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Patent classification

Overview and considerations

Tehran
12-13 November
2018

Alex Riechel
IP Information Officer, Innovation and Technology Support Section

Overview

- What are advantages and disadvantages of patent classification?
- How is the IPC structured?
- How can I find relevant IPC symbols?
- How can I view the IPC scheme?
- What challenges might I face when using patent classification?

Advantages of classification vs. keywords

- Terminology and jargon independent (including changes in terms used over time)
- Language independent

→ A more complete and precise search

Advantages of patent classification vs. keywords

- Applied in a standardized manner to patent documents
- Available for patent documents published (nearly) anywhere in the world
- Available for (old) patent documents for which little or no searchable text is available
- Specially adapted for patent documentation

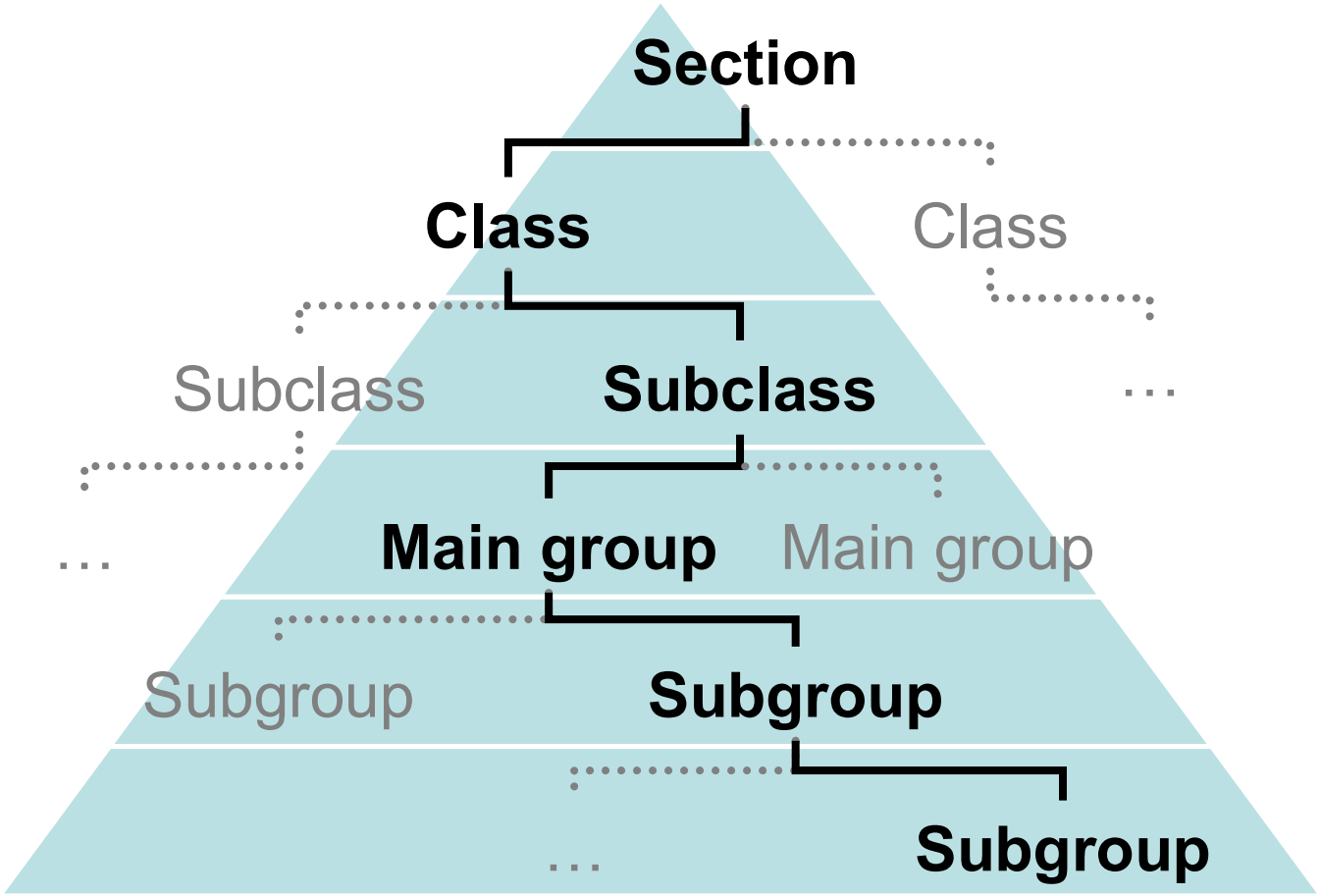
Disadvantages of patent classification vs. keywords

- May not be available for all areas of technology
- May not be specific enough for a particular search
- May not be available for all documents
- Potentially complex

IPC: Structure

- Hierarchical
  - Section
  - Class
  - Subclass
  - Main group
  - Subgroup

IPC: Structure



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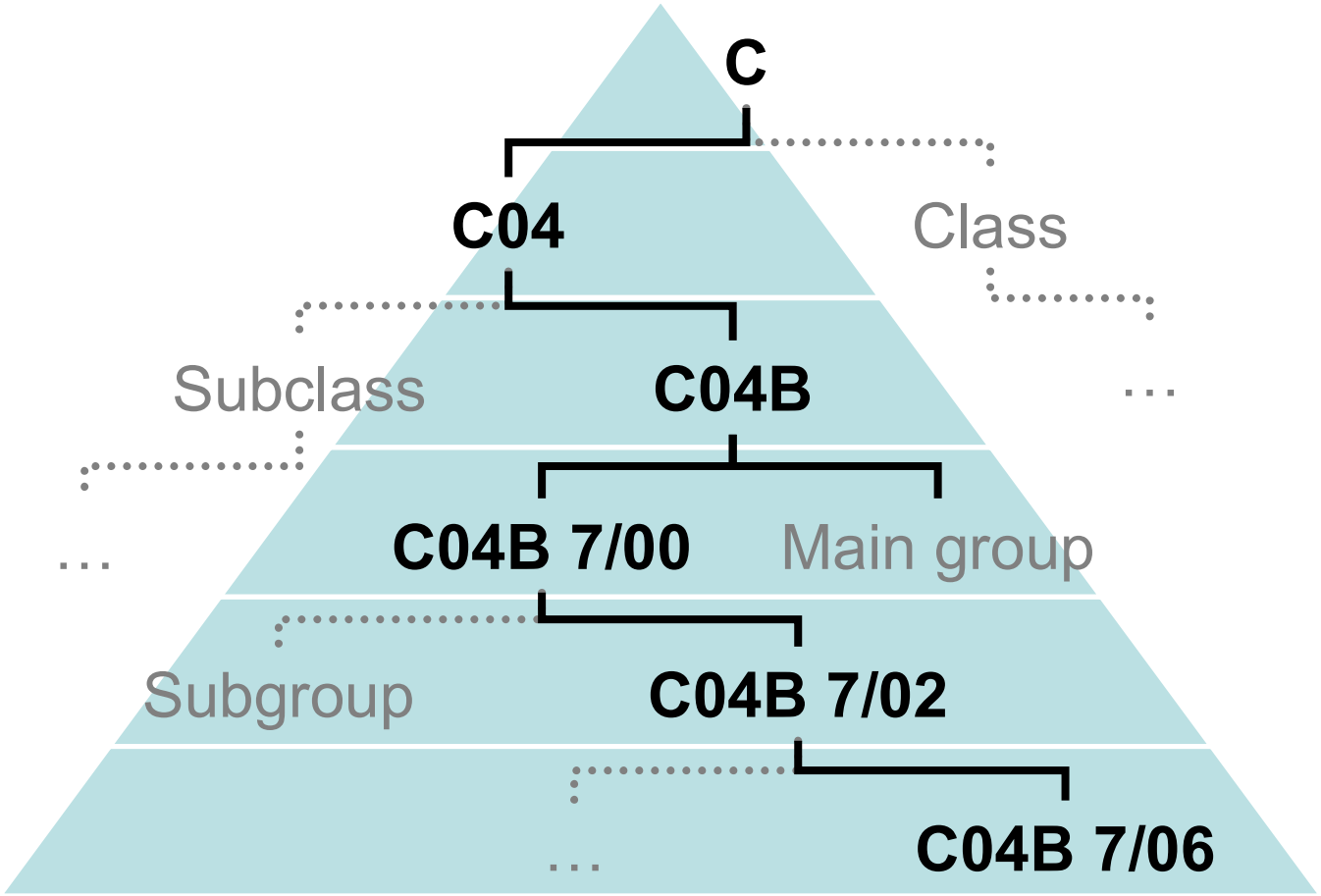
IPC: Structure



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IPC: Structure

- C → Chemistry
- C04 → Cements; concrete; artificial stone; ceramics; refractories
- C04B → Lime; magnesia; slag; cements; compositions thereof…; artificial stone; ceramics; refractories; treatment of natural stone
- C04B 7/00 → Hydraulic cements
- C04B 7/02 → Portland cement
- C04B 7/06 → using alkaline raw materials

IPC: Structure (subgroups)

C04B 7/00	**Hydraulic cements [2006.01]**
C04B 7/02	• Portland cement [2006.01]
C04B 7/04	• • using raw materials containing gypsum [2006.01]
C04B 7/06	• • using alkaline raw materials [2006.01]
C04B 7/12	• Natural pozzuolanas; Natural pozzuolana cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/13	• • Mixtures thereof with inorganic cementitious materials, e.g. Portland cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/14	• Cements containing slag [2006.01]
C04B 7/147	• • Metallurgical slag [2006.01]
C04B 7/153	• • • Mixtures thereof with other inorganic cementitious materials or other activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/17	• • • • with calcium oxide containing activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/19	• • • • • Portland cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/21	• • • • with calcium sulfate containing activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/22	• Iron ore cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/24	• Cements from oil shales, residues or waste other than slag [2006.01]
C04B 7/26	• • from raw materials containing flue dust [2006.01]
C04B 7/28	• • from combustion residues (C04B 7/26 takes precedence) [2006.01]

→ More dots = lower hierarchical level

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IPC: Structure (subgroups)

C04B 7/00	**Hydraulic cements [2006.01]**
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C04B 7/147	• • Metallurgical slag [2006.01]
C04B 7/153	• • • Mixtures thereof with other inorganic cementitious materials or other activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/17	• • • • with calcium oxide containing activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/1[illegible]	• • • • • Portland cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/2[illegible]	• • • • with calcium sulfate containing activators [2006.01]
C04B 7/22	• Iron ore cements [2006.01]
C04B 7/24	• Cements from oil shales, residues or waste other than slag [2006.01]
C04B 7/26	• • from raw materials containing flue dust [2006.01]
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IPC: Structure (subgroups)

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IPC: Structure (notes and references)

C04B	**LIME; MAGNESIA; SLAG; CEMENTS; COMPOSITIONS THEREOF, e.g. MORTARS, CONCRETE OR LIKE BUILDING MATERIALS; ARTIFICIAL STONE; CERAMICS** (devitrified glass-ceramics C03C 10/00); **REFRACTORIES** (alloys based on refractory metals C22C); **TREATMENT OF NATURAL STONE [4]**
	Note(s) **[6]** In this subclass, the following terms or expressions are used with the meanings indicated: • "fillers" includes pigments, aggregates and fibrous reinforcing materials; • "active ingredients" includes processing aids or property improvers, e.g. grinding aids used after the burning process or used in the absence of a burning process; • "mortars", "concrete" and "artificial stone" are to be considered as a single group of materials, and therefore, in the absence of an indication to be contrary, they include mortar, concrete and other cementitious compositions. **Lime; Magnesia; Slag**
C04B 2/00	**Lime, magnesia or dolomite [2006.01]**
C04B 2/02	• Lime **[2006.01]**
C04B 2/04	• • Slaking **[2006.01]**
C04B 2/06	• • • with addition of substances, e.g. hydrophobic agents **[2006.01]**
C04B 2/08	• • • Devices therefor **[2006.01]**
C04B 2/10	• Preheating, burning, calcining or cooling (decarbonation during burning of cement raw materials C04B 7/43) **[2006.01]**
C04B 2/12	• • in shaft or vertical furnaces **[2006.01]**

→ Relevant symbols, definitions, versions

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Indexing

Classification	Independent
Indexing	Complementary (associated with classification in specific subdivisions)

Indexing

Classification	Spot arc welding
Indexing	(Articles made by soldering, welding or cutting) Railway- or like rails

Scenario

- You have been requested to retrieve patent documents related to semiconductor lasers and have decided to use IPC classification for this purpose.

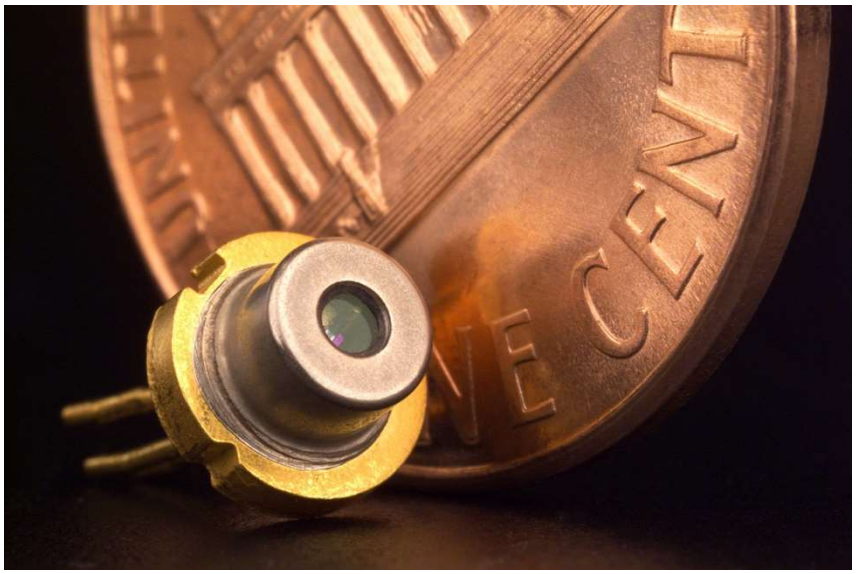
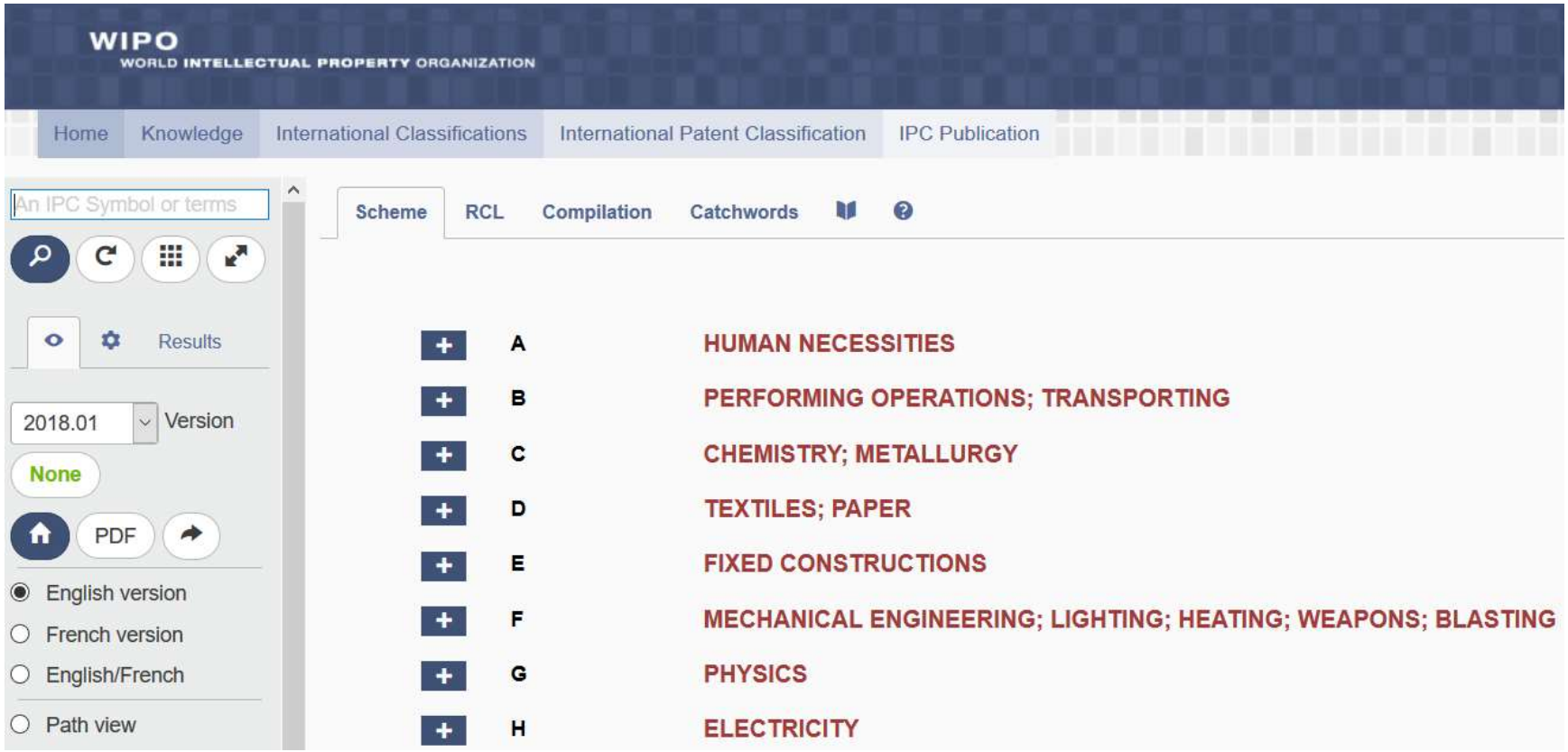


