Chapter 200 Types, Cross-Noting, and Status of Application

201 Types of Applications

37 CFR 1.9 Definitions.

(a) A national application as used in this chapter means a U.S. national application for patent which was either filed in the Office under 35 U.S.C. 111 or which resulted from an international application after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371.

(b) An international application as used in this chapter means an international application for patent filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty prior to entering national processing at the Designated Office stage.

* * * * *

National patent applications fall under three broad types: (1) applications for patent under 35 U.S.C. 101 relating to a "new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, etc."; (2) applications for plant patents under 35 U.S.C. 161; and (3) applications for design patents under 35 U.S.C. 171. The first type of patents are sometimes referred to as "utility" patents or "mechanical" patents when being contrasted with plant or design patents. The specialized procedure which pertains to the examination of applications for design and plant patents are treated in detail in Chapters 1500 and 1600, respectively. National applications include original, reissue, divisional, continuation, § 1.60, § 1.62, plant, design and continuation-in-part applications.

201.01 Sole

An application wherein the invention is presented as that of a single person is termed a sole application.

201.02 Joint

A joint application is one in which the invention is presented as that of two or more persons.

201.03 Convertibility of Application

37 CFR 1.48 Correction of inventorship

If the correct inventor or inventors are not named in an application for patent through error without any deceptive intention on the part of the actual inventor or inventors, the application may be amended to name only the actual inventor or inventors. Such amendment must be diligently made and must be accompanied by (1) a petition including a statement of facts verified by the original named inventor or inventors establishing when the error without deceptive intention was discovered and how it occurred; (2) an oath or declaration by each actual inventor or inventors as required by § 1.63; (3) the fee set forth in § 1.17(h); and (4) the written consent of any assignee.

Under § 1.48, if the correct inventor or inventors are not named in an application for patent, the application can be amended to name only the actual inventor or inventors so long as the error in the naming of the inventor or inventors occurred without any deceptive intention on the part of the actual inventor or inventors. Section 1.48 requires that the amendment be diligently made and be accompanied by (1) a petition including a statement of facts verified by the original named inventor or inventors establishing when the error without deceptive intention was discovered and how it occurred; (2) an oath or declaration by each actual inventor or inventors as required by § 1.63; (3) the fee set forth in § 1.17(h); and (4) the written consent of any assignee. Correction will be permitted, if diligently requested, in cases where the person originally named as inventor was in fact not the inventor of the subject matter contained in the application. If such error occurred without any deceptive intention on the part of the true inventor, the Office has the authority to substitute the true inventor for the erroneously named person. If deceptive intention was present on the part of other individuals substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application their conduct will be considered and appropriate action taken under 37 CFR 1.56. Instances where corrections can be made include changes from a mistaken sole inventor to a different but actual sole inventor, changes from a mistakenly identified sole inventor to different, but actual, joint inventors; conversions from erroneously identified joint inventors to different but actual, joint inventors; and conversions from erroneously identified joint inventors to a different, but actual, sole inventor will

also be permitted. In each instance, however, the Office must be assured of the presence of innocent error, without deceptive intention on the part of the true inventor or inventors, before permitting a substitution of a true inventor's name.

The required "statement of the facts verified by all of the original applicants" must include at the least, a recital of the circumstances, including the relevant dates, of (1) the error in naming the actual inventor or inventors and (2) the discovery of the error. Without such a showing of circumstances, no basis exists for a conclusion that the application had been made in the names of the original sole or joint applicant(s) "through error and without any deceptive intention", and no foundation is supplied for a ruling that the amendment to remove the names of those not inventors or include those to be added as inventors was "diligently made."

On the matter of diligence, attention is directed to the decision of the C.C.P.A. in Van Otteren v. Hafner, 757 O.G. 1026, 126 USPQ 151 (1960).

It is possible to file a sole application to take the place of the joint application, subject to the requirements of § 1.48.

For the procedure to be followed when the joint application is involved in an interference, see § 1111.07.

Conversion is permitted by 35 U.S.C. 116.

The primary examiner will make determination on petitions under 37 CFR 1.48 for correction of inventorship unless the examiner finds that questions are present regarding fraud or deceptive intention, in which case the petition will be referred to the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Patents prior to a determination on the petition.

Any attempt to effect a second conversion must be referred to the group director. The provisions of 37 CFR 1.312 apply to attempted conversions after allowance and before issue. When any conversion is effected, the file should be sent to the Application Division for a revision of its records.

Where a person is added or removed as an inventor during the prosecution of an application before the Patent and Trademark Office, problems may occur upon applicant claiming U.S. priority in a foreign filed case. Therefore, examiners should acknowledge any addition or removal of inventors made in accordance with the practice under § 1.48 and include Form Paragraph 2.14 in the next communication to applicant or his attorney. Form Paragraph 2.14 reads as follow:

2.14 Error in Naming Inventor

In view of the papers filed [1], it has been found that this application, as filed, through error and without any deceptive intent, improperly set forth the inventorship, and accordingly, this application has been corrected in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48. The inventorship of this applicaton has been changed by [2].

Examiner Note: In bracket 2, insert explanation of correction made, including addition or deletion of appropriate names.

201.04 Parent Application

The term *parent* is applied to an earlier application of an inventor disclosing a given invention. Such invention may or may not be claimed in the first application. Benefit of the filing date of copending parent application may be claimed under 35 U.S.C. 120.

201.04(a) Original Application

"Original" is used in the patent statute and rules to refer to an application which is not a reissue application. An original application may be a "first" filing or a continuing application.

201.05 Reissue Application

A reissue application is an application for a patent to take the place of an unexpired patent that is defective in some one or more particulars. A detailed treatment of reissues will be found in chapter 1400.

201.06 Division Application

A later application for a distinct or independent invention, carved out of a pending application and disclosing and claiming only subject matter disclosed in the earlier or parent application, is known as a divisional application or "division". Both must be by the same applicant. (See below.) The divisional application should set forth only that portion of the earlier disclosure which is germane to the invention as claimed in the divisional application.

In the interest of expediting the processing of newly filed divisional applications, filed as a result of a restriction requirement, applicants are requested to include the appropriate Patent and Trademark Office classification of the divisional application and the status and location of the parent application, on the papers submitted. The appropriate classification for the divisional application may be found in the Office communication of the parent case wherein the requirement was made. It is suggested that this classification designation be placed in the upper right hand corner of the letter of transmittal accompanying these divisional applications.

Use Form Paragraph 2.01 to remind applicant of possible division status.

2.01 Definition of Division

This application appears to be a division of application Serial No. [1] filed [2]. A later application for a distinct or independent invention, carved out of a pending application and disclosing and claiming only subject matter disclosed in the earlier or parent application, is known as a divisional application or "division". The divisional application should set forth only that portion of the earlier disclosure which is germane to the invention as claimed in the divisional application.

Examiner Note

[1] Serial No. of parent application.

[2] Filing date of parent application.

A design application is not to be considered to be a division of a utility application, and is not entitled to the filing date thereof, even though the drawings of the earlier filed utility application show the same article as that in the design application. In re Campbell, 1954 C.D. 191; 101 USPQ 406; Certiorari denied 348 U.S. 858.

While a divisional application may depart from the phraseology used in the parent case there may be no departure therefrom in substance or variation in the

disclosure that would amount to "new matter" if introduced by amendment into the parent case. Compare §§ 201.08 and 201.11.

37 CFR 1.48

Since § 1.48 permits the correction of inventorship in an application, it follows that a new application, restricted to divisible subject matter, filed during the pendency of the joint application by one of the joint applicants, in place of restricting and converting the joint case, may properly be identified as a division of the joint application if the conditions of the following paragraph are met. In like manner under 37 CFR 1.48, a new joint application for divisible subject matter present in a sole application may be identified as a division if filed by the sole applicant and another during the pendency of the sole. See § 201.11.

However, the following conditions must be satisfied in each of the foregoing situations,

(a) It must appear that the parent application was filed "through error and without any deceptive intention".

(b) On discovery of the mistake the new application must be diligently filed and the burden of establishing good faith rests with the new applicant or applicants.

(c) There must be filed in the new application the verified statement of facts required by 37 CFR 1.48.

(d) A statement must be filed in the parent application indicating that § 1.48 papers relating to the inventorship thereof have been filed in a particular continuing application.

It should be noted that 35 U.S.C. 120 requires that the prior application and a new application be "by the same inventor" in order for the new application to have the benefit of the filing date of the prior application.

For notation to be put on the file wrapper by the examiner in the case of a divisional application see § 202.02.

201.06(a) Division-Continuation Program

37 CFR 1.60. Continuation or divisional application for invention disclosed in a prior application.

A continuation or divisional application (filed under the conditions specified in 35 U.S.C. 120 or 121), which discloses and claims only subject matter disclosed in a prior application may be filed as a separate application before the patenting or abandonment of or termination of proceedings on the prior application. Signing and execution of the application papers by the applicant may be omitted provided the copy is supplied by and accompanied by a statement by, the applicant or his or her attorney or agent that the application papers comprise a true copy of the prior application as filed. Such statement must be a verified statement if made by a person not registered to practice before the Patent and Trademark Office. Only amendments reducing the number of claims or adding a reference to the prior application (§ 1.78(a)) will be entered before calculating the filing fee and granting of the filing date.

SECTION 1.60 PRACTICE

The § 1.60 practice was developed to provide a procedure for filing a continuation or divisional application where hardships existed in obtaining the signature of the inventor on such an application during the pendency of the prior application. It is suggested that the use of the § 1.60 practice be limited to such instances in view of the additional work required by the Office to enter preliminary amendments.

Section 1.60 practice permits persons having authority to prosecute a prior copending application to file a continuation or divisional application without requiring the inventor to again execute an oath or declaration under 35 U.S.C. 115, if the continuation or divisional application is an exact copy of the prior application as executed and filed. It is not necessary to file a new oath or declaration which includes a reference to the non-filing of an application for an inventor's certificate in § 1.60 applications filed after May 1, 1975. Likewise, it is not necessary to have the inventor sign a new oath or declaration merely to include a reference to the duty of disclosure if the parent application was filed prior to January 1, 1978 or to indicate that the inventor has reviewed and understands the contents of the application if the parent application was filed prior to October 1, 1983. Where the immediate prior application was not signed (for example, where it was filed under the former § 1.147 or current § 1.60 or § 1.62 practice), a copy of the most recent application having a signed oath or declaration in the chain of copending prior applications under 35 U.S.C. 120 must be used.

The basic concept of § 1.60 practice is that since the inventor has already made the affirmation required by 35 U.S.C. 115, it is not necessary to make another affirmation in a later application that discloses and claims only the same subject matter. It is for this reason that a § 1.60 application must be an exact duplicate of an earlier application executed by the inventor. It is permissible to retype pages to provide clean copies.

SECTION 1.60 APPLICATION CONTENT

As mentioned previously, a § 1.60 application must consist of a copy of an executed application as filed (specification, claims, drawings and oath or declaration). The use of transmittal form 3.54 is urged since it acts as a checklist for both applicant and the Office.

Although a copy of all original claims in the prior application must appear in the § 1.60 application, some of the claims may be canceled by request in the § 1.60 application in order to reduce the filing fee (see form 3.54, item 5). Any preliminary amendment presenting additional claims (claims not in the prior application as filed) should accompany the request for filing an application under § 1.60, but such an amendment will not be entered until after the filing date has been granted. Any claims added by amendment should be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered original claim in the prior executed application. Amendments made in the prior application do not carry over into the § 1.60 application. Any preliminary amendment should accompany the § 1.60 application and be directed to "the accompanying § 1.60 application" and not to the prior application.

All application copies must comply with 37 CFR 1.52 and must be on paper which permits entry of amendments thereon in ink.

Copies of the application must be prepared and submitted by the applicant, or his attorney or agent, and be verified to be true copies by him or her. The copy of the oath or declaration need not show a copy of the inventor's or notary's signature provided that all other data is shown and an indication is made that the oath or declaration has been signed.

In order to obtain a filing date under § 1.60 a copy of all pages of the application, including description, claims, any drawings and oath or declaration, are required to be submitted. If all pages are not submitted, remedy is by way of petition under § 1.183 and payment of the fee under § 1.17(h).

Claims for priority rights under 35 U.S.C. 119 must be made in § 1.60 applications if it is desired to have the foreign priority data appear on the issued patent. In re Van Esdonk, 187 USPQ 671 (Comm'r Pat. 1975). Reference should be made to certified copies filed in a prior application if reliance thereon is made.

If the claims presented by amendment in a § 1.60 application are directed to matter shown and described in the prior application but not substantially embraced in the statement of invention or claims originally presented, the applicant should file a supplemental oath or declaration under § 1.67 as promptly as possible.

In view of the fact that § 1.60 applications are limited to continuations and divisions, no new matter may be introduced in a § 1.60 application, 35 U.S.C. 132.

A statement to the effect that the verifier believes the submitted copy to be a true copy of the prior application as filed to the best of his or her information and belief is a sufficient verification, if an explanation is made as to why the statement must be based only on belief.

If the inventorship shown on the original oath or declaration has been changed and approved during the prosecution of the prior application, the § 1.60 application papers must indicate such a change has been made and approved in order that the changed inventorship may be indicated in the § 1.60 application. The § 1.60 application papers should also include any additions or changes in an inventor's citizenship, residence or post office address made and approved in the prior application.

If small entity status has been established in a parent application, it is not necessary to again file a verified statement under § 1.27 if the small entity status is desired in a § 1.60 application. The § 1.60 application must however include a reference to the verified statement in the parent application if the small entity, status is still proper and desired (37 CFR 1.28(a)).

