The function to set and revise the fixed number of officials in each grade of salary schedules reside in the prime minister. However, the fixed number of officials in each grade is related to working conditions. Therefore, the Remuneration Act specifies "when setting or revising the fixed number, the prime minister is to hear and fully respect the opinions of the NPA, which has the compensatory function for the restriction of basic labor rights."

The NPA’s opinions are submitted to the prime minister with a view to securing appropriate working conditions for employees as the compensatory function for restriction of basic labor rights, which are guaranteed in the Constitution. The NPA’s opinions share the same characteristics with the NPA Recommendation, which requests full implementation of the Diet and the Cabinet.

Chapter 4. Life Planning for Public Employees

In response to the full-fledged aging of Japanese society, the NPA has promoted measures to ensure smooth implementation of the reappointment system and provide the information necessary to enable public employees to plan their post-retirement lives.

Section 1. Situation of Mandatory Retirement and Reappointment System

1. Situation of Mandatory Retirement and Employment Extension

The National Public Service Act stipulates the mandatory retirement age to be 60 as a general rule with some exceptions. In cases of positions that do not conform to the mandatory retirement age of 60 due to the particularity of duties and responsibilities, the Act provides the range of 61 to 65 as an alternative (special mandatory retirement age) (e.g. doctors: 65, administrative vice-ministers: 62).

In addition, for exceptional cases of mandatory retirement, where it is recognized that the employee’s retirement would have a significant adverse effect on the administration of public service, an employment extension system is provided to enable employees to continue to work. In this system, the employment period can be extended up to one year. It can be extended again up to a total of three years.

2. Implementing the Reappointment System

The current reappointment system was introduced in FY2001 with the expectation that it would enable employees to devote themselves to their duties without any anxiety regarding their life after mandatory retirement. The system combines employment and pension to allow employees to make effective use of the capabilities and experience they have cultivated over many years, and helps them deal with the gradual raising of the starting age for receiving the portion of public pension equivalent to the basic pension.

The number of employees newly reappointed in FY2015 was 10,378. (The number of employees under the Remuneration Act was 9,657 and the number at agencies engaged in administrative execution was 721.) As a recent trend, employees are reappointed mainly as short-time work employees, which is very different from the situation in the private sector, where reemployment is based on full-time employment.

With regard to the stepwise increase of the starting age for payments of the remuneration-related part of the
public pension, it was decided to take an interim measure to reappoint mandatorily retired employees, who wish to be reappointed, until the starting age of the pension payment in accordance with the "Connection between Employment and Pension of National Public Employees (Cabinet Decision)," which was decided in March 2013.

The above cabinet decision stipulates that a study on the connection between employment and pension, including the gradual increase of the mandatory retirement age, should be conducted each time when a stepwise increase of the starting age for pension payment is carried out, taking into account the "Submission of Opinions on the Revision of the National Public Service Act to Raise the Mandatory Retirement Age to 65," which was submitted by the NPA in 2011. In consideration of raising the starting age of pension payment up to 62 in April 2016, the government expressed their support for a policy in December 2015 that the government would continue to deal with the issue through reappointment and perform a study on measures to further and fully utilize the abilities and experiences of reappointed employees.

Section 2. Holding "Life Planning Seminars"

The NPA held a "life planning seminar" to consider life planning through knowledge and information on the reappointment system and the pension system, as well as the discussion among the participants. The seminar is designed for employees in their 40s and 50s.

In FY2016, "Life planning Seminars" were held 24 times with 1,263 participants.

In addition, the NPA produced and distributed a booklet, titled "How to Take the Next Step," which contains specific information useful for household finances and health management after retirement and so on.

Chapter 5. Public Employees' Working Environment

Section 1. Working Hours and Leave

Working hours and leave are basic working conditions. Details of these working conditions are stipulated in the Working Hours Act based on the principle of meeting changing conditions in Article 28 of the National Public Service Act. The NPA, which is responsible for implementing the Working Hours Act, established Rule 15-14 (Working Hours, Holidays, and Leave of Employees) and has made efforts to ensure appropriate working conditions for public employees in cooperation with each ministry that actually puts the system into operation.

According to the Working Hours Act, the NPA is to carry out a survey on the system of working hours and leave, report the survey results to the Diet and the Cabinet, and if necessary, recommend appropriate revisions of the said Act.

1. Situation of Overtime Work and Annual Leave Taken

In principle, the employees' regular working hours are 7 hours and 45 minutes per day and 38 hours and 45 minutes per week. Overtime work can be ordered when there is a temporary or urgent need. According to the 2016 Fact-finding Survey of Remuneration of National Public Employees, the average number of overtime hours worked across all the ministries in 2015 was 233.0 hours. By organization, the average number of overtime hours in 2015...