

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT ON INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
INFORMATION ACTIVITIES IN 1998**

PLEASE NOTE: The USPTO issues design patents and does **not** register industrial designs. However, US design patent information is included in this report since WIPO has requested that “Offices which issue design patents should report their design patent information activities in this series of Annual Technical Reports.”

I. Evolution of registration activities:

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

In calendar year 1998, the USPTO granted 14,767 design patents, up 29 percent from the total in 1997. The share of grants having foreign origin, as determined by the residence of the first-named inventor, was 32.9 percent for 1998, up from 32.1 percent for 1997. The top patenting organizations receiving design patents in 1998 were Nike, Inc. (203 design patents), Motorola, Inc. (135 design patents), and Sony Corporation (126 design patents).

There were an estimated 17,107 design patent applications filed at the USPTO in 1998, a three percent increase as compared to 1997. The share of applications having foreign origin, as determined by the residence of the first-named inventor, was 33 percent, up slightly from 32 percent for 1997. Final application counts are not yet available for 1998.

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

Among the highly active design patent areas for 1998, the number grants in US Design Patent Class ‘Material or Article Handling Equipment’ increased by 65 percent and the number of grants in ‘Photography and Optical Equipment’ increased by 63 percent over the number of grants for 1997.

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

Publishing, including printing, copying techniques and electronic printing

There are no new developments to report for calendar year 1998.

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

There are no new developments to report for calendar year 1998.

Mass storage media and microforms used

Storage Devices

Since 1996, the USPTO has incorporated magnetic rewritable storage devices into its standard operations. The magnetic devices hold all patent data and are used as a pre-load area for volume reproduction of patent data via high speed printers. The use of the faster responding devices has improved system performance and availability. USPTO acquired the necessary amounts of storage to process terabytes of patent, trademark, and other business data electronically. Most recently, in April 1999, USPTO established an Internet site with access to text and images of patents dating back to 1976. Over 2 terabytes of data stored on these devices is accessible from the Internet.

Patent Image Capture System (PICS)

In FY1997 the USPTO deployed into production the Patent Image Capture System (PICS). PICS replaces the current system of microfilming incoming paper applications with electronic scanning capability. Using PICS, the USPTO is converting paper applications to digital images and delivering those images to selected customers, including Certification and Licensing and Review. Before the system went into production, the USPTO planned for PICS to covert 5,000 applications per week at approximately 39 pages per application, with a maximum application size of 2,000 pages. Currently, the production system is processing 8,000 applications per week, with some sizes up to 3,000 pages. In July 1999, the USPTO plans to expand the functionality of PICS to support expanded reexamination and public access to reexamination cases.

Databases and office automation

Text information (APS-Text) is available back to 1970. Images of all USPTO Design Patents are available on the Classified Search and Image Retrieval (APS-CSIR) system.

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)

All design patents issued in 1998 include both a US Classification designation and a Locarno International Classification designation. The Automated Patent Search (APS) system available at the PTO and at selected Patent and Depository Libraries provides automated searches for US Patent documents with either a US or a Locarno classification designation.

The design patent search file consists of US Design Patent documents which are designated with an "original classification" to reflect the single class and subclass most pertinent to the subject matter claimed. The design patent search file also contains "cross-reference" documents (US Design Patents, Utility and Plant patents) that are believed pertinent to specific subject matter, but also exist as "original documents" elsewhere in the classification schedule. Design patents are organized in 33 classes of subject matter that are substantially parallel to the classes of the Locarno International Classification system.

During 1998, re-classification was initiated for the most active portions of Design Class *D14 - Recording, Communication, or Information Retrieval Equipment*. The subject matter of this project (approximately 6,000 patent documents) is directed to data processor equipment, desktop computers, facsimile equipment, computer generated icons and recording media. The goal of the re-classification effort is to heighten efficient access to this subject matter by establishing new subclasses for specific types of subject matter which have not been provided for.

The *Index to Classification* was expanded to include approximately 200 new terms pertinent to searching industrial design subject matter.