Formal Drawings Required

Formal drawings are required in § 1.60 applications as in other applications. Transfer of drawings from abandoned applications is permitted. If informal drawings are filed with the application papers, use Form Paragraph 2.02 for formal drawing requirement.

2.02 37 CFR 1.60 Drawing Requirement

This application, filed under 37 CFR 1.60, lacks formal drawings. The informal drawings filed in this application are acceptable for examination purposes until such time as allowed subject matter is indicated. Applicant will be required either to submit new formal drawings or to request transfer of the formal drawings from the abandoned parent application.

Any drawing corrections requested but not made in the prior application should be repeated in the § 1.60 application if such changes are still desired. If the drawings were changed during the prosecution of the prior application, such drawings may be transferred, however, a copy of the drawings as originally filed must be included in the § 1.60 application papers to indicate the original content.

Use Form Paragraph 2.04 for instructions to applicant where drawing corrections have been requested in the parent application.

2.04 Correction of Drawings in Rule 1.60 Cases

The drawings in this application are objected to by the Draftsman as informal. Any drawing corrections requested but not made in the prior application should be repeated in this application if such changes are still desired. If the drawings were changed during the prosecution of the prior application, such drawings may be transferred. However, a copy of the drawings as originally filed must be included in the 37 CFR 1.60 application papers to indicate the original content.

Examiner Note: Use form paragraphs 6.39 and 6.40 with this paragraph.

Affidavits and declarations, such as those under §§ 1.131 and 1.132 filed during the prosecution of the prior application do not automatically become a part of the § 1.60 application. Where it is desired to rely on an earlier filed affidavit, the applicant should make his remarks of record in the § 1.60 application and include a copy of the original affidavit filed in the prior application.

Use Form Paragraph 2.03 for instructions to applicant concerning affidavits and declarations in the parent application.

2.03 Affidavits and Declarations in Parent Application

Applicant refers to an affidavit filed in the parent application. Affidavits and declarations, such as those under 37 CFR 1.131 and 37 CFR 1.132, filed during the prosecution of the parent application do not automatically become a part of this application. Where it is desired to rely on an earlier filed affidavit, the applicant should make the remarks of record in the later application and include a copy of the original affidavit filed in the parent application.

Abandonment of the Prior Application

Under § 1.60 practice the prior application is not automatically abandoned upon filing of the § 1.60 application. If the prior application is to be expressly abandoned, such a paper must be signed by the applicant, the assignee of record or the attorney or agent of record § 1.138. A registered attorney or agent not of record acting in a representative capacity under § 1.34(a) may also expressly abandon a prior application as of the filing date granted to a continuing application when filing such a continuing application.

If the prior application which is to be expressly abandoned has a notice of allowance issued therein, the prior application can become abandoned by the nonpayment of the issue fee. However, once an issue fee has been paid in the prior application, even if the payment occurs following the filing of a continuation application under § 1.60, a petition to withdraw the prior application from issue must be filed before the prior application can be abandoned (§ 1.313). The checking of box 8 on form 3.54 is not sufficient to expressly abandon an application having a notice of allowance issued therein and the issue fee submitted (see § 608.02(i)).

If the prior application which is to be expressly abandoned is before the Board of Appeals or the Board of Interferences, a separate notice should be forwarded by the applicant 'o such Board, giving notice thereof.

After a decision by the CAFC in which the rejection of all claims is affirmc proceedings are terminated on the date of receipt of the Court's certified copy of the decision by the Patent and Trademark Office, Continental Can Company, Inc., et al. v. Schuyler 168 USPQ 625 (D.C.D.C. 1970). See § 1216.01.

EXAMINATION

The practice relating to making first action rejections final applies also to § 1.60 applications, see § 706.07(b).

Any preliminary amendment filed with a § 1.60 application which is to be entered after granting of the filing date should be entered by the clerical personnel of the examining group where the application is finally assigned to be examined. Accordingly, these applications should be classified and assigned to the proper examining group by taking into consideration the claims that will be before the examiner upon entry of such a preliminary amendment.

If the examiner finds that a filing date has been granted erroneously because the application was incomplete, the application should be returned to the Application Division via the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Patents.

Form 3.54 is designed as an aid for use by both applicant and the Patent and Trademark Office and should simplify filing and processing of applications under 37 CFR 1.60.

Form 3.54 Division-continuation program application transmittal form.

37 CFR 1.60

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No .....
Anticipated Classification of this application:
Class..... Subclass .....
Prior application:
Examiner .....
Art Unit.....

THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

Washington, D.C. 20231.

SIR: This is a request for filing a ☐ continuation ☐ divisional application under 37 CFR 1.60, of pending prior application serial no.. ..... filed on .....
(date)
of .....
(inventor currently of record to prior application)
for .....
(title of invention)

1. ☐ Enclosed is a complete copy of the prior application, including the oath or declaration as originally filed and an affidavit or declaration verifying it as a true copy. (See 8 and 9 for drawing requirements.)
2. ☐ A verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 1.27 ☐ is enclosed ☐ was filed in the prior application and such status is still proper and desired (37 CFR 1.28(a)).
3. ☐ The filing fee is calculated below:

CLAIMS AS FILED IN THE PRIOR APPLICATION LESS ANY CLAIMS CANCELLED BY AMENDMENT BELOW

For:	No. filed	No. extra
Basic fee		
Total claims.....	−20=	(*)
Indep claims.....	−3=	(*)
☐ Multiple Dependent Claim Presented		

* If the difference in Col. 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in Col. 2.

Fees for small entity		OR	Fees for other than a small entity	
Rate	Fee		Rate	Fee
	$150	OR		$300
×5=	$	OR	×10=	$
×15=	$	OR	×30=	$
+50=	$	OR	+100=	$
Total	$	OR	Total	$

4. ☐ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Account No. .... A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
5. ☐ A check in the amount of $..... is enclosed.
6. ☐ Cancel in this application original claims ..... of the prior application before calculating the filing fee. (At least one original independent claim must be retained for filing purposes.)
7. ☐ Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:—this is a ☐ continuation, ☐ division, of application serial no. ....., filed .....
8. ☐ Transfer the drawings from the prior application to this application and abandon said prior application as of the filing date accorded this application. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed for filing in the prior application file. (May only be used if signed by person authorized by § 1.138 and before payment of base issue fee.)
9. ☐ New formal drawings are enclosed.
10. ☐ Priority of application serial no. ..... filed on ..... in .....
(country)
is claimed under 35 U.S.C. 119.
☐ The certified copy has been filed in prior application serial no. ....., filed .....
11. ☐ The prior application is assigned of record to .....
12. ☐ The power of attorney in the prior application is to .....
(name, registration number, and address)
a. ☐ The power appears in the original papers in the prior application.

b. ☐ Since the power does not appear in the original papers, a copy of the power in the prior application is enclosed.

c. ☐ Address all future communications to ..... (May only be completed by applicant, or attorney or agent of record.)

13. ☐ A preliminary amendment is enclosed. (Claims added by this amendment have been properly numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered original claim in the prior application.)

14. ☐ I hereby verify that the attached papers are a true copy of prior application serial no. ..... as originally filed on .....
(date)

The undersigned declare further that all statements made herein of his or her own knowledge are true and that *all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true;* and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

....
(date) (signature)

Address of signator:
.....
.....

☐ Inventor(s)
☐ Assignee of complete interest
☐ Attorney or agent of record
☐ Filed under § 1.34(a)

201.06(b) File Wrapper Continuing Procedure

37 CFR 1.62 File wrapper continuing procedures.

(a) A continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application, which uses the specification and drawings from a prior application to be abandoned, may be filed before the payment of the issue fee, abandonment of, or termination of proceedings on a prior application. The filing date of an application filed under this section is the date on which a request is filed for a application under this section including identification of the Serial Number, filing date, and applicant's name of the prior application.

(b) The filing fee for a continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application under this section is based on the number of claims remaining in the application after entry of any preliminary amendment and entry of any amendment under § 1.116 unentered in the prior application which applicant has requested to be entered in the continuing application.

(c) In the case of a continuation-in-part application which adds and claims additional disclosure by amendment, an oath or declaration as required by § 1.63 must also be filed. In a continuation or divisional application which discloses and claims only subject matter disclosed in a prior application, no additional oath or declaration is required.

(d) If an application which has been accorded a filing date pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section does not include the appropriate filing fee pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, or an oath or declaration by the applicant in the case of a continuation-in-part application pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, applicant will be so notified and given a period of time within which to file the fee, oath, or declaration and to pay the surcharge as set forth in § 1.16(e) in order to prevent abandonment of the application. The notification pursuant to this paragraph may be made simultaneously with any notification of a defect pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) An application filed under this section will utilize the file wrapper and contents of the prior application to constitute the new continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application but will be assigned a new application serial number.

(f) The filing of an application under this section will be construed to include a waiver of secrecy by the applicant under 35 U.S.C. 122 to the extent that any member of the public who is entitled under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.14 to access to, or information concerning either the prior application or any continuing application filed under the provisions of this section may be given similar access to, or similar information concerning, the other application(s) in the file wrapper.

(g) The filing of a request for a continuing application under this section will be considered to be a request to expressly abandon the prior aplication as of the filing date granted the continuing application.

(h) The applicant is urged to furnish the following information relating to the prior application to the best of his or her ability:

(1) Title as originally filed and as last amended;

(2) Name of applicant as originally filed and as last amended;

(3) Current correspondence address of applicant;

(4) Identification of prior foreign application and any priority claim under 35 U.S.C. 119.

(i) Envelopes containing only application papers and fees for filing under this section should be marked "Box FWC".

An applicant may file a continuation or division of a pending patent application by simply filing a request therefor and paying the necessary application filing fee. To file a continuation-in-part application, an amendment adding the additional subject matter and an oath or declaration relating thereto is also required.

The "file wrapper continuing" (FWC) procedure is set forth in § 1.62. Under this simplified procedure, any continuing application such as a continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application may be filed by using the papers in the copending prior application, which application will become automatically expressly abandoned. Under the FWC procedure, a new serial number is assigned and the specification, drawings and other papers in the parent application file wrapper are used as the papers in the continuing application. Changes in inventorship may be made. The "file wrapper continuing" (FWC) procedure is available for utility, design, plant, and reissue applications to the full extent that continuing applications can now be filed in such applications. Use of the FWC procedure will automatically result in express abandonment of the prior application as of the date that the continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application is filed.

The FWC procedure can be used for any continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application provided the applicant wishes the copending prior application to become abandoned. If a divisional application is desired without abandonment of the parent application, the procedure under § 1.60 should be used. Applicant also has the option of filing new application papers with a reexecuted oath or declaration.

Under § 1.62, the specification, claims and drawings, and any amendments in the prior application are made available for use in the continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application. A new filing fee is required in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 41 and 37 CFR 1.16. The only other statutory requirement under 35 U.S.C. 111 is a signed oath or declaration. Since a continuation or divisional application cannot contain new matter, the oath or declaration filed in the prior application would supply all the information required under the statute and rules to have a complete application and to obtain a filing date. Accordingly, the previously-filed oath or declaration will be considered to be the oath or declaration of the § 1.62 continuation or division. However, if a continuation-

in-part application is being filed, or a correction of inventorship is being made, then a new oath or declaration must be signed and filed by the applicant.

The original disclosure of an application filed under § 1.62 will be the original parent application and amendments filed on the filing date and referred to in the oath or declaration by the inventor(s). However, the filing fee will be based on the claims in the § 1.62 application after entry of any unentered amendments under § 1.116 in the prior application whose entry has been requested by the applicant and any preliminary amendment which may accompany the FWC request and filing fee. The Certificate of Mailing Procedure under 37 CFR 1.8 does not apply to filing a request for a "File Wrapper Continuing" application since the filing of such a request is considered to be a filing of national application papers for the purpose of obtaining an application filing date (37 CFR 1.8(a)(i)).

The applicant may file a signed FWC request and the regular filing fee under § 1.16 and other necessary papers with the Patent and Trademark Office, either by mail addressed to "Box FWC" or in person with the mail room. An individual check or deposit account authorization should accompany each FWC application, since combined checks delay processing.

The Correspondence and Mail Division sorts out all "Box FWC" envelopes upon receipt and delivers them to a reader for prompt special handling. The reader applies the "Mail Room" date stamp and marks the categories of the fees. The papers for each FWC application are assigned a regular national serial number and placed in a "Jumbo" size file wrapper. The Special Handling Branch reviews the FWC request for accuracy and completeness and assigns the filing date if everything appears to be in order. Problems are handled, insofar as possible, by calling the applicant or attorney by telephone. There is no need for any processing of the FWC application by the Classification or Examination Branches of Application Division since there are no papers to be examined and the FWC application is routed to the group assigned the prior application. When the FWC application file wrapper is received in the examining group, the parent application is promptly obtained and processed by a clerical staff member.

All of the correspondence from the Office in a FWC application refers to the FWC application serial number and filing date and is processed in the same manner as any other continuation, continuation-in-part or divisional application. The first action final rejection procedures set forth in § 706.07(b) apply to FWC applications filed under § 1.62. The PALM III system can supply information to authorized persons as to the location of the parent application file wrapper and ties the parent application number to the FWC application number.

The provisions of § 1.62 provide that if any application in the file wrapper is available to the public that all applications in the file wrapper will be available to the public.

Paragraph (a) of § 1.62 sets forth the minimum requirements for obtaining a filing date. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 1.62 set forth the filing fee and oath or declaration requirements. Paragraph 1.62(d) relates to later filing of the filing fee or oath or declaration as provided for in 35 U.S.C. 111.

