

SCIT.ATR.PI.2005.MW

Annual Technical Report 2005 on Patent Information Activities submitted by Malawi (SCIT /ATR/PI/2005/MW)

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

In 2005, 246 applications were filed. 245 of these were lodged under the African Regional Industrial Property Organisation (ARIPO). This shows an increase of 4.24 % in comparison with the previous year.

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

Applications increased by 4.24% and grants increased by 17.76% as compared to previous year.

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 Malawi patent office publishes new patent applications, accepted applications and granted patents through local patents journal. Information published in the journal includes patent application number, applicant filing date, title of invention, date of acceptance, international Patent Classification symbol (IPC) Patent number priority date, patentee, name of agent etc. Technical content of the document is made available to the public for inspection in our library or can be supplied as a photocopy on notice, rulings, (in case of objections) are also done in the journal. Copies of journals are sent to ARIPO, WIPO, Japanese Patent Office and Intellectual Property Offices.

-Main mode of storage of patent information is in paper format.

-Word processing is done on computers.

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

It's done in papers .

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

Main mode of storage of patent information is in paper format.

Word processing and office automation

Word processing is done on computers and office automation is in pipeline.

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

Abstracting, reviewing, translating

Malawi Patent Office does not abstract technical information from 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)

International Patent Classification (IPC) is used at the office by the examiners.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

File building

Registers for applications and granted patents are kept and updated regularly.

Updating

Updating is done regularly by examiners.

Storage, including mass storage media

Storage is in paper form and for each of the new patent application received, a fresh file is opened, in addition to the registers.

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

In-house systems (online/offline)

Retrieval of information on CDs and DVDs which include Espace Access Mimosa, Espace World Mimosa, Espace Globat Pat, Patent Abstracts of Japan is done on request. Activities relating to WIPO's automation system are underway and progressing.

External databases

No external database.

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)

Planning, administration, automation, security, buildings

Applicants seeking protection of their inventions file applications through International Bureau (in case of PCT applications) or any member state of PCT, or ARIPO office or any contracting member state of ARIPO(in case of ARIPO patents) or direct to the office. In all cases, applicant (s) are required to be represented by the Agent(s) (Patent Attorneys). Applications are currently filed in paper format. Files are not taken out of the office. As we receive new applications, examiners record them in the manual index.

Collecting, acquisitions, preparation

As we receive new applications, examiners record them in the manual index.

Collection management, preservation

New applications which have been examined are kept in paper format.

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)

Searches are conducted within the office. Personal aided search is allowed for interested applicants. Any document concerning patents can be obtained on request from the library.No information posted on the www.

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

During the period under review, the office organized one workshop for Small and Medium Enterprises.

Medium allowed for filing applications

It's in paper format.

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)

Presently information is in paper format and in due course it will be in electronic format and the office will be using RW CDs, Email and other portable electronic data carriers.

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

IX. Other relevant matters

In the year 2005 patent administrator attended workshops and conferences in the following countries:- Sweden, Norway, China, Singapore, Austria, Switzerland.

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.