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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)

IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

**Ninth Session
Geneva, June 2 to 13, 2003**

REPORT

adopted by the Working Group

INTRODUCTION

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) held its ninth session in Geneva from June 4 to 13, 2003. The following members of the Working Group were represented at the session: Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America, African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), European Patent Office (EPO) (23). The list of participants appears as Annex A to this report.
 2. The session was opened by Mr. J. Erstling, Director, Office of the PCT (Patent Cooperation Treaty), WIPO, who welcomed the participants on behalf of the Director General.
- ## OFFICERS
3. The Working Group unanimously re-elected Mr. H. Wongel (EPO) as Chair and elected Mr. F. Brady (Ireland) as Vice-Chair for 2003.

4. Mr. A. Farassopoulos (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Working Group unanimously adopted the agenda, which appears as Annex B to this report. In view of the postponement of the start of its session by two days due to the closure of WIPO's offices on June 2 and 3, 2003, the Working Group agreed to assign priority during the session to the IPC revision projects and hybrid systems projects.

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Working Group (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Working Group was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

7. The Working Group noted an oral report by the Secretariat on the thirty-second session of the IPC Committee of Experts (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") (see document IPC/CE/32/12), at which session the Committee had adopted amendments to the seventh edition of the IPC relating to 29 subclasses. The Working Group was informed that the Committee had adopted the "Guidelines for Drafting Classification Definitions" elaborated by the Working Group.

8. The Working Group noted that the Committee had reconsidered its working methods and adopted several substantial amendments relating to those methods which were aimed at the increased use of electronic correspondence and more efficient consideration of projects and tasks. The Working Group noted, in particular, that the Committee had authorized it to carry out the work on the introduction of electronic data to the electronic layer of the IPC, such as classification definitions, illustrating chemical formulae and informative references, and to approve this data, when appropriate, without submitting them for adoption to the Committee.

ELABORATION OF CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

9. The Working Group considered a selected number of proposals contained in compilations, distributed during the session, and approved with some editorial changes the proposals relating to projects D 002, D 007, D 008, D 011, D 025, D 026, D 033, D 045, and D 047. Furthermore, the following actions were requested:

Project D 007 – the rapporteur was asked to include the changes proposed in Annex 19 to the project file;

Project D 008 – the rapporteur was asked to include the changes proposed in Annex 18 to the project file;

Project D 011 – the rapporteur was asked to include the changes proposed in Annex 23 to the project file;

Project D 026 – the rapporteur was asked to include an informative reference to F23K 1/00 in the definition of main group 5/00;

Project D 033 – the rapporteur was asked to replace the title of the limiting reference to C12N 15/00 by the text appearing in the section “Relationships Between Large Subject Matter Areas”;

Project D 045 – the rapporteur was asked to prepare definitions of the main groups in subclass G01V in order to include in those definitions the references mentioned in Annex 6 to the project file.

10. In respect of projects D 039 and D 040 the Working Group invited comments on the remaining open question as to whether in both projects the term “tissue” should be replaced by the term “cell culture” as proposed by Germany and Japan (see Annexes 14 and 15 to the project files). The Working Group also invited comments on the latest rapporteur proposal of project D 006 (see Annex 24 to the project file).

11. The following volunteering offices were appointed to prepare the French version of the definition projects approved during this session:

- France for projects D 007, D 008, D 026;
- EPO for projects D 002, D 011, D 025;
- Switzerland for projects D 033, D 045, D 047.

12. The Working Group agreed that for approving the French version of definition projects a similar procedure of electronic approval as for the original version should be applied. Approval of at least three offices having French as a working language, including the translating office, was requested.

13. During the discussion of the revision project C 424 and in view of the importance of the technical subject matter covered by the newly created subclass G06Q, the Working Group agreed to create a new definition project (D 054) for this subclass and appointed the EPO as rapporteur.

14. During discussions relating to project H 061, the Working Group agreed that definitions were needed for the indexing subclasses F21W and F21Y. Germany volunteered to draft definitions for these subclasses and it was agreed to extend the definition project D 055 to all subclasses of class F 21, in view of their close interrelationship.

