

# WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION  
GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION  
(IPC UNION)

IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

Eleventh Session  
Geneva, June 14 to 24, 2004

PROCEDURE FOR THE ELABORATION OF CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

1. At its thirty-fourth session, held in February 2004, when considering the Task “Elaboration of Classification Definitions,” the IPC Committee of Experts noted the intention of the United States Patent and Trademark Office to prepare, on behalf of the Trilateral Offices, a proposal on ways and means for improving the process of elaborating classification definitions and to present such a proposal to the IPC Revision Working Group for consideration at its next session.
2. The Annex to this document contains the said proposal submitted by the United States of America.
3. *The Working Group is invited, upon consideration of the proposal contained in the Annex to this document, to take appropriate measures for accelerating the elaboration, while maintaining the quality, of subclass definitions.*

[Annex follows]

## ANNEX

<b>USPTO Proposal for Trilateral Offices</b>	
Revision Working Group	<b>Date:</b> May 14, 2004

### Revision Project Coordination Between IPC Special Subcommittee and Revision Working Group

In the Report of the last Committee of Experts Meeting (IPC/CE/34/10, paragraph 35), US agreed to prepare a proposal on behalf of the Advanced level subcommittee for improving the process for creating classification definitions which would be considered by the Revision Working Group (RWG) at their next meeting. This procedure supplements the previously approved revision process for the core and advanced levels (see IPC/CE/33/12, Annex IV).

The proposed procedure is intended to optimize the use of resources to more effectively accomplish the goals of the Reformed IPC. These goals are best accomplished when the process:

- Maximizes the use of existing document placement within ECLA, FI, and USPC to create the Master Classification Database (MCD).
- Ensures that the titles of classification places and their definitions accurately reflect the actual patent documents classified within them in the MCD.
- Minimizes unnecessary reclassification of patent documents during the harmonization of the advanced level.
- Reduces the amount of redundant intellectual work done by the IPC Advanced level subcommittee (ALS) and Revision Working Group.

The Advanced level subcommittee has agreed that the following additional procedures fulfill these requirements and should supplement the previously approved revision procedures.

#### **Process for optimizing resources by coordinating core and advanced level revision projects and accelerating creation of definitions:**

1. The Advanced level subcommittee (ALS) will appoint an ALS Rapporteur for any area in the advanced level where project work is proposed or begun; the ALS Rapporteur will provisionally determine the scope of the project.
2. When advanced level project work has been proposed or begun within a specific subclass, the ALS will invite the IB to officially notify the Revision Working Group (RWG) of the advanced level project.
3. The RWG will not initiate new core-level revision projects within an impacted subclass after notification, until work on this subclass is completed or otherwise concluded in the advanced level. However, if the RWG considers it absolutely

necessary for a new core-level revision project proposal to be considered in a subclass impacted by an ALS project, it can request that the ALS integrate it into the ALS discussions.

4. If a previously ‘finalized’ subclass definition does not already exist for the area covered by the advanced level project, the ALS Rapporteur will draft a provisional definition for the impacted subclass based on existing IPC lines and any proposed advanced level changes to the scope of the subclass. If a previously ‘finalized’ subclass definition exists, it will be used, and modified where needed, to create a provisional definition for the advanced level. The ALS Rapporteur will then draft provisional definitions for any main groups within an IPC subclass that will be impacted during the advanced level project.
5. After finalization of the scope of the advanced level project, the ALS Rapporteur will identify any current RWG maintenance projects, or parts of projects, that may directly or indirectly impact the scope of the subclass or groups within the advanced level project (e.g., rewording of titles in the core level scheme, subclass definition projects or projects creating notes in related subclasses).
6. The ALS Rapporteur will notify the IB of any existing RWG projects that could conflict with the advanced level project.
7. After this notification, the RWG will suspend or redistribute work on any maintenance project, or part of a project, that could conflict with the advanced level project until work is concluded on the advanced level project. In the situations where work must continue on core-level type projects that overlap with projects in the advanced level, the RWG and ALS agree to distribute work in such a way that work done on one project does not conflict with the work done on the other project. After conclusion of the advanced level project, the RWG will reevaluate and determine if any related maintenance projects that were suspended should continue, be modified, or cancelled.
8. The provisional definitions for the subclass and appropriate groups will be sent to the other ALS Offices, who will be given a period to have their experts review the definitions and provide comments. One of the primary goals of the definitions is to ensure harmonization of future document placement while accurately reflecting the existing back file. A provisional scheme for the impacted area will also be drafted and sent to the other ALS Offices. The provisional scheme and definitions for the advanced level project will be provided to members of the RWG for their individual comments to the ALS Rapporteur.
9. When a finalized version of the provisional scheme and the advanced-level subclass and group definitions has been appropriately tested by document placement and approved by ALS, they are referred to RWG for their review and approval.
10. During review, the RWG should only make changes to those portions of a provisional advanced-level scheme, or their definitions, which are to become part of the core level. The changes made by the RWG should normally not require additional reclassification of patent documents in the advanced level

11. If the portion of the provisional scheme and its advanced-level subclass and group definitions, which are to become part of the core level, are approved by RWG without significant changes, the scheme and its definitions are officially incorporated into the core level (where appropriate) and advanced level of the Reformed IPC.
  
12. If a significant change is made by the RWG to a portion of a provisional advanced-level scheme or its definitions when approving their incorporation into the core level scheme (e.g., a change in a title's wording that would cause document reclassification in the advanced level); the provisional advanced-level scheme and definitions will continue to be used, as they were initially proposed to RWG, in the advanced level by the ALS until a suitable compromise on any inconsistencies can be achieved.
  
13. After all of the subclass definitions have been completed, main group definitions that have not already been agreed to at the advanced level will be written utilizing the above procedure.

[End of Annex and of document]