Office of Patent Quality Assurance
search feedback pilot

Patricia Bianco
November 14, 2019
Patent Public Advisory Committee quarterly meeting
General premise

• For a set of randomly selected mailed cases, Review Quality Assurance Specialists (RQASes) conducted their own search of the case and evaluated the examiner’s recorded search strategy and history.

• Each RQAS completed a feedback form which they shared with the examiner via email that included the RQAS’s search strategy.

• The examiner had the option to request a meeting with the RQAS to discuss the search feedback and share best practices on search in general.
Meeting distribution

590 reviews

- 391 No meeting
- 199 Meeting held
Survey data

Would you be interested in receiving the OPQA search feedback report as part of regular reviews conducted by OPQA?

191 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Yes: 74%
- No: 26%
Survey data cont.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the reviewer’s emailed feedback and search recordation:

192 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To a moderate extent</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I agree with the reviewer’s emailed feedback regarding the recordation of the search.</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reviewer’s emailed feedback was informative regarding search recordation best practices.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reviewer’s emailed feedback was helpful in improving the recordation of my searches in the future.</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reviewer’s emailed feedback was informative regarding his/her comments and suggestions on the merit of search itself.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The recordation of the reviewer’s search was easy to follow.</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The recordation of the reviewer’s search was helpful.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The printout of the reviewer’s search strings was informative.</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey data cont.

Of Around 170 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Search Recordation: 70% Yes, 30% No
- Search Analysis: 57% Yes, 43% No
- Search Strategy and Execution: 59% Yes, 41% No
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 183 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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 173 RQAS Responses

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Survey data cont.

Of 185 Examiner/SPE/Primary Responses

- Helped to share best practices on search recordation: 38% (To a great extent), 41% (To a moderate extent), 17% (To a limited extent), 4% (Not at all)
- Helped to share best practices on search strategies: 39% (To a great extent), 34% (To a moderate extent), 18% (To a limited extent), 9% (Not at all)
- Added value to improve the search quality: 36% (To a great extent), 37% (To a moderate extent), 21% (To a limited extent), 6% (Not at all)
Survey data cont.

Of 176 RQAS Responses

- Helped to share best practices on search recordation:
  - To a great extent: 14%
  - To a moderate extent: 48%
  - To a limited extent: 26%
  - Not at all: 11%

- Helped to share best practices on building search strategies:
  - To a great extent: 16%
  - To a moderate extent: 48%
  - To a limited extent: 28%
  - Not at all: 8%

- Added value to improve the search quality:
  - To a great extent: 16%
  - To a moderate extent: 47%
  - To a limited extent: 28%
  - Not at all: 9%
Survey data cont.

- The survey asked questions that focused on the overall impact of the pilot on examination.
Survey data cont.

- The survey asked questions that focused on the overall impact of the pilot on examination.
Pilot demographics

Meetings Held, Total Pilot Cases, Percent Meetings Held, by TC
From 199 Total Meetings, 590 Total Pilot Cases, 34% Meetings Held Overall

- TC 1600: % Meetings Held - 31%, Total Pilot Cases - 51, Meetings Held - 16
- TC 1700: % Meetings Held - 37%, Total Pilot Cases - 71, Meetings Held - 26
- TC 2100: % Meetings Held - 32%, Total Pilot Cases - 57, Meetings Held - 18
- TC 2400: % Meetings Held - 43%, Total Pilot Cases - 65, Meetings Held - 28
- TC 2600: % Meetings Held - 40%, Total Pilot Cases - 70, Meetings Held - 28
- TC 2800: % Meetings Held - 32%, Total Pilot Cases - 109
- TC 3600: % Meetings Held - 23%, Total Pilot Cases - 77, Meetings Held - 18
- TC 3700: % Meetings Held - 33%, Total Pilot Cases - 90, Meetings Held - 30
Focus sessions

• Held focus sessions with three groups:
  – Examiners who participated in a pilot meeting
  – Examiners who did not participate in a pilot meeting
  – RQASes

• Examiners, those who did and did not participate in a meeting, and the RQASes are in favor of more opportunities to collaborate
Next steps

• Working with other search initiative groups to compare results to a path forward
  – Best practices
  – Lessons learned

• Considering updating the search questions in the master review form
Thank you!

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Deputy Commissioner for Patent Quality

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