

Quality Management Manual Nordic Patent Institute

For the Following Processes:

- Statutory work**
- Contract work for foreign authorities and commercial enterprises**

Level 1 – Policy, Goals and Organisation

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PREFACE

The cooperation under Nordic Patent Institute (the Institute) shall contribute to stimulating Nordic companies, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, to innovation and economic growth. This shall be achieved by maintaining and developing the national patent offices as competence centres for Industrial Property Rights in the individual countries, capable of offering customised services of a quality and efficiency which is competitive by international standards.

The Institute shall also contribute positively to the development of a coherent and efficient European patent system based on the European Patent Convention and on cooperation between the European Patent Office (EPO) and the national patent offices (NPOs). The aim is to offer Nordic users the best possible platform for taking advantage of such European network cooperation.

Nordic Patent Institute provides the following services which supplement each other in a synergistic way

- Handling PCT applications (international search and preliminary examination) and related tasks such as Supplementary International Searches (SIS) and International Type Searches (ITS). Consequently, the Institute acts as an International Authority (IA) under the PCT system (Patent Cooperation Treaty).
- Contract work, i.e. work subcontracted from non-NPI patent authorities, and commercial services for private customers based on contracts (large scale contracts as well as contracts on an ad hoc basis in individual cases).

In performing its tasks, Nordic Patent Institute draws upon the specialist resources of the national patent offices of the NPI contracting parties.

High and consistent quality is an indispensable precondition for the Institute in order to achieve its objectives. The Institute has established a quality management system (QMS) with the following objectives:

1. The quality of the services offered by Nordic Patent Institute shall meet the standards established under the European network cooperation and by the PCT Guidelines
2. The quality of the services offered by Nordic Patent Institute shall be consistent irrespective of who has performed the task on behalf of the Institute.
3. The quality of the services offered by Nordic Patent Institute shall meet the specifications requested by customers and other interested parties including third parties (society).
4. The quality delivered by Nordic Patent Institute shall be documented in a way which enhances the objective of attracting contract work on an international market.

The QMS system for Nordic Patent Institute covers the process of handling PCT applications and Supplementary International Searches in the international phase, International Type Searches requested in national applications, and contract work. NPI has the goal to achieve a certification of the system according to the ISO 9001 standard during 2009 or early 2010.

The quality management for Nordic Patent Institute comprises a policy on quality which applies to the entire Institute.

Niels Ravn
Director, Nordic Patent Institute

1. Level 1 – Policy, Goals and Organisation

1.1. ORGANISATION

1.1.1. Architecture of Nordic Patent Institute

Nordic Patent Institute (the Institute) is an authority controlled jointly by the Norwegian, Danish and Icelandic patent offices. The Institute will collaborate with the national offices in order to carry out its tasks.

1.1.2. Work Structure

Nordic Patent Institute shall act as PCT authority (ISA; IPEA) for applicants and residents of the contracting states (presently DK, NO, IS) and as Supplementary Searching Authority (SSA) for any applicant who have used another PCT authority than NPI. It shall also carry out contract work for non-NPI patent authorities and private customers.

1.1.2.1 The basic structure of the PCT work performed by the Institute

PCT-work will be carried out on behalf of the Institute by the Danish Patent and Trademark Office (DKPTO) and the Norwegian Industrial Property Office (NIPO), who will act as suppliers on search and examination services.

Each national patent office (NPO) has a Receiving Office (RO) for receiving PCT-applications (Chapter I). The RO is not part of Nordic Patent Institute. Each RO carries out a preliminary formalities check and collects fees for the received applications. Each RO forwards the dossier to the International Bureau of WIPO (IB) and also forwards certain documents (including the search copy of the application) to the international searching authority (ISA). The applicant can choose between the following international authorities: Nordic Patent Institute, EPO or the Swedish Patent Office (PRV).

Applicants who have used another ISA than NPI may request NPI to perform a Supplementary International Search. The request must be filed with WIPO who will forward the request to NPI when all formalities have been checked and met.

An applicant may request an International Type Search (ITS) as part of the procedure for a national patent application at a NPO. The NPO forwards the request to the ISA chosen by the applicant. Applicants filing the national application in Denmark, Norway or Iceland may choose Nordic Patent Institute, EPO or PRV as the ISA for performing the ITS.

An applicant can file a demand for a preliminary examination (Chapter II). This must be done directly with an international preliminary examining authority (IPEA).

Communication with NPI takes place via the International Secretariat (ISEC) of the Institute.

Nordic Patent Institute has signed a Framework Agreement containing a number of annexed Service Agreements with each NPO. One of the Service Agreements covers the work which the national offices perform as International Secretariat. ISEC is responsible for communication with the international Bureau (IB) of WIPO, with the applicant, and with the Receiving Offices. The IB has overall responsibility for the administration of the PCT system. The IB checks that the formalities pertaining to the system are met, maintains the files, publishes applications and search reports, etc. The activities of IB are based on communication with the various PCT authorities, in this case Nordic Patent Institute, as well as with the Receiving Offices.

Nordic Patent Institute has signed a Service Agreement with both the Norwegian Industrial Property Office and the Danish Patent and Trademark Office governing the search and examination according to PCT guidelines.

The communication between Nordic Patent Institute and the NPOs regarding these tasks is handled by ISEC. This includes all types of formalities as well as reallocation between NO and DK in case of mistakes. Reallocation between NO and DK in case of temporary under-capacity at one office is handled by the directors of the patent department on an *ad hoc* basis. Each NPO maintains an updated list of technical areas for which it on a long term has no capacity available for work for Nordic Patent Institute. The Institute makes a consolidated list covering all NPOs and the Board of Nordic Patent Institute takes the necessary steps to ensure that there will always be capacity available for work for the Institute in at least one NPO.

