

ePCT for New Users (Part I)

08 & 10 March 2022

Q&A Report

No.	Questions	Answers
1	If I move from company A to B, can I use the same WIPO Account?	Yes, before you leave company A, you should remove your access rights to IAs managed by this company and then update your contact details in your Account. You can simply modify your email address and contact details under "My WIPO Account". The only field which cannot be changed is your username.
2	In case the person that opened a generic WIPO Account for the company and has now left, how can we recover the account of the firm?	<p>If you have access to the generic email address associated with the WIPO Account you can retrieve the username and reset the password and then contact us to remove the strong authentication in order for you to reset new ones after you answered some security questions. If not a new WIPO Account should be created.</p> <p>Please note that the International Bureau's security/confidentiality approach for ePCT with strong authentication is that WIPO accounts should be created in the name of individuals (not entities) and that each WIPO account must be authenticated with a strong authentication method.</p> <p>The recommended procedure in companies/law firms is for each person to create their own account in their own name and to authenticate it with their own strong authentication method. Once each person has an account in their own name and associated with a strong authentication method, they can establish eHandshakes between their accounts in order to indicate to the system that the accounts are associated. It is then recommended that you also set up default access rights on the eOwnership screen, where you can specify to which eHandshake associates access rights will be automatically attributed when you are confirmed as the first eOwner for an application. The same default list of associates can also be selected at the time of drafting a new application in ePCT-Filing, giving them access to the application even before it's filed.</p> <p>These instructions are recommended for ensuring the optimum level of security and integrity when using ePCT.</p>
3	What if our firm will not set up WIPO Account?	If no WIPO Account is created, the firm will not have access to ePCT and WIPO's online services. Refer to the Getting started instructions.

4	Can I link my firm's WIPO Account to my WIPO Current Account for payment of fees?	<p>A WIPO Account has to be associated with your existing Current Account at WIPO. Once done, login will be synchronized. The next time you access, you will only need to enter your WIPO Account username and password. Please refer to WIPO Current Account web page for detailed instructions.</p> <p>WIPO Current Account is only selectable as a payment method if the applicable currency as selected at the time of filing is Swiss francs (CHF).</p>
5	Can an assistant/paralegal submit forms via ePCT on behalf of the attorney/agent?	Yes, you can upload/submit documents using ePCT as long as the document is signed by someone having authority to sign on behalf of the applicant, for example the agent.
6	For the signed document, are you talking of an electronic signature (with certificate), or of signatures like "/ me /" in the uploaded document?	Text signature is when you sign with "/" that we also call text string signature. There is no electronic signature with a digital certificate using ePCT when using the upload of documents feature. There is one exception with RO/KR for the RO/101, which can be digitally signed with a WIPO digital certificate.
7	Does WIPO accept a digitally signed priority document via ePCT?	A priority document in PDF format can be submitted to the International Bureau using the "Upload Documents" function in ePCT with or without strong authentication provided that the earlier application in PDF format is digitally signed with the certificate of one of the issuing Offices listed here . Currently the Offices issuing digitally signed priority documents in PDF format are AT, BR, CZ, FR, IT, PL, PT and US.
8	Is it possible to add Ukraine as country to file an application online?	Currently Ukraine does not accept ePCT-Filings. PCT Applications can be filed on paper only. However, you can file with the receiving Office of the International Bureau (RO/IB) using ePCT.
9	Is there any rule/ act book for submitting PCT application where it has some rules for specification, drawings and abstract or any other documents. Just like we have Patents act in India.	You can refer to the PCT Applicant's Guide – Chapter 5 "Filing an International Application".
10	Why should I use the ePCT instead of the EPO online filing?	When using ePCT, your application is available in your Workbench as soon as the application is filed there is no need to wait that the application is received at the IB from the competent receiving Office. Therefore, eOwnership is automatic. Possibility to share the access rights with other colleagues prior or after filing. ePCT has the best-in-class validations against our internal system.

