

SCIT.ATR.ID.2005.GB

Annual Technical Report 2005 on Industrial Design Information Activities submitted by United Kingdom (SCIT/ATR/ID/2005/GB)

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 expression "industrial designs" covers industrial designs and models. Offices which issue design patents should report their design patent information activities in this series of Annual Technical Reports.

I. Evolution of registration activities

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

2004

Design Applications filed: 4179
Design Registrations: 3182

2005

Design Applications filed: 3586
Design Registrations: 3491

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

Demand for Designs in 2005 dropped by 14% compared to 2004. This continues the reducing demand that started during 2003 following the establishment of the Community Design.

New rules are being introduced on 1 October 2006 which will allow applications for multiple examinations and a new fee regime will be introduced. Fees will be split into an application fee and a publication fee. Publication and payment of the relevant fee can be deferred by up to twelve months. The effects of these changes are unlikely to be known until 2007.

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, and distribution of industrial design documents and of secondary sources of industrial design information, i.e., official gazettes

Publishing, including printing, copying techniques and electronic printing

Lists of designs which have been registered, renewed, corrected, or which have requested restoration are published weekly in the Patents and Designs Journal. This is an electronic only weekly journal published on our web site (www.patent.gov.uk).

Designs are also published in our weekly Designs in View Journal. An electronic version currently in development and due to be available later in 2006 will offer a range of search options including Proprietor, Service Agent, image and Locarno Class. A pdf version and weekly CD will also be available.

Main types of announcements of the Office in the field of industrial design information

Office notices are published in the weekly electronic journal; The Patents and Design Journal and the paper Designs in View. Notices are also published on the Patent Office web site.

III. Matters concerning classifying, reclassifying and indexing of industrial design information according to the classification systems applied

Classification and reclassification activities; Classification system used, e.g., International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification), other classification (please indicate whether industrial designs are classified by your Office and, if so, which classification is used)

Design applications are currently classified according to the Locarno Classification, 7th Edition. Locarno Classification 8th Edition will become the standard by the middle of 2006. Class 99 is subject to internal adaptation to allow classification of applications containing logos.

Bibliographic data and processing for search purposes

Although no formal search is carried out as part of the examination process a commercial search is available. An Internet search allows search by Locarno Class or Proprietor or a combination of these items.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

The UK registration process does not include a novelty search but examiners are able to raise objections against application if their own knowledge is such that they are aware the design is not new. The UK office has recently consulted users of the designs registration service on the future of the examination process and new rules will be introduced with effect from 1 October 2006.

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

No documentation from other offices is maintained or considered part of any search files.

V. Activities in the field of computerized search systems for industrial designs

In-house systems (online/offline)

Searches are undertaken in a number of ways. Bibliographic details are held on the ACORD system which runs on an ICL mainframe. Designs images and associated bibliographic details are maintained on the internal Designs Registry Image Management System (DRIMS) which is used for searching within the office. A public web-based service is offered via the DRIMSwweb system. Public search is also available in the British Library Business and IP Centre sited in London. Both DRIMS and DRIMSwweb are based on standard Documentum architecture.

External databases

No external databases are searched.

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

All UK Designs Registry staff are equipped with networked Pentium 4 PCs running the Windows XP operating system attached to a local area network running Novell NetWare 6. 5. Standard automation products available to all staff include Microsoft Office products such as Word and Excel. Novell GroupWise 6.5 is currently used for e-mail. Access to the ACORD mainframe system and the DRIMS image system is available via the networked PCs

VI. Administration of industrial design services available to the public (relating to facilities, e.g., for lodging applications, registering designs, assisting clients with search procedures, obtaining official publications and registry extracts)

Planning, administration, automation, security

Applications for design registration can be made by post or in person to our Newport, South Wales or London offices.

Bibliographic details of applications are captured to the ACORD system with design images scanned onnto the DRIMS system.

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

The Patent Office web site provides a wide range of information including the benefits of design registration, how to register a design, design law and legal decisions, guides to applicants, examination practice and frequently asked questions. All currently used forms are available in pdf format along with guidance on completion and applicable fee information.

Brochures and guides for applicants are available via the web site or through our Central Enquiry Unit which acts as a contact centre for all areas of Intellectual Property. The Enquiry Unit also offers general guidance about designs, with more specialised advice being available from the designs examination section. A search of registered designs is available on payment of a fee. A search by Proprietor or Locarno classification is available on our web site via the DRIMSwweb system.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of industrial design documentation and information

International or regional cooperation in the exchange of industrial design information, e.g., in the form of official gazettes

There is no formal exchange of documentation or information but this is made freely available to other intellectual property offices.

VIII. Matters concerning education and training including technical assistance to developing countries

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

A series of events for small and medium sized enterprises were held around the UK advising on how to manage intellectual property including advice relating to the UK design registration process.

Exchanges of information were held with a number of overseas design registries in person with visits to the UK or individual contacts with design examination staff.

IX. Other relevant matters