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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

INTERNATIONAL PATENT COOPERATION UNION
(PCT UNION)

MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES
UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

Eleventh Session
Geneva, February 21 to 25, 2005

A QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

Document prepared by the International Bureau

SUMMARY

1. The Meeting is invited to comment on a draft quality framework for the International Bureau, which is intended to provide the criteria for updating the quality management systems within the International Bureau, and on draft performance indicators concerning the work of the International Bureau, which are intended to give concrete and measurable expression to the results which have been achieved.

2. This revised document contains a corrected and updated Annex II. Notably, the chart and table concerning the incoming mail items received for international applications filed with certain receiving Offices (see page 6 of Annex II) now includes details of a large class of documents which had been omitted from the query providing the original data. It also updates all the figures to take into account details received up to February 10, 2005 and includes additional statistics which are now available concerning withdrawals of designations.

BACKGROUND

3. At its tenth session, the Meeting discussed preliminary reports on implementation of systems for quality management within the International Authorities. The Meeting also noted that “further and more detailed discussions of quality management matters would need to take place at future sessions of the Meeting.” At the same time, the International Bureau “agreed

that it would also present a report on quality management in the context of its related work for consideration at such future discussions, noting that the nature of that work was very different from the search and examination work carried out by the Authorities” (see paragraph 37 of document PCT/MIA/10/11).

A QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

4. The International Bureau has begun to conduct a thorough review of its quality management systems. As a first stage in this review, the systems which are currently in place or being developed are being measured against a quality framework including criteria equivalent to those described in Chapter 21 of the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines (“the Guidelines”). Annex I to this document contains the draft criteria which are being used.

5. The structure and language of this framework are based on that which appears in Chapter 21 of the Guidelines, but have been adapted to reflect the roles of the International Bureau, rather than the functions of international search and preliminary examination, which are central to the activities of the International Authorities.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TARGETS

6. The International Bureau proposes to deliver reports to the Assembly detailing its progress in review of its quality systems, including a measure of their effectiveness by way of details of performance against customer service targets. It is proposed to conduct customer surveys to identify more clearly the actions undertaken by the International Bureau whose timeliness or quality is most important to applicants, Offices and third parties (either directly or through the effect on the ability of International Authorities and designated and elected Offices to deliver their services effectively). The results would be used to refine the International Bureau’s procedures and to set measurable targets to indicate whether the International Bureau is meeting reasonable customer expectations.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

7. It is envisaged that most of the criteria listed in Annex I, as well as the results of the customer service surveys, will find their expression in a series of performance indicators measuring, more systematically than is currently the case, the quantity, quality and timeliness of the International Bureau’s work (as influenced by the ability of receiving Offices, International Authorities and designated and elected Offices to deliver their services effectively).

8. Preliminary assessments suggest that the International Bureau already has a number of performance indicators in place covering some of the framework’s criteria. Some of these existing performance indicators can already be seen from the monthly PCT statistical indicators report, which is published on the PCT website. However, others are either missing or could be significantly improved. Furthermore, most of the existing elements of the International Bureau’s quality system have evolved separately from one another and some adjustments may be required to ensure that all parts of the overall system work effectively together towards a clear goal.

9. Annex II contains a number of performance indicators already in existence or in the course of development at the International Bureau. These show aggregate figures, which may

form the basis of reports on overall effectiveness of the International Bureau's activities; more detailed figures are also collected for management purposes in order to help identify accurately where any problems may be arising. As the International Bureau is still in the early stages of its work in this area, the indicators reflected in Annex II should not be viewed as a final production, but as a work in progress. It is expected that the International Bureau will expand the scope of and refine these performance indicators in the course of time with a view to the progressive implementation of its quality framework.

REPORT TO PCT ASSEMBLY

10. It is proposed to make a report to the PCT Assembly in September 2005 on the progress of this review and any findings which have been made and to present an informal report to the Meeting of International Authorities on progress in the interim.

11. The Meeting is invited to comment on the draft quality framework for the International Bureau set out in Annex I and the draft performance indicators set out in Annex II.

[Annex I follows]

ANNEX I

DRAFT QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

INTRODUCTION

1. This quality framework describes a minimum set of criteria against which the International Bureau should assess its quality processes.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2. The International Bureau should establish and maintain a quality management system (QMS) which sets out the basic requirements with regard to resources, administrative procedures, feedback and communication channels required to underpin the tasks which it performs under the Patent Cooperation Treaty. The QMS should incorporate a quality assurance scheme for monitoring compliance with these basic requirements.

Resources

3. The International Bureau should be able to accommodate changes in workload and should have an appropriate infrastructure to support its functions and comply with the QMS requirements. The following are examples of the kind of resources and infrastructure which are required:

(a) a quantity of staff sufficient to deal with the inflow of work, with the necessary technical and linguistic skills to perform all the required functions in respect of international applications in any accepted language of filing or publication;

(b) appropriate equipment and facilities, such as IT hardware and software, to support the International Bureau's functions;

(c) an effective training and development program for all staff to ensure they acquire and maintain the necessary experience and skills and are fully aware of the importance of complying with the quality criteria and standards;

(d) documented training materials to help staff understand and adhere to the quality criteria and standards and follow work procedures accurately and consistently; and

(e) a system for continuously monitoring and identifying the resources required to deal with demand and comply with the quality standards.

Quality Assurance

4. The International Bureau should have in place the following minimum practices and procedures for processing international applications:

(a) effective control mechanisms regarding timely performance of work to a level of quality consistent with the QMS requirements;

(b) appropriate control mechanisms regarding fluctuations in demand and backlog management;

(c) appropriate procedures for handling complaints and taking corrective and preventative action where appropriate, and the application of monitoring procedures for measuring user satisfaction and perception and for ensuring their needs and legitimate expectations are met;

(d) a system for measuring, recording, monitoring and analyzing the performance of the quality management system to allow assessment of conformity with the requirements;

(e) a system for verifying the effectiveness of actions taken to address deficiencies and to prevent issues from recurring; and

(f) an effective system for ensuring the continuous improvement of the established processes.

