



STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2017 TO 2019

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Introduction

This Strategy Statement provides a brief analysis of the current IP environment, some risks and challenges facing the Office and sets out the objectives which the Office will be working towards over the next 3 years.

The statement also contains (at Annex1) a table which reviews performance against the objectives set out in the previous Strategy Statement for the period 2014 to 2016.

Environmental Analysis

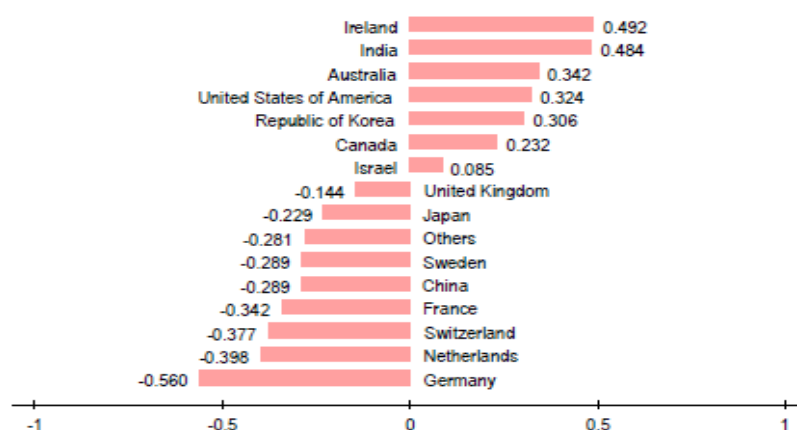
In the period covered by the previous strategy statement, the effects of the economic downturn has begun to show signs of waning. During that period, the filing of new national patent, design and trade mark applications all suffered declines of varying degrees. International applications by Irish firms also fluctuated.

Reduced revenues, lack of credit and tighter profit margins during difficult financial times will have acted to constrain Irish business from adopting a more innovative culture which can create new products or services and therefore new revenue streams. This more conservative approach on the part of domestic enterprises appears to be reflected in the declines in filings for national IP rights which have featured in each year since 2008. However, on a more positive note, the rate of decline has lessened and has begun to flatten out with 2015 and 2016 showing a certain amount of growth which may signal a return of business confidence with companies investing again in innovation and branding and recognising the importance of protecting their IP in a very tight and competitive market.

Investing in innovation has meant that intellectual property rights (IPRs) have begun to take on a more significant role in Ireland's economy. There is some evidence of an increased awareness amongst Irish business that an ability to develop innovative ideas and to commercialise those ideas can contribute significantly to economic success. It is increasingly the case that many of Ireland's export led growth industries are those that are IP-rich and IP-intensive, such as new ICT related technologies, high-end design and media content.

**Relative specialization index for patent applications
for selected fields of technology, 2012-14**

IT methods for management



Source: WIPO Statistics Database and EPO PATSTAT database, October 2016.
WIPO World Intellectual Property Indicators 2016 (page 51).

Note: This index corrects for the effects of country size and focuses on concentration in specific technology fields; it captures whether a country tends to have a lower or a higher propensity to file in certain technology fields. A positive value for a technology indicates that a country has a relatively high share of patent filings related to that field of technology. The above table shows that Ireland tops the worldwide list of countries for patent filings in IPC class G06Q, i.e. DATA PROCESSING SYSTEMS OR METHODS, SPECIALLY ADAPTED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, COMMERCIAL, FINANCIAL, MANAGERIAL, SUPERVISORY OR FORECASTING PURPOSES; SYSTEMS OR METHODS SPECIALLY ADAPTED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, COMMERCIAL, FINANCIAL, MANAGERIAL, SUPERVISORY OR FORECASTING PURPOSES, NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED FOR.

That said, IP intensive firms appear for the most part to be in the export led, FDI and multinational sectors. Indeed, the Government's strategy to promote Ireland as a R&D-centered, innovation-based, knowledge-intensive economy coupled with low corporate taxes is seen as a major deciding factor in Ireland's ability to attract continued investment from R&D-focused U.S. companies and other foreign multi-nationals.

According to the Irish Venture Capital Association (www.ivca.ie), this has led to some 960 foreign companies establishing in Ireland, predominantly in the IT hardware and software, pharmaceutical and medical devices sectors.

Ireland has:

- 8 of the top 10 pharma companies
- 15 of the top 25 in medical device companies
- 8 of the top 10 technology companies.

This has resulted in 10 of the world's top selling prescription drugs being made in Ireland. In addition, there are some €6.9bn in exports of medical devices making Ireland the second largest exporter of medical devices in Europe.

The presence of all these multi-national companies in Ireland (many with substantial R&D operations or collaborative links with third level research centers) has meant that there has been a steady level of activity in IP filings abroad (at the USPTO, EPO and WIPO) by Irish resident applicants even during the recession.

However according to a report by Technopolis¹ published in June 2015 which reviewed the IP activities in the firm base in Ireland, "*a small number of firms are responsible for the majority of patent applications. Approximately 0.2% of firms in Ireland account for 77% of applications between 1999-2013*".

