

C. PCT 1356

September 18, 2012

Madam,
Sir,

Quality Improvement Measures

This Circular is addressed to your Office in its capacity as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

At the second informal session of the PCT Meeting of International Authorities' (PCT/MIA) Quality Subgroup, held in Canberra on February 6 and 7, 2012, the Subgroup discussed a proposal by the Swedish Patent and Registration Office (based on an earlier suggestion made by IP Australia) entitled *Quality Improvement Measures*, aimed at developing a set of quality indicators for international work products (international search reports, written opinions and international preliminary examination reports) to be eventually included in Chapter 21 of the International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines and the reporting templates under the Guidelines.

The outcome of the discussions on quality improvement measures at the meeting of the PCT Quality Subgroup is summarized in paragraph 17 of the Summary by the Chair in the Annex to document PCT/MIA/19/13:

“17. The Subgroup agreed that the International Bureau should invite Authorities, by way of a Circular, to reply to the Questionnaire proposed by the Swedish Patent and Registration Office, subject to minor modifications (responses to item (b) of each of the questions should not only indicate “yes/no” but should give further details as to what

/...

kind of checklist was used by the Authority; responses to item (d) of each of the questions should indicate what kind of quality metrics were used by the Authority) and further clarification as to what was meant by “written formalities” in question 5 (all formal, non-substantive issues to be dealt with in the context of establishing a report or written opinion). One Authority stressed the importance of not only addressing the issue of final product quality but also of process quality, that is, the efficiency of the process of obtaining a high quality final product. ...”

./ In accordance with the follow-up agreed by the Quality Subgroup, your Office is hereby invited to reply to the Questionnaire, which has been modified to take into account the comments made by the Subgroup. The questionnaire is attached as an Annex to this Circular; a copy in electronic form has been placed on the electronic forum of the PCT/MIA Quality Subgroup for completion by International Authorities. If you require access to this forum, please contact the International Bureau at *pct.mia@wipo.int*.

Responses to this Circular should preferably be made by completing the copy in electronic form and uploading it onto the electronic forum of the Quality Subgroup by October 26, 2012. They may alternatively be sent to Mr. Claus Matthes, Director, PCT Business Development Division (e-mail: *claus.matthes@wipo.int*; facsimile: +41 22 338 7150).

Yours sincerely,



James Pooley
Deputy Director General

Enclosures: Annex – Questionnaire on Quality Improvement Measures

QUESTIONNAIRE ON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

1. *A correct search strategy is adopted*
 - (a) How is a correct search strategy defined?
 - (b) What kind of checklist is used, if any?
 - (c) What was the outcome of any quality assurance regarding search strategy?
 - (d) What kind of quality metrics are used, if any?
 - (e) How is feedback of results of quality assurance communicated to staff?

2. *The search report is complete and correct*
 - (a) How is a complete and correct search report defined?
 - (b) What kind of checklist is used, if any?
 - (c) What was the outcome of any quality assurance regarding search reports?
 - (d) What kind of quality metrics are used, if any?
 - (e) How is feedback of results of quality assurance communicated to staff?

3. *Relevant observations are raised in an examination report (Written Opinion under Rule 43bis or 66 or International Preliminary Examination Report under Article 35(2)) are raised*
 - (a) How are relevant observations defined?
 - (b) What kind of checklist is used, if any?
 - (c) What was the outcome of any quality assurance regarding relevant observations?
 - (d) What kind of quality metrics are used, if any?
 - (e) How is feedback of results of quality assurance communicated to staff?

4. *The examination report is comprehensive and informative*
 - (a) How is a comprehensive and informative examination report defined?
 - (b) What kind of checklist is used, if any?
 - (c) What was the outcome of any quality assurance regarding examination reports?
 - (d) What kind of quality metrics are used, if any?
 - (e) How is feedback of results of quality assurance communicated to staff?

5. *Written formalities (i.e. all formal non-substantive issues to be dealt with in the context of establishing an examination report) are complete and correct*
 - (a) How is a complete and correct formalities examination defined?
 - (b) What kind of checklist is used, if any?
 - (c) What was outcome of any quality assurance regarding examination reports?
 - (d) What kind of quality metrics are used, if any?
 - (e) How is feedback of results of quality assurance communicated to staff?

[End of Annex and of Circular]