

**Study Group on Countermeasures against Illegal/Harmful Information
on the Internet—8th Meeting
Summary of Minutes**

1. Date and Time

Friday, September 26, 2008; 15:00–17:00

2. Location

Conference Rooms 1, 2, and 3, 2nd basement, MIC

3. Attendees (honorifics omitted)

(1) Sub-Council Members

Hideo Aiso, Keigo Inoue, Shuji Kato, Naoto Kikuchi, Takamasa Kishihara, Tamayo Kimura, Masanori Kusunoki, Hiroyuki Kuwako, Fumiaki Koizumi, Akio Kokubu, Masanori Koshiyama, Satoshi Seki, Taiyo Takahashi, Tsuyoshi Takenouchi, Toshiaki Tateishi, Hiroshi Tano, Futaba Tamura (proxy for Takahashi), Miki Nagata, Makoto Haruta, Hiroki Hirasawa, Yasuo Hasebe, Naoya Bessho, Masao Horibe, Takashi Matsuyama, Koji Yamashita (proxy for Maruhashi), Ryoji Mori, Kazuhiro Kitamura (proxy for Wakai)

* Okamura, Saito, Sakata, Takahashi (Kokugakuin University), Yamaguchi and Yosikawa were absent.

(2) Observers

Counselor (IT Office), Cabinet Secretariat; Director for Policy of Youth Affairs, Cabinet Office; Cybercrime Division, National Police Agency; Information Economy Division, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; Youth Division, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(3) MIC Representatives

Sakurai (Director-General, Telecommunications Bureau), Takeuchi (Director-General, Telecommunications Business Department), Ando (Director, General Affairs Division, Telecommunications Bureau), Nagashio (Director, Computer Communications Division), Tahara (Director, Telecommunication System Division), Katagiri (Senior Planning Officer, Telecommunication System Division), Ninomiya (Director, Telecommunications Consumer Policy Division), Omura (Senior Planning Officer, Telecommunications Consumer Policy

Division), Okamura (Assistant Director, Telecommunications Consumer Policy Division), Ouchi (Assistant Director, Telecommunications Consumer Policy Division), Murohashi (Assistant Director, Telecommunications Consumer Policy Division)

4. Agenda

- (1) Opening address
- (2) Subjects
 - (i) Report from each Working Group
 - (a) Basic Framework Working Group (WG1)
 - (b) Voluntary Efforts Working Group (WG2)
 - (c) Parents and Children ICT Media Literacy Working Group (WG3)
 - (d) Technological Review Working Group (WG4)
 - (ii) Others
- (3) Closing

5. Meeting Summary

- (1) Opening address
- (2) Subjects
 - (i) Report from each Working Group
 - (a) Basic Framework Working Group (WG1)

Ryoji Mori, WG1 Chief, gave a presentation in consonance with Reference 4. The following questions and answers were subsequently asked and given.

Q: As described in the Reference, the number of noncooperative ISPs has been gradually decreasing. However, the rate of deleted harmful information is low, as usual. For the case of hydrogen sulfide (toxic gas used in some suicide cases in Japan), most information has not been deleted because it is not illegal. As an example, in Ireland there is a voluntary effort organization similar to the Internet Hotline Center. This organization is funded by ISPs. They recently announced the list of ISPs who had not joined the organization, which was covered by the media. Eventually the Ministry of Justice commented that the Ministry would call those ISPs to account for their legal irresponsibility. I suppose there was something that prepared the way to the announcement, but fixing the boundaries between good and evil could be an effective measure.

Q: For illegal information, laws serve as the criteria. For harmful information, how clear are

the criteria? How are the criteria defined and implemented?

A: That is a topic for WG2. At industry group conferences, guidelines are proposed and judgment criteria are discussed. For the case of hydrogen sulfide, a conclusion has not been reached as to whether the information is harmful or not. The general tone of the discussion is that such information is socially harmful.

(b) Voluntary Efforts Working Group (WG2)

WG2 Chief Hiroyuki Kuwako gave a presentation in consonance with Reference 5.

(c) Parents and Children ICT Media Literacy Working Group (WG3)

WG3 Chief Naoto Kikuchi gave a presentation in consonance with Reference 6. The following questions and answers were subsequently asked and given.

Q: Many efforts seem to be conducted. In addition to cooperation in the civil sector, collaboration among ministries and agencies is required. The ministries and agencies, the PTA, and operators should work hand-in-hand. WG3 has introduced various efforts. We would like you to create a system that conveys the results of the efforts to youth and appeals to parents and the general public.

Q: Do you allow the PTA to use Reference 6 to inform parents?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Have you conducted any survey on literacy in other countries?

A: No systematic survey on literacy has been performed, but we think overseas surveys are required for the discussions in all of the four working groups. The secretariat will do our best to support those surveys.

Q: The report from WG3 suggests low awareness on Internet literacy on the part of schools and teachers. Recently, however, they seem to overreact due to a series of incidents. I think the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is making diverse efforts. Internet literacy is discussed in various places. We would like a system that looks at the whole and complements what is lacking.

(d) Technological Review Working Group (WG4)

WG4 Chief Takashi Matsuyama gave a presentation in consonance with Reference 7.

Q: Having heard the four WG reports, I recognized the common perception that overdone systems are not good as countermeasures against illegal and harmful information. We should try to resolve a variety of information on the Internet rather than overreact. It would be important to create such a system. Excessive regulation should be avoided.

Q: In the world of the Internet, the simple belief that everything is open and one can do

anything does not work any more. The operators, the PTA that brings up children and the government have something they can do in their positions. What each one can do should be clarified.

Q: Various incidents have been occurring for which the Internet is to be blamed, without detailed analysis. For the case of hydrogen sulfide, TV broadcasting drew public attention. Unless the cause-and-effect relationship with each incident is scientifically proved, no excessive regulation should be exercised. It is crucial to leave the diversity of the Internet.

Q: It seems the government is not prepared to collect scientific data in the world of the Internet. Only the civil sector has that potential. However, the parties concerned, such as ISPs and site operators, typically hoard information. I think we should consider how to use that information for society.

Q: Each time an incident occurs, reporters and other people ask us why there is no law to control such a thing. It is not rational to think that if an incident occurs something has to be controlled to prevent it happening again. Controlling everything does not solve the problem. The discussions in WG1 reached a consensus on that point.

Q: WG2 thinks it is also necessary to discuss things with the mass media.

- The next meeting is scheduled for November.

(3) Closing