Photo source: NASA

IPC Official Publication



http://www.wipo.int/ipcpub

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Search

- Catchwords
- Definitions
- Scheme
- STATS

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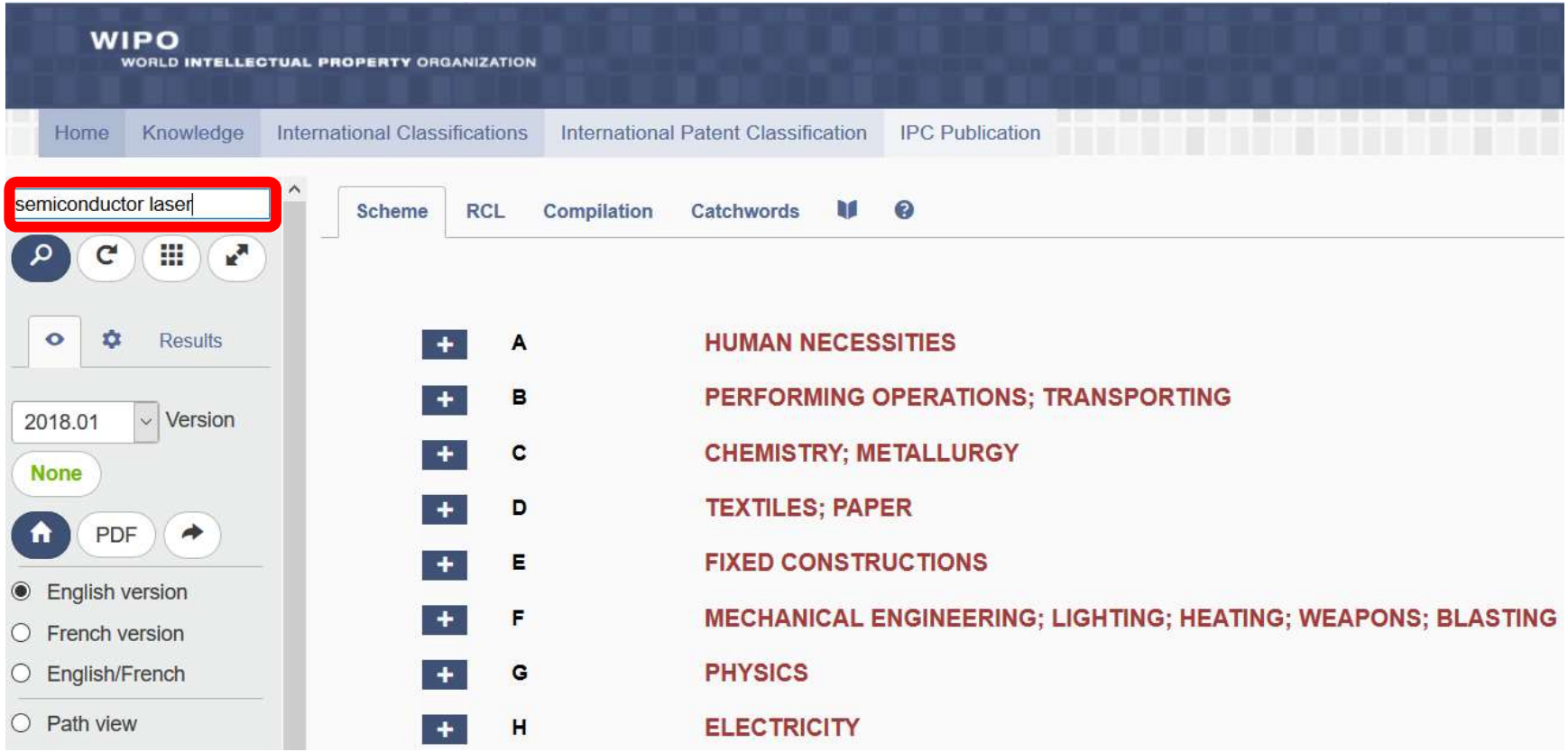
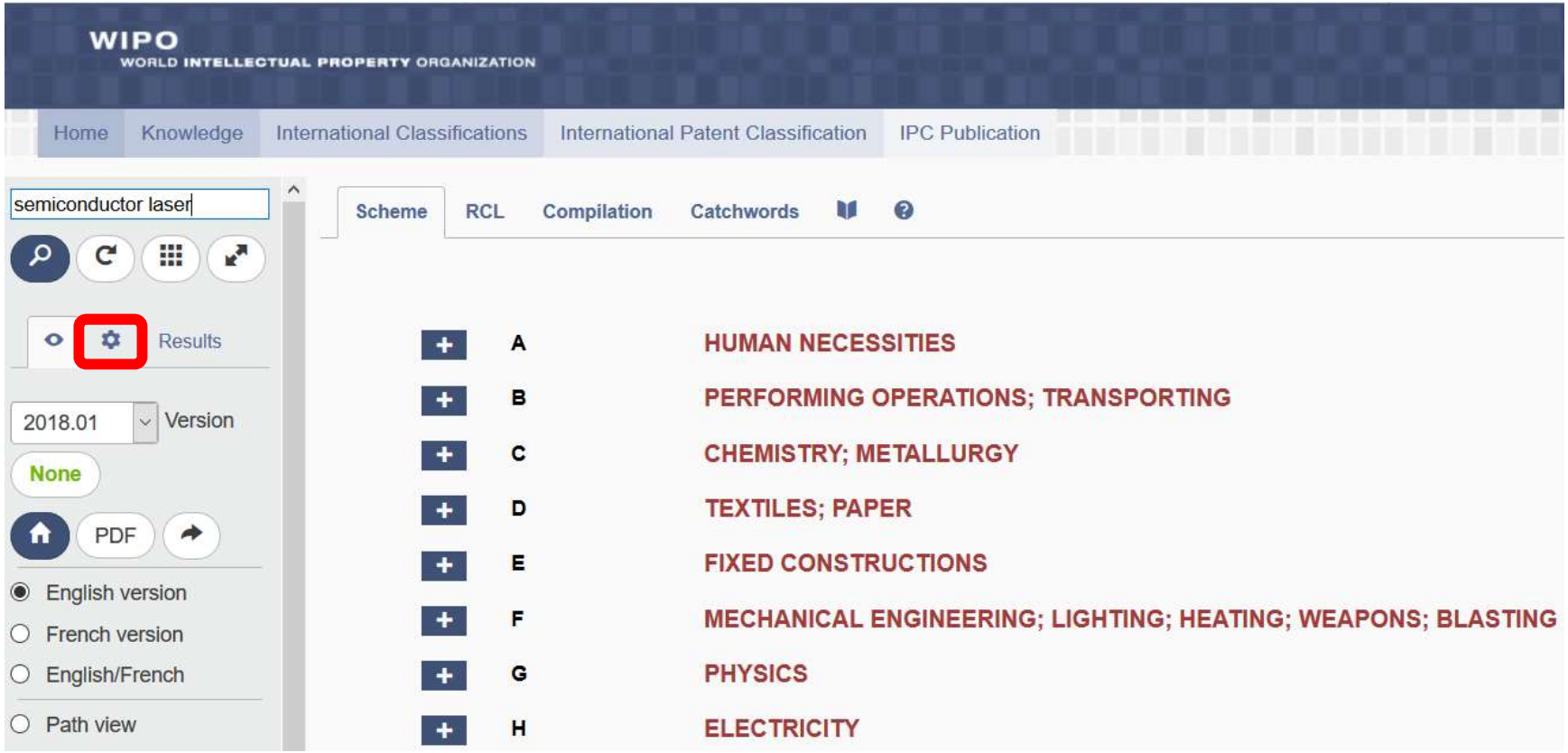
Exercise

- Use the search tools to identify relevant IPC symbols 

IPC Official Publication



IPC Official Publication



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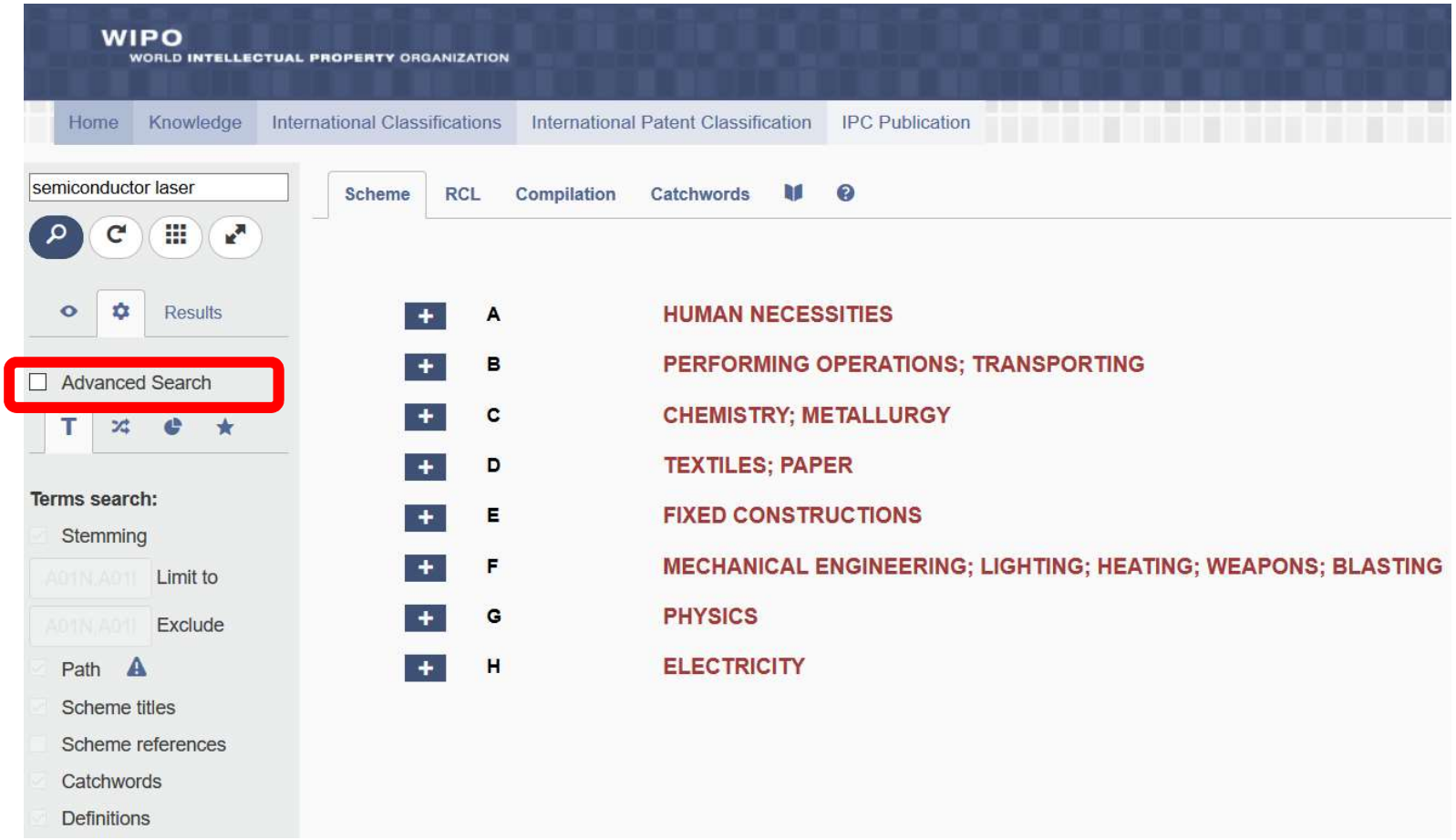
IPC Search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Scheme references
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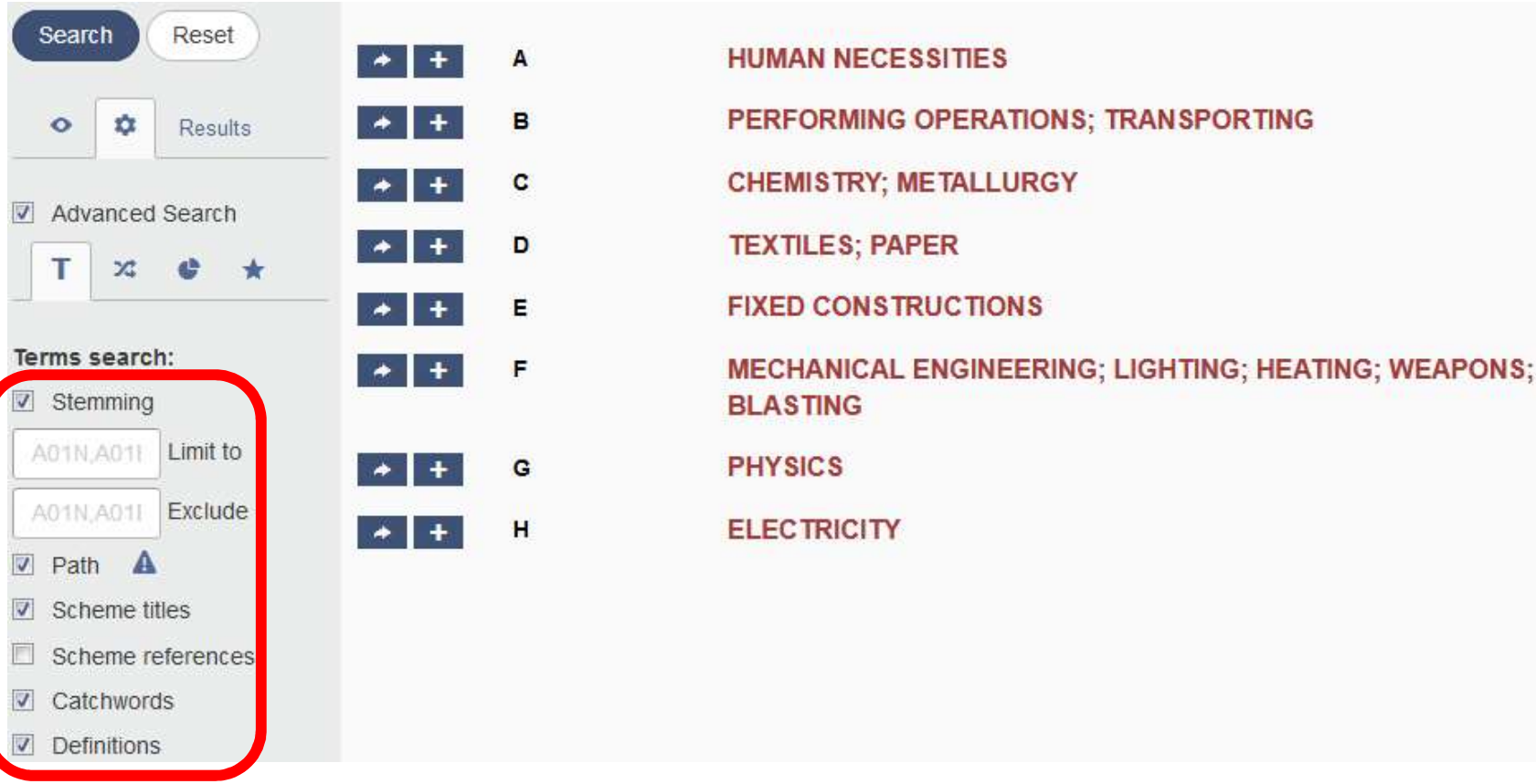
A HUMAN NECESSITIES
B PERFORMING OPERATIONS; TRANSPORTING
C CHEMISTRY; METALLURGY
D TEXTILES; PAPER
E FIXED CONSTRUCTIONS
F MECHANICAL ENGINEERING; LIGHTING; HEATING; WEAPONS; BLASTING
G PHYSICS
H ELECTRICITY

IPC Advanced Search



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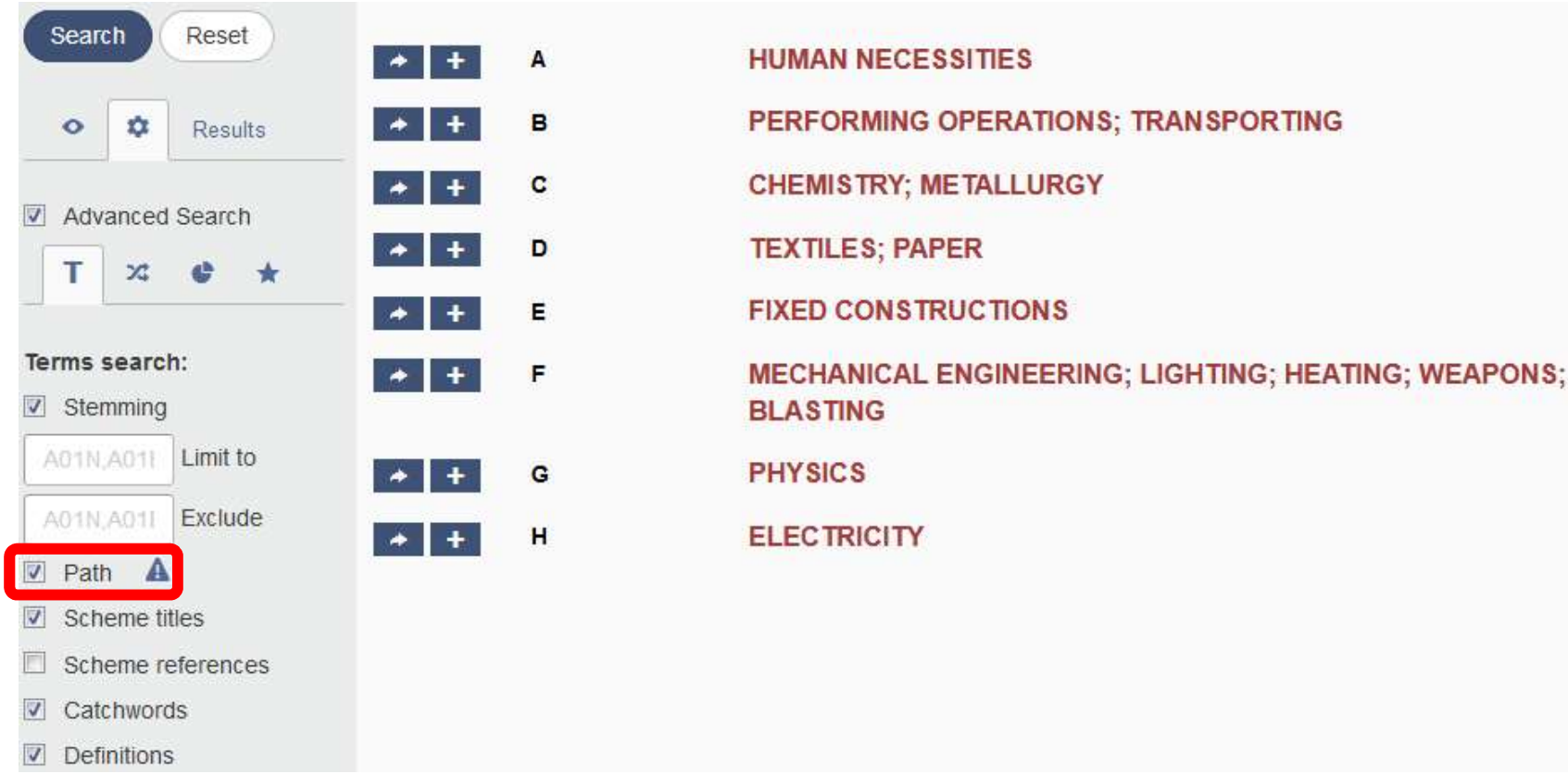
IPC Advanced Search



