ABSTRACT

A time period which is expended since a request for the authentication of the validity of a public key certificate till the authentication of the validity, is shortened. A certificate validity authentication center VC periodically searches for and verifies paths which extend from a bridge certification authority CA_{bridge} to individual terminal admitting certification authorities CA, and it registers the paths whose verifications have held good, in a path database in association with the respective terminal admitting certification authorities CA. Besides, in a case where the request for the authentication of the validity of a certificate has been made by an end entity EE, whether or not a path associated with the terminal admitting certification authority CA which admits the end entity, and a path associated with the terminal admitting certification authority CA which has issued the certificate being a subject for the request are registered in the path database is checked, and the subject certificate is judged valid only when both the paths are registered.

This Sheet Has Been Replaced

