

ANNEX F

GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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.

TITLE

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

The title consists of a concise and complete phrase that describes the subject matter appropriate for the classification place.

The words in the title should be those which best define the appropriate subject matter.

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.

DEFINITION STATEMENT

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

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 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 or titles existing in the scheme is clear enough, they may even be used without any change.

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 subclass (group) 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, are positioned where useful to aid comprehension.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LARGE SUBJECT MATTER AREAS (e.g., SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION BETWEEN SUBCLASSES)

When the scope of the subclass is generally affected by its relationships with other large subject matter areas (e.g., other subclasses), those relationships are stated here.

This section includes special rules of classification between subclasses, e.g. multiple classification in two subclasses, relationships between a residual subclass and other related subclasses, relationships between general (function-oriented) and application-oriented places.

This section should only explain relationships that cannot be expressed in the form of references. The term “see ...” is imprecise and should not be used. The text should not mention “the relevant subclass” without a list of examples.

Graphics may be used where needed.

REFERENCES RELEVANT TO CLASSIFICATION IN THIS SUBCLASS (GROUP)

Limiting references are needed when subject matter otherwise covered by the classification place is collected elsewhere. Limiting references must indicate where this subject matter is classified.

This section contains all the limiting references, with further explanation if needed. It begins with the phrase: “This subclass does not cover:”

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.

Precedence references are a type of limiting reference.

References from general (function-oriented) to application-oriented places should appear in this section. They are grouped together under the subheading “Examples of places where the subject matter of this subclass is covered when specially adapted, used for a particular purpose, or incorporated in a larger system.”

References from residual subclasses (defined as such in the title of the subclass or the definition statement) to non-residual places should appear in this section. They are grouped together under the subheading “Places in relation to which this subclass is residual.”

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

The 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.

Graphics may be used where needed.

INFORMATIVE REFERENCES

An informative reference is any reference that indicates the location of subject matter that could be of interest for searching, but is not within the scope of the classification place where the reference occurs. References from application-oriented places to general (function-oriented) places, are informative references. Informative references are not part of the classification scheme itself. However they will remain in the scheme of the next edition of the IPC. They will then be removed in the framework of the IPC maintenance.

In this section of a subclass definition only informative 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.

This section begins with the phrase “Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search.”

The 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.

In case of long lists, the references are grouped together according to common subject matter, if possible, under a technical subheading.

Within each list the references are presented in alphanumeric order, references pointing to places in the same subclass being listed first.

Graphics may be used where needed.

SPECIAL RULES OF CLASSIFICATION WITHIN THIS SUBCLASS (GROUP)

This section contains special classification rules, which apply within the subclass (group), such as the last place priority rule or first place priority rule.

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.

The rules indicated in this section are rules applying only within the subclass and not between subclasses.

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 subclass (group) 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 B 60 T 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 following expressions/words “---”, “---” and “---” are often used as synonyms.
- In patent documents the expression/word “---” is often used instead of “---” which is used in the classification scheme of this subclass (group).
- In patent documents the expression/word “---” is often used with the meaning “---”.
- In patent documents the following abbreviations are often used:
<abbreviation> = <full wording>.

[Annex G follows]