

ANNEX

REPORT ON THE SCIT IT SYSTEMS TASK FORCE

Overview of Task Force Activities March through October 2003

1. The IT Utilization Task Force was established by agreement of the SCIT IT Projects Working Group at their second meeting in February 2003 to discuss the utilization of WIPO IT Systems in support of core business processes of Member States. The Task Force (TF) was requested to consider:
 - (a) the gathering/collection of procedural, technical and functional requirements from WIPO Member States for ensuring the maximum benefit and utilization of WIPO IT systems; and
 - (b) the integration of WIPO IT systems functionality (i.e., PCT-SAFE, IMPACT, WIPONET) as well as data and information exchange between WIPO IT systems and the IT systems of Member States.
2. Member states were invited to nominate their representatives to the TF no later than March 31, 2003. The delegation of the United States of America was appointed as Task Force leader.
3. Fifteen offices informed the task leader of their intention to participate and nominated a total of 34 individuals to the TF. The TF membership list is provided as Attachment 1 to this report. The International Bureau (IB) setup a List Server for TF use in conducting its business online based on username and password access control. Use of the List Server was initiated on 10 April 2003 with a welcome message from the TF leader that also promulgated the member contact list.
4. At the beginning of May, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) as TF leader notified the members that an action list of proposed activities for TF members would be posted by 14 May and sent a "Schedule for SCIT IT Utilization TF Activities – May through Sep 2003" to the members of the group. At the same time, USPTO also requested WIPO/IB to make available electronic documentation from development of the IT Systems. WIPO complied and presented a sizeable collection of documents from the PCT-SAFE, IMPACT, WIPONET and CLAIMS projects for downloading from a web page. The Action List was posted on 14 May with a request for TF members to choose activities that they would perform and report on.

5. Five of the Task Force member offices submitted sizable responses to the Action List items: IP Australia (IPA), The European Patent Office (EPO), The Japan Patent Office (JPO), The Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and The USPTO. The contributions from the respondents addressed high-level procedural, technical and functional requirements for integration of functionality from the PCT-SAFE, IMPACT, and WIPONET systems with the IT systems of the members. A synopsis for each of the sizable responses is provided in Attachment 2A. The entire content of these five responses is available on the Task Force list server. Furthermore, the United Kingdom Patent Office (UKPO) and the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (SFIIP) submitted responses of a size that allows them to appear in their entirety at the end of Attachment 2B.

Executive Summary of the Task Force member Action List responses

6. This section summarizes plans and activities of Task Force members with respect to the WIPO IT Systems. Additional detail may be found in Attachment 2A and 2B.

PCT-SAFE:

- EPO and WIPO have collaborated on a PCT-SAFE system that is based on the *epoline*® server and *epoline*® client software with PCT Plug-ins provided by WIPO. This approach will allow WIPO to offer a PCT-SAFE solution to fit the needs of many member offices for “single user” filing. Additional work will be needed to develop an “enterprise-wide” version of PCT-SAFE for use by large companies and IP law firms.
- IPA identified the need to define a suitable interface between the IPA/WIPO Module of their B2B server and WIPO/IB.
- JPO plans to adopt the PCT-SAFE client and server for the PCT Receiving Office at the JPO (RO/JP).
- KIPO has launched a PCT-SAFE e-filing system via CD-ROM and will start PCT e-filing service via the Internet in January 2005.
- UKPO will use EPO’s *epoline*® system for receiving electronic PCT applications.
- USPTO has developed requirements documentation for adapting the PCT-SAFE e-filing server to the USPTO IT infrastructure and for tailoring a PCT-SAFE client to meet RO/US needs. This documentation was shared with the TF and can be made available to other IP offices as an example for them to use in developing their own requirements. USPTO has implemented a US version of the *epoline*® on-line filing server for PCT applications under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the EPO.

