

CWS/ATR/PI/2020/CA

Annual Technical Report on Patent Information Activities in 2019 submitted by Canadian Intellectual Property Office

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PATENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Outline of main policies and plans aimed at development of patent information activities and expected time frames for their realization

- The Manual of Office Practice (MOPOP) is maintained and available to the public.
- The Patent Office will be iteratively modernizing all of their online and internal IT systems over the next 24 months.

New projects launched or resumed this year in the context of the policies and plans mentioned above, short description: aims, partners, tasks

In 2020:

- In response to COVID, CIPO implemented designated days (March 16, 2021 -August 21, 2021 - which offered flexibility with respect to deadlines and payments of fees for clients) and priority examination for COVID-19 related applications. We additionally expanded the types of documents that could be submitted online, eg. PCT international documents.
- Implemented the Thin-Grant initiative September 1, 2020 which reduced granted patent sizes from an average of 53 pages to 1 page.
- CIPO stopped the printing and scanning of submitted patent requests in the spring of 2020 from Patent eFiling and Patent General Correspondence. Submissions are now converted from html to pdf and stored in our database.
- Began work (September 2020) to offer online eFiling for receiving and processing PCT National Entry Requests. Expected completion - August 2021.
- Began work (September 2020) to offer eGrant services. Instead of mailing out paper patent documents, these documents will be delivered in pdf format via a secure repository. Expected completion - spring 2021.

Main areas of patent information activities and related information and communication technology (ICT) practices which were in the focus of attention last year

- The preparation of our IT modernization project
- The Patent Law Treaty was implemented on October 30, 2019 and was the main concentration of our efforts for the past few years.

Statistics: changes in terms of application filings and grants with respect to previous year; trends or areas experiencing rapid changes

Item	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
National Filing	6,997	7,911	7,765	7,724	7,724	7,589
National Grants	5,403	5,584	5,888	6,095	7,065	6,309
PCT Filing	27,606	28,577	28,396	27,350	27,201	29,242
PCT Grants	15,882	16,425	17,611	18,003	19,359	15,591

Other matters and useful links (URLs): annual report of the Office, news page, statistics, etc.

Patent Act and Rules

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-4/index.html>

CIPO Mandate

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr00025.html

CIPO Publications including the annual report

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr00026.html

Patent-related news regarding the Office:

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr00001.html

Green Technologies

http://www.ic.gc.ca/opic-cipo/cpd/eng/greenTechnologies/green_technologies.html

Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH)

https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr02160.html

II. SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Information and support provided by the Office to applicants regarding filing on paper and/or e-filing (instructions, seminars, etc.) - URLs

CIPO Website: A Guide to Patents

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr03652.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-patent-main&wt_ext=apply#preparingPatentApplication

CIPO Website: Tutorial - Your Patent Application:

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01398.html>

CIPO Website: Filing Canadian patent applications (e-filing):

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01477.html>

CIPO Website: Filing International PCT applications (e-filing):

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01355.html>

CIPO Website: Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT National Entry) e-filing:

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01970.html>

IP Academy

https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr04234.html

Availability of the application dossier in electronic form

Patent applications laid open to public inspection and granted patents are available to the public through the Canadian Patent Database (CPD):

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/opic-cipo/cpd/eng/introduction.html>

Classification¹, preclassification² (if applicable), reclassification³ activities; classification systems used (e.g., International Patent Classification (IPC)); matters concerning indexing of patent information

CIPO classifies national and international applications according to the IPC. Currently, CIPO's preclassification of national and international applications is based on a preliminary classification which is limited to section, class and subclass for the purpose of assigning the file to the appropriate classification examiner's queue. National files are reclassified following the entry into force of a new version of the IPC. CIPO is working with the EPO in implementing the Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) for international application.

Abstracting, reviewing, and translation of the information contained in patent documents

The Office translates the titles into French or English depending on the language of the application. Some translations are retrieved from the PCT import process which uses an XML file received from WIPO. The Office provides abstracts in both French and English on patents in Good Standing. A contracted third party currently provides the translation services to CIPO, these are then quality checked internally. The office is looking into new technologies in an effort to make the translation process more efficient.

