

# CONOPS

## CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE REFORMED IPC (“CONOPS”)

### SECTION I

#### INTRODUCTION

The reformed IPC will provide a more refined and dynamic classification system to better support searching of patent documents. Three of its most important new features are (1) a dynamic master database of all documents classified in the IPC and their current classification symbols, (2) reclassification of documents in conjunction with IPC revision projects, which will eliminate the need for searching past versions of the IPC, and (3) an enhanced classification structure consisting of a core level and an advanced level. The advanced level will provide further detail to allow a more precise search of the world’s patent literature. In the reformed IPC, both the advanced level and the core level will undergo changes in their schemes. Compatibility between both levels is critical for the unhindered use of the reformed IPC.

This CONcept of OPERATIONs (CONOPS) describes the classification and reclassification process of the reformed IPC, both for the core level and the advanced level. Furthermore, the procedures for maintaining and publishing classification schemes on both levels in English and in French are also included in CONOPS to allow the users of the IPC to find all relevant information in one document.

#### PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of CONOPS is to describe the classification and reclassification process of the reformed IPC in sufficient detail to allow all industrial property offices to understand how the maintenance of the classification data of the core and advanced levels will be carried out.

CONOPS provides sufficient information for offices to determine whether their internal systems and processes will need to accommodate various aspects of the reformed IPC, and to form the basis for any local requirements that may be desired for system developments or enhancements.

In particular, CONOPS describes the information contained in the IPC Master Classification Database (MCD), how the initial data load of the MCD will occur, the processes for receiving classification data from the various offices, and the processing of that data into the MCD. Finally, it describes the interactions between WIPO, the Trilateral Offices (TOs), and the other member offices of the IPC Union as they collaborate in the maintenance of the Reformed IPC.

CONOPS does not contain any rules or substantive guidelines for constructing classification schemes or for classifying documents into them. As in the past, this information can be found in the Guide to the IPC.

## SECTION II

### CLASSIFICATION AND RECLASSIFICATION PROCESS

#### 2.1 MASTER CLASSIFICATION DATABASE (MCD)

##### 2.1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

The reformed IPC requires a master database for the storage and management of the classification data allotted to patent documents. In view of the fact that EPO's DOCDB database met most of the major requirements for the IPC master classification file, it was decided that DOCDB would be enhanced to serve as the master classification database (MCD) of the reformed IPC.

DOCDB currently contains the main bibliographic patent data from more than 70 Intellectual Property Offices (IPOs). In addition, all IPOs that are willing to deliver or complete their bibliographic data are invited to do so for extending the coverage of the database. Information on the country coverage of DOCDB and on the presence of some data elements can be found in Annex I.

##### 2.1.2 STANDARDS AND THE EXCHANGE OF DATA

For the exchange of classification data with the MCD two agreed standards are important, ST.36 and ST.8. The general standard ST.36 was adopted in November 2004. It serves as the agreed platform for the exchange of all bibliographic and other document data in XML format. A particular section of ST.36 is reserved for the exchange of IPC classification data. In order to streamline exchange operations with the MCD, all data transfer to and from the database will be carried out in ST.36. Offices need to inform the EPO's front office at least six months in advance of any change in exchange formats.

The agreed standard for storing and transmitting document classification data in the reformed IPC is ST.8 because it defines the classification symbol and the format to be used for the different indicators needed. At the time of adoption of ST.8, it was designed as a 50 position string of indicators. In addition, the incorporation of ST.8 into the general carrier ST.36 required its redefinition in XML.

Standard ST.8 is attached as Annex III. In the Annex, the indicators and their meaning are explained in detail. For a correct data exchange to the MCD some indicators are mandatory. The load process of the MCD will create default values if these indicators are missing (see respective chapters of CONOPS).

### 2.1.3 PATENT FAMILY SYSTEM

The reclassification of the patent documents according to the latest version of the advanced level of the IPC is a major activity in view of the number of documents involved. Therefore it was agreed to limit the work to reclassifying only one member per family. The MCD will store the same reclassification picture for all members of the family.

It is well known that different types of families exist (see Annex V). The patent family chosen for classification activities must ensure that the reclassification of a document affects only family members with the same technical content. Only so-called “simple” families (or their artificial family equivalents), in which all the documents have the same set of priorities, comply with this assumption to the necessary extent.

During the storage of the received new publication data in the database additional national family priorities may need to be stored for special situations such as continuation-in-part and divisional documents. These priorities are taken to be non-active, i.e., they do not result in new families. These special documents are normally linked to the families of their parent applications.

In general, family information is available for 1970 and later, since complete priority data is only available for that period. Although an extremely large back file of bibliographic data exists for older documents, only a small percentage of the back file has priority information usable for family building.

Family building is achieved for these older documents by the intellectual action of comparing documents, e.g. during a search, and recording an artificially created identical priority for the identified family members in the database. These intellectually created artificial families are considered in the same way as simple families for later treatment as indicated in section 2.5.2.

IPOs that have intellectual family data or more detailed priority data available are invited to send this information to the EPO for loading in the MCD. These actions reduce the later reclassification work.

### 2.1.4 STORAGE OF DATA

For the storage of the IPC classification data in DOCDB, two different scenarios need to be distinguished, (1) the classification of newly published documents, and (2) the reclassification of documents either as a result of the back file conversion or because of a revision of the IPC.

The classification data of newly published documents will be stored on document level. This allows the independent storage of the classification picture of successive publications for the same filing number (application).

The classification data of reclassified documents (back file conversion and revision) will be stored on the level of the simple family (see Annex V for a definition of the simple patent family). This means, that for the whole back file, i.e. documents published before 2006, the classification picture for all members of the simple family including the successive

publications will be identical. In a similar way, all classification symbols affected by a revision reclassification will be stored on the family level. A special procedure will be implemented to allow offices to also reclassify successive publications independently, if they wish to do so.

## 2.2 CREATION OF THE BACK FILE ACCORDING TO THE VERSION 2006

The core level scheme of the reformed IPC, including the new IPC-2006 entries, is scheduled to be completed during 2004, followed by the creation of a concordance table between the advanced and the core level. This table is to be used for the “rolling up” actions described below.

Due to extensive resource requirements, it is impractical to reclassify all documents from the former versions of the IPC to the 2006 version. Therefore, it is necessary to use the classification symbols from systematically reclassified IPC based document collections for the creation of the IPC back file. Since ECLA is already refined beyond the advanced level of the reformed IPC and has the most comprehensive collection of documents classified therein, it will be used as a base from which document classifications can be converted to the advanced level.

In some instances, ECLA is not complete or in line with the latest version of the IPC. Therefore, the conversion from ECLA to the advanced level of the IPC will be carried out on the basis of a detailed ECLA to IPC-2006 concordance table, which will be built with the help of EPO examiners. The German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA) is prepared to deliver their classification data according to IPC-2006 for the cases, where ECLA is not in line with IPC-2006.

The EPO systematically classifies the documents of the following countries or regional offices (PCT Minimum and further countries): AP, BE, CH, DE, EP, FR, GB, LU, NL, OA, US, WO, as well as the first filings from AT, AU and CA. As the back file conversion process will store the IPC symbols on the family level, documents of other countries belonging to a family of ECLA documents will also receive IPC classification symbols in the conversion.

In 2005 the main part of the back file conversion from ECLA to the advanced level will be carried out followed by the loading of classification data delivered by DPMA. In association with the creation of the advanced level classification for the back file, the core level will be created automatically in a special “roll-up” procedure by using the concordance table between the advanced and the core level.

The documents of the JPO, ROSPATENT and EAPO, although belonging to the PCT minimum documentation, are not classified by the EPO according to ECLA. These three offices intend to send their reclassified advanced level data to the MCD in order to complete the back file of the PCT minimum documentation in the advanced level of the IPC. The classifications of these documents can then be rolled up to the core level. Other offices interested in converting their own back file documents for the advanced or the core level are invited to do so.

The loading of back file classification data of other offices may lead to the situation, in which those documents will have already received IPC classification symbols via the ECLA conversion process. Identical symbols will be ignored during loading, additional symbols will be added to the MCD.

Via the family approach, the ECLA to IPC conversion and the loading of classification data from DPMA, JPO, ROSPATENT and EAPO will cover a large part of the documents in DOCDB. The remaining part of the collection will be converted using IPC classification symbols of previous editions. To that effect and similar to the ECLA to IPC conversion, a concordance table IPC 1-7 to IPC-2006 will be created and used in a conversion process specifically designed for these documents.

After the conversion and loading of the classification data is completed, a check will be made to identify all remaining documents that did not receive an advanced level classification. The issuing offices of these documents will be notified and invited to reclassify the documents.

