



**JRI news release**

# **Status of Progression of IT in Local Governments and Future Issues**

**Awareness survey of municipality officials participating in e-Government Forum (Report No.2)**

**Questionnaire Survey Report**

**March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2002**

**The Japan Research Institute, Limited.**

**Center for the Strategy of Emergence**

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# Outline

## 1. Purport

The Japan Research Institute, Ltd. (Head Office: 16 Ichiban-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, President: Masahiko Koido) implemented a questionnaire survey on 'Status of Progression of IT in Local Governments and Future Issues'. The questionnaire was implemented amongst the 287 local governments (number of local governments participating as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002) who are members of the 'e-Government Forum' supervised by The Japan Research Institute, Ltd.

Further, The Japan Research Institute, Ltd. implemented a similar questionnaire in October 2000, which makes this the second time.

Thus, it is possible to grasp progression of e-governments and change in awareness of officials over the last one and a half years.

## 2. Questionnaire implementation outline

The synopsis of this questionnaire survey implementation is as given below.

Implementation period : March 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002

Implementation pool : Member local governments of 'e-Government Forum' - 287

local governments

Number of responses : 92 (response ratio: 32.1%)

Survey method : Respond by filling in the form available on the web

## 3. Results outline

### (1) Progress in availability of personal computers / LAN in offices

Regarding the status of availability of personal computers in offices, 46.1% of the local governments reported realization of '1 computer per person' setup. Further 39.3% of the local governments now have 'more than one computer in each section'. In 2000, local governments reporting 'more than one computer in each section' were 63.6% where as those reporting '1 computer per person' setup

was 12.8%.

- (2) Over 60% of local governments have realized networking of personal computers  
61.8% of local governments reported that all the officials' personal computers are networked (the figure was 28.0% in 2000). Further 22.5% of local governments reported that officials' personal computers are partially networked (the figure was 43.0% in 2000).
- (3) Progress in use of e-mail  
52.9% of local governments reported that 'each official has an individual mail address and is exchanging information with outside parties' (the figure was 25.6% in 2000). 25.8% of local governments replied that 'a single mail address assigned to each department is being shared by several officials' (the figure was 30% in 2000).
- (4) Lack of change in obstacles to IT use policy  
Over 70% (71.4%) raised 'difficulty in securing budget', which is the same ratio of this obstacle in 2000. The next obstacle was the lack of preparedness of the in-house setup (45.5% in 2002 whereas it was 63.8% in 2000.) Following that was 'officials' immature level of handling information' (42.9% in 2002, while it was 48.9% in 2000).
- (5) Lowering of interest in IC cards and increasing interest in portals / e-procurement / tenders  
Most interest (67.4%) was shown in 'regional portal service' followed by 'electronic tenders' 63.0%. 'Regional IC cards service' that was on top in 2000 showed an almost 20 points drop in terms of both interest (2000: 75.5% → current: 57.6%) and importance (50% → 28.3%).
- (6) Key to promotion of residents' participation and departments taking leadership  
30.3% responded that 'disclosure of information' was the key to residents' participation whereas 27.0% responded that the key was 'officials' awareness reform'. Departments taking leadership to promote residents' participation were 'departments related to public hearings and public relations' (78.6%), 'departments related to city planning' (66.7%) followed by 'planning related departments' (64.3%)

Moreover, while it was not attached as data this time the top themes being suggested for the 'E-Government Symposium' that Japan Research Institute, Ltd. plans to hold (held 4 times in the past) were 'NPM (New Public Management' (34.2%) and 'electronic voting' (16.3%). Compared to contents raised last time, which were 'under what theme should progression of IT be promoted' and 'what kind of merits can be expected' one can see a change in officials' interest from

introduction to usage.

#### **4. Proposal for smooth promotion of e-governments**

- (1) As development of networks progresses, it can be expected that use of the networks by worksite officials will become an issue. So, it is necessary that emphasis be placed on enlightenment and education of officials while using methods such as e-learning.**
- (2) Full-scale use of e-mails is being made. So, in order to ensure smooth communications with residents etc. it is necessary to clarify the range of duties of each official and ensure the freedom to communicate within that range.**
- (3) In order to improve IT investments that are of a type overemphasizing initial investment, it is necessary to study IT purchase methods that consider lifecycle including maintenance and operation.**
- (4) It is necessary that the high-interest 'regional portal site' be positioned as a platform to disclose administration related information and as a platform to promote participation of local residents. Then, it is necessary that each existing section use this platform to create the flow for policy promotion.**