America Invents Act
Patent Rulemaking
Patent Roundtable – Greenville, SC

Hiram H. Bernstein
Senior Legal Advisor
Office of Patent Legal Administration
Hiram.Bernstein@uspto.gov
Direct dial: 571-272-7707

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Provisions of Law: Implementation Complete

- Change in inter partes reexamination standard
- Tax strategies deemed within the prior art
- Best mode
- Human organism prohibition

- Prioritized examination
- 15% surcharge
- Electronic filing incentive
Prioritized Examination
(Effective September 26, 2011)

• Original utility or plant patent application for expedited examination if:
  – $4,800 fee, reduced by 50% for small entity;
  – no more than 4 independent claims, 30 total claims, and no multiple dependent claims; and
  – must file application electronically (utility application)

• Does not apply to international, design, reissue, or provisional applications or in reexamination proceedings; may be requested for a continuing application

• USPTO goal for final disposition (e.g., mailing notice of allowance, mailing final office action) is on average 12 months from date of prioritized status
### Prioritized Exam Statistics: Part I (Data as of 3/15/12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requests</th>
<th>Pending</th>
<th>Granted</th>
<th>Dismissed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2012</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>2925</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>3673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2011</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Status</th>
<th>First Action on the Merits Mailed</th>
<th>Final Dispositions Mailed</th>
<th>Number of Allowances of Total Final Dispositions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications</td>
<td>2717</td>
<td>1235</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Failure to disclose the best mode shall not be a basis on which any claim of a patent may be cancelled or held invalid or otherwise unenforceable, 35 U.S.C. 282:

– Inventors must continue to meet the best mode requirement as a pending application can be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(a), which continues to contain the requirement.
Provisions of Law: Implementation in Progress  
(Effective September 16, 2012)

- Inventor’s oath / declaration
- Preissuance submission of prior art
- Supplemental examination
- Citation of a patent owner statement in a patent file
- Inter partes review
- Post grant review
- Transitional program for covered business methods
- Derivation (effective March 16, 2013)
First-Inventor-to-File v. First-to-Invent
(Effective March 16, 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Law</th>
<th>First-to-invent</th>
<th>First-inventor-to-file</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year grace period</td>
<td>YES, but with differences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public use or sale as prior art</td>
<td>Geographic limitation to United States only</td>
<td>No geographic limitation—may occur anywhere in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patents and patent application publications as prior art to another</td>
<td>As of effective filing date: -actual filing date; or -filing date of the earliest U.S. application for which a benefit claim is sought</td>
<td>As of effective filing date: -actual filing date; or -filing date of the earliest application for which a benefit claim or right of priority is sought, regardless if filed in U.S. or a foreign country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First-Inventor-to-File: Prior Art

• Broadens prior art:
  – Prior public use or prior sale anywhere qualifies as prior art
  – U.S. patents and patent application publications are effective as prior art as of their “effective filing date,” provided that the subject matter relied upon is disclosed in the priority application

• Effective filing date = (i) actual filing date; or (ii) filing date of the earliest application for which a right of priority is sought
First-Inventor-to-File: Grace Period

- Reliance on U.S. grace period after public disclosure to file a U.S. application may cause loss of foreign patent rights in absolute novelty countries:
  - notwithstanding the foreign application’s reliance on the U.S. application

- Grace period for first-inventor-to-file not the same, e.g.:
  - a publication date by another independent inventor even one day prior to the filing date of a first inventor’s application can no longer be overcome by a showing of earlier invention
Public comments sought a more robust approach to implementing the AIA to include greater flexibility in:

- the required submission time for an oath or declaration;
- permitting an individual oath or declaration to only identify the inventor executing the document; and
- decreasing the required information
Inventor’s Oath/Declaration: Requirements

- Inventor’s oath/declaration must include statements that:
  - affiant/declarant believes himself to be the original inventor
  - application was made or authorized to be made by the affiant/declarant; and
- Inventor’s oath/declaration no longer has to include statements that:
  - affiant/declarant believes himself to be the first inventor;
  - citizenship of the inventor.
- Assignments may include the statements required in an oath or declaration.
Substitute statement permitted in lieu of a inventor’s oath/declaration where an inventor is:
- Deceased;
- Legally incapacitated;
- Unable to be found or reached after diligent effort; or
- Refuses to sign

