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Bimonthly Updates on Intellectual Property

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Legislation Updates

1. Hong Kong Joins WIPO's Global IP Judgments Database

On September 1, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) regarding the WIPO Lex-Judgments database. Through this collaboration, both parties will enhance the sharing and exchange of intellectual property judicial decisions, working together to build a more integrated and knowledge-rich global IP community. This marks Hong Kong's formal entry into this significant international platform for judicial exchange in intellectual property, with the support of the Central Government.

The WIPO Lex-Judgments database is a free and publicly accessible platform that provides important judicial decisions on intellectual property from around the world. The partnership with Hong Kong will significantly increase the international transparency of Hong Kong's IP system, further strengthening its position as a regional hub for IP trading and legal services. It is worth noting that as the only jurisdiction in China operating a common law system in both Chinese and English, Hong Kong's unique advantages will offer valuable insights for the global IP community.

This cooperation coincides with the release of WIPO's Global Innovation Index 2025, in which the Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou innovation cluster ranked first globally for the first time. The Beijing cluster placed fourth, while the Shanghai-Suzhou cluster came in sixth, highlighting the strong momentum of China's innovation development.

This collaboration will further boost international businesses' confidence in Hong Kong's IP protection regime, support the national strategic goal of establishing China as an IP powerhouse, and inject new energy into knowledge sharing and exchange within the global IP community.

2. Thailand Adopts E-Certificates for International Trademark Registrations

The Thai Trademark Office (TMO) announced that, starting in August 2025, it would implement significant changes to the certification process for international trademark registrations (IR) designating Thailand. The update aimed to improve the efficiency of trademark management and advance paperless operations.

Under the new rules, the TMO discontinued the issuance of physical certificates for IR applications filed through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Instead, it began issuing electronic registration certificates equipped with a QR code for verification purposes. These e-certificates carried the same legal weight as their physical counterparts and could be used for enforcement and legal proceedings. The QR code allowed instant authentication of document details.

It was emphasized that the change applied only to international registrations. For national trademark applications filed directly in Thailand, the existing policy remained unchanged: the TMO continued to issue and mail hardcopy certificates to rights holders or their local representatives. Physical certificates were still required for certain procedures, such as recording assignments.

The shift was expected to streamline the registration process for international trademarks, reduce waiting times, and enhance digital management of trademark records. It also aligned with global trends toward electronic processing in intellectual property administration.

3. Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated Content Officially Implemented in China – Clear Marking Required for AI Outputs

The *Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated and Synthetic Content* (hereinafter referred to as the “Measures”), jointly issued by the Cyberspace Administration of China, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Public Security, and the National Radio and Television Administration, officially took effect on September 1, 2025. The Measures stipulate that all text, images, audio, video, and other content generated or synthesized using artificial intelligence technologies must carry explicit or implicit labels to enhance content transparency and prevent the spread of false information.

According to the Measures, labeling falls into two categories: explicit and implicit. Explicit labels refer to those added to the content itself or the interaction interface in the form of text, sound, graphics, or other means that are easily perceptible to users. Implicit labels, on the other hand, are embedded into the file metadata through technical measures. While not immediately noticeable to ordinary users, they record key information such as the content’s origin and attributes.

Under the regulations, service providers must add explicit labels to content based on specific scenarios. For example, text must include a notice at the beginning, end, or a suitable position within the body; audio should contain voice or rhythm-based indicators; images and videos must be clearly marked in visible areas; and virtual scenes require prompts within the visual interface. At the same time, service providers are also required to embed implicit labels within the file metadata, including information such as content attributes and the provider’s name or code.

Additionally, platforms that distribute content are obliged to verify the presence of implicit labels. Content that is unlabeled or suspected to be AI-generated must be prominently flagged. Users publishing AI-generated content must proactively declare it and use the labeling tools provided. Any organization or individual is prohibited from maliciously removing, altering, forging, or concealing labels, and must not provide tools or services that facilitate such acts.

The introduction of the Measures comes amid the rapid development of generative AI and deep synthesis technologies. While these technologies bring convenience to economic and

cultural activities and daily life, they also pose challenges such as the spread of misinformation and damage to the online ecosystem. The Measures aim to promote healthy and orderly development of AI, protect the legitimate rights and interests of citizens and organizations, and safeguard public interests through standardized labeling management.

The Measures also require internet application distribution platforms to examine materials related to AI-generated content labeling during app review processes. Service providers must clearly specify labeling guidelines in user agreements and retain log information in accordance with the law.

4. China's Stricter Trademark Policies Show Results in Curbing Malicious Cancellations and Deceptive Registrations

China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) has recently intensified efforts to curb malicious trademark cancellations and the use of deceptive trademarks that mislead the public, with multiple targeted measures now showing positive results.

