

Radio Regulatory Council—929th Meeting
Summary of Minutes

1. Date and Time

Wednesday, March 12, 2008; 15:00–

2. Location

Conference Room 1002, 10th Floor, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

3. Attendees (honorifics omitted)

(1) Council Members

Mitsutoshi Hatori (chair), Takeo Inokuchi (vice chair), Junichi Hamada, Kashiko Kodate

(2) Hearing Examiner of the Radio Regulatory Council

Shuichi Nishimoto

(3) Secretary

Shuji Ishida (Deputy Director, General Affairs Division, Telecommunications Bureau)

(4) MIC Representatives (including Secretariat representative)

Terasaki (Director-General, Telecommunications Bureau), Tanaka (Director-General, Radio Department), Ogasawara (Director-General, Information and Communications Policy Bureau), Kawauchi (Deputy Director-General, Minister's Secretariat) and others

4. Agenda

- (1) Draft MIC Ordinances to Partially Amend the Essential Standards for Opening of Radio Stations (Excluding Broadcasting Stations), the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law, the Regulations for Procedures for Obtaining a Radio Station License, and the Rules for Regulating Radio Equipment

(Consultation No. 1 of January 16, 2008)

The council deliberated on the subject Draft MIC Ordinances pertaining to the partial amendment of the Radio Law, which is in the category of laws whose amendment requires the Broadcast Law etc. to be partially amended, with reference to the written statements and written opinions (see the Written Opinions from the 440th Radio Regulatory Council Hearing) submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over the inquiry procedure, with the result that the council submitted a report stating that the subject Draft MIC Ordinances are acceptable.

- (2) Draft MIC Ordinances to Partially Amend the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law and the Rules for Regulating Radio Equipment

The council deliberated on the subject Draft MIC Ordinances, which are consequent to the amendment of the performance criteria for ship radars and upon the imposition of the obligation to install radio equipment in high-speed rescue boats mounted on ships, with reference to the written statements and written opinions (see the Written Opinions from the 441st Radio Regulatory Council Hearing) submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over the inquiry procedure, with the result that the council submitted a report stating that the subject Draft MIC Ordinances are acceptable.

(3) Formal objection to type designation carried out on broadband power line carrier communication equipment

The Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications carried out type designation on broadband power line carrier communication equipment, as publicly announced in MIC Notice No. 682 of 2007, and MIC Notice No. 13 of 2008. Subsequently, a formal objection was filed against these instances of type designation and then was mooted on March 12, 2008. MIC gave an explanation as follows on this formal objection.

Since a hearing on this matter is obligatory under the Radio Law, the council appointed Shuichi Nishimoto to preside over the hearing as examiner.

a. MIC's Explanation

This formal objection is similar to the formal objections that were filed against type designation performed on broadband power line carrier communication equipment and were subsequently mooted at the Radio Regulatory Council on March 23, 2007, May 16, 2007, July 11, 2007, September 12, 2007, November 14, 2007 and December 12, 2007, respectively. In this case, a formal objection was newly filed for the purpose of seeking the nullification of the instances of type designation regarding broadband power line carrier communication equipment that were publicly announced in the Official Gazettes of December 18, 2007 and January 16, 2008.

In the first place, the formal objection now under discussion was filed on February 6, 2008. The number of petitioners is 115, which is the same as under Propositions No. 1 to No. 4, No. 22 and No. 23 of 2007.

The formal objection is to the type designation publicly announced in the Official Gazettes of December 18, 2007 and January 16, 2008, for a total of nine instances.

