

WIPO



IPC/WG/19/2
ORIGINAL: English
DATE: June 20, 2008

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC UNION)

IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

**Nineteenth Session
Geneva, May 26 to 30, 2008**

REPORT

adopted by the Working Group

INTRODUCTION

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) held its nineteenth session in Geneva from May 26 to 30, 2008. The following members of the Working Group were represented at the session: Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America, African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the European Patent Office (EPO) (24). Serbia and Ukraine were represented as observers. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report.

2. The session was opened Mr. A. Farassopoulos, Head, Classification and IP Standards Service, WIPO.

OFFICERS

3. The Working Group unanimously elected Mr. F. Brady (Ireland) as Chair and Ms. S. Rodrigues (Portugal) as Vice-Chair for 2008.

4. Mr. L. Mailänder (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Working Group unanimously adopted the agenda, which appears as Annex II to this report.

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Working Group (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Working Group was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

7. The Secretariat presented an oral report on the fortieth session of the IPC Committee of Experts (hereinafter referred to as the “the Committee”, see document IPC/CE/40/6), in particular, that the Committee had decided, as an exceptional and experimental case, to introduce the new subclass H04W into the core level of the IPC (IPC-2009) before completion of its reclassification, in order to allow offices to be able to use it for the classification of their front file already in 2009. Meanwhile, IPC users would be notified that reclassification in this area was not complete, and they would also be informed of those patent collections which were not completely reclassified and of the scheme which should be used for searching these collections.

8. In view of the continuing high workload of the Working Group, the Committee noted that completion of the task “Removal of Informative References from the Scheme” would most likely last for several more years, given the large number of references to be reviewed and the current working procedure. The Committee therefore invited the International Bureau to prepare a proposal for a more efficient approach to be considered by the Working Group at its nineteenth session (see paragraphs 16 to 22, below).

9. The Committee adopted the 2009 version of the *Guide to the IPC* and a plan of the publication of IPC-2009, already briefly presented at the eighteenth session of the Working Group.

10. In view of the regular reconsideration of the composition of the Special Subcommittee for the advanced level of the IPC (hereinafter referred to as “the ALS”), the Committee decided that the composition of the ALS should be considered in the general context of the revision policy and procedure of the reformed IPC. Issues such as the complexity of the

Classification with its two levels, their independent revision cycles, as well as their different revision procedures, should be reviewed, aiming at a simplification of the interaction between the two levels and bodies, in order to improve the efficiency of the revision process. In addition, the consistency of application of the IPC by different offices and the improvement of the IPC as a tool for search needed particular consideration by the Committee in the definition of a new revision policy. A special Task Force and two projects on the IPC e-forum (CE 404 and CE 405) were created to conduct this debate.

REPORT ON THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE ADVANCED LEVEL SUBCOMMITTEE

11. The Working Group noted an oral report by the Secretariat on the fifth session of the ALS (see document IPC/ALS/5/8), in particular, that the ALS had reviewed all active A-projects on the IPC e-forum.

12. The ALS adopted the remaining scheme of subclass H04W, including the transfer notes and the cross references, in view of the introduction of this subclass in the 2009.01 version of the IPC, as decided by the Committee (see paragraph 7, above). Concerning project A 009 (subclass G01S), it was decided that the proposed scheme would be created under a single new main group. Project A 014 was suspended for the time being; it would be reactivated and a corresponding C-project would be created after an agreement has been reached amongst the Trilateral Offices on where to place the scheme. Such an agreement was reached outside of the Working Group session and project C 454 was thus created.

13. The ALS examined several revision requests and decided to include the request corresponding to Harmony project T 037 (subclass H01L, LED's) in the revision program. A request submitted by Germany on subclass C07K was rejected while a second request on subclass C09D was considered at an extraordinary session of the ALS held during the current session of the Working Group. At that session, and in agreement with Germany, it was decided to reject the second request in view of the light activity in the field covered by the request.

14. The ALS considered the problem of PCT applications published without IPC symbols. For some time already, about 5 to 10% of all PCT applications are published without IPC symbols. For a large number of them, the EPO is the International Searching Authority. The majority of these cases concern applications made at another receiving office, which often take a long time to reach the EPO. The ALS could not provide a solution but would continue to monitor the status and inform their offices' management of the situation. This issue will be put again on the agenda of the next meeting.

15. The ALS noted a report by the EPO on the reclassification status of the backfile in new places in IPC-8. The EPO stated that classification of the front file is being done according to the IPC scheme in force. JPO's reclassification of the backfile is completed.