The report noted that "*the economic structure of Ireland highlights that key growth sectors – in terms of Value Added to the economy and employment share - are, for **multinational firms**: chemicals (including pharmaceuticals), medical device manufacturing and computer, electronic and optical products (ICT hardware)*" – all areas where the most patenting activity occurs and a consequential contribution to economic growth. The report also noted that; "*For **indigenous firms**, these key sectors are: food and drink, business services, and computer consultancy. The latter of these are not traditionally patenting sectors*".

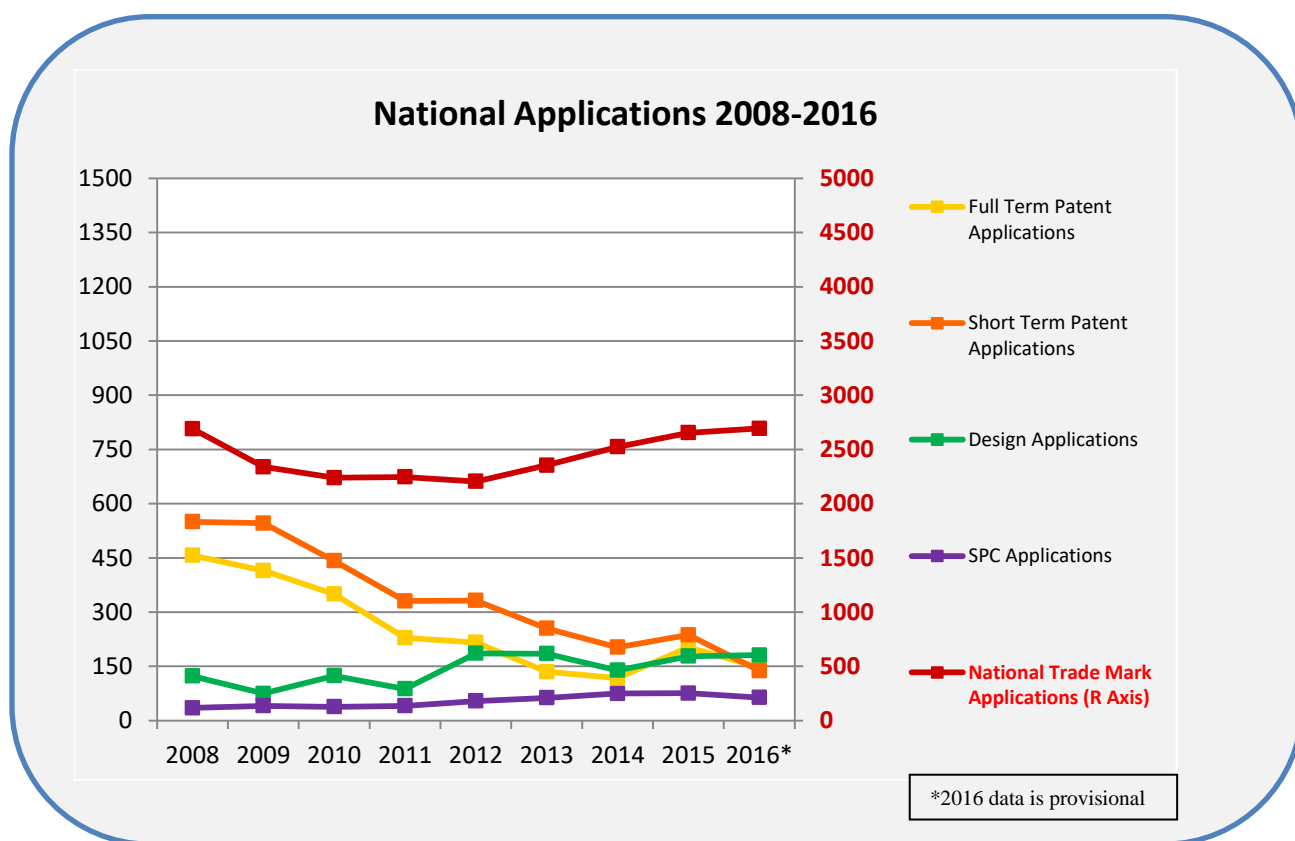
The report considered that trade marks are widely used across a range of sectors, with growing awareness of their applicability reported among firms. Trade Marks appear to be particularly well utilised among firms operating in both national and international markets.

The report made a number of recommendations, the overall focus of which is aimed at achieving an improvement in IP knowledge and management skills in the enterprise base in Ireland, to develop a proper recognition of IPR in relevant innovation and sectorial policies and to develop a focus on quality IP as well as quantity at firm level. The Patents Office is participating in an interagency group which is considering these recommendations in the context of establishing a roadmap of actions aimed at building IP capability and resilience at enterprise level, which have regard to the

¹ <https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Enhancing-the-Intellectual-Property-Activities-in-the-Firm-Base-in-Ireland.pdf>
Strategy Statement 2017 - 2019

Government's overall innovation and enterprise strategies². Accordingly, several of the actions included in this strategy statement are aimed at contributing to providing tools and increasing awareness of IP amongst Irish firms – particularly at start up and also at sectoral level.

