

SCIT.ATR.PI.2006.JP

Annual Technical Report 2006 on Patent Information Activities submitted by Japan (SCIT /ATR/PI/2006/JP)

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

(1) Patent

The number of applications in 2006 was 408,674 (down 4.3 % from the previous year). The number of registrations was 141,399 (up 15.0 % from the previous year).

(2) Utility model

The number of applications in 2006 was 10,965 (down 3.7 % from the previous year). The number of registrations was 10,593 (up 0.2 % from the previous year).

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

The number of patent applications in the following technical fields has significantly increased in 2005 compared with that in the previous year.*

"A61 Medical or Veterinary Science; Hygiene" (up 13% from the previous year)

"C07 Organic Chemistry" (up 18% from the previous year)

"C12 Biochemistry; Beer; Spirits; Wine; Vinegar; Microbiology; Enzymology; Mutation or Genetic Engineering" (up 14% from the previous year)

"F03 Machines or Engines for Liquids; Wind, Spring, Weight, or Miscellaneous Motors; Producing Mechanical Power or a Reactive Propulsive Thrust, Not Otherwise Provided For" (up 17% from the previous year)

"F21 Lighting" (up 14% from the previous year)

*IPC classes with 500 or more applications in 2005 were examined.

URLs of web pages of the Office's website that provide statistics related to patents

http://www.jpo.go.jp/shiryu_e/toushin_e/kenkyukai_e/pdf/annual_report2006/part5.pdf

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

Publishing, printing, copying (main types of publications of the office in the field of patent information, etc.)

The Japanese Patent Office (hereinafter referred to as the "JPO") published the following patent documents in 2006:

Publication of Patent Applications 353,100 issues

Publication of Unexamined Utility Model Applications 1 issues

Published Japanese Translation of PCT International Publication for Patent Applications 29,081 issues

Publication of Registered Utility Model 11,304 issues

Patent Gazette 134,200 issues

Utility Model Gazette 3 issues

Decision on Appeal/Trial Gazette 14,565 issues

Main types of announcements of the Office in the field of patent information

Nothing particular

Mass storage media used (paper, microforms, optical storage, etc.)

Since December 1990, the JPO began accepting patent applications and utility model applications filed by floppy disk or on-line (electronic application). (Floppy disk application was abolished in 1999.) The JPO electronically edits the collected data acquired from the electronic applications or electronic conversion of paper-based applications and creates gazettes.

A Gazette contains mixed-mode type data, composed of text data and image data, thus text search using text data is also available.

In July 2003, the JPO changed the domestic application forms of patent and/or utility model to conform to the PCT international application form and internationally standardized the electronic formats (use of XML forms). Following this, the format for publication of unexamined applications was changed to XML in January 2004 while the format for publication of registrations was likewise changed in July 2004. At the same time, the providing media of these publications was changed from CD-ROM to DVD-ROM.

a) Publication of Unexamined Applications

Since January 1993, the JPO has issued Publication of Unexamined Applications in the form of a CD-ROM. In the beginning, a single-volume CD-ROM included Publication of Patent Applications and Publication of Unexamined Utility Model Applications, but in July 1994, Publication of Registered Utility Model Applications was added, and from January 1996, the Published Japanese Translations of PCT International Publication for Patent Applications, Published Japanese Translations of PCT International Publication for Utility Model Applications (which was abolished in January 2000), domestic re-publication of PCT international publication for patent applications and domestic re-publication of PCT international publication for utility model applications (which was abolished in January 2000) were added sequentially on the CD-ROM to be published. With respect to patent applications containing sequence listings, the JPO issued a separate volume of a CD-ROM containing sequence listings data of the Publication of Unexamined Applications in October 2001.

A single volume CD-ROM Publication of Unexamined Applications contained a total of 3,300 issues and it was issued 119 times in 2003.

Since January 2004, the Publication of Unexamined Applications has been issued with the format changed from SGML to XML and with the media changed from CD-ROM to DVD-ROM.

A single volume DVD-ROM Publication of Unexamined Applications includes a total of about 8,000 issues and it was issued 50 times in 2005 and 51 times in 2006.

The Publication of Unexamined Applications on DVD-ROM enables search using 16 items as search keys, including document number, IPC, applicant and the name of the invention.

b) Patent Gazette

Since January 1994, the JPO has issued the Publication of Examined Applications in the form of a CD-ROM that includes the Patent Gazette and the Utility Model Gazette. The system of publication of examined application was abolished in January 1996 because of the transfer to the post-grant opposition system, and the publication of Publication of Examined Applications was terminated in March 1996. Starting from May 1996, "the Patent Gazette and the Utility Model Gazette on CD-ROM" which includes post-grant registered gazettes (the Patent Gazette and the Utility Model Gazette) has been issued.

