

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

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REPORT ON TASKS NO. 62, NO. 63 AND NO. 65 BY THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the Digital Transformation Task Force Leader

SUMMARY

1. The Digital Transformation Task Force is responsible for Tasks No. 62, No. 63 and No. 65. This report provides the summary of the work carried out by the Task Force since the last session of the CWS.

BACKGROUND

2. The Digital Transformation Task Force was established at the sixth session of the CWS and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) were designated as the leader of this Task Force. The Task Force initially began its activities with Task No. 62, which was created and assigned to the Task Force at the same session of the CWS. The description of Task No. 62 reads as follows:

"Review WIPO Standards: ST.6, ST.8, ST.10, ST.11, ST.15, ST.17, ST.18, ST.63 and ST.81 in view of electronic publication of IP documentation; and propose revisions of those Standards if needed."

(See paragraphs 149 and 150 of document CWS/6/34.)

The aim of this Task is to modernize WIPO Standards, in particular those Standards that were created when intellectual property (IP) offices published documents on paper.

3. At the seventh session of the CWS, the Task Force presented a work plan setting out the steps for reviewing the WIPO Standards covered by Task No. 62 (see paragraphs 102 to 104 of document CWS/7/29). The Task Force planned to examine existing practices and identify

challenges associated with digital publication, establish the scope and criteria for the review, determine the order in which the relevant WIPO Standards should be reviewed, and prepare proposals for their revision.

4. At its seventh session, the CWS also reassigned the Task No. 63 to the Digital Transformation Task Force (see paragraphs 39 and 40 of document CWS/7/29). The description of Task No. 63 reads as follows:

“Develop visual representation(s) of XML data, based on WIPO XML Standards, for electronic publication.”

5. At its eighth session of the CWS, the Task Force presented a plan of prioritized order of WIPO Standards and Part 6 of WIPO Handbook revision (see paragraphs 7 to 10 of document CWS/8/18). At the same session the CWS approved the proposal for the revision of Task No. 62 description, which reads as follows:

“Review WIPO Standards: ST.6, ST.8, ST.10, ST.11, ST.15, ST.17, ST.18, ST.63 and ST.81, and WIPO Handbook Part 6, in view of electronic publication of IP documentation; and propose revisions of those Standards and materials if needed.”

(See paragraph 113 of document CWS/8/24.)

6. At its ninth session the CWS approved a survey questionnaire on Office practices for digital transformation and requested the Secretariat to conduct the survey (see paragraphs 94 and 95 of document CWS/9/25).

7. At its tenth session, the CWS approved the publication in the WIPO Handbook of the analysis of the survey on Office practices for digital transformation (see paragraph 109 of document CWS/10/22). Furthermore, the CWS agreed to create Task No. 65 and assigned it to the Digital Transformation Task Force. The Task Force was requested to give priority to this Task and to present a proposal for a new WIPO standard on the electronic exchange of priority documents at the eleventh session of the CWS. This Task was prompted by the entry into force of WIPO Standard ST.26, to ensure that sequence listings forming part of a priority document can be exchanged in their original format across IP offices. The description of Task No. 65 reads as follows:

“To prepare a proposal for recommendations on the data package format for the electronic exchange of priority documents and certified copies for patents, marks and industrial designs.”

(See paragraphs 23 and 25 of document CWS/10/22.)

8. At the same session, the CWS approved the addition of a new activity to the Task Force's work plan: the development of a common requirements specification for the Microsoft Word Open XML Document (DOCX) to eXtensible Markup Language (XML) conversion solutions (DOCX2XML converter) (see paragraph 106 of document CWS/10/22).

9. At its eleventh session, the CWS approved a revision to the description of Task No. 62 as follows:

“Review paper or image-based WIPO Standards in view of electronic filing and publication and exchange of IP documentation and propose revisions of those Standards or new recommendations if needed; and prepare a proposal for the recommendation on a common requirements specification for a DOCX to XML (DOCX2XML) converter.”

(See paragraph 58 of document CWS/11/28.)

