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**SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)**

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

**Thirty-Fifth Session
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**COORDINATION OF WORK
BETWEEN THE SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE SUPERVISION OF THE
ADVANCED LEVEL AND THE IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP**

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. Annex I to this document contains a proposal, submitted by the Trilateral Offices, on the working procedures of the Special Subcommittee for the Supervision of the Advanced Level of the IPC.

2. Annex II to this document is a revised proposal, submitted by the Trilateral Offices, based on Annex V to document IPC/CE/35/4, on the coordination of work between the Special Subcommittee and the IPC Revision Working Group.

3. *The Committee of Experts is invited to consider the proposals submitted in Annexes I and II to this document.*

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I

ADVANCED LEVEL SUBCOMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Proposal submitted by the Trilateral Offices

The procedures for the Advanced Level Subcommittee (ALS) are designed to accomplish the goals of the Reformed IPC. This should be carried out in the most cost effective manner possible by optimizing resource utilization. Accordingly, the ALS procedures should be guided by the following principles:

Taking advantage, to the maximum extent possible, of existing document classification data within ECLA, FI, and USPC classification places in reclassification work performed by ALS.

Avoiding redundant intellectual work done by the ALS and Revision Working Group (IPC/WG).

Ensuring the quality of the advance level, i.e., that classification places accurately reflect the patent documents classified in the advanced level of the IPC.

Responding quickly to emerging technologies to ensure the Reformed IPC is an effective search tool.

Maximizing the use of equivalent titles or definitions within existing ECLA, FI, and USPC classification places in IPC revisions.

Prioritizing the reclassification work on all IPC revision projects based on the projected availability of resources at the Offices performing the reclassification work.

Completing the reclassification of documents in approved advanced level projects within the shortest practicable time frame given constraints at each ALS office in order to facilitate prior art searches at all offices and maintain search file integrity.

ALS Procedures

The following statements supplement and provide further detail to the procedures set forth in “REVISION POLICY AND REVISION PROCEDURE FOR THE REFORMED IPC” (IPC/CE/33/12 ANNEX IV).

a. The members of the subcommittee will communicate in an appropriate way to continuously evaluate revision proposals, prioritize all reclassification work for IPC revision projects, and approve advanced level revisions.

b. The subcommittee will review all proposed advanced level IPC revision projects forwarded for consideration by the IB, as well as those proposed by member offices of the ALS in accordance with the criteria set forth for in the document “REVISION POLICY AND REVISION PROCEDURE FOR THE REFORMED IPC” (IPC/CE/33/12 ANNEX IV). A current list of all proposed advanced level projects will be posted on the IPC web site, along with the status of each proposal as specified in CONOPS 2.6.1. The IPC/WG will not approve any project proposals separately submitted by an office to equivalent areas of the core level when overlapping advanced level proposals are being acted on by the ALS or within their project back file.

c. In consultation with the IPC/WG, the ALS may assume responsibility for IPC core level revision proposals under consideration by the IPC/WG when the revision proposals impact the advanced level in order to avoid redundant work by the ALS and IPC/WG.

d. For the purposes of completing the reclassification work required for any revision project, the subcommittee will review and prioritize on a semi-annual basis all IPC revision requests approved by either the Revision Working Group or the ALS. Priority will be assigned on the basis of the availability of a Rapporteur for advanced level projects, and the availability of reclassification resources at each ALS offices for any IPC project requiring reclassification of documents. In recognition that situations regarding reclassification resources can change, the relative priority of the reclassification work may be changed at any time upon agreement of all ALS offices.

e. The following procedures will be used for each revision project for which the ALS has responsibility:

Each ALS office designates an expert as contact from which they select a Rapporteur.

Initial project scope is determined and adjusted based on comments. The ALS will propose an advanced level scheme, and interested IPC/WG offices can directly contact the Rapporteur with their comments within an established time period.

ALS offices divide the list of patent documents comprising minimum PCT documentation.

ALS offices test the provisionally agreed scheme by placing documents, modify the scheme based on this testing, and finalize the scheme in the advanced level when unanimously agreed to by the ALS offices. Remaining documents are reclassified into the scheme within an agreed to period.

