## **Question 1**

Explain the term "Prior Art".

2 marks

#### **Answer**

Any 2 of the following:

- Anything published/publicly used before the priority date ... [1 mark]
- ... that discloses inventions that are the same/similar, or
  - ... that is relevant for novelty [1 mark] [1 mark]
- Examples include other patent specifications, journal articles etc.

Total: 2 marks

## Question 2

A first GB patent application was filed on 30 May 2019 without details of the inventors.

By what date must the details of the inventors be filed without requesting an extension of time? Show your calculations.

2 marks

#### **Answer**

(If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is 16 months from the filing date of this application.)

30/05/2019 + 16 months [1 mark] = 30/09/2020 [1 mark]

Total: 2 marks

#### **Question 3**

A GB patent application was filed on 18 March 2016. The application was granted on 9 May 2018.

a) When is the first renewal fee due? Show your calculations.

4 marks

b) If the renewal fee is not paid by this date, what is the latest date for paying the renewal fee without an additional fee?

1 mark

c) How often are renewal fees due on the granted patent?

1 mark

Total: 6 marks

## **Answer**

- a) (If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is
  - i. at the end of the month
  - ii. containing the fourth anniversary of the filing date.)

18/03/2016 (or otherwise identifying filing date as the start date for the calculation)

[1 mark]

+ 4 years [1 mark]

= 18/03/2020 [1 mark]

To end of the month = 31/03/2020 (or 'end of March 2020') [1 mark]

b) (The following mark is to be awarded where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is 1 month after the deadline given as the answer to part a), and at the end of the month.)

First month of grace period is free, so deadline is 30/04/2020 (or 'end of April 2020')

[1 mark]

c) Annually [1 mark]

Total: 6 marks

## **Question 4**

A PCT application is published in Japanese.

a) What are the minimum requirements for entering the GB national phase?

2 marks

b) What is the deadline for entering the GB national phase?

1 mark

Total: 3 marks

#### **Answer**

a) (Only the first two items to be marked, but treat elements of specification as a single item even if listed separately (e.g. translation of description, translation of claims etc.).

All relevant parts of the specification needed for the mark if listed separately.)

Paying the national processing fee [1 mark]
Filing a translation of the specification into English [1 mark]

b) 31 months from the earliest priority date of the PCT application [1 mark]

Total: 3 marks

## **Question 5**

What are the official languages of the EPO?

1 mark

## **Answer**

(All three languages needed for the mark to be awarded.)

English, French and German [1 mark]

Total: 1 mark

## **Question 6**

A decision to refuse a European patent application is dated 9 December 2019.

a) What is the deadline for filing a notice of appeal? Show your calculations.

4 marks

b) What is the deadline for filing the grounds of appeal? Show your calculations.

5 marks

Total: 9 marks

#### **Answer**

- a) (If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is
  - i. 2 months
  - ii. from the date of notification (i.e. including the 10 days allowed for postal delivery)

of the decision to refuse.)

09/12/2019 + 10 days	[1 mark]
= 19/12/2019	[1 mark]
19/12/2019 + 2 months	[1 mark]
= 19/02/2020	[1 mark]

- b) (If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is
  - i. 4 months
  - ii. from the date of notification (i.e. including the 10 days allowed for postal delivery)

of the decision to refuse.)

09/12/2019 + 10 days	[1 mark]
= 19/12/2019	[1 mark]
19/12/2019 + 4 months	[1 mark]
= 19/04/2020	[1 mark]
Sunday; next working day is 20/04/2020	[1 mark]

Total: 9 marks

## **Question 7**

A communication under Rule 71(3) EPC allowing a European patent application is dated 23 October 2019. The communication is received in your office on 1 November 2019. The European application is in English and contains 12 claims. No amendments are needed.

- a) For this application to proceed to grant, what actions must be completed?

  2 marks
- a) What is the deadline for completing these actions? Show your calculations.

  5 marks

Total: 7 marks

#### **Answer**

a) (Approval of the text/bibliographic info is effected by taking the actions below, and stating "approval" etc. does not attract a separate mark.)