10. At its twelfth session, the CWS noted that the Task Force had conducted a review and performed an analysis of the functionality of DOCX2XML converters in use at the USPTO and at the International Bureau. The analysis has been consolidated as a concise specification and posted for comment on the Task Force wiki. At the same session, the CWS encouraged IP offices that are currently using a DOCX2XML converter to share information with the Digital Transformation Task Force regarding the functionalities of their converter. (See paragraphs 69 to 71 of document CWS/12/29.)

11. At the same session, the CWS adopted WIPO Standard ST.92, which sets recommendations for the electronic exchange of priority patent documents. The CWS agreed to a tentative sunset date of June 30, 2027, and requested the Digital Transformation Task Force draft a survey questionnaire on preparedness for implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92. The CWS requested that the Secretariat issue a circular inviting IP offices to respond to the survey and that the Task Force report the survey results at the thirteenth CWS session. The CWS also noted that the International Bureau plans to update the WIPO Digital Access Service (WIPO DAS) to support WIPO Standard ST.92-compliant documents. This update was discussed with WIPO DAS Participating Offices, at the Working Group on the Digital Access Service for Priority Documents meeting, held from March 10 to 12, 2025. The outcome of the meeting was discussed at the Digital Transformation Task Force subsequent meetings. Following the adoption of the new Standard, the CWS approved the proposal for the revised description of Task No. 65 which reads as follows:

“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standard ST.92 and support IP offices for their implementation of the Standard before July 1, 2027.”

(See paragraphs 80 to 84 of document CWS/12/29.)

12. At its thirteenth session, the CWS noted the analysis of the survey on WIPO Standard ST.92 Implementation Plan (see paragraph 136 of document CWS/13/33). At the same session the CWS also approved the revision of WIPO Standard ST.92, version 2.0, which covers exchanging trademark and industrial design priority documents in WIPO Standard ST.92 format as well as patent priority documents. The CWS agreed on the sunset date, June 30, 2028 for the transition to electronically exchanging priority documents from the current practices and approved the proposed new description of Task No. 65 which reads as follows:

“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standard ST.92 and support IP offices for their implementation of the Standard before July 1, 2028.”

(See paragraphs 137 to 139 of document CWS/13/33.)

PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 62

13. The Digital Transformation Task Force held four meetings in 2026, focusing on three workstreams: the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92; the development of the functional specification for a DOCX2XML converter; and work on the visual representation of XML data for electronic publication. The progress made by the Task Force under Task No. 62 is summarized below.

14. Following the agreement reached at the tenth session of the CWS, the Task Force began developing a functional specification for a DOCX2XML converter to support the conversion of patent application documents from DOCX to XML. This work is drawn on a review of converters used by the USPTO, the International Bureau and other IP offices.

15. In parallel, in response to requests made by several delegations at the thirteenth session of the CWS, the Task Force considered the possible development or reuse of a common DOCX2XML conversion tool, together with requirements for producing consistent XML output.

These discussions included consideration of whether existing solutions, such as the WIPO DOCX2XML Converter for international applications under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (ePCT Converter), could be reused, shared or adapted. To advance this work, the Secretariat organized an information session in September 2026 for Offices interested in using an existing converter or exploring the possible development of a common tool. The International Bureau, National Institute of Industrial Property France (INPI France) and the USPTO presented their respective solutions and discussed the benefits and challenges of DOCX2XML conversion.

16. The Task Force will continue its discussions on common requirements and potential areas of collaboration relating to a shared DOCX2XML tool and its output. This work may include defining requirements for document and data structures; promoting consistency and interoperability between outputs; clarifying the respective roles of DOCX, XML and PDF within different legal and operational frameworks; and exploring how existing converter solutions could be shared with or adapted by interested IP offices. The Task Force will also continue to refine the DOCX2XML converter functional specification by incorporating common requirements and addressing output-related practices and challenges identified through information collected from Offices. Further details are provided in document CWS/14/6.

Potential challenges or dependencies

17. The Task Force notes that, although several Offices have expressed interest in reusing an existing DOCX2XML converter, any shared solution may need to be adapted to national legal, operational and technical requirements. Interested Offices would therefore need to identify the functionality they require and clarify their intended use of the tool. Differences in national practices, document-processing requirements and priorities may affect the scope and feasibility of adapting a common converter for broader use by Offices.