In addressing malicious “three-year non-use” cancellation requests, CNIPA has identified four categories of abusive behaviors: frequent and large-scale filings against multiple trademark holders beyond reasonable intent to clear idle trademarks; submitting cancellation requests despite clear knowledge of the trademark’s active use; repeatedly targeting the same trademark to disrupt legitimate business activities; and agencies filing cancellations against trademarks they previously helped register. Starting in 2023, CNIPA enhanced its monitoring mechanisms to detect abnormal filing patterns through data analysis, public reporting, and case reviews. From January to July 2024, over 10 abnormal applicants were penalized, with 841 malicious requests rejected—contributing to a total of 6,736 refused requests, a year-on-year increase of 58.91%. Additionally, clues related to more than 440 suspicious applications involving two individuals and seven agencies were referred to judicial authorities.

To improve application quality, in May 2024 CNIPA issued revised Guidelines for Filing Cancellations Based on Three-Year Non-Use, clarifying requirements for evidence and arguments and strengthening the principle that “the burden of proof lies with the claimant.” The updated guidelines help applicants submit compliant requests and enable trademark owners to provide evidence of use more efficiently.

In combating deceptive trademarks, CNIPA has prioritized public interest sectors such as food and daily consumer goods. The Administration introduced the Guidelines for Examining Deceptive Trademarks, specifying that marks which—in combination with product names, packaging, or advertising—mislead the public regarding quality, composition, or origin shall be rejected or invalidated. As of July 2024, over 104,000 trademarks underwent targeted screening, resulting in the invalidation of 939 deceptive marks, including examples such as “山里来的土” (literally “From the Mountains”) and “0 添加西” (“Zero Added”). Nearly one million misleading applications were also rejected at the examination stage.

CNIPA is also advancing cross-agency collaboration, working with the State Administration for Market Regulation and local intellectual property offices to share clues and coordinate enforcement. Four case clues involving 65 trademarks have been transferred to local authorities, while 22 trademarks confirmed to be deceptive—including “盘氏瑶医” and “福亿博 18-16-18”—were invalidated ex officio.

Looking ahead, CNIPA will continue to support the revision of the Trademark Law and its implementation regulations, clarifying legal consequences for malicious activities. By integrating AI and big data technologies, the agency aims to enhance examination accuracy and response efficiency, building a comprehensive governance framework covering registration, use, and protection to foster a healthier market environment and greater public trust.

5. Service Disruption Notice: Korean Patent E-Filing System Interrupted Due to Data Center Fire, KIPO Issues Contingency Guidelines

The Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) announced on September 27, 2025, that its electronic filing platform, "Patent Portal (www.patent.go.kr)," is experiencing a service interruption and users cannot currently submit documents online. This outage is a result of a fire at the data center of the National Information Resources Service under the Ministry of the Interior and Safety.

The core impact is on document submission; however, **fee payment services have now been restored.** Applicants can currently use all channels, including credit card, bank transfer, and virtual accounts, to make payments normally. If fee obligations do not appear in the system, please try again **after 09:00 AM on Monday, September 29, 2025.**

Regarding application deadlines, KIPO has provided clear guidance. For the vast majority of electronic documents, including those for divisional applications, priority-claiming applications, and intermediate documents, the legal submission deadlines will be **automatically extended to the first business day after the system failure is resolved.**

A crucial exception applies to **first-time filings.** Since the filing date for new applications cannot be retroactively recognized, applicants intending to submit a first filing must use **in-person submission at a KIPO office (Daejeon Headquarters or Seoul Branch) or mail** to establish their filing date.

For alternative submission methods: International applications (PCT) can be submitted in paper form directly to KIPO. For all mailed documents, please note the rules for determining the filing date: general documents are considered filed on the postmark date, while documents for rights registration applications and PCT international applications are considered filed on the date **they are received** by KIPO. For the latter categories, in-person submission is strongly recommended in urgent cases. Please also be aware that the postal service is currently experiencing instability; applicants should verify service status with the post office before opting for mail.

KIPO has apologized for the significant inconvenience caused by this disruption and assured applicants that efforts are underway to restore normal service as quickly as possible.

All applicants are advised to monitor the official KIPO website and the Patent Portal for the latest recovery updates.

6. USPTO Launches AI Pilot Program to Streamline Patent Application Process

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has announced the launch of a new pilot program, the Artificial Intelligence Search Automated Pilot (ASAP!). This initiative represents a significant step in the agency's commitment to leveraging artificial intelligence to enhance patent examination quality, efficiency, and response times.

The ASAP! Program is designed to test the efficacy of an internal AI tool in conducting pre-examination searches for prior art. This initiative will provide utility application applicants with an early assessment of potential challenges by generating an AI-Assisted Search Results Notice (ASRN). This notice will communicate a "top ten list" of potential prior art issues, offering applicants a valuable opportunity to evaluate and potentially strengthen their claims before the formal substantive examination begins.

According to the agency, the AI system will perform automated searches by analyzing contextual information derived from the application's classification under the Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) system, as well as from the specification, claims, and abstract. The pilot aims to inform applicants of potential next steps, which could include filing a preliminary amendment, submitting evidence, requesting deferral, or filing certain petitions.

