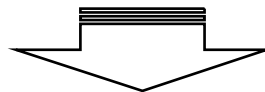


Initiative to Speed up Patent Examinations at the JPO

~Focused on Outsourcing of Prior Art Searches~

Japan Patent Office

In 1980s, The number of patent applications rapidly increased.



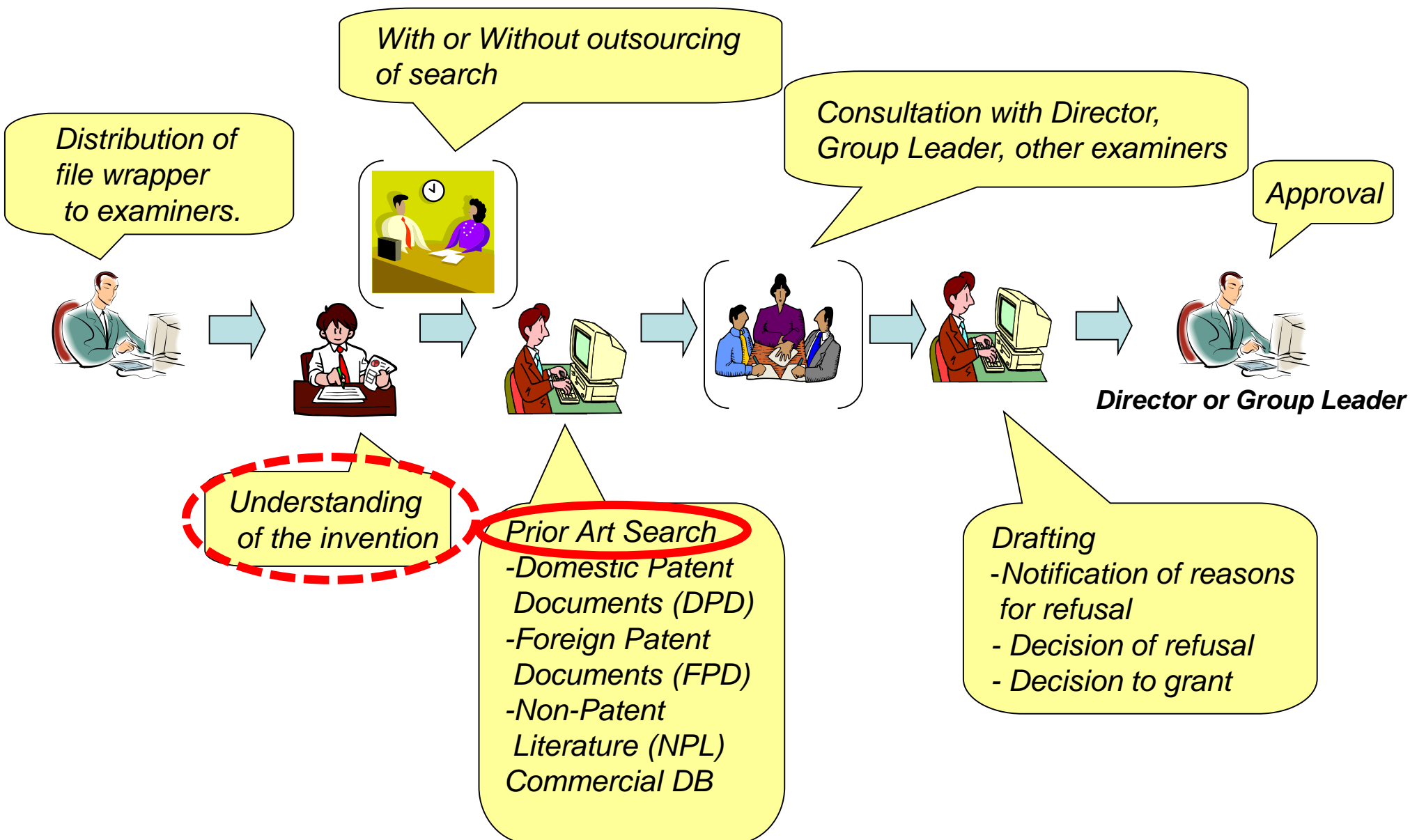
Examination backlog began to pile up.