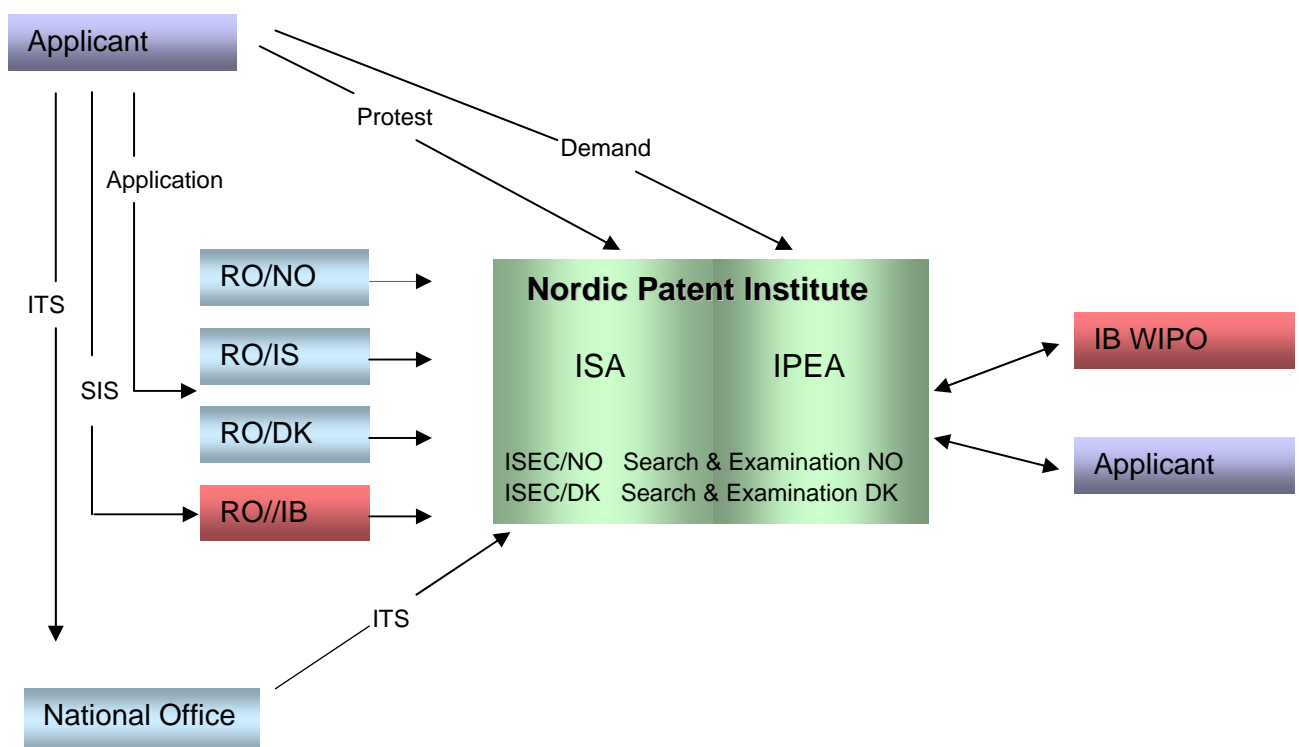


Figure 1- Relation between Receiving Office, Nordic Patent Institute, NPOs and International Bureau

The ROs receive applications (Chapter I) (see Figure 1) and forward the application to Nordic Patent Institute as requested by the applicant. At this stage the application is in an electronic form and is entered into the administrative system of Nordic Patent Institute. Demands for preliminary examinations (Chapter II) are filed directly at Nordic Patent Institute. Requests for International Type Searches are filed at the respective national office (DK, NO and IS) who will forward the request to NPI. Requests for SIS are filed at WIPO (IB) who forwards the request to NPI.

The formalities handling of the cases filed at or forwarded to NPI is done by the ISEC.

The substantive search and/or examination are performed by the Danish or Norwegian office as appropriate. Applications from Iceland are distributed between NO and DK according to agreement.

ISEC communicates with IB (see Figure 1), and allocates the application to the patent division in the NPO for search and examination.

The patent division returns the international search report (ISR) and a written opinion (WO), the International Preliminary Report on Patentability (IPRP), the supplementary international search report or the International Type Search (ITS) to ISEC.

ISEC sends the report to the IB and the applicant.

The applicant can file a protest at Nordic Patent Institute in relation to a decision on non-unity.

1.1.2.2 The basic structure of the contract work performed by the Institute:

Contract work will be carried out on behalf of the Institute by the Danish Patent and Trademark Office and by the Norwegian Industrial Property Office. The general conditions for performing the contract work are outlined in the Service Agreement between Nordic Patent Institute and the NPOs.

Each contract with external patent authorities and each large scale contract with private customers will be assigned to a contract manager who is responsible for the communication with the customer on issues such as quality, payment of bills, form of reporting, delays in delivery etc. All tasks under a contract will be sent to the office of the assigned contract manager and the secretariat of the managing office will check formalities and handle the distribution between the NPOs according to the principles set out in the individual contracts. Small scale commercial services will be handled according to written procedures by the individual examiner in collaboration with the Sales and Marketing departments.

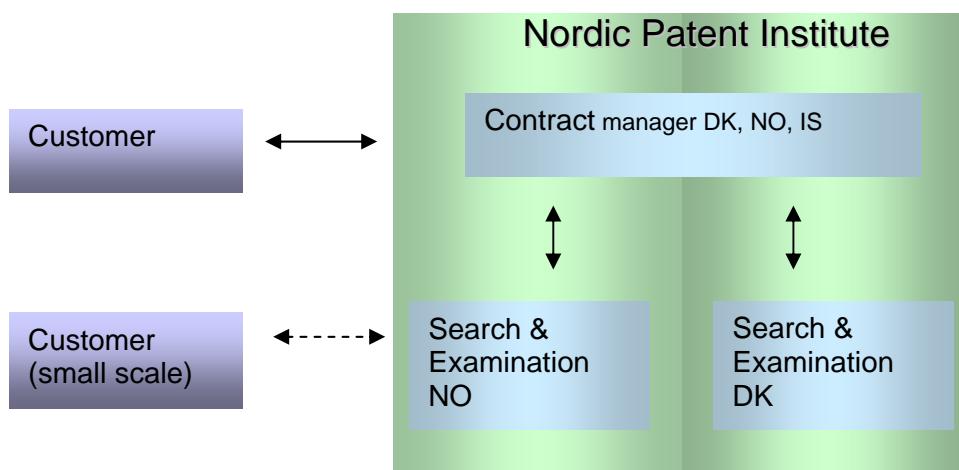


Figure 2 - Contract work

1.1.3. Organisation

Nordic Patent Institute is managed by a Director who is appointed by the Board. The Board is composed of the directors of the participating NPOs. The Director is responsible for the management of the Institute. The various functions will be supplied by one or more of the NPOs according to individual Service Agreements.