The USPTO will utilize the results from this pilot to assess the outcomes of pre-examination searches, evaluate the scalability of generating ASRNs, and collect data to guide future AI-driven initiatives. Participation in the ASAP! Program requires applicants to file a specific petition accompanied by a fee.

A Step Forward for AI in Government Services

The launch of the ASAP! Program underscores a growing trend of integrating AI into public sector workflows to tackle complex challenges. By deploying AI to identify potential patent conflicts at the earliest stages, the USPTO is not only aiming to accelerate the patent process but also to empower inventors with critical data upfront. This proactive approach could lead to more robust patent applications and reduce delays, demonstrating AI's potential to transform bureaucratic processes into more transparent, efficient, and user-friendly services. The initiative serves as a noteworthy model for how government agencies can harness technology

to better serve the public.

For further details on the ASAP! Program, interested parties are directed to view the official Federal Register Notice.

7. China Launches New Online Trademark Application System on October 20

The Trademark Office of the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) announced the forthcoming launch of its new-generation online trademark application system, set to go live on **October 20, 2025**. This significant upgrade is designed to modernize and streamline the trademark application and management process for all users.

A key feature of this launch is the introduction of several **new online services** previously unavailable in the legacy system. These expansions significantly broaden the scope of digital trademark management and include the capability to file the following applications online:

- Applications for Review of Refusal to Register a Trademark
- Applications for Review of Registered Trademark Cancellation
- Applications for Review of Invalidation of a Registered Trademark
- Applications for Trademark Pledge Registration
- Applications for Cancellation of a Trademark that has Become a Generic Name for its

Goods/Services

The administration has confirmed plans to progressively expand the range of online services in the future.

Alongside the main portal, CNIPA will simultaneously launch a dedicated **"Trademark Office Online Service" mini-program** on WeChat and Alipay. This mobile platform is designed to offer greater flexibility and will provide key functionalities such as:

- **QR Code Authentication** for secure login.
- **Application Business Inquiry** to track the status of filings.
- **Electronic Document Receipt** for official notifications.
- **Online Fee Payment.**
- **Electronic Invoice Download.**

To ensure a smooth transition, the existing system will enter a planned maintenance period from **20:00 on October 16, 2025, until 09:00 on October 20, 2025**. During this window, the legacy system will be unavailable for service. The CNIPA has confirmed that any deadlines for responses, fee payments, or supplemental materials for existing electronic applications that fall

during this outage will be uniformly extended to **October 20, 2025**.

Following the transition, the legacy system will remain accessible in a **read-only capacity**, allowing users to view applications and download historical documents, particularly PDF and JPG files dated **before July 1, 2024**. However, it will no longer support any new transactions, including registrations, application submissions, or payments. All new activities must be conducted through the new system.

Users are advised to prepare for the switch by ensuring they use a **supported browser**, such as Chrome, Edge, or Firefox (version 100 or above), and to plan their filing activities around the system downtime.

For further assistance, the Trademark Office can be contacted via its helpline at **010-63218500**.

8. Russia Introduces Tiered Fee System for Trademarks and Expands Official Fee Waivers

In a significant update to its intellectual property framework, the Russian government has issued Resolution No. 1459 on September 23, 2025, introducing key changes. The reforms are centered on a new tiered fee structure for trademarks, expanded cost relief for state entities, and enhanced management procedures for state-owned IP rights.

Key Changes for Trademark Owners: A New Tiered Fee Model

The most direct impact for international rights holders is the restructuring of official fees for trademarks, which now adopts a more granular, tiered calculation system:

- **Examination Fees:** The base fee for examining a trademark application is now 13,000 RUB. An additional 2,500 RUB applies for each class of the International Classification of Goods and Services beyond the first. Furthermore, for any single class containing more than 10 designated goods or services, a fee of 500 RUB will be charged for each item exceeding that threshold.
- **Renewal Fees:** The base fee for renewing a trademark registration is set at 22,000 RUB. An additional 2,000 RUB is required for each class beyond five. The same rule applies for goods/services per class: 500 RUB for each item over 10 in a single class. A 3,000 RUB surcharge will be applied for requesting a paper copy of the renewal certificate.

This new structure makes portfolio management and cost forecasting for trademark applications and renewals in Russia more complex, necessitating careful strategic planning.

Fee Exemptions for State Entities and Corporations

The resolution grants broad exemptions from various patent and trademark fees to federal and regional government bodies, as well as to state corporations Rosatom and Roscosmos. This waiver applies when these entities are managing IP rights owned by the Russian Federation, covering actions from registration and maintenance to the recordal of assignments and licenses.

Streamlined Management of State-Owned Patents

The new rules also impose a stricter timeline for state-funded inventions. Government clients must now file a request for the early termination of a patent for an invention, utility

model, or industrial design with the Russian Patent Office (Rospatent) within 15 working days if the right is no longer deemed necessary. This aims to optimize the state's IP portfolio more actively.

