

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Ninth Session
Geneva, November 1 to 5, 2021

REPORT BY THE AUTHORITY FILE TASK FORCE

Document prepared by the Authority File Task Force Leader

BACKGROUND

1. At its reconvened fourth session, held in March 2016, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) created the Authority File Task Force to deal with Task No. 51, the description of which reads:

“Prepare a recommendation for an authority file of patent documents issued by a national or regional patent office to enable other patent offices and other interested parties to assess the completeness of their collections of published patent documents.”

The European Patent Office (EPO) was designated as the Task Force Leader (see paragraph 122 (e) of document CWS/4BIS/16).

2. At its fifth session, held in May 2017, the CWS adopted WIPO Standard ST.37 “Recommendation for an authority file of published patent documents” noting the pending Annexes III and IV of the Standard (See paragraph 61 of document CWS/5/22). Consequently, the CWS modified the description of Task No. 51 as follows:

“Prepare and present for consideration at the sixth session of the CWS, to be held in 2018, Annex III “XML schema (XSD)” and Annex IV “Data Type Definition (DTD)” to WIPO Standard ST.37 “Recommendation for an authority file of published patent documents.”

3. At its sixth session, held in October 2018, the CWS approved a new version of WIPO ST.37, version 1.1 with the adopted new Annexes III and IV, which are based on WIPO Standards ST.96 and ST.36 respectively. Consequently, the CWS updated the description of Task No. 51 as follows:

“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standard ST.37”.

4. At its seventh session, held in July 2019, the CWS approved a revision to WIPO ST.37, including the improvements to both Annex III and Annex IV (see paragraph 150 of document CWS/7/29). The CWS requested the XML4IP Task Force to update Annex III, for alignment and more consistency with the design guidelines set out for WIPO ST.96 (see paragraph 147 of document CWS/7/29). In collaboration with the XML4IP Task Force, a new version of this Standard, version 2.0, was published in December 2019.

5. At its eighth session, held from 30 November to 4 December 2020, the CWS approved the revision 2.1 of WIPO ST.37, ensuring alignment with WIPO ST.96 version 4.0 and addressing the suggestions for improvement, provided by some of the Intellectual Property Offices (IPOs) delivering authority files in compliance with WIPO ST.37.

6. At the same session, the CWS noted a decision by the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Minimum Documentation Task Force to use WIPO ST.37 as the basis for capturing bibliographic information concerning patent publication collections as provided by International Authorities and requested the Authority File Task Force to present a proposal for necessary revisions to WIPO ST.37 at the next session of the CWS in order to fully satisfy the requirements set out in Objective C of the PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force work plan. The CWS further also approved the date of March 1 for the provision of annual authority file updates by IPOs and requested the Secretariat to issue a circular in February 2021 inviting IPOs to update their authority file information.

PROGRESS REPORT

7. The Authority File portal (https://www.wipo.int/standards/en/authority_file.html) was last updated in June 2021 and the portal contains new or updated authority file data sets provided by 24 IPOs from the following Member States and intergovernmental organizations: Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany (includes former German Democratic Republic), Italy, Japan, Monaco, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia (includes the former Yugoslavia and the former Serbia and Montenegro), Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Eurasian Patent Office and European Patent Office as well as the International Bureau of WIPO.

8. In July 2020, it was announced that the PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force intended to adopt WIPO Standard ST.37 as a means to accomplish their Objective C, which states: “Propose clearly defined bibliographic and text components of patent data that should be present in patent collections belonging to the PCT Minimum Documentation”. Since the eighth session of the CWS, the Authority File Task Force has analyzed the requirements of the PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force and prepared a proposal for a revision of WIPO ST.37, in consultation with PCT Minimum Documentation Task Force, both via the Authority File Task Force wiki and in an online meeting held on July 22, 2021. The proposed revision of WIPO ST.37 is presented to this session of the CWS as document CWS/9/14 Rev.

UPDATE OF AUTHORITY FILES

9. The International Bureau invites any Offices, other than the 24 Offices mentioned above, to consider providing their authority files compliant with WIPO ST.37 and then regular updates, as these type of data-sets are key for the assessment of data completeness and improved search, particularly in light of the PCT Minimum Documentation above-mentioned proposal.

PROPOSAL FOR DISCONTINUATION OF TASK NO. 51 AND CLOSURE OF TASK FORCE

10. The Authority File Task Force under the framework of Task No. 51, is responsible for any necessary revisions to WIPO Standard ST.37. If the CWS approves the proposed revision of ST.37 at this session, which is mentioned in paragraph 8 above, the Authority File Task Force considers there will be no need for further revision to this Standard in the near future. The Task Force, therefore, proposes that Task No. 51 should be considered complete and removed from the CWS Task List. Additionally the Authority File Task Force should be disbanded. Consequently any future request to revise WIPO ST.37 will be considered under Task No. 33 "Ongoing revision of WIPO Standards".

11. *The CWS is invited to:*

(a) note the contents of the present document;

(b) consider and approve the discontinuation of Task No. 51 and the disbandment of the Authority File Task Force, as indicated in paragraph 10; and

(c) consider and approve the revision of WIPO Standard ST.37 should be considered under Task No. 33 when needed, as indicated in paragraph 10.

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