



OIFIG NA bPAITINNÍ
PATENTS OFFICE



**CUSTOMER SERVICE
ACTION PLAN
2017-2019**

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1. Introduction

This is the Office's sixth Customer Service Action Plan. The Office began producing customer service plans in 1998 and each successive plan has endeavoured to reflect changes in the way the Office operates together with changes and reductions in staffing levels as well significant changes and improvements to the services which the Office was able to make available to its customers.

Many of these changes arose from the implementation of new legislation and the modernisation and reorganisation of organisational structures. In addition, automation of procedures and innovative improvements to internal business processing as well as increased development of ebusiness initiatives have facilitated a significant reduction in staff numbers; from 76 in 1998 to currently 41.78 full time equivalents. The changes have also resulted in increased efficiency and at the same time allowed the Office to continue to improve the quality and range of services it offers to its customers.

The purpose of this Customer Service Action Plan for the period 2017 to 2019 is to set out the principles and standards of customer service which the public are entitled to expect from the Patents Office going forward.

The Plan is built around the Twelve Principles of Quality Customer Service which all Departments, Offices and Agencies in the Civil Service are expected to adhere to. These Principles (set out in Annex 3) continue to inform all of our customer service activity.

In line with the Principles of Quality Customer Service, the Plan commits the Office to certain specified standards and targets across the range of our customer service activity.

In setting out its commitments to customer services, the Office is open to comment from its users/customers about the discharge of the Office's functions vis-à-vis their expectations.

The Patents Office does not publish a separate customer service charter. This Plan contains all the elements of a Charter together with the Office's approach to implementation and delivery of key actions and commitments.

2. Mission, Functions and Objectives of the Patents Office

2.1 The central mission of the Patents office is:

“To provide an efficient and effective system of intellectual property protection that encourages technological development and promotes enterprise”.

2.2 The mission statement reflects the principal functions of the Patents Office which are the grant of patents and the registration of trade marks and industrial designs in an efficient manner thereby providing Irish business, industry and individual entrepreneurs with an effective system of protection for their intellectual property rights.

2.3 The Office also disseminates information on intellectual property rights, provides observations and analysis on draft IP legislation to the Intellectual Property Unit of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, administers the registration of Irish patent and trade mark agents and contributes to international negotiations on the development of the IP system.

2.4 The Office will pursue its central mission by seeking to achieve the following six main objectives over the coming three years.

- 1. Provide excellent customer service.**
- 2. Ensure effective business processing resulting from ICT infrastructure improvements.**
- 3. Continue to contribute to the creation of an effective IP legal framework in Ireland and to IP policy.**
- 4. Promote awareness and understanding of IP amongst Irish business, enterprise and students.**
- 5. Enhance staff skills and job satisfaction and knowledge sharing.**
- 6. Work and co-operate with EU and international partners (EPO, EUIPO, WIPO etc.) and other national offices to ensure European and International IP systems are accessible and supportive of Irish business and enterprise.**

3. Our Customers

External Customers

- 3.1 The Office's principal customers are people (including businesses of all kinds, individual inventors, micro to medium sized enterprises, students, researchers and attorneys and other IP professionals) seeking information on existing protected industrial property rights or wishing to protect industrial property rights in Ireland and elsewhere.
- 3.2 Since most individuals and firms use patent and trade mark agents or solicitors to act as their legal representatives when dealing with the Office, the agents and solicitors are in effect the main group of external customers with whom we engage directly on matters relating to applications for industrial property rights. Also included as external customers are several internationally based companies who offer renewal fee payment services to patent and trade mark proprietors. Most of the resources of the Office are devoted to managing procedures, processes and services aimed at serving these customers.
- 3.3 The Office also deals directly with persons and firms who require information on intellectual property rights and who wish to avail of the information which the Office can make available on patented technology development and on registered trade marks and designs. In disseminating such information, the Office seeks to contribute to creating a climate of innovation consciousness.
- 3.4 A further group of external customers comprises several international intellectual property organisations with which the Office has ongoing dealings. These are:
- The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)
 - The European Patent Organisation (EPO)
 - The World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO).
 - Other national IP Offices and the EU – through involvement in cooperative programmes and projects.
- 3.5 The Intellectual Property Unit of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI) which is the liaison unit for the Office can also be regarded as an external customer as the Office provides it with a range of statistical information and provides comment, proposals and suggestions on various policy issues thereby contributing to the formulation of IP legislation on an ongoing basis. A Memorandum of Understanding between the office and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and innovation is in place which provides a framework for agreed service levels and performance indicators and appropriate governance structures.