15. In view of the objective to finalize fifty definition projects for the next edition of the IPC and in view of the limited time left, the Working Group invited comments on the latest proposals of remaining projects and asked its members to indicate their electronic approval whenever they can agree with the latest proposal of a rapporteur. The International Bureau indicated that deadlines would be posted on the e-forum.

REARRANGEMENT OF MAIN GROUPS ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDIZED SEQUENCE

16. The Working Group considered a selected number of proposals contained in the compilations of rearrangement projects distributed during the session, and approved a number of them. The list of approved projects is given in Annex F to this report. Additional comments on the projects which were not approved at the session were requested by October 1, 2003.

17. The Working Group reaffirmed its decision taken during its previous session that for groups with multipart titles, division of the group into its constituent parts and presenting it in two (or more) different places in the standardized sequence (e.g. by additional listing of a subgroup covering a part of this title) should be avoided.

18. The Working Group accepted with gratitude an offer of the Delegation of the United States of America to prepare proposals for all remaining subclasses of the IPC which had not yet been assigned. The list of these remaining subclasses together with project numbers is given in Annex G to this report. In view of the difficulty and importance of this work, the Delegation of the United States of America indicated that comments on their proposals already submitted and on the proposals to be submitted for the new projects were most appreciated.

19. The Working Group briefly discussed the Guidelines on the Rearrangement of the Main Groups According to the Standardized Sequence (see Annex to document IPC/WG/9/2). In view of the fact that limited practical experience had already been accumulated in the application of the Guidelines and in the absence of the comments submitted, the Working Group agreed to postpone further consideration and approval of the Guidelines until its next session and invited its members to submit comments on the Guidelines.

20. The Working Group finally agreed that information given in the rearrangement projects on the need to create residual main groups in certain subclasses should be collected for the future work.

CHECKING OF NOTES AND REFERENCES IN THE REFORMED IPC

21. Discussions were based on document IPC/WG/9/3 containing, in its Annex I, the initial proposal by the International Bureau, the comments submitted and the rapporteur report concerning complex cases of outpointers and X, P-type outpointers.

22. The Working Group approved the rapporteur's proposal, with some amendments, which appears in Annex H to this report.

23. With regard to Annex III to document IPC/WG/9/3, containing a proposal for simplification of the core level of subclass G02F submitted by the EPO, the Working Group approved the new distribution of core level groups in that subclass as proposed. This distribution is included in the said Annex H.
24. Having considered and reviewed the decisions made by the Working Group during this session, as well at the previous session and the status of the project concerning checking of notes and references, the Working Group agreed that most of the problems relating to typical references and notes from the core to the advanced level, such as X-type references, P-type references, X, P-type references and complex cases of redirected references and notes, had already been solved (see document IPC/WG/8/8, paragraphs 34 to 42, and paragraph 22 above). The Working Group requested the International Bureau to implement the approved rearrangement of core and advanced level groups and introduce minor amendments of references and notes into the IPC based on the decisions made and make it available on the IBIS website by the end of 2003.
25. Bearing in mind the short time available for the completion of the project until the publication of the next edition of the IPC, the Working Group authorized the International Bureau to make any further minor adjustments if necessary, that is rearrangement of groups between the core and advanced levels or modifications of wordings of notes and references, in order to achieve compatibility of the two levels. The Working Group also authorized the International Bureau to make such adjustments and modifications, if necessary, available directly on the IBIS website and agreed that they should be considered as minor amendments to the IPC.
26. Discussing a study provided by the International Bureau (see Suppl.1 to document IPC/WG/9/3), the Working Group noted problems related to limiting references in entries of the advanced level of the IPC. Whenever such a limiting reference refers out subject matter to a place in the IPC which is not located in the same hierarchical branch as the place where the reference occurs, this also affects the scope of the corresponding core level entry.
27. The Working Group also noted that due to the limited population of the advanced level entries, only a small percentage of documents to be classified in the core level would eventually be affected. The Working Group however agreed that, in order to provide assistance for precise classification at the core level, it would be necessary to inform the user of the core level about the potential limitation of the scope of a core level entry resulting from references in its advanced level subgroups.
28. While an automatic algorithm could identify all possibly affected advanced level entries, it was agreed that considerable effort by experts would be required to judge which of these references are limiting and how the relevant limiting references should be taken into account in the core level entries. An estimated total of 7200 individual references would have to be considered.
29. In view of this high workload the Working Group concluded that for the eighth edition of the IPC (IPC-2005) a limited solution only could be envisaged warning the user about a potential problem in the respective places and requested the International Bureau to prepare a proposal indicating possible solutions by August 1, 2003.

30. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that an automatic sorting, locating and listing algorithm according to Annex III of Suppl.1 to document IPC/WG/9/3 had already been implemented and preliminarily tested under the CLAIMS project. The Working Group requested the International Bureau to make the final results of this procedure, in the form of a list of potentially affected core level entries, available on the IBIS website as soon as possible for further consideration by the Working Group during its next session.

31. The Working Group finally agreed that the problem of references in the advanced level of the IPC should be reconsidered in the course of the next IPC revision period with the objective of finding a more comprehensive solution.

CONVERSION OF INDEXING SCHEMES TO CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES

Double-Purpose Schemes

32. Discussions were based on document IPC/WG/9/4 concerning the elaboration of a standardized approach to classifying of chemical mixtures or compositions. The Working Group approved the following set of notes to be used to indicate how to classify chemical mixtures or compositions:

Standardized notes for the classification of chemical mixtures or compositions

(1) In groups < - - - >, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, a <compound or ingredient> is classified in the <last/first> appropriate place.

(2) A <composition, i.e. a mixture of two or more compounds or ingredients> is classified in the <last/first> of groups < - - - > that provides for at least one of these <compounds or ingredients>.

(3) Any part of a <composition> which is not identified by the classification according to note (2), and which itself is determined to be novel and non-obvious, must also be classified according to note (1) or (2). The part can be either a single <compound or ingredient> or a <composition> in itself.

(4) Any part of a <composition> which is not identified by the classification according to note (2) or (3), and which is considered to represent information of interest for search, may also be classified according to note (1) or (2). This can for example be the case when it is considered of interest to enable searching of <compositions> using a combination of classification symbols. Such non-obligatory classifications should be given as “additional information.”

33. The following set of notes was approved to be used to indicate how to classify combinations or subcombinations:

Standardized Notes for the Classification of Combinations or Subcombinations

(1) In groups < - - - >, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, a <subcombination> is classified in the <first/last> appropriate place.

(2) A <combination> of <subcombinations> is classified in the <first/last> of groups <- - - > that provides for at least one of its <subcombinations>.

(3) Any <subcombination> of a <combination> which is not identified by the classification according to note (2), and which is determined to be novel and non-obvious, must also be classified according to note (1) or (2).

(4) Any <subcombination> of a <combination> which is not identified by the classification according to note (2) or (3), and which is considered to represent information of interest for search, may also be classified according to note (1) or (2). This can for example be the case when it is considered of interest to enable searching of <combinations> using a combination of classification symbols. Such non-obligatory classifications should be given as "additional information."

34. The rapporteurs on hybrid projects concerning double-purpose schemes were invited to submit, by September 15, 2003, proposals incorporating, where needed, the above set of notes. These proposals should indicate all necessary amendments to the IPC in order to facilitate their introduction in the IPC Information System. It was noted that the International Bureau would post on the revision list server, by July 1, 2003, the rules for presenting and ordering notes in the IPC in order to provide assistance on the correct placement of the said set of notes.

35. It was noted that in order to accelerate the introduction of the amendments in the IPC resulting from the abolishment of the double-purpose schemes, the International Bureau would prepare the French versions of those amendments before submitting them to the thirty-fourth session of the Committee of Experts in 2004.

36. The Working Group agreed that the rapporteurs on the H projects should send comments, if any, to the corresponding D projects, to warn about possible implications of H projects to the corresponding definitions.

