

# OMPI



IPC/CE/29/4 Suppl.1

ORIGINAL : anglais

DATE : 10 mars 2000

F

**ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE**  
GENÈVE

**UNION PARTICULIÈRE POUR LA CLASSIFICATION INTERNATIONALE DES BREVETS  
(UNION DE L'IPC)**

**COMITÉ D'EXPERTS**

**Vingt-neuvième session  
Genève, 13 – 17 mars 2000**

**STRUCTURE À DEUX NIVEAUX DE LA CLASSIFICATION  
INTERNATIONALE DES BREVETS APRÈS SA RÉFORME**

*Document établi par le Bureau international*

1. Le Bureau international a diffusé, suite à une demande formulée lors de la deuxième session du Groupe de travail ad hoc sur la réforme de la CIB (voir le paragraphe 21 du document IPC/REF/2/2), la circulaire de l'OMPI n° IPC 33 invitant les membres et les observateurs de l'Union de l'IPC à donner leur avis sur le contenu du niveau de base de la CIB après sa réforme. Cette circulaire fait l'objet de l'annexe 1 du présent document.

2. Les réponses soumises par les membres et les observateurs de l'Union de l'IPC sont reproduites dans les annexes 2 à 24. Un résumé des réponses établi par le Bureau international fait l'objet de l'annexe 25 du présent document.

*3. Le comité d'experts est invité à examiner la structure de la classification après sa réforme.*

[Les annexes suivent]

## ANNEXE 1



C. IPC 33  
00

le 2 février 2000

Objet : Structure à deux niveaux de la classification internationale des brevets (CIB)

---

Madame,  
Monsieur,

Dans le cadre de la réforme de la CIB, lancée à l'initiative du Comité d'experts de l'Union de l'IPC, il a été décidé d'organiser la nouvelle classification en un système à deux niveaux, qui correspondra mieux aux besoins des différentes catégories d'utilisateurs. Ce système à deux niveaux sera constitué d'un niveau de base et d'un niveau plus élevé.

Lors de sa deuxième session, tenue en novembre 1999, le Groupe de travail ad hoc sur la réforme de la CIB a étudié les modalités d'une structure à deux niveaux de la classification, pour aboutir aux conclusions suivantes :

- a) Le niveau de base doit comprendre "les symboles complets de la classification" ainsi que le prévoit l'Arrangement de Strasbourg. L'usage de la classification à ce niveau doit être rendu obligatoire, aux fins du classement des inventions, pour les membres de l'Union de l'IPC et les observateurs auprès de cette union. Le niveau de base doit porter sur les collections de documents de brevet du monde entier.
- b) Le niveau plus élevé doit constituer un développement du niveau de base. Tout membre de l'Union de l'IPC ou observateur auprès de cette union pourra choisir d'en utiliser les entrées aux fins du classement et de l'indexation des inventions. Le niveau plus élevé doit comprendre au moins la documentation minimale du PCT.

/...

C. IPC 33  
00

2.

c) Le contenu du niveau de base reste à définir. Ce niveau pourrait correspondre :

i) soit à la partie classification de la septième édition de la CIB, avec d'éventuelles modifications qui pourraient être introduites durant la période de transition en cours;

ii) soit constituer une version plus restreinte de cette septième édition, par exemple limitée aux groupes à deux points.

Dans ce dernier cas, les entrées ne figurant pas dans le niveau de base seraient incorporées dans le niveau plus élevé de la CIB.

Certaines délégations se sont prononcées en faveur de la première possibilité car, selon elles, la restriction appliquée à la CIB pourrait rendre cette dernière inefficace pour des offices de taille moyenne procédant à des recherches dans les collections nationales sur des domaines techniques en évolution rapide et priverait les utilisateurs francophones d'une part importante de la classification en l'absence de version authentique en français du niveau plus élevé.

D'autres délégations se sont déclarées favorables à la seconde possibilité car elles trouvent que la CIB, sous sa forme actuelle, est trop complexe et pose des problèmes d'utilisation aux petits offices.