11	Can you use an ePCT generated Request form via USPTO?	It's possible to create a data package which includes the request form (PCT/RO/101) in ePCT to be uploaded afterwards to USPTO. Please refer to Filing at RO/US using ePCT in combination with EFS-Web
12	If we use ePCT to file with RO/US, which filing date does a patent application receive? Do we "loose" a day for filing by using ePCT instead of the USPTO?	As of today, 77 receiving Offices accept ePCT-Filings. With 74 of them, it's direct filing and the other 3 Offices (US, IL, CA) it is a two-steps process. The date of receipt of the application will be the international filing date if there is no article 11 defects when it's direct filing. For US, IL and CA the date of receipt and international filing date if there is no article 11 defects will be the date when the .zip data package created in ePCT is uploaded to the filing system of the receiving Office, for example EFS-Web, USPTO Patent Center. The receipt time of the application depends on the time zone of each receiving office. As long as you upload your .zip file on the same day to the filing system of USPTO, you will not loose a day.
13	Can an applicant file a PCT application using ePCT directly or you'd need an agent/attorney? Or is an agent mandatory?	It depends on each receiving Office requirements. For RO/IN in your case "Is an agent required by the receiving Office? No, but an address for service in India is required." This information can be found in Annex C of the PCT Applicant's Guide .
14	If there was a technical problem with filing with the IB, do we receive a formal notice and retain the IA filing date?	ePCT is monitored 24x7 and down times are extremely exceptional. Furthermore, in case there is a technical issue with the main server a back-up server is available to receive your application. If ePCT is completely down for a long period, you will be excused due to the unavailability of the system (PCT Rule 82quater). However please note that the priority time limit is prescribed in the Paris Convention instead of the PCT, so PCT Rule 82quater does not apply to it. Lastly in the event that the ePCT system is unavailable and users are not able to log in, it is possible to upload PDF documents and file a PCT application to the IB using the contingency upload service .
15	How can we update the agent reference number after the draft IA has been saved in ePCT?	The first part on the draft application screen is the basic information of the draft including the agent's file reference. On the right hand side, the pencil icon is the editing function. You can then update the reference number. If you refer to a draft application for RO/US and you have already downloaded the application package, it's no longer possible to edit the draft. You can clone the existing draft and then in the new draft, you can edit the reference number.
16	Is the complete specification file to be in one file or can be in modular and integrated multiple files?	In ePCT, the specification can be attached as separate files for description, claims, abstract and drawings (if any) or as a single specification with or without drawings.