37. Concerning the double-purpose scheme A01N 25/00 to 65/00 (project H 002), the Working Group approved in principle the proposal submitted by the Rapporteur (see Annex 8 to the project file) which incorporates the set of standardized notes. However a new proposal should be submitted, including the amendments to the set of notes approved by the Working Group and the necessary amendments to the IPC.

38. Concerning the double-purpose schemes F16H 48/06 to 48/30 and F16H 59/00 (project H 031), the rapporteur was invited to prepare notes for multiple classification, based on the standardized notes, after group F16H 48/04 and before group F16H 59/00.

39. The Rapporteur on project H 022 (subclass C10M) was invited to submit a consolidated proposal relating to the notes after the subclass title, incorporating the set of standardized notes and amending the existing notes accordingly.

40. Concerning project H 029 (subclass D21H) it was agreed to delete the notes prescribing the use of double-purpose schemes without deleting any groups. Given that this solution would not be satisfactory in the long term, Sweden was invited to submit a revision request for amendments to the scheme of subclass D21H during the next revision period.

Separate Indexing Schemes

41. The Working Group agreed to abolish the indexing scheme A61B 101:00 in view of its very low use.

42. The Working Group agreed to abolish the indexing schemes A61F 101:00 to 105:00 and 111:00 to 113:00 in view of their very low use. It was further agreed to delete the precedence references in groups A61F 13/471 and 13/472 since these references had been introduced in order to promote the use of indexing codes 111:00 and 113:00.

43. The Working Group agreed to retain the indexing scheme B03D 101:00, 103:00 in view of its significant use and the fact that it conforms to the Guidelines for Creation of Indexing Schemes.

44. The Working Group agreed to abolish the indexing scheme B09C 101:00 in view of its very low use.

45. The Working Group agreed to convert the indexing scheme B21B 108:00 to a classification scheme by approving seven two-dot subgroups of group B21B 1/081 (to appear as Annex 7 to the project file) since these new groups could be used to classify invention information. In view of the possible overlap between the approved new groups, comments were invited on the way to indicate precedence between the subgroups of B21B 1/081 (first place rule or precedence references) or on whether multiple classification was preferable.

46. The Working Group agreed to retain the indexing scheme B23K 101:00, 103:00 in view of its sufficient use and its importance as a search tool.

47. The Working Group confirmed the recommendation of the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group to retain the indexing subclass B29L. The deletion of code B29L 9:00 was considered, in view of amended Note 2 after subclass B29C (see revision project C278 and Technical Annex 8 to document IPC/CE/32/12). It was however agreed to retain the whole of the indexing scheme, and to reconsider this question during the next revision period.

48. Concerning the indexing scheme B42D 201:00 to 227:00, the Working Group confirmed the recommendation of the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group to abolish it. It was further agreed that there was a need to subdivide group B42D 15/10 in view of its high file size but the titles of indexing codes B42D 101:00 to 121:00 were not appropriate for a classification scheme and could in such case create an overlap with subclass G06K. Therefore, the Working Group agreed to retain the indexing scheme B42D 101:00 to 121:00. An advanced level revision project concerning subdivision of group B42D 15/10 should be initiated and should take priority for consideration during the next revision period.

49. The Working Group agreed to retain the indexing scheme of subclass C12R in view of its usefulness in many subclasses of class C 12.

50. In response to the request made at the previous session of the Working Group to consider the creation of group F16H 61/68 (see document IPC/WG/8/8, paragraph 53), this group and four subgroups were approved (see Annex 12 to project file H 031) with some amendments. The International Bureau was invited to post the amended scheme to the e-forum by July 15, 2003. The indexing codes F16H 107:00 and 109:00 were not used in the classification scheme and the Working Group agreed to abolish them.

51. In the framework of project H 034, the Working Group considered the inclusion of indexing codes G06F 151:00 to 161:00 into the classification scheme. It was agreed that the codes 151:00 to 157:00 would be covered by groups of subclass G06Q, which was created at the present session of the Working Group, and therefore these codes should be deleted. The EPO was invited to investigate whether codes 159:00 and 161:00 could be incorporated in the classification scheme of main group G06F 19/00 and to present a proposal for the next session of the Working Group.