Certified Copy

If a certified copy of a continuation-in-part application filed under § 1.62 is desired for foreign filing purposes, a clean retyped copy of the application, including the amendments made in the parent application and the amendment submitted with the § 1.62 application must be submitted to the Solicitor's Office together with an affidavit that the retyped copy is a true and accurate copy of the FWC application as filed.

Small Entity Status

If small entity status was established in the parent application of an application filed under § 1.62, and such status is desired and proper in a § 1.62 application, it is necessary that a new statement under § 1.27 to be filed.

Priority Claim

Claims under 35 U.S.C. 119 and 120 for the benefit of the filing dates of earlier applications in a parent application will automatically carry over to an application filed under § 1.62. Applicants are encouraged to repeat and update such claims at the time of filing the § 1.62 application so that such claims will not be overlooked. The issue clerk should check if priority data has been entered of the file wrapper.

Form Paragraph 2.28 may be used to remind applicant to insert parent application data.

2.28 Reference in § 1.62 Continuing Applications

This application filed under 37 CFR 1.62 lacks the necessary reference to the prior application. A statement reading "This is a [1] of application Serial No. [2], filed [3] should be entered following the title of the invention or as the first sentence of the specification. Also, the present status of the parent application(s) should be included.

Examiner Note:

1. In the "bracket 1" insert Division, Continuation, or Continuation-in-part.

2. Use only in "File Wrapper Continuing" applications.

201.07 Continuation Application

A continuation is a second application for the same invention claimed in a prior application and filed before the original becomes abandoned. The applicant in the continuing application must be the same as in the prior application. The disclosure presented in the continuation must be the same as that of the original application, i.e., the continuation should not include anything which would constitute new matter if inserted in the original application.

At any time before the patenting or abandonment of or termination of proceedings on his or her earlier application, an applicant may have recourse to filing a continuation in order to introduce into the case a new set of claims and to establish a right to further examination by the primary examiner.

For notation to be put on the file wrapper by the examiner in the case of a continuation application see § 202.02.

Use Form Paragraph 2.05 to remind applicant of possible continuation status.

2.05 Definition of Continuation Application

This application appears to be a continuation application of Serial No. [1], filed [2]. A continuation is a second application by the same applicant for the same invention claimed in a parent application and filed before the parent application becomes abandoned to receive the benefit thereof under 35 U.S.C. 120. The disclosure presented in the continuation must be the same as that of the parent application.

At any time before the abandonment of or termination of proceedings in the parent application, an applicant may have recourse to filing a continuation in order to introduce into the case a new set of claims and to establish a right to further examination by the primary examiner.

The Streamlined Continuation Program has been superseded by § 1.60 practice which became effective on September 1, 1971, see § 201.06(a) and the File Wrapper Continuing Procedure under § 1.62 which became effective on February 27, 1983, see § 201.06(b).

201.08 Continuation-in-Part Application

A continuation-in-part is an application filed during the lifetime of an earlier application by the same applicant, repeating some substantial portion or all of the earlier application *and adding matter not disclosed* in the said earlier case. (In re Klein, 1930 C.D. 2; 393 O.G. 519.)

A continuation-in-part filed by a sole applicant may also derive from an earlier joint application showing a portion only of the subject matter of the later application, subject to the conditions stated in the case of a sole divisional application stemming from a joint application under 37 CFR 1.48 (§ 201.06). Subject to the same conditions, a joint continuation-in-part application may derive from an earlier sole application.

Unless the filing date of the earlier application is actually needed, for example, in the case of an interference or to overcome a reference, there is no need to make a determination as to whether the requirement of 35 U.S.C. 120, that the earlier application discloses the invention of the second application in the matter provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, is met and whether a substantial portion of all of the earlier application is repeated in the second application in a continuation-in-part situation. Accordingly, an alleged continuation-in-part application should be permitted to claim the benefit of the filing date of an earlier application if the alleged continuation-in-part application complies with the following formal requirements of 35 U.S.C.120:

1. The first application and the alleged continuation application were filed "by the same inventor";

2. The alleged continuing application was "filed before the patenting or abandonment of or termination of proceedings on the first application or an application similarly entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first application"; and

3. The alleged continuing application "contains or is amended to contain a specific reference to the earlier filed application."

For notation to be put on the file wrapper by the examiner in the case of a continuation-in-part application see § 202.02. See § 708 for order of examination.

Use Form Paragraph 2.06 to remind applicant of possible continuation-in-part status.

2.06 Definition of CIP

This application appears to be a continuation-in-part application of Serial No. [1], filed [2]. A continuation-in-part is an application filed during the lifetime of an earlier application by the same applicant, repeating some substantial portion or all of the earlier application and adding matter not disclosed in the earlier case. (In re Klein, 1930 C.D. 2; 393 O.G. 519.)

Examiner Note:
[1] Serial No. of earlier application.
[2] Filing date of earlier application.

201.09 Substitute Application

Use Form Paragraph 2.07 to remind applicant of possible substitute status.

2.07 Defintion of a Substitute

Applicant refers to this application as a "Substitute" of Serial No. [1], filed [2]. The use of the term "Substitute" to designate an application which is in essence the duplicate of an application by the same applicant abandoned before the filing of the later case finds official recognition in the decision, Ex parte Komenak, 1940 C.D. 1; 512 O.G. 739. The notation on the file wrapper (See MPEP 202.02) that one case is a "Substitute" for another is printed in the heading of the patent copies. A "Substitute" does not obtain the benefit of the filing date of the prior application. The indication that this case is a "Substitute" will result in the further endorsement by the Assignment Division on the case of any assignment of the parent case that may have been made.

The use of the term "Substitute" to designate any application which is in essence the Duplicate of an application by the same applicant abandoned before the filing of the later case, finds official recognition in the decision, Ex parte Komenak, 1940 C.D. 1; 512 O.G. 739. Current practice does not require applicant to insert in the specification reference to the earlier case however, attention should be called to the earlier application. The notation on the file wrapper (see § 202.02) that one case is a "Substitute" for another is printed in the heading of the patent copies. See § 201.11.

As is explained in § 201.11 a "Substitute" does not obtain the benefit of the filing date of the prior application.

201.10 Refile

No official definition has been given the term Refile, though it is sometimes used as an alternative for the term Substitute.

If the applicant designates his application as "refile" and the examiner finds that the application is in fact a duplicate of a former application by the same party which was abandoned prior to the filing of the second case, the examiner should require the substitution of the word *substitute* for "refile," since the former term has official recognition. The endorsement on the file wrapper that the case is a "substitute" will result in the further endorsement by the Assignment Division

of any assignment of the parent case that may have been made.

Use Form Paragraph 2.08 to remind applicant of possible refile status.

2.08 Definition of a Refile.

It is noted that applicant refers to this application as a "Refile". No official definition has been given the term "Refile", though it is sometimes used as an alternative for the term "Substitute". Since this application appears to be in fact a duplicate of a former application by the same party which was abandoned prior to the filing of the second case, the substitution of the word "Substitute" for "Refile," is required since the term "Substitute" has official recognition. The indication that this case is a "Substitute" will result in the further endorsement by the Assignment Division on the case of any assignment of the parent case that may have been made. Applicant is required to make appropriate corrections.

201.11 Continuity Between Applications: When Entitled to Filing Date

Under certain circumstances an application for patent is entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior application of the same inventor. The conditions are specified in 35 U.S.C. 120.

35 U.S.C. 120. Benefit of earlier filing date in the United States. An application for patent for an invention disclosed in the manner provided by the first paragraph of section 112 of this title in an application previously filed in the United States, or as provided by section 363 of this title, by the same inventor shall have the same effect, as to such invention, as though filed on the date of the prior application, if files before the patenting or abandonment of or termination of proceedings on the first application or on an application similarly entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first application and it contains or is amended to contain a specific reference to the earlier filed application.

There are four conditions for receiving the benefit of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 120:

1. The second application (which is called a continuing application) must be an application for a patent for an invention which is also disclosed in the first application (the parent or original application); the disclosure of invention in the first application and in the second application must be sufficient to comply with the requirements of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112. See In re Ahlbrecht, 168 USPQ 293 (CCPA 1971).

Form Paragraphs 2.09 and 2.10 should be used where the disclosure of the second application is not for an invention disclosed in the parent applicant.

2.09 Heading for Conditions for Priority Under 35 U.S.C. 120

Applicant has not complied with one or more conditions for receiving the benefit of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 120 as follows:

Examiner Note:

One or more of the following from paragraphs 2.10 to 2.13 must follow depending upon the situation at hand.

2.10 Disclosure Must Be The Same

The second application (which is called a continuing application) must be an application for a patent for an invention which is also disclosed in the first application (the parent application); the disclosure of invention in the parent application and in the continuing application must be sufficient to comply with the requirements of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112. See In re Ahlbrecht, 168 USPQ 293 (CCPA 1971).

Examiner Note:

This paragraph must be preceded by hearing paragraph 2.09.

2. The continuing application must be co-pending with the first application or with an application similarly entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first application.

3. The continuing application must contain a specific reference to the prior application(s) in the specification.

Form paragraphs 2.09 and 2.12 should be used to indicate reference to the parent application is required.

2.12 Application Must Contain a Reference to Parent

The continuing application must contain a specific reference to the parent application(s) in the specification.

Examiner Note:

This paragraph must be preceded by heading paragraph 2.09.

4. The continuing application must be "filed by the same inventor" as in the prior application. The term "same inventor" has been construed in *In re Schmidt,* 1961 C.D. 542; 130 USPQ 404, to include a continuing application of a sole inventor derived from an application of joint inventors where a showing was made under 37 CFR 1.48 that the joinder involved error without any deceptive intent (35 U.S.C. 116). See § 201.06.

COPENDENCY

Copendency is defined in the clause which requires that the second application must be filed before (a) the patenting, or (b) the abandonment of, or (c) the termination of proceedings in the first application.

Use Form Paragraphs 2.09 and 2.11 to indicate copendency is required.

2.11 Application Must Be Copending With Parent

The continuing application must be copending with the parent application or with an application simularly entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the parent application.

Examiner Note:

This paragraph must be preceded by heading paragraph 2.09.

If the first application issues as a patent, it is sufficient for the second application to be copending with it if the second application is filed on the same date, or before the date the patent issues on the first application. Thus, the second application may be filed while the first is still pending before the examiner, while it is in issue, or even between the time the issue fee is paid and the patent issues.

If the first application is abandoned, the second application must be filed before the abandonment in order for it to be copending with the first. The term "abandoned," refers to abandonment for failure to prosecute (§ 711.02), express abandonment (§ 711.01), and abandonment for failure to pay the issue fee (§ 712). If an abandoned application is revived (§ 711.03(c)) or a petition for late payment of the issue fee (§ 712) is granted by the Commissioner, it becomes reinstated as a pending application and the preceding period of abandonment has no effect.

The expression "termination of proceedings" includes the situations when an application is abandoned or when a patent has been issued, and hence this expression is the broadest of the three.

After a decision by the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in which the rejection of all claims is affirmed, proceedings are terminated on the date of receipt of the Court's certified copy of the decision by the Patent and Trademark Office, Continental Can Company, Inc. v. Schuyler, 168 USPQ 625 (D.C.D.C. 1970). There are several other situations in which proceedings are terminated as is explained in § 711.02(c).

When proceedings in an application are terminated, the application is treated in the same manner as an abandoned application, and the term "abandoned application" may be used broadly to include such applications.

The term "continuity" is used to express the relationship of copendency of the same subject matter in two different applications of the same inventor, and the second application may be referred to as a continuing application. Continuing applications include those applications which are called divisions, continuations, and continuations-in-part. As far as the right under the statute is concerned the name used is immaterial, the names being merely expressions developed for convenience. The statute is so worded that the first application may contain more than the second, or the second application may contain more than the first, and in either case the second application is entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first as to the common subject matter.

Reference to First Application

The third requirement of the statute is that the second (or subsequent) application must contain a specific reference to the first application. This should appear as the first sentence of the specification following the title preferably as a separate paragraph (37 CFR 1.78(a)). Status of the parent applications (whether it is patented or abandoned) should also be included. If a parent application has become a patent, the expression ", Patent No. ——" should follow the filing date of the parent applicaton. If a parent application has become abandoned, the expression ", abandoned" should follow the filing date of the parent application. In the case of design applications, it should appear as set forth in § 1503.01. In view of this requirement, the right to rely on a prior application may be waived or refused by an applicant by refraining from inserting a reference to the prior application in the specification of the later one. If the examiner is aware of the fact that an application is a continuing application of a prior one, he or she should merely call attention to this in an Office action by using the wording of Form Paragraphs 2.15 or 2.16.

2.15 Reference to Parent Application 35 U.S.C. 120 Benefit

If applicant desires priority under 35 U.S.C. 120 based upon a parent application, specific reference to the parent application must be made in the instant application. This should appear as the first sentence of the specification following the title, preferably as a separate paragraph. Status of the parent application (whether patented or abandoned) should also be included. If a parent application has become a patent, the expression "Patent No." should follow the filing date of the parent application. If a parent application has become abandonded, the expression "abandoned" should follow the filing date of the parent application.

2.16 Reference to Copending Application

It is noted that this application appears to claim subject matter disclosed in applicant's prior copending application Serial No. [1], filed [2]. A reference to the prior application must be inserted as the firest sentence of the specification of this application if applicant intends to rely on the filing date of the prior application under 35 U.S.C. 120. See 37 CFR 1.78(a). Also, the present status of all parent applications should be included.

If the examiner is aware of a prior application he or she should note it in an Office action, as indicated above, but should not require the applicant to call attention to the prior application.

