ANNEX IV

GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC

INTRODUCTION

1.   A basic description of the IPC and its classification rules is given in the "Guide to the IPC". The purpose of the present document and its Appendices is to give complementary information for revising the IPC, particularly in regard of drafting classification schemes.

2.   Details of the criteria for revision and of the working methods of different IPC bodies can be found in the following documents:

–   "IPC Revision Policy and Procedure";

–   "Working Procedure of the IPC Revision Working Group".

3.   Detailed rules for classification can also be found in the following documents:

–   "Guidelines for Determining Subject Matter Appropriate for Obligatory and Nonobligatory Classification (i.e., What to Classify Within Patent Document Disclosures Guidelines)";

–   "Guidelines for Determining Where to Classify Patent Documents Within the IPC".

SECTION II – FEATURES OF THE IPC

Terminology

17.   As far as possible the titles, notes and references of the schemes should give the information necessary for the correct interpretation of the scopes of their places. The Definitions are intended for giving a more detailed explanation of the scope, for example by giving illustrations or definitions of terms or by describing the relationship between related places. This additional information might increase the precision, particularly for novice users. Definitions should also be used for information that can be of use when searching places for related technical fields. Additional information about Definitions can be found in "Guidelines for Drafting Definitions".

23.   If abbreviations are used that might not be familiar to IPC users the corresponding full text that they replace should be given together with the abbreviation at the hierarchically highest place where it appears in the scheme. Either the full text or its abbreviation could be in square brackets, depending on their readability or on the industrial practices in certain technical fields. Abbreviations that are used in the scheme should also be included, along with the full text that they replace, in the "Synonyms and Keywords" section of the Definitions.

28.   Expressions within brackets should be avoided in schemes, except for references (which are placed within round brackets) and explanations or abbreviations [which are placed within square brackets].

Class and Subclass Indexes

59.   Only main group symbols should be used in the indexes.

SECTION III – STRATEGIES AND SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVISION

66.   Deleted

Subdivision or Reorganization?

74.   Normally, for each group proposed to be subdivided, either the file should contain at least an average of 200 patent documents of the PCT minimum documentation (with one document per patent family) or the rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation should be at least 50 patent documents for the most recent year for which statistics are considered.

75.   When proposing new groups, it should be expected that as an average 50 to 100 patent documents (with one document per patent family) from the PCT minimum documentation should be covered by each such new group.

Hybrid Systems

87.   A hybrid system includes one or more classification groups and one or more indexing codes for specified aspects that are associated with these groups.

89.   Deleted

Residual Places

110. Residual subgroups should be avoided. It is preferable to make use of hierarchy instead. As an example, a subdivision of this type:

    1/08 . Movable tools
    1/10 . . Rotating tools
    1/12 . . Reciprocating tools

is preferable to this type:

    1/08 . Rotating tools
    1/10 . Reciprocating tools
    1/12 . Other movable tools

[Appendices follow]

APPENDIX III

CHECK LIST FOR USE WHEN REVISING THE IPC

KINDS OF REVISION

Subclass Revision

8.　　Consideration should be given to the following questions:

(a)　　Whether the scope of the subclass is clearly defined; particular reference being given to:

– 　the subclass title;

– 　notes in different places in the subclass;

– 　references in different places in the subclass;

– 　the subclass Definitions, including the glossary therein;

– 　the class title with associated notes.

(b)　　Whether the subdivision into main groups enables efficient searches.

(c)　　Whether there is subject matter falling within the scope of the subclass which is not provided for or is not specifically referred out.

(d)　　The existence or necessity of residual groups, application-oriented groups or "details" groups.

(e)　　Whether each main group falls within the scope of the subclass.

(f)　　The possible overlap between main groups.

(g)　　The usefulness of subdividing the subclass scheme into distinct parts using guidance headings.

(h)　　Whether any corrections are needed in the Catchword Index.

APPENDIX V

REQUEST FOR REVISION OF THE IPC

Class(es) or subclass(es):

1. Description of the area to be revised:

2. The request will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Reasons for revision			
a	Subdivision of IPC groups having an excessive file size	Av.- file size	
b	High rate of growth of the PCT minimum documentation	Growth rate / y	
c	Due to changes in technology the classification structure has become inefficient for searching. A gain in efficiency is expected with the proposed new scheme		
d	Clarification of wordings in order to improve consistency in classifying or to avoid overlap with other places of the IPC		
e	A high number of searches are executed in the technical field (i.e. a high number of patent applications or a high number of searches for other purposes)	patent appl.	other searches
f	New technology not specifically covered in the current IPC		
Factors influencing the cost and effort of the project			
g	Appropriate subdivisions already exist in a local classification scheme and can be easily brought into the IPC	Scheme(s)	No. of subgroups
h	Reclassification effort: No. of families to reclassify:	Mechanically, using existing data	Intellectually

Additional Remarks

Proposing Office:

Date: Signature: