

Major Coverage Enhancements for US legal status information in INPADOC

The European Patent Office (EPO) has considerably enhanced the coverage of US legal status information in INPADOC and INPAFAM for 8.3 million US applications back to 1980, especially for the US pre-grant phase. These new content additions enable users to monitor the status of US applications and see which applications have been lapsed. Also, one of the codes can be used as an early indication of patent grant.

The new legal status information is reflecting major events in the transaction history of the US PAIR platform. Users can specifically search this information with 10 new legal status codes and refine the search with specific text information available for these codes. The new codes have been assigned to the STN legal status categories.

The main US coverage enhancements include the following pre-grant and grant events:

- application lapsed (USSTCB)
- application restored (USSTCC)
- prosecution suspended (USSTCT)
- notice of allowance (USSTPP)
- issue fee payment (USSTPP)
- appeal procedure (USSTCV)
- patent grant (USSTCF)

Status changes of applications in the examination phase are searchable with the code USSTPP. Crucial events shortly before patenting like “Notice of Allowance Mailed - Application Received in Office of Publications”, “Publications - Issue Fee Payment Received” and “Publications - Issue Fee Payment Verified” – all indexed in the USSTPP-code – can be searched in the /LSFT-field.

The new codes are available in /LSC (Legal Status Code). All ten codes are assigned to one of the legal status categories in the /LSC2 search field. The more than 80 original USPTO's original status values are searchable as free text in the /LSFT (Legal Status Free Format Text) field. The EPO mapped these 80 status values onto the new generic codes. This mapping will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Table 1: New US Legal Status Codes in field /LSC with description text in field /LSTX and Legal Status Categories in field /LSC2

Legal status code (/LSC)	Description in Legal Status text (/LSTX)	/LSC2-Category
USSTCA	Information on status: Application Filing	–
USSTCB	Information on status: Application Discontinuation	NIF
USSTCC	Information on status: Application Revival	REI
USSTCE	Information on status: Pre-grant Review	EXA
USSTCF	Information on status: Patent Grant	–
USSTCH	Information on status: Patent Discontinuation	NIF
USSTCK	Information on status: Patent Revival	REI
USSTCT	Information on status: Administrative Procedure Adjustment	–
USSTCV	Information on status: Appeal Procedure	ORE
USSTPP	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general	–

The EPO obtains the new status information from the Patent Examination Data System platform of the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), which provides the same information as on the Public Patent Application Information Retrieval (US PAIR) platform. The given status information is reflecting a major event in the transaction history and can be correlated with documents in the image file wrapper tab of the US PAIR platform. For most applications (especially older applications and granted patents), only the status information at the time the EPO retrieves the backfile data is available. If the status of a particular application changes, an additional status code is added to the INPADOC legal status, but no retrospective status information will be loaded. New US records are regularly delivered with the new codes.

Examples

Sequence of "Information on Status" changes in the examination phase with early indication of grant

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=> S USSTPP/LSC (L) (NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE OR ISSUE FEE PAYMENT)/LSFT (L) 20190620/UPLS
L1 34526 USSTPP/LSC (L) (NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE OR ISSUE FEE PAYMENT)/LSFT (L) 20190620/UPLS

=> D PN AP LS
L1 ANSWER 20 OF 34526 INPADOCDB COPYRIGHT 2019 EPO/FIZ KA on STN
PI US 20170197957 A1 20170713
AI US 2017-15472779 A 20170329
LEGAL STATUS
AN 90663293 INPADOCDB
20190212 USSTPP INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT APPLICATION AND GRANTING PROCEDURE IN GENERAL
DOCKETED NEW CASE - READY FOR EXAMINATION
.....20190530
20190404 USSTPP INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT APPLICATION AND GRANTING PROCEDURE IN GENERAL
NON FINAL ACTION MAILED
.....20190606
20190423 USSTPP INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT APPLICATION AND GRANTING PROCEDURE IN GENERAL
RESPONSE TO NON-FINAL OFFICE ACTION ENTERED AND FORWARDED TO EXAMINER
.....20190620
20190426 USSTPP INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT APPLICATION AND GRANTING PROCEDURE IN GENERAL
NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE MAILED -- APPLICATION RECEIVED IN OFFICE OF PUBLICATIONS
.....20190620
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Legal status information on grant and subsequent publication of B2-document

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=> S USSTCF/LSC (L) UPLS=20190620
L1 12935 USSTCF/LSC (L) UPLS=20190620

=>D PN AP LS
PI US 20180261654 A1 20180913
PI US 10290683 B2 20190514
AI US 2015-15534426 A 20151006
LEGAL STATUS
AN 100758877 INPADOCDB
20190327 USSTPP INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT APPLICATION AND GRANTING PROCEDURE IN GENERAL
PUBLICATIONS -- ISSUE FEE PAYMENT VERIFIED
.....20190530
20190424 USSTCF INFORMATION ON STATUS: PATENT GRANT
PATENTED CASE
.....20190620
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Table 2: Mapping between the original status value and the corresponding generic INPADOC legal event code.