52. The Working Group confirmed the recommendation of the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group to retain the following indexing schemes: A61L 101:00, B29K, C09K 101:00-123:00, D06M 101:00, E01D 101:00, F16L 101:00, F21W, F21Y.

53. The Working Group confirmed the recommendation by the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group to abolish the following indexing schemes: B01D 101:00, B01D 111:00 to 119:00, B01D 131:00 to 141:00, B01D 151:00 to 161:00, B01D 171:00 to 187:00, B01J 101:00 to 105:00, B08B 101:00, B42D 201:00 to 227:00, B60C 101:00 to 125:00, B60T 101:00 to 105:00, C07K 101:00 to 123:00, C07M, C22K, F16D 101:00 to 113:00 and F16F 101:00 to 103:00.

54. The Working Group agreed that, in light of the Guidelines for Conversion of Existing IPC Indexing Schemes into Classification Schemes, the conversion of those schemes was not possible.

55. Annex I to this report gives a list of all separate indexing schemes with the recommendations by the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group and the decisions by the IPC Revision Working Group.

INTRODUCTION OF ILLUSTRATING CHEMICAL FORMULAE IN THE ELECTRONIC LAYER OF THE IPC

56. The Working Group noted the current status of the project relating to the introduction of illustrating chemical formulae in the electronic layer of the IPC, as shown in document IPC/WG/9/5 and Annex thereto. The Working Group realized that, for all of those chemical areas of the IPC where the original collection of chemical formulae was provided by the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), final rapporteur reports had been submitted by the offices-rapporteurs, taking into account all the comments and proposals made by participating offices as well as the original collection of chemical formulae provided by KIPO.

57. The Working Group agreed with the opinions of offices-rapporteurs that their final submissions were considered complete and were ready to be incorporated in the electronic layer of the IPC.

58. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that the International Bureau would introduce the complete collection of those final submissions by the offices-rapporteurs to the IBIS system and would make it available on the IBIS website in Autumn 2003. Offices would be able to propose to the International Bureau any corrections or improvements to be introduced in the published collection of chemical formulae.

59. The Working Group agreed that the project relating to the introduction of illustrating chemical formulae in the electronic layer of the IPC was completed.

IPC REVISION PROGRAM

General

60. The Working Group discussed 12 pending IPC revision projects and approved amendments relating to those projects (see Annexes 1 to 19 to this report). The decisions of the Working Group with respect to those projects are listed in Annex C to this report and further information with respect to some of these decisions is given in paragraph 62, below. A list indicating to which classes or subclasses amendments have been approved during the revision period appears as Annex D to this report. Changes to amendments approved at earlier sessions are indicated in Annex E to this report.

61. The Working Group had before it, in particular, document IPC/WG/8/8 and the relevant project files.

IPC Revision Projects

62. The Working Group made the following observations, in addition to the decisions set forth in Annex C to this report, with respect to the IPC revision projects:

Project C 371 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved a note on the desirability to use the indexing scheme F23B 101/00 to 103/00.

The need for a standard note referring to the chapter explaining the use of hybrid systems in the Guide was considered. Since the indexing schemes belong to the advanced level and will be published only electronically, it was decided that such notes were not needed anymore in the IPC and that they could be replaced by hyperlinks to the relevant part of the Guide. The International Bureau was invited to remove these standard notes from the remaining indexing schemes.

Project C 386 (mechanical) – Following the request of the Committee of Experts, it was agreed that in the English version of subclasses A61F, A61G and A61H, the term “patients” should be added to the term “disabled persons.” The corresponding amendments appear in Annexes 2 to 4 to this report. The Working Group noted that the French version of these subclasses did not need any modification.

Project C 393 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved several amendments of main groups E21B 10/00 and 27/00 (see Annex 5 to this report).

