

WIPO



IPC/WG/15/4

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: June 20, 2006

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)

IPC REVISION WORKING GROUP

Fifteenth Session
Geneva, May 29 to June 2, 2006

REPORT

adopted by the Working Group

INTRODUCTION

1. The IPC Revision Working Group (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) held its fifteenth session in Geneva from May 29 to June 2, 2006. The following members of the Working Group were represented at the session: Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America, European Patent Office (EPO) (25). Ukraine was represented by an observer. The list of participants appears as Annex I to this report.

2. The session was opened by Mr. M. Makarov, Acting Director, Patent Information, Classification and IP Standards Division, WIPO, who welcomed the participants on behalf of the Director General.

OFFICERS

3. The Working Group unanimously elected Mr. M. Price (United Kingdom) as Chair and Mr. A. Lioumbis (Greece) as Vice-Chair for 2006.
4. Mr. A. Farassopoulos (WIPO) acted as Secretary of the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Working Group unanimously adopted the agenda, which appears as Annex II to this report.

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

6. As decided by the Governing Bodies of WIPO at their tenth series of meetings held from September 24 to October 2, 1979 (see document AB/X/32, paragraphs 51 and 52), the report of this session reflects only the conclusions of the Working Group (decisions, recommendations, opinions, etc.) and does not, in particular, reflect the statements made by any participant, except where a reservation in relation to any specific conclusion of the Working Group was expressed or repeated after the conclusion was reached.

REPORT ON THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE IPC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

7. The Secretariat made an oral report on the thirty-seventh session of the IPC Committee of Experts (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee" (see document IPC/CE/37/9)) and on the IPC Forum Open Day which preceded the session of the Committee. The Secretariat explained that the purpose of the IPC Forum was to further promote the worldwide use of the IPC by discussing the role of the IPC in accessing and searching patent information and considering principal features of IPC reform. The Secretariat informed that the IPC Forum was attended by some 150 participants and that one of the main conclusions of the forum was that all basic objectives of IPC reform had been achieved. At the same time, the Forum noted that the quality of the reformed classification information was not yet sufficiently high.
8. The Secretariat informed of the principal decisions made by the Committee at its thirty-seventh session, in particular, that the Committee indicated to the Working Group two possible alternatives in dealing with the problem of reclassification of patent files which had arisen in the framework of the IPC revision project C432 and that the Committee adopted the "Guidelines for Revision of the IPC" prepared by the Working Group and providing guidance for the revision of the reformed IPC. The Committee also expressed its satisfaction with the activities of the Working Group with regard to the tasks "Elaboration of Classification Definitions" and "Updating of IPC Training Examples".

9. The Secretariat also informed the Working Group that, in view of certain remarks made at the IPC Forum and concerning the quality of the reformed classification information, the Committee requested its members and other offices applying the IPC to urgently implement measures for increasing the quality of assigned classification symbols, to introduce the procedure of validation of classification symbols and to strictly follow WIPO Standard ST.10/C in recording the symbols. The Secretariat indicated that, as a follow-up of the above request by the Committee, the International Bureau would organize for industrial property offices the Meeting on the Implementation of IPC Reform, which would be held in Geneva on July 3 and 4, 2006. The purpose of the Meeting would be to discuss the status of the technical implementation of IPC reform, to reveal outstanding problems and to determine appropriate solutions therefor.

REPORT ON THE FIRST SESSION OF THE IPC ADVANCED LEVEL SUBCOMMITTEE

10. The Working Group noted an oral report by the Secretariat on the first session of the IPC Advanced Level Subcommittee (hereinafter referred to as "the ALS") (see document IPC/ALS/1/5), in particular, that the ALS had fixed the regular dates of entering into force of new versions of the advanced version of the IPC, that is: January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1. In view of the probable adoption of several revision projects at the next session of the ALS (September 13, 2006), it was expected that the next version of the advanced level of the IPC would enter into force on January 1, 2007, and would be available at least three months in advance.

11. The Working Group also noted that the ALS had included in the revision program of the advanced level six new projects emanating from Harmony projects. For two of these projects having an impact on the core level, corresponding core level revision projects were included in the program of the Working Group (Projects C 434 and C 435) and would be considered during this session.

LIST OF PRIORITIES FOR DEFINITION AND MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

12. Discussions were based on document IPC/WG/15/2. It was recalled that, at its thirty-seventh session, the Committee of Experts had adopted the IPC Development Program for 2006 to 2008 (see Annex IV to document IPC/CE/37/9). Task No. 1(a) of this program relates to the development of a plan for completion of all subclass definitions and requests the Working Group to prepare a list of priorities in the second quarter 2006 and a list of prioritized subclasses in the fourth quarter. Task No. 2(a) of this program relates to the development of a plan for maintenance of all subclasses which should result in a list of priorities and the start of ten pilot projects.

