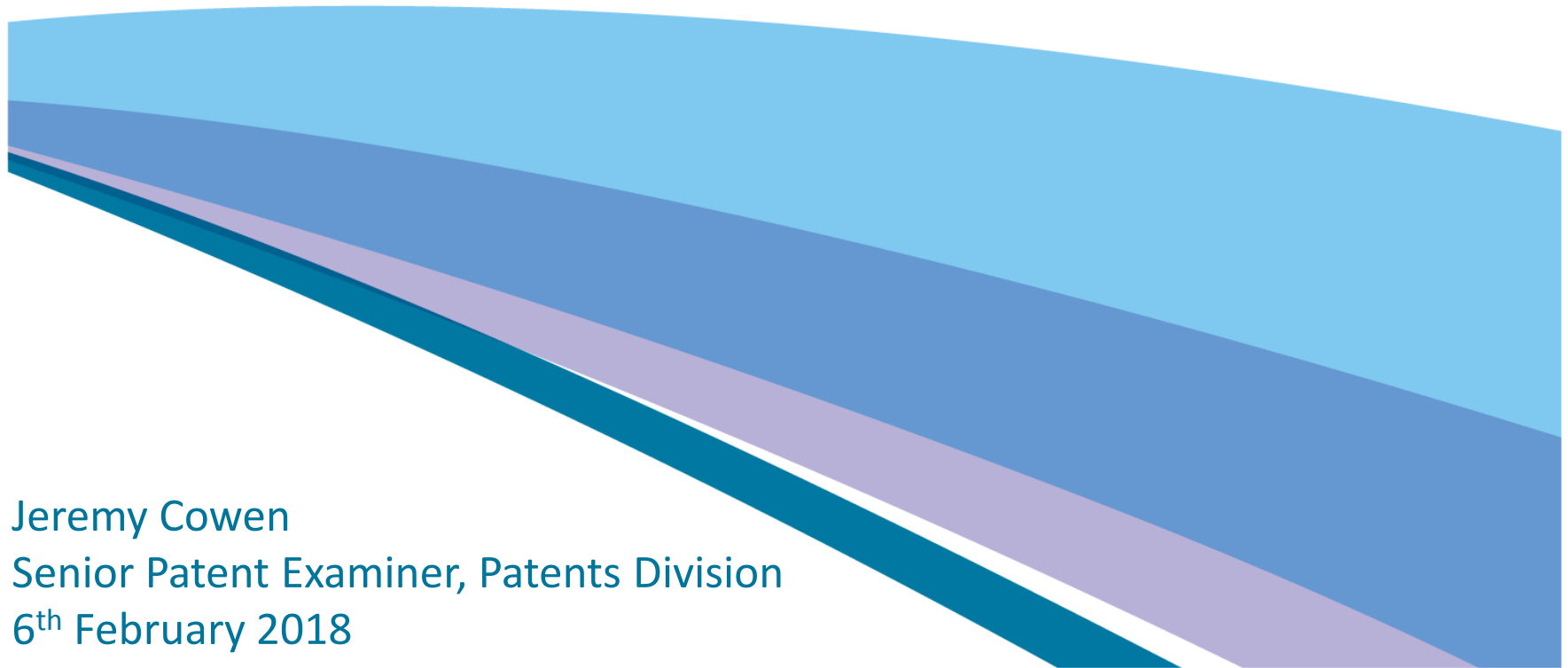




Intellectual  
Property  
Office

# UK Intellectual Property Office CPC implementation



Jeremy Cowen  
Senior Patent Examiner, Patents Division  
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Intellectual Property Office is an operating name of the Patent Office

# UK Intellectual Property Office

- Medium-sized office, based in Newport, South Wales



- ~22,000 patent applications/year  
([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/630572/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2016-17-Web-Ready.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/630572/Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2016-17-Web-Ready.pdf))
- 400+ Patent examiners  
(150 recruited between 2014-2016)

# Context

- UK Intellectual Property Office was a historical user of ECLA:

	Search	Classification
<b>ECLA</b>	From early 1990s (paper WO/EP/US collection 1990) (electronic from late 1990s)	1/1/2006 - 27/10/2013
<b>CPC</b>	from 1/4/2013	from 28/10/2013



# CPC classification

- CPC applied to all applications before A & B publication, and to PCT applications entering the national phase (we republish these as A docs)
- CPC not applied to the backfile
- GB documentation = part of collection classified in the CPC by EPO
- CPC archive = in-house collection of former CPC versions to facilitate updating search and classification after CPC revisions

## CPC archive

The CPC entered into force on 1st January 2013, and has been continuously revised since July 2013. The scheme is updated 4 or 5 times each year. However, the [Espacenet CPC viewer](#) and the [USPTO CPC viewer](#) only display the current version of the CPC. It can be useful to determine the scope of CPC symbols previously used for search (e.g. for top-up searches) or classification (e.g. when updating classification symbols to address [publication picklist failures](#)).