Substitute statement can be made by:
- Legal representative;
- Assignee;
- Party to whom the inventor is under an obligation to assign; or
- Party who otherwise shows sufficient proprietary interest
Preissuance Submissions
(Effective 9/16/12 – 77 FR 42150 (7/17/12) (Final))

- Allows third parties to submit printed publications of potential relevance in the application of another if certain conditions are met, e.g.:
  - submitted in writing;
  - contains a concise description of the asserted relevance of each submitted document;
  - the fee is paid (if necessary);
  - includes a statement by the person making the submission affirming that the submission is compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements; and
  - meets the timing requirements.
Preissuance Submissions

- Third party:
  - Can be anonymous; and
  - Not required to serve submission on applicant.
- Can be filed by EFS-Web with this caveat:
  - Must select the preissuance submission filing option.
• $180 for every ten items or fraction thereof:
  – 3 and under are free if first submission, but:
    • Need statement that it is a “first and only” submission.
Preissuance Submissions: Concise Description

• Format that would best explain information:
  – *E.g.*, narrative or claim chart (mapping various portions of a document’s information to different claim elements).

**Caveat:** Not a protest, therefore, do not, *e.g.*,:

• Propose rejections; or
• Provide arguments relating to an Office action or an applicant reply.
Preissuance Submissions: Timing

- Submission must be made before the earlier of:
  - (A) date a notice of allowance under 35 U.S.C. 151 is given or mailed in the application; or

- (B) the later of
  - 6 months after the date on which the application is first published by the USPTO; or
  - date of the first rejection of any claim in the application
Preissuance Submissions: Timing Example

- Appl. Filed
- 18 mos. Publication
- 24 mos. Six months after Publication
- 25 mos. *First Rej.*
- 33 mos. Notice of Allowance

* Preissuance submission must be filed before this date
Preissuance Submissions: Notifications

• **Applicants**: Can be notified to entry of a compliant submission:
  – If applicant participates in the Office’s e-Office Action program.

• **Third party submitters**: Can be notified to a noncompliant submission:
  – If an electronic mail message (e-mail) address is provided.
Patent owner may request supplemental examination of a patent to “consider, reconsider, or correct information” believed to be relevant to the patent.

Purpose is to immunize the patent against claims of unenforceability based on an allegation of inequitable conduct relating to the information submitted.

“Information” that forms the basis of the request is not limited to patents and printed publications.
Supplemental Examination: Inequitable Conduct Immunization

• Immunity does not apply:
  – To allegations pled in a civil action or notice to the patentee before the date of the request for supplemental examination; and
  – Unless the supplemental examination and any resulting ex parte reexamination is completed before the civil action is brought.
Patent Owner Request

3 months

Decision on Patent Owner Request: Standard Triggered?

Supplemental Examination Complete

Ex Parte Reexamination

YES

NO
Supplemental Examination: Process

• USPTO must decide, within 3 months from the request, whether the information in the request raises a “substantial new question of patentability:”
  – Substantial likelihood that a reasonable examiner would consider the item of information important in determining patentability.

• Supplemental examination concludes with a supplemental reexamination certificate indicating whether any item of information raised an SNQ.

• If a substantial new question of patentability is raised by one or more items of information in the request, then ex parte reexamination will be ordered.
• If the Office becomes aware of a material fraud on the Office in connection with the patent under supplemental examination, then USPTO:

  – Must confidentially refer the matter to the U.S. Attorney General; and

  – May take other action as set forth in 35 U.S.C. 257(e), e.g., cancellation of any claims found to be invalid as a result of a reexamination
Submission of Patent Owner Statements

• Expands scope of information that may be submitted into the file of an issued patent:
  – Statements of the patent owner on scope of any claim of a particular patent.

• Requirements:
  – Statement must have been filed in a proceeding before a Federal court or USPTO proceeding.
  – Must include any other documents, pleadings, and evidence (additional information) that address the statement.
Submission of Patent Owner Statements

– Must include an explanation of how the statement and any additional information are pertinent to the patented claim(s).

– A patent owner submitting a statement may provide an explanation as to how the claims are patentable over the statement and any additional information.

• The statement and any additional information cannot be used to order reexamination, but can be used once reexamination is ordered.
Thank You