The loading and conversion processes described above will need to be repeated several times in 2005 and again in 2006, after the new IPC enters into force, in order to complete the back file information. For search purposes, the old IPC (versions 1-7) and the newly created or derived IPC (2006 version) will be kept independent of each other in the MCD.

As already mentioned in chapter 2.1.4 “Storage of Data”, the classification data of reclassified documents will be stored on the level of the simple family, which includes the successive publications. Offices interested in reclassifying their successive publications separately should indicate that to the EPO. A special procedure will be implemented for these documents.

## 2.3 NEWLY PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

Currently, more than 70 IPOs deliver bibliographic data of their newly published documents to the EPO's DOCDB. In order to streamline these data exchanges, IPOs are requested to implement ST.36 as soon as possible. The EPO expects to receive data for new documents including IPC-2006 elements in the new standard.

The loading of the new IPC data should be carried out as soon as possible after the publication date of the documents concerned. To provide timely access to newly published documents by IPC, the data could be received and processed into the MCD prior to the publication date if possible. There would be no access to the data prior to publication.

Offices that publish their applications in different steps, e.g. from published application to granted patent document, are expected to deliver the full bibliographic data for each publication step separately. If after preparation of a further publication for the same application a correction of the IPC data of a previous publication seems desirable, this correction should be delivered to the MCD separately.

Offices should provide, for each classification symbol given to a newly published document, the following indicators needed for the reformed IPC according to standard ST.8 (see Annex III for a more detailed description):

Version indicator	YYYYMM
Classification level	C (core), A (advanced), S (subclass)
First or later position	F (first), L (later)
Classification value	I (invention), N (non-invention, i.e., additional)
Action date	YYYYMMDD
Original or reclassified	B (original)
Source	H (Human)
Generating office	CC (country/organization code according to ST.3)

New documents and their associated data will be processed identically, regardless of the classification level. Offices may choose to use the core and the advanced level classification symbols for their published documents. A single patent document may be assigned classifications from both levels.

Offices usually allot classification symbols to their documents some time before publication, for instance, during a search for a first filing. The version of the IPC, which will be valid at the moment of publication, is not always available at this moment. Since it is an obligation to apply currently valid IPC symbols, offices should check the validity of the symbols before publication and, in addition, WIPO should carry out a similar check for WO publications on the basis of classification made by International Searching Authorities. To facilitate such a check a new edition of the core level of the IPC is published by WIPO six (6) months and a new version of the advanced level at least three months before entering into force. WIPO will also make a list of valid IPC symbols available. By knowing the publication date of the patent document and the validity date of the respective versions the classifiers are able to allot the symbols valid at the moment of publication. Classification data that do not correspond to the latest version of the IPC will not be loaded into the MCD. A MCD error reporting system will be created, which will allow offices to retrieve information about documents carrying the invalid symbols, on the basis of which they will be able to supply corrected data.

The MCD loading process will also validate the indicators. Invalid indicators will be corrected to default values according to a set of rules. Symbols with successfully corrected indicators will be loaded; other symbols will be rejected. Issuing offices supplying invalid indicators will be informed independently of whether the symbol could be loaded or not. The following defaulting rules will be applied:

Version indicator

If blank or not a valid version date - set to current version of Valid Symbols File

Classification level

If blank or other than C, A, S - set to A (advanced) for complete symbols  
- set to S (subclass) for subclass symbols

First or later position of symbol

If blank, or other than F, L - set to F (first) for the first classification appearing,  
- set to L (later) for all other classifications

Classification value, if symbol is classification

If blank, or other than I, N - set to I (invention)

Classification value, if symbol is indexing code

If blank, or other than N - set to N (additional)

Action date

If blank - set to publication date

Original or reclassified

If blank or other than B, R, V - set to B

Source

If blank or other than H, M, G - set to H

It is important for offices to note that, in practice, a period of time may elapse between a classification symbol being allotted to a document for publication and its associated bibliographic data being prepared for publication on tape or file for incorporation into the MCD. As a consequence, the classification information stored in the MCD may not always be identical to that appearing on the document as published.

## 2.4 RECLASSIFICATION OF THE CORE LEVEL

### 2.4.1 REVISION PROCEDURE

The revision procedure is initiated by the International Bureau, which should regularly invite members of the IPC Committee of Experts and the intergovernmental organizations referred to in Article 5(2) of the Strasbourg Agreement to submit proposals for amendments to the core level in accordance with the revision criteria for the core level.

The International Bureau will forward revision requests and proposals for consideration to the IPC Revision Working Group or the IPC Committee of Experts. Revision requests approved by these bodies will be included in the IPC core level revision program. For each approved request, a rapporteur office will be appointed, to prepare a project plan that includes time frames for individual actions on the project. The rapporteur office organizes discussions on their projects through the IPC electronic forum. Comments and rapporteur's proposals will be posted on the forum.

When amendments to the core level are approved in one of the authentic language versions, a volunteering office should prepare respective amendments in the other authentic language version. The amendments are then included in the next edition of the core level of the IPC.

The details relating to the revision procedure of the core level are described in the document "Revision Policy and Revision Procedure for the Reformed IPC", which is appended as Annex VI.

## 2.4.2 RECLASSIFICATION BY OFFICES

Offices that provide advanced level classification symbols for their documents on a regular basis do not need to also provide core level classification symbols. The core level classification symbols will be automatically generated by processes in the MCD.

Offices that provide only core level symbols for their documents are expected to provide the new core level symbols for the MCD as soon as a new version of the core level enters into force. However, prior to reclassifying any of these documents, offices should check whether systematic propagation of advanced and core level data has taken place and then decide whether or not to reclassify any of their documents.

Reclassification data need to be provided to the MCD in the same way that they are provided for newly published documents, i.e. using standards ST.36 and ST.8. However, for reclassified documents, it is only necessary to provide the publication identification of the document (country/organization code according to ST.3, number according to ST.6, kind code according to ST.16), the changes in the classification symbols (normally an old and a new classification symbol), and the indicator for the genesis of each classification symbol, i.e. the indicator (R) for new classification data, and the indicator (D) for each classification symbol to be deleted.

In some cases new subdivisions are created from an existing group, and the group retains its original symbol with a new version indicator. In these cases the documents that remain in the existing group need to be “reclassified”, by submitting to the MCD a record with two actions for each of these documents. The first action will include the group symbol with the new version indicator and the indicator (R) for “reclassified”. The second action will include the group symbol with the old version indicator and the indicator (D) for “deleted”.

Due to the definition for the storage of classification data in the MCD (see 2.1.4), original classification data that are stored on document level will be deleted from the document level after completion of the reclassification action. The reclassification data will be added on the family level and will then be valid for all members of the simple family including their successive publications.

For offices reclassifying their documents, and that have more than one publication for the same filing, the reclassification data initially delivered for MCD processing should include only data for the first publications. The reclassification data of the first publications will be valid also for the successive publications. Offices that also intend to reclassify the successive publications independently and differently, should transmit the classification data for successive publications independently of the data for the first publications (see 2.13).

## 2.4.3 RECORDING OF RECLASSIFICATION DATA IN THE MCD

After reception of the reclassification data the changes are processed in the MCD. However it is important to keep the classification symbols for each valid version complete to allow a full search. Therefore the following procedure will be used:

(1) Reclassification data will only be made available for search upon the date of entering into force of a new core level version of the IPC.

(2) Once the new core level version enters into force, the classification symbols that are no longer valid will be deleted from the MCD.

## 2.5 RECLASSIFICATION OF THE ADVANCED LEVEL

### 2.5.1 REVISION PROCEDURE

Revision of the advanced level will be carried out through an accelerated procedure in order to accommodate changing search needs. All member states of the IPC Union and the intergovernmental organizations referred to in Article 5(2) of the Strasbourg Agreement are authorized to submit proposals for amendments to the advanced level.

An IPC Special Subcommittee of the Committee of Experts has been created to carry out the revision procedure for the advanced level. This Subcommittee reports at least once a year to the Committee of Experts. The members of the Subcommittee are the offices that carry out at least 20% of the reclassification for the PCT minimum documentation, and the IB. The composition of the Subcommittee will be reconsidered every three years on the basis of reclassification work actually performed.

Any revision proposal should be accompanied by a revision request explaining the reasons for revision and is to be posted on the WIPO IPC website and the revision request is also to be submitted to the IPC electronic forum. The International Bureau will forward the revision requests and proposals for consideration to the IPC Special Subcommittee.

