

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

Common Quality Framework for International Search and Preliminary Examination

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

prepared by SPANISH PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

This supplemental report relates to the quality management system established by this Office as set forth in our report under PCT/GL/ISPE section 21.29 on September 23, 2010

As a result of our most recent internal review under the International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines paragraphs 21.25-21.28, this Authority has made modifications to its QMS as discussed below.

The modifications are given with reference to the sections of the revised template for responses to PCT/GL/ISPE Chapter 21.29 to which the changes relate.

The Authority should describe any changes made to its QMS making reference to the specific sections of the previous main report, and/or making reference to any supplemental report(s) under paragraph 21.30 compiled in accordance with this template.

If no changes have been made to its QMS since the last report, the Authority should indicate such.

INTRODUCTION (PARAGRAPHS 21.01 TO 21.03)

The SPTO has a Quality Management System certified according to ISO 9001:2008. The scope of this System is PCT procedure, Technological Watch procedures, Industrial Design, National trademarks and commercial names.

For the last year, SPTO has been working in the implementation of QMS for National Patents and Utility Models, which hopefully will be certified by July 2012. SPTO QMS complies with EQS except for some specific points which are being addressed at present. These points will be

fulfilled when the scope of the certified QMS includes National Patents and Utility Models by July 2012.

1. LEADERSHIP AND POLICY (PARAGRAPHS 21.04 TO 21.09)

No changes since 2010 report

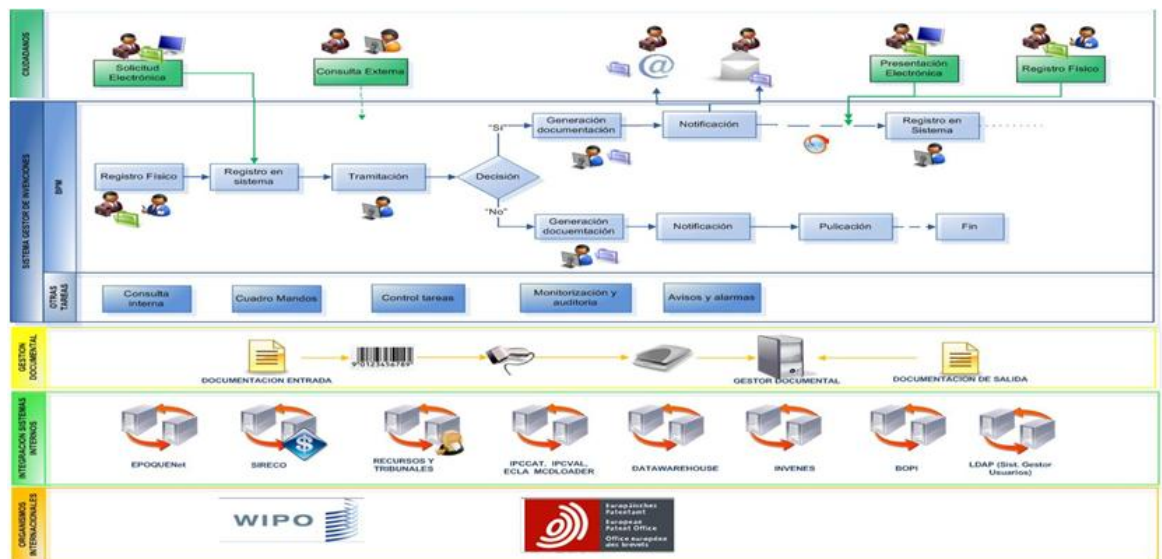
2. RESOURCES (PARAGRAPHS 21.10 TO 21.14)

