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

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

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PUBLICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE EIGHTH EDITION OF THE IPC

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. At its thirty-sixth session, held in February 2005, the IPC Committee of Experts discussed and adopted the plan of the publication of the eighth edition of the IPC (IPC-2006) and related material, prepared by the International Bureau (see Annex IX to document IPC/CE/36/11).
2. Following that plan, the International Bureau published, at the beginning of July 2005, the core level of the eighth edition, in English and French, in the printed form. This publication contains five volumes, as follows: Volume 1 – Sections A and B, Volume 2 – Sections C and D, Volume 3 – Sections E and F, Volume 4 – Sections G and H, and Volume 5 – Guide to the IPC. This publication is intended for industrial property offices wishing to use the core level of the IPC for classifying their published patent documents and for the general public. One copy of the publication was sent, free of charge, to all member States of the IPC Union and to observer intergovernmental organizations. Additional copies of the publication can be ordered, at cost, through the Marketing and Distribution Section of WIPO.

3. A number of errors discovered in the printed publication of the eighth edition were corrected by means of the Corrigendum to the eighth edition to be issued in February 2006. It has also been noticed that, in some new areas of the eighth edition, distribution of groups between the core and the advanced level does not completely correspond in the printed publication to the distribution approved by the IPC Revision Working Group. Namely, new one-dot groups in subclasses C40B, F23B, F23C and G21G are presented as core level groups, although the Working Group has decided that only main groups should be in the core level in these subclasses. In order to avoid an expensive correction of the distribution of these groups, it was agreed, in consultation with the members of the Committee of Experts, to maintain one-dot groups of the above subclasses in the core level until the next edition of the IPC. The main reason for this decision was that their presence in the core level will not disturb the logic of the classification scheme and will have no bearing on classification in the advanced level. To avoid any influence of this decision to the new IPC revision procedure, it was further agreed that the above-mentioned one-dot groups should fall under the procedure provided for the advanced level if a corresponding revision is initiated by the Advanced Level Subcommittee.
4. At the beginning of August 2005, the International Bureau published the Internet version of the eighth edition of the IPC, in English and French, on the WIPO IPC website. Compared with the printed version, the Internet version contains the complete text of the Classification and incorporates the electronic layer, including supplementary information facilitating the use of the Classification, such as classification definitions, illustrating chemical formulae and main groups in a standardized sequence. The access to the Internet version is free of charge.
5. In October 2005, the International Bureau published the updated official Catchword Indexes to the IPC in the printed form and on the Internet. One copy of the printed publication of the Catchword Indexes was sent, free of charge, to all member States of the IPC Union and to observer intergovernmental organizations. The Internet version of the Catchword Indexes is presented as part of the Internet publication of the eighth edition of the IPC. All references in the Catchword Indexes are given to both, the core and the advanced levels of the IPC. No further updating of the Catchword Indexes will be made in the course of the next IPC revision period. However, the IPC symbols in the Internet version of the Catchword Indexes will be updated with regard to amendments to the advanced level of the IPC.
6. Also in October 2005, the Revision Concordance List between the seventh and eighth editions was published on the WIPO IPC website. The Revision Concordance List is presented as part of the Internet publication of the eighth edition of the IPC. It contains information relating to the core and advanced levels of the IPC.
7. In view of budget constraints, it was not possible, as was planned, to publish in 2005 a new version of the IPC:CLASS CD-ROM (Version 5). The International Bureau is currently finalizing the specification of this product and intends to issue it in the near future. Its main features will be in concordance with those approved by the Committee of Experts (see Annex IX to document IPC/CE/36/11).

8. The eighth edition of the IPC entered into force on January 1, 2006. It was expected that patent documents published after that date would be classified according to the eighth edition of the IPC. However, the practice in the past showed that some industrial property offices were not in a position to follow such a deadline. With a view to collecting information on the plans of industrial property offices concerning a starting date of the use of the eighth edition, the International Bureau issued, on November 21, 2005, WIPO Circular No. IPC 145. A questionnaire attached to the Circular also requested information on the plans of offices to use the core or the advanced level of the eighth edition and on the plans to carry out reclassification of national patent collections according to the eighth edition of the IPC.