The IPC Special Subcommittee evaluates these proposals on the basis of the revision criteria established by the Committee of Experts and on the proposal's cost/benefit aspects. The cost/benefit aspects are generally determined by the ratio between the reclassification effort and the efficiency of searches after the revision. On basis of this outcome the proposals are placed into one of the following three categories:

- (1) action as soon as resources are available;
- (2) keep on waiting list for later technical review;
- (3) no further action.

In the last case the IPC Special Subcommittee will provide an explanation why no further action is planned with respect to the proposal.

Each revision project placed into the first category will be included in the IPC advanced level revision program, receive a project number and be assigned a rapporteur office by the Special Subcommittee. The rapporteur office will complete a project plan, beginning with the finalizing of the scope of the project (area of the IPC to be revised) and ending with the reclassification of the documents into the revised scheme.

The rapporteur office will submit regular (bimonthly) status reports to the IPC Special Subcommittee, which will in turn report progress on the various projects to the Committee of Experts. A copy of this progress report will also be made available to the Subcommittee on the French version with indication of the already finished parts of the projects. The rapporteur office will also include in the bimonthly report any changes agreed to within the scope of the project.

The revision proposals posted on the website will be updated to reflect the status of the project. Offices may submit comments on the basic structure of a revision proposal via the IPC electronic forum until two months after approval of a revision request. The rapporteur office should respond to comments received within one month and, if needed, post the Rapporteur's proposal.

All offices can follow the progress of a revision proposal and comment upon the scheme until the IPC Special Subcommittee approves the final scheme. However, once final reclassification of the documents has begun, any changes to the scheme that would require rework on the part of offices participating in the reclassification of documents will normally not be made as part of the current revision project.

After approval of the final scheme, the International Bureau will publish the amendments on the WIPO IPC website (section 3.5), create a concordance list between old and new classification symbols, and create a new list of valid IPC symbols (validity list). These amendments should be identified as future advanced level schemes and include the planned date that they will enter into force.

Directly after the approval of the amendments in English of the advanced level the International Bureau forwards these amendments to a translation service and the French version is published not later than three months after the approval of the English version and after agreement given by the IPC Special Subcommittee on the French version.

The amendments to the advanced level should enter into force when the results of the reclassification of respective search files of the PCT minimum documentation are made available in the Master Classification Database, but not earlier than three months after their approval by the IPC Special Subcommittee. In Annex II, a timetable is presented for the advanced level procedures.

Further details relating to the revision procedure of the advanced level are described in the document "Revision Policy and Revision Procedure for the Reformed IPC" (Annex VI).

## 2.5.2 WORK DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN THE TRILATERAL OFFICES

In order to minimize the workload for the offices reclassifying documents, only one member of a simple family will normally be reclassified. The documentation to be reclassified is the PCT minimum documentation. The Trilateral Offices (TOs) have agreed to reclassify all of the PCT minimum documentation, as far as complete specifications are available in one of the working languages of the TOs. Documents that are not part of either the PCT minimum documentation or the other documents classified by the EPO in ECLA, should be reclassified by the issuing offices, if they are not already covered by reclassified family members.

The country and kind codes of the documents involved in the reclassification procedure of the TOs are listed below:

AP  
AT B (first filings only)  
AU A and B (first filings only)  
CA (first filings only)  
CH  
DE A1, B1, C1 (B3 since 2004)  
EP A  
FR A  
GB A  
JP A1, B  
OA A  
US A1, B1, E, H  
WO A

The work distribution is based on the “simple family” relationship using the following criteria in the order specified (note: a “priority document” is not taken into account until it becomes a published document).

(I) Unique documents

Each TO reclassifies its own unique documents for which no family members of the PCT minimum documentation are present in the MCD. In the case of the EPO the coverage is AP, CH, DE, EP, FR, GB, OA and WO as well as the first filings of AT, AU, and CA. For the USPTO the coverage is US documents, for the JPO it is JP documents.

(II) Priority of family

In case there are two or more trilateral family members, a selection is made from among the family members. The selection criterion used is the first filing country or priority country for the family.

1. For American and Oceanic priorities the USPTO is selected; if US is not present in the family, the EPO is selected.
2. For European and African priorities the EPO is selected; if EP is not present in the family, the USPTO is selected.
3. For Asian priorities the JPO is selected; if JP is not present in the family, the USPTO or the EPO is selected, respectively.

In those reclassification projects where the above method results in unbalanced workloads involving document families, the Trilateral Offices may agree to a more equitable distribution of the workload.

If any document of a simple family has a classification symbol within the project scope, all members of the family are considered to be included in the project, for the purpose of assigning work. The presence or absence of the classification symbol for another TO is not considered in assigning the document for reclassification.

### 2.5.3 RECLASSIFICATION WORK BY OTHER OFFICES

Although the Trilateral Offices have agreed to reclassify most of the documents impacted by a reclassification project in the advanced level, any office may, in principle, reclassify its own documents. For international families, the participation should be limited to first filings of that office. To avoid overlap in reclassification work the documents from any participating office will be deleted from the priority country list of one of the TOs. This means that the other office (not the TOs) will reclassify the whole family.

### 2.5.4 CREATION OF WORKING LISTS OF DOCUMENTS

Once the exact scope of the revision project is decided, working lists of the documents included within the project scope to be reclassified by each office that has advanced level classification symbols to be revised will be created from the MCD based upon the criteria described above. A list will be provided for each office and each document will appear on only one office's list along with all of the classification information associated with that document. Information about affected successive publications and about documents from national families having non-active priorities, e.g. Continuation-In-Part documents, will be provided separately upon request. For each document to be reclassified, the complete international family information will also be provided, along with any additional classification symbols applied to the family members.

### 2.5.5 RULES FOR PROPAGATING DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

For MCD processing following a reclassification project, the automatic propagation of symbols for the documents reclassified in the advanced level to all members of the family will be carried out according to the following rules:

- The propagation will be on the basis of the documents assigned to and reclassified by each TO or from the first filings of other offices participating in the reclassification activity (2.5.3).
- There will be propagation from the first published document to the successive publications. Offices interested in reclassifying their successive publications separately should indicate that to the EPO. A special procedure will be implemented for these documents.
- In exceptional cases, the reclassifying office may come to the conclusion that for a certain document only a class deletion has to be carried out. However, propagation should not result in deletion of all invention information. In such cases, the whole family should be reviewed.

## 2.5.6 INVENTION INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, FIRST AND LATER POSITION INFORMATION

All classification symbols must represent “invention information” or “additional information” and “first” or “later” position information. Offices may have different opinions on classification symbols applied to documents. This may include, for example, whether a classification symbol is for invention or additional information.

The office on whose working list (2.5.4) a document appears will decide on the kind (invention or additional information, first or later position information) of classification symbol to be assigned to the document, and is not bound to the kind of classification symbol which formed the basis for inclusion in the reclassification project.

Such changes, when they appear, are to be reported to the office that gave the classification symbol to be changed. A formal procedure is only to be agreed upon when such situations are appearing regularly. In the absence of a formal procedure offices changing the category of classification symbol are expected to inform the office that generated the original information.

## 2.5.7 RECORDING OF RECLASSIFICATION DATA IN THE MCD

After reception of the reclassification data the changes are then processed in the MCD. However it is important to keep the classification symbols for each valid version of the advanced level of the IPC complete to allow a full search. Therefore the following procedure will be used:

(1) Reclassification data will only be made available for search upon the date of entering into force of a new advanced level version of the IPC.

(2) Once the new advanced level version of the IPC enters into force, the classification symbols that are no longer valid will be deleted from the MCD.

(3) Documents forming part of the collection normally reclassified by the Trilateral Offices that are published after the working list is initially generated should be submitted for reclassification prior to the new reclassification scheme entering into force.

## 2.6 MAINTENANCE OF THE MCD

As part of the maintenance of the MCD, after each revision project in the reformed IPC is completed and the reclassification changes are processed in the MCD, a check will be made to determine whether any documents remain whose classification data must be updated. The maintenance is to be carried out six months after the entry into force of a new version of the core or of the advanced level, which seems sufficiently long to allow for completion of ongoing reclassification. The check may need to be repeated in order to validate the completion of the reclassification activities.

For the purpose of checking the MCD, the IB will provide to the EPO a list of all deleted groups, newly established groups, groups with a change of scope, all groups for which new subdivisions have been created (groups with a new version indicator) and a reverse-reference list (e.g. list of groups for which new or changed references may have an impact on their scope). Note that this procedure can be applied for groups that changed in scope only if the version indicator is correctly applied.