In § 1.60 cases, applicant, in the amendment canceling the nonelected claims, should include directions to enter "This is a division (continuation) of application Serial No. ....., filed ....." as the first sentence. Where the applicant has inadvertently failed to do this the wording of Form Paragraph 2.17 should be used. Where the § 1.60 case is otherwise ready for allowance, the examiner should insert the quoted sentence by examiner's amendment.

Applications are sometimes filed with a division, continuation, or continuation-in-part oath or declaration, in which the oath or declaration refers back to a prior application. If there is no reference in the specification, in such cases, the examiner should merely call attention to this fact in his Office action, utilizing the wording of Form Paragraph 2.17.

2.17 Reference in § 1.60 Continuing Applications.

This application filed under 37 CFR 1.60 lacks the necessary reference to the prior application. A statement reading "This is a [1] of application Serial No. [2], filed [3]" should be entered following the title of the invention or as the first sentence of the specification. Also, the present status of all parent applications should be included.

Examiner Note:

In the bracket 1, insert either—Division—or—Continuation—.

Use only for Rule 1.60 applications. For File Wrapper continuing applications under 37 CFR 1.62, see form paragraph 2.28.

Where the applicant has inadvertenly failed to make a reference to the parent case in an application filed under 37 CFR 1.60 or 1.62 which is otherwise ready for issue, the examiner should insert the required reference by examiner's amendment.

Sometimes a pending application is one of a series of applications wherein the pending application is not copending with the first filed application but is copending with an intermediate application entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first applicaton. If applicant desires that the pending application have the benefit of the filing date of the first filed application he or she must, besides making reference in the specification to the intermediate application, also make reference in the specification to the first application. See Hovlid v. Asari, 134 USPQ 162; 305 F. 2d 747 and Sticker Industrial Supply Corp. v. Blaw-Knox Co., 160 USPQ 177.

There is no limit to the number of prior applications through which a chain of copendency may be traced to obtain the benefit of the filing date of the earliest of a chain of prior copending applications. See In re Henriksen, 158 USPQ 224; 853 O.G. 17.

A second application which is not copending with the first application, which includes those called substitutes in § 201.09, is not entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the prior application and the bars to the grant of a patent are computed from the filing date of the second application. An applicant is not required to refer to such applications in the specification of the later filed application, but is required to otherwise call the examiner's attention to the earlier application if it or its contents or prosecution are material as defined in 37 CFR 1.56(a). If the examiner is aware of such a ... abandoned application he or she should make a reference to it in an Office action in order that the record of the second application will show this fact.

If an applicant refers to a prior noncopending abandoned application in the specification, the manner of referring to it should make it evident that it was abandoned before filing the second.

For notations to be placed on the file wrapper in the case of continuing applications see §§ 202.02 and 1302.09.

SAME APPLICANT

The statute also requires that both the prior application and the continuing applications be filed "by the same inventor" in order for the later application to have benefit of the earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 120.

Use Form Paragraphs 2.09 and 2.13 where the parent and continuing applications are filed by different inventors.

2.13 Application Must Be Filed By Same Inventor

The continuing application must be "filed by the same inventor" as in the parent application. The term "same inventor" has been construed in In re Schmidt, 1961 C.D. 542; 130 USPQ 404, to include a continuing applicator of a sole inventor derived from an application of joint inventors where a showing was made under 37 CFR 1.48 that the joinder involved error without any deceptive intent (35 U.S.C. 116). See MPEP 201.06.

Examiner Note:

This paragraph must be preceded by heading paragraph 2.09.

WHEN NOT ENTITLED TO BENEFIT OF FILING DATE

Where the first application is found to be fatally defective because of insufficient disclosure to support allowable claims, a second application filed as a "continuation-in-part" of the first application to supply the deficiency is not entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the first application. Hunt Co. v. Mallinckrodt Chemical Works, 83 USPQ 277 at 281 and cases cited therein.

Any claim in a continuation-in-part application which is directly *solely* to subject matter adequately disclosed under 35 U.S.C. 112 in the parent application is entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the parent application. However, if a claim in a continuation-in-part application recites a feature which was not disclosed or adequately supported by a proper disclosure under 35 U.S.C. 112 in the parent application, but which was first introduced or adequately supported in the continuation-in-part application such a claim is entitled only to the filing date of the continuation-in-part application, *In re von Lagenhoven,* 458 F.2d 132, at 136, 173 USPQ 426 at 429 (CCPA 1972) and *Chromalloy American Corp. v. Alloy Surfaces Co., Inc.,* 339 F. Supp. 859 at 874, 173 USPQ 295 at 306 (D. Del. 1972).

By way of further illustration, if the claims of a continuation-in-part application which are only entitled to the continuation-in-part filing date, "read on" such published, publically used or sold, or patented subject matter (e.g., as in a genus-species relationship) a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 would be proper. Cases of interest in this regard are *In re Steenbock,* 83 F.2d 912, 30 USPQ 45 (CCPA 1936): *In re Ruscetta,* 255 F.2d 687, 118 USPQ 101 CCPA (1958); *In re Hafner,* 410 F.2d 1403, 161 USPQ 783 (CCPA 1969); *In re Lukach,* 442 F.2d 967, 169 USPQ 795 (CCPA 1971); and *Exparte Hageman,* 179 USPQ 747 (Bd. App. 1971).

201.12 Assignment Carries Title

Assignment of an original application carries title to any divisional, continuation, substitute or reissue application stemming from the original application and filed after the date of assignment. See § 306.

201.13 Right of Priority of Foreign Application

Under certain conditions and on fulfilling certain requirements, an application for patent filed in the United States may be entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior application filed in a foreign country, to overcome an intervening reference or for similar purposes. The conditions are specified in 35 U.S.C. 119.

35 U.S.C. 119. Benefit of earlier filing date in foreign country; right to priority. An application for patent for an invention filed in this country by any person who has, or whose legal representatives or assigns have, previously regularly filed an application for a patent for the same invention in a foreign country which affords similar privileges in the case of applications filed in the United States or to citizens of the United States, shall have the same effect as the same application would have if filed in this country on the date on which the application for patent for the same invention was first filed in such foreign country, if the application in this country is filed within twelve months from the earliest date on which such foreign application was filed; but no patent shall be granted on any application for patent for an invention which has been patented or described in a printed publication in any country more than one year before the date of the actual filing of the application in this country, or which had been in public use or on sale in this country more than one year prior to such filing.

No application for patent shall be entitled to this right of priority unless a claim therefor and a certified copy of the original foreign application, specification and drawings upon which it is based are filed in the Patent and Trademark Office before the patent is granted, or at such time during the pendency of the application as required by the Commissioner not earlier than six months after the filing of the application in this country. Such certification shall be made by the patent office of the foreign country in which filed and show the date of the application and of the filing of the specification and other papers. The Commissioner may require a translation of the papers filed if not in the English language and such other information as he deems necessary.

In like manner and subject to the same conditions and requirements, the right provided in this section may be based upon a subsequent regularly filed application in the same foreign country instead of the first filed foreign application, provided that any foreign application filed prior to such subsequent application has been withdrawn, abandoned, or otherwise disposed of, without having been

laid open to public inspection and without leaving any rights outstanding, and has not served, nor thereafter shall serve, as a basis for claiming a right of priority.

Applications for inventors' certificates filed in a foreign country in which applicants have a right to apply, at their discretion, either for a patent or for an inventor's certificate shall be treated in this country in the same manner and have the same effect for purpose of the right of priority under this section as applications for patents, subject to the same conditions and requirements of this section as apply to applications for patents, provided such applicants are entitled to the benefits of the Stockholm Revision of the Paris Convention at the time of such filing.

37 CFR 1.55 Claim for foreign priority.

(a) An applicant may claim the benefit of the filing date of a prior foreign application under the conditions specified in 35 U.S.C. 119 and 172. The claim to priority need be in no special form and may be made by the attorney or agent if the foreign application is referred to in the oath or declaration as required by § 1.63. The claim for priority and the certified copy of the foreign application specified in the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 119 must be filed in the case of interference (§ 1.224); when necessary to overcome the date of a reference relied upon the examiner; or when specifically required by the examiner; and in all other cases they must be filed not later than the date the issue fee is paid. If the papers filed are not in the English language, a translation need not be filed except in the three particular instances specified in the preceding sentence, in which event a sworn translation or a translation certified as accurate by a sworn or official translator must be filed. If the priority papers are submitted after the date the issue fee is paid, they must be accompanied by a petition requesting their entry and the fee set forth in § 1.17(i).

The period of twelve months specified in this section is six months in the case of designs, 35 U.S.C. 172. See § 1506.

The conditions, for benefit of the filing date of a prior application filed in a foreign country, may be listed as follows:

1. The foreign application must be one filed in "a foreign country which affords similar privileges in the case of applications filed in the United States or to citizens of the United States."

2. The foreign application must have been filed by the same applicant (inventor) as the applicant in the United states, or by his or her legal representatives or assigns.

3. The application, or its earliest parent United States application under 35 U.S.C. 120, must have been filed within twelve months from the date of the earliest foreign filing in a "recognized" country as explained below.

4. The foreign application must be for the same invention as the application in the United States.

5. In the case where the basis of the claim is an application for an inventor's certificate, the requirements of 37 CFR 1.55(c) must also be met.

Applicant may be informed of possible priority rights under 35 U.S.C. 119 by using the wording of Form Paragraph 2.18.

2.18 Right of Priority Under 35 U.S.C. 119

Applicant is advised of possible benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119, wherein an application for patent filed in the United States may be entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior application filed in a foreign country.

RECOGNIZED COUNTRIES OF FOREIGN FILING

The right to rely on a foreign application is known as the right of priority in international patent law and this phrase has been adopted in our statute. The right of priority originated in a multilateral treaty of 1883, to which the United States adhered in 1887, known as the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, is administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) at Geneva, Switzerland. This treaty has been revised several times, the latest revision in effect being written in Stockholm in July, 1967 (copy at 852 O.G. 511). Articles 13–30 of the Stockholm Revision became effective on September 5, 1970. Articles 1–12 of the Stockholm Revision became effective on August 25, 1973. One of the many provisions of the treaty requires each of the adhering countries to accord the right of priority to the nationals of the other countries and the first United States statute relating to this subject was enacted to carry out this obligation. There is another treaty between the United States and some Latin American countries which also provides for the right of priority. A foreign country may also provide for this right by reciprocal legislation.

NOTE: Following is a list of countries with respect to which the right of priority referred to in 35 U.S.C. 119 has been recognized. The letter "I" following the name of the country indicates that the basis for priority in the case of these countries is the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (613 O.G. 23, 53 Stat. 1748). The letter "P" after the name of the country indicates the basis for priority of these countries is the Inter-American Convention relating to Inventions, Patents, Designs and Industrial Models, signed at Buenos Aires, August 20, 1910 (207 O.G. 935, 38 Stat. 1811). The letter "L" following the name of the country indicates the basis for priority is reciprocal legislation in the particular country. Algeria (I), Argentina (I), Australia (I), Austria (I), Bahamas (I), Belgium (I), Benin (I), Bolivia (P), Brazil (I, P), Bulgaria, (I), Burundi (I), Cameroon (I), Canada (I), Central African Republic (I), Chad, Republic of (I), Congo (I), Costa Rica (P), Cuba (I, P), Cyprus (I), Czechoslovakia (I), Democratic People's Republic of Korea (I), Denmark (I), Dominican Republic (I,P), Ecuador (P), Egypt (I), Finland (I), France (I), Gabon (I), German Democratic Republic (I), Germany, Federal Republic of (I), Ghana (I), Greece (I), Guina (I), Guatemala (P), Haiti (I,P), Holy See (I), Honduras (P), Hungary (I), Iceland (I), Indonesia (I), Iran (I), Iraq (I), Ireland (I), Israel (I), Italy (I), Ivory Coast, Republic of (I), Japan (I), Jordan (I), Kenya (I), Korea, Republic of (I), Lebanon (I), Libya (I), Liechtenstein (I), Luxembourg (I), Madagascar (I), Malawi (I), Mali (I), Malta (I), Mauritania (I), Mauritius (I), Mexico (I), Monaco (I), Morocco (I), Netherlands (I), New Zealand, (I), Nicaragua (P), Niger (I), Nigeria, Federation of (I), Norway (I), Paraguay (P), Philippines (I), Poland (I), Portugal (I), Romania (I), San Marino (I), Senegal, Republic of (I), South Africa, Republic of (I), Soviet Union (I), Spain (I), Sri Lanka (I), Surinam (I), Sweden (I), Switzerland (I), Syria (I), Tanzania (I), Togo (I), Trinidad and Tobago (I), Tunisia (I), Turkey (I), Uganda (I), United King-

dom (I), Upper Volta, Republic of (I), Uruguay (I, P), Viet Nam (I), Yugoslavia (I), Zaire (I), Zambia (I), Zimbabwe (I).

Twelve African Countries have joined together to create a common patent office and to promulgate a common law for the protection of inventions, trademarks, and designs. The common patent office is called "Organisation Africain de la Propriete Intellectuelle" (OAPI) and is located in Yaounde, Cameroon. The English title is "African Intellectual Property Organization." The member countries using the OAPI Patent Office are Benin (Dahomey); Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad, Republic of; Congo, Republic of; Gabon; Ivory Coast, Republic of; Mauritania; Niger; Senegal, Republic of; Togo; and Upper Volta, Republic of. Since all these countries adhere to the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 may be claimed of an application filed in the OAPI Patent Office.

