

**Questionnaire on the Term "Quality of Patents" and Cooperation between Patent Offices in Search and Examination**

The answers to this questionnaire have been provided on behalf of:

Country: ....**PHILIPPINES**.....  
Office: ....**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINES**.....

Person to be contacted:

Name: .... **EPIFANIO M. EVASCO**.....  
Title: .....**Director, Bureau of Patents**.....  
E-mail: ...**epifanio.evasco@ipophil.gov.ph**.....  
Telephone: ....**02-2386300 loc 3100**.....  
Facsimile: ...**02-8569293**.....

**Q1. Various aspects may be relevant to the concept of "quality of patents". It may relate to, for example, quality of patent procedures and management in the office, quality of search and examination, quality of granted patents or quality of a patent system. In addition, the expression "quality of patents" may be understood differently depending on the perspectives of various stake holders, for example, the perspectives of a patent office, and applicant etc.**

**How does your office understand the term "quality of patents"?**

In IPOPHL, the concept of "quality of patents" relates to the quality of search and examination to grant robust patents.

The quality of patents depends and starts in the conduct of doing a good prior art search, choosing the right prior art, and proper judgement as to the patentability of the claims during the substantive examination of a patent application. This will ensure that the claim(s) can withstand any opposition, cancellation or invalidation procedures should a patent is granted.

**Q2. What experiences does your office have with respect to cooperation with other patent offices in the area of search and examination?**

The Office has been in collaboration with other patent offices through different partnerships, programs, trainings and seminars such as:

- IPOPHL initially joined the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) program in 2012 thru the bilateral partnership with JPO and subsequently with USPTO, KIPO and EPO.
- In the same year, IPOPHL started implementation of the ASEAN Patent Examination Cooperation (Worksharing for ASEAN IP Offices)
- In 2013, IPOPHL started participating in the RPET Program initiated and implemented by IP Australia to primarily build the patent examination capabilities of new examiners by

improving their competency in conducting search and examination to international or PCT standards

- IPOPHL joined WIPO CASE in July of 2014 as an accessing office. Three (3) seminars and workshops had already been conducted.
- Several Patent Search and Examination Trainings and workshops in different fields of technology such as nanotechnology, biotechnology, computer related inventions and mechatronics were also conducted by WIPO, USPTO, JPO and EPO.

**Q3. When performing on-line prior art search, patent examiners prepare a set of search queries to find relevant prior art. Does your office share (for example, via an official website), or exchange, such search queries with other offices?**

Currently, the office does not provide search queries or search strategy with other offices. Documentation of the search query and strategy are kept in the file wrappers of the applications and may only be accessed internally.

**Q4. In order to facilitate the cooperation, what kinds of platforms and tools to share information on search and examination are available in your office? Such platforms and tools include, for example, WIPO CASE, databases allowing other offices to retrieve information and external databases used to retrieve information.**

(i) Platforms and tools provided by your office

The Office publishes the search report for patent applications in the e-gazette of the IPOPHL website. The search report includes the bibliographic data of the application and the list of relevant documents found.

The Office also provides a public patent search tool (IPOPHL Patent Search) in the IPOPHL website where the bibliographic data and status of the application is available.

(ii) Platforms and tools used by your office

Currently, the Office uses the search results and examination work of foreign offices to compare with the national search and examination work such as: WIPO Case, Aus Pat, European Patent Register, Espacenet global dossier, USPTO PAIR, CIPO Patent Database and J-Plat Pat.

**Q5. What are the impacts of such cooperation to your office? If your office has different types of cooperation and each type of cooperation has different impacts, please indicate them separately.**

The shared information helps in improving the quality and efficiency of search and examination work. The IPOPHL carry out further search and examination work if necessary after analyzing the existing information of the foreign patent office.

**Q6. What kinds of capacity building and trainings are required for cooperation between patent offices in search and examination? Please indicate any specific capacity building needs to conduct such cooperation successfully.**

For New Patent Examiners, an intensive training course is needed in order to equip them with the necessary competencies, skills and proper perspective before they do their examination work. Specifically, a course with an in-depth study of PCT rules and practical exercises focused on patent examination practices and procedures.

For Senior Examiners, a continuous learning through advance lectures, seminars or trainings from other IP Offices is needed to update and enhance their examination skills.