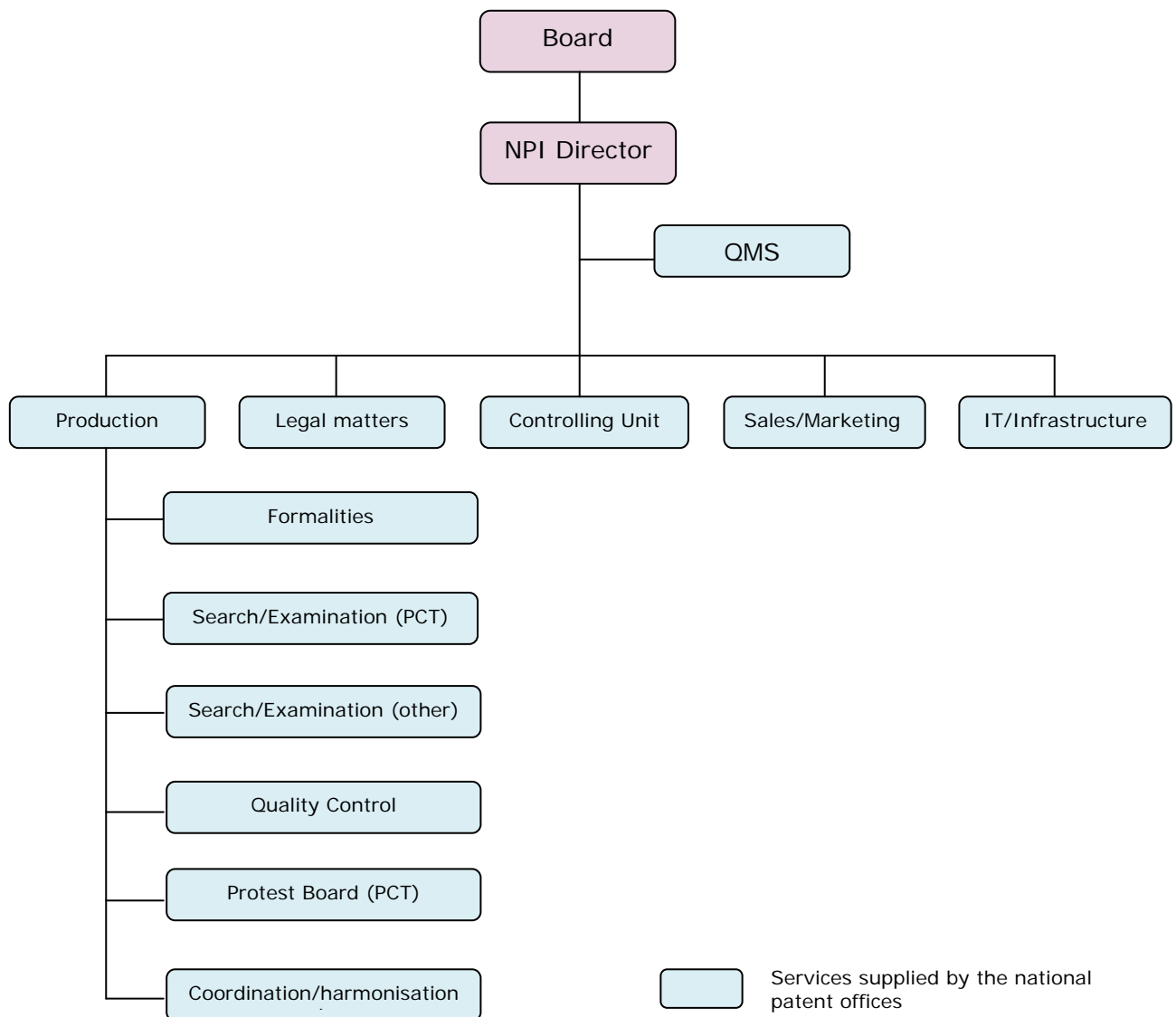


Figure 3 - Organisation of NPI

The production unit comprises the patent units of the Norwegian and Danish Offices, which are each under the responsibility of a Director of Patents. The patent units are subdivided into a number of sections related to specific technical areas or industrial branches, e.g. biochemistry, computers and communication, and managed by a Head of Section. Each section consists of a number of technical examiners with a scientific background. The patent unit in each NPO (of sufficient size) also comprise a formalities section, which deals with administrative matters including formalities and thus functions as Receiving Office and International Secretariat. Each patent unit has an internal quality control unit responsible for monitoring the work performed. The patent units of the NPOs are also responsible for coordination; this includes harmonization of practise and distribution of tasks both internally and between the patent units.

The Protest Board is a decentralised board in the production unit, which specifically deals with protests against a decision taken by the Institute ruling lack of unity when the claims contain more than one independent invention. The Protest Board consists of

technical examiners from the Danish and Norwegian office and is headed by a protest manager who is appointed for one year at a time.

The production is supported by a number of support functions comprising the controlling unit (including economy), sales and marketing, legal matters, IT and quality assurance.

The Director of Patents at each NPO is responsible for staff management and performance of the patent unit, and the Heads of sections have a similar responsibility at the section level.

1.1.4. Relation to the Quality Management Systems of the NPOs

Each NPO carrying out the PCT-work and contract work has an ISO-9001 certified quality management system. The NPO quality management systems cover all necessary procedures for carrying out the work and the procedures for continuous improvements.

The general Framework Agreement between NPI and the NPOs specifies the requirements which must be met by the QMS systems of the NPOs. Further specifications are set out in the individual Service Agreements which are annexes to the Framework Agreement.