The following table presents a graph of national IP filings in the period 2008 to 2016. While the number of national patent and trade mark filings has shown a modest increase from 2014 to 2015, national patent filings in 2016 fell back to 2014 levels and only trade mark and design filings continued to increase again at a very modest rate. Figures for national filings do not necessarily reflect the extent to which Irish based firms and inventors are engaged in innovative activity.



² <https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Enterprise-2025.html>
<https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Publication.../Innovation-2020.pdf>

In the case of multi-nationals engaged in R&D in Ireland in conjunction with Irish resident inventors or Irish resident companies, many applications (European, PCT, EUTM and Madrid, as well as US and UK) may be filed through the parent company or a group company which holds all the IP assets and these companies may not be resident in Ireland. Consequently, it is difficult to present an accurate picture of innovative or IP related activity if one relies solely on either national or even international applications by Irish resident firms. Nonetheless, if looked at from the perspective that applicants for national IP protection are for the most part concentrating on the Irish domestic market, a generally positive upward movement may be discerned for trade marks and designs with patent filings remaining flat.

The following tables are presented as an indicator that outside of national filings, for the most part international patent (PCT and European) filings and international trade mark (EUTM and Madrid) filings remained relatively stable in 2014 and 2015.

Number of PCT Filings (international phase) by Country of Origin

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ireland	481	482	443	415	391	432	438	457

Source: WIPO Statistics Database
http://www.wipo.int/ipstats/en/statistics/country_profile/

Note: The PCT system makes it possible to seek patent protection for an invention simultaneously in each of a large number of countries by filing a single "international" patent application. The above count is based on the international filing date and country of residence of the first named applicant i.e. Ireland and reflect applications at the PCT international stage. These applications may subsequently enter the national or European phase at the EPO.

European patent filings per country of residence of the first named applicant

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ireland	721	759	767	696	667	718	742	743

Source: EPO Statistics Database as of 31 December 2016.
<https://www.epo.org/about-us/annual-reports-statistics/statistics.html#applications>

Note: The table shows European patent applications filed with the EPO (Direct European applications and International (PCT) applications entering the European phase). Statistics are based on the first-named applicant.

Number of EU Trade Mark applications by Country of Residence of Applicant

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ireland	794	808	842	803	827	1,055	1,035	1,067

Source OHIM Statistics SSC003.1 (version as of 30/11/2016)

Number of Madrid International trade mark applications by Country of Origin

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ireland	81	112	101	130	123	168	193	170

Source: WIPO Statistics Database http://www.wipo.int/ipstats/en/statistics/country_profile/

Finances

Declines in business volumes and in particular decisions by business not to maintain their IP rights in force, initially impacted on the Office's fee income after 2008. The bulk of the Office's fee income comes from renewal fees and declines in national patent renewals and both national and international trade mark renewals have been evident since 2008 with consequential impact on income levels. The decline in renewal fee income in the years 2009 to 2011 can probably be attributed to the effects of the recession on entrepreneurial activity, often resulting in financial considerations dictating a firm's ability to renew a trade mark or the ceasing of the manufacture of a patented product. However, a relatively stable income stream from European Patent renewals compensated for declines in other fee income and has meant that the Office's overall outturn for receipts has generally been in line with that estimated. Net expenses in 2015 were 21% less than in 2011.

Receipts and Expenses

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016*
Net receipts	10.1	9.0	8.8	8.2	8.6	8.4	8.2	8.3	9.8
Net expenses	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.7	2.8	2.3	2.7	2.9	2.6

• provisional

During 2014 to 2016, the period of the previous strategy statement, we have managed to significantly reduce the Office's running costs through operating with a reduced staff complement, introducing administrative efficiencies and effective use of support from the EUIPO and to a lesser extent from the EPO which has facilitated the development of new ICT based services.

By expedient use of ICT's, the computerisation of cumbersome internal processes, developing online services, including email-based services, the Office has improved access to information for the public and delivered major improvements to its digital infrastructure making it easier for customers to interact with its services; in particular, self-service procedures such as online filing of trade marks and designs and online payment functionality. This has reduced processing times, improved productivity and reduced costs.

The Office is committed to continue to innovate and improve its online services through use of ICT's to assist in achieving the goals set out in this strategy statement. We will also seek to manage the budgetary resources available to us so as to keep costs down without detriment to our operations and the services we provide.

Risk Analysis

The Office has a Risk Register that identifies the potential risks to the Office under various headings. The main areas of risk, in regard to the business continuity of the Office, revolve around the continuous availability of the Office's administration system and the Office's website. The website has become increasingly important from a risk perspective because of the increasing number of services which the Office delivers online and the need to be able to offer these services as far as possible on a 24 X 7 basis with almost no downtime. During the period of the last strategy statement, the Office's ICT unit continued to pursue the goal of having appropriate and adequate redundancy and backup of all of the Office's systems, including its website services involving virtualisation and remote hosting, so as to ensure uninterrupted business continuity.

In 2016 the Office commenced a project to redesign and redevelop its website with a view to improving its overall usability, accessibility, functionality and visual presentation which will allow us to provide our customers with easy access to the information and services that they require. It is intended that the new website will come on stream in Q2 of 2017.

