

Special Union for the International Patent Classification (IPC Union)

Committee of Experts

Forty-Sixth Session

Geneva, February 26 to 28, 2014

REPORT

adopted by the Committee of Experts

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee of Experts of the IPC Union (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) held its forty-sixth session in Geneva from February 26 to 28, 2014. The following members of the Committee were represented at the session: Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America (29). The Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO) were also represented. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report.

2. The session was opened by Mr. Antonios Farassopoulos, Director, International Classifications and Standards Division, who welcomed the participants.

OFFICERS

3. The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Hiroshi Kawamata (Japan) as Chair and Ms. Nancy Beauchemin (Canada) and Ms. Lavinia Ramona Marina Cornea (Romania), as Vice-Chairs.
4. Mr. Antonios Farassopoulos (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Committee unanimously adopted the agenda with a modification, which appears as Annex II to this report.
6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Committee (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Committee was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE EIGHTH AND NINTH SESSIONS OF THE IP5 WG1-WORKING GROUP ON CLASSIFICATION

7. The Committee noted brief oral reports by the USPTO and KIPO on the eighth and ninth sessions, respectively, of the IP5 WG1-Working Group on Classification (WG1).
8. At its eighth session, the WG1 agreed on a new and revised mandate based on the Global Classification Initiative (GCI) concept. The CHC Project was closed out. The new mandate focused on two activities:
 - I. introduction of aligned internal classification schemes into the IPC; and
 - II. adaptation of classification schemes to emerging technologies.
9. The WG1 received a revision proposal in the area of additive manufacturing under the Activity II, above. The WG1 also discussed a draft Operating Procedures (GCI-OPS) document which described in detail the process on how proposals on GCI Activities I and II would work. The WG1 agreed that IP5 Office revision projects should be automatically included in the working program of the IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as the "Working Group"), and given priority.
10. Concerning its ninth session, the WG1 reviewed an update on the classification systems, as well as the status of CPC pilot projects in KIPO and SIPO. The WG1 also agreed to launch 16 F projects in IP5 phase, namely, projects F 019 to F 034.

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS ON THE IPC REVISION PROGRAM

11. Discussions were based on Annex 2 to project file [CE 462](#) prepared by the International Bureau containing a status report on the activities of the Working Group in particular, on the IPC revision program.

12. The Committee recalled its decision at the forty-fifth session that the Working Group would be responsible for all technical or formal consideration of revision projects, and to delegate its authority to adopt approved schemes to the Working Group.

13. The Committee noted that the total number of A and F projects had decreased since IPC-2013.01 and, in contrast, the number of C projects had rapidly increased since IPC-2014.01. The Committee also noted that, in addition to the IP5 Offices, increasingly, more offices, such as Brazil, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, submitted revision requests under the framework of the IPC Revision Roadmap.

IPC REVISION MANAGEMENT (IPCRM) PROJECT AND IMPLICATIONS ON IPC PUBLICATION AND MASTER FILES

14. In the framework of the replacement of the Reformed IPC Information System (RIPCIS) by a new IPC Revision Management System (IPCRMS), the Committee discussed the principles of the procedure of the revision, as needed for IPCRMS, the way that IPCRMS will interact with Offices and the proposed simplifications and changes in the Master Files and in the IPC Publication. This discussion was based on project [CE 457](#) and the conclusions are included in Annex III to this report.

REPORT ON IPC-RELATED IT SYSTEMS

15. The International Bureau delivered a [presentation](#) on the status of IPCRECLASS functional evolutions and on the parallel viewer (FIPCPC) project.

16. IPCRECLASS is now able to perform default transfer for stage 3 reclassification and ignores the kind code of documents proposed by offices for reclassification at family level. It also allows for identification of potential candidates for de-activation, includes a Web service for reclassification and additional features for a better monitoring of IPC reclassification.

17. The International Bureau gave an update to the Committee on the status of the FIPCPC project. An extended text search facility ([STATS](#)), based on the statistical analysis of text occurrence in PATENTSCOPE documents and most frequently used IPC symbols in these documents, was added to the IPC Internet publication (IPCPUB) in Autumn 2013.

18. The International Bureau also demonstrated the beta version of the parallel viewer showing the CPC and FI subdivisions in the context of the IPC.