MIC assessed the filing criteria for the formal objection and found that the criteria had been met except for those regarding the following items: the petitioners' qualifications to file an objection; and the certification of the qualifications of, and the entries pertaining to, the representative and so on. MIC decided to suspend its assessment of the petitioners' qualifications to file an objection, since MIC intends to demand clarification of that matter during deliberations at the Radio Regulatory Council. As for the certification of the qualification of the representative and so on, MIC is suspending its assessment process, since it is necessary to call for the deficiency to be corrected. As regards the entries, the Administrative Complaint Investigation Law requires that the name and age, or the appellation and address, of the petitioner be entered. However, there are inconsistencies in that, for example, the petitioner's age entered in the written formal objection now under discussion is the same as the age entered in the written formal objection that was raised by the same petitioner in January last year. Such being the case, it is necessary to demand that the said inconsistencies be corrected, and therefore MIC decided to suspend its assessment process. However, since the matters awaiting correction are unlikely to affect deliberations, MIC proposes that the objection be deliberated on by the Radio Regulatory Council, pursuant to Article 85 of the Radio Law.

- (4) Draft MIC Ordinances to Partially Amend the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law, the Rules for Regulating Radio Equipment, and the Ordinance Concerning Technical Regulations Conformity Certification etc. of Specified Radio Equipment

(Consultation No. 13)

MIC explained this matter together with Consultation No. 14, since the two consultations were related.

- (5) Draft Partial Changes to the Frequency Assignment Plan

(Consultation No. 14)

MIC explained this matter as follows together with Consultation No. 13, since the two consultations were related.

A hearing on Consultation No. 13 is obligatory under Article 99-12, Paragraph 1 of the Radio Law. Furthermore, it was judged appropriate to hear submissions on Consultation No. 14 together with submissions on Consultation No. 13. Therefore, it was decided that submissions on Consultations No. 13 and No. 14 be heard on the same occasion. The council appointed Shuichi Nishimoto to preside over the hearing as examiner.

- MIC's Explanation

In this case, related regulations will be developed as a consequence of the abolition of the systems for premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band and of the subscriber radio access communication radio stations using the 1,900 MHz band.

Premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band were defined by law in 1992 as radio stations that are required to be licensed and serve as systems for wireless LANs on the same premises. These stations have been used in offices and the like.

However, 2.4 GHz band and 5 GHz band wireless LAN radio stations, namely, Wi-Fi LAN radio stations, which are not required to be licensed, became widespread due to advanced capabilities and low prices. As a consequence of this, the number of premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band decreased, with the result that as of March 2007, the number of such radio stations was zero. In this respect, it is stated in the Action Plan for Radio Spectrum Reallocation announced in November 2007, that the radio stations using the 19 GHz band will cease to be used, since the number of such stations is zero. In connection with this, public comment was invited in conjunction with the formulation of this Action Plan, with the result that no objection was expressed about this matter.

Secondly, radio stations for subscriber radio access communication using the 1,900 MHz band were defined by law in 1998 for the purpose of securing subscriber telephone lines in areas of adverse conditions in particular, by way of subscriber radio access communication stations using this band. Such radio stations were operated in mountainous areas and on outlying islands. Mainly due to the fact that systems operated at an extremely low speed of about 32 kbps, the number of these radio stations became zero in August 2005 following the penetration of 18 GHz band FWA capable of providing advanced services via an Internet connection. In this respect, it is stated in the Action Plan for Radio Spectrum Reallocation announced in October 2007 that this frequency band will cease to be used.

On the basis of the above circumstances, the systems for premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band and for radio stations for subscriber radio access communication using the 1,900 MHz band will be abolished. Such being the case, the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law, the Rules for Regulating Radio Equipment, and the Ordinance Concerning Technical Regulations Conformity Certification etc. of Specified Radio Equipment will be amended.

Furthermore, the Frequency Assignment Plan will be changed to reflect the fact that related MIC Ordinances will be abolished as a consequence of the abolition of the systems for

premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band and of the subscriber radio access communication radio stations using the 1,900 MHz band.

The changes consequential to the abolition of the system for premises radio stations using the 19 GHz band are as follows: The frequencies in the range of 19.3 GHz to 19.7 GHz are currently allocated to fixed services, fixed satellite services and mobile services in terms of allocation within Japan. Telecommunications services, public services and general services (for data transmission) are currently specified as the purposes of radio stations for the abovementioned mobile services. The aforementioned general services (for data transmission) will be deleted from the abovementioned purpose.