Comments were invited on (see the said Annex 5):

- whether the title of main group E21B 27/00 reflected its intended scope; whether the approved reference in main group 10/00 provided a good borderline between groups 10/00 and 27/00, and if not, whether the expression “with means for” in the latter group should be replaced by the expression “characterized by means for”;
- whether the reference in group 10/44 to group 10/42 was still appropriate in view of the modification of the title of group 10/42;
- whether the title of group 10/43 was correct in view of its intended scope, in particular whether the term “arrangement” was properly used;
- whether in group 10/627 the term “separable” should be replaced by “detachable,” that is, whether these two terms were synonyms in that context;
- whether the title of group 27/04 was correct in view of the new two-part title of main group 27/00 and, in particular, should “depositing means” be part of the scope of group 27/04.

Project C 394 (mechanical) – It was agreed to modify the scheme of groups F04D 29/04 and 29/06 and to create several new subgroups (see Annex 6 to this report).

Comments were invited on whether the titles of groups 29/044 and 29/054 correctly reflected their intended scope.

Project C 395 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the creation of several subgroups of group F16D 1/09 (see Annex 7 to this report). The EPO was invited to prepare drawings illustrating these new groups:

Comments were invited on the need of the proposed group F16D 1/099 (see Annex 14 to the project file) and if it was needed, how its title could be modified in order to make its scope clear.

Project C 411 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved a modified title and a modified scheme of main group A47B 21/00 (see Annex 8 to this report).

It was decided that a reference excluding “mouse pads” from the scope of main group A47B 21/00 was needed, but its approval was postponed to the next session of the Working Group until approval of the exact title of the group providing for “mouse pads” in subclass G06F.

It was agreed that definitions in this subclass should give further precision to the relationship between main groups A47B 17/00 and 21/00.

Comments were invited on (see the said Annex 8):

- the clarity of the title of group A47B 21/007;

– whether the scope of A47B 21/00 was wide enough to cover all its subgroups and whether all relevant aspects of computer workstations were covered by that scope.

Project C 420 (electrical) – The Working Group agreed that “mouse pads” should be covered in subclass G06F and not in subclass G06K and approved the relevant amendments based on Annex 12 to the project file (see Annex 15 to this report).

After considering a proposal submitted by the EPO (see Annex 17 to the project file), the Working Group agreed to extend the scope of the project in order to bring the scheme of main group G06F 3/00 more in line with the technical developments in that area and to include therein other “input-output arrangements.” Comments were invited on that proposal by July 31, 2003. On the basis of those comments, the EPO was invited to prepare a consolidated proposal by September 1, 2003. Comments were invited on the consolidated proposal by September 25, 2003, and a rapporteur report by October 25, 2003.

Project C 422 (chemical) – Comments were invited on whether adopted groups C40B 9/12 and 9/18 (see Annex 16E to this report) should also cover methods of cleavage of library members from the support and, if that were not the case, where these methods should be classified, for example in groups 3/00, 5/00 or 9/00.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur of definition project D 005 was invited to include in the glossary part of that project examples illustrating the expressions “contained in” or “displayed by” (see group C40B 7/02) and an explanatory definition for “biochemical methods” (see group C40B 9/06).

Project C 424 (electrical) – The Working Group agreed to create the new subclass G06Q and a number of main groups of that subclass were approved (see Annex 18 to this report). It was also agreed to create a new definition project (project D 054) in order to further clarify the scope of the subclass and of its main groups (see paragraph 12 above).

Comments were invited by July 31, 2003, on:

– whether “non-technical documents” relating to business methods should be classified in G06Q and if that were the case, how this should be indicated;

– whether the title of approved group G06Q 6/00 (see Annex 18 to this report) was too restrictive in view of its intended scope (see examples and Sweden’s comments in Annexes 2 and 7 to the project file respectively);

– how to clarify the borderline between the approved group G06Q 4/00 (see Annex 18 to this report) and subclass G07F, in particular group G07F 19/00;

– whether proposed group G06Q 7/00 (see Annex 9 to the project file) was a residual group and whether a standard residual group should be created at the end of the scheme; if main group 7/00 was not a residual one, what should be its scope in relation to the other main groups (see subject matter indicated in Annex 2 to the project file and in Annex I to document IPC/CE/30/3); and whether different main groups with more specific wordings should be created instead of group 7/00;

– on the basis of the above comments the rapporteur was invited to submit a consolidated proposal by September 1, 2003. In that proposal the rapporteur was requested to include subgroups of the approved main groups, where needed, and to adapt the references pointing to the deleted group G06F 17/60.

