

JAPAN
Annual Technical Reports on Patent Information Activities
(1998 Edition)

I. Evolution of patent activities:

- Comparison with the preceding year in application filings and grants (registration);

In 1998, application filings, pre-grant oppositions and post-grant oppositions respectively totaled 378,569, 5,501 and 135,947.

- Year-to-year comparison in patent application filings;

In 1998, patent application filings totaled 378,569, up 2% over filings in 1997 (370,555).

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, distribution and use of primary and secondary sources of patent information:

- Publication, printing and photocopying (relating to major JPO-issued patent gazettes and documents);

Breakdown of patent gazettes/documents released by Japanese Patent Office (JPO) in 1998:

Unexamined patent gazettes:	341,600
Unexamined utility model gazettes:	302
Publication of patent gazettes on PCT:	15,118
Publication of utility model on PCT:	1
Registered utility model gazettes:	10,500
Patent gazettes:	146,700
Utility model gazettes:	29,300
Patent opposition decision gazettes:	3,418
Utility model registration opposition decision gazettes:	582
Trial decision gazettes:	3,900
Examination request lists:	189,435
Technical evaluation request lists:	1,465
Lists of registration:	35,000
Final disposition lists:	267,842

- Word-processing and office automation;

Nothing particular to report

- New technologies used to generate patent information, e.g., printing, recording, microfilming, phototypesetting, etc;

Current distribution of CD-ROM gazettes:

Since December 1990, the JPO has been accepting patent and utility model applications filed on floppy disc (FD) or online. The JPO electronically compiles these application data into CD-ROM gazettes.

1. Unexamined CD-ROM gazettes

Since January 1993, the JPO has been issuing unexamined CD-ROM gazettes, each storing unexamined patent and utility model applications. Registered utility model gazettes whose publication was started in July 1994 are stored in these CD-ROM gazettes. Furthermore since January 1996, unexamined CD-ROM gazettes have started to cover publication of patent gazettes on PCT, publication of utility model gazettes on PCT, republication of patent gazettes on PCT and republication of utility model on PCT.

Each unexamined CD-ROM contains a total of approximately 5,000 documents. In 1998, the JPO issued 73 unexamined CD-ROM gazettes.

Unexamined CD-ROM gazettes can be retrieved by 15 search keys including document number, IPC, applicant and title of invention. Unexamined CD-ROM gazettes record data in a mixed mode of text and image data. Accordingly, full text searches are possible using parts of text data.

2. CD-ROM patent gazettes

Since January 1994, the JPO has been publishing examined CD-ROM gazettes, each covering patent and utility model gazettes. Examined gazettes were cancelled and superseded in March 1996 by the post-grant opposition system introduced in January 1996. Since May of the same year, the JPO has been issuing CD-ROM patent gazettes covering post-grant registered patent and utility model gazettes.

Besides, since September 1997, patent opposition decision gazettes and utility model registration opposition decision gazettes have been recorded in CD-ROM patent gazettes.

A single CD-ROM patent gazette issued weekly covers a total of 3,000 patent documents.

These patent CD-ROM gazettes can be retrieved by 20 search keys involving patent number, IPC, applicant and title of invention. The CD-ROM patent gazette stores text and image data in a mixed mode. Accordingly, full text searches are possible using parts of the text data.

At Present, 17 software suppliers place on the market Japanese language software to run CD-ROM gazettes, with some of them offering Internet patent information services using CD-ROM gazettes. The JPO has been supplying free of charge to foreign patent offices the CD-ROM gazette review software (JMSCD4) running on Windows (English version). The JPO issues a new CD-ROM version as soon as its entries have been updated. The new version (JMSCD 4.1) has been offered to foreign patent offices since August 1997.

“Easy gazette review software (JPO.CONV)” applicable to unexamined CD-ROM gazettes released since January 1996 and CD-ROM patent gazettes since May of the same year was upgraded to display data even in an English language environment and has been supplied since October 1997.