Le Bureau international a été prié de demander l'avis de tous les membres de l'Union de l'IPC et de tous les observateurs auprès de cette union sur le contenu du niveau de base de la CIB.

C'est pourquoi nous vous prions de bien vouloir indiquer au Bureau international, entre les deux options proposées concernant le contenu du niveau de base de la CIB, laquelle conviendrait le mieux pour votre office. Nous vous serions reconnaissants de bien vouloir communiquer la réponse de votre office au Bureau international d'ici au 1<sup>er</sup> mars 2000, de préférence par courrier électronique à l'adresse suivante : "mikhail.makarov@wipo.int".

Dans cette attente, je vous prie d'agréer, Madame, Monsieur, l'assurance de ma considération distinguée.



Mikhail Makarov  
Chef de la Section de la  
classification internationale des brevets

ANNEX 2/ANNEXE 2

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY AUSTRIA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'AUTRICHE

**From:** "Velinsky-Huber Ingrid Mag." <Ingrid.Velinsky-Huber@patent.bmwa.gv.at>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Thu, Feb 24, 2000 12:36 PM  
**Subject:** Two-level structure of the reformed International Patent Classification (IPC);  
C.IPC 33/ 00, February 2, 2000

Re: Two-level structure of the reformed International Patent  
Classification (IPC)  
(C.IPC 33/ 00, February 2, 2000)

Dear Mr.Makarov,

With reference to WIPO Circular C.IPC 33/ 00, dated February 2, 2000, I have pleasure in submitting the comments of the Austrian Patent Office.

After considering the possibilities for the contents of the core level the Austrian Patent Office is in favor of the first option. The core level should represent the seventh edition of the IPC with eventual amendments introduced during the current transitional period.

We are aware that the two goals to serve small offices who find the present IPC 7 too complex for a search in their national patent collection and medium sized offices with a considerably larger patent documentation that does not belong to the PCT minimum documentation cannot be fulfilled at the same time. The core level should be a high quality system, good enough to serve as a search tool for the patent documentation even of medium sized offices; otherwise these offices might be forced to reclassify the documents which do not belong to the PCT minimum documentation with high effort. We must take into account not only the interests of offices but also of the public when searching national patent collections which do not belong to the PCT minimum documentation. A general restriction of the core level to the two-dot group level seems to be a too mechanical approach for all technical fields and would make retrieval of documents much more difficult especially in areas with rapidly growing documentation. If the retrieval of documents in a search is not reliable because the core level is too roughly subdivided we might create property rights of different qualities on the core level and

on the advanced level. Therefore we think that the reliable retrieval of documents in a search by a deeper subdivision on the core level is also in the interest of patent applicants and the general public.

Sincerely yours,  
I.Velinsky-Huber

Austrian Patent Office  
A-1014 Wien, Kohlmarkt 8-10  
Tel.: +43 1 53424 371  
e-mail [ingrid.velinsky-huber@patent.bmwa.gv.at](mailto:ingrid.velinsky-huber@patent.bmwa.gv.at)  
<<mailto:ingrid.velinsky-huber@patent.bmwa.gv.at>>

[Annex 3 follows/  
L'annexe 3 suit]

ANNEX 3/ANNEXE 3

---

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY BELGIUM/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA BELGIQUE

MINISTERE DES AFFAIRES ECONOMIQUES

1000 BRUXELLES  
North Gate III  
Boulevard Em. Jacqmain 154  
téléphone (02)206 41 11  
fax (02)206 57 50

ADMINISTRATION DE LA POLITIQUE COMMERCIALE  
Office de la Propriété Industrielle

vosre avis du

vosre référence  
C.IPC22

nosre référence  
E3.PIIIE/J.V.

annexes

***Objet :Structure à deux niveaux de la classification internationale des brevets (CIB).***

L' Office belge de la Propriété Industrielle ne pratique plus la recherche à des fins de classement, cette dernière étant confiée à l' Office Européen des Brevets.

Toutefois, l'Office belge utilise intensivement la classification internationale à des fins de recherche d'information réservée au public.

C'est donc dans ce cadre que nous donnerons succinctement notre avis concernant l'objet sous rubrique .