Using this list, a check will be made in the MCD to identify any documents having classification symbols corresponding to any of these no longer valid groups. Lists of such documents will be sent to the offices concerned for reclassification.

For groups whose version indicator has changed, the corresponding documents in the MCD will be checked to identify any documents having an old version indicator. Lists of any such documents will also be provided to the offices concerned for reclassification.

## 2.7 COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN THE CORE AND ADVANCED LEVEL

As there are different procedures for the revision of the core and the advanced level, special procedures are needed to ensure the compatibility of both levels during the revision of the IPC. This is especially important when modifications to the core level are required by the intended revision of the advanced level.

As the core level of the IPC remains unchanged for a longer period, proposed amendments to the advanced level should be compatible with the core level and should not imply modifications to the relevant parts of the core level without good reasons. Such good reasons may include, for example, the need to change the title of the core level entry in view of the amendments in the advanced level or to create new entries at subclass or main group level. When modifications to the core level are necessary, they should be treated in accordance with the revision procedure for the core level.

Amendments to the core level adopted by the Committee of Experts will be accumulated during the three-year revision period and will officially enter into force at its end. Amendments adopted will also be incorporated by the International Bureau in the IPC and published in the Internet version of the IPC, following the sessions of the Committee. These amendments will not be mandatory for use until the end of the revision period and will be considered as temporarily belonging to the advanced level of the IPC. This will provide possibilities for the rapid implementation of the results of the core level revision by offices that apply classification at the advanced level and would wish to use such amendments for classification of published patent documents or to use new core level entries for their subdivision in the advanced level.

Such core level amendments temporarily belonging to the advanced level should not distort the compatibility of the core and the advanced levels. Such compatibility will be ensured by the revision concordance data which will be available to offices at the same time as the core level amendments themselves.

Upon entering into force of the new core level the MCD will delete the old core level symbols and create new ones by converting again the advanced level symbols using the concordance available from the Valid Symbols File (see 3.4).

To assure a correct handling of the data in the MCD offices are requested to send classification data for new documents according to the procedures described in section 2.3.

## 2.8 CLASSIFICATION CHANGES OUTSIDE REVISION PROJECTS

It may arise that an office disagrees with a classification symbol allotted by another office, or believes that an additional classification symbol is required. This can happen for invention information and additional information. In such cases the following procedures are to be followed:

(1) The MCD will only implement corrections or additions to classification data for a document on request of the office that allotted the classification data.

(2) Any office disagreeing with a classification symbol allotted to a document should contact the office that allotted the classification symbol and should indicate reasons for the proposed change by referring to specific subject matter of the document. The office that allotted the symbol can be identified from the MCD.

The issuing office should send detailed correction information to the MCD administrator by indicating the requested changes, the reasons for the changes and whether the correction concerns a change of an initial classification on document level or a change of a reclassification action on the family level.

The International Bureau (IB) will maintain a current list of the contact persons in the respective offices and the International Search Authorities (ISA) for correction of classification information. The corresponding ISA should be contacted for requests to correct classification of a WO document. The IB should be informed of the request and of the action made.

## SECTION III

### PUBLICATION AND UPDATING OF THE IPC AND RELATED MATERIAL

#### 3.1 AUTHORITY FILES

The International Bureau maintains the authority files of valid IPC classification symbols, and their associated titles, definitions, informative notes and graphic illustrations. It also maintains official IPC publications such as the Guide to the IPC and the Official Catchword Index.

After the IPC reform, the official reference to the IPC will be the IPC master file in electronic form, with version control. The electronic version of the IPC will continue to be available via the Internet from the WIPO IPC website ([www.wipo.int/classifications](http://www.wipo.int/classifications)).

The authority files contain all data necessary for viewing or printing of the official publication described under section 3.2 and 3.3.

These files are produced by RIPCIS, the new IPC management system. It provides the maintenance of the IPC database and IPC-related databases, updating of the IPC data and will generate working documents for IPC bodies. RIPCIS will be enabled to merge revision amendments with the IPC data and to establish various views for accessing the database (see section 3.5).

### 3.2 PAPER PUBLICATIONS OF THE OFFICIAL VERSION OF THE IPC

As of the year 2006, new IPC core level editions incorporating revision changes appear every three years and bear the designation of the year of publication, for example, IPC-2009. The International Bureau publishes a core level of the IPC corresponding to the new editions in the printed form. This publication appears six months before entering into force of a new edition.

The International Bureau coordinates updating of the Official Catchword Indexes to the IPC, in English and French, by introducing amendments to the Catchword Indexes according to revision changes in the core level as presented in a new edition of the IPC and by accommodating references to the advanced level of the IPC as it read when the revised core level was published. The International Bureau publishes, every three years, the updated official indexes to the IPC in the printed form.

### 3.3 INTERNET PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL VERSION OF THE IPC

The WIPO website contains a complete text of the Classification in English and French. The electronic version of the IPC also includes supplementary information facilitating the use of the Classification, such as classification definitions, informative references, chemical formulae and graphic illustrations.

The authority files of the IPC can be viewed and searched using customized software available at the IP offices or over the Internet through the WIPO IPC website.

In fact, the WIPO IPC website represents the publishing framework of the IPC supplemented by the IPC e-forum, which is a document submission and document management system.

The system is enabled to display the core or the advanced level of IPC separately. It is linked to various language versions of IPC and to document databases such as Esp@cenet or the USPTO database. RIPCIS and e-forum also provide the technical infrastructure of the IPC reform. The e-forum has been further adjusted to future needs for revision and publication. IPC Master Files are available to patent offices by downloading from the WIPO classification site, e.g. in XML format.

The Internet version of the IPC includes in English and French the revision amendments made to the core and to the advanced levels of the IPC. The revision amendments to the core level, in both languages, are introduced into the official Internet publication every three years,

six months before entering into force of a new edition of the IPC. New entries of the core level, or entries with a change of scope, are indicated in italics and are accompanied by an Arabic numeral in square brackets, corresponding to the edition date. For example [2009] for the 2009-edition will appear at the end of an entry.

Version indicators of the core and the advanced level are independent of each other, i.e. after a revision of the core level, the advanced level version indicator of groups corresponding to the amended core level groups stays unchanged, if there was no advanced level amendment.

The revision amendments to the advanced level are continuously introduced into the electronic version of the IPC, following their approval by the IPC Special Subcommittee for the supervision of the advanced level, with an indication of their planned date of entering into force. Upon approval of the amendments in one of the authentic language versions, they are incorporated by the International Bureau and published on the WIPO IPC website. Within some (in general three) months after this, respective amendments to the other authentic language version are prepared, and incorporated by the International Bureau into the official Internet publication.

The translation of the amendments, already approved in one language will be established during the reclassification phase and both versions should be available at the latest when the amendments are entering into force. If this information is not available in one language when the amendments are published, a provisional version is made available. In exceptional cases a link to the English version of the amendments is to be made in the French version but only for a limited period.

The revision amendments to the advanced level enter into force when the results of reclassification of respective search files of the PCT minimum documentation are made available in the Master Classification Database, but not earlier than three months after their approval by the Special Subcommittee. New entries of the advanced level, or entries with a change of scope, are indicated in italics and are accompanied by six digits in square brackets at the end of an entry. These six digits (for example, 2009.03) indicate the year and the month when the revision amendments to the advanced level have entered or will enter into force.

### 3.4 INTERNET PUBLICATION OF IPC-RELATED MATERIAL

The official catchword indexes to the IPC, in English and French, are updated every three years with information from revision amendments in the core and in the advanced levels. They are then published by the International Bureau on the WIPO IPC website.

In order to facilitate the use of the revision amendments and the reclassification of respective search files, the International Bureau coordinates the preparation of revision concordance lists. These lists give information on how subject matter has been transferred between different places in the IPC as a result of its revision. The revision concordance lists are separately prepared for the amendments of the core level and for the amendments of the advanced level. They are linked to respective places of the official publication of the IPC. The International Bureau publishes the revision concordance lists on the WIPO IPC website.

An IPC Valid Symbols File including old versions of the IPC is made available on the WIPO IPC website. This file is used in the maintenance of the MCD, for automatic checking of the validity of IPC symbols allotted to patent documents. With respect to revision amendments, the file is updated and extended with each new version of the IPC. A public IPC validity service, incorporating the revision decisions which have entered into force, is available for checking IPC symbols validity over a given period of time.

### 3.5 ADVANCE PUBLICATIONS AND WORKING COPIES OF THE IPC

The official current version of the IPC is available for all users of the IPC from the WIPO IPC website. In order to facilitate the IPC revision work and administration of the IPC by industrial property offices, for example, the preparation of national language versions and reclassification of search files, unofficial publications of the IPC are made available in RIPCIS to member States of the IPC Union and intergovernmental organizations having the right of making proposals for amendments to the Classification.