Implications

These changes underscore Russia's ongoing efforts to modernize its IP regime. While providing cost savings for state-driven innovation, the revised trademark fee system requires businesses to manage their applications and renewals more strategically to control costs.

9. EU Enters New Phase of Geographical Indication Protection, Extending to Crafts and Industrial Products in 2025

Starting December 1, 2025, the European Union's Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) system will undergo a significant expansion. From that date, Italy and all other EU member states will officially begin accepting PGI registration applications for craft and industrial products. This move means that a wide range of goods—such as natural stone, wooden items, jewelry, textiles, ceramics, and glassware—will be eligible to obtain this "passport," granting them rigorous protection across the entire EU, much like agricultural products, based on their unique geographical origin and reputation for quality.

To successfully register as a geographical indication product, three core criteria must be met: the product must originate from a specific place, region, or country; its quality, reputation, or other defining characteristics must be essentially attributable to that geographical origin; and at least one key production step must take place within the defined geographical area. This new set of unified rules is established by **EU Regulation (EU) 2023/2411**, which aims to enhance the quality and reputation of EU craft and industrial products through legal protection and to boost recognition for local and regional economies on the international stage.

Comparative Perspective: Similarities and Differences Between the EU's New Rules and China's GI Protection System

A comparison between the EU's new framework and China's geographical indication protection system reveals shared objectives—such as protecting local specialty products and promoting industrial development—alongside differences in specific scope and structure. China has already established a relatively comprehensive geographical indication protection system, primarily implemented through the "Geographical Indication Product" scheme overseen by the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), as well as through "Geographical Indication Certification Marks" and "Collective Marks" under the market regulation system.

A notable difference lies in the scope of protection. While China's existing system does not theoretically exclude craft and industrial products—as evidenced by well-known protected examples like "Jingdezhen Porcelain" and "Xuan Paper"—in practice, the vast majority of

protected GI products in China are concentrated in categories such as agricultural products, foodstuffs, tea, and traditional Chinese medicinal materials. The EU, by contrast, is using legislation to extend protection explicitly and systematically to the entire spectrum of craft and industrial goods, creating a clear pathway for a more diverse range of products. This is seen as a forward-looking step in the field of intellectual property protection.

Furthermore, the management frameworks of the two systems also show distinct characteristics. The EU is striving to establish a mandatory, pan-European regulation, whereas China's protection system is multi-layered, with specific management and supervision responsibilities often falling more heavily on local governments or designated industry associations.

The expansion of the EU's system signals a growing global recognition of the value of geographical indications. It will not only strengthen the distinctiveness and competitiveness of "Made in Europe" products but also offers valuable insights for other countries and regions worldwide—including China—as they consider how to protect non-agricultural cultural heritage and specialty industries more comprehensively.

10. Malaysia Introduces Key IP Revisions: New Fee Concessions, Expanded E-Filing, and Post-Grant Opposition System

The Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO) has recently issued several important updates affecting both the trademark and patent systems. These changes, which will be implemented in phases starting in the second half of 2025, signify a substantial modernization of the Malaysian intellectual property framework.

1. Limited-Time Fee Reduction for Trademark Applications

Pursuant to the Trademarks (Reduction of Fee) Regulations 2025 and the accompanying Practice Direction No. 1/2025, a temporary fee reduction for trademark applications will be in effect from **1 September 2025 to 31 December 2025**.

This initiative is available to applicants—including individuals, sole proprietorships, partnerships, associations, body corporates, and institutions—with an annual sales turnover of less than **MYR 500,000 (about 106,000 US\$)**. Applicants must submit supporting documents: individuals must provide a declaration of turnover; sole proprietorships or partnerships must provide a copy of their registration certificate and a turnover declaration; associations, body corporates, or institutions must provide a copy of their registration certificate along with either audited financial statements or tax payment documents as proof of turnover.

Eligible applicants are required to use the prescribed "Application for Reduction of Fee" form, submit it together with the relevant trademark application form (TMA2A or TMA2B) and supporting documents **in person at the Trademarks Office counter**. The process is designed to provide an approval decision on the same day of filing.

2. Significant Expansion of Patent E-Filing; Additional Fee for Physical Submissions

Practice Notice No. 1/2025, effective **31 December 2025**, clearly lists ten (10) key patent matters available for electronic filing via the IP Online Portal. These include:

- Request for Grant of Patent
- Declaration of Withdrawal of Application
- Entering National Phase for International Application
- Request for Substantive Examination
- Request to Convert Application for Patent into Application for Certificate for

Utility Innovation (and vice versa)

- Application for Grant of a Certificate for a Utility Innovation
- Appointment or Change of Patent Agent
- Request for Extension of Time
- Renewal of a Patent or Utility Innovation Certificate

A key operational change is the introduction of a **handling fee** for filings related to the above matters if submitted physically at the Patent Registration Office counter or by post, when electronic filing is available.

Furthermore, the Notice specifies that all applications or requests related to patent opposition proceedings must be submitted at the Patent Registration Office counter **no later than 3:00 PM** on any working day. Submissions after this time will be date-stamped as received on the next working day.