No changes since 2010 report

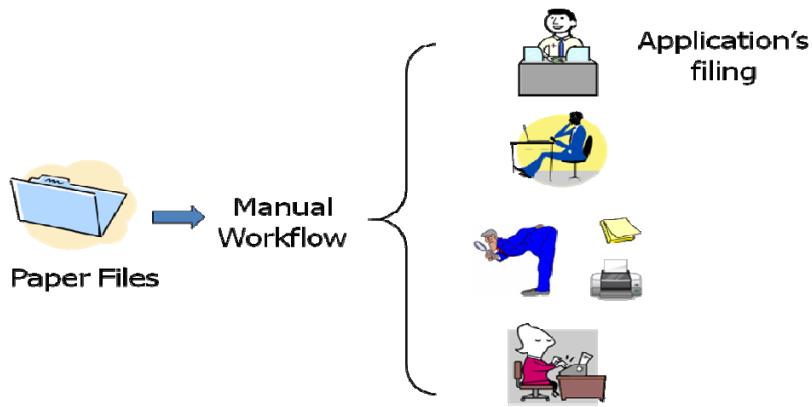
3. MANAGEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE WORKLOAD (PARAGRAPH 21.15)

ALFA is the new electronic workflow tool implemented by SPTO since November 2010:

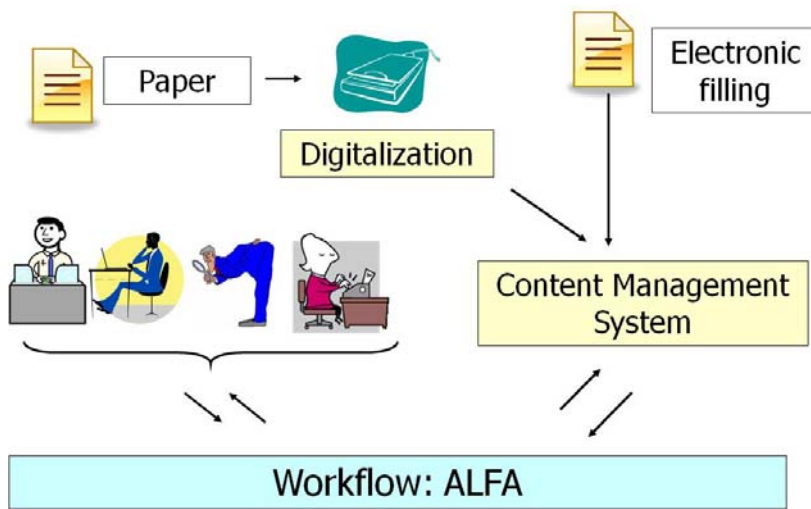
- It is a Business Process Manager. It works with Patent applications according to a defined Process model.
- It is a tool that allows the end users to interact with applications management
- It is integrated with external systems and organisms
- Alfa registers and keeps a record of all application data and how such applications are being processed



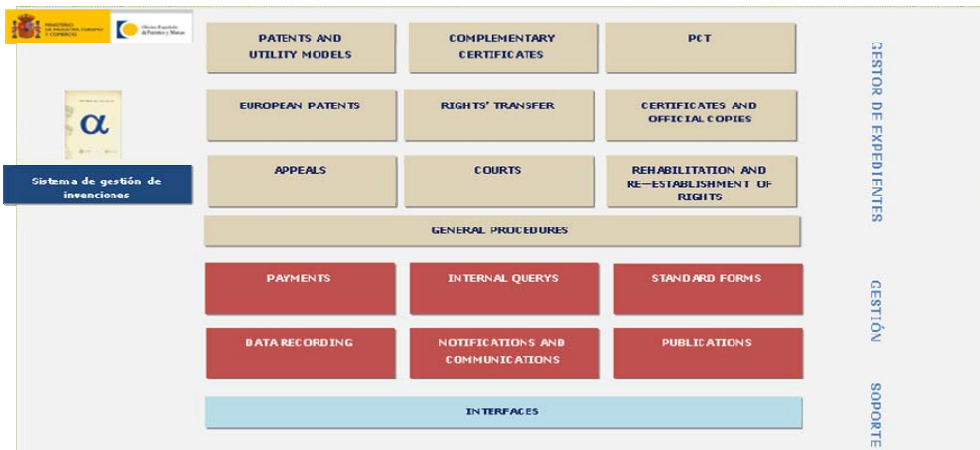
Before ALFA, files workflow at OEPM was:



