



Procedures to File a Request to the Korean Intellectual Property Office for Patent Prosecution Highway program between the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI)

PPH program

I. Purpose of this document

This document aims to publicize the requirements and necessary documents for requesting participation in the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) program between the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI) at KIPO in order that an applicant is able to easily file a request for accelerated examination under the PPH program.

When an applicant files a request for accelerated examination under the PPH program to KIPO based on examination results by IMPI as Office of Earlier Examination (OEE), the PPH request should meet the requirements described in the below paragraph III.

II. The Period for the PPH program

The PPH pilot program was effective from March 23, 2012 until June 30, 2023. Following its trial period, the permanent PPH program has been fully implemented since July 1, 2023.

III. Procedures to File a Request for Accelerated Examination under the

1. Basic Requirements for Requesting Accelerated Examination under the PPH program at KIPO

There are five requirements for requesting accelerated examination under the PPH program at KIPO. An applicant must fulfill all five requirements listed below:

1.1 Both the KIPO application on which the PPH is requested and the OEE application(s) forming the basis of the PPH request must have the same earliest date (whether this be a priority date or a filing date).

An applicant should write the earliest dates for the KIPO application and the OEE application(s) in the request form. See Annex I for examples where the above requirement is satisfied.

1.2 The corresponding application(s) in IMPI has one or more claim(s) determined to be patentable/allowable by IMPI

(1) The patentable/allowable claims of IMPI are the claims which are explicitly

identified as patentable/allowable in the granted patent publication or in the latest office action by IMPI.

(2) Corresponding application in IMPI whose claims are determined to be patentable/allowable does not have to be the application for which priority is claimed in the KIPO application (the basic application). The IMPI application can be an application explicitly derived from the basic application, e.g., a divisional application of the basic application, a converted application of the basic application or an application which claims domestic priority to the basic application (Refer to Examples D and H in Annex I).

[Note]

Where the IMPI application that contains the patentable/allowable claims is not the same application for which priority is claimed in the KIPO application, applicant must identify the relationship between the IMPI application that contains the patentable/allowable claims and the IMPI priority application claimed in the KIPO application.

1.3 All claims in KIPO must sufficiently correspond or be amended to sufficiently correspond to one or more of those claims determined to be patentable/allowable in IMPI.

(1) Claims are considered to “sufficiently correspond” where the claims in KIPO are the same or substantially same as the claims in IMPI, or have additions or further limitations of specific features resulting that the claims in KIPO fall within the scope of the claims in IMPI.

A claim in KIPO which introduces a

new/different category of claims to those claims indicated as allowable in IMPI is NOT considered to sufficiently correspond. For example, the IMPI claims only contain claims to a process of manufacturing a product, then the claims in KIPO are not considered to sufficiently correspond if the KIPO claims introduce product claims that are dependent on the corresponding process claims.

(2) It is not necessary to include “all” claims determined to be patentable/allowable in IMPI in an application in KIPO (the deletion of claims is allowable). For example, in the case where an application in IMPI contains 5 claims determined to be patentable/allowable, the corresponding application in KIPO may contain only 3 of these 5 claims.

Refer to Annex II for the cases which are considered to “sufficiently correspond” and the cases which are not considered to “sufficiently correspond”.

1.4 Whether examination of the KIPO application has begun or not, it is possible to participate in the PPH program

It is possible to participate in the PPH program notwithstanding whether examination has begun or not, provided that there has been no first office action at the time the PPH request is filed.

1.5 A “Request for Examination” must have been filed by the applicant in order to request accelerated examination under the PPH program.

The request for accelerated examination under the PPH program must also be

accompanied by, or preceded by a request for examination.

2. Document Necessary to File a Request for Accelerated Examination under the PPH program at KIPO

An applicant must submit “A Request Form for Accelerated Examination” and “The Explanation of Request for Accelerated Examination under the PPH Program”. The documents 2.1 to 2.4 below must be submitted by attaching them to “The Explanation of Request for Accelerated Examination under the PPH Program”. Please refer to ANNEX III for “A Request Form for Accelerated Examination” and “The Explanation of Request for Accelerated Examination under the PPH Program”.

2.1 A Copy and translation of all claims determined to be patentable/allowable by IMPI

(1) An applicant who requests participation in the PPH program is required to submit the copy of the claims determined to be patentable/allowable in IMPI.

The copy of the claims determined to be patentable/allowable by IMPI might be either:

i) a copy of the document submitted at the time of the filing of an initial application which includes claims determined to be patentable/allowable where no later amendments to the claims have been made, or

ii) a copy of the amendments which include claims determined to be patentable/allowable where later amendments to the claims have been made, or

iii) a copy of IMPI’s publication of the

granted patent.

(2) Korean or English is acceptable as a translation language. If it is impossible for the examiner to understand the translated claims due to inadequate translation, the examiner can request the applicant to resubmit translations. It is noted that a request for the PPH program is not rejected on the basis that the translation is not sufficient to understand the scope of the claims.