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IPC Advanced Search

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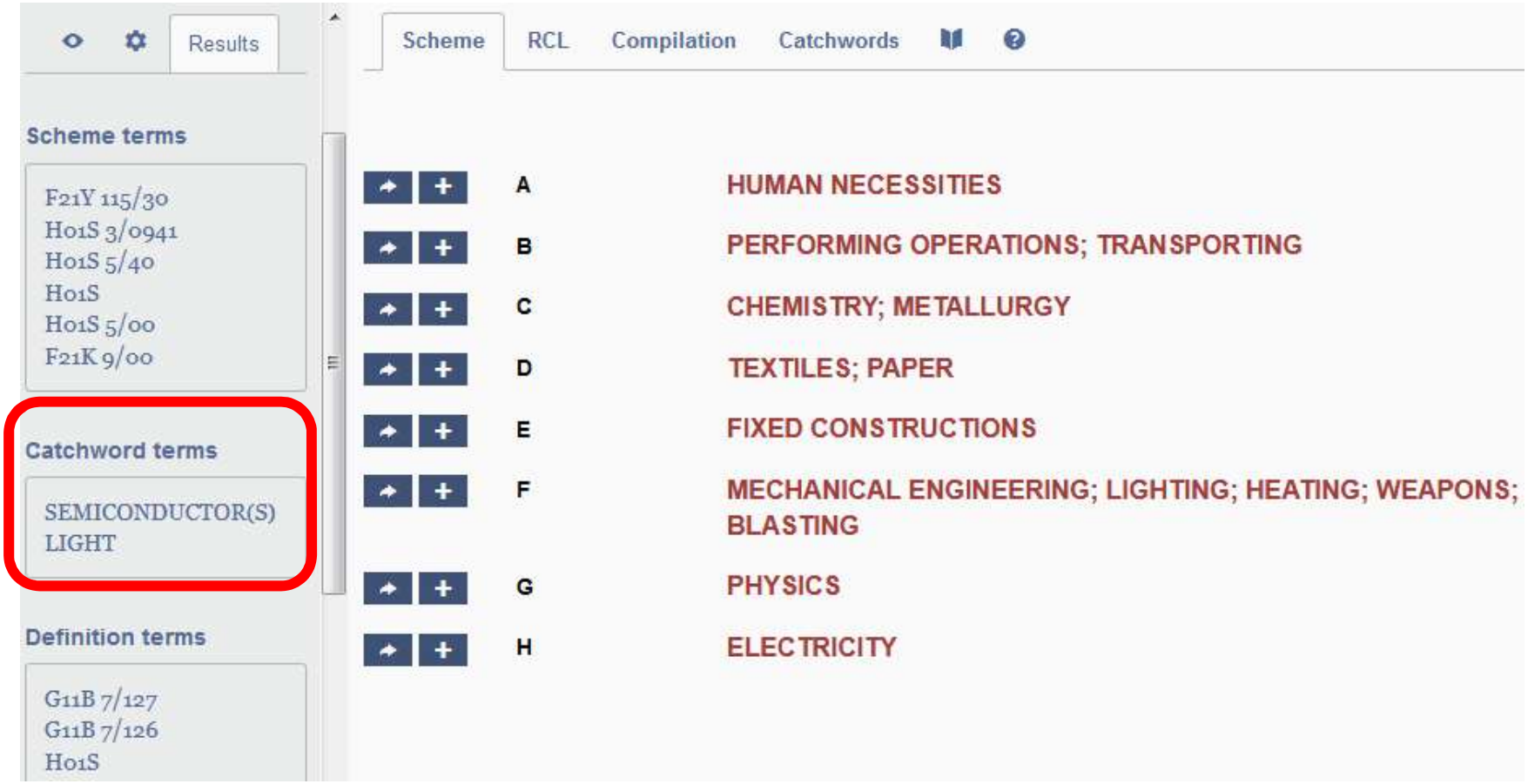
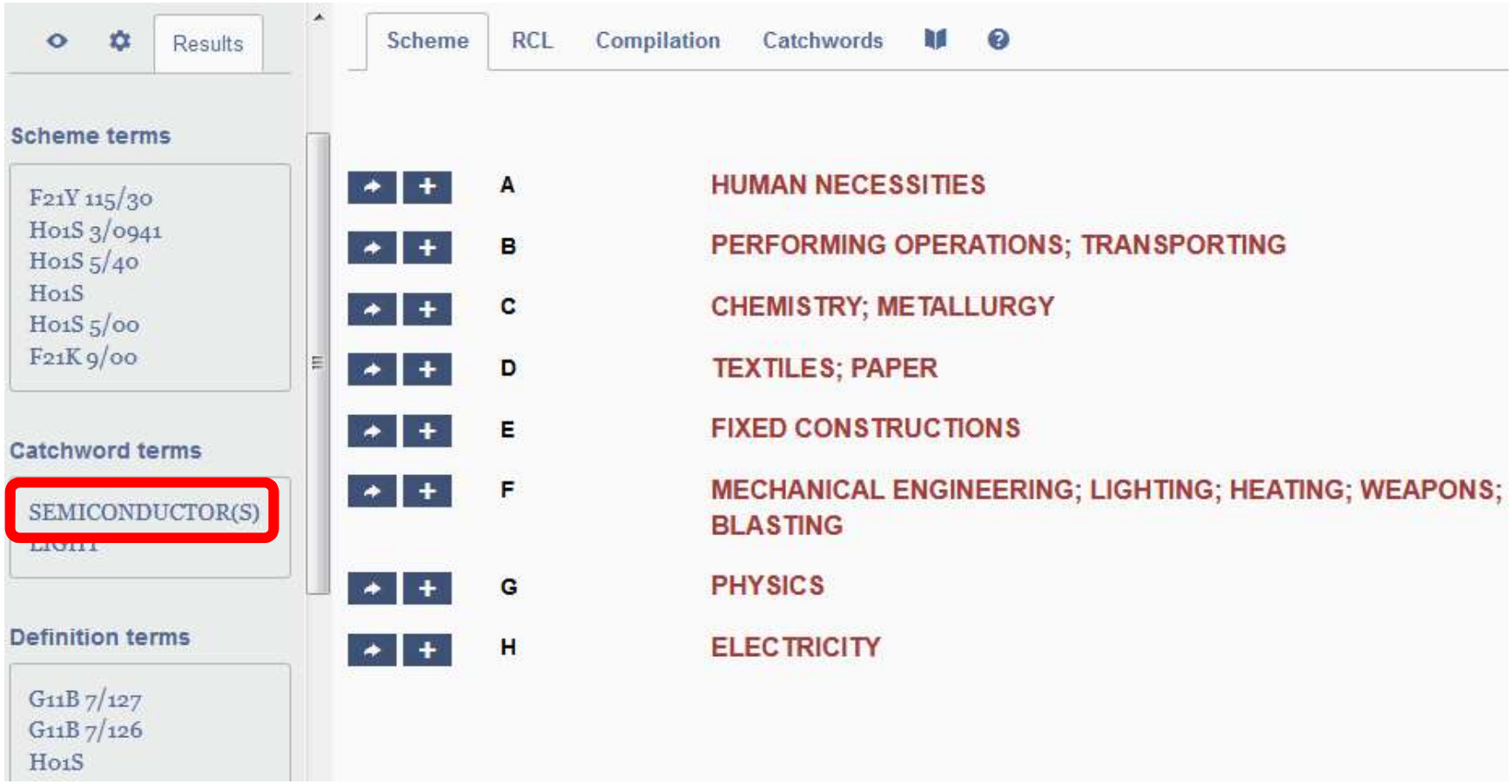
IPC Search Results



IPC Search Results (Catchwords)



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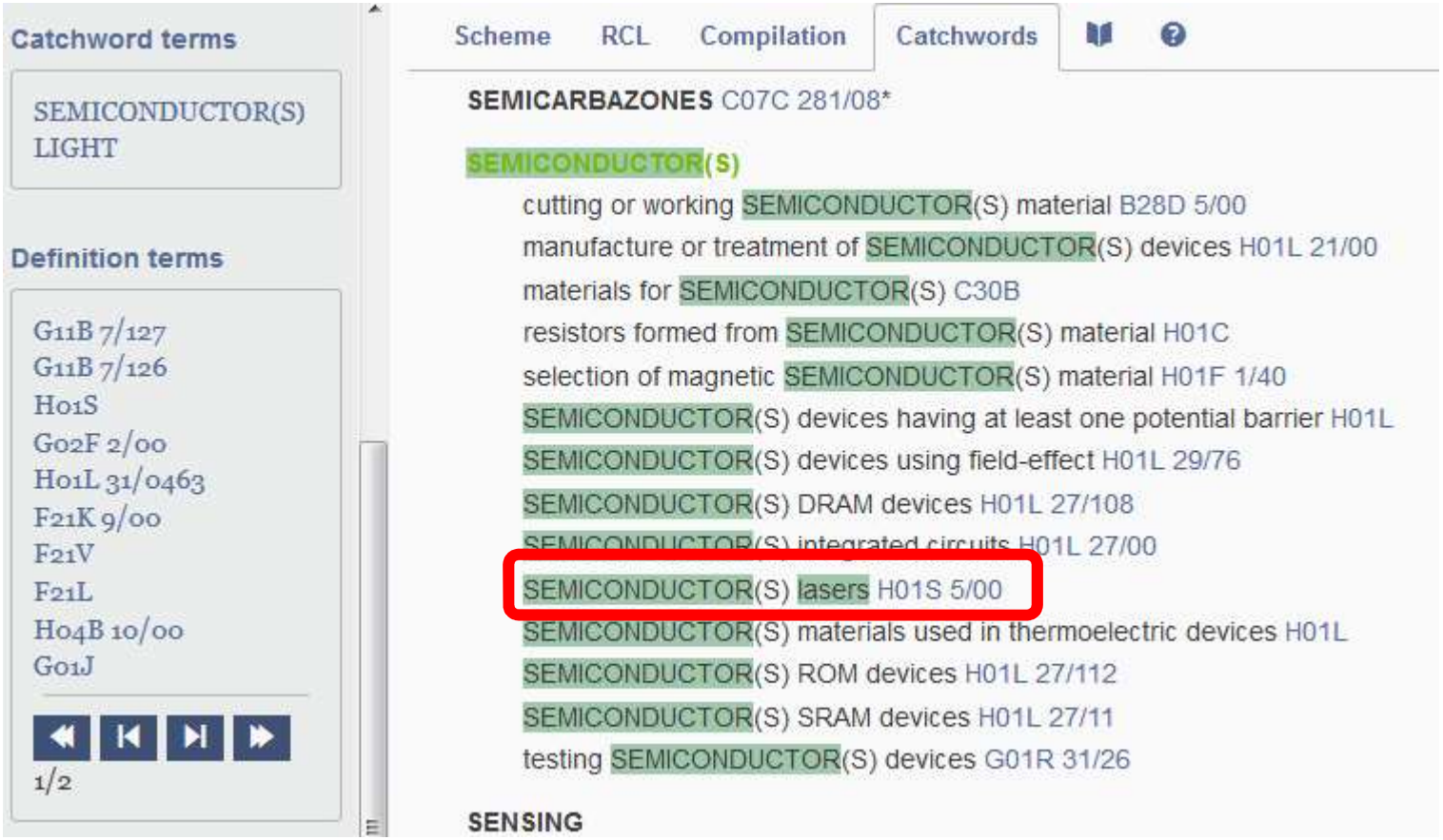
IPC Catchword Index



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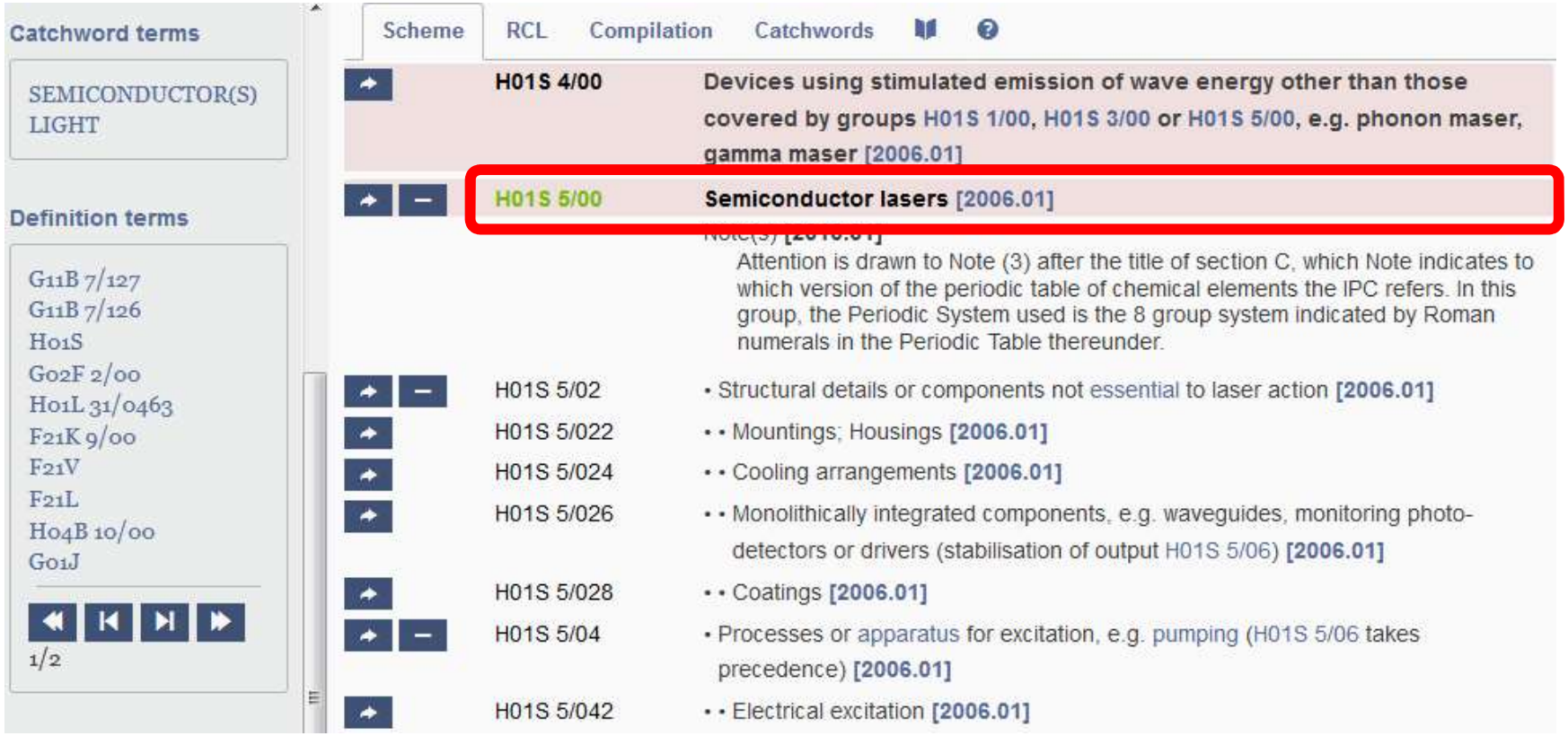
IPC Scheme



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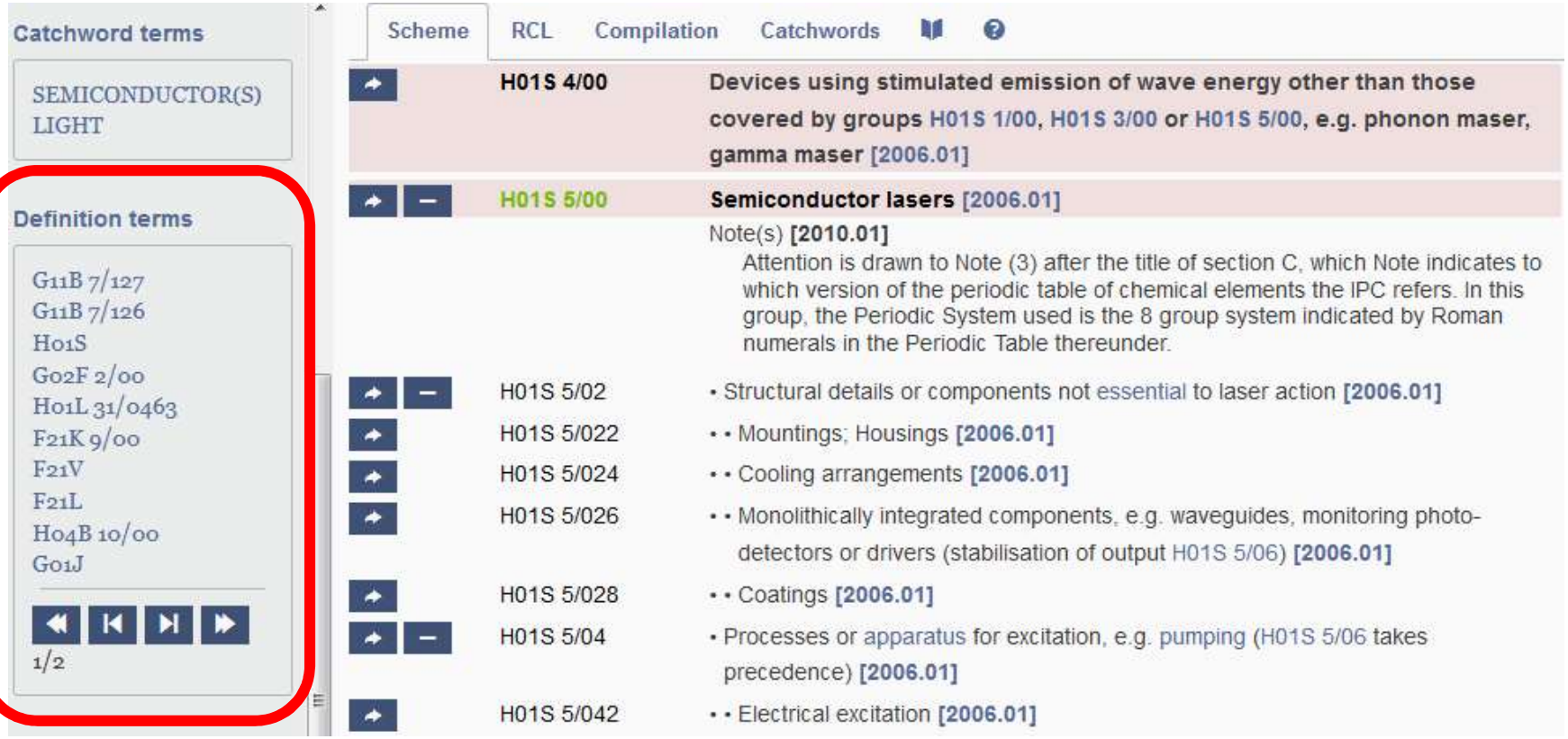
IPC Search Results (Definitions)



