

ANNEX VI

WORKING PROCEDURE OF THE IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (IPC/WG) is responsible for:
 - (a) evaluating requests and proposals for revision of the core level of the IPC;
 - (b) appointing an office as Rapporteur for each approved revision project and carrying out revision of the core level of the IPC;
 - (c) evaluating requests for maintenance of the IPC;
 - (d) appointing an office as Rapporteur for each approved maintenance project, carrying out maintenance, and referring advanced level modifications to the Special Subcommittee for the Supervision of the Advanced Level (ALS) for approval;
 - (e) evaluating proposals for new or revised IPC principles and rules as set forth in the Guide to the IPC;
 - (f) forwarding proposed amendments to the core level of the IPC, or to the Guide, to the Committee of Experts (IPC/CE) for consideration and adoption;
 - (g) carrying out creation and maintenance of definitions for entries of the core level of the IPC and appointing an office as Rapporteur for each definition project.
2. Revision of the core level must not adversely impact the quality of the advanced level, i.e., any changes made must accurately reflect the patent documents currently classified in that area of the advanced level of the IPC.
3. Changes to the IPC that result from maintenance must accurately reflect the patent documents currently classified in that area of the IPC and should not result in a change of scope of the places affected.
4. If intellectual reclassification of documents will be necessary, the cost/benefit of such work must be evaluated. Reclassification of documents in the IPC by the offices of the ALS can only occur with the approval of the ALS.
5. Revision of the core level schemes should be undertaken:
 - (a) to improve the quality of the IPC by clarifying its technical terminology, updating it or enhancing its consistency;
 - (b) in harmony with the ALS to accommodate new technologies;

(c) to provide new subdivisions of groups having a very large file size and a very high rate of growth of the national patent documentations. Such revisions should be based on the current classification schemes in the advanced level;

(d) when revisions carried out in the advanced level require modification of the core level of the IPC (e.g., subclass or main group title changes).

6. Core level revision projects will normally not be initiated within areas of the IPC where an ongoing advanced level project or proposal exists until work on the advanced level project is completed or otherwise concluded in the advanced level. However, in situations where IPC/WG considers it necessary to initiate a core level revision project, the IPC/WG will distribute work between itself and the ALS in such a way that work done on the core level project does not overlap with the work done on the advanced level project.

7. Projects for clarifying existing titles or creating definitions should, to the extent feasible while ensuring consistency of the terminology in the IPC, use the wording of titles or definitions within equivalent areas of ECLA, FI and USPC.

8. Any revision proposal for the core level should be accompanied by a revision request explaining the reasons for the revision and indicating to which of the above categories (see paragraph 5) the proposal relates. Revision requests should also contain when applicable: the numerical data concerning the file size and rate of growth, citations of patent documents illustrating proposed new groups, and the results of any testing of the proposal.

9. The ALS will forward all projects that directly impact an area of the core level for review by the IPC/WG and subsequent forwarding of any required core level changes to the IPC/CE for adoption. The IPC/WG will review and forward only portions of completed advanced level revision projects that involve changes to the core level. In these situations, the revision request of paragraph 8 is not required.

10. If an office is not in a position to prepare a revision proposal but wishes to solve a classification problem in the IPC, it can submit only the revision request to the IPC e-forum. Such a request should explain the reasons for its submission and indicate that the revision proposal cannot be elaborated by an office-proponent. The elaboration of the proposal, and compiling of required data and supporting information, is entrusted to a Rapporteur if the revision request is accepted into the revision program.

11. The revision proposal should be posted on the WIPO IPC website and the revision request should be submitted to the IPC e-forum.

12. The International Bureau should forward the revision requests and proposals for consideration by the IPC/WG.

13. The IPC/WG should evaluate all requests to ensure that they comply with the revision policy and the revision criteria of the IPC/CE, determine the need for them, and their priority. Revision requests approved by the IPC/WG should be included in the IPC core level revision program. For each approved request, a project file should be created on the IPC e-forum. The IPC/WG should establish time frames for individual actions on the project (comments, Rapporteur report).

14. The Rapporteurs are responsible for organizing discussions on projects through the IPC e-forum, making decisions as to when projects should be submitted for consideration by the IPC/WG, and preparing Rapporteur reports. The objective of Rapporteurs should be to accomplish as much work as possible by electronic communication, so that the project could basically be approved, in one of the authentic language versions, at a single session of the IPC/WG. Rapporteurs' proposals should be posted on the WIPO IPC website.

15. When amendments to the core level are approved by the IPC/WG in one of the authentic language versions, a volunteering office should prepare respective amendments in the other authentic language version. Upon completion of the project in both language versions, the amendments should be forwarded for adoption to the IPC/CE. Endorsed amendments should be included in the next edition of the IPC.

16. The creation or modification of definitions for subclasses and groups that are part of the core level is the responsibility of the IPC/WG as long as the definitions created for the places defined are not within an ALS project. In areas of the IPC where the ALS has proposed, ongoing, or completed projects, the IPC/WG will either refer writing of the definitions to the ALS or create and modify the definitions only in agreement with the ALS. The definitions created for places should be in compliance with the documents classified within the Master Classification Database (MCD). However, in situations where there is uncertainty that all the documents are covered by a definition approved by the IPC/WG, the IPC/WG will inform the ALS of the potential discrepancy and possible solutions.

[Annex VII follows]