Feedback Arrangements

5. To help improve performance and foster continual improvement, the International Bureau should:

(a) communicate the results of their internal quality assurance process to their staff to ensure that any necessary corrective action is taken and for the dissemination and adoption of best practice; and

(b) provide for effective communication with applicants, receiving Offices, International Authorities, and designated and elected Offices to allow for prompt feedback from them so that potential systemic issues can be evaluated and addressed.

Communication and Guidance to Users

6. The International Bureau should have in place the following arrangements for ensuring effective communication with users:

(a) effective communication channels so that enquiries are dealt with promptly and that appropriate two-way communication is possible between applicants or Offices and staff of the International Bureau; and

(b) clear, concise and comprehensive guidance and information to users (particularly unrepresented applicants) on PCT processes.

INTERNAL REVIEW

7. The International Bureau should establish its internal review arrangements to determine the extent to which it has established a QMS based on the above model and the extent to which it is complying with the QMS requirements. The reviews should be objective and transparent so as to demonstrate whether or not those requirements are being applied consistently and effectively and should be undertaken on a regular basis.

8. The input to each review should include information on:

(a) conformity with the QMS requirements;

- (b) any corrective and preventative action taken to eliminate the cause of non-compliance;
- (c) any follow-up action from previous reviews;
- (d) the effectiveness of the QMS itself and its processes;
- (e) feedback from customers, including applicants, receiving Offices, International Authorities and designated and elected Offices; and
- (f) recommendations for improvement.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

9. The International Bureau should submit an initial report to the PCT Assembly describing what it has done to implement a QMS based on the broad requirements set out in this framework and prepare annual reports thereafter, identifying the lessons learned and actions taken within the year, and making recommendations in light of the review.

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

DRAFT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

PCT Statistics Section
PCT Operations Division

- 1 Record Copy Processing Timeliness & Workload
- 2 Incoming Mail Workload
- 3 Publication Timeliness and Workload
- 4 Chapter II Processing Timeliness and Workload

10 February 2005

1. Record Copy Processing Timeliness & Workload

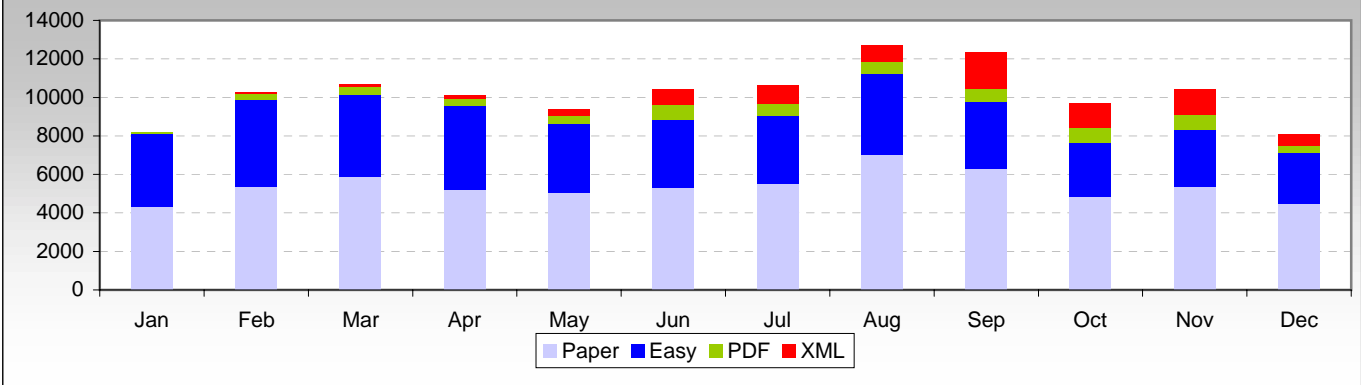
This section shows the number of record copies received at the International Bureau and subsequently processed (the form IB/301 issued), and the timeliness for processing them, according to the filing language, filing format, and by processing teams.

Record Copies Received and Processed in 2004

2004

The table and graph below show the number of record copies received and processed at IB and format in which they were filed.

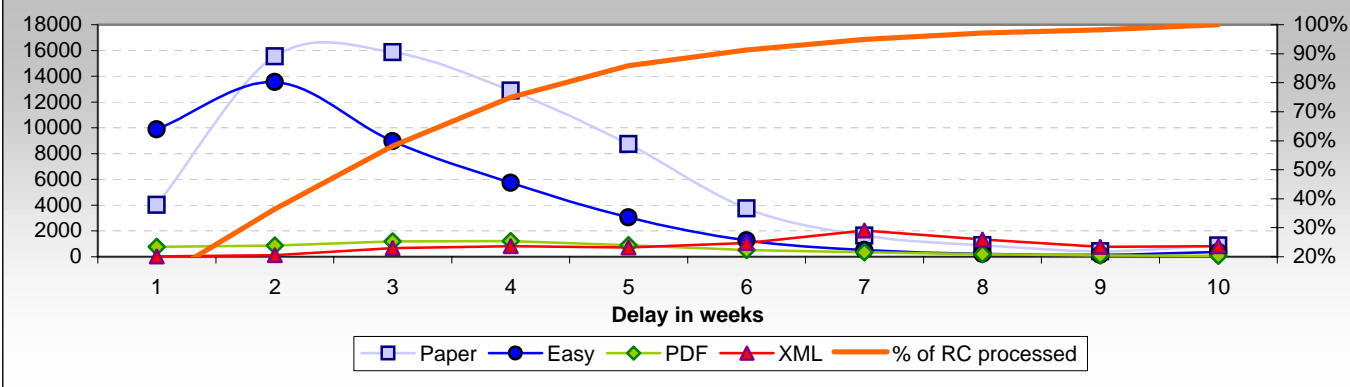
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	%
Paper	4306	5385	5903	5169	5027	5303	5513	7020	6314	4874	5376	4448	64638	52.6%
Easy	3819	4486	4265	4414	3561	3567	3536	4221	3457	2814	2959	2653	43752	35.6%
PDF	83	310	381	343	477	740	627	606	687	719	756	398	6127	5.0%
XML	0	60	137	164	319	794	974	853	1893	1304	1310	575	8383	6.8%
Total	8208	10241	10686	10090	9384	10404	10650	12700	12351	9711	10401	8074	122900	



Record Copy Processing Timeliness Summary

The record copy timeliness is the time difference between the date of receipt of RC at the International Bureau and the mailing date of the form IB/301.

