IPC REVISION MANAGEMENT (IPCRM) PROJECT

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE IPC AND MASTER FILES

REVISION PROCEDURE

1.   The procedure to be followed will be the one decided by the IPC Committee of Experts in 2013 and which was followed for the preparation of IPC-2014.01. The new IPCRMS should be flexible enough and should not have a built-in procedure, in order to allow for future developments. However some principles should be followed, which have always been implicitly followed.

2.   The revision of the IPC is done in the framework of projects. A project contains amendments having a technical relation, e.g. they are contained in the same subclass or in a limited number of main groups. A project might be completed within one revision period but could also be active during several revision periods. A revision period is the period between two consecutive versions of the IPC. A project could concern exclusively the scheme or the Definitions or both. A revision of the scheme might have an impact on the RCL, the Catchword Index (CI) and/or the Definitions. A revision of Definitions could have an impact on the scheme, e.g. due to a change in the categorization of references.

3.   A project has a Rapporteur who takes the lead, making proposals, revising previously submitted proposals or proposing changes to adopted amendments, before submitting them to a session which takes decisions.

4.   Similarly, a project has a Translator, who acts as the Rapporteur of the second authentic language. Translator and Rapporteur of a project might be the same Office.

5.   Since 2013, co-rapporteurs are appointed to some projects. They have the role of checking the proposals of the Rapporteur. From the point of view of IPCRMS, a co-rapporteur will have the same status as a commenting Office.

6.   A project is considered as completed concerning the revision of the scheme when both language versions and its RCL have been adopted, when the impact to other areas of the scheme, the Definitions and the CI has been considered and when related corrective actions have been approved. Although a project might be considered as completed concerning the scheme, the completion of the corresponding new Definitions could take longer. As a result, the publication of the scheme related to a project could be published at an earlier version than the corresponding new Definitions. In such case, the new Definition proposals should be transferred to a new D project, identified by the same number as the revision project, e.g. the new Definitions of project C456 should be transferred to definition project DC456.

7.   A session is a period during which decisions are taken on proposed amendments, e.g. a session of the IPC Revision Working Group. A session has a phase during which projects are considered and decisions are taken on proposed amendments, as well as a checking phase, after which all decisions of all considered projects are confirmed. The decisions of a session overrule any decision taken on the same amendment at a previous session. This is independent of the type of the session.

8.   There are two types of sessions, the ordinary sessions and the publication sessions. During ordinary sessions, technical discussions are taking place. During publication sessions, in principle there are no technical discussions; the compiled adopted amendments, that will form part of the following version of the IPC, are checked. However, some punctual technical discussion might not be excluded during publication sessions. All sessions might be physical or electronic.

9.   Between sessions, Offices can comment on Rapporteur proposals, react to questions coming from a session or challenge decisions taken by a session. After the June publication (prepub) session, only punctual corrections of errors, without technical impact, might be submitted to the IB. If possible, these corrections are taken into account before the final publication, if not, they are considered at the following revision period. The corrigendum will be discontinued.

INTERACTION BETWEEN OFFICES AND IPCRMS

10.   IPCRMS will be open for input by the Offices. Additional functions will be available allowing the integration of some activities of the e-forum, like commenting, Rapporteur or session reports. The e-forum will be maintained, e.g. for allowing offices to submit general comments or setting deadlines for actions.

11.   Authoring of revision proposals will be centralized and more controlled so that adoption is made only on proposals technically acceptable by IPCRMS. This is an opportunity to review related requirements and to propose standardization and centralized controls before decisions.

12.   The Rapporteurs and the Translators will be able to directly prepare their proposals using IPCRMS. Once they consider that the draft proposal is ready, it will be visible to all Offices. Offices will then be able to submit their comments to IPCRMS, attached to the corresponding proposed amendments. The Rapporteurs/Translators will be able to reply to these comments and submit new proposals. In this way, there will be no need of additional rapporteur reports since all comments and proposed amendments will be linked.

DISPLAY OF PROJECTS IN IPCRMS

13.   The history of the proposal, comments and decisions will be kept and a user will be able to display them, in totality or partially on demand. The amendments will be displayed, also on demand, in the context of the current version of the IPC. Current version is the version in force from January to June and the prepub version from July to December.

14.   For example, a user wishing to display project X relating to subclass A will see the proposed amendments in the context of the current IPC, in track changes; on demand, the user will display only the complete impacted main groups or other main groups of subclass A. All relevant comments and decisions, or comments and decisions submitted after a certain date, will be displayed on request next to the corresponding amendment. It will also be possible to display only amendments considered by a session with the corresponding decision, or the complete history of the decisions. In this way, there will be no more need of producing technical annexes in separate documents. Proposals, decisions and comments will be displayed in different ways, e.g. by using different highlight colors, in order to avoid confusion and improve readability.

SESSIONS AND DECISIONS IN IPCRMS

15.   When a project is under consideration during a session, Offices will not be able to submit comments or proposals. The International Bureau (IB) will have the authority to introduce adopted changes and decisions. Exceptionally the IB may authorize a Rapporteur to introduce modifications to its proposal under consideration.

16.   Decisions will be recorded by the IB during the discussion of a project. Once the discussion and the recording have been completed, the recorded decisions will be available through IPCRMS in order to allow corrections even before the end of the physical meeting. During the checking phase, additional corrections may be submitted to the IB as currently. These suggestions for corrections will not be submitted to IPCRMS but to the e-forum.

17.   All completed projects after the May session will be included in the following version of the IPC and will be considered for final checking during the prepub electronic session in June.

