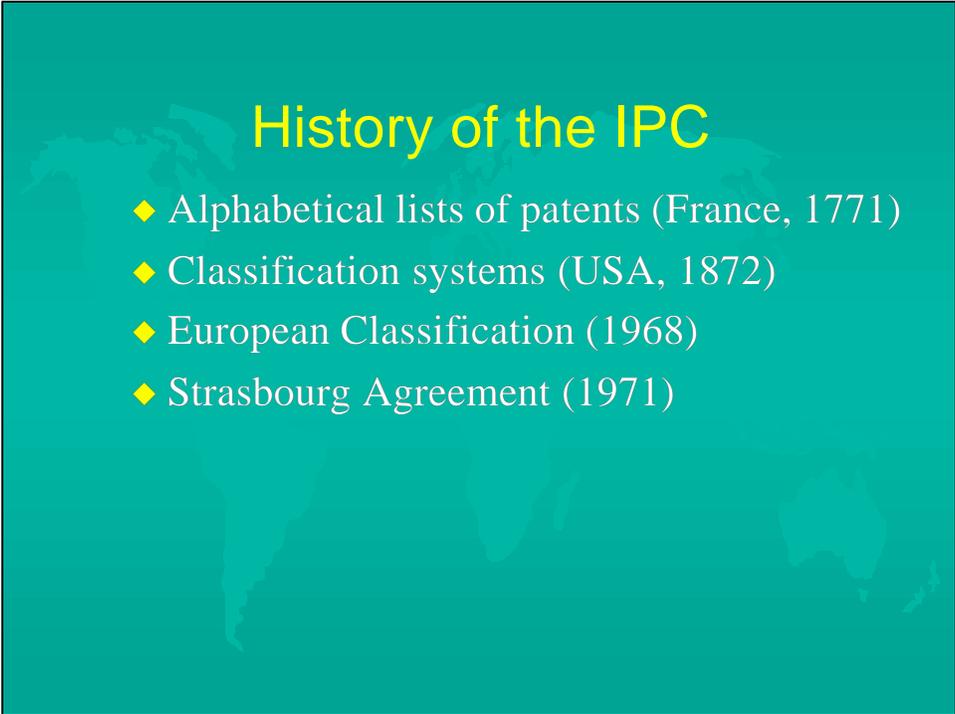


BASIC FACTS ABOUT IPC REFORM

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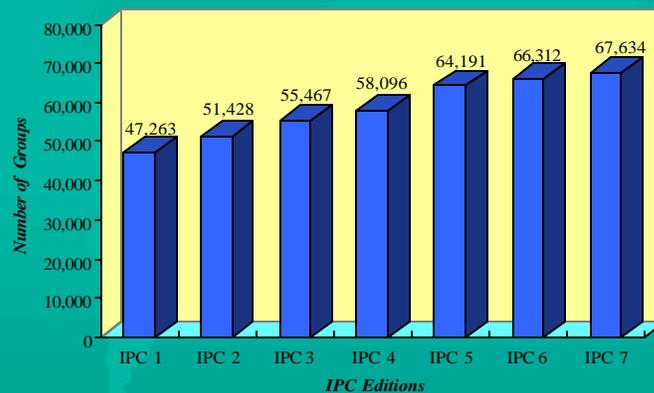
History of the IPC

- ◆ Alphabetical lists of patents (France, 1771)
- ◆ Classification systems (USA, 1872)
- ◆ European Classification (1968)
- ◆ Strasbourg Agreement (1971)

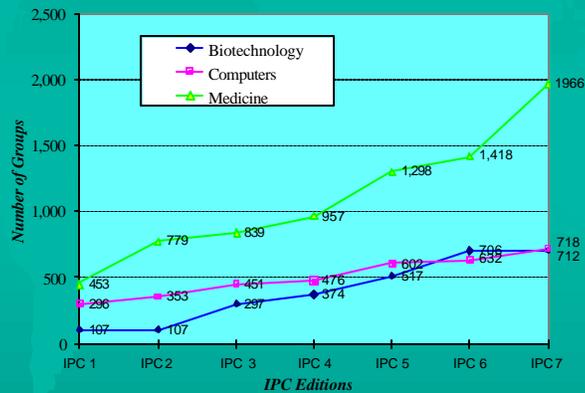
IPC Revision

- ◆ New edition every 5 years
- ◆ International revision procedure under the administration by WIPO
- ◆ The seventh edition entered into force on January 1, 2000

IPC Growth (classification groups)



IPC Growth for some rapidly developing technologies



Purposes of the IPC

- ◆ Primary purpose: effective search tool for the retrieval of patent information
- ◆ Other purposes:
 - selective dissemination of information
 - investigation of the state of the art
 - preparation of industrial property statistics

Statistical Studies and the IPC

- ◆ Global statistical studies - use of high level IPC entries (sections, classes)
- ◆ Technology trends studies - use of low level IPC entries (subclasses, groups)

IPC Advanced Seminar (December 1998) Conclusions

- ◆ IPC retains its value as the only world-wide patent classification
- ◆ Methods of revision and use of the IPC should be radically changed
- ◆ IPC should become a tool for searching electronic information

Launch of the reform

- ◆ In March 1999 the IPC Committee of Experts decides to start reform of the Classification
- ◆ In September 1999 the Assembly of the IPC Union confirms this decision
- ◆ In March 2000 the strategic plan for the development of the IPC is approved

Principal goals of the reform

- ◆ Division of the IPC into the core and the advanced levels
- ◆ Creation of the Master Classification Database
- ◆ Introduction in the IPC of electronic information facilitating classification and search

Core and advanced levels

- ◆ May be used on the choice of patent offices
- ◆ Are fully compatible
- ◆ Revised according to different procedures

Core level

- ◆ Volume - 20, 000 groups (main groups and, in some fields, subgroups)
- ◆ Use - search in small national patent files, dissemination of patent information
- ◆ Revision according to the traditional procedure
- ◆ Revision cycle - three years

Advanced level

- ◆ Initial volume in 2005 - 70, 000 subgroups
- ◆ Use - search in international patent files (PCT minimum documentation)
- ◆ Revision by a Special Subcommittee according to an accelerated procedure
- ◆ Continuous revision
- ◆ Rapid accommodation of developments in technology

Master Classification Database

- ◆ Classification data of the world-wide patent collections
- ◆ Complete information at the core level as a result of the rolling-up of classification symbols of the advanced level
- ◆ Continuous reclassification at the advanced level
- ◆ Links to full text databases

Access to the Master Classification Database

- ◆ Via the Internet
- ◆ Via EPO databases
- ◆ Copies of the Master Classification Database may be delivered to interested patent offices

Electronic information in the reformed IPC

- ◆ Classification definitions
- ◆ Chemical formulae; drawings
- ◆ Informative references
- ◆ Standardized sequence of main groups
- ◆ Definitions of technical terms

Some changes in the classification practice resulting from the reform

- ◆ New way of recording of classification symbols on the front page of patent documents
- ◆ New standard for electronic recording of classification symbols
- ◆ Delivery of reclassification data to the Master Classification Database

Future publications of the IPC

- ◆ Printed publication - only the core level
- ◆ Internet publication - on the user's choice, access will be possible:
 - only to the core level or to the complete text of the Classification
 - only the official text or with the inclusion of electronic information
- ◆ The reformed IPC will enter into force on January 1, 2005

User's help

- ◆ Computer-assisted classification (at the core level)
- ◆ Computer-assisted translation of classification texts
- ◆ Search for relevant classification symbols in the natural language

Strategic goal of the reform -
creation of the common
universal search tool for all
industrial property offices and
the public