Internal Customers

- 3.6 Management will endeavour to ensure that the staff of the Patents Office – the internal customers - are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

4. Our Service Level Commitments

4.1 SERVICE BY TELEPHONE

We will

- Respond as promptly as possible to telephone calls and not leave callers 'hanging on'.
- Ensure that staff identify themselves in all telephone communications
- Try to deal with enquiries without passing callers on to another extension.
- Take details and call back, if the information sought cannot be given immediately
- Inform a caller if we need to transfer the call to another staff member, give that person's name and number and ensure that the call is properly transferred.
- Supply up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information in a clear and courteous manner.
- Require staff to update their voicemail greetings if absent from the office.
- Respond to all voice mail messages as promptly as possible.
- Provide appropriate training in telephone techniques to new front-line staff.
- Provide a videoconference capability for external communications.

Most of the above commitments do not lend themselves to measurement. Also, the version of the Cisco telephone system used by the Office does not provide statistical information on telephone communications and does not facilitate monitoring the timeliness of responses.

4.2 CORRESPONDENCE

We will:

- As far as possible, use clear and simple language in all correspondence.
Ensure that all outgoing written correspondence carries a contact name, telephone number, Email address and, where possible, a reference number, to ensure ease of transaction.
- Aim to provide a reply to correspondence promptly (including e-mail), if possible within one week.
- Where the nature of an enquiry is such that a definitive response within this time frame is not possible, issue an interim reply.
- Continue to expand as far as possible, the use of Email for incoming and outgoing correspondence

Heads of Section will be expected to monitor the handling of correspondence to ensure the above commitments are adhered to.

4.3 PUBLICATIONS AND FORMS

We will:

- Use simple and clear language.
- Revise, improve and update forms and information booklets to take account of changes in legislation.
- Provide guidance on the completion of key application forms with the forms themselves, on our website and in our information booklets.
- Provide a template tool to assist private patent applicants in understanding the patent application requirements
- Publish accurate and relevant information on the use made of the services we provide.
- Make available key forms, information booklets and the Official Journal in electronic format on the Patents Office website.
- Ensure that the procedures which are applicable to the provision of a service activity (including that of patent and trade mark agents) are as simple as possible and permit the submission of documents related thereto by electronic means.

When necessary the Office's annual business plan will contain a schedule and timeframe for the revision of the various forms and publications or for the development of new forms and publications.

4.4 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

We will:

- Reply in Irish where correspondence is in Irish.
- Publish key documents in Irish and English in accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003.
- Continue with the process of creating Irish language webpages (where appropriate) on the Office's Website.

The translation of key documents and web pages into Irish takes place on an ongoing basis and will continue during the life of this Plan. While the Office has not been required to publish an Irish language scheme in accordance with Section II of the Official Languages Act 2003, the Office will continue to take steps to comply with the provisions of the Act which are relevant to it.

4.5 VISITORS

We will

- Treat all visitors in a polite and courteous manner.
- Provide a clean and accessible public office with private meeting facilities which comply with occupational and safety standards and facilitate access for those with disabilities and specific needs.
- Ensure that visitors to our public offices are dealt with as quickly as possible.

The above commitments do not lend themselves to measurement. However, the head of Finance & Customer Services Section will be responsible for ensuring delivery and ensuring that standards are maintained and complied with.