Nowadays, workflow at the Office is as follows



ALFA includes many functional subsystems



The system has interfaces with:

- Content Management System
- eOLF
- Official Gazette (BOPI)

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- IPCCAT
 - LDAP
 - SPEP (Publication Service)
 - Payment System

Implementing this system has brought some additional work to the Office, such as:

- Need of digitalization of the existing documentation:
- Need of reorganization (huge impact over the tasks carried out by a large part of the personal:

The main benefits from ALFA implementation are:

- System unification
- Process automation and optimization
- Error minimization
- Pre-Classification
- Easy task distribution
- Alerts for pending tasks and deadlines
- System available at any time
- Paper saving
- Standardization
- Easy payment control

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE (PARAGRAPH 21.16)

ALFA has also had an impact in the quality assurance systems, specially in quality control, since the tool includes a record of the quality review done by Heads of Technical Units prior to the issue of all the Reports.

This sort of review was already done in the past, but thanks to the tool, we can record comments done during this evaluation and extract this information afterwards.

Another novelty regarding quality assurance is the implementation of checklist review for 100% of Preliminary Exams on Patentability after issue. These reviews were already implemented for a random sample of issued Search Reports and Written Opinions. The information gathered through this checklist is useful, for example, to identify needs of training among other possible improvement actions.

5. COMMUNICATION (PARAGRAPHS 21.17 TO 21.19)

In relation to **complaint** management no changes since 2010 report have occurred.

The Evaluation of User Satisfaction has been carried out through a **survey** which was made in collaboration with the Spanish Association of Patent Attorneys.

The survey, implemented by questionnaires, covered the different IP rights granted by the SPTO and included these aspects:

- I. Information and e-services
- II. IP right procedures
 - a. **PCT International procedure**
 - b. National Patent
 - c. Trademarks
 - d. Industrial Designs
 - e. Utility Models
- III. Appeals
- IV. Accessibility and Customer care
- V. General Aspects

In order to know the perception of the client about the service provided by the SPTO we use three different approaches in the survey:

To assess the overall satisfaction on the service provided in the PCT process.

To assess the Level of user satisfaction on the different aspects that define the service (based on the SERVQUAL model: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.)

Suggestions for improvement and positive and negative aspects of the service via open questions

The process is outsourced to a service provider (for confidentiality and objectivity). Basically, we provide them with the data to get in contact with users and work closely with them in the design of the questionnaires.

The survey is launched using a Web tool, using on-line questionnaires. We contact the users preferably via email providing them with a user code a password and the link to the website where the survey is located.

Finally the service provider delivers the final report with the results and analysis of the data. These results are used as inputs to the Quality Management Group in each department (the Patent Department for the PCT Process), where improvement actions can be taken.

In order to improve communication and dissemination of information to users, a new web page was launched by SPTO in 2011. As in the previous version of the web a Micro site on Quality is included

At present, this Quality site is being reviewed. This location includes information on:

- Quality Policy of SPTO
- Service Charters
- Scope of the QMS system
- Results of User Satisfaction Surveys
- Channels to get in contact with SPTO, including how to file suggestions, comments and complaints

This web site on Quality is accessible from the main web site of the Office

6. DOCUMENTATION (PARAGRAPHS 21.20 TO 21.23)

No changes since 2010 report

7. SEARCH PROCESS DOCUMENTATION (PARAGRAPH 21.24)

ALFA, the new electronic workflow tool implemented by OEPM since November 2010, includes a screen for search process documentation.

The record includes:

- Databases consulted (patent and non patent)
- Keywords and combination
- Language in which the search was carried out
- Classes and class combination searched
- List of search statements used. This application can import data from Epoque in order to compile the search statements used by the examiner during the search.
- Possible comments regarding the search done by the examiners.

As said before, some of this search process documentation is automatically retrieved from Epoque and some other can be completed by the examiners.

8. INTERNAL REVIEW (PARAGRAPHS 21.25 TO 21.28)

No changes since 2010 report

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