Il est clair que pour un petit Office procédant à des recherches dans des collections limitées, l'utilisation d'une version plus restreinte concernant le niveau de base serait inefficace pour les raisons exposées dans votre lettre du 2 février 2000 et ce d'autant plus pour des domaines techniques à développement intensif (chimie, électronique, informatique,...)

En outre, il aura lieu de définir ce que l'on entend par "développement du niveau de base " lorsqu'on se réfère au niveau le plus élevé.

En ce qui nous concerne, si l'utilisation de la classification interne à l' OEB nous permet à rendre notre recherche plus efficace, encore faut-il que celle-ci réponde à un besoin réel et qu'elle ne porte que sur quelques documents.

i.r.J. Vansthertem

---

Personne à contacter : José Vansthertem, Ingénieur Conseil, téléphone (02)206 41 47.  
Chaque jour ouvrable de 9 à 16 heures, sauf sur rendez-vous. Référence interne:

[Annex 4 follows/  
L'annexe 4 suit]

ANNEX 4/ANNEXE 4

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY CANADA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LE CANADA

**From:** "Guzzo, Gerry: #CIPO - OPIC" <Guzzo.Gerry@ic.gc.ca>  
**To:** "SMTP:mikhail.makarov@wipo.int" <mikhail.makarov@w...  
**Date:** Wed, Feb 9, 2000 10:02 PM  
**Subject:** Two - Level Structure

Re: C.IPC 33

Mikhail,

We at CIPO feel that inconsistency in application of the IPC cannot be attributed to the fineness of subdivision. Indeed, the wording of indented subgroups frequently aids in our understanding of the hierarchically superior groups. Overall, we feel that restricting entries (option 2) would be a retrograde step, negating the hard work of the Search Information Group over the last 25 years.

We attribute the inconsistency in IPC's assigned to a patent document to other factors, such as,

1. lack of proper lines between major areas of the elaboration,
2. lack of detailed rules in the Guide for classifying multiple subject matters - pp88 is not sufficient,
3. lack of an overall precedence (first-place rule) and
4. excessive reliance on concordances by some offices.

In reply to Circular C.IPC 33, CIPO is in favour of the first option, namely, a core level corresponding to the 7th edition of the IPC plus amendments.

Gerry Guzzo  
Section Head,  
Patent Branch

[Annex 5 follows/  
L'annexe 5 suit]

ANNEX 5/ANNEXE 5

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY CROATIA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA CROATIE

(Not available in electronic form/  
Non disponible sous forme électronique)

[Annex 6 follows/  
L'annexe 6 suit]



ANNEX 6/ANNEXE 6

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY DENMARK/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LE DANEMARK

**From:** "Sigurd Bak Christensen (PVS)" <SBA@DKPTO.DK>  
**To:** "mikhail.makarov@wipo.int" <mikhail.makarov@wipo...>  
**Date:** Fri, Feb 25, 2000 12:00 PM  
**Subject:** Re.: Two-level IPC structure

The Danish Patent and Trademark Office

2000-02-25

Re.: Two-level structure of reformed IPC

Dear Mr. Makarov

According to your letter dated February 2nd, we would like to express, that the DK PTO just wants to support a full version of the IPC Classification, (e. g. marked as (i) in your letter page 2).

We do not find it will make much sense to have a restricted IPC version as a classification tool, even for small offices.

Your sincerely

Sigurd Bak Christensen

Principal Technical Examiner  
DKPTO

[Annex 7 follows/  
L'annexe 7 suit]

ANNEX 7/ANNEXE 7

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY ESTONIA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'ESTONIE

**From:** Tanel Kalmet <Tanel.Kalmet@epa.ee>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 1, 2000 1:10 PM  
**Subject:** IPC two-level structure

Dear Mr Makarov

Answering your question expressed in document C. IPC 33/00 from 2 February 2000, the Estonian Patent Office informs the International Bureau that it is in favor of the first (i) option mentioned.

