

Rule 66**Procedure before the International Preliminary Examining Authority****66.1 Basis of the International Preliminary Examination**

Before the international preliminary examination starts, the applicant may make amendments according to Article 34(2)(b) and the international preliminary examination shall initially be directed to the claims, the description, and the drawings, as contained in the international application at the time the international preliminary examination starts.

66.2 First Written Opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority**(a) If the International Preliminary Examining Authority**

- (i) considers that the international application has any of the defects described in Article 34(4),
- (ii) considers that the international preliminary examination report should be negative in respect of any of the claims because the invention claimed therein does not appear to be novel, does not appear to involve an inventive step (does not appear to be non-obvious), or does not appear to be industrially applicable,
- (iii) notices that there is some defect in the form or contents of the international application under the Treaty or these Regulations,
- (iv) considers that any amendment goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, or
- (v) wishes to accompany the international preliminary examination report by observations on the clarity of the claims, the description, and the drawings, or the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description,

the said Authority shall notify the applicant accordingly in writing. Where the national law of the national Office acting as International Preliminary Examining Authority does not allow multiple dependent claims to be drafted in a manner different from that provided for in the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a), the International Preliminary Examining Authority may, in case of failure to use that manner of claiming, apply Article 34(4)(b). In such case, it shall notify the applicant accordingly in writing.

(b) The notification shall fully state the reasons for the opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority.

(c) The notification shall invite the applicant to submit a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments.

(d) The notification shall fix a time limit for the reply. The time limit shall be reasonable under the circumstances. It shall normally be two months after the date of notification. In no case shall it be shorter than one month after the said date. It shall be at least two months after the said date where the international search report is transmitted at the same time as the notification. In no case shall it be more than three months after the said date.