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Special Union for the International Patent Classification (IPC Union)

Committee of Experts

Forty-Seventh Session
Geneva, April 16 and 17, 2015

REPORT

adopted by the Committee of Experts

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee of Experts of the IPC Union (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") held its forty-seventh session in Geneva on April 16 and 17, 2015. The following members of the Committee were represented at the session: Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America (26). The African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the European Patent Office (EPO) were represented. Patent Information Users Group (PIUG) was also represented. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report.

2. The session was opened by Mr. Francis Gurry, Director General, WIPO, who welcomed the participants. Mr. Gurry stressed the importance of the work of the Committee for the revision of the IPC in the framework of the IPC Revision Roadmap. In that respect he emphasized the work done so far for the improvement of the IPC-related IT systems and, in particular, of the IPC Revision Management System.

OFFICERS

3. The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Kunihiko Fushimi (Japan) as Chair and Mr. Lu Huisheng (China) and Ms. Orit Regev (Israel) as Vice-Chairs.

4. Mrs. Xu Ning (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Committee unanimously adopted the agenda which appears as Annex II to this report.

6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Committee (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Committee was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE TENTH TO TWELFTH SESSIONS OF THE IP5 WG1-WORKING GROUP ON CLASSIFICATION

7. The Committee noted brief oral reports by China, the EPO and Japan on the tenth, eleventh and twelfth sessions, respectively, of the IP5 WG1-Working Group on Classification (WG1).

8. The tenth session of WG1 was hosted by SIPO in Beijing from March 24 to 28, 2014. The FiveIPOffices reviewed 41 proposals (including 12 P-proposals, 18 J-proposals and 11 E-proposals) and 21 projects (including 15 F projects in IPC phase and six F projects in IP5 phase). They agreed to launch eight new F projects in IP5 phase (in brackets the related IPC area and the Rapporteur office):

F 036 (from P 104, F21K; JP);

F 037 (from P 117, B83Y; US);

F 038 (from P 117, B29C; EP);

F 039 (from P 120, C03C; JP);

F 040 (from P 121, C23C; JP);

F 041 (from P 122, B60Q; EP);

F 042 (from P 123, A63B; EP); and

F 043 (from J 034, G09G 3/32; KR).

9. The FiveIPOffices also agreed to promote the following three F projects from IP5 phase to IPC phase:

F 019 (from P 106 (J 002), H02K 11/00 – 11/04; JP);

F 023 (from P 110 (J 017), H01F 41/06; JP); and

F 033 (from P 119 (J 035), H01L 27/115; KR).

10. The eleventh session of WG1 was hosted by the EPO in Munich from October 14 to 17, 2014. The FiveIPOffices reviewed all of the active F projects still in IP5 phase as well as all of the proposals. The IP5 WG1 agreed to promote the following F projects to IPC phase (in brackets the related IPC area and the Rapporteur office):

F 038 (B29C 64/00; EP);

F 040 (C23C 4/00; JP);

F 041 (B60Q 3/00; EP);

F 042 (A63B 67/18; JP); and

F 045 (H04B 7/02; KR).

11. The FiveIPOffices also agreed to promote several proposals to F projects of IP5 phase:

F 046 (C09D 7/00; CN);

F 047 (C12Q 1/68; KR);

F 048 (G02F 1/15 – 1/19; JP);

F 049 (C02F 1/00, CN);

F 050 (G01R 31/02; KR); and

F 051 (F42J 2/00; JP).

12. The twelfth session of WG1 was hosted by the JPO in Tokyo from March 23 to 27, 2015. The FiveIPOffices reviewed 29 proposals and 11 projects. They also agreed to promote the following E/J/P proposals to F projects of IP5 phase (in brackets the related IPC area and the Rapporteur office):

F 052 (from JE 057, F16L 53/00; CN);

F 053 (from E 065, G10B; JP);

F 054 (from J 059, B60N 2/48; CN);

F 055 (from J 061, H01R 4/24; CN);

F 056 (from J 062, F25C; JP);

F 057 (from P 129, B01J; JP); and

F 058 (from P 130, J 045, H04W 76/00; CN).

13. The FiveIPOffices agreed to promote the following F projects to IPC phase (in brackets the related IPC area and the Rapporteur office):

F 035 (from P 114, H02J 17/00; KR); and

F 044 (from P 124, J 038: H04N 13/00 – 15/00; KR).

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS ON THE IPC REVISION PROGRAM

14. Discussions were based on Annex 4 to project file CE 462 prepared by the International Bureau, containing a status report on the activities of the IPC Revision Working Group in 2015, in particular on the IPC Revision Program.