Pay grant and printing fees [1 mark]
File translations of the claims in French and German [1 mark]

- b) (If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is
  - i. 4 months
  - ii. from the date of notification (i.e. including the 10 days allowed for postal delivery)

of the communication.)

23/10/2019	[1 mark]
+ 10 days	[1 mark]
= 02/11/2019	[1 mark]
02/11/2019 + 4 months	[1 mark]
= 02/03/2020	[1 mark]

Total: 7 marks

## **Question 8**

An A2 publication is issued in respect of an international patent application.

a) What is an A2 publication?

1 mark

b) What publication will follow the A2 publication, and what will it include?

2 marks

Total: 3 marks

#### **Answer**

a) (Need to specify that the search report is not included to gain the following mark.)

Publication of the application / specification without the search report

[1 mark]

b) The A3 publication
The international search report (ISR)

[1 mark] [1 mark]

Total: 3 marks

## **Question 9**

A second GB patent application is filed claiming priority from an earlier GB patent application. Informal drawings are filed as part of the second GB application.

a) What is the deadline for filing formal drawings?

2 marks

b) The deadline mentioned in part a) is missed. To validly file the formal drawings, what must you do and by when?

2 marks

Total: 4 marks

## **Answer**

a) 15 months from the priority date

[1 mark] [1 mark]

b)	(Need to include the concept of the extension being 2 months to get be following marks.)	ooth of the
	Request an (as-of-right) 2 month extension of time Within the extended period	[1 mark] [1 mark]
		Total: 4 marks
Ques	stion 10	
A GE	patent application is filed in the name of the sole inventor.	
ls it ı	necessary to file a PF7 at the UK IPO?	, ,
Ansv	ver	1 mark
No		[1 mark]
		Total: 1 mark
Ques	stion 11	
	s patent application is filed that does not claim priority. No request for ea e. All relevant forms are filed, and all relevant fees are paid.	rly publication is
а	) What is the earliest that the application will be published?	1 mark
b	) What could delay the publication of the application?	1 mark
С	) How can the applicant avoid the application being published?	1 mark
		Total: 3 marks
Ansv	ver	
а	) 18 months from filing	[1 mark]
b	) (Accept other reasonable causes of delay, e.g. late filing of formal dra	wings.)
	A delay in the drawing up of the search report by the UK IPO	[1 mark]
С	<ul> <li>By withdrawing the application before the technical preparations for p completed</li> </ul>	ublication are [1 mark]

Total: 3 marks

## **Question 12**

An official communication from the EPO noting a loss of rights is dated 14 January 2020. You receive the communication the same day.

a) What is the deadline for responding to the communication? Show your calculations.

4 marks

b) What actions must be taken by the deadline calculated in part a)?

2 marks

Total: 6 marks

## **Answer**

a)	14/01/2020 + 10 days	[1 mark]
	= 24/01/2020	[1 mark]
	24/01/2020 + 2 months	[1 mark]
	= 24/03/2020	[1 mark]

b) ('Pay fee' without an indication in the answer that the fee is for further processing is not enough to get this second mark; 'request further processing' does not attract a separate mark.)

Complete the missing/omitted act [1 mark]
Pay the further processing fee [1 mark]

Total: 6 marks

## **Question 13**

An application for a registered Community design is to be filed that claims priority from a GB design application. The applicant wishes to defer publication of the registered Community design.

- a) What is the maximum time period for which the publication can be deferred?

  1 mark
- b) By when does the applicant need to request publication and pay the publication fee?

1 mark

Total: 2 marks

## **Answer**

a) 30 months from the priority date

[1 mark]

b) 27 months from the priority date/ 3 months before the end of the deferred period

[1 mark]

Total: 2 marks

## **Question 14**

When is the first renewal fee due in respect of a registered Community design?

2 marks

#### **Answer**

The end of the month containing the 5th anniversary of the filing/registration date

[1 mark] [1 mark]

Total: 2 marks

## **Question 15**

An attorney in your office sends you the following memo.

