Patent Public Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting

OPQA search feedback pilot

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General premise

• For a set of randomly selected cases, RQASes will conduct their own search of the case and evaluate the examiner’s recorded search strategy and history.

• A feedback form is completed by the RQASes and shared with the examiner via email that includes the RQAS’s search strategy.

• The examiner may request a meeting with the RQAS to discuss the search feedback and share best practices on search in general.
Status update

• The pilot began at the end of February.
• To date there have been 529 cases reviewed.
• To date there have been 157 pilot meetings have been held.
• After a meeting, participants complete a survey to assess the feedback form information and the meeting.
Survey data

The examiners, SPEs, and primary examiners have shown an interest in receiving a feedback form in the future.

Would you be interested in receiving the OPQA search feedback report as part of regular reviews conducted by OPQA?
Of 142 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Yes: 77%
- No: 23%
Survey data cont.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the reviewer’s emailed feedback and search recordation:
Of 144 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- **I agree with the reviewer’s emailed feedback regarding the recordation of the search.**
  - To a great extent: 67%
  - To a moderate extent: 29%
  - To a limited extent: 7%
  - Not at all: 1%

- **The reviewer’s emailed feedback was informative regarding search recordation best practices.**
  - To a great extent: 65%
  - To a moderate extent: 27%
  - To a limited extent: 7%
  - Not at all: 1%

- **The reviewer’s emailed feedback was helpful in improving the recordation of my searches in the future.**
  - To a great extent: 56%
  - To a moderate extent: 29%
  - To a limited extent: 11%
  - Not at all: 4%

- **The reviewer’s emailed feedback was informative regarding his/her comments and suggestions on the merit of search itself.**
  - To a great extent: 62%
  - To a moderate extent: 31%
  - To a limited extent: 6%
  - Not at all: 1%

- **The recordation of the reviewer’s search was easy to follow.**
  - To a great extent: 68%
  - To a moderate extent: 29%
  - To a limited extent: 2%
  - Not at all: 1%

- **The recordation of the reviewer’s search was helpful.**
  - To a great extent: 56%
  - To a moderate extent: 32%
  - To a limited extent: 10%
  - Not at all: 1%

- **The printout of the reviewer’s search strings was informative.**
  - To a great extent: 51%
  - To a moderate extent: 36%
  - To a limited extent: 12%
  - Not at all: 1%
The examiners, SPEs, and primary examiners have indicated they have learned additional information in addition to the form in the meeting.
Survey data cont.

Interest in future meetings:

Would you be interested in having the opportunity to meet with a reviewer to discuss the search of your case in the future? Of 138 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Yes: 67%
- No: 33%

Would you be interested in having the opportunity to meet with examiners to discuss the results of your reviews regarding search in the future? Of 125 RQAS Responses

- Yes: 75%
- No: 25%
The survey asks all participants questions focused on collaboration in the meetings.
The survey asks all participants questions focused on collaboration in the meetings.

Of 128 RQAS Responses

- Helped to share best practices on search recordation?  
  - To a great extent: 45%  
  - To a moderate extent: 47%  
  - To a limited extent: 28%  
  - Not at all: 12%

- Helped to share best practices on building search strategies?  
  - To a great extent: 44%  
  - To a moderate extent: 31%  
  - To a limited extent: 8%  
  - Not at all: 8%

- Added value to improve the search quality?  
  - To a great extent: 17%  
  - To a moderate extent: 17%  
  - To a limited extent: 28%  
  - Not at all: 8%
Survey data cont.

The pilot participants were asked questions that focused on the overall impact of the pilot on examination.

How beneficial was the time reviewing and comparing the two sets of search results with the reviewer regarding each of the topics below?
Of 134 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Identify better art for use in a rejection: 41% Very beneficial, 24% Moderately beneficial, 25% Somewhat beneficial, 13% Not beneficial at all
- Learning other search strategies: 32% Very beneficial, 31% Moderately beneficial, 10% Somewhat beneficial, 13% Not beneficial at all
- Enhancing my collaboration skills: 29% Very beneficial, 35% Moderately beneficial, 19% Somewhat beneficial, 13% Not beneficial at all
- Enhancing my knowledge of the art: 13% Very beneficial, 43% Moderately beneficial, 25% Somewhat beneficial, 19% Not beneficial at all
- Enhancing quality of Office Actions: 21% Very beneficial, 26% Moderately beneficial, 32% Somewhat beneficial, 21% Not beneficial at all
- Enhancing my knowledge of other search sources: 27% Very beneficial, 28% Moderately beneficial, 24% Somewhat beneficial, 20% Not beneficial at all
Survey data cont.

The pilot participants were asked questions that focused on the overall impact of the pilot on examination.

How beneficial was the time reviewing and comparing the two sets of search results with the examiner regarding each of the topics below?

Of 128 RQAS Responses

- **Identify better art for use in a rejection**: 47% Very beneficial, 19% Moderately beneficial, 17% Somewhat beneficial, 15% Not beneficial at all
- **Learning other search strategies**: 35% Very beneficial, 34% Moderately beneficial, 36% Somewhat beneficial, 15% Not beneficial at all
- **Enhancing my collaboration skills**: 37% Very beneficial, 17% Moderately beneficial, 36% Somewhat beneficial, 10% Not beneficial at all
- **Enhancing my knowledge of the art**: 29% Very beneficial, 30% Moderately beneficial, 30% Somewhat beneficial, 11% Not beneficial at all
- **Enhancing quality of my reviews**: 28% Very beneficial, 33% Moderately beneficial, 32% Somewhat beneficial, 13% Not beneficial at all
- **Enhancing my knowledge of other search sources**: 20% Very beneficial, 33% Moderately beneficial, 43% Somewhat beneficial, 2% Not beneficial at all
Pilot cases, meetings held, percent meetings held, by TC
From 475 total pilot cases, 140 total meetings, 29% meetings held overall
Next steps

• Complete the evaluation of applications from a random sample.

• We will hold focus sessions with three groups:
  – Examiners who participated in a pilot meeting.
  – Examiners who did not participate in a pilot meeting.
  – RQASes.

• Analyze the final survey data.
Questions and comments

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