III. Matters concerning abstracting, classifying, reclassifying and indexing of technical information contained in patent documents:

- Abstracting, reviewing and translation;

Generation and use of secondary documents:

1. Generation of English abstracts of unexamined patent gazettes (PAJ :Patent Abstracts of Japan)

The PAJ combines English abstracts of unexamined patent applications filed by a Japanese national with typical drawings. Since 1976, the JPO has been distributing PAJs in the form of pamphlets to foreign patent offices.

The PAJs covering unexamined patent gazettes released since October 1994 are compiled into mixed-mode CD-ROM gazettes, using MIMOSA software jointly procured by the trilateral patent offices (JPO, USPTO and EPO), and have been supplied to the International Search Authority, 80 countries and 3 international organizations, replacing conventional paper PAJs.

In 1998, the JPO issued 334,449 PAJs on CD-ROMs.

The PAJ/CD-ROMs containing English abstracts of unexamined patent gazettes are issued at a rate of one disc per month in order of date the original gazettes were laid open.

Besides, back files of PAJs (applicable to unexamined patent gazettes issued between 1976 and 1993) are stored in 99 CD-ROMs by 69 technical fields.

The PAJ/CD-ROM, placed on the market through the Japan Patent Information Organization (JAPIO), is useful for companies wishing to construct custom databases and provide information services to third parties.

2. Generation of PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM

The PAJ/INDEX CD-ROM stores bibliographic data and summaries of PAJs and corresponding PAJ/CD-ROM disc number. Issued quarterly, the CD-ROM stores cumulative quarterly data, with a maximum storage capacity of a year's worth of data. The CD-ROM has been issued since April 1997.

The PAJ/INDEX CD-ROMs are supplied to those foreign patent offices that receive PAJ/CD-ROMs.

3. Generation of "PAJ/CD-ROM foreign application" version

This version contains English abstracts of unexamined patent applications filed by foreign nationals that are not contained in PAJ/CD-ROMs for domestic applications.

This CD-ROM is issued annually and stores back files of unexamined patent gazettes issued between 1989 and 1997 by the IPC section.

In March 1998, the JPO published section G. Publication will continue until March 2001.

Front files of PAJs corresponding to applications filed by foreigners since 1998 are supplied on the current PAJ/CD-ROMs.

4. Foreign patent documents

The JPO prepares code data of Japanese abstracts for U.S. patent specifications and stores them electronically as search reference data.

5. Abstracts prepared by JAPIO

JAPIO's Japanese abstracts of unexamined patent gazettes are stored in the JPO's comprehensive document database as search data.

- Classification and re-classification;

In 1998, about 350,000 applications were classified by IPC when laid open, about 170,000 applications classified upon publication of patent and utility model gazettes and about 10,000 applications classified upon publication of registered utility model gazettes.

The JPO played an active role in the IPC reclassification program, sending delegates to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) 's IPC reclassification conferences.

- Coordinate indexing (ICIREPAT type and/or domestic deep indexing systems and keyword indexing);

The JPO continued ICIREPAT type indexing for the field covering alloys.

1. System name and symbol: Alloy (AL)
2. Storage media: Magnetic tapes and variable length blocks
3. Development phase: Continuous indexing
4. Indexed number of documents, year and countries: 72, 913 documents, up to 1998, Japan

- Hybrid system indexing;

Hybrid system indexing codes are assigned to documents and used as search keys.

- Bibliographic data and full text processing for data search;

Refer to V. 5.

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep:

- File creation and updating;

1. Updating search files

Examiners' search files are continuously kept current. In applicable search files, Japanese patent documents (unexamined patent gazettes, registered utility model gazettes, etc.) are added based on the JPO's internal classification (FI) based on subdivision of the IPC Classification. In 1998, a total of about 550,000 documents were added to applicable search files.

