Minute Summary of the 2nd Meeting of the Study Group on Information Communication Technology for Realizing a Safe and Secure Society

1 Date and time: May 26 (Fri), 2006 10:00 to 12:00

2 Location: Lecture Hall, 2nd basement level, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

3 Attendees

(Members, Honorifics omitted) Tadao Saito, Yujiro Ogawa, Masaki Watanabe, Kazuo Hisa, Harue Maeno, Kazuharu Yamada (in place of Shingo Omori), Shuji Ozawa (proxy for Yasuyo Horikawa), Masuteru Murozaki, Yoshihisa Onishi

(Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) Matsumoto (Director-General for Technology Policy Coordination), Nishimoto (Director of Space Communications Policy Division), Saito (Assistant), Onaga (Assistant to Research and Development Office), et al

In addition to the above, about 30 people from manufacturers, business operators and related ministries and agencies participated as observers.

4. Agenda

(1) Status of the study by the Working Group on Disaster Control and Risk Management
(2) Status of the study by the Working Group on Food Security and Safety
(3) Status of the study by the Working Group on Support for Daily Lives of Children and Elderly People
(4) Draft table of contents for the Interim Report
(5) Future schedule and others

5. Proceedings

The leader of each working group respectively explained the status of their studies in the areas of disaster control and risk management, food security and safety, and support for daily lives of children, elderly people and vulnerable people. The major comments are outlined below:

(Area of Disaster Control and Risk Management)

○ It seems necessary to think of the aspects of being both technically able to solve problems and able to afford the introduction of the relevant technology into society.

○ In the United States, IP and standard computer terminals constitute the major elements of disaster control and risk management. In Japan, custom-made versions of IP and computer terminals are generally used. When using custom-made articles, they cannot easily be replaced, even if the economic principle makes the technology obsolete. Let us discuss the use of open source systems as countermeasures. Do we really have to make special systems, even if they are systems for disaster control and risk management?

○ The total view of a disaster comes to the office of the Prime Minister, while it may be difficult to understand the total view at the municipal level and ministry and agency levels.

Let us add the sharing of information on the total view, since understanding the total view is necessary for the cooperation and decision-making of respective agencies.

- We must organize the existing systems to know what system each ministry and agency are using now.
- The needs for disaster control and risk management include logistics support. It must be considered, because then we can make the most of the achievements of the ubiquitous network being promoted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
- To much information gathering in the office of the Prime Minister will result in total confusion. The process of selecting information is essential in the course of information communication. Not only horizontal cooperation but also vertical cooperation between institutions is important.
- Selecting information may lead to the loss of useful information. Raw data is also indispensable.
- It is necessary to have a viewpoint of creating an ideal network system, and furthermore, at the same time, we must discuss how to use the system so that it will properly function in society.

(Area of Food Security and Safety)

- Major food manufacturers and distribution manufacturers can promptly respond to food-related troubles such as damage to health while smaller local manufacturers cannot. Most food-related manufacturers are smaller and local, and thus the use of ICR is expected.
- When some problem occurred with food (such as the use of inappropriate food additives), we cannot tell how much of the food products in question have been recalled. We wonder if we could use ICT for such cases.
- There are three ways to use ICT for food security and safety. The first is construction of a system to cope with expected problems. Since this is a common issue among all manufacturers, it is possible to use ICT for standardization and cost reduction. The second is response to address unexpected problems. This cannot be addressed in a single way, since it involves the characteristics of each type of business, but it is necessary to think if we could address this when constructing the system. The third is response when an accident occurred. It means that these are not problems within the plant, and thus we have to think how we should take the actions for society. In order to construct a system to address accidents smoothly once they occurred, it seems necessary to include in the system development those having ISO22000 hazard analysis skills.

(Area of Support for Daily Lives of Children, Elderly People and Vulnerable People)

- We must construct a system that can be easily used by elderly people and children. In the process of information communication, for example, information may sometimes not be communicated properly because some elderly people have difficulty in hearing. We must discuss measures for using ICT based on such individuality of users.

(Final discussions)

- Measures for disseminating technologies and systems are also important, in addition to technical development. We suggest that we discuss what mechanisms can be found for dissemination. Then we may have something in common as a social base.

○ It is quite difficult to define who will be responsible for assure security and safety in the respective areas to be studied.
○ Authorities are providing services for assuring security and safety regarding disaster control and risk management. However, we cannot read grounds for the item corresponding to a “Safety right” from the Constitution.
○ Citizens must be assuming that it is the responsibility of the government, even if it is not clearly stated so in the Constitution. Although it is difficult to fully commit to assuring technical security and safety, it is necessary to discuss how much of it we can do.
○ When considering information cooperation, we must identify what existing information communication infrastructures are currently in place.
○ We should compile the trends in other countries. When considering what are secure and safe, it may be helpful in our future studies if we identify the differences among nations as to the concept of security and safety, based on the recent increase of foreign residents and tourists.
○ When conducting demonstration experiments, the cooperation of local governments is required. Let us utilize, beyond the framework of ministries and agencies, the cooperative relationships that other ministries and agencies have already built with local communities through demonstration experiments.
○ How about discussing the amount of the burden on not only the service-providing side but also the service-receiving side?

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