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PROPOSALS FOR METHODS OTHER THAN INFORMATION MEETINGS AND TEST SEARCHES

Addendum to Document PCT/TCO/SS/I/7

Document PCT/TCO/SS/I/7 contains the replies which had been received by the International Bureau, before October 14, 1971, to its Circular No. C.1221 of March 24, 1971. A further reply, that of the Patent and Registration Office of Sweden, was received on October 22, 1971. The text of that reply, dated October 10, 1971, reads as follows:

"The Swedish Patent Office hereby acknowledges the receipt of circular No 1221 of March 24, 1971, in which the members of the Standing Subcommittee are invited to make concrete proposals for methods to achieve uniform standards among the Prospective Searching Authorities.

"At the First Session of the PCT Interim Committee for Technical Cooperation (February 1971), the Committee discussed the two methods proposed, namely test searches and information meetings on searching techniques.

"Test searches, which were proposed by the German Patent Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, would serve merely as an instrument to survey the quality of the search carried out by the different Prospective Authorities. The method would probably involve much

labour and relatively high costs, as it includes the "construction" of model applications, as well as the carrying out of the search and the evaluation of the results. The primary advantage of the method would be that it would give a concrete conception of the degree of conformity of searches at the different Prospective Authorities.

"If the cooperation is limited to a test search the objectives set out probably would not be achieved, but in combination with some other method of information exchange between the examiners of the Prospective Authorities the method proposed by the German Patent Office would serve a useful purpose. A test search also seems to be an appropriate way to obtain information which can reveal the more significant differences in searching techniques used by the different Prospective Authorities. This information could further serve as a basis to define the scope of the method to be used in combination with the test search.

"The second method, mentioned above, i.e. information meetings on searching techniques, which could serve as a valuable complement to a test search, would more readily offer the opportunity for the examiners taking part in these meetings to exchange information concerning searching techniques of all the different Prospective Authorities. However, each meeting should be confined to a specific branch of technology in order to offer the possibility of a thorough penetration of the problems that are specially connected with the search into the state of art of that particular branch. This scheme would demand several meetings to cover the whole technological field, whereby the method might involve high costs.

"Whether the proposed information meetings could be replaced by an exchange of information in written form is questionable, as such a method would not give the same freedom of communication.

"A method to be considered in this context is an exchange program of examiners as proposed by the Swedish delegation at the February meeting. According to this proposal examiners from each one of the Prospective Authorities should visit the other Authorities, where they can follow and possibly take an active part in the searching process. Through this method the exchanged examiners would receive an unbiased impression of the techniques in use and so in a simple way recognize the differences

between the searching techniques they are studying and those employed in their home offices. It would also offer them an opportunity of studying in detail what they consider to be the more intricate problems of the search.

"Upon returning to their home offices the examiners should discuss with their superiors the impressions and opinions received during the period of exchange, after which a report on searching techniques and possible proposals of how to optimize them should be forwarded to the International Bureau to enable the Bureau to consider the proposals and elaborate an advisory report to be discussed by the Interim Committee.

"The expenditure caused by this method, which should be considered as a substitute for the proposed information meetings, is partly dependent upon the period of time assigned for the exchange and can thus probably be agreed upon, considering the possible advantages and experiences this approach may provide for the International Bureau and the Prospective International Searching Authorities."

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