A single CD-ROM Patent Gazette includes a total of about 2,400 issues and it was published 53 times in 2003 and 24 times in 2004.

Since July 2004, the Patent Gazette has been issued with the format changed from SGML to XML and with the media changed from CD-ROM to DVD-ROM.

A single DVD-ROM Patent Gazette includes a total of about 2,500 issues and it was issued 50 times in 2005 and 51 times in 2006.

The Patent Gazette on DVD-ROM enables search using 22 items as search keys, including document number, IPC, applicant and the name of the invention.

c) Publication of Registered Utility Model Applications via the Internet

Until 2005, Publications of Registered Utility Model Applications were issued through recording on a DVD-ROM Official Gazette. Since January 2006 they have been issued once a week via the Internet, thereby making it possible to download Official Gazettes free of charge at any time, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

In addition, even after the start of issuance of Official Gazettes via the Internet, information contained in the Official Gazettes is recorded on DVD-ROM and provided as "information on Publication of Registered Utility Model Applications" one week after issuance in order to meet the need for long-term data storage.

A single Publication of Registered Utility Model Applications includes about 250 cases; such publications were issued 48 times in 2006.

At present, some software companies sell the Japanese-language software necessary to use the DVD-ROM Official Gazette. Several companies also provide Internet-based patent information services that use the data in the DVD-ROM Official Gazette.

The JPO has provided foreign patent offices, free of charge, with viewer software (JMCD4) for the CD-ROM Official Gazette that runs on Windows English version.

Furthermore, the simplified viewer software (JPO.CONV) included in the Publication of Unexamined Applications on CD-ROM issued in January 1996 and thereafter, and the Patent Gazette on CD-ROM issued in May 1996 and thereafter have been modified so as to allow data display even in an English environment, and such modified version of the software has been provided since October 1997.

Since January 2004, the JPO has been providing, free of charge, viewer software (DVD-ROM GAZETTE VIEWER SOFTWARE) for the Official Gazette on DVD-ROM that runs on Windows English version.

Word processing and office automation

Refer to the third section of the paragraph.

(New) techniques used for the generation of patent information (printing, recording, photocomposing, etc.)

Nothing particular

URLs of web pages of the Office's website that provide access to online publication of patent documents and gazettes, and other primary and secondary sources of patent information, including patent publication servers and download of bulk patent data

http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl

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

Abstracting, reviewing, translating

a) Abstract

From December 1, 1990, the JPO has required applicants filing patent application and utility model application to submit an Abstract in addition to filing documents. The Abstract is inserted in the front page of a Gazette together with the bibliographic matters such as the name of the applicant, the title of the invention. Although the Abstract is prepared by the applicant, in order to enhance its utility as the front-page database, the JPO checks whether the content of the Abstract is appropriate, and if it is found inappropriate, the Abstract is modified by the office.

b) Preparation of and Use of Secondary Documents

1) Preparation of English Abstract of Publication of Unexamined Patent Application in Japan

The Patent Abstracts of Japan (hereinafter referred to as the "PAJ") is a paper booklet which combines English Abstracts of publications of patent applications, filed by Japanese applicants, and their representative drawing. The JPO has been sending the PAJ to foreign patent offices since its first issue.

Since April 1995, The PAJ for publications of patent applications, issued in October 1994 or later, has been issued in mixed mode CD-ROM format by using MIMOSA software that Trilateral Patent Offices (EPO, JPO, and USPTO) jointly procured since April 1995, instead of in the conventional paper booklet form. Currently the PAJ is sent to 87 foreign patent offices and public institutions.

PAJs issued in the paper booklet form (from 1976 to 1993) were subsequently sorted into 69 technical fields and published by IPC section on 99 CD-ROMs.

Starting from the issue in April 1998, all applications by both Japanese and foreigners have been issued in PAJs.

The PAJ/CD-ROM is sold to the general public, and can be used to create in-house database or to provide information services to a third party.

2) Preparation of PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM

The PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM contains a bibliography and an abstract of PAJs, and the disk number of the corresponding PAJ/CD-ROM.

The JPO has been publishing PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM quarterly since April 1997. The information on each PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM is organized chronologically based on a 3-month period and covers a one-year period. The PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM is also sent to foreign patent offices and public institutions that currently receive the PAJ/CD-ROM.