Yours sincerely

Matti Päs  
Director General  
Estonian Patent Office

[Annex 8 follows/  
L'annexe 8 suit]

ANNEX 8/ANNEXE 8

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY GERMANY/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'ALLEMAGNE

**DEUTSCHES PATENT - und MARKENAMT**

München, den 28.02.2000

Division 2.2. (Classification)

☎ (089) 2195 - 2781

e:\1-ipc\04-ipc7\allg\_ipc\c\_ipc33

**Geschäfts-Nr.:** 9482/2-002-2.2.

Bitte stets angeben

Deutsches Patentamt - 80297 München

Mr. Mikhail Makarov  
Head, International  
Patent Classifications Section  
World Intellectual  
Property Organization  
34, Chemin des Colombettes  
**CH-1211 GENEVE 20**  
Suisse

Re.: **C. IPC 33, " Two-level structure..."our opinion upon to ( c )---> (i) and (ii)**

Dear Mikhail,

(i) for the German Patent and Trade Mark Office it will be preferable for us to use the classification part of the IPC<sup>7</sup> as "core - level";

(ii) for a restricted version of the IPC<sup>7</sup>: in general we do not object to have a restricted version down to two-dot level, but in our opinion it will be nessecary to go further down than two-dots -- it depends on the particular field. Anyway, if a restricted version is created, all notes, precedence notes and references would be nessecary to be checked.

Yours sincerely

Axel Okelmann  
Head, IPC Section

[Annex 9 follows/  
L'annexe 9 suit]

ANNEX 9/ANNEXE 9

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY JAPAN/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LE JAPON

**From:** <MHPA9407@jpo-miti.go.jp>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 1, 2000 10:20 AM  
**Subject:** RE:IPC33 00

Dear Makarov,

I send you the JPO's opinion about C.IPC33 00.  
Please find the attached file.  
Best regards,

Masao Arai  
R&D Office for patent information  
Japanese Patent Office

## JP COMMENTS

Re: C.IPC33 00 Two-level structure of the reformed IPC

Jpo supports the second option that the contents of the core level should be defined a restricted version of the seventh edition of IPC.

Reasons

1. There are merits that small offices can use IPC easily and it produces consistency.
2. Two demerits of the second option pointed out at the second session of the ad hoc IPC Reform WG are resolvable as below.
  - (1) Offices can use the advance level in some technical fields if they need. So medium-sized offices can search using the advance level when they search national collections in actively developing technical fields.
  - (2) The advance level is prepared in English. So French-speaking users can use the advance level they translate it into French.

[Annex 10 follows/  
L'annexe 10 suit]

ANNEX 10/ANNEXE 10

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY KYRGYZSTAN/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LE KIRGHIZISTAN

(Not available in electronic form/  
Non disponible sous forme électronique)

[Annex 11 follows/  
L'annexe 11 suit]

ANNEX 11/ANNEXE 11

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE NETHERLANDS/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LES PAYS-BAS

uw brief en kenmerk	ons kenmerk	bijlage(n)
	ma250200	-

Rijswijk, February 25, 2000

Mr. M. Makarov  
Head Int. Patent Classification Section  
World Intellectual Property Organization  
34, chemin des Colembettes  
CH-1211 GENEVA 20

Subject: : Circular IPC 33/00

Dear Sir,

In connection with your circular IPC 33/00 of February 2, 2000, concerning the two-level structure of the reformed IPC, the Netherlands Industrial Property Office would like to make the following remarks:

- 1) It seems rather premature to restrict the discussion about the content of the core level of the IPC to the two alternatives mentioned under “(C)” on page 2 of the circular IPC 33/00. The Netherlands regards these alternatives only as broadly indicative about the possible content of the core level. The alternatives show a certain direction rather than a definitive answer.
- 2) The Netherlands sees the core level as a level fulfilling two purposes:
  - a. It contains sufficient subdivision to be useful for selective information retrieval from small or medium-sized collections of national patent documents.
  - b. It provides a level of elaboration that hardly needs to be revised. Such for many national Offices would obviate the need to reclassify the collection of their national patent documents. Ideally all the revision work of the IPC should concentrate on the continued usefulness of the advanced level.