Definitions

13. Regarding the priorities for inclusion of new subclasses in the definition program, the Working Group agreed upon the following:

(a) new or extensively revised subclasses should be treated with the highest priority. Their subclass definitions should be discussed in the framework of the corresponding revision project with the aim to complete them at the moment of the publication of the new scheme at the advanced level.

For each of these subclass definitions, a definition project should be formally created and a project number be assigned in order to properly keep track of their status. Comments or proposals should however be submitted to the respective revision project on the e-forum. The corresponding D-project file on the e-forum should contain only a remark referring to the respective revision project.

(b) For each subclass which is under revision, either in the core or the advanced levels, the Working Group should consider whether subclass definitions are needed or should be amended, if they already exist.

(c) Priority should also be given to subclasses where the rapporteurs of projects R 701 to R 706 recommended the initiation of a definition project in order to clarify any unclear scope of a subclass or of its main groups.

(d) Subclasses selected for systematic maintenance should also be included in the definition program. This would allow for a most efficient treatment because experience and knowledge gained in a particular project would not be lost. In such cases, the same office should act as Rapporteur of both the definition and the maintenance projects.

14. In addition, priority should be given to those subclasses which

- have an unclear scope;
- present classification difficulties that are caused by shortcomings of the scheme;
- cover technology that has developed substantially since the subclass was created; and
- have a high search activity or high file size growth.

15. The Working Group agreed that prioritizing of existing definition projects was not necessary, with the exception of projects in categories indicated in paragraph 13(a) and (b), above. Since a further nine definitions have been completed during the present session and several other projects are in a rather advanced state, it is very likely that the aim of 50 additional subclasses to be completed by end of 2008 would be reached.

Systematic Maintenance

16. The Working Group recalled the goals of the systematic maintenance of the IPC and confirmed the following priority criteria for selecting subclasses for systematic maintenance as adopted by the Committee of Experts at its thirty-second session (see Annex VIII of document IPC/CE/33/12):

“– subclasses presenting classification difficulties that are caused by shortcomings of the scheme;

“– subclasses covering technology that has developed substantially since the subclass was created; and

“– subclasses having a high search activity or high file size growth.”

17. The Working Group noted that the following tasks have now become separate tasks of the Working Group in the IPC Development Program for 2006 to 2008 (see Annex IV of document IPC/CE/37/9): the removal of informative references (Task No. 3), the introduction of residual main groups (Task No. 5), and borderlines between the core and advanced levels (Task No. 9).

18. In view of Task No. 2(b) of the Development Program, which requires the completion of systematic maintenance of 10 subclasses by end of 2007, the Working Group selected the following subclasses: A01F, C07B, F23G, and H04M with Sweden as Rapporteur, B01D, C08L, C09D, C09J with the United Kingdom as Rapporteur, F04C with the United States of America as Rapporteur, and D21F with the EPO as Rapporteur.

19. The Working Group recalled its decision taken at its fourteenth session that “existing residual groups being residual to their whole subclass should be renumbered to 99/00 or 999/00, and their titles should be replaced by the standard title, in the framework of the systematic maintenance of the IPC” (see paragraph 9(c) of document IPC/WG/14/3). The Working Group agreed to carry out this task outside the systematic maintenance of whole subclasses and accepted an offer of the Secretariat to prepare a proposal containing the necessary amendments which would be posted on the e-forum by September 15, 2006. Offices were invited to comment on this proposal by October 27, 2006. The International Bureau was asked to prepare, by November 10, 2006, a rapporteur report for consideration at the next session of the Working Group.

PLAN TO REMOVE REFERENCES FROM GUIDANCE HEADINGS AND INFORMATIVE REFERENCES FROM THE SCHEME

20. Discussions were based on document IPC/WG/15/3 containing a proposal, prepared by the International Bureau, relating to a plan to remove references from guidance headings and informative references from the scheme.

21. The Working Group noted that the Committee had agreed, at its thirty-seventh session, that references should not be allowed in guidance headings, since guidance headings should not limit or modify the scope of the groups to which they relate. Therefore, existing references in guidance headings should be deleted and either be relocated to the groups where they are needed, be transformed into notes, or be moved to the Definitions in the case of informative references. In addition, informative references should only be present in the Definitions, under the heading “Informative References”, and not in the scheme, as they have no effect on the scope of the place where they stand.

22. It was also noted that the Committee had adopted relevant tasks covering the above aspects in the IPC Development Program for 2006 to 2008 for the IPC Working Group (see paragraph 21 of document IPC/CE/37/9 and, in particular, Tasks No. 3 and No. 4 of Annex IV to the said document).

23. The Working Group agreed that the two tasks would be carried out in the following way, incorporating a proposal, submitted by the United States of America, to make the scope of main groups independent of guidance headings (see Annex 3 to project file WG 011).