17	Please clarify, if the description, claims and drawings are in pdf adobe format, is this acceptable for ePCT?	<p>Any converter tool which can generate PDF documents can be used. However PDF documents used in PCT electronic filing must meet certain requirements with regard to electronic properties and the Regulations under the PCT.</p> <p>Whether attaching application documents to a new application or uploading files to an existing one, it is strongly recommended to generate text-based PDFs, such as documents created in MS Word (or other word processor) and then printed/saved/converted to PDF, so that the text can be processed by the International Bureau.</p> <p>PCT Rule 11.13 'Special Requirements for Drawings' is also applicable in electronic filing. It states for example that "Drawings shall be executed in durable, black, sufficiently dense and dark, uniformly thick and well-defined, lines and strokes without colorings."</p> <p>PDF documents must be compliant with Annex F of the Administrative Instructions under the Patent Cooperation Treaty. This means that PDF documents should be created with the following specifications in order to ensure good quality when the IB converts them to image format for publication purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page size should be A4. • Portrait orientation (not landscape). • Black and white (not greyscale). An error message referring to the documents not being black and white or containing greyscale can appear if drawings contain colored/shaded areas, even if they are black and white. In a text document, formatting in bold or a hyperlink in color may also trigger such a validation message. • PDF version 1.4 compatible (this can be modified in the Settings of PDF tools). • Resolution 300 dpi (this can be modified in the Settings of PDF tools). • All fonts must be embedded and licensed for distribution. Fonts can be embedded at the time of conversion to PDF; please refer to the instructions of your PDF tool. Fonts can also be embedded already in the original document. For example in MS Word 2007-2010: File > Options> under Save, check the box 'Embed fonts in the file'. Then, save the document and proceed to PDF conversion. <p>If ePCT detects that a PDF document does not comply with the above, it prompts the filer to use the dedicated 'View document as it will rendered at the IB' function to check how the document will look after it has been rendered for processing and international publication.</p> <p>Tip: Watch the video on how to create PDF documents for PCT filing purposes.</p>
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18	Would a black and white document with 600 dpi be accepted?	We recommend a resolution of 300 dpi (this can be modified in the Settings of PDF tools). However, if you use 600 dpi and the quality of the rendered document at the IB is good enough, you can submit your document.
19	What is the maximum size of the pdf document that can be uploaded, particularly in the drawing section?	<p>The maximum size for PDF and any other document format to be uploaded in ePCT is 20MB. To make sure that a PDF document is in compliance with the requirements for PCT electronic filing, we suggest that you try to convert/reconvert the document to PDF in black and white (and 300dpi) and then to see how large the resulting PDF document is.</p> <p>If a PDF document is truly black and white, then it would have to contain a very significant amount of pages to exceed 20MB. An average application document, in A4 size, black and white with 300 dpi, is typically 50KB. Color (and grey scale) documents can easily be larger than 20MB, but PCT e-filing does not provide for colour documents.</p> <p>Upon filing a new application in ePCT, if the specification is over 20MB, we recommend that you upload the description, claims, abstract and drawings as separate files using the option ""PDF format - separate files for description, claims, abstract, drawings"" instead of ""PDF format - single specification"". So the total capacity can be increased to 80MB.</p>
20	Will uploading pre-conversion files at e-PCT filing avoid receiving Defects notice related to Drawings given the rendering of the drawings at WIPO convert the pdf drawings into unclear / fuzzy drawings?	Pre-conversion file will not prevent from receiving an invitation to correct for the drawings under PCT Rule 26 , however it's a safeguard to conversion errors in fully electronic applications, the inclusion of "pre-conversion documents" is strongly recommended if the receiving Office accepts this option. These are the original Word document(s) and any drawing file in their format prior to conversion to PDF or XML. In the event that some of the application data is not legible in the PDF or XML document, the International Bureau will have the original correct documents and will be able to determine where the error was introduced. In ePCT-Filing 'Documents in pre-conversion format' are attached on the 'Accompanying items' screen. This zip file should contain the original word processing files making up the international application prior to their conversion to PDF.

21	How long are draft applications saved in ePCT before filing?	There is no deadline to keep a draft application in your Workbench. However you have to take into consideration the deadline to file that draft application according to your priority date in case you have one.
22	Are you able to save a draft application before filing so that I can access at a later date to file? How do I do this?	Yes, it is possible to save a draft and come back to it later, or another day. To do so click "Save", it will also run the validations report. Then your saved draft new IA will be available in your Workbench and you can reopen and submit it when ready.
23	Can a user of a firm create a new IA and save as draft, and then be filed by a different user (working at the same company) at a later stage?	Yes, if you share access rights of the draft application with your colleague and make that person as eOwner or eEditor, that person will be able to file.
24	If I prepare the application as a paralegal, can the responsible attorney see and sign the application under his/her own account? Can the accounts be connected?	Yes, you may prepare a draft application in ePCT and share access rights with the attorney in order for that person to review and sign the request form. To do so you should exchange an eHandshake in order to share access rights afterwards.
25	When creating a new IA, does the attorney who signs automatically have access rights? Or would they have to be added to have access rights.	You need to share access rights of your draft application with the Attorney in order for him to sign the request form. The first step is to establish an eHandshake with the Attorney, then you can share access rights.
26	What corrections you can make using the option "Same Day Corrections"?	After an international application has been filed using ePCT, and provided that the RO to which the application was submitted is an Office to which documents can be uploaded using ePCT, you can submit 'same day corrections' up until midnight in the time zone relevant to the receiving Office in order to add documents that were omitted at the time of filing and which affect the according of the international filing date, such as description, claims, abstract, drawings, sequence listing and pre-conversion files.
27	Can we also make changes to bibliographic details?	Same day corrections only apply to the description, claims, abstract, drawings, sequence listing and pre-conversion files. For updating bibliographic data such as applicant's name, address etc, a request under Rule 92bis should be submitted to the International Bureau using the appropriate action after filing.
28	I started to file an application using ePCT but decided to wait until I had more information and understanding. The application was filed successfully using PCT-Safe but the input information is still in ePCT. Is there a way for me to delete the information or do I need to request help?	If you have created draft New IAs that you do not intend to file and wish to discard, it is possible to delete them from your Workbench. Simply select the draft New IAs on your Workbench and then choose the relevant operation on the dropdown list of 'Actions'. Only draft New IAs can be deleted from the Workbench – international applications that have already been filed cannot be deleted and to remove them from your Workbench please