The following views of the IPC will be available in both English and French for accessing the IPC database:

- (1) “Original view” is the IPC edition that entered into force at the beginning of a core-level revision period (open to public).
- (2) “Adopted view” is the original view incorporating revision amendments approved by the Special Subcommittee and revision amendments adopted by the Committee of Experts for the core level (open to offices).
- (3) “Approved view” is the adopted view incorporating revision amendments approved by the IPC Revision Working Group (open to offices).
- (4) “Discussion (proposed view)” is the “Approved view” incorporating revision amendments proposed by industrial property offices (open to offices). Offices will be able to post proposed amendments in the discussion view of the IPC once an appropriate revision request has been filed. The proposed amendments so introduced may relate to the revision of the core level or the advanced level of the IPC.
- (5) “Current view” is the “Original view” incorporating revision amendments approved by the IPC Special Subcommittee, and revision amendments adopted by the Committee of Experts but temporarily present in the advanced level (open to offices).
- (6) The “Official (publication) view” is the “Original view” incorporating revision amendments approved by the Special Subcommittee which have entered into force, and amendments adopted by the Committee of Experts but temporarily present in the advanced level (open to public).

At the end of the core level revision period, the “Adopted view” becomes the “Original view”.

### 3.6 GUIDE

The Guide to the IPC is valid for both the core and the advanced level. The revision cycle of the Guide is synchronized to the revision cycle of the core level. Proposals for amendments to the Guide are treated in the form of projects following a procedure similar to the one used for IPC core level revision projects.

## SECTION IV

### PUBLICATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE IPC SYMBOLS

#### 4.1 PRESENTATION OF THE IPC SYMBOLS ON PATENT DOCUMENTS

IPC symbols shall be presented in tabular form on the first page of the patent documents, not in string form as in previous editions. When a large number of symbols is applied to a patent document, offices can decide to use more than one column for printing the symbols or continue the presentation of the symbols on a second page.

Offices are free to decide on the symbol to be placed in the first position in the column. It is recommended that the classification symbol that most adequately represents the invention should be listed first, when more than one symbol is provided for invention information.

The essential elements to understand correctly the classification symbol are the level indicators (advanced or core), the value indicators (invention information and additional information) and the version indicator.

The level of the classification symbols influences the indication of the version. There are three different possibilities of classification symbols used:

- (1) only core level symbols (subclass level symbols are treated in the same way as core level symbol);
- (2) combinations of core level and advanced level symbols;
- (3) only advanced level symbols.

When only core level symbols are present the version of the core level is to be indicated only once after the INID code 51 and the mention of Int.Cl. The indicator is to be placed between round brackets, i.e., parentheses. Example: 51 Int.Cl. (2006).

When combinations of core and advanced level symbols are present the version indicator is for all core level symbols only once to be indicated and exactly in the same way as for the previous situation, namely after INID code 51 and the mention of Int.Cl. For each advanced level classification symbol the version indicator should be mentioned after the classification symbol and placed between brackets.

When only advanced level classification symbols are present there is no indication of the version after INID code 51 with the mention of Int.Cl. but for each advanced level symbol the version indicator is placed after the classification symbol and between round brackets.

The difference between the core and advanced level is expressed by the use of the font for the characters. Core level symbols should be presented with the regular font and advanced level symbols in italics.

The difference between invention information and additional information is to be presented by using bold font for invention information and regular font for additional information.

Examples for the presentation of the different combinations can be found in Annex IV.

#### 4.2 ACCESS TO THE IPC DATA IN THE MCD

Access to the IPC data is possible in several ways and can vary for the offices in view of their needs. Currently it is planned to give access to the data in the MCD in the following ways.

Offices, which have a high use of the MCD or DOCDB, and which have already installed a copy of the database in-house will receive updates to be in line with the master copy on a regular basis (monthly or weekly). This option is open for all offices.

It will also be possible for offices to get information about updates concerning their own documents, both with regards to the back file conversion and to reclassification projects.

The data present in the MCD is also loaded in the database EPODOC, which is used by the examiners in the EPO as well as by examiners of EPO Member Offices via EPOQUE NET. Patent Offices of countries that are not member states of the EPO can request access to EPOQUE NET under conditions as described in the EPOQUE and PATNET Service Level Agreements and according to the pricing schedule that shares the cost of usage between all users accessing EPOQUE and BNS.

Esp@cenet will give access to the data of the reformed IPC for searching. In 2005, the Esp@cenet interface will be adapted to provide suitable IPC-based search possibilities.

ANNEX I

COVERAGE OF DOCDB – MCD  
(As of February 2003)

Country	Biblio. Data	Family ind.	Abstracts	IPC	ECLA
AP	from begin	from begin	no	yes	from begin
AR	1973 - 1991	no	no	from 1975	no
AT	from begin	only f.f.*	from 1990	from 1972	from 1970 (f.f.)
AU	from 1973	only f.f.	no	from 1973	from 1970 (f.f.)
BA	from 1998	no	no	from 1998	no
BE	from 1964	from 1969	from 1990	from 1970	from 1926
BG	from 1973	no	from 2000	from 1973	no
BR	from 1974	no	no	from 1975	no
CA	from 1973	only f.f.	from 1999	from 1979	from 1970 (f.f.)
CH	from begin	from 1969	from 1970	from 1965	from 1920
CN	from 1985	no	from 1990	from 1986	no
CS	1973 – 1992	no	no	1973 - 1992	no
CU	1974 – 1975	no	no	1974 – 1975	no
CY	from 1954	no	no	from 1975	no
CZ	from 1993	no	from 2000	from 1993	no
DD	from 1973	no	no	from 1973	no
DE A-C	from 1920	from 1969	from 1970	from 1972	from begin
DE U	from 1968	from 1985	no	from 1973	from 1985
DK	from begin	no	from 1990	from 1969	no
EA	from 1996	no	no	from 1996	no
EE	from 1995	no	no	from 1995	no
EG	from 1976	no	no	from 1976	no
EP	from begin	from begin	from begin	from begin	from begin
ES	from 1968	no	from 1983	from 1968	no
FI	from 1968	no	from 1985	from 1969	no
FR	from 1920	from 1969	from 1970	from 1969	from 1902
GB	from 1920	from 1969	from 1970	from 1973	from 1909
GR	from 1977	no	from 1996	from 1978	no
HK	from 1976	no	no	from 1976	no
HR	from 1994	no	no	from 1994	no
HU	from 1973	no	no	from 1973	no
IE	from 1930	no	no	from 1930	no
IL	from 1968	no	no	from 1968	no
IN	from 1975	no	no	from 1975	no
IT	from 1973	no	from 1993	from 1973	no
JP A-C	from 1973	no	from 1973	from 1973	no
JP U	from 1993	no	no	from 1993	no
KE	from 1975	no	no	from 1975	no
KR B	from 1978	no	from 1979	from 1979	no
KR A	from 2000	no	no	from 2000	no
LT	from 1994	no	from 2001	from 1994	no
LU	from 1960	from 1969	no	from 1973	from 1946
LV	from 1994	no	from 1999	from 1994	no
MC	from 1958	from 1958	no	from 1958	from begin

\* “f.f.” means first filing documents or documents without foreign priority.