The other area of risk which has been identified is in the area of financial irregularities and fraud. The Office continues to review this area with a view to ensuring that adequate controls are in place.

Other challenges

The previous strategy statement referred to a number of other factors (shown as bullet points below) which present challenges for the Office and which had the potential to adversely impact on the Office's ability to fully achieve its goals. The following commentary sets out how these factors have been addressed or have evolved.

- **Budgetary constraints and being unable to operate efficiently with a notional budgetary allocation which is not set by the Office and over which the Office can not exercise proper control.**

Under the provisions of an MOU between the Office and the DJEI, the Controller may set out the Patents Office funding requirements, including ICT spending, for future years through engagement with the Intellectual Property Unit, ICT Unit and Finance Unit and has the possibility to exercise more control over the allocation than hitherto.

- **The ICT budget and support continuing to remain outside the control of the Office**

The ICT budget is now within the control of the Office. However the members of the ICT Unit within the Office remain under the control of the DJEI.

- **Ongoing economic volatility which is reflected in a continuing decline in the volume of applications being received and renewed and which could have a negative effect on fee income.**

The Office's income stream has remained relatively stable and the decline in the number of applications reduced or halted.

- **The impact (in the longer term) of the Unitary Patent on the Office's revenue stream from European Patent renewal fees.**

During 2015 and 2016, the Office participated in the deliberations and negotiations of the Select Committee of the Administrative Council which established a fee structure for the UP system and agreed a distribution key for the distribution of UP renewal fees to the participating member states. However, with ratification by the 13 member states including the UK and Germany still to be completed, the UP system may not come into being until the latter part of 2017. While the UK has indicated it will ratify the agreement, the long term consequences of the BREXIT decision have added a further complication and this makes the long term impact and viability of the UP system almost impossible to predict.

In the course of this strategy statement, the Office will review and monitor the effects and implications, if any, BREXIT may have on the IP system and the IP

environment in Ireland and will consider if there is a need for any change in approach.

- Operating with a reduced staff complement which is adequate for current operations, objectives and targets but which may be insufficient to cope with increased volumes of filings in the future.

During the period of the last strategy statement, the Office successfully operated with a staff complement of 46 posts filled by 41.78 full-time equivalents as at end 2016. An element of workforce planning is now in place which will assist in ensuring that the Office has sufficient resources to carry out its statutory functions and to meet its business targets.

Patents Office Functions and Mission Statement

The core business of the Patents Office is the grant of patents and the registration of trade marks and industrial designs as laid down by statute. The Controller also has statutory functions under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000.

The central mission of the Patents Office is:

“To provide an efficient and effective system of intellectual property protection that encourages technological development and promotes enterprise”.

This is to be achieved through the protection of intellectual property rights in the fields of patents, trade marks and designs and the proactive dissemination of relevant knowledge in conjunction with each of these activities.

Links with the Department’s Statement of Strategy 2016-2019³

The Department’s Mission is:

“We will lead on the creation and maintenance of high quality and sustainable full employment across all regions of the country by championing enterprise across government, by supporting a competitive enterprise base to incentivise work, enterprise, trade and investment and by promoting fair and competitive markets”.

The Department’s mission is to be delivered through a number of goals which include supporting entrepreneurship, supporting innovation and maintaining a regulatory environment which is one of the more progressive and supportive environments for enterprise. The goals are focused around the primary ambitions of delivering sustainable full employment by 2018 and of making Ireland the best small country in which to do business.

³ <https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Statement-of-Strategy-2016-2019.pdf>

As an independent statutory office, the Patents Office has a somewhat different mission and goals to that of the Department. However, the Patents Office will contribute to the overall goal of optimising the national innovation system.

The Department's most recent strategy statement 2016-2019 states:

"In the area of intellectual property, we will actively engage with, and respond to, new challenges in the digital market context, support the deepening of innovation, including at enterprise level. We will strengthen our comprehensive legislative framework for intellectual property rights at domestic, EU and international level."

The Patents Office has and will continue to be involved in achieving the desired outcome of a *"progressive Intellectual Property regime that rewards creators, meets wider societal needs and encourages greater levels of innovation by businesses"*, through its day to day activities. The Office will look to play its part in achieving a modern and responsive regulatory regime for IP and will continue to assist with the preparation of IP legislation (particularly where the legislation impacts on the role of the Controller or creates functions for the Controller).

In the area of supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, the Office will continue (where possible in co-operation with Enterprise Ireland, County Enterprise Boards, universities and institutes of technology) to assist in supporting innovation through providing IP information and awareness raising activities which inform indigenous Irish enterprise, micro enterprises and small business start-ups of how a knowledge of IP can help with the development of a business idea and establishing and running a successful enterprise.

The Office will seek to pursue its central mission by seeking to achieve the following main objectives over the coming three years.