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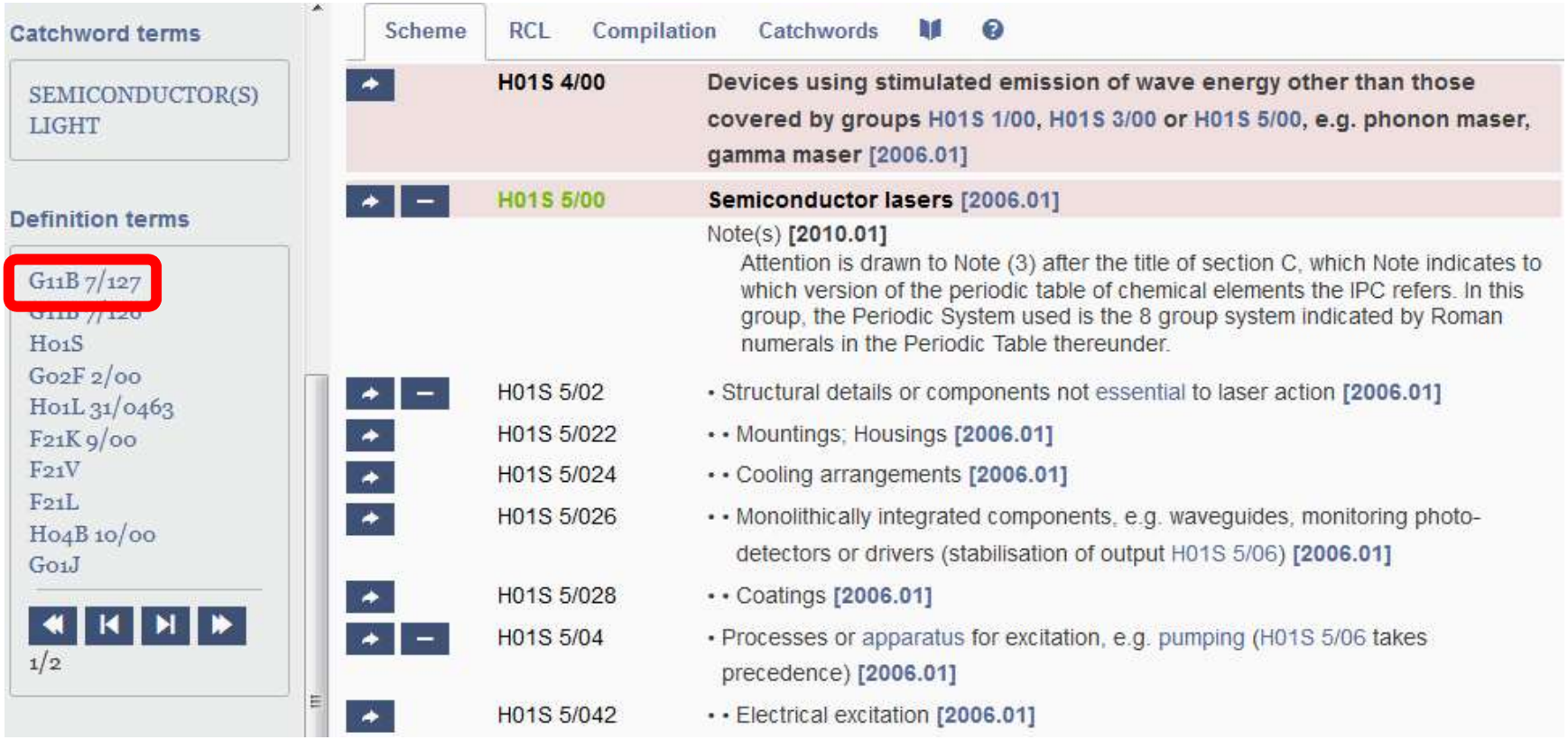
IPC Search Results (Definitions)



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IPC Scheme

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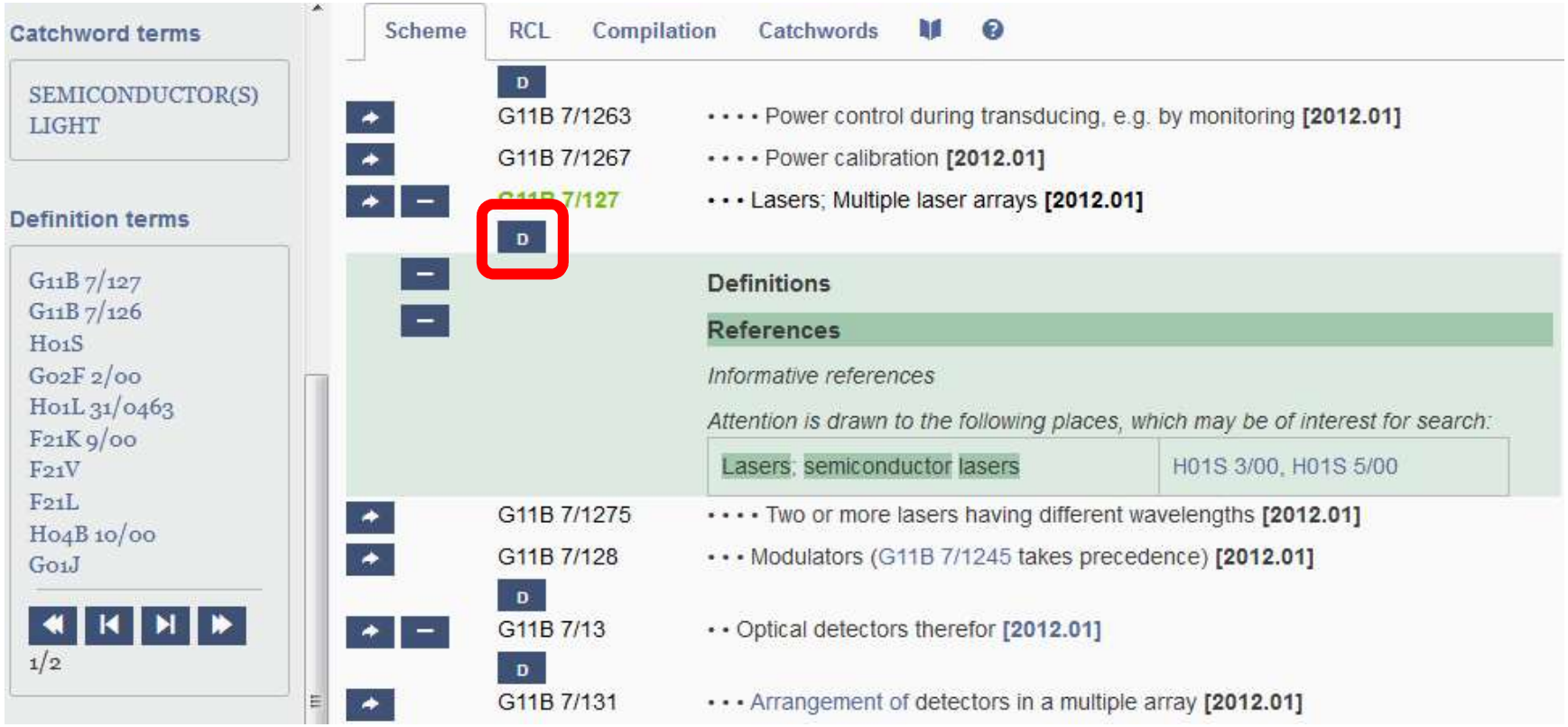
IPC Scheme (Definitions)



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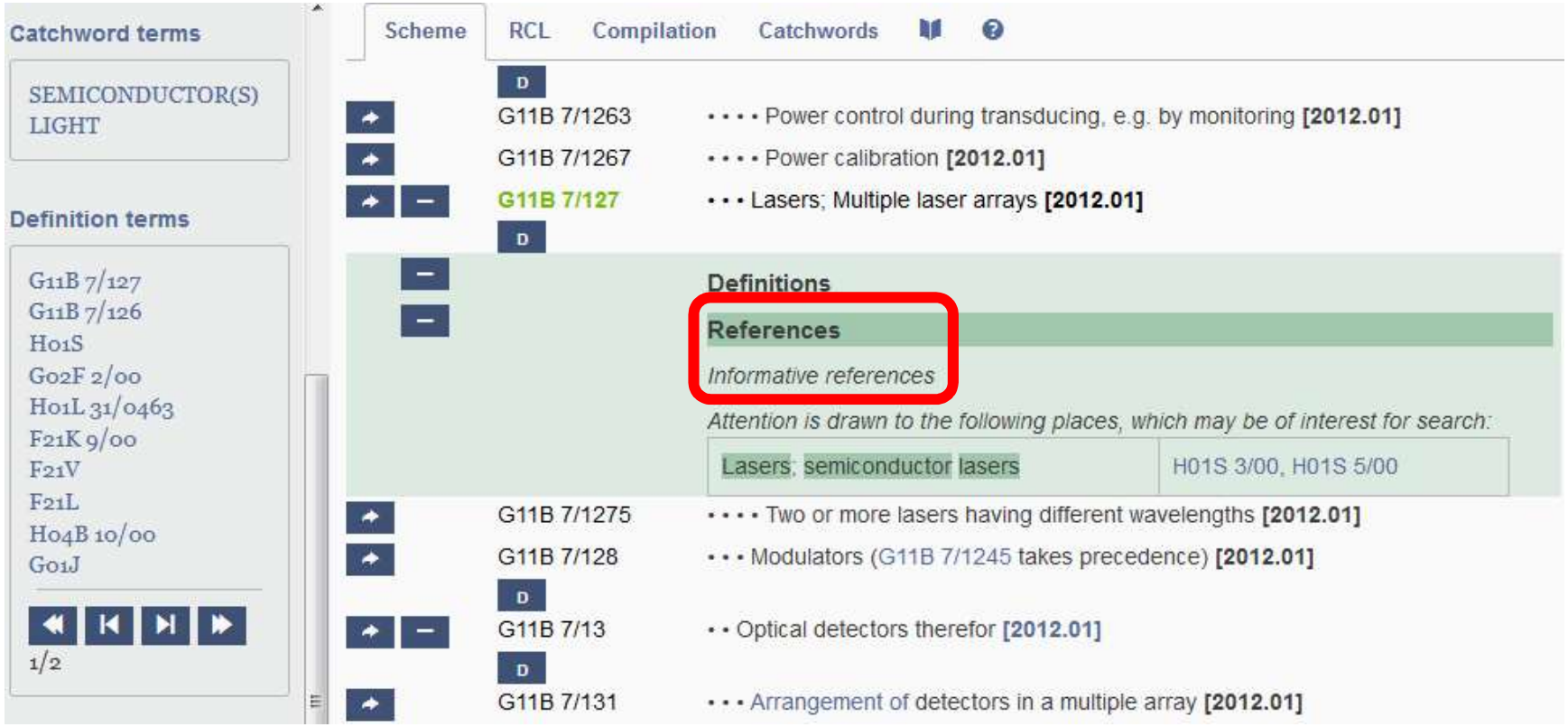

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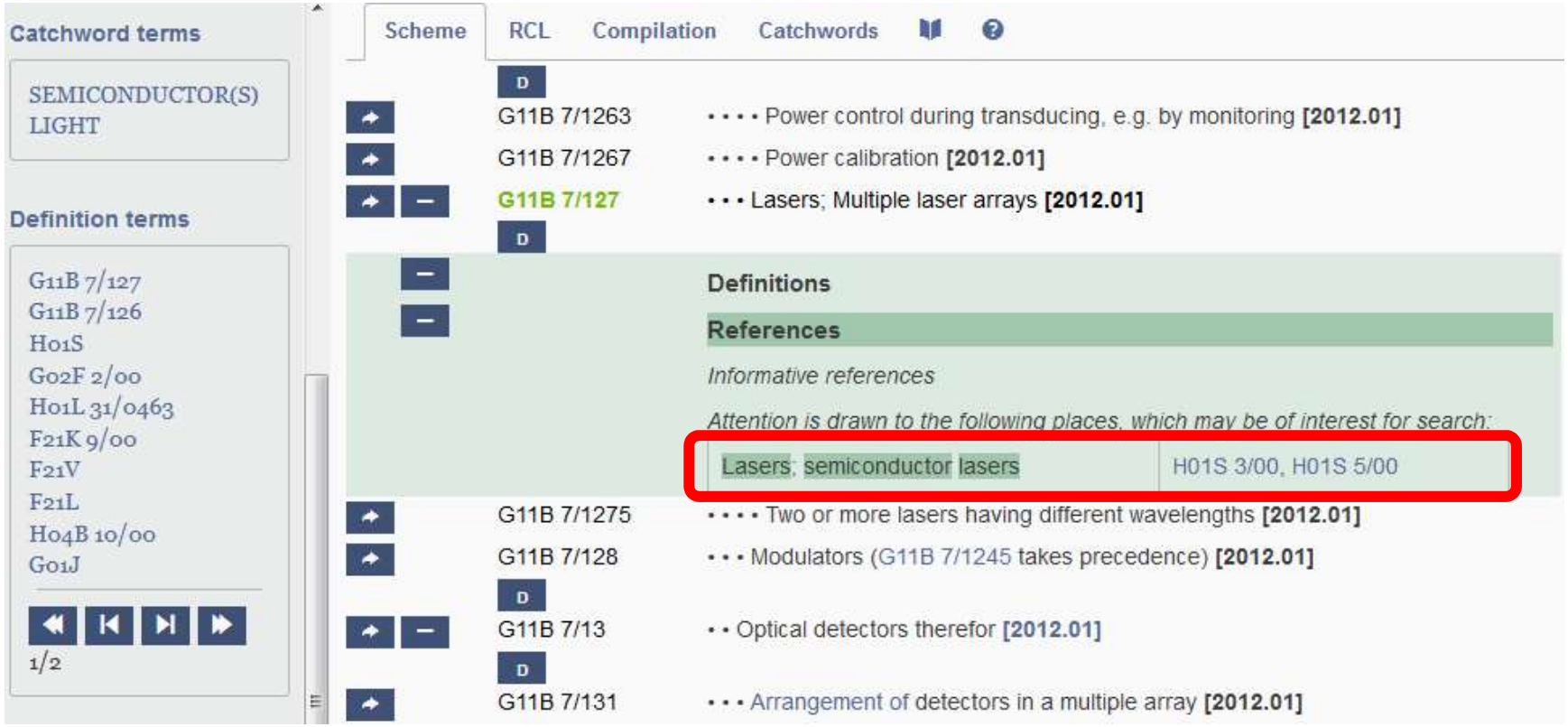

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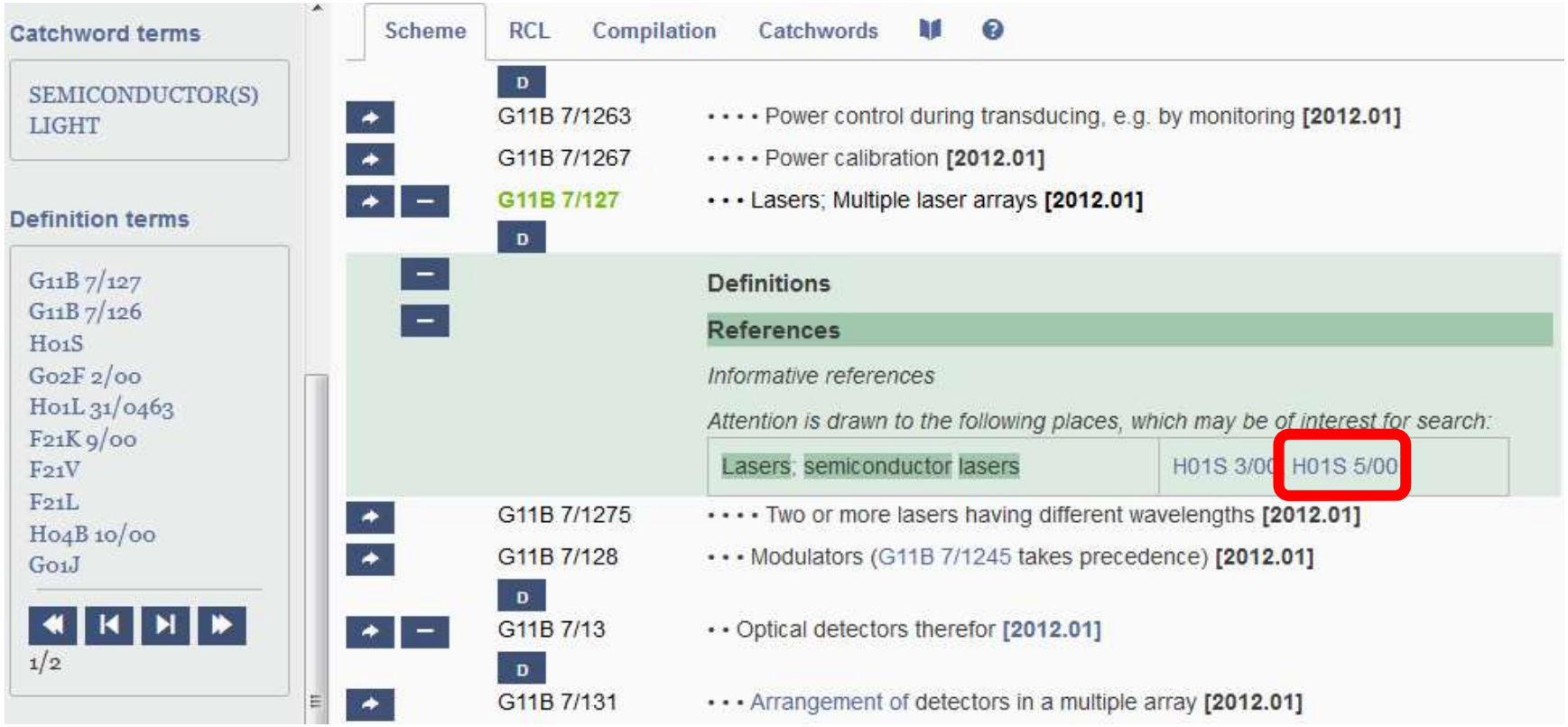