19. The International Bureau clarified that the parallel viewer will neither include the Y section nor the 2000 symbols of the CPC and described the impact of problems found in the CPC and FI XML scheme and concordance files. The International Bureau and the EPO/United States of America, who are the owners of CPC, or Japan, who is the owner of FI, were invited to keep in touch to solve those problems as best as possible.

20. The Committee reviewed several suggestions submitted to projects [CE 445](#), [CE 446](#) and [CE 447](#) from offices and confirmed, in particular, the need to maintain a PDF version of the IPC in two columns, to give more visibility to the *Guide* in IPCPUB and to consider the parallel viewer as a functional extension also in the publication of national versions of the IPC. The Committee also noted that the position 40 "Source of Classification Data" of ST.8 might not be used properly in accordance with its definition and decided to create project CE 464, with the United States of America as Rapporteur, to further investigate this issue and to propose clarification for consideration at its next session.

21. In an effort to streamline its investments in IT support for the IPC, the International Bureau announced a survey aiming at reviewing the utility of each by-product of IPC master files.

TREATMENT OF NON-RECLASSIFIED PATENT DOCUMENTS IN THE MASTER CLASSIFICATION DATABASE (MCD) AND IPCRECLASS

22. Discussions were based on Annex 20 to project file [CE 381](#).

23. The Committee noted a table prepared by the International Bureau containing statistics on the amount of non-reclassified patent families. A large amount of reclassification data had been delivered to the IPCRECLASS by responsible offices since last year. The percentage of non-reclassified patent families had decreased from 12.5% to 6.2% for revision projects that entered into force in 2007 and 2008.

24. The Delegation of the EPO indicated that its working lists should be excluded from IPCRECLASS since its reclassification data had been stored in the MCD and that the data in IPCRECLASS and the MCD should be synchronized. The International Bureau and the EPO were invited to agree bilaterally on a process for synchronizing IPCRECLASS with the MCD.

25. The Committee also noted that some offices had already completed their reclassification work for certain projects, however for some unknown reason, the reclassification data were not correctly recorded in IPCRECLASS. Offices were therefore invited to review their reclassification status and to submit their result lists properly.

26. The International Bureau was invited to implement the default transfers to revision projects that entered into force in 2007 and 2008 after the above synchronization and the submission of result lists by offices.

27. The Committee decided to postpone the inclusion of additional projects, that entered into force in 2009 and thereafter, to implement default transfers until its next session. The International Bureau was therefore invited to propose additional projects to implement default transfers.

28. The Committee considered non-reclassified documents of project M 099 in version 2010.01 that should have been dealt with by one-to-one automatic transfer in the MCD. The International Bureau and the EPO were invited to further investigate this issue.

MASTER CLASSIFICATION DATABASE AND RECLASSIFICATION STATUS REPORT

29. The Committee noted that the International Bureau posted accumulated statistics from the MCD and the current reports from IPCRECLASS (see Annex 11 to project file [QC 013](#)).

30. It was noted that the percentage of already reclassified patent families for versions 2007.01 to 2011.01 was considerably improved compared to last year. The percentage for versions 2007.01 to 2008.04 had reached more than 90% of the original, while that for versions 2009.01 to 2012.02 remained at a relatively low level of 40% to 70%. The total backlog of IPC reclassification for versions 2007.01 to 2014.01 amounts to 1.6 million families.

31. The Committee noted a considerable amount of non-reclassified documents in versions 2013.01 and 2014.01. The International Bureau was requested to update the IPC warnings in version 2014.01 in the IPC Internet publication by the end of March 2014.

32. The International Bureau was invited to provide updated statistics for consideration by the Committee at its next session.

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDE TO THE IPC* AND OTHER BASIC IPC DOCUMENTS

33. Discussions were based on project file [CE 454](#), in particular, on Annex 5 to the project file prepared by the International Bureau containing amendments to the *Guide*.

34. The Committee adopted, with some modifications, the proposed amendments to paragraphs 15, 28, 39, 40, 45, 48, 63, 92bis, 99 147, 151 and 163, which appear in Annex IV to this report. These amendments would be included in version 2014 of the *Guide*.

35. Discussions were also based on project file [CE 455](#), in particular, on Annexes 11 and 13 to the project file, containing amendments to the Guidelines for Revision of the IPC and other basic IPC documents prepared by the International Bureau which integrated proposals and comments by offices, and a consolidated proposal by Sweden, respectively.

