

**INTOSAI EDP Committee Performance Audit Seminar, Slovenia,
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Summary of Country Paper prepared by Board of Audit, Japan

Why IT Projects Fail

1. The reason why I selected this topic

Until early 1990s we used to build centralized computer systems using mainframe computer-based technology in Japan. The systems were designed using waterfall model, in which development is supposed to proceed linearly through the phases of requirements analysis, design, implementation, testing (validation), integration and maintenance. It often required a long time for programming.

Recent technical innovation brought the downsizing of computers based on client-server system. This enables us to develop systems more easily and quickly.

I wish to consider how we should audit client-server based systems, and if there are any problems, how we should find why these systems failed in the development phase.

2. IT Project Failures in Japan (Examples)

2-1 National Diet Library System

2-2 Board of Audit Information Management System

3. Problems in operating big projects

In Japan, it often takes a lot of time to implement one big IT project because many central/local governments are involved in such a project and decisions are usually made by mutual consent after time-consuming ground work.

4. IT Audit in Board of Audit

The IT Division of the Board used to allocate some of its resources on IT audits until recently. However, the Division is also responsible for developing systems for the Board and most of its resources are now dedicated to systems development. Thus, each Audit Division in the Board now must conduct IT audit without sufficient support from the IT Division and confronts some difficulties in technical issues.