3) Item 2) just mentioned points into the direction of alternative (ii) rather than alternative (i). The Netherlands has some doubt, however, whether the borderline between the advanced level and the core level always can be drawn at the same hierarchical level in the classification scheme. In the mechanical area most of the subdivisions under a main group often are just one-dot groups and two-dot groups. In the chemical area, one-dot groups and two-dot groups often form a minority only of the number of subdivisions under a main group. A three-dot, or perhaps even four-dot level would, from the point of view of selective information retrieval, seem an appropriate borderline in that area.

4) The core level should be defined in terms of the forthcoming eighth edition of the IPC. Said edition will be the first one having a "core level" and an "advanced level". If, for instance, a new class C40 is introduced, a part of its elaboration should become part of the core level in accordance with the direction of alternative (ii).

5) In The Netherlands view the core level will consist of a part of the classification scheme. Hybrid systems and other advanced developments are not part of the core level.

Yours sincerely,

S. de Vries  
Head Chemical Division  
Netherlands Industrial Property Office

[Annex 12 follows/  
L'annexe 12 suit]

ANNEX 12/ANNEXE 12

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY NORWAY/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA NORVÈGE

WIPO  
Attn.: Mr. Mikhail Makarov  
Head  
International Patent Classification Section  
Genève, Suisse

22 38 75 40                      2000/00221/THT                      C.IPC 32/00+33/00                      2000.03.02

Dear Sir,

**RE: INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC) – SEVENTH EDITION**

The Norwegian Patent Office started to classify new patent applications in accordance with the 7<sup>th</sup> edition from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1999. Printed documents of issued patents were classified after the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the IPC from the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2000.

**Re: Two-level structure of the reformed International Patent Classification (IPC)**

The Norwegian Patent Office is of the opinion that the core level preferably should contain a classification system equal to the IPC 7<sup>th</sup> edition (without the indexing schemes) i.e. alternative (i) of the two alternatives listed in the request.

A comment to the other solutions (ii) where the content of the core level is chosen to be equal to a two-dot IPC system. A classification system like that will not meet the needs we, at the Norwegian Patent Office, have for retrieving documents in our national collection, so that will be a classifications system we won't be using.

We also believe that the simple way of just saying that the core levels consist of IPC two-dots will not eliminate the difficulties that offices have in using the IPC. This complexity issue of using the IPC contains more than just the number of possible entries for a document it also is affected by the diversity of rules within the IPC. We believe that by refining the rules, making them more consistent throughout the IPC and maybe even end up with fewer rules, which will have a larger effect in making the use of IPC easier. Another aspect is to define a single, easy to understand philosophy, which we also believe will help to ease the use of IPC.

Sincerely yours,

Turid Helene Tronbøl  
Head of Section  
The Norwegian Patent Office

[Annex 13 follows/  
L'annexe 13 suit]



ANNEX 13/ANNEXE 13

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY PORTUGAL/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LE PORTUGAL

**From:** "Luísa Modesto" <lumodesto@mail.telepac.pt>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Mon, Feb 21, 2000 11:48 AM  
**Subject:** Two-level structure of the reformed IPC

Dear Mr. Makarov,

In reply to your circular C.IPC 33, dated February 2, 2000, we are in favor of the first option, that is, the contents of the core level of the IPC must be the classification part of the seventh edition of the IPC, with eventual amendments which could be introduced during the current transitional revision period.

Sincerely yours,

Luísa Modesto  
Head of Patent Department

[Annex 14 follows/  
L'annexe 14 suit]

ANNEX 14/ANNEXE 14

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE CORÉE

**From:** "bongkee min" <BKMIN@chollian.net>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** 2/28/00 1:59AM  
**Subject:** Reply from KIPO on IPC 32/33

Dear Mr. Makarov:

Pursuant to your request, we provide our position as below.

1. KIPO started to issue patent documents with the symbols of the new IPC edition as of Jan. 1 2000.
2. We are in favor of the first option ;  
the classification part of the 7th edition of the IPC.