1.1.5. Quality Management Organisation

The Quality Management of the Institute is organised as shown in Figure 4. All members have well defined roles within quality control, training or quality management matters. The quality management organisation has the following responsibilities:

- revise the QMS documentation with special reference to Service Agreements
- follow up on the quality objectives in the QMS
- make recommendations for new quality objectives
- monitor the quality of the deliveries
- deal with non-conformities, initiate and carry out corrective and preventive actions
- suggestions for improvements of the QMS
- Prepare and support the ISO 9001–certification of Nordic Patent Institute

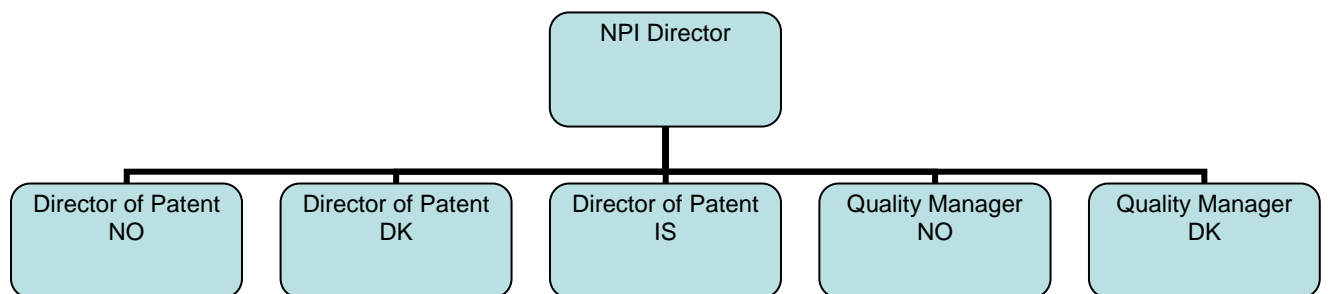


Figure 4- *Quality management organisation*

1.2. QUALITY POLICY OF NORDIC PATENT INSTITUTE

1.2.1. Mission Statement

Nordic Patent Institute shall supply international patenting and information services in close cooperation with the participating national patent offices in order to stimulate industrial innovation in the contracting states.

The Institute shall, in particular

- Support an efficient and high-quality, centrally controlled patent granting procedure for Europe within the framework of the European Patent Convention.
- Provide the basis for maintaining highly competitive IPR competence centres in the Nordic countries and for offering Nordic users a professional and customised interface to the patent system via their national patent offices.
- Exploit the synergy of cooperation on contract work for other parties, PCT applications and patent information services.
- Address the needs of small and medium sized enterprises in the Nordic countries.

1.2.2. Vision

Nordic Patent Institute aims to become:

- the preferred PCT authority for applicants of the participating parties
- an attractive business partner and service provider for global clients

This shall be achieved by offering products based on professionalism, high competencies and high quality service standards.

1.2.3. Policy

The Quality Policy of Nordic Patent Institute is the joint, overall declaration of the Board and the director of the Institute on how the Institute shall manage its tasks in a quality context.

The overall Quality Policy constitutes the framework for detailed instructions on working and quality control procedures and, additionally, provides guidance to employees and suppliers regarding their daily work. The Quality Policy is a commitment of the Institute to deliver products of a high and consistent quality.

The Quality Policy is expressed under the headings "Customers", "Suppliers" and "Governance", and states the values, methods and procedures chosen by the Board and the director of the Institute.

Customers

We will develop and deliver quality work by observing the following criteria

- deliver correct and comprehensive information
- deliver consistent, well-founded and valid opinions by the agreed deadline
- treat all applicants and customers in a constructive, open-minded and helpful manner
- adjust our services to meet the needs of customers

Suppliers

We will continuously develop and improve our performance in respect of

- sharing of knowledge and mutual resources

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- taking responsibility for reaching the quality objectives
- monitoring the Quality Policy and procedures

Governance

We will

- ensure that objectives and goals are clear to suppliers and will be continuously adjusted according to customer demands
- follow up on detected errors and deficiencies through education and adjustment of procedures

1.3. QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1.3.1. Purpose

The purpose of the Quality Management System (QMS) is to

- Ensure a predictable and consistent quality of products irrespective of the National Office (NPO) performing the work.
- Ensure that Nordic Patent Institute delivers work of a high quality, which provides customers a solid basis for further decisions.

The products and services delivered by processes covered by the QMS of the Institute depend on deliveries from a number of subcontracted processes. The specifications as to substance and quality of the deliverables from these processes are covered via Service Agreements. The Institute has specific Service Agreements with each NPO specifying the obligations of the NPO in order to ensure that all work supplied by the individual NPOs meets the objectives and goals set by the Institute. It is mandatory for each NPO to have a certified Quality Management System.

Level 1 of the QMS describes the policy, goals and organisation of the Institute in relation to quality.

Level 2 of the QMS describes the general procedures and conditions for handling documents in the QMS.

Level 3 contains a number of procedures describing the different processes in Nordic Patent Institute, including how to interact with the national offices according to the Service Agreements.

Service Agreements with NPOs are as a minimum required for the following areas:

- IT administrative system (uPDate)
- Internal Services including archiving
- Handling of complaints
- Infrastructure in general (furniture, logistics, communication lines etc)
- General controlling (budgeting, monitoring of production and finances, etc)
- Legal support
- Delivery of PCT-work and contract work (e.g. amounts, deadlines, quality and price)
- Production data
- Marketing / general communication / sales
- Participation in the quality management of the Institute including internal audits

Development and construction (ISO ref. 7.3) are excluded from the scope of the QMS. Processing of intellectual property rights is solely regulated through legislation and hence no development at the level of the Institute is needed. Monitoring and measuring equipment (ISO ref. 7.6) are also excluded from the scope of the QMS.

