

# WIPO



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### ASSEMBLY

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#### PCT INFORMATION SYSTEMS REPORT

*Document prepared by the International Bureau*

#### INTRODUCTION

1. It is recalled that over two years ago the PCT Information Systems Division (PCT IS) initiated an approach aimed at re-orienting the IMPACT Project. In order to prepare itself for the new challenges ahead this approach permitted the rapid deployment of appropriate technologies according to the business priorities set by the PCT and many achievements were made in this respect, as further detailed below. However, given the degree of functionality developed since then, combined with a relatively limited resource base, a continuation of this approach would no longer be appropriate, as it would not permit the establishment of industry standard support structures for the information systems that have been developed.

#### CURRENT SITUATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2. During the past two years, the information system tools at the disposal of the PCT have radically changed. The list of achievements is as follows: PCT COR (specific and systematic communication of PCT documentation), the RMI document service (a bespoke system for the retrieval of documents), E-dossier (document storage), E-viewer (document viewer), Pdoc-Wizard (automated priority document processor), PCT EDI (electronic document interchange), PatentScope, PCT OCR (Optical Character Recognition for internal and publication purposes, in batch and on demand), launch of the OCR "Back-file" Project, Patent Information services, Patent Statistic services, IP Statistics, Electronic-publication, EDI Cooperation Plans, JP SPIDI, KR SPIDI, a limited Bibliographic Administrative function (in a working prototype for evaluation by the PCT) and a percentage of documentation arriving in

electronic form greater than 50% since the European Patent Office started sending scanned record copy data by PCT EDI on May 15, 2006. The majority, if not all of the above, was achieved following a non-standard approach (at least from the classic IT Project Management perspective).

3. As indicated above, the re-oriented approach to IMPACT was multi-dimensional. The main thrust was first, to provide technologies that would enable the operation to become paperless, secondly, to integrate progressively the necessary bibliographic data and publication functions and, lastly, to encourage the electronic transmission of documentation to the International Bureau (IB). It was also necessary for the Information Technology (IT) staff to re-establish themselves as credible IT services providers. There were very limited resources available to address needed externally facing IT functions such as patent statistics, patent information and electronic publication.

4. The approach was non-standard, and involved the acceptance of associated risks. Classic IT procedures and change management practise were foregone so that solutions could be most nimbly provided in a rapid, time - and resource - efficient manner. This resulted in a situation where system developers were operating information systems rather than developing new functions because there was insufficient time to fully commission our operational systems with appropriate documentation and repeatable automated procedures. However, PCT buy-in was indeed achieved and trust in the provided IT services was re-established.

#### CONSTRAINTS

5. The achievements listed above were achieved with a limited resource base. A judicious mix of staff and consultant resources was managed to strike the appropriate balance between cost and delivery. Resource allotment to PCT IS in the 2006-2007 biennium has remained constant, with little flexibility to accelerate the functional delivery of the revised approach, or to address a number of new requirements being expressed by the PCT and its stakeholders.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES IN 2006-2007

6. PCT IS, in cooperation with the PCT, has conducted a review and prioritization exercise, resulting in a decision to continue to integrate progressively bibliographic data functions in the e-dossier environment, whilst consolidating the system functions already deployed. A brief description of the main activities to be undertaken is as follows:

(a) Consolidation

There is an urgent need to consolidate current systems and infrastructure so that systems operation is stabilized and maintenance requires less programmer intervention. These activities include extending the core applications (PCT e-dossier, PCT EDI, data reception and PCT COR) to use common software architecture and to handle more administration functions, a modernization of the data storage policy and the implementation of backup and disaster recover mechanisms that better address the IT environment now in use for the PCT. Benefits of the consolidation activities would be improved systems availability, and the systems would become more reliable and programmer resource usage would become more efficient;

(b) Integration

Completion of the development of the “bibliographic data administration” system has progressed to the point where it is now a working prototype that has been made available for user feedback. The continued development of this system would ultimately enable the decommissioning of the mainframe systems (CASPIA and CASPRO) and the delivery of an environment where both image and bibliographic functions operate within the e-dossier, and where the International Bureau as receiving office (RO/IB) processing can also be integrated. By adopting a fully integrated IT environment, the PCT would see an important return in the flexibility that such an environment offers, where data and services can be made available both inside and outside the International Bureau, in a more streamlined fashion.

## ACTIVITIES TO BE DEFERRED

7. The following is a brief description of the type of activities that have not yet been explicitly resourced, and therefore may be deferred due to limited resource availability. PCT IS, in cooperation with the PCT, expects that a limited number of these may also be started within the biennium, depending on the progress made with the consolidation and integration activities and its impact on the availability of resources.

(a) New PCT and Patent services

There continues to be strong support for the introduction of various new services, including secure file inspection (for applicants and offices), the adoption of Trilateral Document Access (TDA) technology for our data exchanges with the Trilateral Offices, the integration of translation tools, and the extension of the e-dossier and publication systems to process and eventually publish electronic filing data in its original format (full XML processing). In addition, revisiting IPDL standards initiative would enable the integration of search results from other patent databases into the PatentScope interface. Moreover, there is a possibility that the International Bureau’s Member States may agree to launch a priority document exchange system (document A/42/5);

(b) New Patent Information services

There also continues to be a strong requirement to further enrich the International Bureau’s contribution to the provision of PCT and Patent Information. The catalog of enhanced patent information functions includes the creation of a complete set of publication history events to track all PCT post-publication changes as well as a dynamic XML-based front page functionality extending of the scope of patent information collection and dissemination under the PCT EDI cooperation plan exercise (statistics, national phase entry data, unpublished priority documents, and national patent data in general), increasing the quality and usability of PCT electronic publication and search data through improved quality assurance and more granular XML tagging of PCT data, the creation and dissemination of a PCT back-file data product, integration of XML full-text into Rule 87 communications and make it more accessible to third parties, the simplification of Article 20 communications, the implementation of a natural language search interface in PatentScope and elsewhere, and the further automation of the of IPC reclassification process.

8. All the activities listed above that are expected to remain unaddressed during the current biennium will be the subject of a detailed submission for additional resources by PCT IS and the PCT as part of the preparation of the 2008-2009 Program and Budget.

9. *The Assembly is invited to note and to make comment on, the contents of this document.*

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