

# WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION  
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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES STANDARDS AND DOCUMENTATION WORKING GROUP

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WIPO STANDARDS AND IPC REFORM TASK FORCE

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

1. On March 21, 2003, the European Patent Office (EPO), as the Leader of the WIPO Standards and International Patent Classification (IPC) Reform Task Force, submitted a report of the Task Force to the Standards and Documentation Working Group (SDWG) of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT). This report, which is reproduced as an Annex, contained information regarding the work carried out by the Task Force, the issues that have been addressed and the agreements reached. e

2. *The SDWG is invited:*

(a) *to note the contents of this document;*  
*and*

(b) *to consider and agree to the proposals concerning the amendments to WIPO Standards ST.8, ST.10/Band ST.10/C reproduced in Appendices I and II to the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

REPORT OF THE WIPO STANDARDS AND IPC REFORM TASK FORCE

Introduction

1. In the framework of WIPO, the Committee of Experts of the IPC Union and the ad hoc Working Group on IPC Reform are currently considering changes in the use and structure of the IPC, which induce revisions to several WIPO Standards, dealing with classification symbols. In this respect, the Working Group authorized the International Bureau (IB) to submit a request to the SCIT for inclusion of the revision of WIPO Standard ST.8 (and recommendations concerning other relevant standards, as necessary) in the SCIT work program and to establish a Task Force as deemed necessary.

2. Upon request of the seventh session of the SCIT Plenary, held in June 2002, 16 patent offices nominated members for the Task Force on WIPO Standards and IPC Reform, and work began in August 2002, on the basis of documents SCIT/7/7 and SCIT/7/7 Add. 1.

Task Force Activities

3. The Task Force started by defining its project brief, which had been presented at the second session of the SDWG (see Appendix I to the Annex to document SCIT/SDWG/2/7). The Task Force decided that electronic standards were an integral part of the problem to be addressed, and therefore drafted a project brief both for this Task Force and for the Task Force on Electronic Data Processing and Exchange Standards (EDPES). Since the EDPES Task Force has yet to be nominated, the Task Force has concentrated its efforts on achieving agreement on proposals for improvements to WIPO Standards ST.8 and ST.10 by the end of February 2003.

4. Discussions commenced on the revision of WIPO Standard ST.8 with the title "Standard Recording of International Patent Classification (IPC) Symbols on Machine-Readable Records" to achieve compliance with the new specifications set by the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group. Discussions also took place regarding improvements to WIPO Standard ST.10, which relate to "Published Patent Documents." During its discussions, the Task Force concentrated on clarifying these specifications and ensuring a wording which should permit users to maximize interchangeability through use of a coherent common standard.

Current Result and Future Work

5. The members of the Task Force agreed to amend WIPO Standards ST.8, ST.10/B and ST.10/C. The revised version of WIPO Standard ST.8 is attached, in its entirety, in Appendix I to this Annex. Appendix II contains the proposed amendments to WIPO Standards ST.10/B and ST.10/C.

6. It was agreed that no changes were necessary with regard to WIPO Standards ST.10, ST.10/A and ST.10/D.
7. WIPO Standard ST.10/B has been amended in paragraph 5(e) by adding a cross-reference to WIPO Standard ST.10/C.
8. WIPO Standard ST.10/C (see Appendix II) was amended in such a way that the classification value (“invention information” or “other information”) and the indication of the IPC level (“Core” or “Advanced”) are reflected in the manner of presentation of the IPC symbols, namely “Core” in Regular and “Advanced” in italics, as well as “invention information” in bold, and “other information” in normal font. With regard to paragraph 4 of WIPO Standard ST.10/C, care has been taken to avoid conflict with the provisions of the International Classification for Industrial Designs (the Locarno Union). An example has been added as well.
9. For the recording of IPC symbols, WIPO Standard ST.8 with a recommended record layout of fixed length has been redrafted and the text correspondingly adapted in such a way that blank positions for future use are grouped at positions 16-19 and at the end of the respective records.
10. During the thirty-second session of the Committee of Experts of the IPC Union, held from February 24 to 28, 2003, several items raised by the Task Force were discussed with the following result:
  - The X -notation has been re-introduced as paragraph 9 and value X added in the table, whenever appropriate.
  - The values V (various) and D (deleted) have been introduced in position 39 and the corresponding explanation is proposed in the text of paragraph 7.
  - Possible ambiguities, as to which level of classification a published document had been classified, have been resolved by disallowing the “Other” classification levels.
  - A new indicator (letter G) has been introduced to indicate class symbols generated by software using automatic analysis of the content of the patent application at position 40.
11. All these changes have been incorporated in the draft WIPO Standard ST.8 attached as Appendix I.
12. No contribution from the EDPE Task Force could be incorporated into this report, because of its schedule of renewal by March 15, 2003. It is proposed to table a common proposal if necessary at the meeting of the SDWG.

[Appendices follow]

## APPENDIX I

## STANDARD ST.8

STANDARD RECORDING OF INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC)  
SYMBOLS ON MACHINE-READABLE RECORDS

*Under revision by the WIPO Standards and IPC Reform Task Force  
(version 9 (2003.03.12))*

## INTRODUCTION

[1.](#) This recording convention provides that symbols of the International Patent Classification (IPC) should be presented on machine-readable records for the exchange of information in machine-readable form in a fixed-length field in 50 positions, each part of the International Symbol being recorded in specific positions and in the manner prescribed.

[2.](#) The examples given are intended to clarify the text and should not be considered as comprehensive.