Sincerely yours,  
Eun-woo Lee  
Director  
Examination Coordination Div.,  
KIPO

[Annex 15 follows/  
L'annexe 15 suit]

ANNEX 15/ANNEXE 15

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA

Dear Mr. Makarov,

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated January 28, 2000, and with reference to it we are pleased to inform the WIPO International Bureau of the fact that on January 1, 2000, our State Agency on Industrial Property Protection started to issue patent documents with the symbols of the seventh edition of the IPC.

At the same time, referring to the IPC two-level structure, we would like to let you know that the Working group of our Office has studied the suggested variants and decided that the first option is preferable for us - the core level must correspond to the classification part of the seventh edition of the IPC, with eventual amendments which could be introduced during the current transitional revision period.

The use of the first version would permit us to carry out documentation search and patent classification more efficiently at the level of advanced offices. Otherwise, we may find ourselves in the situation of auto-limitation of our possibilities of using International Patent Classification in electronic form.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Eugen Stashkov  
Director General

[Annex 16 follows/  
L'annexe 16 suit]

ANNEX 16/ANNEXE 16

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY ROMANIA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA ROUMANIE

(Not available in electronic form/  
Non disponible sous forme électronique)

[Annex 17 follows/  
L'annexe 17 suit]

ANNEX 17/ANNEXE 17

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA FÉDÉRATION DE RUSSIE

**From:** "." <orpos@rupto.ru>  
**To:** <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Fri, Feb 25, 2000 8:20 AM  
**Subject:** C.IPC33/00

Re:Two-level structure of the reformed IPC (C.IPC 33/00)

Dear Mr. Makarov,

I have pleasure in submitting herewith our reply to the Circular 33/00 dated February 2, 2000

Sincerely yours,

G.Nenakhov

In response to the circular C.IPC 33/00 I inform the International Bureau that Russian Agency for Patents and Trademarks is of the opinion that the contents of the core level of the IPC should correspond to the seventh edition of the IPC, with eventual amendments which could be introduced during the current transitional revision period (i.e. the first option). We believe that it is not rational to do away with advances which have been made in the IPC for thirty years. In our viewpoint restriction to two-dot groups level is not appropriate for different fields of the Classification. We hope complexity of the current IPC could be reduced as a result of complementation of the IPC reform.

[Annex 18 follows/  
L'annexe 18 suit]

ANNEX 18/ANNEXE 18

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY SPAIN/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'ESPAGNE

(Not available in electronic form/  
Non disponible sous forme électronique)

[Annex 19 follows/  
L'annexe 19 suit]

ANNEX 19/ANNEXE 19

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY SWEDEN/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA SUÈDE

---

SWEDISH PATENT AND REGISTRATION OFFICE

March 3rd, 2000

---

**COMMENTS**  
**(in response to document C. IPC 33)**

The International Bureau requested the views regarding the contents of the core level of the IPC – whether it should correspond to the classification part of the seventh edition of the IPC, with amendments introduced during the current revision period, or a restricted version, for example to two-dot level.

According to the Guide to the IPC, the primary purpose of the IPC is to serve as an efficient search tool for the retrieval of patent documents by patent offices and other users, in order to evaluate the novelty and inventive step of patent applications.

**What would be the advantages of restricting the size of the core level?**

We find it difficult to see any advantage for search purposes, even for less initiated users. It is sometimes stated that the IPC is too complex for use by small offices and the general public, and that a smaller system would be sufficient for searching smaller volumes of documents. However, we have little doubt that given the choice between a more efficient tool and a less efficient tool, all searchers would use the more efficient one. We think the criticism regarding complexity relates more to the quality of the IPC and its support systems than to the size of it.

For offices that do not search, classification is only a cost, which brings no immediate benefits. A simplified system would perhaps reduce that cost. However, given the primary purpose of the IPC, cost cutting must not be brought too far – the system still has to be efficient. The IPC is useless if it does not serve its purpose as a search tool.

There would perhaps be an administrative advantage to have a small core level, since it is presumed that the advanced level would be able to react quicker and be developed in a less formal way.