Archived versions of the CPC are available via the table below which may be filtered by subclass and version. To view a previous version of a given subclass, select the subclass from the drop-down menu to list all past versions of the CPC for that subclass. If no revisions have been made, only a single version will be available, dated 2013-01 (for 1st January 2013). If several versions are available, the CPC Version indicates the date on which each version entered into force (e.g. 2014-11 = 1st November 2014 etc). Clicking on a file name (e.g. 2014-11-H04N) opens a pdf file corresponding to the selected version of the subclass which entered into force on that date.

### CPC revisions

(All) Type	Name	A01B Subclass	(All) CPC Version
	2013-01-A	A	2013-01
	2013-01-A01B	A01B	2013-01
	2013-01-A01C	A01C	2013-01
	2013-01-A01D	A01D	2013-01
	2013-01-A01F	A01F	2013-01
	2013-01-A01G	A01G	2013-01
	2013-01-A01H	A01H	2013-01
	2013-01-A01J	A01J	2013-01
	2013-01-A01K	A01K	2013-01
	2013-01-A01L	A01L	2013-01

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### CPC revisions

Type	Name	Subclass	CPC Version
	2013-01-A01B	A01B	2013-01
	2016-05-A01B	A01B	2016-05
	2016-11-A01B	A01B	2016-11
	2017-05-A01B	A01B	2017-05
	2017-08-A01B	A01B	2017-08
	2018-01-A01B	A01B	2018-01

# CPC classification

- PROSE (Patents Reporting Of Search & Examination) - report writing & display of selected IPC & CPC symbols

The screenshot displays the PROSE software interface. On the left, a 'Worklist' pane shows a list of patent cases, with 'GB1419790.9' selected and highlighted in blue. The main window shows the details for this application, including its title 'A compensation method for a display apparatus' and status 'Disposed of - In Order (PROSE: No Outstanding Actions)'. Below this, a table displays the CPC classification for the application, with tabs for 'UKC', 'IPC', 'ECLA', 'IPC-8', and 'CPC'. The 'CPC' tab is active, showing a table with columns for DocType, Category, SubClass, SubGroup, Version, DocType Pub., and Status.

DocType	Category	SubClass	SubGroup	Version	DocType Pub.	Status
+	Inventive (First)	H04N	0005/57	01/01/2013	A	C
+	Inventive	G02B	0027/017	01/01/2013	A	C
+	Inventive	H04N	0007/0117	01/01/2013	A	C
+	Inventive	H04N	0009/12	01/01/2013	A	C
+	Additional Information	G02B	2027/0118	01/01/2013	A	C
+	Additional Information	G02B	2027/0147	01/01/2013	A	C
B	Inventive	H04N	0009/3188	01/01/2013		C

# CPC classification

- PROSE ClassTool = in-house tool to select, edit and validate IPC & CPC symbols, e.g.

The screenshot shows the 'ClassTool for PROSE - GB1419790.9 (GB2523872)' window. The search bar contains 'H04N5/57'. A context menu is open over the search results, with 'Inventive' and 'Additional Information' selected. The main pane displays CPC details for H04N 5/57, including a list of IPC2018.01 subclasses and their descriptions. On the right, the 'Selected Cpc:' table lists the following entries:

Category	SubClass	SubGroup	Version	DocType	Pub.
+ Inventive (First)	H04N	0005/57	01/01/2013	A	
+ Inventive	G02B	0027/017	01/01/2013	A	
+ Inventive	H04N	0007/0117	01/01/2013	A	
+ Inventive	H04N	0009/12	01/01/2013	A	
+ Additional Information	G02B	2027/0118	01/01/2013	A	
+ Additional Information	G02B	2027/0147	01/01/2013	A	
B Inventive	H04N	0009/3188	01/01/2013		

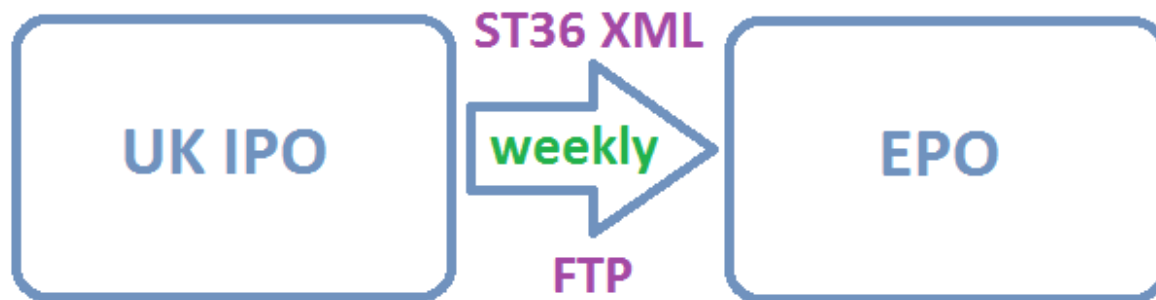
Below this, the 'Selected IPC8:' table lists the following entries:

