

JAPANESE INDUSTRY AND POLICY NEWS

October 2016

LEGISLATION AND POLICY NEWS

Japan and the United States Conclude MOU for IoT Cooperation

The IoT Acceleration Consortium (ITAC) concluded two memorandums of understanding (MOU) for Internet of Things (IoT) cooperation respectively with the Industrial Internet Consortium (IIC) and with OpenFog Consortium of the United States on October 3. According to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan will accelerate activity toward the realization of the “fourth industrial revolution” through advancing these efforts in the field of IoT. ITAC and IIC will implement demonstration projects for each field based on common architectures and promote initiatives for standardization based on such projects. (For details, see first PDF below.)

ITAC and OpenFog Consortium will implement demonstration projects focused on distributed computing and promote initiatives and other efforts for standardization in anticipation of IoT solutions in the fields in which real-time or bulk data processing is required, in particular. (For details, see second PDF below.)

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1011_03.html

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/10/20161011007/20161011007-1.pdf>

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/10/20161011007/20161011007-2.pdf>

METI Announces Winners of the FY 2016 Awards for Resources Recirculation Technologies and Systems

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced the winners of the FY 2016 Awards for Resources Recirculation Technologies and Systems on 7 October. This awards program was launched in 1975, with the aim of extensively calling for and recognizing outstanding projects and efforts by companies and other industrial groups with excellent technologies that contribute to waste reduction, reuse and recycling, thereby encouraging and fostering such efforts and creating new business.

METI Minister’s Award was accorded to a joint project of Ajinomoto General Foods, Inc., Tokyo Seikan Co., Ltd. and PET Refine Technology Co., Ltd. for recirculation use of PET bottles through chemical recycling. Hitachi Automotive

Systems, Ltd. won the Award of the Director-General of the Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau for introduction of electrical component reuse.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1007_04.html

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/10/20161007001/20161007001-1.pdf>

(Japanese language only)

Creating New Technologies in Fukushima

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) sponsors the Fukushima Innovation Coast Scheme, a program to develop innovative technologies, including robots, energy-related, medical and environmental technologies along coastal areas in Fukushima prefecture, an area devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. The scheme adopted 34 different R&D projects submitted by companies across Japan, with support from both the national and local government.

In October, METI compiled a report introducing these projects ranging from initiatives to recycle waste materials such as plastic or carbon fiber through new technology, to leveraging Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to build large-scale vegetable production plants.

Through the Fukushima Innovation Coast Scheme, METI aims to attract overseas researchers to the cutting-edge research in Fukushima, contributing accelerated recovery of the region.

<http://www.meti.go.jp/english/mobile/2016/20161019001en.html>

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/10/20161014003/20161014003-2.pdf>

(Japanese language only)

METI Announces Winners of the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle)

Awards

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced on 20 October the winners of the FY 2016 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) Promotion Merit Awards. The awards program has been held annually since 1992, being hosted by the 3Rs Promotion Council and supported by seven related ministries, including METI.

This year the Prime Minister's prize was accorded to Ricoh Eco Business Development Center of Ricoh Company Ltd. for their project of "Thorough Utilization of Recycled Office Automation Equipment through the Development

and Practice of Reuse/Recycle Technologies” while METI Minister’s Prize went to Lyprone Towa Co., Ltd. for “Practice of 3R Activities in the Manufacturing and Sales Processes concerning Large Products Made of Recycled Plastics titled Hydro Stuff: Rainwater Reservoir and Penetration System.”

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1020_02.html

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/10/20161020002/20161020002-1.pdf>

(Japanese language only)

New Qualification System for IT Security Provider Introduced

On October 21, the IT Security Support Provider System started as the first national qualification system in the field of cybersecurity.

In recent years, as information technology prevails in society, the number of cyberattacks is tending to grow, and enterprises and organizations are facing a shortage of human resources who can play a practical role in conducting information security measures. In order to address this situation, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) revised provisions of the Act on Facilitation of Information Processing to fortify cybersecurity measures, and the revised Act has come into force on 21 October 21.

Along with this revision, METI inaugurated a new national qualification system in which human resources who have the latest knowledge and skills in the field of cybersecurity capable of playing a highly-practical role in the field are registered. Through this system, METI aims to encourage Japanese enterprises to ensure experts who are in charge of in-house cybersecurity measures.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1021_02.html

Improving the Competitiveness of Renewable Power

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) published on 17 October, reports of two study committees on improving the competitiveness of renewable power, i.e. one for solar power, the other for wind power.

