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**CURRENT STATUS
AND POLICIES
ON
INFORMATION·
TELECOMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY
IN
JAPAN**

1996

The Institute of Administrative Information Systems

PREFACE

Information-telecommunication technology has remarkably advanced recently, and it is playing important roles in upgrading administrative, economic and social activities as well as people's life. We are now entering into information oriented society, and information-telecommunication technology should be harmonized with society resolving various issues caused by the new technology.

Under these circumstances the government of Japan is carrying out policies for promoting R&D and industry of information-telecommunication technology, and for utilizing the technology in various fields of public and private sector in efficient and effective manner.

The purpose of this book is to introduce the current status and major policies in terms of information-telecommunication technology in Japan, and it is the first publication of the series by our institute. I sincerely hope this book could be helpful to understand Japan more deeply.

March 1997

Michiro HIRAI
President
The Institute of Administrative
Information Systems

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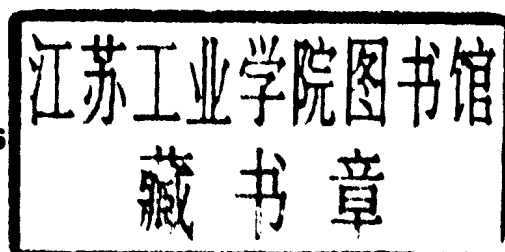
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**GUIDELINE FOR REVIEWING
APPLICATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES
TO COPE WITH ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY**

OCTOBER 1996



**MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION AGENCY
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN**

Guideline for reviewing Application and Reporting Procedures to cope with electronic Technology

approved by The Inter-ministerial Committee of Administrative Information Systems 2 September 1996

In the Basic Plan for promoting Informatization in the Public Administration (Cabinet Decision, 25 December 1994), it was prescribed that various administrative procedures such as applications, reporting and consultation should be electronized based on nature of the work in accordance with efforts of establishing information systems to make administrative office work such as inspections of issues in question rational and rapid. In addition, it was prescribed that a guideline for reviewing existing procedures of various applications and reporting should be completed to make them adjusted with electronic technology.

In the Measures for promoting Administrative Reform for the Moment (Cabinet Decision, 25 December 1995), it was prescribed that the guideline for reviewing various procedures of applications and reporting to cope with electronic technology should be completed in the Inter-ministerial Committee of Administrative Information Systems by the end of fiscal year 1996, and measures necessary should be taken successively.

Furthermore, the Sub-Committee for Review of existing Institutional Systems and Procedures was set up in February 1995 under the Head Quarters for Advanced Information-Telecommunication Society in order to study retention of documents on electronic media and electronic or paper-less procedures of applications, as one of the measures to review existing institutional systems to cope with advanced information-telecommunication technology, based on the Head-Quarters' report, the Basic Policy for Advanced Information-Telecommunication Society. It was decided that the Sub-Committee should keep relationship and consistency with activities for creating a guideline on electronic applications and reporting procedures being carried out in the Inter-ministerial Committee based on the Basic Plan for the Informatization. The report by the Sub-Committee was completed in June 1996, and it was decided by the Head Quarters that the government should highly evaluate the report and promote electronic or paper-less procedures of applications and reporting actively based on the report.

Thus, this guideline was completed to indicate directions when the ministries would carry out review of existing procedures of applications and reporting to cope with electronic technology.

1. Basic concept

Electronic procedures of applications and reporting shall principally be enforced and necessary measures such as amendment of acts and regulations shall be taken by reviewing the administrative procedures from the people to cope with electronic technology, in accordance with the guideline of the report by the Sub-Committee.

In carrying out these measures, existing procedures and forms of applications and reporting shall be simplified and standardized to reduce burden of the people and private sectors. Applications and reporting procedures on paper shall also be admitted principally.

The electronic procedures could be divided into following two types.

A. off-line procedures: applications and reporting on electronic media such as flexible disks

B. on-line procedures: applications and reporting directly put into electronic files of ministry concerned, from terminals and through telecommunications line

The on-line procedures shall be promoted in principle. Off-line procedures, nevertheless, will be promoted at first in case of difficulty of on-line procedures considering the present situation of the work. It will also be possible solely off-line or on-line procedures are enforced.

Scopes of the procedures are applications, reporting and consultation done by the private sectors based on acts, regulations and notifications. The private sectors include citizens, foreigners, private companies and public corporations.

2. Scopes and schedule of enforcement

2-1 Principles of the scopes

Electronic procedures of following applications and reporting shall be enforced:

- A. persons or organizations of application or reporting are specified*1;
- B. procedures which are done repeatedly and continuously*2; and
- C. the number of procedures exceed a certain amount*3.

In case of enforcement, priority that how many factors described above are met shall be taken account.

Procedures of repetition or continuation or procedures which the number of applications year exceed a certain amount shall be objects even the applicants are not specified. In addition, following procedures beyond the scopes described above shall be electronized:

- D. procedures related with procedures which shall be electronized;
- E. procedures which will be easily electronized, such as administrative consultation.

*1: procedures requested by specified persons or organizations such as members of industrial groups or organizations, persons who have some qualification or licenses or who are registered into some file of public sector

*2: procedures which are repeatedly done in a certain cycle

*3: criteria for object of electronic procedures could be decided by each ministry considering that the number of procedures managed by each ministry and number of applications or reporting received a year are different

2-2 Approaches for enforcement

The electronic procedures shall be enforced based on following principles referring the appendix.

