

WIPO



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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DESK-TO-DESK PROJECT

prepared by the Secretariat

1. In February 2004, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), an independent external oversight body of the United Nations system of organizations, conducted a "Review of Management and Administration in WIPO". The report (document JIU/REP/2005/1) contained nine recommendations one of which was that the Director General of WIPO should hire independent external expertise to perform a comprehensive desk-to-desk assessment of human and financial resource needs of the Organization.
2. As shown in document A/41/12, Annex II, paragraph 22, the Secretariat welcomed this recommendation as a significant opportunity to strengthen the strategic plan of the Organization. An amount of 500 thousand Swiss francs was therefore earmarked by WIPO in the Revised Budget for the 2004/05 biennium, the intention being to begin the exercise in 2005.
3. As shown in document A/41/17, paragraph 194(ii), in approving the establishment of a WIPO Audit Committee at its forty-first series of meetings in September-October 2005, the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States also approved that the mandate of the WIPO Audit Committee would include the oversight of the desk-to-desk assessment. This meant that before the Secretariat of WIPO could start this exercise the members of the said Audit Committee had first to be elected.
4. As shown in document WO/PBC/9/5, paragraph 219, seven members of the WIPO Audit Committee were elected by the ninth session of the Program and Budget Committee, which the Secretariat convened for that purpose from January 10 to 12, 2006. The remaining two members were elected by these seven members in February 2006.

5. In the meantime, the Secretariat undertook the required internal preparatory work in respect of the desk-to-desk assessment, including the development of its draft terms of reference. These draft terms of reference (draft TORs) were transmitted to the Audit Committee on March 28, 2006.
6. During its first formal meeting, from April 10 to 12, 2006, the Audit Committee called upon the Secretariat to provide clarifications and to respond to several questions that its members had on the draft TORs prepared by the Secretariat. The Audit Committee summarized its feedback thereon in its report of May 6, 2006. The Secretariat transmitted this report (as document WO/AC/1/2) to all States members and observers of the Program and Budget Committee (PBC) by Note C. N 2648, dated May 19, 2006.
7. The initial draft TORs that the Secretariat submitted to the Audit Committee included an elaboration of the project background, objectives, scope, deliverables and work plan. It also contained a description of the expected competencies of the external firm that would be charged to execute the project, as well as a description of the tendering process, and the main criteria for the evaluation of the offers that would be received from potential bidders. These elements (the specifications of the project) would be part of the tender documents to be sent to potential bidders. In addition, the Secretariat had also provided the Audit Committee with information on the estimated cost of the project, its follow up and the internal organization and communication measures that the Secretariat would take to ensure effective interaction between the Secretariat and the selected external firm.
8. According to these initial draft TORs the scope of the project would be comprehensive and include all categories of personnel at WIPO (staff on regular budget posts, consultants, and holders of short-term contracts) and all locations (the Geneva headquarters and the liaison offices in Brussels, New York, Singapore, Tokyo and Washington, D.C.). In those draft TORs, an international tender would be launched by May 2006 with the aim of awarding the contract to the selected bidder by September 2006. In such initial workplan, the external firm would start its work in September 2006, would produce an interim report in December 2006 and the final report and related recommendations by June 2007. The elaboration of this work plan had been guided by the objective of making available the results of the exercise to the Secretariat in time, so that they could be taken into consideration in the preparation of the draft Program and Budget for 2008/09.
9. Following receipt of the Audit Committee's report, and in compliance with the request contained in paragraph 19(b), the Secretariat revised the initial draft TORs to reflect the comments and recommendations of the Committee and transmitted them to all the Committee members on June 22, 2006.
10. The Secretariat wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that, in order to meet the recommendations of the Audit Committee, it had to include in the work plan of the project a preliminary phase in which the external firm would, first, validate "its understanding of the expected evolution of the world IP environment" with WIPO's Management and Member States through the coordinators of the different regional groups" and, second, conduct a pre-assessment to ensure "the effectiveness of the consultancy work through an understanding of WIPO's position by gauging the alignment of WIPO's business processes, technology, organizational architecture, culture, and leadership capabilities with the strategic goals and objectives of WIPO as defined by WIPO Member States in the Medium-Term Plan for WIPO Program Activities – Vision and Strategic Direction of WIPO

for 2006-2009 (document A/39/5) and the Program and Budget for 2006-2007” (document WO/AC/1/2, paragraph 19(e) and (f)). The report of the consultancy firm on this preliminary pre-assessment would then be provided to the WIPO Secretariat and the Audit Committee.

11. Also, in order to meet the request of the Audit Committee, a pre-bidding conference would need to be organized by the Secretariat and a number of additional deliverables would need to be added to the project specifications, including, in particular, the identification, as a by-product of the exercise, of “synergies and overlapping, if any, between programs” and of possible “consolidation and streamlining of processes” (*Ibidem*, paragraph 19(g)), as well as the examination of the organizational structure of WIPO (*ibid.*, paragraph 19(j)). In addition, the Audit Committee requested that the desk-to-desk survey contain “different scenarios to address the identified gaps with a high-level indication of expected cost implications of each scenario taking into account the long-term liabilities for after-service medical insurance and separation costs” (*ibid.*, paragraph 19(h)).

12. The Secretariat wishes to emphasize that it will make every effort to ensure that, notwithstanding this additional preparatory phase in the project work plan and the addition of these deliverables to the original specifications, the project will be completed in time to provide relevant inputs for the draft Program and Budget for the 2008/09 Biennium, with a final report being available for the Secretariat to submit it, along with its comments, as required, to the Member States at the September 2007 Assemblies. The Secretariat would also inform the Member States if the inclusion of these additional steps and additional deliverables would have an impact on the originally estimated cost of the project.

13. At the time of writing this report, a second session of the Audit Committee has been scheduled to take place from July 5 to 7, 2006.

14. Subject to the approval of the revised TORs of the project at this session of the Audit Committee, the Secretariat is ready to send the required Request for Proposals (RFP) to potential bidders before the end of July 2006. Based on the revised work plan of the project, and taking into account the minimum deadline (40 days) required for the Open International Tender procedure, which would be applicable to such tender, this would enable WIPO to award a contract to the selected bidder in November 2006.

15. The Program and Budget Committee is invited to note the contents of this document.

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