

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Fourteenth Session
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REPORT ON TASK NO. 41 FROM THE XML4IP TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the XML4IP Task Force Leader

SUMMARY

1. The XML4IP Task Force is responsible for developing and maintaining eXtensible Markup Language (XML) components that comprise WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.66, ST.86 and ST.96. During the bi-monthly meetings held by the Task Force, progress has been made on finalizing the patent record XML schema components and the centralized repository pilot. This document provides a summary of progress made by the Task Force since the last session of the CWS on Task No. 41.

BACKGROUND

2. The XML4IP Task Force, is a Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) Task Force who conducts a series of activities, known as its annual work plan, undertaken according to the description of the Task No. 41 which reads as follows:

"Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.66, ST.86 and ST.96; and support the implementation of those Standards."

It's activities are led by the International Bureau.

3. As WIPO Standards ST.36, ST.66 and ST.86 are infrequently updated, the Task Force's primary focus is on ensuring that WIPO Standard ST.96 continues to provide a library of XML schemas for use by IP offices in capturing and disseminating intellectual property data.

4. At its twelfth session, held in 2024, the CWS noted the release of version 8.0 of WIPO Standard ST.96, which included for the first time trademark and industrial design legal status schemas, and agreed that the copyright orphan work components should continue to be improved by the Task Force (see paragraphs 30, 111 and 112 of document [CWS/12/29](#)).

5. At its thirteenth session, held in 2025, the CWS noted the release of version 9.0, which included the Lisbon Express and Article 6ter publication data schemas and design patent document-level components, and the progress made on the development of the Patent Record schemas and launch of the SharePoint-based pilot for the centralized repository (see paragraphs 18 to 19 of document [CWS/13/33](#)).

6. At its thirteenth session, the CWS also noted a document presented by the International Bureau regarding the efforts by International Searching Authorities (ISAs) to implement the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) minimum documentation requirements (see document CWS/13/28). One of the requirements is to provide all new patent publications from January 1, 2026 onwards in a machine-readable format being compliant with either WIPO Standards ST.36 or ST.96, or in plain-text format. This has seen an uptake in the number of Offices who are implementing these two Standards which are managed by the Task Force.

7. The XML4IP Task Force started meeting monthly back in late 2019, in order to keep up with its large workload. However, at the end of 2025, the Task Force agreed that there was no longer the need to have monthly meetings and in 2026, the number of scheduled Task Force meetings was reduced by half.

OBJECTIVES

8. The CWS should note the following objectives were set out by the Task Force for completion in 2026:

- Finalize the patent record schemas;
- Publish the next version of WIPO Standard ST.96 incorporating these schemas amongst other improvements;
- Continue with the centralized repository pilot and determine its viability;
- Host an implementation workshop;
- Redesign `SearchReport` and `ExaminationReport` document-level schemas;
- Further improve the copyright orphan work metadata proposals for structured components `OrphanWorkKindCode` and `RightsHolderCategory`; and
- Determine future opportunities for development of WIPO Standard ST.96.

PROGRESS REPORT

9. The XML4IP Task Force is comprised of experts representing 33 Member States and Organizations, and the Task Force met 6 times online in 2026. As a reminder, this Task Force has "fast track" approval for any revisions to WIPO Standard ST.96, meaning that it has the ability to approve revisions to the Standard without explicit approval by the CWS.

Version 10.0

10. The XML4IP Task Force prepared a new major release of the Standard, version 10.0, and published it on April 1, 2026. This latest version of WIPO Standard ST.96 is available on the WIPO website here: <https://www.wipo.int/documents/d/standards/docs-en-03-96-01.pdf>.

11. Included within this release were the finalized patent record schemas as well as necessary updates to support Hague communications between the International Bureau and Offices. The finalization of the `PatentRecord` schemas is a significant achievement for the Task Force as these have been under discussion for more than a decade. A full set of release notes including tracked changes for all modified schemas can be found here: <https://www.wipo.int/standards/en/st96/v10-0/release-notes.html>.