- 1. Provide excellent customer service.**
- 2. Ensure effective business processing resulting from ICT infrastructure improvements.**
- 3. Continue to contribute to the creation of an effective IP legal framework in Ireland and to IP policy.**
- 4. Promote awareness and understanding of IP amongst Irish business, enterprise and students.**
- 5. Enhance staff skills, job satisfaction and knowledge sharing.**
- 6. Work and co-operate with EU and international partners (EPO, EUIPO, WIPO etc.) and other national offices to ensure European and International IP systems are accessible and supportive of Irish business and enterprise.**

These six high level strategic objectives that underpin the structure of the strategy statement show what we are aiming to achieve and extend beyond the Office's statutory functions. Several of the activities are outward facing: serving our customers; involvement in the shaping the Irish IP system, at home and in Europe; IP awareness raising and developing tools and services which make public and business interaction with the IP regime easier and as straightforward as possible.

To deliver these objectives, we also need to continue to manage our resources – people and infrastructure to ensure that the Office is fit for purpose and operating to the highest

standards of governance; able to deal with change and to manage and support staff performance through the PMDS system and continue to improve and modernise our technology, systems and processes and how we operate, to make us the best and most efficient we can be.

Objective (1)

Provide excellent customer service.

Over the next three years we will -

- Draw up a new customer service action plan (2017-2019) to ensure that the customer service targets are appropriate having regard to the introduction and development of eservices, new functions and the available staff resources.
- Deliver a responsive and quality service in line with performance targets.
- Continue to review administrative procedures with a view to simplification of same and achieve organisational excellence.
- Maintain quality of orders and decisions issued and issue same in a timely manner.
- Where feasible, benchmark with other national IP offices to identify best practice and determine appropriate customer service targets.
- Participate in the EUIPO convergence programme in those areas which will be of most benefit to the Office.
- Seek to avail of any new tools developed by the EUIPO which (having due regard to costs and benefits) are considered to be worthwhile in terms of enhancing the Office's customer service provision.
- Engage with the EUIPO Project ECP5 which aims to support Quality Management Systems for trade marks in IP Offices. Specifically, the project will focus on implementing the ISO 9001:2015 standard in IP Offices that wish to achieve certification in that standard, thereby improving the working environment for staff and offering more consistent and transparent services to end users.

Outcomes

- *The Office will deliver its services to its customers with demonstrable effectiveness and efficiency.*
- *Improved organisational performance.*
- *Beginning the process of adopting a globally recognised quality management system.*

Objective (2)

Ensure effective business processing resulting from ICT infrastructure improvements

Over the next three years we will –

- Produce an annual ICT plan for the Office (in consultation with ICT Unit) ensuring that priority projects are also reflected in the Office's annual business plan.
- Introduce an online filing and application payment systems for patents and SPC's (by end 2018, with the assistance of ICT Unit).
- Introduce scanning paper TM application filings so as to facilitate electronic processing of all non- efiled TM applications.
- Continuously aim to optimise the Office's application hardware and software and its overall IT communications structure to deliver more efficient work processes that deliver benefits to internal and external customers.
- Agree an annual co-operation programme with the EUIPO. This will allow for support to be obtained from the EUIPO and the EUIPO's co-operation fund for any eServices and business related developments which the Office might wish to avail of having regard to feasibility including usefulness to users, costs and benefits of introducing same.
- Improve the provision of and public access to intellectual property information by introducing a redesigned web site in 2017 as a dynamic information tool.
- Seek to acquire or customise IP business tools which may be available from the VIPforSME project or other programmes, (e.g. an online IP Healthcheck tool for small business) and make them available to Irish business.
- Agree a new Bilateral Cooperation Programme with the EPO. This will allow for support for several patent related initiatives including the expansion of the amount of national patent documents which are electronically archived and which as a result can be made available online to the public.

Outcomes

- *A robust and responsive ICT infrastructure, administration system and website built on an appropriate architecture that allows the office to be as innovative as possible in providing effective and efficient services and tools, as well as enhanced accessibility to IP data and IP business tools which benefit both staff and customers.*
- *All applications for registered IP rights capable of being filed online and subsequently processed as far as possible in a fully electronic environment which delivers optimum efficiency and is capable of being adapted to meet changes to business requirements and customer needs.*

Objective (3)

Continue to contribute to the creation of an effective IP legal framework in Ireland and to IP Policy.

Over the next three years we will –

- Provide input into any new legislation with a view to improving the administrative and regulatory environment for intellectual property protection.
- Provide ongoing policy observations to the IPU on IP issues.
- Implement any legislative changes which create or change the statutory functions of the Controller – in particular implementing the changes and new functions arising from the enactment of the KDB Bill.
- Assist with the identification of legislative changes to the Patents Act and Rules required to give effect to the Unitary Patent.
- Assist with the identification of legislative changes to the Trade Marks Act and Rules arising from the implementation of the new EU Trade Marks Directive and Regulation.
- Use the opportunity of rule changes to reduce procedural burdens on applicants and to streamline and clarify the Office's administrative rules and procedures in line with best practice.
- Create Office Practice sections in the Office's website so that notices regarding Office practice and procedure can be easily accessed.

Outcomes:

- *Any changes to the national and European IP systems are underpinned by a strong legal basis which supports the needs of Irish business and enterprise and continues to support innovation and creativity.*
- *An IP regulatory framework that supports the business environment in Ireland.*
- *Ease of access to Office practice and procedures.*

Objective (4)

Promote awareness and understanding of IP amongst Irish business, enterprise and second and third level students.