2. F-term analysis

The search file is classified into about 2,600 themes (technical fields), whereof in 1998, about 1,800 themes had been analyzed. Currently, about 2,520 themes are available for use, consisting of about 820 themes for which F-terms need not be assigned (since they work on FI) and about 1,700 themes for which analysis has been completed. Documents for which F-term analysis has been completed total about 18,440,000.

3. Public disclosure of F-terms

The JPO discloses F-terms to the public in succession for those themes that are ready for use. These F-terms are disclosed to the public through JAPIO and users can make F-term searches using PATOLIS, the commercial online service offered by JAPIO.

In May 1999, a total of 2,176 themes is disclosed and ready for use, except those under maintenance.

- File custody;

Examiners' search files are stored in RAID devices as electronic data, with some of the search files kept in paper form.

- JPO's internal documents and foreign documents useful as search files;

The JPO stores patent documents from USPTO, EPO and major European countries including Britain, Germany, France and Switzerland in image data available for ECLA searches.

V. Activities in the field of computerized and other mechanized search systems:

- JPO's internal system (online/offline);

1. F-term search system

The JPO search key lists (F-term lists) are capable of classifying technical information from multiple points of view with respect to about 2,300 themes (technical fields) for searching domestically published patent documents. Patent documents classified by theme are assigned F-terms (search keys) according to the list concerned.

The F-term search system provides an online system for retrieving domestic patent documents using F-terms and FI (JPO's internal classification based on the IPC Classification) as search keys. Retrieved documents' image data are displayed on a high-resolution screen via a document server and can be viewed quickly.

2. Comprehensive document database inquiry system

The comprehensive document database inquiry system provides an online system which stores image data of patent gazettes, utility model gazettes, design gazettes, trademark gazettes and trial decision gazettes published by the JPO on optical disc and displays them on a high-resolution screen using document numbers as keys.

The system also stores image data of Japanese abstracts with respect to patent gazettes and unexamined international specifications of the United States and major European countries, and USPTO's and EPO's patent gazettes and also image data of unexamined patent abstracts.

The number of documents stored totals about 43.5 million.

The comprehensive document database inquiry system is used by JPO examiners to access the primary documents.

3. Patent family inquiry system

The JPO has been continuously operating the patent family inquiry system since 1979. The system is designed for inquiries about a family of relevant patent documents. The JPO stores data generated since 1973 in the patent family file using ASD data.

4. J-term search system

The JPO stores trial decision gazettes, court decisions on trial decision invalidation suits and major court decisions on industrial property right infringement suits in optical discs as image data for constructing databases. Data stored are classified by multiple factors including legal classification, judicial precedent, conclusion, etc., and J-term search keys are assigned to these data.

The J-term search system provides an online system that retrieves data using J-terms as search keys, stores the image data of retrieved patent office trial decisions and court decisions in optical discs and displays them on a high-resolution screen.

Up to December 1997, the JPO had stored data on 180,000 trial decisions and court decisions and maintains them ready for searches.

The J-term search system has been mainly used by JPO examiners for retrieval of trial and judicial precedents.

5. Full text search system

The JPO released the full text search system in April 1997 for retrieval of patent and utility model gazettes. This system downloads code data to terminals for full text searches on the local terminal side, where synonyms can be retrieved using thesaurus. Users can customize the search system by compiling a dictionary of synonyms.

Besides, server text searches using code data directly on the server will be available from January 2000 onwards, which should pave the way for extensive text searches.

- External database;

The JPO's examiners use the following external databases for searches. These databases are accessible online from terminals installed at the JPO.

1. PATOLIS

Japanese patent document search system offered by JAPIO

2. JOIS

Science and technology document search system offered by the Japan Information Center for Science and Technology (JISCT)

3. CAS online

4. Derwent WPI/WPIL

- Clerical management system (i.e., registration, legal status, statistical compilation, administrative support, etc.);

1. Electronic filing and file-wrapper processing system

The JPO commissioned the electronic filing and file-wrapper processing system to public service in December 1990. This system is designed to raise operational efficiency by computerizing paperwork regarding acceptance of applications, formality checks, etc. Introduction of this system will facilitate filing of patent and utility model applications either online or on flexible disc, where entries in applications are electronically processed for storage in database files.