36. The Committee adopted, with some modifications, the amendments to paragraphs 2, 37, 37bis, 38, 67, 122, 123, 125 and Appendix I of the Guidelines for Revision of the IPC, which appear in Annex V to this report.

37. It also adopted, with some modifications, the amendments to the Guidelines for Drafting Classification Definitions, which appear in Annex VI to this report.

38. With respect to the amendments to the IPC Revision Policy and Procedure, the Committee noted that this document was outdated in relation to the IPC Revision Roadmap and the IP5's new activities. It was therefore decided to remove the hyperlink to this document from the Guidelines for Revision of the IPC and the International Bureau was invited to update the entire document for consideration by the Committee at its next session.

REMOVAL OF NON-LIMITING REFERENCES (NLRs) FROM THE SCHEME OF THE IPC

39. Discussions were based on Annex 17 to project [WG 191](#). In view of the decrease of new definition projects considered by the Working Group, based on the Committee's decision at the forty-fifth session that new subclass definitions would be considered only in those subclasses where there is evidence that the scheme or the relation of the subclass with other places is not clear enough, concerns were expressed by the Committee on the completion of the removal of NLRs from the scheme. Currently more than 348 subclasses remained to be completed.

40. It was decided to include the task of removal of NLRs in the framework of revision projects and maintenance projects, on a voluntary basis, following agreement by the corresponding Rapporteurs.

41. In order to further accelerate this removal, it was decided to create project [WG 301](#) with the International Bureau as Rapporteur. During a pilot phase the International Bureau would post a proposal on 10 subclasses. Comments should be submitted exclusively to the IEF, i.e. they will not be discussed at the Working Group, and only to indicate disagreement with individual proposals. The International Bureau would then post a proposal including the amendments where there is no disagreement, as well as corresponding definitions that include non-limiting references removed from the scheme.

42. If, during the pilot phase, there is substantial agreement with International Bureau's proposals, the International Bureau would submit at the forty-seventh session of the Committee a plan to continue and complete the removal of NLRs using the above procedure. In case of important disagreements, the International Bureau should submit instead an alternative procedure that would not impact the revision tasks of the Working Group.

NEXT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

43. The Committee noted the following tentative dates for its next regular session:

Geneva, February 9 to 13, 2015.

44. This report was unanimously adopted by the Committee of Experts by electronic means on March 20, 2014.

[Annexes follow]

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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(dans l'ordre alphabétique des noms français des États/
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III. BUREAU/OFFICERS

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Vice-présidentes/

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[L'annexe II suit/
Annex II follows]

AGENDA

45. Opening of the session
46. Election of a Chair and two Vice-Chairs
47. Adoption of the agenda
48. Report on the eighth and ninth sessions of the IP5 WG1-Working Group on Classification
Oral report by the IP5 Offices.
49. Report on the progress on the IPC revision program
See project [CE 462](#).
50. IPC Revision Management (IPCRM) project and implications on IPC publication and master files
See project [CE 457](#).
51. Report on IPC-related IT systems
Presentation by the International Bureau. See also projects [CE 445](#), [CE 446](#) and [CE 447](#).
52. Treatment of non-reclassified patent documents in the MCD and IPCRECLASS
See project [CE 381](#).
53. Master Classification Database and reclassification status report
See project [QC 013](#).
54. Amendments to the Guide to the IPC and other basic IPC documents
See project CE 454 and CE 455.
55. Removal of non-limiting references from the scheme of the IPC
56. Next session of the Committee
57. Adoption of the report
58. Closing of the Session

[Annex III follows]

