

IPG - Newsletter 2001/05

Australia:

Changes to the Numbering System of Patent Documents

This newsletter is based on an official notice of the Australian Patent Office, sent out to the EPO on April 6, 2001.

The EPO plans to take over the new kind codes and number formats as proposed by the Australian Patent Office. However, it will take some months, until this can be implemented in the services provided by the EPO.

With the introduction of the new innovation system, IP Australia is taking the opportunity to change the numbering system of Australian patent documents to align with the preferred World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) numbering standard.

After consultation with users, it has been decided that the new numbering system should align with the preferred WIPO numbering standard of ccyyxxxxxx for both applications and patents. The standard identifies cc for the century, yy for the year and xxxxxx for a six digit number. A patent application will retain the same number from filing through acceptance and sealing to expiry thus allowing for simpler tracking of the application throughout its life.

Innovation patent applications will start from 100000, complete applications for standard patents will start from 200000 and provisional applications will start from 900000. Thus the number 2001902113 would represent a provisional application numbered 902113 filed in 2001.

The following table compares the existing numbering with the new numbering system.
Note: for the new number the fictions serial number 12345 is used in all examples

	Existing numbering	New numbering
New filings for stand patent applications	12345/2001	2001212345
New filings for innovation patent applications		2001112345
New filings for provisional applications	PF1234	2001912345
Accepted standard patent applications and granted standard patents	516345	2001212345

Granted innovation patents		2001112345
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The Australian Patent Office is also extending its use of WIPO Standard codes for the identification of different kinds of patent documents.

The new innovation patent system allows for an innovation patent to proceed to the grant of a patent after certain formalities checks have been carried out. Formal examination does not occur before the grant of an innovation patent. The innovation patent is published on sealing and grant. The patentee or a third party can voluntarily request examination of the innovation patent subsequent to grant. When an innovation patent successfully passes the examination stage, it is indicated as being certified. Only after certification is the patentee is entitled to sue for infringement.

The extended range of publication codes are:

First level publication

- A1 OPI Document
- A2 Amended OPI Document
- A4 Granted/OPI Innovation Patent
- A5 Amended Granted/OPI Innovation Patent
- A8 Corrected document (bibliographic data A1 - A5)
- A9 Corrected document (complete reprint A1 - A5)

Second level publication

- B1 Accepted standard - OPI at acceptance
- B2 Accepted Standard - previously OPI
- B3 Granted Petty - irrespective of whether previously OPI or not
- B4 Certified Innovation Patent
- B8 Corrected document (bibliographic data) B1 - B4
- B9 Republished corrected version of any one B1 - B4

Third level publication

- C1 Amended after acceptance/grant or further amended after acceptance/grant of a standard/petty patent
- C4 Amended after certification/further amended after certification Innovation Patent
- C8 Corrected document (bibliographic data C1 - C4)
- C9 Corrected document (complete reprint C1 - C4)

The new numbering system and publication codes will commence from 24 May 2001 for innovation patent documents.

It is envisaged that, from September 2001, all other Australian patent documents will be numbered under the new system.

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