In July 1993, the JPO released a new version that allows the JPO to transmit documents online to applicants and users to review online the JPO's internal documents, thereby paving the way for bilateral communication between applicants and the JPO.

The electronic filing and file-wrapper processing system has been in successful operation since the outset.

Electronic versus paper application filings is proceeding as follows.

	Initially (December 1990)	1998 (annual average)
Online:	43%	79%
FD:	48%	17%
Paper:	9%	4%

In April 1998, the JPO introduced a PC-applied electronic filing system, and has developed its own application software that is supplied free-of-charge to users. The JPO discontinued the FD filing system from January 1999.

2. Other clerical processing system (i.e., registration, legal status, statistical compilation, administrative support, etc.)

Systems in successful operation include a document transmission system, application registration system, PCT-designated office clerical processing system, trial affairs processing system, and the National Center for Industrial Property Information (NCIPI) file-wrapper processing system.

- Hardware (including terminals and network) and circuits used;

1. Hardware

(1) CPUs:

MP5800/210	1 set
M-880/180	1 set
M-680D	2 sets
ACOS1510	1 set
MP5600/180	1 set

(2) Terminals: 4,296 units

(3) Electronic disc devices: 1 set

(4) Semiconductor memory devices: 9 sets

(5) Magnetic tape units: 33 sets

(6) Magnetic disc units: 89 sets

(7) Optical disc units: 12 sets

(8) Optical disc libraries: 49 sets

(9) Servers: 81 sets

(10) Disc array units: 231 sets

(11) CD-ROM units: 12 sets

2. Circuits used

(1) Leased circuits: 16 lines

(2) ISDN: 17 lines

(3) DDX-P: nil

(4) Frame relay: 4 lines

- Existing online thesaurus: Construction, display and usefulness for computer search;

Refer to the paragraph on full text searches (V. 5.)

VI. Administration of the industrial property office library and services available to the public (relating to facilities, e.g., for lodging applications, for assisting clients on searching procedures, for obtaining official publications and registry extracts):

- Collection, acquisition and preparation;

The NCIPi offers gazettes acquired from 80 countries and 5 international organizations on the international exchange program as well as JPO-published patent gazettes for public inspection.

1. As to paper gazettes, NCIPi arranges Japanese gazettes (published by 1996) and U.S. patent specifications (published by 1996) by class and other gazettes by issued date and document number, and offers them for public inspection.
2. As to CD-ROM gazettes, NCIPi offers Japanese gazettes (unexamined gazettes, patent gazettes and English abstracts of unexamined patent publications) and foreign counterparts (from Germany, Austria, EPO, PCT, U.K., U.S.A., France, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, China, Italy, East European countries, Benelux nations, OAPI, Slovenia, Russia, Australia and South Korea) for public inspection on the electronic gazette inspection system (five workstations and 26 personal computers).
3. As to microfilms, NCIPi processes those from France, former East Germany, and Sweden by date issued and document number, and offers them for public inspection.

- Collection and maintenance;

Gazettes collected are carefully preserved to withstand long-term use.

1. Paper gazettes are compiled by class, date published or document number and bound into book form for optimum preservation. These gazettes are routinely checked for breakage, spoilage, missing pages, etc.
2. CD-ROM gazettes are preserved, packed in the search CD caddy cases.
3. Microfilms are stored in a special cabinet.

- Inter-library accommodation of patent information through national network of local libraries;

The JPO established a national network of 96 local patent libraries including the regional bureaus of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) in all prefectures across the country to provide regular, free-of-charge public gazette services. The JPO provides guidance and supervision to these local patent libraries concerning classification, maintenance and utilization of gazettes, etc.

