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IPC/CE/26/7 Suppl.1
ORIGINAL: English
DATE: March 12, 1998

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC UNION)

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

Twenty-Sixth Session
Geneva, March 16 to 20, 1998

COMMENTS ON DOCUMENT IPC/CE/26/7

Document prepared by the International Bureau

Annexes I and II to this document contain comments submitted by Sweden and the United States of America, relating to the indication in the IPC of groups with a change of scope existing since the first edition of the IPC.

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I/ANNEXE I

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY SWEDEN/
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA SUÈDE

Swedish Patent and Registration Office

COMMENTS
on IPC/CE/26/7
Date: 26 February 1998

Unless the implementation would be very labour-intensive, we support the proposal from the German Patent Office.

The proposed indication that a modified group has existed in earlier editions will improve the IPC and remove an inconsistency which has been pointed out to me a number of times, for example during training of new examiners.

If it can be done automatically using existing validity data, we would support the implementation of the proposal also in earlier IPC versions in future editions of the IPC:CLASS CD-ROM.

Anders Bruun

[Annex II follows/
L'annexe II suit]

ANNEX II/ANNEXE II

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA/
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LES ÉTATS-UNIS D'AMÉRIQUE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office
ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND COMMISSIONER
OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

6 March, 1998

Mr. Mikhail Makarov
Head, IPC Section,
Classification and Patent
Information Division,
World Intellectual Property Organization
34, Chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneve 20
Switzerland

Subject: IPC/CE/26/7

Dear Mr. Makarov,

In connection with the forthcoming 26th session of the Committee of Experts, US is commenting on the proposal by DE found in document IPC/CE/26/7. We apologize for the lateness of these comments, but they are intended as a preliminary exchange to facilitate this topic's completion. We strongly support the broad concept of including in the "USER INFORMATION" statement found at the beginning of each section's manual an explicit indication when text found in the original 'first' edition has been merely modified in subsequent editions and is not an entirely new classification entry. In our opinion, the proposed modification by DE makes this intent clear in the "USER INFORMATION" statement.

Nevertheless, we believe that some additional modifications of paragraph 3 of the "USER INFORMATION" are necessary to accurately convey this intent to users. Our first suggestion is to modify DE's proposal on page 6 of their letter dated February 3, 1998. We suggest adding an additional subsection (iii) to section (a) of their proposal with this wording " (iii) has been deleted". This subject matter may have been inadvertently left out of their proposal. Obviously, a deleted group's symbol and its statement are in italicized print in currently published editions.

In addition, both the portions modified and unmodified by the proposal of section (b) seem to need some revision. One problem is in the third line of the second paragraph of the existing section (b). The terminology "—the preceding edition,---" would seem to preclude the use of '1' within the square brackets since there are no editions preceding the first edition. This wording is also found in the third line of section (b) of the proposal. We suggest entirely deleting the existing second paragraph of (b) and modifying the wording proposed by DE to overcome this problem as follows:

(b) **Arabic numerals in square brackets (for example [4]) which are located at the end of an entry, indicate the edition(s) of the Classification the entry was,**

(ii) **new, when it was created after the first edition, for example [4], or**

(iii) **first created and subsequently changed so that the scope of one or more of the groups was affected, for example [1,7].**

Deleted groups are----------

While US fully supports the changes proposed for the "USER INFORMATION" statement, we also believe that this information should be included within the Guide. In our opinion, this is essential since it does not seem to be available otherwise in the current electronic versions of the Classification (i.e., IPC CLASS). When doing a full text review of the electronic sections portion of IPC CLASS, we were unable to locate the "USER INFORMATION" statement anywhere. We were also unable to locate any information related to sections (a) and (b) of this statement in a term search of the electronic Guide. Since the majority of users in the future will only have the electronic data available, we favor at least a general statement within the Guide. US has already proposed possible wording for such an addition in its comments to C.PCIPI 2342.

However, our proposed modification of paragraph 30 would need some additional language to make the information in the Guide complete. These changes are dependent on the final language adopted for the "USER INFORMATION" statement. If language is adopted at this meeting that does not indicate the original text of the Classification by [1] and indicates modified text by its original inclusion and modification editions (e.g. [1,7]), then the following paragraph should be added to our proposal for the Guide:

(d) Subsequent indicators - **In future editions of the Classification, the indicated information covered above in the transitional editions is altered or deleted. The information covered in (c) is entirely deleted and the added or modified information covered in (a) and (b) appears in regular print and only remains indicated by its Arabic numeral(s) between brackets, e.g., 4/00 Arch-type bridges [6].**

Furthermore, we believe that any general statement in the Guide should acknowledge, in some manner, that the presentation of this subject matter is only consistent between electronic versions of the Classification editions. For example, in the electronic version of IPC[2], the group code and title for A 01 K 97/01 are italicized and the title is followed by a [2]. In the paper edition of IPC[2] none of these indicators are included and it is not differentiated from the original classification schedule. The information on when these indicators were first available in the printed editions, and that they are consistently used in the electronic versions, is useful to users.