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<b>Country</b>	<b>Biblio. Data</b>	<b>Family ind.</b>	<b>Abstracts</b>	<b>IPC</b>	<b>ECLA</b>
MD	from 1994	no	from 2000	from 1994	no
MN	1972 – 1989	no	no	1972 – 1989	no
MT	1967 – 1992	no	no	no	no
MW	1973 – 1994	no	no	1973 – 1994	no
MX	1981 – 1994	no	no	1981 – 1994	no
MY	1953 – 1996	no	no	1953 – 1996	no
NL	from 1964	yes	from 1990	from 1964	from begin
NO	from 1968	no	no	from 1973	no
NZ	from 1978	no	from 1999	from 1984	no
OA	from 1966	from 1966	no	from 1966	from 1966
PH	1975 – 1997	no	no	1975 – 1997	no
PL	from 1973	no	no	from 1973	no
PT	from 1976	no	from 1990	from 1976	no
RO	from 1973	no	from 1999	from 1973	no
RU	from 1993	no	from 1998	from 1993	no
SE	from 1968	no	from 1990	from 1973	no
SG	from 1983	no	no	from 1983	no
SI	from 1992	no	from 1998	from 1993	no
SK	from 1993	no	from 1993	from 1993	no
SU	1972 – 1993	no	no	1972 – 1993	no
TJ	from 1998	no	no	from 1998	no
TR	from 1973	no	no	from 1976	no
TW	from 2000	no	from 2000	from 2000	no
US	from 1920	from 1969	from 1970	from 1969	from 1920
VN	1984 – 1997	no	no	1984 – 1997	no
WO	from 1978	from 1978	from 1978	from 1978	from 1978
YU	1973 – 1992	no	no	1973 – 1992	no
ZA	from 1971	no	no	from 1971	no
ZM	1968 – 1994	no	no	1969 – 1994	no
ZW	1980 – 1994	no	no	1980 – 1994	no

ANNEX II

Events	Provisional scheme agreement		final scheme agreement		Changed scheme enters into force						
Months	1	2	3	4, 5 +	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Actions	testing	reclassification of backfile; establish FR version	Scheme is official part of advanced level								
			MCD checks for documents still having old classification symbols and sends notification to the offices responsible for reclassification								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. EPO sends final working lists to TO's (and possibly to other offices)</li> <li>. IB produces validity &amp; concordance lists</li> <li>. Offices start using the revised scheme for documents that will be published after its entry into force</li> <li>. the scheme is posted on the IPC website with date of entry into force</li> </ul>								MCD checks again for documents still having old classification symbols		
	Scheme is posted on IPC advanced level website as "provisional"										

ANNEX III

**STANDARD ST.8**

STANDARD RECORDING OF INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC)  
SYMBOLS ON MACHINE-READABLE RECORDS

*Editorial Note by the International Bureau*

The Standards and Documentation Working Group (SDWG) of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) adopted this revision of Standard ST.8 at its fifth session on November 11, 2004. This revision of Standard ST.8 incorporates changes made necessary by the IPC reform initiative.

Industrial property offices are asked to implement this new version of Standard ST.8 for all patent documents with a publication date from January 1, 2006, onwards. For patent documents published prior to that date, the previous version of the Standard should continue to be used.

The previous version of Standard ST.8, valid until December 31, 2005, is reproduced as an Annex to the new Standard ST.8.

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**STANDARD ST.8**

STANDARD RECORDING OF INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC)  
SYMBOLS ON MACHINE-READABLE RECORDS

*Revision adopted by the SCIT Standards and Documentation Working Group  
at its fifth session on November 11, 2004*

INTRODUCTION

1. This recording convention provides that symbols of the International Patent Classification (IPC) should be presented on machine-readable records for the exchange of information in machine-readable form in a fixed-length field in 50 positions, each part of the Int. Cl. symbol being recorded in specific positions and in the manner prescribed.
2. The examples given are intended to clarify the text and should not be considered as comprehensive.

RECORDING

3. For the recording of IPC symbols on machine-readable records a field of 50 positions should be allotted for each symbol, the 50 positions of the field to be used as follows:

<i>Position(s)</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Values</i>
1	Section	A,...,H
2,3	Class	01,...,99
4	Subclass	A,...,Z
5 to 8	Main Group (right aligned)	1,...,9999, blank
9	Separating character	/ ("Slash")
10 to 15	Subgroup (left aligned)	00,...,999999, blank
16 to 19	For future use	4 blanks
20 to 27	Version indicator	YYYYMMDD date format
28	Classification level	C,A,S
29	First or later position of symbol	F,L
30	Classification value (inventive or non-inventive)	I,N
31 to 38	Action date	YYYYMMDD date format
39	Original or reclassified data	B,R,V,D
40	Source of classification data	H,M,G
41-42	Generating office	AA,...,ZZ (ST.3)
43-50	For future use	8 blanks

4. Unused positions in the IPC classification fields Group (positions 5-8) and Subgroup (positions 10-15) should be left blank. The only other positions that may be left blank are the ones reserved for "future use". All other positions must be assigned one of the acceptable "values" listed in the table of paragraph 3. Any zero appearing in the symbols should be recorded.
5. Considering the numerals appearing after the separating character, the most significant digit (including the case where it is zero, e.g., subgroup 02) should be in position 10. Any unused positions should be left blank.
6. Representation of the indicators

*Positions 1 to 19: Recording of the parts of the IPC symbols*

IPC symbols are defined in Part 5 of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* and in the latest version of the Guide to the IPC.

*Positions 20 to 27: Version indicator*

Although in the paper publications a version indicator may contain four or six digits, the version indicator in machine-readable records contains eight digits, namely YYYYMMDD with Y for year, M for month and D for day.

Annex III, page 3

*Position 28 : Classification level*

Offices are expected to classify each subject matter only in one level (core or advanced). However, both levels need to be completely represented in the master classification database and thus a level indicator is needed. The level indicator is also useful for indicating situations where an office does not classify in either the core or the advanced level classification, i.e., when an office only assigns classifications to the subclass level. The level indicator enables to make the difference between core, advanced and subclass levels. The letters C (Core), A (Advanced) and S (Subclass) are used for this one-digit field.

*Position 29: First or later position of symbols*

The position of the first invention information classification can be recognized by this field. The letters F and L are used for first and later position, respectively.

*Position 30: Classification value (inventive or non-inventive)*

The difference between invention information and other information is important for the retrieval of the information. The letters I and N are used for the invention and non-invention information, respectively.

*Positions 31-38: Action date*

The date of assigning the classification symbol (action date) is represented by eight digits, namely YYYYMMDD. This date can be used to check if a classification needs to be reviewed after revision of the scheme, e.g., in case of creating new subdivisions.

*Position 39: Original and reclassified data*

Original data is the first data allotted to the document. In case of a publishing office assigning classification symbols at the core level, another office may also assign symbols at the advanced level as original data.

Reclassified data is data changed due to a change in the classification schemes.

Various data is data changed due to an incidental reclassification of an individual document, such as the correction of a mistake.

Deleted data is data which has to be deleted from the Master Classification Database, due to a change in allocation of classification symbols to a document.

The indication of the different types of data is marked by the letters B for the basic or original data, R for reclassified data, V for various incidental changes, and D for data to be deleted.

*Position 40: Source of classification data*

The following sources of classification data are foreseen:

- Intellectual classification by persons, value H for human generated data.
- Machine classification by the propagation of earlier intellectual classification through the use of common priorities in the patent application. The value M is used in this case and will facilitate later corrections.
- Classification symbols generated by software using automatic analysis of the content of the patent document. The letter G is used to indicate this source of generated data.

*Positions 41-42: Generating Office*

Since part of the original data in the advanced level and the reclassified data can be delivered by offices other than the publishing office, the information source of such data is recorded by a field of two characters. The country or office code CC, as defined by WIPO Standard ST.3, must be used.

7. Recording of complete IPC symbols

The full classification symbol must always be used when recording it on machine-readable records. The IPC section, class and subclass should be provided for each group or subgroup classification, even if previously provided with another group or subgroup classification in the same document.

See paragraph 2 of WIPO Standard ST.10/C for the recommended presentation of IPC classifications on machine displays or in printed documents.

Annex III, page 4

8. A schematic representation of the contents of the 50 positions is as follows:

Section	Class			Subclass	Main Group				Separating character	Subgroup						Blanks			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	

Version indicator								Classification level	First or later position of a symbol	Classification value	Action date							
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38

Original or reclassified data	Source of classification data	Generating office		Blanks							
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50

Example

One sample representation of IPC classification symbols assigned on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 and their indicators is:

Int. Cl. (2006)

<b>B28B 5/00 (2006.01)</b>	<b>classification in advanced level</b>	<b>invention information</b>
<b>B28B 1/29 (2007.04)</b>	<b>classification in advanced level</b>	<b>invention information</b>
H05B 3/10	classification in core level	non-invention information

Annex III, page 5

According to this Standard, this example would be recorded on machine-readable records as follows:

Record 1:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
B	2	8	B				5	/	0	0								

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
2	0	0	6	0	1	0	1	A	F	I	2	0	0	7	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	E	P								

Record 2:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
B	2	8	B				1	/	2	9								

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
2	0	0	7	0	4	0	1	A	L	I	2	0	0	7	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	E	P								

Record 3:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
H	0	5	B				3	/	1	0								

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
2	0	0	6	0	1	0	1	C	L	N	2	0	0	7	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	E	P								

ANNEX IV

**STANDARD ST.10/C**  
PRESENTATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA COMPONENTS

*Editorial Note prepared by the International Bureau*

The Standard and Documentation Working Group (SDWG) of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) adopted the revisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Standard ST.10/C at its fifth session on November 11, 2004. These revisions incorporate changes made necessary by the IPC reform initiative.

