

Study Group on Broadcast Retransmission by Cable Broadcasters—1st Meeting
Summary of Minutes

1. Date and Time

Friday, October 5, 2007, 10:00 to 12:00

2. Location

Special Conference Room No. 1, 8th floor, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

3. Attendees (honorifics omitted)

Niimi (chair), Ito (vice chair), Kikuchi, Takahashi, Tosa, Osada, Nohara, Hasebe, Hayasaka, Yamashita, Suzuki (Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination), Ogasawara (Director-General, Information and Communications Policy Bureau), Kawauchi (Deputy Director-General, Minister's Secretariat), Imabayashi (Director, General Affairs Division, Information and Communications Policy Bureau), Yoshida (Director, Terrestrial Broadcasting Division), Fujishima (Director, Regional Broadcasting Division), Nagashio (Senior Planning Officer, Broadcasting Policy Division)

4. Proceedings

- (1) Director-General Ogasawara of the Information and Communications Policy Bureau opened the proceedings with a speech.
- (2) The draft general plan for forming the study group on broadcast retransmission by cable broadcasters was submitted by the Secretariat (Document 1-1) and approved.
- (3) The draft plan for opening the proceedings of study group meetings to the public (Document 1-2) was approved. The plan specifies the following: The study group is, as a general principle, open to the public and the materials used and records of proceedings will be reported on MIC's Web site, excepting in such cases where such action could be detrimental to the right or interests of any party concerned or any third party or to the public interest, could hinder frank exchange of views among the members and where the chair recognizes that secrecy should be preserved.
- (4) Niimi was elected chair in accordance with the general plan forming the study group. The chair designated Ito as vice chair.

(5) The Secretariat explained the current situation regarding cable TV (Document 1-3), the current situation regarding broadcast retransmission by cable broadcasters and the outline of the system (Document 1-4), and the current draft plan for the proceedings of the study group (Document 1-5) and the members entered into a general discussion.

(6) During the general discussion, the members questioned the Secretariat about its explanation and about the scope of discussion to be engaged in by the study group and made the following remarks:

- One of the reasons commercial broadcasters oppose retransmission is reported to be the damage it will cause to the business of local commercial broadcasters. The numbers and actual conditions should be confirmed.
- Data on Internet accessibility in the 47 prefectures of Japan is required to verify the possibility using cable TV as a substitute in areas with poor reception and the like.
- Data concerning external retransmission of digital broadcasts is required, such as data indicating how many current transmission channels will be unable to be viewed when retransmission of analog broadcasts, which is currently approved, becomes impossible.
- According to the civil code, a dispute over land rental, house rental or the like must be eventually settled by the courts. The courts, however, determine only a reasonable range or the like. If the same type of dispute arises over external transmission, it will be unable to be settled, so the current arbitration system should be continued, in my personal opinion. However, poor reception and other issues should be examined carefully.
- In the discussion of this issue, the interests of viewers should be carefully considered.
- The interests of viewers should mean the interests of both cable TV viewers and commercial broadcast viewers.
- The interests of viewers is important, but this is a business matter. If the cable broadcaster side pays an appropriate amount of money, the approval of the commercial broadcaster side could be obtained.
- It can be assumed that the giving and taking of money was not considered earlier because the CATV business was small-scale. It is doubtful that the commercial broadcaster side really wants to give and take money in its relationship with the original proprietor. Is it sufficient to hear only from cable broadcasters and commercial broadcasters in the future? We would suggest that copyright organizations also be given a hearing.