If any applicant asserts the benefit of the filing date of an application filed in a country not on this list, the examiner should inquire to determine if there has been any change in the status of that country. It should be noted that the right is based on the *country* of the foreign filing and not upon the citizenship of the applicant.

RIGHT OF PRIORITY (35 U.S.C. 119 AND 365) BASED ON A FOREIGN APPLICATION FILED UNDER A BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL TREATY

Under Article 4A of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property a right of priority may be based either on an application filed under the national law of a foreign country adhering to the Convention or on a foreign application filed under a bilateral or multilateral treaty concluded between two or more such countries. Examples of such treaties are The Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Designs, the Benelux Designs Convention, and the Libreville Agreement of September 13, 1962, relating to the creation of an African Intellectual Property Office. The Convention on the Grant of European Patents and the Patent Co-operation Treaty (§ 201.13(b)) are further examples of such treaties.

The Priority Claim

In claiming priority of a foreign application previously filed under such a treaty, certain information must be supplied to the Patent and Trademark Office. In addition to the application number and the date of the filing of the application, the following information is required: (1) the name of the treaty under which the application was filed, (2) the name of at least one country other than the United States in which the application has the effect of, or is equivalent to, a regular national application, and (3) the name and location of the national or intergovernmental authority which received such application.

Certification of the Priority Papers

Section 119 of Title 35 of the United States Code requires the applicant to furnish a certified copy of priority papers. Certification by the authority empowered under a bilateral or multilateral treaty to receive applications which give rise to a right of priority under Article 4A(2) of the Paris Convention will be deemed to satisfy the certification requirement.

IDENTITY OF INVENTORS

The inventors of the U.S. application and of the foreign application must be the same, for a right of priority does not exist in the case of an application of inventor A in the foreign country and inventor B in the United States, even though the two applications may be owned by the same party. However the application in the foreign country may have been filed by the assignee, or by the legal representative or agent of the inventor which is permitted in some foreign countries, rather than by the inventor himself, but in such cases the name of the inventor is usually given in the foreign application on a paper filed therein. An indication of the identity of inventors made in the oath or declaration accompanying the U.S. application by identifying the foreign application and stating that the foreign application had been filed by the assignee, or the legal representative, or agent, of the inventor, or on behalf of the inventor, as the case may be, is acceptable.

TIME FOR FILING U.S. APPLICATION

The United States application, or its earliest parent application under 35 U.S.C. 120, must have been filed within twelve months of the earliest foreign filing. In computing this twelve months, the first day is not counted; thus, if an application was filed in Canada on January 3, 1982, the U.S. application may be filed on January 3, 1984. The Convention specifies in Article 4C(2) that "the day of filing is not counted in this period." (This is the usual method of computing periods, for example a six month period for reply to an Office action dated January 2 does not expire on July 1 but the reply may be made on July 2.) If the last day of the twelve months is a Saturday, Sunday or a Federal holiday within the District of Columbia, the U.S. application is in time if filed on the next succeeding business day; thus, if the foreign application was filed on September 4, 1981, the U.S. application is in time if filed on September 7, 1982, since September 4, 1982 was a Saturday and September 5, 1982 was a Sunday and September 6, 1982 was a Federal holiday. Since January 1, 1953, the Office has not received applications on Saturdays and, in view of 35 U.S.C. 21, and the Convention which provides "if the last day of the period is an official holiday, or a day on which the Office is not open for the filing of applications in the country where protection is claimed, the period shall be extended until the first following working day" (Article 4C3), if the twelve months expires on Saturday, the U.S. application may be filed on the fol-

lowing Monday. Note Ex parte Olah and Kuhn, 131 USPQ 41 (Bd. of Appl's, 1960).

First Foreign Application

The twelve months is from earliest foreign filing except as provided in the second to the last paragraph of 35 U.S.C 119. If an inventor has filed an application in France on January 4, 1982, and an identical application in the United Kingdom on March 3, 1982, and then files in the United States on February 2, 1983, he is not entitled to the right of priority at all; he would not be entitled to the benefit of the date of the French application since this application was filed more than twelve months before the U.S. application, and he would not be entitled to the benefit of the date of the United Kingdom application since this application is not the first one filed. Ahrens v. Gray, 1931 C.D. 9; 402 O.G. 261 (Bd. of Appl's, 1929). If the first foreign application was filed in a country which is not recognized with respect to the right of priority, it is disregarded for this purpose.

Public Law 87-333 extended the right of priority to "subsequent" foreign applications if one earlier filed had been withdrawn, abandoned or otherwise disposed of, under certain conditions.

The United Kingdom and a few other countries have a system of "post-dating" whereby the filing date of an application is changed to a later date. This "post-dating" of the filing date of the application does not affect the status of the application with respect to the right of priority; if the original filing date is more than one year prior to the U.S. filing no right of priority can be based upon the application. See In re Clamp. 151 USPQ 423.

If an applicant has filed two foreign applications in recognized countries, one outside the year and one within the year, and the later application discloses additional subject matter, a claim in the U.S. application specifically limited to the additional disclosure would be entitled to the date of the second foreign application since this would be the first foreign application for that subject matter.

Effect of Right of Priority

The right to rely on the foreign filing extends to overcoming the effects of intervening references or uses, but there are certain restrictions. For example the one year bar of 35 U.S.C. 102(b) dates from the U.S. filing date and not from the foreign filing date; thus if an invention was described in a printed publication, or was in public use in this country, in November 1981, a foreign application filed in January 1982, and a U.S. application filed in December 1982, granting a patent on the U.S. application is barred by the printed publication or public use occurring more than one year prior to its actual filing in the U.S.

The right of priority can be based upon an application in a foreign country for a so-called "utility model," called Gebrauchsmuster in Germany.

201.13(a) Right of Priority Based Upon an Application for an Inventor's Certificate

Until August 25, 1973, the Patent and Trademark Office did not recognize a right of priority based upon an application for an Inventors' Certificate such as used in the U.S.S.R. However, a claim for priority and a certificated copy of an application for Inventors Certificate were entered in the file of the U.S. application and were retained therein. This allowed the applicant to urge the right of priority in possible later court action.

On August 25, 1973, Articles 1-12 of the Paris Convention of March 20, 1883, for the Protection of Industrial Property, as revised at Stockholm, July 14, 1967, came into force with respect to the United States and apply to applications filed thereafter in the United States. A fourth paragraph to 35 U.S.C. 119 (enacted by Public Law 92-358, July 28, 1972) (copy at § 201.13) became effective on August 25, 1973.

37 CFR 1.55. Claim for foreign priority

* * * * *

(b) An applicant may under certain circumstances claim priority on the basis of an application for an inventor's certificate in a country granting both inventor's certificates and patents. When an applicant wishes to claim the right of priority as to a claim or claims of the application on the basis of an application for an inventor's certificate in such a country under 35 U.S.C. 119, last paragraph (as amended July 28, 1972), the applicant or his attorney or agent, when submitting a claim for such right as specified in paragraph (b) of this section, shall include an affidavit or declaration including a specific statement that, upon an investigation, he or she has satisfied himself or herself that to the best of his or her knowledge the applicant, when filing his or her application for the inventor's certificate, had the option to file an application either for a patent or an inventor's certificate as to the subject matter of the identified claim or claims forming the basis for the claim of priority.

An inventor's certificate may form the basis for rights of priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 only when the country in which they are filed gives to applicants, at their discretion, the right to apply, on the same invention, either for a patent or for an inventor's certificate. The affidavit or declaration specified under 37 CFR 1.55(b) is only required for the purpose of ascertaining whether, in the country where the application for an inventor's certificate originated, this option generally existed for applicants with respect to the particular subject matter of the invention involved. The requirements of 35 U.S.C. 119 and 37 CFR 1.55(b) are not intended, however, to probe into the eligibility of the particular applicant to exercise the option in the particular priority application involved.

It is recognized that certain countries that grant inventors' certificates also provide by law that their own nationals who are employed in state enterprises may only receive inventors' certificates and not patents on inventions made in connection with their employment. This will not impair their right to be granted priority in the United States based on the filing of the inventor's certificate.

Accordingly, affidavits or declarations filed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.55(b) need only show that in the country in which the original inventor's certificate

was filed, applicants generally have the right to apply at their own option either for a patent or an inventor's certificate as to the particular subject matter of the invention.

Priority rights on the basis of an inventor's certificate application will be honored only if the applicant had the option or discretion to file for either an inventor's certificate or a patent on his invention in his home country. Certain countries which grant both patents and inventor's certificates issue only inventor's certificates on certain subject matter, generally pharmaceuticals, foodstuffs and cosmetics.

To insure compliance with the treaty and statute, § 1.55(b) provides that at the time of claiming the benefit of priority for an inventor's certificate, the applicant or his attorney must submit an affidavit or declaration stating that the applicant when filing his application for the inventor's certificate had the option either to file for a patent or an inventor's certificate as to the subject matter forming the basis for the claim of priority

Effective Date

37 CFR 1.55(b) went into effect on August 25, 1973, which is the date on which the international treaty entered into force with respect to the United States. The rights of priority based on an earlier filed inventor's certificate shall be granted only with respect to U.S. patent applications where *both* the earlier application and the U.S. patent application were filed in their respective countries following this effective date.

201.13(b) Right of Priority Based Upon an International Application Filed Under the Patent Cooperation Treaty

35 U.S.C. 365. Right of priority; benefit of the filing date of a prior application

(a) In accordance with the conditions and requirements of section 119 of this title, a national application shall be entitled to the right of priority based on a prior filed international application which designated at least one country other than the United States.

(b) In accordance with the conditions and requirements of the first paragraph of section 119 of this title and the treaty and the Regulations, an international application designating the United States shall be entitled to the right of priority based on a prior foreign application, or a prior international application designating at least one country other than the United States.

(c) In accordance with the conditions and requirements of section 120 of this title, an international application designating the United States shall be entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior national application or a prior international application designating the United States, and a national application shall be entitled to the benefit of the filing date of a prior international application designating the United States. If any claim for the benefit of an earlier filing date is based on a prior international application which designated by did not originate in the United States, the Commissioner may require the filing in the Patent Office of a certified copy of such application together with a translation thereof into the English language, if it was filed in another language.

35 U.S.C. 365(a) provides that a national application shall be entitled to the right of priority based on a prior international application of whatever origin, which designated any country other than, or in addition to, the United States. Of course, the conditions prescribed by section 119 of title 35 U.S.C., which deals with the right of priority based on earlier filed foreign applications, must be complied with.

35 U.S.C. 365(b) provides that an international application designating the United States shall be entitled to the right of priority of a prior foreign application which may either be another international application or a regularly filed foreign application. The international application upon which the claim of priority is based can either have been filed in the United States or a foreign country; however, it must contain the designation of at least one country other than, or in addition to, the United States.

As far as the actual place of filing is concerned, for the purpose of 35 U.S.C. 365 (a) and (b) and 35 U.S.C. 119, an international application designating a country is considered to be a national application regularly filed in that country on the international filing date irrespective of whether it was physically filed in that country, in another country, or in an intergovernmental organization acting as Receiving Office for a country.

An international application which seeks to establish the right of priority will have to comply with the conditions and requirements as prescribed by the Treaty and the PCT Regulations, in order to avoid rejection of the claim to the right of priority. Reference is especially made to the requirement of making a declaration of the claim of priority at the time of filing of the international application (Article 8(1) of the Treaty and Rule 4.10 of the PCT Regulations) and the requirement of either filing a certified copy of the priority document with the international application, or submitting a certified copy of the priority document to the International Bureau at a certain time (Rule 17 of the PCT Regulations). The submission of the priority document to the International Bureau is only required in those instances where priority is based on an earlier filed foreign *national* application.

Thus, if the priority document is an earlier national application and did not accompany the international application when filed with the Receiving Office, an applicant must submit such document to the International Bureau not later than sixteen months after the priority date. However, should an applicant request early processing of his international application in accordance with Article 23(2) of the Treaty, the priority document would have to be submitted to the International Bureau at that time (Rule 17.1(a) of the PCT Regulations). If priority is based on an earlier international application, a copy does not have to be filed, either with the Receiving Office or the International Bureau, since the latter is already in possession of such international application.

The formal requirements for obtaining the right of priority under 35 U.S.C. 365 differ somewhat from those imposed by 35 U.S.C. 119, although the one year bar of 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as required by the last clause of the first paragraph of section 119 is the same. However, the substantive right of priority is the same, in that it is derived from Article 4 of the Paris

Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (Article 8(2) of the Treaty).

35 U.S.C. 365(c) recognizes the benefit of the filing date of an earlier application under 35 U.S.C. 120. Any international application designating the United States, whether filed with a Receiving Office in this country or abroad, and even though other countries may have also been designated, has the effect of a regular national application in the United States, as of the international filing date. As such, any later filed national application, or international application designating the United States, may claim the benefit of the filing date of an earlier international application designating the United States, if the requirements and conditions of section 120 of title 35 U.S.C. are fulfilled. Under the same circumstances, the benefit of the earlier filing date of a national application may be obtained in a later filed intrernational application designating the United States. In those instances where the applicant relies on an international application designating, but not originating in, the United States the Commissioner may require submission of a copy of such application together with an English translation, since in some instances, and for various reasons, a copy of that international application or its translation may not otherwise be filed in the Patent and Trademark Office.

PCT RULE 17

The Priority Document

17.1 Obligation to Submit Copy of Earlier National Application

(a) Where the priority of an earlier national application is claimed under Article 8 in the international application, a copy of the said national application, certified by the authority with which it was filed ("the priority document"), shall, unless already filed with the receiving Office, together with the international application, be submitted by the applicant to the International Bureau or to the receiving Office not later than 16 months after the priority date or, in the case referred to in Article 23(2), not later than at the time the processing or examination is requested. Where submitted to the receiving Office, the priority document shall be transmitted by that Office to the International Bureau together with the record copy or promptly after having been received by that Office. In the latter case, the receiving Office shall indicate to the International Bureau the date on which it received the priority document.

