

Extension of the Pilot Pre-Appeal Brief Conference Program

In July of 2005, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) established a pilot pre-appeal brief conference program that offers a patent applicant an avenue to request a review of the legal and factual basis of the rejections in his or her patent application prior to the filing of an appeal brief. See New Pre-Appeal Brief Conference Pilot Program, 1296 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 67 (July 12, 2005). The USPTO indicated that the pilot pre-appeal brief conference program would run for at least six months, and that the USPTO would extend, terminate, revise or otherwise take appropriate action after evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot pre-appeal brief conference program. See New Pre-Appeal Brief Conference Pilot Program, 1296 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 69. While the USPTO has not yet completed its evaluation of the pilot pre-appeal brief conference program, the initial results of this program appear to be promising. Therefore, the USPTO is extending the pilot pre-appeal brief conference program until further notice.

Please continue to direct inquiries with respect to a pending request for a pre-appeal brief conference to the examiner to whom the patent application is assigned, or the examiner's immediate supervisor. Please direct comments and inquiries on this pilot program to Anton Fetting via email addressed to anton.fetting@uspto.gov. You may also contact Mr. Fetting at (571) 272-7717.

Date: 1/10/2006

/s/

John Doll
Commissioner for Patents