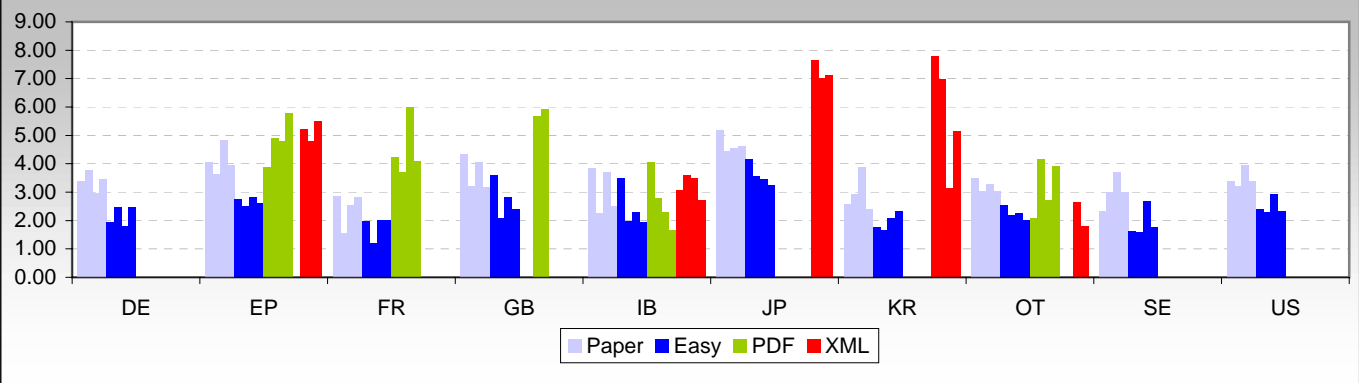
This graph shows the total number and cumulative percentage of record copies processed within 1-10 weeks. The total number is broken down by filing method



Average RC Processing Timeliness for Selected Receiving Offices **2004**

The table and graph show the average processing time (in weeks) for international applications filed with selected receiving Offices.

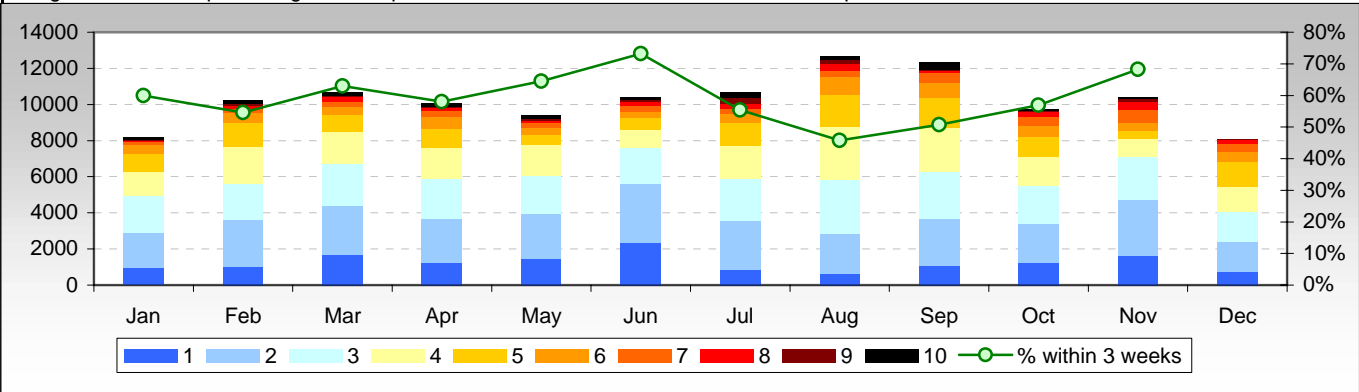
		DE	EP	FR	GB	IB	JP	KR	OT	SE	US	Average
Paper	Jan-Mar	3.41	4.05	2.88	4.33	3.84	5.20	2.57	3.51	2.32	3.38	3.58
	Apr-Jun	3.77	3.62	1.54	3.20	2.28	4.44	2.95	3.04	2.99	3.22	
	Jul-Sep	2.95	4.83	2.54	4.07	3.71	4.57	3.89	3.28	3.71	3.97	
	Oct-Dec	3.46	3.95	2.82	3.17	2.50	4.64	2.41	3.05	2.99	3.39	
Easy	Jan-Mar	1.93	2.76	1.98	3.61	3.50	4.15	1.76	2.56	1.62	2.41	
	Apr-Jun	2.48	2.51	1.20	2.09	1.97	3.55	1.67	2.18	1.58	2.29	
	Jul-Sep	1.79	2.84	2.03	2.82	2.29	3.45	2.07	2.27	2.67	2.92	
	Oct-Dec	2.46	2.62	2.02	2.39	1.94	3.25	2.33	2.02	1.76	2.35	
PDF	Jan-Mar	n/a	3.89	4.22	n/a	4.06	n/a	n/a	2.09	n/a	n/a	
	Apr-Jun	n/a	4.91	3.72	n/a	2.79	n/a	n/a	4.18	n/a	n/a	
	Jul-Sep	n/a	4.79	6.01	5.67	2.31	n/a	n/a	2.73	n/a	n/a	
	Oct-Dec	n/a	5.79	4.09	5.93	1.67	n/a	n/a	3.93	n/a	n/a	
XML	Jan-Mar	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.07	n/a	7.81	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Apr-Jun	n/a	5.23	n/a	n/a	3.59	7.67	6.97	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	Jul-Sep	n/a	4.79	n/a	n/a	3.49	7.00	3.16	2.67	n/a	n/a	
	Oct-Dec	n/a	5.52	n/a	n/a	2.73	7.12	5.16	1.81	n/a	n/a	
Paper	Average	3.40	4.13	2.56	3.74	3.05	4.72	2.90	3.22	2.96	3.54	3.58
Easy		2.14	2.69	1.92	2.80	2.54	3.71	1.90	2.26	1.84	2.54	2.75
PDF		n/a	5.03	4.45	5.81	2.44	n/a	n/a	3.41	n/a	n/a	3.92
XML		n/a	5.13	n/a	n/a	3.24	7.14	5.11	2.10	n/a	n/a	6.62



