

WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

PLENARY Seventh Session Geneva, June 10 to 14, 2002

REQUEST FOR THE REVISION OF WIPO STANDARD 6

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. At its first session, the Standards and Documentation Working Group (SDWG) of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) agreed to set up a task force in order to discuss the revision of WIPO Standard ST.6. The SDWG requested the task force to consider in particular:

- (a) the maximum number of digits that should be allowed for the publication number of patent documents;
- (b) the implications of having a code for each kind of industrial property right mentioned in this Standard included in the format of the publication numbers; and
- (c) better guidance for defining publication numbers in view of electronic data processing and use by the public.

The task force was also requested to carry out a preliminary study and prepare a written project brief, which would include the following: a clear indication of the needs to be addressed, the objectives of the task and options for solutions. This paper should be submitted to the International Bureau (IB) for consideration by the SCIT Plenary at its next meeting, along with a progress report of the work carried out by the task force. In addition, the task force was requested to consider in its discussions the impact of the revision of

WIPO Standard ST.6 on other WIPO standards, as well as an appropriated delay for the implementation of the revisions agreed upon. The Delegation of the United States of America was appointed as leader of the task force. (See document SCIT/SDWG/1/9, paragraphs 18 to 22.)

2. In accordance with the decision by the SDWG, mentioned above, the IB issued Circular SCIT/2540, dated July 6, 2001, which invited those Offices wishing to participate actively in the discussion to nominate a representative to work as part of the ST.6 Task Force. In reply to this circular, 17 Offices nominated their representatives in the said task force that are listed in Annex I to this document.

3. The United States Patent and Trademark Office, as leader of the task force, submitted a draft Project Brief to the IB to be circulated for comments by the ST.6 Task Force members on August 2, 2001. Upon setting up the electronic forum for the discussions of the task force on February 25, 2002, the task force began its discussions on the basis of this draft Project Brief. As a first step, the task force agreed on a final version of the Project Brief that the task leaders submitted to the IB on April 4, 2002, for the consideration by the SCIT Plenary. The Project Brief is reproduced as Annex II to this document.

4. As requested by the SDWG, a progress report of the work carried out by the ST.6 Task Force will be presented at the Seventh Session of the SCIT Plenary. This progress report will be an oral report in order to allow the task force to inform the SCIT Plenary on the latest results reached in its discussions, which will not likely yet be finalized. After the consideration by the SCIT Plenary of the progress report and of the request to revise WIPO Standard ST.6, further discussions held by the task force would follow the terms adopted by the SCIT Plenary. The results reached by the task force, including a revised version of WIPO Standard ST.6, should be ready for the consideration of the SDWG at its next session later this year.

5. *The SCIT Plenary is invited:*

(a) to consider the proposal to revise WIPO Standard ST.6 as requested in Annex II to this document; and

(b) to consider establishing a task force for the revision of Standard ST.6.

[Annexes follow]

MEMBERS OF THE ST.6 TASK FORCE

<i>CONTACT</i>	<i>TITLE</i>	<i>OFFICE OR ORGANIZATION</i>	<i>COUNTRY</i>
ARGUELLO, Alexis (Mr.)	Ingeniero civil jefe de Patentes de Invencción	Registro de la Propiedad Industrial e Intelectual	Nicaragua
CHARKVIANI, Tamara (Mrs.)	Head of Department of International Relations and Information	Georgian Patent Office	Georgia
GRONAU, Elvira (Mrs.)	Head, Technical Department XI	Austrian Patent Office	Austria
HATTORI, Kazuo (Mr.)	Deputy-Director, Patent Information Promotion Policy Office	Japan Patent Office	Japan
JAKIMOVSKA, Irena (Mrs.)	Head of Patent Section	Industrial Property Protection Office	TFYR Macedonia
KOUSAIA, Svitlana (Ms.)	Head, Standards and Documentation Division	Ukrainian Industrial Property Institute	Ukraine
KRIER, Marc (Mr.)	Director Documentation, Applied Research and Development	European Patent Office	(EPO, NL)
MU—OZORES, Ignacio (Mr.)	Jefe, Servicio de Documentación	Oficina Española de Patentes y Marcas	Spain
NAKONCZY-PALUCHOWSKA, Anna (Mrs.)	Chief Expert, Informatics Department	Patent Office	Poland
REYNAORTIZ, Santiago (Mr.)	Coordinador Departamental de Desarrollo de Sistemas de Patentes	Instituto Mexicano de la Propiedad Industrial	Mexico
RISHELL, Edmond (Mr.)	International Exchanges and Standards Specialist	Patent and Trademark Office	United States of America
ROMBOUTS, John (Mr.)	Technical Architect Informatic Services Branch	Canadian Intellectual Property Office	Canada

