IPO publishes its report on the Peer to Patent Pilot

The IPO has now published its findings on the Peer to Patent Pilot which was launched on 1 June 2011.

Peer to Patent is an initiative which was developed to try to improve the quality of granted patents by providing patent Examiners with an additional resource to obtain third party observations on a patent application and to consider prior art uploaded by third parties. Peer to Patent therefore provides third parties, usually from within the scientific community, with a way to contribute to the examination process of a patent application.

Over 6 months, 172 applications associated with computing technology were made available to the public for comment and any comments made were passed to an Examiner for consideration during examination of the application. The results of the pilot show that the observation rate for these patent applications increased from less than 0.002% to 6.4% and that over 50% of the responses received from third parties were considered helpful or useful by the Examiners.

The IPO therefore considers Peer to Patent to make an incremental but significant improvement to the ability of Patent Offices to identify prior art. During the Peer to Patent pilot the IPO also launched their Ipsum service which is an online file inspection service. In view of the Peer to Patent pilot findings, the IPO is now working on an enhancement of this service to make it easier for third parties to make observations on patent applications.

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