9. This Circular was sent to industrial property offices of member States of the IPC Union, observer intergovernmental organizations and to industrial property offices of States not members of the IPC Union, but using the IPC. A summary of replies to the Circular is given in the Annex to this document.

10. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the contents of this document and the Annex thereto.

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

SUMMARY OF REPLIES RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO WIPO CIRCULAR No. IPC 145

1. The International Bureau received a total of 52 replies in response to WIPO Circular No. IPC 145, including 36 from States being members of the IPC Union (55 members), 13 from States not being members of the IPC Union and three from intergovernmental organizations.
2. Replies were received from the following Offices or Organizations: African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) (AP), Algeria (DZ), Armenia (AM), Australia (AU), Austria (AT), Azerbaijan (AZ), Belize (BZ), Brazil (BR), Bulgaria (BG), Chile (CL), Croatia (HR), Cuba (CU), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Estonia (EE), Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO) (EA), European Patent Office (EPO) (EP), Finland (FI), France (FR), Germany (DE), Greece (GR), Guatemala (GT), Hungary (HU), Indonesia (ID), Ireland (IE), Israel (IL), Japan (JP), Kenya (KE), Kyrgyzstan (KG), Lithuania (LT), Madagascar (MG), Mongolia (MN), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Portugal (PT), Republic of Korea (KR), Republic of Moldova (MD), Romania (RO), Russian Federation (RU), San Marino (SM), Slovakia (SK), Slovenia (SI), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), Switzerland (CH), Thailand (TH), The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK), Turkey (TR), Ukraine (UA), United Kingdom (GB), United Republic of Tanzania (TZ), United States of America (US).
3. The replies received are summarized in the table reproduced below. In order to provide an overview as comprehensive as possible, this table has been supplemented by earlier replies of offices or organizations that have not replied to Circular No. IPC 145 but have replied to Circulars Nos. IPC 107 and 123, issued on June 30, 2003, and August 4, 2004, respectively, requesting similar information on the use of the reformed IPC. In total, 72 offices or organizations have replied to at least one of these three Circulars.
4. The answers to the six questions included in the questionnaire of Circular No. IPC 145 can be summarized as follows:

Classifying according to the eighth edition of the IPC

Question 1: “Will your Office start publication of patent documents classified according to the eighth edition of the IPC from January 1, 2006?”

Forty-five out of 52 offices replied “Yes” and only seven offices replied that they could not meet this deadline.

Question 2: “If the response to Question 1 is “No”, from which date does your Office plan to start publication of patent documents classified according to the eighth edition?”

Four of the above seven offices provided provisional dates (see the table below).

Use of the core level or the advanced level of the eighth edition of the IPC

Question 3: “Will your Office use the core level or the advanced level of the eighth edition of the IPC for classifying your published patent documents?”

Thirty-six offices replied that they would use the advanced level. Taking into account replies to question 2 of Circular No. IPC 107, a total of 47 offices have indicated that they would use the advanced level.

Ten offices replied they would use the core level only. Taking into account replies to question 2 of Circular No. IPC 107, a total of 16 offices indicated that they would use the core level only.

Three offices replied that they would use both levels. In its reply to Circular No. IPC 107, Monaco indicated that it would classify at subclass level only.

Question 4: “If the response to Question 3 is both “Core level” and “Advanced level”, please list technical fields (indicated by IPC symbols) in which the advanced level will be used.”

See the table below.

Reclassification of retrospective patent collections for loading the reclassification data in the Master Classification Database (MCD)

Question 5: “Is your Office carrying out or is planning to carry out reclassification according to the eighth edition of the IPC of your patent documents published before January 1, 2006?”

Twenty-four offices replied “Yes” and 20 offices replied “No”. Taking into account replies to question 7 of Circular No. IPC 123, a total of 28 offices indicated that they would carry out such reclassification while a total of 22 offices indicated that they would not carry out such reclassification

Question 6: “If the response to Question 5 is “Yes”, when does your office plan to make the results of reclassification available for loading in the MCD?”