When the advanced level scheme has an impact on the core level, it should be submitted to the CE for adoption.

f. IPC revision projects that require reclassification of the back file can only be approved, if all ALS offices agree on the usefulness from a cost/benefit perspective. Based on the mutual agreement of all ALS offices, an initial time frame will be determined for completion of reclassification work on the project and adjusted when necessary based on unforeseen circumstances.

g. Newly proposed projects that merely clarify wording of existing advanced level classification places and with no significant document reclassification work required will be approved whenever a majority of ALS offices deem them useful.

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

USPTO	
Committee of Experts Project CE 352	Date: October 8, 2004

Trilateral Proposal

The following additional procedures supplement the document “Revision Policy and Revision Procedure for the Reformed IPC” which was adopted by the Committee of Experts (see Annex IV to document IPC/CE/33/12).

Process for optimizing resources by coordinating core and advanced level revision projects and accelerating creation of definitions:

1. The Advanced level subcommittee (ALS) will appoint an ALS Rapporteur for any area in the advanced level where project work is proposed or begun; the ALS Rapporteur will provisionally determine the scope of the project.
2. When advanced level project work has been proposed or begun within a specific subclass, the ALS will invite the IB to officially notify the Revision Working Group (RWG) of the advanced-level project.
3. After this notification, the RWG will not initiate new core level revision projects within any portion of a subclass impacted by an advanced level project until work on this subclass is completed or otherwise concluded in the advanced level. However, if the RWG considers it necessary for a new core level revision project proposal to be considered in a subclass impacted by an ALS project, it can request that the ALS integrate it into the ALS discussions.
4. If a previously approved subclass definition does not already exist for the area covered by the advanced level project, the ALS Rapporteur will draft a provisional definition for the impacted subclass based on existing IPC borderlines and any proposed advanced level changes to the scope of the subclass. If an approved subclass definition exists, it will be used, and modified where needed, to create a provisional subclass definition for the advanced level. The ALS Rapporteur will also draft provisional definitions for any new or existing main groups within the area covered by an advanced-level project and within extensively impacted related areas.
5. After finalization of the scope of the advanced level project, the ALS Rapporteur will identify any current RWG maintenance projects, or parts of projects, that may directly or indirectly impact the scope of the subclass or groups within the advanced level project (e.g., rewording of titles in the core level scheme, subclass definition projects or projects creating notes in related subclasses).
6. The ALS Rapporteur will notify the IB of any existing RWG projects that could overlap with the advanced level project.

7. After this notification, the RWG will suspend or redistribute work on any maintenance project, or part of a project, that could overlap with the advanced level project until work is concluded on the advanced level project. In the situations where work must continue on core level projects that overlap with projects in the advanced level, the RWG and ALS agree to distribute work in such a way that work done on one project does not overlap with the work done on the other project. After conclusion of the advanced level project, the RWG will reevaluate and determine if any related maintenance projects that were suspended should continue, be modified, or cancelled.
8. The provisional definitions for the subclass and appropriate main groups will be sent to the other ALS Offices, who will be given a period of time to have their experts review the definitions and provide comments. One of the primary goals of the definitions is to ensure harmonization of future document placement while accurately reflecting the existing back file. A provisional scheme for the impacted area will also be drafted and sent to the other ALS Offices. The provisional scheme and definitions for the advanced level project will be provided to members of the RWG for their individual comments to the ALS Rapporteur.
9. After the subclass and appropriate main group definitions have been completed, any relevant subgroup definitions that have not already been agreed to at the advanced level will be written or rewritten utilizing the above procedure.
10. When a finalized version of the provisional scheme and the relevant advanced level subclass and group definitions have been appropriately tested by document placement and approved by the ALS, the portion of the definitions and scheme which are to become part of the core level are referred to the RWG for their review and approval.
11. During review, the RWG should only make changes to those portions of a provisional advanced level scheme, or their definitions, which are to become part of the core level. The changes made by the RWG should normally not require additional reclassification of patent documents in the advanced level.
12. If the portion of the provisional scheme and its advanced-level subclass and group definitions, which are to become part of the core level, are approved by RWG without significant changes, the definitions are officially incorporated into the core level of the IPC and the scheme is submitted to the CE for adoption.
13. If a significant change is made by the RWG to a portion of a provisional advanced-level scheme or its definitions when approving their incorporation into the core level scheme (e.g., a change in a title's wording that would cause document reclassification in the advanced level); the provisional advanced-level scheme and definitions will continue to be used, as they were initially proposed to RWG, in the advanced level by the ALS until a suitable compromise on any inconsistencies can be achieved.

[End of Annex II and of document]