2.2 Copies and translation of all office actions in IMPI

(1) An applicant who requests participation in the PPH program is required to submit copies of the office actions in IMPI.

“Office action” means documents which relate to examination and which were sent to an applicant from the IMPI examiner.

The office actions in IMPI are communications of the examiner, such as the final decision to grant a patent, or the most recent non-final office action or a decision of rejection issued on the patent application, however, which indicates that any claim or claims are allowable.

(2) Korean or English is acceptable as a translation language. If it is impossible for the examiner to understand the translated office actions due to inadequate translation, the examiner can request the applicant to resubmit translations. It is noted that a request for the PPH program is not rejected on the basis that the translation is not sufficient to understand the office actions.

2.3 Documents cited by the IMPI examiner

(1) The documents to be submitted are those cited in the office action in the reason of refusal in IMPI. Documents which are only referred to as references and consequently do not take part of the reason for refusal do not have to be submitted.

(2) If the cited document is a patent document, applicant does not have to submit it because it is usually available to KIPO. However, if the cited document is non-patent literature, applicant will have to submit it.

[Note]

In the case where the KIPO examiner has difficulty in obtaining the document, it will ask the applicant to submit it. On the one hand, translations of the cited documents are not required to be submitted.

2.4 Claims correspondence table

(1) An applicant must submit a claims correspondence table to explain the correspondence of claims determined to be patentable/allowable in IMPI and all claims in KIPO.

(2) An applicant must explain how all claims in the KIPO application sufficiently correspond to the patentable/allowable claims in the IMPI application in the table for each KIPO claim based on the criteria in “III.1.3 All claims in KIPO must sufficiently correspond to one or more of those claims determined to be patentable/allowable in IMPI” (Also refer to Annex II for the examples of the claims correspondence).

3. Fee for participation in the PPH program

An applicant must pay the fee for accelerated examination under the PPH program as same as other requests for accelerated examination.

4. Notes on Examination Procedures

KIPO decides whether the application can undergo accelerated examination under the PPH program when it receives the request along with the documents stated above. When KIPO decides that the request is acceptable, the application is assigned a special status for accelerated examination under the PPH program.

KIPO will not notify the applicant of the acceptance for assigning a special status for accelerated examination under the PPH program, but instead the applicant may recognize it upon the receipt of an office action resulting from accelerated examination.

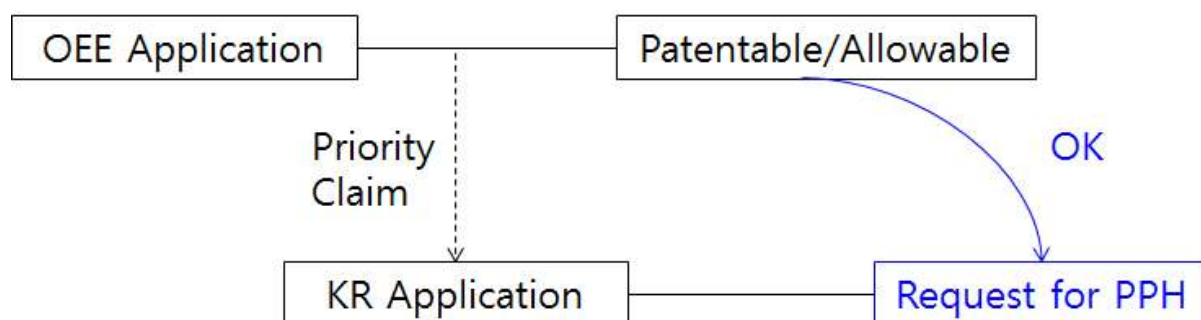
Where the request does not meet all the requirements set forth above, the applicant will be notified thereof and identify the defects in the request. The applicant may be given an opportunity to perfect the request or may be invited to submit a new request. If the PPH request is rejected, the applicant will be notified thereof and the application will await examination in its regular turn.