- Public information services (including computer services);

Public gazette review services are offered free of charge by NCIPI, and 96 local patent libraries including the regional bureaus of MITI. In addition to paper gazette public inspection services, electronic public inspection is available as follows.

1. CD-ROM gazette public inspection service

Of the mixed-mode CD-ROM gazettes published by the JPO, unexamined gazettes can be retrieved (including full text searches) by 15 different keys including unexamined publication number, IPC, applicant, title of invention, and patent gazettes by 20 different keys including document number and other bibliographic data.

Collected foreign CD-ROM gazettes can be retrieved by approximately 10 keys including document number, IPC, applicant and title of invention at NCIPI.

Besides, the Osaka Prefectural Patent Information Center affords public access to gazettes released by Germany, USPTO, EPO, PCT, Britain, France, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, China, Italy and OAPI. Also, the Aichi Art and Culture Center (Aichi Prefectural Library) provides access to gazettes issued by Germany, PCT, France, Italy and Slovenia.

2. Public inspection of new comprehensive document database

Online access to the new comprehensive document database is available at NCIPI (33 terminals), Kinki Regional Bureau (6 terminals), Chubu Regional Bureau (2 terminals), Hokkaido Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Tohoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Chugoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal) and Shikoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal) of MITI, and Okinawa General Office (1 terminal). The inquiry services include: reference to document numbers, IPC references, references by numbers for Japanese official gazettes and reference to document numbers for foreign countries' official gazettes (USA, EPO, former West Germany, Great Britain, France, Switzerland, PCT).

3. Public inspection of new comprehensive document database service
 Since January 1997, the new comprehensive document database online Service has been offered at the NCIP (15 terminals), Kinki Regional Bureau (5 terminals), Chubu Regional Bureau (3 terminals), Kyushu Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Hokkaido Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Tohoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Chugoku Regional (1 terminal) and Shikoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal) of MITI, and Okinawa General Office (1 terminal). Inquiry Service covers retrieval of unexamined patent gazettes released by the JPO since 1993 using bibliographic data, i.e., document number, as search key and full text search of their summaries and claims.
4. The JPO also offers a document photocopying service at cost.
5. Distribution of industrial property information via the Internet
 The JPO has been offering industrial property information via the Internet since February 1998, including the following patent information:
 - Gazette journal search (since February 1998)
 Supplies full texts of patent and utility model gazettes issued since April 1998.
 - Front page search on unexamined patent gazettes (since April 1998)
 Supplies front page information on unexamined patent gazettes issued since January 1993 (including legal status information).
 - PAJ search (since April 1998)
 Supplies English abstracts of unexamined patent gazettes issued since January 1993 (including legal status information).

The JPO is planning to launch the industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL) on March 1999, in which about 40 million documents of industrial property information are provided via the Internet free of charge with search capabilities.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of patent documentation and information:

- International and/or regional cooperation through mutual exchange of machine-readable information, bibliographic data, abstracts, full texts, etc;
 1. Trilateral exchange of patent gazette image data and bibliographic items, etc.
 The JPO periodically sends to EPO (European Patent Office) bibliographic data on unexamined patent applications and then receives the same data by Magnetic Tape (MT) after it is unified and processed by EPO.

 Under the trilateral mutual cooperation program, the JPO receives from USPTO by MT the image data of full texts of patent specifications and relevant classification data, and from EPO image data of full texts of

unexamined patent applications, relevant classification, patent inventory/family data, etc. In turn, the JPO sends by MT the image data of full texts of unexamined patent gazettes by CD-ROM, and concordance data of patent document numbers, English abstract data of unexamined patent applications, IPC files and Kanji character bibliographic data to USPTO and EPO.

