

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Twelfth Session **Geneva, September 16 to 19, 2024**

REPORT ON TASKS NO. 62, NO. 63 AND NO. 65 BY THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the Digital Transformation Task Force Leader

SUMMARY

1. The Digital Transformation Task Force works under the framework of Tasks No. 62, No. 63 and No. 65 and reports its activities since the last session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS).

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 paragraph 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 paragraphs 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. At the 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”.

6. 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. The Task Force presented a proposal for a new WIPO standard at the eleventh session. The CWS considered the proposed standard not mature enough to be adopted and requested the Task Force to prepare and present a updated proposal for consideration at its twelfth session. The Digital Transformation Task Force committed to meeting monthly in order to finalize the new standard in preparation for CWS/12.

7. 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 DOCX2XML converter (See paragraphs 104 and 106 of document CWS/10/22.)

PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 62

8. At its eleventh session, the CWS agreed to transfer the work of the update of the WIPO Handbook Part 6.1, which was part of Task No. 62, from the Digital Transformation Task Force to the Public Access to Patent Information (PAPI) Task Force.

9. In light of the changing scope of work captured by Task No. 62, i.e., the transfer of work indicated above and the work on the development of the common specification for DOCX2XML, the description of this Task was updated at the eleventh session of the CWS to read as follows:

“Review paper or image-based WIPO Standards in view of electronic filing and publication and exchange of IP documentation and propose revisions of those Standards or new recommendations if needed; and prepare a proposal for the recommendation on a common requirements specification for a DOCX to XML (DOCX2XML) converter “

Objectives

10. 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

11. Since the eleventh session of the CWS, following discussions between the Digital Transformation Task Force and the PAPI Task Force, it was agreed to transfer the update of Part 6 of the WIPO Handbook to the PAPI Task Force, considering the workload of the Digital Transformation Task Force. For further details on the progress of the PAPI Task Force, refer to document CWS/12/7.

12. As agreed at the tenth session of the CWS, the Task Force commenced work on the development of a common requirements specification for transforming a DOCX document to a corresponding XML document. 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 spreadsheet now includes information from the Korean Intellectual Patent Office (KIPO). 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.

Potential challenges or dependencies

13. 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 requirements specification will be challenging.

Future Work

14. In the upcoming year, 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. The common requirements specification will be helpful to all Offices considering the implementation of a DOCX2XML converter.

PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 63

Objectives

15. 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

16. The Digital Transformation Task Force has prioritized the work of Task No. 65 and secondarily Task No. 62. This has limited the progress on Task No. 63. As such, work on this Task has not been conducted since the eleventh session of the CWS.

Potential challenges or dependencies

17. No challenges or dependencies are reported as no work has been conducted since the eleventh session of the Committee.

PROGRESS ON TASK NO. 65

Objectives

18. 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, trademarks and industrial designs.

Relevant Actions and Progress

19. It is recommended that IPOs furnish any data package of certified priority documents as compliant with this Standard and accept the priority documents furnished by another IPO according to this Standard.

20. Since the eleventh session of the CWS, the Digital Transformation Task Force has prepared a updated proposal for the new standard for consideration and adoption at the current session. This draft is based on the feedback provided by Task Force members during the past year. The scope of the new standard has been narrowed to focus on recommendations for patent priority document exchange, with a planned future update to the Standard once approved to include trademark and design priority documents. Adoption of this new standard, proposed as WIPO Standard ST.92, will enable Offices to begin implementation planning. Further details on the proposed new standard is available in document CWS/12/15.

Potential challenges or dependencies

21. Once the new standard is adopted, Offices can commence its implementation. The 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.

Future Work

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

23. The next steps foreseen for this Task in the upcoming year, assuming the adoption of the Standard, will be:

- To further improve the new standard to include recommendations on the exchange of trademark and industrial design priority documents as well asset of examples to be included as part of the Annexes of the adopted new standard.
- Support Offices to implement WIPO Standard ST.92, when adopted.

24. *The CWS is invited to:*

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

(b) encourage its Members to provide feedback on their use of DOCX2XML converters as referred to in paragraph 12 above.

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