

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
DG Internal Market
At.: Mr. Erik Nooteboom

5 February 2007

Communication from the Commission on the Financial Perspectives of the OHIM

MARQUES, the Association of European Trade Mark Owners, is an association created to promote and educate the professional development of brand owners in the selection, management, protection and exploitation of their trade marks and other IP rights within a global economy.

With this in mind, MARQUES welcomes the recent Communication from the Commission – COM (2006) 865 final – on the Financial Perspectives of the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (Trade Marks and Designs) and wishes to signal its position regarding your approach to OHIM's financial management.

MARQUES favours simple and cost-effective registration systems, which are beneficial to innovative industries seeking the protection of Intellectual Property rights for their products and services.

To this end, we have supported the CTM registration system since its beginning. We have welcomed the initiatives that OHIM has undertaken in the past years, and indeed we have witnessed an increasing productivity and an improvement of efficiency in the Office in Alicante.

It is true that there are still some areas in the operational field that need an increased performance, and at the same time, it is important that attention to quality and consistency in decisions are kept at an appropriately high level. However, we have every reason to believe that the current management of OHIM will remain responsive to users' needs and will continue to work on improvements like its e-business projects.

840 MELTON ROAD
THURMASTON, LEICESTER
LE4 8BN
TEL: +44 116 264 0080
FAX: +44 116 264 0141

email: info@marques.org
Internet Home Page:
<http://www.marques.org>

It is vital that OHIM remains financially independent and that the fee income ensure that revenue is sufficient to balance the budget. On the other hand we see no need to build up reserves beyond what OHIM requires to cover a full year of operations. Apart from being unnecessary, it would also be against the stipulations in the Community Trade Mark Regulation.

MARQUES already registered its full support for the reduction of fees in 2005 and would look positively on a further reduction of fees. A fee reduction would justly benefit the users of the system, from whose payments the surplus was originally generated.

We therefore look forward to receiving the proposal for an amendment of the Commission's fees Regulation once it is presented and published.

Yours sincerely,



Cristina Duch
External Relations Officer
MARQUES
cduch@marques.org

840 MELTON ROAD
THURMASTON, LEICESTER
LE4 8BN
TEL: +44 116 264 0080
FAX: +44 116 264 0141

email: info@marques.org
Internet Home Page:
<http://www.marques.org>