ANNEX I

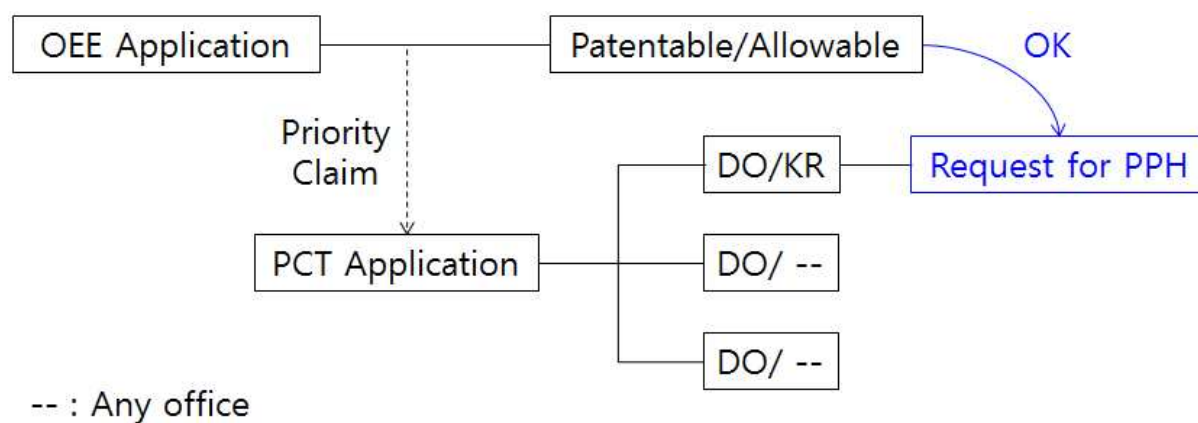
Examples of KIPO Application Eligible for the PPH Program

CASE I (Figures A, B, C and D)

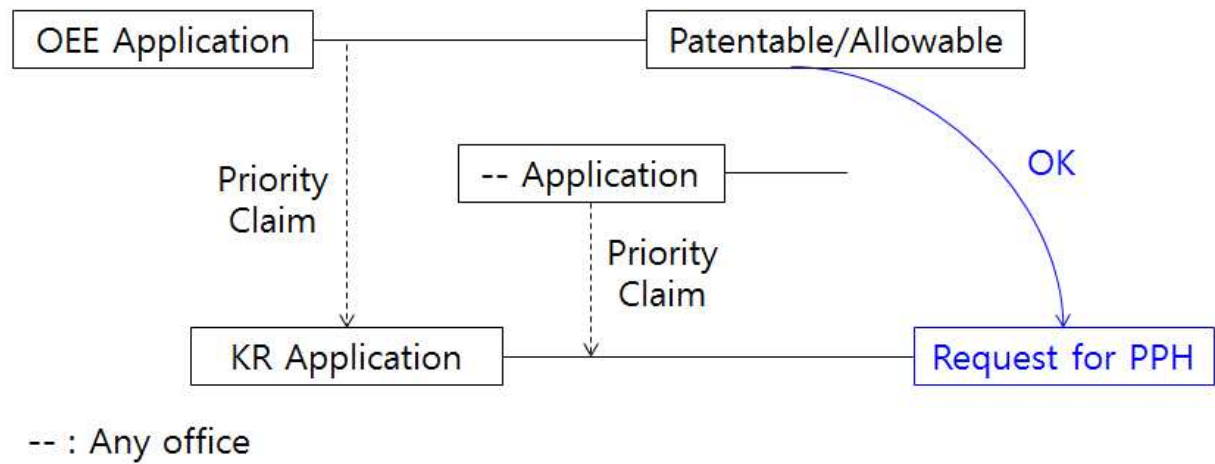
KIPO application which validly claims priority under the Paris Convention from the OEE application(s).