15. The Committee noted that the total number of F projects had decreased since version 2014.01 and, in contrast, during which the number of C projects had rapidly increased. A large number of new entries from C projects would be expected from version 2016.01 onwards. The Committee also noted that, in addition to the FiveIPOffices, more offices, such as Brazil, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, submitted revision requests under the framework of the IPC Revision Roadmap.

16. The Committee encouraged all offices to actively participate in the IPC Revision Program, in particular, by submitting revision requests under the framework of the IPC Revision Roadmap.

17. Japan orally presented a proposal during the session to revise the procedure of adopting revision requests under the IPC Revision Roadmap. The Committee decided to keep the current procedure unchanged and invited Japan to submit a written proposal to be considered by the Committee at its forty-eighth session in 2016 which would not contradict the fundamental rules of the IPC Union.

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDE TO THE IPC* AND OTHER BASIC IPC DOCUMENTS

18. Discussions were based on project file CE 454, in particular on Annex 10 to the project file prepared by the International Bureau containing amendments to the *Guide*.

19. The Committee adopted, with one minor modification, the proposed amendments to paragraphs 21, 52, 142 and 187 which appear in Annex III to this report. These amendments would be included in version 2015 of the *Guide*.

20. The Committee noted with gratitude that Sweden volunteered to be Rapporteur of newly created maintenance project M 755 to propose modifications to the IPC scheme in view of the adopted modifications to paragraph 187 of the *Guide* concerning the terms “control”, “controlling”, “regulate” and “regulation”.

21. Discussions were also based on project file CE 455, in particular on Annex 22 to the project file, containing compiled amendments to the “Guidelines for Revision of the IPC” and other basic IPC documents, prepared by the International Bureau, which integrated proposals and comments by offices.

22. The Committee adopted, with some modifications, the amendments to paragraphs 102 to 106 and Appendix I of the “Guidelines for Revision of the IPC” which appear in Annex IV to this report.

23. The Committee also adopted, with some modifications, the amendments to the “Guidelines for Determining Where to Classify Patent Documents” which appear in Annex V to this report.

24. Furthermore, the Committee agreed with a proposal by Sweden to integrate into the *Guide* all relevant instructions on what and where to classify, without necessarily maintaining the two relevant documents separately. The Committee invited Sweden to prepare a proposal to modify the *Guide* accordingly under project CE 455.

25. The Committee further adopted, with some amendments, the proposed modifications to the “Guidelines for Drafting Classification Definitions” and the Definition Template, as presented by the International Bureau in Annexes 21 and 24 to the project file, which appear in Annex VI to this report.

26. With respect to the amendments to the document “IPC Revision Policy and Procedure”, the Committee agreed with a proposal prepared by the International Bureau in Annex 20 to the project file. The document “IPC Revision Policy and Procedure” would not need any updates and should be considered as completely replaced by the IPC Revision Roadmap, in view of the fact that the current practice to automatically include F projects in the IPC Revision Program is not impacted by the IPC Revision Roadmap.

CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF POSITION 40 “SOURCE OF CLASSIFICATION DATA” IN WIPO STANDARD ST.8

27. Discussions were based on Annex 2 to project file CE 464, containing a rapporteur proposal by the United States of America on the use of position 40 “Source of Classification Data” of WIPO Standard ST.8, and on Annex 3, containing comments submitted by the International Bureau.

28. Japan expressed concerns that changing WIPO Standard ST.8 would have strong impact on users and IT systems. Furthermore, frequent changes to Standards should be avoided. Other offices had doubts about the need for introducing new indicators and would prefer to introduce additional clarifications on the definitions of the current indicators under position 40, i.e. “H”, “M” and “G”.

29. In view of the late submission of the rapporteur proposal and the comments by the International Bureau, as well as the concerns expressed during the session, the Committee invited further comments by offices on the use of position 40 in their current practice and, in particular, on the questions raised by the International Bureau listed in Annex 3 to the project file.

30. The Rapporteur was invited to provide a rapporteur report and proposal for consideration at the next session of the Committee.

REMOVAL OF NON-LIMITING REFERENCES (NLRs) FROM THE SCHEME OF THE IPC

31. Discussions were based on Annex 19 to project file WG 191 containing a rapporteur proposal on a plan to remove NLRs from the scheme.

32. The Committee noted that, during the pilot phase of project WG 301 which had been initiated by the Committee at its forty-sixth session with the International Bureau as Rapporteur, initial proposals for 10 selected subclasses covering the three technical fields had been prepared by the Rapporteur, based on which comments had been received from seven offices.

33. It was also noted that the majority of the comments were in agreement with the initial proposals, where less than 15 per cent of the comments indicated disagreement. However, this percentage would be significantly lower when taking into account the final rapporteur’s proposal.

34. The Committee therefore adopted, with some modifications, the plan to remove NLRs from the scheme following the procedure as in the pilot phase of project WG 301 which appears as Annex VII to this report.

