

WIPO



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STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES STANDARDS AND DOCUMENTATION WORKING GROUP

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RENEWAL OF THE WIPO HANDBOOK

Document prepared by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. The Standards and Documentation Working Group (SDWG) of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT), at its second session in December 2002, agreed that the Secretariat would prepare a document concerning future revisions and updates of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* (the WIPO Handbook) for consideration by the SDWG. The document should point out the need for setting priorities, for determining the contents, and for investigating new ways of updating the WIPO Handbook. (See Task No. 26, paragraph 11 of document SCIT/SDWG/2/14.)

2. The WIPO Handbook is the authoritative source of the WIPO Standards, Recommendations and Guidelines. It also provides information on various matters concerning patents, trademarks and industrial designs. It is used as a reference source by industrial property offices and by other industrial property information and documentation users. At present, all the language versions of the WIPO Handbook (in English, French and Spanish, as well as WIPO Standards in Russian) are available on a single CD-ROM, the WIPO Handbook CD-ROM. All WIPO Standards and certain parts of the WIPO Handbook are also available on WIPO's website (<http://www.wipo.int/scit/en/standards/index.htm>).

Document files for both the CD-ROM and the Internet are published in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). The paper version of the WIPO Handbook was discontinued in the year 2000.

3. The WIPO Handbook CD-ROM is annually updated by the International Bureau; each updated disk replaces the previous one. All new and revised versions of WIPO Standards adopted in between two consecutive releases of the WIPO Handbook CD-ROM are made available through WIPO's website. This practice grants industrial property offices and other users a timely access to the latest versions of WIPO Standards.

4. The WIPO Handbook also contains a number of inventories, surveys and other information regarding patents, trademarks and industrial designs. At present, the WIPO Handbook is a voluminous publication that contains approximately 7,000 pages (compared with roughly 2,000 pages in the English and French paper editions of 10 years ago). The growth of the WIPO Handbook, which is likely to continue in the future, as well as the limited human resources of the International Bureau (IB), make it practically impossible to maintain timely updates of all its parts. In order to face these issues while keeping the WIPO Handbook a useful and practical tool for industrial property information users, it is essential to review the contents of the WIPO Handbook and its publication procedures.

Contents of the WIPO Handbook

5. The IB considers that a decision should be made with regard to the contents of the WIPO Handbook in order to make it more suitable for the current needs of the users. Some information may have become obsolete or is already provided by other separate WIPO publications, including the Internet. It should be determined what information needs to be revised and/or updated, as well as what information is non-essential and should be removed. More specifically, consideration should be given to the various surveys contained in the WIPO Handbook on whether the time and resource cost outweighs the benefits gained from updating them, and whether the review and update processes can be improved. Surveys that would not require future updates, could be frozen and archived. The other surveys could be grouped and re-organized to facilitate their retrieval, revision and update.

Publication and Maintenance Procedure

6. The publication of the WIPO Handbook is used as a mechanism to officially publish changes/updates of its content, but the usability and timeliness of this information is limited by the tools used in managing the content. Although there are benefits to the current publication on CD-ROM, there are also some drawbacks such as poor search options for the users, poor re-usability of the data because of file format (i.e. PDF), and poor document version control.

7. It should be noted that the preparatory work for the publication of the WIPO Handbook, and its revisions and updates are interrelated tasks that are carried out by the same staff. Therefore, the implementation of the new publication procedure will need to be undertaken step-by-step according with the priorities set and according to the staff availability. The

WIPO Handbook CD-ROM should be published at least until the implementation of the new publication procedure, then the SDWG should consider whether or not it is convenient to maintain the publication or to modify it.

Renewal Process

8. In considering this issue the IB is preparing a draft proposal for presentation to and discussion by the members of the SDWG. The purpose of the proposal is to facilitate the development of an agreed set of user requirements for the revised WIPO Handbook. As such the scope of the proposal is planned to contain, *inter alia*, the following points:

(a) Publication and maintenance procedure for the WIPO Handbook;

(i) the development and implementation of new procedures for the updating of surveys, examples and country information.

(ii) the consideration of a different publication model and maintenance procedures to improve the reusability of data, search and display options and the dissemination of information.

(b) Contents of the WIPO Handbook: the possible removal or reorganization of certain parts of the WIPO Handbook.

9. In accordance with standard project initiation processes the agreed requirements would subsequently be reviewed by the IB to determine both the corresponding technical requirements and solutions and to prioritize and/or allocate the necessary resources to deliver the revised WIPO Handbook. In discussing the draft proposal for renewal, the SDWG would be invited to give its opinion, as necessary, on the application of and impact on users of and contributors to the WIPO Handbook, of certain technologies e.g. the Internet. However, such technical input would be made without prejudice to the formulation of technical solutions that are deemed to be the most appropriate in their satisfaction of the agreed requirements for the renewal process. It should also be noted that many of the requirements may be satisfied through, e.g. changes to working methods or the content of the Handbook, and may not require any technical investment or intervention. The SDWG would also be invited to determine the priorities among the different tasks that should be carried out to renew the contents of the WIPO Handbook and to develop and implement the new publication and maintenance procedures.

10. In order to renew the contents of the WIPO Handbook and the publication procedures, the IB recommends that, within the framework of SDWG Task No. 26, a task force be created to prepare a proposal on the renewal of the WIPO Handbook. The IB offers to assume the responsibility of Task Force Leader and suggests that a draft proposal to form the basis of preliminary discussions be made available to Task Force members who would then be invited to comment on the draft proposals but should not be limited by the scope of the proposal and should include, in their responses, information on any aspect of the WIPO Handbook that is of interest in terms of its renewal.

11. The SDWG is invited to consider establishing a task force for the discussion and preparation of a proposal to renew the contents of the WIPO Handbook and its publication and maintenance procedure as described in paragraphs 8 to 10, above.

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