Time Series Indicating Timeliness for Processing Record Copies **2004**

This graph shows the total number and percentage of record copies processed within 1-10 weeks, from January to December.

The green line is the percentage of RCs processed within 3 weeks from the date of receipt.

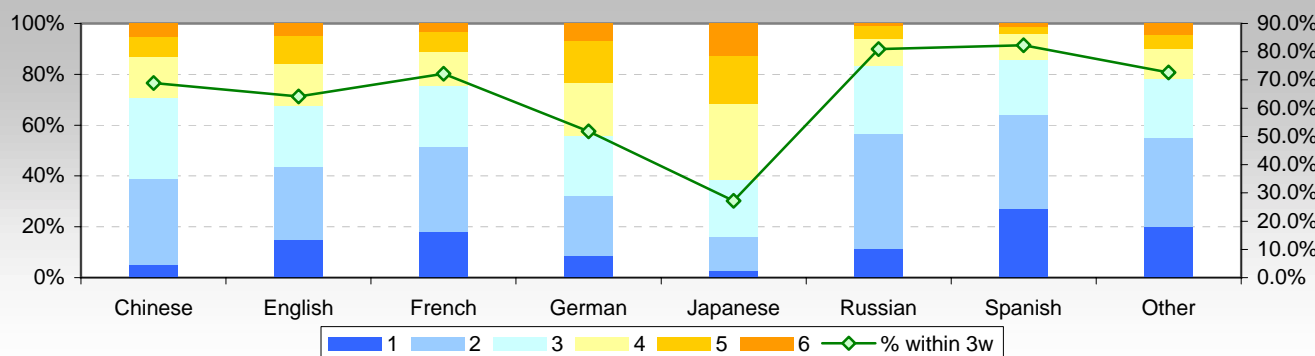


RC Processing Timeliness by Filing Language 2004

The table and graph below show the break-down by language of the record copies processing timeliness (in weeks) within 1-10 weeks from the date of receipt at IB.

The green line is the percentage of record copies processed within 3 weeks from the date of receipt.

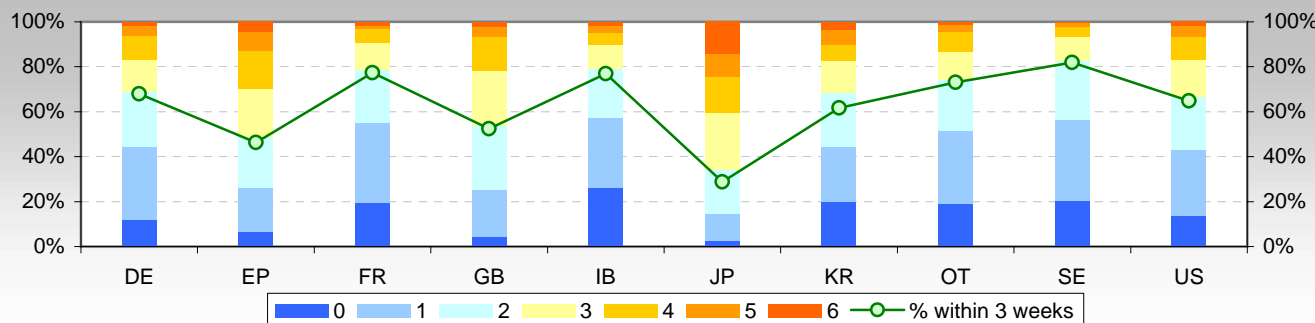
Language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	% 3w
Chinese	67	447	417	216	102	69	21	3	1	7	1350	69.0%
English	11246	21229	17864	12646	7995	3627	1515	880	467	1016	78485	64.1%
French	766	1429	1040	560	354	134	87	58	16	37	4481	72.2%
German	1199	3294	3329	2879	2291	995	560	243	105	192	15087	51.8%
Japanese	344	1685	2787	3748	2364	1573	2282	1348	794	781	17706	27.2%
Russian	69	280	164	66	30	7	4	3	1	10	634	80.9%
Spanish	214	292	172	82	21	10	9	12	2	10	824	82.3%
Other	805	1419	926	474	227	177	83	98	43	81	4333	72.7%



RC Processing Timeliness for Selected Receiving Offices

This graph shows the processing timeliness for IAs filed with selected receiving Offices.

The green line is the percentage of record copies processed within 3 weeks from the date of receipt.