Removal of References from Guidance Headings

24. It was decided that this task would be carried out by the International Bureau as Rapporteur, in the framework of Project M 031, which would be created on the IPC e-forum.

25. In respect to each subclass, the reference check should be carried out as follows:

(a) For each subclass, the Rapporteur should check all guidance headings within the subclass and whether any of them contained references. At the same time, the Rapporteur would check whether a guidance heading has an impact on the scope of the groups covered by it.

(b) For those guidance headings containing references, the Rapporteur should determine which references should remain in the scheme (see paragraph 21, above).

(c) For references already existing in approved definitions, the decisions on removing them or not from the scheme should be based on the definitions, unless there is disagreement, in which case the Rapporteur of the corresponding definition project should be consulted and the Working Group should take the final decision. The definitions and the scheme should then comply with that decision.

(d) In case of limiting references, the Rapporteur should decide whether they should be relocated in appropriate groups of the subclass or be transformed into notes, with modifications in wording as necessary.

(e) Definitions of corresponding main groups should be created to collect the references to be removed from the scheme.

(f) After steps (a) to (e), the Rapporteur should delete the references from guidance headings, propose amendments to the scheme (including those corresponding to step (d), above), and send them to the Working Group for approval.

(g) If a guidance heading has an impact on the scope of the groups covered by it, the Rapporteur should propose new titles for those groups so that they can read independently of the guidance heading.

26. Attention should be drawn to subclasses, where amendments have been approved and where definition projects already exist. In step (e), the Rapporteur should check whether the proposed amendments have already been considered in the completed definition projects and make necessary additions to definitions. In case of substantial changes, step (c), above, should be considered. In case of active definition projects, the Rapporteurs concerned should check whether the corresponding definitions have to be changed, taking into account the proposed amendments.

27. It was agreed that the Working Group should complete the reference check for sections A and H by end of 2006, sections C, D and E by mid-2007 and sections B, F and G by end of 2007.

Removal of Informative References from the IPC Scheme

28. It was decided that this task would be carried out by the International Bureau as Rapporteur at the initial stage. At this stage the removal of references should be carried out in subclasses where definitions have been approved, in the framework of the D projects and following their numerical order, in the following way:

(a) Proposals with additional definitions, containing the removed references, should be submitted for the corresponding groups to the relevant definition projects.

(b) In case of disagreement with the original definitions or doubt, the procedure indicated in paragraph 25(c), above, should be followed.

(c) Definitions of corresponding main groups should be created to collect the references to be removed from the scheme.

(d) The corresponding amendments to the scheme should then be prepared by the Rapporteur and included in the proposal.

29. At a second stage, it was decided that Rapporteurs of definition projects, which would be active by end of 2007, would include in their proposals for group definitions references that should be removed from the scheme. Once the project was completed, the International Bureau would prepare the corresponding amendments to the scheme.

30. The Working Group expressed its gratitude to the International Bureau for volunteering to carry out these two tasks as Rapporteur.

PROCEDURE FOR REGULAR MAINTENANCE OF RESIDUAL MAIN GROUPS

31. Discussions were based on Annex 1 to project file WG 151, containing a proposal, submitted by the International Bureau, for a periodical review of residual subclasses and main groups for emerging technologies or classification problems.

32. It was recalled that during the reform of the IPC superresidual main groups (of the type S99Z 99/00) and residual groups of the type 99/00 were introduced. Paragraphs 162 to 165 of the *Guide to the IPC* (Guide) give instructions on the use of such groups.

33. These groups were intended to replace the X-notation practice which had failed in the past. One of the purposes of the above residual groups is to identify, through regular monitoring, such as by file size, new technologies for which there is no adequate place in the IPC.

34. Concerns were expressed in the past that such groups could be misused either due to lack of knowledge of the scheme, or lack of knowledge of IPC rules. Therefore, paragraph 164 of the Guide gives more specific guidance on the use of residual groups. Furthermore, a close monitoring of the activity of these groups could also identify inappropriate use of the residual groups.

35. However, it was noted that in offices where internal detailed schemes based on the IPC were used, sometimes when the IPC did not provide places for new technologies, internal schemes had been developed under IPC main groups which in principle did not cover these technologies. In such cases, the title and scope of such a main group in the internal scheme were amended in order to cover the internal subdivisions, creating a discrepancy with the IPC, and the increased likelihood of divergent classification practices in the IPC. Further, documents classified in the IPC by rolling up the internal symbol would not be classified in a residual group and thus the latter would not reveal the emergence of a new technology which could not be properly classified in the IPC. It was decided that these documents should not be classified in the IPC by rolling up the internal symbol and, in the future, internal schemes for new technologies should be developed under residual groups. If such residual groups did not exist, they should be created.

36. It was noted that the Committee had included in the IPC development program for the Working Group the continuous Task 5(b) for the maintenance of special residual subclasses and main groups (see Annex IV to document IPC/CE/37/9).