To promote increased efficiency for placement and access of design patent documents, an effort was initiated to write formal definitions for all design classes and subclasses. Definitions for some design classes will be published during 1999.

Information about the use of the US Patent Classification System is available at:
<http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/dapp/sir/co/ovrvw.htm>

Bibliographic data and processing for search purposes

Bibliographic data is recorded on Design Patents at the time of patent grant. This data includes: the title of the patented subject matter, the inventor(s) name, residence of the inventor(s), assignee, term, and information relating to priority, US Classification, Field of Search, References cited and the claim. Each entry of bibliographic data is associated with

an INID code that corresponds with Standard ST.9 of WIPO. Locarno International Designations began appearing with Bibliographic data for Design Patents printed beginning in May of 1997.

Classification Data System, version 1.1

USPTO has provided the capability to perform professional reclassification related activities in an easy to operate desktop microcomputer environment using patent images and modern classification tools. On-line help, class/subclass definitions, and other indices assist classifiers in accomplishing their everyday job. Groups of tools to aid in the support of Classification Operations are under development and the first of those tools should be deployed in late calendar 1999. Included in those tools will be a classification authoring tool, a classification creation management tool, and a collection management tool. USPTO is also testing software that is part of Dataware's BRS/Search that does clustering and query by example, which may support document assignment of applications. There is also planned a tool that will support the application assignment dispute resolution process across industry sectors. This is called the Application Dispute Resolution system, and it is scheduled for deployment in the later part of calendar 1999.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep:

File building

During 1998 US Design Patent number D400,000 issued and was celebrated as a benchmark for industrial design activity in the USPTO. By the end of 1998, the total number of US Design Patents increased by 14,767 for a total of 402,917.

The USPTO has used OCR software to convert images of approximately 166,000 U.S. Patents issued between 1970 and 1976 missing from the current text file. It is also converting the US Patent backfile from 1970 to 1790, which is approximately 3.9 million additional documents. The conversion is complete, and USPTO is working to load the text into its search engine, BRS/Search, for access. This is planned for November 1999.

NPL

The USPTO has provided electronic access to over 232 technical journals to all examiners, through the Elsevier database. In addition, Examiners have access to *UMI ProQuest Direct* via the Internet. Finally, Examiners will be given access to IBM's Technical Disclosure Bulletins in July 1999.

Non-US Patents

All JPO patent full images through 1996, which are associated with the first page database, have been loaded to storage devices and are available to examiners. Because of the change in format, the loading of documents after that date was delayed. Currently, we expect to have them completed in September 1999. All of the EPO patent full images associated with the first page database, both front file and backfile are loaded and available to examiners.

Updating

Concurrent with the publication of each new Design Patent in the Official Gazette, copies are added to the paper and electronic search files.

Also, see File Building, above.

Storage, including mass storage media and microforms

Since 1996, the USPTO has incorporated magnetic rewritable storage devices into its standard operations. The magnetic devices hold all data and are used as a pre-load area for volume reproduction of patent data via high speed printers. The use of the faster responding devices has improved system performance and availability. USPTO acquired the necessary amounts of storage to process terabytes of patent, trademark, and other business data electronically. Most recently, in April 1999, USPTO established an Internet site with access to text and images of patents dating back to 1976. Over 2 terabytes of data stored on these devices is accessible via the Internet.

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

Gazette type publications of design registrations from over 37 nations or international organizations are available to Examiners. These publications are generally maintained in the Design Library or the USPTO Scientific and Technical Information Center (STIC).

A collection of non-patent literature is available to Examiners in the Design Library and the main STIC facility. Non-patent literature includes commercial publications, catalogs, magazines, advertising fliers, technical publications and other information pertinent to the 33 classes of the Design Classification system. Additionally, the Scientific and Technical Information Center provides complete library services that includes links to a libraries nation-wide, literature acquisition as requested, cataloging of literature received. The literature in the collection can be searched via an on-line catalog maintained by the STIC. The Design Library does not have a microfilm reader/printer, and microfilm is kept in the main STIC.

