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**SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)**

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

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TRAINING IN THE USE OF THE IPC

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Annex to this document contains a program of updating of the existing material for training in the use of the IPC and of elaboration of new material for this purpose, prepared by the International Bureau.

2. *The Committee of Experts is invited to consider the program contained in the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

IPC TRAINING AND EXPLANATORY MATERIAL

1. Task No. 13 on the IPC reform program is entitled “Improve IPC Training by Providing Modern Training Techniques,” for example, computer-based and Internet training tools, involving, in particular, enhanced support for developing countries in the use of the IPC. The objective of this Task is to further promote the use of the IPC, as well as to thoroughly inform the users of IPC reform and of changes it will introduce in the Classification.
2. The Task will require elaboration of new material, especially with regard to information on IPC reform. To a certain extent, the existing IPC training and explanatory material could also be used in the framework of this Task. However, its updating will be necessary. This material is discussed below from the viewpoint of its applicability for the Task.
3. The existing IPC training and explanatory material is collected in Part 5.1 (“International Patent Classification – Application”) of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation*. It is also partly published on the WIPO IPC website. The following publications in Part 5.1 relate to the IPC training, teaching and explanatory material: *General Information on the Seventh Edition of the International Patent Classification*, *Introductory Manual to the International Patent Classification*, two sets of IPC training examples and *Guidelines for the Organization of Search Files Based on the International Patent Classification*.
4. The publication *General information on the seventh edition of the IPC* is also published as a separate brochure in the English, French and Spanish languages. It contains basic information on the history, structure and use of the IPC and is intended for users who wish to obtain the initial knowledge of the Classification, i.e., for non-initiated users. This brochure proved to be a popular IPC-related publication, in particular for developing countries, and it seems convenient to maintain it in the set of the IPC explanatory material. It should, however, be substantially revised to include basic facts on IPC reform.
5. The *Introductory Manual to the IPC*, in its major part, represents an extended version of the *Guide to the IPC*. In addition to the contents of the Guide, it includes a chapter concerned with the use of the IPC for search purposes. The revised *Guide to the IPC*, which is elaborated under Task No. 17, will also contain a part relating to the use of the IPC for the search and retrieval of patent information. In view of this, it is proposed to discontinue the publication of the Introductory Manual.
6. The IPC training examples represent the training material intended for professional users of the IPC, in particular for patent examiners. The first set includes 58 examples of patent families divided into three categories depending on the difficulty in their classifying. The second set includes 20 patent families illustrating classifying in function-oriented and application places of the IPC. All examples should be updated according to the revision changes introduced in the IPC in the current revision period and taking into account a modified approach to classifying introduced by IPC reform, especially the new definition of invention information.

7. At its thirty-second session, held in February 2003, the Committee of Experts underlined the importance of IPC training examples for teaching the staff of industrial property offices and instructed the IPC Revision Working Group to create a Task Force on updating and revising IPC training examples (see document IPC/CE/32/12, paragraph 69). At its ninth session, held in June 2003, the Working Group agreed that the work on updating of the training examples could commence at the beginning of 2004 and should rapidly proceed so as to timely obtain at least a minimum collection of training examples appropriate for teaching the reformed IPC. For this purpose, the Working Group established the Task Force on IPC Training Examples, in which its following members volunteered to participate: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States of America, European Patent Office (EPO) (see document IPC/WG/9/8, paragraphs 66 to 71).

8. IPC training examples will be available on the WIPO IPC website in the form of IPC tutorials which are being prepared under the CLAIMS project. The tutorials will include hyperlinks to the IPC and will implement an interactive mode of providing training information by using available software packages. It is planned that the preparation of the tutorials will be completed by the end of 2003.

9. The publication *Guidelines for the Organization of Search Files Based on the International Patent Classification* was approved by the Committee of Experts in 1978 and, since that time, was periodically updated in accordance with each new edition of the IPC. The Guidelines are primarily concerned with the organization of paper search files. In view of the constant decreasing of the importance of paper files and their progressive replacing by electronic search files, the Guidelines have nowadays significantly lost its value. It is proposed to discontinue this publication. However, the rich information material, contained in the Guidelines and relating to the IPC, patent and non-patent literature, and patent search files, could be used in other IPC-related publications.

10. At its thirty-second session, the Committee of Experts adopted the document "Frequently Asked Questions About the International Patent Classification (IPC)" which had been prepared by the International Bureau and published on the WIPO IPC website (see document IPC/CE/32/12, paragraph 47). The Committee expressed its appreciation of this publication as representing a good information source for the public. The publication includes general questions about the IPC, questions concerning availability of the IPC and questions related to IPC reform. An electronic mailbox is attached to the publication in order to collect further questions from the public. The International Bureau will regularly update the publication on the basis of questions asked by the public. The part related to IPC reform will be significantly enhanced so as to provide detailed information about the reform.

11. It is realized that new publications will be necessary to prepare for informing a broad range of users of IPC reform. The International Bureau plans to compile a publication "Reform of the International Patent Classification" addressed to non-initiated users of the IPC. This publication will be issued as a separate brochure in several languages and will also be available from the WIPO IPC website. For professional users of the IPC, the International Bureau will make available on this site various guidelines and explanatory documents prepared in the course of IPC reform.