		remove your own access rights to those international applications so that they no longer appear.
29	Can I access a PCT application via ePCT that was filed directly at an RO using another electronic filing method, e.g. Online filing 2.0 at the EPO?	If eOwnership was not requested at the time of filing using eOLF 2.0, you can request eOwnership after filing, once you have received the Form PCT/IB/301. Refer to Action: Request access rights to an international application after filing' (eOwnership)
30	How do we update access rights of PCT applications filed by someone who left the company?	Contact us pct.eservices@wipo.int in order to remove access rights of the person who left the company and you will then be able to request eOwnership. We strongly recommend to have at least two eOwners per application to facilitate access rights management and avoid such situation.
31	Please advise how the specification can be amended after filing, if deemed necessary?	Claims under PCT Article 19 can be amended after the issuance of the International Search report. The description, claims, drawings can also be amended under PCT Article 34 if you file a Chapter II Demand. Refer to the guidance on how to file amendments under Article 19 and 34 .
32	Please could you clarify if the "warning message" and the "my comments" are internal notes or if they are messages for the IB?	There are internal and not visible by the International Bureau. Warnings are visible to all colleagues having access rights to that application whereas my comments are only visible to you.
33	If you use the warning messages to indicate to your attorney that the application is ready to review and sign - do they need to delete the warning before proceeding?	The warning messages can be kept or deleted, it's up to you to manage the warnings and comments. There is no need to delete the warning before taking any action on the IA.
34	What is an example of an informal message that might be sent via an ePCT message?	ePCT message is instant but it's informal. For any PCT application related formal requests or document submissions, please use "Actions" or "Upload Document" function. A typical example for ePCT message could be - the new agent asking the IB to send a copy of the form IB/301 to him/her in order to request access rights to an application. Other examples could be that there is a typo in the publication front page or why my Access rights have been suspended.
35	On the timeline, are the due dates initially displayed in blue changed in any way once the action due has been completed?	No, the blue or white colour does not change. Items indicated in white denote actions that are optional for the user. Items indicated in blue are important time limits for your application.

36	I never filed a change request under Rule 92bis before. Is there a certain form that I can use to submit it?	The best practice is to use the Action - Rule 92bis change request .
37	Can I enter the National Phase in a particular country through ePCT?	ePCT cannot be used to enter into National Phase. You can refer to the PCT Applicant's Guide National Phase .
38	How do we get into demo mode on ePCT?	<p>ePCT Demo (https://pctdemo.wipo.int/ePCT/) allows users to practice and familiarize themselves with the ePCT system.</p> <p>Please note that applications filed using the DEMO environment should not contain any confidential or sensitive data. When you submit an ePCT filing in DEMO mode to RO/IB, you will receive a transmittal receipt confirming the successful DEMO filing – this is not to be confused with a real production filing. A DEMO application submitted to RO/IB can also be used to practice Actions, document uploads and many other ePCT features immediately after filing.</p>