(b) Where the priority document is issued by the receiving Office, the applicant may, instead of submitting the priority document, request the receiving Office to transmit the priority document to the International Bureau. Such request shall be made not later than the expiration of the applicable time limit referred to under paragraph (a) and may be subjected by the receiving Office to the payment of a fee. The receiving Office shall, promptly after receipt of such request, and, where applicable, the payment of such fee, transmit the priority document to the International Bureau with an indication of the date of receipt of such request.

(c) If the requirements of neither of the two preceding paragraphs are complied with, any designated State may disregard the priority claim.

(d) The International Bureau shall record the date on which the priority document has been received by it or by the receiving Office. Where applicable, the date of receipt by the receiving Office of a request referred to under paragraph (b) shall be recorded as the date of receipt of the priority document. The International Bureau shall notify the applicant and the designated Offices accordingly.

17.2 Availability of Copies

(a) The International Bureau shall, at the specific request of the designated Office, promptly but not before the expiration of the time limit fixed in Rule 17.1(a), furnish a copy of the priority document to that Office. No such Office shall ask the applicant himself to furnish it with a copy, except where it requires the furnishing of a copy of the priority document together with a certified translation thereof. The applicant shall not be required to furnish a certified translation to the designated Office before the expiration of the applicable time limit under Article 22.

(b) The International Bureau shall not make copies of the priority document available to the public prior to the international publication of the international application.

(c) Paragraphs (a) and (b) shall apply also to any earlier international application whose priority is claimed in the subsequent international application.

37 CFR 1.451. The priority claim and priority document in an international application. (a) The claim for priority must be made on the Request (PCT Rule 4.10) in a manner complying with Sections 110 and 201 of the Administrative Instructions.

(b) Whenever the priority of an earlier United States national application is claimed in an international application, the applicant may request in a letter of transmittal accompanying the international application upon filing with the United States Receiving Office, that the Patent and Trademark Office prepare a certified copy of the national application for transmittal to the International Bureau (PCT Art. 8 and PCT Rule 17). The fee for preparing a certified copy is stated in § 1.19 (a)(3) and (b)(1).

(c) If a certified copy of the priority document is not submitted together with the international application on filing, or, if the priority application was filed in the United States and a request and appropriate payment for preparation of such a certified copy do not accompany the international application on filing, the certified copy of the priority document must be transmitted directly by the applicant to the International Bureau within the time limit specified in PCT Rule 17.1(a).

201.14 Right of Priority, Formal Requirements

Under the statute (35 U.S.C. 119, second paragraph), an applicant who wishes to secure the right of priority must comply with certain formal requirements within a time specified. If these requirements are not complied with the right of priority is lost and cannot thereafter be asserted.

The requirements of the statute are (a) that the applicant must file a claim for the right and (b) he or she must also file a certified copy of the original foreign application; these papers must be filed within a certain time limit. The maximum time limit specified in the statute is that the papers must be filed before the patent is granted, but the statute gives the Commissioner authority to set this time limit at an earlier time during the pendency of the application. If the required papers are not filed within the time limit set the right of priority is lost. A reissue was granted in Brenner v. State of Israel, 862 O.G. 661; 158 USPQ 584, where the only ground urged was failure to file a certified copy of the original foreign application to obtain the right of foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 before the patent was granted.

It should be particularly noted that these papers must be filed in all cases even though they may not be necessary during the pendency of the application to overcome the date of any reference. The statute also gives the Commissioner authority to require a translation of the foreign documents if not in the English language and such other information as the Commissioner may deem necessary.

37 CFR 1.63 requires that the oath or declaration shall state in any application in which a claim for for-

eign priority is made pursuant to § 1.55 must identify the foreign application for patent or inventors' certificate on which priority is claimed, and any foreign applications having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed, by specifying the application number, country, day, month, and year of its filing.

The requirements for recitation of foreign applications in the oath or declaration, while serving other purposes as well, are used in connection with the right of priority.

201.14(a) Right of Priority, Time for Filing Papers

The time for filing the priority papers required by the statute is specified in 37 CFR 1.55(a).

37 CFR 1.55(a). An applicant may claim the benefit of the filing date of a prior foreign application under the conditions specified in 35 U.S.C. 119 and 172. The claim to priority need be in no special form and may be made by the attorney or agent if the foreign application is referred to in the oath or declaration as required by § 1.63. The claim for priority and the certified copy of the foreign application specified in the second paragraph 35 U.S.C. 119 must be filed in the case of interference (§ 1.224); when necessary to overcome the date of a reference relied upon by the examiner; or when specifically required by the examiner, and in all other cases they must be filed not later than the date the issue fee is paid. If the papers filed are not in the English language, a translation need not be filed except in the three particular instances specified in the preceding sentence, in which event a sworn translation or a translation certified as accurate by a sworn or official translator must be filed. If the priority papers are submitted after the date the issue fee is paid, they must be accompanied by a petition requesting their entry and the fee set forth in § 1.17(i).

It should first be noted that the Commissioner has by rule specified an earlier ultimate date than the date the patent is granted for filing a claim and a certified copy. The latest time at which the papers may be filed is the date of the payment of the issue fee, except that, under certain circumstances, they are required at an earlier date. These circumstances are specified in the rule as (1) in the case of interferences in which event the papers must be filed within the time specified in the interference rules, (2) when necessary to overcome the date of a reference relied upon by the examiner, and (3) when specifically required by the examiner.

In view of the shortened periods for prosecution leading to allowances, it is recommended that priority papers be filed as early as possible. Although § 1.55 permits the filing of priority papers up to and including the date for payment of the issue fee, it is advisable that such papers be filed promptly after filing the application. Frequently, priority papers are found to be deficient in material respects, such as for example, the failure to include the correct certified copy, and there is not sufficient time to remedy the defect. Occasionally a new oath or declaration may be necessary where the original oath or declaration omits the reference to the foreign filing date for which the benefit is claimed. The early filing of priority papers would thus be advantageous to applicants in that it would afford time to explain any inconsistencies that exist or to supply any additional documents that may be necessary.

It is also suggested that a pencil notation of the serial number of the corresponding U.S. application be placed on the priority papers. Such notation should be placed directly on the priority papers themselves even where a cover letter is attached bearing the U.S. application data. Experience indicates that cover letters and priority papers occasionally become separated, and without the suggested pencil notations on the priority papers, correlating them with the corresponding U.S. application becomes exceedingly difficult, frequently resulting in severe problems for both the Office and applicant. Adherence to the foregoing suggestion for making a pencil notation on the priority document of the U.S. application data will result in a substantial lessening of the problem.

Priority papers filed after the date of payment of the issue fee will be accepted and acknowledged only if a petition with fee (§ 1.17(i)) pursuant to 37 CFR 1.55(a) is filed and granted. Such petitions are granted only where the printing of the patent has not yet taken place.

201.14(b) Right of Priority, Papers Required

The filing of the priority papers under 35 U.S.C. 119 makes the record of the file of the United States patent complete. The Patent and Trademark Office does not normally examine the papers to determine whether the applicant is in fact entitled to the right of priority and does not grant or refuse the right or priority, except as described in § 201.15 and in cases of interferences.

The papers required are the claim for priority and the certified copy of the foreign application. The claim to priority need be in no special form, and may be made by the attorney or agent at the time of transmitting the certified copy if the foreign application is the one referred to in the oath or declaration of the U.S application. No special language is required in making the claim for priority and any expression which can be reasonably interpreted as claiming the benefit of the foreign application is accepted as the claim for priority. The claim for priority may appear in the oath or declaration with the recitation of the foreign application.

The certified copy which must be filed is a copy of the original foreign application with a certification by the patent office of the foreign country in which it was filed. Certified copies ordinarily consist of a copy of the specification and drawings of the applications as filed with a certificate of the foreign patent office giving certain information. "Application" in this connection is not considered to include formal papers such as a petition. A copy of the foreign patent as issued does not comply since the application as filed is required; however, a copy of the printed specification and drawing of the foreign patent is sufficient if the certification indicates that it corresponds to the application as filed. A French patent stamped "Service De La Propriété Industrielle—Conforme Aux Piéces Déposées A L' Appui de La Demande" and additionally

bearing a signed seal is also acceptable in lieu of a certified copy of the French application.

When the claim to priority and the certified copy of the foreign application are received while the application is pending before the examiner, the examiner should make no examination of the papers except to see that they correspond in date and country to the application identified in the oath or declaration and contain no obvious formal defects. The subject matter of the application is not examined to determine whether the applicant is actually entitled to the benefit of the foreign filing date on the basis of the disclosure thereof.

During Interference

If priority papers are filed in an interference, it is not necessary to file an additional certified copy in the application file. The interference examiner will place then in the application file.

Later Filed Applications, Reissues

Where the benefit of a foreign filing date based on a foreign application is claimed in a later filed application (i.e., continuation, continuation-in-part, division) or in a reissue application and a certified copy of the foreign application as filed, has been filed in a parent or related application, it is not necessary to file and additional certified copy in the later application. A reminder of this provision is found in Form Paragraph 2.20. The applicant when making such claim for priority may simply identify the application containing the certified copy. In such cases, the examiner should acknowledge the claim on form PTOL–326. Note copy in § 707.

If the applicant fails to call attention to the fact that the certified copy is in the parent or related application and the examiner is aware of the fact that a claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 was made in the parent application, the examiner should call applicant's attention to these facts in an Office action, so that if a patent issues on the later or reissue application, the priority data will appear in the patent. In such cases, the language of Form Paragraph 2.20 should be used.

2.20 Priority Papers in Parent Application.

Applicant is reminded that in order for a patent issuing on the instant application to obtain the benefit of priority based on priority papers filed in parent application Serial No. [1] under 35 U.S.C. 119, a claim for such priority must be made in this application. In making such claim, applicant may simply identify the application containing the priority papers.

Where the benefit of a foreign filing date, based on a foreign application, is claimed in a later filed application or in a reissue application and a certified copy of the foreign application, as filed, has not been filed in a parent or related application, a claim for priority may be made in the later application. In re Tangsrud, 184 USPQ 746 (Comm'r. Pat. 1973). When such a claim is made in the later application and a certified copy of the foreign application is placed therein, the examiner should acknowledge the claim on form PTOL–326. Note copy in § 707.

Where an Actual Model Was Originally Filed in Germany

The German design statute does not permit an applicant having an establishment or domicile in the Federal Republic of Germany to file design patent applications with the German Patent Office. These German applicants can only obtain design protection by filing papers or an actual deposit of a model with the judicial authority ("Amtsgericht") of their principal establishment or domicile. Filing with the German Patent Office is exclusively reserved for applicants who have neither an establishment or domicile in the Federal Republic of Germany. The deposit in an "Amtsgericht" has the same effect as if deposited at the German Patent Office and results in a "Geschmacksmuster" which is effective throughout Germany.

In implementing the Paris Convention, 35 U.S.C. 119 requires that a copy of the original foreign application, specification and drawings certified by the patent office of the foreign country in which filed, shall be submitted to the Patent and Trademark Office, in order for an applicant to be entitled to the right of priority in the United States.

Article 4, section A(2) of the Paris Convention however states that "(a)ny filing that is equivalent to a regular national filing under the domestic legislation of any country of the Union . . . shall be recognized as giving rise to the right of priority." Article 4D(3) of the Convention further provides that countries of the Union may require any person making a declaration of priority to produce a copy of the previously filed application (description, drawings, etc.) certified as correct by the authority which received this application.

As far as the physical production of a copy of the earlier filed paper application is concerned, an applicant should have no difficulty in providing a copy, certified by the authority which received it, if his earlier filed application contained drawings illustrating his design. A problem, however, arises when the only prior "regular national filing" consisted of the deposit of an actual model of the design. 35 U.S.C. 119 is silent on this subject.

Therefore, the Patent and Trademark Office will receive as evidence of an earlier filed German design application under 35 U.S.C. 119, drawings or acceptable clear photographs of the deposited model faithfully reproducing the design embodied therein together with other required information, certified as being a true copy by an official of the court with which the model was originally deposited.

35 U.S.C. 119 also provides for the certification of the earlier filed application by the patent office of the foreign country in which it was filed. Because Article 4D(3) of the Paris Convention which 35 U.S.C. 119 implements refers to certification ". . . by the authority which received such application . . .", the reference to "patent office" in the statute is construed to extend also to the authority which is in charge of the

design register, i.e., the applicable German court. As a consequence, an additonal certification by the German Patent Office will not be necessary especially since Article 4D(3) of the Paris Convention provides that authentication shall not be required.

Although, as stated above, a "regular national filing" gives rise to the right of priority, the mere submission of a certified copy of the earlier filed foreign application, however, may not be sufficient to perfect that right in this country. For example, among other things, an application filed in a foreign country must contain a disclosure of the invention adequate to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, in order to form the basis for the right of priority in a later filed United States application.

201.14(c) Right of Priority, Practice

Before going into the practice with respect to those instances in which the priority papers are used to overcome a reference, there will first be discribed the practice when there is no occasion to use the papers, which will be in the majority of cases. In what follows in this section it is assumed that no reference has been cited which requires the priority date to be overcome.