4.6 WEBSITE

We will

- Complete the redesign of the website.
- Ensure that the information on our website is understandable, accurate, relevant and up-to-date.
- Continue to develop online interactive services (e.g. Design Class and e-filing of patents and SPCs) in line with e-government policy.
- Ensure that the redesigned Patents Office website conforms to the highest standards of user accessibility (a minimum of Priority 2 of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for virtually all web pages on the site is to be achieved and maintained)
- Monitor and evaluate our online service delivery (and seek customer feedback) to ensure the highest standards are maintained.
- Maintain the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the website.

24X7 web monitoring software is used to provide alerts if the webserver develops a fault or if the site becomes unavailable due to a technical malfunction. With a view to improving reliability and minimizing downtime the Office has moved its webserver to an externally hosted environment.

Following the launch of the redesigned website, the Office will use a customer survey tool obtained from the EUIPO to introduce a new online customer service questionnaire function on its website with the aim of eliciting user satisfaction with the website and generally with service delivery by staff.

Website usage including use of interactive online services will be monitored using Google Analytics and a monthly statistical report produced and analysed.

4.7 COURTESY

We will:

- Treat our clients sensitively and have regard for their age, their capacity to understand often complex rules and to any disability they may have.
- Treat all clients equally ensuring that there is no discrimination on the grounds of race, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or religion.

A specific question aimed at evaluating staff courtesy will be included in the customer service questionnaire referred to under 5.6 above.

4.8 PRIVACY

Personal data supplied to the Patents Office in the course of the making of an application for registration of intellectual property rights pursuant to the Patents Acts 1992 and 2009, the Trade Marks Act 1996, the Industrial Designs Act 2001 and the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 (for instance, the name, address and contact numbers of applicants (individual, firm or body corporate) for the registration of intellectual property rights, or changes of address of proprietors of intellectual property rights) does not come within the Data Protection Acts 1988-2003, being that it is "personal data consisting of information that the person keeping the data is required by law to make available to the public".

Customers should be aware that their names and contact information will appear in our publicly available databases and in our journals in line with the requirements of the Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Acts.

We will:

When dealing with requests for information that is not open for public inspection, check the contacting person is either the agent, applicant or address for service before providing information and ensure that the information requested can be provided under the provisions of the legislation before releasing same

4.9 FEEDBACK and COMPLAINTS

All staff have an important role to play in processing customer feedback. Staff should record all feedback received by external customers as well as any required subsequent follow up action. This is valuable information that we can use to correct problems, improve our processes and increase customer satisfaction.

The types of customer feedback we will record are complaints, compliments and suggestions. While there is an online feedback form available on the Office's website, event appropriate feedback forms will be created to measure customer satisfaction where Office staff present at IP seminars, talks and exhibitions.

The Patents Office at all times seeks to deliver an efficient and effective service to its customers. We endeavour to give no grounds for complaint. Nevertheless, things do go wrong. In such instances, staff who handled the matter which is the subject of a complaint will be assisted to deal with and resolve the problem, if necessary with the help and supervision of senior managers.

We believe that our customers have a right of complaint if a reasonable level and quality of service is not provided. All complaints will be dealt with in a fair and sympathetic manner.

Q. Who can I complain to?/Who will deal with my complaint?

A. You can make a complaint by contacting the Patents Office:

- In person
- By phone or fax
- In writing
- By e-mail
- By completing the Complaints Form at Annex 2 (also available online) and submitting it by email.

Staff in the relevant section will attempt to resolve your complaint quickly, if necessary with the assistance of a supervisor or section head.

Q. What happens if I am dissatisfied with the response to my complaint from the section?

A. If you are not satisfied with the service being provided by the section you should write to the appropriate Head of Section/Division. Should you still remain dissatisfied with the response from the Head of Section/Division you should write directly to the Controller of the Patents Office. A list of contact names of Heads of Section/Division is at Annex 1.