Our client, Ninja Securities Limited, would like to request search and examination of their GB patent application, which was filed without claiming priority. We have already paid the application fee on filing, and the application has been assigned application number GB 2022044.6 (our reference is NSL-GB1).

The application contains the following documents:

description: 32 pages;

claims: 18 claims over 5 pages;

abstract: 1 page;

drawings: 3 figures over 3 pages.

There is no need to request paper copies as we keep electronic files.

I'll sign the form once you have prepared it. Thanks for your help with this.

Bea Trice, CPA 0161 012 3344

Complete forms PF9A and PF10.

8 marks

## **Answer**

See completed PF9A and PF10.

[8 marks]

Total: 8 marks

#### **Question 16**

You work as a paralegal at Stechert Partners LLP. One of the partners, Laura Stechert, sends you the following memo.

Good morning. Please can you prepare the form for filing an international patent application for our client, Seating Technology Limited (a UK company based at 12 Russel Street, London W15 8TT, UK), naming me as agent. This application will claim priority from their earlier GB application entitled Reclining Mechanism. We'll use the same documents for filing the international application. Our reference for this new application is SeatTech01.

The details of their current application are:

Application no.: GB 1912345 Filing date: 14 February 2019

Description: 14 pages

Claims: 6 claims over 2 pages

Abstract: 1 page (accompanied by figure 3)

Drawings: 7 figures over 6 pages

Digital library access code (PDAS): 123A

Inventor: Tob DERRY (a UK citizen)

20 Portcullis House, Plymouth PL36 0LR, UK

Please request that we receive notifications only by email. We won't file a certified copy of the priority document, but will make use of the PDAS code received for the current GB application.

There's no need to fill in a fee sheet. Finance will do this. The fee sheet will be included on filing.

Many thanks, Laura

Laura Stechert, CPA, EPA Stechert Partners LLP, 4 South Drive, London, W20 6PO, UK Tel: 02020 657483; Fax: 02020 657482 stechert@spartners.co.uk

## Complete form PCT/RO/101.

10 marks

## **Answer**

See completed PCT/RO/101.

[10 marks]

Total: 10 marks

## **Question 17**

A European patent is granted on 8 November 2019.

a) What is the deadline for opposing the patent? Show your calculations.

3 marks

b) What actions must be taken by the date in part a) to validly oppose the patent?

3 marks

Total: 6 marks

#### **Answer**

a) (If no, or incorrect, calculations: award 1 mark where the candidate demonstrates knowledge that the deadline is 9 months from the date of grant.)

	08/11/2019 + 9 months = 08/08/2020 (Saturday) Deadline is 10/08/2020 (next working day)	[1 mark] [1 mark] [1 mark]
b)	File a notice of opposition	[1 mark]

File grounds of opposition
Pay the opposition fee

Total: 6 marks

[1 mark]

[1 mark]

## **Question 18**

A GB patent application is filed. After 18 months, a new divisional GB application is filed based on the earlier parent GB application.

When is the abstract due in respect of the new (divisional) GB application? Explain your answer.

2 marks

## **Answer**

The abstract is due two months from the filing date of the divisional application [1 mark]

... because the 12 month deadline for filing the abstract on the earlier (parent) application has passed [1 mark]

Total: 2 marks

## **Question 19**

What is a patent? Explain your answer.

3 marks

## **Answer**

A monopoly (granted by a state) for a period of time (20 years)

... to an inventor (accept 'applicant') ...

[1 mark]

... in exchange for disclosing an invention.

[1 mark]

Total: 3 marks

**Total Marks: 80 marks** 



## Patents Form 9A

Patents Act 1977 (Rule 27)

Concept House Cardiff Road Newport South Wales NP10 8QQ

## Request for search

(See the notes on the back of this form)

