

Patent News of Japan

August, 2017

1. New commissioner at Japan Patent Office.

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)'s headquarter appointed MUNAKATA Naoko as new commissioner of Japan Patent Office. She has served as secretary of the prime minister for two years, and became the first female commissioner of JPO.

She is also known to have long experience for trading policy field and advocated the participation of the Japan Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) from the beginning. In 2014, she was appointed Director of Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, and she was the first female director. She is expected to strengthen its industrial competitiveness by promoting the use of intellectual property.

Her Inauguration address (Japanese) as JPO commissioner can be found on JPO homepage below

https://www.jpo.go.jp/shoukai/choukan/201708_aisatsu.htm

* * * * *

2. Amazon withdraw NAP clause from their service agreement.

Amazon.com, the world's largest online retailer, has deleted the clause of prohibiting customers from suing Amazon in infringement of IP rights in the agreement of cloud computing "Amazon Web Services". This clause is called "Non Assertion Patent (NAP)", and has caused conflict for many years to many companies interested in using Amazon's cloud services.

According to CEO of PhilStock World.Com, investment advisory service company, "this will make it easier to use and reduce the problems that have been the main issues that advisory lawyers opposed."

In addition, Amazon also introduced a new policy to protect customers in cases where customers are sued for patent infringement with services operated on the Amazon's cloud service. Microsoft Corp. has also launched similar customer protection in February.

* * * * *

3. Kick-off meeting by practitioners of IP trial and appeal was held.

At the "Study Group of practitioners of IP trial and appeal", those from respective positions of industrial practitioners, such as patent attorneys, lawyers, judges (participating as observers) and trial examiners gathered together to research on trial decisions and judgments. This year, 20 cases from 7 fields (5 cases from patent and 1 case from design and trademark each) will be researched.

At the kick-off meeting, attendance was attended by participants from all fields, greetings by the chairperson of the study group chief Abe and clerical work from the secretariat were conducted, after which participants' meetings and cases An in-charge decision etc. was held in the examination.

The meetings will be held as needed and conduct case studies. The report of the session will be summarized and published on JPO website at the end of fiscal year.

4. Administration office of JPO in Osaka area.

In relation to the article in previous issue, the independent administrative agency of the Japanese Patent Office, National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training opened Kinki district administration office in Osaka on July 31. So far, applicants who would like to have the interview examination have to go to JPO in Tokyo. But this can be made in Osaka as well.

With advance appointment, the examiners will conduct an interview and experts from corporate senior staffs will answer to questions on SME's intellectual property strategy etc. There are 10 staff members at the head office. Establishment is part of the relocation of government agencies.

If you have any questions and enquiries, please contact international-dept@jpds.co.jp

