



"In view of the significant benefit to stakeholders of developing a transparent and harmonized approach to a global classification system for patent documents...

...the USPTO and the EPO have agreed together to work toward the formation of a partnership to explore the development of a joint classification system...that will incorporate the best classification practices of the two offices...

— Joint statement by the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, Mr David Kappos, and the President of the EPO, Mr Benoît Battistelli, 25 October 2010 —

...Stakeholders will receive regular updates on the substance and progress of classification partnership discussions between the two offices."

Through the implementation of CPC, the USPTO and the EPO believe that applicants and the user community will derive many benefits. Once fully implemented, the Offices anticipate CPC will:

- Enhance examination efficiency;
- Improve access to more documents from patent offices around the world;
- Improve navigation and understanding of a single classification system;
- Facilitate worksharing on patent applications filed in multiple IP offices;
- Improve consistency of classified search results across IP Offices; and
- Provide adaptive and actively maintained classification schemes.

For more information :

www.cpcinfo.org
(avail. 25 Oct. 2011)

www.uspto.gov

www.epo.org

Cooperative Patent Classification

CPC

An informative guide to the EPO's and USPTO's effort to migrate towards a collaboratively managed bilateral classification system.



UNITED STATES PATENT
AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

What is CPC?



THE UNITED STATES PATENT
AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Europäisches
Patentamt
European
Patent Office
Office européen
des brevets

What is CPC?

The Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) effort is a joint partnership between the USPTO and the EPO where the Offices have agreed to harmonize their existing classification systems (ECLA and USPC, respectively) and migrate towards a common classification scheme. This is a strategic decision by both offices and is seen as an important step towards advancing harmonization efforts currently being undertaken through the IP5's Common Hybrid Classification (CHC) project.

The migration to CPC will be developed based in large part on the existing European Classification System (ECLA) and will be modified to ensure compliance with the International Patent Classification system (IPC) standards administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Why CPC?

The EPO and USPTO both have highly developed patent classification systems. CPC is an ambitious harmonization effort to bring the best practices from each Office together. In fact, most U.S. patent documents are already classified in ECLA. The conversion from ECLA to CPC at the EPO will ensure IPC compliance and eliminate the need for the EPO to classify U.S. patent documents. At the USPTO, the conversion will provide an up-to date classification system that is internationally compatible.

Transitioning from ECLA/USPC to CPC:

The migration to CPC will mean substantial changes affecting the work of patent examiners. In addition, CPC will change the source of patent classification information for users and stakeholders of the EPO and USPTO.

To ensure a smooth transition, the EPO and USPTO are reaching out to inform and seeking input from our user community and examination staff throughout the process.

To address the many details throughout this transition, the Offices are working closely together to establish training and a robust quality management system.

The Offices are also initiating revision pilots to test the agility of future refinements to the CPC scheme. In addition, work on the IT infrastructure is underway to seamlessly coordinate and communicate information across offices.

CPC Milestones:

CPC is expected to launch on **January 1st, 2013**. Through July, 2012, the Offices will develop classification practices, training and the design of the collaborative CPC environment. Leading up to the launch, the CPC scheme, quality controls and IT considerations will be finalized and in-depth training provided.

What will CPC look like?

A sample of the CPC scheme is below in comparison to the existing, USPC, ECLA and IPC classification systems:

USPC:

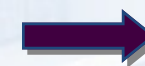
607/60

ECLA:

A61N 1/36V

IPC:

A61N 1/36



CPC

A61N 1/3618