The changes consequential to the abolition of the system for subscriber radio access communication radio stations using the 1,900 MHz band are as follows: The frequencies in the range of 1,885 MHz to 1,980 MHz are currently allocated to fixed services and mobile services in terms of allocation within Japan. Telecommunications services are currently specified as one of the purposes of radio stations for the abovementioned fixed services. The aforementioned telecommunications services (for subscriber radio access communication radio stations using the 1,900 MHz band) will be deleted from the abovementioned purposes.

(6) Draft Partial Changes to the Frequency Assignment Plan

(Consultation No. 15)

The Frequency Assignment Plan is intended to be partially changed as a consequence of changing circumstances including the expansion of frequency bands for amateur services in the 3.8 MHz band etc., and therefore Draft Partial Changes were prepared. MIC gave an explanation on these Draft Partial Changes as follows.

○ MIC's Explanation

In this case, the Frequency Assignment Plan will be partially changed for the purpose of expanding frequency bands for amateur services in the 3.8 MHz band etc. and introducing Internet communication using leakage coaxial cables (LCXs).

The expansion of the frequency bands for amateur services will take place as follows: The 3.8 MHz frequency band, which is utilized in long distance communications for reasons of radio wave propagation characteristics, as well as the 3.5 MHz frequency band, which is in the vicinity of the first abovementioned frequency band, will be expanded. The 3.8 MHz band is utilized in ship communications within the framework of general services and in long distance

communications in Japan and communications with amateur radio operators in foreign countries within the framework of amateur services. Such being the case, amateur operators requested this frequency band be expanded. A survey of the use status of radio waves was conducted in 2005. As a result, it was concluded that it is necessary to consider the expansion of frequency bands on the grounds that frequencies are in high demand.

At present, the following band widths are allocated to amateur services: the 75 kHz width between 3,570 kHz and 3,575 kHz in the 3.5 MHz band; and the 7 kHz width between 3,747 kHz and 3,754 kHz, as well as the 14 kHz width between 3,791 kHz and 3,805 kHz, in the 3.8 MHz band. In the case of the 3.8 MHz band, expansion will be performed to include the following widths: the width between 3,702 kHz and 3,716 kHz; the width between 3,745 kHz and 3,747 kHz; and the width between 3,754 kHz and 3,770 kHz. As regards the 3.5 MHz band, expansion will be performed to include the following widths: the width between 3,599 kHz and 3,612 kHz; and the width between 3,680 kHz and 3,687 kHz. As a result of the above, in the case of the 3.8 MHz band, which many users have requested be expanded, the total width of 21 kHz will be increased by 32 kHz to 53 kHz. And as for the 3.5 MHz band, the total width of 75 kHz will be increased by 20 kHz to 95 kHz.

Secondly, with regard to the changes consequent upon the introduction of Internet communication using leakage coaxial cables (LCXs), as a consequence of the expansion of the Internet use, there are demands for the development of environments in which users can connect with the Internet—for example, to browse Web sites and send and receive emails—even when they are in motion. In particular, there are strong demands for these kinds of environments on bullet trains, which are a means for extended high-speed travel.

At present, leakage coaxial cables (LCXs) are used for communications between train direction centers and train crew members. This type of communication using LCXs is intended to be utilized on the Internet. In specific terms, communication will be made possible with radio stations connected to LCXs via Internet connection equipment connected to Internet networks. At the other end, communications will be transmitted via intra-train wire lines to wireless LAN access points in trains from intra-train radio stations connected to LCXs by means of radio waves. Then individual passengers will be able to connect their personal computers or the like via wireless LAN access points. By virtue of the above, passengers will be able to use ordinary personal computers, since it will be possible to use general wireless LANs on trains, with the result that stable communication will be feasible even on high-speed bullet trains that frequently run through tunnels.

As regards this communication technology using LCXs, MIC performed verification studies for

two years, starting in fiscal 2005. As a result, outcomes were obtained regarding technical requirements that would be needed. Such being the case, the Frequency Assignment Plan will be changed so that Internet connection services using LCXs will become feasible on bullet trains with regard to the 400 MHz band, which is the same frequency band that is currently used in airport radio telephone systems.