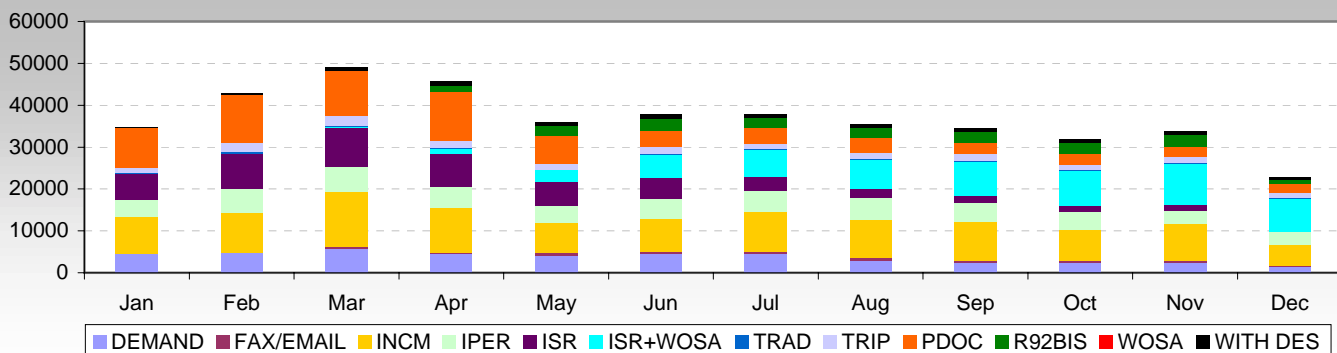
2. Incoming Mail Workload

This section lists incoming mail items received at the International Bureau.
For an explanation of the codes used, see glossary at the end of this section.

Incoming Mail Items Received 2004

The table and graph below show the number of mail items received in 2004.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	%
DEMAND	4473	4636	5762	4437	4237	4429	4590	3017	2337	2321	2482	1377	44098	10.2%
FAX/EMAIL	0	23	410	358	512	628	542	538	584	562	492	313	4962	1.1%
INCM	8841	9743	13201	10755	7210	7815	9549	9242	9244	7469	8627	5057	106753	24.6%
IPER	4211	5722	5957	4970	4135	4855	5003	5112	4618	4201	3292	2849	54925	12.7%
ISR	6089	8409	9277	7888	5559	5084	3183	2270	1541	1575	1220	41	52136	12.0%
ISR+WOSA	0	0	181	1174	2774	5241	6464	6739	8135	8147	9967	8069	56891	13.1%
TRAD	261	256	274	297	246	345	337	261	259	168	190	97	2991	0.7%
TRIP	1178	2125	2555	1711	1297	1699	1006	1553	1628	1394	1377	1272	18795	4.3%
PDOC	9432	11663	10510	11582	6806	3814	4030	3627	2861	2431	2521	2243	71520	16.5%
R92BIS	0	0	48	1353	2431	2743	2241	2284	2419	2821	2682	962	19984	4.6%
WOSA	0	0	9	233	5	106	40	11	9	53	73	2	541	0.1%
WITH DES	184	429	867	1011	803	988	828	820	919	828	779	597	9053	2.1%
Total	34485	42577	48184	44758	35212	36759	36985	34654	33635	31142	32923	22282	433596	
%	8.0%	9.8%	11.1%	10.3%	8.1%	8.5%	8.5%	8.0%	7.8%	7.2%	7.6%	5.1%		

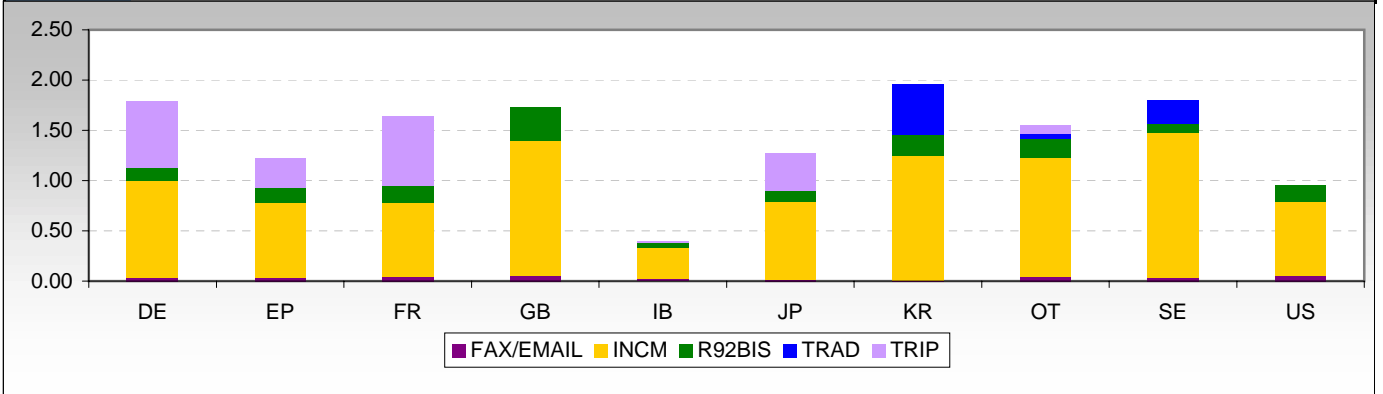


Incoming Mail Items Received for IAs Filed with Selected Receiving Offices 2004

The table and graph below show the number of selected mail items received for international applications filed with selected receiving Offices, and the average number of mail items per record copy.

	DE	EP	FR	GB	IB	JP	KR	OT	SE	US	Total	%
FAX/EMAIL	101	645	152	279	189	204	28	777	67	2323	4765	3.2%
INCM	2968	14241	2734	7471	2191	14930	3902	18861	2917	32455	102670	69.1%
R92BIS	398	2804	614	1865	354	2256	667	2984	181	7250	19373	13.0%
TRAD	0	22	1	1	4	0	1598	800	477	2	2905	2.0%
TRIP	2046	5490	2578	0	112	7136	0	1345	0	88	18795	12.7%
Total	5513	23202	6079	9616	2850	24526	6195	24767	3642	42118	148508	
%	3.7%	15.6%	4.1%	6.5%	1.9%	16.5%	4.2%	16.7%	2.5%	28.4%		