Redesign of SearchReport and ExaminationReport

12. In version 3.0, the document-level component `SearchReport` was introduced and in version 4.0, the `ExaminationReport` document-level component was introduced. These two components were developed by the Task Force by mapping the relevant PCT forms to existing components in WIPO Standard ST.96 and developing new components where they did not exist. As a result, there is a tight coupling between the PCT forms and the WIPO Standard ST.96 document-level components. Some Task Force Members have indicated that this makes it difficult to implement either for national-phase reports. In addition, the International Bureau is only aware of one Office who is implementing `SearchReport` and no Offices who have implemented `ExaminationReport`. As such, the International Bureau proposed redeveloping these components so that they are better suited to capture data from search and examination reports at national, regional and international levels.

13. In order to better understand Office needs in terms of these two document-level schemas, the International Bureau issued a survey to Task Force members, asking for feedback on whether they thought the existing definition could be utilized by their Office and if not, possible improvements. Results indicated that the existing components were not fit for purpose and that significant re-development was required.

14. Following this survey, three Task Force member Offices nominated themselves to support the re-development activities for the `SearchReport` document-level schemas. At least one round of discussion was conducted with discussions to continue in 2027. In undertaking these re-development activities, these Offices hope to achieve the following objectives:

- Allow the application of `SearchReport` to national-level and regional-level reports;
- Improve the definition for `ReferenceCitation`, by ensuring that there is a one-to-one mapping between existing WIPO Standards ST.36 and ST.96 components and producing new WIPO Standard ST.96 components if these are missing; and
- Provide a modular list of citations that can be referenced both by `ExaminationReport` and `PatentPublication` components.

WIPO Standard ST.96 Workshop

15. In June 2026, the International Bureau hosted an online workshop, where Offices who had experience in implementing WIPO Standard ST.96 shared their experience with participants. The provisional program is available on the event page at: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=91249. The Workshop aimed at sharing experiences in implementing WIPO Standard ST.96, conducting knowledge transfer to Offices who were interested in implementing WIPO Standard ST.96 and would benefit from the insights of these Offices.

16. At the conclusion of the Workshop, the International Bureau presented several common implementation issues raised by Offices and the potential support that could be offered for Offices to overcome them. This included the production of an improved data dictionary and of a developer toolkit, and raising awareness activities around the [WIPO Handbook on Intellectual Property Information and Documentation](#). It was proposed by the International Bureau that the XML4IP Task Force consider which of these proposals could be added as action items in the Task Force work plan for 2027.

Centralized repository pilot

17. The first proposal for a "centralized repository" was presented at the seventh session of the CWS (see Annex II of document [CWS/7/3 Rev.](#)). The centralized repository was proposed by the Task Force as a centralized location where Offices' customized WIPO Standard ST.96 schemas would be hosted by the International Bureau. A set of requirements were prepared and initial investigations into the use of a git repository were made. In recent years the provision of this centralized repository has not been considered a priority.

18. However, with the new PCT Regulations coming into force on January 1, 2026, there has been an increase in the number of Offices implementing WIPO Standards, including WIPO Standards ST.36 and ST.96. This has raised the priority of implementing this type of repository. As such, this item was presented for discussion at the Joint API/XML4IP Task Force meeting in 2025 and participants agreed on the need to provide this platform, and to launch a pilot based on an external SharePoint site. Details regarding the types of files which could be uploaded, the provision of guest accounts and how to capture common changes across different Office-customizations could be resolved during the pilot.

19. The centralized repository pilot was conducted from July 2025 until June 2026. During this period, the International Bureau created accounts for the four Offices participating and set their access permissions. The Offices participated by uploading their customized schemas and confirming which files they had access to. However, during the Pilot, a new policy regarding the use of external SharePoint site was established at the International Bureau which restricted the downloading of files hosted on external SharePoint sites, such as the centralized repository. Without the ability to download customized schemas, the International Bureau could not deliver on the original aim of this platform and so made the decision to conclude the pilot.