IMPACT: The respondents are encouraging the International Bureau (IB) to provide within IMPACT capabilities for document exchange in Extensible Markup Language (XML) format. XML formats should be developed for other forms included in the patent dossier like search and examination reports as well as for dispatch documents like the

International Preliminary Examination Report (IPER). IMPACT needs to have a transfer mechanism to exchange the documents in these formats with the automated examination systems of other offices. An IMPACT function for file inspection of patent dossiers is also needed. WIPO also needs to continue to work with member offices in the IMPACT Communications on Request (COR) subsystem to address issues relating to the COR data exchange protocols and integration of Specific COR data with member office systems. IPA is preparing to test a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) facility with the IB for automated XML exchange of correspondence (including reconciliation of returned documents).

WIPONET: Offices that can arrange access to WIPONET services through the upcoming PATNET- WIPONET -TRINET interconnection will be encouraged to use this method. The gateway-to-gateway option is also available for other offices where this option is best suited to the needs. The respondents identified services desired from WIPONET including: International Preliminary Examination Authorities (IPEA) RO/IB communications, IPDL access, COR data exchange, search data exchange, gazette data, and procedural exchanges with other IPOs connected to WIPONET.

CLAIMS: There were no TF member responses for the Action Item to identify procedural, technical and functional requirements for using CLAIMS.

OTHER: The Swiss Federal Institute for Intellectual Property indicated that in some cases the Institute prefers solutions where employees of the national office can interact directly with the system in Geneva as “teleworkers”. SFIIP pointed out that for smaller offices this solution provides no additional local infrastructure and the traffic and support of WIPO is not increased in a significant manner. Although this solution cannot be used for every transaction, it is nevertheless worthwhile to keep it in mind.

Recommendation to Conclude Task Force Activities

7. In view of the TF having:

(a) gathered and collected procedural, technical and functional requirements from four members for ensuring the maximum benefit and utilization of the PCT-SAFE, IMPACT, and WIPONET systems;

(b) considered the integration of WIPO IT systems functionality (i.e., PCT-SAFE, IMPACT, WIPONET) as well as data and information exchange between WIPO IT systems and the IT systems of Member States;

and shared this information among themselves via the TF List Server, the TF has accomplished its objective.

8. The idea that WIPO IT Systems might be provided to member states for their use has been diminished by: delay in the development of the IMPACT IB and RO/IB Systems. WIPO efforts to develop the IMPACT IB and IMPACT RO/IB systems, which might have been useful for another RO, are being redefined and reorganized under the new PCT Information Systems Division. WIPO has not revealed any specifics about the new manageable sub-projects approach they are calling “Streams”.
9. As a result of these developments, the current contributions from the Task Force Members are sufficient for the intended purpose and the Members are encouraged to pursue the activities they identified. The Plenary is requested to conclude that the work of the Task Force is completed and that the participants are to be thanked for their participation.

[Attachments follow]

Attachment 1 – IT Systems Task Force Members

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[Attachment 2A follows]

ATTACHMENT 2A – SYNOPSIS OF RESPONSES FROM FIVE TASK
FORCE MEMBERS

EPO Response

PCT-SAFE - EPO and WIPO are concluding a Memorandum of Agreement providing the IB the right to use electronic filing and application processing software developed by the EPO for PCT filings in exchange for granting the EPO access to any modules developed to support the electronic filing of PCT forms. EPO will provide *epoline*® client and server software in an Open Source Library and implement all the PCT plug-ins from the IB within *epoline*® on-line filing software. It will be WIPO's responsibility to use the *epoline*® on-line filing software for PCT e-filing along with developing and maintaining PCT form plug-ins. WIPO will encourage and support its partners in using the *eOLF* Open Source client software in any developments.

IMPACT – EPO is encouraging the IB to contribute to setting the standard and providing within IMPACT capabilities for document exchange in XML format. Beyond the XML formats for documents already defined by Annex F, EPO wants XML formats developed for other forms included in the patent dossier like search and examination reports. IMPACT needs to have a transfer mechanism to exchange the documents in these formats with ePHOENIX and the automated examination systems of other offices. An IMPACT function for file inspection of patent dossiers is also needed.