The number of patent examiners couldn't be increased easily, due to the legal ceiling of the number of government employees in Japan.

- **To overcome the situation...**

JPO launched the outsourcing of prior art searches in 1985.

General Workflow of Patent Examination



By outsourcing prior art searches to registered search organizations, the JPO promotes the speeding up of examinations through utilization of the private sector.

- As of December 2017, there were ten registered search organizations.
- In FY2017, the number of search outsourced was approximately 153,000, and of those, approximately three-quarters (or approximately 114,000 searches) also involved searches of foreign patent documents in addition to patent documents in Japanese.

Outline of Outsourcing of Prior Art Searches

Report by dialogue

(efficiency in first action is **50%**)

Dialogue between searchers and examiners using search report helps examiners quickly and efficiently understand applications and prior art.

If necessary, examiners instruct searchers to conduct additional searches.

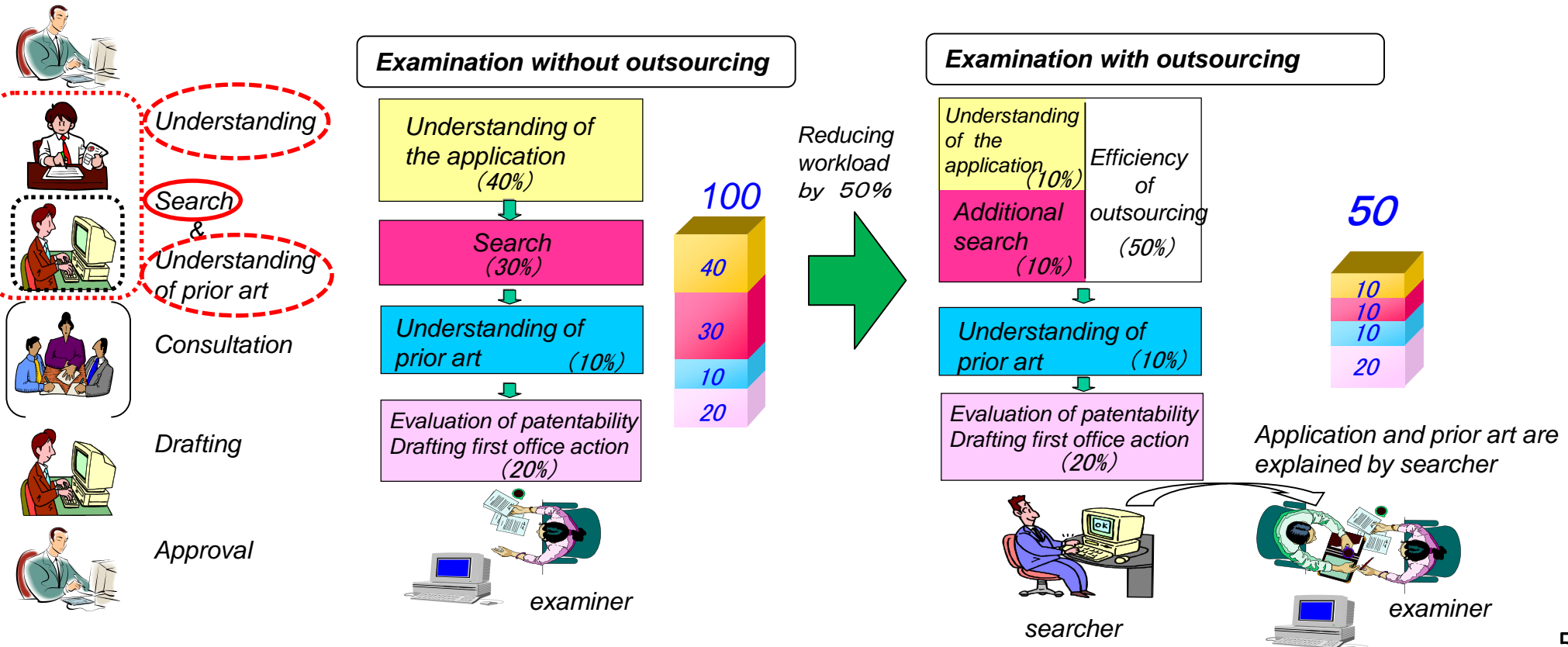


Searcher



Examiner

Report by dialogue



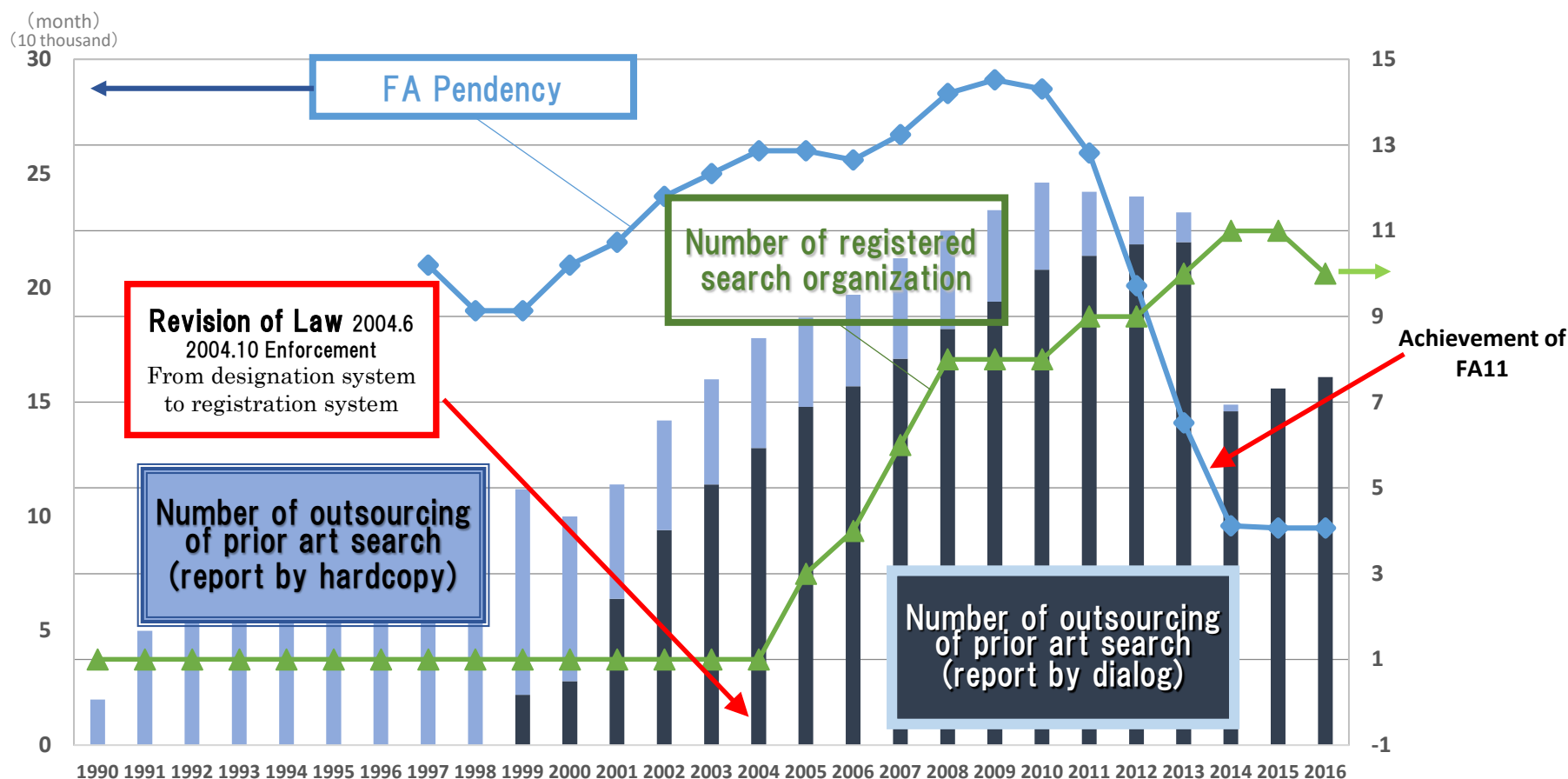
Technical Fields for Search Outsourcing

The technical fields for prior art searches are classified into 39 fields.
Each field corresponds to each Patent Division in JPO.