Other activities

n/a

III. SOURCES OF PATENT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE

Main types of publications of the Office (patent applications, full text, first pages, abstracts, bibliographic data, granted patents, etc.), medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URLs)

Canadian Patent Office Record (Gazette) is published weekly and is available on CIPO's Website. <http://patents.ic.gc.ca/opic-cipo/cpor/eng/home.html>

MIMOSA files for applications open to public inspection and granted patents are prepared weekly and are made available for download at www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/bulk

Text of applications open to public inspection and granted patents including abstracts, descriptions and claims are made available for download at www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/bulk

All of CIPO's data products are available free of charge.

Official Gazettes: main types of announcements, frequency of publication, medium (on paper, on CDs, online - URL), etc.

Office notices and changes to office procedures are published on CIPO's website and incorporated into the MOPOP if required.

These notices, and many other patent related notices, are published directly on the CIPO Website under the Patent Notices section at the following link:

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr00292.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-patent-main

CIPO also publishes the Canadian Patent Office Record (CPOR) on a weekly basis

<https://www.ic.gc.ca/opic-cipo/cpor/eng/home.html>

Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to examiners, including external collections and databases

CIPO's internal office TechSource system includes bibliographic data (from 1869-present), text (abstract, claim and description of laid open patent documents from late 1978-present) and images of patent documents (from 1869-present). All these documents are available stored on hard disk technology.

Externally, examiners have access to many publicly available and subscription based databases such as the following list of databases;

Academic Search Complete
Nature Biotechnology
American Chemical Society (ACS) Journals
NewsDesk
Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Digital Library
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
Australian Intellectual Property Thesaurus
The Official Journal of the EPO
Business Book Summaries
OLISnet
Business Source Complete
Orthonet
Canadian Patent Office Record (CPOR)
PatentPak
Canadian Patent Reporter (CPR)
PB Terminology Database
DAMA Dictionary of Data Management
Pharmaview
DAMA Guide to the Data Management Body of Knowledge (DMBOK)
PubAg
Decisions of the Commissioner of Patents
PubMed
Decisions of the Copyright Board of Canada
Questel Orbit Intelligence
Decisions of the Federal Court of Canada
Reports of Patent, Design and Trade Mark Cases (RPC)
EBSCO eBook Collection
Research Disclosure
Econlit
Science.gov
EDGAR
Science Online
FP Advisor
Scientific American
Frost & Sullivan
SciFinder
Government and Legislative Libraries Online Publications Portal (GALLOP)
SCOPUS
GreenFILE
Standard Industry Classifications (SIC)
Le guide du rédacteur
STM Source
A Guide to Countries of the World
STN (Scientific and Technical Information Network)
IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)
Termium Plus
International Journal of Design
USPTO WEST
IP.com
WIPO Lex
IP Source
WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization) Magazine
Merck Manual
World Competitiveness Online
National Research Council Canada (NRC) — Publications Archive
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
National Research Council Canada (NRC) — Research Press Journals
World Intellectual Property Report
Nature
World Patent Information
NBER (National Bureau of Economic Research)
Other IPO websites

Information products and patent document collections (coverage, medium, etc.) available to external users, conditions of access (e.g., free of charge, subscription, etc.)

CIPO's Website makes available documentation pertaining to applications open to public inspection and granted patents from 1869-present.

The listing of available information products and subscriptions to bulk data, free of charge, is available at the following link: www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/bulk

CIPO also offers a publicly accessible Client Search Room available at its headquarters in Gatineau, Quebec, Canada where one on one personal assistance is available.

Legal status information (kind of information, coverage, medium, etc.)

CIPO provides Patent/application information and important dates such as filing and issue dates on its website. Statuses per say are not currently available on the website. <https://www.ic.gc.ca/opic-cipo/cpd/eng/introduction.html>

Other sources

Administrative status of applications open to public inspection and granted patents are available as a bulk subscription product.