REMOVAL OF INFORMATIVE REFERENCES FROM THE SCHEME

16. Discussions were based on a compilation of project file WG 191, and in particular on Annex 1, submitted by the International Bureau, relating to a proposal on how to further proceed with this task.

17. The Working Group noted that the Task Force on removal of informative references from the scheme had completed reviewing and removal of informative references from the scheme for 32 subclasses where definitions had already been published online. For the remaining 57 subclasses where definition projects had been completed by the end of 2007, the Working Group confirmed its decision taken at its fifteenth session that the International Bureau would prepare proposals and submit them to project M 032. These proposals would be submitted in the form of standardized tables that should be used by Rapporteurs of other projects when submitting proposals for removing informative references from the scheme. Following a round of comments, the International Bureau would prepare consolidated proposals for approval by the Task Force. In case of doubt about the nature of a certain reference, i.e. if the Task Force cannot come to a unanimous agreement, that reference should remain in the scheme.

18. It was decided that the Task Force should carry out discussions and approvals by electronic communication. Based on the proposals approved by the Task Force, the International Bureau would then prepare technical annexes for approval by the Working Group and adoption by the Committee of Experts.

19. The Working Group recalled its previous decision that Rapporteurs of definition projects which were active at the end of 2007 should submit proposals for informative references that should be removed from the scheme (see paragraph 29 of document IPC/WG/15/4 and paragraph 22 of document IPC/WG/18/4). Those proposals should not only include the informative references at subclass level, i.e. those references that would be included in the subclass definition, but all references in the subclass that should be treated as informative references. Rapporteurs of currently active definition projects were therefore reminded to take the said decision into account when submitting their proposals.

20. With respect to subclasses where no definition projects exist, the Working Group decided that, for each newly created definition project, the International Bureau would prepare a proposal for the removal of informative references for consideration by the Rapporteur of the project. It was also agreed that the same approach should equally be applied to newly created revision and maintenance (C and M) projects, since Rapporteurs of both projects also have technical expertise regarding the specific subclasses.

21. Based on the proposals approved by the Working Group at a given session, the International Bureau would prepare the relevant technical annexes for the report of that session and for further adoption by the Committee of Experts.

22. In view of the high workload and the expected long duration of this task, it was also agreed that any office could submit proposals for the removal of informative references from those subclasses for which no active project exists, in the framework of project M 032.

SYSTEMATIC INTRODUCTION OF GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE IPC

23. Discussions were based on a compilation of project file WG 171, in particular on Annex 30 prepared by the International Bureau, relating to a proposal on how to further proceed with this project, and on Annex 31 presented by Brazil at the session.

24. The Working Group noted that the Rapporteurs and Co-Rapporteurs of the pilot projects M 600 to M 605 had selected only few graphical illustrations as being suitable for future inclusion in the IPC for illustrative purposes. For the subclasses of the pilot projects, it was found that many of the illustrations available in the collection of the United States of America were not suitable, due in large part to the differences between the US Classification and the IPC. The Working Group therefore also renewed its invitation to the EPO to make available its collections of graphical illustrations.

25. The Working Group agreed that the selection of illustrations should not be continued by systematically reviewing the available illustrations, nor by prior identification of the areas in the IPC that would need such illustrations. In view of the required expertise with the technical subject matter covered by the different subclasses, it was considered more efficient if Rapporteurs of definition projects for subclasses would identify the areas that would need graphical illustrations and would review the available illustrations in the OEPN, USPTO and EPO collections. The Working Group also noted that it could be necessary to draw new illustrations because illustrations taken from patent documents are sometimes not generic enough, as the pilot projects have shown.

26. The Working Group also agreed that the review of the provisional guidelines for selecting suitable graphical illustrations should be continued at its next session and accepted an offer of the International Bureau to prepare a new proposal, taking into account the latest comments submitted to project WG 171.

27. The Working Group also noted, with gratitude, the interest and commitment of several offices to this task and agreed that, further to the systematic treatment of this task in definition projects, initiatives of individual offices would be welcomed. If, for example, classifiers or examiners working in a particular field considered the availability of illustrations helpful, corresponding proposals could be submitted for consideration by the Working Group.

RENUMBERING OF PRE-REFORM RESIDUAL MAIN GROUPS

28. Discussions were based on the latest rapporteur proposal (see Annex 57 to project file WG 111) relating to residual main groups with subgroups. The Working Group agreed that the residual main groups F03B 17/00 and F28G 13/00 should not be renumbered.