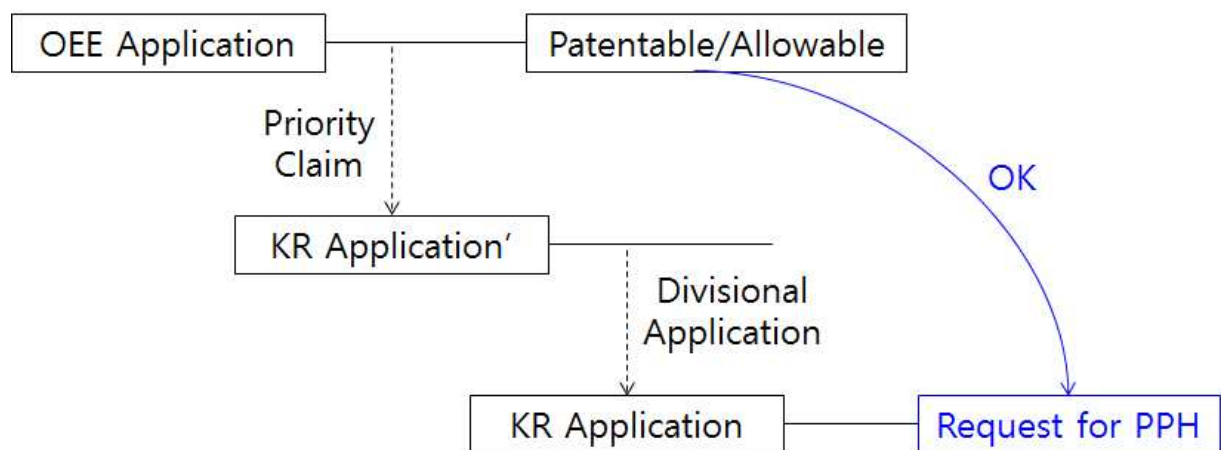
(A) Paris route



(B) Paris route and PCT route



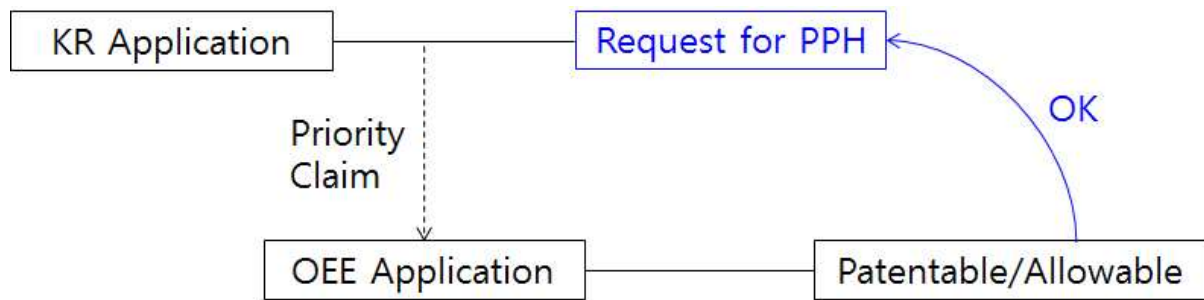
(C) Paris route and complex priority



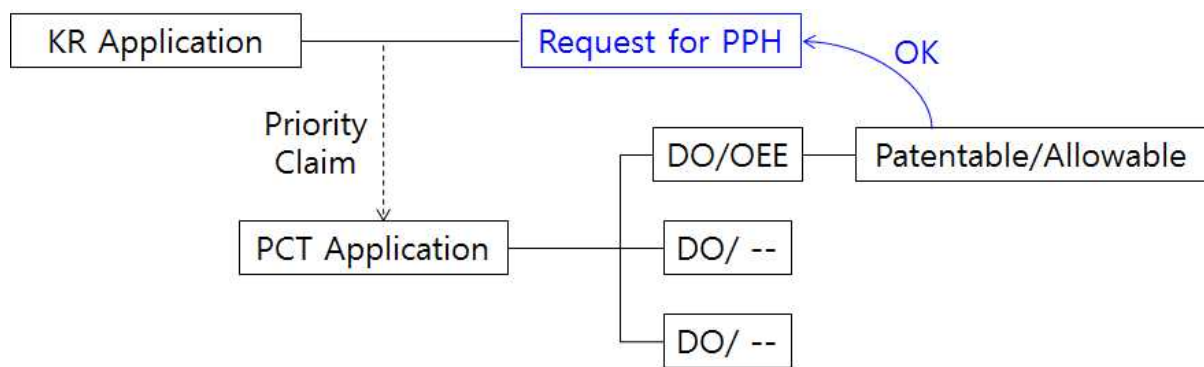
(D) Paris route and divisional application

CASE II (Figures E and F)

KIPOO application which provides the basis of a valid priority claim under the Paris Convention for the OEE application(s) (including PCT national phase application(s)).