3. Introduction of a Structured Post-Grant Patent Opposition System

The Patents (Amendment) Regulations 2025 introduce a comprehensive post-grant opposition mechanism, also effective **31 December 2025**.

Under the new framework, any interested person may file a notice of opposition within **six (6) months** from the date of publication of the grant of a patent. This requires the prescribed form, a fee of **MYR 2,500** (for a patent) or **MYR 1,500** (for a utility innovation), a statement of grounds, supporting evidence by statutory declaration, and a **security for costs** as required by Section 55A(2) of the Patents Act 1983.

The detailed opposition procedure is outlined as follows:

- The patent owner must file a counterstatement (Fee: MYR 250 / MYR 150) within **three (3) months** and may concurrently file a request to amend the patent (Fee: MYR 200) in response.
- The opponent may then file evidence in reply within a further **three (3) months**.
- Requests for leave to file further evidence (Fee: MYR 300) are also permitted, subject to the Registrar's approval.

The entire process will be evaluated by an ad-hoc opposition committee, leading to a final decision by the Registrar. The regulations also detail procedures and associated fees for extensions of time (max. one month, once only), amendments to documents (Fee: MYR 150),

and withdrawal of opposition (Fee: MYR 150 or MYR 300 depending on the stage).

4. Transitional Arrangements and Commencement

Please note that Practice Notice No. 1/2025 expressly revokes the previous Practice Notice No. 1/2022, No. 2/2022, and No. 1/2023. The amended Patents Regulations also include coordination measures, stating that a request to amend a patent filed before the initiation of opposition proceedings may be deferred by the Registrar until the opposition period ends or the proceedings are concluded.

Conclusion

These sequential updates reflect Malaysia's focused efforts to reduce barriers for innovators, enhance administrative efficiency through digitalization, and strengthen the robustness of the patent system. The changes provide clearer operational guidelines for rights holders seeking protection in Malaysia. Given the specific deadlines, procedural nuances, and cost implications, it is advisable for stakeholders to review their Malaysian IP strategies and consider seeking professional guidance to navigate these new provisions effectively.

11. Upcoming Changes to Australia’s Trademark Regulations: Key Reforms to International Registrations, Oppositions, and Hearings

Australia’s trademark system is poised for a series of important updates with the recent release of the exposure draft of the *Trade Marks Amendment (International Registrations, Hearings and Oppositions) Regulations 2025* by IP Australia. The public consultation period for the draft concluded on September 29, 2025. These proposed changes are designed to align more closely with international standards and improve user experience, offering greater flexibility and efficiency for businesses and individuals managing trademark rights in Australia.

Extended Period for Filing a Notice of Intention to Defend

A significant change under the proposal is the extension of the deadline for filing a Notice of Intention to Defend from **one month to two months**. This adjustment brings Australia into line with the Madrid system and offers trademark holders more time to prepare and respond to an opposition, reducing the risk of losing rights due to time constraints.

More Flexible Management of National and International Trademark Portfolios

The draft regulations introduce the possibility of **partial replacement** of a national Australian trademark registration by a protected international trade mark. This allows trademark owners to manage their rights with greater precision. For example, they could maintain an international registration for specific goods or services while allowing the corresponding national registration to lapse, potentially simplifying portfolio management and reducing renewal costs.

New Powers to Resolve Stalled Opposition Proceedings

To address the issue of opposition proceedings that remain inactive indefinitely, the Registrar will be empowered to **formally end such “stalled” oppositions**. If the relevant party (such as the opponent or the non-use applicant) fails to take required steps—such as requesting a hearing or paying the applicable fee—within three months after the evidence period ends, the Registrar may dismiss the opposition or deem it successful. This measure aims to clear case backlogs and enhance the overall efficiency and certainty of the trademark system.

Other Notable Improvements

The amendments also introduce a **new ground for refusing protection** of an international

registration designating Australia if it would contravene Australian sanctions laws. Additionally, the process for handling hearings will be streamlined: when an applicant requests a hearing, the examination deadline will be **automatically deferred**, removing the need for a separate extension request and reducing administrative burdens.

Next Steps and Strategic Considerations

Please note that the public consultation period for the exposure draft **closed on September 29, 2025**. IP Australia is now reviewing the feedback received. The **final content and effective date of the amended regulations may differ from the draft** and are subject to official approval.

Businesses with trademark interests in Australia are advised to monitor official announcements closely. Once these changes take effect, adapting promptly will be key to leveraging the increased flexibility and managing potential risks effectively.

12. IPOS Introduces Pilot Fee Refund for Patent Prosecution Highway Users

The Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) has launched a new pilot initiative to encourage use of the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) programme. From **15 September 2025 to 31 December 2027**, applicants who file a PPH request together with a search and/or examination (S&E) request will be eligible for a **30% refund** on official fees.