WIPONET – EPO does not want to have a gateway-to-gateway connection with WIPONET citing reasons of complexity in maintenance and in separation technical responsibilities. Instead EPO prefers the approach of access via the interconnection of PATNET, TRINET and WIPONET and would like to assist its PATNET participants in making use of IB services and data exchanges through the use of the three-network interconnection.

IP Australia (IPA) Response

PCT-SAFE – IP Australia plans to utilize PCT-SAFE in a single user version and an enterprise-wide version to receive PCT e-filings to the IPA/RO. An IPA/WIPO Module will be developed by IPA to support international transactions specific to PCT/WIPO. IPA has identified the need to define a suitable interface between IPA/WIPO Module of their B2B server and WIPO/IB. They also indicate a need to develop the interface between the PCT-SAFE Server and IPA's generic receiving and receipting functionality for all electronic submission methods. An accommodation needs to be found between PCT-SAFE digital certificate technology and Australian Government policy requiring the use of Gatekeeper-accredited digital certificates. IPA supports WIPO efforts to develop a tool that can generate a compliant XML file given a dtd and a pre-authored word processing file (independent of the word processor used).

IMPACT – IPA gave requirements for the RO-IB System, Document Scanning Subsystem, and the Specific COR Subsystem.

- RO-IB: High level requirements were given for transmission, formats, receipting, transaction support, and availability.
- Document Scanning: IPA concluded that it would be impractical to adapt the IMPACT document scanning subsystem in their current IT system environment based on review of the WIPO documentation. Nevertheless, IPA supplied Scanning Requirements and Integration Issues to be met by a suitable document scanning system.
- Specific COR: IPA gives list of eight requirements for interaction between IPA and the Specific COR subsystem. Issues relating to integration of Specific COR with IPA Systems are also given.

WIPONET – IPA anticipates using WIPONET secure data exchange facilities once all PCT transactions are fully electronic. Possible uses identified are: IPA – RO/IB communications, IPDL access, COR data exchange, and exchanges with other IPOs connected to WIPONET. Integration issues relating to extending the WIPONET VPN through a Third Party firewall service and the amount of overhead introduced by using encryption for all WIPONET communications are discussed.

JPO Response

PCT-SAFE – Beginning in January 2004, JPO will accept International Applications written in PCT technical standard compliant XML format submitted via the ISDN and JPO's original client software. The received PCT applications with XML format will be sent to the IB. JPO has been working with the PCT-SAFE Project Team of WIPO to develop a Japanese version of the PCT-SAFE client to begin operation with release 3 of the PCT-SAFE software. In the future, JPO will schedule the development of PCT-SAFE Server software for receiving Japanese PCT applications.

IMPACT – JPO is working with the IB to ensure smooth reception of record copy document data in Japanese XML format. In the future, JPO will make ISR data available in Japanese XML format, which will have to be accepted by WIPO/IB. JPO indicates it is desirable that the IMPACT COR system should support the following services:

- (a) Publication of WO pamphlets in XML format sent with COR function.
- (b) Dispatch of other XML documents that will be made available in electronic form in the future, such as XML formatted IPER, by using COR function.

WIPONET – JPO is testing a gateway-to-gateway connection with WIPONET and has requested reconsideration of the current WIPONET specifications to enable easier use of WIPONET. After the gateway-to-gateway connection is established, JPO expects that it will be used for distribution of WO publications and exchange of the search DB and gazette data. JPO also wants to use the gateway-to-gateway connection for expanded online priority document exchange.

KIPO Response

PCT-SAFE - KIPO collaborated with WIPO to translate parts of PCT-SAFE into Korean. KIPO's RO launched a PCT e-filing system via CD-ROM in January 2004. KIPO applied PCT-SAFE with the PKI-based certificate issued by KIPO and the PCT-SAFE Editor developed by WIPO. KIPO implemented a separate function for ex-officio correction on RO/WASP. KIPO will start PCT e-filing service via the Internet from January 2005 using KIPO's editor (K-editor) that will enable preparation of both national and international applications.