RECLASSIFICATION STATUS REPORT AND TREATMENT OF NON-RECLASSIFIED PATENT DOCUMENTS IN THE MCD AND IPCRECLASS

35. Discussions were based on Annex 13 to project file QC 013 and Annex 22 to project file CE 381, respectively, containing a proposal for "Treatment of Non-Reclassified Patent Documents in the MCD and IPCRECLASS" and a statistical report from the MCD and IPCRECLASS prepared by the International Bureau.

36. The Committee noted the recent uploads of more than 170,000 families of the reclassification data to IPCRECLASS from several offices, e.g. Japan, China and Canada. The Committee expressed its gratitude for their reclassification effort.

37. It was also noted that the International Bureau implemented the default transfers to revision projects that entered into force in 2007 and 2008. The International Bureau explained that six families of version 2008.01 in IPCRECLASS reported as "still to be reclassified" had been found as being not necessary to be reclassified. Therefore, all the families in the projects of versions 2007.01 to 2008.04 were considered as reclassified.

38. The reclassification statistics for versions 2009.01 and 2010.01 showed progress since the forty-sixth session of the Committee, particularly for version 2010.01; the amount of families to be reclassified has dropped from 27.6 per cent to 20.1 per cent of the original for version 2009.01 and from 45.3 per cent to 26.8 per cent for version 2010.01. There were still more than 30,000 families for version 2009.01 and 60,000 for version 2010.01 which remained to be reclassified. The statistics for versions 2011.01 to 2014.01 showed a large number of families still remaining to be reclassified.

39. China informed that reclassification of CN documents for versions 2009.01 to 2013.01 had been completed; however, there were problems with data delivery to IPCRECLASS and some data were delivered just before the session. A complete set of reclassification data from China would be expected to be delivered to IPCRECLASS during this year. The United States of America would further investigate the reason why their Result Lists (RLs) had not been received by IPCRECLASS once the investigation by the EPO as foreseen in paragraph 42, below, was completed.

40. The Committee decided to postpone the inclusion of projects that entered into force in versions 2009.01 and 2010.01 for the implementation of default transfers. Offices were therefore invited to review their reclassification status and to submit their RLs according to the IT requirements.

41. The International Bureau was invited to prepare an updated reclassification status report in the second half of the year, based on which the Committee would decide electronically whether the default transfers for versions 2009.01 and 2010.01 could be implemented even before its next session.

42. The Committee repeated its invitation to the International Bureau and the EPO to further investigate the non-reclassified documents of project M 099 in version 2010.01 that should have been dealt with by one-to-one automatic transfer in the MCD. The International Bureau and the EPO were also invited to agree bilaterally on a process for synchronizing IPCRECLASS with the MCD with regard to non-reclassified patent families. The EPO informed the Committee that Residual Working Lists (RWLs) had been prepared. However, investigations on their content would still be needed and would be completed in June 2015.

HANDOVER OF THE WORKING LISTS MANAGEMENT FROM THE EPO TO WIPO

43. Discussions were based on project file CE 472.

44. It was particularly noted, that following this handover, it would be the responsibility of the International Bureau to create Working Lists (WLs) and RWLs. The existing tools for the creation of the WLs used by the EPO would not be used since they are integrated in the DOCDB; the International Bureau would need to develop new tools and access a copy of the DOCDB instead. IPCRECLASS would need to be updated as well. The EPO would assist the International Bureau in the definition of the specifications of the new tools.

45. In view of budgetary constraints, these developments would start only at the beginning of 2016 and their completion was foreseen for 2017. In the meantime, the EPO would continue delivering WLs and RWLs when needed.

46. The Committee approved the handover of the above-described operations from the EPO to the International Bureau.

REPORT ON IPC-RELATED IT SYSTEMS

47. The International Bureau delivered a presentation on the status of IT related developments in relation to IPC support.

48. The International Bureau informed the Committee about the completion of the parallel viewer (FIPCPC) project, which shows the CPC and FI subdivisions in the context of the IPC, and about the implementation of additional web services.

49. The corresponding IPCPUB software package had been made available to offices and had been already implemented by Brazil for the publication of its national version of the IPC.

50. The Committee noted that recent changes in CPC XML files would affect the parallel viewer and the International Bureau would further assess the issue. The International Bureau further clarified that the parallel viewer would not need to include Y section or 2000 series of the CPC.

51. The Committee reviewed several suggestions submitted by offices to project CE 447 on the improvement of IPCPUB. It was noted that a tool offered by Mexico would be made available on the IPC website, and a new view (“full view tree”) would be added to the IPC Internet publication platform. It was agreed that other suggestions proposed by Mexico would be considered at a later stage. The Committee noted that Brazil offered to contribute to the documentation of the implementation of IPCPUB software package.