IV. ICT SUPPORT TO SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PATENT INFORMATION CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

Specific software tools supporting business procedures within the Office: general description, characteristics, advantages, possible improvements

Tool	Internal /External	Technology	Purpose
TechSource	Internal Office Tool	In-house custom DB2 database	Mainframe application to handle National cases). Supports workflow and storing of patent data. Includes bibliographic data (from 1869-present), text (abstract, claim and description of laid open patent documents from 1978-present) and images of patent documents (from 1920-present). All these documents are available stored on hard disk technology.
InterApp	Internal Office Tool	C++	An application to process International PCT applications including all RO, ISA and IPEA functionality. The application also imports and exports documents and data directly to and from WIPO via sFTP
AppEntry	Internal Office Tool	C++	An application that electronically retrieves national entry applications from WIPO for processing in Canada
MS Word	Internal Office Tool	Microsoft	Word along with VBA coding gives Patent Branch users the ability to create reports with complex automated paragraphs
Intellect	Internal Office Tool	JAVA	The Internal Canadian Patent database search engine is updated electronically daily for our internal search tool. The search application is named Intellect and it has been in use since 2008.
Canadian Patent Database	External Office Tool	JAVA	The External Canadian Patent database search engine is updated electronically daily and is available on our Web site.

Hardware used to supporting business processes of the Office

Patents main IT systems are hosted on a mainframe solution. This is a common government wide infrastructure that is maintained by the government department, Shared Services Canada.

Telework support for patent activities are provided using a laptop VPN solution through which staff remotely connect to the office's network. During the pandemic, the Patent employees have been working remotely full time with a few people in essential positions entering on an as-needed basis.

Internal databases: coverage, updates, interlinks with external sources

CIPPO's internal office TechSource system includes bibliographic data (from 1869-present), text (abstract, claim and description of laid open patent documents from 1978-present) and images of patent documents (from 1869-present). All these documents are available stored on hard disk technology. Data for applications open to public inspection and granted patents is extracted from the TechSource database and published onto CIPPO's searchable online Canadian Patent Database (CPD) and made available for bulk data downloads

Establishment and maintenance of electronic search file: file building, updating, storage, documents from other offices included in the search file

Patent Branch examiners continue to populate a database of 'search records' for every office action. The tools developed allow the examiners to create, update, store and retrieve information on the search activities. This information includes data on family members, applicant submissions, databases and search queries used. The database is populated via an interface built into MS Excel. The examiner can add new tabs to each record with subsequent office actions, eventually building a complete history of the search over the prosecution life of the application. The files are stored in the database, but are also exported into the Notations field of the Line of Business (LOB) application within TechSource, written to a MS Word document and added as an annex to any examiner's report. A similar system exists for International applications. The search record is a benefit to internal and external stakeholders and serves as a foundational tool for quality assessment.

Administrative management electronic systems (register, legal status, statistics, and administrative support)

All Canadian Patents/applications are managed within our custom built TechSource system.

Other matters

n/a

V. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AIMED TO SUPPORT USERS IN ACCESS AND EFFICIENT USE OF PATENT INFORMATION

Patent library: equipment, collection management, network of patent libraries in the country, cooperation with foreign patent libraries

- CIPO provides prosecution documentation in the WIPO CASE system as a full participating member
- Canada shares weekly patent data with patent offices and commercial clients for integration in various search databases.

Publications related to different business procedures and patent information sources available to users, for example, books, brochures, Internet publications, etc.

The CIPO Resource Centre provides non-patent literature research and reference services. It enables employees to access world-class external information sources via its many e-resources. The centre continues to enhance its virtual collection and provide training to ensure employees effectively access the electronic information sources from their desktops. The centre serves as the central point for information procurement within CIPO. Its services also include webinars, specialized wikis and e-books.

The CIPO Client Service Centre and the CIPO web site provide information and a guide to patents to assist users. CIPO also has an outreach program.

CIPO Website: Intellectual Property (IP) Case Studies

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01946.html>

CIPO Website: A Guide to Patents

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr03652.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-patent-main&wt_cxt=apply#preparingPatentApplication

CIPO Website: Tutorial - Your Patent Application:

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01398.html>

CIPO Website: Filing Canadian patent applications (e-filing):

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01477.html>

CIPO Website: Manual of Patent Office Practice:

http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr00720.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-patent-main

Office's initiatives on providing foreign patent information in the local language(s) (e.g., machine translation tools, translation of abstracts)

CIPO receives and prosecutes patents in either official language (French or English). The Office translates all of the patent titles and abstracts so that they are available in both official languages (English and French). The Office does not translate the other sections of a patent (claims, description, drawings, Sequence Listings).

