

## **STANDARD ST.8**

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

*Editorial Note by the International Bureau*

The Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) adopted this revision of Standard ST.8 at its first session on October 29, 2010. This revision of Standard ST.8 incorporates amendments made necessary by certain modifications of the IPC structure as adopted by the Committee of Experts of the IPC Union at its 41<sup>st</sup> session in March 2009.

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#### 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 IPC 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 assigned 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 (invention or additional)	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 ( <a href="#">ST.3</a> )
43-50	For future use	8 blanks

4. Unused positions in the IPC classification fields Main 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 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 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. It corresponds to the version indicator of the corresponding symbol.

*Position 28 : Classification level*

Offices are expected to classify each subject matter either in subclasses only, in main groups only or in the full IPC. However, these three different options need to be completely represented in the master classification database and thus a level indicator is needed. As of January 1, 2011, the previous designations for classification level indicators C (Core), A (Advance) and S (Subclass) are not applicable. The new designations for the classification level are as follows:

- the letter S is used for classification in subclasses only,
- the C for classification in main groups only, and
- the A for classification in the full IPC.

A particular main group symbol in positions 1 to 19 may thus have the indicator C in position 28 if the office uses only main group symbols for classifying, or A if the office uses the full IPC.

*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 (invention or additional)*

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 additional (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 assigned to the document.

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

Various data is data changed due to an incidental correction of the classification 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 assigning 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 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 main group or subgroup classification, even if previously provided with another main 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.

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

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

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

*Example 1*

The following is one sample representation of IPC classification symbols assigned on June 1, 2011, and their indicators:

Int. Cl. (2011.01)

<b><i>B28B 5/00 (2006.01)</i></b>	<b><i>classification using the full IPC</i></b>	<b><i>invention information</i></b>
<b><i>H04H 20/12 (2008.01)</i></b>	<b><i>classification using the full IPC</i></b>	<b><i>invention information</i></b>
H01H 33/00	classification in main groups only	additional information

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	1	1	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	M	A								

Record 2:

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

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
2	0	0	8	0	1	0	1	A	L	I	2	0	1	1	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	M	A								

Record 3:

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

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	M	A								

*Example 2*

The following is one sample representation of IPC classification symbols assigned on June 1, 2011, when classifying at subclass level:

Int. Cl. (2011.01)

<b>B28B</b>	<b>classification at subclass level</b>	<b>invention information</b>
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According to this Standard, this example would be recorded on machine-readable records as follows:

Record:

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

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	S	F	I	2	0	1	1	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	Z	A								

[End of Standard]