English Language
The upward curving lines of the World Intellectual Property Organization’s logo evoke human progress driven by innovation and creativity.

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Proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.37

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

## Summary

The Authority File Task Force proposes to revise WIPO Standard ST.37, a set of recommendations relating to the necessary elements of a patent authority file, as well as the allowable formats it can be provided in. The revision to WIPO ST.37 serves to provide clarifications to the current version 2.2 and support the implementation of the Standard by International Searching Authorities in their efforts to meet new requirements set out in the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Administrative Instructions.

## Background

The Authority File Task Force was restarted at the twelfth session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) after feedback from Member States regarding necessary updates to WIPO Standard ST.37 (see paragraphs 171 and 172 of document [CWS/12/29](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/cws/en/cws_12/cws_12_29.pdf)).

In addition, as the new PCT Regulations will enter into force on January 1, 2026, many new Offices are authoring their first authority file in order to comply with the new PCT Minimum Documentation requirements set out in the new Annex H of the PCT Administrative Instructions (see document [C.PCT 1660](https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/pct-system/docs-en-circulars-2024-1660.pdf)).

At its twelfth session, the CWS approved a revision of Task No. 66, whose description reads:

“*Encourage IP offices to provide their patent authority file in compliance with WIPO Standard ST.37 by providing any technical support or training necessary, based on available resources; and undertake any necessary revisions and updates to WIPO Standard ST.37*.”

In undertaking Task No. 66, the Task Force met for one hybrid-format workshop and two online Task Force meetings. During these sessions, the Task Force worked on a draft of revised WIPO ST.37 seeking to improve the readability of the Standard, clarify any inconsistencies and provide any missing recommendations. Further details regarding the work of the Task Force since the last session of the CWS are explained in document CWS/13/13.

## Proposed revision of WIPO Standard ST.37

The Authority File Task Force has prepared a proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.37 for consideration and, where appropriate, approval by the CWS. The proposal for the revision to WIPO ST.37 is reproduced as the Annex I to the present document, where strike-through text indicates a deletion and underlined text indicates an addition. Annex II to the present document is the updated XML Schema and Annex III to the present document is the updated DTD. Annex IV to the present document is the updated XML instance, Appendix to Annex III of ST.37 and Annex V to the present document is the updated XML instance, Appendix to Annex IV of ST.37.

The proposed changes to WIPO ST.37 agreed to by the Task Force can be summarized as follows:

1. Restructure the contents of the WIPO ST.37 Main Body into four new sections: the first relating to the mandatory elements of an authority file, the second relating to optional elements of an authority file, the third relating to the file format and naming conventions and the fourth relating to the implementation of WIPO ST.37;
2. Include a table of contents and details regarding the notations used throughout the WIPO ST.37, which are typically included for WIPO Standards;
3. Include additional definitions under paragraph 4, including definitions for text-searchable’ and ‘publication exception code’;
4. Update the list of allowable exception codes and improve the associated descriptions, to ensure consistent usage;
5. Remove the kind code as one of the sub-elements allowable under priority application identification, defined in new paragraph 19(c);
6. Remove ‘U’ as an allowable text-searchable indicator, defined in new paragraph 19(d);
7. Update Annex I to remove references to outdated exception codes;
8. Update Annex IV (DTD), and the related Appendix, to align it and remove any inconsistencies with Annex III (XML Schema);
9. Include a reference to the WIPO Authority File Portal Guidelines; and
10. Provide clarifications within the Standard and remove any inconsistencies within the text, where necessary.

In addition to those changes indicated above in paragraph 7, the Secretariat is further proposing the following changes:

1. Update the Standard to make the provision of a definition file mandatory;
2. Update Annex III (XML Schema) to identify the date range over which a particular publication number range is valid; and
3. Update Annex III (XML Schema) to include in the documentation at the top a list of changes made since version 2.2 of ST.37

## Versioning and transition requirements

The new revision to WIPO ST.37 is proposed as version 3.0. This is due to the changes introduced in both Annex III and IV which are not considered backwards compatible with version 2.2, and therefore this is considered a major update.

The CWS should note that when generating an authority file, or updating an existing authority file, any version of WIPO Standard ST.37 can be used. However, the International Bureau always recommends that the use of the latest version of any WIPO Standard is implemented. Version 3.0 will come into effect from the date of publication of the Standard. For those Offices wishing to have their patent and utility model collections included within PCT minimum documentation, either version 2.2 or 3.0 must be used.

Offices implementing WIPO Standard ST.37 who require assistance should refer to the Authority File Guidelines at: <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/standards/authority-file-guidelines> or alternatively contact the International Bureau at: [standards@wipo.int](mailto:standards@wipo.int).

*The CWS is invited to:*

1. *note the contents of this document and its Annexes;*
2. *consider and approve the proposal for revision to WIPO Standard ST.37 as indicated above in paragraphs 6 to 8 and detailed in the Annexes to the present document; and*
3. *approve the new version number as version 3.0 of WIPO Standard ST.37, as indicated in paragraph 9 above.*

[Annex I (revised WIPO Standard ST.37) follows]