3.2. International Exchange

3.2.1. Multilateral Exchanges

(1) Northeast Asia Port Director-General Meeting
The Northeast Asia Port Director-General Meeting has been held annually among Japan, Korea, and China, with the site sifting Japan, Korea, and China in this order, since the first meeting in Japan in 2000. The conference gives the Director-General of Ports and Harbours Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport in Japan, the Director-General of Ports and Harbours Bureau, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in Republic of Korea and Director-General of Department of Water Transport, Ministry of Communications in People’s Republic of China an opportunity to exchange views and opinions on port development and administration in order to improve the capacity and efficiency of ports in the three countries, and also to foster understanding and friendship among people concerning port issues in the three countries. This meeting has been transformed from the Japan-Korea Port Director-General Meeting, which has been held annually since the first meeting in Korea in 1995.
In addition to fostering understanding and friendship among the people concerning port issues in the three countries, the conference has also sponsored the Northeast Asia Port Symposium.

(2) The International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH)
The IAPH is a non-profit, non-governmental organization headquartered in Tokyo for the world’s port and harbor management bodies. It was founded in 1955 in response to a proposal from Japan. The IAPH’s main objectives are to exchange information on the administration, management, operation, and development of ports and harbors; to expand marine trade among ports; and to contribute to world peace.

At present, the IAPH has more than 230 regular members and more than 120 supporting members in 90 countries around the world, most of which are port management bodies. It pursues a wide variety of activities as an advisory organization to six organizations of the United Nations, including the International Marine Organization. Japanese participants include not only the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport but also port management bodies and other port-related groups who, as participants, exchange opinions on management and operations with government officials and port management bodies from all over the world and discuss problems.

Having understood the importance of the IAPH since its founding, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, as well as Japan’s other port management bodies, have been playing an active role in IAPH activities. In 2005, the 50th Anniversary event were held in Tokyo.

(3) The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
The focus of the APEC Transportation Working Group Meeting (TPT-WG) is two-fold: 1) to plan the promotion of efficient and comprehensive regional transportation systems and support the development of multilateral trade systems; and 2) to ascertain transportation system conditions and
present information and suggestions to cabinet ministers in order to promote economic growth in the Asia Pacific region. The first working group meeting was held in 1991.

The Port Experts Group was formed as an APEC Transportation Working Group Meeting project in 1996 at the suggestion of the Japanese delegation who chairs this project. The purpose of the Port Experts Group is to: 1) improve specialized technology and knowledge through the exchange of information and professional experience by port experts; and 2) unearth common issues and formulate Action Programs to improve the capacity and efficiency of the ports and harbors in the APEC region.

(4) International Navigation Association (PIANC)
PIANC was formed as a worldwide non-governmental organization to foster the design, construction, improvement, maintenance and operation of inland and maritime navigation channels, ports and coastal areas. This association also provides the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with information as an advisory body. PIANC currently comprises 31 government members, about 450 corporate members and about 2000 individual members from 65 countries.

The Japanese delegation including Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport representatives, attends various meeting to promote the development of technologies for inland navigation and maritime navigation channels. Currently, One of the vice-president is elected from Japan. The Annual General Assembly (AGA) in 2004 was held in Fukuoka.

(5) International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA)
Concerned that delays in cargo handling were hampering the growth of marine trade, those involved in marine transport and ports originally founded the ICHCA in 1951, soon after World War II, as a forum for survey research and the exchange of information designed to make port cargo handling more efficient. The organization’s present goal is to increase the efficiency and economical operation of cargo handling and transfer throughout the entire transport transaction, from point of origin to ultimate destination. In order to achieve this goal, the organization gathers relevant information, provides information to members, and facilitates the exchange of information among members.