

DANISH EXPERIENCE ON ANTI-COUNTERFEITING TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

Document submitted by Denmark

Danish activities in respect to anti-counterfeiting training and awareness raising run along three strands: international projects, communication strategy and courses. These will be presented in the chapters below.

The Danish Patent and Trademark Office holds a central position in Denmark in respect to anti-counterfeiting training and awareness raising in its role as the the centre for strategic information and protection of technology and business identifiers.

1. International projects

The background

The Danish Patent and Trademark Office (DKPTO) has specialised in assisting other authorities in building up IPR infrastructure.

In 2004, based on the project experience acquired, we decided to further develop our international project work, establishing it as an influential business area in DKPTO.

We expect to develop and expand our activity in the area over the coming years. Our goal is to be a visible and respected player, one which other national authorities will find it attractive to work with. We see it as a great challenge to use our experience in this connection. The organisation as a whole as well as the individual staff member can learn much from participating in such projects.

Our references include large-scale EU-funded twinning projects in Bulgaria, Poland and Romania as well as smaller projects in Malta, Croatia, Russia and Turkey.

In Bulgaria, Poland and now in Romania we have been working with an inter-institutional focus to strengthen the countries' ability to protect and enforce intellectual property rights.

Target groups

So far our focus of attention has primarily been the new EU countries and the EU candidate countries of the Balkans. Common to all these countries is that their administrative procedures must be brought into line with EU practice and standards. In addition to this, the coming years will see an increasing focus on Asia, and especially China.

Funding

Funding for projects is applied for with the EU, for example through the Phare Twinning programme. On previous occasions, we have also received funding from the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Anti-counterfeiting training in international projects

The experience from the international projects is that the best way to facilitate learning is to provide trainers who know the issues from their own daily work, and who can provide relevant cases to support theory. Therefore, DKPTO has developed cooperation with Danish Police, Danish Customs authorities and specialists within the judiciary to ensure that police officers, customs officers, judges etc. are trained by their peers.

Resources and qualifications among the participants in training vary widely from country to country and also within countries. Some participants may not even have access to a computer while others have state-of-the art equipment at their disposal. DKPTO copes with this challenge by conducting training needs assessment as early as possible in the course of a project.

When the actual training starts, the participants may prove to have other backgrounds than the target group identified in the needs assessment. Again this requires flexibility and tact on the part of the trainer and of the project management to meet the needs of the beneficiary.

A valuable lesson from the projects is that effective anti-counterfeiting measures require close cooperation between the stakeholders, i.e. national IPR authorities and international organisations such as WIPO, Interpol, World Customs Organization, World Health Organisation et al. It is of great importance to address the issue of inter-institutional cooperation during the training or as a separate activity. This can also be done – as it will be in Romania – as a separate activity - or, as it will be in Poland – in the form of common training.

In regards of the enforcement training targeting the police and customs services it has shown highly valuable to incorporate presentations from various rightholders (actors from the private sector). Their input has provided the beneficiaries with valuable input on how to distinguish a counterfeit product from an original product. The added value of the rightholders is that their input makes it easier for customs and police officers to identify pirated goods. The cooperation between the rightholders and especially the customs authorities is well developed in Denmark. This kind of cooperation should be highly encouraged as it has a clear added value for all key stakeholders

Finally, the projects have proven to be beneficial for the cooperation between Danish authorities: The DKPTO's knowledge of the way operational enforcement is carried out at the border or internally in Denmark and other countries has been improved. DKPTO's contacts to the Danish enforcement agencies nationally have also increased, thereby creating valuable professional networks for DKPTO.

For more information on DKPTO's international projects, please see attachment.

Awareness raising in international projects

Typically, the beneficiary countries in our projects need to strengthen protection of intellectual property rights. This goal can also be supported by way of awareness raising in its different forms. DKPTO helps other countries in designing awareness campaigns, including specifying the aim and the target group(s) of the activities.

In Malta, an awareness raising campaign was developed in cooperation with the relevant IPR authorities. The work concluded in the design of five TV trailers with different target groups and contents. DKPTO assisted the Maltese authorities in defining the angles of the campaign. The TV trailers will deal with both the possibilities in using IPR and on the illegality and danger in breaching IPRs.

In Saint Petersburg, Russia, a Finnish-led project has used DKPTO expertise in starting up an IPR network which is to coordinate the activities of authorities, unive sities and IPR business players in the region. Awareness raising activities will be one of several activities in the network.

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2. Communication strategy

The national awareness raising activities conducted by the DKPTO are to be seen as an integral part of the strategy, mission and vision of DKPTO's business. Awareness raising lies at the very heart of the office's activities and is expressed in our communication platform. We communicate about intellectual property rights as a set of traffic rules which it is in the interest of all businesses to adhere to. The focus is always on the opportunities of the IPR system for our users.

The aim is to make DKPTO's website the primary source of information for anyone seeking information on IPR. In March 2006 there were 138 000 unique "hits" on our homepage. The weblog of our website www.dkpto.dk contains postings from both employees and Internet users on all aspects of IPR. The aim is to reach out to both the general public and the media.

3. Courses

The DKPTO has a professional course department which sells courses on a commercial basis to the Danish IPR community. These include

- tailor-made courses for customs and police officers
- expert seminars on enforcement for attorneys, police, customs, and IPR specialists from businesses
- courses on enforcement in other countries such as Germany, UK and USA
- courses on infringements of patents
- courses on infringements of trademarks
- courses on infringements on the Internet

An example of cooperation with Danish Customs is a course which DKPTO held for the Danish Customs in the use of the public Internet access to DKPTO's database, PVS Online.