

## **Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)**

**Eleventh Session**  
**Geneva, December 4 to 8, 2023**

REPORT BY THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TASK FORCE (TASK NO. 62, TASK NO. 63 AND TASK NO. 65)

*Document prepared by the Task Force Leader*

### **SUMMARY**

1. The Digital Transformation Task Force works under the framework of Task No. 62, 63 and 65 and reports its activities since the last session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS). The Task Force is proposing to update the Task description for Task No. 62. Additionally, the work undertaken to update Part 6, that was previously part of Task No. 62, is proposed to be transferred to the Public Access to Patent Information (PAPI) Task Force. The Digital Transformation Task Force was also successful in producing a draft standard specifying recommendations for producing a priority document data package, which is presented for adoption at this session.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. The Digital Transformation Task Force was established at the sixth session of the CWS and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) was designated as the leader of this Task Force (see paragraphs 150 of document CWS/6/34). The Task Force initially began with undertaking Task No. 62, which focused on the review of selected WIPO Standards related to the publication of Intellectual Property (IP) rights information with the aim to modernize those Standards, as several were created when IP offices published documents on paper.

3. At the seventh and eight sessions of the CWS, the Task Force presented a plan to discuss existing practices, establish criteria for prioritization and for review of the Standards detailed as part of Task No. 62 (see paragraphs 102 to 104 of document CWS/7/29 and paragraphs 7 to 10 of document CWS/8/18). During the discussion of the work plan, the Task Force realized more information regarding current Intellectual Property Office (IPO) practices was needed to better understand IPO practices for intake and publication. The Task Force prepared a questionnaire to survey IPO practices which was presented for approval at the ninth session (see document CWS/9/17). The outcome of the survey was presented at the tenth session of the CWS (see document CWS/10/15).

4. Also at its seventh session, the CWS supported the reassignment of Task No. 63 to the Digital Transformation Task Force (see paragraph 39 to 40 of document CWS/7/29). The description of this Task No. 63 reads as follows:

*“Develop visual representation(s) of XML data, based on WIPO XML Standards, for electronic publication”*

5. Also at its tenth session, the CWS, agreed to create Task No. 65 and this Task was assigned to the Digital Transformation Task Force. The description of the Task No. 65 is as follows:

*“To prepare a proposal for recommendations on the data package format for the electronic exchange of priority documents and certified copies for patents, marks and industrial designs”.*

The CWS requested the Digital Transformation Task Force to prioritize work on Task No. 65 and to present a proposal for a new WIPO standard on a priority document package format at the eleventh session of the CWS.

6. At its tenth session, the CWS noted that after the review of the IPOs’ digital transformation practices survey results presented at that session, the Task Force Leader recommended developing a plan for the Task Force to work on bringing uniformity to two areas of the patent application process: intake and export. For intake, most Offices record similar information for bibliographic data, claims, specification, abstract, and drawings. The Task Force agreed to explore DOCX to XML (DOCX2XML) conversion as an option for Offices. Consequently, the Task Force was assigned to work on the development of a common requirements specification for the DOCX2XMLconverter. (See paragraphs 104 and 106 of document CWS/10/22.)

## PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 62

### Objectives

7. The objective of Task No. 62 is to review existing WIPO Standards: ST.6, ST.8, ST.10, ST.11, ST.15, ST.17, ST.18, ST.63 and ST.81, and WIPO Handbook Part 6, and to report to the CWS whether revisions of these Standards are required in view of electronic publication of IP documentation.

### Relevant Actions and Progress

8. Since the last session of the CWS, following discussions between the Digital Transformation Task Force and the Task Force Leader of the PAPI Task Force, it was agreed to transfer the update of Part 6 of the WIPO Handbook to the PAPI Task Force taking into account the workload of the Digital Transformation Task Force. The CWS is requested to approve the transfer of this work under its mandate at the current session.

9. As agreed at the tenth session, under the framework of Task No. 62, the Task Force will commence work on the development of a common requirements specification for transforming a DOCX document to a corresponding XML document. Since the last session, the Task Force has conducted a review and performed an analysis of the functionality of DOCX2XML converters in use at the USPTO and at the International Bureau. The analysis has been consolidated, documented and posted for comment on the Task Force wiki space. The Task Force encourages Offices that are currently using DOCX2XML converters to share information on the functionalities of their converter. This will enable the Task Force to have a broader view on what converters are available and be better placed to provide a draft for the common requirements specification.