Key Details:

Applicants can receive refunds of **S\$615** for a full search and examination request, or **S\$426** for an examination-only request. For PCT national phase applications where IPOS established the ISR/IPER, the refund is **S\$315**. To qualify, the PPH request must be filed within the pilot period, and examination must not have started at the time of request.

How to Apply:

There are two simple ways to apply. At the time of filing the S&E request, select the “ASPEC/PPH” checkbox on Patents Form 11 or 12 and attach the necessary PPH documents. If the S&E request has already been filed but examination has not yet begun, applicants can email **PT_acceleration@ipos.gov.sg** with the subject line “PPH acceleration requested”, stating the application number and any required claim amendments.

Upon acceptance of the PPH request, IPOS will automatically process the refund, which applicants can expect to receive within **1 to 2 months**.

Benefits of the PPH Programme:

The PPH programme offers significant advantages, including a high patent grant rate of **94%** in Singapore, a faster first office action typically issued within **10 months** of the request, and a streamlined process where about **70%** of patents are granted at the first office action. Singapore's extensive PPH network includes over 30 global partners, such as the patent offices of China, Japan, Korea, the US, and the European Patent Office.

Other Acceleration Options:

IPOS continues to offer a suite of other acceleration programmes, including SG Patents FAST, the ASEAN Patent Examination Co-operation (ASPEC), and Collaborative Search and Examination (CS&E) programmes with Vietnam and Indonesia.

This pilot initiative underscores IPOS's commitment to supporting businesses with more

efficient and cost-effective patent prosecution pathways.

13. Tanzania Mandates Trademark Recordation for All Imported Goods, Effective December 2025

The Fair Competition Commission (FCC) of Tanzania has announced the commencement of implementation of Trademark Rights Recordation effective from **1st December 2025**. This significant regulatory update makes it mandatory for all trademarks on goods imported into Mainland Tanzania to be recorded with the Chief Inspector of Merchandise Marks, irrespective of their country of registration.

The initiative reinforces Tanzania's legal framework for combating counterfeit trade under the **Merchandise Marks Act, 1963 (as amended)**.

Key Requirements and Process

Trademark owners or their authorized agents must submit a formal application using the prescribed **Form FCC 1**. Essential information includes applicant and owner details, nationality or jurisdiction of incorporation, the place of manufacture of the goods, and a sample or digital image of the trademarked products. The application must also include details of any foreign entities licensed to use the mark and information on related companies under common ownership or control. A certified copy of the trademark registration and proof of payment for the application fee of **TZS 200,000 per class** must accompany the submission.

The Chief Inspector will review applications within **21 days**, with notification of the decision issued within **5 days** thereafter. Once approved, the recordation is valid for **one year** from the approval date.

Maintenance and Enforcement

To maintain a valid recordation, any assignment or transfer of ownership must be reported to the FCC within **30 days** using **Form FCC 2**, and any change in the owner's name must be notified within **7 days**. Failure to report such changes will result in the cancellation of the recordation. Renewal must be filed at least **30 days before expiry**, accompanied by updated information and a fee of **TZS 50,000**.

Providing false or misleading information to the FCC is a punishable offense, carrying penalties of up to **TZS 10 million**, imprisonment for up to **12 months**, or both.

Protection and Representation

Recorded trademarks will benefit from **proactive protection against counterfeit imports**. Furthermore, from 1st December 2025, only trademark representatives formally registered and admitted by the respective trademark owners will be permitted to act on their behalf before the FCC.

Trademark owners and importers are urged to prepare for these new requirements well ahead of the December deadline.

14. USPTO Launches Streamlined Claim Set Pilot Program to Accelerate Patent Examination

In a move to further reduce patent pendency and application backlog, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has introduced the Streamlined Claim Set Pilot Program. This initiative enables certain qualifying utility patent applications to receive an earlier first Office action by advancing them out of turn.

To be eligible, an application must contain no more than one independent claim and ten total claims. Applicants can bring pending applications into compliance with these requirements by filing a preliminary amendment.

Each Technology Center will accept approximately 200 applications into the pilot program. Participation requires the submission of a petition to make special using Form PTO/SB/472.

This program offers a valuable opportunity for applicants seeking expedited examination of their U.S. patent applications. By streamlining claim sets, applicants can obtain faster feedback from the USPTO while contributing to the overall reduction of examination backlog.

15. Singapore IP Regime Proposed Updates: Public Consultation Extended until 25 November 2025

The Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) has released a Public Consultation Paper outlining proposed changes to Singapore’s intellectual property (IP) regime. The consultation period, originally set to close on 11 November 2025, has been extended by two weeks and will now end on **25 November 2025**.

IPOS is seeking feedback on revisions across patents, trademarks, geographical indications (GIs), and other IP rights, aiming to enhance clarity, efficiency, and alignment with international practices.

