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**Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)**

**Eighth Session**

**Geneva, November 30 to December 4, 2020**

Proposal for a new standard on design representations

*Document prepared by the Design Representation Task Force Leader*

## BACKGROUND

1. At its seventh session, held in July 2019, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) noted the progress made on Task No. 57 to "prepare recommendations for electronic visual representations of designs". In particular, the CWS approved the results of the survey on electronic visual representation of industrial designs for publication and noted that the results would assist the Design Representation Task Force in developing a draft standard. The Task Force co-leaders are IP Australia and the International Bureau. (See paragraphs 174 to 175 of document CWS/6/34.)

## Task force activities

1. The Design Representation Task Force continued work on a draft for a proposed Standard via the wiki and online meetings. The results of the survey on electronic visual representation of industrial designs, which were published in November 2019, were used to draft recommendations, along with input from Task Force members, the Hague system, ID5 members and other sources. The resulting proposal for a draft Standard on Recommendations for electronic representation of industrial designs is presented as the Annex to this document.
2. Major issues discussed by the Task Force included the definition of industrial designs, file formats for two-dimensional (2D) images, and issues with file conversions. Recommended formats for video files was another major issue, discussed jointly with other relevant Task Forces (see paragraphs 5 to 10 of document CWS/8/3). The Task Force also worked on recommendations for three-dimensional (3D) objects including file formats, but this work was deferred until the 3D Task Force develops its recommendations.

## PROPOSED STANDARD

1. The Task Force prepared proposed recommendations for electronic representation of industrial designs, for consideration and adoption by the CWS as a new WIPO Standard. The proposal is presented in the Annex of this document. The International Bureau recommends the new Standard be designated as ST.88 for consistency with other Standards: ST.67 and ST.68 deal with electronic representations of various types of trademarks, as does the proposed ST.69 (see document CWS/8/3).
2. The proposed Standard provides recommendations on how to create, store, display, manage, publish and exchange electronic representations of industrial designs. The recommendations are intended to maximize re-use of electronic representations for applicants filing the same design at multiple Intellectual Property (IP) offices. The proposed Standard also provides common guidelines for IP offices to exchange data on electronic representations, publish electronic representations, and enhance automated search of electronic representations.
3. During discussions, the Task Force noted that different 2D image formats have different advantages and disadvantages. No single format is capable of satisfying all the various requirements and usages of design images by IP Offices and applicants. Each Office prefers to work with their own chosen formats, based on factors such as national regulations, industry usage, and / or stakeholder preferences.
4. Several Offices reported difficulties with converting images. Converting between different formats poses challenges, as conversion can lose information or introduce errors, requiring quality checks and verification of results. The Standard seeks to minimize format conversions when possible.
5. Therefore the proposed new Standard recommends three preferred formats for 2D images (JPEG, PNG, and SVG) which are modern, standardized, widely supported, and address different needs. JPEG provides small file sizes with configurable image quality and is often used for photographic images. PNG provides lossless image representation with compression and is often used for line drawings or graphic designs. SVG provides vector images which are independent of device resolution and is often used for icons and simple figures.
6. The Standard recommends that Offices accept at least one of the preferred formats for filing. This allows Offices to choose the formats most suited to their environment. To avoid the problems posed by converting images to a different format, the Standard further recommends that Offices accept all three preferred formats in data exchange with other Offices.
7. The Standard also allows Offices to accept GIF and TIFF as alternative formats. These formats are not preferred because they are outdated, are not as widely supported and have inconsistent implementations, among other reasons. Offices may accept these formats if they wish, but must convert them to a preferred format for data exchange with other Offices. Although the Standard seeks to minimize format conversions due to the challenges it brings, in this situation format conversions by one originating Office are better than requiring all Offices to invest in IT support for less widely used formats.
8. For video or multimedia submissions, the Standard recommends two sets of multimedia formats. The first set provides the broadest compatibility and support with current platforms and devices, while subject to patent licensing royalties for playing videos. These royalties are currently paid by many device and software providers, so most end users already have licenses. The second set of multimedia formats have broad support among certain platforms and industries, while being designed to avoid patent licensing issues. For more information, see paragraphs 5 to 10 of document CWS/8/3.
9. *The CWS is invited to:*
10. *note the content of this document;*
11. *consider and approve the proposed name of new WIPO Standard ST.88: "Recommendations for electronic representation of industrial designs"; and*
12. *consider and adopt the proposed new WIPO Standard ST. 88, as reproduced in the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]