IPO-GSE event 12th November 2013

Joint event between GSE (Government Science and Engineering) and IPO (Intellectual Property Office)

On Tuesday 12th November a joint GSE/IPO professional development event was hosted by the IPO in Newport (Gwent). Sean Dennehey (IPO's Deputy CEO) gave an overview of IPO's work. In 2012/13, demand for services at the IPO reached record levels, with over 41,000 Trade Mark applications and over 20,000 patent applications. It was noted that there are about 250 Patent examiners at IPO, all with backgrounds in Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). A recurring theme throughout the day was the role of IP in driving economic growth.

Dr David Bacon (Head of Science and Engineering Profession for Wales) outlined the challenges facing the ~12,000 S&E staff across all government departments, not least in the face of a growing volume of published scientific documentation currently growing at 10%/year.

Dr Chris Young (Commercialisation Senior Manager, Welsh Government) provided an insight into the Business innovation support activities in Wales, including Innovation Vouchers, SMARTCymru R&D grants and manufacturing/design guidance.

Graham Farnsworth (Head of Intellectual Property, Defence Science & Technology Laboratory – DSTL) gave an illuminating account of the different approaches taken to Intellectual Property in DSTL, to ensure that it is highlighted, protected and correctly exploited. For example, DSTL's Ploughshare Innovations provide licensed access to, and commercialisation of, DSTL technology.

An entertaining post-lunch session by the IPO's Gary Townley gave delegates an opportunity to explore IP issues through a mixture of presentations and syndicate exercises. This gave people a chance to discuss issues surrounding patents, trademarks and design, and to extend their knowledge of IP issues in general.

Dr Marian Lillington (Patent Informatics, IPO) concluded the day with a presentation on the valuable insight to be gained through analysis of Patent documents to reveal patterns and trends as evidence to inform decision making in both government and industry. The example of 3D printing was presented in detail, and reports on other technologies, such as grapheme, are also available from IPO.

Feedback from the event has been very positive, with a good many people responding. Not only did delegates find the presentations interesting, informative and entertaining, but the opportunities for networking were considered hugely valuable. Delegates went home with a strong impression of the importance both of the GSE network and of the benefits of managing their Intellectual Property.

For more on the work of the IPO, see www.ipo.gov.uk, and to join GSE go to http://tinyurl.com/joinGSE or sign up to the LinkedIn group http://tinyurl.com/gselink.