Promoting Worldwide Cooperation in Broadcast Research

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Work on STRL's Intermediate-to-Long-term Vision research plan has begun at our new facility. The plan outlines STRL's research areas and how it will conduct operations in the future. Although the focus has been on research that falls under STRL's three main research themes, the policy governing the way the laboratories are operated is also important. These issues are covered in the plan's "Basic Policies for Laboratory Operation" section. This section includes a subsection titled "Worldwide cooperation," along with guidelines on public relations and personnel training.

Research findings acquire meaning only after they've been used by society. STRL's mandate is to have its accomplishments widely utilized, as evidenced by its Hi-Vision (HDTV) broadcasting service and plasma display panels (PDPs), which are being manufactured commercially. In both cases, the work done by manufacturers in making equipment and systems is indispensable and ensures that research and development progress in a rapid and efficient manner. This entails that STRL collaborate with manufacturers, beginning with the test manufacturing process, which follows basic research.

A technically superior development does not automatically ensure popularity or even implementation. Diffusion of a technology into society first requires its recognition as an international standard. To obtain this status, the need to promote research and development in cooperation with other countries, even in the pre-standardization R&D stage, is inevitable. In line with this idea, the activities of STRL include participation in international conferences, the dispatch of STRL researchers abroad, and acceptance of visiting researchers from Asian countries through the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU). We will expand such activities, making an effort to construct a network of individual contacts, as well as cooperate with related institutions overseas.

Regarding the future of broadcasting, new perspectives will be needed to examine outstanding technical issues in such areas as communications networking technology, computer data processing technology, and contents copyright protection. There are also legal issues. It will be difficult for STRL to study all of these issues alone. This means that sharing the load by pursuing research in cooperation with universities and other institutions is indispensable.

STRL specializes in broadcasting-related fields ranging from video/audio/data contents production and distribution to contents reception, and as a research institution, it has characteristics that make it unique in the world. The technology that it has developed has been evaluated favorably internationally. Its new research facilities have the latest equipment, including an experimental studio, experimental acoustic facilities, and an experimental facility for radio wave propagation. These facilities will be available to external institutions, and we will create a more open laboratory by expanding personnel exchanges.