1. Police Info-Communications

A. Analysis of Computer Systems and Electro-magnetic Records

(1) Digital Forensics

The High-Tech Crime Technology Division with the Digital Forensic Center was established in the NPA in April 1999, to provide digital forensic service for criminal investigations. The Digital Forensic Center specializes in conducting advanced digital forensic examinations such as advanced malware analysis or data recovery from damaged hard drives.

Additionally, in April 2004, a High-Tech Crime Technology Section was established in each Prefectural Info-Communications Department. The Section provides each Prefectural Police Headquarter (PPH) with technical support including assistance for search and seizure, and analysis of electronic devices.

(2) Technical Support in Defending Society from Cyber Attacks

As one of the countermeasures against cyber terrorism, the Cyber Forces which are composed of mobile technical squads, were organized within the NPA and Regional Police Bureaus (RPBs) in April 2001, and the Prefectural Info-Communications Departments in May 2013. Together with PPHs, they build relationships with critical infrastructure industries by sharing current topics about information security or by responding to incidents in an emergency. In addition, in order to prevent damage by cyber espionage activities and to investigate incidents, the Cyber Force Center (CFC) of the NPA, the head of Cyber Forces, collects and analyzes malware attached to spear-phishing e-mails and provides analysis results to enterprises with advanced technologies.

In November 2005, the CFC joined Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST), whose aims include promoting of information sharing among members and the community at large, to enhance collaboration with other computer security incident response teams.

B. Infrastructure of Info-Communications

(1) Infrastructure

The infrastructure of the police info-communications consists of microwave radio multiplex circuits maintained by the police and dedicated lines leased from carriers. The police have developed various info-communication systems on the basis of the infrastructure. These systems include the telephone system, the mailing system, and multimedia databases among others.

(2) Police Radio Systems

The police have pioneered the digital mobile radio communications systems.

Their cores are:

a. "The Mobile communications system", mainly equipped inside police vehicles
b. "The Police-station-level communications system", operated within the jurisdiction of each police station
c. "The Portable communications system", mainly for the Riot Police Unit

(3) Police Wide Area Network System (P-WAN)

P-WAN is a nationwide independent network system. It enables the secured sharing of information and promotes the efficiency of various police activities.

C. Operational Support

(1) Communications Command Systems

Each PPH runs its own Communications Command Center. In response to "Dial 110" calls from citizens, the center swiftly issues dispatch orders to patrol cars and police officers on duty using radio,
police telephones and mobile data terminal.

The system consists of the “Dial 110” response, radio dispatch and telephone dispatch desks. Due to advanced technology, the functions of dispatch systems have greatly improved. The latest dispatch systems adopt the Car Locator System and the Automated Mapping System, which enable crime scenes to be pinpointed on the operation display. In addition, a system that can display the location of phones is now under operation.

(2) Investigation Support System

(a) Criminal Information Management System

The Criminal Information Management System stocks a variety of information such as stolen vehicles and missing persons. Police officers on street can immediately obtain necessary information with this system.

(b) Automatic Number Plate Recognition System

The police occasionally carry out car inspection in search of crime-related/stolen vehicles. In order to avoid time-consuming inspection leading to traffic jams, the police have developed the Automatic Number Plate Recognition System which reads numbers on license plates and matches them with the database of stolen/wanted vehicles.

(c) High-Resolution Image Retrieval System

The High-Resolution Image Retrieval System enables the quick search and identification of suspects by utilizing information such as facial impression and physical characteristics of suspects.

(3) Driver’s License Data Management System

The Driver’s License Data Management System stocks data on driver’s licenses, issued by each Prefectural Public Safety Commission.

This system enables controlling and providing all traffic violations data in order to facilitate administrative dispositions including the suspension and revocation of driver’s licenses.

(4) Mobile Police Communications Squads

In case of natural disasters, serious accidents and crimes, Mobile Police Communications Squads assigned to RPBs and Prefectural Info-Communications Departments arrange, if necessary, temporary radio communications networks and provide real-time video images from the site for respective PPHs. This facilitates the command and control of PPHs and enables them to better grasp the situation.

(5) International Business

(a) Info-Communications System of the ICPO

The NPA plays a part in the ICPO network as the National Central Bureau of Japan. The ICPO encourages member countries to promote the effective use of ‘I-24/7’ which provides the means to share information on criminals and criminal activities. Since 2003, the NPA has been connected to ‘I-24/7’.

(b) Counter-cybercrime Technologies and Investigation Symposium (CTINS)

The NPA has been hosting an annual international conference, CTINS, since 2001 to enhance the digital forensic capabilities of law enforcement agencies in the Asia Pacific region through discussions and hands-on training. It also aims at sharing the practical knowledge and experiences in the field of cybercrime investigation.
(c) International Police Communications Deployment Squad

The NPA organizes the International Police Communications Deployment Squad to secure police communications at overseas disaster sites. In 2017, it was dispatched to the earthquake-stricken area in Mexico, as a part of the Japan Disaster Relief Team.