29. The Working Group also agreed to delete the following residual main groups and to transfer them to new standardized residual main groups: A62C 39/00, B24D 17/00, B43M 17/00, B60G 25/00, B81C 5/00, C01G 57/00, C12S 13/00, D01G 37/00, F21K 7/00, F23D 21/00, F23M 13/00 and G06N 1/00 (see Technical Annexes relating to project M 099).

30. It was further agreed to delete the following residual main groups and their subgroups, and to transfer the deleted main groups to new standardized residual main groups, the deleted one-dot subgroups to new main groups and the deleted hierarchically lower subgroups to respective subgroups of the new main groups (see Technical Annexes relating to project M 099): B01L 11/00, B29D 31/00, F01N 7/00, F02N 17/00, F03C 5/00 and G04G 1/00.

31. With respect to subclass B27J, the Working Group agreed that the renumbering of the residual main group B27J 7/00 should be further treated in maintenance project M 700, and invited the Rapporteur of that project to submit a proposal for renumbering or rewording the title of main group B27J 7/00.

32. With respect to subclass B60F, the Working Group approved the proposed amendments of the titles of subclass B60F and of main group B60F 5/00 (see Technical Annex 32 to this report) and the inclusion of the term “convertible” in the glossary of the corresponding definition.

33. The Working Group agreed that main group B64C 39/00 was not residual to the whole subclass and approved a new standardized residual main group (see Technical Annex 34 to this report).

34. With respect to subclass B67D, the Working Group invited the Rapporteur to review the comments of Japan in Annex 55 and to submit a new proposal taking into account the references in the title of main group B67D 5/00.

35. With respect to subclass C07B, the Working Group agreed that a decision on the renumbering of main group C07B 61/00 should be taken in the framework of project M 101.

36. In view of the concerns of the United States of America, the Working Group agreed to postpone a decision on the residual main group C08H 5/00 and its subgroups and invited comments on whether a revision project would be needed in order to clarify a potential overlap between the proposed new main groups C08H 7/00 and 9/00 and main group C07G 1/00 (see Annex 57 to project file WG 111).

37. With respect to subclass F27D, the Working Group agreed to delete main group F27D 23/00 and its subgroups, and to create the proposed new main groups F27D 25/00, 27/00 and a new standardized residual main group. The proposed main groups F27D 29/00 and F27D 31/00 were not approved because their creation would require intellectual reclassification of documents currently classified in main group F27D 23/00. It was further agreed to include a precedence reference to F27D 3/14 in the title of new main group F27D 27/00 (see Technical Annex 45 to this report).

38. With respect to subclass G01M, the Working Group agreed that the testing of sparking plugs should be placed in the main group H01T 13/00. However, it was also noted that group G01R 31/38 covers electrical testing of sparking plugs and includes a reference to G01M 19/02. It was therefore agreed to create new revision project C 453, with the EPO as Rapporteur, for investigating if such subject matter should also be placed in H01T 13/00. The renumbering of G01M 19/00 should also be considered in that project.

39. The Secretariat informed the Working Group of its plan to post an updated version of the proposal of Annex 57 to the e-forum for the remaining residual main groups. The Working Group invited comments to this proposal by October 17, 2008. The Working Group finally agreed to continue the consideration of the remaining three residual main groups at its next session.

40. The Secretariat informed the Working Group of its plan to post an updated version of Annex 58 to the e-forum, which would summarize all decisions of the Working Group with respect to the introduction of new residual main groups and the renumbering of existing residual main groups.

PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE IPC

41. The Working Group considered projects M 700, M 701, M 703, M 704, M 706, M 707 and M 709. A list of M 7xx projects, their status and relevant future actions with deadlines are indicated in Annex III to this report.

Project M 700 – B27K (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the amendment of the title of subclass B27K as proposed by the Rapporteur in Annex 15 to the project file (see Technical Annex 60 to this report). A round of comments was invited on the questions raised by the Rapporteur in said Annex 15.

Project M 701 – B60L 15/00 (mechanical) – Discussions were based on a proposal submitted by the Rapporteur (see Annex 11 to the project file), as well as on an updated proposal prepared by the Rapporteur during the session. The Working Group approved the amended title of subclass B60L (see Technical Annex 61 to this report).

Comments were invited on:

- the relation between group B60R 16/03 and main group B60L 1/00 in light of the second part of the approved new title of subclass B60L; and
- whether the title of main group B60L 15/00 covers the scope of its subgroups, e.g. groups B60L 15/20 and 15/40, and, if not, on how to accommodate the scope of the subgroups in the main group title, for example by modifying the title as proposed by the Rapporteur in Annex 11 of the project file.