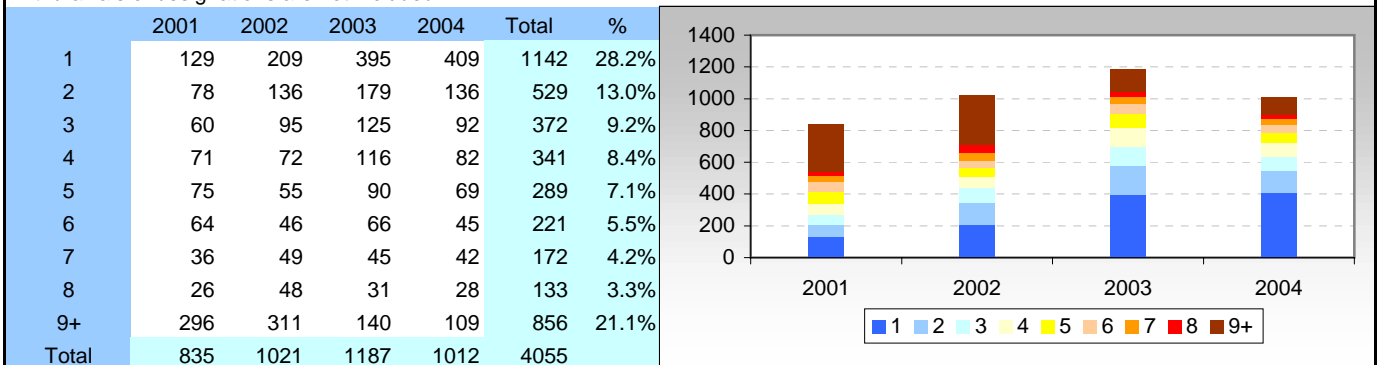
	DE	EP	FR	GB	IB	JP	KR	OT	SE	US
FAX/EMAIL	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.03	0.05
INCM	0.97	0.75	0.74	1.34	0.31	0.77	1.23	1.18	1.44	0.74
R92BIS	0.13	0.15	0.17	0.33	0.05	0.12	0.21	0.19	0.09	0.17
TRAD	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.51	0.05	0.24	0.00
TRIP	0.67	0.29	0.70	0.00	0.02	0.37	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00



International Applications Withdrawn by Applicants

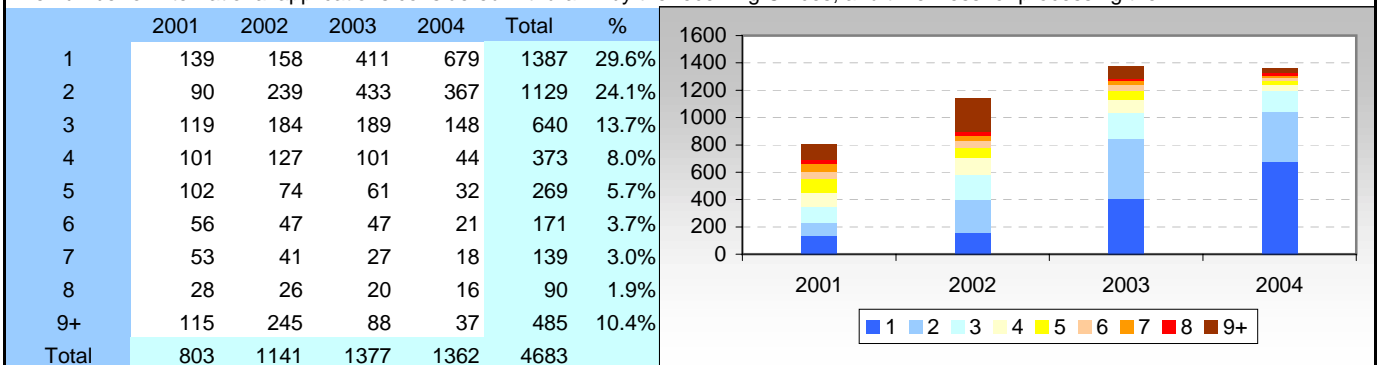
The tables and graphs below show the total number of international applications withdrawn and timeliness (in weeks) for processing them at the IB, from the date of receipt at the IB to the issuance of the relevant form related to the withdrawal.

Withdrawals of designations are not included.



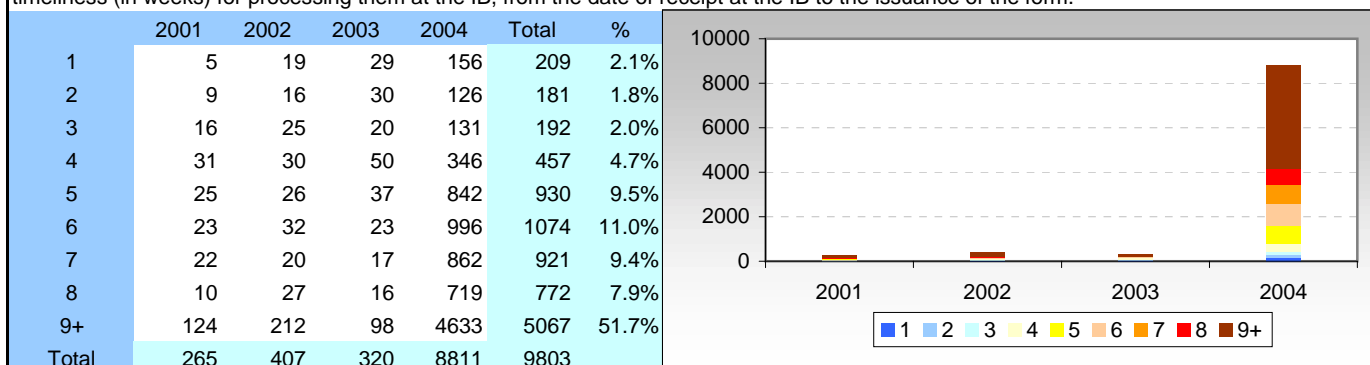
International Applications Considered Withdrawn by Receiving Offices

The number of international applications considered withdrawn by the receiving Offices, and timeliness for processing them.



