

## New Challenges Facing the Science & Technical Research Laboratories

Becoming a research institution that can respond to the challenges of a new era



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**I**t has been a month and a half since the fiscal 2003 re-organization, and we can say that the fiscal 2003 research is now in full swing and it is time to table a research agenda for fiscal 2004. To make the 2004 plan, I think it would be helpful for everyone at STRL to consider the broader role that STRL plays or should play beyond their own narrow research fields. Here, I would like to relate my opinion on the role of STRL and what should be done to fulfill that role, using the STRL Open House as an example.

We organized this year's open house around the themes of "reform and action" and "disclosure and participation," and we undertook a broad range of discussions with other departments in NHK when we planned it. We wanted to convey to visitors an understanding of exactly how the research of STRL benefited NHK's viewers. While there had been a numerous discussions on this reform, I believe that the latest open house obtained a certain level of recognition because of the cooperation of personnel from various departments. Two factors contributed to this success.

I believe that the first factor was that the open house presented exhibitions reflecting social issues, and the second was that STRL employees were fully aware of the purpose of holding the event, which is for our viewers. This first point encompasses the role of STRL, and the second is what we must do to fulfill it.

Let's take the vision exhibition as an example embodying the first point. This vision exhibition presented research results related to digital terrestrial broadcasting, which is an item on NHK's administrative agenda; research results in relation to the new broadcasting services of the broadband era; and progress on fundamental technologies, the practical realization of which

will probably take 10 years or longer. This exhibition showed that STRL is engaged in leading-edge research and development that can keep pace with these ever-changing times and that we are working to meet the current needs of society and our viewers. Many of the exhibits also revealed the level of cooperation with other NHK departments or research institutions. I think that this section of the exhibition embodied the essence of STRL's research and its approach toward it.

The second point involves issues related to reforming our staff's consciousness. It seems that our consciousness is gradually but steadily transforming, from our old way of perceiving STRL as an institution located in Kinuta, to that of recognizing where we are in relation to society and to NHK. If we can grasp what this means, we will be able to see what should be done and in what way. Constantly thinking about whether our own research activity and patterns of behavior can withstand social evaluation is the key to reforming our consciousness.

As we meet the needs of our viewers for broadcasting services in a new era, a further challenge must be met. As the public broadcaster's research institution, STRL must continue to take the initiative in presenting new technologies and services and must always be ready to examine its research style with the aim of fulfilling this role. We are determined to work as a group that contemplates broadcasting services for the broadband era.