IPC REVISION MANAGEMENT (IPCRM) PROJECT

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE IPC AND MASTER FILES

REVISION PROCEDURE

1. The procedure to be followed will be the one decided by the IPC Committee of Experts in 2013 and which was followed for the preparation of IPC-2014.01. The new IPCRMS should be flexible enough and should not have a built-in procedure, in order to allow for future developments. However some principles should be followed, which have always been implicitly followed.
2. The revision of the IPC is done in the framework of projects. A project contains amendments having a technical relation, e.g. they are contained in the same subclass or in a limited number of main groups. A project might be completed within one revision period but could also be active during several revision periods. A revision period is the period between two consecutive versions of the IPC. A project could concern exclusively the scheme or the Definitions or both. A revision of the scheme might have an impact on the RCL, the Catchword Index (CI) and/or the Definitions. A revision of Definitions could have an impact on the scheme, e.g. due to a change in the categorization of references.
3. A project has a Rapporteur who takes the lead, making proposals, revising previously submitted proposals or proposing changes to adopted amendments, before submitting them to a session which takes decisions.
4. Similarly, a project has a Translator, who acts as the Rapporteur of the second authentic language. Translator and Rapporteur of a project might be the same Office.
5. Since 2013, co-rapporteurs are appointed to some projects. They have the role of checking the proposals of the Rapporteur. From the point of view of IPCRMS, a co-rapporteur will have the same status as a commenting Office.
6. A project is considered as completed concerning the revision of the scheme when both language versions and its RCL have been adopted, when the impact to other areas of the scheme, the Definitions and the CI has been considered and when related corrective actions have been approved. Although a project might be considered as completed concerning the scheme, the completion of the corresponding new Definitions could take longer. As a result, the publication of the scheme related to a project could be published at an earlier version than the corresponding new Definitions. In such case, the new Definition proposals should be transferred to a new D project, identified by the same number as the revision project, e.g. the new Definitions of project C456 should be transferred to definition project DC456.
7. A session is a period during which decisions are taken on proposed amendments, e.g. a session of the IPC Revision Working Group. A session has a phase during which projects are considered and decisions are taken on proposed amendments, as well as a checking phase, after which all decisions of all considered projects are confirmed. The decisions of a session overrule any decision taken on the same amendment at a previous session. This is independent of the type of the session.

8. There are two types of sessions, the ordinary sessions and the publication sessions. During ordinary sessions, technical discussions are taking place. During publication sessions, in principle there are no technical discussions; the compiled adopted amendments, that will form part of the following version of the IPC, are checked. However, some punctual technical discussion might not be excluded during publication sessions. All sessions might be physical or electronic.

9. Between sessions, Offices can comment on Rapporteur proposals, react to questions coming from a session or challenge decisions taken by a session. After the June publication (prepub) session, only punctual corrections of errors, without technical impact, might be submitted to the IB. If possible, these corrections are taken into account before the final publication, if not, they are considered at the following revision period. The corrigendum will be discontinued.

INTERACTION BETWEEN OFFICES AND IPCRMS

10. IPCRMS will be open for input by the Offices. Additional functions will be available allowing the integration of some activities of the e-forum, like commenting, Rapporteur or session reports. The e-forum will be maintained, e.g. for allowing offices to submit general comments or setting deadlines for actions.

11. Authoring of revision proposals will be centralized and more controlled so that adoption is made only on proposals technically acceptable by IPCRMS. This is an opportunity to review related requirements and to propose standardization and centralized controls before decisions.

12. The Rapporteurs and the Translators will be able to directly prepare their proposals using IPCRMS. Once they consider that the draft proposal is ready, it will be visible to all Offices. Offices will then be able to submit their comments to IPCRMS, attached to the corresponding proposed amendments. The Rapporteurs/Translators will be able to reply to these comments and submit new proposals. In this way, there will be no need of additional rapporteur reports since all comments and proposed amendments will be linked.

DISPLAY OF PROJECTS IN IPCRMS

13. The history of the proposal, comments and decisions will be kept and a user will be able to display them, in totality or partially on demand. The amendments will be displayed, also on demand, in the context of the current version of the IPC. Current version is the version in force from January to June and the prepub version from July to December.

14. For example, a user wishing to display project X relating to subclass A will see the proposed amendments in the context of the current IPC, in track changes; on demand, the user will display only the complete impacted main groups or other main groups of subclass A. All relevant comments and decisions, or comments and decisions submitted after a certain date, will be displayed on request next to the corresponding amendment. It will also be possible to display only amendments considered by a session with the corresponding decision, or the complete history of the decisions. In this way, there will be no more need of producing technical annexes in separate documents. Proposals, decisions and comments will be displayed in different ways, e.g. by using different highlight colors, in order to avoid confusion and improve readability.