Key Proposed Changes

Patents: Formalising Basis for Amendments & Revising Burden of Proof

- Applicants will be **required to provide a basis for amendments** to patent specifications. Failure to do so may result in a registrar’s notice allowing one month (non-extendable) for compliance, after which amendments may be refused.
- Section 68(1) of the Patents Act will be amended to **remove the term “new”** before “product,” clarifying that the rebuttable presumption in process patent infringement applies in both the “new product” and “substantial likelihood” scenarios, aligning with TRIPS Article 34.

Trade Marks: Introducing a Final Examination Report (FER)

- A new **Final Examination Report (FER)** procedure will be implemented to resolve examination impasses. This applies where applicants’ repeated submissions fail to address substantive objections or where a mark is clearly non-registrable.
- Upon receiving an FER, applicants have **four months** to either remove non-registrable goods/services or request an *ex parte* hearing. Limited extensions and reinstatement options will be available.

Geographical Indications: Harmonising Deadlines with Trade Marks

- Opposition and amendment objection deadlines for GIs will be **aligned with existing trade mark procedures**.
- Key updates include extending the deadline to file a notice of opposition or

objection to **two months** (extendable to four months), and introducing a **right of appeal to the General Division of the High Court** for interlocutory decisions.

Cross-Cutting IP Updates

- **Filing Dates on Sundays/Public Holidays:** Applications filed on non-working days will be accorded the **actual date of submission**, matching practices in major IP offices such as those in the US, EU, China, and Japan.
- **Scale of Costs:** Fee schedules for trademarks, patents, designs, plant varieties, and GIs will be updated, with a new **power for the Registrar to award off-scale costs** in cases of unreasonable conduct.
- **Extension of Time:** The Registrar’s discretion to extend deadlines in “special circumstances” will be narrowed to “**circumstances beyond the control of a party,**” removing the broader “other special circumstances” provision.

Call for Submissions

IPOS invites stakeholders to provide feedback via FormSG by **25 November 2025**. Submissions should include the respondent’s name, email, organisation, and designation. Confidential treatment may be requested for sensitive information.

These proposals reflect IPOS’s ongoing commitment to maintaining a forward-looking and robust IP regime in Singapore.

International Cooperation

16. EPO and CNIPA extend PCT ISA pilot until 2031

The European Patent Office (EPO) and the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) are pleased to announce that their successful PCT pilot programme will continue until 30 November 2031.

The heads of the two offices agreed to the extension of the pilot at their bilateral heads of office meeting in Porto on 22 September.

Since its launch in December 2020, more than 770 enterprises, universities, and research institutes - nationals and residents of the People's Republic of China - have designated the EPO as their International Searching Authority, benefiting from fast, top-quality search reports and insightful written opinions that expedite the road toward European patent protection.

By choosing the EPO as their ISA, Chinese nationals and residents gain a **strategic advantage**. They can **accelerate the European patent grant process** when entering the European phase and bypass supplementary search, thereby saving substantial time and cost. Additionally, these applicants benefit from a **75% reduction in examination fees** when requesting international preliminary examination under PCT Chapter II with the EPO. The pilot continues to accept **up to 3 000 applications per year**, maintaining broad access to its benefits, and the applications must be filed in English.

“Our pilot scheme has proven its worth in practice,” said EPO President António Campinos. *“By simplifying procedures, reducing costs, and delivering tangible results to innovators, it exemplifies the impact of strategic international cooperation. Extending the programme until 2031 ensures that even more Chinese innovators can enjoy the European IP landscape with clarity and confidence. This extension is more than a signal of commitment between the EPO and the CNIPA - it is a direct endorsement of our shared mission to elevate innovation, reduce barriers, and strengthen cooperation across our regions.”*

CNIPA Commissioner Dr. Shen Changyu remarked *“As an important part of the cooperation between the CNIPA and the EPO, the pilot project has been widely welcomed by Chinese users since it was launched. More than 770 innovative entities have benefited from the pilot so far. We welcome the extension of the project, enabling Chinese entities to continue to*

choose the EPO as ISA and thus making it easier to apply for IP and get patent protection in Europe.”

17. Key Updates to the Madrid System: New Rules Effective from November 1, 2025

The Madrid Union has introduced several significant amendments to the Regulations under the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement, which will come into effect on November 1, 2025. These updates are designed to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the international trademark registration system. Below, we summarize the key changes to help trademark holders and representatives adapt in a timely manner.

1. Mandatory Email Address for Recordal Requests

To facilitate electronic communication and streamline processes, the amended Rules now require the provision of email addresses when submitting various requests to the International Bureau, unless previously supplied. This applies to requests such as the appointment of a representative, recording of licenses, subsequent designations, and changes in ownership, name, or address.

Requests that do not include the required email address will be considered irregular. For the appointment of a representative, a new compliant request must be submitted. For other types of requests, applicants or their representatives will have three months from the date of notification to rectify the omission; otherwise, the request will be deemed abandoned.

When using the eMadrid online platform, users will receive a prompt to provide any missing email address before the request can be finalized. A special provision applies to subsequent designations, allowing applicants to preserve the filing date by correcting the irregularity after notification.