2. Trilateral exchange of DNA sequence data

In June 1997, the JPO forwarded to the National Genetics Research Institute 4,894 items of data on DNA and amino acid sequence generated over one year up to March 1997. These data relate to DNA and amino acid sequences described in applications (filed during December 1993 through March 1995) laid open during June 1995 through September 1996.

The JPO commenced analysis of DNA and amino acid sequences described in applications filed by March 1996 and laid open by September 1997. Relevant data were sent to the National Genetics Research Institute in April 1998.

3. Overseas distribution of F-term data

In 1997, the JPO translated into English the F-term assignment manual covering 300 themes and forwarded it to EPO and USPTO together with corresponding F-term inventories (database storing F-term assigned documents). This increased the total number of F-term data sent to these patent offices accompanied with F-term inventories to as many as 825 themes.

4. Overseas distribution of CD-ROM gazettes

As of April 1998, the JPO forwarded a total of 94 CD-ROM patent gazettes to one international organization and 31 countries, plus 98 unexamined CD-ROM gazettes to one international organization and patent offices in 27 countries.

5. Overseas distribution of PAJ CD-ROMs

Refer to III.1.

VIII. Other relevant matters concerning education and training in, and promotion of, the use of patent information, including technical assistance to developing countries:

1. Cooperation with developing countries through the WIPO

The JPO has been cooperating with the WIPO in the technical level inspection program and offering search findings to developing countries free of charge through the WIPO. In 1998, the JPO offered 85 search services and 132 patent document photocopying services to developing countries on request through the WIPO.

2. Cooperation with WIPO through trust funds

- a) The JPO hosted the WIPO Asian Regional Forum on Intellectual Property Policy Development in Tokyo in October 1998. With an opening address from Minister of International Trade and Industry Kaoru Yosano, the Forum was attended by commissioner-level delegates from 50 patent office from 22 Asian states and a joint statement was adopted.
- b) The WIPO Asian Regional Symposium convened in Beijing, China in March 1999 on the theme of "Information Technology and Intellectual Property" and was attended by about 30 delegates from 16 Asian states.
- c) The JPO sent an officer as an expert to the Directorate General of Intellectual Property Rights, Department of Justice, Republic of Indonesia to provide guidance and counseling on the trial system.
- d) The JPO sent one expert to each of the State Intellectual Property Office of China and the National Office of Industrial Property Office of Vietnam to provide guidance and counseling on computerizing industrial property administration.
- e) The JPO accepted a total of 40 trainees from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Vietnam to provide education and training on administration of intellectual property, enforcement of intellectual property rights, intellectual property information and office automation in the field of industrial property with the cooperation of the Japan Institute of Invention and Innovation (JIII).

3. Cooperation with developing countries through other organizations

- a) With the cooperation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the JPO offered an industrial property administration training course for competent administrative officers in non-APEC developing countries (Cuba, India, Kyrgyz, Latvia, Peru, Turkey, Uruguay, Vietnam), and an industrial property examination training course for examiners from the APEC region, etc.(the Philippines, Cuba, Egypt, India, Kenya, Lithuania, Peru, Slovakia, Turkey and Vietnam). Also, the JPO offered an industrial property training course for administrative officers and examiners from the APEC region (China, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, the Philippines and Thailand). Besides, as part of the training course, the JPO gave lectures and practice on how to retrieve patent information.

The JPO accepted 2 to 4 trainees from Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam as counterparts of experts dispatched to these countries to provide education and training on computer-related

technologies and other specialized fields.

The JPO also held the third APEC/PFP course in Thailand, attended by 16 lecturers from 6 countries, one international organization and one region, and by 49 trainees from 10 APEC member states and one region.

Furthermore, the JPO hosted an industrial property examination training course for Taiwanese patent office examiners with the cooperation of the Interchange Association.