Sincerely yours,

Gary A uton

Gary Auton
International Patent Classifier,
IPC Group
US Patent & Trademark Office

APPENDIX/APPENDICE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office
ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND COMMISSIONER
OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

3 March, 1998

Mr. Yo Takagi
Director, Inter-Office
Information Services Department
World Intellectual Property Organization
34, Chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneve 20
Switzerland

C. PCIPI 2342 08.3

Re: Revision of the Guide to the International Patent Classification (IPC)

Dear Mr. Takagi,

US commends the International Bureau for the high quality of, and its extensive work on, the suggested modifications to the IPC Guide found in its proposal.

In general, US fully supports the International Bureau's proposed modifications to the IPC Guide. However, we would like the IB to consider some additional minor modifications to those it suggested for two of the paragraphs (i.e., paragraphs 28 and 59), one very minor additional modification on page 4 of the Guide, a minor clarification to a label on page 8 of the Guide, and finally complete replacement of existing paragraph 30.

The minor correction on page 4 is a typing error under V. which currently reads "----AND ADDITIONALINFORMATION …---.. 84-85" and which should read "----AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION …---.. 84-85".

We believe that a minor clarification to one of the labels on page 8 of the Guide would be useful. The meaning of the boxed information "[5]" after the title of G 06 F 101:00 in the "SAMPLE PAGES" would be clearer to the user if the label explained this subject matter more exactly. To accomplish this, we suggest changing from "User information" to "Indicates particular edition(s) title was added to or changed in the Classification". The suggested label is intended to correspond directly with sections 3. (a) and (b) of "USER INFORMATION" found at the beginning of each sections manual.

We agree completely with the modifications suggested by IB to paragraph 28 (d) and that these modifications are helpful to the user of the Guide. However, we believe that it would also be useful to the user to specify in this paragraph how this information is presented in similar situations in the electronic text of the IPC. We suggest adding to the (d) portion of paragraph 28 the sentence "In the identical situation in the electronic version of the Classification, the entire IPC symbol for the referenced group is always utilized."

We agree with the modifications suggested by IB to paragraph 59 (a). However, we believe that a similar modification to section (b) which drops the 's' in 'characteristics' is useful. We suggest "(b) If the essential technical characteristic of the subject relates both------."

Finally, US proposes the complete deletion of existing paragraph 30 and substituting one of two possible alternatives for it. Our first alternative suggestion would merely modify this paragraph in a different manner which would avoid its constant need for updating in the future. Additionally, this suggestion is intended to clearly indicate to the user that this information is included only in the next edition of the IPC and not in any other future editions. We suggest that the first sentence of paragraph 30 be changed to "The symbols of groups that were previously valid in an immediately preceding edition of the Classification, but whose codes are no longer valid and their titles deleted in the next edition, are printed in the updated edition with a statement enclosed by parentheses indicating where the subject matter is now covered in this edition."

Our second alternative solution is more radical, but we believe it makes the Guide more useful. As you are aware, the current wording for paragraph 30 is also exactly repeated in paragraph 3. (c) of the "USER INFORMATION" section of the classification manuals which is located near the front of each of the manuals. This information was not covered in the fifth edition and was added to both the Guide and classification manuals for the first time in the sixth edition material. However, the information found in the first two portions of this paragraph is equally important to the user and is not found in the Guide. DE is currently suggesting modification of both of these portions of the "USER INFORMATION" section of the classification manuals for the next edition of the Classification. I have attempted to incorporate their suggestions into an 'edition neutral' version of the text which will not need to be continuously modified for each new edition. I have also grouped this information differently to allow users to easily look up how each type of alteration is indicated. We propose replacing paragraph 30 with the following statement:

CONTENT ALTERATION INDICATORS

30. Embedded within the text of the Classification are specific indicators for alerting the user that explicit types of changes have occurred to the Classification.

(a) Additions - **Text which has been added to an edition from the text of the immediately preceding edition of the Classification is indicated by both italicizing its print and placing after it the Arabic numeral associated with its edition enclosed by square brackets e.g., in the sixth edition subclass E 01 D added group - *4/00 Arch-type bridges [6]*.**

(b) Modifications - **Text which has been modified (in wording or hierarchical position) in an edition from the text of the immediately preceding edition of the Classification, in a manner that the scope of one or more classifications are affected, is indicated by both italicizing its print and placing after it the Arabic numerals associated with the edition it was first created and any edition(s) where it was significantly modified (as specified above) enclosed by square brackets e.g., *[1,7]*.**

(c) Deletions - **The symbols of groups that were previously valid in an immediately preceding edition of the Classification, but whose codes are no longer valid and their titles deleted in the next edition, are printed in the updated edition with a statement enclosed by parentheses indicating where the subject matter is now covered in this edition. The group's symbol and its statement are in italicized print and the statement is located in the deleted group title's position and replaces it, e.g., 5/00 *(transferred to 1/00 to 15/00)*.**

We would also like to note that an existing statement in the "USER INFORMATION" portion of the manuals may be incorrect. The third part of section 3. (b) states "--- are not followed by the Arabic numeral six in square brackets and, in respect of notes, only those which are new in their entirety are followed (at the end) by that indication, whether these notes are numbered or not." This may not be correct in the situation where the note existed in the first edition and was modified in the sixth edition. Perhaps the IB could check their files to determine this and, if necessary, suggest possible changes similar to those proposed by DE for this situation.

Sincerely yours,

Gary A uton

Gary Auton
International Patent Classifier,
IPC Group
US Patent & Trademark Office

cc SIG Members

[End of Annex II and of document/
Fin de l'annexe II et du document]