The former committee studied cost-effective competitiveness in the “Post Feed-in-Tariff” era, government and industry engagement necessary for stable long-term power supply, and future of photovoltaic power generation in association of zero energy house (ZEH) and virtual power plant (VPP). As for the cost of solar power, 7 Yen/kWh was indicated as a target in 2030.

The latter committee on wind power studied measures for strengthening competitiveness especially at the initial stage of installation, realizing stable

generation system for attaining high rate of operation.

http://www.meti.go.jp/committee/kenkyukai/energy_environment/taiyoukou/pdf/report_01_01.pdf (Japanese language only)

http://www.meti.go.jp/committee/kenkyukai/energy_environment/furyoku/pdf/report_01_01.pdf (Japanese language only)

COMPANY NEWS

Verification Test of Large-scale Offshore Fish Culture Starts

Nippon Steel & Sumikin Engineering Co. Ltd. (NSENGI) announced on 3 October that it would start a verification test of large-scale offshore culture systems for silver salmon off Sakaiminato, Shimane prefecture with cooperation of Nippon Suisan Kaisha, Ltd. It would be world first verification test using automatic feeding facilities installed on an offshore platform.

After the verification test which is expected to last for the period of December 2016 to May 2017, NSENGI hopes to start selling the system on commercial basis as early as in 2017. At the start, they focus on the Japanese market with future prospect for export.

<https://www.eng.nssmc.com/news/detail/310> (Japanese language only)

<http://www.nissui.co.jp/news/20161003.html> (Japanese language only)

Successful Start of New Geothermal Power Generation System

Japan New Energy (J・NEC) announced on 12 October that the new geothermal power generation system that they developed jointly with the Kyoto University proved operational.

The JNEC new geothermal generation system produces power by absorbing heat in the earth without using spring water. The new system injects water and circulates it in the “closed cycle system.” According to the J・NEC, the new system thus can avoid common problem of geothermal generation such as accumulating residue (scale) and building extra facilities for sending back used hot water.

http://j-nec.co.jp/pdf/JNEC_NR_1012.pdf (Japanese language only)

Honda Starts Testing Smart Hydrogen Filling Station

Honda Motor Co., Ltd. announced on 24 October that it had started verification

of “Smart Hydrogen Filling Station” which produce hydrogen by solar powered water electrolyzing. The filling station is located in Aomi area in Tokyo. According to Honda, the Smart Filling Station provides world’s first high pressure hydrogen of 70Mpa which makes its Clarity Fuel Cell car run 750 km by a single filling. Honda intends to verify CO2 reduction effect and usefulness as power supplying plant in emergency in this test.

<http://www.honda.co.jp/news/2016/c161024.html> (Japanese language only)

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Tools for Supporting SMEs’ Smart Monodzukuri Compiled

Mid-ranking companies and SMEs in the manufacturing industry in Japan often face challenges in the utilization of Internet of Things (IoT)-based technologies. Aiming to help such companies overcome the challenges, the Robot Revolution Initiative of Japan (RRI) called for simple, IoT-based tools that these companies are able to use at a minimal cost to the manufacturers.

The RRI has selected information on tools submitted by the applicants and compiled the results into a collection titled “Tools for Supporting Smart Monodzukuri” on 4 October. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has been supporting the project and will continue to encourage mid-ranking companies and SMEs to utilize IoT-based technologies.

Based on the selections of an examination committee mainly consisting of SME business owners in the manufacturing industries, RRI categorized existing and proposed future tools and selected a total of 106 tools. Selected examples include a tool which displays operation information with the utilization of smartphones and other familiar devices and a tool which enhances work efficiency through the utilization of still pictures and video.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1004_03.html

<https://www.jmfrri.gr.jp/info/314/> (Japanese language only)

METI Establishes Auto Parts and Software Industries Section

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced on 14 October that it had established a new section called “Auto Parts and Software Industries Office” under the Automobile Division of the Manufacturing Industries Bureau. The office will aim to advance support measures for the automobile industry in

the field of automobile parts and software, thereby fortifying competitiveness of the industry.

According to the METI, the new office was established to cope with the dramatic change of business environment in automobile industry centering around advanced development of new technologies, e.g., autonomous driving technology and next-generation cars. Therefore, a driving safety support system (DSSS) and other automobile software, as well as automobile parts become more important sources for competitiveness.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/1014_02.html