field number	Technical fields for searches	field number	Technical fields for searches
1	Measurement	21	Metal processing
2	Nano-physics	22	Metals and electrochemistry
3	Material analysis	23	Semiconductor
4	Applied optics	24	Medical science
5	Light related devices	25	Biotechnology
6	Business machinery	26	Environmental chemistry
7	Natural resources	27	Organic chemistry
8	Amusement	28	Polymer
9	Construction	29	Plastic engineering
10	Automatic control	30	Organic compounds
11	Motive machinery	31	Electronic commerce technology
12	Transportation	32	Interface
13	General machinery	33	Data processing
14	Production machinery	34	Transmission systems
15	Logistics and assembling	35	Telephonic communications
16	Textile processing	36	Digital communications
17	Living related machinery	37	Electronic image devices
18	Heating and cooling devices	38	Image processing
19	Welfare and service devices	39	Information storage
20	Inorganic chemistry		

Results of Outsourcing of Prior Art Searches

- The number of outsourcing of prior art search in 2016FY was about 161,000. This was **two-thirds of the patent examination(first action)**.
- There are 10 registered search organizations.
- Outsourcing of prior art search is the **lifeline of speedy patent registration**.



Thank you for your attention!



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(54) 【発明の名称】 ファクシミリ走査装置

(57) 【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項 1】

電話回線を用いて相互通信を行うファクシミリ端末等によるラメータを通知し、通信時の端末パラメータを識別するファクシミリ制御信号の送信側端末は該制御信号のファクシミリフィールドに分離し、各サブフィールドの情報を分離するデータ中には現れない特定の識別コードを挿入してファクシミリ制御信号の識別コードを検出し、該ファクシミリ制御信号の端末パラメータの内容を検出することを特徴とする装置。

【請求項 2】

請求項 1 の装置を用いる方法・・・・・・。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【技術分野】

【0001】

本発明は簡単にして、装置機能のパラメータの拡張が容易なファクシミリ制御方式に関するものである。

Examined
by
the JPO

(Reference 1) Toward the speeding up of Patent Examination

Long-term Goal :

Making First Action (FA) pendency less than **11 months** at the end of March 2014

⇒ The JPO achieved “FA11”!

New Goal

1. Request for examination



2. First Action



3. Granting patent rights



First Action
Pendency

FY 2008

29.3
months



FY 2013

10.4
months



FY 2023

10
months

Total Pendency*

FY 2013

18.8
months



FY 2023

14
months

* “Total pendency” excludes such cases where the JPO requests an applicant to respond to the second notification of reasons for refusal and others

1. Designated Search Organization System (From 1990 to 2004)

- In 1990, “Act on Special Provisions for Procedures related to Industrial Property Right” was constituted and IPCC only was authorized as “Designated Search Organization”.
- Every searcher of Designated Search Organization had confidentiality obligation.
- Designated Search Organization must be a public interest corporation to ensure the neutrality.

Movement of regulatory reform in Japanese Government.
(2002.12.12 Council for Regulatory Reform)

2. Registered Search Organization System (Since 2004)

- Any organizations can be **registered** if they meet the requirements. (There are 10 registered search organizations now.)
- Registration can be made **in each technical field**.
- Improvement of search quality through competition

Act on Special Provisions for Procedures related to Industrial Property Right

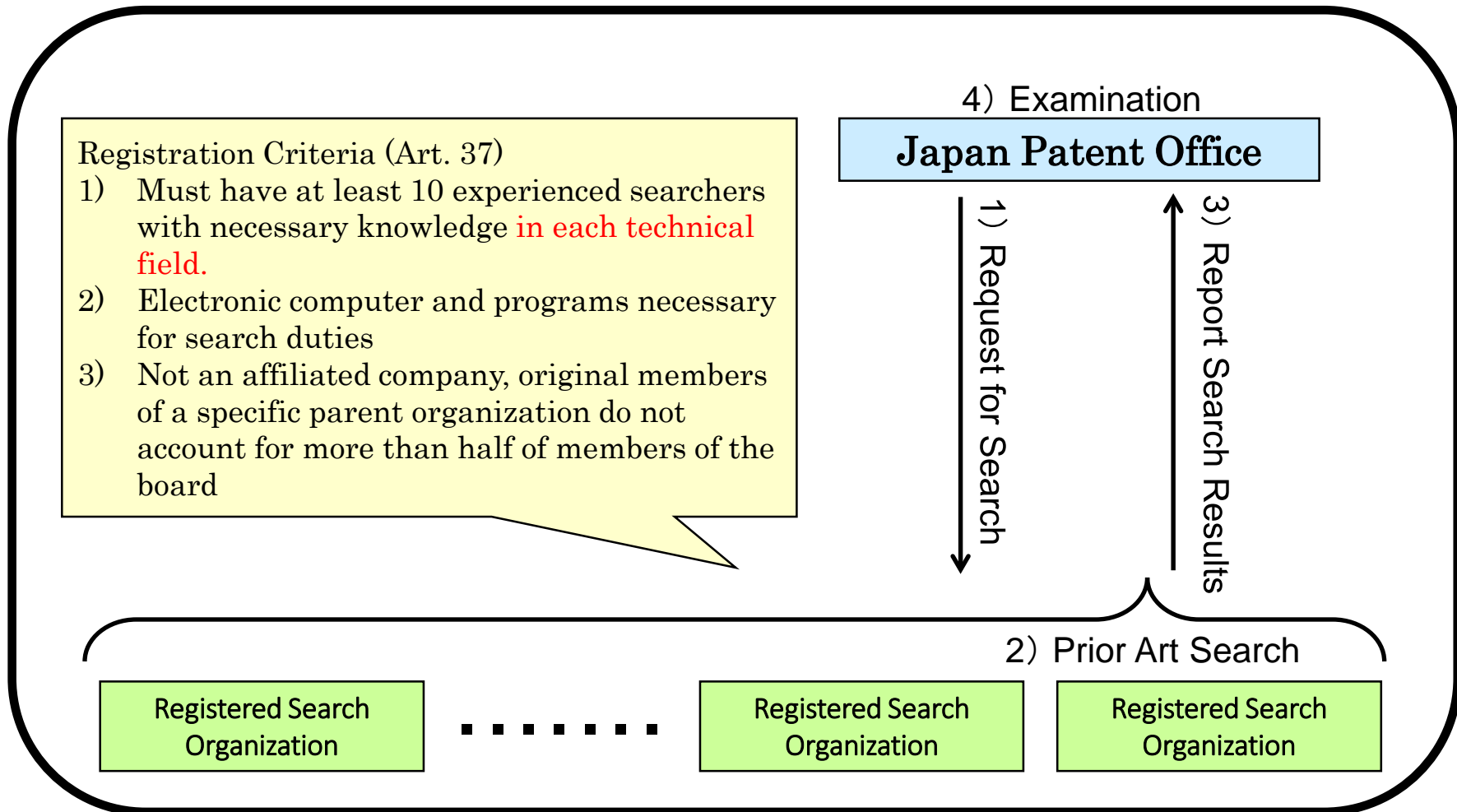
(Current Article) Art.36

The Commissioner of the Patent Office can direct the search by **registered** organization.

Art.37 (**Registration** Criteria)

- 1) Must have at least 10 experienced searchers with necessary knowledge **in each technical field**.
- 2) Electronic computer and programs necessary for search duties
- 3) Not an affiliated company, original members of a specific parent organization do not account for more than half of members of the board

The System of Registered Search Organizations is regulated by Act on Special Provisions for Procedures related to Industrial Property Right since Oct. 2004.



- Based on **the results of quality evaluation of searches** by the registered search organization for the present fiscal year and on **the bidding prices offered by each organization**, the search organization to place orders and amount of orders to place for the next fiscal year are decided.
- For the quality evaluation of search reports, examiners evaluate the search method and search results for each case.
- In addition to quality evaluation, delivery date management is also taken into account in selecting the search organization from among the registered search ones.