

Special Union for the International Patent Classification (IPC Union) IPC Revision Working Group

Fifty-First Session
Geneva, April 15 to 19, 2024

REPORT

adopted by the Working Group

INTRODUCTION

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) held its fifty-first session in Geneva from April 15 to 19, 2024. The following members of the Working Group were represented at the session: Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Netherlands, (Kingdom of the), Norway, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, European Patent Office (EPO) (26). Hungary was represented as an observer. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report. There were 35 onsite participants and 86 remote participants at the session.

2. The session was opened by Mr. K. Natsume, Assistant General, Infrastructure and Platforms Sector, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), who welcomed the participants.

OFFICERS

3. Ms. A. Merle-Gamez (EPO) was elected as Chair and Ms. N. Beauchemin (Canada) as Vice-Chair at the last session of the Working Group for the IPC revision cycle of 2023-2024.

4. Mrs. N. Xu (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Working Group unanimously adopted the revised agenda, which appears as Annex II to this report.

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

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 Working Group (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 Working Group was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

7. The Working Group noted an oral report by the Secretariat on the fifty-fifth session of the IPC Committee of Experts (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) (see document IPC/CE/55/2).

8. The Working Group was informed that the Committee expressed its great satisfaction and appreciation with the work achieved by the Working Group in 2023, in particular with the improved efficiency in knowing the decreased average IPC-phase period. The Committee invited the Working Group to consider both quality and quantity aspects in its future revision process and invited a broader participation by offices in the revision under the IPC Revision Roadmap. During the discussion, the Committee noted that there were still about more than 200 pending subclasses with respect to the removal of non-limiting references (NLRs) exercise and invited the Working Group to seek a solution for dealing with the removal of NLRs from the scheme in a reasonable period, with regard to the ongoing revision projects.

9. It was noted that the Committee expressed its deep and sincere appreciation to all the EGST members, and in particular to the EPO, the leading office of the EGST, for the considerable outcome achieved up to now and encouraged in-person participation in the upcoming EGST meeting in view of the complexity of the subject matter and in-depth technical discussions foreseen. Meanwhile, electronic discussion between the physical meetings should also be enhanced in order to achieve the target of complete introduction into IPC 2026.01.

10. The Working Group also noted that the Committee decided on certain modifications to the *Guide to the IPC* and Guidelines for Revision of the IPC, which would be published by the International Bureau on the WIPO IPC website as “Version 2024”.

11. It was further informed that the Committee confirmed that the current revision practice for new emerging technologies (NETs) should continue when submitting new revision requests by using the template of Request for Revision of the IPC as presented in Appendix V in the Guidelines. . The International Bureau would take necessary steps to make those requests or projects visible on the IPC e-forum. A new project [CE 551](#) was created to consider potential objective criteria for identification of the NETs.

12. The Working Group further noted that the Committee decided to create a new project [CE 552](#), with China as Rapporteur, to further discuss on the representation of supplementary classification in the IPC.

REPORT ON THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE IP5 WG1-WORKING GROUP ON CLASSIFICATION

13. The Working Group noted an oral report by the United States of America, on behalf of the FiveIPOffices (hereinafter referred to as “the IP5 Offices”), on the twenty-sixth session of the IP5 Working Group on Classification (IP5 WG1).

14. It was highlighted that the twenty-sixth session of the IP5 WG1 was the first physical meeting since the Covid pandemic with hybrid component for possible participation remotely.
15. The IP5 Offices agreed to promote five IP5 projects (F projects) to the IPC phase, namely projects [F 189](#), [F 190](#), [F 191](#), [F 196](#) and [F 198](#), all of which were from the IPC Revision Roadmap candidate areas.
16. The IP5 Offices also agreed to promote six proposals to the IP5 F-phase (F projects).
17. It was noted that the USPTO, on behalf of the IP5 Offices, had posted to the IPC e-forum, under project [CE 456](#), the updated lists of all ongoing IP5 projects and proposals (see Annex 46 to project file) to avoid overlapping between the IPC revision requests and the IP5 ongoing revision activities.

REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON SEMICONDUCTOR TECHNOLOGY (EGST)

18. The Working Group noted an oral report by the EPO, the leading office of the EGST.
19. The Working Group noted that the tenth session of the EGST (EGST/2024/10) took place in Geneva during the week of April 8 to 12, 2024.
20. The Working Group also noted that it was an intensive and productive session, where all pending issues concerning subclasses H10P and H10W, as well as the issues within ongoing C projects [C 514](#), [C 515](#) and [C 516](#), relating to subclasses H10D H10F and H10H, had been discussed in depth.
21. It was also noted that the EGST agreed on an updated [CE 481](#) Roadmap (v3.2), which is found in Annex 482 of project [CE 481](#), where the third batch of C project candidates covering subclasses H10P and H10W was expected to be launched by the end of May 2025, targeting for IPC 2026.01.
22. It was further noted that, in view of the ongoing project [C 519](#) dealing with transfer-and RCL-related issues for main group H01L 25/00 and all its subgroups, reclassification in those areas by offices should be put on hold until project [C 519](#) is completed. The International Bureau was invited to introduce warnings in those areas concerned into the IPC Official Publication (IPC PUB).
23. The Working Group expressed its sincere appreciation to all the EGST members and, in particular, to the EPO, the leading office of the EGST, for the considerable outcome achieved up to now.

