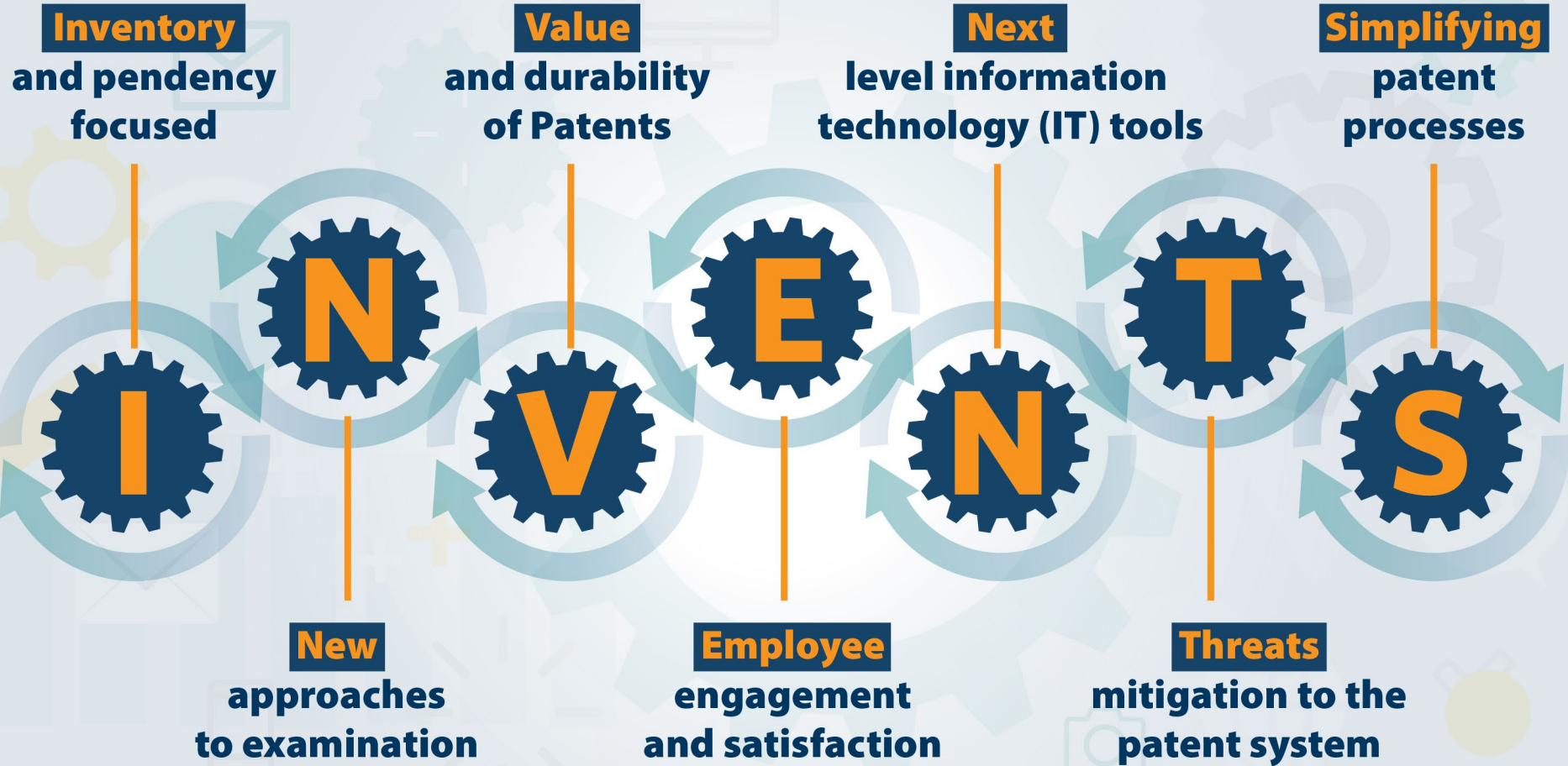


Improving patent inventory and pendency

USPTO Hour
May 2025



UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE ®



USPTO's role

- Drive U.S. innovation
- Provide timely and durable patentability decisions



Putting it together

INVENTORY

- The inventory of new applications awaiting examination

CAPACITY

- USPTO's ability to render patentability decisions at an established rate

PENDENCY

- The timeliness of patentability decisions provided by the USPTO

Filings and inventory - Utility

From calendar year 2021 through 2024,
examining capacity has not kept up
with filings