37. The Working Group agreed that this maintenance should include two steps:

- collecting of statistics on the use of residual groups by the International Bureau once a year;
- examination of these statistics by offices in order to identify problems and solutions.

Collection of Statistics

38. Once a year, in March, the International Bureau should collect and publish, on the e-forum, statistics on the use of residual main groups during the previous two years, i.e., file size and rate of growth. The statistical data should be obtained from the Master Classification Database (MCD) and should be presented in the following two ways:

- total number of documents per superresidual group, with separate indication of the number of families having at least two documents classified in the superresidual group, and another indication of the number of families having all documents classified in the superresidual group;

- percentage of documents classified in a residual group compared to the total number of documents classified in the corresponding subclass with separate indication of the proportion of families having at least two documents classified in the residual group, and another indication of the proportion of families having all documents classified in the residual group.

39. Based on the above statistics, lists of documents per office and per subclass should be prepared with particular indication of documents having other family members classified in “normal” places.

Examination of Statistics by Offices

40. In order to identify inefficiencies of existing schemes to classify new technologies, volunteering offices should examine families with two or more documents classified in a residual place. IPC classes for checking should be distributed to volunteering offices. Following the publication of the statistics by the International Bureau in March, these offices would present the results of their inquiry at the summer session of the Working Group.

41. In order to identify improper use of residual places, individual offices, which originally allotted symbols of such places, could reexamine the classification of their national documents classified in residual places, having other family members classified in normal places, and either correct the classification (and inform the MCD) or inform the International Bureau about a problem or inefficiency of the scheme.

42. In the period before the next (sixteenth) session of the Working Group, the International Bureau should investigate whether, in the framework of a continuation of CLAIMS project, automatic ways of identifying new technologies could be applied, e.g., by clustering documents and identifying keywords that distinguish these clusters.

INTRODUCTION OF RESIDUAL MAIN GROUPS IN IPC SUBCLASSES

43. The Working Group had before it, in particular, document IPC/WG/14/3 and compilations of project files R 701 to R 706. The Working Group agreed that no new residual main group should be created in subclasses where consensus had been reached, in the course of the last round of comments, that no such group was needed. These subclasses are the following:

A01H	A21B	A23B	A23C	A23N	A24B	A24D	A41B	A41D	A41G
A42B	A43B	A47C	A47D	A47F	A47G	A47K	A47L	A62D	B01J
B03B	B04B	B05D	B07B	B23B	B27H	B31F	B41L	B43K	B60B
B60H	B60K	B60M	B63H	C03B	C03C	C04B	C06C	C06F	C09D
C09F	C09J	C10B	C10C	C12Q	C21B	C22B	C22F	C25C	C25F
D01H	D02J	D05B	D06N	D07B	D21F	D21H	D21J	E04B	E05B
E06B	E21C	F01C	F02C	F16J	F16P	F17D	F24H	F25B	F25D
F25J	F27B	F41C	G02F	G03B	G07G	G10H	G21H	G21J	H02G
H04Q									

44. It was further agreed that Rapporteurs should submit for consideration, at the next session of the Working Group, consolidated proposals for the numbering and titles of residual main groups in all subclasses where consensus had been reached that a new residual main group was needed. For the remaining subclasses, where no consensus had been reached, Rapporteurs were invited to submit consolidated proposals regarding the need of a definition or maintenance project, indicating those subclasses that should be treated with highest priority.

REQUEST FOR REVISION OF THE CORE LEVEL OF THE IPC

45. The Working Group considered a request for revision of the core level, in the area of main groups C12N 5/00 and C12N 15/00, submitted by Israel (see Annex 2 to project file WG 020). It was decided to create the revision project C 436 and Israel was appointed Rapporteur. The Rapporteur was requested to submit a new proposal, by July 15, 2006, taking into account the comments already submitted (see Annexes 3 to 6 to project file WG 020). Comments were invited on this proposal to be submitted by September 15, 2006, and a rapporteur report by October 15, 2006.

PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE IPC

46. Following the procedure adopted at the twelfth session of the Working Group, proposals were submitted to projects WG 010, WG 011, WG 012, WG 013 and WG 014, by Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States of America, concerning improvements in subclasses B21D, B41F, B60W, B63B, C07C, C07H, C09J, C11B, F21L, F21S, F21V, F25C, F27B, F28F and in class F21. It was noted that, in the future, projects WG 010 to WG 014 would be replaced by projects M 010 to M 014 and that this change has already been implemented in the Technical Annexes of this report.

Subclass B21D – Discussions were based on Annex 4 to project file WG 014 containing a proposal by Sweden to simplify the scheme of main group B21D 51/00 by deleting the one-dot subgroups 51/02 and 51/16 and removing a dot from the remaining subgroups.