- (7) Formulation of the Standards for Entitlement to Freedom of Expression Concerning Broadcasting Stations and formulation of the Ordinance Defining Exceptions to the Standards for Entitlement to Freedom of Expression Concerning Broadcasting Stations on the Approved Broadcast Holding Company's Subsidiaries, as well as Draft MIC Ordinances to Partially Amend the Regulations for Enforcement of the Broadcast Law and the Essential Standards for Establishing Broadcasting Stations

(Consultation No. 6 of January 16, 2008)

The subject Draft MIC Ordinances to Partially Amend the Broadcast Law etc. were partially corrected to remedy technical deficiencies. Subsequently, the council deliberated on the said Draft MIC Ordinances, with reference to the written statements and written opinions (see the Written Opinions from the 442nd Radio Regulatory Council Hearing) submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over the inquiry procedure, with the result that the council submitted a report stating that the said Draft MIC Ordinances are acceptable.

- (8) Draft MIC Ordinance to Partially Amend the Regulations for Enforcement of the Radio Law and Draft Changes to the Basic Broadcasting Plan and the Plan for the Available Frequencies Allocated to Broadcasting

(Consultation No. 7 of January 16, 2008)

The council deliberated on the subject Draft MIC Ordinances etc., which are consequent to the simultaneous relicensing of broadcasting stations in fiscal 2008, with reference to the written statements and written opinions (see the Written Opinions from the 443rd Radio Regulatory Council Hearing) submitted by the hearing examiner who presided over the inquiry procedure, with the result that the council submitted a report stating that the said Draft MIC Ordinances etc. are acceptable.

Furthermore, the chair of the Radio Regulatory Council voiced an opinion on this matter to the effect that in view of the fact that many requests were made in relation to the full transition to digital broadcasting, MIC is requested to take additional positive action toward the transition to digital broadcasting from this point on. MIC answered that in preparation for the termination of analog broadcasting on July 23, 2011, efforts will be made to realize a smooth transition to

digital broadcasting by thoroughly implementing necessary measures including universal provision of information to the citizenry.

(9) Authorization of changes to the Reception Contract of Japan Broadcasting Corporation

(Consultation No. 16)

Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of changes to its Reception Contract. These changes pertain to matters such as the introduction of exceptions to the home-visit fee collection practice and to contracts with business establishments, the expansion of exceptions concerning fee payment for split households, and the discontinuation of the use of broadcast reception labels. MIC gave an explanation as follows on this matter.

○ MIC's Explanation

In this case, Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of changes to the Reception Contract in accordance with the provisions of Article 32, Paragraph 3 of the Broadcast Law.

The first point of the changes is the abolition of the home-visit fee collection practice. Conventional methods of payment of viewing fees include account transfer, continuing payment by credit cards, continuing bank transfer and home-visit fee collection. Of these methods, the home-visit fee collections will be abolished. There are two categories currently. The fee for one — home visit fee collection — is set at 50 yen higher than for the other — account transfer etc. In conjunction with this abolition, only one payment category will remain. However, in the case of disabled people, exceptional measures will be established so that it will be possible to continue to collect fees in a manner similar to the current practice.

The second point is exceptions pertaining to contracts with business establishments. In this case, viewing fees for the second and subsequent contracts with business establishments will be reduced by half, provided, for example, that necessary broadcast reception contracts are concluded for all television sets located at the same premises. By means of the above, it will be ensured that burdens due to increases in numbers of contracts with business establishments will be borne in a fair manner. At the same time, provisions will be established to the effect that in order to ensure definite payment, it shall be permissible to demand that documents be submitted by which the contents of the entries in written applications can be confirmed.

The third point is exceptions concerning fee payment by split households. At present, family

member discounts are applied to students and workers living away from their families. The application of this discount scheme will be widely expanded to include broadcast reception contracts concluded for multiple residences of the same households. The discount rate, which is 33 percent at present, will be revised to 50 percent.