3) Preparation of PAJ/CD-ROM Foreign Applicant Version

PAJ (disclosed after 1998) published in April 1998 included that of foreign applicants, but foreigners' applications filed between 1989 and 1997 which had not been prepared as PAJ were collected and stored in six CD-ROMs and then issued in the following schedule, namely; G section in March 1998; A and H sections in March 1999; C section in March 2000; and B, D, E & F sections in March 2001.

4) Foreign patent documents

The JPO prepares coded data of Japanese abstracts of US patent specifications, the publication of US patent specifications and the publication of EPO patent specifications. The data are stored electronically and used as search reference.

The services from 1) to 4) above have been operated by INPIT since October 2004.

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)

In 2006, the number of applications classified by the JPO by the International Patent Classification was: about 400, 000 when the application was laid open, about 130,000 when the Patent Gazette or Utility Model Gazette was issued, and about 10,000 when the registered utility model gazette was issued.

The JPO positively participated in the activities for the revision of the IPC, and sent their delegates to IPC-related WIPO meetings for aggressive activities.

Coordinate indexing (domestic deep indexing systems, keyword indexing)

The JPO continued the indexing of ICIREPAT types in the alloy field.

1) System name and symbol Alloy AL

2) Storage media Magnetic disk, variable block

3) Development stage Indexing is continued

4) The number of indexed documents, year and origin About 99,000 documents by 2006 Japan.

Hybrid system indexing

An F-term derived by reorganising or subdividing the IPC for each predetermined technical fields from a variety of technical standpoints (purpose, usage, structure, material, manufacturing method, processing method, control means, etc.) is assigned to each documents and used as search keys.

Bibliographic data and full-text processing

Full text search service that integrate the following technologies (1) to (4) has been provided:

(1) Technology to produce an automaton based on search condition and apply the targeted data for search to the automaton to evaluate the matched condition (SIGMA search technology)

(2) Technology to store the targeted data for search in a plain text file that has a different tag of XML data file; the tag allows searching bibliographic data and data of the main body, such as specification, paying attention to the type of data (Transforming the targeted data for search into data in XML form data structure)

(3) Technology using split processing and parallel searches of the targeted data for search, thereby enabling coping with the increase of data solely by adding more servers on a case-by-case basis, in order to perform a high-speed full-text search of Japanese, English and other documents, irrespective of the increase of data (High volume technology)

(4) Technology to perform a search under one search condition by combining each search condition of each search request with "OR" and to provide the search answer by dividing the search results based on each search request, in the case of unspecified number of search requests (High-traffic technology)

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

File building

a) F-term Analysis

The search file is classified into about 2,600 themes (technical fields). In 2006, about 1,800 themes were analyzed. Almost all themes, including about 800 themes for which F-term assignment is not needed (FI is sufficient) and about 1,800 themes for which analysis of the published documents have completed, can be used in the search.

b) Making F-terms Available to the General Public

The JPO opens all F-terms of the themes which are available to general public. By the industrial property right information via the Internet, F-term is available to general public and users can conduct F-term search through the use of Industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL) of INPIT.

Updating

Updating of the Search File

The search file used by the examiner is continuously updated so that it is the latest one. To the search files, Japanese patent documents (publication of patent applications, publication of registered utility model, etc.) are added in accordance with the JPO's internal classifications (FI) developed by subdividing the IPC. In 2006, about 200,000 documents in total were added to the search file.

Storage, including mass storage media

The search indices file used by the examiner is stored in the form of electronic data on RAID. For full text search, all documents are stored on memory.

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

Text data and image data of the WIPO, the USPTO and the EPO, as well as image data of major European countries are stored, and IPC, ECLA and USPC search is possible.

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

In-house systems (online/offline)

a) Patent and Utility Model Search System (F-term search system)

In December 1999, a patent and utility model search system, based on a distributed computing system, was put into operation. This system integrated (clustered) not only the conventional F-term search system and a system to search computer-software related non-patent literature (CS literature), but also a foreign patent document search system using EPO internal classification (ECLA) and the United States patent classification (USPC). Multiple search keys, such as F-term, FI, free word, CS term, ECLA and USPC, can be inputted simultaneously; thus an examination environment, enabling seamless search of various documents, such as domestic patents, foreign patents, non-patents, was created. This system enables referencing by linking patent family documents, citing documents, and cited documents. Furthermore, the text data of prior to laying-open specifications is stored and is available for search.

A full text search in Japanese and English is also available by use of text data of the domestic patent gazette collected through the paperless system and text data of the foreign patent gazette.