**What would be the disadvantages of restricting the size of the core level?**

A reduced core level would in many cases be completely insufficient for searching even the patent documents of a single country. Just as an example, the two-dot group H01L 21/04 covers almost the complete technology of manufacture of semiconductor devices – more than 23 000 US patents!

A reduced core level would only enable efficient search in old, outdated and inactive technologies. Most active fields of technology have been subdivided further than into two-dot groups – according to the quantitative criteria used for selecting IPC revision projects that have been in force during the latest revision period, activity has been the main criterion for subdivision.

Since it is presumed that the Master Classification Database would be updated, the more detailed classification information according to older editions of the IPC will be lost if the core level is downsized. This would be a waste of a classification effort that is already done.

OUR CONCLUSION

We are not in favour of restricting the size of the core level – and definitely not if it is done by simple truncation of groups with more than three dots.

Anders Bruun

[Annex 20 follows/  
L'annexe 20 suit]



ANNEX 20/ANNEXE 20

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY SWITZERLAND/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA SUISSE

**From:** "Amsler, Kaspar" <Kaspar.Amsler@ipi.ch>  
**To:** "'mikhail.makarov@wipo.int'" <mikhail.makarov@wipo...>  
**Date:** Tue, Feb 29, 2000 3:44 PM  
**Subject:** C.IPC 33

Cher Mikhail,

pour le contenu du niveau de base de la CIB notre Institut favoriserait la première option c.à d. que ce niveau de base correspondrait à la partie classification (c. à d. sans les codes d'indexation) de la septième édition de la CIB avec d'éventuelles modifications qui pourraient être introduites durant la période de transition en cours.

À bientôt pour le CE !

Meilleures salutations:

Dr. Kaspar Amsler  
Division Brevets  
Institut Fédéral de la Propriété Intellectuelle  
Einsteinstrasse 2 - CH-3003 Bern  
Tel. +41 31 325 25 25 Fax +41 31 325 25 26  
Tel. direct +41 31 322 49 77 Fax direct +41 31 350 06 20  
<mailto: Kaspar.Amsler@ipi.ch>

[Annex 21 follows/  
L'annexe 21 suit]

ANNEX 21/ANNEXE 21

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY TURKEY/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LA TURQUIE

**Republic of Turkey**  
**TURKISH PATENT INSTITUTE**  
**Patent Department**

**Mikhail Makarov**  
**Head of International Patent Classification Section**  
**WIPO**  
**34, chemin des Colombettes**  
**1211 Geneva 20**  
**SWITZERLAND**

Address:

Necatibey Cad. No: 49  
Kizilay-ANKARA  
TURKEY  
Tel: (90-312)2325425  
Fax: (90-312)2325437

Dear Mr. Makarov,

In reply to your Circulars **C.IPC 32** dated January 28, 2000 relating to the IPC Seventh edition and **C.IPC 33** dated February 2, 2000 relating to the two-level structure of the reformed IPC.

We would like to inform you that, we started to use seventh edition of IPC on January 01, 2000 for domestic applications. The patent attorneys give the IPC symbols for foreign applications. We amend the IPC symbols according to the search reports prepared by Swedish, Danish, Russian and European Patent Offices which perform those search reports on behalf of our Office.

Concerning the contents of the core level of the IPC, we would prefer (i) option in the Circular C.IPC 33.

Sincerely yours,

Hülya ÇAYLI  
Head of Patent Department

[Annex 22 follows/  
L'annexe 22 suit]

ANNEX 22/ANNEXE 22

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR LES ÉTATS-UNIS D'AMÉRIQUE



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Patent and Trademark Office**  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND COMMISSIONER  
OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

March 6, 2000

Mr. Mikhail Makarov  
Head  
International Patent Classification Section  
World Intellectual Property Organization  
34, chemin des Colombettes  
1211 Geneva 20  
SWITZERLAND

Re: WIPO IPC Circular 33 - Two-level structure of the reformed IPC

---

Dear Mr. Makarov:

The United States Patent & Trademark Office, in agreement with the other Trilateral Offices, prefers the second option; namely that the core level correspond to a restricted version of the seventh Edition of the IPC, for example, to the two-dot subgroup level.