The fourth point is the abolition of broadcast reception labels. Such labels are displayed at residence entrances and the like for the purpose of confirming whether reception contracts are concluded. However, following the introduction of mobile terminals, it became possible to confirm the presence or absence of reception contracts without the need for broadcast reception labels. In light of this, the use of broadcast reception labels will be discontinued.

The commencement date of the modified Reception Contract applied for is October 1, 2008, apart from the exceptions to contracts with business establishments and the exceptions to fee payment by split households, which will commence on February 1, 2009.

As a result of a study made of the application for authorization pertaining to this matter, it was found that these changes are required for implementing some of the items incorporated into the Japan Broadcasting Corporation's FY 2008 Payment Balance Budget submitted to the Diet on February 8 this year. Therefore, this application will be authorized if the Diet approves the FY 2008 Payment Balance Budget.

(10) Authorization of changes to the Criteria for Exemption from the Requirement to Pay Viewing Fees to Japan Broadcasting Corporation

(Consultation No. 17)

Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of changes to the Criteria for Exemption from the Requirement to Pay a Viewing Fee to Japan Broadcasting Corporation. These changes pertain to the development of provisions consequent upon the expansion of the scope of the viewing fee exemption for disabled people and upon the enforcement of the Law on Promotion of the Return of War-Displaced Japanese in China and Subsequent Self-Reliance Support. MIC gave an explanation as follows on this matter.

○ MIC's Explanation

In this case, Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of changes to the Criteria for Exemption from the Requirement to Pay a Viewing Fee to Japan Broadcasting Corporation, in accordance with the provisions of Article 32, Paragraph 2 of the Broadcast Law.

The first point of the changes is that the scope of application of the abovementioned criteria will be expanded to include more people, taking into account the circumstances where the scope of application has been expanded for reasons such as amendments to the Disabled Persons Fundamental Law, and that the criteria, which differ depending on the type of disability, will be unified. Under the current system, people with physical disabilities, people with severe intellectual disabilities and people with mental disabilities and so on are treated differently depending on their level of livelihood protection or income. However, the criteria will be unified. Due to the above, the viewing fee income is expected to decrease by about 2 billion yen per year. Furthermore, the number of instances of exemption of the full amount is predicted to increase by 40,000, and the number of instances of exemption of half the amount is expected to rise by 170,000.

The second point is the development of provisions consequent to the enforcement of the Law on Promotion of the Return of War-Displaced Japanese in China and Subsequent Self-Reliance Support. Since the amended Self-Reliance Support Law was enacted in December 2007, people such as war-displaced Japanese who returned home from China and who were recipients of livelihood protection until then were brought within the scope of the amended Self-Reliance Support Law, which meant they fell outside the scope of the Livelihood Protection Law and were not eligible for full exemption of viewing fees. Such being the case, it will be made possible to continue to grant full exemption.

As a result of a study made of this application, it was found that the expansion of the scope of viewing fee exemption for disabled people means changes are required for some of the items incorporated into the Japan Broadcasting Corporation's FY 2008 Businesses Plan to be implemented. Therefore, this application will be authorized if the Diet approves the FY 2008 Businesses Plan. Furthermore, the development of provisions consequent to the enforcement of the Law on Promotion of the Return of War-Displaced Japanese in China and Subsequent Self-Reliance Support means amendments are required for the arrangement where people such as war-displaced Japanese who have returned home from China will continue to be eligible for a full exemption. Therefore, the development of the abovementioned provisions will be authorized.

(11) Authorization regarding Business Criteria in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the Broadcast Law

(Consultation No. 18)

In accordance with the provisions of Article 9, Paragraph 9 of the Broadcast Law, as amended

pursuant to the Law to Partially Amend the Broadcast Law etc., Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of the Business Criteria in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law. MIC gave an explanation as follows on this matter. Subsequently, a question-and-answer session took place as follows.

a. MIC's Explanation

In this case, in accordance with the provisions of Article 9, Paragraph 9 of the Broadcast Law, as amended pursuant to the Law to Partially Amend the Broadcast Law etc., Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of the Business Criteria in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law.

