

and other unusual words which can be provided to any individual transcribing an oral hearing.

(h) *Length of argument.* Unless otherwise ordered by the Board, argument on behalf of appellant shall be limited to 20 minutes.

(i) *Oral hearing limited to Record.* At oral hearing only the Record will be considered. No additional evidence may be offered to the Board in support of the appeal. Any argument not presented in a brief cannot be raised at an oral hearing.

(j) *Recent legal development.* Notwithstanding paragraph (i) of this section, an appellant or the examiner may rely on and call the Board's attention to a recent court or Board opinion which could have an effect on the manner in which the appeal is decided.

(k) *Visual aids.* Visual aids may be used at an oral hearing, but must be limited to documents or artifacts in the Record or a model or an exhibit presented for demonstration purposes during an interview with the examiner. At the oral hearing, appellant shall provide one copy of each visual aid (photograph in the case of an artifact, a model or an exhibit) for each judge and one copy to be added to the Record.

(l) *Failure to attend oral hearing.* Failure of an appellant to attend an oral hearing will be treated as a waiver of oral hearing.

§41.50 Decisions and other actions by the Board.

(a)(1) The Board, in its decision, may affirm or reverse the decision of the examiner in whole or in part on the grounds and on the claims specified by the examiner. The affirmance of the rejection of a claim on any of the grounds specified constitutes a general affirmance of the decision of the examiner on that claim, except as to any ground specifically reversed. The Board may also remand an application to the examiner.

(2) If a supplemental examiner's answer is written in response to a remand by the Board for further consideration of a rejection pursuant to paragraph (a)(1) of this section, the appellant must within two months from the date of the supplemental examiner's answer exercise one of the following two options to avoid sua sponte dismissal of the appeal as to the claims subject to the rejection for which the Board has remanded the proceeding:

(i) *Reopen prosecution.* Request that prosecution be reopened before the examiner by filing a reply under §1.111 of this title with or without amendment or submission of affidavits (§§1.130,

1.131 or 1.132 of this title) or other evidence. Any amendment or submission of affidavits or other evidence must be relevant to the issues set forth in the remand or raised in the supplemental examiner's answer. A request that complies with this paragraph will be entered and the application or the patent under *ex parte* reexamination will be reconsidered by the examiner under the provisions of §1.112 of this title. Any request that prosecution be reopened under this paragraph will be treated as a request to withdraw the appeal.

(ii) *Maintain appeal.* Request that the appeal be maintained by filing a reply brief as provided in §41.41. If such a reply brief is accompanied by any amendment, affidavit or other evidence, it shall be treated as a request that prosecution be reopened before the examiner under paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section.

(b) Should the Board have knowledge of any grounds not involved in the appeal for rejecting any pending claim, it may include in its opinion a statement to that effect with its reasons for so holding, which statement constitutes a new ground of rejection of the claim. A new ground of rejection pursuant to this paragraph shall not be considered final for judicial review. When the Board makes a new ground of rejection, the appellant, within two months from the date of the decision, must exercise one of the following two options with respect to the new ground of rejection to avoid termination of the appeal as to the rejected claims:

(1) *Reopen prosecution.* Submit an appropriate amendment of the claims so rejected or new evidence relating to the claims so rejected, or both, and have the matter reconsidered by the examiner, in which event the proceeding will be remanded to the examiner. The new ground of rejection is binding upon the examiner unless an amendment or new evidence not previously of record is made which, in the opinion of the examiner, overcomes the new ground of rejection stated in the decision. Should the examiner reject the claims, appellant may again appeal to the Board pursuant to this subpart.

(2) *Request rehearing.* Request that the proceeding be reheard under §41.52

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by the Board upon the same record. The request for rehearing must address any new ground of rejection and state with particularity the points believed to have been misapprehended or overlooked in entering the new ground of rejection and also state all other grounds upon which rehearing is sought.

(c) The opinion of the Board may include an explicit statement of how a claim on appeal may be amended to overcome a specific rejection. When the opinion of the Board includes such a statement, appellant has the right to amend in conformity therewith. An amendment in conformity with such statement will overcome the specific rejection. An examiner may reject a claim so-amended, provided that the rejection constitutes a new ground of rejection.

(d) The Board may order appellant to additionally brief any matter that the Board considers to be of assistance in reaching a reasoned decision on the pending appeal. Appellant will be given a non-extendable time period within which to respond to such an order. Failure to timely comply with the order may result in the sua sponte dismissal of the appeal.

(e) Whenever a decision of the Board includes a remand, that decision shall not be considered final for judicial review. When appropriate, upon conclusion of proceedings on remand before the examiner, the Board may enter an order otherwise making its decision final for judicial review.

(f) Extensions of time under § 1.136(a) of this title for patent applications are not applicable to the time periods set forth in this section. See § 1.136(b) of this title for extensions of time to reply for patent applications and § 1.550(c) of this title for extensions of time to reply for *ex parte* reexamination proceedings.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 73 FR 32976, June 10, 2008, § 41.50 was revised, effective December 10, 2008. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 41.50 Decisions and other actions by the Board.

(a) *Affirmance and reversal.* The Board may affirm or reverse an examiner's rejection in whole or in part. Affirmance of a rejection of a claim constitutes a general affirmance of

the decision of the examiner on that claim, except as to any rejection specifically reversed.

(b) *Remand.* The Board may remand an application to the examiner. If in response to a remand for further consideration of a rejection, the examiner enters an examiner's answer, within two months the appellant shall exercise one of the following two options to avoid abandonment of the application or termination of a reexamination proceeding:

(1) *Request to reopen prosecution.* Request that prosecution be reopened before the examiner by filing a reply under § 1.111 of this title with or without amendment or submission of evidence. Any amendment or evidence must be responsive to the remand or issues discussed in the examiner's answer. A request that complies with this paragraph will be entered and the application or patent under reexamination will be reconsidered by the examiner under the provisions of § 1.112 of this title. A request under this paragraph will be treated as a request to dismiss the appeal.

(2) *Request to re-docket the appeal.* The appellant may request that the Board re-docket the appeal (see § 41.35(a) of this subpart) and file a reply brief as set forth in § 41.41 of this subpart. A reply brief may not be accompanied by any amendment or evidence. A reply brief which is accompanied by an amendment or evidence will be treated as a request to reopen prosecution pursuant to paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

(c) *Remand not final action.* Whenever a decision of the Board includes a remand, the decision shall not be considered a final decision of the Board. When appropriate, upon conclusion of proceedings on remand before the examiner, the Board may enter an order making its decision final.

(d) *New ground of rejection.* Should the Board have a basis not involved in the appeal for rejecting any pending claim, it may enter a new ground of rejection. A new ground of rejection shall be considered an interlocutory order and shall not be considered a final decision. If the Board enters a new ground of rejection, within two months appellant must exercise one of the following two options with respect to the new ground of rejection to avoid dismissal of the appeal as to any claim subject to the new ground of rejection:

(1) *Reopen prosecution.* Submit an amendment of the claims subject to a new ground of rejection or new evidence relating to the new ground of rejection or both, and request that the matter be reconsidered by the examiner. The application or reexamination proceeding on appeal will be remanded to the examiner. A new ground of rejection by the Board is binding on the examiner unless, in the opinion of the examiner, the amendment or new evidence overcomes the new ground