1.3.2. Primary Legislative and Administrative Basis

The basis for establishing Nordic Patent Institute is the *Agreement on the Establishing of the Nordic Patent Institute* between Denmark, Iceland and Norway which was signed on behalf of the governments by the directors of the Danish, Icelandic and Norwegian patent offices on July 5, 2006 and approved, together with certain additional documents, in November 2007. The additional documents comprise the Protocol on Privileges and Immunities, the Regulations, and the Rules of Procedure for the Board.

The primary legislative basis for the work performed by Nordic Patent Institute is therefore the *Agreement Establishing the Nordic Patent Institute* and the said additional documents. This covers PCT work as well as contract work.

Furthermore, the legislative basis for the Institute in its capacity as International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty is the Agreement between Nordic Patent Institute and WIPO. The work must fulfil the requirements of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the regulations under PCT and the guidelines attached thereto.

Finally, the legal basis for Nordic Patent Institute to act as ISA and IPEA under the European Patent Convention (EPC) is governed by the Protocol on Centralisation under EPC. Further details are set out in a special Agreement between EPO and Nordic Patent Institute.

Contract work for external patent authorities will be performed according to the patent legislation specified in the contract with the authority, usually the legislation of the country which the patent authority represents. The specific contracts also contain further specification for the work such as a description of the relevant patent practice, which the Institute is required to follow. The standards based upon the requirements stated in the PCT, the regulations and the guidelines will be applied. Patent practice established under the framework of the European Patent Organisation will be applied, if relevant.

Contract work (commercial services) for private customers will be made according to the specific agreement between the Institute and the customer.

1.4. QUALITY OBJECTIVE

1.4.1. 1-Year Action Plan

The quality in the processing of PCT applications, SIS and ITS in 2009 is improved by

- Establishing a QMS which fulfils the PCT guidelines, part VII, Chapter 21, which ensures the presence of
 - Necessary procedures
 - Necessary resources
 - Necessary communication and feedback channels
 - Necessary competences allocated to specific technical areas
 - Necessary coordination between the suppliers
 - Necessary Service Agreements between the Institute and the NPOs.
- Publishing quality related information (objectives and results) of relevance for customers
- Measuring customer satisfaction with delivered products

The quality in each search and examination is improved and measured by

- establishing benchmarking systems between the NPOs
- evaluating spot checks

1.4.2. 3-year action plan

The quality in the processing of PCT applications, SIS and ITS in 2009 - 11 is improved by

- Ensuring that the 1-year action plan objectives as a minimum are maintained
- Improving the search and examination procedures

1.5. QUALITY GOALS

The suppliers (the participating NPOs) are required to follow the PCT-regulations. Additional specific goals are defined below.

1.5.1. Timeliness

The following goals for timeliness apply to PCT-work:

- ITS-report issued within 5 month from the date of filing of the national application
- ISR and WO issued within 15 months from the priority date of the international application
- Declaration of Non-Establishment of ISR (and WO) issued within 15 months from the priority date of the international application
- Supplementary international search report is issued within 2 months from receipt of the request
- IPRP issued within 27 months from the priority date
(Other time limits may apply under certain circumstances (PCT/GL/ISPE/paragraphs 3.13-14 and 18.11-12))

The following goal applies to contract-work:

- Agreed deadlines for contract work shall be met in at least 98% of all cases.

1.5.2. Quality

Quality in PCT-work and contract-work is monitored and improved with the aim of ensuring that spot checks will show that

- Less than 5% of all samples in a calendar year are marked as unsatisfactory
- All contractual agreements as to specific quality criteria and requirements are met

Quality (harmonisation) of the PCT-work is improved by

- Benchmarking search and examination results between NPOs

1.5.3. Customers

Product quality and customer satisfaction is improved by

- Carrying out a customer satisfaction analysis at least every second year
- Conducting regular (at least annual) meetings with customers for contract work
- Striving to establish and understand customers needs and expectations

1.6 ABSTRACT OF THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The QMS consists of a number of procedures in order to ensure that work is performed at a uniform and consistently high quality level. The efficiency of the QMS is dependent on the procedures being up-to-date and the system being continuously improved in a systematic way. Therefore, procedures for maintenance and improvement are part of the system.

External and internal audits are conducted regularly to ensure that the QMS functions properly. Audits are conducted with checklists and auditors prepare a written report of their observations.

Both auditors and employees can make suggestions for improvement or point out deficiencies which require changes in processes. Suggestions are submitted to the quality management organisation of Nordic Patent Institute.

The efficiency of the QMS is continuously measured by regular meetings in the quality management organisation. The task of this organisation is to follow up on the daily running of the QMS, e.g. the NPOs' compliance with Service Agreements with the Institute, with audits, customer feedback and performance.

The quality management organisation consists of the director of Nordic Patent Institute and appointed quality members and directors of patents from each NPO. The quality management organisation meets at least twice a year in order to evaluate the QMS, e.g. with regards to the NPOs' compliance with Service Agreements with the Institute, quality policy, objectives, goals and resources.

The Director is responsible for presenting an annual evaluation of the QMS to the Board.

1.7 NPI PROCESSES

1.7.1. General Structure

Workflows for PCT work, International Type Searches, Supplementary International Searches and for contract work will be described in the following.

1.7.2. PCT Workflow, Chapter I

Figure 5 shows a simplified workflow for establishing an ISR (International Search Report) and a WO (Written Opinion) in accordance with Chapter I of the PCT.