USPTO is also making available document images and products of other intellectual property offices obtained from magnetic tape and CD-ROM products. Currently examiners have access to IPC classifications on line. PTO is currently evaluating DOC.db for use as a search utility for examiners. PTO plans to use this information to assist in applying US classifications to non-US patents.

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

In-house systems (on-line/off-line)

The USPTO has continued the development and deployment of patent and trademark search systems as reported in previous years. USPTO's automation program is described in the Strategic Information Technology Plan, which is updated annually.

Automated Patent System

As described in previous reports, the on-line text search system is used by examiners, classifiers, and the public. Since the 1995 report, USPTO continues to research alternative systems and has prototyped several commercial products -- Verity's TOPIC, Personal Library Software (PLS), Dataware's BRS Search, and OpenText -- the USPTO expects improvements over the current system. BRS has been selected as the replacement system for the current CAS owned Messenger search system. It was installed, and examiners were given access to it starting in January as part of a Pilot. It is being deployed to all examiners in May, 1999.

Patent Image Retrieval System

Since the 1995 report, the USPTO deployed Windows NT desktop text and image workstations to all patent and trademark examiners. Examiners will have access to the text and images of US, JPO, and EPO patents through a browser based client called WEST and a coded client called EAST. WEST is designed for ease of use, and rapid deployment of new functionality. EAST is a more complex interface, designed for greater user customization, more rapid retrieval of images, and greater use of the keyboard. WEST will be deployed in May, and EAST will be deployed in June of 1999.

External data bases

The STIC performs searches for the design examiners on Dialog when requested. They also search for resources on the Internet that are appropriate for design examiners.

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

PALM Migration: USPTO continued the segmented subsystem delivery with successful delivery of the first subsystem (Infrastructure) in October 1998. The second and third subsystems (File ordering system and Pre-examination system) are expected in the July - September 1999 time period. The project is expected to run through the July - September 2000 time period.

PALM on PTONET: All USPTO employees have been provided further access to the current Management Information System on their desktop PC via barcode readers. This system has been found to provide increased case tracking accuracy.

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

PTOnet

As desktop applications require more network bandwidth (through the backbone server attachments) PTOnet will be upgraded to keep ahead of the requirements. In 1997, PTOnet users shared a 10 Mbps Ethernet segment, with an effective bandwidth of 3 to 4 Mbps. Currently, PTOnet users have dedicated 10 Mbps connections; in the future, bandwidth of 100 Mbps or more will be provided to the desktop.

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

These functions are provided by the Design Library in cooperation with STIC whenever necessary.

Collection management, preservation

The STIC catalogs all non-patent materials purchased; the repair of design materials is handled by the STIC when requested by the Design Group; the STIC does not manage the collection directly, but oversight is provided on a part-time basis by contract support staff. The STIC receives design patent materials from sixteen countries via exchange agreement; these documents are kept in the Design Library except for materials received from two of the countries that include other patent documents together with the design documents; these materials are kept in the Main STIC.

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 Design Patent professional staff is available to answer questions about the Design Patent process both by telephone interview or personal appointment. In 1996, an informational booklet titled A Guide to Filing a Design Patent Application was published by the USPTO to provide general information concerning the requirements for a Design Patent application and the examination process. This booklet is available free of charge and can be received by written request or by calling the PTO Help Line at 800-PTO-9199 (800-786-9199) or 703-308-HELP (703-308-4357). It is also available on the USPTO Web Site (www.uspto.gov).

Accessible from the USPTO Web site is the Patent and Trademark Depository Library (PTDL) Program Home Page. The mission, history, background, and frequently asked questions are among the topics included. Various publications, materials, and services at PTDLs are described and a list of the libraries, with telephone numbers and Internet links is also included.

Automated Information in Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries

Patent full-text searching via the Automated Patent System (APS-Text) is available at all PTDLs that pay a subscription fee or establish a deposit account for the service. There are currently 30 PTDLs that have entered subscriptions to access APS-Text.