Project M 703 – A62B, A62D (mechanical) – The Working Group approved an amendment to the title of group A62B 29/00 and the introduction of a new limiting reference in group A62D 3/00 pointing to group A62B 29/00 (see Technical Annexes 62 and 63 to this report). It was decided that this reference should also be included in A62D 3/00 group definitions as a limiting reference, in project D 071.

Project M 704 – B29K (mechanical) – The Working Group approved, with some modifications, the amendments of titles of the main groups of subclass B29K proposed by the Rapporteur in Annex 3 to the project file (see Technical Annex 64 to this report).

Project M 706 – B65D (mechanical) – The English version was approved by the Working Group (see Technical Annex 65 to this report).

Project M 707 – B27G (mechanical) – Discussions were based on an initial proposal submitted by the Rapporteur and comments submitted by the United States of America and Sweden (see Annexes 4 to 6 to the project file). Comments were invited on:

- whether a reference to B24D 15/00 would be needed in subclass B27G or in its main groups;
- which of the proposed titles of subclass B27G, the one of the Rapporteur in Annex 4 or the one of Sweden in Annex 6, could better clarify its scope, taking into account the scope of class B27; and
- whether the title of B27G 21/00 should be amended as “---for other wood-working machines or devices” in view of the title of main group B27G 19/00 covering “wood saws”.

Project M 709 – G01B (electrical) – Following the proposal of the Rapporteur, the Working Group agreed to abandon this project.

IPC CORE LEVEL REVISION PROGRAM

General

42. The Working Group discussed nine pending IPC core level revision projects and approved amendments relating to those projects (see the Technical Annexes 1 to 18 to this report relating to revision projects). The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in Annex III to this report.

43. During the consideration of project C 448, it was noted that some amendments that had previously been approved at the eighteenth session of the Working Group were present again in the proposed Technical Annexes of the nineteenth session. The Secretariat indicated that the Rapporteurs typically included entries already approved in the proposed scheme, and as such, it was not always obvious which amendments should be introduced into RIPCIS. The International Bureau was therefore invited to draft instructions on how to present, in rapporteur proposals, those amendments that should be introduced into RIPCIS. These instructions, in addition to the “Guidelines for Revision of the IPC”, should be submitted to Project C 000 of the e-forum.

IPC Revision Projects

44. The Working Group made the following observations with respect to the IPC revision projects.

Project C 436 (chemical) – New groups C12N 5/0735, 15/873 and 15/877 were approved as proposed by the Rapporteur (see Technical Annex 1 to this report). The project was therefore completed in English and a French version was requested for consideration at the next session of the Working Group. It was decided to reopen the definition project D 039 (subclass C12N), with Israel as Rapporteur, in order to accommodate the changes made in project C 436 and to add relevant new entries in the Glossary (see additionally Annex 32 to project C 436).

Furthermore, the Working Group took note of the expected workload for reclassification as provided in the statistics prepared by the EPO (see Annex 34 to the project file), based on the algorithm approved at the previous session of the Working Group.

Project C 441 (mechanical) – New notes for class B29 and for subclass B32B were approved; said notes give guidance on how to classify products characterized by the manner of their production in these places (see Technical Annexes 2 to 5 to this report). The consideration of this project was completed in English and the French version would be considered at the next session of the Working Group.

Project C 443 (chemical) – Discussions were based on Annex 20 to the project file containing a proposal to rearrange class C13. It was recalled that one of the reasons for revising this area was to solve a potential overlap between class C13 and subclass C07H. In that respect, the Working Group decided that all “sugars *per se*” should be classified only in subclass C07H.

The new subclass C13B, its main groups and an amended title of subclass C13K were approved (see Technical Annexes 7 and 8, respectively, to this report). Two new definition projects D 212 and D 213 for subclasses C13B and C13K were created with Germany as Rapporteur.

Comments were invited on:

- whether there was any overlap between subclasses C13B and C13K in view of their approved titles;
- whether the titles of main groups under subclass C13K should be amended in order to reflect the amended title of the subclass, i.e. to include the term “obtaining” at the beginning of the titles of these main groups.

Project C 447 (electrical) – The latest rapporteur proposal was approved, with some amendments (see Technical Annex 9 to this report).