IPC REVISION PROGRAM

24. The Working Group discussed 25 revision projects, namely: [C 510](#), [C 514](#), [C 515](#), [C 516](#), [C 525](#), [C 527](#), [C 528](#), [C 529](#), [C 530](#), [F 140](#), [F 148](#), [F 155](#), [F 157](#), [F 170](#), [F 175](#), [F 177](#), [F 178](#), [F 180](#), [F 182](#), [F 184](#), [F 185](#), [F 186](#), [F 187](#), [F 188](#) and [F 198](#).
25. The Working Group approved 16 revision projects, two of which were approved with respect to scheme amendments, while it was confirmed that no definition was needed, namely projects [F 182](#) and [F 187](#), for which the scheme amendments would enter into force in IPC 2025.01, while nine out of 16 were approved with respect to scheme amendments only, namely projects [C 514](#), [C 515](#), [C 516](#), [C 525](#), [F 170](#), [F 175](#), [F 184](#), [F 185](#) and [F 188](#), which would enter into force in IPC 2025.01. Meanwhile, five out of 16 projects were completed with respect to definitions, which would be integrated into IPC 2025.01, namely projects [C 527](#), [C 528](#), [F 155](#), [F 157](#) and [F 178](#), while their scheme amendments had been completed by the Working Group at its previous sessions. As for project [F 157](#), the Working Group also approved

the scheme and definitions resulted from the removal of non-limiting references from subclass B65D, which would enter into force in IPC 2025.01.

26. The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in the corresponding projects on the e-forum. All decisions, observations and technical annexes are available in the “Working Group Decision” annexes of the corresponding projects on the e-forum.

27. The Working Group strongly recommended that Rapporteur-offices, Translator-offices and commenting offices use the “Working Documents” or “Preparatory Technical Annexes” prepared by the International Bureau when submitting proposals and comments during the IPC e-forum discussions.

IPC MAINTENANCE

28. The Working Group discussed 11 maintenance projects, namely: [M 621](#), [M 627](#), [M 633](#), [M 634](#), [M 812](#), [M 831](#), [M 832](#), [M 834](#), [M 835](#), [M 836](#) and [M 837](#).

29. The Working Group completed two maintenance projects, one of which scheme amendments would be integrated into IPC 2025.01, namely project [M 834](#), while the other of which scheme and definition amendments would be integrated into IPC 2025.01, namely project [M 832](#).

30. The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in the corresponding projects on the e-forum. All decisions, observations and technical annexes are available in the “Working Group Decision” Annexes of the corresponding projects on the e-forum.

31. The Working Group agreed to create the following four new revision projects and four new maintenance projects, namely:

- Electricity: [C 532](#) (Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 633](#);
 [C 533](#) (Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 633](#);
 [M 838](#) (Rapporteur – United States of America) – originating from project [C 530](#);
 [M 840](#) (Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 633](#);
- Chemistry: [C 534](#) (Rapporteur – United States of America) – originating from project [M 812](#);
 [C 535](#) (Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 812](#);
 [M 839](#) (Rapporteur – Republic of Korea) – originating from project [C 529](#); and
- T-independent: [M 841](#) (Rapporteur – Canada) – originating from project [M 621](#).

STATUS OF REMOVAL OF NLRs WITHIN M 200 TO M 500 PROJECTS

32. Discussions were based on a status report prepared by the International Bureau concerning maintenance projects for removal of NLRs from the scheme of the IPC (see Annex 50 to project file [WG 191](#)).

33. The Working Group noted that, among the 12 active projects, agreement had been or would soon be achieved for the following three projects during discussions on the e-forum and that these projects could be considered completed. The corresponding amendments to the scheme and definitions would thus be included in IPC 2025.01.

- [M 274](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass A47C (Rapporteur – Israel)
[M 277](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass F01B (Rapporteur – United States of America)

34. The Working Group took note on the instruction of the Committee concerning how to improve the working manner with respect to the task of removal of non-limiting references from the scheme, in view of the fact that more than 200 pending subclasses need to be dealt with.

35. The Secretariat indicated that an updated table summarizing the status of the removal of NLRs from the scheme would be posted to project file [WG 191](#).

UPDATES ON IPC-RELATED IT SUPPORT

36. The Working Group observed a brief update by the International Bureau on the IPCRMS and IPCWLMS status.

37. Offices were strongly encouraged to use the IPCRMS for drafting revision proposals and introducing comments. In order to promote a more enhanced use of IPCRMS, the International Bureau was willing to provide tailored training for Rapporteur/Translator-offices and commenting offices upon requests.

NEXT SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP

38. The Working Group, having assessed the workload expected for its next session, agreed to devote the first two and a half days to the electrical field, the following afternoon and the next morning to the chemical field and the last one and a half days to the mechanical field.

39. The Working Group noted the following tentative dates for its fifty-second session:

October 14 to 18, 2024.

CLOSING OF THE SESSION

40. The Chair closed the session.

41. *This report was unanimously adopted by the Working Group by electronic means on May 16, 2024*

[Annexes follow]