52. The International Bureau informed that, during the second half of 2015 all login-based IT solutions supporting the IPC would be migrated to a new authentication method.

53. The Committee reviewed several suggestions submitted by offices to project CE 446 on the improvement of IPCRECLASS. The Committee invited comments on the first suggestion made by Brazil in Annex 13 to project file CE 446 and, furthermore, on whether modifications to the algorithm for WL creation were needed for consideration at its next session. The International Bureau clarified that such changes would need to be considered in connection with the handover of WL management from the EPO to WIPO.

54. Concerning the suggestion made by Brazil in paragraph 3 of Annex 13 to project file CE 446, the International Bureau agreed to modify IPCRECLASS so that the capture of IPC symbols would be case insensitive and that acceptable formats would be aligned with those currently documented in IPCPUB on-line help. As for the second suggestion in paragraph 2 of said Annex, the International Bureau would further investigate and analyze the feasibility of modifying IPCRECLASS design. The corresponding changes to IPCRECLASS could then be implemented taking into account the available resources.

55. The International Bureau announced that a survey aimed at reviewing the utility of each by-product of the IPC master files had been conducted and lead to the conclusion that all of them should be kept. It was also noted that, as side effect of IPCRMS implementation, the compilation file and the validity file would be added to the list of by-products. The results of the survey were posted as Annex 1 to project file QC 019.

56. The Committee took note of the above and expressed its gratitude for the efforts made by the International Bureau on the IT support for the IPC.

IPC REVISION MANAGEMENT (IPCRMS) PROJECT

57. The International Bureau delivered a presentation on the status of the IPC Revision Management (IPCRM) project and procurement of the related solution (IPCRMS) as Managed Application Services.

58. The Committee noted necessary changes in Master Files and their by-products provided by the International Bureau in Annex 24 of project file QC 010 and approved those changes which would enter into force in the final publication of IPC-2016.01.

59. The International Bureau described the planned scenarios for drafting IPC definition proposals until and after IPCRMS is moved into production, as well as plans to address the transition from the legacy system to IPCRMS.

60. The International Bureau was invited to inform the Committee on the potential overlap of functionalities between IPCRMS and the IPC e-forum and to clarify for which purpose the two systems would be used.

61. SaM Solutions, the contractor selected by WIPO for the implementation of IPCRMS, delivered a presentation on the functional scope and timelines for the delivery of IPCRMS.

62. The Committee took note of the above and expressed its appreciation on the progress of this project.

NEXT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

63. The Committee noted that, since 2014, in order to avoid overlapping sessions and to more efficiently use the available premises at WIPO, the dates of the sessions of all Committees and Working Groups were centrally planned and approved for the whole year at the beginning of each year. Since the Committee usually meets in February each year, the members of the Committee expressed the wish to receive the invitation as early as possible; furthermore, they expressed their preference that the Committee meets at the beginning of April instead of February.

64. This report was unanimously adopted by the Committee of Experts by electronic means on May 12, 2015.

[Annexes follow]

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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(dans l'ordre alphabétique des noms français des États/
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ORGANISATION EUROPÉENE DES BREVETS (OEB)/EUROPEAN PATENT ORGANISATION (EPO)

Marios SIDERIS, Director, Classification, Rijswijk

Pierre HELD, Service Manager, International Cooperation Support - Project Manager IP5 WG1 - Administrator Classification, Classification, Rijswijk

III. ORGANISATION NON GOUVERNEMENTALE/NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

PATENT INFORMATION USERS GROUP (PIUG)

Guido MORADEI, Managing Director, Varese

IV. BUREAU/OFFICERS

Président/Chair:	Kunihiko FUSHIMI (Japon/Japan)
Vice-présidents/ Vice-Chairs:	LU Huisheng (Chine/China) Orit REGEV (Mme/Ms.) (Israël/Israel)
Secrétaire/Secretary:	XU Ning (Mme/Mrs.) (OMPI/WIPO)

V. BUREAU INTERNATIONAL DE L'ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE (OMPI)/INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

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Antonios FARASSOPOULOS, directeur de la Division des classifications internationales et des normes/Director, International Classifications and Standards Division

Patrick FIÉVET, chef de la Section des systèmes informatiques/Head, IT Systems Section

XU Ning (Mme/Mrs.), chef de la Section de la classification internationale des brevets (CIB)/ Head, International Patent Classification (IPC) Section

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[L'annexe II suit
Annex II follows]

AGENDA

1. Opening of the session

2. Election of a Chair and two Vice-Chairs

3. Adoption of the agenda

4. Report on the tenth to twelfth sessions of the IP5 WG1-Working Group on Classification
   Oral report by the IP5 Offices.