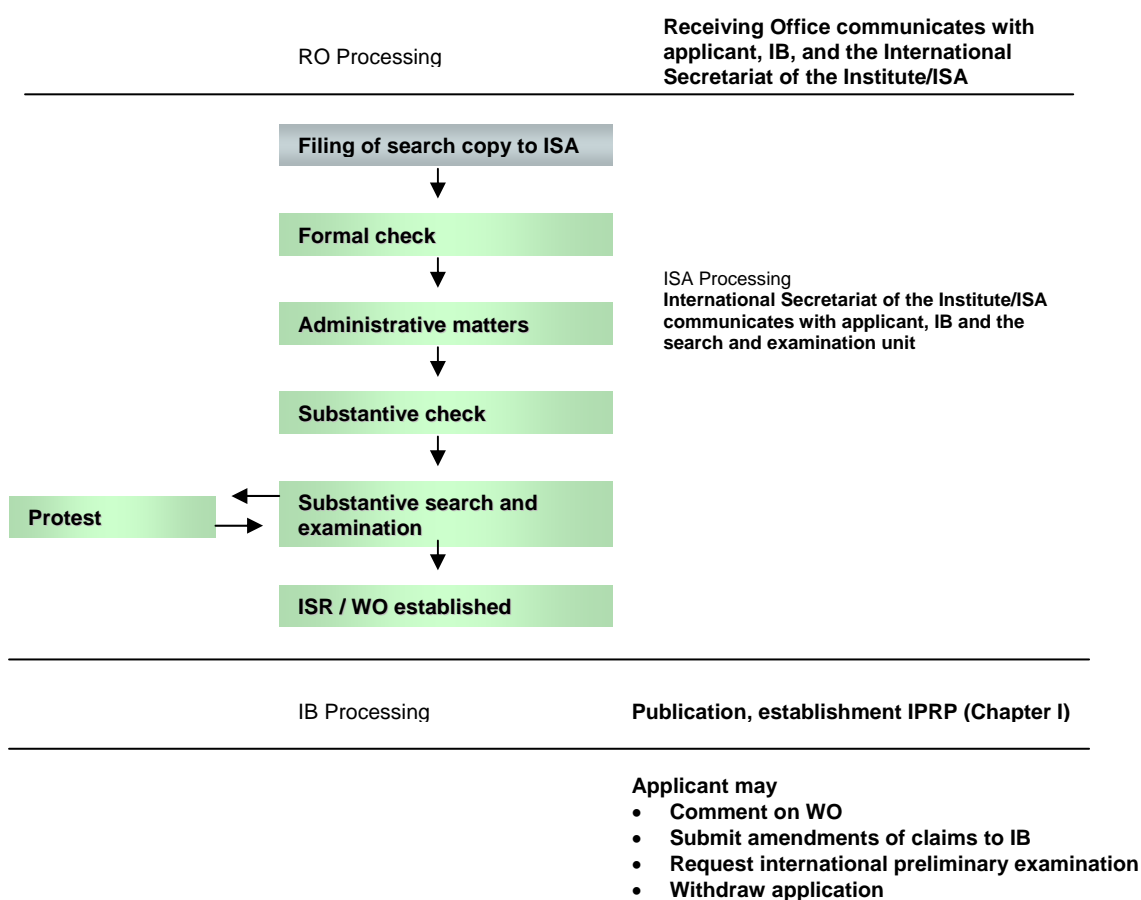


Figure 5–The workflow for ISR and WO

1. Norwegian, Danish and Icelandic applicants (and residents), wishing to use Nordic Patent Institute as an ISA, may file PCT applications at the RO of their local NPO together with a request that the application is processed by the Institute according to the Treaty. RO provides the international filing date and forwards the record copy to the International Bureau and the search copy to the Institute either in electronic form or in paper form. Prior to forwarding the search copy, RO collects the transmittal fee, the search fee, and the international filing fee and checks that the application is in one of the accepted languages. The collected fees are forwarded to the relevant NPO, the Institute and the IB, respectively.
2. When the application is received by ISA/(Nordic Patent Institute), all relevant data is entered into the administrative system (uPDate) and a receipt is forwarded to the applicant.

3. Administrative matters - The application is classified according to IPC (International Patent Classification System) and allocated the relevant NPO section.
4. The substantive check comprises a check in order to determine whether the application meets the requirements of unity of invention and if some of the subject matters should be excluded from search. Furthermore it is assessed to which extent results of any earlier search can be used in the international search report and consequently entitles the applicant to a partial refund. At this stage it is also determined if the applicant should be invited to provide a listing of sequence data.
5. The international search is carried out in order to establish relevant prior art. Some subject matter may not be searched if the searching authority is not obliged to do so or for instance if the claims or drawings fail to comply with requirements. This includes claims relating to independent inventions if the applicant has not paid the additional search fees. The result of the international search is presented in a search report. Alternatively, a declaration is made stating that the search was not performed or would not be meaningful.
6. Based on the search result a written opinion is established. This includes an assessment of the novelty, inventive step, industrial applicability and compliance with the Treaty and Regulations.
7. The search report and the written opinion is forwarded to the International Bureau and the applicant.
8. International publication of application, search report (if available) and amendments (if any) is performed by the International Bureau.
9. The applicant may file a demand for International Preliminary Examination Chapter II with the International Preliminary Examination Authority (optional).
10. An International Preliminary Report on Patentability (IPRP Chapter I) is established by the International Bureau (if no demand filed). The report is based on the written opinion of the International Searching Authority (WO/ISA).
11. The applicant may file informal comments on written opinion (WO/ISA) to the International Bureau (optional).
12. The International Bureau publishes the International Preliminary Report on Patentability (IPRP Chapter I) incl. comments on WO/ISA if received. The report and comments (if any) may be forwarded to designated offices (DO) on request.
13. National / regional phase entry (if no demand for International Preliminary Examination Chapter II is filed).

1.7.3. PCT Workflow, Chapter II

Applicants may request an IPRP (Chapter II) despite the fact that the Chapter I procedure already comprises a Written Opinion. Such request may for instance be relevant if the applicant in response to the Chapter I report finds it necessary to amend the claims substantially and would like to have a positive IPRP before entering the national or regional phase.