2. Licensees to Receive Direct Notifications

Under the revised Rule 20bis, licensees or their representatives will now receive direct notifications from the International Bureau in several key situations. These include irregularities in a license recordal request, successful recordal of the license in the International Register, and declarations by a Contracting Party that the license has no effect in its territory.

This update ensures that licensees stay informed about developments affecting their rights and are able to take appropriate action in a timely manner.

3. Adjusted Fee Calculation in Response to Exchange Rate Changes

The amendments to Rule 35 introduce more responsive mechanisms for recalculating individual fees in Swiss francs to reflect exchange rate fluctuations.

When the exchange rate decreases by at least 5% for more than three consecutive months, the Director General will now be required to establish new fee amounts in Swiss currency. Conversely, when the rate increases by at least 5% over the same period, the Offices of the concerned Contracting Parties may request a recalculation. The International Bureau will also inform these Offices when the conditions for a fee adjustment are met.

These changes help minimize discrepancies between the costs of using the Madrid System and direct national filings, ensuring greater equity for users.

Recommendations for Rights Holders and Representatives

With the new rules taking effect on November 1, 2025, we recommend that all users of the Madrid System ensure that email addresses are collected and included in all relevant submissions. Internal procedures and checklists should be updated to reflect these amendments. Working closely with your intellectual property advisor will help prevent processing delays and maintain seamless management of your international trademark portfolio.

Others

18. China Leads Globally in AI Patents, Holding 60% of Total

At a recent press conference held by the State Council Information Office on the high-quality implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan, China announced a series of major advances in intellectual property and digital technology. Data shows that Chinese AI patents now account for 60% of the global total, with breakthroughs in key digital technologies such as integrated circuits and operating systems.

During the 14th Five-Year Plan period, the China National Intellectual Property Administration thoroughly implemented the decisions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, achieving multiple targets ahead of schedule and making solid progress in building China into an IP powerhouse.

In terms of IP protection, China amended the Patent Law, introduced a high-standard punitive compensation system, and revised the Trademark Law to address malicious registrations and hoarding. The country has established 128 national-level IP protection centers and rapid enforcement centers, reducing the average examination periods for invention patents and trademark registrations to 15.5 months and 4 months, respectively—ranking among the fastest globally under comparable examination systems. Public satisfaction with IP protection continues to rise.

Regarding application, the patent industrialization rate of Chinese enterprises reached 53.3%, while patent-intensive industries accounted for 13.04% of GDP. Revenue from imports and exports of IP royalties grew steadily. China now leads in core patents in AI, ICT, new energy vehicles, quantum technology, and other fields, with PCT international patent applications and other metrics among the highest in the world.

IP services have also significantly improved: the national IP public service platform offers one-stop online services for the entire IP chain. There are 483 national-level IP public service institutions covering all provinces, and 28 specialized patent databases have been built and opened to the public.

On international cooperation, China joined the Hague Agreement and facilitated the conclusion of multiple international IP treaties. It has established IP cooperation with more

than 80 countries and regions, and the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) network now covers 84 countries. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), China ranks 11th on the Global Innovation Index and has topped the list of global top 100 science and technology clusters for two consecutive years.

Amid rapid growth in the output of intelligent products such as industrial robots and unmanned aerial vehicles, digital technologies are deeply integrating with the real economy. China's growing influence in global IP not only fuels domestic innovation but also provides crucial support for international IP governance and collaboration.

19. China Breaks into Global Top 10 in Innovation, Says Latest WIPO Report

On September 16, 2025, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) released the Global Innovation Index 2025 report, in which China climbed to 10th place globally, marking its first entry into the top ten. China continues to lead among upper-middle-income economies and has advanced 25 places since 2013, reflecting the notable achievements of the country's innovation-driven development strategy and its ongoing efforts to build a strong technological and intellectual property ecosystem.

The report evaluates the innovation ecosystems of 139 global economies across two pillars—innovation input and output—using seven key dimensions, 21 sub-indicators, and 78 individual metrics. China performed strongly in innovation output, rising to 5th worldwide, while also improving in innovation input, where it now ranks 19th.

China leads globally in several key IP-related metrics, including industrial design and utility model patent applications, trademark filings per unit of GDP, and the share of creative goods exports in total trade. It also ranks second in inventions per unit of GDP, the development of industrial clusters, and business-funded R expenditure.

With 24 clusters among the world's top 100, China now has the highest number of leading innovation hubs worldwide. The Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou cluster rose to first place globally for the first time, while Beijing (4th) and Shanghai-Suzhou (6th) also ranked within the top ten, underscoring these regions as major centers for patent applications, technological innovation, and venture investment.

Additionally, the total value of Chinese brands reached \$1.81 trillion, maintaining the country's position as the second most valuable brand economy globally. The report further highlighted China's growing presence in high-tech exports and global value chains, particularly in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and green technologies.

These results demonstrate China's systematic progress in intellectual property creation and utilization, signaling its steady emergence as a key player in the global innovation landscape.