SESSIONS AND DECISIONS IN IPCRMS

15. When a project is under consideration during a session, Offices will not be able to submit comments or proposals. The International Bureau (IB) will have the authority to introduce adopted changes and decisions. Exceptionally the IB may authorize a Rapporteur to introduce modifications to its proposal under consideration.

16. Decisions will be recorded by the IB during the discussion of a project. Once the discussion and the recording have been completed, the recorded decisions will be available through IPCRMS in order to allow corrections even before the end of the physical meeting. During the checking

phase, additional corrections may be submitted to the IB as currently. These suggestions for corrections will not be submitted to IPCRMS but to the e-forum.

17. All completed projects after the May session will be included in the following version of the IPC and will be considered for final checking during the prepub electronic session in June.

PREPARATION OF NATIONAL VERSIONS IN IPCRMS

18. A separate interface will be available to volunteering Offices preparing national versions of the IPC using IPC Master Files. Once the prepub version is published, this facility will present the amendments of the prepub version in track changes and, next to them, the original text of the IPC in the national version (when available) and the TAPTA proposals. Once the complete national version is validated, it will be possible, using IPCRMS, to prepare the scheme and Definitions Master Files in the national version.

SIMPLIFICATIONS CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF THE SCHEME IN IPCPUB

19. The following simplifications will be implemented:

Version indicator for Notes

20. There will be only one version indicator for each complete note instead of separate version indicators for each paragraph. This indicator will indicate the version when the note was first created and additional version indicators will be added whenever the note was revised to indicate a change in classification practice.

Version indicators for pre-reform symbols and version 8

21. Many offices, in particular small and medium ones, incorrectly indicate version indicators 1 to 8 for pre-reform symbols which are still valid, instead of 2006.01. It is therefore decided, for symbols with version indicators 1 to 7, to add 2006.01 without removing version indicators 1 to 7, and to replace 8 by 2006.01. This change will appear in IPCPUB. In the Scheme Master Files, the version indicator 2006.01.01 will be added to those symbols.

Compilation tab

22. The compilation tab will show a comparison between the current version and the previous one, with the possibility to go to a particular modified entry. Any information related to the revision process currently available in the compilation tab will be available in IPCRMS only.

Standardized sequence

23. The standardized sequence will be removed from the Scheme Master File and the publication. The IB will submit a proposal to the 47th session of the Committee to modify the 2016 version of the *Guide to the IPC* accordingly.

MASTER FILES (MF)

24. Initially, the IB had an ambitious plan aiming at reviewing, modernizing and making ST.96 compliant the IPC MFs. However, in view of the comments submitted and following a reevaluation of the cost of the side effects of this plan, the majority of the changes were abandoned. The current Validity File (VF) and the compilation file will no longer be Master Files but by-products of the MFs.

25. IPCRMS will create the most appropriate set of Master Files, avoiding as much as possible overlapping information. These files are: Scheme MFs, scheme images MF (mainly chemical formulae in the titles of the scheme), Definition MFs, Definition illustrations MF, Catchword Index MFs and RCL MF.

26. Two new Fixed Text MFs (one for EN one for FR) will include all fixed texts used in the IPC publication.

27. If additional by-product files are needed for particular purposes, they will be produced from the original MFs. For those MFs which are language-dependent, there will be one file per language.

28. The following existing XML Master Files will be discontinued as Master Files: Compilation File and Validity File. In fact, their content can be derived from the Scheme MF and the RCL MF, and proposed in alternative formats. In view of the needs identified by the IB, the following content is proposed for each one.

New compilation file

29. The intended purpose of this file is to indicate the changes between two consecutive versions of the IPC, e.g. in order to assist in the preparation of new language versions or to inform IPC users about the changes between two consecutive versions. In the current Master File, additional information is added coming from the revision process, e.g. project number, session when a decision was taken etc. This information will be available by consulting IPCRMS; there will be no need to repeat it in the new compilation file.

30. The new compilation file will include only the modifications between two consecutive versions of the IPC. The scheme MFs will be used for this purpose.

Validity Files

31. The current Validity File (VF) is a compilation of all present and past symbols with indication of their validity in the past. In addition, their validity in core and advanced levels and core predecessors are also indicated. In order to cope with the different revision periods between levels in the past, additional complications have been introduced that are not needed any more. Furthermore, the VF was supposed to provide information to the reclassification process, which finally was not the case.

