



PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2006/2007

During the past 12 months, our Association continued to play an important role behind the scene in developing the patent agent profession in Singapore. Again, I would like to thank all members of the Executive Committee for the time, effort and commitment that they each have put in during the past year. They are:

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|
| Vice-President | : | Jupiter Kong |
| Hon. Secretary | : | Morris John |
| Hon. Treasurer | : | Alban Kang |
| Committee | | |
| Members | : | Adam Bogsch |
| | | Audrey Yap |
| | | Charles Bergere |
| | | Gerald Koh |
| | | Keith Callinan |
| | | Song Wern Lee |

During the year, we carried out the following activities:

1. Seminars/Workshops

On 28 May 2007, at the invitation of IPOS, I gave a talk on the role of a patent agent in Singapore at a seminar in Beijing organized by IPOS and its Chinese counterpart. I took the opportunity to introduce ASPA and the part that it plays in promoting the development of the patent agent profession in Singapore.

2. Code of Conduct

The Code is still a work-in-progress. In November 2006, ASPA had discussions with IPOS on the appropriate disciplinary structure and procedure and how ASPA can man the relevant committees.

3. Patent Agent Exams

Again, I thank the members of ASPA who were involved in assisting the candidates in their preparations for the examinations by providing free tutorials as well as in preparing and marking examination papers. This fulfils one of the important roles of the Association. In May 2007, ASPA had discussions with a consultant who may be appointed to conduct a training course and the examinations for IPOS.

4. PF13A

In February 2007, ASPA submitted a paper to IPOS concerning the filing of the above-mentioned form. This is because some members had been receiving notifications from IPOS concerning wrong forms being filed in response to a written opinion and the Registry adopted the position that if the wrong forms were filed, the response would be deemed never to have been filed. ASPA felt that the position was too drastic, especially as the deadline cannot be extended. ASPA therefore suggested that

- (1) in the event of the filing of a wrong form, the applicant should be permitted to correct it with the payment of a correction fee similar to the fee paid for PF23 or there should be an ex officio correction of the obvious error; or
- (2) there should be a change of PF23 so that it permits the replacement of one form with another.

The reasons that ASPA gave for the suggestion included

- (a) the manner of response (i.e. the need to file PF13A) is one of form only;
- (b) allowance of correction is consistent with principles of civil procedure applied in the courts where the litigant is allowed to cure procedural irregularities; and
- (c) diversity of forms inadvertently leads to errors.

5. Mentorship Funding Scheme

In November 2006, ASPA provided feedback on the above-mentioned scheme. Essentially, we took the view that the scheme should be extended to include

- (1) patent agents/attorneys (foreign and local) who are working in Singapore, provided they are or have been training local trainees and contributing to ASPA in particular and to the development of the profession in Singapore; and
- (2) current trainees who are undergoing training and/or attending the GCIP course.

We stressed that support should be given to those patent agents/attorneys who have been making contributions to the profession in Singapore and not to “newcomers” only. We also suggested that the maximum period of training that should be committed by the mentor should be 14 full days per year, rather than 6 as originally proposed by IPOS.

6. Contacts With Other Associations

Recently,

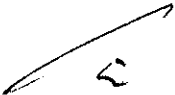
- (1) we received an invitation from APAA and FICPI to participate in their joint colloquium on “A Comprehensive Approach to Patent Quality” in Amsterdam

on 8-9 June 2007. Regrettably, we were unable to send any representative to the event.

- (2) we received a letter from JPAA informing us of the change of presidency and council members. I sent a congratulatory letter to the new President (Jun Nakajima) on his appointment.

Concluding Remarks

I reiterate that the patent agent profession in Singapore continues to face challenges. ASPA must continue to strive to nurture the growth of the profession and must continue to attract more patent agents to join its ranks.



Tan Tee Jim, S.C.
President
ASPA
20 June 2007