2-2-1 Procedures of which applicants are specified

(1) repeated and continuous procedures or procedures of a certain amount of applicants a year

a. Off-line procedures

Off-line procedures of which receiving systems have already been established or which are under planning shall be enforced rapidly, and studies of procedures otherwise shall be promoted immediately and the on-line procedures shall be enforced establishing receiving systems based on the studies targeting the end of fiscal year 1997. Off-line procedures which require solution of issues described in section 2-3 below shall immediately be enforced targeting the end of fiscal year 1997 prompting studies to resolve the problems.

Off-line procedures which need especially deliberate studies of issues described in section 2-3 below shall be enforced as soon as possible based on the studies prompting the studies to resolve the problems immediately.

b. On-line procedures

On-line procedures which need much time to solve issues described in section 2-3 below shall be enforced as soon as possible based on the studies, prompting studies to resolve the problems immediately.

(2) Procedures without repetition or continuation and procedures under certain of the number of applications

a. Procedures managed by the same acts or regulations of the procedures described section 2-1 shall simultaneously be enforced.

b. Other procedures shall be electronized as soon as possible taking situations into account.

2-2-2 Procedures of which applicants are not specified

1) repeated and continuous procedures or procedures of a certain amount of applicants a year

a. On-line procedures which do not need rigid identification of the persons concerned or off-line procedures shall be electronized in principle in the same way of procedures described in section 2--1-1 (1).

b. On-line procedures which need identification of the persons concerned shall be forced as soon as possible promoting studies to resolve the problems immediately and establishing systems coping with results of the studies.

2) Procedures without repetition or continuation and procedures under a certain number of applications shall be enforced in the same way of those of section 2-2-1 (2).

2-3 Issues and measures for electronic procedures of applications and reporting

There are following issues to enforce on-line or off-line procedures of application and reporting. Each ministry shall study on measures to solve the issues necessary for promoting electronic procedures and shall enforce them soon based on the result the study.

In addition, regarding studies on measures for solving common issues useful for every ministry, contents of the study or the plan and result of the study shall be available in relevant working groups under the Inter-ministerial Committee of Administrative Information Systems.

2-3-1 Confirmation and Security

Following procedures are necessary for electronic applications and reporting

A. confirmation of a person who sent application forms whether he is the person in question

B. security to prevent leakage of data during transmission

C. confirmation of data transmission and receiving between transmitter and recipient

Following measures shall be referred to promote the electronic procedures

1) cipher technology such as confirmation of the person in question, protection of data, prevention of leakage, detection of alteration or determination of data, certification of transmission and receiving, and digital signature based on these technology

(These technology shall be reviewed or enhanced periodically considering progress of the technology because it is said that there is no cipher technology that could not be broken.)

2) confirmation technology such as utilization of identification number for confirming the person in question in case of electronic procedures by persons not specified.

There is a way to confirm the person in question by attaching identification label with bar codes issued by ministries on flexible disks in case off-line procedures.)

2-3-2 Payment of commissions

In case of on-line procedures, there is a problem in paying commissions when the charges have to be paid by sticking stamps at the moment. Following measures now utilized could be useful in accordance with the purposes concerned.

1) prepaid system: some amount of money is paid beforehand and it will be automatically deducted as the commission for each procedure

2) automatic payment: commissions are paid from bank accounts automatically

It would be useful to study measures such as payment in cash to bank accounts of a ministry or transfer accounts. In addition, what is called electronic money based on electronic data interchange; EDI, could be applicable when the

technology is established.

2-3-3 Measures for documents or objects difficult to electronize

On-line procedures for applications or reporting which need complicated materials or charts difficult to confirm genuineness when electronized are difficult to electronize so far. It, nevertheless, would be possible to achieve the off-line procedures by sending documents on paper which are difficult to electronize in parallel with application forms on electronic media such as flexible disks.

In addition, there might be a way to achieve off-line electronic procedures in following cases that documents other than those difficult to electronize so far are submitted on electronic media.

- A. procedures which require applicants to bring objects to the ministry concerned for inspection at the site
- B. procedures which require examination or inspection of applicants directly

3. Miscellaneous

3-1 Organizational system for enforcement

Each ministry shall establish and enhance an organizational system for enforcing the electronic procedures of applications and reporting smoothly. Following issues shall be studied by each ministry.

- A. promotion of studies on solving issues to enforce the electronic procedures
- B. creating and monitoring of action programs on electronic procedures
- C. promotion and coordination of review of existing acts and regulations concerned with electronic procedures
- D. coordination of information systems to be established keeping consistency with electronic procedures

3-2 Consistency with other systems

Each ministry shall keep consistency with action programs of other information systems taking trends of information and telecommunication technology into account. In addition, each ministry shall consider to apply standards such as media or logic based on Japan Industrial Standards; JIS, International Standard Organization; ISO, or telecommunication protocols and procedures based on International Telecommunication Union; ITU.

3-3 Relationship and cooperation with local governments

In parallel with review activities of the national governments, each ministry shall encourage local governments to take measures for electronic procedures of applications and reporting concerned with activities delegated to local governments by ministries, considering scopes of objects, contents of procedures, situation of office of office work, requirements of local governments and the citizens.

3-4 Follow-up

Each ministry shall follow up the result of the review and current status of enforcement so that electronic procedures could be smoothly promoted in accordance with this guideline in the government as a whole based on issues approved by the Inter-ministerial Committee of Administrative Information Systems. The result of the follow-up in each ministry shall be reported to Administrative Management Bureau, the Management and Coordination Agency of the Prime Minister's Office. In addition, the report shall be sent to the Cabinet.

3-5 Announcement to the private sectors

Each ministry shall make announcement on the schedule of enforcement of the electronic procedures to the private sectors.

APPENDIX

