

the Japanese government tasked with the formulation of S&T policy, it must guide the direction which the country takes in research. The old CST was once housed within the former STA building, however the reorganized CSTP has been physically moved to the building where the Cabinet Office is located. The CSTP is staffed by about 100 officials, divided into areas which the CSTP has prioritised. The secretariat of the CSTP now comprises a group of specialists; some CSTP officials hold Ph.D. degrees in engineering or science. Usually they are seconded, or have been moved over from industry or universities. One significant change occurring as a result of the reform is that a general CSTP meeting is now held once per month so as to discuss, in the presence of the Prime Minister, a wide range of S&T issues. Since the Koizumi administration was inaugurated in April, 2001, discussions at the CSTP have become very active. The State Minister for S&T, Koji Omi, is a powerful member of the Liberal Democratic Party (the current ruling party), and he has played a major role in drafting the S&T Basic Law. He demonstrates his leadership forcefully within the CSTP. CSTP has already demonstrated that it is capable of preparing an S&T budget to effectively guide the future direction of Japan's S&T agenda. A number of key issues remain to be sorted out, however. The exact role of the CSTP is still not completely clear. Furthermore, there currently is no single body charged with formulating Japan's overall space development policy. The S&T Basic Plan states the importance of basic research, but a number of the S&T players on the scene tend to place more emphasis on applied, rather than curiosity oriented, or basic research. No spokesperson or authority is responsible for defending or articulating the importance of basic research.

With regard to the reform of the public corporations, the National Space Development Agency of Japan (NASDA), the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (ISAS), and the National Aerospace Laboratory (NAL), are all to be integrated next year into a single space organisation. The Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute (JAERI) and the Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute (JNC-DI) will also merge. The government has proposed as well that the JSPS, an agency that once was under the auspices of the old Monbusho, be merged with the JST (Japan Science & Technology Corporation), another agency that once was within the old STA. The only "reform" that so far has been realised however, is that the operation of the STA Fellowship Programme for young foreign researchers, and the Fellowship for Japanese Researchers programme, were transferred from JST to the JSPS.

The Japan Marine Science & Technology Centre (JAMSTEC) is likely to merge with the Institute of Polar Research (IPR), at some point in the not-too-distant future, because JAMSTEC, a public corporation, has been asked to seek some kind of merger, and IPR is a like-minded research organisation with overlapping interests. The IPR has expertise in geological research which JAMSTEC requires; this is because of the upcoming deep-sea drilling activity planned to be undertaken at JAMSTEC. Discussions are now underway.

National Universities are to be reformed according to the following guidelines:

- Restructuring and integration of a number of national universities.
- The top-ranked 30 universities should be upgraded to the level of being amongst the world's best.