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTCA	Utility Application Converted into a Provisional Application	Information on status: Application Filing
USSTCA	Utility Application Converted to Provisional Application	Information on status: Application Filing
USSTCB	Abandoned -- After Examiner's Answer or Board of Appeals Decision	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandoned -- Failure to Pay Issue Fee	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandoned -- Failure to Respond to an Office Action	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandoned -- File-Wrapper-Continuation Parent Application	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandoned -- Incomplete (Filing Date Under Rule 53 (b) - PreExam)	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandoned -- Incomplete Application (Pre-examination)	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Abandonment for Failure to Correct Drawings/Oath /NonPub Request	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Expressly Abandoned -- During Examination	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Expressly Abandoned -- During Publication Process	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCB	Final Rejection Mailed	Information on status: Application Discontinuation
USSTCC	Withdrawn Abandonment, awaiting examiner action	Information on status: Application Revival
USSTCE	Interference -- Decision on Priority Rendered by Board of Interferences	Information on status: Pre-grant Review
USSTCE	Interference -- Declared by Board of Interferences	Information on status: Pre-grant Review

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTCE	Interference -- Initial Memorandum	Information on status: Pre-grant Review
USSTCE	Interference-Dispatch to Examiner	Information on status: Pre-grant Review
USSTCF	Patented Case	Information on status: Patent Grant
USSTCF	Patented File - (Old Case Added for File Tracking Purposes)	Information on status: Patent Grant
USSTCH	Patent Expired Due to Non Payment of Maintenance Fees Under 37 CFR 1.362	Information on status: Patent Discontinuation
USSTCH	Patented File - Lapsed	Information on status: Patent Discontinuation
USSTCK	Abandoned - Restored	Information on status: Patent Revival
USSTCK	Patent Reinstated Following Decision on Maintenance Fee Petition Under 37 CFR 1.377 - 1.378	Information on status: Patent Revival
USSTCT	Prosecution Suspended	Information on status: Administrative Procedure Adjustment
USSTCV	Appeal brief - Requester	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Appeal Brief (or Supplemental Brief) Entered and Forwarded to Examiner	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Appeal Dismissed / Withdrawn	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Appeal Order Return from TC	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Appeal Ready for Review	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Application Involved in Court Proceedings	Information on status: Appeal Procedure

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTCV	Board of Appeals Decision Rendered	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Board of Appeals Decision Rendered after Request for Reconsideration	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Court Proceedings Terminated	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Examiner's Answer to Appeal Brief Mailed	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Notice of Appeal Filed	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	On Appeal -- Awaiting Decision by the Board of Appeals	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Remand to Examiner from Board of Appeals	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Reply Brief Filed and Forwarded to BPAI	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTCV	Request Reconsideration after Board of Appeals Decision	Information on status: Appeal Procedure
USSTPP	Advisory Action Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Allowed -- Notice of Allowance Mailed -- Issue Revision Completed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Amendment / Argument after Board of Appeals Decision	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Amendment after Notice of Appeal	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Application Dispatched from Preexam, Not Yet Docketed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTPP	Application Returned back to Preexam	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Application Undergoing Preexam Processing	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Awaiting Response For Informality, Fee Deficiency Or CRF Action	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Awaiting TC Resp, Issue Fee Payment Received	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Awaiting TC Resp, Issue Fee Payment Verified	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Awaiting TC Resp., Issue Fee Not Paid	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Defensive Publication or SIR File	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Docketed New Case - Ready for Examination	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Ex parte Quayle Action Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Examiner's Answer	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Examiner's Answer Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Examiner's Answer to Reply Brief or Response to Remand Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTPP	Missassigned Application Number	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Non Final Action Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Non-Final Action Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Notice of Allowance Mailed -- Application Received in Office of Publications	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Patent Application Number Inactivated	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Pre-Interview Communication Mailed	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Publications -- Issue Fee Payment Received	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Publications -- Issue Fee Payment Verified	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Reply Brief (or Supplemental Reply Brief) Filed - Not Entered	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Reply Brief (or Supplemental Reply Brief) Forwarded to Examiner	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Respondent brief - requester	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general

Legal Status Code in /LSC	Original status value (USPTO) in /LSFT	Description in /LSTX
USSTPP	Response after Final Action Forwarded to Examiner	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Response after Non-Final Action Entered Ready for Examiner Action)	Information on status: Patent (or Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Response to Ex parte Quayle Action Entered and Forwarded to Examiner	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Response to Non-Final Office Action Entered and Forwarded to Examiner	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	RO Processing Completed-Placed In Storage	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	SE ready for Pubs Processing -- Certificate in IFW	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Sent to Classification contractor	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Special New	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	TC Return of Appeal	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Undocketed Track 1	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general
USSTPP	Withdraw from Issue Awaiting Action	Information on status: Patent Application and granting procedure in general