(E) Paris route

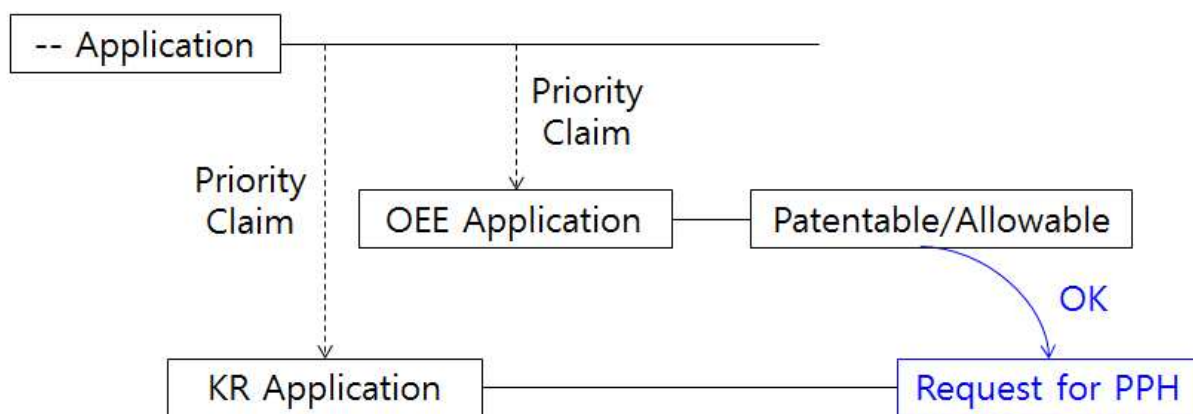


-- : Any office

(F) Paris route and PCT route

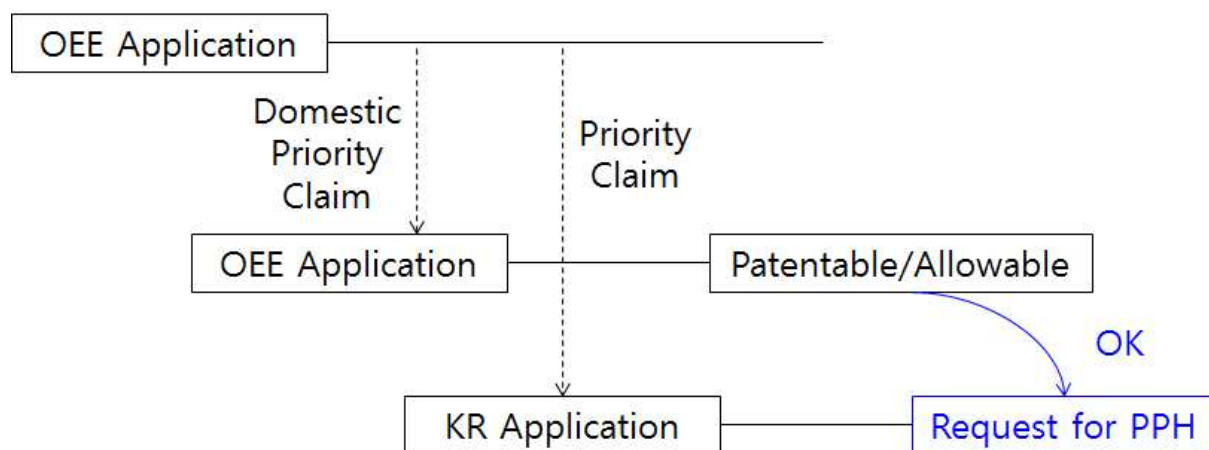
CASE III (Figures G, H, I, J, K, L and M)

KIPO application which shares a common priority document with the OEE application(s) (including PCT national phase application(s)).

