

# WIPO



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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS WORKING GROUP

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PCT-SAFE PROJECT STATUS REPORT

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

### Background

1. At the Thirty -Second Series of meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO, a proposal (see document A/32/5) for the initiation of a project for the automation of the PCT Operations was considered and approved (see paragraphs 94 to 99 of document A/32/7). The PCT Electronic Filing Project originated as part of the Information Management for the Patent Cooperation Treaty (IMPACT) Project.
2. The present document contains a progress report on the development of the PCT -SAFE (Secure Applications Filed Electronically) Project.

### Overall Project Status

3. The project, which officially started at the beginning of 2002, is delayed by four months based on the PCT Electronic Filing Project High Level Project Plan<sup>1</sup> published in August 2001.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [http://pcteasy.wipo.int/efiling\\_standards/PCT-EF-HLPP1.doc](http://pcteasy.wipo.int/efiling_standards/PCT-EF-HLPP1.doc)

Summary of Progress

4. The PCT -SAFE Pilot, which was planned to start in September 2002, is now expected to be operational in February 2003. The objective of the PCT -SAFE Pilot Project is to take the electronic filing legal framework and the technical standard (see Part 7 and Annex F of the Administrative Instructions) as well as associated computer developments through a proof-of-concept process; it will enable further development of the software and operational procedures in preparation for full implementation of electronic filing in 2003. Despite the delay, a key milestone was achieved in November 2002, when the first filing under the PCT -SAFE Pilot was made. Although the first filing proved the PCT -SAFE Pilot system works it was decided to delay general activity under PCT -SAFE Pilot due to the following factors:

(a) The PCT -SAFE Pilot server software is based to a large degree on the European Patent Office's (EPO's) *epoline* server which was released to the International Bureau (IB) later than first planned. As such, deployment, security testing and integration testing was delayed. It should be noted that the EPO cooperated very closely with the IB to minimize this delay.

(b) Although the client software is operational, a high degree of stability is being sought for the PCT -SAFE Pilot participants, a process that is more complex than first estimated in the High Level Project Plan of August 2001.

Project Milestones/Deliverables Planned and Achieved (for the past three months)

5. The PCT -SAFE server and database has been deployed and is operational.
6. The PCT -SAFE client software and PCT -SAFE editor (XML authoring tool) have undergone multiple rounds of development and testing and are nearing stabilization.
7. The IB has issued low-level digital certificates to the PCT -SAFE Pilot participants.
8. A security test of the PCT -SAFE Pilot system was completed in November 2002.
9. Training workshops were delivered in Tokyo, Washington D.C. and Geneva to the PCT -SAFE Pilot participants.
10. Annex F was modified to introduce new section 2.5 setting out a special procedure for the proposal consideration and implementation of future modifications of the technical requirements for the electronic filing and processing of international applications. It came into effect on December 12, 2002, and a website supporting the procedure was implemented at: [http://www.wipo.int/pct/efiling\\_standard/en/welcome.html](http://www.wipo.int/pct/efiling_standard/en/welcome.html).
11. A revision of Annex F, taking into account thirteen Proposals For Change is under preparation and is planned to come into effect March 2003.
12. A revision of Part 7 has been initiated that will provide for the possibility of exchanging and processing scanned image copies of documents such as international applications and priority documents instead of on paper.

13. The first filing under the PCT -SAFE Pilot Project was received in November 2002.

Project Milestones/Deliverables for the Next Period (three months)

14. The PCT -SAFE Pilot Project is expected to become fully operational in February 2003.

Key Issues

15. Certain PCT -SAFE software is based on the reuse of existing components in the European Patent Office's *epoline*® software. The IB would like to note its appreciation to the EPO for its software, expertise and close cooperation.

16. Member States have raised the possibility of setting up an open source library of electronic filing software, a proposal which could have benefit to the PCT -SAFE Project but also implications on the schedule and deliverables promised to Member States in Step 2 of the High Level Project Plan. For example an open source library may be an alternative to the IB bilaterally making servers software available to PCT receiving Offices.

*17. The ITPWG is invited to comment upon and not the contents of this document.*

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