

# WIPO



PCT/A/27/2

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: August 4, 1999

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

GENEVA

INTERNATIONAL PATENT COOPERATION UNION  
(PCT UNION)

ASSEMBLY

Twenty-Seventh (12<sup>th</sup> Ordinary) Session  
Geneva, September 20 to 29, 1999

PCT AUTOMATION

*Document prepared by the International Bureau*

Progress Report on the PCT Automation ("IMPACT") Project

1. In March 1998, the Assemblies of Member States of WIPO authorized the financing of a PCT automation project by the Special Reserve Fund for Additional Premises and Computerization and also agreed that the Assembly of the PCT Union should be kept informed of the development of the automated system (see documents A/32/5 – WO/BC/18/5 and A/32/7). This document contains a progress report on the development of the project and other relevant information.
2. The project to develop the IMPACT (Information Management for the Patent Cooperation Treaty) System aims to modernize all processing and storage of international applications at the International Bureau and provide for electronic communications to applicants and Offices. Following the proposed plan of action approved by the PCT Assembly (see paragraph 15 of document A/32/5), an international tender was issued to select a partner to develop the system. The tender process is progressing well in terms of the current work plan. The International Bureau of WIPO has been through the process of evaluating a short-list of five potential bidders to arrive at a second short-list of two bidders. To assist in the process of evaluating the final two bidders, the International Bureau invited experts from six patent Offices to participate. The outcome of this process will be the narrowing down to

the final choice of the partner to work with the International Bureau as a systems developer on the IMPACT Project.

3. It is to be noted that WIPO is reserving the right to undertake parallel contract negotiations should the final two short-listed bidders propose solutions which are acceptable to the requirements of the IMPACT Project. This will give WIPO an added advantage during the contract negotiation stage and assure that the final choice is in fact a “best value” solution, which balances the investment with the solution provided.

4. In parallel with the bidder evaluation process, the International Bureau undertook an intensive recruitment exercise to put in place its own core team of information technology specialists. This will give the International Bureau the overall control and responsibility for the outcome of the project and will facilitate greatly the transfer of know-how and technology to the International Bureau.

5. The International Bureau gave a presentation about the management structure, technical overview and the implementation plan of the IMPACT Project at the third session of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) in June 1999, and the Committee expressed its satisfaction with the progress.

6. To allow for the flow of data into the IMPACT Project, the PCT-EASY (Electronic Application System) software was released by the International Bureau in January 1999. This software currently permits applicants to author the PCT request form in any of the seven PCT publication languages (Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish). Thus far, more than 2,500 copies of the software have been distributed on CD-ROM and through the WIPO Internet site, and 10% of PCT international applications are now being filed with a request form authored using this software.

7. The International Bureau has also deployed a system for the electronic scanning of PCT pamphlets (published international applications plus other related information including international search report) for inclusion in the WIPO Intellectual Property Digital Library (IPDL), production of the ESPACE-WORLD CD-ROM, and distribution to national and regional Offices and commercial vendors. This scanning system will be integrated into the IMPACT project during the early phases of deployment.

8. Since the WIPONET will provide the IMPACT Project with a reliable and secured network infrastructure, the IMPACT Project will become an important user of the WIPONET. In view of the interdependency of the two projects, they have been closely coordinated from the planning stage, sharing the same project management strategy and methodology. Moreover, following the Strategic Plan adopted by the SCIT in June 1999, a number of on-going and planned information technology projects of WIPO, including the IMPACT and WIPONET, will be integrated into a comprehensive implementation plan of WIPO information technology projects which will be presented to the SCIT in December 1999.

#### Modifications of the PCT Administrative Instructions to Provide for Electronic Filing

9. The PCT Assembly in 1997 adopted amendments of the PCT Regulations providing for the future introduction of a system permitting PCT applications to be filed electronically. The

formulation of draft modifications of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT to establish a legal framework is being undertaken by an ad hoc advisory group. The development of a technical standard has been referred to a task force established by the SCIT (see document SCIT/2/8, paragraphs 33 and 34). The results of the work of the advisory group and the task force will, after consultation and adoption by PCT member States, constitute the legal framework and technical standard for the filing, processing, storage and records management of PCT applications in electronic form.

#### PCT Rule 87 and the Provision of PC Workstations

10. Under PCT Rule 87, each International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority and each national Office has the right to receive, free of charge, copies of every published international application. The PCT Assembly in 1990 approved a proposal that any PCT Office or Authority that chooses to receive a subscription to the ESPACE-WORLD CD-ROM series, in substitution for paper copies of published international applications, would be able to request the International Bureau to provide it with one workstation (see document PCT/A/XVII/1, paragraph 16, and document PCT/A/XVII/2, paragraph 20(ii)). Within the scope of the WIPONET implementation, each Office will receive up to six workstations capable of reading the ESPACE-WORLD CD-ROMs. It is therefore proposed that, once the workstations have been provided to an Office as part of WIPONET, those workstations will be considered to include the workstation provided to PCT Offices and Authorities under the present arrangement.

*11. The Assembly of the PCT Union is invited:*

*(i) to take note of the progress report on the IMPACT Project contained in paragraphs 1 to 8, above;*

*(ii) to take note of the information contained in paragraph 9, above;*

*(iii) to approve the proposal contained in paragraph 10, above.*

[End of document]