(A3) Customer experience improvements encouraging post filing upload and comparison of replacements

The International Bureau aims to implement additional end user self-service features that benefit the applicant when filing in full text format. It should be possible to conduct all subsequent stages of processing in full text format and to allow effective comparison of different versions of the application. Ideally, applicants should be able to submit changes for themselves and immediately see the effects the changes will have if they are accepted. The automated comparison between versions should help to generate the letters required describing the changes and the basis for the new text in the application as filed when amending the claims before international publication, or amending the application during international preliminary examination (see PCT Rules 46.5(b) and 66.8, respectively).

The International Bureau expects that the normal method of making a change would be to submit either an entire replacement application body or a replacement element (description, claims or drawings) in the same format as the original application and for the system to detect changes, though alternative methods would also need to be supported, for example to allow correction of errors caused by the original conversion process.

For such a service to work in an environment where different roles are performed by the International Bureau and different national Offices, it is important that receiving Offices, International Authorities and the International Bureau all accept full text applications in a common format and perform the conversions consistently. Receiving Offices and International Authorities are requested to advise, working with the International Bureau, on strategies and implementation timelines to offer applicants full text processing improvements that improve the value proposition for applicants to file in full text formats.