Over the next three years we will –

- Use the redesign of the website to improve the content, accessibility and searchability of our databases to facilitate the leveraging of IP information.
- Meet the annual targets set for IP events (seminars, exhibitions courses and clinics) which are provided in support of Irish business, new business start-ups, entrepreneurs and individual inventors (within the constraints of limited resources i.e. staff numbers and T&S allocation).
- Co-operate with Enterprise Ireland (EI), Third Level Institutions, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) and others to deliver outreach awareness raising IP events.
- Refine and improve online guides and tools.
- Redesign all the IP Information booklets and redraft where necessary to reflect legal and other changes to the IP environment
- As part of the EPO's quality at source programme, (a) improve the transmission of published patent data to the EPO and (b) digitize patent specifications of published patent applications from 1927 to 1989 (which are on microfilm) and make them available online for public use. This is dependent on agreeing a Bilateral Co-operation Plan (BCP) with the EPO for financial and other supports.
- Run awareness surveys via the website (using the EUIPO online survey tool or another suitable tool) with a view to identifying gaps and trends and to better inform our information dissemination strategy.
- Continue our involvement with the Student Enterprise Awards and BT Young Scientist with a view to increasing an awareness of IP amongst second level students.
- Complete the actions and activities which the Office has agreed to deliver with EI as part of the EU's VIP4SME programme.

Outcomes:

- *Tools and services in place which will allow businesses, innovators and entrepreneurs have a better understanding of the role of IP and its importance for their business; to understand how IP can help them create value from their ideas and be able to access information on IPR's which will enable them to use, manage, protect and enforce their IP to its fullest potential.*
- *An awareness amongst students of what IP is about and how it works.*

Objective (5)

Improve organisational effectiveness through enhancing staff skills, job satisfaction and knowledge sharing.

Over the next 3 years we will:

- Maintain and improve internal communications through appropriate management structures and reporting arrangements.
- Ensure that the knowledge base, skills and competencies of staff in the Office is sustained through the provision of appropriate training, internal coaching and mentoring, detailed up-to-date work manuals, increased responsibilities, participation in project teams, etc.
- Use the PMDS process to help staff improve and manage performance better.
- Utilise the business planning and performance management process so as to focus on and prioritise key tasks.
- Seek to align individual performance goals with the Office's Strategy Statement and annual Business Plan.
- Ensure all staff contribute to the business planning process.
- Ensure staff meetings take place on a regular basis.
- Maintain a safe and pleasant working environment for staff.
- Encourage staff to avail of training and secondment opportunities which will improve their knowledge and skill set to the benefit of the Office.
- As far as is possible and where circumstances and "new ways of working" allow, encourage and promote internal staff rotation, as well as external temporary transfers in and out in order to expand knowledge, skills and competencies and promotional opportunities.

Outcomes:

- *A flexible staff complement with appropriate skills and competencies, capable of responding to the legislative changes and the demands of our customers and stakeholders.*
- *A high standard of performance which ensures that business and customer service targets are met and is valued and recognised.*
- *A working environment and work practices that enables staff to deliver the Office's goals and objectives effectively and efficiently.*

Objective (6)

Work and co-operate with EU and international partners (EPO, EUIPO, WIPO etc.) and other national offices to ensure that European and International IP systems are accessible to and supportive of Irish business and enterprise.

Over the next 3 years we will:

- Represent Ireland's views at meetings in international organisations – in particular at meetings of the Administrative Council of the EPO and its various committees and at meetings of the Administrative Board of EUIPO and its associated committees.
- Participate and attend meetings at expert level in EPO, EUIPO and WIPO.
- Develop contacts and networks with colleagues in other industrial property offices in Europe and elsewhere, to keep abreast of and where possible implement best practice in the administration of patents, trade marks, designs and copyright.

Outcomes

IE position properly articulated.

We add to our knowledge and expertise.

Maximise the practical benefits and assistance of co-operation programmes offered by the EPO and EUIPO, for the benefit of the Office and its customers.

Office is seen as forward looking and implementing best practice.

Indicators of success

Evidence that the desired outcomes under each objective have been achieved.

- Delivery of a high quality Intellectual Property protection system which meet the needs of our customers (measured through customer feedback and performance against customer service targets).
- Effective and efficient administrative systems for the grant/registration of patents, designs and trade marks in place. (measured through performance against customer service targets)
- Customer satisfaction (measured through the number of complaints received, positive reviews and reviews and comments received through online feedback and feedback at events) .
- Patents Office regarded as a progressive, professional and safe place to work (measured through upward feedback and staff inputs to management through divisional and section meetings).

The Office's annual Business Plans will, where possible, incorporate specific performance indicators in respect of specific actions to be undertaken to achieve the wider objectives set out in this Strategy Statement.

The Office will also measure performance against specific business targets set for specific tasks. Specific business and customer service targets can be found in the Office's current Customer Service Action Plan and are also incorporated into the MOU between the Office and the Department..