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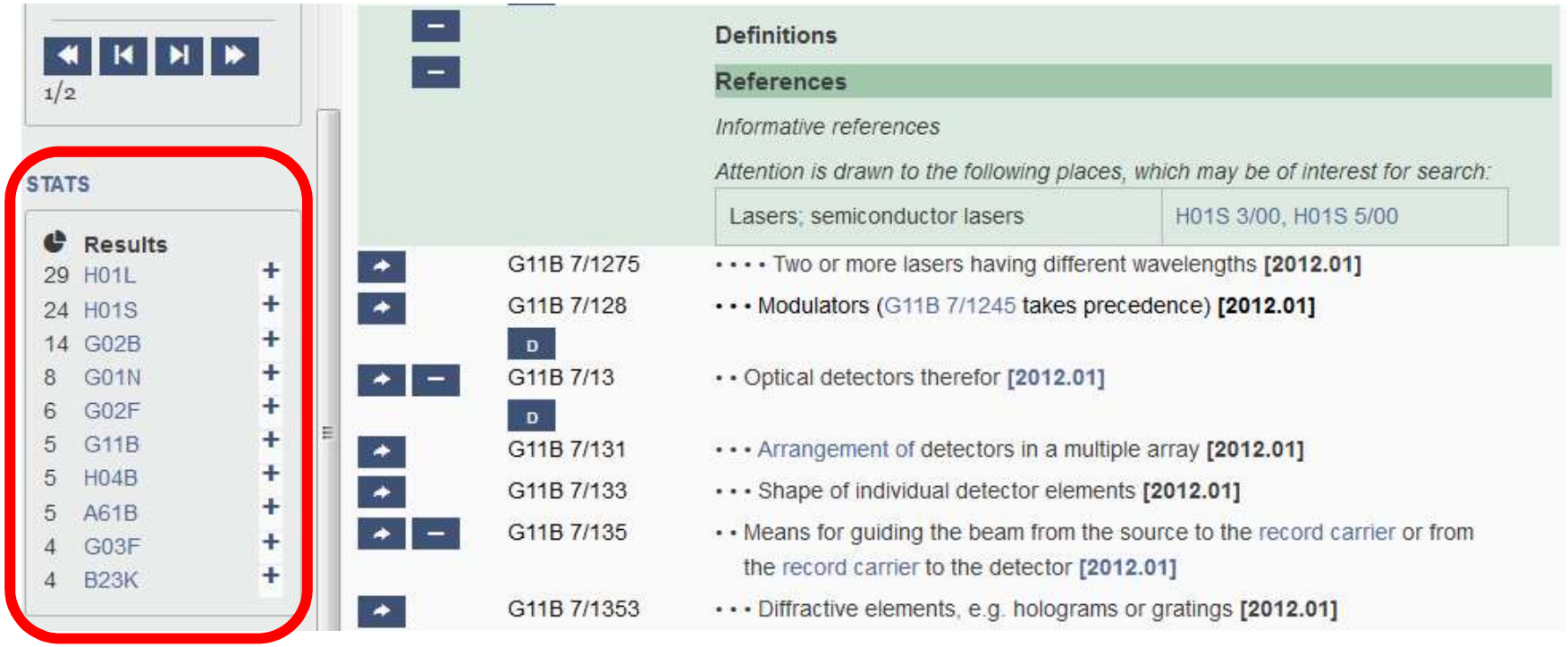
IPC Search Results (STATS)



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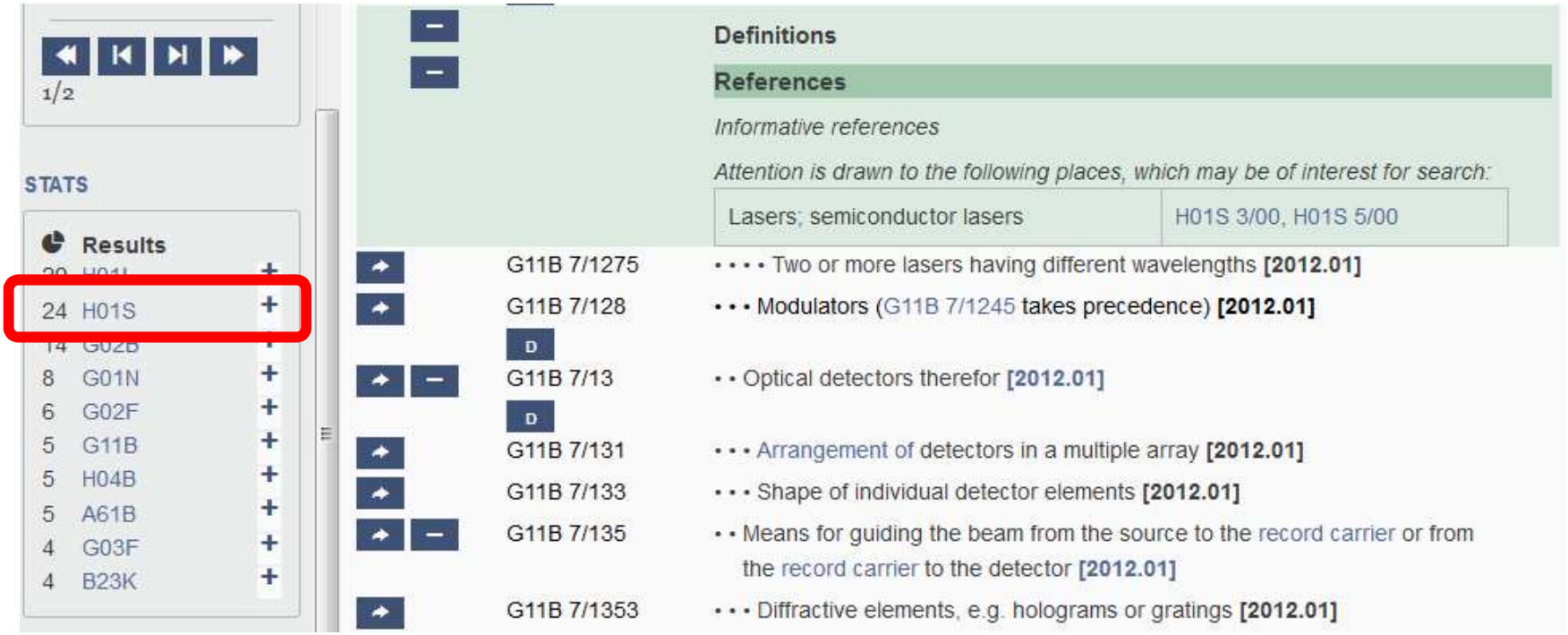

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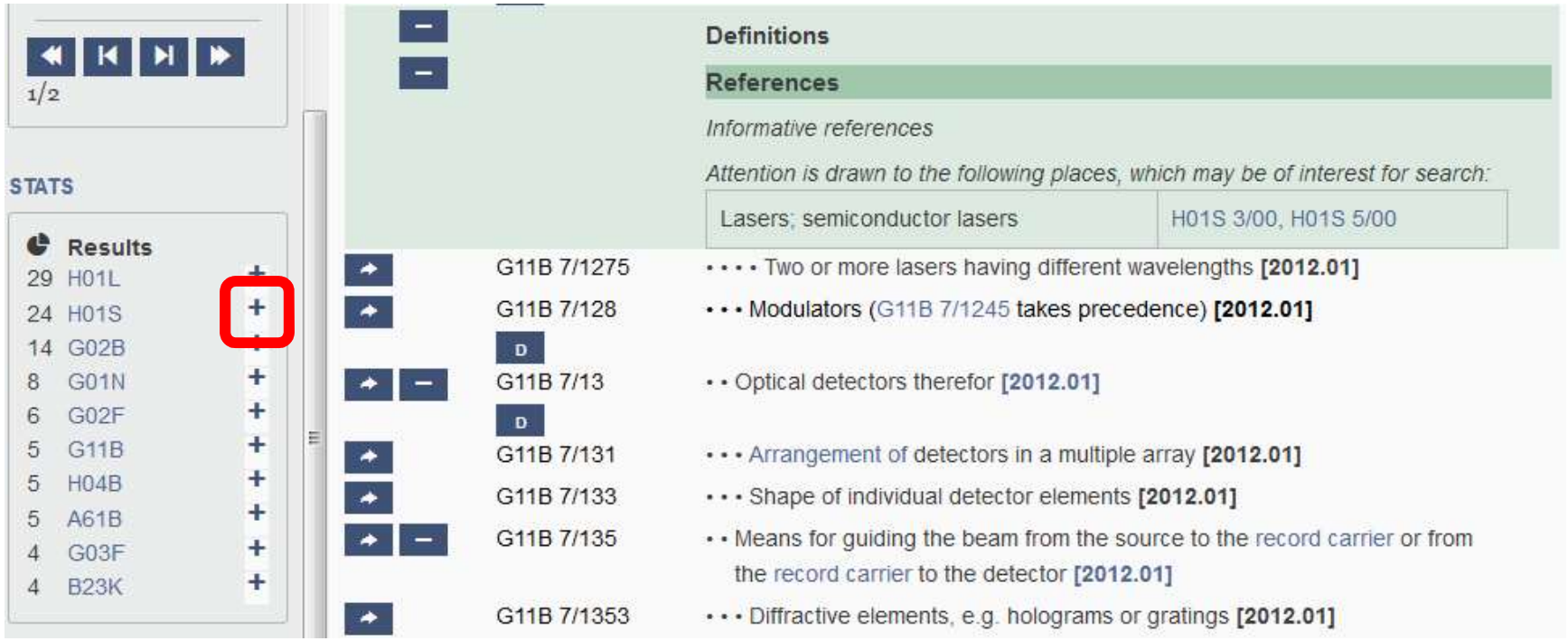

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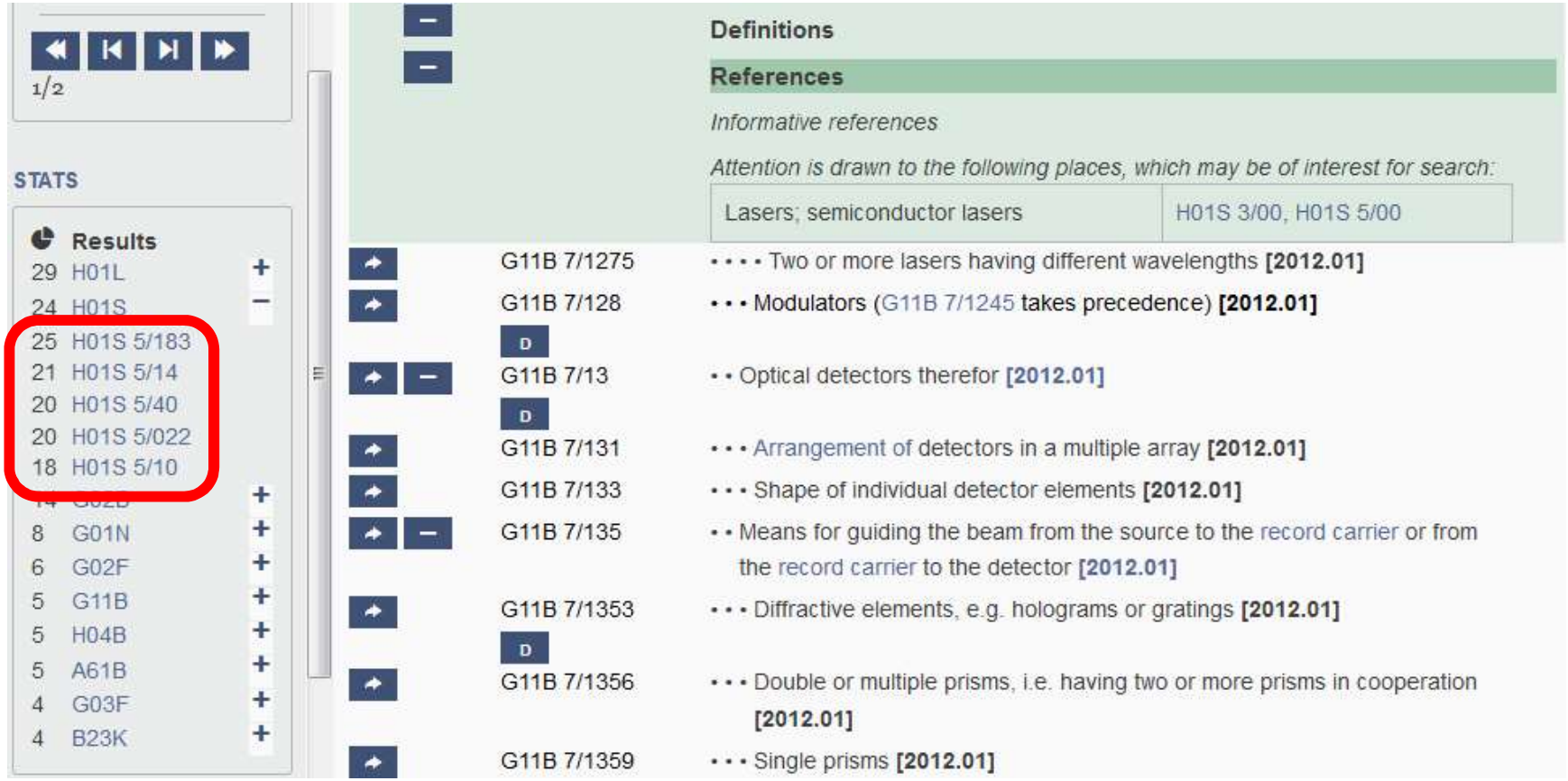

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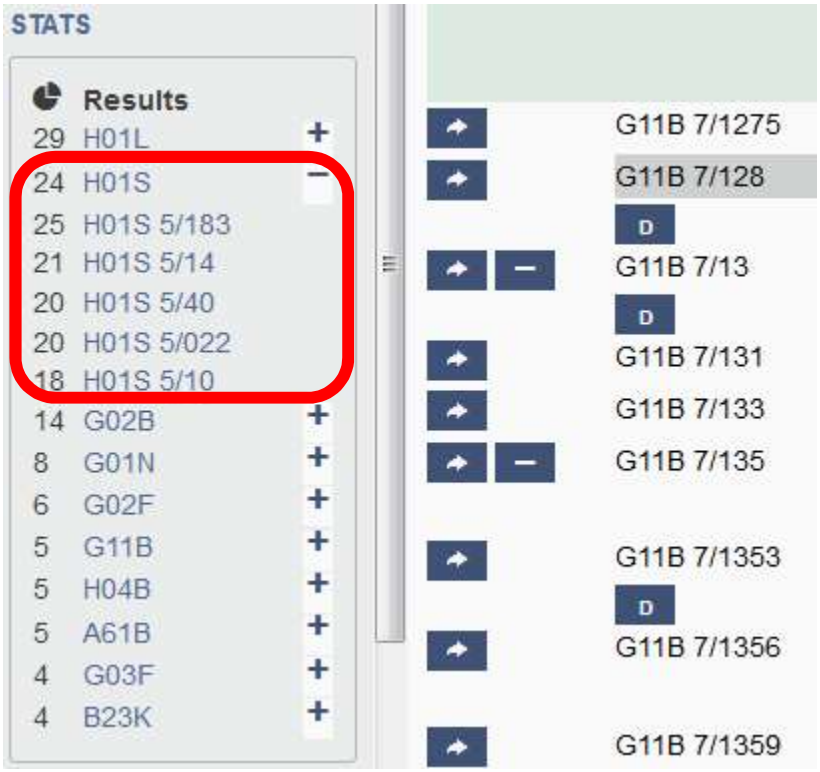
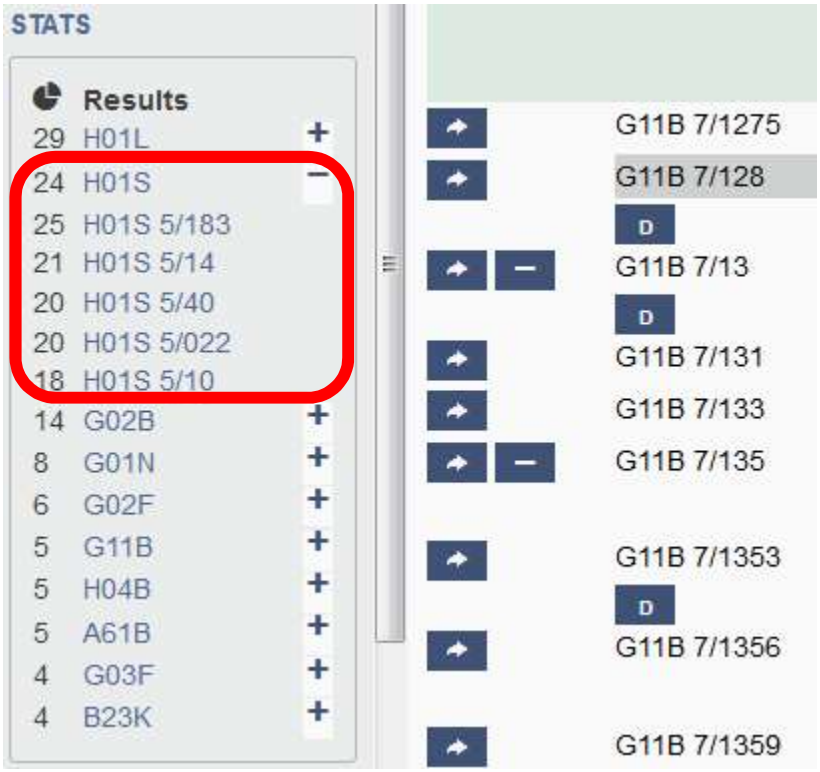
IPC Search Results (STATS)