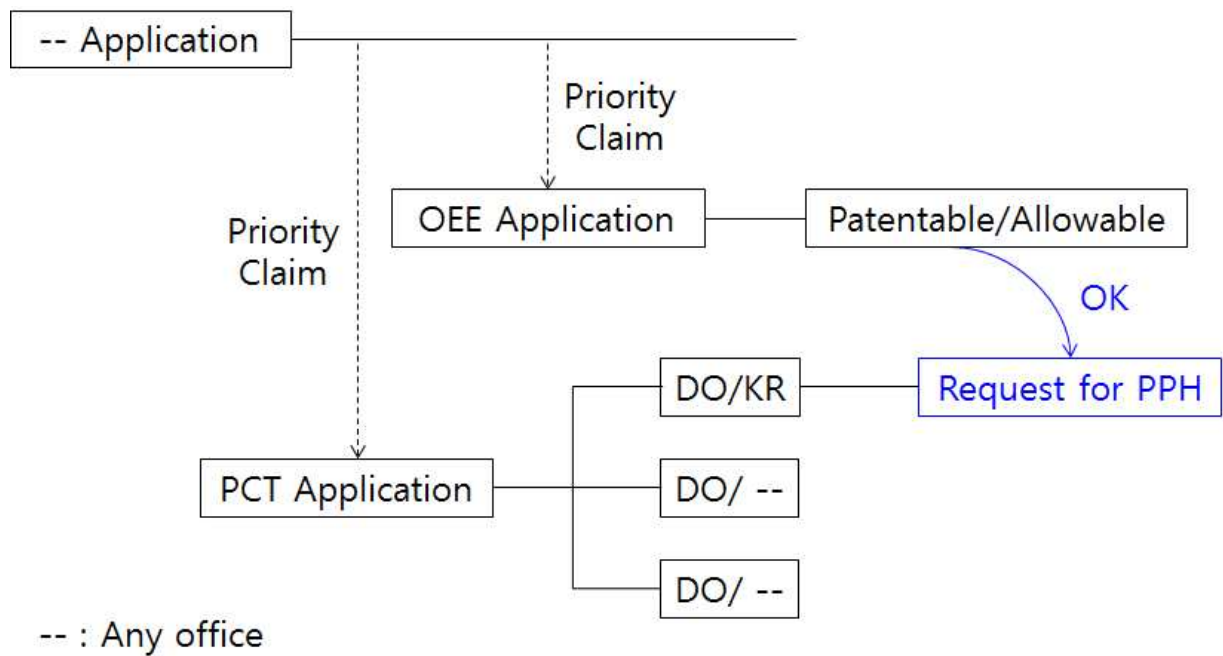


-- : Any office

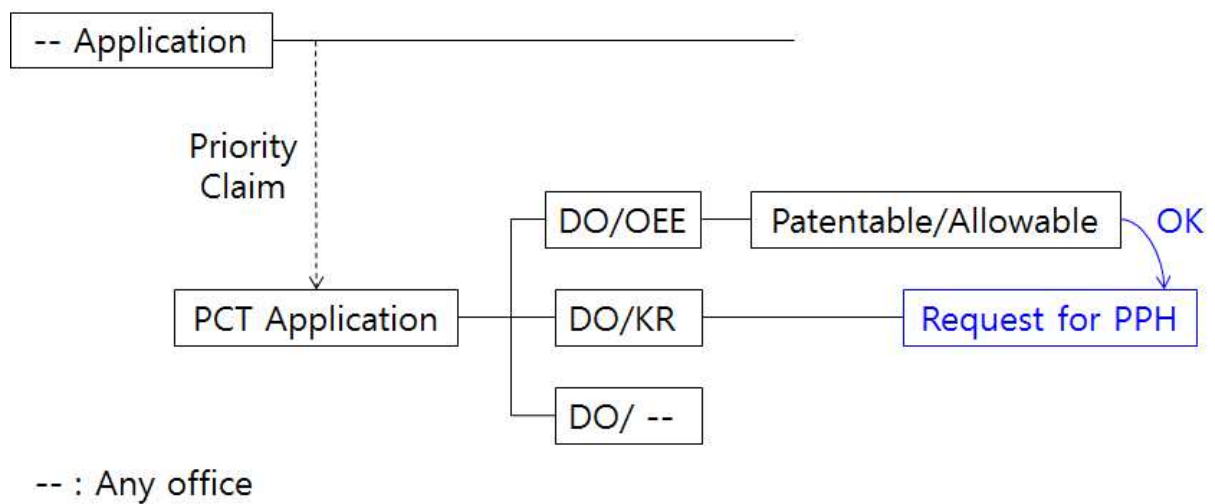
(G) Paris route, but the first application is from the third country