In addition, in January 2005, a new terminal incorporating 2 screens, one ordinary high-resolution LCD for performing search work and one super high-resolution LCD for displaying documents such as Patent Gazette and the like, was introduced.

b) Search System for Example of Appeals and Trials and Court Decisions (J-term search system)

Gazettes and other documents on appeal and trial decisions are converted into electronic form and search keys, called J-term, are assigned to them; thereby enabling search and browsing by using J-term. A full-text search is available for appeal and trial decisions issued after January 2000.

c) DNA Search System

This is a system introduced in January 1998 for searching gene-related information, and enables homology search, which searches for a sequence utilizing homology in respect of nucleotide sequences and amino acid sequences, and keyword search, which utilizes bibliographic data.

(offline)

a) LiqCryst

The JPO stores to PC a database of liquid crystal materials, provided in CD-ROM format by University of Hamburg, Federal Republic of Germany, thereby enabling a search.

b) Microsoft TechNet

This system enables search of the database about the most advanced computer technical information provided by CD-ROM from Microsoft.

c) CODE V

This system enables database searches for various optical properties of lens systems shown in many publicly known documents, which are provided on CD-ROM by the Optical Research Associates based on the conditions established by said optical properties.

External databases

The examiners of the JPO use the following external databases for searches. Any database listed below can be used online from the PC in the JPO.

a) PATOLIS

A Japanese patent document search system, provided by PATOLIS Corporation.

b) JDream II

A scientific and technical document search system, provided by Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

c) STN

A search system for the database of the science and technology field which is mainly used for searching CAS-related databases.

d) Science Direct

A website provided by the Elsevier for searching more than 1,800 journals in the science, technology, medicine and social science fields published by the Elsevier Group, and EMBASE, Compendex and other bibliographic databases, and reference works, etc..

e) IEEEExplore

An internet search site provided by IEEE/IEE for searching their publications including magazines and minutes, IEEE standard, etc..

f) ACM/DL

An internet search site provided by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) for searching their scientific association journals.

g) Nikkei Biotech Online

An internet search site provided by Nikkei Business Publications Inc. for searching biotechnology-related articles published in "Nikkei Biotech" magazine.

h) INTERGLAD

A search system provided by the New Glass Forum for searching a database of glass formation information via internet.

i) Science Online

An internet search site for searching biotechnology-related information published in "Science" magazine.

j) ProQuest

An internet search site provided by PQIL Limited for searching economy and finance-related documents.

k) Web of Science

An internet search site storing bibliographic information from about 8,700 important scientific journals and enabling search for their citation relationship.

l) G-Search

An internet search site for enabling search for full text articles on general newspapers, industrial journals and specialty magazines.

m) NRI Cyber Patent Desk

An internet search site for enabling search for abstracts of company technical journals and for enabling concept-based search.

n) Shoku Net

An internet search site for searching articles in various fields concerning foods.

o) AIP On-line

An internet search site provided by AIP for searching journals titled "Journal of Applied Physics," "Applied Physics Letters," "Review of Scientific Instruments," etc..

p) I-Chu-Shi WEB

An internet search site for searching "Igaku Chuo Journal", carrying information on medical science, pharmaceutical science, dentistry and their related fields.

q) Medical and Pharmaceutical Prepared Document Full Text DB

An internet search site for enabling search for full text of about 200 institutes prepared documents in medical and pharmaceutical fields.

r) Dialog Web

An on-line information search system provided by Dialog Limited having at least 500 varieties of commercial-use database of information on patent, medical, pharmaceutical, science, technology, humanity & enterprises etc in the world.

s) QWEB2

An on-line information search service provided by Questel.Orbit Limited enabling search for the patent, the trademark, and the document in the world.

t) JJAP Online

An on-line internet search site of the JJAP (Japanese Journal of Applied Physics) published by the Japan Society of Applied Physics.

u) Colour Index

An Internet search sites for searching information on colorants and pigments.

v) Nature.com

An Internet search site for searching a magazine "Nature" containing science and technology papers and related magazines.

w) Chemical Documents Library

An on-line Internet search site for full-text searches and inspection of "Chemical Handbook," "Experimental Science Course," and "Standard Chemical Term Dictionary" edited by the Chemical Society of Japan as well as searches of compounds based on the "Chemical Handbook: Basic Edition; Revised 5th Edition; CD-ROM.

x) CiNii

An Internet search site covering about 2.8 million papers published in academic and association journals in Japan and abroad, which are possessed by the NII (National Institute of Informatics).