H01S 5/183
H01S 5/14
H01S 5/40



IPC Search Results (STATS)

H01S 5/00



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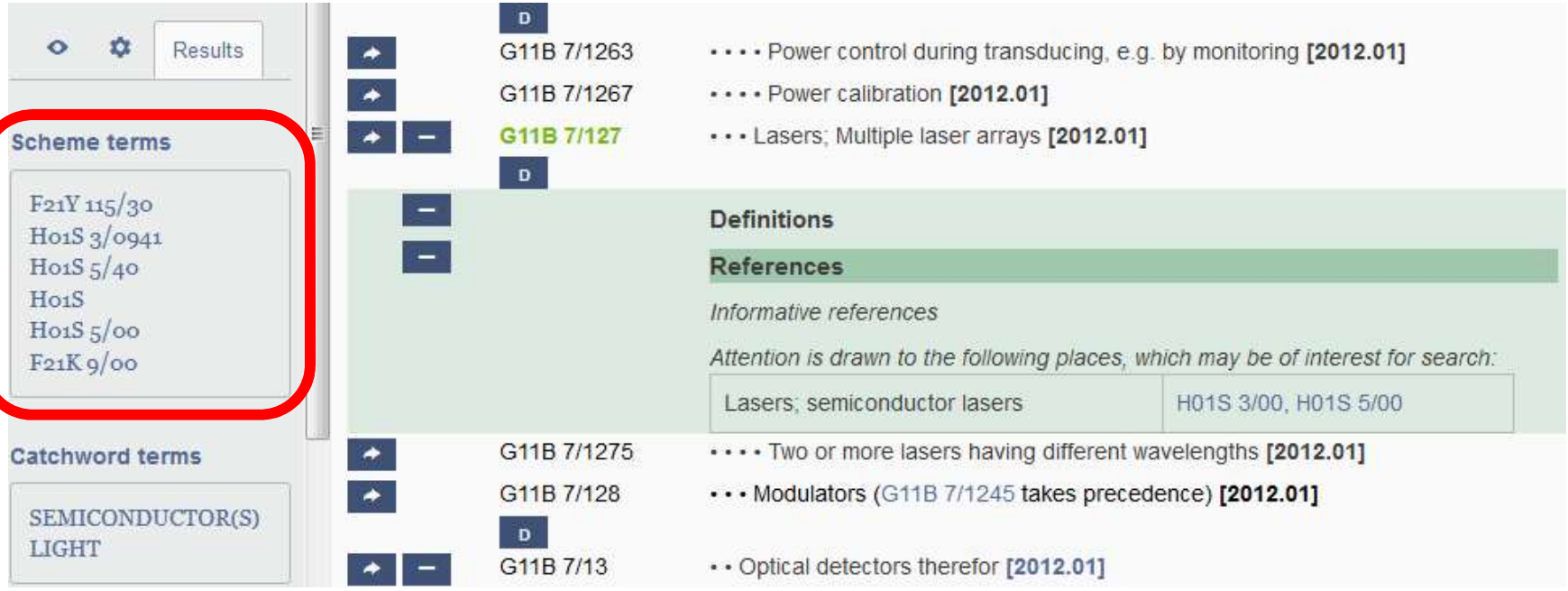
IPC Search Results (Scheme)



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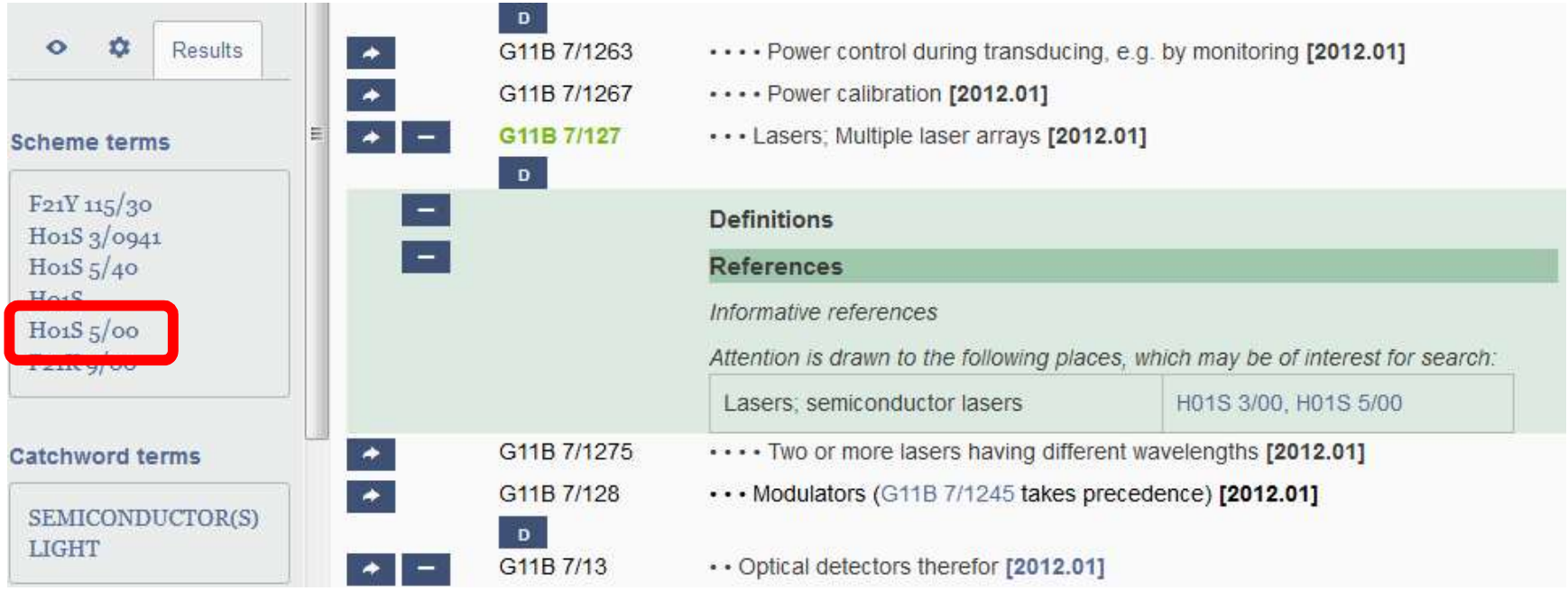

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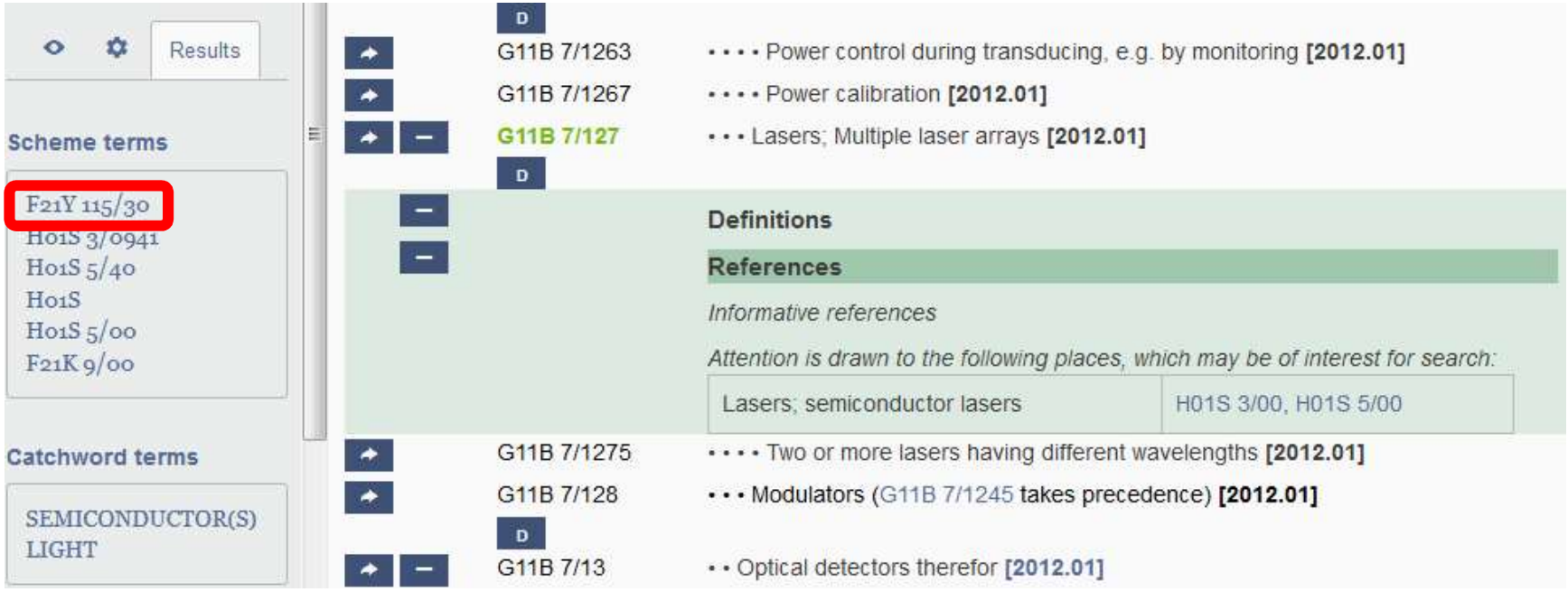

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IPC Scheme

F21Y	**INDEXING SCHEME ASSOCIATED WITH SUBCLASSES F21K, F21L, F21S and F21V, RELATING TO THE FORM OR THE KIND OF THE LIGHT SOURCES OR OF THE COLOUR OF THE LIGHT EMITTED [7]**
	Note(s) **[7]** This subclass constitutes an indexing scheme associated with subclasses F21K, F21L, F21S and F21V, relating to the form or the kind of the light sources, or of the colour of the light emitted.
F21Y 101/00	**Point-like light sources [2016.01]**
F21Y 103/00	**Elongate light sources, e.g. fluorescent tubes [2016.01]**
F21Y 105/00	**Planar light sources [2016.01]**
F21Y 107/00	**Light sources with three-dimensionally disposed light-generating elements [2016.01]**
F21Y 109/00	**Light sources with light-generating elements disposed on transparent or translucent supports or substrates [2016.01]**
F21Y 111/00	**Light sources of a form not covered by groups F21Y 101/00-F21Y 107/00 [2016.01]**
F21Y 113/00	**Combination of light sources [2016.01]**
F21Y 115/00	**Light-generating elements of semiconductor light sources [2016.01]**
F21Y 115/10	• Light-emitting diodes [LED] **[2016.01]**
F21Y 115/15	• • Organic light-emitting diodes [OLED] **[2016.01]**
F21Y 115/20	• Electroluminescent [EL] light sources **[2016.01]**
F21Y 115/30	• Semiconductor lasers **[2016.01]**

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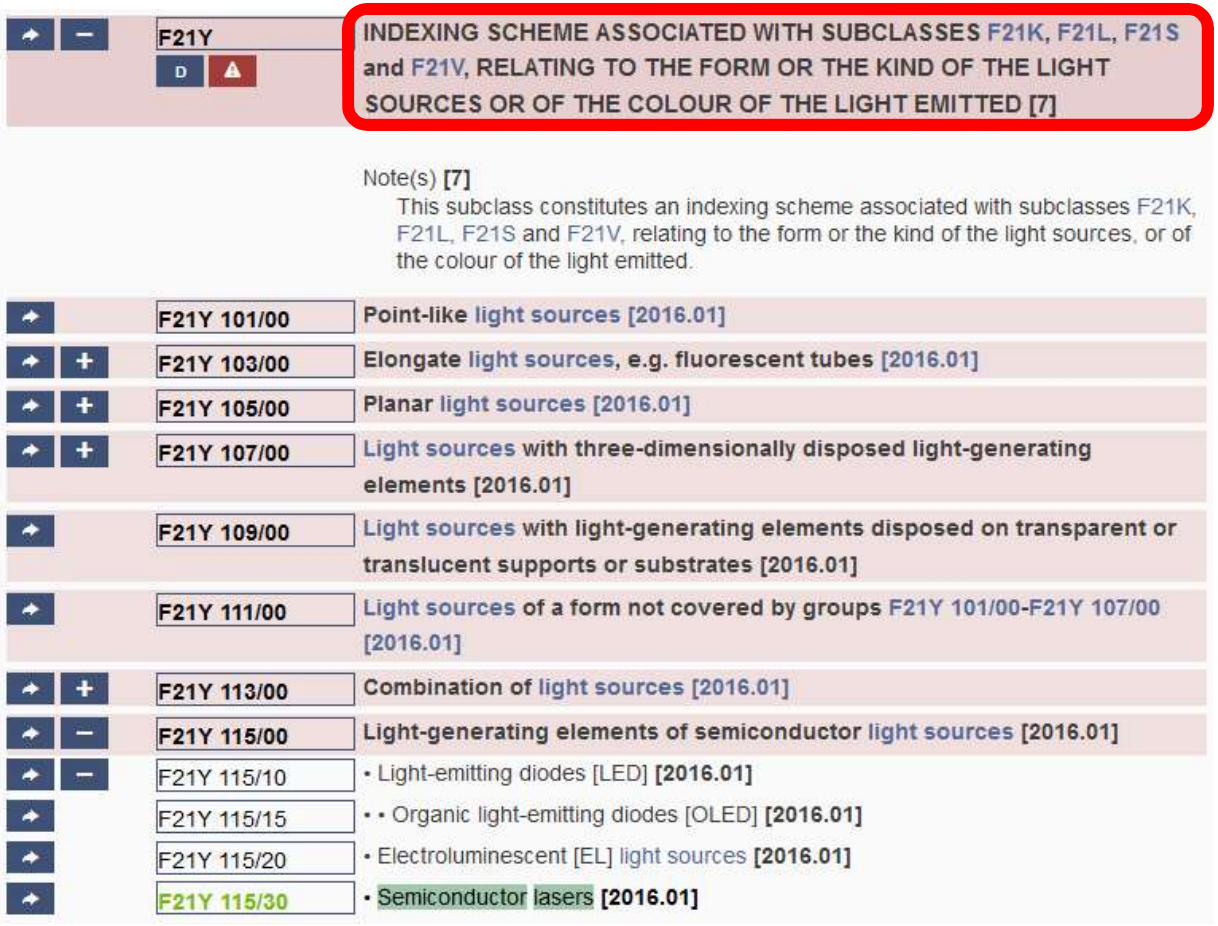

F21Y	INDEXING SCHEME ASSOCIATED WITH SUBCLASSES F21K, F21L, F21S and F21V, RELATING TO THE FORM OR THE KIND OF THE LIGHT SOURCES OR OF THE COLOUR OF THE LIGHT EMITTED [7]
	Note(s) [7] This subclass constitutes an indexing scheme associated with subclasses F21K, F21L, F21S and F21V, relating to the form or the kind of the light sources, or of the colour of the light emitted.
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F21Y 109/00	Light sources with light-generating elements disposed on transparent or translucent supports or substrates [2016.01]
F21Y 111/00	Light sources of a form not covered by groups F21Y 101/00-F21Y 107/00 [2016.01]
F21Y 113/00	Combination of light sources [2016.01]
F21Y 115/00	Light-generating elements of semiconductor light sources [2016.01]
F21Y 115/10	• Light-emitting diodes [LED] [2016.01]
F21Y 115/15	• • Organic light-emitting diodes [OLED] [2016.01]
F21Y 115/20	• Electroluminescent [EL] light sources [2016.01]
F21Y 115/30	• Semiconductor lasers [2016.01]

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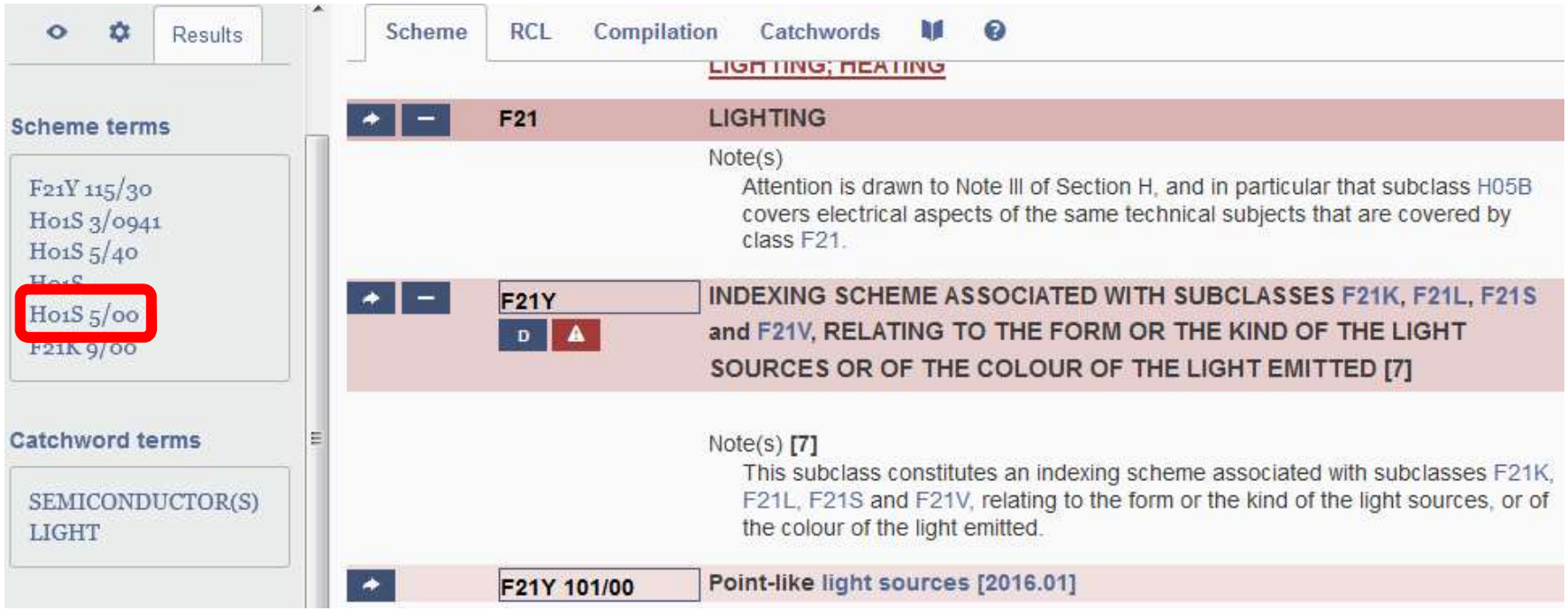
View options