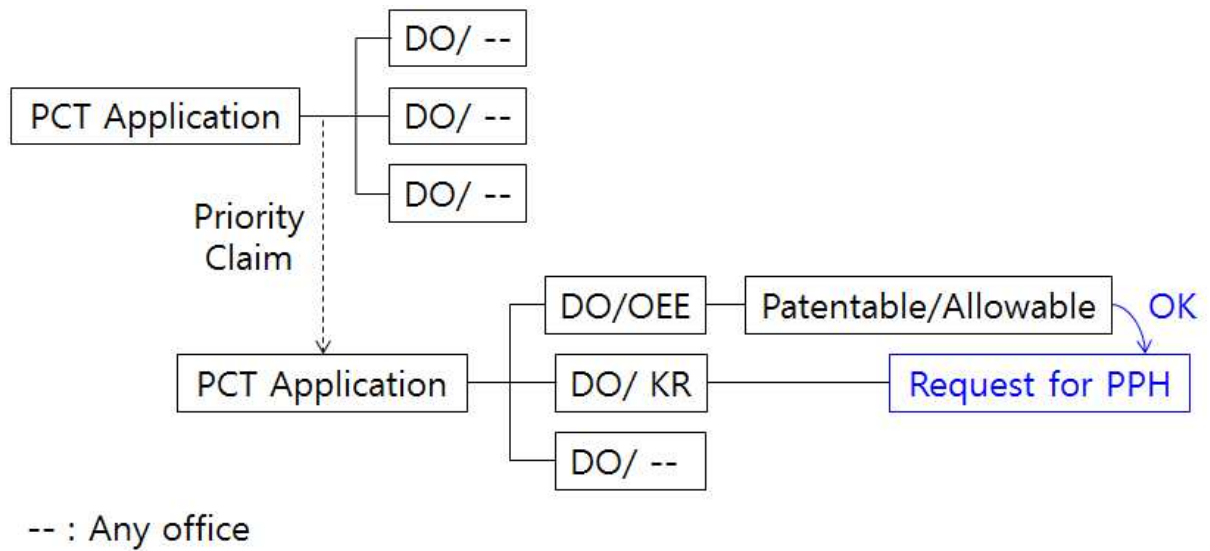
(H) Paris route and domestic priority



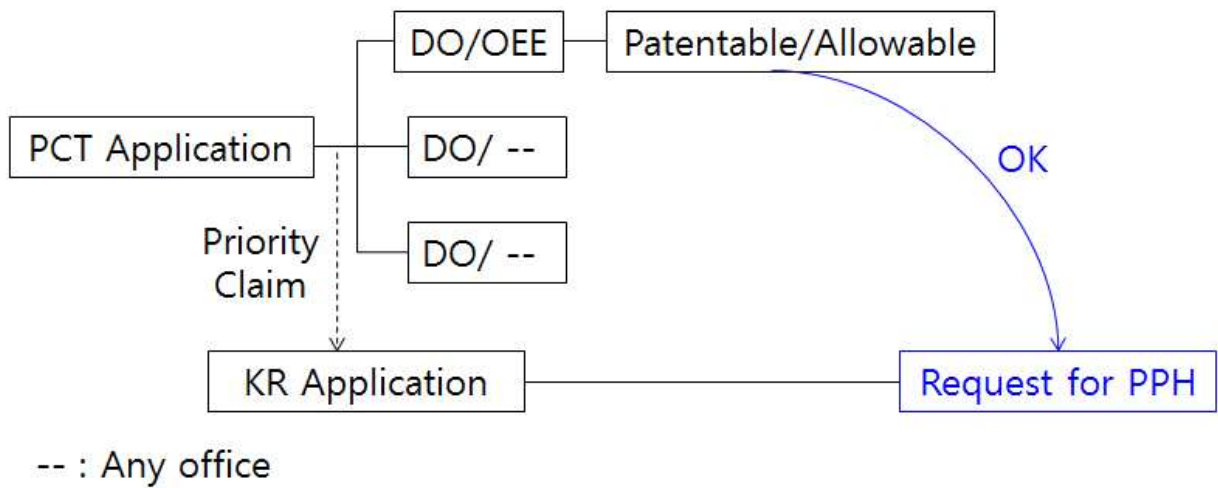
(I) Paris route and PCT route, but the first application is from the third country.



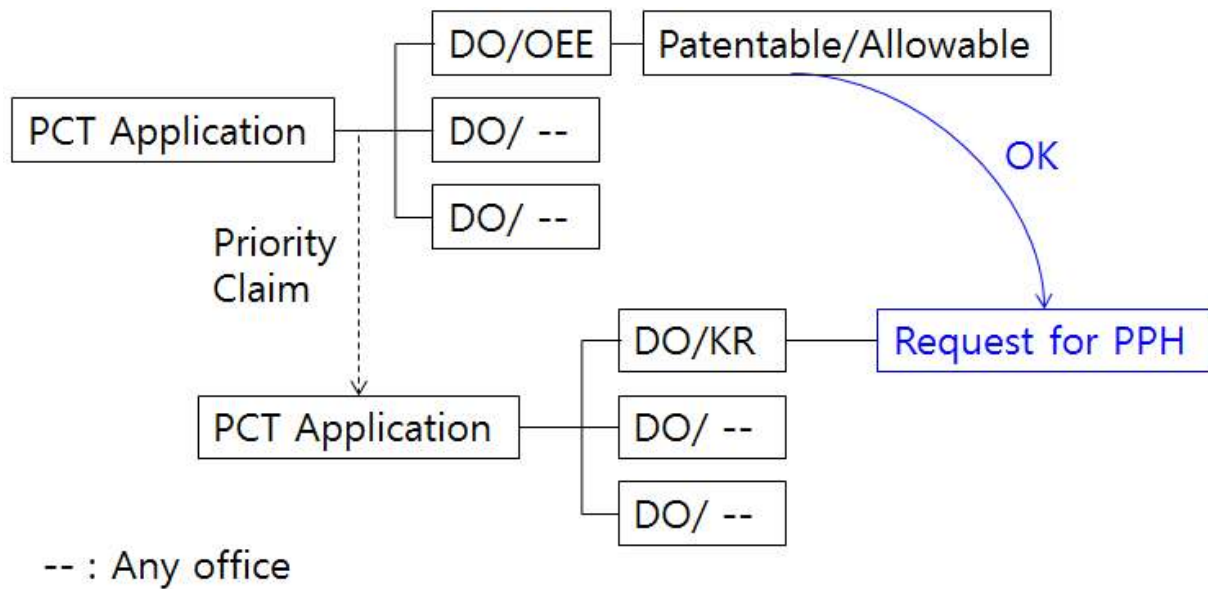
(J) PCT route



(K) Direct PCT route and PCT route



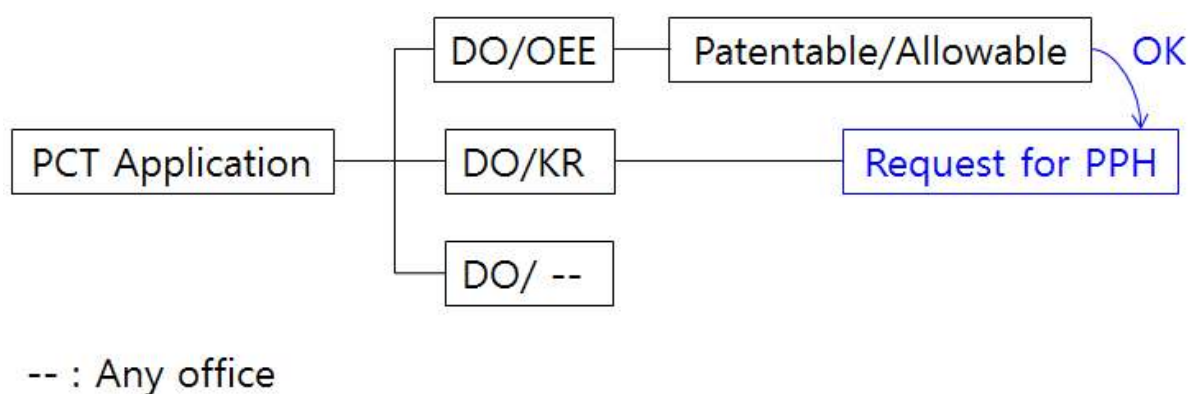
(L) Direct PCT route and Paris route



(M) Direct PCT route and PCT route

CASE IV (Figure N)

A PCT national phase application where both the KIPO application and the OEE application(s) are derived from a common PCT international application with no priority claim.



