

Preface

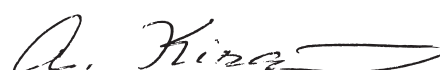
This volume covers the highlight of the achievement attained at SPring-8 in its 7th year of operation. The results demonstrate that utilization and application of SPring-8 are closing to a peak under the present conditions. By the present conditions, I would like to mean that SPring-8 is not yet complete because the sites for 14 beamlines are still vacant. No plans for new beamlines have been approved by the Government since 2002, owing to the poor economics of the country. The latest and second-latest constructed are all contract beamlines: the one by Hyogo prefecture (2005) and the other by Pharmaceutical Consortium (2002).

The big topic in facilities was the start of the top-up operations, of which details are described in this issue. The users seem to accept the top-up operation favorably. I hope that the advantageous effects of top-up operation will appear in reports of next issue of the Research Frontiers.

Promotion of industrial application is still the largest concern of the Japanese Government. The Government starts a new program to promote industrial application at some large public facilities for common use in 2005 fiscal year, in which SPring-8 was included. This program will probably lead to a new system of governmental support to the public research facilities.

In a policy of the medical application at SPring-8, emphasis was shifted from clinical utilization to basic medical-bio applications after arguments over 5 years. I hope that the release from the limitation based on the clinical use would activate useful applications that finally contribute to clinical medicine.

Since its opening, JASRI has operated SPring-8 entrusted by JAERI and RIKEN, the owners of the facilities. However, as a result of the innovation of governmental organizations, JAERI is to withdraw from the administration of SPring-8 after September 2005, but will remain as a major user who owns 4 contract beamlines. RIKEN will take over the facilities JAERI owned. This scheme may change again in near future if the above-mentioned new system for large public facilities starts.



Akira Kira
Director General
SPring-8 / JASRI