Comments were invited on that proposal, by September 25, 2003, and a rapporteur report by October 25, 2003. The EPO was requested to provide, before the next session of the Working Group, a French version of the proposal which would be included in the rapporteur report.

Project C 425 (chemical) – The Working Group approved main group A61K 36/00 and its subgroups based on the initial proposal arranged according to the first place rule (see Annex 19 to this report). It was however agreed that the last place rule should apply in that group as in the rest of subclass A61K.

It was noted that, in the scheme of group A61K 36/00, common names of plants were indicated in brackets, for families with “family” indication, for genus without indication. In view of questions raised with respect to the spelling of certain botanical names, it was agreed that the International Bureau would check the spelling of all botanical names and that the spelling should normally conform with British spelling.

Furthermore, it was agreed that in order to facilitate the use of group A61K 36/00, it should be linked to a database of botanical classification. Offices were invited to propose the most appropriate database.

The EPO was invited to propose transfer notes for groups A61K 35/70 and 35/72 to be deleted. The International Bureau was invited to propose a note explaining the presentation of common names.

Comments were invited on:

– the notes to be proposed by the EPO and the International Bureau, and the notes already proposed after group A61K 36/00 (see Annex 1 to the project file);

– whether a subgroup of the adopted group 36/062 should be created to cover “yeasts” (see Annex 19 to this report);

– the correctness of the hierarchical position of groups 36/47 to 36/478 or whether they should be subordinated to group 36/46 (see Annex 19 to this report);

– the proposed indexing scheme (see Annex 1 to the project file).

PREPARATION OF THE EIGHTH EDITION OF THE IPC (IPC-2005)

63. The Secretariat introduced document IPC/WG/9/6 indicating the procedure and the time schedule for various actions relating to the preparation of the eighth edition of the IPC (IPC-2005) and associated publications.

64. The Secretariat explained that the proposed plan of action related to the publication of the IPC in the printed and in the electronic form. It did not include preparation of classification definitions because these definitions would be available only in the electronic layer of the IPC and would be continuously introduced in the electronic layer.

65. Following discussion of this subject, the Working group approved the proposed procedure and the time schedule as given in Annex J to this report.

UPDATING OF IPC TRAINING EXAMPLES

66. Discussions were based on document IPC/WG/9/7 containing background material on this matter prepared by the International Bureau.

67. The Working Group indicated that IPC training examples were extensively used for teaching the staff of industrial property offices and underlined the importance of their updating well in advance of entering into force of the next edition of the IPC so as to achieve timely preparation for the use of the reformed IPC.

68. The Working Group agreed that the whole collection of IPC training examples contained in the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* should be reconsidered in view of many substantial changes introduced in the process of IPC revision and reform. Having estimated the amount of work required for such reconsideration and noted other urgent tasks before the Working Group, it came to the conclusion that the work on the updating of IPC training examples could commence at the beginning of 2004 and should rapidly proceed so as to timely obtain at least a minimum collection of training examples appropriate for teaching the reformed IPC.

69. The Working Group agreed that priorities should be established in carrying out this work and, at the first stage, the existing collection of training examples should be reconsidered, appropriate examples selected and, if necessary, new examples added.

70. Following the instruction given by the IPC Committee of Experts, the Working Group established the Task Force on IPC Training Examples and noted that its following members volunteered to participate in the Task Force: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden (provisionally), United Kingdom, United States of America, EPO. The Working Group agreed that its other members could join the Task Force at a later stage.

71. The Working Group agreed to consider a procedure for carrying out the updating of training examples at its next session and invited the members of the Task Force to submit, by October 15, 2003, proposals with regard to this procedure to the International Bureau.