Comments were invited on:

- whether the use of the term “tokens” in the note of subclass G07D was entirely accurate since tokens might sometimes be made of paper, and
- whether the list of “paper currency or similar valuable papers”, appearing in said note above, was exhaustive.

A definition project D 214 was created for subclass G07D with the EPO as Rapporteur, in the framework of which the informative references to be removed from the scheme would be considered.

A French version was requested for consideration at the next session of the Working Group.

Project C 448 (electrical) – A reference to subclass B81C was approved in new group G01Q 80/00. On the other hand, it was decided that a reference to new group G01Q 60/24 was not needed in subclass G01L (see Technical Annexes 10 to 16 to this report). The project was thus completed. It was noted that the advanced level part would be considered by the ALS at its next session in the framework of project A 007. Definitions would be further considered in the framework of project D 171.

Project C 449 (electrical) – Discussions were based on the latest rapporteur report (see Annex 18 to the project file). In particular, the Working Group discussed the most appropriate place for the classification of “road pricing for vehicles charged for travelling in particular areas”. Consensus, however, was not achieved and comments were invited on the following alternatives:

- multiple classification in a subgroup to be created under group G07B 15/00 and in group G06Q 20/00 (e.g. see the EPO’s proposal in Annex 15 to the project file);
- classification in group G06Q 20/00 or in an application oriented subgroup to be created and
- classification in group G08G 1/00.

Following the comments to be submitted, the Rapporteur was invited to submit a consolidated proposal.

Project C 450 (chemical) – The Working Group approved, with some amendments, the English version (see Technical Annex 17 to this report). It was noted that the Rapporteur would prepare the French version of the approved amendments for consideration by the Working Group at its next session.

Project C 451 (electrical) – It was decided that subclass G10L implicitly covered “audio processing” and the titles of the subclass and of some main groups were amended in order to explicitly indicate this coverage. In addition, informative references were removed from the scheme and the project was completed (see Technical Annex 18 to this report).

Project C 452 (electrical) – Discussions were based on Annex 6 to the project file containing a rapporteur proposal and on Annex 8 containing a counterproposal submitted by the International Bureau. It was indicated that the groups in the counterproposal submitted by the International Bureau had exactly the same scope as the groups in the rapporteur proposal. However, the groups for “specific uses or applications of nano-structures” were included in a separate subclass for secondary classification. It was further indicated that, in any case, the scope of existing groups B82B 1/00 and 3/00 should remain unchanged.

It was noted that the creation of these groups for specific uses or applications did not intend to replace application places elsewhere in the IPC, nor to restrict the development of new such places in other subclasses, if there is such a need in the future. Furthermore, these new groups for “uses or applications of nano-structures” should be used for the classification of “genuine nano-structures” and not automatically for all applications alleged to be nano-technology. The intention of the proposal was to provide a basis for a complete search to be made on nano-technology classified primarily elsewhere in the IPC.

Comments were invited on:

- whether the proposed groups B82C 10/00, 20/00, 40/00 and 50/00 (see said Annex 6) could also be used for primary classification and if that were the case, whether they should belong to a new subclass or inserted in existing subclass B82B, whose scope should be widened to include these groups.

IPC DEFINITIONS PROGRAM

45. The Working Group had before it, in particular, document IPC/WG/18/4 and compilations of the relevant definition project files. The decisions of the Working Group with respect to those projects, in particular new deadlines and the appointment of offices for the preparation of French versions, are listed in Annex IV to this report. Further information with respect to some of those decisions is given in paragraph 47, below.

46. The Working Group recalled its decision at its fifteenth session that Rapporteurs of definition projects which were active at the end of 2007 had been invited to submit proposals for informative references that should be removed from the scheme (see paragraph 29 of document IPC/WG/15/4), and noted that such proposals had been submitted for several projects. Rapporteurs of definition projects for which such proposals had not yet been submitted were asked to do so at the earliest time possible, or to indicate on the e-forum that the respective subclass would not contain any informative references (see also paragraph 19, above).

IPC Definition Projects

47. The Working Group made the following observations, in addition to the decisions set forth in Annex IV to this report, with respect to the cited IPC definition projects. All references to annexes in this paragraph refer to annexes of the corresponding project file, unless otherwise stated.

Project D 011 (electrical) – Following the question raised at its eighteenth session, the Working Group agreed that all references under the title of subclass H01L should be considered as limiting with the exception of the reference to B65G 49/07 which should be considered as informative and removed from the scheme (see Technical Annex 19 to this report).