5. Report on the progress of the IPC revision program
   See project CE 462.

6. Amendments to the *Guide to the IPC* and other basic IPC documents
   See projects CE 454 and CE 455.

7. Consideration of the use of Position 40 “Source of Classification Data” in WIPO Standard ST.8
   See project CE 464.

8. Removal of non-limiting references (NLRs) from the scheme of the IPC
   See projects WG 301 and WG 191.

9. Reclassification status report and treatment of non-reclassified patent documents in the MCD and IPCRECLASS
   See projects QC 013 and CE 381.

10. Handover of the Working Lists management from the EPO to WIPO
    See project CE 472.

11. Report on IPC-related IT systems
    Presentation by the International Bureau. See also projects CE 446, CE 447 and QC 019.

12. IPC Revision Management (IPCRMS) Project
    Presentations by the International Bureau and SaM Solutions. See also projects CE 457 and QC 010.

13. Next session of the Committee

14. Adoption of the report

15. Closing of the session

[Annex III follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDE TO THE IPC*

INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(Version 2015)

– – –

SUBCLASS

21. Each class comprises one or more subclasses which are the third hierarchical level of the Classification.

(a) **Subclass Symbol** – Each subclass symbol consists of the class symbol followed by a capital letter.

Example: H01S

(b) **Subclass Title** – The subclass title indicates as precisely as possible the content of the subclass.

Example: H01S DEVICES USING STIMULATED EMISSION

(c) **Subclass Index** – Most subclasses have an index which is merely an informative summary giving a broad survey of the content of the subclass.

(d) **Guidance Heading** – Where a large part of a subclass relates to a common subject matter a guidance heading indicating that subject matter may be provided at the beginning of that part.

- - -

51. Other explanatory graphic illustrations have also been introduced in the electronic layer of the IPC (see, for example, graphic illustrations under main group F23B 50/00).

VI. TERMINOLOGY

Standard expressions; Glossary

- - -

COMMON RULE

141. - - -

142. As opposed to the first and last place priority rules described in paragraphs 146 to 154, below, no general priority rules apply in the common rule areas of the IPC. Classification should be made in all appropriate places (see, for example, paragraphs 88 to 91, above). However, the following principles of priority can be applied to limit unnecessary multiple classification and to select groups that most adequately represent the technical subject to be classified:

(a) Groups for more complex matter take priority over groups for less complex matter. For example, groups for combinations take priority over groups for subcombinations and groups for “whole things” take priority over groups for “details”.

(b) Groups for more specialised subject matter take priority over groups for less specialised subject matter. For example, groups for unique types of matter or groups for matter with means for solving particular problems take priority over more general groups.

143. - - -

TECHNICAL TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS USED IN THE CLASSIFICATION

- - -

187. The following abbreviations are used:

- - -

chemical compound	=	- - -
	=	
control; controlling (in contexts where a variable as defined below, for example a speed or a voltage, is affected)		affect a variable in any way, e.g. changing its direction or its value (including changing it to or from zero), maintaining it constant or limiting its range of variation. Control does not need to be automatic and does not need to involve any measuring or testing. See also the meaning of “regulation”.
engine	=	- - -

- - -

product	=	- - -
regulate; regulation	=	maintain a variable automatically at a desired value or within a desired range of values. The desired value or range may be fixed, or manually varied, or may vary with time according to a predetermined "programme" or according to variation of another variable. Regulation is a form of “control”. The expression "automatic control" is sometimes used in the art as a synonym for "regulation".
stock	=	- - -

[Annex IV follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE "GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC"

GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC

adopted by the Committee on Experts of the IPC Union at its thirty-seventh session and modified at its forty-forth, forty-fifth, forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions

– – –

Common Rule

102. When revising an area of the IPC where the common rule is applied, the order of the new and revised main groups and subgroups should be based on the guidelines of Appendix II, except when it would cause confusion in relation to existing groups.

103. *Deleted*.

104. *Deleted*.

105. *Deleted*.

106. *Deleted*.

Residual Places

107. – – –

Appendix I

PRESENTATION AND LAYOUT OF NOTES IN THE IPC

1. The notes in the IPC should be categorized and presented in the following order:

(a) Notes relating to the subject matter covered by the place in question (see also paragraph 2, below)

(i) explaining subject matter which is covered;

(ii) explaining subject matter which is not covered.

(iii) *Deleted*.

(b) – – –

(f) Notes relating to recommendations

(g) Notes drawing attention to indexing schemes

(h) Other notes

– – –

3. [Unchanged]

– – –

5. Notes prescribing multiple classification (referred to under 1(e)(iv), above) should be presented as follows:

(a) Obligatory multiple classification:

"- - -, when it is determined to be novel and non-obvious, must also be classified in - - -".

