

ANNEX VI

WORKING PROCEDURE OF THE IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (WG) was created by the Committee of Experts (CE) and is working under its supervision.
2. The mandate of the WG is:
  - (a) Consideration of projects for revision and maintenance of the IPC (including the Catchword Index);
  - (b) Consideration of projects for creation or modification of definitions (D projects); and
  - (c) Other tasks given by the CE.
3. The following types of revision projects are considered by the WG:
  - (a) Projects resulting from the cooperation of the Five IP Offices (F projects);
  - (b) Trilateral Harmony projects resulting from the cooperation of the Trilateral Offices (A projects); and
  - (c) Projects forwarded by the CE (C projects).
4. All requests for revision of the IPC implying reclassification of patent documents should be submitted to the CE for approval.
5. The following types of maintenance projects (M projects) are considered by the WG:
  - (a) Correction of titles or hierarchal structure which do not necessitate reclassification of patent documents or involve only administrative movement of patent documents (no intellectual effort required); and
  - (b) Systematic corrections or introduction of new features in the IPC (e.g. removal of non-limiting references, introduction of residual main groups, etc.).
6. Changes to the IPC that result from maintenance should accurately reflect the patent documents currently classified in that area of the IPC and should not result in a change of scope of the places affected.
7. Projects for clarifying existing titles or creating definitions should, to the extent feasible while ensuring consistency of the terminology in the IPC, use the wording of titles or definitions within equivalent areas of ECLA, FI and USPC.
8. Requests for maintenance of type (a) above may be submitted directly to the WG. However, projects for systematic maintenance or introduction of new features should be submitted to the CE.

9. The following types of definition projects are considered by the WG:

(a) New or amended definitions needed because of adoption of a new revision project. These definitions should be considered in the framework of the corresponding revision project.

(b) Subclass or group definitions in those subclasses where definitions do not exist. Although the aim is ultimately to create definitions in all subclasses, priority should be given to those subclasses where problems are identified that could be resolved using definitions and to subclasses with high activity. Before introducing new definition projects, the availability of resources in all offices should be taken into account.

10. For each project considered by the WG (revision, maintenance or definition), a project file should be created on the IPC e-forum. The WG should appoint a Rapporteur and establish time frames for individual actions on the project (e.g. comments, Rapporteur reports). Between sessions of the WG, the IB or the Rapporteur of a particular project may establish additional time frames. Rapporteurs of F and A projects are appointed by the IB based on the requests of the Five IP Offices or Trilateral Offices, respectively.

11. The Rapporteurs are responsible for organizing discussions on projects through the IPC e-forum, making decisions as to when projects should be submitted for consideration by the WG, and preparing Rapporteur reports. The objective of Rapporteurs should be to accomplish as much work as possible by electronic communication, so that the project can basically be approved, in one of the authentic language versions, at a single session of the WG. In order to achieve efficient consideration by the WG, it is desirable that each Rapporteur prepare a Rapporteur Summary before the physical meeting of the WG.

12. Discussions on the IPC e-forum should try to settle most of the substantive and technical issues prior to a subsequent physical meeting of the WG. In particular when there are controversial issues on a project, two rounds of comments should be organized between sessions. During sessions some issues or parts of a project may be forwarded either to a subsidiary body or to a subgroup with limited participation. In case of technical questions raised during a session of the WG, Rapporteurs or other delegations should be able to consult the files of the relevant Five IP Offices or Trilateral Offices projects and also the technical experts in their respective offices. If such contacts are not feasible during the session, consideration should be given to solving an issue during the process of the report approval.

13. A volunteering office or the IB will prepare the first draft of the French version of a project when the project is at a rather advanced stage, e.g. once approximately 80 per cent of the proposal is approved, early enough after the session of the WG in order to allow time for comment by French-speaking Offices. The WG will discuss the French version whenever needed, in particular when deficiencies in the English version are discovered during the preparation of the French version. Should only the English version be complete at the end of the last WG session preceding the CE meeting, the French version might be directly forwarded to, and adopted by the CE, provided that the meeting dates are sufficiently far apart to leave time to prepare the French version with a view to adoption by the CE. In case of short and relatively simple projects, the French version might be prepared by a volunteering Office during a session of the WG.

14. Once a project is completed in English, the Rapporteur should prepare a proposal for a Revision Concordance List, if needed. Furthermore, the IB will check the impact of this project on cross references, on existing definitions and on the catchword index, and prepare proposals for necessary amendments, as required.

15. The CE should manage the overall workload of the WG to ensure an efficient revision process and quality of revision projects.

[Annex VII follows]