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

a) An electronic application and file wrapper system

The JPO has been using an electronic application and file wrapper system since December 1990. This system improves the efficiency of administrative works by computerizing application filing, formality/substantive examinations, dispatch, registration, gazette publications, and requesting for inspection of files, requesting for certification. Whole contents of the application are stored in an electronic file, processed and managed. Currently, to improve the efficiency of drafting by linking drafting system with the search systems and of examination by implementing electronic approval, and for faster gazette publication and for separate management of each applications, the following subsystems are operating;

- (1) Filing system (electronic application filing)
- (2) Formality check system (automatic formality check, formality-check-related drafting, approval and time management, etc)
- (3) On-line dispatch system (on-line notification to applicants)
- (4) On-line viewing system (online request and viewing)
- (5) Examination-related administrative work system (substantive-examination-related drafting, approval and management, etc)
- (6) System for appeals and trials (appeals-and-trials-related drafting, approval and management, etc)
- (7) Gazette system (automatic preparation of the Gazette)
- (8) Registration clerical work system (registration of establishment of right, management of original register, etc.)

Owing to the introduction of these systems, an applicant can file a patent application or a utility model application via on-line from a personal computer. Moreover, introduced is a paperless system related to the appeal (including reconsideration by examiner before appeal) and to the domestic administrative procedures of a JPO-designated PCT international application. In April 2004, the electronic filing of the PCT international application was started.

In 2006, the ratios of online electronic filing to all applications were 97% for patent and utility model, 91% for design, 83% for trademark, 98% for appeal, 99% for the domestic administrative procedures of a PCT internal application, and 83% for PCT international application.

In addition to electronic filing via the conventional ISDN line, acceptance of electronic filing via the Internet was initiated in October 2005 for patent and utility model applications, appeals and the domestic administrative procedures for PCT internal applications, and in January 2007 for PCT international applications. In October 2005, the acceptance hours were extended, as a result of which applications are accepted at any time, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Internet filing utilizes electronic certifications corresponding with the Government Public Key Infrastructure (GKPI) for identity verification and prevention of alteration, and an "Electronic Payment" system is also available, which allows for payment of patent application fees and other fees via Internet banking.

b) Other administrative procedure systems (existing systems)

The following systems, operating before the electronic application system was introduced, have been operating successfully.

(1) Application-related management system

This system provides computerized central management for application-related administrative work, including management of various progress information, extraction of an application for which a gazette is to be published and preparation of various statistical tables. (The management of patents and utility models, and designs and trademarks filed prior to the electronic application system.)

(2) A file wrapper administrative work system for the INPIT

This system provides computerized central management for administrative work data, relating to disposed file wrapper kept in the INPIT, and performs duties, such as management and storage of file wrappers, lending and returning a file wrapper by using terminals.

Starting from January 2007, the National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training (INPIT) will take over operations for this system from the JPO.

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

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- (5) Examination-related administrative work system (substantive-examination-related drafting, approval and management, etc)
- (6) System for appeals and trials (appeals-and-trials-related drafting, approval and management, etc)
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Existing online thesauri; their structure, presentation and usefulness for computerized searches

Since December 1999, the JPO has been operating the patent and utility model search system which enables a full text search function by utilizing the data collected through the paperless system. The collected text data includes domestic patent gazette, foreign patent gazette, and non-patent literature. This search function supports the use of thesaurus dictionaries.

By use of the Thesaurus dictionary, a user can search a synonym, related word, superordinate word, and subordinate word, and perform Japanese-English and English-Japanese translation of the search word. When performing full text search, reduction of users' burden such as producing and inputting of a search query, and improvement of accuracy and efficiency of the full text search can be realized because the words searched, displayed, and translated by the Thesaurus dictionary can be easily converted into the search query.

The Thesaurus dictionary loaded on the present patent and utility model search system and the functions using the Thesaurus dictionary are as follows:

(Available thesaurus dictionaries)

a) Common dictionary (synonyms)

A dictionary in which synonyms of common words are collected.

b) Common dictionary (by-form)

A dictionary in which by-forms of the common words are collected.

c) JICST dictionary (Japanese version)

A dictionary prepared by Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) having technical terms in Japanese collected therein.

d) JICST dictionary (English version)

A dictionary prepared by Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) having technical terms in English collected therein.

e) JICST dictionary (Japanese-English translation)

A dictionary having correspondence of technical terms between Japanese and English collected therein.

f) Theme dictionary

A dictionary prepared by theme, and having technical terms of the technical field registered therein by the user. This dictionary can be freely edited by a user by himself, and the edited contents can be commonly used by all users.

(Available functions)

1) Search query input assist function

A function is used inputting search query of full text search.

The function can automatically produce a search query, wherein synonyms, subordinate and related words are displayed in a tree-form by inputting a search word, and then optional words are selected there from, thus the selected words can be searched at one time.

Furthermore, a series of all of the procedures can be automatically performed. Moreover, when producing the search query, search areas of a document can also be designated.