Project D 012 (mechanical) – The Working Group agreed to replace the existing group A44B 21/00 by a standardized residual main group (see Technical Annexes relating to project M 099). The Working Group also approved the list of informative references to be removed from the scheme, as proposed in Annex 39 (see Technical Annex 20 to this report), and invited the International Bureau to include them in the definitions of the relevant groups.

Project D 013 (mechanical) – The Working Group agreed that a standardized residual main group was not needed. It was also agreed to replace in the English version of the definition statement the term “abnormal” by “particular” and “individual human beings” by “persons”, to remove the reference to G01N 27/047 from the informative references, to treat the reference to G03B 42/00 as informative, and to replace the reference to A61F 9/00 by a reference to A61F 9/007 with the title “Eye Surgery”.

Project D 014 (mechanical) – The Working Group agreed that a standardized residual main group was not needed, approved the list of informative references to be removed from the scheme, as proposed in Annex 37 (see Technical Annex 21 to this report), and invited the International Bureau to include them in the definitions of the relevant groups.

Project D 031 (mechanical) – The Working Group agreed to amend the title of main group E01D 19/00 as “Details of Bridges”, and that a standardized residual main group was therefore not needed. The Working Group also approved the removal of informative references, as proposed in Annex 54, and decided to introduce the deleted references to groups B63B 27/14 and B65G 69/28 into main group E01D 15/00 (see Technical Annex 22 to this report).

Project D 055 (mechanical) – The Working Group reviewed the proposals for the definitions of all subclasses of class F21 that are collectively under consideration in this project and took the following decisions:

- Subclass F21K: The Working Group noted that the definition of this subclass had already been approved at the seventeenth session, including the placement of the references of the subsection “References Relevant to Classification” under the subheading “Places to which this Subclass is Residual”. The inclusion of the explanation in the section “Relationship between large subject matter areas” as proposed in Annex 92 was not approved.
- Subclass F21L: The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 93, subject to deletion of the second paragraph in the subsection “Special Rules of Classification Within this Subclass” and to moving the first paragraph thereof to the end of subsection “Relationship Between Large Subject Matter Areas”, to deletion of last paragraph of the latter subsection, and to moving the informative reference to F21V 33/00 under the subheading “Examples of Places …”.
- Subclass F21S: The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 94, subject to replacing the last paragraph of the subsection “Relationship Between Large Subject Matter Areas” by the first paragraph of the subsection “Special Rules of Classification within this Subclass” of Annex 93, to moving the reference to B60Q to the informative references, and to adding a reference to F21V 33/00 with the title “Structural combinations of lighting devices with other articles, not otherwise provided for” under the subheading “Examples of Places …”.
- Subclass F21V: The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 95, subject to replacing the last paragraph of the subsection “Relationship between large subject matter areas” by the first paragraph of the subsection “Special rules of classification within this subclass” of Annex 93.

Project D 058 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 40, subject to adding “Les” or “Le” at the beginning of each bullet of the definition statement, to replacing “mouvement” by “déplacement” in the entries of the glossary, and some further editorial amendments. The Working Group also approved the amendments of the English version proposed in Annex 41.

Project D 067 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 9, subject to removing the last bullet in the first paragraph of the definition statement. The Working Group also approved the list of informative references to be removed from the scheme, as proposed in Annex 14, and added thereto the references in A01D 5/00 to B24D 15/00 (see Technical Annex 23 to this report). The International Bureau was invited to include them in the definitions of the relevant groups.

Project D 068 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 14, subject to some editorial amendments.

Project D 069 (mechanical) – The Working Group invited a new round of comments on the latest rapporteur proposal of Annex 8.

Project D 070 (mechanical) – The Working Group invited the Rapporteur to review if the reference to A23P, in view of its amendment proposed by the EPO in Annex 23, should better be included in the section “Relationship Between Large Subject Matter Areas”. The Working Group also approved some editorial changes to the already approved French version of Annex 24.

Project D 071 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 17 and the list of informative references to be removed from the scheme, as proposed in Annex 16 (see Technical Annex 24 to this report).

Project D 076 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 22, subject to moving the reference to B32B to the subsection of informative references. It was also agreed to change the English version accordingly, including the amendment of the wording of the reference.

Project D 077 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 12.

Project D 078 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 11, subject to replacing “Explosions” in the title by “Explosives”, introducing an informative reference to C06B, and rewording the reference to F42B to “conventional explosive devices”.

Project D 079 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 26.

Project D 081 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 12, subject to replacing “parenté” by “liens”. The Working Group also agreed to similarly replace in the English version the term “affinity” by “relationship”.