1		Your reference: (optional)	NSL-GB1	1
2		Patent application number (e.g. GB7654321.0):	GB 2022044.6	_
3		Full name of the applicant or of each applicant:	Ninja Securities Limited	1
4		Is this request for (please tick one box):		_
	a)	A search under Section 17(1) for an international application which has been searched in the international phase?	b) A search under Section 17 (1)	
	c)	A supplementary search under Section 17(8)?  (See note (b) for help choosing which search you require)	d) A search of a further invention under Section 17(6)?	
		If your answer is (d), identify which invention you would like to be searched by referring to the claims to be searched (See note (c)):		
5		If you wish to opt in to receive a paper copy of any patent document cited in the search report please tick the box.  (we will automatically send you a paper copy of any cited non-patent document see note (d))		1
6		Are you paying the application fee with this form?  (See note (e))	YES □ NO ☒	
7		Number of claims in your application:	18	1
		Only relevant for options (a) and (b) above. See note (f)		
8		(please see note (g))	Signature Date [today]	1
9		Name, e-mail address, telephone, fax and/or mobile number, if any, of a contact point for the applicant:	Bea Trice 0161 012 3344	



## Patents Form 10

Patents Act 1977(Rule 28)

# Request for a substantive examination (See the notes on the back of this form)

Concept House Cardiff Road Newport South Wales NP10 8QQ

1	Your reference (optional):		NSL-GB1	
2	Patent application number (e.g. GB7	'654321.0):	GB 2022044.6	
3	Full name of the applicant or of each applicant:	h	Ninja Securities Limited	
4	Number of pages of description in y application:	our	32	
	(see note (c))			
5	(please see notes (d) and (e))	I/We requ	uest substantive examination of th	is application.
		Signature	9	Date
				[today]
6	Name, e-mail address, telephone, fax and/or mobile number, if any, of a contact point for the applicant:		Bea Trice 0161 012 3344	

PCT	For	receiving Office use only	
101			
	International Application	on No.	
REQUEST			
	International Filing Da	te	
The undersigned requests that the present			
international application be processed according to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.	Name of receiving Offi	ce and "PCT International Application"	
	Applicant's or agent's file SeatTech01	e reference (if desired) (25 characters maximum)	1
Box No. I TITLE OF INVENTION	I		
Reclining mechanism			
Box No. II APPLICANT This person	n is also inventor		1
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal ent The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of to Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of reside.	ity, full official designation. he address indicated in this	Telephone No.	
Seating Technology Limited  12 Russel Street	nce is mulculed below.	Facsimile No.	
London W15 8TT United Kingdom		Applicant's registration No. with the Office	
(GB or UK ok here; both post code and coun	try needed)		
E-mail authorization: Marking one of the check-boxes below au International Bureau and the International Preliminary Examining Au issued in respect of this international application to that e-mail addr as advance copies followed by paper notifications; or E-mail address:	thority to use the e-mail ac res if those offices are wi	ddress indicated in this Box to send, notifications	
State (that is, country) of nationality: GB or United Kingdom (not UK)	State (that is, country) BLANK (or GE	of residence: B, United Kingdom, not UK)	
This person is applicant for the purposes of:	the States indicate	d in the Supplemental Box	
Box No. III FURTHER APPLICANT(S) AND/OR (FURTI	HER) INVENTOR(S)		1
Further applicants and/or (further) inventors are indicated or	on a continuation sheet.		
Box No. IV AGENT OR COMMON REPRESENTATIVE	; OR ADDRESS FOR	CORRESPONDENCE	1
The person identified below is hereby/has been appointed to act of the applicant(s) before the competent International Authorities		agent common representative	
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal enti- The address must include postal code and name of	country.)	Telephone No. 02020 657483	
Stechert, Laura (order of names is importan	t here)	Facsimile No.	
Stechert Partners LLP 4 South Drive		02020 657482	
London W20 6PO		Agent's registration No. with the Office	
United Kingdom			
(GB or UK ok here; both post code and coun	ntry needed)		
		fice, the International Searching Authority, the laddress indicated in this Box to send, notificate willing to do so.  nic form (no paper notifications will be sent).	
E-mail address: stechert@spartners.co.uk  Address for correspondence: Mark this check-box where	no agent or common rep	resentative is/has been appointed and the	
space above is used instead to indicate a special address to	which correspondence sh	nould be sent.	