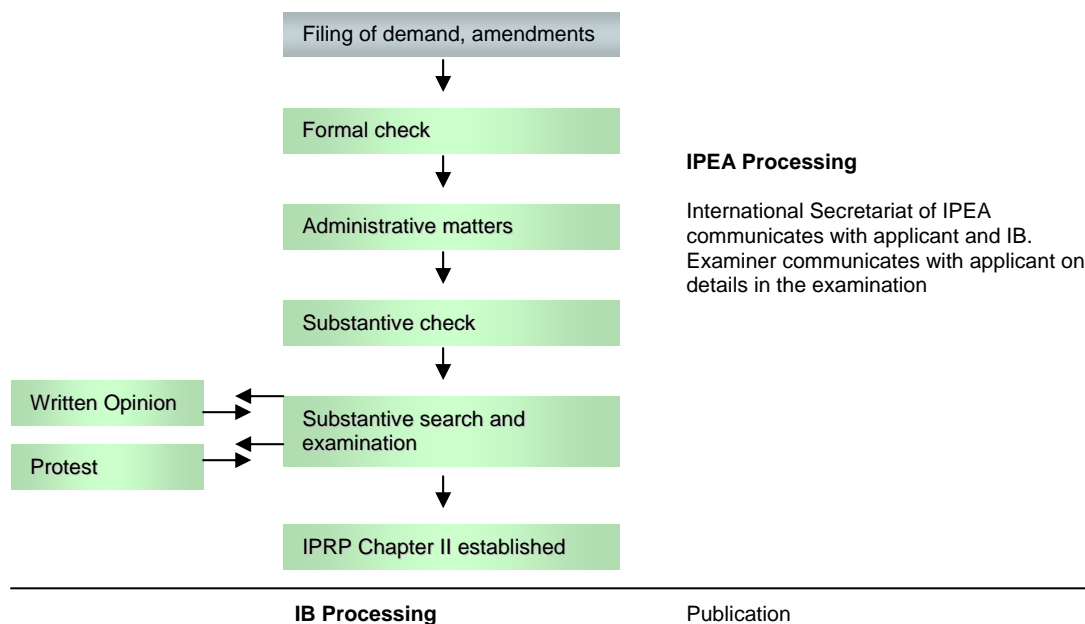


Figure 6- *The workflow for the IPRP procedure*

1. The applicant files a demand for International Preliminary Examination Chapter II with the elected International Preliminary Examination Authority (IPEA), i.e. with the International secretariat (ISEC) of Nordic Patent Institute.
2. The applicant may file amendments and/or arguments
3. ISEC performs the formalities procedure including check of documents and forms as well as payment of fees and compliance with time limits. ISEC submits a copy of the demand to International Bureau and notifies the applicant of the receipt of the demand. ISEC also forwards the handling fee to the IB of WIPO.
4. The International Bureau ensures that IPEA receives a copy of the written opinion from ISA (in the case where IPEA is different from ISA) and any amendments or additional information filed.
5. ISEC allocates the relevant NPO section. This will be the same as the section that acted for the Chapter I procedure, unless specific reasons indicate a need for allocating another.
6. The International Preliminary Examination Authority examines the international application, taking into account any amendments and arguments. IPEA may establish further written opinions and invite comments.
7. An International Preliminary Report on Patentability (IPRP Chapter II) is established, typically based on the written opinion established by ISA and the subsequent amendments and comments received from the applicant. The applicant is entitled to at least one written opinion.
8. The International Preliminary Report on Patentability (IPRP Chapter II) is forwarded to the International Bureau and the applicant.
9. National / regional phase entry

1.7.4 Workflow for ITS

National patent laws provide applicants the possibility of requesting an International Type Search (ITS) by an International Authority as a basis for the processing of a national patent application.

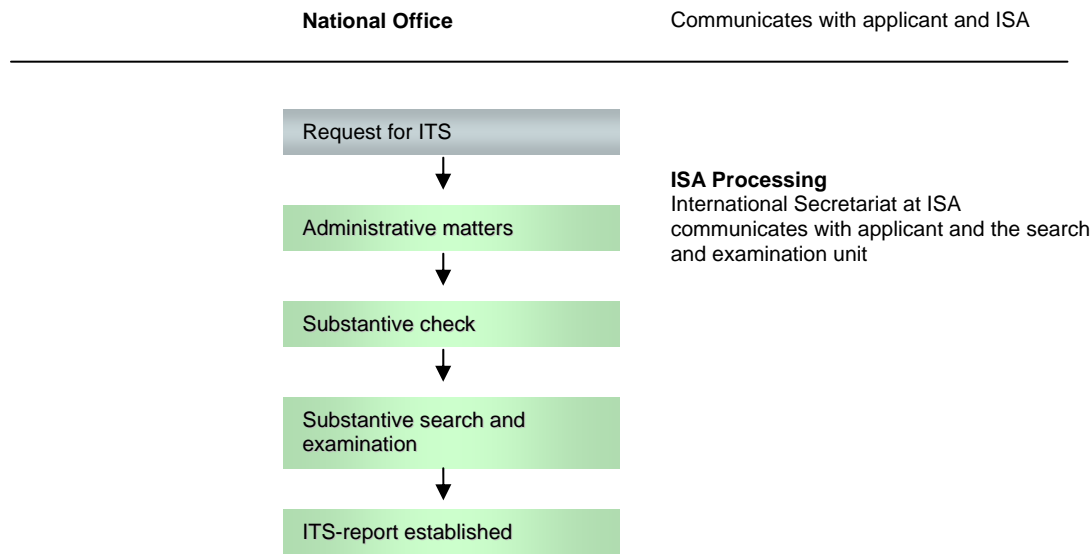


Figure 7- *The workflow for establishing an ITS*

1. The applicant requests an international-type search (ITS) with a NPO.
2. NPO checks formalities such as payment of ITS fee and timeliness of the request and payment. It also forwards the request and fee to ISA/(Nordic Patent Institute).
3. ISEC formally allocates a department to carry out the ITS. This will normally be the department responsible for the national application.
4. ISA/(Nordic Patent Institute) performs the ITS and forwards the report to ISEC for further processing. International-type searches are by definition similar to PCT international searches and similar considerations apply.

1.7.5 Workflow for Supplementary International Searches (SIS)

This is an optional service that allows additional searches to be performed during the international phase, in addition to the search prepared by the applicant's "usual" International Searching Authority (ISA).

The Supplementary International Search request must be filed and fees paid to the International Bureau.