Q. How long will I have to wait for my complaint to be investigated?

A. An acknowledgement will be sent to you within two working days of the complaint being received. A full written reply will issue within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint and we will inform you directly of any expected delays and provide a timeframe for resolution.

Office of the Ombudsman

If you feel you have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with our decision on your complaint, you may contact the Office of the Ombudsman (*create link here on the website*). By law the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any of our administrative actions or procedures as well as delays or inaction in your dealings with us. The Ombudsman provides a free, impartial and independent dispute resolution service.

Contact details as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman
18 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2
Lo-Call 1890 22 30 30
Tel: 01 6395600
Fax: 01 639 5674
E-mail ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie
Web: www.ombudsman.ie

Contact the Patents Office:

The Patents Office
Government Buildings
Hebron Road
Kilkenny
R95 H4XC

Tel: 00 353 56 7720111
Lo-Call 1890 220223

Fax: 00 353 56 7720100
Lo-Call Fax: 1890 220120

E-mail: patlib@patentsoffice.ie
Website: www.patentsoffice.ie

*A feedback form is available on the Office's website at
<http://www.patentsoffice.ie/feedback.htm>*

The online customer service questionnaire referred to under 4.6 above will be used to encourage customers to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

This Customer Service Action Plan incorporating a complaints form will be published on the Office's website.

5. Customer Service Performance Targets

The Office has reviewed its existing Customer Service Targets which were set out in the previous Customer Service Action Plan. In setting out the targets in this Plan for the period 2017 –2019, the Office has had regard to the relevance of the previous targets as well as the level of performance achieved to date.

The Office constantly monitors performance against its Customer Service Targets.

Quarterly reports of performance against targets are furnished to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

The Controller's Annual Report also contains a presentation by achievement against performance targets for the year.

5.1 ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Customer Service Performance Targets for Finance & Customer Services Section

- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed Patent applications within 4 working days.
- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed (paper based) Trade Mark applications within 4 working days.
- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly efiled Design applications within 2 working days.
- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed (paper based) Design applications within 4 working days.
- Issue payment receipts for fees received (in the form of cash, bank draft and money order) within 2 working days.
- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed SPC applications within 4 working days.

Customer Service Performance Targets for Grants and Register Administration Section

Trademarks

- Issue a request for payment of registration fees within 7 working days of the expiration of the period for filing of opposition where no opposition is received.
- Where opposition is determined in favour of the applicant, the request for registration fee will issue within 7 working days of publication of the withdrawal of opposition.
- Register Trade Marks within 3 working days of receipt of registration fee
- Transmit applications for International Trade Mark Registration within 3 working days of receipt of correctly filed applications.
- Issue Trade Mark Renewal Certificates within 1 working days of receipt of renewal fee.
- Issue certified copies and extracts from the Trade marks Register within 4 working days of receipt of request.
- Process applications for registration of trade mark assignments within 7 working days of submission of a properly fully completed application.

- Issue confirmation that requested amendments to the Trade Marks Register in respect of names and addresses of proprietors and trade mark agents and addresses for service have been recorded within 5 working days of receipt of a properly completed application.

Patents

- Issue notification of formal defects within 15 working days of filing date.
- Issue confirmation that amendments requested to the patent register in respect of pending applications have been recorded within 5 working days of receipt of a correctly completed application.
- Grant patents within 3 days of receipt of grant fee.
- Transmit European patent applications to the EPO within 5 working days of receipt.
- Transmit PCT applications to WIPO within 5 working days of receipt.
- Issue certified copies of patent documents within 4 working days of receipt of request.
- Issue patent renewal certificates within 3 working days of receipt of renewal fee.
- Process applications for registration of assignments within 7 working days of submission of a fully completed application.

Supplementary Protection Certificates

- Issue notification of formal defects within 10 working days of filing date.

Designs

- Issue Certificates of Registration within 5 working days of the application being registered by Examination Division
- Issue Design renewal certificates within 1 working days of receipt of renewal fee.