The Working Group approved in principle the deletion of these one-dot groups. However, since this deletion impacts the advanced level, the ALS was invited to consider whether intellectual reclassification of documents would be needed due to this deletion. The ALS would report on its findings at the next session of the Working Group in light of the above consideration.

Subclass B41F – Discussions were based on Annex 1 to project file WG 014 containing a proposal by Sweden to move the advanced level group B41F 17/06 under the advanced level group B41F 17/10, in order to achieve consistent classification in the advanced and the core levels. It was decided that further discussion was needed and for that purpose the revision project C 437 was created and Sweden was appointed as Rapporteur. The Rapporteur was invited to provide a report by July 1, 2006. Comments on the rapporteur report were invited by September 1, 2006, in order to allow the ALS to determine its position at its next session in September 2006 (see also Annex III to this report for programmed actions in this project).

Subclass B60W – In view of the late submission of this proposal (see Annex 22 to project file WG 014), the Working Group invited comments on the proposal in order to consider it at its next session.

Subclass B63B – The Working Group approved the proposal by the Russian Federation (see Annex 1 to project file WG 011), to remove the references to groups B63B 7/00 and B63C 9/00 in the title of main group B63B 35/00 at the core level, since these references exist already in the titles of core level groups B63B 35/71 and B63B 35/58, respectively (see Annex 9 to this report).

Subclass C07C – It was agreed that the second structural formula given in the fifth bullet of Note (1) after the title of subclass C07C should be corrected (see Annex 5 to this report).

Subclass C07H – It was agreed that the structural formula given in Note (3)(a)(iii) after the title of subclass C07H was not correctly represented in the electronic version of IPC-8 on the WIPO website. The International Bureau was invited to correct this formula following its presentation in the printed version of the IPC, which is also correct in the RIPCIS database, as was indicated by the Secretariat.

With regard to the above two corrections, the Secretariat indicated that such corrections should be considered as corrections of obvious errors, should be submitted to project M010 and it was agreed that they did not need to be discussed by the Working Group.

Subclass C09J – The Working Group approved the proposal by the Russian Federation (see Annex 2 to project file WG 011) to move Notes (4) and (5) after subclass title C09J, and place them before group C09J 101/00, with the scope C09J 101/00 to C09J 201/00, including the corresponding editorial amendments proposed by the United States of America in Annex 4 to the said project file WG 011 (see Annex 6 to this report).

Subclass C11B – Following a proposal by Sweden (see Annex 12 to project file WG 010), it was decided to indicate the examples in the title of subclass C11B in the standardized form and to modify this title accordingly (see Annex 7 to this report).

Class F21 – Discussions were based on Annex 9 to project file WG 014 containing a proposal, by the United States of America, to delete Note (1) after the class title. It was agreed that this note should not be deleted since this deletion would lead to an extensive reclassification in class F21. The Working Group agreed that any proposal for modification of this note, for example, an alternate wording of Note (1), should not change the classification practice in this class. Such proposal, if needed, could be submitted in project C 438 (see next paragraph). Impact on the need for reclassification should also be considered.

Subclasses F21L, F21S and F21V – Discussions were based on Annexes 8, 7 and 10, respectively, to project file WG 014 containing proposals, by the United States of America, to remove Guidance Headings in these subclasses and adapt accordingly the titles of the main groups covered by these Guidance Headings.

The Working Group approved the proposed modifications to subclass F21S, with some amendments, which appear in Annex 10 to this report. In view of the lack of time, the Working Group did not consider the proposals for the other two subclasses. In order to facilitate the continuation of the discussion, the proposals for subclasses F21L and F21V, as well as a possible proposal for class F21 (see above), would be considered in the new revision project C 438 (see also Annex III to this report for programmed actions in this project).

Main Group F25C 3/00 – Discussions were based on Annex 2 to project file WG 014 containing a proposal by Sweden, to clarify the title of main group F25C 3/00, which currently is defined by reference to its subgroups. It was noted that the core level of the IPC in this area contains no subgroups and therefore this main group is not defined in the core level. The Working Group considered also the counter-proposals submitted by the EPO and Japan (see Annexes 13 and 24 to the project file, respectively), but felt that a more in depth investigation was needed on the art currently classified in this group and on a possible overlap of this group with other subclasses in case of a title amendment as proposed by Japan. It was therefore decided to create a new revision project (C 439) to deal with this problem and Sweden was appointed as Rapporteur (see also Annex III to this report for programmed actions in this project).

Main Group F25C 5/00 – The Working Group approved the proposal by Sweden (see Annex 3 to project file WG 014) to clarify the title of main group F25C 5/00 (see Annex 11 to this report).

Main Group F27B 19/00 – Discussions were based on Annex 11 to project file WG 014 containing a proposal, by Sweden, to clarify the title of main group F27B 19/00. The Working Group approved the proposed amendments, with some changes, which appear in Annex 12 to this report.