Designations Withdrawn by Applicants

The tables and graphs below show the total number of international applications in which the designations were withdrawn and timeliness (in weeks) for processing them at the IB, from the date of receipt at the IB to the issuance of the form.



Glossary

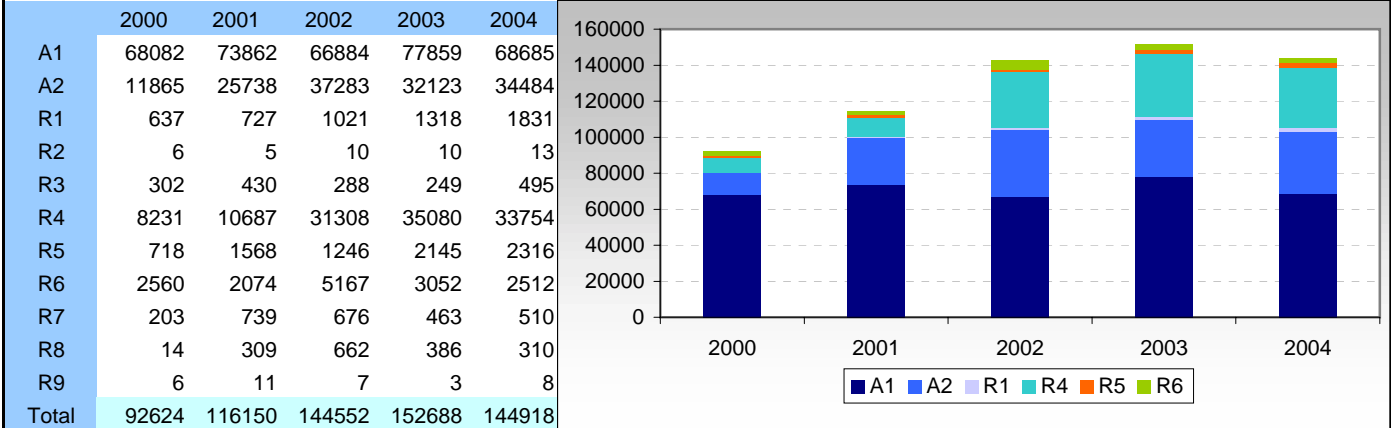
Demand	Demand for international preliminary examination under PCT Chapter II
Fax/Email	General correspondence related to the international applications received by these electronic means
INCM	General correspondence received by postal services
IPER	International preliminary examination report
ISR	International search report
ISR+WOSA	International search report and written opinion
TRAD	Translation of international application for publication purposes
TRIP	Translation of international preliminary examination report into English
R92BIS	Request for a change in the bibliographic data under Rule 92bis
PDOC	Priority document
WOSA	Written opinion by International Searching Authorities
WITH DES	Withdrawn of designation by applicants

3. Publication Timeliness and Workload

This section displays the number and timeliness of publications and republications.
For an explanation of the codes used, see glossary at the end of this section.

Publication Summary

The table and graph below show the break-down by publication type of the publications made by the IB from 2000-2004.



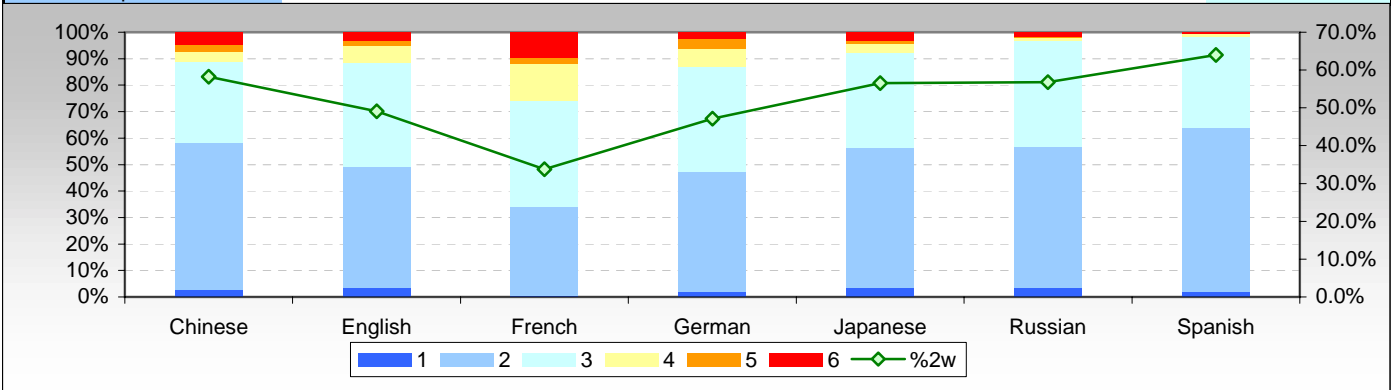
Publication Timeliness by Publication Language

2004

The table and graph below show the number of international applications published after 18 months from the priority date (in the different publication language) broken down by the extent of delay in weeks.

The green line is the percentage of the publications made within 2 weeks after 18 months.