## RECORDING

[3.](#) For the recording of IPC symbols on machine-readable records a field of 50 positions should be allotted for each symbol, the 50 positions of the field to be used as follows:

<i>Position(s)</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Values</i>
1	Section	A, ..., H, X
2,3	Class	01, ..., 99; X
4	Subclass	A, ..., Z
5 to 8	Main Group (right aligned)	1, ..., 9999; X, blank
9	Slash separator	/
10 to 15	Subgroup (left aligned)	00, ..., 999999; X, blank
16 to 19	For future use	4 blanks
20 to 27	Version indicator	YYYYMMDD date format
28	Classification level	C, A, S
29	First or later position of symbol	F, L
30	Classification value (inventive or non-inventive)	I, N
31 to 38	Action date	YYYYMMDD date format
39	Original or reclassified data	B, R, V, D
40	Source of classification	H, M, G
41-42	Generating office	AA, ..., ZZ (ST.3)
43-50	For future use	8 blanks

4. [Deleted]

5. Unused positions in the IPC classification fields Group (positions 5-8) and Subgroup (positions 10-15) should be left blank. The only other positions that may be left "blank" are the ones reserved for "future use." All other positions must be assigned one of the acceptable "values" listed in the table of paragraph 3. Any zero appearing in the symbols should be recorded.

6. Considering the numerals appearing after the separating character, the most significant digit (including the case where it is zero, e.g., subgroup 02) should be in position 10. Any unused positions should be left blank.

7. Representation of the indicators

*Positions 1 to 19: Recording of the parts of the IPC symbols*

IPC symbols are defined in Part 5 of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* and in the latest version of the Guide to the IPC.

*Positions 20 to 27: Version indicator*

Although in the paper publications a version indicator may contain four or six digits, the version indicator in machine-readable records contains eight digits namely YYYYMMDD with Y for year, M for month and D for day.

*Position 28: Classification level*

Offices are expected to classify only in one level (core or advanced). However, both levels need to be completely represented in the master classification database and thus a level indicator is needed. The level indicator is also useful for indicating situations where an office does not classify in either the core or the advanced level classification, i.e., when an office only assigns classification to the subclass level or gives other broad classification to documents. The level indicator enables to make the difference between core, advanced and subclass levels. The letters C (Core), A (Advanced) and S (Subclass) are used for this one-digit field.

*Position 29: First or later position of symbols*

The position of the first invention information classification can be recognized by this field. The letters F and L are used for first and later position, respectively.

*Position 30: Classification value (inventive or non-inventive)*

The difference between invention information and other information is important for the retrieval of the information. The letters I and N are used for the invention and non-invention information, respectively.

*Position 31-38: Action date*

The date of assigning the classification symbol (action date) is represented by eight symbols, namely YYYYMMDD. This date can be used to check if a classification needs to be reviewed after revision of the scheme, e.g., in case of creating new subdivisions.





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Record2:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
B	2	8	B				1	/	2	9								

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
1	9	9	6	0	3	0	1	A	L	I	2	0	0	4	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	E	P								

Record3:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
H	0	5	B				3	/	1	8								

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
1	9	9	7	0	6	0	1	A	L	N	2	0	0	4	0	6	0	1

39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
B	H	E	P								

[Appendix I follows]



APPENDIX II

REVISION OF WIPO STANDARDS ST.10/B AND ST.10/C  
IN CONNECTION WITH IPC REFORM<sup>1</sup>

WIPO STANDARD ST.10/B

Paragraph 5(e) should be amended to read:

“the symbol of the International Patent Classification (INID Code (51)), see WIPO Standard ST.10/C for details.”

WIPO STANDARD ST.10/C

Paragraph 2 should be amended to read:

“PRESENTATION OF CLASSIFICATION SYMBOLS

2. The recommended abbreviation of the International Patent Classification is “Int.Cl.” The version indicator (year) has to be placed in round brackets after the abbreviation “Int.Cl.”

The recommended presentation of classification symbols in printed or formatted display form is as follows”

- classification symbols presented in a tabular form, in such a manner as to facilitate machine transcription
- the core level symbols printed in regular font style and the advanced level symbols in italics
- the invention information symbols printed in bold font style and the other information symbols in regular
- the version indicator for each advanced level symbol (year, month) placed in round brackets after each advanced level symbol.”

WIPO STANDARD ST.10/C

(a) Paragraph 3 should be amended to read:

“3. One sample representation of IPC classification symbols and indicators is:

Int.Cl.(1995)

**B28B5 /02**

***B28B1/29*** (1996.03)

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<sup>1</sup>The full current versions of all WIPO Standards are available at <http://www.wipo.int/scit:WIPOStandardsandOtherDocumentation/ListofWIPOStandards>.

*H05B3/18* (1997.06)

where **B28B5/02** is core level classification (regular font style) and invention information (bold font style);

***B28B1/29*** is advanced level classification (italics font style) and invention information (bold font style);

and

*H05B3/18* is advanced level classification (italics font style) and non -invention information (regular font style).

IPC symbols are defined in Part 5 of the WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* and in the latest version of the Guide to the IPC.”

(b) The last two sentences of paragraph 4 should be amended to read:

“Classifications symbols should be presented with all elements of a given symbol contained in the same line, preferably in such a manner as to facilitate a machine transcription. If the numbers of several classes or subclasses must be indicated for one and the same subject matter, the classes should be separated by semicolons and subclasses by commas (for example, LOC(6)Cl.8 -05,08;11 -01).”

[End of Appendix II and of document]