Annex 1 Review of Strategy Statement 2014 to 2016

Objective (1) Continue to grant patents and register trade marks and designs based on efficient administrative procedures and standards of service, which are in line with best international practice and meet the needs of customers.	
During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to :	Delivered/Current Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review annually the Office's customer service action plan (2014-2016) to ensure that the customer service targets are appropriate having regard to the introduction of new eservices and reduced staff numbers. Deliver a responsive and quality service in line with performance targets. 	<p>Reviews undertaken. All customer service targets being met to a satisfactory level. For details and percentages achieved see the Controller's Annual Reports.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review administrative procedures with a view to simplification of same and achieve organisational excellence. 	<p>Procedures in F and CS changed in light of introduction of TM and Designs efilng leading to more efficient processes. E.g. elimination of proofreading and scanning of images.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain quality of orders and decisions issued and issue same in a timely manner. 	<p>Achieved.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where feasible, benchmark with other national IP offices to identify best practice and determine appropriate customer service targets. 	<p>Some benchmarking done in relation to TM processes having regard to best practice in UK, EUIPO and some other offices. Office is considered to be to the fore in operating best practice having regard to our size, throughput and workload.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to engage a consultant (subject to the necessary financial resources being made available) to advise the Office on obtaining ISO 9000 certification. 	<p>Deferred because of possible participation in a quality project being developed by the EUIPO which is to commence in 2017.</p>

Objective (2) Seek to incorporate new technology in order to improve systems and procedures and service to customers and which will also have regard to the demands of the information society and e-business.	
During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to :	Delivered/Current Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce an annual IT plan for the Office (in consultation with IT Unit) ensuring that priority projects are also reflected in the Office's annual business plan. 	<p>Achieved.</p> <p>Office IT plan developed in consultation with IT Unit each year.</p> <p>Office also assists with the completion of start of year and end of year statements.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop online filing and application payment systems for designs (In conjunction with the EUIPO CF). 	<p>TM efilng progressed – soft go live in December 2013.</p> <p>Full go live in 2nd week of February 2014.</p> <p>Designs in 2014.</p> <p>Patents will depend of progress on EPO efilng (national) plug in.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the feasibility (usefulness to users, costs and benefits) of introducing an efilng system for patents. This will be dependent on development of an EPO efilng plugin for national offices (possibly in 2015) and receiving detailed information on same which confirms that it will be capable of integration our PTOLEMY administration system and our epayments system. 	<p>RFT issues for patents and SPC efilng system.</p> <p>Withdrawn because of issues with tender and responses. New RFT to issue in 2017.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce “Design View” (in conjunction with the OHIM CF). 	<p>Introduced and operational.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange for the online Irish Patent Register to be included in Phase 2 of the EPO's Federated Register project. 	<p>Achieved and operational.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce full electronic processing initially of efiled TM applications in 2014 and consider scanning paper filings in 2015. 	<p>Full electronic processing achieved for efiled applications.</p> <p>Scanning of paper TM applications to commence in February 2017.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuously aim to optimise the Office's application hardware and software and its overall IT communications structure to deliver more efficient work processes that deliver benefits to internal and external customers. Examine the feasibility (including usefulness to users, costs and benefits) of introducing further e-services which are supported by the EUIPO CF. Explore the feasibility (and cost effectiveness) of expanding the online fee payment module to allow all fee items to be paid online by credit or debit card. 	<p>Ongoing with risks minimised and improvements continued to be made to customer services e.g. implementation of online payments functionality for “other” TM and design fees.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to improve the provision of and public access to intellectual property information by further developing and enhancing the Office's Web site as a dynamic information tool. ▪ Seek to develop either a micro website or expand the "IP for Business" section so as to customise IP business tools (e.g. an online IP Healthcheck tool for small business) acquired via the IPORTA project and make them available to Irish business. 	<p>RFT for redesign of website issued in 2016 and redesign work has commenced with a completion date of end Q2 of 2017.</p> <p>IP for business section expanded but will be improved and developed further in the context of the website redesign.</p> <p>Acquiring an IP healthcheck tool is being pursued in the context of the EU VIP4SME project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the amount of national patent documents which are electronically archived and which as a result can be made available online to the public. 	<p>Ongoing project being progressed by Grants & Reg Admin section who scan the documents as time and other duties permit.</p> <p>A further element of this electronic archiving project is the EPO's quality at source project which will be progressed under a new Bi-lateral Cooperation programme to be agreed with the EPO.</p>

Objective (3)

Contribute to the development of legislation relating to Intellectual Property; in particular provide observations, contribute to the drafting and subsequently implement any new IP legislation which creates functions for the Controller.

During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to :

Delivered/Current Status

- Assist with the identification of legislative changes to the Patents Act and Rules required to give effect to the Unitary Patent.
- Provide input into any new legislation with a view to improving the administrative and regulatory environment for intellectual property protection.
- Provide ongoing policy observations on IP issues.
- Use the opportunity of rule changes to reduce procedural burdens on applicants and to streamline and clarify the Office's administrative rules and procedures in line with best practice.

The Office contributed text and amendments to *inter-alia* the following rules/regulations:

- Amendments to the Patents Act and Rules.
- Amendments to the Trade Marks Act and Rules.
- Amendment of the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000.
- Orphan Works Regulations.
- CRM Regulations 2014.
- IP Misc Provisions Act 4014 (Research exemption provision and Singapore Treaty).