Cooperation with universities, research centers, technology and innovation support centers, etc.

CIPO patent office has forged several partnerships with industry, universities and other IPOs.

- The Industry Training Visit (ITV) program: Examiners can update their knowledge in the relevant field by visiting leading-edge companies that are active in research and development within Canada. The companies voluntarily host visits, and their inventors, scientists, engineers and other experts share the knowledge related to their research and development to the examiners.
- Free university training program provides examiners with the opportunity to attend technical learning activities organized by local universities, information and technology hubs, professional organizations and other government departments.
- USPTO seminars by WEBEX: Examiners attend technical seminars organized by the USPTO for their examiners via live streamed WEBEX. In exchange, CIPO also invites USPTO examiners to attend their webinars via WEBEX.
- Webinars by third parties: Examiners attend webinars organized by professional organizations. These webinars are technically relevant, from reputable organizations and typically free of charge.

Education and training: training courses, e-learning modules (URLs), seminars, exhibitions, etc.

CIPO recently launched a new IP Academy: A collection of online learning resources, seminars and training about intellectual property (IP), such as patents, trademarks, industrial designs and copyright.

https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr04234.html

Other activities

n/a

VI. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF PATENT INFORMATION

International exchange and sharing of patent information in machine-readable form, e.g., priority documents, bibliographic data, abstracts, search reports, full text information

CIPO provides data and documents for applications that are open to public inspection and for granted patents.

The following is a link to CIPO's electronic data products, all of CIPO's data products are available free of charge: www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/bulk

CIPO offers online eServices for all Patent transactions.

CIPO has PPH agreements with several countries and retrieves files from their respective public dossier access systems, where available. Our partner offices can now retrieve most Canadian files directly from the Canadian Patents Database while the rest must be obtained from the applicant.

CIPO provides prosecution documentation in the WIPO CASE system as a full participating member.

Participation in international or regional activities and projects related to patent information

The Canadian Patent Office participates in the Vancouver Group Searching Working Group (VG-SWG) launched in early 2018. The purpose of the VG-SWG is to compare and contrast all elements of patent searching (i.e. practice, tools, training, quality review), develop best practices and enhance the quality of searching for all offices.

In addition to the initiative completed last year (Search Tools and Databases), the VGSWG has since completed its second initiative (Search Quality Review). We are currently finalizing a third initiative (Search Training). This group also developed a hands-on benchmarking exercise (VG Search collaboration workshop), where examiners in the VG Offices (VGO) independently search an application and then convene to discuss and compare strategies and results.

A third workshop is expected to be run in the second-half of 2020. Examiners welcomed the opportunity to have a “live” discussion on search strategy with their VGO colleagues.

Assistance to developing countries

CIPO has provided, in cooperation with WIPO, the following free patent services to developing countries:

- Patent search and examination reports for developing countries, upon request from WIPO, under the WIPO program of International Cooperation in the Search and Examination of Inventions (ICE)
- State-of-the-art patent searches under the WIPO Patent Information Searches (WPIS) for developing countries Paper copies of relevant Canadian patent documents identified by WIPO patent searches

Other activities

n/a

VII. OTHER RELATED MATTERS

n/a

1. Classification is allotting one or more classification symbols (e.g., IPC symbols) to a patent application, either before or during search and examination, which symbols are then published with the patent application.

2. Preclassification is allotting an initial broad classification symbol (e.g., IPC class or subclass, or administrative unit) to a patent application, using human or automated means for internal administrative purposes (e.g., routing an application to the appropriate examiner). Usually preclassification is applied by the administration of an office.

3. Reclassification is the reconsideration and usually the replacement of one or more previously allotted classification symbols to a patent document, following a revision and the entry into force of a new version of the Classification system (e.g., the IPC). The new symbols are available on patent databases.