

# WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION  
GENEVA

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**  
**STANDARDS AND DOCUMENTATION WORKING GROUP**

**Fourth Session**  
**Geneva, January 26 to 30, 2004**

CODING OF DOCUMENT CATEGORIES IN SEARCH REPORTS AND FRONT PAGES  
OF PATENT DOCUMENTS

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

1. When patent applications are examined or search reports are established therefor, a certain number of patent documents and other documents might be cited as reference to illustrate the prior art by industrial property offices (IPOs). WIPO Standard ST.14 recommends that IPOs should include all relevant references cited in the course of a search or examination procedure in their granted patents and in their published patent applications. The list of references cited should appear either on the first page of the patent document or in a search report attached to the patent document. In order to indicate the relevance of any document cited in the search report accompanying published patent applications, the Standard provides category codes (X, Y, A, etc.) that should be placed next to the citation of the said document (reference). If these category codes are given on the first page of published patent applications, they should be printed in parentheses, immediately after each citation.
2. In its letter of August 20, 2003, the Patent Documentation Group (PDG) expressed that the valuable knowledge that is created through examining patent applications should be made available to the industrial property user community and proposed to broaden the application of WIPO Standard ST.14. The Standard should be used not only by IPOs publishing search results but by all other IPOs examining patent applications.

3. The letter of the PDG is reproduced in the Annex to this document. WIPO Standard ST.14 is available at <http://www.wipo.int/scit>: WIPO Standards and Other Documentation/List of WIPO Standards.

*4. The Standards and Documentation Working Group is invited to consider the letter of the PDG reproduced in the Annex to this document and, if found appropriate, to take a decision on what action should be taken.*

[Annex follows]

## ANNEX

**Patent Documentation Group**

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PCT
26 / OUT 2003
-76.2

Date. 20 August 2003

Our ref. WIPO\_20032008\_3

Your ref.

Re: Coding of Document Categories

Dear Mr. Solanas,

During a number of several meetings of the PDG Working Group IMPACT (Impact of patent laws on documentation), the item “coding document categories in search reports and on the front page” has been discussed. The background of this topic lies in the fact that a lot of manpower and specified systems are used in the different offices to master the workload of examining patents. The valuable knowledge that is created through examining patent applications (e.g. in search reports) should be made available to the user community.

In the framework of ST 14, PDG proposed to introduce codes like “X” (novelty destroying), “Y” (indicating obviousness) or “A” (technical background) which could be used to categorize results of examinations (citations). These codes, created for examiner’s citations, could be used in databases in order to search for novelty-destroying documents or for general technical background. This would open the way to getting access to the important evaluation of inventions. The main work of patent examiners is to cluster the state of the art according to its relevance to the respective invention. This cluster could result in codes or simply in the decision to grant or to reject an invention.

Our proposal is to broaden the application of ST 14. But it should be used not only by offices publishing search results but by all other offices examining patent applications.

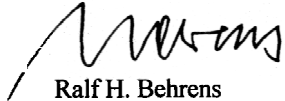
We are of the opinion that this item should be discussed in the framework of WIPO working groups to the benefit of the IP offices as well as the patent information user community.

A common approach of coding categories could help offices to master the workload because similar categories for results of examinations could be used to reduce the duplication of work. In times of limited budgets and large amounts of work, this should be taken into consideration.

The PDG is prepared to explain in more detail its initiative in order to exploit more efficiently the knowledge that is sometimes “buried” in search reports.

Sincerely yours,

Patent Documentation Group



Ralf H. Behrens  
Secretary General

[End of Annex and of document]