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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**

**ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT**

**2001**

**ON INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION ACTIVITIES<sup>1</sup>**

submitted by

**JAPAN**

An annual series of reports on the industrial design information activities  
of members of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies

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<sup>1</sup> – The expression “industrial design” covers designs and models.  
– Information related to design patent activities reported by industrial property offices issuing design patents is included in this series of documents.

**ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT ON  
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION ACTIVITIES**

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I. Evolution of registration activities:

Changes experienced in terms of application filings and grants (registrations) with respect to the previous year;

The number of applications in 2001 was 39,423. The number of registrations was 32,934.

Trends or areas experiencing rapid changes with respect to the previous year.

The most popular area of design application remained to be electric/electronic machinery/instruments and communication machinery/instruments (Japanese Design Classification: Group H). Over the previous year, a relatively large growth of the number of applications was found in the areas of housing equipment (Group D) and daily living goods (Group C), and the number of applications in the area of civil engineering and construction goods (Group L), which had been declining in recent years, showed a sign of recovery. Applications for designs of part of an article (partial design registration system, introduced in 1999) increased to account for about 20% of the total applications (about 15% in 2000).

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, and distribution of industrial design documents and of secondary sources of industrial design information, i.e., official gazettes:

Publishing, including printing, copying techniques and electronic printing;

Since January 2000, the JPO has been accepting on-line design applications (electronic applications). The JPO electronically edits the collected data, acquired from electronic applications or electronic conversion of paper-based applications, and publishes the Design Gazette on CD-ROM.

Design Gazette on CD-ROM

The JPO has been publishing the Design Gazette on CD-ROM since January 2000.

A single Design Gazette on CD-ROM contains about 800 registered designs. In 2001, 50 Design Gazettes on CD-ROM in total were published.

Design Gazette on CD-ROM can be searched by 13 keys, including a registration number, goods and service related to the design, Japanese Design Classification and D-term. The Design Gazette on CD-ROM contains mixed-mode type data, composed of text data and image data, thus text searches using the text data part is available.

JPO has been providing, free of charge, viewer software to use Design Gazette on CD-ROM.

Main types of announcements of the Office in the field of industrial design information;

The number of Design Gazettes published in 2001 is as follows:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Design Gazette                                   | 35,204 issues |
| Publication of Decision on Appeal/trial (Design) | 1,910 issues  |

Mass storage media and microforms used;  
Databases and office automation.

III. Matters concerning classifying, reclassifying and indexing of industrial design information according to the classification systems applied:

Classification and reclassification activities; Classification system used, e.g., International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification), other classification (please indicate whether industrial designs are classified by your Office and, if so, which classification is used);

The JPO uses the Japanese Design Classification, a domestic classification revised in 1983. The Japanese Design Classification is based on the concept of usage of articles, and organized in 4 stages. The stages are, from top to bottom; groups, main classes, minor classes, and if necessary, subclasses based on shape/form/configuration or pattern. Thus, the Japanese Design Classification offers a total of about 5,100 classification branches.

In 2001, design classification was assigned to 39,423 design applications and about 180,000 publicly known design reference documents, such as magazine/catalog based new design information, used as reference material for design examination.

In order to deal with new concepts of recent articles in such field as information and communication instruments, the JPO is now carrying out preparatory work towards necessary revision of the Japanese Design Classification.

Bibliographic data and processing for search purposes.

As bibliographic data for searches, application number, filing date, registration number, registration date, article, design classification, D-term (classification symbols for search purpose based on the different classification system from the design classification) and others are used. The data for each document is stored on hard disks.

In 2001, "article" was included as one of the search keys.

#### IV. Search file establishment and upkeep:

##### File building:

By 2001, the JPO has collected images and bibliographic data (including design classification and D-term) of about 2 million design applications and about 2.5 million publicly known design reference documents in the search file. On January 1, 2000, the on-line filing system for design applications started, so that the data about design application is automatically taken and stored into the search file.