- Tree view (subgroups)

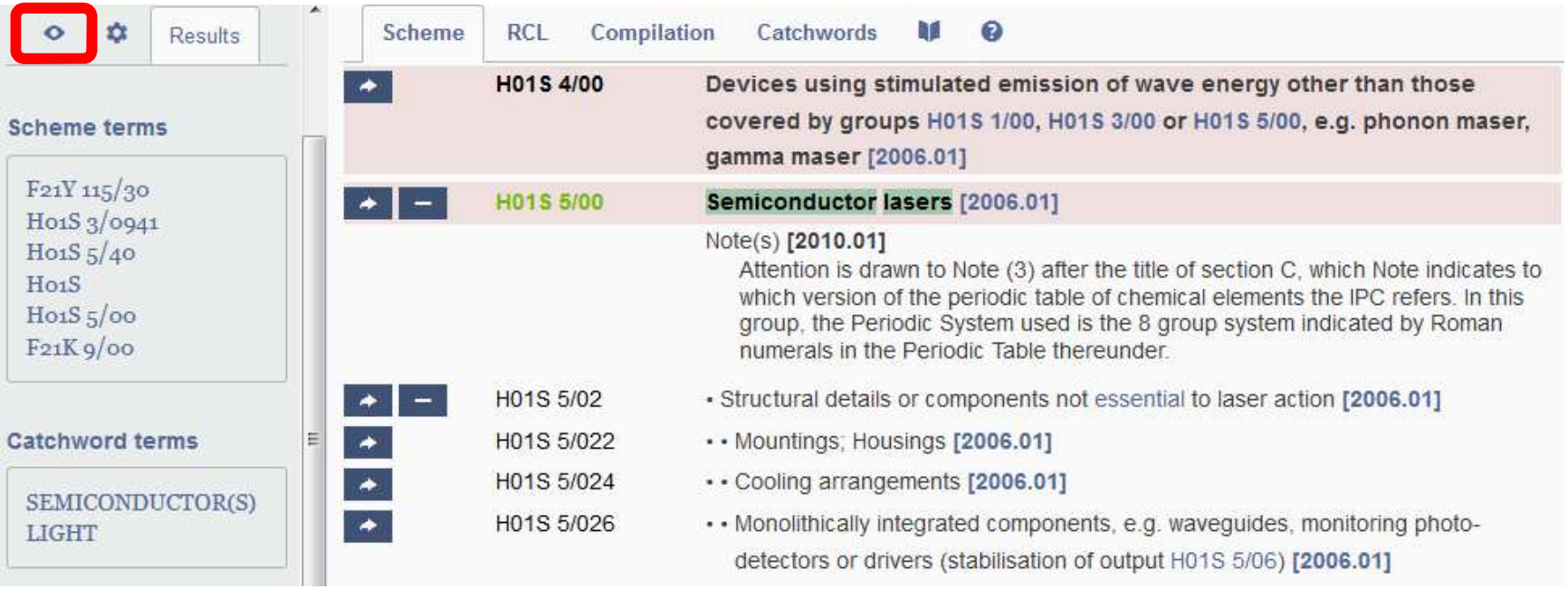
Exercise

- Activate the tree view in the IPC Scheme 

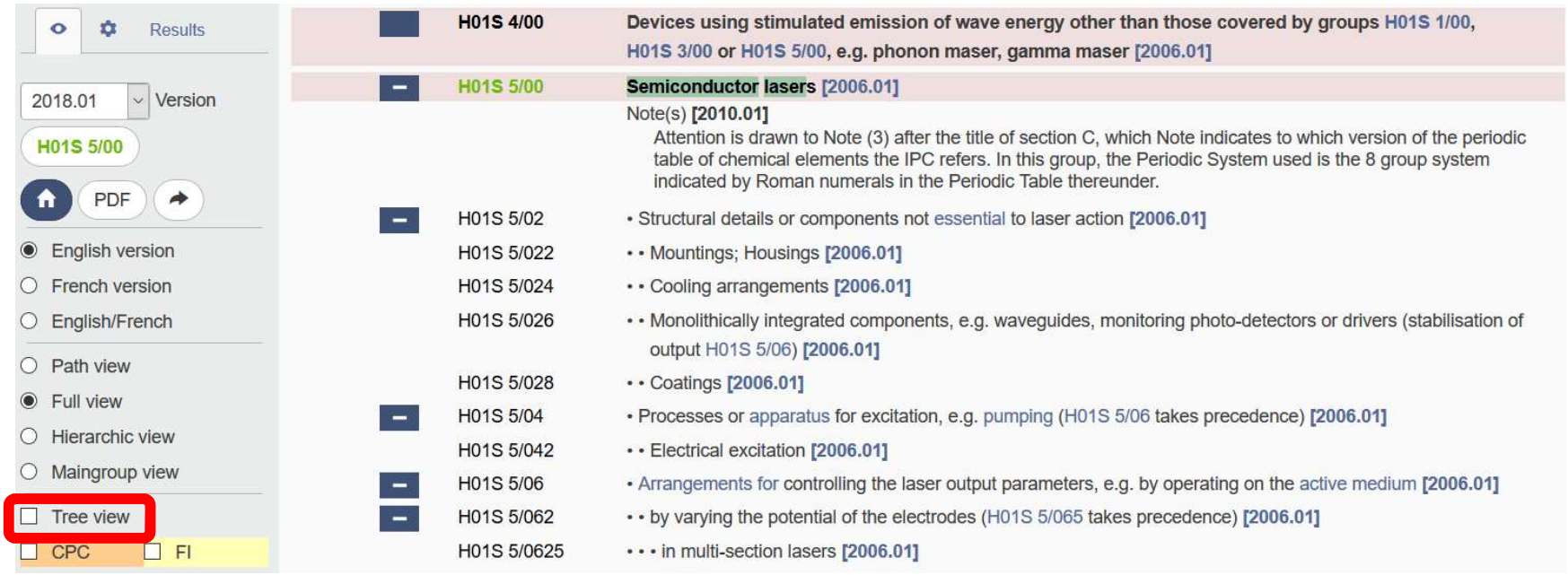
IPC Search Results (Scheme)



IPC Scheme


Results
Scheme terms
F21Y 115/30
H01S 3/0941
H01S 5/40
H01S
H01S 5/00
F21K 9/00
Catchword terms
SEMICONDUCTOR(S)
LIGHT
Scheme
RCL
Compilation
Catchwords
H01S 4/00
Devices using stimulated emission of wave energy other than those covered by groups H01S 1/00, H01S 3/00 or H01S 5/00, e.g. phonon maser, gamma maser [2006.01]
H01S 5/00
Semiconductor lasers [2006.01]
Note(s) [2010.01]
Attention is drawn to Note (3) after the title of section C, which Note indicates to which version of the periodic table of chemical elements the IPC refers. In this group, the Periodic System used is the 8 group system indicated by Roman numerals in the Periodic Table thereunder.
H01S 5/02
• Structural details or components not essential to laser action [2006.01]
H01S 5/022
• • Mountings; Housings [2006.01]
H01S 5/024
• • Cooling arrangements [2006.01]
H01S 5/026
• • Monolithically integrated components, e.g. waveguides, monitoring photo-detectors or drivers (stabilisation of output H01S 5/06) [2006.01]

IPC Scheme



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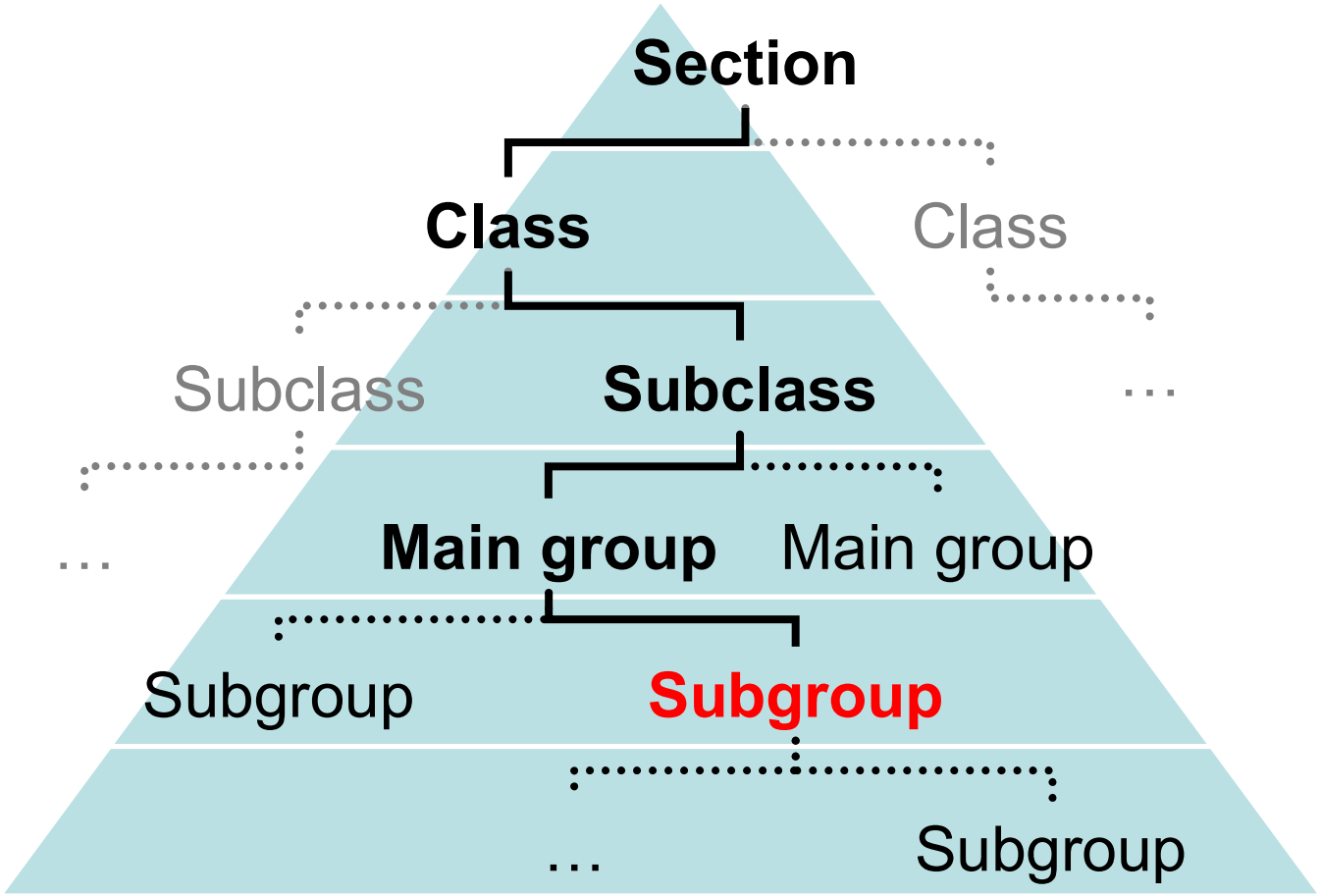
IPC Scheme

H01S 5/04	Processes or apparatus for excitation, e.g. pumping (H01S 5/06 takes precedence) **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/042	Electrical excitation **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/06	Arrangements for controlling the laser output parameters, e.g. by operating on the active medium **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/062	by varying the potential of the electrodes (H01S 5/065 takes precedence) **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/0625	in multi-section lasers **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/065	Mode locking; Mode suppression; Mode selection **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/068	Stabilisation of laser output parameters (H01S 5/0625 takes precedence) **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/0683	by monitoring the optical output parameters **[2006.01]**
H01S 5/0687	Stabilising the frequency of the laser **[2006.01]**

View options

- Full
- Path
- Hierarchical
- Main group

IPC: Structure (full)



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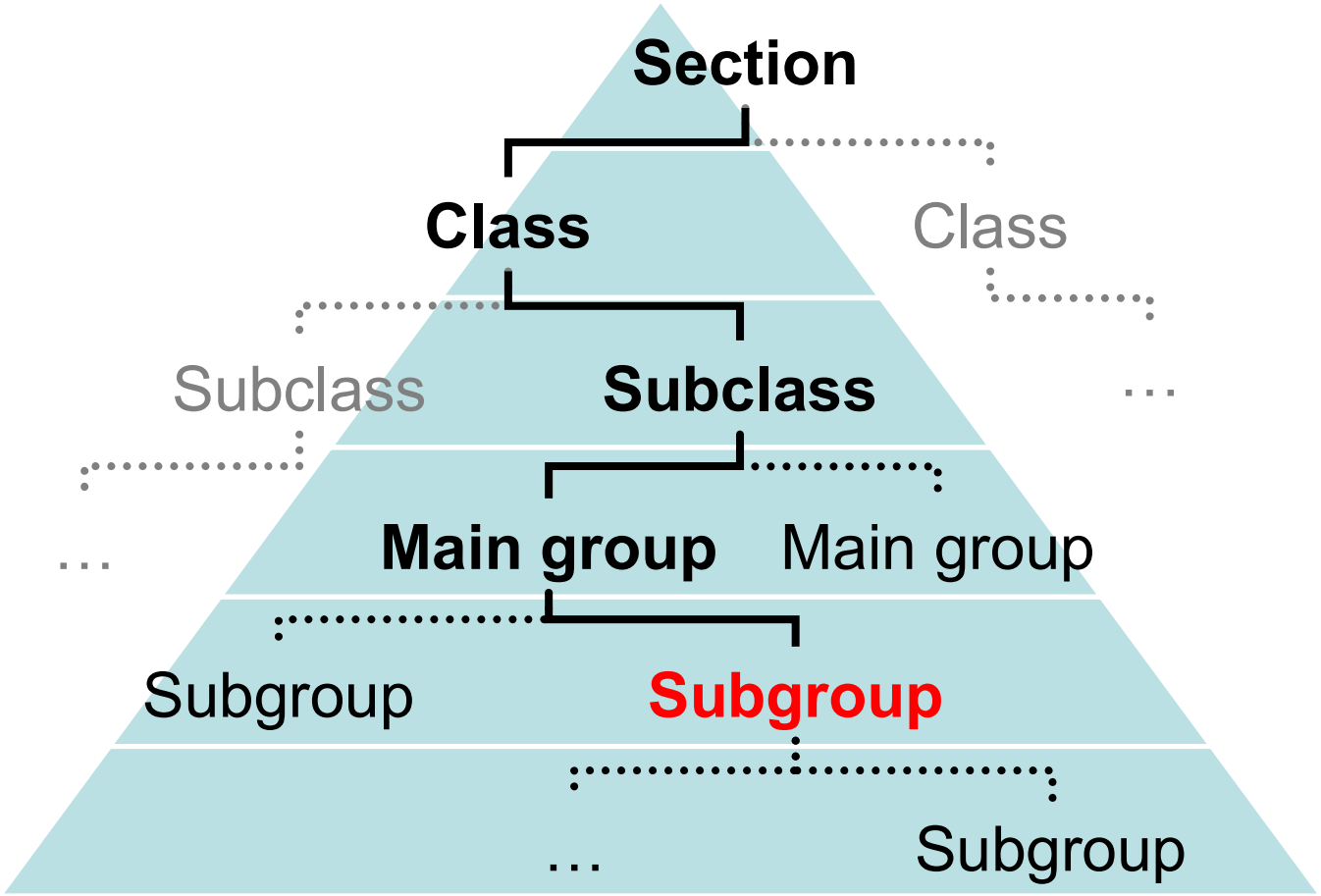
IPC: Structure (main group)



Main groups collapsed (except if selected)

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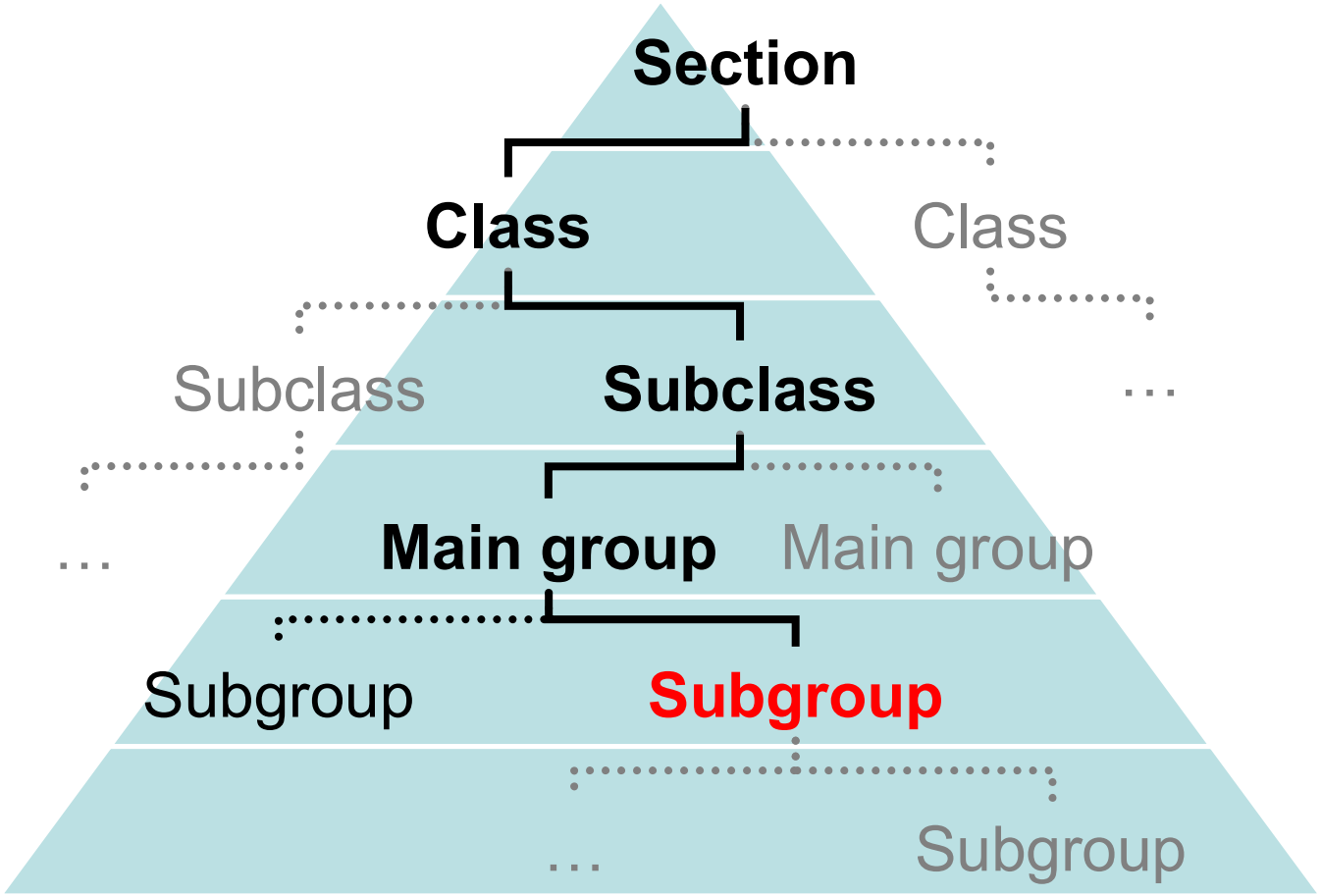
IPC: Structure (hierarchic)



