

How Regional Patent Examination Training for ASEAN Member States contributes to the ASEAN Economic Community

FACTSHEET
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The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) envisages a single market and production base in a dynamic and competitive region, which is fully integrated into the global economy. Predictable, efficient and accessible national intellectual property (IP) systems enhance ASEAN competitiveness by building business confidence to invest in research and development, technology transfer and diffusion, as well as regional trade. Maintaining a pool of well-trained patent examiners conducting robust and effective examination is essential to building predictable IP systems that protect and encourage innovation.

The AECSP Regional Patent Examination Training (RPET) Program delivers intensive competency-based patent examination training to examiners of ASEAN IP Offices that conduct substantive patent examination, to enable them to meet international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) standards.

Supporting Quality Examination Outcomes

Launched in 2013, the RPET Program is based on IP Australia's existing patent examiner training framework and is delivered through modern e-learning technology to five participating patent examination offices in the ASEAN region. RPET covers training on patent search and examination according to the international PCT standards. It also includes core concepts on claim construction, novelty and inventive step.

Throughout the program, trainees are progressively assessed against defined competencies and standards of practice. An onsite workshop is included in the program to support learning through the e-platform. To be a graduate of the RPET program, trainees need to consistently demonstrate the application of skills and knowledge to their work. Feedback from participating IP offices (Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam) indicates that trainees have demonstrated a noticeable improvement in examination quality as a result of RPET training.

Benefits of the Project

The program helps to enhance the consistency and quality of patent examination in participating offices, enabling them to boost their examination methods to international standards. For businesses, this improvement in examination standards creates greater confidence to file patent applications in the region and to transfer technology across borders.

Graduates from the RPET Program

The first six ASEAN trainees who participated in the first intake of the program in 2013 have been evaluated as competent against the RPET assessment criteria, and have graduated from the program. An IP officer from the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) was the first graduate to complete the RPET programme in December 2014. These are significant milestones for the graduates as the RPET program includes in excess of 600 hours of course work and assignments over a two-year period. The second intake of 13 trainees is due to complete the program by April 2016.

A third intake of the program commenced in April 2015, comprising 13 trainees from the five participating ASEAN offices. By the conclusion of the third intake in 2017, the program would have produced up to 32 graduates that are trained to international standards, thereby creating a critical mass of patent examiners that can assist with improving patent examination outcomes within the region.

Role of Participating ASEAN IP Offices

RPET encourages long-term collective achievement of improved patent quality in the region with the overall commitment of participating IP offices in the program. Participating IP offices support RPET trainees by providing the necessary and appropriate technical infrastructure for their efficient and continuous participation in RPET's virtual classes, catch-up sessions and community meetings. In addition, each participating IP office commits to developing its patent examination capabilities through the improved competency of trainees to conduct search and examination to PCT standards, and supports continuous learning and practical application at work under the guidance of local supervisors.

Ensuring Training Sustainability

Complementing the RPET and to further support sustainability of competency-based patent examination training in the ASEAN region, an Ideal Patent Examination Training (IPET) Model was created in 2014. The IPET Model reuses RPET content and training approaches, and provides additional learning tools to enable interested ASEAN Member States to conduct their own patent examiner training. A train-the-trainer course will be delivered in late 2015 to ensure competency-based training can be delivered on an ongoing basis.

For more information, visit:

- ASEAN Website

<http://www.asean.org/news/asean-secretariat-news/item/regional-patent-examination-training-for-asean-embarks-on-its-second-year>

http://aanzfta.asean.org/uploads/docs/AECSP_Factsheets/AECSP_Updates_RPET_Graduate_PR_Feb2015.pdf

- IP Australia Website

<http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/about-us/international-activity/asia-pacific-development-cooperation/Regional-Patent-Examination-Training-RPET/>

http://www.wipo.int/wipo_magazine/en/2014/03/article_0008.html



The 2013 intake of RPET participating in the trainee workshop in Canberra, Australia