Internal Oversight Division

Reference: IA 2016-03

Audit Report

Audit of Madrid Registry

May 11, 2017

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

HR	Human Resources
HRMD	Human Resources Management Department
IOD	Internal Oversight Division
IS	Information Systems
ISO	International Standards Organization
IT	Information Technology
MAPS	Madrid Agreement and Protocol System
MIRIS	Madrid International Registrations Information System
OI	Office Instruction
SRR	Staff Regulations and Rules
UN	United Nations
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.   The Internal Oversight Division (IOD) conducted an audit of the Madrid Registry in line with its 2017 work plan.

2.   The Madrid Registry has seen some significant changes in its operations since early 2016. Most significantly, a new Information Technology (IT) platform known as Madrid International Registrations Information System (MIRIS) was rolled-out in March 2016 after a multi-year implementation effort. This period also saw changes in the leadership of some key positions within the Madrid Registry as well as changes in the organization structure.

3.   After the roll-out of the MIRIS system in March 2016, several issues were faced in the new system which also contributed to the build-up of a backlog in the stock of transactions to be processed by the Operations Division. A formal project closure report is yet to be finalized following the roll-out of the new system. It is important that the lessons learned from the roll-out of the MIRIS system are documented so that any future IT initiatives take these into account. Furthermore, the project closure report should be formalized at the earliest taking into account that institutional memory concerning the project may fade as time passes. The MIRIS project missed a potential opportunity to enable the partial automation of some processes that are currently performed outside the system, such as quality control and certification. Any future IT efforts should consider that it takes significantly more time and effort to "bolt-on" processes to IT systems than building them in at the design stage.

4.   The Madrid Operations Division relies to a significant extent on personnel contracted under flexible contracts (such as fellows and agency workers). In an area where the training period is rather long for a new person to become fully conversant with the work tasks required in transaction processing combined with the relatively high turnover of such personnel, there is a need to rethink Human Resources (HR) planning in this area so that an appropriate balance exists between fixed and flexible staff contracts with the adequate combination of skills and competences.

5.   The client records unit and customer service section within the Operations Division are heavily reliant on the staff members heading these units to an extent that their prolonged absence could lead to deterioration in quality of services delivered. It is essential that these and other "single points of failure" be identified and long term plans are devised to mitigate the risks.

6.   Further improvements within the Madrid Registry can be made by: (i) completing the recruitment exercise for the position of the Director, Madrid Registry; (ii) ensuring that staff who play a role in sample testing for quality control purposes are adequately trained in International Standards Organization (ISO) principles; and (iii) the documentation of business process flows, the examination manual and other guiding documents are fully aligned.