The JPO dispatched an official to the Industrial Property Information Seminar held in Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang, Vietnam. The dispatched official gave a lecture on patent information.

b) With the cooperation of the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) and JIII, the JPO lectured on the subject of industrial property rights (IPR) as a whole including retrieval of IPR data at a series of IPR training courses (9 sessions). The courses were attended by 136 trainees from Chile, China, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, the Philippines, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, India, Laos, Mongolia, Turkey and Vietnam.

c) The Japanese Project-type Technical Cooperation for the Industrial Property Information Center in the Kingdom of Thailand

Under this project, the Industrial Property Information Center was established in the DIP. This project is aimed at assisting the DIP to build up a system to computerize industrial property information and provide/disseminate industrial property information to the users.

4. Publication of intellectual property laws and ordinances on CD-ROMs

In order to assist the intellectual property offices of developing countries that are striving to upgrade their domestic intellectual property laws and ordinances to assure implementation of the TRIPS obligations by 2000, the JPO carried out the "foreign industrial property system updating cooperation program" involving the translation of industrialized and developing nations' intellectual property laws and ordinances into English and storing the English version on CD-ROMs.

In 1998, the JPO stored on CD-ROMs a total of 68 laws and ordinances (including the industrial property laws and enforcement rules), of Australia, Canada, China, Indonesia, Italy, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States, EPO, Taiwan and Japan, and distributed the CD-ROM versions free of charge to APEC member states and other developing countries.

The JPO is planning to expand the scope of recipient countries, and laws and ordinances covered.

- Promotional activities (seminars, exhibitions, field visits, public relations campaigns, etc.);

1. The JPO hosted IPC seminars to promote public awareness of the international patent classification as follows.

May 1998:	Tokyo
June 1998:	Tochigi and Aichi
July 1998:	Osaka and Fukuoka
September 1998:	Aichi and Ehime
October 1998:	Miyagi
November 1998:	Tokyo and Hiroshima
December 1998:	Osaka

(Note): The seminars presented an introductory course and special courses by technical field (mechanical, chemical, electric, and software industries), accompanied with presentations on F-terms.

2. To help patent information users retrieve information using IPC, the JPO compiled the "IPC illustration" and then compiled a new version, "Easy IPC Guide" in 1998. This allows users to quickly index the desired IPC applicable to the overall architecture and component parts of technologies, even for technical fields that are normally difficult to explain by illustrations.

In March 1998, the JPO compiled the new version for the following technical fields:

a) Cropping machines :	A01D, A01F (major IPC subclass)
b) Paper:	D21 (major IPC subclass)
c) Food:	A23B (major IPC subclass)

- Studies on identifying the trend of new technologies by use of patent statistics, generation of monograms, etc;

Since 1983, the JPO has been publishing the total number of patent and utility model applications filed by technical field to enable current technological trends to be analyzed. Annually, the JPO conducts in-depth studies on the current trend of technology based on applications covering 10 significant themes and compiles findings into the Report on Investigation of Application Filings by Technical Field for public disclosure.

This investigation and research program is intended to make effective use of patent information by assessing current trends of application filings by technical field and the contents of specific key technologies singled out from overall industrial technologies, using the comprehensive document database compiled by the JPO which provides statistical information on application filings and technical information on unexamined gazettes and by extensive publication of

findings in order to promote the development of new technologies, which is the key scheme of the Japanese Government in fostering medium- and small-scale enterprises.

[Themes investigated]

- Biotechnology (plants and vegetation)
- Anti-oxidizing and anti-aging foods
- Ceramic materials for living bodies
- Collection and recycling of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles
- Household garbage disposer
- Glass frit paste
- Adhesives
- Application of laser technology to measuring instruments
- Burglar sensor technology
- Solar power generation technology

In 1998, the JPO compiled the Report on Investigation of Application Filings by Technical Field (1997 edition) covering the findings of investigation and research related to the following 10 themes, the chronological trend of application filings by technical field, and tables of application filings (IPC subclass level) for distribution to regional and local patent libraries including the Intellectual Property Center. The Report was published by JIII.

IX. Other relevant matters.

Nothing particular to report