

Next-generation Cities Built on Innovations in Social Infrastructure



Yutaka Saito
*Vice President and
Executive Officer
President & CEO
Information & Control Systems Company
Hitachi, Ltd.*

I would like to start by expressing my deep condolences for the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake and sincerely hope for the earliest possible recovery in all regions involved.

The disaster that took place on March 11 caused major damage to energy, mobility, water, manufacturing, and other facilities in Japan, bringing with it significant implications for economic activity and people's daily lives. This has brought home to us once again the importance of social infrastructure.

The topic of this issue is next-generation cities built on innovations in social infrastructure. There are two main reasons for this focus on next-generation cities. The first is the need to move toward low-carbon lifestyles to help achieve a sustainable society. The second is the rapid urbanization due to economic growth in emerging economies. The pursuit of the comfort and convenience, high-speed transport, and mass production that come with economic growth and the concentration of populations in urban areas also bring problems such as high energy consumption and greater environmental impact and are further complicated by issues like the worldwide water shortage, aging society with a falling birthrate.

Hitachi's concept of a "next-generation city" is one that can overcome these challenges to provide an ideal urban environment in which people will want to live. Such a city provides services that are tailored to people's needs and take account of the global environment by coordinating the essential services of energy, mobility, and water through city management functions that utilize IT (information technology). Concepts for realizing next-generation cities such as staged system implementation and the use of distributed and cluster-based system designs also facilitate urban developments that can continue to grow over time and have the strength to withstand disasters.

Hitachi intends to combine the extensive technologies and experience it has built up over many years to help overcome the earthquake devastation and build next-generation cities that combine economic growth with a low-carbon lifestyle and in which everyone can live in safety and enjoy peace of mind, comfort, and convenience.

It is my hope that this issue will help everyone understand better Hitachi's approach to urban development and our wide range of activities in this field.