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

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

**Thirty-Eighth Session
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MASTER CLASSIFICATION DATABASE
STATUS REPORT

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Annex to this document contains a paper submitted by the European Patent Office (EPO) describing developments in relation to the Master Classification Database.

2. *The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the contents of the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]



Europäisches
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ANNEX

October 5, 2006

IPC Reform - IT developments at EPO -

1. MCD Backfile

A second release of the IPC-2006 backfile DVD was delivered in August. It contained approximately 25% more symbols than the first release, principally as a result of loading the JPO backfile data. Another DVD showing only the differences between the first and second releases was created at the end of September. The next step towards increasing the backfile coverage involves loading of backfiles received from other offices. This is expected to be done before the end of 2006.

The following table gives a summary of the overall coverage in the MCD at the level of application (figures from beginning of September):

<i>Country</i>	<i>Total apps</i>	<i>With IPC8</i>	<i>Coverage*</i>
EPO	1.892.887	1.850.202	98%
JPO	13.900.506	13.870.613	100%
USPTO	8.466.340	6.972.238	82%
EPO Member States	16.576.676	14.368.904	87%
Other	9.250.993	8.005.534	87%
Total	50.087.402	45.067.491	90%

More detailed statistics are available on request.

- * The coverage for the PCT minimum part of national documents can be greater than indicated in the Table since, in some countries, old documents (e.g. pre-1920 documents) have no classification that can be converted to IPC-8.



2. MCD Frontfile

So far, IPC-2006 frontfile data from 27 offices is being added to the MCD. The table below summarises the overall coverage at the level of publication (figures from beginning of September).

<i>Country</i>	<i>Total pubs in 2006</i>	<i>With valid IPC at pub level</i>	<i>Coverage</i>
EPO *	174.725	123.461	71%
JPO	288.178	288.160	100%
USPTO	322.613	305.510	95%
EPO Member States	243.350	199.633	82%
WIPO *	113.261	77.563	68%
Other	287.326	259.096	90%
Total	1.429.453	1.253.423	88%

* N.B. since 01.08.06 the coverage for both EPO and WIPO is around 95%

The mechanism which will allow National Offices to check IPC frontfile errors for their own documents is not yet available, but a prototype is being tested internally at the EPO. In the near future it will be made available to a small number of offices for evaluation.

3. Reclassification

Final testing of software for creating reclassification working lists is in progress. The EPO expects to be ready to deliver working lists for the 2007.01 revision to participating offices before the end of October.



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September 5, 2006

Subject : Correction of IPC-2006 symbols in MCD

One important aspect of IPC Reform is the need to ensure that all patent documents within the Master Classification Database (MCD) are correctly classified according to the latest version of the scheme.

Since the implementation of the reform at the beginning of 2006, the EPO has begun to record errors found on IPC symbols when loading patent documents from National Offices into the MCD. These errors are being reported back to the Offices concerned. In response to these error reports, a number of Offices have begun to send IPC corrections to the EPO.

In discussions prior to the introduction of the reform, the EPO requested that IPC corrections be sent according to the standard correction procedures used for other patent bibliographic data. In practice, creation of bibliographic data files for IPC-specific correction has been difficult for National Offices. This has resulted in corrections being sent to the EPO in a wide range of formats.

In order to make handling of IPC corrections easier, both for the EPO and for National Offices, the EPO proposes that in future, these corrections should be sent to the MCD in one of two ways :

Corrections involving an official publication

When IPC correction results in an official publication, the new publication will be added to the patent family according to normal frontfile loading procedures. N.B. the corrected symbols will be stored at document level, with the correction document.

Corrections without an official publication

As a new service, the EPO will process ad-hoc corrections of IPC data, if they are sent according to a standard format. This should be an XML file which conforms to the ep-ipcr-documents.dtd. This is a format which is already known to Offices, as it is used for other IPC processes. It consists of a publication number, application number and the set of IPC symbols.



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