Work plan

18. The Task Force will continue its discussions on common requirements and potential areas of collaboration relating to DOCX2XML tools and their output. It will collect and analyze information from interested IP offices on their requirements, practices and implementation challenges; consider options for increasing consistency in document-conversion processes and outputs; and further refine the DOCX2XML converter functional specification to reflect the common elements identified.

PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 63

19. The Digital Transformation Task Force began discussions on the work Task No.63 concerning the “Visual representation of XML data for electronic publication”. Initial research on the feedback provided by Offices through CWS surveys conducted in previous years indicated that many Offices publish electronically in PDF format. Existing WIPO Standard ST.10, which focuses on paper-based publications, and WIPO Standard ST.33, which addresses facsimile- and image-based publications, are not suited to this purpose. The Task Force will begin to explore options for developing a PDF based WIPO standard for future consideration by the CWS.

Potential challenges or dependencies

20. No challenges or dependencies are reported at this time as the Task Force is to begin initial research and discussions.

Work plan

21. The Task Force Task Force will begin exploratory work to conduct an analysis of existing practices for electronic publication and based on the findings propose a recommendation on the format for electronic publication of patents.

PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 65

22. Following the approval of WIPO Standard ST.92, version 2.0, at the thirteenth session of the CWS, the Task Force shifted its focus from revising the Standard to coordinating its implementation. Its work focused on analyzing the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92 by Offices using WIPO DAS. The analysis confirmed that Offices use four principal access methods for exchanging priority documents through WIPO DAS: the legacy trilateral connection, secure file transfer, Representational State Transfer Application Programming Interface (REST API) version 1.0 and the WIPO DAS Office Portal. Each method entails different migration requirements.

23. During the Task Force meetings, a phased transition model was discussed. The first phase would begin when a small number of directly connected participants are ready to use REST API version 2, together with the upgraded WIPO DAS Office Portal. A second phase would cover the remaining directly connected Offices as their systems become ready. This approach is intended to support controlled testing and deployment in the production environment while taking account of differences in technical readiness. Offices were invited to confirm their preferred phase and target implementation dates to facilitate coordinated planning.

24. The implementation discussions clarified the transition arrangements for sending and receiving Offices. During the transition period, Offices that are not yet ready to process a priority document data package may continue to receive the legacy PDF through existing workflows. Where an original package contains supplementary content, such as sequence listings or three dimensional (3D) model or image, the original package may need to remain available separately. Conversely, where a sending Office is not yet ready to produce a compliant package, the exchange service may create a package containing the legacy PDF and the required index information.

25. The Task Force also clarified that the WIPO DAS Office Portal will remain available as an operational access mechanism. Portal uploads will be packaged in accordance with WIPO Standard ST.92, including where no supplementary content is provided. The Office Portal can therefore reduce the technical burden on Offices that do not plan to establish a direct API connection. Nevertheless, operational procedures must ensure that compliant packages can be produced, received and processed by the agreed end date.

26. The International Bureau informed the Task Force that a testing environment for REST API version 2.0 for ST.92-compliant priority document exchanges is available. The implementation analysis emphasized the importance of early bilateral testing, representative sample data and end-to-end scenarios covering both deposit and retrieval. Further details on the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92 by Offices are provided in document CWS/14/5.

Potential challenges or dependencies

27. The Task Force will continue to monitor implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92 and, where necessary, coordinate with the International Bureau. The implementation process may depend on Offices making following changes:

- Update their IT systems to generate packages that comply with the new WIPO Standard format;
- Implement WIPO DAS API version 2.0 as needed;
- Revise legal or administrative guidelines, where necessary; and
- Coordinate timely system updates and testing with the WIPO DAS team.

Work plan

28. The activities proposed for the Task Force under Task No. 65 for the coming year are as follows:

- Continue supporting implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92 by Offices.
- Ensure the possible revisions to the Standard may be considered based on feedback from IP offices and their implementation experience.
- Continue coordinating with the International Bureau on the WIPO DAS system updates and testing required to support the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.92.

29. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the content of the present document; and

(b) note the work plan as indicated in paragraphs 18, 21 and 28 above.

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