



**OFFICE FOR HARMONIZATION IN THE INTERNAL MARKET  
(TRADE MARKS AND DESIGNS)**

The President

Alicante, 22 May 2012  
ICLAD/JN/RP/JL/jh

**New process for updating OHIM's Trade Marks and Designs Practice Manuals/Guidelines**

Dear User

During the April session of our Administrative Board and Budget Committee meetings, I informed you that we were in the process of designing a new way to update OHIM's trade mark and designs practice rules (The Manual and The Guidelines).

OHIM's practice is currently reflected in the Manual on Trade Mark Practice and the Manual on Registered Designs Practice which are two dynamically changing practical guides. We also have our Guidelines but they have not been updated for a few years. As you know, the Regulations stipulate that the Office has to consult the Administrative Board before adopting its examination guidelines.

The existence of two sets of rules on practice with different legislative weight is unsatisfactory. So, we aim to revitalize the approach to the Guidelines contemplated in our Regulation, by adding a much needed agility to the process with a more regular revision of our rules on practice.

We consider that this update process should be based on two principles: they should be cyclic and open. A cycle has been designed so that OHIM's practice can be updated on a yearly basis by looking at case-law, operational needs and the outcome of the various convergence initiatives.

The second principle is openness; your input is vital so all our internal and external stakeholders, particularly EU National Offices and our users, will know on a biannual basis which areas of our practice we intend to update, and when we plan to update it; as well as being given the opportunity to prepare contributions in advance as well as during the process itself.

The result of this process will be a single document for OHIM's practice, a new set of Guidelines, available in all the official languages of the European Union. Our goals, as stated in the Office's Strategic Plan, are to increase the coherence, predictability and quality of our operations while promoting convergence of practices Europe-wide.

I have enclosed a note to explain this process in greater detail and I would welcome any comments you may have on this new process.

Yours sincerely

António Campinos

Enc.