

1st Annual Meeting of European Patent Litigators Association (EPLIT)

About half a year after foundation of the European Patent Litigators Association (EPLIT), the first annual meeting of EPLIT took place in Edinburgh on 2nd May, 2014.

The meeting was opened by Eugen Popp by briefly explaining how the idea to create an association such as EPLIT arose. As the UPCA appropriately provides for representation of parties by European patent attorneys having an additional qualification in patent litigation, there is an ongoing need to promote the participation of European Patent Attorney Litigators in proceedings before the UPC. Active participation of attorneys specialized in litigation seems essential for reaching the goal of user-friendly, fair and cost-efficient patent litigation in Europe. However EPLIT is not only open for EPA litigators, but also other practitioners qualified according to Article 48(1) or (4) UPCA are eligible as associate members.

The introduction was followed by a presentation from Laura Starrs, a member of the UPC task force of the UK Intellectual Property Office. She gave a brief overview on representation before the UPC according to Article 48 UPCA before entering into a detailed presentation on the question of what qualifications will be considered appropriate in order to qualify as representative under Art 48(2) UPCA. She mentioned that the Preparatory Committee is currently working on an amended proposal (in view of input from the member states) whereas a revised proposal will be published soon and will be subject to a public consultation which will be open for six weeks. Her presentation was followed by a discussion on where the level should be set for appropriate qualifications according to 48(2) UPCA.

After a coffee break, elections of two further board members as well as of three temporary directors took place. Koen Bijvank, first president of EPLIT, presented the endeavours EPLIT's board plans for the immediate future. Amongst others, meetings with officials and the organisation of mock trials will be the primary objects of the first elected board of EPLIT. Finally, the creation of six working groups was agreed on. These working groups established at the First Annual Meeting of EPLIT are the following:

1. Qualification
2. Costs of Proceedings
3. Code of Conduct
4. Privilege
5. Mock trials
6. Issues of substantive Law

For anyone interested in joining EPLIT and eventually joining one of the working groups, the application form can be found on www.eplit.eu.