32. In view of the comments submitted, the IB will continue to produce the current XML VF although it contains obsolete information. However, it will not be a Master File but a by-product.

33. In addition, a new XML Valid symbols file (not a MF) will be produced, containing only the symbols valid at the corresponding version with their latest version indicator. Since this version indicator is the one to be indicated on patent documents, it will replace the pre-reform version indicators (1 to 8) by 2006.01, as already proposed above for the scheme.

34. In order to know whether a symbol has ever been used, a cumulative inventory in CSV format of ever used IPC symbols will be maintained (see http://www.wipo.int/ipc/itos4ipc/ITSupport_and_download_area/20140101/IPC_symbol_inventory/PC_ever_used_symbol_inventory_20140101.csv).

Illustrations file

35. Scheme illustrations contain essentially chemical formulae, developed during the reform, and some additional illustrations. They are directly accessible in IPCPUB using the  icon next to the IPC symbol. It is proposed to move all these illustrations to existing or new (group) Definitions. In this way, only one Definition illustration Master File will be maintained.

New RCL file

36. New elements will be added in the RCL file to record the default reclassification symbol and the revision project number. This additional information will be used in the creation of the Working Lists and in IPCRECLASS. It will not be published in the RCL tab of IPCPUB.

37. On several occasions, the transfer notes of the deleted symbols in the scheme (introduced directly in RIPCIS-scheme) and the RCL indications (introduced in RIPCIS RCL) were inconsistent. It is therefore proposed to record the transfer of deleted symbols only once in IPCRMS, which will then create automatically the RCL table and XML file.

Definitions

38. The references in the Definitions will be presented in one section under the header "References" and under four categories: "limiting references", "application-oriented references", "references out of a residual place" and "informative references". More levels of embedding will be allowed in "Definition Statement", etc. IPCRMS will allow for a strict control of their authoring so that only Definitions with acceptable structure are proposed for consideration.

39. No feature is envisaged for the translation of definition illustrations which are expected to be language-independent.

[Annex IV follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDE TO THE IPC*

INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (Version 2014)

15. ---

(a) the supplementary information in the IPC which includes classification definitions, chemical formulae and graphic illustrations (see paragraphs 44 to 51, below);

(b) ---

28. ---

Two-dot subgroup: ---

Three-dot subgroup: 1/032 ••• of hard-magnetic materials

Four-dot subgroup: ---

39. ---

(b) **Precedence** – A reference --- of subclass A61M).

Precedence references have different functions depending on the relationship between the affected places:

(i) A precedence reference to a place which is a subset of the place where the reference stands has the same function as a scope-limitation reference.

(ii) A precedence reference to a place which is not a subset of the place where the reference stands serves as a classification rule for combination-type subject matter.

Example (hypothetic):

10/00 Mechanical means (20/00, 30/00 take precedence)

20/00 Hydraulic means

30/00 Chemical means

– The precedence reference from 10/00 to 20/00 has the same function as a scope-limitation reference saying "(hydraulic means 20/00)". Since hydraulic means are a type of mechanical it excludes a subset of the matter covered by 10/00 and places it in a different place.

– The precedence reference from 10/00 to 30/00 does not exclude chemical means *per se*, since chemical means *per se* are not covered by 10/00. Its function is to exclude subject matter that would otherwise be classified in both 10/00 and 30/00, i.e. combinations of mechanical means and chemical means. It

has the same function as a scope-limitation reference saying "(mechanical means in combination with chemical means 30/00)".

(c) ---

Example: ---

eye surgery using laser	A61F 9/008
laser printers	B41J 2/44, B41J 2/455
laser heads for recording or reproducing	G11B 7/125

In the definitions, ---

40. ---

(f) Where two or ---.

Example: A01B 77/00 Machines for lifting and treating soil (biocides, pest repellants or attractants, plant growth regulators A01N 25/00-A01N 65/00; ---)

(g) ---

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION IN THE IPC

44. ---

Classification Definitions

45. Although the scope of classification places can be determined from classification titles with associated references and notes, which are present in the scheme of the Classification, it is recommended to use classification definitions for clarifying the exact boundaries of the subject matter appropriate for the classification place. Classification definitions provide supplementary information in respect of classification entries and serve for their clarification, but do not change the scope of classification entries.

