to MIC. The other item concerns the submission of an ex-post enforcement report. NHK is requested to submit a report on the international broadcasting that NHK conducted based on the order.

Pages 16 and 17 in the reference show respective examples of the weekly program listing and an excerpt from the latest enforcement report.

Pages 19 to 23 in the reference explain the issue of abducted Japanese by North Korea for members' information. This may be a repetition of what was explained before. Page 19 explains the abduction issue. The Association of Families was formed and for the past ten years has been actively carrying out various movements in Japan. When it came to specific diplomatic activities between nations, the Prime Minister's visit to North Korea four years ago triggered moves at the government level.

As described at the beginning of page 19, although some persons returned from North Korea, the country has never provided a convincing explanation about the issue. Under this situation, in the wake of the inauguration of a new cabinet this September, the government as a whole has recently committed itself to establishing the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue, and preparing its stance and system of approach is one of its most vital tasks.

For members' information, the current Director-General of the Headquarters is Nakayama, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister. Nakayama is in charge of the abduction issue. The number of members in the secretariat to support the special advisor was doubled from September to October this year, with most ministries and agencies seconding their staff to it. MIC is one of these ministries.

b. Main contents of the Q&A session

- The following question was asked:

The reporting requirements include the submission of NHK's weekly program listing and an enforcement report. Page 16 in the reference includes an excerpt from a specific weekly program listing. The new enforcement order document states that NHK must reconfirm that it needs to pay special attention to the abduction issue as one such broadcasting matter. Have any of NHK's weekly program listings included the fact that a program with such content has been delivered?

MIC answered as follows:

It is hard to keep track of such facts in program listings. MIC can sometimes ensure with an enforcement report that NHK is trying to cover the North Korea problem or abduction issue in news programs.

- The following question was asked in connection with the previous question:

Has such international broadcasting ever been conducted by NHK? MIC answered as follows:

Some of the recent enforcement reports, such as this September's one, include the fact that NHK conducted such international broadcasting. Page 26 in the reference states that NHK's Deputy Executive Director-General of General Broadcasting announced in a recent press conference that approximately 700 of about 2,000 manuscript copies related to North Korea were concerned with the abduction issue from January to September.

- The following question was asked:

Section 4 on page 1 in the Explanatory Reference for Consultation No. 34 states that "the international broadcasts offered by NHK are extremely important sources of information transmitted from Japan for the abductees themselves." Can we understand that the word abductees means the abducted victims detained in North Korea?

MIC answered indicating that:

The word meant the abducted victims detained in North Korea.

- The following question was asked in connection with the previous question:

Does MIC believe that the abducted victims have or may have an opportunity of listening to international broadcasts?

MIC answered as follows:

MIC knows that discussions with some of the abducted victims who have already returned home reveal that they actually listened to NHK shortwave radio programs.

Note the following fact as supplementary information: MIC hears that North Korea formally orders its people to only listen to a particular frequency or frequencies by modifying radios to receive only certain channels even for AM broadcasting. And as far as shortwave broadcasting receivers are concerned, people are prohibited to even own shortwave radio receivers. One victim related in a talk that they had been encouraged by the knowledge that people in Japan were worried about them by listening to Radio Japan from Japan. A record of the lecture is preserved.

- The following question was asked in connection with the previous question:

I have read before that North Korea attempts to block information that Japan sends by emitting jamming signals. Is it not the case that the international broadcasting by NHK may be blocked?

MIC answered as follows:

MIC cannot say anything at all about jamming. If North Korea should resort to such actions, MIC intends to seek countermeasures based on international procedures or procedures defined by ITU. Note the following fact as supplementary information: MIC hears that broadcast programs about the abducted victims offered by private organizations in Irkutsk in Russia or in Taipei were jammed, but NHK has never experienced such events. Off course, MIC cannot

guarantee that such acts of sabotage will not occur in the future. If that is the case, as MIC explained previously, MIC intends to ask international organizations to neutralize jamming transmissions by following international procedures.