Japan Broadcasting Corporation has so far been using the Internet by way of complementary utilization for broadcasting within the framework of ancillary business. In connection with this, the amended Broadcast Law is scheduled to come into force on April 1, 2008. It was decided that a provision be laid down in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law, to the effect that broadcast programs which were broadcast by Japan Broadcasting Corporation and documents required for editing such programs be permitted to be made available for public use via telecommunications lines. At present, in the Guidelines for Japan Broadcasting Corporation's use of the Internet published by MIC, it is stipulated, for example, that public viewing via internet of programs that were broadcast shall be realized by using viewing fees with the upper limit of one billion yen per year for about one week after the termination of broadcast programs. In the case of the application pertaining to the subject matter, with regard to those business items in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law which are performed free of charge, the abovementioned guidelines are replaced with new implementation criteria. Thus the abovementioned Business Criteria will be authorized on the grounds that they are necessary and appropriate. Furthermore, as regards business items to be performed on a fee basis, these Business Criteria will be reviewed by November 2008 and an application for authorization is scheduled to be filed thereafter in such a way that the timing will be compatible with the start of such business items.

b. Key questions and answers

- In connection with the fact that this matter pertains to the authorization of the business criteria in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law, a question was asked as to whether the business in Item 3 of the abovementioned paragraph will be submitted for consultation in the future. MIC gave the following answer: As regards the business in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 2 of the amended Broadcast Law, stipulations are specified for cases where

services are directly provided to users and viewers and therefore the law provides that criteria be established, thereby enabling business; and on the other hand, with regard to the business in Article 9, Paragraph 2, Item 3 of the amended Broadcast Law, there are no provisions that require criteria to be specified, since this Item is a provision serving as the grounds for cases where Japan Broadcasting Corporation provides services to carriers, among whom business is to be conducted.

(12) Authorization of changes to the Articles of Corporation of Japan Broadcasting Corporation
(Consultation No. 19)

Japan Broadcasting Corporation intends to make changes to its Articles of Corporation for the purpose of developing provisions that are required as a consequence of the fact that provisions concerning the corporation will be amended in accordance with the Broadcast Law as amended by the Law to Partially Amend the Broadcast Law etc. Therefore, Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of the abovementioned changes. MIC gave an explanation as follows on this matter.

○ MIC's Explanation

In this case, Japan Broadcasting Corporation filed an application for the authorization of changes to its Articles of Corporation in accordance with Article 8-3, Paragraph 2 of the Broadcast Law as amended by the Law to Partially Amend the Broadcast Law etc.

The changes pertain to the development of provisions with regard to items concerning the Business Management Committee, the Audit Committee, international broadcasting, accounting etc., as stipulated by the amended Broadcast Law.

It is judged that the changes to Japan Broadcasting Corporation's Articles of Corporation which are covered by this application are in compliance with the provisions of the amended Broadcast Law and so on as they will be after enforcement, and therefore these changes will be authorized.

(13) Request made to Japan Broadcasting Corporation for the implementation of FY 2008 international broadcasting
(Consultation No. 20)

MIC explained this matter together with Consultation No. 21 since the two consultations were related.

(14) Request made to Japan Broadcasting Corporation for the implementation of FY 2008 NHK's International Broadcast Programming Operations

(Consultation No. 21)

MIC explained this matter as follows together with Consultation No. 20 since the two consultations were related.

○ MIC's Explanation

In this case, a request is made to Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) for the implementation of FY 2008 international broadcasting. As a consequence of the amendment of the Broadcast Law, the term "order," which was formerly used, was changed to "request."

The first point of the amendment is the handling of the request system. Article 33 of the current Broadcast Law provides that the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications may order Japan Broadcasting Corporation to implement international broadcasting, specifying broadcast areas, broadcast contents and other necessary items. On the other hand, Article 33, Paragraph 1 of the amended Broadcast Law stipulates that the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications may request Japan Broadcasting Corporation to implement international broadcasting, specifying broadcast areas, broadcast contents (limited to items pertaining to the protection of Japanese people's lives, bodies and property; items pertaining to important national policies; important items pertaining to national culture, tradition and social economy; and other important national items), and other important items. Paragraph 2 of the abovementioned Article specifies that the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications shall, when making any such request, give careful consideration to Japan Broadcasting Corporation's editorial freedom regarding broadcast programs. Paragraph 3 of the abovementioned Article provides that Japan Broadcasting Corporation shall, when any such request is made by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, strive to comply with said request. In connection with this, NHK is obligated to make an effort to comply with the request. Such being the case, international broadcasting etc. is carried out with NHK's compliance.