No Irregularities

When the papers under 35 U.S.C. 119 are received they are to be endorsed on the contents page of the file as "Letter (or amendment) and foreign application". Assuming that the papers are regular in form and that there are no irregularities in dates, the examiner in the next Office action will advise the applicant that the papers have been received on form PTOL—326 or by use of Form Paragraph 2.26.

2.26 Claimed Priority, and Papers Filed

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119, which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Where the priority papers have been filed in another application, use Form Paragraph 2.27.

2.27 Acknowledge Priority Paper in Parent

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119. The certified copy has been filed in parent application, Serial No. [1], filed on [2].

Examiner Note:

For problems with foreign priority see form paragraphs: 2.18 to 2.24.

The examiner will enter the information specified in § 202.03 on the face of the file wrapper.

If application is in interference when papers under 35 U.S.C. 119 are received see § 1111.10.

Papers Inconsistent

If the certified copy filed does not correspond to the application identified in the application oath or declaration, or if the application oath or declaration does not refer to the particular foreign application, the applicant has not complied with the requirements of the rule relating to the oath or declaration. In such instances the examiner's letter, after acknowledging receipt of the papers, should require the applicant to explain the inconsistency and to file a new oath or declaration stating correctly the facts concerning foreign applications required by § 1.63 by using Form Paragraph 2.21.

2.21 Oath. Declaration Does Not Contain Reference to Foreign Filing

Receipt is acknowledged of papers filed under 35 U.S.C. 119 based on an application filed in [1] on [2]. Applicant has not complied with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.63 since the oath or declaration does not acknowledge the filing of any foreign application. A new oath or declaration is required in the body of which the present application should be identified by Serial No. and filing date.

Other situations requiring some action by the examiner are exemplified by other Form Paragraphs.

No Claim for Priority

Where applicant has filed a certified copy but has not made a claim for priority, use Form Paragraph 2.22.

2.22 Certified Copy Filed, But No Claim Made

Receipt is acknowledged of a certified copy of the [1] application referred to in the oath or declaration. If this copy is being filed to obtain the benefits of the foreign filing date under 35 U.S.C. 119, applicant should also file a claim for priority.

NOTE: Where the applicant's accompanying letter states that the certified copy is filed for priority purposes or for the convention date, it is accepted as a claim for priority.

Foreign Applications All More Than a Year Before Earliest Effective U.S. Filing

Where the earlier foreign application was filed more than 12 months prior to the U.S. application, use Form Paragraph 2.23.

2.23 Foreign Filing More Than 12 Months

Acknowledgement is made of applicant's claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 based upon an application filed in [1] on [2]. A claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 cannot be based on said application, since the United States application was filed more than twelve months thereafter.

Some Foreign Applications More Than a Year Before U.S. Filing

For example, where a British provisional specification was filed more than a year before a U.S. application, but the British complete application was filed within the year, and certified copies of both submitted language similar to the following should be used: "Receipt is acknowledged of papers filed on September 18, 1979, purporting to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 119. It is not seen how the claim for priority can be based on the British specification filed January 23, 1978, because the instant application was filed more than one year thereafter. However, the printed heading of the patent will note the claimed priority date based on the complete specification; i.e., November 1, 1978, for such subject matter as was not disclosed in the provisional specification."

CERTIFIED COPY NOT THE FIRST FILED FOREIGN APPLICATION

Where the date of the priority claimed is not the date of the first filed foreign application on the same subject matter, use Form Paragraph 2.24.

2.24 Claimed Priority Date Not the Earliest date

Receipt is acknowledged of papers filed on [1] purporting to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 119 and they have been placed of record in the file. Attention is directed to the fact that the date for which priority is claimed is not the date of the first filed foreign application acknowledged in the oath or declaration.

NO CERTIFIED COPY

Where priority is claimed but no certified copy of the foreign application has been filed, use Form Paragraph 2.25.

2.25 Claimed Priority, No Papers Filed

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for priority based on an application filed in [1] on [2]. It is noted, however, that applicant has not filed a certified copy of the [3] application as required by 35 U.S.C. 119.

Any unusual situation may be referred to the group director.

APPLICATION IN ISSUE

When priority papers for applications which have been sent to the Patent Issue Division are received, the priority papers should be sent to the Patent Issue Division. The Patent Issue Division will acknowledge receipt of all such priority papers. If the issue fee has been paid applicant must petition under 37 CFR 1.55(a).

RETURN OF PAPERS

It is sometimes necessary for the examiner to return papers filed under 35 U.S.C. 119 either upon request of the applicant, for example, to obtain a sworn translation of the certified copy of the foreign application, or because they fail to meet a basic requirement of the statute, such as where all foreign applications were filed more than a year prior to the U.S. filing date.

When the papers have not been given a paper number and endorsed on the file wrapper, it is not necessary to secure approval of the Commissioner for their return but they should be sent to the group director for cancellation of the Office stamps. Where the papers have been made of record in the file (given a paper number and endorsed on the file wrapper), a request for permission to return the papers should be addressed to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks and forwarded to the group director for approval. Where the return is approved, the written approval should be placed in the file wrapper. Any questions relating to the return of papers filed under 35 U.S.C. 119 should be directed to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Patents.

201.14(d) Proper Identification of Priority Application

In order to help overcome problems in determining the proper identification of priority applications for patent documentation and printing purposes, the following tables have been prepared which set out for 43 countries the forms of acceptable presentation of application numbers.

The tables should enable applicants, examiners and others to extract from the various formats the minimum required data which comprises a proper citation.

Proper identification of priority applications is essential to establishing accurate and complete relationships among various patent documents which reflect the same invention. Knowledge of these relationships is essential to search file management, technology documentation and various other purposes.

The tables show the forms of presentation of application numbers as used in the records of the source or originating patent office. They also show, under the heading "Minimum Significant Part of the Number", the simplied form of presentation which should be used in United States Patent and Trademark Office records.

Note particularly that in the simplifed format that:

(1) Alpha symbols preceding numerals are eliminated in all cases except Hungary.

(2) A decimal character and numerical subset as part of a number is eliminated in all cases except France.

(3) Use of the dash (—) is reduced, but is still an essential element of application numbers, in the case of Czechoslovakia, Japan, and Venezuela.

MINIMUM SIGNIFICANT PART OF AN APPLICATION NUMBER PROVIDING UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION OF AN APPLICATION

TABLE I.—*Countries Using Annual Application Number Series*

Country #	Example of application number at source	Minimum significant part of the number	Remarks
Austria [AT]	A 12116/69	12116/69	The letter A is common to all patent applications.
Czechoslovakia [CS].	PV3628-72	3628-72	PV is an abbreviation meaning "application of invention".
Denmark [DK]	68/2986	68/2968	
Egypt [EG]	487-1968	487-1968	
Finland [FI]	3032/69 (old numbering system).	3032/69	
	752032 (new numbering system).	752032	New numbering system introduced on January 1, 1975. First two digits indicate year of application.
France [FR]	69.38066	69.38066	
	73 19346	73 19346	Deletion of the intermediary full stop from this number onwards.

Note: All French applications are numbered in a single annual series, e.g. demande de brevet, demande de certificate d'addition (first addition; second addition, etc.)

Annual series of numbers is used for all applications of patent documents. The number allotted to an application at its filing (national registration number) is also the number of the granted patent.

MINIMUM SIGNIFICANT PART OF AN APPLICATION NUMBER PROVIDING UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION OF AN APPLICATION—Continued

Country #	Example of application number at source	Minimum significant part of the number	Remarks
Germany, Fed. Rep. of [DE].	P 1940738 //6-24.	1940738	P=Patent. The first two digits of the number represent the last two digits of the year of Application less 50 (e.g., 1969 less 50=19; 1973 less 50=23). The first digit after the period is an error control digit. The two digits following the dash indicate the examining division.
	G 6947580.5	*6947580	G=Gebrauchsmuster. The first two digits represent the last two digits of the year of the application. The difference in numbering scheme of the first two digits affords unique identification of this type of application. However, see note below (*). The digit after the period is for error control.
India [IN]	643/58	643/58	
Ireland [IE]	1152/69	1152/69	
Italy [IT]	28039-A/70	28039/70	Application numbers are not presented on published patent documents or given in an official gazette. An exclusive block of application numbers is given annually to each of 93 provincial bureaus where patent applications may be filed. In 1973, 90,000 numbers were allotted, whereas an estimated total of 30,000 applications are expected to be filed. While, as a consequence, gaps will exist in the ultimately used numbers, each application has a unique number. For this purpose, neither the dash not the letter identifying the receiving bureau, which follow the application number, is needed.
Japan [JP]	46-69807	46-69807	The two digits before the dash indicate the year of the Emperor's reign in which the application was filed (46=1971). Patent and utility model applications are numbered in separate series. The examples given were filed on the same day.
	46-81861	*46-81864	
Netherlands [NL].	7015038	7015038	First two digits indicate year of application.
Norway [NO]	1748/70 (old numbering system).	1748/70	
	74001 (new numbering system).	740001	New numbering system introduced on January 1, 1974. First two digits indicate year of application.
Pakistan [PK]	1031/65	1031/65	
South Africa [ZA].	70/4865	70/4865	
Sweden [SE]	16414/70	16414/70	The new numbering system was introduced January 1, 1973.
	7300001-0 (new system).	7300001	First two digits indicate year of application. The digit after the dash is used for computer control.
Switzerland [CH].	15978/70	15978/70	
United Kingdom [GB].	41352/70	41352/70	
Venezuela [VE]	2122-68	2122-68	
Yugoslavia [YU]	P1135/66	1135/66	
Zambia [ZM]	142/70	142/70	

#ICIREPAT Country Code is indicated in brackets; e.g., Austria [OE].

*In order to distinguish utility model applications from patent applications, it is necessary to identify them as to type of application in citations or references. This may be done either by using the name of the application type in conjunction with the number or by using the symbol "U" in brackets or other enclosure following the number.

TABLE II.—*Countries Using Other Than an Annual Application Number Series*

Country #	Example of application number at source	Minimum significant part of the number	Remarks
Argentina [AR]	231790	231790	
Australia [AU]	59195/69	59195/69	Long series spread over several years. New series started in 1970.
Belgium [BE]	96469	96469	Application numbers are not presented on published patent documents or given in an official gazette. A series of parallel numbers is provided to each of 10 offices which, respectively, may receive applications (control office +9 provincial bureaus) and assign application numbers. Present series was started in 1958. Since an application number does not uniquely identify a BE document, the patent number is often cited as the "priority application number".
Brazil [BR]	222986	222986	
Bulgaria [BG]	11572	11572	
Canada [CA]	103828	103828	
Colombia [CO]	126050	126050	
Cuba [CU]	33384	33384	
German (Dem. Rep.) [DD].	AP84c/137355	137355	AP=Ausschliessungspatent;
	WP35b/147203	147203	=Wirtschaftspatent. The other symbols before the slash are classification symbols. A single numbering series covers both AP and WP applications.
Greece [GR]	44114	44114	
Hungary [HU]	OE 107	OE 107	The letters preceding the number are essential for identifying the application. They are the first letter and the first following vowel of the applicant's name. There is a separate numbering series for each pair of letters.
Israel [IL]	35691	35691	
Luxembourg [LU].	60093	60093	
Mexico [MX]	123723	123723	
Monaco [MC]	908	908	

TABLE II.—*Countries Using Other Than an Annual Application Number Series—Continued*

Country #	Example of application number at source	Minimum significant part of the number	Remarks
New Zealand [NZ].	161732	161732	
OAPI (OA)	52118	52118	
Philippines [PH]	11929	11929	
Poland [PO]	P144826 44987	144826 *44987	
Portugal [PT]	P52-555 5607	52555 *5607	
Romania [RO]	65211	65211	
Soviet Union [SU].	1397205/30-15	1397205	The numbers following the slash denote the examination division and a processing number.
United Sates [US].	889877	889877	The highest number assigned in the series of numbers started in January 1960. New series started January 1970 and January 1979.

ICIREPAT Country Code is indicated in brackets; e.g. [AR].
*In order to distinguish utility model applications from patent applications, it is necessary to identify them as to type of application in citations or references. This may be done either by using the name of the application type in conjunction with the number or by using the symbol "U" in brackets or other enclosure following the number.

201.15 Right of Priority, Overcoming a Reference

The only times during ex parte prosecution that the examiner considers the merits of an applicant's claim of priority is when a reference is found with an effective date between the date of the foreign filing and the date of filing in the United States and when an interference situation is under consideration. If at the time of making an action the examiner has found such an intervening reference, he or she simply rejects whatever claims may be considered unpatentable thereover, without paying any attention to the priority date (assuming the papers have not yet been filed). The applicant in his or her response may argue the rejection if it is of such a nature that it can be argued, or present the foreign papers for the purpose of overcoming the date of the reference. If the applicant argues the reference, the examiner, in the next action in the case, may specifically require the foreign papers to be filed in addition to repeating the rejection if it is still considered applicable, or he or she may merely continue the rejection.

Form Paragraph 2.19 may be used in this instance.

2.19 Overcome Rejection by Translation

Applicant cannot rely upon the foreign priority papers to overcome the rejection because a certified translation of said papers has not been made of record. See MPEP 201.15.

Examining Note:

This paragraph should follow a rejection based on an intervening reference.

In those cases where the applicant files the foreign papers for the purpose of overcoming the effective date of a reference a translation is required, if the foreign papers are not in the English language. When the examiner requires the filing of the papers, the translation should also be required at the same time. This translation must be a sworn translation or a translation certified as accurate by a sworn or official translator. When the necessary papers are filed to overcome the date of the reference, the examiner's action, if he or she determines that the applicant is not entitled to the priority date, is to repeat the rejection on the reference, stating the reasons why the applicant is not considered entitled to the date. If it is determined that the applicant is entitled to the date, the rejection is withdrawn in view of the priority date.