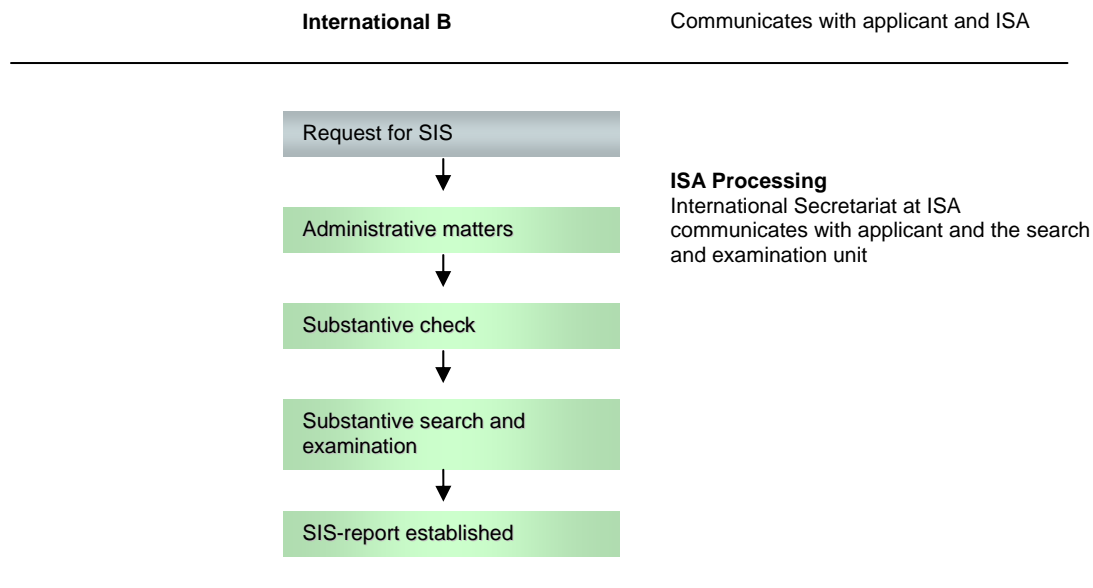


Figure 8- *The workflow for performing a SIS*

1. The applicant requests a Supplementary International Search (ITS) to the IB.
2. IB checks formalities such as payment of SIS fee and timeliness of the request and payment. It also forwards the request and fee to ISA/(Nordic Patent Institute).
3. The Supplementary International Search is carried out on the PCT application as filed.
4. The Supplementary Search Authority (SSA) begins the Supplementary Search at the latest by the expiration of 22 months from the priority date.
5. The Supplementary International search report (SSR) shall be established within 28 months from the priority date. The SSR is transmitted to the PCT applicant and the International Bureau.

1.7.6 Workflow for Contract Work

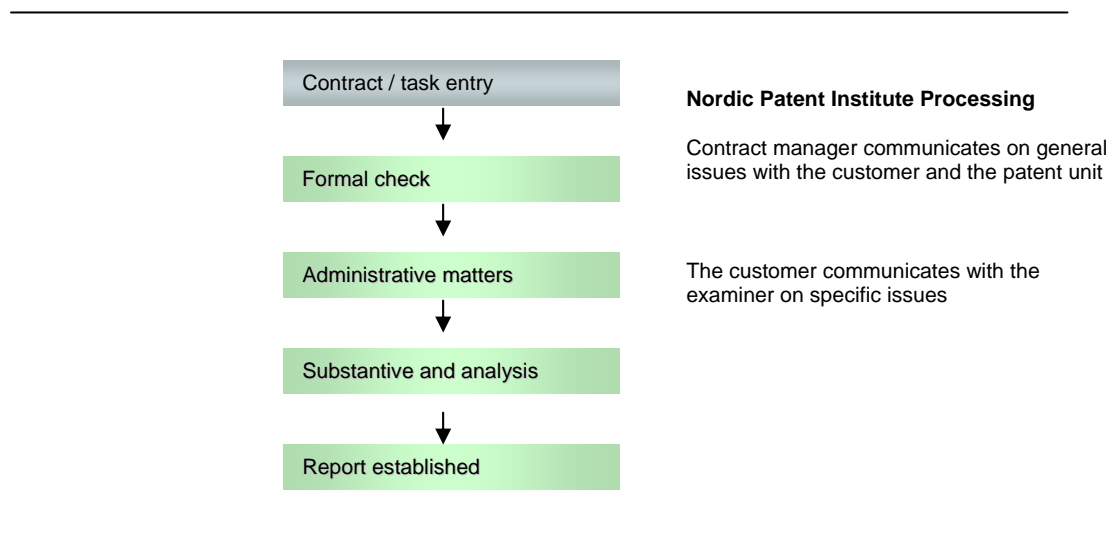


Figure 9- *The workflow for large scale contract work.*

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1. All tasks must be sent to the appointed contract manager who checks for contractual formalities.
2. The contract manager allocates a unit in accordance with agreements specified in the contract.
3. The examiner consults, if necessary and in accordance with each contract, the customer for clarification of the task.

In the case of small size commercial services on an ad hoc basis, a dialog is established directly between the customer and the examiner carrying out the task in order to agree on the purpose and scope of the task.

NOMENCLATURE and DEFINITIONS

DK	– Country Code for Denmark
DKPO	– Danish Patent and Trademark Office
DO	– Designated office
EPO	– European Patent Office
IA	– International Authority
IB	– International Bureau of WIPO
Institute	– Nordic Patent Institute
IPEA	– International Preliminary Examination Authority
IPRP	-- International Preliminary Report on Patentability (Chapter I or II)
IS	– Country Code for Iceland
ISEC	– International Secretariat in Nordic Patent Institute
ISA	– International Searching Authority
ISR	– International Searching Report
ITS	– International Type Search
NIPO	– Norwegian Industrial Property Office
NO	– Country Code for Norway
NPI	– Nordic Patent Institute
NPO	– National Patent Office
PCT	– Patent Cooperation Treaty
PRV	– Swedish Patent Office
QA	– Quality Assurance
QMS	– Quality Management System
RO	– Receiving Office
SIS	– Supplementary International Search
WIPO	– World Intellectual Property Organisation
WO	– Written opinion
XN	– Country code for NPI