# Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

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

REPORT ON TASK NO. 58 BY THE ICT STRATEGY TASK FORCE

*Document prepared by the ICT Strategy Task Force Co-Leaders*

SUMMARY

1.      The ICT Strategy Task Force works on ICT Recommendations related to Intellectual Property (IP) administration for consideration and implementation by IP offices and has prepared a final proposal for a set of 10 recommendations.  If the set of recommendations is adopted at this session of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS), the Task Force proposes to revise the description of Task No. 58.

BACKGROUND

2.      At its sixth session in 2018, the CWS created the new Task No. 58 to:

*"Prepare a proposal for a roadmap of future development and enhancement of WIPO standards, including policy Recommendations, in view of more effective production, sharing, and utilization of data by IP offices and other interested parties, taking the following activities:*

- *to review the Recommendations in Group 1 indicated in the Annex of document CWS/6/3, in collaboration with other relevant CWS Task Forces;*
- *to review the Recommendations in Group 2 and Group 3 indicated in the Annex of document CWS/6/3;*
- *to prioritize Recommendations and suggest a timeline; and*
- *to explore the impact of disruptive technologies on IP administration and IP data in view of harmonization and collaboration."*

3.     The CWS also established the ICT Strategy for Standards Task Force to work on Task No. 58 and designated the International Bureau as the Task Force leader (See paragraphs 17 to 24 of document CWS/6/34).

4.     At its seventh session in 2019, the CWS noted that the Task Force had started prioritizing the 40 Recommendations for which feedback had been requested, including the development of a common DOCX conversion tool.  The CWS noted that the Task Force would prepare a strategic roadmap of future work of the CWS and collaboration among IP offices for consideration by the CWS at a future session (See paragraphs 19 to 21 of document CWS/7/29.)

5.     At its eighth session in 2020, the CWS noted the prioritization of 40 Recommendations which was collected as the result of the survey distributed to the members of the Task Force. To reflect the opinions of a wider group, the CWS requested the International Bureau invite all IP offices to respond to the survey on the prioritization of 40 Recommendations and to report the results of the survey at its ninth session (See paragraphs 80 to 84 of document CWS/8/24.)

6.     At its ninth session in 2021, the CWS noted the results of the survey on the priority of the 40 Recommendations for which all IP offices were invited to respond.  Participating offices had different interpretations of the questionnaire and rated the recommendations by applying different criteria.  Results of this survey were quite different from the survey results of the Task Force, reported at the eighth session of the CWS.  The CWS requested the Task Force take into account the results of the survey when it prepared the planned ICT strategic roadmap and its work plan for 2022 (See paragraphs 15 to 18 of document CWS/9/25.)

7.     At its tenth session in 2022, the CWS adopted its Organizational Matters and Special Rules of Procedure which details the mandate of CWS:

> *"The mandate of the CWS will be to provide a forum to adopt new or revised WIPO standards, policies, Recommendations and statements of principle relating to intellectual property data, global information system related matters, information services on the global system, data dissemination and documentation, which may be promulgated or referred to the WIP office General Assembly for consideration or approval."*

Considering the above mandate, the Task Force reviewed the 40 Recommendations and agreed to reclassify the grouping, as all the Recommendations seemed relevant to the CWS activities in light of the CWS mandate.

8.     Also at its tenth session, the CWS noted that the work on developing a common DOCX converter would be assigned to the Digital Transformation Task Force, including the development of a common technical specification to meet the goals of IP offices and applicants (see paragraphs 117 to 120 of document CWS/10/22).  Additionally, the CWS revised the description of Task No. 58 as follows:

> *"Prepare a proposal for revised Recommendations taking into account the mandate of the CWS and relevant ICT activities in IP community."*

9.     At its eleventh session in 2023, the CWS considered a set of draft recommendations presented by the Task Force, which was reproduced in the Annex to document CWS/11/18. The CWS requested that the Secretariat issue a circular inviting its Members to comment on the draft recommendations and the Task Force to report the results of responses to the circular (see paragraphs 156 to 159 of document CWS/11/28).

10.    IP Australia was designated as co-leader of the ICT Strategy Task Force.  The CWS approved the new Task Force name "ICT Strategy Task Force", removing "for Standards", and revised the description of Task No. 58 as follows:

*"Prepare a final proposal for a set of Recommendations based on the feedback from the CWS Members on the proposed 10 Recommendations on ICT and IP administration."*
*(See paragraphs 70 and 71 of document CWS/11/28.)*

PROGRESS REPORT ON TASK NO. 58

Objectives

11.    Working under the framework of Task No. 58, the ICT Strategy Task Force has prepared a final proposal for a set of Recommendations.

Relevant Actions for 2024

12.    The Task Force agreed to focus on preparing a final proposal for a set of 10 recommendations on ICT and IP administration, considering the substantive feedback received in response to Circular C.CWS.180 and from input provided at Task Force meetings.

Potential Challenges or Dependencies

13.    The Task Force identified several challenges or dependencies which may inhibit its work as follows:

– Active participation and contribution from IP offices;
– Lack of engagement of ICT policy makers or business owners in the Task Force's activities;
– Hard to follow up on analysis of various ICT-related activities in the IP community; and
– Difficult to share ICT strategies among IP offices.

Progress Evaluation

14.    The Task Force met twice after the eleventh session of the CWS, in March and June 2024, with an additional meeting scheduled in August 2024.

15.    The Task Force had several rounds of discussions to review and update the 10 Recommendations considering the discussions at the eleventh session of the CWS and responses to Circular C.CWS.180.  The Task Force considered that the recommendations could be reordered to improve flow; duplicative wording between recommendations and their recommended actions could be removed; and minor editorial changes should be made to provide clarity and ensure consistency.  The Task Force prepared a new set of recommendations and presents it to the current session of the CWS as a part of document CWS/12/22.

FUTURE WORK PLAN

16.    If the proposed set of 10 recommendations presented are adopted by the Committee at the present session, Task No. 58 as currently worded could be considered completed.  IP offices are then encouraged to implement the Recommendations and share their experience or plans to do so.  The ICT Strategy Task Force therefore proposes to revise the mandate of Task No. 58 to encourage and facilitate the implementation of the recommendations by IP offices and the International Bureau.  Furthermore, as information technologies are continuously and rapidly evolving, those recommendations should be evaluated regularly and updated if needed.  The Task Force will continue to operate with the International Bureau and IP Australia as co-leaders, but requests the CWS to approve the updated description of Task No. 58:

*"Facilitate the implementation of the ICT related Recommendations by IP offices and the International Bureau; and evaluate and update these Recommendations as needed to maintain their relevance."*

17.    If the CWS approves the revised description of Task No. 58 as proposed in paragraph 16 above, the Task Force will also discuss implementation of the set of Recommendations, and decide on review procedures, including how often and through what process they should be updated.  The Task Force plans to report the outcome of its discussions to the next session of the Committee.

18.    *The CWS is invited to:*

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

b)    *consider and approve the proposed new description of Task No. 58 as referred to in paragraph 16 above; and*

c)    *note the work plan of the ICT Task Force as referred to in paragraphs 16 and 17 above.*

[End of document]