Copyright

- Issue 95% of Certificates of Registration or Certificates of Renewal of Registration in respect of the Register of Copyright Licensing Bodies within 30 working days of receipt of a completed application¹.
- Complete examination of compliance reports at least 14 days before expiry of the relevant registration.²
- Process request for amendments to the Register within 10 working days of completed request.

¹This target is contingent on requests for registration and renewal of registration being submitted more than 30 days in advance of the renewal date.

²This target is contingent on compliance statements and reports being more than 30 days in advance of the renewal date.

Patent and Trade Mark Agents

Directive 2006/123/EC of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market places certain obligations on the Patents Office (as the Competent Authority) to simplify administrative procedures and formalities for the provision of patent and trade mark agent services. The procedures to be followed by patent and trade mark agents established in another EC Member State and wishing to provide services in Ireland are set out in the Office's website.

Guidelines for persons seeking to become registered in the Irish register of patent agents and the Irish register of trade mark agents are also published on the Office's website at:

http://www.patentsoffice.ie/en/trademark_guidlines.aspx (trade mark agent registration), and
http://www.patentsoffice.ie/en/patents_agents_reg_guidelines.aspx (patent agent registration).

To ensure compliance with the Services Directive, the Office has established a number of customer service targets (below)² which will operate in respect of the administrative procedures for dealing with communications from persons established in another Member State of the EC and qualified under the law of that state, that they propose to act for another person in relation to patent or trade mark matters before the Controller of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks.

- Enquiries from EC based agents will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and the acknowledgement will include information on the procedures to be followed and the documentation to be submitted.
- Within 3 working days of receipt of a notification accompanied by all the correct documentation, the agent will be sent confirmation that he or she may act before the Controller.
- Within 3 working days of receipt of a notification accompanied by incomplete or incorrect documentation, the agent will be sent a request to furnish additional documentation.
- Within 3 working days of receipt of all the correct documentation in respect of a previously incomplete notification, the agent will be sent confirmation that he or she may act before the Controller.

² *These are internal targets and performance against them is monitored by the head of section*

5.2 TRADEMARK EXAMINATION DIVISION

Customer Service Performance Targets For Trade Mark Examination Division

- Issue formal filing receipts for correctly e-filed Trade Mark applications on the next business day.
- Conduct initial search in respect of new applications within 1 week of receipt.
- Formalities check on all e-filed applications completed within 1 week of receipt.
- Issue initial acceptance/objection letters within 8 weeks of receipt of new applications in Division.
- Issue preliminary search reports within 1 week of request.
- Respond to 95% of all written correspondence on individual applications in examination within 2 weeks.
- Decision on regulations governing the use of collective trade marks within 2 months of filing acceptable regulations.
- Issue 90% of decisions in hearings within 1 month of hearing.
- Issue 80% of written statement of grounds of decisions within 2 months following request for same.

- Issue to relevant parties copies of notices of opposition and applications for revocation or declaration of invalidity within 2 weeks of receipt.
- Respond to 95% of written correspondence on individual applications (opposition, revocation and invalidity) within 2 weeks.
- Respond to individual requests for extensions of time prior to the expiry of the relevant deadline, where those requests are made not later than 2 weeks before such expiry.
- Accept applications for Trade Marks within a period of 2 months from the filing of a properly completed application and where no objections have been raised by the Office.

5.3 PATENT EXAMINATION DIVISION

Customer service targets for Patent Examination Division

- To approve the grant of short term patents within a period of 6 months from filing of a proper, complete application.
- Issue notification of substantive defects within 2 months of filing.
- Following receipt of all necessary documents and responses to official objections associated with patent applications, to decide on whether to grant or refuse a patent within two months
- Perform examination of all applications for Supplementary Protection Certificates at least 12 months before expiry date of the basic patent.¹
- Classify for publication 90% of all non-divisional patent applications within 18 months after the priority filing date. (Position to be reported on a quarterly basis).

¹Dependant on applications being received earlier than 12 months before the expiry date.

