Protecting registered and unregistered design in the UK post-exit

Nathan Abraham
Policy Advisor, Trade Marks & Designs
Developments to date

- **IP and Brexit: The Facts** published in August 2016 - evolving document;

- **Draft Withdrawal Agreement** published in March 2018 - Articles 50, 52, 53 and 55 address registered and unregistered EU designs;

- **White Paper** published in July 2018 - confirmed Government’s commitment to explore options on IP, and to seek future cooperation arrangements;

- **Technical Notice** published in September 2018 - setting out Government’s plans in event of no-deal;

- **No-deal Statutory Instruments** will be published in the near future, but detail subject to further Parliamentary scrutiny.
Registered Designs: No-Deal Scenario

- Owners of Registered Community Designs which exist at exit day will be provided with comparable UK rights;
- New UK rights will be granted with minimal administrative burden for the owner;
- New UK right will be treated as if registered under UK law, and will be independent of corresponding RCD;
- Provisions will be made for e.g. renewals, priority claims, registerable transactions and deferment;
- Owner of the new UK right can opt-out if not seeking UK protection;
- Work ongoing with WIPO on Hague EU designations; Government committed to ensuring continued protection, as with RCDs.
Registered Designs: No-Deal Scenario

- RCD applications which are pending at exit day will confer privileges on applicants seeking post-exit UK protection;
- Within nine months of exit day, applicant may file UK application and retain filing date or (earlier) priority date of pending RCD application;
- In all other respects, post-exit UK application procedures will be retained;
- Those with pending RCD applications **will not** be notified of UK application privilege;
- Pending Hague (EU) applications will also be accommodated;
- Provisions to address proceedings pending before UK courts involving RCDs.
Unregistered Designs: No-Deal Scenario

- Existing unregistered EU designs will continue to be protected in the UK via ‘Continuing Unregistered Design Right’;
- Protection will continue for remaining period accorded to the EU right;
- Also creation of new ‘Supplementary Unregistered Design Right’ which mirrors characteristics of unregistered Community design;
- ‘CUDR’ ensures that designs disclosed in EU27 prior to exit will continue to be protected in the UK post-exit;
- ‘SUDR’ ensures that designs disclosed in UK post-exit will be protected in UK;
- Provisions addressing unregistered designs proceedings before UK court
**Designs: Alternative Scenarios**

- Existing (agreed) terms of Withdrawal Agreement oblige the UK to provide continued protection for registered and published RCDs;
- WA also obliges us to recognise filing dates, priority dates, remaining period of protection etc.
- But some differences to no-deal approach - e.g. WA will oblige UK to recognise cancellation of EU right and make effect on comparable UK right;
- Terms of WA may yet be superseded by alternative arrangements negotiated as part of Future Economic Partnership.
nathan.abraham@ipo.gov.uk