

Translation of Laws and Regulations into Foreign Languages: Issues and Future Policies

March 6, 2023

**Judicial System Department of the Minister's Secretariat
in the Ministry of Justice**

Issues and Current Status

Numerical Targets for the Release of Translated Laws, Regulations, and Outlines

- ◆ January 2021 April 2022 Special requests concerning the number of translated laws and regulations to release from the Joint Public- and Private-Sector Strategy Council

PRIORITY REQUESTS IN FY2020

- The Project should release at least 600 new translated laws, regulations, and outlines by FY2025.

PRIORITY REQUESTS IN FY2022

- The Project should aim to release 1,000 new translated laws, regulations, and outlines by FY2025.



- ◆ July 2022 Liaison Conference of Relevant Ministries and Agencies

Approval granted for the Joint Public- and Private-Sector Strategy Council's request to proceed with efforts to achieve the indicated numerical targets

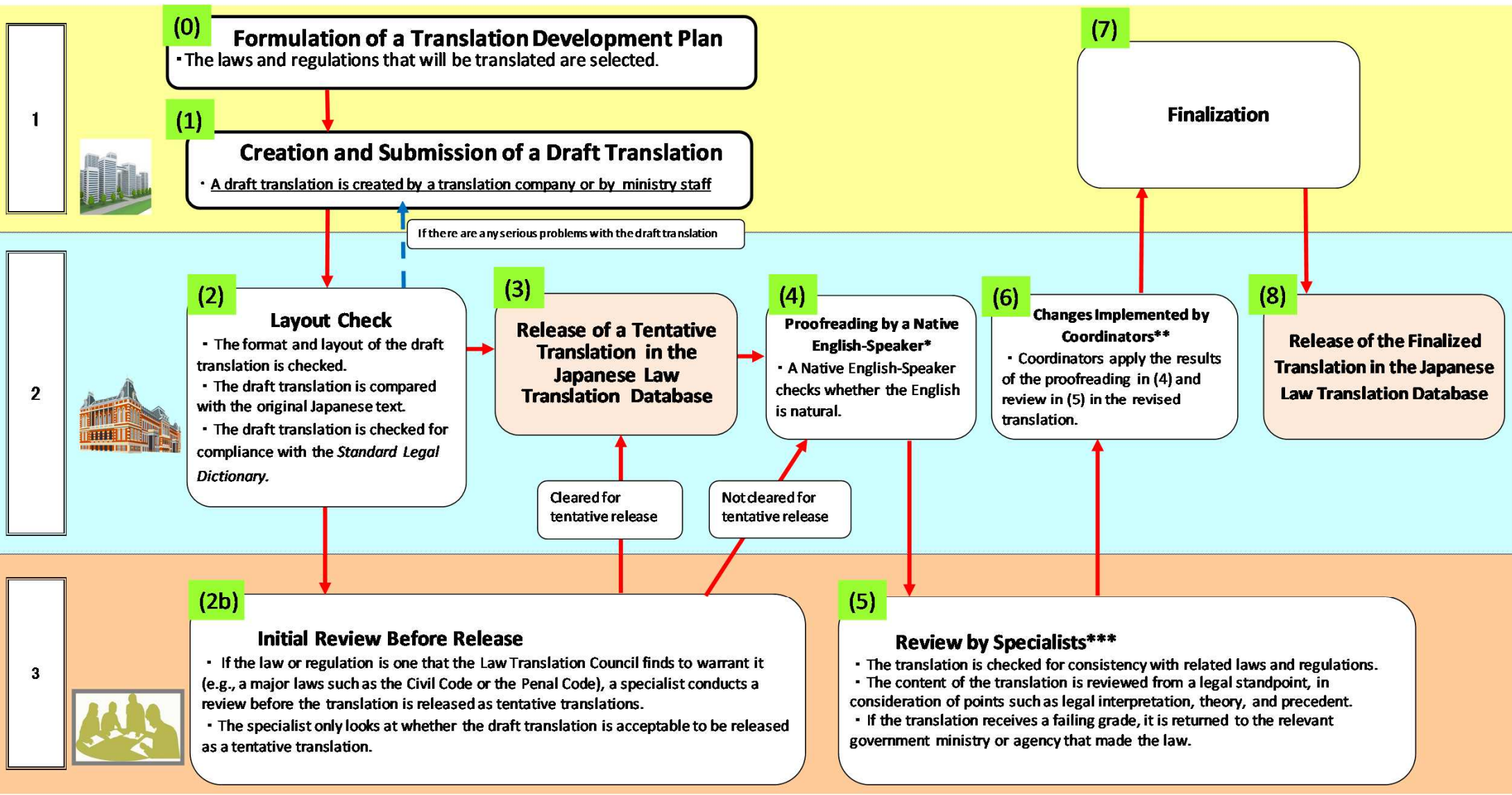
There were 81 laws and regulations released in FY 2021

There were 107 laws and regulations released in FY 2022 (as of the end of February 2023)

Interviews have been held with the relevant government ministries and agencies to make a fact-finding assessment.

