

**UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**



Office of Patent Quality Assurance (OPQA): Search immersion

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OPQA search feedback pilot recap

- Reviewers from OPQA
 - Conducted an independent search of a pilot application
 - Evaluated the examiner's recorded search strategy and history via a search feedback form
- Optional meeting between reviewer and examiner at examiner's election to:
 - Discuss feedback
 - Share best practices



OPQA search feedback pilot takeaways

- 590 randomly selected applications searched
 - Reviewer/examiner meetings held in 34% of applications
- Post pilot survey conducted
 - 75% of examiners expressed interest in having the search feedback form as part of regular OPQA reviews
 - 66% of examiners expressed interest in the opportunity to meet with reviewers and discuss search in the future



Search immersion

- Started during 4th Quarter of FY 20
- Reviewers are
 - Conducting an independent search in 10% of applications reviewed as part of regular OPQA reviews
 - Evaluating recorded search strategy and history using an updated search feedback form
- No optional meetings

Search immersion goals

- Provide meaningful search feedback to both managers and examiners
- Consider impact of no meetings
- Finalize search inquiries for inclusion in Master Review Form (MRF) and search related data collection



Search recordation form for reviewer's independent search

- Sections include:
 - Inventive concept
 - CPC Symbols allocated to the application
 - Summary of:
 - Attached printouts
 - Search logic
 - Consultations
 - Notes



Search immersion form

- Sections include:
 - Reviewer search
 - Search preparation
 - Search performed and documented
 - Comparison between reviewer/examiner search
 - Assessment of the examiner's search documentation
 - Analysis of examiner's search strategy



Search immersion next steps

- Approximately 325 reviews expected during 4th Quarter of FY 20
- Assessment planned in FY 21



Thank you!

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