The USPTO continues to provide a number of CD-ROM products to the PTDLs for direct public use. This includes all of the Cassis CD-ROM series: Patents BIB, Patents CLASS, Patents ASSIST, Patents ASSIGN, Patents SNAP, Trademarks ASSIST, Trademarks ASSIGN, Trademarks PENDING, Trademarks REGISTERED, and weekly issues of USAPat. A new product, USAMark, including a full back file of all registered marks was also distributed to the PTDLs in 1998.

The Sunnyvale (California) Center for Innovation, Invention and Ideas and the Great Lakes Patent and Trademark Center of the Detroit (Michigan) Public Library are successfully functioning as Partnership PTDLs. The Fondren Library, The South Central Intellectual Property Partnership, at Rice University in Houston (Texas) held its grand opening as the third Partnership PTDL in 1998. At the Partnership PTDLs, enhanced intellectual property information services that are offered on a cost recovery basis include APS-Text and APS-Image access and workstations, trademark searching using the X-Search System, electronic ordering of US and foreign patent documents, on-site and videoconference practitioner and public seminars, local filing of Disclosure Documents, and secure videoconferencing capability between patent examiners and inventors and/or attorneys.

Automated Information in Patent Public Search Facilities

Public access to patent images through the Automated Patent System (APS-Image) continued growing through 1998 in the Patent Search and Image Retrieval Facility. The system contains patent images of all US patents, and permits word searching of the text contained in patents granted since 1971.

The Patent Search and Image Retrieval Facility consists of 23 workstations, which utilize a fee system based on hourly usage. Access over the last year has leveled off to average of 73 sessions per day and 23% usage rate. The 1997 increase in the number of machines has all but eliminated the problem of machine availability, and except for peak hours, no customers are being turned away.

The Automated Patent System for text searching (APS-Text) is also available in the Patent Search Room. Six terminals are available utilizing a fee system based on hourly usage. Use of the APS-Text System in 1998 averaged 74 sessions per day with a usage rate of 21 percent.

A four-hour training course on the image workstations is available to the public for a nominal fee. In 1998, 47 public users were trained, making the total number of customers trained on this system 1,072. A 12-hour APS-Text training course is recommended prior to the APS-Image course. In 1998, 104 public users were trained on APS-Text, making the total number of customers trained on this system 2,042.

The CD-ROM jukebox network in the Patent Search Room allows for access to all of the PTO's CD-ROM products. Access to the system is free of charge. A fee is charged for all printing from the system.

Automated Products Provided to the Public

The USPTO's Information Dissemination Organizations continues to provide patent information products and services to the public in a variety of formats. The *Products and Services Catalog*, produced annually, describes USPTO products and services, and contains details on how to obtain them.

The following CD-ROM products are available for purchase by the public:

Patents BIB: Selected Bibliographic Information from US Patents Issued 1969 to Present

This Cassis CD-ROM contains bibliographic information for utility patents issued from 1969 to the present, and for other types of patent documents issued from 1977 to the present. It includes date of issue, state/country of first listed inventor's residence, assignee at time of issue, status (i.e., withdrawn, corrected, expired for failure to pay maintenance fees, reexamined or term extended), current classifications, patent title, and patent

abstracts (for the most recent 2½-year period, as disc space allows). Patents BIB also refers to patent image locations on USAPat, described below. This CD-ROM product is updated every two months.

Patents CLASS: Current Classifications of US Patents Issued 1790 to Present

This Cassis CD-ROM contains current classification information for all utility, design, plant, reissue and X-numbered patents, as well as defensive publications and statutory invention registrations issued from 1790 to the present (over 6 million documents). Indexing of classification information has been optimized for rapid retrieval. This CD-ROM product is updated every two months.

Patents ASSIGN: US Patents Assignments Recorded at the USPTO 1980 August to Present

This Cassis CD-ROM includes data derived from assignment deeds for issued patents, which were recorded at the Patent and Trademark Office after August 1980. The disc includes assignments recorded before and after the patent issued. This CD-ROM product is updated every three months.

