

Principal Directorate Documentation

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Rijswijk, 3 October 2000

Subject: Restructuring of the SCIT (C. SCIT/RES/1)

Dear Ms Frary,

Concerning the proposal made by the International Bureau for restructuring the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT), the EPO would like to present the following comments.

1. The need for a general high level management structure to coordinate the policy proposals, the planning (projects approvals and priorities) and to monitor all technical aspects related to the functioning of Intellectual Property Offices is very broadly recognized.
The new IT technologies impact both the processing of applications for IP titles by the Offices and the dissemination of the related information to the public.
2. The present SCIT may correspond to this need for coordination.
Nevertheless, the working methods should be reviewed, the present functioning being somewhat complex.
The Working Groups should have a decisive role.
Proposals should reach the SCIT after a first elaboration, either by the IB or a Commission.
Work on specific items should be conducted in Working Groups, with a limited number of delegates, specialized on the questions dealt with within the Working Groups.
Elaborated proposals from the Working Group would then be approved by the SCIT or sent back to the relevant Working Group for reworking.
The EPO feels that a restructuring of the Working Methods is the most important question.

3. The EPO observes that the mandate given to the Secretariat by the Plenary SCIT in July 2000, does not envisage the creation of a new structure, but calls for a clarification of the working methods.
4. There is a strong interrelation between the Information Technologies and the formulation of Standards and Documentation aspects. They are to be applied in a similar way for different Intellectual Property Rights.
5. The different lines of responsibility should be more clearly defined: ie. to which instance should the SCIT or any similar committee report to.
For instance, an Advisory Group maybe required for internal WIPO IT matters, with the duty to report to the General Director.
A different reporting mechanism could be envisaged for matters concerning Automation and Information for the Member States.

The EPO will welcome any solution proposed, which would preserve the global coordination and overview necessary whilst improving the efficiency of the SCIT working methods.

Yours sincerely,

Gérard GIROUD
Principal Director
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