

The Patent Regulation Board and the Trade Mark Regulation Board (The Intellectual Property Regulation Board) Business Plan for 2012

1 Policy Focus and Objectives for 2012

The regulatory objectives which underpin all of IPReg's activities are:

- a) protecting and promoting the public interest;
- b) supporting the constitutional principle of the rule of law;
- c) improving access to justice;
- d) protecting and promoting the interests of consumers;
- e) promoting competition in the provision of legal services;
- f) encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession;
- g) increasing public understanding of the citizen's legal rights and duties;
- h) promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles

Our Work Programme in 2012 will again focus on meeting the regulatory objectives in the following key ways:

- a) **Consumer Protection** – monitoring of first tier complaints and working with the Legal Ombudsman;
- b) **Communication** - Provision of expanded public communication through the development our website and enabling online registration by registrants. Subject to a value for money assessment, management of the registers in house with back office support from CIPA and ITMA;
- c) **Regulatory Compliance** – preparing and submitting the application to become a licensing authority authorised to regulate Alternative Business Structures providing intellectual property services and undertaking all necessary consultations and communications.
- d) **Education** – Given the significant work required in this area a separate 3 year plan is being prepared but this general business plan outlines, essentially, some activities relating to the process by which attorneys are admitted which are intended to be implemented this year.

Priority is based on a combination of urgency and importance with 1 being the most urgent and important

2 Specific Work Programme for 2012

Details of the specific activities in our 2012 work programme are shown overleaf together with their projected completion dates:

Note: annual activities, such as the appointment of board members, submission of the IGR (internal governance review) to the LSB and formal admissions to and publication of the statutory registers, are not shown although the plan does highlight areas where the annual activities are intended to be undertaken in a different way in 2012.

Consumer Protection			
	Activity	Description	Priority
1	First tier complaints	Commence annual collection of statistics and review.	1
2	Conduct Complaints (PRB and TRB)	Develop and publish a protocol on the work of the CRC (sift panel) and to provide further training to the CRC board members. Complete the set up of the Joint Disciplinary Panel and provide training.	1
3	Service Complaints (Legal Ombudsman)	Following completion of a first year of operation (October 2010/11) undertaking a review of: - operations to identify areas where access for/information to the public might be improved; and - where areas of co-operation/information sharing can be enhanced and also a review of emerging patterns in the types and numbers of complaints being made	2

Communication			
	Activity	Description	Priority
1	Website Development	Develop the IPReg website so that it is more accessible for consumers and the general public and allows on line registration and maintenance of records.	2
2	Annual Report	The 2011 Annual report (to be issued in March 2012) to contain a survey of the activities of IPReg over its first two years of operation	2
3	Seminars on complaints handling	Working with CIPA and ITMA develop (or procure the development) of training courses and written material on complaints handling.	3
4	Liaison meetings	Continue regular meetings with main stakeholders including LSB, CIPA, ITMA, LeO, PAMIA and other ARs as necessary	3
5	Meetings with registrants	Continue the programme of presentations at regular open meetings with registrants to maintain their awareness of the regulatory regime, update them on developments and to receive their feedback.	3

Regulatory Compliance			
	Activity	Description	Priority
1	ABS	<p>Prepare and submit the application(s) for designation as a licensing authority.</p> <p>Undertake all necessary general consultations and communications.</p> <p>Undertake a targeted communication campaign addressed to sole practitioners and smaller firms who may wish to remain outside ABS regulation.</p> <p>Prepare all documentation required to implement ABS regulation.</p>	1
2	Diversity	Develop a frame work/process to collect and review statistics	1
3	Governance	Implement fully a board appraisal process (NB expected to have been commenced in 2011).	2
4	Governance	Review board members annual remuneration	3

Qualification			
	Activity	Description	Priority
1	Litigation Accreditation	Implement new regulatory framework for rights to litigate/rights of audience	1
2	Admissions process	Develop and publish guidelines regarding the production of evidence of satisfactory training as part of the application process. Consult on the impact of the removal of the right to admission based on an unsupervised (i.e. +4years) period of practice.	2
3	EU Recognition/European Qualification	Develop and publish a protocol on the admissions procedure.	2