(N) Direct PCT route

ANNEX II

Examples for the Claims Correspondence

1. The claims in the following cases (cases 1 to 4) are considered to “sufficiently correspond” to each other.

Case	IMPI claim(s)		KIPO claim(s)		Correspondence
	Claim	Subject matter	Claim	Subject matter	
Case 1	1	A	1	A	The same as IMPI claim 1.
Case 2	1	A	1 2	A A+a	The same as IMPI claim 1. Dependent claim 2 in the KIPO claim is created by adding an element to the IMPI claim.
Case 3	1 2 3	A A+a A+b	1 2 3	A A+b A+a	The same as IMPI claim 1. The same except for claim format. The same except for claim format.
Case 4	1	A	1	A+a	Claim 1 has an additional element ‘a’.

** Where “A” is the subject matter, and “a” and “b” are the additional technical features which are supported in the description*

2. The claims in the following cases (cases 5 and 6) are NOT considered to “sufficiently correspond” to each other.

Case	IMPI claim(s)		KIPO claim(s)		Explanation
	Claim	Subject matter	Claim	Subject matter	
Case 5	1	A system	1	A' method	The claimed invention of the KIPO application is a method, whereas the claimed invention of the IMPI application is a system. (The technical features in the IMPI claim are the same as those in the KIPO claim, but categories of both inventions are different)
Case 6	1	A+B	1	A+C	The KIPO claim is different from the IMPI granted claim in a component of the claimed invention. (The KIPO claim is created by altering part of the technical features of the IMPI claim)

ANNEX III

Example of “A Request for Accelerated Examination under the Patent Prosecution Highway Program”

【서류명】 심사청구(우선심사신청)서 (A Request Form for Accelerated Examination)

【구분】 우선심사신청 (A Request for Accelerated Examination)

【제출인】 (Subscriber)

【명칭】 (Name)

【출원인코드】 (Subscriber ID)

【사건과의 관계】 (Relation)

【대리인】 (Agent)

【성명】 (Name)

【대리인코드】 (Agent ID)

【포괄위임등록번호】 (Mandating Registration ID)

【사건의 표시】 (Application)

【출원번호】 (Application Number)

【발명의 명칭】 (Title)

【수수료】 (Fee)

【우선심사 신청료】 (Fee for Accelerated Examination)

【수수료 자동납부번호】 (Automated Fee Transfer ID)

【취지】 (Purpose)

【첨부서류】 (Attachment) (Explanation of A Request for Accelerated Examination under the Patent Prosecution Highway Program)

【서류명】 특허심사하이웨이(PPH)에 의한 우선심사신청설명서

(Explanation of A Request for Accelerated Examination under the Patent Prosecution Highway Program)

【대상국가등】 (Office of Earlier Examination; OEE)

【본원출원번호】 (Application Number)

【대응출원번호】 (Application Number of Corresponding Application)

【본원출원과 대응출원의 관계】 (Relationship between the Present Application and the Corresponding Application)

【제출서류】 (Required Documents)

【특허가능하다고 판단된 특허청구범위】 (Patentable Claims in OEE)

【서류명 및 제출(발행)일】 (Issue Date)

【서류제출여부】 (Submit, Y/N)

【제출생략 이유】 (Reasons of Exemption)

【번역문제출여부】 (Submit Translations, Y/N)

【제출생략 이유】 (Reasons of Exemption for Translations)

【심사관련통지서】 (Office Action in OEE)

【서류명 및 통지일】 (Issue Date)

【서류제출여부】 (Submit, Y/N)

【제출생략 이유】 (Reasons of Exemption)

【번역문제출여부】 (Submit Translations, Y/N)

【제출생략 이유】 (Reasons of Exemption for Translations)

【심사단계에서 인용된 선행기술문헌】 (Prior Arts cited in the Office Action of OFF)

【명칭】 (Title)

【제출여부】 (Submit, Y/N)

【제출생략 이유】 (Reasons of Exemption)

【청구항간 대응관계설명표】 (Claims Correspondence Table)

본원출원의 청구항 번호 (Claim Number)	대응출원에서 특허가능하다고 판단한 청구항 번호 (Claim Number of OEE)	대응관계 설명 (Correspondence)