~3.7%

filings increase

~21.7%

**total unexamined
inventory growth**

Filings and inventory - Designs

From calendar year 2021 through 2024,
examining capacity has not kept up
with filings

~9.7%

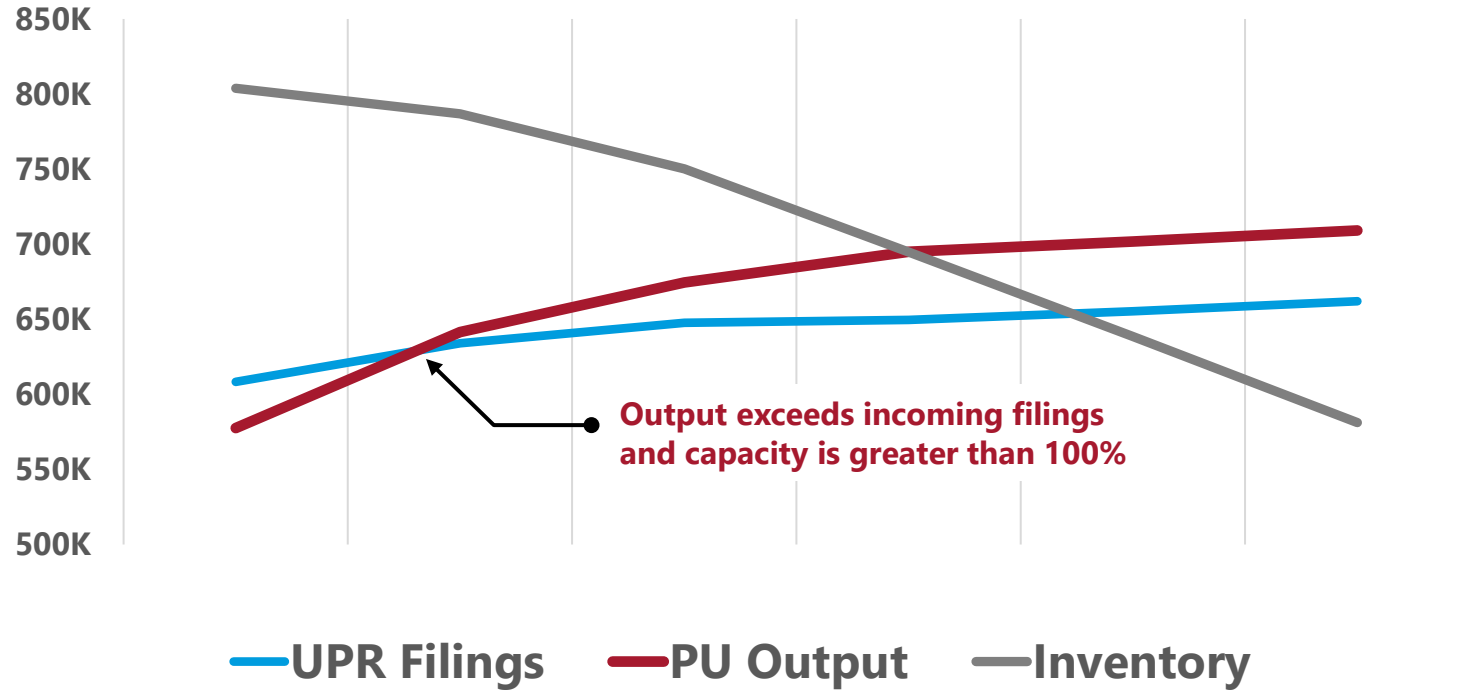
filings increase

~23.1%

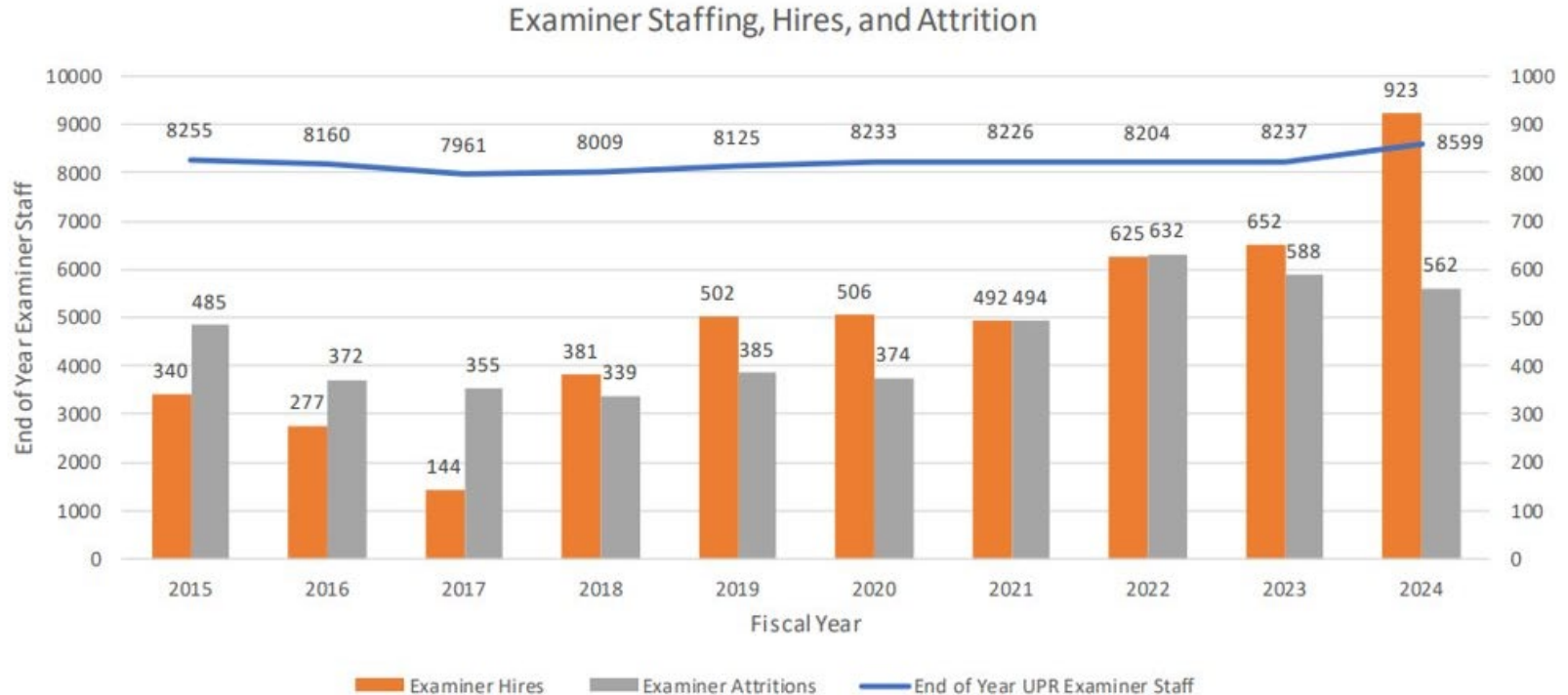
**total unexamined
inventory growth**

UPR / PU / Inventory

Projections



FY15-24 examiner staffing



- UPR Examiner Staff: Number of patent examiners at the USPTO, not including design patent examiners.
- Examiner Hires: Number of UPR examiner hires completed within the fiscal year.
- Examiner Attritions: Number of UPR examiners that left, either voluntarily or involuntarily.

Building examining capacity



- **Leveraging existing staff:**
 - Prioritize examination work
 - Incentivize more output while maintaining high quality
 - Increase retention
- **Increasing examination staff:**
 - Reassignment of employees with examination skills back to Patent Corps
- **Investing in AI-enhanced tools for examination**