In case of obligatory multi-aspect classification:

"In this subclass / main group / group, multi-aspect classification is applied, so that subject matter characterised by aspects covered by more than one of its groups / subgroups should be classified in each of those groups / subgroups."

(b) Non obligatory multiple classification:

"- - -, which is considered to represent information of interest for search, may also be classified in - - -".

6. – – –

7. The following model wordings of the different notes relating to indexing schemes (referred to under 1(g), above) should be observed:

(a) Note for a – – –

[Annex V follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE "GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING WHERE TO CLASSIFY PATENT DOCUMENTS WITHIN THE IPC"

GENERAL

The IPC utilizes three distinct general classifying rules (i.e., first place priority, last place priority, and common) for determining the appropriate groups for obligatory classification of inventive things within subclass schemes. Optimally, the Classification, or at least each of its subclass schemes, should when feasible use only a single general classifying rule.

Currently, many of - - -

"Common" Rule

The "common" rule is the "default" general classification rule and is applied in all areas of the IPC where no other general classification rule or special classification rule is specified for a subclass scheme or a portion of a scheme.

Schemes, or distinct portions of schemes, that use the "common" rule require that an inventive thing be obligatorily classified in the group within whose scope this particular inventive thing is most completely embraced. This rule generally requires devising subclasses and the classification schemes, or portions of schemes, where it is applied in such a way that one and the same type of inventive thing can be classified in only one place in the scheme. This means, for this rule to be optimally applied, that classification places must be mutually exclusive of each other for every possible inventive thing at all hierarchical levels. In situations where there are plural groups in the subclass scheme within which an inventive thing could potentially fit (e.g., different groups cover portions of the entire inventive thing, a very specific and a more general group could both cover the inventive thing), specific procedures for determining relative priority between the possible groups are followed, specified below, to determine which group most completely embraces the inventive thing.

In contrast to the first and last place priority rules described above, no general priority based on the relative position of groups in a scheme is applied in the common rule areas of the IPC. In the common rule areas of the IPC, when the inventive thing can fit within two or more groups of equal complexity or specialisation, classification should be made in all appropriate groups of equal complexity or specialisation. However, the following principles of priority are applied to limit unnecessary multiple classification and to select the group that most adequately represents the inventive thing being classified:

(a) Groups for more complex matter take priority over groups for less complex matter. For example, groups for combinations take priority over groups for subcombinations and groups for "whole things" take priority over groups for "details."

(b) Groups for more specialized subject matter take priority over groups for less specialized subject matter. For example, groups for unique types of matter or groups for matter with means for solving particular problems take priority over more general groups.

However, when references or local precedence rules apply, these overrule the above principles of priority.

Specifically, after the appropriate subclass for the inventive thing is determined, the group in the scheme that most completely embraces it is selected by sequentially:

1. Determining, by review of all of the main groups in the scheme, if only one main group covers the inventive thing. If this is so, go to step 3.

2. If it is determined in step 1 that two or more main groups could potentially cover the inventive thing being classified (e.g., the group titles state only subcombinations of the inventive thing), then the principles of priority stated above should be used as guidance.

(i) If these principles - - -

[Annex VI follows]

AMENDMENTS TO THE "GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS"

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Users are expecting to find in definitions additional explanation and guidance that are not available in the scheme. If such additional material is not available, there is no need to draft definitions which would merely repeat information already available in the scheme.

The paragraphs in the different sections of the definitions should not be numbered. Numbered lists should be replaced by bulleted lists. Care should be taken in the text to avoid references to such numbered paragraphs.

Numbers should be avoided to indicate different items in a phrase. In the case of long phrases, bulleted paragraphs should be used instead.

Definitions should not contain references to example patent documents.

TITLE

The title of a subclass definition is as indicated in the classification scheme but does not include any references.

The title should *not* be capitalized to improve readability. Multipart titles should be presented sequentially with each part of the title commencing on a separate line, e.g.:

Vehicle brake control systems or parts thereof;
Brake control systems or parts thereof, in general;
Arrangement of braking elements on vehicles in general;
Portable devices for preventing unwanted movement of vehicles;
Vehicle modifications to facilitate cooling of brakes.

The titles of groups are not displayed in the definitions in the new platform of the Internet publication since definitions appear in a separate window together with the scheme. In the drafting of definitions, there is no need to reproduce the title. The titles of groups do not appear in the definitions XML master file either.

DEFINITION STATEMENT

The definition statement is a more detailed explanation of the subject matter appropriate for the classification place.

A complete technical explanation should be used to define the scope of a classification place, instead of referring back to groups by just using their symbols in the definition statement.