- The following question was asked:

One of the national consensuses in the current Japan is that the issue of abducted Japanese by North Korea is a grave problem affecting the life and safety of Japanese nationals. Our people can fully understand that the government must tackle the issue as an urgent task. On the other hand, while some requests have been submitted to MIC, some argue that the order in question may violate the freedoms of speech and press. What does MIC think of this argument?

MIC answered as follows:

The Broadcast Law is a law embodiment of the freedoms of speech and press guaranteed by the Constitution. The Constitution, on the other hand, also stipulates that “the people shall refrain from any abuse of these freedoms and rights and shall always be responsible for utilizing them for the public welfare.” MIC believes that the Broadcast Law establishes some matters that broadcasters must observe from such a viewpoint.

For this reason, certain restrictions are imposed on the freedoms of speech and press for broadcasters by Article 3 of the Broadcast Law that clearly states as a law that “except in the case where it is done through invested powers provided by law.” MIC also believes that the enforcement orders have certainly been carried out while paying attention to the freedoms of compilation and press for broadcasters in terms of the administration of the orders when issuing them in the past. Note that as a supplementary comment, the provision “broadcast programs shall never be interfered with or regulated by any person, except in the case where it is done

through invested powers provided by law” in Article 3 of the Broadcast Law clearly embodies this idea and one of the most famous rights stipulated by the law is the general program standards. Article 3 of the Broadcast Law stipulates the general program standards such as the parts “shall be politically impartial” and “shall broadcast news without distorting facts,” which means that broadcasters are placed under a certain discipline. The Law stipulates that NHK shall have Consultative Committees and broadcasters shall establish the Standards of Broadcast Programs, and also their own broadcast program standards based on these. MIC believes that the very fact that the general program standards are included in the law and the establishment of the broadcast program standards and the Consultative Committees are required by law indicates a presupposition based on which broadcasters may be controlled.

Similarly, international broadcasting has its own general program standards and also includes mandatory broadcasting. This means that some types of broadcasting can be restricted by the same law.

These laws include not only those based on the Broadcast Law but also the Basic Law on Natural Disasters, the public office election law, etc. For example, the public office election law stipulates that broadcasters must deliver election campaign broadcasts as they are when the manuscripts are submitted, which means the freedom of program compilation with which broadcasters are endowed can be restricted. For these reasons, the interpretation MIC thinks right is that freedom may be restricted based on particular cogent reasons.

- The following question was asked in response to the answer to the previous question:

I agree with MIC explaining that invested powers provided by law can impose some restrictions on the freedom of program compilation. But, I don't think that once a law is established, the law can do whatever it stipulates. Laws must pertain to the purport of the Constitution, especially, the purport of the freedoms of speech and press. Mandatory broadcasting has indicated an

outline of broadcasting matters in the past. Do we have any cases where any order was questioned because NHK did not follow the designated broadcasting matters or properly carry out the order?

MIC answered as follows:

No, we do not have any such cases.

- The following question was asked in response to the answer to the previous question:

Can I accept that is the MIC's formal answer?

MIC answered as follows:

Unless there is clear evidence that NHK has operated against an order to conduct international broadcasting, MIC judges that NHK observes this order. MIC does not know of any cases where MIC has questioned the possibility of NHK's failure to follow the orders.

- The following question was asked in response to the answer to the previous question:

Does MIC really mean that MIC has respected NHK's voluntary operation when the minister orders NHK to conduct international broadcasting?

MIC answered indicating that:

MIC had respected NHK's voluntary operation.

- The following question was asked:

Is this change to the order based on MIC's understanding that NHK's coverage of the abduction issue is insufficient or MIC's intent to prompt NHK to make more efforts than now?

MIC answered as follows:

As the minister also makes it clear in responding to questions in the Diet or in press conferences, MIC does not have any concern that there is anything wrong with NHK's current approach to

the issue.

In view of properly conveying the purport of the system of mandatory broadcasting, and the state of affairs and actual conditions of Japan, as well as the prompt provision of information required for our nationals in foreign countries, MIC wishes our people to understand that this consultation was derived from reflecting the fact that the government and the minister judged what were appropriate broadcasting matters under this situation.

