

1. Overall the UK patent system is excellent! Also in our sector the Patent Office is particularly helpful in helping us to educate academics on patenting and IP issues generally. There is always room for improvement but I would be concerned if there was a radical overhaul of an established

And well run system. If there were to be changes the focus should be on speeding up the process, maybe via simplification of procedures, but without losing the necessary due diligence. I suggest this as speed to market seems to be the single biggest issue for successful, innovative companies and affording protection to ones IP on a timely basis is important.

2. Global IP protection is more important now than ever before, especially for small companies whom via the digital/internet revolution can more easily access markets worldwide. IP systems are well established in Europe, USA, Japan and a number of other key markets; however India and

China are significant growth economies that still have to develop their IP systems and procedures. I went to a seminar recently which suggested

That China was investing heavily in their Patent Office and India is still playing catch up. I mention this because UK universities have many contacts with these economies and we need to be aware of the potential of IP theft. The more UK Government can put pressure on these countries to improve their approach in this field the less likely we are to lose control of IP important to the UK economy.

3. UK Universities have well established licensing contracts and I believe that Government investment, via the funding councils, in knowledge transfer expertise within the sector has been critical in this regard. Technology Transfer Managers across the sector are doing a much better Job at identifying, protecting and licensing IP developed by academic researchers.

4. European patenting country by country is extremely expensive and one of the major benefits of the EU (common market) would be to have one EU patent application. This would save £30k of costs at least and provide a financial incentive to patent in Europe.

5. With regards to the issue of tactical patenting it may be possible to introduce a system whereby if a patent holder cannot prove use/application of a patent that the patent is then made available for purchase by other parties maybe via a market administered by the Patent Office. The only problem here is that it would be unfair to introduce this type of system on a national basis and it would have to be applied internationally to work properly.

6. I'm not too conversant with patent exchanges/markets but I think it would be help for Government to encourage the development of a market For patents/IP. As the report indicates this is particularly relevant at a time when patent bundling is becoming popular and more important for complex innovations.

7. Protection of copyright seems to be a big issue in this internet/digital age and the time maybe right to consider the possibility of registering copyright in the way that the USA does via their patent office? This is a difficult and complex issue but copyright registration in the UK patent office may afford better protection.

Regards David

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