The scope of the definition statement should essentially be the same as the scope of the title. Where a classification place also covers categories of invention not explicitly mentioned by its title, these should be mentioned in the definition statement.

The definition statement may be as long as needed to give the user complete information. However, long, complicated phrases should be avoided, e.g. phrases containing many of the following items at the same time: i.e., e.g., ordered lists, items between brackets.

The definition statement should clearly elaborate the meaning of the classification place rather than merely restate its title. The definition statement may use words, which are alternatives to those used in the title, in particular relevant words and phrases found in the patent documents classified in this place. However, this should be done when it is helpful for a better understanding of the content of the subclass. It should be avoided to systematically use alternative wordings, since this may confuse users. If the content of notes existing in the scheme is clear enough, such content may be used without change. The definition statement may be omitted in instances where the meaning of the classification place is clear from the title and would not benefit from further explanation.

The definition statement should provide a positive description of the subject matter appropriate for the classification place, rather than a negative description of the subject matter excluded from that place. It should begin with the phrase: “This place covers:”. The appropriate classification places for excluded subject matter are found under “Limiting references” (see below).

In the case of subclasses with a large number of main groups, or of subclasses with a multipart title covering distinct technical fields, the definition statement should reflect the structure of the subclass. When parts of the title or scheme correspond to distinct technical subject matter, then each part should be defined by a separate statement.

The definition statement may include explanatory notes and graphics which represent subject matter appropriate for the classification place. The explanatory notes clarify or address special or complex issues. The graphics, e.g. chemical formulae, drawings, can be useful to more fully illustrate the subject matter of a classification place and are positioned where useful to aid comprehension.

Numbers on graphics should be avoided. However, if graphics are taken from a patent document, numbers should be removed only if this is a straightforward task. Attention should be also given to the clarity of the graphics.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CLASSIFICATION PLACES

When the scope of the subclass is generally affected by its relationships with other places, and those relationships cannot entirely be expressed in the form of references, then those relationships are stated here.

This section includes special rules of classification or guidance for defining the classification practice between different classification places, e.g. availability and usage of indexing subclasses or groups, multiple classification, relationships between general (function-oriented) and application-oriented places, relationships between a residual place and other related places.

When the special rules of classification or guidance for defining the classification practice apply only within a subclass/group, then the specific section “SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION” should be used instead.

This section also includes more detailed explanation about the particular application of notes in certain technical areas, where, in the scheme, only the standardized wording of notes explaining the classification rules is presented.

Where the relationship between classification places is characterized by having a place which is considered to be a limiting reference as well as a non-limiting reference, this section should be used to explain the nature of this relationship to minimize any confusion when the specific reference sections of the definition do not fully clarify the relationship.

Graphics may be used where needed.

REFERENCES

In this section of a subclass definition, only references concerning the whole subclass or several main groups are mentioned. A reference concerning only a particular main group or subgroup appears in the corresponding section of the definition of that particular group.

In case of large number of references or in case of references concerning distinct subject matters (e.g. in subclasses with multipart titles covering distinct technical fields), the references concerning the same subject matter should be grouped together under a common technical subheading.

The references within groupings should be listed in the alphanumeric order of the places, references pointing to places in the same subclass being listed first.

References are presented in two columns; in the left one appears the wording of the reference and in the right the place to which the reference points.

References should indicate the most specific place where the subject matter is classified, e.g. if the subject matter is covered by a particular group only, this group should be indicated and not the complete subclass. References to sections and classes should be avoided.

Limiting references are grouped together under the subheading:

> “Limiting references
>
> “This place does not cover:”.

Precedence references often have the same function as limiting references (see the *Guide to the IPC*, paragraph 39(b)). If they are not considered limiting, it might be desirable to describe their function in the section "Relationships with other classification places".

References from general (function-oriented) to application-oriented places are grouped under the subheading:

> “Application-oriented references
>
> “Examples of places where the subject matter of this place is covered when specially adapted, used for a particular purpose, or incorporated in a larger system:”.

References from residual places to non-residual places are grouped under the subheading:

> “References out of a residual place
>
> “Examples of places in relation to which this place is residual:”.

Informative references indicate the location of subject matter that could be of interest for searching, but is not covered by the place where the reference occurs. References from application-oriented places to general (function-oriented) places are informative references. References to more or less related places that are of no interest for search should be avoided.

Informative references are grouped under the subheading:

"Informative references

"Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:".

Graphics may be used where needed.

SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION

This section contains special classification rules, which apply only within the subclass/group and not between subclasses/groups. Examples of such classification rules are the last place or first place priority rules. Normal precedence rules are not considered as special, and therefore should not be listed here.

Special classification rules, which affect only one main group within a subclass, are stated in the corresponding section of the definition of that particular main group.