##### Updating:

The image and bibliographic data on 39,423 applications and about 180,000 publicly known design reference document were added.

##### Storage, including mass storage media:

Hard disk.

Documentation from other offices maintained and/or considered part of the available search file.

Foreign Design gazettes.

#### V. Activities in the field of computerized search systems for industrial designs:

##### In-house systems (online/offline):

For the examination of design applications, the JPO has been collecting images of new designs (including color images and converted into electric form) from design application documents, magazines and catalogs issued domestically or non-domestically, information on the Internet (publicly known design reference documents), and design gazettes of other countries. In addition to the Japanese Design Classification, the JPO has created the search key list (D-term list) to classify designs in various viewpoints for about 330 themes (86 themes for publication). D-terms (search keys) have been assigned to design application documents and publicly known design reference documents in accordance with the list.

The JPO's design search system is an on-line system to search design application documents and publicly known design reference documents by using the Japanese Design Classifications and D-terms as search keys. The image data of the searched document on the image file server is displayed on the terminal (color image data is displayed in color), allowing fast screening.

In downsizing of the system, in January 2000 the system was converted to a client-server system from the system using a host computer to enable faster and more reliable searching and screening.

External databases; \_\_\_\_\_

Administrative management systems (e.g., register, legal status, statistics, administrative support, etc.):

In January 2000, the design paperless system was started and the administrative and examination procedures were completely moved to the system based on electronic data. Therefore, a total system, covering from design application filing, formality check and substantive examination, dispatching, registration, publishing the gazette, requesting inspection of files, to requesting certification, was completed. The effect of this system is far reaching, such as more efficient drafting based on the close link between the administrative system and the design search system, more efficient examination by implementation of electric approval, faster design gazette publication and separate management of each application.

With the operation of the above system, design application filing in electrical form was started in January 2000. Despite of the recent implementation of this system, the ratio of the design applications filed on-line reached a high percentage, 88% (annual average in 2001). Please note that JPO's system is an integrated system and that the administrative procedure system and the search system for design applications are part of the integrated system. Thus for the overall system, please refer to the "ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT ON PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES."

Equipment used (hardware, including the types of terminal and network used, and software), data carriers used.

Please refer to the "ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT ON PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES."

VI. Administration of industrial design services available to the public (relating to facilities, e.g., for lodging applications, registering designs, assisting clients with search procedures, obtaining official publications and registry extracts):

Planning, administration, automation, security;

Collection management, preservation;

Information services available to the public (including computerized services and search files contained in libraries remote from your Office and industrial design information posted by your Office on the World Wide Web).

The JPO has been providing a patent electric library service since March 1999. This service is accessible through the Internet and allows searching information of about 47 million industrial property rights by using document number and/or classification as search keys.

Main services relating to design information that JPO provides are as follows:

(1) Design Gazette database search

Design Gazette published in and after 1889 can be searched by using document number.

(2) Japanese Design Classification and D-term

Searching for flash report on registration of the establishment of design rights and Design Gazette documents by using Japanese Design Classification and/or D-term is available.

(3) Classification lists

Japanese Design Classification, the cross-reference table of International Classification for Industrial Designs and Japanese Design Classification, and D-term list can be referenced.

Further, the published appeal and trial decisions in and after 1940, and as related information, the information on appeal and trial decisions, the progress information on application, registration and decision, the collection of decisions on suit against appeal/trial decision, the information on Design Law handbook and others can be referenced.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of industrial design documentation and information:

International or regional cooperation in the exchange of industrial design information, e.g., in the form of official gazettes;

JPO is engaged in mutual exchange of gazette and other documents with 88 countries (including international organizations), and of which, JPO sends its Design Gazettes to 26 countries.

Exchange of machine-readable information, e.g., data contained on CD-ROM or magnetic tape.

Since January 2000, gazettes on CD-ROM have been sent.