For the different dates indicated in the replies, see the table below.

Table: Summary of Replies to Questions 1 to 6 of Circular No. IPC 145
("Use of the Eighth Edition of the IPC")

<p>A: Advanced level C: Core level S: Subclass level Y: Yes N: No * The office/organization has not yet replied to Circular No. IPC 145; the answers indicated in the table were derived from the replies received to similar questions in Circulars Nos. IPC 107 or IPC 123 (see paragraph 3, above).</p>
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Country or Organization	Code	Questions 1 and 2	Questions 3 and 4	Question 5	Question 6
Algeria	DZ	Y	C	N	
ARIPO	AP	Y	A		
Armenia	AM	Y	C	Y	01.12.2006
Australia	AU	Y	A	N	
Austria	AT	Y	A	N	
Azerbaijan	AZ	Y	C	N	
Belarus*	BY		C		
Belgium*	BE		C		
Belize	BZ	Y	A	N	
Brazil	BR	N by 07.2007	A	N	
Bulgaria	BG	Y	A	Y	2008
Canada*	CA		A	Y	
Chile	CL	Y	A	N	
China*	CN		A		
Colombia*	CO		C		
Croatia	HR	Y	A	Y	open
Cuba	CU	Y	A	Y	open
Czech Republic	CZ	Y	A	Y	09.2006
Denmark	DK	Y	A	N	
EAPO	EA	Y	A		
Egypt*	EG		A		
EPO	EP	Y	A		
Estonia	EE	Y	A	N	
Finland	FI	Y	A	Y	open
France	FR	Y	A		
Germany	DE	Y	A		
Greece	GR	Y	A	Y	open
Guatemala	GT	Y	A	Y	after 2006
Hungary	HU	Y	A	Y	31.12.2006
Iceland*	IS		C		
Indonesia	ID	N 01.07.2007	A	N	

Country or Organization	Code	Questions 1 and 2	Questions 3 and 4	Question 5	Question 6
Ireland	IE	Y	C	Y	01.01.2006
Israel	IL	N 01.03.2006	A	N	
Italy*	IT		A		
Japan	JP	Y	A	Y	03.2006
Kenya	KE	N	C/A ¹	N	
Kyrgyzstan	KG	N 01.07.2006	A	N	
Lithuania	LT	Y	C	Y	01.01.2007
Madagascar	MG	Y	C	Y	Q4/2006
Mexico*	MX		C		
Monaco*	MC		S		
Mongolia	MN	Y	C	N	
Netherlands	NL	Y	A	N	
New Zealand*	NZ		C		
Nicaragua*	NI			Y	
Norway	NO	Y	A	Y	2006-2007
OAPI*	OA		A	Y	
Poland*	PL		A		
Portugal	PT	Y	A	Y	Q1/2006
Republic of Korea	KR	Y	A	Y	06.2006
Republic of Moldova	MD	Y	A	Y	06.2006
Romania	RO	Y	A	Y	Q1/2006
Russian Federation	RU	Y	A	Y	04.2006
San Marino	SM	N			
Serbia and Montenegro*	YU		A	N	
Slovakia	SK	Y	C	Y	12.2006
Slovenia	SI	Y	C	Y	01.2006
Spain	ES	Y	A	Y	07.2006
Sweden	SE	Y	A	Y	2006-2009
Switzerland	CH	Y	A	N	
Thailand	TH	Y	C/A ²	N	
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	MK	Y	C	Y	
Turkey	TR	Y	A	N	
Ukraine	UA	Y	C/A ³	Y	Q3-Q4/2006
United Kingdom	GB	Y	A	N	
United Republic of Tanzania	TZ	N		N	

¹ Advanced level in biological areas.

² Core level for unexamined applications, advanced level for examined applications.

³ Ukraine has provided an extensive list which cannot be reproduced here.

Country or Organization	Code	Questions 1 and 2	Questions 3 and 4	Question 5	Question 6
United States of America	US	Y	A	N	
Uruguay*	UY		A		
Uzbekistan*	UZ		A		
Viet Nam*	VN		A	N	

[End of Annex and of document]