

**Electronic Notification of Outgoing Correspondence  
(e-Office Action)  
Update**

On December 16, 2006, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (Office) began a pilot program to provide a limited number of Private PAIR users with the option of receiving electronic notification of some outgoing correspondence related to their US patents and US national patent applications retrievable through Private PAIR instead of a paper mailing of the correspondence. Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications are not included in this pilot.

Participants in this pilot program no longer receive paper mailings for most correspondence originating from a Technology Center. However, since several areas of the Office have independent mailing processes, pilot participants continue to receive paper mailings for correspondence originating from several areas of the Office including, but not limited to: Office of Initial Patent Examination, Office of Petitions, Office of PCT Legal Administration, Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, Office of Patent Publications, and Central Reexamination Unit.

Pilot participants receive e-mail notification if new electronic outgoing correspondence is prepared for patents or patent applications associated with the participant's Customer Number.

The pilot program was originally announced in the notice entitled "Electronic Notification of Outgoing Correspondence (e-Office action)," 1314 *Off. Gaz. Pat. Office* 1321 (January 16, 2007).

The Office has received informative feedback from its pilot participants since the pilot program began December 16, 2006. As a result, the Office has made modifications to the pilot program as discussed below.

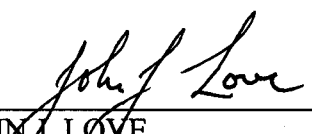
First, during the first few months of the pilot, the Office sent e-mail notifications for all outgoing correspondence, including paper mailings. However, receipt of both an e-mail notification and a paper mailing has caused confusion for some users. Accordingly, as of April 28, 2007, the Office no longer sends e-mail notifications for paper mailings of outgoing Office correspondence.

Secondly, as of February 10, 2007, new electronic outgoing correspondence is available for viewing and downloading through Private PAIR immediately upon transmission of the e-mail notification. Prior to this date, participants sometimes had to wait for up to two business days before the outgoing correspondence became available through Private PAIR.

The Office will continue to monitor pilot participant feedback and may make additional amendments to the pilot program as warranted.

For further information, please contact the Patent Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free) or 571-272-4100 Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 12 Midnight Eastern Time or send e-mail to [ebc@uspto.gov](mailto:ebc@uspto.gov).

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