OTHER MATTERS

Presentation of a Prototype Patent Categorizer

72. The Secretariat made a presentation of a prototype patent categorizer under elaboration in the framework of the CLAIMS project. The Working Group was informed that the objective of such a categorizer was to provide a computer-assisted classification tool, operating at subclass and main group level, for small and medium-sized industrial property offices, in particular in developing countries.

73. The Secretariat explained that the prototype categorizer had been elaborated using training on the English data corpus of 450,000 abstracts extracted from the ESPACE-A collection and demonstrated a typical testing scenario based on successive refining of classification symbols determined at hierarchically high classification levels. The Secretariat indicated that it was planned to elaborate, by the end of 2003, a patent categorizer operating in several languages.

74. The Working Group expressed its appreciation of the work conducted and noted that such a categorizer could also be used at large industrial property offices for preclassification of filed patent applications to forward them to appropriate examination departments. The Delegation of Spain requested that Spanish be included as a working language of the categorizer.

75. The Secretariat invited the members of the Working Group to carry out testing of the prototype categorizer available at the URL <http://proto.metaread.ch/index.html> (username:claims, password:winnowu) and to submit to the International Bureau by July 15, 2003, their comments with regard to possible improvements of the categorizer, operation scenarios and user interface.

Presentation of the New IPC e-Forum

76. The Secretariat made a presentation of the new IPC e-forum (IEF), available at the URL <http://www.wipo.int/ipc-ief>. The Secretariat explained that the IEF was intended to replace in the next weeks the current e-forum and contained new features, such as selection of projects based on a combination of criteria, direct access to a project, rights given to the rapporteur to edit project information, capability for each office to delete wrong submissions, downloading facilities, etc.

77. The Working Group expressed its appreciation of the IEF and the extended possibilities it would provide. These possibilities would permit, already for the next session of the Working Group, to submit "Working Group" papers to designated "Working Group projects" of the IEF, thus making their retrieval easier.

78. The Secretariat indicated that, in the next weeks, the complete database of the current e-forum would be transferred to the IEF and that offices would then be informed of the availability of the IEF and receive user instructions and passwords.

Removal of the Term “Miscellaneous” from the IPC

79. The Working Group noted that at the second meeting of the Task Force on the Revision of the Guide, it had been agreed to remove the term “miscellaneous” from the Guide to the IPC since it was considered misleading. It had also been agreed that it was desirable to remove it from places in the IPC where it was used.

80. It was also noted that Sweden had submitted a proposal on such a removal. Several comments on this proposal and a proposal by France to remove the term “divers(e,es)” from the French version of the IPC had also been submitted.

81. Due to the lack of time, the Working Group was not able to consider this issue at this session. Sweden was invited to prepare a rapporteur report taking account of the already submitted comments, by July 15, 2003. Comments were invited on the rapporteur report by September 15, 2003, and, finally, a new rapporteur report by October 15, 2003. Sweden and France were invited to cooperate for the preparation of the French version.

STATUS OF THE WORK

82. The Chair assessed the status of the Tasks assigned to the Working Group and stated that 13 revision projects on the agenda of this session (see Annex B to this report) had been dealt with in a satisfactory way and six projects had been completed. The Chair indicated that Annex C to this report gave the status of each revision project and brief information on actions to follow. He also pointed out that, at this session, the Working Group had continued an important work program of the implementation of the results of IPC reform and had achieved good progress on most of the tasks of the program. The Chair specified that, in the framework of the implementation of the results of IPC reform, the Working Group, at this session, had completed projects relating to checking notes and references in the reformed IPC and to the introduction of illustrating chemical formulae in the electronic layer of the IPC and had approved nine projects relating to classification definitions in one language version.

NEXT SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP

83. The Working Group assessed the workload expected to be before it at its next session (see paragraph 84, below) and agreed to devote the first three days of the first week to the chemical field, the remainder of that week to the electrical field and the first three days of the second week to the mechanical field.

84. The Working Group noted the tentative dates for its tenth session:
November 24 to December 5, 2003.

85. This report was unanimously adopted by the Working Group at its closing meeting on June 13, 2003.

[Annexes follow]