Main Group F28F 27/00 – The Working Group approved the proposal by Germany (see Annex 3 to project file WG 013) to clarify the title of main group F28F 27/00 (see Annex 8 to this report).

47. The Working Group noted the remark of Sweden (see Annex 6 to project file WG 011) that several hyperlinks from terms in the Internet version of the IPC to the Glossary of terms and expressions of the Guide pointed to a wrong definition of these terms (e.g. from the term “plant(s)” in subclasses A01N and A01H or from the term “essential” in subclass C11B). The Secretariat indicated that these hyperlinks were introduced only in the Internet version of the IPC in an automatic way and were not included in the database. The International Bureau would remove the wrong hyperlinks to the Glossary by July 2006. Offices were invited to submit proposals for corrections to project M010 indicating any other erroneous hyperlinks that could remain in the text of the Internet version of the IPC after that date.

48. It was noted that the ALS had considered the proposal of the Working Group to move the advanced level group A23B 7/06 below the core level group A23B 7/005, in order to achieve consistent classification in the advanced and the core levels. The ALS came to the conclusion that it would be better to keep group A23B 7/06 at the place it stands and not to change its hierarchical position. In order to achieve consistency between the core and advanced levels, it was proposed to move this group to the core level. This proposal was approved by the Working Group and appears in Annex 4 to this report.

IPC CORE LEVEL REVISION PROGRAM

General

49. The Working Group discussed four pending IPC core level revision projects and approved amendments relating to those projects (see Annexes 1 to 3 to this report). The status of those projects and the list of future actions and deadlines are indicated in Annex III to this report. In view of the possibilities of RIPCIS to display technical annexes either on the basis of a session, or on the basis of a project, or further on the basis of a subclass, and since the IPC and Annex Viewer of RIPCIS would soon be available to offices, it was decided to discontinue the practice of including annexes to the report corresponding to former Annexes D and E.

IPC Revision Projects

50. The Working Group made the following observations with respect to the IPC revision projects.

Project C 432 (chemical) – The Working Group approved, with some amendments, the proposed one-dot group covering “algae” and the two-dot subgroups of groups A01N 65/08 and A01N 65/40 (see Annex 1 to this report).

In respect to the problem of resources for reclassification, the Working Group noted that Annex 24 to the project file contained statistics on the number of families classified in group A01N 65/00 with the indication of the number of first filings or first publications per office, once families with Chinese or Japanese members were removed. Based on these figures, the following offices indicated that they were willing to take part in the reclassification of patent collections of group A01N 65/00:

- China, the Russian Federation and Sweden declared that they would reclassify their entire national documentation in this area;
- Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Finland, Mexico would reclassify family members having a national priority;
- Brazil and the United Kingdom, although regarding their participation in a positive way, could not make a commitment during the session and reserved their final reply for the next session of the Committee of Experts;
- China and Sweden indicated that they could reclassify also documents outside their national patent collections and that they would give precise figures on the amount of such documents at the next session of the Committee of Experts;
- the United States of America and the EPO indicated that they did not have resources for any reclassification in this area.

The Secretariat reminded the Working Group that the members of the ALS had taken a commitment to reclassify the PCT minimum documentation in the advanced level following revision changes (see document IPC/CE/33/12, paragraph 28), and that the revision changes under this project, once adopted by the Committee, would be part of the advanced level.

The Working Group requested the EPO to reconsider its position and to take part in the reclassification of patent collections of group A01N 65/00. The Working Group agreed to report to the Committee the results of the consideration of the reclassification issue.

Project C 433 (chemical) – The Working Group did not approve the proposed amendments to Notes 3 and 4 after the title of subclass C08K (see Annex 1 to the project file) and therefore the project was withdrawn.

Project C 434 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the principle of complete revision of subclass H04H, since its current classification scheme was insufficient for searching, and accepted as a basis for revision of the core level the proposal submitted by the rapporteur as proposal C, in Annex 5 to the project file. This proposal was approved, with certain amendments, and appears as Annex 2 to this report.

It was noted that the transfer notes should indicate the whole range of groups where documents should be reclassified. Since the scope of the subclass was not changed, and subject matter was not transferred from other subclasses, all new groups should be indicated in these transfer notes. The International Bureau was requested to investigate, and inform the rapporteur accordingly, whether only one set of notes, i.e. for the advanced level, would be sufficient for introduction in RIPCIS, the core level transfer notes being automatically derived for the next edition of the core level.

The Working Group noted that, although there is no priority rule in this subclass, the groups were presented in the order of the standardized sequence.

