SCIT.ATR.PI.2003.SE

Annual Technical Report 2003 on Patent Information Activities submitted by Sweden (SCIT /ATR/PI/2003/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

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

The number of national patent applications was lower than the previous year, i.e., 3619 applications in 2003 compared to 3910 in 2002.

The number of applications filed under Chapter I of the PCT, where the SPRO acts as an International Searching Authority (ISA) was 3731 in 2003, lower than in 2002 (4206 filings). 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 3469 filings in 2002 to 2627 in 2003.

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 for legal purposes 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/default.jsp) 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

Classification and reclassification activities; Classification system used, e.g., International Patent Classification (IPC), other classification (please indicate whether or not patent documents are classified by your Office and, if so, which classification is used)

From 2006, Swedish patent documents will be classified according to the advanced level of the IPC at publication. All active patent applications are in addition classified according to ECLA.

Reclassification of the backfile of Swedish patent documents into ECLA has started and software for this purpose has been created. This reclassification will eventually cover all Swedish patent documents that are now classified according to IPC and do not have a patent family member with an ECLA classification.

A complete, mainly Swedish-language, PDF version of the old German Classification (DPK) has been created. This will be used for simplifying access to those around 160 000 pre-1970 documents that will not be reclassified to ECLA.

Reclassification of paper documents has ceased.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

The files contain the whole PCT minimum documentation (with exception of the US documents), together with patent documents from all the Nordic countries. However, the search files are frozen, no new paper documents are added. The search files from most countries are complete up to the date when 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.

The documents are filed in classified order, mainly according to the IPC. In several technical areas they are filed according to ECLA. Some pre-1968 documents are stored according to DPK.

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 2000, 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 30, 5 million references by the end of year 2003. The documents can be accessed by number or by classification. The public has also access to a collection of patent databases on the Internet (i.e. esp@cenet) and on CD-ROM.

The holdings of the SPRO library consist of more than 100.000 volumes of books and journals, and during 2003 the library subscribed to over 715 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.

Furthermore, the public has access to more than 5.200 electronic journals, encyclopaedias, 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 1500 keywords translated into Swedish, English, French and German.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of patent documentation and information

International or regional cooperation in the exchange of machine-readable information, e.g., bibliographic data, abstract and/or full text 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.

Complete classification data for all Swedish patent documents will be transferred to the EPO. This data will include IPC, ECLA and DPK classifications, depending on which is available.

Medium used for exchange of priority documents

Priority documents can be accepted in the form of microfiche if they fulfill WIPO Standard ST.21.

Medium allowed for filing applications

Only paper is allowed for filing applications.

Implementation of the Statement of Principles Concerning the Changeover to Electronic Data Carriers for the Exchange of Patent Documents (please make a status report on the extent to which your Office has changed over to electronic data carriers for the exchange of patent documents)

The SPRO receives data cartridges from the EPO on a weekly basis, containing scanned new patent documents for loading into our BNS system. Correspondingly, the SPRO sends data cartridges to the EPO on a weekly basis, containing scanned new SE documents as well as scanned new NO documents for loading into EPO's BNS system.

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

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

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.