20. The Task Force will now need to consider alternative platforms as a solution for the centralized repository.

Copyright orphan works metadata

21. Copyright orphan work schemas were first introduced into WIPO Standard ST.96 in version 4.0. Following their inclusion, the Task Force planned for the enhancement of two particular WIPO Standard ST.96 components: `RightsHolderCategory` (category which identifies the type of rights holder) and `OrphanWorkKindCode` (code list which identifies a kind of orphan work). (See paragraphs 86 and 92 of document [CWS/8/24.](#))

22. At its ninth session held in 2021, the CWS considered a draft working paper presented by the International Bureau which proposed providing a structured means of categorizing rights holder roles and creative works as is currently captured in WIPO Standard ST.96 components: `cpy:RightsHolderCategory` and `cpy:OrphanWorkKindCode`. The main aim of this paper was to improve the interoperability of WIPO Standard ST.96 with other industry data standards around the world, which are developed or used by cultural industries, collective management organizations (CMOs) as well as with national and university libraries. The CWS invited its Members to comment on the proposals for copyright orphan work metadata, as reproduced in the Annex to document CWS/9/4, and noted that the International Bureau would present the final proposals for the categories being proposed for consideration at its tenth session. (See paragraphs 21 to 24 of document [CWS/9/25.](#))

23. Since the original working paper, there has been two rounds of consultation with CWS Members and Observers (via circulars [C.CWS 156](#) and [C.CWS 171](#)) and one round of public consultation at the request of the CWS to gather feedback from international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) representing creative industry stakeholders. Following each round of consultation, the draft working paper was improved to account for the feedback provided.

24. An improved draft was presented at the eleventh session of the CWS, held in 2023. At the session, the CWS supported the International Bureau hosting an online workshop for copyright metadata experts and other interested parties to better understand the need for this standardization and to collaborate on improving the improved draft. The Copyright Orphan Works and WIPO Standards Workshop took place virtually on May 7, 2024 and was moderated by Ms. Margaret Haig from the United Kingdom IP Office (UK IPO). Several Organizations presented how they used orphan works including: UK IPO, Korean Copyright Commission (KCC), Fonoteca Nacional Mexico, European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the International Bureau. All presentations indicated that they were at various stages of development of a copyright orphan work platform or database and welcomed standardization to support these activities. Participants noted that the session was very useful in better understanding the need for standardization but there was no agreement on next steps (see paragraph 8 to 9 of document [CWS/12/21](#)).

25. At its twelfth session, held in 2024, the CWS requested that the XML4IP Task Force continue its discussion on the proposals or start a discussion on an alternative forum (see paragraphs 111 to 112 of document [CWS/12/29](#)). Following this request, the Task Force included a related work item in its 2026 work plan. The International Bureau noted that the experts, who were members of the Task Force, were industrial property and IT experts and that the membership would need to be expanded if the Task Force was to continue to improve the draft working paper.

26. Following discussions amongst the Task Force members since the last session of the CWS, the Task Force agreed to conclude that the project be held in abeyance until a new request or a proposal will be submitted to improve the two components in WIPO Standard ST.96.

CHALLENGES

27. As has been stated previously, and is the case for many of the CWS Task Forces, there is a lot of work to be done by Members of the Task Force and limited resources available. The International Bureau, as Task Force leader, notes that items in the work plan approved at the beginning of each calendar year are often not completed between sessions of the CWS. Specific challenges for the Task Force include:

- Difficulty in implementing WIPO Standards ST.36 and ST.96 reported by Offices. The International Bureau can only provide limited support;
- Large number of different versions are available to be implemented, where some Offices implement different versions for different IP rights;
- Very small representation of copyright experts in the Task Force;
- Large number of topics to manage during discussions, with little progress made, resulting from the high work-load for participants; and
- Lack of feedback from Task Force for new discussion rounds for schemas under development.

28. The International Bureau notes that the most successful development activities were those where Task Force member Offices nominated themselves to support the work, as was done for both the development of the alloy data XML schemas and more recently the search report schemas.

WORK PLAN

29. The XML4IP Task Force considers the following action items for 2027 work plan, among others:

- Items from the WIPO Standard ST.96 Implementation Workshop;
- Improvement of the SearchReport schema, including the improvement of ReferenceCitation and ExaminationReport schema;
- Alternative platform to implement centralized repository; and
- New schema components for common use.

30. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the contents of the present document, including the challenges and future work plan of the Task Force;

(b) encourage its Members and Observers to contact the International Bureau if interested in joining the Task Force; and

(c) encourage its Members and Observers to provide feedback to the International Bureau on their experience in implementing WIPO Standard ST.96.

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