Non-limiting References

48. Non-limiting references indicating the location of subject matter that could be of interest for searching are progressively being introduced into the classification definitions. They do not limit the scope of classification places with which they are associated and are intended only to facilitate the patent search.

63. The expression "per se" concerns only an item of subject matter itself as opposed to a combination of which that item is a part.

Examples: B22F 1/00
H04N 21/80

Special treatment of metallic powder; Metallic powders per se
 . Generation or processing of content or additional data by content creator independently of the distribution process; Content per se

92bis. In all sections of the IPC, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, the Periodic System of chemical elements referred to is the one with eight groups as represented in the table below. For example, group C07F 3/00 "Compounds containing elements of Groups 2 or 12 of the Periodic System" refers to the elements of columns IIa and IIb.

Period	1 IA	2 IIA	3 IIIB	4 IVB	5 VB	6 VIB	7 VIIB	8 [-----VIII-----]	9	10	11 IB	12 IIB	13 IIIA	14 IVA	15 VA	16 VIA	17 VIIA	18 VIIIA
1	H																	He
2	Li	Be											B	C	N	O	F	Ne
3	Na	Mg											Al	Si	P	S	Cl	Ar
4	K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	Ga	Ge	As	Se	Br	Kr
5	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	Tc	Ru	Rh	Pd	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Xe
6	Cs	Ba	Lanthanides	Hf	Ta	W	Re	Os	Ir	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Po	At	Rn
7	Fr	Ra	Actinides	Rf	Db	Sg	Bh	Hs	Mt	Ds	Rg	Cn		Fl			Lv	

Lanthanides	La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb	Lu
Actinides	Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No	Lr

99. ---

(d) ---

Example: In subclass A45B, groups 11/00 to 23/00 cover the various kinds of umbrellas, while group 25/00 covers details of umbrellas applicable to more than one kind of umbrella.

First Place Priority Rule

147. In some parts of the Classification, the first place priority rule is used. Where this rule applies, it is set out in a note of the type: "In this subclass / main group(s) / group(s), the first place priority rule is applied, i.e. at each hierarchical level, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, classification is made in the first appropriate place." For example, see the relevant notes in G03F 1/00 or H04W. According to this rule, a technical subject of the invention is classified by successively, at each indentation level, locating the first group covering any portion of the technical subject, until a subgroup is selected for classification at the deepest appropriate indentation level. When several particular technical subjects are disclosed in a patent document, the first place priority rule is separately applied to each of them.

Last Place Priority Rule

151. In some parts of the Classification the last place priority rule is used. Where this rule applies, it is set up in a note of the type: "In this subclass / main group(s) / group(s), the last place priority rule is applied, i.e. at each hierarchical level, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, classification is made in the last appropriate place." For example, see the relevant notes in A61K, C08G, C10M. According to this rule, a technical subject of the invention is classified by successively locating at each indentation level the last group covering any portion of the technical subject until a subgroup is selected for classification at the deepest appropriate indentation level. When several particular technical subjects are disclosed in a patent document, the last place priority rule is separately applied to each of them.

163. ---

For example (Section A):

A99Z 99/00 Subject matter not otherwise provided for in this section.

Each of the special residual subclasses has the following standard note:

"This subclass covers subject matter that (a) is not provided for, but is most closely related to, the subject matter covered by the subclasses of this section, and (b) is not explicitly covered by any subclass of another section."

[Annex V follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC

GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC

adopted by the Committee on Experts of the IPC Union at its thirty-seventh session and modified at its forty-fourth, forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions

2. Deleted.

37. Limiting references should always be presented both in the classification schemes and in the Definitions. There are two types of limiting references:

- **Scope-limitation references** exclude specified subject matter from the scope of a classification place, which subject matter would otherwise be covered by that place, and indicate the place(s) where this subject matter is classified.
- **Precedence references** are used when subject matter is classifiable in two places, or when different aspects of the subject matter are classifiable in two places, and it is desired that the subject matter should be classified in only one of those places.

37bis. Precedence references have different functions depending on the relationship between the affected places:

- A precedence reference to a place which is a subset of the place where the reference stands has the same function as a scope-limitation reference.
- A precedence reference to a place which is not a subset of the place where the reference stands serves as a classification rule for combination-type subject matter.

