

Internal Oversight Division

Report Publication Policy

2025 EDITION

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

IAOC	Independent Advisory Oversight Committee
IOD	Internal Oversight Division
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1. The Internal Oversight Division (IOD) Report Publication Policy (hereinafter the Policy) provides the framework and establishes governing principles for the publication of internal oversight reports, including management implication reports resulting from investigative activities. It does not apply to preliminary evaluation reports and final investigation reports. Rules and procedures on the issuance and disclosure of such reports are set out in the Internal Oversight Charter¹.
2. Publication of internal oversight reports is an opportunity to show accountability for results and transparency in sharing lessons and experiences from internal oversight work with interested stakeholders inside and outside of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Such publication also provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to make better use of findings from IOD's analysis for the purpose of institutional learning and hence increase the relevance and impact of internal oversight.
3. The Policy is established in consultation with Member States, pursuant to the WIPO Internal Oversight Charter². The Policy is consistent with the WIPO Staff Regulations and Rules and related administrative issuances. It also takes into account the Global Internal Audit Standards issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors, the standards developed and adopted by the United Nations Evaluation Group, and the Uniform Principles and Guidelines for Investigations adopted by the Conference of International Investigators.

2. GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

4. Paragraph 38 of the Internal Oversight Charter stipulates: "The Director, IOD, shall submit the final internal audit and evaluation reports to the Director General with a copy to the IAOC and the External Auditor. Upon request, the External Auditor shall be provided with any supporting documentation for internal audit and evaluation reports".
5. Paragraph 39 of the Internal Oversight Charter specifies: "The Director, IOD, shall publish internal audit and evaluation reports, as well as Management Implication Reports resulting from investigations, on the WIPO website within one month of their issuance in line with the IOD Report Publication Policy".
6. The Director, IOD, shall publish the quarterly reports to the Director General, with a copy to the IAOC, regarding the status of the implementation of recommendations, on the IOD intranet page³. The annual reports by the Director, IOD, to the WIPO General Assembly, through the Program and Budget Committee, which provide an overview of the internal oversight activities conducted during the reporting period⁴, are available on the WIPO website.
7. Reports on advisory services⁵ requested by management are not intended for publication; however, they may be published subject to clearance from the Sector Lead and/or other relevant officials.

¹ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraphs 41 to 47.

² Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 30 (b): "To carry out her/his mandate, the Director, IOD shall, after review by the IAOC and consultation with Member States, establish policies for all oversight functions, i.e., internal audit, evaluation, and investigation. The policies shall provide rules and procedures on the access to reports while ensuring rights to due process and the preservation of confidentiality."

³ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 50.

⁴ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 51.

⁵ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 33: "The Director, IOD, may provide advisory services, the nature and scope of which are agreed with relevant stakeholders, and which are intended to improve WIPO's governance, risk management, and control processes without IOD providing assurance or taking on management responsibility."

3. PROCEDURES

8. Dissemination of internal oversight reports through publication on the WIPO public website will allow all stakeholders to receive timely information on oversight activities and to make use of these insights in their work. To maximize the value of published reports and prevent breaches of confidentiality and potential harmful effects of such publications, the following measures shall be taken:

QUALITY

9. To ensure accuracy and quality both in substance and in form, all oversight reports are subject to an internal quality assurance process as organized in the relevant IOD manuals.

10. In accordance with the Internal Oversight Charter⁶, reasonable time, as specified in the draft report, will be allocated to the Sector Lead and/or other relevant officials directly responsible for the program or activity that has been the subject of the internal audit or evaluation to review the draft reports for factual corrections; revision of findings, as appropriate, taking into account their operational and organizational context; clarification of outstanding issues; and reporting of dissenting views.

TIMEFRAME

11. Final internal oversight reports must be published on the WIPO public website no later than one month after they are issued.

12. The one-month time limit for publication is intended to provide the Sector Lead and/or other relevant officials directly responsible for the program or activity that has been the subject of the internal audit or evaluation with the opportunity to initiate any management action and prepare for any queries, as necessary, that might be addressed to the Organization once the report is in the public domain.

CONFIDENTIALITY

13. Until they are published on the WIPO public website, the draft reports and any information gathered or received during an internal audit, evaluation, or investigation shall be categorized and handled as “confidential” in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Internal Oversight Charter⁷. Any indication of the confidential nature of the final reports shall be removed before publication.

REDACTING / WITHHOLDING REPORTS

14. In accordance with paragraph 40 of the Internal Oversight Charter: “If required to protect security, safety or privacy, the Director, IOD may, at her/his discretion, withhold a report in its entirety or redact parts of it. However, Member States may request access to reports withheld or to the original version of the redacted reports; such access will be granted under the condition of confidentiality at the offices of IOD”. Member States shall send a written request to IOD, designating a representative(s), who shall then be required to sign a confidentiality agreement for such access. IOD develops further guidance in the internal Standard Operating Procedures.

15. The Director, IOD, in consultation with the Sector Lead and/or other relevant officials directly responsible for the program or activity that has been the subject of the internal audit or evaluation, will take a decision to withhold or redact a report. The reason(s) will be recorded in writing; such records will be made available to the IAOC, the External Auditor, and Member States upon request.

⁶ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 36.

⁷ Internal Oversight Charter, paragraph 12: “The Director, IOD shall respect the confidential nature of, and protect from unauthorized disclosure, any information gathered or received in the course of during an internal audit, evaluation, or investigation, and shall use such information only in so far as it is necessary for the performance of her/his duties.”

16. Circumstances warranting redacting or withholding a report may include, but are not limited to, situations which could:

- (a) Disclose the identity of a confidential source or expose personnel who cooperate with an oversight activity or other individuals to possible retaliation or other adverse consequences;
- (b) Reveal trade secrets and/or political, commercial, or financial information that are privileged and/or confidential;
- (c) Divulge personal information of WIPO staff members;
- (d) Disclose information that is otherwise restricted from disclosure by WIPO Information Security Classification and Handling Policy;
- (e) Disclose technical or operational safety/security information that may compromise staff safety, negatively impact WIPO's security systems and potentially expose the Organization and its clients to otherwise manageable risk;
- (f) Disclose information that could result in significant legal risk for individuals;
- (g) Needlessly expose WIPO to commercial, legal, or any other risk which may have adverse impact on the reputation or operations of the Organization; or
- (h) Aid the perpetration or contemplation of unlawful activities against WIPO.

17. IOD develops further guidance on redacting and withholding internal oversight reports in the internal Standard Operating Procedures.

MEDIA

18. The publication of oversight reports might elicit queries and questions from the media. Questions from the media should be directed to the WIPO News and Media Division. To ensure that oversight findings and their underlying context are properly expressed and understood, IOD and the Sector Lead and/or other relevant officials directly responsible for the program or activity that has been the subject of the internal audit or evaluation should be consulted. These consultations should support the formulation of responses by providing pertinent background information, explanations, and clarifications where appropriate, with due regard to any restrictions that may be stipulated under separate policies that are in force.

4. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

19. The Policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary.