

Relevant Dates in Revocations on Grounds of Non-Use (HMD Circular No. 1/2012, dated 21 December 2012)

This circular clarifies the relevant dates for revocations on grounds of non-use and sets out the necessary information that an applicant for revocation should include in the grounds of revocation.

Sections 22(1)(a),(b) and 22(7) of the Trade Marks Act (Cap 332, 2005 Rev Ed) ("the Act") provides that:

22. –(1) The registration of a trade mark may be revoked on any of the following grounds:

(a) that, within the period of 5 years following the date of completion of the registration procedure, it has not been put to genuine use in the course of trade in Singapore, by the proprietor or with his consent, in relation to the goods or services for which it is registered, and there are no proper reasons for non-use;

(b) that such use has been suspended for an uninterrupted period of 5 years, and there are no proper reasons for non-use;

...

(7) Where the registration of a trade mark is revoked to any extent, the rights of the proprietor shall be deemed to have ceased to that extent as from –

(a) the date of the application for revocation; or

(b) if the Registrar or the Court is satisfied that the grounds for revocation existed at an earlier date, that date.

A. DATE OF COMPLETION OF REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

For national trade mark filings, the date of completion of the registration procedure is the "Cert Issuance Date" found on the e-Register of Trade Marks. This is the date that IPOS sends the certificate of registration to the Registered Proprietor.

For international registrations, the date of completion of the registration procedure is the "Date of Completion of Registration Procedure" found on the e-Register of Trade Marks.

B. PERIOD OF NON-USE

Section 22(1)(a)

If an applicant for revocation relies on Section 22(1)(a) of the Act, the relevant period of non-use starts from the day immediately following the date of completion of the registration procedure and ends on the fifth anniversary of the date of completion of the registration procedure.

Thus, for example, if the date of completion is 2 January 2013, the relevant period in question under Section 22(1)(a) is from 3 January 2013 to 2 January 2018 inclusive. If it is alleged that a registered proprietor has not used his trade mark in the course

of trade from 3 January 2013 to 2 January 2018 inclusive, the earliest date that an applicant can file an application for revocation is 3 January 2018.

Section 22(1)(b)

If an applicant for revocation relies on Section 22(1)(b) of the Act, in the grounds of revocation, he will need to specify the relevant period of non-use alleged.

C. EFFECTIVE DATE OF REVOCATION

An applicant for revocation usually seeks the earliest possible effective date of revocation.

If the registered trade mark has not been used at all since completion of registration, the earliest possible effective date will be the date immediately following the fifth anniversary of the date of completion of the registration procedure. Alternatively, if the registered trade mark has been used after completion of registration but subsequently was not used for an uninterrupted period of 5 years, the earliest possible effective date will be the date immediately following the end of the 5-year period of non-use.

The date of the application for revocation may or may not coincide with the above two dates.

Hence, it is important and essential that the Applicant clearly states the requested effective date of revocation.

If no effective date is stated and the revocation is successful, the Registrar will typically apply Section 22(7)(a) to revoke the registered trade mark from the date of the application for revocation.