Annex 1

CONTACT DETAILS

The Patents Office is open Monday to Friday from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm, including lunch time.

Patents Office
Government Buildings
Hebron Road
Kilkenny
R95 H4XC

Callers from within Ireland can contact the Office for the price of a local call by using our lo-call numbers:

Tel: +353-56-7720111
Lo-Call Tel: 1890-220223 (within Ireland)
Fax: +353-56-7720100
Lo-Call Fax: 1890-220120 (within Ireland)
E-mail: patlib@entemp.ie

The Office's website address is www.patentsoffice.ie

The Office's general Email address is: patlib@patentsoffice.ie

Staff contact details

Controller	Mr. Gerard Barrett
Administration Division	
Finance & Customer Service Section.	Ms. Mary Flynn
Grants & Register Administration Section	Ms. Claire O'Reilly
Trade Marks Examination Division	Mr. Dermot Doyle
Patent Examination Division	Dr. Michael Lydon.

Annex 2

**Patents Office
Complaints Form**

Please complete this form providing as much detail as you can in relation to the nature of the complaint, the name of the officials with whom you were dealing with and the steps taken to-date to resolve your complaint. Dates and copies of any documentation should be included where appropriate.

Name	
Address	
Telephone No.	
e.mail address	
Please tick box if you wish the Office to correspond with you by e-mail in relation to this complaint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patents Office reference number / file number / application number (or other identification of the subject matter):	
Details of the complaint:	
Any complaint received will be acknowledged and investigated and a full written reply will issue within 10 working days.	

Annex 3

Principles Of Quality Customer Service For Customers And Clients Of The Public Service

Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

Equality/Diversity

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication.

Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.

Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.

Complaints

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

Appeals

Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery

Choice

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

Official Languages Equality

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

Better Co-ordination

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

Internal Customer

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

Annex III

Annex 4

Performance targets by area of IP activity (2017 to 2019)

Patents

1	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed Patent applications within 4 working days.
2	Issue notification of formal defects 15 working days of filing.
3	Issue notification of substantive defects within 2 months of filing.
4	Issue confirmation that amendments requested to the patent register in respect of pending applications have been recorded within 5 working days of receipt of a correctly completed application.
5	Grant patents within 3 days of receipt of grant fee.
6	Transmit European patent applications to the EPO within 5 working days of receipt.
7	Transmit PCT applications to WIPO within 5 working days of receipt.
8	To approve the grant of short term patents within a period of 6 months from filing of a proper, complete application.
9	Following receipt of all necessary documents and responses to official objections associated with patent applications, to decide on whether to grant or refuse a patent within two months
10	Classify for publication 90% of all non-divisional patent applications within 18 months after the priority filing date.
11	Issue patent renewal certificate within 3 working days of receipt of renewal fee
12	Issue certified copies of Patent documents within 4 working days of receipt of request.
13	Process applications for registration of assignments within 7 working days of submission of a fully completed application.

Supplementary Protection Certificates

14	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed SPC applications within 4 working days.
15	Issue notification of formal defects within 10 working days of filing date
16	Perform examination of all applications for Supplementary Protection Certificates at least 12 months before expiry date of the basic patent*. (*Dependant on applications being received earlier than 12 months before the expiry date.)