Box No. III FURTHER APPLICANT(S) AND/OR (FURTH	Box No. III FURTHER APPLICANT(S) AND/OR (FURTHER) INVENTOR(S)			
If none of the following sub-boxes is used, this sheet should not	t be included in the red	quest.		
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entit The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence of Portraint here 20 Portcullis House Plymouth PL36 0LR United Kingdom	e address indicated in this ce is indicated below.)	This person is:  applicant only  applicant and inventor  inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)		
(GB or UK ok here; both post code and count	ry needed)	Applicant's registration No. with the Office		
State (that is, country) of nationality: BLANK (or GB, United Kingdom, not UK)	State (that is, country BLANK (or GE	of residence: 3, United Kingdom, not UK)		
This person is applicant for the purposes of:	the States indicate	d in the Supplemental Box		
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence.	e address indicated in this	This person is:  applicant only  applicant and inventor  inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)  Applicant's registration No. with the Office		
State (that is, country) of nationality:	State (that is, country	) of residence:		
This person is applicant for the purposes of:	the States indicate	d in the Supplemental Box		
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entit The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence	e address indicated in this	This person is:  applicant only  applicant and inventor  inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)  Applicant's registration No. with the Office		
State (that is, country) of nationality:	State (that is, country	e) of residence:		
This person is applicant for the purposes of:	the States indicate	d in the Supplemental Box		
Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entit The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence	e address indicated in this	This person is:  applicant only applicant and inventor inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)  Applicant's registration No. with the Office		
State (that is, country) of nationality:	State (that is, country)	) of residence:		
This person is applicant for the purposes of:	the States indicate	d in the Supplemental Box		
Further applicants and/or (further) inventors are indicated or	n another continuation	sheet.		

Box No. V DESIGNATIONS				
The filing of this request <b>constitutes under Rule 4.9(a) the designation</b> of all Contracting States bound by the PCT on the international filing date, for the grant of every kind of protection available and, where applicable, for the grant of both regional and national patents.				
However,				
DE Germany is not designated	for any kind of national p	rotection		
JP Japan is not designated for a	any kind of national protec	etion		
KR Republic of Korea is not do	esignated for any kind of a	national protection		
(The check-boxes above may only be under Rule 26bis.1, the international particular State concerned, in order to	application contains in Bo	x No. VI a priority clas	im to an earlier nationd	al application filed in the
Box No. VI PRIORITY CLAIM	AND DOCUMENT			
The priority of the following earlier	1	claimed:		
Filing date of earlier application	Number of earlier application		ere earlier application is	5:
(day/month/year)	от сили ирричинен	national application: country or Member of WTO	regional application: regional Office	international application: receiving Office
item (1) 14/02/2019	1912345	GB		
item (2)				
item (3)				
item (3)				
Further priority claims are indica	ted in the Supplemental B	ox.		
Furnishing the priority document(s	):			
The <b>receiving Office</b> is requested (only if the earlier application(s, the receiving Office) identified all	) was filed with the receive	o the International Buring Office which, for the	eau a certified copy of the purposes of this inter-	the earlier application(s) rnational application, is
all items item (1)	item (2)	item (3)	other, see Suppler	nental Box
The International Bureau is req	uested to obtain from a dig	ital library a certified co	opy of the earlier application	ation(s) identified above,
using, where applicable, the acce				
item (1) access code 123A	item (2) access code	item (3	) code	other, see Supplemental Box
Restore the right of priority: the receiving Office is requested to restore the right of priority for the earlier application(s) identified above or in the Supplemental Box as item(s) (				
<b>Incorporation by reference:</b> where an element of the international application referred to in Article 11(1)(iii)(d) or (e) or a part of the description, claims or drawings referred to in Rule 20.5(a) is not otherwise contained in this international application but is completely contained in an earlier application whose priority is claimed on the date on which one or more elements referred to in Article 11(1)(iii) were first received by the receiving Office, that element or part is, subject to confirmation under Rule 20.6, incorporated by reference in this international application for the purposes of Rule 20.6.				
Box No. VII INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY				
Choice of International Searching Authority (ISA) (if more than one International Searching Authority is competent to carry out the international search, indicate the Authority chosen; the two-letter code may be used):				
ISA/ BLANK (or FPO or FP)				

