

II. Securing and Developing Diverse, Competent Personnel

1. Reinforcement and Improvement of Activities for Recruitment Examinations

The number of applicants for the public service recruitment examinations has been decreasing due to private enterprises' increased willingness to employ new graduates, as well as a decrease in the number of four-year college/university graduates and an increase in the number of graduate school graduates. The decrease in the number of four-year college/university graduates is attributed to a shift in emphasis of university education to education at graduate schools including the establishment of professional graduate schools, such as law schools and public policy schools. The NPA has reviewed examination subjects and the method of examination for the FY 2006 Level I Examination in order to secure personnel who can respond to more complex, sophisticated, internationalized public administrations and respond to issues including the change in the human resource supply structure caused by the establishment of professional graduate schools.

The NPA also promoted the reinforcement and improvement of activities for recruitment examinations, held the "Kasumigaseki Open Seminar" twice a year (September 2006 and March 2007) to open up the workplaces at Kasumigaseki to students and provide students with an opportunity to see operations and employees at the Cabinet Office and each Ministry. As many as 6,501 and 5,162 students participated in the seminars, respectively. Recently, students have collected recruitment information chiefly through the Internet. Considering this, the NPA summarized information on recruitment and examinations for the national public service in the "National Public Service Recruitment Examination Information Navigation" on its website so that applicants can obtain necessary information easily.

The NPA intends to make efforts to secure diverse, competent personnel, in cooperation with the Cabinet Office and each Ministry, through a variety of active recruitment activities with a focus on conveying the "attractiveness of working as a public employee" to students.

2. Promoting Public-Private Personnel Exchange

In order to provide high-quality administration services to the people, it is important to make the public service organizations open, recruit and utilize competent personnel in the private sector with various experience and advanced expertise, which cannot be acquired in the public sector, develop personnel, and vitalize organizations.

The NPA has established a system for mid-career recruitment from the private sector (Rule 1-24 [Special Rule for Recruitment of People from the Private Sector for Vitalization of the Public Service]), a system for public-private personnel exchange, and a system to recruit fixed-term employees, etc. The Cabinet Office and Ministries are utilizing these systems according to their needs.

In FY 2006, the Act on Personnel Exchange between the Government and the Private Sector was partially amended (proclaimed on June 21, 2006, and enforced on September 20, 2006) and relevant rules such as Rule 21-0 (Personnel Exchange between the Government and Private Sectors) were also revised as needed. This amendment was based on an NPA opinion on the retirement from private enterprises involved in the public-private personnel exchange, designed to facilitate recruitment through such exchange. Under the amended law, the public sector can recruit employees from the private sector, retaining their status as an employee of a private enterprise without forcing them to retire.

Additionally, in order to promote exchanges based on the Act on Personnel Exchange between the Government and Private Sector, the NPA held the “Explanatory Meeting on the Further Utilization of Public-Private Sector Exchange” for private enterprises, with the cooperation of the Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), in Tokyo and Osaka in October 2006 (only in Tokyo in FY 2005). Furthermore, the NPA increased momentum for the facilitation of personnel exchange between the public and private sectors through the “Public-Private Sector Exchange and Exchange Information Sharing System” as an intermediary in sharing information on the wishes of government ministries and private sector companies regarding exchange in order to respond actively to consultations related to the exchange.

3. Running the System for Recruiting Experienced Personnel

In order to respond to changes in the employment and labor situations such as liquidation of human resources, the NPA introduced in FY 2006 the System for Recruiting Experienced Personnel, where the NPA partially take charge of recruitment and ability verification. This system is aimed to promote recruitment from the private

sector and to let the Cabinet Office and Ministries select and recruit necessary personnel regardless of their age.

In this new system, the NPA implements open recruitment and selection procedures to recruit personnel with expertise and experience, based on individual requests from the Cabinet Office and Ministries, and conducts liberal art and essay examinations, etc. to verify the basic abilities of applicants. The NPA also supports recruitment activities of the Cabinet Office and each Ministry in verifying the expertise of applicants. This system was utilized in seven examinations for recruitments through selection in FY 2006.

4. Establishment of the Act on the Reimbursement of Study Abroad Expenses

On October 18, 2005, the NPA expressed an opinion to the Diet and the Cabinet on a system to make employees reimburse all or part of the study abroad expenses if they leave the service during the study abroad period or within five years after completing study abroad. Based on this opinion, the Act on the Reimbursement of Study Abroad Expenses Paid for National Public Employees (2006 Act No. 70 of 2006) was proclaimed on June 14, 2006, and enforced on June 19, 2006. In line with proclamation of this law, the NPA established Rule 10-12 (Reimbursement of Study Abroad Expenses Paid for National Public Employees) which stipulates matters related to the reimbursement of study abroad expenses paid for national public employees.

Outline of the Study Abroad Expense Reimbursement System

1. Study Abroad (training covered by the Act)

Training in the form of taking courses at graduate schools or equivalent courses at foreign universities, conducted by the Japanese government with the consent of employees based on the Article 73 of the National Public Service Act

2. Study Abroad Expenses

Traveling expenses, course fees and other expenses necessary for studying abroad

3. Duty of Reimbursement

(1) Amount to be Reimbursed

A. If the employee leaves the service while studying abroad

→ An amount equivalent to the total amount of study abroad expenses paid by the Japanese government

B. If the employee leaves the service within five years after completing study abroad

→ An amount equivalent to the total amount of study abroad expenses paid by the Japanese government, which gradually decreases according to the period of service after completing study abroad

* “Leaving the service” does not include separation after death.

(2) Period Excluded from the Period of Service

The respective periods for sick leave and the like due to personal illness or injury, suspension from duty, exclusive work for an employee organization, or child care leave are excluded from the period of service.

(3) Exemption

A. The duty of reimbursement is exempted in cases where employees are dismissed due to a mental or physical disorder caused by accidents incurred in the line of duty or in the course of commuting to or from work, elimination of the post, or supernumerary employees; or where employees retire at the retirement age, upon expiration of the employment extension period or expiration of the period of fixed-term recruitment, etc.

B. The duty of reimbursement is exempted when employees leave the service to serve as a special national public service employee upon request from the appointing officer.

4. Special Provisions

Special provisions on the period of service, etc. are stipulated for employees who left the service for the reason noted in **3. (3) B.** and continued to serve as a special national public service employee.