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**To all the Members of the AIPPI - UAE National Group**

**Subject: 3rd Circular/ 2024**

**Updates on latest services and work by the UAE Ministry of Economy**

Dear all,

We trust you are well.

We take this opportunity to share our 3rd circular for the year. It is prepared by our Communication Committee member Mona Saleh to give the readers some updates on recent developments and practice updates. We trust you find the same informative and in order.

In line with the recent launch of the UAE's Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) programme, an ambitious initiative aimed at overhauling the current government work structure to enhance service efficiency and quality, the Ministry of Economy (MOE) with all its sectors is working to kickstart the program of ZGB, which seeks to eliminate unnecessary government procedures and requirements, significantly simplifying the administrative process which includes cancelling a minimum of 2,000 government measures, halving the time required for procedures with more than 50% reduction, and removing all unnecessary bureaucracy by the end of 2024.

This circular is prepared to shed a light on the ongoing efforts the MOE is taking to improve and streamline its Trade Mark services in some key areas related to trade mark filing and prosecution. The contents are based on the understanding of some of the AIPPI UAE members and no statement or official position on behalf of any Ministry or Authority should be assumed or implied.

The intention is to inform the members on what was understood from some recent discussions with the MOE.

This circular contains an update and some information on the following topics:

- Suggestions/proposals received for improvement of current trade mark services which may change depending on further feedback and discussions between the Trade Mark Office and agents/customers.
- Update on likely new features and changes in the Law which will be reflected in the new online portal.
- **New portal for Trade Mark services**

The Trade Mark Office is currently working on a new online portal that aims to be more user friendly and which will activate a number of new features and update current forms based on feedback from agents/customers. The new online portal is still a work in progress. Current timeframe for the launch of the new online portal is unknown but the Trade Mark Office mentioned a tentative date in June 2024. Once the portal is available, we understand that the Trade Mark Office will share updates on it with all trade mark attorneys and agents including a trial period for feedback before the official launch. Our initial information shows that the new portal will likely include the following features and updates but this is subject to final confirmation by the MOE at the time of launching:

- **Power of Attorney (POA)**

The Trade Mark Office is looking at options to tackle the issue of providing a POA with local national filing in face of IR process that does not require a legalised POA.

- **Trade Mark Filing**

The new portal will be for filing in English/Arabic with options to issue the registration certificate in dual languages.

- **Multi class Filing**

As per the New Trade Mark Law in the UAE, a multi class application is possible in the UAE. However, this function is not yet available on the current online portal for filing and trade mark services. We will wait to see if this is available on the new portal.

- **Specifications of goods/services**

The Trade Mark Office as part of facilitating examination is looking at options regarding the list of goods/services. They are considering options between a predefined list (similar to the practice in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia) and/or freedom to file any goods/services. This would possibly mean giving options to agents and clients to choose a set of specifications and/or including detailed lists.

- **Trade Mark Examination**

The Trade Mark Office as part of their ongoing efforts to streamline the examination process has brought in extra manpower to assist to clear the current backlog.

The Trade Mark Office is also looking at reducing the timeframe for examination. Currently and as per the Trade Mark regulations, examination should take place within 90 days from the date of filing. The Trade Mark Office is looking at reducing this timeframe to 30 days. They are also looking at possible introduction of a fast track or a VIP trade mark option; this initiative would provide for the examination of a trade mark application in one day with an additional set fee. This initiative does not aim to get the mark registered in one day as the normal publication and registration process would still need to be completed as per the applicable law but it would expedite the initial examination phase.

- **Publication**

The Trade Mark Office is considering publication and issuance of the Trade Mark Journal on a daily basis, similar to many other systems in the region, which may have different opposition deadlines depending on the publication date.

- **Trade Mark Searches**

The Trade Mark Office is looking at options regarding trade mark searches after listening to feedback from agents across the UAE. The options they are looking at for the new searches as per the online portal could include:

- One fee for a trade mark search that would cover up to 3 classes.
- Annual subscription with different packages covering searches in 10 classes, 15 and 45 classes.  
Looking at updating the results section in the search reports to include status of revealed marks.

- **Obtaining Certified copies**

The new portal will simplify the options regarding the service to obtain a certified copy.

- **Renewal of trademarks**

The renewal process will become simpler online and can be completed in no time. However, it is important that the process is handled with care especially with older trade mark records, handled by different agents, which may need to be corrected/updated with the Trade Mark Office, until the Trade Mark Office launches the new portal.

The MOE and the Trade Mark office are looking to resolve any incomplete online records of trade marks, resolve any other data related issues with the new portal.

- **Trade Mark Oppositions**

Trade Mark Office has recently been making considerable efforts in dealing with pending oppositions, setting hearings and issuance of decisions to complete the backlog of cases.

The Trade Mark Office is also looking at providing more features regarding oppositions filed on the online portal. This includes automating the full opposition process including linking opposition records with the status of a mark and obtaining copies of the responses when filed.

- **Trade Mark Administrative Cancellation Actions**

As per the New Trade Mark Law, any interested parties can file a cancellation action with the Trade Mark Office in line with the relevant articles of the UAE Trade Mark Law. Currently and in line with ZBG programme, the Trade Mark Office is revising the process for handling and issuance of decisions on cancellation matters. They are putting in place a different improved mechanism to handle cancellation requests. The Trade Mark Office shall update us with the process in due course.

- **E-wallet**

Considering payment options including creating an e-wallet on the online portal.

- **Online Technical support**

Reviewing current support and option to maintain it available 24 hours in line with availability of the online portal.

As mentioned above, this circular focusses only on the Trade Mark Department but the MOE is also actively working on a number of other IP projects eg IP Ecosystem, IP School, IP Sports to name just a few. These are all initiatives that are intended on easing the customer experience and are being driven right from the top.

We will keep monitoring the progress and developments and hopefully be able to report the updates to members in a timely manner. We welcome any contribution or suggestion from the members on the above updates to discuss or send further circulars to members in the future.

Kind regards,

On behalf of the Communication Committee

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