Industrial property offices are asked to implement the new versions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Standard ST.10/C for all patent documents with a publication date from January 1, 2006, onwards. For patent documents published prior to that date, the previous text of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Standard should continue to be used.

The previous versions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Standard ST.10/C, valid until December 31, 2005, are reproduced in the Annex to the new Standard ST.10/C.

Annex IV, page 2

**STANDARD ST.10/C**

PRESENTATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA COMPONENTS

*Revision adopted by the SCIT Standards and Documentation Working Group  
at its fifth session on November 11, 2004*

PRESENTATION OF DATES

1. For the representation of calendar dates according to the Gregorian calendar, which are printed or displayed in industrial property documents, in entries in official gazettes or in electronic records, WIPO Standard ST.2 is applicable.

PRESENTATION OF CLASSIFICATION SYMBOLS

2. The recommended abbreviation of the International Patent Classification is "Int.Cl.". The current version indicator of the core level (year) has to be placed in round brackets after the abbreviation "Int.Cl.", if the document is classified, at least partly, using the core level. Most offices will classify a given document only in one level, i.e. only in the advanced level or only in the core level (see examples 3a and 3b).

The recommended presentation of classification symbols in printed or formatted display form is as follows:

- classification symbols are presented in a tabular form, in such a manner as to facilitate machine transcription;
- when classifying using the core level classification, IPC symbols are printed or displayed in regular font style, and when classifying using the advanced level classification, IPC symbols are printed or displayed in italics;
- the invention information symbols are printed or displayed in bold font style and the non-invention information symbols in regular;
- when classifying using the advanced level classification, the version indicator for each IPC symbol, indicating when this symbol was created or substantially revised at the advanced level (year, month), is placed in round brackets after each IPC symbol.

3. Sample representations of IPC classification symbols and indicators are given below for the same document when classified using the advanced level, the core level or both the advanced level and the core level.

(a) When classified in the advanced level:

Int. Cl.  
***B28B 5/00*** (2006.01)  
***B28B 1/29*** (2007.04)  
*H05B 3/18* (2008.07)

Where: ***B28B 5/00*** indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the advanced level classification (italics font style);  
***B28B 1/29*** indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the advanced level classification (italics font style);  
*H05B 3/18* indicates non-invention information (regular font style, i.e., non-bold) classified using the advanced level classification (italics font style).

(b) When classified in the core level:

Int. Cl. (2006)  
**B28B 5/00**  
**B28B 1/00**  
H05B 3/10

Where: **B28B 5/00** indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the core level classification (regular font style, i.e., non-italics);  
**B28B 1/00** indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the core level classification (regular font style, i.e., non-italics);  
H05B 3/10 indicates non-invention information (regular font style, i.e., non-bold) classified using the core level classification (regular font style, i.e., non-italics).

(c) When invention information is classified in the advanced level and non-invention information in the core level:

Int. Cl. (2006)

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***B28B 5/00*** (2006.01)  
***B28B 1/29*** (2007.04)  
H05B 3/10

Where:      ***B28B 5/00***      indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the advanced level classification (*italics font style*);  
                 ***B28B 1/29***      indicates invention information (bold font style) classified using the advanced level classification (*italics font style*);  
                 H05B 3/10      indicates non-invention information (regular font style, i.e., non-bold) classified using the core level classification (regular font style, i.e., non-italics).

IPC symbols are defined in Part 5 of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* and in the latest version of the Guide to the IPC.

This presentation is effective beginning with the January 1, 2006, edition of the IPC.

4.      The recommended -----

## ANNEX V

### PATENT FAMILY

Patent documents published in different countries or regions but relating to the same invention are generally called a patent family. Such documents can normally be identified by the data concerning the application(s) on the basis of which the “priority right” has been claimed for all subsequent applications in other countries or regions. The possibility of claiming multiple priorities may lead to the situation in which applications filed in different countries or regions, and patent documents subsequently published, may be based on not completely coincident priority applications and, therefore, may differ in their contents. Below follow the definitions for different types of patent families:

(1) SIMPLE PATENT FAMILY

“Simple patent family” means a set of published patent documents, all of them having exactly the same originating application or applications;

(2) COMPLEX PATENT FAMILY

“Complex patent family” means a set of published patent documents, having at least one originating application in common;

(3) EXTENDED PATENT FAMILY

“Extended patent family” means a set of published patent documents, each document of the set having at least one originating application in common with at least one other document of the set;

(4) NATIONAL PATENT FAMILY

“National patent family” means a set of published patent documents of one country, formed as a result of additions, continuations, continuations-in-part or divisions, but not including merely patent documents published at different procedural stages coming from a single application;

(5) ARTIFICIAL PATENT FAMILY

(also called intellectual, technical or non-conventional patent family)

“Artificial patent family” means a set of published equivalent patent documents of different countries, grouped following intellectual investigation, having essentially the same contents but not having an originating application or applications in common. In patent family services, members of an “Artificial Patent Family” are usually added to patent families of other types.

## ANNEX VI

### REVISION POLICY AND REVISION PROCEDURE FOR THE REFORMED IPC

#### REVISION POLICY

##### Core Level

1. The main goal of the revision of the core level is to improve the IPC as a universal information tool. The development of the core level should ensure its efficiency as:
  - (a) a search tool for the retrieval of patent information contained in national patent collections;
  - (b) an instrument for the orderly arrangement of patent documents in order to facilitate access to technological and legal information contained therein;
  - (c) a basis for selective dissemination of information to all users of patent information;
  - (d) a basis for the preparation of industrial property statistics which in turn would permit the assessment of technological development in various areas.
2. The data needed for serving the purposes referred to in paragraphs 1(b) to (d), above, will be available from the Master Classification Database. This database will contain the IPC data of patent documentation classified according to the current edition of the IPC.
3. Revision of the core level should be undertaken when needed in order to accommodate new technologies or to increase the quality of the IPC by clarifying its text. For accommodating the new technologies, revision of the core level should be carried out in harmony with revision of the advanced level.
4. Revision of the core level should also be undertaken in order to provide new subdivisions of groups having a very large file size and a very high rate of growth of the national patent documentations. Such revision should be based on the classification schemes in the advanced level.
5. Revision of the core level could also be required by revision carried out at the advanced level when, for example, changes proposed to the advanced level would require modifications at subclass or main group level of the IPC.
6. Indexing schemes should not be created in the core level.

### Advanced Level

7. The main goal of the revision of the advanced level is to improve the IPC as an effective search tool for the retrieval of patent information contained in large international patent collections. The development of the advanced level is also to ensure its efficiency as a tool for investigating the state of the art in given fields of technology.
8. Revision of the advanced level should be undertaken when needed in order to accommodate the IPC to the excessive file size and high rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation classified in IPC groups of the advanced level, to change the classification structure in areas where it has become inefficient for searching or to increase the quality of the advanced level by clarifying the text of the IPC.
9. The possibility of meeting the search needs in a certain area of the IPC by another search technique, for example, text searching, should be taken into consideration before commencing revision of the advanced level in that area.
10. Indexing schemes, associated with respective classification schemes, could be created in the advanced level, where desirable for efficient searching.

### REVISION PROCEDURE

11. A new revision procedure for the reformed IPC will be supported by a modern IPC management system. To this end, the International Bureau has carried out its IBIS project aimed at the modernization of the former IPC Information System (IPCIS) and the establishment of an Internet-based, open IPC management system which will incorporate new features resulting from the IPC reform and which includes the advanced IPC electronic forum. Industrial property offices, when proposing amendments to the IPC, will be authorized to directly introduce the proposed amendments in the IPC, namely, in the discussion view of the IPC which will be available on the WIPO website. The amendments then could be incorporated into the current version of the IPC.
12. The preliminary testing of the proposed amendments to the IPC by an office-proponent should be a prerequisite for submitting a revision proposal. In respect of revision proposals which are concerned with the transfer of subject matter to new or existing classification places, the testing should include carrying out reclassification of at least 10% of the search file concerned.

### Core Level

13. The revision procedure should be initiated by the International Bureau which should regularly invite members of the IPC Committee of Experts and the intergovernmental organizations referred to in Article 5(2) of the Strasbourg Agreement to submit proposals for amendments to the core level in accordance with the revision criteria for the core level which are defined in paragraph 14, below.

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14. The revision proposals for the core level could relate to one or more of the following categories:

(a) Creation of IPC places covering new technologies for which no distinct place in the IPC exists;

(b) Clarification of wordings in order to improve consistency in classifying or to avoid overlap with other places of the IPC;

(c) Subdivision of IPC groups having a very large file size and a very high rate of growth of the national patent documentation;

(d) Modifications required by revision changes to the advanced level.