PREPARATION OF NATIONAL VERSIONS IN IPCRMS

18.   A separate interface will be available to volunteering Offices preparing national versions of the IPC using IPC Master Files. Once the prepub version is published, this facility will present the amendments of the prepub version in track changes and, next to them, the original text of the IPC in the national version (when available) and the TAPTA proposals. Once the complete national version is validated, it will be possible, using IPCRMS, to prepare the scheme and Definitions Master Files in the national version.

SIMPLIFICATIONS CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF THE SCHEME IN IPCPUB

19.   The following simplifications will be implemented:

Version indicator for Notes

20.   There will be only one version indicator for each complete note instead of separate version indicators for each paragraph. This indicator will indicate the version when the note was first created and additional version indicators will be added whenever the note was revised to indicate a change in classification practice.

Version indicators for pre-reform symbols and version 8

21.   Many offices, in particular small and medium ones, incorrectly indicate version indicators 1 to 8 for pre-reform symbols which are still valid, instead of 2006.01. It is therefore decided, for symbols with version indicators 1 to 7, to add 2006.01 without removing version indicators 1 to 7, and to replace 8 by 2006.01. This change will appear in IPCPUB. In the Scheme Master Files, the version indicator 2006.01.01 will be added to those symbols.

Compilation tab

22.   The compilation tab will show a comparison between the current version and the previous one, with the possibility to go to a particular modified entry. Any information related to the revision process currently available in the compilation tab will be available in IPCRMS only.

Standardized sequence

23.   The standardized sequence will be removed from the Scheme Master File and the publication. The IB will submit a proposal to the 47th session of the Committee to modify the 2016 version of the *Guide to the IPC* accordingly.

MASTER FILES (MF)

24.   Initially, the IB had an ambitious plan aiming at reviewing, modernizing and making ST.96 compliant the IPC MFs. However, in view of the comments submitted and following a reevaluation of the cost of the side effects of this plan, the majority of the changes were abandoned. The current Validity File (VF) and the compilation file will no longer be Master Files but by-products of the MFs.

25.   IPCRMS will create the most appropriate set of Master Files, avoiding as much as possible overlapping information. These files are: Scheme MFs, scheme images MF (mainly chemical formulae in the titles of the scheme), Definition MFs, Definition illustrations MF, Catchword Index MFs and RCL MF.

26.   Two new Fixed Text MFs (one for EN one for FR) will include all fixed texts used in the IPC publication.

27.   If additional by-product files are needed for particular purposes, they will be produced from the original MFs. For those MFs which are language-dependent, there will be one file per language.

28.   The following existing XML Master Files will be discontinued as Master Files: Compilation File and Validity File. In fact, their content can be derived from the Scheme MF and the RCL MF, and proposed in alternative formats. In view of the needs identified by the IB, the following content is proposed for each one.

New compilation file

29.   The intended purpose of this file is to indicate the changes between two consecutive versions of the IPC, e.g. in order to assist in the preparation of new language versions or to inform IPC users about the changes between two consecutive versions. In the current Master File, additional information is added coming from the revision process, e.g. project number, session when a decision was taken etc. This information will be available by consulting IPCRMS; there will be no need to repeat it in the new compilation file.

30.   The new compilation file will include only the modifications between two consecutive versions of the IPC. The scheme MFs will be used for this purpose.

Validity Files

31.   The current Validity File (VF) is a compilation of all present and past symbols with indication of their validity in the past. In addition, their validity in core and advanced levels and core predecessors are also indicated. In order to cope with the different revision periods between levels in the past, additional complications have been introduced that are not needed any more. Furthermore, the VF was supposed to provide information to the reclassification process, which finally was not the case.

32.   In view of the comments submitted, the IB will continue to produce the current XML VF although it contains obsolete information. However, it will not be a Master File but a by-product.

33.   In addition, a new XML Valid symbols file (not a MF) will be produced, containing only the symbols valid at the corresponding version with their latest version indicator. Since this version indicator is the one to be indicated on patent documents, it will replace the pre-reform version indicators (1 to 8) by 2006.01, as already proposed above for the scheme.

34.   In order to know whether a symbol has ever been used, a cumulative inventory in CSV format of ever used IPC symbols will be maintained (see **http://www.wipo.int/ipc/itos4ipc/ITSupport_and_download_area/20140101/IPC_symbol_inventory/IPC_ever_used_symbol_inventory_20140101.csv**).

Illustrations file

35.   Scheme illustrations contain essentially chemical formulae, developed during the reform, and some additional illustrations. They are directly accessible in IPCPUB using the 🖼 icon next to the IPC symbol. It is proposed to move all these illustrations to existing or new (group) Definitions. In this way, only one Definition illustration Master File will be maintained.

New RCL file

36.   New elements will be added in the RCL file to record the default reclassification symbol and the revision project number. This additional information will be used in the creation of the Working Lists and in IPCRECLASS. It will not be published in the RCL tab of IPCPUB.

37.   On several occasions, the transfer notes of the deleted symbols in the scheme (introduced directly in RIPCIS-scheme) and the RCL indications (introduced in RIPCIS RCL) were inconsistent. It is therefore proposed to record the transfer of deleted symbols only once in IPCRMS, which will then create automatically the RCL table and XML file.

Definitions

38.   The references in the Definitions will be presented in one section under the header "References" and under four categories: "limiting references", "application-oriented references", "references out of a residual place" and "informative references". More levels of embedding will be allowed in "Definition Statement", etc. IPCRMS will allow for a strict control of their authoring so that only Definitions with acceptable structure are proposed for consideration.

39.   No feature is envisaged for the translation of definition illustrations which are expected to be language-independent.

[Annex IV follows]