Comments were invited, by September 1, 2006, on (see the said Annex 2):

- the titles of new groups H04H 20/53 and H04H 20/86, in particular whether these titles allowed to sufficiently distinguish the subject matter covered by these groups;
- whether the term “characteristics” in the group H04H 60/35 was appropriate in view of the subject matter covered, or whether another term, e.g. “things” or “items”, would be preferable;
- whether the title of the group H04H 60/61 was appropriate in view of its intended scope and whether an example would be useful at the end of the title;
- which of the bulleted term definitions proposed by the Rapporteur in said Annex 5 (see Note (2) after the subclass title) should be retained in the scheme and at which place;
- whether the overall scope of the subclass was unchanged in view of the new groups;
- whether any limiting references should be introduced between new groups in the scheme in order to limit unnecessary multiple classification;
- whether additional references were needed in other subclasses to the new groups.

The rapporteur was invited to submit a report, by October 1, 2006, including existing references in other places, pointing to subclass H04H, that should be modified.

Project C 435 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the creation of the new subclass H04W, its title, the notes defining its scope and the note on the application of the first place priority rule (see Annex 3 to this report).

It was agreed that the proposed titles of the main groups (see Annex 2 to the project file) were not explicit enough in the context of the core level. The Rapporteur was invited to submit new titles, by July 15, 2006, that would allow the use of the core level without a need of consulting the advanced level.

Comments were invited, by September 1, 2006, on:

the new main group titles to be proposed;

whether the term “provisioning” was clear enough or whether it should be replaced by another term, e.g. “providing wireless services”;

whether the last paragraph in Note (1) after the subclass title was appropriately worded and placed;

whether the approved Note (2) was complete in order to clarify the relation with other subclasses, and whether further references were needed, either in subclass H04W or in other subclasses, in order to avoid overlap between this subclass and other subclasses, in particular of class H04.

UPDATING OF IPC TRAINING EXAMPLES

General

51. The Working Group had before it, in particular, the compilations of the relevant Training Example (TE) project files.
52. The Working Group discussed the last set of 15 currently pending IPC TE projects.
53. The Working Group noted the problem, pointed out by French-speaking offices, relating to the use of a non-standard IPC terminology in the French version of some training examples, such as in the titles of the training example template.
54. Those offices were invited to provide the International Bureau with a list of problematic technical terms, in order to improve the quality of the French version of training examples under preparation. The International Bureau would forward this list to its translation section and would correct the titles of the training example template of the already translated examples.
55. The Working Group made the following observations with respect to the IPC TE projects. Examples approved during this session would be distributed among members of the Editorial Board for editorial checking. All references to annexes in this paragraph refer to annexes of the corresponding project file, unless otherwise stated.

IPC Training Example Projects

Project TE 120 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 17, with some amendments, to appear as Annex 18.

Project TE 131 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 15, with some amendments, to appear as Annex 18.

Project TE 132 (chemical) – The Working Group agreed that this example would be a useful training example illustrating “Markush-type formulae”. The Rapporteur was invited to submit an initial proposal taking into account the Task Force decision contained in Annex 3.

Project TE 216 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 14.

Project TE 218 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 11.

Project TE 219 (mechanical) – The Working Group conditionally approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 20. The Rapporteur was invited to submit a new proposal taking into account all the comments made during the discussions, e.g., deleting the current additional information A1, adding a second piece of invention information I2 and redrafting the corresponding tables and the “Analysis” section based on those changes.

Project TE 222 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 13.

Project TE 225 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 12.

Project TE 228 (mechanical) – Discussions were based on the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 9. The Working Group approved the proposal with Alternative 1.

Project TE 232 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 7.

Project TE 233 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 7, with the instruction to the members of the Editorial Board to remove the phrase “potential novel and non-obvious ...” which appeared in the “Invention Information” and “Additional Information” sections. The Working Group emphasized that a similar checking should be carried out by the Editorial Board for all the approved training examples.

Project TE 234 (mechanical) – The Working Group conditionally approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 8. The Rapporteur was invited to submit a new proposal taking into account all the comments made during the discussion, e.g., by replacing “Abstract” in the “Brief Description of the Artificial Example” section by “The Invention is” and adding an explanation, in “Analysis” section, that “the inserts” do not constitute a layer, in light of Note (4) after the title of subclass B32B, and therefore they should not be classified in group B32B 3/10.

Project TE 334 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 15, with some amendments, to appear as Annex 16.

Project TE 336 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 10.

Project TE 338 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the last rapporteur proposal contained in Annex 6.

IPC DEFINITIONS PROGRAM

56. The Working Group had before it, in particular, document IPC/WG/14/3 and compilations of the relevant definition project files. The decisions of the Working Group with respect to those projects, in particular new deadlines and appointment of offices for the preparation of French versions, are listed in Annex IV to this report. Further information with respect to some of those decisions is given in paragraph 57, below.

57. The Working Group made the following observations, in addition to the decisions set forth in Annex IV to this report, with respect to the cited IPC definition projects. All references to annexes in this paragraph refer to annexes of the corresponding project file, unless otherwise stated.