In addition, the Office provided observations and contributed legal text on:

- Compliance with the provisions of the Services Directive insofar as it applies to the regulated professions of patent and trade mark agents and to the registration of copyright licensing bodies;
- Compliance reporting as part of the implementation of the CRM Directive. The Unitary Patent

Objective (4) To increase awareness of intellectual property among individual entrepreneurs, small and micro enterprises and new business start-ups as well as second and third level students.	
During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to:	Delivered/Current Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve the content, accessibility and searchability of our databases to facilitate the leveraging of IP information. 	Ongoing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the annual targets set for IP events (seminars, exhibitions, courses and clinics) which are provided in support of Irish business, new business start-ups entrepreneurs and individual inventors (within the constraints of limited resources i.e. staff numbers and T&S allocation). 	50 events in 2011 (target 43) 69 events in 2012 (target 43) 43 events in 2013 (target 43) 110 in 2014 (56 events and 54 clinics) 131 in 2015 (63 events and 68 clinics) Circa 150 in 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine and improve online information, search guides and tools. 	Ongoing. Online information, search guides and tools updated and improved (e.g. TM View, Design View, Innovaccess)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign the IP Information booklets and redraft where necessary to reflect changes to the IP environment, rules and procedures. 	Some updating done but redesign held off until redesign of website completed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider establishing a section of the Patents Office website devoted to green energy related technologies (possibly promoting patented Irish technologies) to include a direct link to the esp@cenet and possibly other search engines with help on how to search using the new YO2E clean energy classification scheme. 	Not delivered. Unable to progress due to resource constraints and priority being given to other work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitize patent specifications of published patent applications from 1927 to 1989 and make them available online for public use. 	Project underway in that staff are currently working on paper specs. Digitising Microfilm not progressed as discussions with the EPO aimed at obtaining financial support under the EPO's cooperation programme and quality at source programme were delayed pending new BCP. New project outline provided as part of draft BCP to EPO in November 2016.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue our involvement with the Student Enterprise Awards with a view to increasing an awareness of IP amongst second level students. 	Ongoing with successful involvement in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Objective (5)

Recognise staff as a key asset of the Office and utilise business planning and individual performance management and development in order to improve business performance and processes and enhance organisational effectiveness.

During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to:

Delivered/Current Status

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain and improve internal communications through appropriate management structures and reporting arrangements.	Delivered. Staff meetings took place on a regular basis, as envisaged under PMDS. Management meetings continued to take place as and when required as did liaison meetings with the IPU.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Utilise the business planning and performance management process so as to focus on and prioritise key tasks.▪ Seek to align individual performance goals with the Office's Strategy Statement and annual Business Plan.?▪ Ensure high involvement of staff in the business planning process.	Annual Office Business Plan is drawn up and progress is reviewed mid year and end year. Staff in each section contribute to drafting of section business plan which is incorporated into the Office's Business Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain a safe and pleasant working environment for staff.	Bi-annual H&S Audits, Risk assessment exercise undertaken, VDU assessments provided. Health and well being and safety courses organised and provided annually. Energy awareness committee established and operating successfully.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the knowledge base, skills and competencies of staff in the Office is sustained through the provision of appropriate training, tools and up-to-date work manuals.	Ongoing implementation of the Staff Training and Development Plan ensures that staff receive training in the appropriate competencies required to deliver on the key tasks and objectives set out in each annual business plan and the customer services action plan.

Objective (6)	
To represent Ireland at international fora.	
During the period 2014 to 2016 the Office undertook to:	Delivered/Current Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure Ireland's views are represented at meetings in international organisations – in particular at the Administrative Council meetings of the EPO and the Administrative Board meetings of EUIPO. ▪ Continue to participate in attending meetings at expert level in EPO, EUIPO and WIPO. ▪ Develop contacts and networks with colleagues in other industrial property offices in Europe and elsewhere, to keep abreast of best practice in the administration of patents, trade marks and designs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff from the Office led the Irish delegation at the Administrative Council meetings of the EPO and the Administrative Board meetings of OHIM/EUIPO and ensured Ireland's views were properly represented. ▪ Staff from the Office continued to attend meetings at expert level in EPO, EUIPO and WIPO. ▪ Contacts were developed and maintained with colleagues in the EPO, EUIPO, WIPO, and from other countries, to keep abreast of best practice in the administration of patents, trade marks and designs. ▪ The practical benefits and assistance of co-operation programmes, in the EPO and EUIPO, for the benefit of the Office and its customers were maximised. <p>The following were amongst the benefits obtained from maintaining successful relationships with international IP organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing financial assistance obtained from EUIPO under a bi-lateral agreement to assist with the cost of providing information on TM's and Designs at start your own business courses and at other events. ▪ Assistance obtained from the EPO towards staff training, information provision/access to patent documentation under a bi-lateral agreement. ▪ Assistance obtained from EUIPO under its new Co-operation Fund towards the cost of implementing several CF projects such as Design View, Design eFiling and Eservices.