Patents ASSIST: Full Text of Patent Search Tools

This Cassis CD-ROM is a compilation of many patent search tools including the following: Manual of Classification, Index to the US Patent Classification, Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, IPC - USPC Concordance, and Attorneys and Agents Registered to Practice Before the US Patent and Trademark Office. In addition, Classification Definitions, a Patentee-Assignee Index, and a Classification Orders Index are included. The Patentee-Assignee Index shows ownership at time of issue for utility patents 1969 to present; for other patent types 1977 to present; and inventor names 1975 to present. The Classification Orders Index is a list of classifications abolished and established since 1976 with corresponding Classification Order number and effective date. This CD-ROM product is updated every three months.

Patents SNAP: Concordance of US Patent Application Serial Numbers to US Patent Numbers

This Cassis CD-ROM provides a concordance between US patent numbers and application serial numbers. It includes data for patents with an application date from January 1, 1977 through the date specified on the disc. This CD-ROM product ceased publication with the 1998 issue.

Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP)

This Manual is published to provide US Patent and Trademark Office patent examiners, applicants, attorneys, agents, and representatives of applicants with a reference work on the practices and procedures relative to the prosecution of patent applications before the Patent and Trademark Office. The MPEP is available in electronic form as an ASCII text file downloadable (no charge) from the USPTO Web site on the Internet at <http://www.uspto.gov/>, and as a searchable text file on the Patents ASSIST CD-ROM product which includes many other useful files (CD Answer® software). Each revision is fully incorporated into the base edition and republished as a whole.

USAPat: Facsimile Images of United States Patents

This Cassis CD-ROM product contains facsimile images of US patents. An “image” is an actual page of the patent, including all drawings, and looks just like the original printed document. The purpose of USAPat is to serve as a document delivery system, not as a search system. Retrieval is by document number only from a cumulative index. Excellent printed copies of actual documents can be obtained directly from a laser printer. Over 150 discs are published each year (three to four discs per week). Delivery of weekly discs is usually within 15 days from issue date.

GLOBALPat: Text and Drawings from Patent First Pages

This Cassis CD-ROM includes text from the first page of a representative member of each patent family published by the United States, the European Patent Office, France, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland, or the World Intellectual Property Organization. Records contain bibliographic and patent family information, an abstract, and a drawing (where available). This information was derived from the First Page Data Base (FPDB), an English-language collection representing nearly all of the world’s patent literature published since 1971. The FPDB and GLOBALPat retrieval software, MIMOSA, were jointly financed by the Trilateral Offices—the United States Patent and Trademark Office, the European Patent Office, and the Japanese Patent Office. The GLOBALPat back file of 116 discs, covering 1971-1996, is organized into sixty-nine technology groups based on the International Patent Classification. The front file, 1997-1998, is arranged by issuing country and document number. An index disc covering all published issues is available. Publication will cease with the completion of 1998.

Trademarks REGISTERED: Bibliographic Information from Active, Registered US Trademarks

This Cassis CD-ROM contains the text of all active registered trademarks from 1884 to present with 30 searchable fields. This CD-ROM product is updated every two months.

Trademarks PENDING: Bibliographic Information from Pending US Trademarks

This Cassis CD-ROM contains the text of trademark applications, which have been filed but not yet approved for registration, with 25 searchable fields. This CD-ROM product is updated every two months.

Trademarks ASSIGN: US Trademarks Assignments Recorded at the USPTO 1955 to Present

This Cassis CD-ROM includes data derived from trademark assignment deeds recorded since 1955 with 10 searchable fields. This CD-ROM product is updated every two months.

Trademarks ASSIST: Full Text of Trademark Search Tools

This Cassis CD-ROM includes the searchable text of the Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure, the Goods and Services Manual, the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board Manual of Procedure, the Trademark Statute and Rules (Trademark Act of 1946 and the Rules of Practice), the Trademark Telephone Index, and the PTO Products and Services Catalog. It is updated on an irregular basis.