10. In light of the changing scope of work captured by Task No. 62, i.e., the transfer of work updating the WIPO Handbook Part 6 to the PAPI Task Force and the work on the development of the common specification for DOCX2XML, it is proposed to update the description of this Task by removing specific references to WIPO Standards. The proposed update to the Task No. 62 reads as follows, where strikethrough text indicates that text is removed and underlined text indicates that text has been added:

*“Review ~~WIPO Standards: ST.6, ST.8, ST.10, ST.11, ST.15, ST.17, ST.18, ST.63 and ST.81, and WIPO Handbook Part 6, paper or image-based WIPO Standards~~ in view of electronic filing and publication and exchange of IP documentation and propose revisions of those Standards ~~and materials if needed~~ or new recommendations if needed; and prepare a proposal for the recommendation on a common requirements specification for a DOCX to XML (DOCX2XML) converter.”*

#### Potential challenges or dependencies

11. The Task Force requires active participation by its Members in providing details about the functionality of their DOCX2XML converters as this is key to the development of the requirements specification. Without this feedback, preparing this document will be challenging.

#### Future Work

12. In the upcoming year, in terms of Task No. 62, the Task Force plans to continue documentation of the existing practices of various Offices and the development of a comprehensive list of converter requirements. These efforts may require outreach to Offices currently using DOCX2XML converters and updating the spreadsheet with the information provided. This common requirements document will be helpful to all Offices considering the implementation of a DOCX2XML converter.

#### PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 63

#### Objectives

13. The objective of this Task is to develop a visual representation of XML data, which is compliant with one of the WIPO XML Standards, for electronic publication.

#### Relevant Actions and Progress

14. As the Digital Transformation Task Force has been busy working on Task No. 62 and Task No. 65, it has not been able to progress on this Task. As such, work on this Task has not been conducted since the last session.

#### Potential challenges or dependencies

15. No challenges or dependencies are indicated as no work has been conducted during the period since the last Committee.

## PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 65

### Objectives

16. The objective of this Task is to prepare a proposal for recommendations on the data package format for the electronic exchange of priority documents and certified copies for patents, trade marks and industrial designs.

### Relevant Actions and Progress

17. Since the last session of the CWS, when Task No. 65 was approved for inclusion in the CWS work program, the Digital Transformation Task Force has prepared a draft standard for adoption by the CWS at the current session.

18. The goal of this standard is to define the data package format for the electronic exchange of certified priority documents. It is recommended that IPOs furnish any data package of certified priority documents compliant with this Standard and accept the priority documents which are certified and furnished by another IPO according to this Standard.

19. For further details on the proposal of this draft Standard, proposed as WIPO Standard ST.92, refer to document CWS/11/20.

### Potential challenges or dependencies

20. Progress on the development of this Standard and have a draft standard ready for adoption at the eleventh session required the close and committed collaboration of Task Force members. If the Standard is adopted at the current session, implementation will be dependent on Offices making the necessary changes to their IT systems to generate packages compliant with the new WIPO Standard format. It will also be dependent on the WIPO Digital Access Service (DAS) system implementing the changes needed so it can process packages received in the new format. This process will likely take time which may delay when this Standard can be implemented.

### Future Work

21. The next step for the Digital Transformation Task Force for this particular Task, if the Standard is adopted, will be to develop an implementation plan. A draft implementation plan should include the following elements:

- Testing of the exchanging of data packages compliant with the new Standard: Offices are requested to nominate themselves to collaborate with the Task Force in testing the implementation of the Standard. These Offices will work directly with the DAS team to develop and test sample packages.
- Identifying and resolving any reported challenges to the implementation found during testing. Task Force members currently using DAS for priority document should meet to review and discuss findings.
- Supporting the DAS team to identify and implement any changes needed to allow Offices currently using DAS to exchange priority document package compliant with the new Standard. This is tentatively proposed to be completed by July 2024.
- Confirming if any additional updates are required for legal instruments by participating Offices.
- Confirming a date for the implementation once IT and legal issues are resolved for participating Offices and the DAS Team.

22. The Digital Transformation Task Force will continue to work on updating the proposed WIPO Standard ST.92 as and when needed, based on feedback from participating Offices and their reported experiences during their implementation.

23. *The CWS is invited to:*

*(a) note the content of the present document;*

*(b) approve the proposed update to the description of Task No. 62 as indicated above in paragraph 10 above;*

*(c) provide feedback on their use of DOC2XML converters as indicated above in paragraphs 9 above;*

*(d) approve the transfer of the update to Part 6 of the WIPO Handbook to the PAPI Task Force as indicated in paragraph 8 above; and*

*(e) participate in the testing of the implementation of the new WIPO Standard ST.92, as indicated in paragraphs 20 and 21 above.*

[End of the document]