ePCT for receiving Offices, Designated Offices and International Authorities

What’s New for Offices?

ePCT v4.7 - Release Note
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What's new in ePCT 4.7

In this version, there have been a number of other improvements in the ePCT Applicant functionality along with a number of improvements in the ePCT Office features including:

- improvements to the Office Actions for the ISA/203, the ISA/206, the ISA/210, ISA/237 and a new ISA/212;
- improvements to the Office report display layout and new reports for quarterly timeliness;
- a new Office Action to request documents for national phase entries "Document request for Authorities"; and,
- a new Office Action to generate monthly fee transfer information for selected applications.

Offices are encouraged to provide their feedback and to discuss their needs with the PCT International Cooperation Division PCTICD@wipo.int. Questions about the current ePCT system can be sent to the PCT eServices Support Team pct.eservices@wipo.int.

Improvement to the ISA/203

A new ePCT Action, "Prepare Declaration of Non Establishment of ISR [ISA/203] and/or Written Opinion [ISA/237]", has been created to facilitate the creation and sending of the written opinion at the same time as sending the ISA/203.

Improvement to the ISA/206 and ISA/210

The ePCT actions for the ISA Forms ISA/206 and ISA/210 have been updated to allow the selection of category D citations to indicate "Document cited by the applicant in the international application". When selected, this category will appear on the international search report with the other selected categories.

Improvement to the ePCT Action to create the ISA/210 and ISA/237

The ePCT actions to create the ISA Forms ISA/210 and ISA/237 have been updated to allow the import of citations from EPOQUE. This feature has been implemented with a small set of examples, and is not expected to be successful for all attempted imports. Where possible, please send valid samples that fail to import to WIPO for investigation and further improvement.

New form ISA/212 – Notification of Decision on Protest

The PCT Form ISA/212, the "Notification of Decision on Protest" has been implemented as an ePCT ISA Office Action.
Improvements to ePCT Office reports

The ePCT Office reports have been revised and updated. The complete list of reports available is as listed below:

Four new reports have been introduced, and the titles and format of some existing reports have been revised for consistency purposes. To facilitate the timely transmission and processing of record copies, search reports and IPERs, ePCT notifications will be generated and sent to the main contact person for each Office, on a monthly / quarterly basis. Detailed descriptions of the reports are available in the User Guide.

New ePCT Office Action to request documents for national phase entries

A new ePCT Office Action to request documents for national phase entries "Request outstanding document(s)" has been implemented for designated Offices. This action generates a standard “Document request from Authorities” that is submitted directly to the IB only for the purposes of obtaining documents for National Phase processing that are not available in Patentscope or ePCT.

The unavailability of required documents is most likely in the case of early National Phase entries and in this case this action may be used to request documents from the IB. In upcoming releases, this action will be enhanced to provide additional information to examiners.

For documents being requested for international applications entering the National Phase prior to international publication, as a pre-requisite to submitting a “Request outstanding document(s)” Action, the examiner must complete the ePCT Action to notify entry into the National Phase at that Office.

New ePCT Office Action to generate monthly fee transfer information for ROs

A new ePCT Office Action to automatically generate monthly fee transfer information for selected applications has been implemented for receiving Offices as a means of improving the data transmission of Office fee payment breakdowns.

This ePCT action is accessible through the search screen feature to process actions for a number of selected international applications. The function requires that for all of the selected international applications each application has been transmitted to the International Bureau (IB), the balance of fees due and paid shows that there is no outstanding amount due, the RO/102 has been issued and the search fee payment has been confirmed to the IB.

Office users must select the applications for fee transfer carefully as, in this version, the list of selected international applications is not currently saved by ePCT (the fees for the same international application can be included in multiple fee transfer files).
This ePCT Action, when run successfully, will generate a ZIP file containing an XML and an Excel file that detail the fees to be transferred to the IB for the selected international applications. The intention is that the IB will process the XML file while the corresponding Excel file is aimed at being more readable for Office users. Offices are invited to read the user guide and start using this feature, in coordination with the IB, with a view to replacing the files that are currently transmitted.

Other improvements and corrections

In this release, a number of further improvements have been implemented including:

- applicants, when filing electronically, are now permitted to enter into the title field a limited number of lowercase characters that are unavailable in uppercase;
- applicants may receive a new ePCT notification for the time limit to upload priority documents;
- applicants now have access to perform some ePCT Actions when the international application is in RO Phase and not yet transmitted to the IB (Submit translation, submit declarations and submit power of attorney); and,
- improvements to applicant fee calculation and payment features.

Main future developments

The future improvements that are targeted in ePCT remain as follows:

- implementation of features supporting the July 2020 PCT Rule changes;
- development of improved tasks and actions to enhance the automation of processes (dependency between actions and forms);
- improvement of the WIPO Fee Transfer features in ePCT (better automation of the extraction of monthly fee transfer payment breakdowns for ROs to transmit to the IB); and,
- additional RO, ISA and IPEA forms in various languages.

Help and FAQs

Once you are logged in to ePCT, you can either open directly the web page containing ‘ePCT Documentation’ and ‘FAQs’ or click the link ‘Contact us’ to access the ePCT support contact page:

The ePCT documentation page contains a link to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) specifically for Offices. Please do not hesitate to contact pct.eservices@wipo.int if you have any other questions related to ePCT or Office user account.