Sincerely,

/Robert W. Saifer/

Robert W. Saifer, Director  
International Liaison Staff

[Annex 23 follows/  
L'annexe 23 suit]

ANNEX 23/ANNEXE 23

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE  
AFRICAN REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION (ARIPO)/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'ORGANISATION RÉGIONALE  
AFRICAINNE DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INDUSTRIELLE (ARIPO)

(Not available in electronic form/  
Non disponible sous forme électronique)

[Annex 24 follows/  
L'annexe 24 suit]

ANNEX 24/ANNEXE 24

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE (EPO)/  
OBSERVATIONS SOUMISES PAR L'OFFICE EUROPÉEN DES BREVETS (OEB)

**From:** Heiko Wongel <hwongel@epo.org>  
**To:** "WIPO - M. Makarov" <mikhail.makarov@wipo.int>  
**Date:** Tue, Feb 15, 2000 1:33 PM  
**Subject:** IPC circulars 32 and 33

Dear Mikhail,

in response to IPC circulars C.IPC 32 and C.IPC 33, I can inform you of the following:

ad C.IPC 32:

The EPO started to issue documents classified according to IPC edition 7 on January 1st, 2000.

ad C.IPC 33:

As already stated at the last meeting of the ad hoc IPC Reform Working group, the EPO would prefer a core level which is substantially smaller than the current seventh edition of the IPC. We are convinced that this would simplify the revision process and facilitate the use of the IPC by smaller offices. The criteria for the division (two-dot-level or others) still could require some discussion.

Kind regards,  
Heiko Wongel

[Annex 25 follows/  
L'annexe 25 suit]

ANNEXE 25

RÉSUMÉ DES RÉPONSES

*établi par le Bureau international*

1. Le Bureau international a diffusé la circulaire de l'OMPI n° IPC 33, datée du 2 février 2000, invitant les membres et les observateurs de l'Union de l'IPC à donner leur avis sur le contenu du niveau de base de la CIB après sa réforme. Deux alternatives, proposées par le Groupe de travail ad hoc sur la réforme de la CIB lors de sa deuxième session (voir les paragraphes 19 à 21 du document IPC/REF/2/2), y étaient présentées, c'est-à-dire que le niveau de base pourrait correspondre :

i) soit à la partie classification de la septième édition de la CIB, avec d'éventuelles modifications qui pourraient être introduites durant la période de transition en cours;

ii) soit constituer une version plus restreinte de cette septième édition, par exemple limitée aux groupes à deux points.

2. Des réponses ont été reçues des membres et observateurs suivants de l'Union de l'IPC : Allemagne, Autriche, Belgique, Canada, Croatie, Danemark, Espagne, Estonie, États-Unis d'Amérique, Fédération de Russie, Japon, Kirghizistan, Norvège, Pays-Bas, Portugal, République de Corée, République de Moldova, Roumanie, Suède, Suisse, Turquie, Organisation régionale africaine de la propriété industrielle (ARIPO), Office européen des brevets (23).

3. L'Allemagne, l'Autriche, le Canada, la Croatie, le Danemark, l'Espagne, l'Estonie, la Fédération de Russie, le Kirghizistan, la Norvège, le Portugal, la République de Corée, la République de Moldova, la Roumanie, la Suède, la Suisse et la Turquie (17 offices) sont en faveur de l'alternative i).

4. Les États-Unis d'Amérique, le Japon, les Pays-Bas, l'ARIPO et l'OEB sont en faveur de l'alternative ii). La Belgique estime que quelques clarifications sur ce sujet sont nécessaires.

5. Étant donné que moins de la moitié des membres et des observateurs de l'Union de l'IPC ont répondu à cette circulaire, le Bureau international est d'avis qu'il serait prématuré pour le comité d'experts de prendre des décisions quant au contenu du niveau de base de la classification et que cette question très complexe mériterait un examen plus approfondi qui pourrait faire l'objet d'une nouvelle tâche assignée au Groupe de travail ad hoc sur la réforme de la CIB.

[Fin de l'annexe 25 et du document]