IPC Definition Projects

58. The Working Group approved, without further changes, the English versions of definition projects D 049 (Annex 25), D 060 (Annex 12), D 064 (Annex 13), D 070 (Annex 18), D 072 (Annex 14), D 080 (Annex 15), D 083 (Annex 7), D 084 (Annex 3), D 104 (Annex 06), and the French version of definition projects D034 (Annex 24), D 035 (Annex 17) and D 043 (Annex 18).

Project D 016 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 21 with the amendments of Annex 22.

Project D 031 (mechanical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 44 with the amendments of Annex 43, and agreed to remove the reference to group F16L 11/00 in the already approved English version.

Project D 036 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 55, subject to adding “pour freins et embrayages” to the title of the reference to group F16D 69/02 in the definition of main group C04B 35/00. The Working Group further agreed to amend the approved English version subject to the three amendments as detailed at the end of Annex 55.

Project D 046 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 18, subject to adding “lentilles de contact” to the title, and to moving the reference to main group A61F 9/00 into the informative references.

Project D 053 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the French version of Annex 15, subject to an editorial amendment.

Project D 056 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 14, subject to an editorial amendment.

Project D 057 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 8, subject to the completion of the truncated title of group G06F 1/00.

Project D 059 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 8, subject to some editorial amendment and the deletion of the informative reference to group H05K 5/00 in the definition of main group H02K 9/00.

Project D 065 (chemical) – The Working Group invited the Rapporteur to prepare a new proposal taking into account the latest comments by Japan (see Annex 21).

Project D 071 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 5, subject to the three editorial amendments as detailed at the end of Annex 6. The Working Group further approved the French version of Annex 6

Project D 082 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 13, subject to an editorial amendment including the positioning of the last bullet in the definition statement after the third bullet.

Project D 090 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 10, subject to deleting the limiting reference to C07, adding a limiting reference to C12P with the title “production of polymers using enzymes”, removing the informative reference to C25, removing the entry for “macromolecular compounds, polymers” in the Glossary, and amending the entry in the Glossary for “aliphatic radical” by replacing the references to main group by the references to subgroups as in the corresponding note in subclass C08F.

Project D 091 (chemical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 10, subject to removing the limiting reference to class C07, adding a limiting reference to subclass C12P with the title “production of polymers using enzymes”, and removing the entry for “macromolecular compounds, polymers” in the Glossary.

Project D 119 (electrical) – The Working Group approved the English version of Annex 8, subject to an editorial amendment.

LENGTH AND FREQUENCY OF ANNUAL SESSIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

59. Discussions were based on Annex 12 to project file WG 121, containing a proposal submitted by the Rapporteur (Ireland) on the length and frequency of future sessions of the Working Group, on the work of Task Forces, and on the use of the IPC electronic forum.

60. It was decided to keep the current practice of two one-week sessions per year. If needed, the Secretariat and the Chair would extend a session by two days, would determine which items should be discussed during these days and inform the Working Group, at least two months in advance, of this extension. Preference should be given in such cases, if possible, to use three days from the first week and four from the second. This practice could change in the future if the workload changes dramatically.

61. It was agreed that Task Force meetings would be convened by the Working Group on an *ad hoc* basis and should continue to submit their conclusions back to the Working Group for adoption.

62. It was also decided that projects discussed on the IPC electronic forum should be always brought to the Working Group for approval. The number of electronic approvals should serve as a basis to identify the progress of a project and whether it could be presented to the Working Group for discussion.

STATUS OF THE WORK

63. The Chair stated that, on the agenda of this session, 17 definition projects were approved in English and nine definition projects were completed in both English and French. In total, 57 definition projects have been completed so far. Annex IV to this report gave the status of each definition project on the program. He also stated that in total, 14 training example projects were completed and approved by the Working Group. He finally indicated that one revision project has been dealt with and completed in one language, while four new revision projects were included in the program of the revision of the core level (see Annex III to this report for the status of each revision project).

64. The Chair stated that, at this session, the Working Group had continued an important work program of the implementation of the results of IPC reform and had achieved good progress. In particular, the Working Group has completed tasks 1(a), 2(a), 4(a) and 5(b) of the IPC development program, scheduled for the second quarter of 2006.

NEXT SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP

65. The Working Group having assessed the workload expected for its next session (see paragraph 66, below), agreed to devote the first two days to the mechanical field, the third and fourth days to the electrical field and the last day to the chemical field. When convening the next session, the International Bureau was requested to consider, in consultation with the Chair, the possible need for an extension of the session, depending on the envisaged amount of work, and for the modification of the number of days devoted to any technical field.

66. The Working Group noted the following tentative dates for its sixteenth session.

November 27 to December 1, 2006.

67. The Working Group unanimously adopted this report by electronic means on June 20, 2006.

[Annexes follow]