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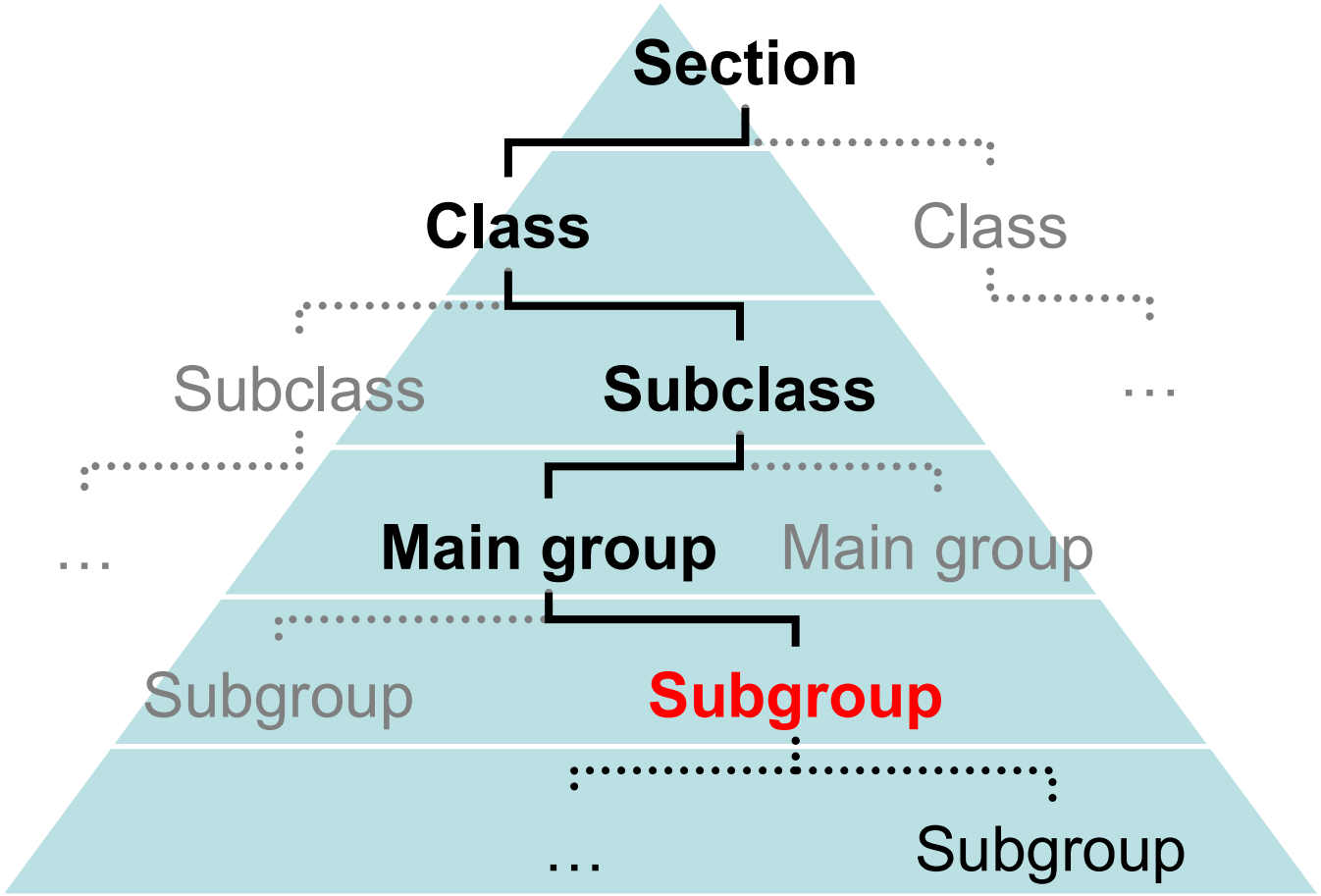
IPC: Structure (path)



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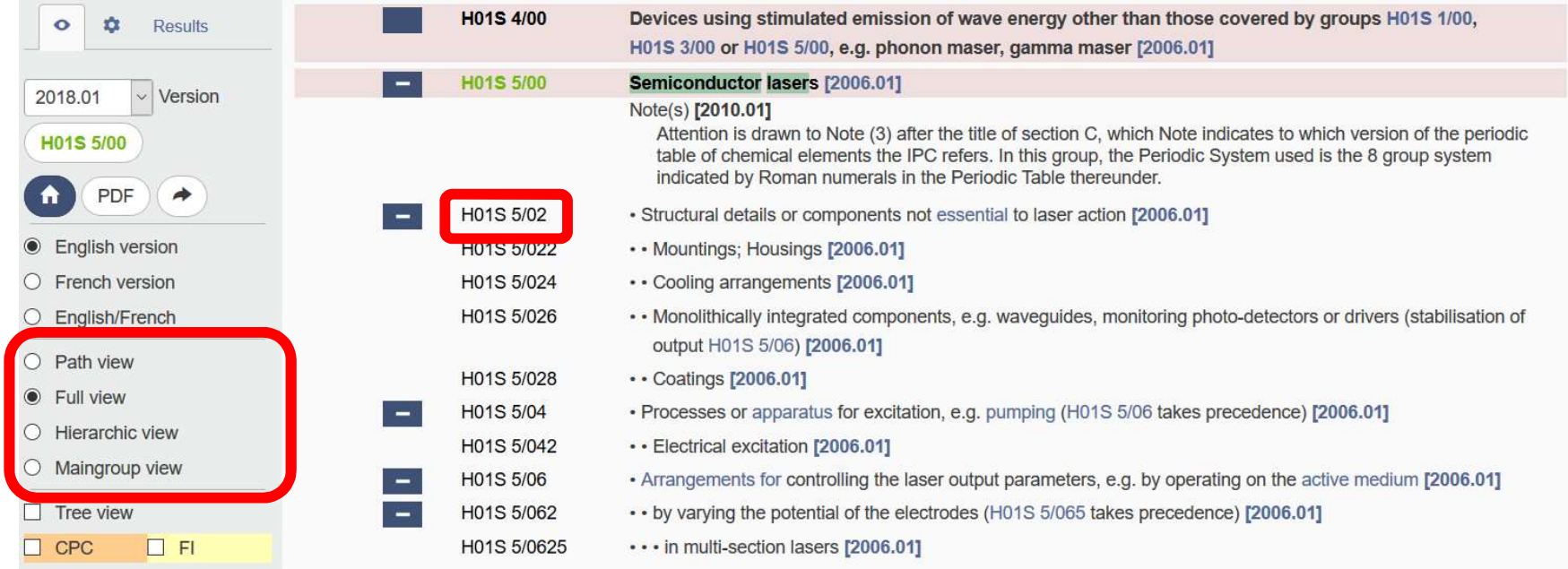
Exercise

- Use the different views of the IPC Scheme 

IPC Scheme



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IPC Scheme: Full / Main group

	H01S 4/00	**Devices using stimulated emission of wave energy other than those covered by groups H01S 1/00, H01S 3/00 or H01S 5/00, e.g. phonon maser, gamma maser [2006.01]**
–	**H01S 5/00**	**Semiconductor lasers [2006.01]**
		Note(s) **[2010.01]** Attention is drawn to Note (3) after the title of section C, which Note indicates to which version of the periodic table of chemical elements the IPC refers. In this group, the Periodic System used is the 8 group system indicated by Roman numerals in the Periodic Table thereunder.
–	H01S 5/02	• Structural details or components not essential to laser action **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/022	• Mountings; Housings **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/024	• Cooling arrangements **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/026	• Monolithically integrated components, e.g. waveguides, monitoring photo-detectors or drivers (stabilisation of output H01S 5/06) **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/028	• Coatings **[2006.01]**

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IPC Scheme: Path

	H01S D	**DEVICES USING STIMULATED EMISSION**
		Note(s) **[2]** This subclass covers: • devices for the generation or amplification, by using stimulated emission, of coherent electromagnetic waves or other forms of wave energy; • such functions as modulating, demodulating, controlling, or stabilising such waves.
	H01S 5/00	**Semiconductor lasers [2006.01]**
		Note(s) **[2010.01]** Attention is drawn to Note (3) after the title of section C, which Note indicates to which version of the periodic table of chemical elements the IPC refers. In this group, the Periodic System used is the 8 group system indicated by Roman numerals in the Periodic Table thereunder.
	H01S 5/02	• Structural details or components not essential to laser action **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/022	• Mountings; Housings **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/024	• Cooling arrangements **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/026	• Monolithically integrated components, e.g. waveguides, monitoring photo-detectors or drivers (stabilisation of output H01S 5/06) **[2006.01]**
	H01S 5/028	• Coatings **[2006.01]**

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IPC Scheme: Hierarchic

→ −	**H01S** D	**DEVICES USING STIMULATED EMISSION**
		Note(s) **[2]** This subclass covers: • devices for the generation or amplification, by using stimulated emission, of coherent electromagnetic waves or other forms of wave energy; • such functions as modulating, demodulating, controlling, or stabilising such waves.
→ −	**H01S 5/00**	**Semiconductor lasers [2006.01]**
		Note(s) **[2010.01]** Attention is drawn to Note (3) after the title of section C, which Note indicates to which version of the periodic table of chemical elements the IPC refers. In this group, the Periodic System used is the 8 group system indicated by Roman numerals in the Periodic Table thereunder.
→ +	**H01S 5/02**	• Structural details or components not essential to laser action **[2006.01]**
→ +	H01S 5/04	• Processes or apparatus for excitation, e.g. pumping (H01S 5/06 takes precedence) **[2006.01]**
→ +	H01S 5/06	• Arrangements for controlling the laser output parameters, e.g. by operating on the active medium **[2006.01]**
→ +	H01S 5/10	• Construction or shape of the optical resonator **[2006.01]**

Tip!

From	To	View
Any level	Any level	Full
Any level	Any level (faster)	Main group
Specific level	Same level	Hierarchical
Specific level	Subdivisions	Path

Classification

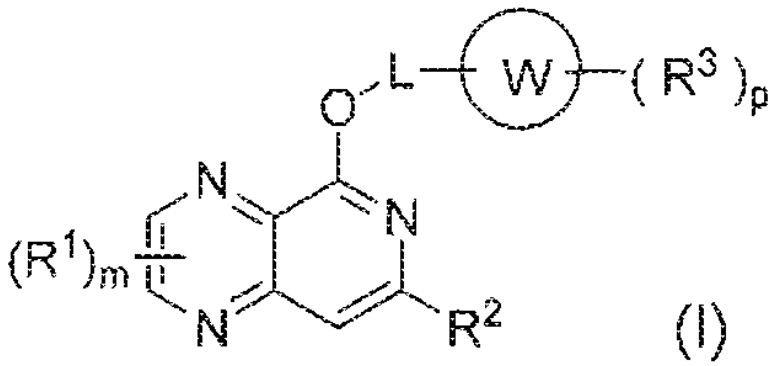
- Structure
  - Arrangement
  - Composition
- Function
- Advantages

Scenario

- A pharmaceutical company develops a new compound in its laboratories and files a patent application for this compound.

Invention

- Structure
  - Cyclic compound
  - Six-membered
  - Orthocondensed
  - Heterocyclic
  - Containing nitrogen
  - …



(I)

IPC Scheme: C07D 471/04

→ —	**C07D 471/00**	**Heterocyclic compounds containing nitrogen atoms as the only ring hetero atoms in the condensed system, at least one ring being a six-membered ring with one nitrogen atom, not provided for by groups C07D 451/00-C07D 463/00 [2006.01]**
→ —	C07D 471/02	• in which the condensed system contains two hetero rings **[2006.01]**
→	**C07D 471/04** D	• • Ortho-condensed systems **[2006.01]**

IPC Scheme: A61K 31/4985

	A61K 31/00	**Medicinal preparations containing organic active ingredients [2006.01]**
		Note(s) **[7]** 1. Organic active compounds forming salts or complexes with heavy metals are not classified in groups A61K 31/28, A61K 31/555 or A61K 31/7135, unless explicit indication to the contrary is made, e.g. hemin A61K 31/555. 2. In this group, the expressions "containing further heterocyclic rings" and "condensed with heterocyclic rings" also cover compounds having two or more identical heterocyclic rings.
	A61K 31/33 D	• Heterocyclic compounds **[2006.01]**
	A61K 31/395 D	• • having nitrogen as a ring hetero atom, e.g. guanethidine, rifamycins (rifampin A61K 31/496) **[2006.01]**
	A61K 31/495 D	• • • having six-membered rings with two nitrogen atoms as the only ring hetero atoms, e.g. piperazine (A61K 31/48 takes precedence) **[2006.01]**
	A61K 31/4985 D	• • • • Pyrazines or piperazines ortho- or peri-condensed with heterocyclic ring systems **[2006.01]**

Caution!

- Multiple classification symbols may have a similar scope

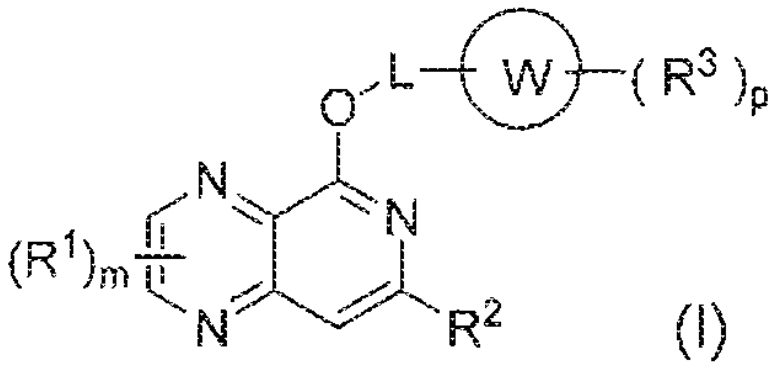
→ Consider different classifications that may be relevant

Scenario

- The pharmaceutical company discovers that the compound it developed has anti-inflammatory and anti-neoplastic (anti-cancer) properties.

Invention

- Structure
  - Cyclic compound
  - Six-membered
  - Orthocondensed
  - Heterocyclic
  - Containing nitrogen
  - …
- Function
  - Anti-arthritic
  - Anti-neoplastic
  - …



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IPC Scheme: A61P 19/02

	A61P D	**SPECIFIC THERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY OF CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS OR MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS [7]**
		Note(s) **[2012.01]** 1. This subclass covers therapeutic activity of chemical compounds or medicinal preparations already classified as such in subclasses A61K or C12N, or in classes C01, C07 or C08. 2. In this subclass, the term "drugs" includes chemical compounds or compositions with therapeutic activity. 3. In this subclass, therapeutic activity is classified in all appropriate places. 4. Attention is drawn to cases where the subject of the invention concerns only specific therapeutic activity of chemical compounds or medical preparations, and the chemical structure, compound, mixture or composition of this subject of the invention is known. In such cases, classification is made in both subclass A61K and subclass A61P as invention information. In addition, if the chemical structure, compound, mixture or composition or any individual ingredient of a mixture or composition is considered to represent information of interest for search, it may also be classified as additional information 5. The classification symbols of this subclass are not listed first when assigned to patent documents.
	A61P 19/00	**Drugs for skeletal disorders [2006.01]**
	A61P 19/02	• for joint disorders, e.g. arthritis, arthrosis **[2006.01]**

IPC Scheme: A61P 35/00

	A61P D	**SPECIFIC THERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY OF CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS OR MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS [7]**
		Note(s) **[2012.01]** 1. This subclass covers therapeutic activity of chemical compounds or medicinal preparations already classified as such in subclasses A61K or C12N, or in classes C01, C07 or C08. 2. In this subclass, the term "drugs" includes chemical compounds or compositions with therapeutic activity. 3. In this subclass, therapeutic activity is classified in all appropriate places. 4. Attention is drawn to cases where the subject of the invention concerns only specific therapeutic activity of chemical compounds or medical preparations, and the chemical structure, compound, mixture or composition of this subject of the invention is known. In such cases, classification is made in both subclass A61K and subclass A61P as invention information. In addition, if the chemical structure, compound, mixture or composition or any individual ingredient of a mixture or composition is considered to represent information of interest for search, it may also be classified as additional information 5. The classification symbols of this subclass are not listed first when assigned to patent documents.
	A61P 35/00	**Antineoplastic agents [2006.01]**
	A61P 35/02	• specific for leukemia **[2006.01]**
	A61P 35/04	• specific for metastasis **[2006.01]**

Tip!

- Inventions may only be classified according to certain aspects

→ Consider all different aspects of inventions to be searched (structure, function)

Review

- Advantage → More complete, precise search
- Structure → Hierarchical
- Search → Scheme, Catchwords, Definitions, STATS
- Challenge → Classification symbols with similar scope
- Challenge → Classification according to limitations

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