15. Any revision proposal should be accompanied by a revision request explaining the reasons for the revision and indicating to which of the revision categories the proposal relates. The revision request should also contain the numerical data concerning the file size and rate of growth for the Category-c proposals (see paragraph 14, above), citations of patent documents illustrating proposed new groups and information on the testing of the proposal.

16. The revision proposal should be posted on the WIPO IPC website (discussion view of the IPC) and the revision request should be submitted to the IPC electronic forum.

17. If an office is not in a position to prepare a revision proposal but wishes to solve a classification problem in the IPC, it can submit only the revision request to the IPC electronic forum. Such a request should explain the reasons for its submission and indicate that the revision proposal cannot be elaborated by an office-proponent. The elaboration of the proposal will then be entrusted to an office-rapporteur if the revision request is accepted to the revision program.

18. The International Bureau should forward the revision requests and proposals for consideration by the IPC Revision Working Group

19. The IPC Revision Working Group should evaluate all requests to ensure that they comply with the revision policy and the revision criteria laid down by the Committee and described in this document, determine the need for them and their priority. Revision requests approved by the Working Group should be included in the IPC core level revision program. For each approved request, a project file should be created. The Working Group should establish time frames for individual actions on the project (comments, rapporteur report) and should appoint an office-rapporteur.

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20. The offices-rapporteurs should be responsible for organizing discussions on the project through the IPC electronic forum, taking decisions as to when the project should be submitted for consideration by the Working Group and preparing the rapporteur report. The objective of the rapporteurs should be to accomplish as much work as possible by electronic communication, so that the project could basically be approved, in one of the authentic language versions, at a single session of the Working Group. Rapporteur's proposals should be posted on the WIPO IPC website (discussion view).

21. When amendments to the core level are approved by the Working Group in one of the authentic language versions, a volunteering office should prepare respective amendments in the other authentic language version. Upon completion of the project in both language versions, the amendments should be forwarded for adoption to the Committee. Endorsed amendments should be included in the next edition of the IPC.

Advanced Level

22. Revision of the advanced level should be carried out through an accelerated procedure in order to provide conditions for the quick accommodation of the advanced level to changing search needs. All member States of the IPC Union and the intergovernmental organizations referred to in Article 5(2) of the Strasbourg Agreement are authorized to submit proposals for amendments to the advanced level in accordance with the revision criteria for the advanced level which are defined in paragraph 23, below.

23. The revision proposal for the advanced level could relate to one or more of the following categories:

- (a) Subdivision of IPC groups having an excessive file size and a high rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation;
- (b) Change of the classification structure where it has become inefficient for searching;
- (c) Clarification of wordings in order to improve consistency in classifying or to avoid overlap with other places of the IPC.

24. For each group proposed to be subdivided, either the file should contain at least an average of 200 patent documents of the PCT minimum documentation (with one document per patent family) or the rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation should be at least 50 patent documents for the most recent year for which statistics are considered.

25. When proposing new groups, it should be expected that as an average 50-100 patent documents (with one document per patent family) from the PCT minimum documentation should be covered by each such new group.

26. The quantitative criteria indicated in paragraphs 24 and 25, above, should be applied in a flexible manner and the IPC Special Subcommittee, when considering revision proposals, is authorized to depart from these criteria when this is justified by cost/benefit reasons.

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27. As the core level of the IPC should be stable, proposed amendments to the advanced level should be compatible with the core level and should not imply modifications to the relevant parts of the core level without good reason. If such modifications are necessary, they should be treated in accordance with the revision procedure for the core level.

28. Any revision proposal should be accompanied by a revision request explaining the reasons for the revision and indicating to which of the revision categories the proposal relates. The revision request should also contain the numerical data concerning the file size and rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation for the Category-a proposals (see paragraph 23, above), citations of patent documents illustrating proposed new groups and information on the testing of the proposal. The revision proposal should be posted on the WIPO IPC website (discussion view of the IPC) and the revision request should be submitted to the IPC electronic forum.

29. The International Bureau should forward the revision requests and proposals for consideration by the IPC Special Subcommittee which should be established by the Committee of Experts for the revision of the advanced level.

30. The composition of the Special Subcommittee will be determined by the Committee of Experts and reconsidered every three years. An industrial property office may be elected to the Special Subcommittee if it assumes responsibility to do at least 20% of the total reclassification work in respect of the PCT minimum documentation in the following three years.

31. The Special Subcommittee should deliver reports at least once a year to the Committee of Experts on the work carried out, which results should be reviewed by the Committee of Experts and, if needed, necessary corrections should be made.

32. The mandate of the Special Subcommittee should include evaluation of revision requests for the advanced level to ensure that they comply with the revision policy and the revision criteria laid down by the Committee and described in this document, determining the need for them and their priority, and taking decisions with regard to the discussion of the proposed amendments. The Special Subcommittee should conduct its work using electronic communication whenever possible.

33. Revision requests approved by the Special Subcommittee should be included in the IPC advanced level revision program. For each approved request, a project number should be assigned. The Special Subcommittee should appoint an office-rapporteur for each project.

34. Within two months after approval of the request, industrial property offices could submit comments thereon on the IPC electronic forum. If no comments are submitted within that period, the amendments should be considered as approved and should be incorporated by the International Bureau in the advanced level of the IPC.

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35. If comments are submitted on the proposed amendments, the Rapporteur should, within one month, post the Rapporteur's proposal, taking account of the comments, or to submit reasons for rejecting the comments. When posting the Rapporteur's proposal, the Rapporteur could request additional comments from interested offices. For submitting additional comments and preparing the revised Rapporteur's proposal, one-month periods should apply.

36. If no additional comments are requested by the Rapporteur, the Rapporteur's proposal should be considered and approved by the Special Subcommittee. Upon approval of the amendments in one of the authentic language versions, they should be incorporated by the International Bureau in the advanced level.

37. After the approval of the amendments by the Special Subcommittee, responsible industrial property offices should carry out reclassification of search files of the PCT minimum documentation and make the results of reclassification available in the Master Classification Database.

38. The amendments to the advanced level should enter into force when the results of reclassification of respective search files of the PCT minimum documentation are made available in the Master Classification Database, but not earlier than three months after their approval by the Special Subcommittee. The International Bureau should continuously update the advanced level of the IPC and make it available on the WIPO IPC website.

39. Within three months after the approval of the amendments by the Special Subcommittee, respective amendments to the other authentic language version should be incorporated by the International Bureau in the advanced level.

40. It is expected that an overwhelming majority of the revision proposals for the advanced level will be submitted in English. According to the Strasbourg Agreement, the Classification shall be established in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic. As revision of the advanced level should be carried out through an accelerated procedure, a special procedure is required for the establishment of the French version of the advanced level.

41. Translation of the amendments to the advanced level into French should be ensured by the International Bureau. A subcommittee for the supervision of the French version of the advanced level should be established by the Committee of Experts. The composition of the Subcommittee on the French Version will be determined by the Committee of Experts.

42. The mandate of the Subcommittee on the French Version should include ensuring that the French version of the amendments to the advanced level is in conformity with the English version, verifying the correctness of the terminology used in the French version, issuing general instructions for the preparation of the French version and taking initiatives for correcting possible errors in the French version. The Subcommittee on the French Version should conduct its work using electronic communication whenever possible.

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43. Upon approval of the amendments to the advanced level by the Special Subcommittee referred to in paragraph 29, above, the International Bureau should, within one month, ensure translation of the amendments into French and post the amendments on the WIPO IPC website (French version of the discussion view of the IPC). The International Bureau should notify the Subcommittee on the French Version on the amendments posted.

44. Within one month, the amendments should be approved by the Subcommittee on the French Version, as initially prepared or with changes agreed by the Subcommittee. If significant changes are needed to the initial translation, the Subcommittee on the French Version should appoint an office-rapporteur for the preparation of the final version of the amendments.

45. Upon approval of the amendments by the Subcommittee on the French Version, they should be incorporated by the International Bureau in the French version of the advanced level before the new version of the advanced level enters into force. If, exceptionally, the final version of the amendments could not be prepared on time, the International Bureau should include in the advanced level a provisional version, with a clear indication of its provisional character, hyperlinked to the respective amendments in the English version of the advanced level and should replace it by the final version as soon as it is approved by the Subcommittee on the French Version.

46. Corrections to the English or the French version of the advanced level should be made by the International Bureau in consultations with the Special Subcommittee for the revision of the advanced level or the Subcommittee on the French version, respectively.