contains the following:  (a) request form PCTRO/101 (including any declarations and supplemental sheets)  (b) description (excluding any sequence listing part of the description, (excluding any sequence listing part of the description (f) in the left column) copy in electronic form (Annex CST.25 text file) on hybical data currier(s) of the sequence listing and line make (above) are marked a statement confirming that "the information recorded in electronic form submitted under Rule 13ere is identical to the sequence listing as contained in the interna- tional application is  Figure of the drawings which should accompany the abstract:    For receiving Office use only	Box No. IX CHECK LIST	for PAPER filings – th	nis sheet is only to be used when filing an international app	plication on PAPER
(including any declarations and supplemental sheets)  (b) description (excluding any sequence listing part of the description, see (f), below).  (c) claims		Number of sheets	following item(s) (mark the applicable check-boxes below	Number of items
(including any declarations and supplemental sheets)  (b) description (excluding any sequence listing part of the description, set (f), below).  (c) claims.  (d) abstract.  (d) abstract.  (d) abstract.  (e) drawings (if any).  (f) sequence listing part of the description (only where item (f) is marked in the left column) copy in electronic form (Annex C/S1.25 text file) on physical data carrier(s) of the sequence listing part of the description (if any).  (abstract)  (b) description (or any).  (c) claims.  (d) abstract (d) abstract (d) is marked in the left column) copy in electronic form (Annex C/S1.25 text file) on physical data carrier(s) of the sequence listing part of the international application, which is furnished only for the purposes of international approach, which is furnished only for the purposes of international search under Rule 13/er (type and number of physical data carriers).  (abstract)  (b) description (if any).  (c) claims.  (d) abstract (d) is marked in the left column) copy in electronic form (Annex C/S1.25 text file) on physical data carrier(s) of the sequence listing part of the international application, which is furnished only for the purposes of international application, which is furnished only for the purposes of international application as filed on paper.  (b) (only where item (f) (in the left column) and item 8 (above) are marked) a statement confirming that "the information recorded in electronic form submitted under Rule 13/er is identical to the sequence listing as contained in the international application.  (abstract) (in the left column) and item 8 (above) are marked) a statement confirming that "the information recorded in electronic form submitted under Rule 13/er is identical to the sequence listing as contained in the international application.  (abstract) (in the left column) and item 8 (above) are marked) a statement confirming that "the information recorded in electronic form submitted under Rule 13/er is identical to the sequence listing as contained in the intern		od o	1. 🛮 fee calculation sheet.	: 1
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Security of the description   Security of the purpose of the pur		left ted	3.   original general power of attorney	:
(excluding any sequence listing part of the description, see (f), below)	sheets)	1		
sequence listing part of the description, see (f), below)		gns	number:	:
See (f), below)   14		<u>es</u>		
See (f), below)   14	part of the	bag	• •	
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10.		ä   j	microorganism or other biological material	:
10.	(d) abstract	- S   1		
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Figure of the drawings which should accompany the abstract:  3				
International application:   Signistrative	Figure of the duantings which		<u> </u>	
Laura Stechert (or Stechert, Laura)  For receiving Office use only  1. Date of actual receipt of the purported international application:  3. Corrected date of actual receipt due to later but timely received papers or drawings completing the purported international application:  4. Date of timely receipt of the required corrections under PCT Article 11(2):  5. International Searching Authority  6. Transmittal of search copy delayed	should accompany the abstract:	3		EN)
Laura Stechert (or Stechert, Laura)  For receiving Office use only  1. Date of actual receipt of the purported international application:  2. Drawings:  1. Corrected date of actual receipt due to later but timely received papers or drawings completing the purported international application:  4. Date of timely receipt of the required corrections under PCT Article 11(2):  5. International Searching Authority  6. Transmittal of search copy delayed	Box No. X SIGNATURE C	F APPLICANT, AGI	ENT OR COMMON REPRESENTATIVE	
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