
Special Union for the International Patent Classification (IPC Union) IPC Revision Working Group

**Forty-Sixth Session
Geneva, November 8 to 10, 2021**

REPORT

adopted by the Working Group

INTRODUCTION

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) held its forty-sixth session in Geneva from November 8 to 10, 2021. The following members of the Working Group were represented at the session: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), European Patent Office (EPO) (28). Hungary, India, Singapore and Viet Nam were represented as observers. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report.

2. The session was opened by Mr. K. Natsume, Assistant Director General, Infrastructure and Platforms Sector, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), who welcomed the participants. Mr. Natsume appreciated the tremendous achievements of the Working Group in the last two revision cycles, proven by the significant number of amendments introduced in IPC 2021.01 and IPC 2022.01, and, in particular, under the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic.

OFFICERS

3. The Working Group unanimously elected Mr. O. Steinkellner (Germany) as Chair and elected Mr. P. Weibel (Switzerland) as Vice-Chair for the IPC revision cycle of 2021 - 2022.

4. Mrs. N. Xu (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Working Group unanimously adopted the revised agenda, with two minor amendments, which appears as Annex II to this report.

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Working Group (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Working Group was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

7. The Working Group noted an oral report by the Secretariat on the fifty-second session of the IPC Committee of Experts (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) (see document IPC/CE/52/2).

8. The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the work done by the Working Group and encouraged offices to actively participate in the IPC Revision Program, in particular, by submitting revision requests under the IPC Revision Roadmap.

9. The Committee agreed with the recommendation of the Working Group to apply a flexible approach to carry out discussions on revision proposal electronically by using the IPC e-forum (hereinafter referred to as the “e-forum”) to the extent possible and agreed on an immediate solution by taking certain measures to keep a balance between quality and efficiency. The Committee invited the Working Group to evaluate further the outcome and effectiveness of certain agreed-upon working measures in its future meetings.

10. The Committee, having noted a report of the Expert Group on Semiconductor Technologies (EGST), extended its gratitude to the EPO, the leading office of the EGST, and the member offices of the EGST, for the efforts made and their contribution to the work done so far. The Committee further encouraged the members of the EGST to continue their work on the same path taken in 2019.

11. The Committee further adopted amendments to the Guide to the IPC and the Guidelines for Revision of the IPC. Finally, the Committee considered several IPC-related IT issues.

REPORT ON THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST SESSIONS OF THE IP5 WG1-WORKING GROUP ON CLASSIFICATION

12. The Working Group noted oral reports by the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) and the Japan Patent Office (JPO), on behalf of the FiveIPOffices, on the twentieth and twenty-first sessions of the IP5 Working Group on Classification.

13. It was noted that during the twentieth session of the IP5 WG1, the FiveIPOffices agreed to promote five IP5 projects (F projects) to the IPC phase, while nine F projects were promoted to the IPC phase during the twenty-first session of the IP5 WG1.

14. The Working Group further noted that CNIPA and JPO, on behalf of the FiveIPOffices, had posted to the e-forum under project [CE 456](#) the updated lists of all ongoing IP5 projects and proposals (see Annexes 35 and 37 to project file) in order to avoid overlap between the IPC revision requests and the IP5 ongoing revision activities.

IPC REVISION PROGRAM

15. The Working Group discussed 22 revision projects, namely, [C 504](#), [C 505](#), [C 507](#), [C 508](#), [C 509](#), [C 520](#), [F 071](#), [F 082](#), [F 089](#), [F 122](#), [F 138](#), [F 141](#), [F 142](#), [F 143](#), [F 149](#), [F 151](#), [F 152](#), [F 153](#), [F 154](#), [F 156](#), [F 157](#) and [F 159](#).

16. The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in the corresponding projects on the e-forum. All decisions, observations and technical annexes are available in the “Working Group Decision” annexes of the corresponding projects on the e-forum.

17. The Working Group completed four revision projects, two of which were completed with respect to scheme revision, namely projects [F 153](#) and [F 154](#), which would enter into force in IPC 2023.01; the remaining two were completed with respect to definitions, namely projects [C 504](#) and [C 507](#), the scheme revision having been published in IPC 2022.01 early publication. The information was provided that those definitions would be included in IPC 2022.01 upon its entering into force on January 1, 2022, together with the corresponding scheme amendments.