VI. Administration of the industrial property office library and information products 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)

Planning, administration, automation, security, buildings

The Intellectual Property Related Materials Reading Room is provided on the first basement of the JPO office building, and is operated in the following manner. And it is a branch library of the National Diet Library.

(1) The user

- JPO workers and those who obtained permission from the Director of the Patent Information Division (inclusive of public users).

- Personnel of the National Diet Library and personnel of the branch libraries of each ministries and government offices.

(2) Open

- 9:30 to 18:00

Collecting, acquisitions, preparation

The following are collected: Materials concerning industrial property right legislation and the peripheral laws inside and outside of Japan, related materials necessary for understanding industrial property right, related materials necessary for study of industrial property right, and reference materials for general administration.

As of the end of 2006, the library contains 32,000 volumes.

Collection management, preservation

Books are added with the storage number and classification and put on shelves, while bibliographic information is inputted in the library system to construct a database for a collection of books.

Interlibrary lending, resource sharing, networks of patent libraries in the country

Interlibrary lending of books etc. has been conducted among the National Diet Library and the branch libraries of each ministries and government offices.

Furthermore, the JPO participates in "Distributed Type Comprehensive Data System" which permits a batch retrieval of the database for a collection of books of the each branch libraries by use of the inter-Ministry network (Wide Area Network), Kasumigaseki WAN (LAN of the each ministries and government offices (in-house Local Area Network)), which is constructed by the National Diet Library.

Information services available to the public (including computerized services and search files contained in libraries remote from your Office and patent information posted by your Office on the World Wide Web)

a) Providing industrial property right information via the internet

The JPO has been providing the Industrial Property Digital Library(IPDL) service since March 1999. This service is accessible through the Internet and covers 61.0 million items of industrial property information by using document number and classification as search keys. The service was transferred from October 2004 to INPIT, and has been operated thereby.

Main services relating to patent information that the JPO provides are as follows;

(1) Simplified Search for beginners (patent and utility model)

This search means is for beginners who are not familiar with industrial property information. Patent and utility model application gazettes on CD-ROMs and DVD-ROMs (publication and re-publication of utility model applications and registrations) issued since 1993 can be referred to by free-word searches or by document number.

(2) Patent/utility model gazette database search

Various patent and utility model gazettes (including publication of patent applications, examined applications and registrations), published in 1885 and later can be searched by using document number. Download and printing of Official Gazettes on document-by-document basis has become possible since March 2006. An English version is available.

(3) Search for patent/utility model documents by reference numbers

Searches for patent/utility model gazettes published since 1921 can be made by reference number. An English version is available.

(4) Gazette text searches

Publications of patent and utility model applications published from January 1993 onward as well as publications of examined patent and utility model applications and publications of registrations published from January 1994 onward can be searched by free word or document number searches. Download and printing of Official Gazettes on a document-by-document basis have been possible since March 2006. In addition, in March 2007, Japanese abstracts of US patent specifications and publications of US patent specifications will be included in the search subjects, and the number of input columns for search items will be increased.

(5) Front page searches for publication of patent applications

The front pages of publications of patent applications published from January 1993 onward can be searched by free word or document number searches.

(6) Patent classification searches

In October 2006, conventional IPC searches and FI and/or F-term Retrieval were integrated and made available as patent classification search services. Various patent/utility model gazettes published from 1885 onward can be searched by using FI and F-terms as well as facet and IPC used within the JPO. For FI and/or F-term retrieval, an English version is also available.

(7) Patent map guidance

IPC list, FI list, F-term descriptions and F-term list can be referenced. An English version is also available. Explanations of additional F-term codes have been available in the English version services since March 2004.

(8) Patent Abstracts of Japan (PAJ) Search

English abstracts of publications of patent applications issued from 1976 onward can be searched by free word or document number searches. Also, since March 2000, the JPO has been providing the full texts (machine translation into English) of publications of patent applications issued from January 1993 onward.

(9) Online File Inspections

Inspection of documents sent to applicants by the JPO after July 2003 has been available since March 2006 by way of using document numbers. In addition, in March 2007, documents subject to inspection will be expanded to include documents sent by applicants and documents used within the JPO.

Further, the published appeal and trial decisions in 1940 and after, and as related information, the information on appeal and trial decisions, the legal status on applications, registrations and trial decisions are provided.

b) Providing JPO data

In March 1999, the JPO began providing the JPO's bibliographical and progress information to outside users by organizing and converting it in the standard format for better usability for the outside users. This service was transferred to INPIT from October 2004, and has been provided to the outside users twice a month.

c) Access Service of the Patent Gazettes

INPIT has provided about 145 devices for search for the Patent Gazette access room on the second floor of the JPO office building to allow the public access to the "IPDL Service," "CD-ROM /DVD-ROM Gazette", etc. free of charge.

