SCIT.ATR.PI.2002.SE

Annual Technical Report 2002 on Patent Information Activities submitted by Sweden (SCIT /ATR/PI/2002/SE)

Where URLs are requested below, it is preferred that either URLs which are likely to remain stable over time (three years or more) are provided, or home (main) page URLs are provided with a short explanation of how to access the corresponding information.

The term "patent" covers utility models and Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs). Offices which issue design patents should report their design patent information activities in their Annual Technical Reports on Industrial Design Information Activities.

I. Evolution of patent activities

The number of national patent applications was lower than the previous year, i.e. 3,911 applications in 2002 compared to 4,500 in 2001.

The number of applications filed under Chapter I of the PCT, where the SPRO acts as an International Searching Authority (ISA) is still on a high level with 4,206 filings in 2002, slightly lower than in 2001 (4,651 filings). However, the number of applications filed under Chapter II of the PCT, for which the SPRO acts as an International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA), has decreased from 3,574 filings in 2001 to 3,469 in 2002.

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, distribution and use of primary and secondary sources of patent information

The SPRO publishes examined applications and patents as well as abstracts, i.e. the B-, C-, E-, L- and T-documents. They are produced as paper documents and also stored in electronic form. All new documents are available in electronic (facsimile) form in the reading room as well as on the Internet. All backlog since 1885 is also available in electronic (facsimile) form in the reading room.

We do not print any A-documents. Instead the entire application is made available to the public for inspection in our library or can be supplied as a photocopy on demand.

However, for the first level of publication we do have a printed product, i.e. a published collection of the separate abstracts of the applications together with bibliographic data (SE L).

The weekly Swedish Patent Gazette contains bibliographic data concerning national applications, European applications designating Sweden and PCT-applications applied for at the SPRO. The Gazette is available on the Internet (http://www.prv.se/svp/index.html) in PDF format and also as a database.

Bibliographic data of the applications mentioned above and information concerning responses and actions taken in those applications are stored in our database.

With a few exceptions we do not print any paper copies of our patent specifications. Instead, we make them available on the Internet in PDF format through the Gazette, and also on a special site for the use of other Patent Offices. On the latter site the weekly publications are in a zipped format.

III. Matters concerning abstracting, classifying, reclassifying and indexing of technical information contained in patent documents

Reclassification of paper documents, other than Swedish ones, has in principle ceased, due to the advances in search systems.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

Non-US patent documents are filed in classified order according to the IPC. In several technical areas they are filed according to the ECLA. Some [pre-1968] documents are still stored according to the old German classification system.

US patent documents are all filed according to the US Classification System.

However, in most technical areas the SPRO has frozen the search files, no longer adding new paper documents . These areas were chosen in cooperation with the examiners and were those where searches in datebases and systems like EPOQUE will get the same, or better, results than a pure manual search. In all areas, however, the files continue to be updated with Nordic (i.e. SE, DK, FI and NO) specifications.

The files contain the whole PCT minimum documentation together with patent documents from all the Nordic countries. The search files from most countries are complete up to to the date the files were frozen and start with documents from the nineteenth century, i.e. they comprise more than is stipulated by the PCT minimum documentation Rule 34.

Furthermore, a large collection of non-patent literature is included in the files. This collection is more extensive than the non-patent literature stipulated in PCT Rule 34.1.b (iii).

V. Activities in the field of computerized and other mechanized search systems

The migration of patent documents in the BNS system from tape storage to hard disc storage in order to improve performance has continued during the year.

The work of improving the Internet version of our Patent Gazette has continued during 2002.

Use of EPO´s query system EPOQUE has been further developed in cooperation with the EPO.

The SPRO is now scanning its unique patent documents, including translations of European patents (SE T3), for loading into our BNS.

Every year new on-line systems are developed or acquired and loaded into the mainframe computer. The mainframe has been upgraded and new peripherals have been installed. The main purpose of all systems so far has been to support the search and examination work.

On-line searching of external databases made available by DIALOG, QUESTEL-ORBIT, STN etc. is a natural and integrated part of the searching procedure at the SPRO. Databases made available by Swedish hosts are also searched, e.g. MEDLINE (host: MIC--KIBIC/QZ) and BODIL and BYGGFO (host: BYGGDOC). These databases contain information in biomedicine and building technology & research respectively.

All examiners get training courses in on-line searching. Newly employed examiners have to pass an obligatory introduction course. This is followed at regular intervals by different kinds of courses: advanced courses, refresher courses, specialized courses etc. These latter courses are normally in-house courses held by outside instructors from the different hosts, databases or other organisations.

All examiners have their own PC-workstation running on Windows NT, which allows them to access all interesting databases, internal as well as external (EPOQUE, commercial etc) from the same terminal without having to take notes on the side or to make intermediary print-outs.

The SPRO participates in the esp@cenet network.

VI. Administration of the industrial property office library and services available to the public (relating to facilities, e.g., for lodging applications, for assisting clients on searching procedures, for obtaining official publications and registry extracts)

Swedish patent applications, open for public inspection, are available in the main reading room of the SPRO library.

There are workstations for accessing documents from our BNS system, approximately 23,5 million references by the end of year 2002. The documents can be accessed by number or by classification. The public has also access to a collection of patent databases on CD-ROM and on the Internet (i.e. esp@cenet).

The holdings of the SPRO library consist of more than 95.000 volumes of books and journals, and during 2002 the library subscribed to over 750 printed journals. The collections are available to the public for study in the reading room or by inter-library loans. The library catalogue is accessible on the Internet and from workstations in the reading room.

The public has also access to more than 4.750 electronic journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries and handbooks from workstations in the reading room.

The SPRO library is continuously compiling a bibliography within the field of industrial property, searchable on the Internet through the Swedish National Library Catalogue (LIBRIS).

Through the SPRO library the public has additional access to a customer service specialized in answering questions concerning patents, patent applications, patent rights etc.

The SPRO library also produces an electronic IP glossary with approximately 500 keywords translated into Swedish, English, French and German.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of patent documentation and information

On a weekly basis, the Swedish Patent and Registration Office sends magnetic tapes containing bibliographic data of Swedish applications to EPIDOS as well as to the EPO in the Hague.

Only paper is allowed for filing applications. However priority documents can be accepted in the form of microfiche if they fulfill WIPO Standard ST. 21.

The SPRO receives data cartridges from the EPO on a weekly basis, containing new patent documents for loading into our BNS system.

The Swedish patent specifications are available from SPRO's site in weekly zipped files. A "pull" procedure is used.

VIII. Other relevant matters concerning education and training in, and promotion of, the use of patent information, including technical assistance to developing countries

The SPRO gives assistance to developing countries in cooperation with WIPO. Staff from the SPRO has also been released for missions as WIPO experts in developing countries.

IX. Other relevant matters

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. |