18. The Working Group further agreed to create two new revision projects, namely:

Mechanical: [C 521](#) (A61J 1/00, Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 632](#).

Electrical: [C 522](#) (G06Q 50/00, Rapporteur – United States of America) – originating from project [C 508](#);

19. The Working Group noted an oral report by the EPO on behalf of the EGST (see Annex 8 in project [WG 469](#)), about the launching of three C projects from the EGST, namely, [C 511](#), [C 512](#) and [C 513](#). The Working Group took good note and expressed its gratitude to the EPO, the leading Office of the EGST, and the member Offices of the EGST, for their efforts and the great contribution of their expertise to project [CE 481](#), and congratulated them on the outcomes that have been achieved so far.

IPC MAINTENANCE

20. The Working Group discussed 11 maintenance projects, namely [M 621](#), [M 627](#), [M 632](#), [M 633](#), [M 805](#), [M 811](#), [M 812](#), [M 813](#), [M 814](#), [M 815](#) and [M 816](#).

21. The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in the corresponding projects on the e-forum. All decisions, observations and technical annexes are available in the “Working Group Decision” annexes of the corresponding projects on the e-forum.

22. The Working Group completed four maintenance projects with respect to either scheme or definition amendments, three of which would be integrated into IPC 2023.01, namely, [M 632](#), [M 813](#), [M 816](#), while project [M 805](#) with respect to definition only would be integrated into IPC 2022.01 together with the corresponding scheme amendments already in IPC 2022.01.

23. The Working Group agreed to create four new revision projects, namely:

Mechanical: [M 817](#) (B09B, Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [C 504](#);

T-independent: [M 818](#) (Rapporteur – United States of America) – originating from project [M 632](#).

Electrical: [M 819](#) (G06Q, Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [C 508](#);

[M 820](#) (G01B, Rapporteur – EPO) – originating from project [M 633](#);

STATUS OF REMOVAL OF NON-LIMITING REFERENCES (NLRs) WITHIN M 200 TO M 500 PROJECTS

24. Discussions were based on a status report prepared by the International Bureau, concerning maintenance projects for removal of NLRs for the scheme of the IPC (see Annex 40 to project file [WG 191](#)).

25. The Working Group noted that, among the 25 active projects, agreement had been reached for the following seven projects during discussions on the e-forum and that these projects could be considered completed. The corresponding amendments to the scheme and definitions would thus be included in IPC 2023.01.

- [M 235](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass G05D (Rapporteur – EPO);
- [M 239](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass C23G (Rapporteur – Israel);
- [M 240](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass B03B (Rapporteur – United States of America);
- [M 245](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass G04F (Rapporteur – United States of America);
- [M 250](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass H03J (Rapporteur – United States of America);
- [M 253](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass G06C (Rapporteur – United States of America);
- [M 256](#) Removal of NLRs in subclass H05G (Rapporteur – United States of America).

26. The Working Group further noted that discussions should continue on the e-forum for the remaining 18 active projects, including project [M 223](#). The status of all projects and the list of future actions and deadlines for ongoing projects are indicated in the corresponding projects on the e-forum.

27. The Secretariat indicated that an updated table summarizing the status of the removal of NLRs from the scheme would be posted to project file [WG 191](#).

UPDATES ON IPC-RELATED IT SUPPORT

28. The Working Group noted a short presentation by the International Bureau on various new functionalities that were recently made available in IPCRMS, which would allow rapporteurs, translators and commenting offices to manage their IPC revision proposals and comments in a more user-friendly manner. The Working Group invited offices to make benefit of such functionalities by more actively and intensively using the IPCRMS.

NEXT SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP

29. The Working Group, having assessed the workload expected for its next session, agreed to devote the first day to the chemical field, the following day and a half to the mechanical field and the last two days and a half to the electrical field.

30. The Working Group noted that the tentative dates for its forty-seventh session would be confirmed shortly.

31. This report was unanimously adopted by the Working Group by electronic means on November 30, 2021.

[Annexes follow]