Category	SubClass	SubGroup	Valid From	Valid To
+ Inventive (First)	H04N	0005/57	01/01/2006	
+ Inventive	G02B	0027/01	01/01/2006	
+ Inventive	H04N	0007/01	01/01/2006	
+ Inventive	H04N	0009/12	01/01/2006	
B Inventive	H04N	0009/31	01/01/2006	

- updated on 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday after new CPC version enters into force


## CPC Data Exchange

- Patent applications published weekly (A = Weds, B = Thurs) at the end of a 5 week publication cycle
- Data supplied to EPO 3 weeks prior to date of publication
- Bibliographic data for all publications (including CPC data) supplied weekly to EPO via ST36 XML file via file transfer protocol (FTP)



- well-established procedure with no recurring issues

# CPC Training

- **Early 2013:** all Examiners underwent training to change from searching ECLA/ICO to CPC in Epoquenet from 1/4/2013
  - **Oct 2013:** ECLA/ICO symbols on all live, pre-grant applications converted to CPC using 1:1 ECLA-CPC concordance
  - **From 28/10/2013:** Examiners classifying in CPC in all areas (PROSE & PROSE ClassTool modified)
  - Established examiners undertake Regular Examiner Training (RET) on various modules, including a module on IPC & CPC Classification, run several times/year
  - Examiners expected to complete all RET modules every 5 years
  - Examiners have access to collection of online classification training material as aide memoires, including FST videos via EPOXY
- 

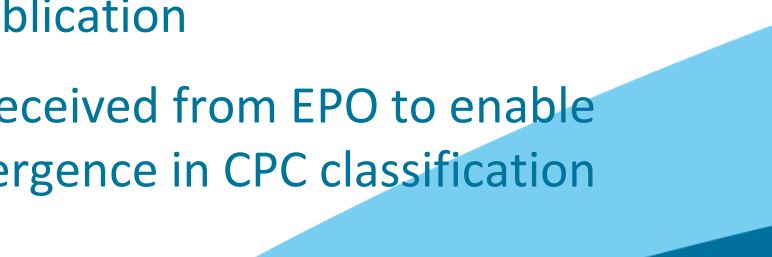


## CPC Training – new examiners

- **1<sup>st</sup> month:** **Initial Search & Examination Training (ISET)**, including initial classification training
- **2<sup>nd</sup> month:** **new Examiners => Examining groups** (at-the-desk training on live patent applications under close supervision of a Senior Examiner)
- **After 12-18 months:** **Advanced Search & Examination Training (ASET)**, including further classification training
- **Years 2-3:** **Close revision** - all trainee Examiners' work (including IPC & CPC classification) reviewed by Senior Examiners
- When Examiners achieve 'independently proficiency' (after 2-3 years), they embark on RET programme, including IPC & CPC classification training



# CPC quality assurance

- **Revision** - all trainee Examiner classification supervised by Senior Examiners, with expertise in field
  - **IDQA** (Inter-Divisional Quality Assessment) - all Examiners' work subject to regular sampling which looks at all aspects of search/examination, including IPC & CPC classification
  - **CPC validation** – PROSE & PROSE ClassTool perform automated validation of CPC symbols to check validity before publication
  - **Publication picklist procedures** prevent publication with invalid CPC symbols, due to CPC revision. Applications referred back to Examining groups for reclassification prior to publication
  - **EPO ACDC CPC comparison** reports received from EPO to enable internal queries into any UK-EPO divergence in CPC classification practice
- 

# CPC - challenges

- Regularity of CPC revisions
  - demands upon IT resources (CPC2018.02 late release)
  - maintaining Examiners' knowledge of scheme
- Divergences between IPC & CPC scheme (e.g. H04L 41/00 – 69/00)
- Inconsistencies between IPC & CPC definitions



## CPC - conclusions

- ✓ Transition from ECLA/ICO to CPC at the UK IPO has been smooth
- ✓ Finer subdivision compared to the IPC
- ✓ 2000 series groups
- Not always certain that our feedback to [cpc@epo.org](mailto:cpc@epo.org) (e.g. notification of errors) is received

Questions?