Project D 086 (electrical) – The Working Group invited a new rapporteur proposal, to be followed by a round of comments. The Rapporteur was asked to take into account the decisions of the related project M 103. The offices were invited to comment in particular on the suggestion of the EPO in Annex 19 to apply multiple classification in the area of “VoIP”, to create a revision project for the introduction of a corresponding note, and to include such rule in the definition.

Project D 098 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 29.

Project D 100 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 13 and invited the International Bureau to include a subheading before the last paragraph of the definition statement.

Project D 101 (mechanical) – The Working Group agreed that a standardized residual main group would not be needed. The Working Group also invited comments on the proper wording of the second paragraph of the definition statement regarding “flexible shafts” and “bowden cables”, which are indicated as examples thereof, and of the fifth paragraph regarding “rotary bodies”, and on the definition of these terms in the glossary. The Working Group further invited comments on whether the subclass title should be amended to accommodate the second part of the title of F16C 1/00.

Project D 115 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 19.

Project D 116 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 15, subject to adding a bullet for “obtaining specific metals, e.g. copper or manganese” to the definition statement, to splitting the informative reference to group C01G 9/02 into a reference to subclass C01G and a reference to the more specific subgroup C01G 9/02, and to some further editorial amendments.

Project D 117 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 16.

Project D 124 (C 434) (electrical) – The Working Group agreed to continue the discussion of the definition proposal in the definition project and asked the International Bureau to transfer Annex 26 of the project file C 434 to the definition project file D 124. The offices were invited to comment on the proposal in Annex 26.

Project D 125 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of the subclass definition of Annex 3 to the project file, and invited the Rapporteur to prepare an updated proposal for the main group and subgroup definitions.

Project D 137 (chemical) – The Working Group invited the Rapporteur to review the relationship between subclasses C10B and C10J, in particular the proper placement of the reference to C10B in the section for informative references, and to include in the definition a glossary entry for “gasification”.

Project D 138 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 11, subject to some editorial amendments.

Project D 141 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 9, subject to removing the references to B24B, to B28D 5/00 and to G02B, G02F under informative references, and the list of informative references to be removed from the scheme, as proposed in Annex 8 (see Technical Annex 25 to this report), and invited the International Bureau to include them in the definitions of the relevant groups.

Project D 167 (electrical) – The Rapporteur was invited to prepare a new proposal including the proposals for main group definitions proposed by the EPO in Annex 8, to be followed by a round of comments.

Project D 170 (electrical) – The Working Group invited further comments on the rapporteur proposal of Annex 1.

Project D 171 (C 448) (electrical) – The Working Group invited a new rapporteur report taking into account the Canadian comments in Annex 7 to the project file, to be followed by a round of comments.

IPC SYSTEMATIC MAINTENANCE

General

48. The Working Group discussed five pending IPC systematic maintenance projects and approved amendments relating to those projects (see the Technical Annexes to this report relating to maintenance projects). The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in Annex III to this report.

IPC Systematic Maintenance Projects

49. The Working Group made the following observations with respect to the IPC systematic maintenance projects.

Project M 100 – A01F (mechanical) – The Working Group approved, subject to an amendment of the title of subgroup A01F 12/58, the English and the French versions of the project (see Technical Annex 48 to this report). The Working Group noted that these amendments also included the removal of informative references from subclass A01F. It was also noted that there was no need for reclassification following the modification of the title of said subgroup A01F 12/58. The project was therefore considered as completed.

Project M 102 – F23G (mechanical) – The English version was approved (see Technical Annex 49 to this report).

Project M 103 – H04M (electrical) – The Working Group approved, with amendments, the English version of the project (see Technical Annex 50 to this report).

Project M 107 – F04C (mechanical) – Comments were invited on the latest rapporteur proposal (see Annex 8 to the project file) as to whether the title of the guidance heading before F04C 2/00 and the corresponding entry in the subclass title were suitable.

Project M 110 – G10 (electrical) – The Working Group approved, with several additional amendments, the English version of Annex 12 to the project file (see Technical Annexes 51 to 58 to this report), except for subclass G10L for which amendments were discussed in the framework of project C 451 (see paragraph 44, above, and Technical Annex 18 to this report). The Working Group also agreed on some editorial amendments in subclass H04R (see Technical Annex 59 to this report). The Working Group also approved the French version which was prepared by the Secretariat during the session.

