

FY 2011-2015 Quality Metrics

Office of Patent Quality Assurance (OPQA)

FY 2011-2015 Quality Metrics Summary

- Seven components of the quality composite:
 - OPQA Review: Final Disposition Compliance
 - OPQA Review: In-Process Compliance
 - OPQA Review: FAOM Review
 - OPQA Review: Search Review
 - QIR transactional data
 - External Quality Survey
 - Internal Quality Survey



OPQA Work Product Reviews

- Four kinds of OPQA work product reviews:
 - 1) Final Disposition Compliance Rate
 - Measures correctness of the final determination made by an examiner – either the decision to allow a patent or finally reject it
 - Review for improper or omitted rejections, improper finality, failure to treat arguments
 - 2) In-Process Compliance Rate
 - Measures correctness and reasonableness of Office Actions during prosecution (non-final actions)
 - Review for improper or omitted rejections, improper restriction practice, failure to treat arguments, and other issues that may significantly inhibit the advancement of prosecution



OPQA Work Product Reviews (con't)

- Four kinds of OPQA work product reviews (con't):
 - 3) First Action on the Merits (FAOM) Review
 - Provides more insight into clarity issues than normal compliance reviews
 - 4) Search Review
 - Focused on identifying the best prior art



Quality Index Reporting (QIR)

- Statistical analysis of data representing examination events (examiner trends) occurring during prosecution
 - Data taken from the USPTO internal database
- Statistical analysis identifies outlier populations that can signal the presence of quality or procedural issues that represent best practices or opportunities for improvement
- Typically a process-based evaluation of quality rather than an end-product inspection



Internal Quality Survey

- Conducted semi-annually
- Measures patent examiner satisfaction with various factors that lead to the ability to perform high quality patent examination
 - Evaluates overall **examiner** experience in past 3 months with respect to:
 - Office-related factors: tools, training, etc.
 - Applicant-related factors: incoming patent applications, applicant responses, etc.



External Quality Survey

- Conducted semi-annually
- Measures applicant and practitioner satisfaction with patent examination quality
 - Evaluates overall **applicant** experience in past 3 months with respect to:
 - Consistency
 - Reasonableness of rejections
 - Adhering to rules and procedures



Quality Composite

- In 2011, USPTO implemented a Quality Composite in an attempt to consolidate the wide variety of quality metrics and generate a single index that could be used to quickly assess progress towards Office goals through 2015

Quality Composite Items and Weights