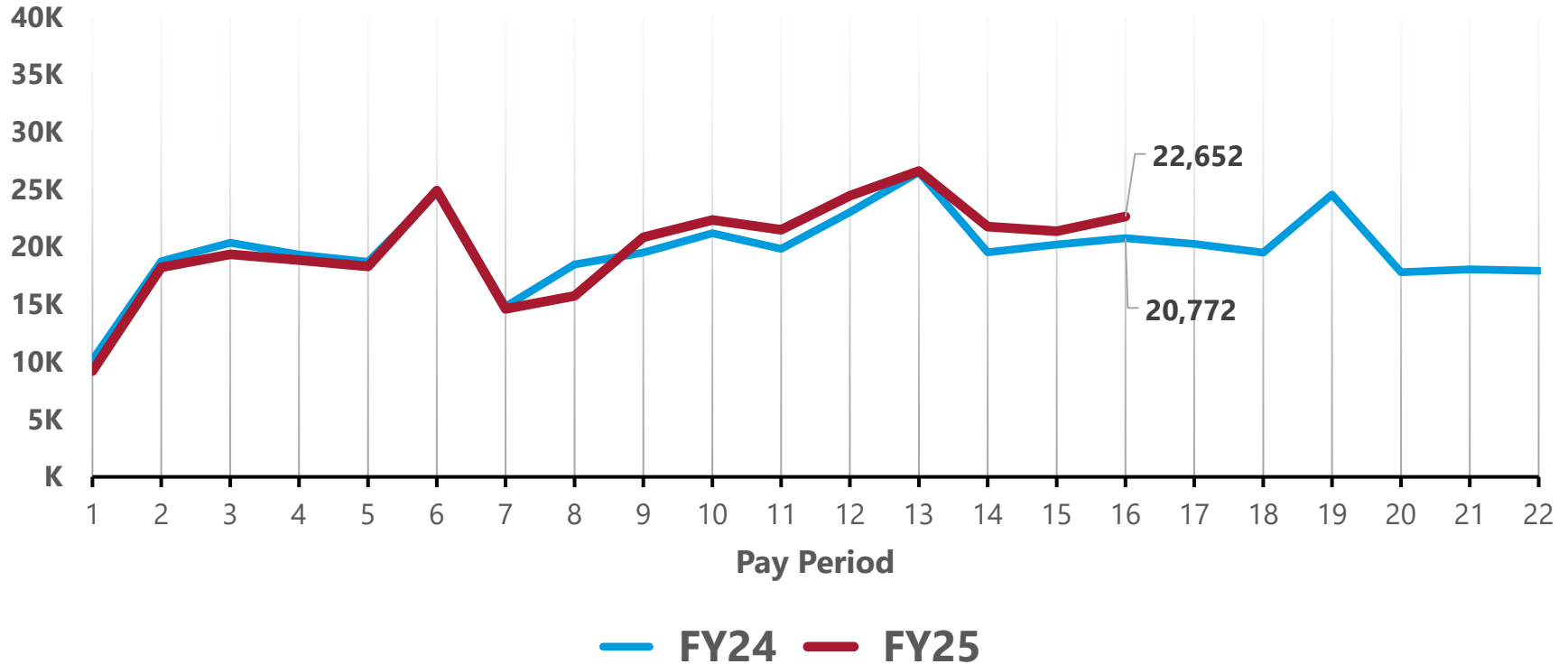
Prioritizing examination activities

- Examiners focus on reducing inventory and pendency through examination
- Supervisory Patent Examiners focus on coaching and mentoring of junior examiners
- Managing the number of career-development details



FY24 and FY25 Production Units by pay period

As of 5/15/2025



Incentivizing examining output

- Pendency Balance Award Pilot
 - Monetary bonus for additional examination in areas of highest inventory
 - Complements already established production awards
 - Over 2,400 voluntary participants
 - Over 4,300 applications have been examined to date

