

## *Message to Readers*

# ***At the Time of Becoming an Independent Administrative Institution***



President  
***Dr. Takashi IIDA***

The Review of the Communications Research Laboratory and the Journal of the Communications Research Laboratory have an uninterrupted history of publication that dates back almost 50 years. Issue Number 1 of each publication was brought out after the launch of the Radio Research Laboratory of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (RRL) in 1952, so that by March 2001, the Review and the Journal had reached issue Number 220 and Number 180, respectively. Meanwhile, the Communications Research Laboratory began a new era as an independent administrative institution on April 1, 2001 --- a result of the national policy of administrative reforms. This new start has been seen as an opportunity to bring a clearer definition to the roles of the Review and Journal of the Communications Research Laboratory and to endow them with more practical and effective functions. To this end, therefore, it has been decided to compile and issue these two publications in the future primarily in the form of special topic issues.

The Communications Research Laboratory has its origins in what was then known as the Electrotechnical Laboratory of the Ministry of Communications, which pioneered the nation's very first research projects in radio communications in 1896. This research organ subsequently underwent a number of organizational transformations during the prewar and postwar years, which led to the foundation of the RRL in 1952. It was in this year that publication began of the Review of the Radio Research Laboratory and the Journal of the RRL. However, the changes in the research environment that followed in the wake of the privatization of NTT Public Corporation (resulting in the creation of NTT) in 1985 prompted the RRL to change its official designation to that of the Communications Research Laboratory (CRL) in 1988. Since its establishment, the CRL has added information-communications infrastructure and basic research to its research domain, supplementing its RRL activities (which included research on ionosphere and space environments, radio propagation mechanisms, satellite and space-communications, data-transmission, radio measurement technology, frequency and time standards, and research into the discharge of standard waves, in addition to activities surrounding the type approval, calibration, and testing of the performance of radio equipment).

Subsequently, further to the findings of an external assessment carried out in 1996, "CRL Vision 21" was formulated in 1998, which served to define the mission and objectives of the CRL. In specific terms, the mission of the CRL was defined as the promotion

of research and development in the field of info-communications, for the purpose of achieving the sustained advancement of human society. At the same time, the CRL Vision 21 defines the CRL's objective as the development of a globally-reaching core research institute in the field of info-communications, building upon its radio and photonic research.

Up until the year 2000, the CRL had been part of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. Government administrative reforms, however, saw the CRL come under the control of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (January 2001). Moreover, on April 1 of the same year, our organization was relaunched, under the new designation of "Communications Research Laboratory, Independent Administrative Institution." Although the jurisdictional domain of the Communications Research Laboratory, Independent Administrative Institution (CRL,IAI), which is legally stipulated by the Law governing the CRL,IAI, has not been significantly altered, what does constitute a significant difference are the Medium-Term Objectives that were set for the new organization by the controlling ministry (i.e., the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications). Covering a five-year period starting in fiscal 2001, these Medium-Term objectives provide for the promotion of research in the four high-priority areas of next-generation info-communications infrastructure technology, radio communications systems technology, electromagnetic measurement and applied technology, and fundamental research in the field of info-communications. During this period, the CRL,IAI will also be expected to ensure greater efficiency in its services and operations. In response to these objectives, the CRL,IAI formulated a Mid-Term Plan. This was submitted to the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, which approved the contents, providing a budget in the order of 26.15 billion yen for fiscal 2001.

Expressed in simple terms, what is expected of the CRL,IAI in its new guise is an increase in organizational and administrative flexibility and transparency, which is hoped will infuse research activities with a surge of dynamism that will bring forth even more and greater achievements. Organizational flexibility means that the heads of an organization will be in a position to modify its structure, while administrative flexibility involves the ability to apply funding flexibly and effectively, in that the greater part of the budget will be in the form of administrative grants with no restrictions on how they are used. Such improvements will be conducive to an even greater degree of concerted action on the part of industry, academia, and government. One particular benefit that we can look forward to is an increasingly tightly integrated network linking researchers around the world, thus stimulating research activities around the globe. These publications, therefore, are intended to be the vehicle through which we provide information on the dynamic progress of these research activities. Nothing would delight me more than to know that the information provided therein is of benefit to the research activities of our readers.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who lent us their encouragement and support during our recent conversion to an independent administrative institution.