At the same time, in eight places (Sapporo, Sendai, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima, Takamatsu, Fukuoka, and Naha), such devices are provided for giving search service. The number of the users of the services at the above devices in 2006 was about 53,000.

d) Reference to examination and trial documents

INPIT is collecting various technical documents (books, etc.), which are used in the examinations and trials by the JPO, widely from inside and outside of Japan and made available to the public.

e) Provision of Licensable Patent Information

The INPIT provides a database via internet for licensable patents owned by companies, universities and public research institutes, etc in order to promote smoothly transferring these licensable patents.

The database named Patent Licensing Database includes approximately 58,000 licensable patents as of March 2007.

f) Intellectual Property Center

59 Intellectual Property Centers throughout the nation have widely implemented support operations for users including regional companies and applicants etc. They have given advice to the users, provided them guidance in retrieval methods of patent information, etc. according to their purposes, regularly conducted workshops and prepared booklets relating to retrieval methods of patent information etc.

URLs of web pages of the Office's website that provide information on business procedures such as: filing, publication, examination and grant procedures related to patents; opposition and appeal procedures related to patents; etc.

http://www.jpo.go.jp/tetuzuki_e/t_gaiyo_e/pa_right.htm

URLs of web pages of the Office's website that provide a description of information products and services offered by the Office (e.g., patent search service(s), patent databases, etc.), as well as information on how to access and utilize them

http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl

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

a) Trilateral data exchange and data exchange between two countries

Regarding the trilateral exchange of data, the JPO periodically provides bibliographic data of the publications of unexamined patent/utility model applications, recorded in electronic media (such as DVD-R, etc), to the European Patent Office (EPO) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

In addition, the JPO sends concordance data of patent document numbers, Patent Abstracts of Japan (PAJ) data, and IPC files stored in electronic media (such as DVD-R, etc.).

As a bilateral data exchange project, the JPO sent image data and bibliographic data of the Patent Gazette and Utility Model Gazette, etc., published before the publication of the CD-ROM Official Gazette, stored on electronic media (such as CD-R) to the Republic of Korea in March 2005.

The EPO sends to the JPO the data by CMT. Incorporating the publication of unexamined applications bibliographic data provided by the JPO, the data includes the consolidated and edited bibliographic data of: the publication of unexamined applications of each country; full text image data of laid-open patent application specifications; and the data of classifications, patent inventory and patent family.

The USPTO sends to the JPO full text image data of patent application specifications and full text image data of laid-open patent application specifications by DLT and classification data by FTP.

b) Trilateral exchange of DNA sequence data

The JPO sent the DNA sequence data published in publications of patent applications, etc. (about 5,000 data) to the National Institute of Genetics, one of the intermediaries for the trilateral data exchange.

c) English translation of FI and F-terms

They have been translated into English under the cooperation of Trilateral Patent Offices. The translated data was sent to USPTO and EPO as trilateral exchange data.

In addition, they have been published in Industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL) since March 2001.

An English version for 100 themes of the F-term manual was produced in March 2006 and will send to the USPTO and EPO in July 2007. They have also been posted in the IPDL since September 2005.

d) Sending Official Gazette on DVD-ROM to overseas

The JPO mutually exchanges official gazettes, etc. with 87 organizations (including international organizations) in 74 nations, out of which it sends the DVD-ROM Patent Gazette to 31 organizations. The JPO also sends the DVD-ROM of the publication of unexamined applications to 27 organizations.

Those gazettes sent to the above countries and organizations include PAJ (Patent Abstracts of Japan), which has become a project of INPIT since October 2004.

Medium used for exchange of priority documents

On-line (for exchange with EPO, KIPO and USPTO), CD-R (to be sent to WIPO)

Medium allowed for filing applications

On-line or paper or as PCT applications, those sent by fax

CD-R or flexible disc may be used in case of emergency except for cases of PCT application.

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

See 5th item of Paragraph II and 1st and second items of Paragraph VII.

VIII. Other relevant matters concerning education and training in, and promotion of, the use of patent information, including technical assistance to developing countries (please indicate URLs of web pages of the Office's website wherever appropriate)

Training courses for national and foreign participants, use of audiovisual means

See second and third items.

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

a) Activities and assistance through WIPO Funds-in-Trust/Japan

(1) Dispatch of Experts

The JPO sent one expert official to the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) of the People's Republic of China in order to give guidance and advice regarding patent examinations in the field of Medical Science.