Trade Marks

17	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed (paper based) Trade Mark applications within 4 working days.
18	Issue a request for payment of registration fees within 7 working days of the expiration of the period for filing of opposition where no opposition is received
19	Where opposition is determined in favour of the applicant, the request for registration fee will issue within 7 working days of publication of the withdrawal of opposition
20	Register Trade Marks within 3 working days of receipt of registration fee
21	Transmit applications for International Trade Mark Registration within 3 working days of receipt of correctly filed applications
22	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly e-filed Trade Mark applications on the next business day.
23	Conduct initial search in respect of new applications within 1 week of receipt.
24	Formalities check on all e-filed applications completed within 1 week of receipt.
25	Issue initial acceptance/objection letters within 8 weeks of receipt of new applications in Division.
26	Issue preliminary search reports within 1 week of request.
27	Respond to 95% of all written correspondence on individual applications in examination within 2 weeks.
28	Decision on regulations governing the use of collective trade marks within 2 months of filing acceptable regulations.
29	Issue 90% of decisions in hearings within 1 month of hearing.
30	Issue 80% of written statement of grounds of decisions within 2 months following request for same.
31	Issue to relevant parties copies of notices of opposition and applications for revocation or declaration of invalidity within 2 weeks of receipt.
32	Respond to 95% of written correspondence on individual applications (opposition, revocation and invalidity) within 2 weeks.
33	Respond to individual requests for extensions of time prior to the expiry of the relevant deadline, where those requests are made not later than 2 weeks before such expiry.
34	Accept applications for Trade Marks within a period of 2 months from the filing of a properly completed application and where no objections have been raised by the Office.
35	Issue trade mark renewal certificate within 1 working days of receipt of renewal fee.
36	Issue certified copies and extracts from the Register within 4 working days of application.
37	Process applications for registration of trade mark assignments within 7 working days of submission of a properly fully completed application.
38	Issue confirmation that requested amendments to the Trade Marks Register in respect of names and addresses of proprietors and trade mark agents and addresses for service have been recorded within 5 working days of receipt of a properly completed application.

Industrial Designs

39	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly filed (paper based) Design applications within 4 working days.
40	Issue formal filing receipts for correctly efiled Design applications within 2 working days
41	Issue Certificates of Registration within 5 working days of the application being registered by Examination Division
42	Issue design renewal certificate within 1 working days of receipt of renewal fee.

Copyright

43	Issue 95% of Certificates of Registration or Certificates of Renewal of Registration in respect of the Register of Copyright Licensing Bodies within 30 working days of receipt of a completed application. <i>(This target is contingent on requests for registration and renewal of registration being submitted more than 30 days in advance of the renewal date)</i>
44	Process request for amendments to the Register within 10 working days of completed request
45	Complete examination of compliance reports at least 14 days before expiry of the relevant registration. <i>(This target is contingent on compliance statements and reports being more than 30 days in advance of the renewal date)</i>

General

46	Issue payment receipts for fees received (in the form of cash, bank draft and money order) within 2 working days.
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Annex 5

Significant customer service related actions carried out during the period of the 2014-2016 Plan

During the life of the previous plan the Office has:

- Commenced a project to redesign its Website so as to offer a comprehensive Intellectual Property (IP) information resource, particularly for small business users.
- Replaced the website content management system (CMS).
- Continued its involvement in IP education in schools through involvement with the Student Enterprise Awards (aimed at second level students)
- Continued its successful support of and involvement in the Young Scientists and Technology Exhibition.
- Continued to review and improve the range of standard official letters (including those which the administration system generates automatically) to make them more user friendly and understandable.
- Continued the process of modernisation and change of its IT structures so as to enhance system performance and effectiveness for the benefit of internal and external customers and to ensure a 24 X 7 delivery of online services. New online services introduced included:
 - Efiling of Trade Marks
 - DesignView (an all-in-one design search tool covering data from a large number of EU and international IP Offices).
 - Efiling of Designs.
 - Expanded the range of trade mark and design fees which can be paid online
 - Federated Register Phase 2 (similar to TMView and DesignView but for patents).
 - Introducing a link to the underlying published patent documents from the Register of Patents thereby facilitating free online access to same.
- Continued to review administrative procedures and processes with a view to simplification of same and where possible taking advantage of automation and electronic processing to improve efficiency.
- Increased awareness raising and provision of IP information to business by delivering more than the target numbers of seminars and talks and participation in more business events and exhibitions.
- Ensured a safe and pleasant working environment for staff through bi-annual H&S Audits and continued provision of safety training.
- Produced quarterly statistical and management information reports for the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation published a report of performance against customer service targets in the Controller's Annual Report.