Example:

10/00	Mechanical means (20/00, 30/00 take precedence)
20/00	Hydraulic means
30/00	Chemical means

- The precedence reference from 10/00 to 20/00 has the same function as a scope-limitation reference saying “(hydraulic means 20/00)”. Since hydraulic means are a type of mechanical means the reference excludes a subset of the matter covered by 10/00 and places it in a different place.

- The precedence reference from 10/00 to 30/00 does not exclude chemical means *per se*, since chemical means *per se* are not covered by 10/00. It can therefore not be replaced by a reference saying “(chemical means 30/00)”, since this would be an informative reference. The function of the precedence reference from 10/00 to 30/00 is to exclude subject matter that would otherwise be classified in both places, i.e. combinations of mechanical means and chemical means. A scope-limitation reference with the same function as the precedence reference from 10/00 to 30/00 would have to be worded “(mechanical means in combination with chemical means 30/00)”.

38. Precedence references should only be used between places in the same subclass. As far as possible, scope-limitation references should be used instead of precedence references.

67. Revision of the IPC should as far as possible make use of the experiences and solutions of other existing classification schemes, such as CPC and FI.

122. When indicating the status of an entry during the working phase of a project, for example, when submitting a proposal, the following indications should be used:

- “N” for new entries;
- “C” for entries with modified file scope;
- “M” for groups or subclasses where changes do not impact the file scope;
- “D” for deleted entries;
- “U” for entries that are unchanged, but presented in order to show the hierarchy of the scheme to assist understanding.

In case of “N” or “C”, the entry will get a new version indicator.

123. For the purpose of establishing the Revision Concordance List (RCL), the rapporteurs appointed for the revision projects concerned should, at the end of each revision project, submit a proposal indicating how subject matter will be transferred between places in the IPC as a result of the approved amendments. This data should include the following:

- for new places: an indication of the source of the subject matter covered;
- for existing places whose file scope has changed: indication of the source of subject matter added to the file scope of the place or the destination of subject matter removed from the file scope of the place, when the place works as a destination of subject matter, a transfer from this place to the same place should also be indicated;
- for deleted places: an indication of the destination of the original subject matter.

125. The inclusion of a group as source of subject matter in the RCL indicates that documents classified in that group only, excluding its subgroups, should be reclassified. When subject matter of several consecutive groups is transferred to one and the same place, the first and the last groups transferred should always be indicated, even when the last group is a subgroup of the first.

APPENDIX I

4. Notes stating general priority rules (referred to under 1(e)(ii) and 1(e)(iii), above) should be presented as follows:

(a) First place priority rule:

“In this subclass / main group(s) / group(s), the first place priority rule is applied, i.e. at each hierarchical level, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, classification is made in the first appropriate place.”

(b) Last place priority rule:

“In this subclass / main group(s) / group(s), the last place priority rule is applied, i.e. at each hierarchical level, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, classification is made in the last appropriate place.”

[Annex VI follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

DEFINITION STATEMENT

Numbers on graphics should be avoided. However, if graphics are taken from a patent document, numbers should be removed only if this is a straightforward task. Attention should be also given to the clarity of the graphics.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CLASSIFICATION PLACES

When the scope of the subclass is generally affected by its relationships with other places, and those relationships cannot entirely be expressed in the form of references, then those relationships are stated here.

This section includes special rules of classification or guidance for defining the classification practice between different classification places, e.g. availability and usage of indexing subclasses or groups, multiple classification, relationships between general (function oriented) and application-oriented places, relationships between a residual place and other related places.

When the special rules of classification or guidance for defining the classification practice apply only within a subclass/group, then the specific section "SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION WITHIN THIS SUBCLASS/GROUP" should be used instead.

This section also includes more detailed explanation about the particular application of notes in certain technical areas, where, in the scheme, only the standardized wording of notes explaining the classification rules is presented.

Where the relationship between classification places is characterized by having a place which is considered to be a limiting reference as well as a non-limiting reference, this section should be used to explain the nature of this relationship to minimize any confusion when the specific reference sections of the definition do not fully clarify the relationship.

SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION WITHIN THIS SUBCLASS/GROUP

This section contains special classification rules, which apply only within the subclass/group and not between subclasses/groups. Examples of such classification rules are the last place or first place priority rules. Normal precedence rules are not considered as special, and therefore should not be listed here.

[End of Annex VI and of document]