(2) Holding of Workshops

The JPO supported the workshop on "Automation of Intellectual Property Offices and the Development of Intellectual Property Databases" held by WIPO in Indonesia in July 2006. The JPO will also support to hold a workshop on the theme of the "The Role of Automation Process in Effective Management of Intellectual Property Offices and Their Services" in Vietnam in March 2007 to conduct exchanges of opinions on efforts to address computerization-related problems and successful examples of computerization.

(3) Training for government officials

In cooperation with WIPO, the JPO held the training course on the Use of Information Technology for about 2 weeks in Japan.

b) Assistance to developing countries using other institutions

(1) Dispatch of Experts

Under the Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) scheme, the JPO sent an official as a long-term expert to the National Office of Intellectual Property of Viet Nam (NOIP) and an official to the Directorate General of Intellectual Property Rights, Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Government of Indonesia (DGIPR) as a long-term expert. The JPO also sent 3 officials as short-term experts to the NOIP.

(2) Modernization of Intellectual Property Administration

From May 1999 to May 2003, the "Modernization of Industrial Property Administration Project" at the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IP-Phil) to establish patent administration system was carried out by JICA. The JPO dispatched long-term experts for technology transfer and human resource development. The follow-up cooperation project has been carrying out from November 2004. The project will be completed in March 2007.

From April 2000 to June 2004, the "Modernization of Industrial Property Administration Project in Viet Nam", at the NOIP was carried out by JICA. This project was aimed at developing human resources through the automation of administrative work in the NOIP. Since January 2005, the project for establishment of IPDL system and e-filing system has been carrying out. The JPO has dispatched long-term experts and has supported the project.

In Indonesia, under a JICA development study scheme, the JPO has been supporting the establishment of Intellectual Property Digital Library (IPDL) system at the DGIPR from June 2005. This project will be completed in March 2007.

(3) Training for government officials

The JPO invited 3 counterparts to the JICA experts, who have been dispatched from the JPO to Vietnam and Indonesia on a long-term basis, respectively from Vietnam and Indonesia, to provide them with lectures/on-site training on computer-related technology and other technological fields.

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

a) Briefing sessions

(1) Workshop on IPDL

Workshops for patent search using the Industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL) were held for individuals and medium and small sized companies concurrently on holidays.

July 2006 Tokyo

September 2006 Tokyo

November 2006 Osaka

December 2006 Tokyo

Nagoya

February 2007 Sendai

Fukuoka

The above services have been provided at the National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training (INPIT), an Independent Administrative Institution since October 2004.

b) Patent Information Advisor

In order to realize effective use of IP information in medium and small-sized enterprises and universities/research institutions, INPIT dispatches Patent Information Advisors to each prefecture to give advices on how to search and use IP information, and to hold workshops, thus responding to various demands regarding the use of the IP information.

Studies to identify trends in new technology, e.g., by the use of patent statistics, preparation of monographs, etc.

The JPO conducts surveys on technological trends in patent applications, in which patent information is analyzed from multiple perspectives, primarily in fields in which numbers of applications are significantly increasing or in which technological advances are foreseen. The purpose of these surveys is to prepare materials for accurate examination and basic materials for considering examination structures and to contribute to the formulation of the future direction of technological development and R&D by companies and research institutes.

In FY 2006, the JPO conducted surveys concerning the following themes:

- Zoom lens technology
- Total Control Technology for Electrophotographic Devices
- Alarm systems
- Cleaning technology in semiconductor device manufacturing
- Nanoimprint technology, and submicro forming and processing technology in resin finishing
- Reconfigurable logic circuits
- Latest Speaker Technology, with a particular focus on small speakers
- Robotics
- Fuel cells
- Applications of nanotechnology: carbon nanotubes, optical semiconductors and scanning probe microscopes
- Post- genomic technology: Protein-Level Analysis
- High-Density Hard Disk Drives

The results of the surveys on the above 12 themes are available on the JPO website (Japanese version only)

IX. Other general information related to the Office that is available on the Internet -- URLs of web pages of the Office's website that:

provide information on legislation related to patents

<http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/hourei/data/PA.pdf>

contain the Annual Report of the Office

http://www.jpo.go.jp/cgi/linke.cgi?url=/shiryoku_e/toushin_e/kenkyukai_e/annual_report2006.htm

if necessary, provide further information related to the topics referred to in the current ATR

Nothing particular

provide open source codes related to patent information systems

Nothing particular

contain patent-related news regarding the Office

<http://www.jpo.go.jp/index.htm>

X. Other relevant matters

Nothing particular

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.