- The following question was asked:

Many organizations made overtures or sent requests about mandatory broadcasting. They wrote a proposal inviting public comments on the process of deliberation. What does MIC think of the proposal? I would like MIC to explain their current judgment—if MIC has one—towards the proposition that MIC should invite public comments concerning this matter.

MIC answered as follows:

MIC wishes to proceed with this matter by following the procedures stipulated in the Broadcast Law. That was why MIC decided to ask the Council to deliberate on it, receive a report as a result of deliberations based on an exact, impartial, and neutral stance, and review the decision because MIC believes it better to back up the decisions of the minister and MIC through such a report. MIC cannot really understand what public comments will actually mean, especially in this case. For this reason, MIC is thinking of an exact approach based on the procedures ordered by the Law.

- The following question was asked:

The section Past Examples of Additional Orders in the reference specifically lists all the five cases where subsidies were granted in the subsection Additional Orders. Will MIC not grant NHK an additional subsidy for this additional order?

MIC answered as follows:

All of the past five cases did involve an extension of broadcasting time. If the budgets assigned for them by the government had been kept intact, NHK would have been affected financially. For this reason, the government formally compiled supplementary budgets for them. MIC does not believe there is a requirement for specific measures such as the broadcasting time or the frequency of broadcasting for the current matter. MIC would just like NHK to pay special attention to the abduction issue when conducting its broadcasting. That is all MIC asks of NHK.

- The following question was asked in response to the answer to the previous question:

Does MIC mean that this case is clearly different from the past five cases in that it does not involve a budget increase?

MIC answered indicating that:

This case is very different.

After the questions-and-answers session was over and the participants from MIC were asked to exit the room on a temporary basis, only the members continued to discuss this matter as indicated in section c.

c. Minutes of meeting between members only

- The following proposition was made about the date of the report and accepted: The council should prepare a report on this very day because the intention of this change to the enforcement order is clear, the issue of abducted Japanese by North Korea is hanging before our eyes, and international countermeasures in response to the issue are being taken.

- The following proposal was made about the principal text of the draft report and accepted: The wording of “in the light of the reality of the prior and existing way of operation” should be changed to “similarly to the prior and existing way of operation” because the latter wording

helps the public to better understand that MIC will pay proper attention to the freedom of NHK's compilation of broadcasts as before.

- The following proposition was made about "Reason" in this draft report and accepted: The wording "... the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue" chaired by Prime Minister in the cabinet..." should be added.

In addition, the follow proposal was made about the purport of the wording "..., in the past...." In order to further clarify the meaning of statements that the minister made in the Diet and at press conferences, the wording should be changed to "... in the past" The proposal was accepted.

After the discussions between the members only, the participants from MIC reentered the room and the Council made the following report:

The Council has deliberated on the matter about which MIC asks the opinions of the Council with Consultation No. 34 as of November 8, 2006, and as a result of the deliberations, the Council replies as follows:

(Principal text)

The Council concludes that it is appropriate to make the changes to FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting issued to the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) as requested in the consultation. Note that it is advisable that MIC continues to operate the system while paying attention to the freedom of program compilation by NHK as before.

(Reason)

The Council recognizes that the changes to the FY2006 Order to Conduct International Broadcasting issued to the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) are those associated with the fact that the Headquarters on the Abduction Issue chaired by Prime Minister has been established in the cabinet and the government has decided to commit itself as a whole to

promoting the resolution of the abduction issue as one of its most important tasks,” and consequently regards them as acceptable.

Note the fact that MIC has been operating the system with attention to the freedom of program compilation by NHK in the past are clearly indicated by the statements that the minister made in the Diet and press conferences, and it is appropriate that MIC continues to operate the system by following the line of thinking in future when NHK is carrying out the order associated with these changes.

(5) Others

MIC made two reports on the announcement of the Action Plan for Spectrum Reallocation (revised version of October 2006) and the status of processing applications, etc. for radio station licenses (for the first half of the fiscal 2006).

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