Numbering of paragraphs should be avoided. Subheadings are allowed.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This section consists of definitions for significant words or phrases found in the titles or definition statements. This is particularly useful when the terms are used in a more precise or restricted manner than their common usage.

This section begins with the phrase: "In this place, the following terms or expressions are used with the meanings indicated:".

Terms found exclusively in patent documents or in technical literature, but not in the scheme or the definition statement, should normally appear in the next section.

The terms in the glossary should be preferably in the singular.

Graphics may be used where needed.

SYNONYMS AND KEYWORDS

This is an optional section intended to be used for establishing synonyms, keywords, abbreviations and acronyms from terms used in the patent documents themselves or in technical literature. This will aid in formulating search queries in electronic searching in this technical field. For example, in group B60T 8/00, the keywords “anti-lock” and “anti-skid” would be useful to a searcher. These synonyms and keywords should be accompanied by explanations of their meaning.

This section may include definitions of such terms when they do not appear in the scheme or the definition statement.

The following standardized wordings may be used:

– In patent documents, the words/expressions “---”, “---” and “---” are often used as synonyms.

– In patent documents, the word/expression “---” is often used instead of “---” which is used in the classification scheme of this place.

– In patent documents, the word/expression “---” is often used with the meaning “---”.

– In patent documents, the following abbreviations are often used:
<abbreviation> = <full wording>.

[Definition Template follows]

DEFINITION TEMPLATE

Definition statement

This place covers:

Relationships with other classification places

References

Limiting references:

- i.e. “This place does not cover:”

Application-oriented references:

- i.e. “Examples of places where the subject matter of this place is covered when specially adapted, used for a particular purpose, or incorporated in a larger system:”

References out of a residual place:

- i.e. “Examples of places in relation to which this place is residual:”

Informative references:

- i.e. “Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:”

Special rules of classification

Glossary of terms

In this place, the following terms or expressions are used with the meaning indicated:

Synonyms and Keywords

In patent documents, the following abbreviations are often used:

In patent documents, the words/expressions "---", "---" and "---" are often used as synonyms.

In patent documents, the word/expression "---" is often used instead of "---" which is used in the classification scheme of this place.

In patent documents, the word/expression "---" is often used with the meaning "---".

[Annex VII follows]

PLAN TO REMOVE NON-LIMITING REFERENCES (NLRS) FROM THE SCHEME OF THE IPC

1. Following a decision by the IPC Committee of Experts at its forty-sixth session to further accelerate the task of removal of non-limiting references (NLRs) from the scheme, project WG 301 was created covering 10 subclasses. Having reviewed the proposal by the International Bureau based on the analysis of the results of project WG 301, the Committee, at its forty-seventh session, adopted the following plan for carrying out the task.

2. Rapporteurs of definition projects should prepare a proposal for removal of NLRs for the subclass concerned for consideration by the IPC Revision Working Group.

3. As for revision and maintenance projects, bilateral agreement between the International Bureau and the Rapporteur should be reached on who prepares such a proposal for removal of NLRs. In case of unavailability of the Rapporteur, the International Bureau should prepare such a proposal for the subclass concerned for consideration by the Rapporteur of the project.

4. A new type of maintenance projects (M 200 to M 500) is created with volunteering offices, including the International Bureau, as Rapporteurs for those subclasses where there are no active revision, maintenance or definition projects.

5. The International Bureau prepares a list of the subclasses indicated in paragraph 3, above, and keeps the list up-to-date under project WG 191, from which the International Bureau and volunteering offices select to be Rapporteur(s).

6. The International Bureau should create new maintenance projects on the IPC e-forum (IEF) based on the selection of subclasses by offices, as well as by the International Bureau, and should set up corresponding deadlines for initial rapporteur proposals and a round of comments. Proposals and comments should be submitted exclusively to the IEF, i.e. they should not be discussed at the Working Group meetings.

7. Comments should, as far as possible, include only the indication of disagreement with proposals for individual references. Second round of comments should be requested by Rapporteurs on disagreed proposals for each of the references.

8. In case of disagreement, the references concerned should be removed from the scheme and included in the definitions under “Informative references”, unless Rapporteurs are requested by offices to raise certain issues to the Working Group for approval.

9. The corresponding amendments to the scheme and the definitions collecting NLRs to be removed from the scheme should then be prepared by the Rapporteur and included in the proposal, to be integrated into the following IPC publications.

10. In case that a revision, a maintenance or a definition project is created within a subclass for which an M 200 to M 500 maintenance project already exists, the initial proposal, together with comments submitted in the framework of M 200 to M 500 project, should be forwarded to the project concerned. The Rapporteur should then follow the procedure indicated in paragraph 9, above. The corresponding M 200 to M 500 project should then be considered as suspended.

[End of Annex VII and of document]