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■ Ten Companies and Organizations to Collaborate in First Ever Initiative Worldwide to Create a Secure and Stable IPv6 Usage Environment

Establishment of the IPv6 Technical Verification Consortium for Verifying the Security and Interoperability of IPv6 Technology

The National Institute of Information and Communications Technology, F5 Networks Japan K.K., KDDI Corporation, SoftBank BB Corporation, Thales Japan K.K., Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation, Buffalo Inc., Palo Alto Networks, Brocade Communications Systems Inc., and Microsoft Co., Ltd. have announced their joint establishment and launch of activities on Wednesday, July 28, of the IPv6 Technical Verification Consortium, a body whose mission is to improve the security and interoperability of IPv6[1] and ensure its secure and stable use. This is the first initiative worldwide in which companies and organizations have joined forces to create a body for verifying the security of the IPv6 usage environment.

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IPv6 enables advanced interconnectivity between a wide range of network-connected devices and software, but because it has not been tested over a long time span as has the currently dominant IPv4, household and company networks face unprecedented security risks with the approach of IPv4 address exhaustion.

In the present day, with all sorts of devices and services being interconnected and used together as a result of the spread of the Internet, there is a possibility that not just a few, but rather a great many companies, along with public institutions and ordinary households, would be exposed to security risks associated with migration to IPv6 and suffer attacks from the Internet and damage from malware.

Up to now, the IPv6 Promotion Consortium[2] has led efforts to check interconnectivity and protocol performance at a basic level, but much still needs to be done in the area of testing security features and packaging methods, and appraising performance in a real world environment that anticipates the concrete utilization of IPv6.

As IPv6 utilization spreads, new threats posed by IPv6 need to be identified and countermeasures established through research on IPv6 network environments that anticipate combined IPv4/IPv6 use and migration to IPv6 to discover what kind of threats exist and what kinds of technological countermeasures could be applied, while also making use of knowledge accumulated to date on IPv4 security technology. It is such circumstances that have prompted the above ten telecommunications, network, security, hardware and software-related companies and organizations to establish the IPv6 Technical Verification Consortium as a body that will seek to ensure the safety and stability of IPv6-based IT environments through focusing in particular on technical verification in security-related areas.

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Chair:	Kazumasa Enami	Director, National Institute of Information and Communications Technology
Vice-chair:	Shunichi Kajisa	Executive Officer and CTO, Microsoft Co., Ltd.
Members:	Shigeo Sato	Technology Director, F5 Networks Japan K.K.
	Koji Nakao	Security Fellow, Operations Sector, KDDI Corporation
	Michikazu Fukuchi	Deputy Division Director, Network Operation Division, SoftBank BB Corporation
	Toshiyuki Kato	General Manager, Information System Security Division, Thales Japan K.K.
	Kazuhiko Ohkubo	Manager, Security Strategy, Next Generation Network Promotion Office, Technology Planning Department, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation
	Hajime Nakai	Director and General Manager, Broadband Solutions Group, Buffalo Inc.
	Makoto Murata	General Manager, SP Technical Engagement Division, Brocade Communications Systems Inc. (Japan)
Executive Director:	Ken Tamaru	Group Senior Manager, National Technology Office/Innovation Center, Microsoft Co., Ltd, Japan
Advisor:	Hiroki Takakura	Professor, Advanced Network Division, Information Technology Center, Nagoya University

Founding companies/organizations:

- National Institute of Information and Communications Technology
- F5 Networks Japan K.K.
- KDDI Corporation
- SoftBank BB Corporation
- Thales Japan K.K.
- Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation
- Buffalo Inc.
- Palo Alto Networks
- Brocade Communications Systems Inc.
- Microsoft Co., Ltd.

Overview of Activities

The National Institute of Information and Communications Technology will study information security issues, while Consortium members will take their solutions and products to Microsoft Otemachi Technology Center (http://www.microsoft.com/japan/business/otc/) for testing in the latest IT environments with the cooperation of fellow members. Identified issues are to be shared with all Consortium members, who will work together to develop solutions and thus help to promote more secure and stable network utilization. The Consortium will seek to broadly enlist the participation as members of other companies and organizations involved in IPv6.

Notes:

1. IPv6 (Internet Protocol Version 6) is an Internet communications protocol that is designed to succeed IPv4, which is still in dominant use currently. IPv6 has space for an almost limitless number of IP addresses, and is said to provide better security and simpler configuration of settings than IPv4.
2. The IPv6 Promotion Consortium was established in October 2000 to promote use of the next generation IPv6-based Internet.