

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

Common Quality Framework for
International Search and Preliminary Examination

Supplemental Report Under Paragraph 21.18 of the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines

by: *Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)*

on: *January 23, 2008*

Date of main report and *January 4, 2007*
any supplemental reports to
which this is a supplement:

Documents referred to in this report:

As a result of our most recent internal review under PCT/GL/ISPE paragraphs 21.10-21.15, this Authority has made modifications to its Quality Management System (QMS) as discussed below.

The modifications are given with reference to the sections of the revised template for responses to PCT/GL/ISPE Paragraph 21.17 to which the changes relate.

The Authority should describe any changes made to its QMS making reference to the specific sections of the earlier report using template T21-17, and / or making reference to any supplemental report(s) established in the meantime using template T21-18.

If no changes have been made to its QMS since the last report, the Authority should indicate such.

Resources – Infrastructure (Paragraph 21.05)

Within the framework of CIPO's Enterprise Business Renewal, an extensive process improvement initiative was conducted across the organization. Training manuals, process mappings and work instructions were updated. An improved procedure for document control was implemented to better ensure use of approved document versions.

In addition, the formal training program is reviewed annually with respect to Patent Branch training standards to identify opportunities for improvement. A continuous training program is currently under review which aims at providing examiners with enhanced practice knowledge and renewed skills in work tools. Examiners also have access to professional development in writing, coaching, leadership and legal matter.

Administration (Paragraph 21.06)

An improved corporate online feedback mechanism was launched in the fall of 2007 for handling client complaints. The system timely collects and uses complaints, compliments and feedback from clients to resolve problems and identify opportunities for improvements.

Quality Assurance Procedure (Paragraph 21.07)

A complete review of the Patent Branch's quality standards and procedures are being performed. Search, Examination and Operations quality standards are refined to better meet internal and external clients' needs.

The Board of ISA Consistency (BISAC) has evolved into the International Issues Working Group (IIWG), whose members span the entire Patent Branch. This Group monitors all issues arising from Heads of sections and ensure consistency and dissemination of best practices across the Branch. The Group also monitors the Branch's processes to identify major nonconformities deserving of corrective action. It reports to the Quality Steering Committee (QSC), which the Assistant Commissioner of Patents chairs.

A pilot project to gauge quality of CIPO's searches is currently underway, whereby CIPO's search results are compared with those issued by other offices on the same applications. The pilot involves comparison of claims, search strategy, and search tools, where available. Analysis of the pilot results will be used to identify opportunities for improvement in training or practice.

[End of report]