VIII. Matters concerning education and training including technical assistance to developing countries:

Promotional activities (seminars, exhibitions, visits, advertising, etc.);

Training courses for national and foreign participants;

Assistance to developing countries (sending consultants and experts, receiving trainees from developing countries, etc.).

a) Activities and assistance through WIPO Funds-in-Trust/Japan

(1) Sending experts

The JPO sent expert officials to the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China, the Department of Justice and Human Right Republic of Indonesia

Directorate General of Intellectual Property Rights, the Intellectual Property Office of Mongolia, and the Department of Intellectual Property of Thailand to provide training and advice in such areas as the design system and design examination.

(2) The JPO, in cooperation with the Japan Institute of Invention and Innovation (JIII), invited 58 trainees from the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, Papua New Guinea, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Nepal, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (17 countries) for training on Industrial Property Administration, the Enforcement of the Intellectual Property Rights, the Examination Practices of Industrial Property Rights, and the Use of Information Technology in Industrial Property Administration.

b) Assistance to developing countries using other institutions

(1) Training for government officials

In cooperation with JICA, the JPO provided a group training course on industrial property for government officials from developing APEC economies involved in industrial property right administration and examination. 16 officials from the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Peru and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam attended the training course. Patent information lectures and practical training regarding searches were provided.

The JPO sent expert officials to the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Indonesia and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and invited 1 to 2 counterpart(s) from each of these countries for specialized training such as lectures and practical training on computer-related technology.

The JPO held industrial property right enforcement seminars in the Republic of Singapore and the Republic of Korea. 27 participants from 3 countries such as the Republic of Korea, China and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam attended the seminar held in the Republic of Korea, and 36 participants from 5 Asian countries including the Republic of Singapore attended the seminar.

(2) Training for private sectors

In cooperation with the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) and the JIII, the JPO held a total of 8 industrial property right training courses. Lectures were given on industrial property rights in general, including industrial property right information searches. 126 participants from the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Peru, Malaysia, United Mexican States, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, India, the Laos People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and the Union of Myanmar attended the seminar.

c) Production project of CD-ROMs containing laws and regulations related to intellectual property rights

In order to assist intellectual property Offices in developing countries, in which domestic laws on intellectual property rights are being established, the JPO has been engaged in the "Project to Assist in Gathering Information Related to Overseas Industrial Property Right Systems." Under this program, laws and regulations related to the industrial property rights of major developed and developing countries are translated into English, if necessary, and recorded on CD-ROM, to which a search function is added.

In fiscal year 2001, industrial property right laws (including laws and enforcement rules) from a total of 45 countries and a total of 5 international agreements (agreements concerning the Benelux countries, the Eurasian Patent Office, the EPO, the European Community and the TRIPS Agreements) were recorded on CD-ROM and provided without charge to developing countries, mainly in the APEC region. Information from the Argentine Republic, Australia, the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Belarus, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Bulgaria, Canada, the Republic of Chile, Perople's Republic of China, Taiwan, the Czech Republic, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Finland, the French Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Hellenic Republic, Hong Kong, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Italy, Japan, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Malaysia, the United Mexican States, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of the Philippines, the Portuguese Republic, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Republic of Singapore, the Slovakia Republic , Spain, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Republic of Sudan, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Swiss Confederation, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is provided. The JPO intends to increase the number of countries and laws covered under this program.

#### IX. Other relevant matters.

a) A Cross-reference table between International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification) and Japanese Design Classification (concordance data)

In order for effective use of the Japanese Design Gazette as examination reference documents in foreign countries, the JPO established the cross-reference table between International Classification for Industrial Designs and Japanese Design Classification (concordance data). As reference information, the JPO lists International Classification in the gazette in addition to Japanese Design Classification.

b) English translation of the Japanese Design Classification

In order for effective use of Japanese Design Gazette and concordance data in foreign countries, the JPO established English translation of the Japanese Design Classification.

c) Information on reference design documents



The JPO provides in Design Gazettes information on reference designs which were referred to by the examiner in the examination process of each registered design.

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