"Reports and commentaries pertaining to government statements on current events, important national policies and international issues" were specified as broadcast contents in the case of broadcast contents and broadcast contents from which programs are sourced that so far constituted the focus of conventional orders. From now on, in compliance with the relevant provisions of the amended Law, "reports and commentaries regarding items pertaining to the

protection of Japanese people's lives, bodies and property; items pertaining to important national policies; important items pertaining to national culture, tradition and social economy; and other important national items" will be specified. Under the conventional system too, it was so arranged that in light of the continuing situation, only items considered to be important national tasks were specified. Be that as it may, in deference to the intent of the current amendment of the Broadcast Law, the relevant wording of the amended Broadcast Law was adopted.

The second point is the strengthening of international television broadcasting. Starting in fiscal 2006, orders were issued to implement international broadcasting with the aim of strengthening the ability to transmit information to foreign countries. In this respect, it is planned that, beginning in fiscal 2008, the objects of requests will be limited to broadcast services for foreigners and subsidy amounts will be significantly increased. Furthermore, international television broadcasting is scheduled to be reorganized and restarted, beginning in January 2009, as broadcasting for foreign nationals based on a new scheme that will include some voluntary broadcasting. Broadcast services for Japanese nationals living abroad are mixed in with those for foreign nationals in the case of current international television broadcasting. However, under the new scheme, services for Japanese nationals living abroad will be separated from those for foreign nationals and a new corporation that is planned to be established will be entrusted with part of production and transmission of programs to be broadcast for foreign nationals. Not only will the new corporation be entrusted by NHK with the production and transmission of NHK brand broadcast programs, but also consideration will be given to the implementation of original brand broadcasting such that the new corporation will have its own program editing rights and will produce and transmit programs. Since this corporation will take the form of a subsidiary, it is considered that the following can be done: Matters such as private enterprise investment and participation in the business will become feasible; it will be possible to produce attractive programs that will receive large amounts of private sector expertise and funding; it will be possible to deliver such programs effectively; and NHK brand broadcasts and the new corporation's original brand broadcasts will be provided as hybrids, thereby increasing the capacity to offer more channels.

The way international television broadcasting is orchestrated is scheduled for a series of changes, beginning in January 2009. At present, broadcast programs aimed at Japanese people are mixed in with those for foreign nationals. However, in October 2008, Japanese portion of the program will be transferred to different channels, with the result that the channels for foreign nationals will contain English programs only. In other words, those channels will only broadcast programs aimed at a foreign audience. Furthermore, at the beginning of 2009, English news programs and information programs are expected to be overhauled or expanded

in terms of content and quality.

Under NHK's FY 2008 Payment Balance Budget, international television broadcasting is intended to be further enriched and enhanced. At present, the reception environment is developed only for about 7 million households. However, this environment is scheduled to be expanded to cover about 110 million households in fiscal 2008.

The third point is the shift in the role of international radio broadcasting. So far, international radio broadcasting has been the main player in the area of international broadcasting. However, beginning in January 2009, when international television broadcasting begins under the new scheme, international radio broadcasting will take on a role that is rather complementary to international television broadcasting. Currently, programs are broadcast in 18 languages, including those broadcast voluntarily by NHK. The languages for the objects of requests will be limited to the three languages of Japanese, Chinese and Korean, which are included in the abovementioned 18 languages.

The fourth point is the handling of the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea. Under the current system, it is stated in the relevant item regarding international radio broadcasting that the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea should be given attention. This statement will continue to be expressly made as no progress is observed at present with regard to the issue.

(Office responsible for the above wording: The Secretariat of the Radio Regulatory Council.)