REGULAR MONITORING OF RESIDUAL MAIN GROUPS

50. Discussions were based on a compilation of project file WG 151, and in particular on Annexes 11 and 12, relating to the statistics on the use of the 99/00 residual main groups and a rapporteur report prepared by the International Bureau.

51. The Working Group noted that for almost all residual main groups the rate of increase or their file size was modest and did not require further investigations. However, for some groups the following observations were made:

- it was pointed out that the excessive number of documents classified in main group F16K 99/00 was mainly due to the frequent use of this main group by Chinese classifiers. China was therefore invited to investigate whether there would be some specific subject matter currently classified in F16K 99/00 which could not be covered by other groups in subclass F16K and whether a revision project would be needed;
- following the analysis prepared by Sweden (see Annex 6 to the project file), it was noted that the high use of main group F23C 99/00 was due to the incomplete subdivision of F23C, the administrative reclassification of old documents from EPO's IDT to ECLA and an extensive subdivision of F23C 11/00 in FI; and
- it was noted that Germany would confirm at a later stage its availability to contribute to a potential solution of the problem of the documents administratively reclassified to F23C 99/00 as proposed by Sweden, i.e. by using the classification symbols of these documents in the German database DEPATIS. On the other hand, Japan took note of the problem created by the extensive subdivision of F23C 11/00 in FI and would consider the possibility of developing a more accurate FI-to-IPC concordance list.

CHECKING OF THE AMENDMENTS ADOPTED DURING THE LAST REVISION PERIOD IN IPC-2009.01

52. The Secretariat announced that the list of amendments (compilation file) and the scheme file of IPC-2009.01 would be available for checking under the IPC early publication webpage (<http://www.wipo.int/ipc8earllypub/>) where a restricted access was added. This site would include all approved modifications and show the associated IPC project and session where each of them had been finally adopted.

53. The grouping of amendments would be as follows: all core level amendments between the 2006 and 2009 editions; all amendments to the advanced level between IPC 2008.04 and 2009.01 and all amendments to the advanced level between IPC 2006.01 and 2009.01.

54. The scheme of the core and advanced levels would also be available for checking under the same area. Each Rapporteur was requested to check its projects. In addition, other offices volunteered to check projects M 031, M 032, M and P projects with corrections of errors and the French versions of revision projects. It was reminded that, in view of the IPC publication deadline of July 1, 2008, all comments/corrections should be submitted by June 16, 2008.

55. The Working Group was further informed that some clarification of the documentation was in progress for the master compilation file (the document type definition remains compatible with previous XML compilation files), and that no structural change was foreseen for the IPC-2009 master files. It was finally noted that a new feature allowing for download of the structure files of chemical formulae illustrations would soon be included on the IPC website.

STATUS OF THE WORK

56. The Chair stated that, on the agenda of this session, nine definition projects were approved in English and five definition projects were completed in both English and French. In total, 102 definition projects have been completed so far. Annex IV to this report gives the status of each definition project on the program. He also indicated that two revision projects have been dealt with and completed in both languages (see Annex III to this report for the status of each revision project). Furthermore, 12 maintenance projects have been dealt with (see Annex III to this report for the status of each maintenance project).

57. The Chair stated that, at this session, the Working Group had continued an important work program of the implementation of the results of IPC reform and had achieved good progress in the completion of the relevant tasks of the IPC development program. In particular, the Working Group has considered and created some new residual main groups (see Task No. 5(a)), and has removed several informative references from the scheme (see Task No. 3).

THANKS TO MR. DAELEMAN

58. Having noted that Mr. Daeleman would conclude his participation in the IPC revision work, the Working Group and the International Bureau thanked him and expressed their appreciation for his excellent contribution over many years as Technical Expert and Coordinator of the European Patent Office. The Working Group and the International Bureau wished him a long and happy retirement.

NEXT SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP

59. The Working Group, having assessed the workload expected for its next session, agreed to devote the first two days to the mechanical field, the following one and a half days to the electrical field and the last one and a half days to the chemical field. When convening the next session, the International Bureau was requested to consider, in consultation with the Chair, the possible need for an extension of the session, depending on the envisaged amount of work, and for the modification of the number of days dedicated to each technical field. The International Bureau was also requested to consider whether the status of C and M-projects in one of the technical fields would justify the convening of another Task Force type meeting for preparing consolidated proposals for subsequent consideration by the plenary of the Working Group.

60. The Working Group noted the following dates for its twentieth session:

November 24 to 28, 2008.

61. The Working Group unanimously adopted this report by electronic means on June 20, 2008.

[Annexes follow]