

Intellectual Property Caribbean Association (IPCA)

IPCA Annual General Meeting 2019 Meeting Report dated 9 November 2019

The fifth AGM of the Intellectual Property Caribbean Association (IPCA) took place on Saturday, 9 November, 2019 from 9.00 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad, No. 1 Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago. In attendance were 28 representatives from 20 firms from 13 countries from the Caribbean.

Morning session

The meeting was led by Mr. Huw St. John Moses OBE of HSM IP in the Cayman Islands. Registration began at 9 a.m. and the meeting started at around 9.15 a.m.

Huw thanked Stephanie Moe, Associate at Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan for preparing the Information sheets on Trinidad & Tobago.

Formal AGM

The official minutes of the formal part of the AGM are available in the Members Only section of the website

The Directors' Report

A Policy Dialogue on Anti-Counterfeiting took place on Tuesday, 19 March, 2019 at the Jamaica Customs Building in Kingston, Jamaica. The purpose was to encourage collaboration between countries against counterfeiting and other best practices. This was the first collaboration between INTA and IPCA.

The half-yearly meeting of IPCA took place on Sunday, 19 May, 2019 during the International Trademark Association's (INTA) Annual Meeting in Boston at The Westin Boston Waterfront. This included a panel discussion on the topic "Copyright Protection in the Caribbean". The speakers were: Fiona Hinds, Elleson Fraenk and Kimberley Roheman. There was a record turnout of 79 Attendees, comprised of both members and guests.

IPCA joined with the Cayman Islands Intellectual Property Office (CIIPO) in co-sponsoring the Welcome Reception for delegates attending an IP Enforcement conference conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (ICE Division) on Tuesday, 23 July, 2019 which took place at Pedro Castle in the Cayman Islands.

Website

Huw reminded everyone of the resources available to IPCA members on the IPCA website. There had been some changes over recent months. The website was previously hosted on a platform owned by a company called "Squarespace". The format of the website made it difficult to edit and was not https compliant, therefore the Board had the website rebuilt in WordPress and the hosting changed. Whilst this was not a cheap step to take it has reduced on-going annual hosting costs from US\$312 to US\$75 and enabled HSM IP's Marketing Manager to continue to maintain and update the website at no cost to IPCA.

Registry Outreach

Members in countries where their Registry is not a member of IPCA were asked to make a personal approach to the appropriate official, to further the awareness, aims and work of IPCA, as general e-mails to the Registries from IPCA were not being responded to.

Current Membership

61 Members (including 6 Registry members) from 24 Countries and 7 Associate Members.

That concluded the Report from the Board.

There was a 30 minute break for coffee and cookies at 10.30 a.m.

Panel Discussion

Marissa Longsworth, Anne-Marie White-Feanny and Fanta Punch led a Panel Discussion on the subject of “Anti-counterfeiting in the Caribbean”.

A hot buffet lunch was served at 12.30 p.m.

Afternoon session / Committee Meetings

The meeting resumed at around 2 p.m. when the Committee Meetings commenced. The Board Liaison for each Committee were asked to provide Huw Moses with a list of members of each of their respective committees.

Committee Reports

At 3.00 p.m. the Committee reports were presented:

1. Legislation & Registry Liaison Committee (“Coconut Team”) Report

Board Liaison: Kimberley Roheman
Chair: Natalie Augustin

Aims and Objectives:

- a) Re-establish commitment to Committee and redefine aims and objectives and membership.
- b) Discussions have highlighted difficulties in establishing the Committee’s mandate given the variations between jurisdictions and how IP practitioners interact with their respective registries.
- c) Aim to gather data on where we are with laws, treaties, who the point persons are in the registries and then clearly identify an approach taking into account the political dynamic.
- d) Natalie will report more fully at the next meeting on progress.
- e) Board requested to consider electing a point person for each jurisdiction to help with responsiveness.

2. Enforcement & Anti-counterfeiting (“Turtle Team”) Report

Board Liaison: Jessica Ward
Chair: Howard Harris
Co-Chair: Keesha Fleming-Lake

Marissa Longsworth delivered the report on behalf of the Committee.

Aims and Objectives:

- a) In the process of finalizing a report on a questionnaire on anti-counterfeiting.
- b) Develop an anti-counterfeiting campaign for the region in the form of a curriculum and certification program e.g. Customs officials and students etc.
- c) Aim to conduct a survey on Singapore's anti-counterfeiting measures in advance of the next INTA Annual Meeting.
- d) Aim to try to ensure that IP aspects are incorporated in regional police and customs officer training.
- e) Consider ways that we could change the process at Customs regarding the requirement for a bond before bringing an anti-counterfeiting action.
- f) Harmonization of anti-counterfeiting legislation and procedure in the region.
- g) Create a Caribbean manual to assist clients taking anti-counterfeiting actions in the Caribbean.

3. Education & Training Committee ("Dolphin Team") Report

Board Liaison: Kenneth Porter

Chair: Sophie Peat

Aims and Objectives:

- a) 2020 essay competition title: "Discuss the role of IP in the creative sector in the Caribbean, with a focus on the law of copyright". Judges: Elleson Fraenk, Karyl Bertrand and Duncan Stowe. The deadline is 1 July 2020. The winner and runner-up be notified by email on or before 30 September 2020. Members are encouraged to help promote the competition to maximize entries (only 5 entries were received for the 2019 competition).
- b) The Panel discussion at the IPCA Meeting during the INTA 2020 Meeting in Singapore will be in relation to "Sanitary registrations in the Caribbean: what are they, legislative developments (or lack thereof) and the role of IPCA in developing this as an area of practice in the Caribbean". Karyl Bertrand and Jessica Ward have volunteered so far. Also, a member of Estudio Benedetti may also volunteer (Audrey Williams to confirm).
- c) Research into training in IP in countries in which IP focused courses are not available. Elleson will finalise a report of the responses she has now received from IPCA members for circulation and publication on the IPCA website.
- d) Webinar / Workshops for IPCA Members: Kenneth and Vincentia are exploring an annual workshop for IPCA to exchange IP knowledge between practitioners in the region.

No one in the Marketing Committee ("Conch Team") was in attendance and so no committee report was given.

Other Matters

Members were requested to check that their firm's listing under MEMBERS and FIRM BIO (if provided) is correct.

Big picture questions: what direction should IPCA go in next?

- More members. Aim to add 10% by next AGM.
- More member engagement.
- More IPCA events in each member country.

- Use of a project management tool (e.g. Basecamp) to increase participation between members, schedule meetings, send messages, use as an Intranet, etc. Estimated cost: US\$500 - 600 per year.
- Create alliances with external organizations, e.g. CARICOM.
- Elleson Fraenk to establish an IPCA Facebook page.
- Maintain existing efforts.

Next Meeting

Proposed date and venue: 9-11 a.m. on Sunday, 26 April, 2020 during INTA's Annual Meeting in Singapore.

Closing remarks were made by Huw.

The meeting ended at around 4 p.m.

A reception was held between 6.00pm and 8.00pm.

Report prepared by:

Sophie Peat

Education and Training Committee Chairman