Current Workflow

- 1 The Ministry or Agency responsible for translating the law
- 2 The Ministry of Justice (Judicial System Department)
- 3 The Ministry of Justice's Japanese Law Translation Council



* Native English speaker: A person who is from an English-speaking country, whose native language is English, and who is knowledgeable about both Japanese law and Anglo-American law.

** Coordinator: A person who is from Japan, whose native language is Japanese, and who is knowledgeable about Japanese law and English.

*** Specialist: A member of the Japanese Law Translation Council. The Council is composed of academics, attorneys, and registered foreign lawyers.

Results of the Fact-Finding Assessment

◆ Inclusion of Laws and Regulations in the Translation Development Plan (FY2022)

(1) Reasons for including laws and regulations in the Plan

- People had been asking for that law or regulation to be translated.
- It is important to establish a system that enables information to be shared with international organizations and others.

(2) Reasons for not including laws and regulations in the Plan

- It was determined that requests for translations were not connected with one of the fields* in which the release of English translations of laws and regulations is being prioritized.
- Budget constraints made it difficult to handle translation.

* Fields related to foreign direct investment in Japan, intellectual property, Basic Acts in the field of civil matters, and fields of interest to foreign nationals residing in Japan

◆ Reasons why it is taking so much time to draft English translations of laws and regulations

- There is no budget to translate the law in the fiscal year in which it is amended.
- An extremely busy schedule means that there is no time for translating laws and regulations into foreign languages.
- The work progress depends greatly on the English ability of the person in charge.

Challenges to Achieving the Targets

The results of the fact-finding assessment reveal the following two points as the main challenges to achieving the targets.

- (1) The decision on whether to include a law or regulation in the Translation Development Plan is left up to the ministry or agency with jurisdiction over that law or regulation.
- (2) The ministries and agencies with jurisdiction over the laws and regulations do not have the budget or the time to prepare draft translations.



To achieve the targets, we need to handle these challenges.

How We Propose to Handle These Challenges

(1) To handle the challenge of the decision on whether to include a law or regulation in the Translation Development Plan being left up to the ministry or agency with jurisdiction over that law or regulation



➤ **A reconsideration of which laws and regulations are to be included in the Plan**

- It should be established that the relevant ministry or agency is to include a law or regulation in the Translation Development Plan if private sector members of the Joint Public- and Private-Sector Strategic Council request that it be translated and it belongs to a field in which translations should be made a priority.
- If a ministry or agency does not include one of these laws or regulations in the Plan, it should explain the reason to the Joint Public- and Private-Sector Strategy Council, as necessary.

(2) To handle the challenge of the ministries and agencies with jurisdiction over the laws and regulations not having the budget or the time to prepare draft translations



➤ **A reconsideration of the workflow**

- The adoption of AI translation should be used as an opportunity to reconsider the current workflow in order to help reduce the workload of the ministries and agencies with jurisdiction over the laws and regulations.

Roadmap to Achieving the Targets

No.	Item	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
No.	Release targets	8 1 (actual number released)	1 2 0	1 6 0	3 2 0	3 2 0
1	Workflow	Reconsideration of quality checks	Interviews with relevant ministries and agencies Overseas surveys (EU, Others)	Interviews with relevant ministries and agencies Overseas surveys (S. Korea) Consideration of new workflow	Test adoption	Full-scale adoption
2	System for Quality Checks	Budget request	Budget request Overseas surveys (EU, Others) Systemic enhancements	Budget request Overseas surveys (S. Korea) Systemic enhancements System review/revisions	Systemic enhancements	Systemic enhancements
3	AI Translation	Budget request Consideration Verification	Budget request Overseas surveys (EU, Others) Exploration and review Procurement	Overseas surveys (S. Korea) Design and development Test adoption	Full-scale adoption	Full-scale adoption

*Translations released in FY2022, as of February 28, 2023 (released: 107)