If the priority papers are already in the file when the examiner finds a reference with the intervening effective date, the examiner will study the papers, if they are in the English language, to determine if the applicant is entitled to their date. If the applicant is found to be entitled to the date, the reference is simply not used but may be cited to applicant on form PTO-892. If the applicant is found not entitled to the date, the unpatentable claims are rejected on the reference with an explanation. If the papers are not in the English language and there is no translation, the examiner may reject the unpatentable claims and at the same time require an English translation for the purpose of determining the applicant's right to rely on the foreign filing date.

The foreign application may have been filed by and in the name of the assignee or legal representative or agent of the inventor, as applicant. In such cases, if the certified copy of the foreign application corresponds with the one identified in the oath or declaration as required by 37 CFR 1.63 and no discrepancies appear, it may be assumed that the inventors are the same. If there is disagreement as to inventors on the certified copy, the priority date should be refused until the inconsistency or disagreement is resolved.

The most important aspect of the examiner's action pertaining to a right of priority is the determination of the identity of invention between the U.S. and the foreign applications. The foreign application may be considered in the same manner as if it had been filed in this country on the same date that it was filed in the foreign country, and the applicant is ordinarily entitled to any claims based on such foreign application that he would be entitled to under our laws and practice. The foreign application must be examined for the question of sufficiency of the disclosure under 35 U.S.C. 112, as well as to determine if there is a basis for the claims sought.

In applications filed from the United Kingdom there may be submitted a certified copy of the "provisional specification," which may also in some cases be accompanied by a copy of the "complete specification." The nature and function of the United Kingdom provisional specification is described in an article in the Journal of the Patent Office Society of November 1936, pages 770-774. According to United Kingdom law the provisional specification need not contain a complete disclosure of the invention in the sense of 35 U.S.C. 112, but need only describe the general nature of the invention, and neither claims nor drawings are required. Consequently, in considering such provisional specifications, the question of completeness of disclosure is important. If it is found that

the United Kingdom provisional specifcation is insufficient for lack of disclosure, reliance may then be had on the complete specification and its date, if one has been presented, the complete specification then being treated as a different application.

In some instances the specification and drawing of the foreign application may have been filed at a date subsequent to the filing of the petition in the foreign country. Even though the petition is called the application and the filing date of this petition is the filing date of the application in a particular country, the date accorded here is the date on which the specification and drawing were filed.

It may occasionally happen that the U.S. application will be found entitled to the filing date of the foreign application with respect to some claims and not with respect to others. Occasionally an applicant may rely on two or more different foreign applications and may be entitled to the filing date of one of them with respect to certain claims and to another with respect to other claims.

202 Cross-Noting

201.01 In Specification

37 CFR 1.78. Cross-references to other applications. (a) When an applicant files an application claiming an invention disclosed in a prior filed copending national application or international application designating the United States of America of the same applicant, the second application must contain or be amended to contain in the first sentence of the specification following the title a reference to such prior application, identifying it by serial number and filing date or international application number and international filing date and indicating the relationship of the applications. If the benefit of the filing date of such prior application is to be claimed. Cross-references to other related applications may be made when appropriate. (See § 1.14(b).)

See also 37 CFR 1.79 and § 201.11.

There is seldom a reason for one application to refer to the application of another applicant not assigned to a common assignee. Such reference ordinarily should not be permitted.

202.02 Notation on File Wrapper of a Divisional, Continuation, Continuation-in-Part, or Substitute Application

The heading of a printed patent includes all identifying parent data of continuation-in-part, continuation, divisional, substitute, and reissue applications. Therefore, the identifying data of all parent or prior applications, when given in the specification must be inserted by the examiner in black ink on the file wrapper in the case of a DIVISION, a CONTINUATION, a CONTINUATION-IN-PART and, whether given in the specification or not, in the case of a SUBSTITUTE Application.

Where parent or prior application data is preprinted on the file wrapper, the examiner should check that data for accuracy. Where the data is correct, the examiner should initial the file wrapper in the provided space. Should there be error in the preprinted application serial number, or omission of same, the application should be forwarded to the Application Division for correction or entry of the data, accompanied by an explanatory memorandum. Only these terms should be used to specify the relationship between applications because of clarity and ease of printing. The status of the parent application should also be indicated if it has been patented, abandoned, or published under either the Defensive Publication Program or the Trial Voluntary Protest Program. Note § 1302.04(f). The "None" boxes must be marked when no parent or prior application information is present on the file wrappers containing such boxes. This should be done no later than the first action.

The inclusion of parent or prior application information in the heading does not necesarily indicate that the claims are entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing date.

See § 306 for work done by the Assignment Division pertaining to these particular types of applications.

In the unlikely situation that there has been no reference to a parent application because the benefit of its filing date is not desired, no notation as to the parent case in made on the face of the file wrapper.

202.03 Notation On File Wrapper When Priority Is Claimed for Foreign Application

In accordance with § 201.14(c) the examiner will fill in the spaces concerning foreign applications on the face of the older file wrappers.

The information to be written on the face of the file wrapper consists of the country, application date (filing date), and if available, the application and patent numbers. In some instances, the particular nature of the foreign application such as "utility model" (Germany (Gebrauchsmuster) and Japan) must be written in parentheses before the application number. For example: Application Number (utility model) B62854.

At the present time the computer printed file wrapper labels include the prior foreign application information. The examiner should check this information for accuracy. Should there be error, the examiner should make the appropriate corrections directly on the file wrapper in black ink. The examiner should inital the file wrapper in the "VERIFIED" space provided when the information is correct or has been amended to be correct. However, the examiner must still indicate on the Office action and on the file wrapper whether the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 119 have been met.

If the filing dates of several foreign applications are claimed (see § 201.15, last paragraph) and satisfactory papers have been received for each, information respecting each of the foreign applications is to be entered on the face of the file wrapper.

The front page of the patent when it is issued, and the listing in the Official Gazette, will refer to the claim of priority, giving the country, the filing date, and the number of the application in those cases in which the face of the file has been endorsed.

202.04 In Oath or Declaration

As will be noted by reference to § 201.14, 37 CFR 1.63 requires that the oath or declaration include certain information concerning applications filed in any foreign country.

202.05 In Case of Reissues

37 CFR 1.179 requires that a notice be placed in the file of an original patent for which an application for reissue has been filed. See § 1431.

203 Status of Applications

203.01 New

A "new" application is one that has not yet received an action by the examiner. An amendment filed prior to the first Office Action does not alter the status of a "new" application.

203.02 Rejected

An application which, during its prosecution in the examining group and before allowance, contains an unanswered examiner's action is designated as a "rejected" application. Its status as a "rejected" application continues as such until acted upon by the applicant in response to the examiner's action (within the allotted response period), or until it becomes abandoned.

203.03 Amended

An "amended" or "old" application is one that having been acted on by the examiner, has in turn been acted on by the applicant in response to the examiner's action. The applicant's response may be confined to an election, a traverse of the action taken by the examiner or may include an amendment of the application.

203.04 Allowed or in Issue

An "allowed" application or an .application "in issue" is one which, having been examined, is passed to issue as a patent, subject to payment of the issue fee. Its status as an "allowed" case continues from the date of the notice of allowance until it is withdrawn from issue or until it issues as a patent or becomes abandoned, as provided in 37 CFR 1.316. See § 712.

The files of allowed cases are kept in the Patent Issue Division, arranged by Batch Number.

203.05 Abandoned

An abandoned application is, *inter alia,* one which is removed from the Office docket of pending cases (1) through formal abandonment by the applicant (acquiesced in by the assignee if there is one) or by the attorney or agent of record, (2) through failure of applicant to take appropriate action at some stage in the prosecution of the case or (3) for failure to pay the issue fee (§§ 203.07, 711 to 711.05, 712)

203.06 Incomplete

An application lacking some of the essential parts and not accepted for filing is termed an incomplete application. (§§ 506 and 506.01)

203.07 Abandonment for Failure to Pay Issue Fee

An allowed application in which the Issue Fee is not paid within three months after the Notice of Allowance is abandoned for that reason (37 CFR 1.316(a)). The issue fee may however be accepted by the Commissioner if on petition it is shown that the delay in payment was unavoidable and payment of the fee for delayed payment of the issue fee under 37 CFR 1.17(l), in which case the patent will issue as though no abandonment had occurred (§ 712). (37 CFR 1.316(b) The issue fee may also be accepted if on petition it is shown that the delay in payment was unintentional and upon payment of the fee for delayed payment of the issue fee under 37 CFR 1.17 (m), (37 CFR 1.316(c)).

203.08 Status Inquiries

In an effort to sharply reduce the volume and need for status inquiries, the past policy that diligence must be established by making timely status requests in connection with petitions to revive has been discontinued.

When an application has been abandoned for an excessive period before the filing of a petition to revive on the basis that the delay was unavoidable , an appropriate terminal disclaimer may be required (37 CFR 1.316(d)). It should also be recognized that a petition to revive must be accompanied by the proposed response unless it has been previously filed (37 CFR 1.137). Also, under 37 CFR 1.113, "Response to a final rejection or action must include cancellation of, or appeal from the rejection of, each claim so rejected and, if any claim stands allowed, compliance with any requirement or objection as to form."

NEW APPLICATION

Current examining procedures now provide for the routine mailing from the examining groups of Form PTOL–327 in *every* case of allowance of an application except where an Examiner's Amendment is promptly mailed. Thus, the separate mailing of a form PTOL–327 or an Examiner's Amendment in addition to a formal Notice of Allowance (PTOL–85) in all allowed cases would seem to obviate the need for status inquiries even as a precautionary measure where the applicant may believe his or her new application may have been passed to issue on the first examination. However, as an exception, a status inquiry would be appropriate where a Notice of Allowance is not received within three months from receipt of either a form PTOL–327 or an Examiner's Amendment.

Current examining procedures also aim to minimize the spread in dates among the various examiner dockets of each art unit and group with respect to actions on new applications. Accordingly, the dates of the "oldest new applications" appearing in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE are fairly reliable guides as to the expected time frames of when the examiners reach the cases for action.

Therefore, it should be rarely necessary to query the status of a new application.

AMENDED APPLICATIONS

Amended cases are expected to be taken up by the examiner and an action completed within two months of the date the examiner receives the case. Accordingly, a status inquiry is not in order after response by the attorney until five or six months have elapsed with no response from the Office. A post card receipt for responses to Office actions, adequately and specifically identifying the papers filed, will be considered *prima facie* proof of receipt of such papers. Where such proof indicates the timely filing of a response, the submission of a copy of the post card with a copy of the response will ordinarily obviate the need for a petition to revive. Proof of receipt of a timely response to a final action will obviate the need for a petition to revive only if the response was in compliance with 37 CFR 1.113.

IN GENERAL

Such staus inquiries as may be still necessary may be more expeditiously processed by the Office if each inquiry includes the application Serial Number, filing date, name of the applicant, name of the examiner who prepared the most recent Office action, and group art unit (taken from the most recent Office communication) in addition to the last known status of the application, and is accompanied by a stamped return-addressed envelope.

Status replies will be made by the Office clerical support force and will only indicate whether the application is awaiting action by the examiner or the applicant's response to an Office action. In the latter instance the mailing date of the Office action will also be given.

Inquiries as to the status of applications, by persons entitled to the information, should be answered promptly. Simple letters of inquiry regarding the status of applications will be transmitted from the Correspondence and Mail Division, to the examining groups for direct action. Such letters will be stamped "Status Letters."

If the correspondent is not entitled to the information, in view of 37 CFR 1.14, he or she should be so informed.

For Congressional and other official inquiries see § 203.08(a).

The original letter of inquiry should be returned to the correspondent together with the reply. The reply to an inquiry which includes a self-addressed, postage-paid post card should be made on the post card without placing it in an envelope.

In cases of allowed applications, a memorandum should be pinned to the inquiry with a statement of date it was forwarded to the Patent Issue Division. The memorandum and inquiry should then be sent to the Patent Issue Division. This Division will notify the inquirer of the date of the notice of allowance and the status of the application with respect to payment of the issue fee and abandonment for failure to pay the issue fee.

In those instances where the letter of inquiry goes beyond mere matters of inquiry, it should not be marked as a "status letter", or returned to the correspondent. Such letters must be entered in the application file as a permanent part of the record. The inquiry should be answered by the examiner, however, and in a manner consistent with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.14.

Another type of inquiry is to be distinguished from ordinary status letters. When a U.S. application is referred to in a foreign patent (for priority purposes, for example), inquiries as to the status of said application (abandoned, pending, patented) should be forwarded to the Application Division (§ 102).

Telephone inquiries regarding the status of applications, by persons entitled to the information, should be directed to the group clerical personnel and not to the examiners. Inasmuch as the official records and applications are located in the clerical section of the examining groups, the clerical personnel can readily provide status information without contacting the examiners.

203.08(a) Congressional and Other Official Inquiries

Correspondence and inquiries from the White House, Members of Congress, embassies, and heads of Executive departments and agencies normally are cleared through the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for External Affairs.

When persons from the designated official sources request services from the Office, or information regarding the business of the Office, they should, under long-standing instructions, be referred, at least initially, to the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for External Affairs.

This procedure is used so that there will be uniformity in the handling of contacts from the indicated sources, and also so that compliance with directives of the Depatment of Commerce is attained.

Inquiries referred to in this section, particularly correspondence from Congress or the White House, should immediately be transmitted to the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for External Affairs by messenger, and the Office of the Assistant Commissioner for External Affairs should be notified by phone that such correspondence has been received.