<i>CONTACT</i>	<i>TITLE</i>	<i>OFFICE OR ORGANIZATION</i>	<i>COUNTRY</i>
ROTHE, Hubert (Mr.)	Head, Industrial Property Information for the Public, Supply of Literature	German Patent and Trade Mark Office	Germany
STOLT, Leif (Mr.)	Process Manager, Patent Information	Swedish Patent and Registration Office	Sweden
TONEVA, Ivanka (Mrs.)	Principal Expert	Information, Publications and Industrial Property State Registers Department	Bulgaria
ULUDAG, H, seyin	Patent Examiner Department of International Affairs	Turkish Patent Institute	Turkey
YUN, Young -Woo (Mr.)	Deputy Director	Korean Intellectual Property Office	Republic of Korea

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

PROJECT BRIEF

1. Clear indication of the problem or specific need to be addressed

The current version of WIPO Standard ST.6, Recommendation for the Numbering of Published Patent Documents, paragraphs 13 (a) and (b), recommends:

- (a) the publication number should consist of digits only;
- (b) the total number of digits, subject to a maximum of 10, is to be determined by each industrial property office according to its needs.

These limitations cause problems for a number of offices resulting in the Standard not being followed. This is a clear indication that the Standard is not serving the needs of all industrial property offices and needs to be revised to enable more compliance with the standard. Obviously all offices benefit when other offices comply with WIPO standards, and this is especially true with respect to data stored in computer databases and exchanged between offices. As indicated in newly-created WIPO Standard ST.1, the ST.6 publication number is essential to uniquely identifying published patent documents.

Specifically, three problems have been identified as causing problems for industrial property offices:

- (i) The maximum number of digits that should be allowed for the publication number of patent documents.

The 10-digit publication number is not long enough for some offices. For example, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) needs 11 digits for its patent application publications. This allows for a four-digit year followed by a seven-digit annual number portion. The USPTO, when developing its new numbering system for these documents has tried to follow the WIPO standards as much as possible, but needed to allow for publication of over 1 million documents in a single year. Other offices are also hampered by the 10-digit limitation, e.g., the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) has expressed a need to have a 13-digit publication number.

- (ii) The implications of having a code for each kind of industrial property right mentioned in Standard ST.6 included in the format of the publications numbers. WIPO Standard ST.6 is applicable to patent documents published in the context of several kinds of industrial property rights, e.g., patents of inventions, plant patents, design patents, utility models and others (see paragraph 2 of WIPO Standard ST.6). Many offices publish patent documents in the sense of paragraph 2 of ST.6 for two or more kinds of industrial property rights. Some offices use the same numbering series for different kinds of rights. A better distinction of industrial property rights is needed as well as a clarification of their relationship to the kind-of-document codes in WIPO Standard ST.16. A number of offices, for example, KIPO, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office and the USPTO use number or letter codes to distinguish between different types of industrial property based on the publication number alone.

(iii) Better guidance for defining publication numbers in view of electronic data processing and use by the public.

Better guidance is needed for understanding the model which defines the codification of the type of industrial property rights, the numbering scheme or range of numbers for each kind of right and the kind-of-document codes. A more rigorous definition of the scheme for numbering published patent documents and its relation with other standards will improve the efficiency and flexibility of database operations, as well as the productivity of the users when retrieving documents from the database.

2. How the need was determined

At the May 2001 SCIT Standards and Documentation Working Group meeting, the USPTO suggested WIPO Standard ST.6 needed to be amended to allow for 11-digit publication numbers for its patent application publications. A number of other offices were also interested in improving this standard with regard to both the number of digits possible and the inclusion of the type of industrial property right. A consensus of the offices attending the SCIT Standards and Documentation Working Group agreed that revision of the standard needed to be reconsidered. A task force was created and given the initial task of preparing and submitting a project brief requesting the SCIT Plenary create a task. The USPTO agreed to be task leader.

3. The objectives of the task

The main objective of the task would be to create improved publication numbers for better use (1) in document exchange between industrial property offices and (2) by examiners and the public. The indication of the kind of industrial property rights should be clarified, in particular when the same numbering series is used for more than one kind of right.

4. Options for solution

An amended Standard ST.6 should be drafted by the Task Force taking into consideration the needs expressed above. The impact that any such changes might have on other WIPO standards would need to be taken into consideration as well as any delay that may be needed for the implementation of the revisions agreed upon.

5. Expected benefits

Among the benefits expected would be the more efficient handling of data by Industrial Property Offices and the public. An improved WIPO Standard ST.6 would also result in fewer corrections being needed in the exchange of patent data. Misinterpretations of document numbers will be reduced, especially - as this is very often the case - when ST.16 code is not presented together with the number. Likewise, there would be fewer errors made by the public in citing documents. A more useful WIPO Standard ST.6 addressing the concerns of industrial property Offices would result in better compliance with the Standard.