IMPACT - KIPO will develop an XML-based automation system for business related to RO, ISA/IPEA and DO by the end of 2004 depending on close cooperation with WIPO to develop the interface between KIPO's e-dossier system and IMPACT. From 2005, KIPO would like to electronically process and exchange all documents related to the PCT. KIPO hopes that DTDs for all notifications of RO, ISA and IPEA will be established as soon as possible and will participate in activities for developing such DTDs.

WIPONET - KIPO has tested the access to WIPONET through the High Speed Government Network (HSGN), but there are some difficulties because of different security policies. The HSGN is a private net for connecting government offices in Korea and has a strict security policy. Currently, some of KIPO's staff can access WIPONET through the public network. KIPO expects to exchange online IP documents with WIPONET member IP offices.

USPTO Response

PCT-SAFE – USPTO has implemented a tailored version of the *epoline*® on-line filing server for PCT applications in cooperation with the EPO by adding features such as credit card payment, deposit accounts, and USPTO branding. USPTO obtained the right to use electronic filing and application processing software developed by the EPO via a Memorandum of Agreement signed in Nov. 2003. This USPCT-ES server is available for beta testing by RO/US with external customers. Plans for conducting the beta tests have not been finalized due to FY04 funding level uncertainties. EPO has also provided a PCT-US Plug-in for use with the *eOLF Open Source* client software. WIPO should be able to make the PCT-US Plug-in available for use with the PCT-SAFE Client software under their agreements with EPO.

IMPACT – USPTO has been receiving IMPACT Specific Communication disks since June 2003. The experience gained from processing these disks will allow USPTO to define requirements for desired improvements that include:

1. Speeding up the printing which is very slow;
2. Sending the follow-on papers that accompany a given order fulfillment on a separate disk;
3. Providing a cumulative index allowing location of the disk containing a particular document; and
4. Devising a method/tool for tracking unfulfilled requests.

WIPONET – USPTO will not use a gateway-to-gateway connection with WIPONET, choosing instead to have access via the interconnection of PATNET, TRINET and WIPONET. USPTO will be able to assist the Canadian IPO and any future offices connected to the USPTO TRINET hub with accessing IB services and data exchanges through the three-network interconnection.

[Attachment 2B follows]

ATTACHMENT 2B – FULL RESPONSES OF OTHER TASK
FORCE MEMBERS

UKPO Response

PCT-SAFE - UKPO is implementing EPO's *epoline*® on-line filing system as the primary means for receiving electronic PCT applications. The collaboration between EPO and WIPO on the PCT module should ensure customers are not confused about which system to use.

IMPACT - UKPO would support moves to encourage WIPO/IB to provide for XML data exchange within the IMPACT system. UKPO is currently piloting EPO's Phoenix technology for patent dossier management.

WIPONET - UKPO is not planning to have a gateway-to-gateway connection to WIPONET. UKPO are already part of PATNET and any access to WIPONET will be considered through the proposed PATNET-TRINET- WIPONET interconnection.

SFIIP Response

The Institute is very pleased with the efforts of WIPO to provide good services for the national offices. The automation projects are therefore fully supported by the Institute. In some cases the Institute prefers solutions where employees of the national office can interact directly with the system in Geneva as "teleworkers". In those cases no exchange of data and no development of own applications is necessary. Between WIPO and the Institute such a solution is in place since 2003 for the Madrid system: WIPO's MAPS is emulated on the local clients of the Institute. We have introduced this solution after having a MECA-data exchange and being the first office registering an international trademark application in 1998. For smaller offices this solution provides no additional local infrastructure and the traffic and support of WIPO is not increased in a significant manner. This solution cannot be used for every transaction, but it is worthwhile to keep this possibility in mind.

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