

Wednesday Afternoon Session 1:30 - 4:00  
Updates from Patent Offices - Session Chair: Stephen Adams

3:20 - 4:00

**Reform of the IPC and the Trilateral Harmonization Project**

by Harold Smith, Director, Office of Patent Classification, US Patent and Trademark Office

**Abstract:**

As one of its strategic initiatives, the US Patent and Trademark Office has been working closely with the Japan Patent Office and the European Patent Office to “harmonize” or align their local classification systems. In a related effort, the Trilateral Offices are working together and with the World Intellectual Property Organization and its members to reform the International Patent Classification system (IPC), upon which the Japanese and European classification systems are based. This effort will improve the Offices’ ability to share increasing workloads.

**Biography:**

Mr. Smith received a BS degree from the University of South Carolina School of Engineering, and came to US Patent and Trademark Office as a Patent Examiner in late 1972. He transferred to Classification in 1975. He was appointed to a Supervisory position in 1987 and to Director of Classification Operations in 1995. The Office of Patent Classification, as it is now called, has 45 employees and includes several senior classifiers that coordinate reclassification activities in the examining technology centers, and other staff who maintain patent classification data and publish classification reference materials. Over the past four years, Mr. Smith has been heavily involved in international cooperation on classification activities, including reform of the International Classification System.

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