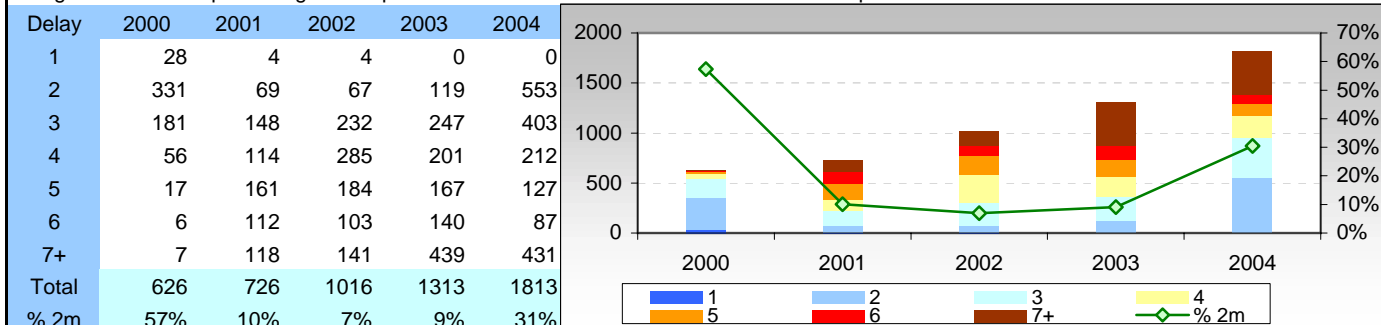
Language	Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	%2w
Chinese		26	549	301	39	26	46	987	58.3%
English		2400	31405	27102	4508	1156	2347	68918	49.1%
French		22	1306	1587	550	88	376	3929	33.8%
German		258	5822	5133	881	496	315	12905	47.1%
Japanese		511	8142	5432	539	152	517	15293	56.6%
Russian		15	244	182	6	1	8	456	56.8%
Spanish		13	423	234	6	0	5	681	64.0%



R1 Republication Summary

The table and graph below show the time elapsed between the date of receipt of amendment of claims under PCT Article 19 and the R1 publication date, in months.

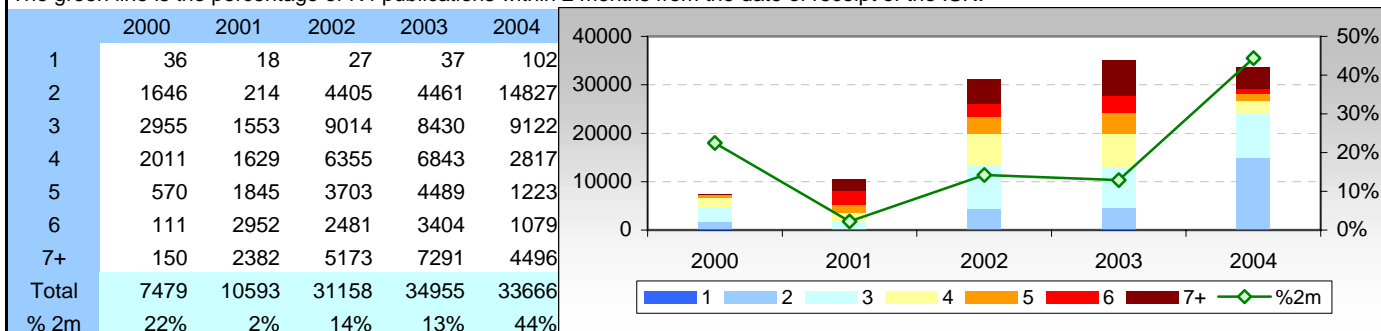
The green line is the percentage of R1 publications within 2 months from the date of receipt of amendment of claims under Article 19.



R4 Republication Summary

The table and graph below show the time between the date of receipt of the ISR and the R4 publication date, in months.

The green line is the percentage of R4 publications within 2 months from the date of receipt of the ISR.



Glossary

A1	Publication of international application with international search report
A2	Publication of international application without international search report
R1	Late publication of amendment of claims under Article 19 (PCT)
R2	Late publication of supplementary international search report
R3	Late publication of revised international search report
R4	Late publication of international search report
R5	Corrections of an entry in Section I of the PCT Gazette
R6	Corrected version of the pamphlet
R7	Corrected version of the pamphlet front page
R8	Later publication of declaration under Article 17(2)(a)
R9	Later publication of revised international search report translation

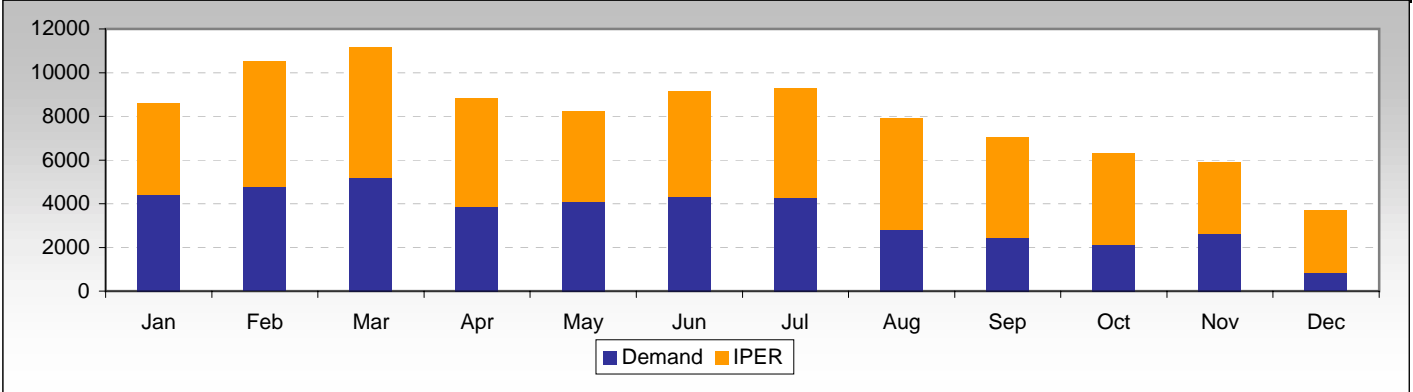
4. Chapter II Processing Timeliness and Workload

This section shows the workload and processing timeliness of the Chapter II Demands and IPERs.

Total Number of Demands and IPER Received 2004

The table and graph below show the number of Demands for Chapter II examination and IPERs processed by the IB in 2004.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Demand	4391	4791	5190	3864	4075	4302	4260	2800	2444	2115	2618	854	41704
IPER	4211	5722	5957	4970	4135	4855	5003	5112	4618	4201	3292	2849	54925
Total	8602	10513	11147	8834	8210	9157	9263	7912	7062	6316	5910	3703	96629



[End of Annex II and of document]