

C. PCT 1513

May 29, 2017

Madam,  
Sir,

This Circular is addressed to your Office in its capacity as a receiving Office (RO), International Searching Authority (ISA), International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) and/or designated or elected Office (DO/EO) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). It is also being sent to interested intergovernmental organizations as well as certain non-governmental organizations representing users of the PCT System.

This Circular concerns proposals for change to the Standard for the Filing and Processing in Electronic Form of International Applications (Annex F of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT) related to allowable electronic document formats for documents in electronic form that are prepared or exchanged in accordance with the standard set out in Annex F.

#### DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES

Details of the Proposal for Change (PFC), submitted by the European Patent Office, are set out in the following PFC file (available at: [http://www.wipo.int/pct/efiling\\_standard/en/pfc\\_files.htm](http://www.wipo.int/pct/efiling_standard/en/pfc_files.htm)):

- PCT/EF/PFC 17/005 (Modifications of Annex F of the PCT Administrative Instructions to add DOCX OOXML as a possible filing format for the patent specification and add PNG to list of supported image formats).

The main objective of this proposal for change is to introduce DOCX OOXML as an (optional) electronic document format for documents in electronic form that are prepared or exchanged under the PCT in accordance with Annex F, notably for the filing of the international application with any receiving Office which decided to accept such document format (Applicant to Office sector).

## C. PCT 1513

Under the PFC, any receiving Office which decided to accept international applications in the DOCX OOXML format would, after receipt of the application, convert the application from the DOCX OOXML format into the XML format referred to in Section 3.1.1.1 (including any images as references) and would send both the DOCX OOXML file and the converted XML format file to the International Bureau in the record copy package. All further processing (including international search and international publication) would be carried out on the basis of the converted XML file, in the same way as is done at present for applications originally filed in that XML format.

The second objective of this change proposal is to introduce PNG as an additional optional image file format. PNG which would be treated in exactly the same way as JPEG/JFIF at present; that is, Offices would be permitted to accept images in this format, but the images would (for the moment) subsequently be converted to monochrome TIFF. While this proposed change to permit PNG as an additional optional image file format is not consequential on the proposed inclusion of DOCX OOXML as an electronic document format for the filing of international applications, it would appear useful to introduce such change simultaneously, as PNG is one of the most commonly used file formats for general purposes at present and applicants may not always be aware of the specific file formats of images which are embedded within a DOCX OOXML file.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Pending discussion and agreement on the PFC set out in the present Circular, the International Bureau intends to further consult with Offices, by way of a separate PCT Circular, on any necessary changes to Part 7 of the PCT Administrative instructions with respect to the record copy, the home copy and search copy of an application filed in the DOCX OOXML format, as well as the possibility for applicants to rely on the application filed in the DOCX OOXML format to request the receiving Office to correct the record copy, in the case where the conversion is not a complete and accurate copy, so as to bring it into conformity with the original.

#### CONSULTATIONS

Consultations under PCT Rule 89.2 are being conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 2.5 of Annex F of the PCT Administrative Instructions. The International Bureau is updating the facilities available to the consultative group and has, in addition to the normal process, made this PFC available in the WIPO Wiki (available at: <https://www3.wipo.int/confluence/display/PCTAFCG>) to enable the prompt sharing of comments in a public forum. Existing members of the consultative group have been granted access rights to post comments directly on to the WIPO Wiki page; furthermore, comments submitted using the existing e-mail process, that is, submitted by e-mail sent to the address set out below, will be added to the WIPO Wiki page by the International Bureau.

The International Bureau would appreciate receiving any comments on the proposals by July 14, 2017. Comments should preferably be made by posting them directly onto the WIPO Wiki page or by e-mail to: [pcticd@wipo.int](mailto:pcticd@wipo.int). All comments received will be made available on the WIPO Wiki and later as Annexes to the PFC file. Copies of the proposals on paper are available from the International Bureau upon request. Enquiries concerning the proposals should be directed to the International Bureau by e-mail sent to: [pcticd@wipo.int](mailto:pcticd@wipo.int).

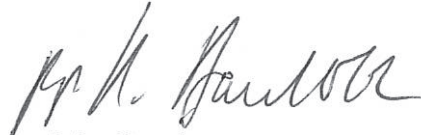
/...

C. PCT 1513

#### FURTHER PROCESS

Once the Consultative Group established under Section 2.5 of Annex F of the PCT Administrative Instructions has made its recommendations, the International Bureau will promulgate any necessary changes to the PCT Administrative Instructions, together with information on entry into force of the changes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Sandage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John Sandage  
Deputy Director General