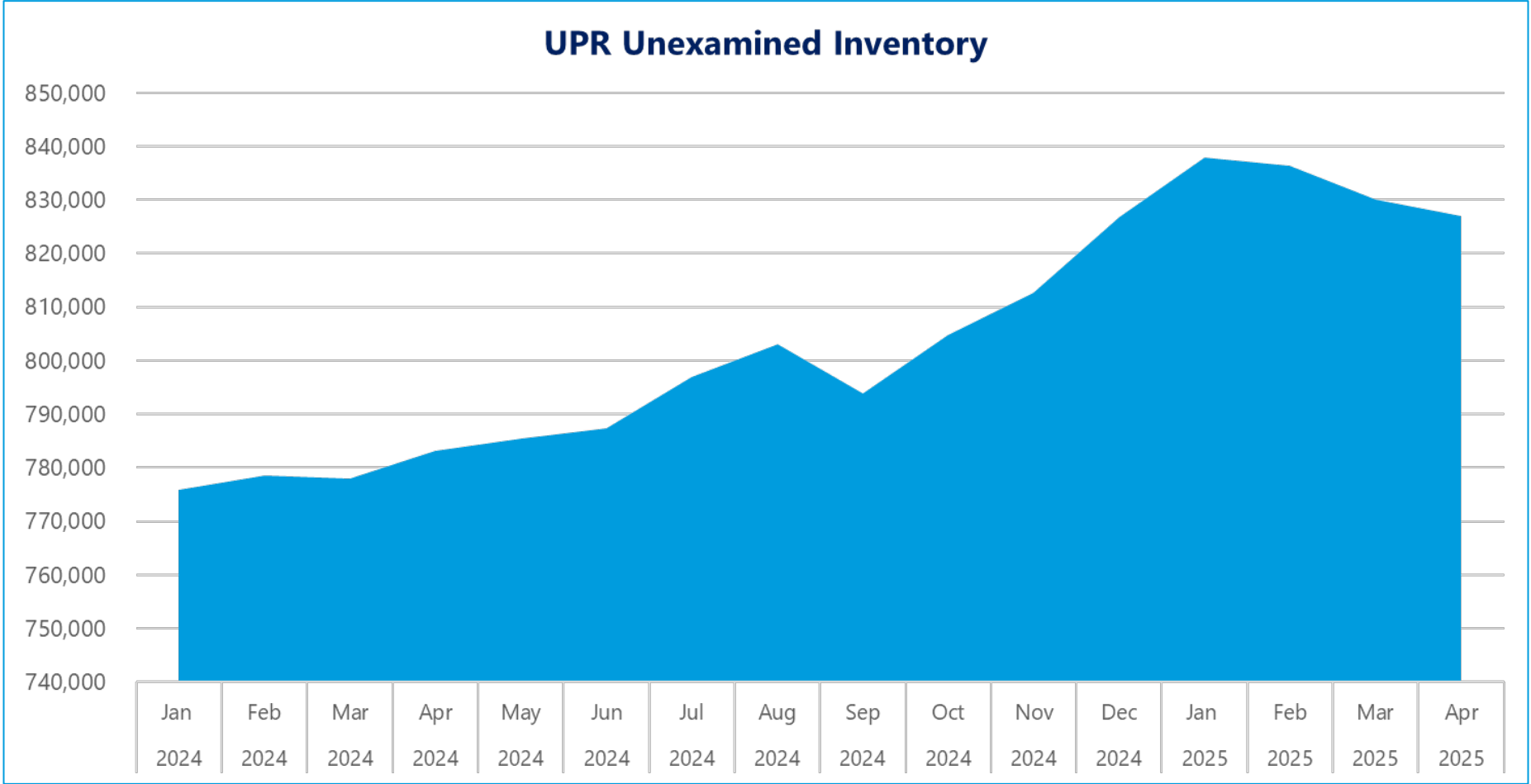


Reassignment opportunities

- Employees with prior examining/management experience
 - **66** voluntary examiner reassignments to date
 - **24** voluntary SPE reassignments to date

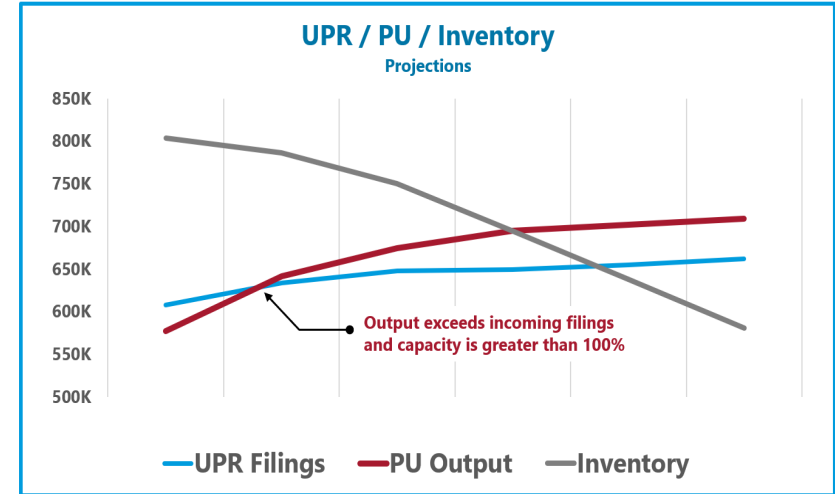


UPR Unexamined Inventory



Moving forward...

- Deliver **timely** and **durable patentability decisions**
- Continue **building capacity** to address inventory
 - Output exceeds incoming new application filings



<https://www.uspto.gov/dashboard/patents/>





Thank you!

Jerry Lorengo

Deputy Commissioner for Patents

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