USAMark: Facsimile Images of United States Trademark Registrations

This Cassis CD-ROM contains facsimile images of U.S. registered trademarks from 1870 to the present. An "image" is an actual page of the trademark, including renewals and modifications, and looks just like the original printed document. *USAMark* is a document delivery system, not a search system. Retrieval is by document number only from a cumulative index that covers all issued discs. Excellent printed copies of actual documents can be obtained directly from a laser printer. *USAMark* is published as a back file and a front file. The inaugural back file, with 118 discs, covers registrations through the end of 1998. Additional back-file and monthly discs will be created starting in 1999.

The USPTO maintains World Wide Web (WWW) and File Transfer Protocol (ftp) sites on the Internet, which permit the public free access to selected information related to patents and trademarks.

The USPTO Web site at <http://www.uspto.gov/> contains information about the office and information about patents and trademarks. It also provides access to searchable databases of patent and trademark information, and to tools that assist users in obtaining information.

In August 1998, the USPTO began providing free access to a searchable trademark database. It consists of bibliographic data and full-text of over one million registered trademarks and pending applications which date back to 1870. Currently, the text portion of the database is updated on a two-month cycle, and images are updated weekly.

In November 1995, the USPTO began providing access to patent bibliographic information and abstract text on its Web Site. The PatBib database contains the data back to January 1976, and is updated on a weekly basis, usually on issue day (each Tuesday). The raw data is available for FTP downloading on the same day. In November 1998, the USPTO began providing access to the searchable, full text of US patent from January 1976 to the present. The database is updated weekly, usually on issue day.

The AIDS Patent Database, accessible from the USPTO Web site, contains US patents related to research on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), as well as patent documents from the Japanese Patent Office, the European Patent Office and other countries. Users can browse the database, or search using command-line fielded searching, phrase searching or date range searching.

(Note: The AIDS Patent Database was discontinued in March 1999 when the USPTO began offering images of all US patent documents from 1976 to the present.)

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

The USPTO maintains exchange agreements with many intellectual property offices for the exchange of industrial design registrations and gazettes and continually seeks to expand the number of such exchanges.

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

CD-ROM products including, but not limited to, design patent images and information are sent to 108 intellectual property offices (see descriptions of the products above).

The USPTO currently exchanges patent images and information on magnetic computer tapes with the EPO and JPO as part of a Trilateral Agreement.

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

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

The USPTO expanded the PTDL network to 85 libraries to provide patent and trademark information to the public throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

The USPTO expanded its *1998 Catalog of Patent and Trademark Information Products and Services*. It is available on the USPTO's Web Site.

Training courses for national and foreign participants

The USPTO provides technical training relevant to patent law and patent practice for all patent examiners. Additionally, a variety of technical classes are available dealing with search techniques on the Automated Patent System (APS) on and methods of using a variety of custom computer software to assist in the examination process.

The Academy participates in the two week Visiting Scholars Program. Here the PTO hosts patent professionals from offices world-wide and presents them with training on patents, trademarks, copyrights, and related procedural and operational issues.

The Academy also operates a televideo-conference facility. This has been used to broadcast live meetings and lectures with officials in foreign countries.

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

The Patent and Trademark Office offers various programs to provide technical assistance to developing countries and to countries moving to a market economy. Regarding the establishment of adequate systems in these countries for the protection of intellectual property rights and to provide intellectual protection enforcement training. The goal of the programs is to provide advice and expertise to these countries with the desired outcome being the reduction of losses resulting from piracy of U.S. intellectual property.

The FY 98 Visiting Scholars Program provided participants from Argentina, Bahamas, China, Egypt, Ghana, Jamaica, Laos, Lesotho, Moldova, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, South Korea, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela with two weeks of classroom and hands-on study of various aspects of the administration of intellectual property law, patent and trademark examination and copyright protection, and an opportunity to gain an understanding of the important role of intellectual property protection as a tool for economic development.

Another highlight was the Intellectual Property Enforcement Training Programs conducted in South Africa, Latvia, Belize, China, and Hong Kong.

IX. Other relevant matters

The USPTO continued its participation in the technical activities established under the various international agreements administered by WIPO.