

What to Expect from the New USPTO Authentication Method for Private PAIR and Registered EFS in Various Browsers

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As of today, October 24, 2016, the USPTO implemented a work around for its antiquated system for accessing Private PAIR and implementing filings via Registered EFS. The antiquated system requires using a Java Applet for user authentication. The old system has been widely criticized and not compatible with modern version of popular browsers. This short article graphically reviews what happens using the new system.

Private PAIR and Attorney EFS should be functionally identical. When an user now attempts to log on to (for example) Private PAIR, here is what to expect, when using Firefox, IE, and Chrome.

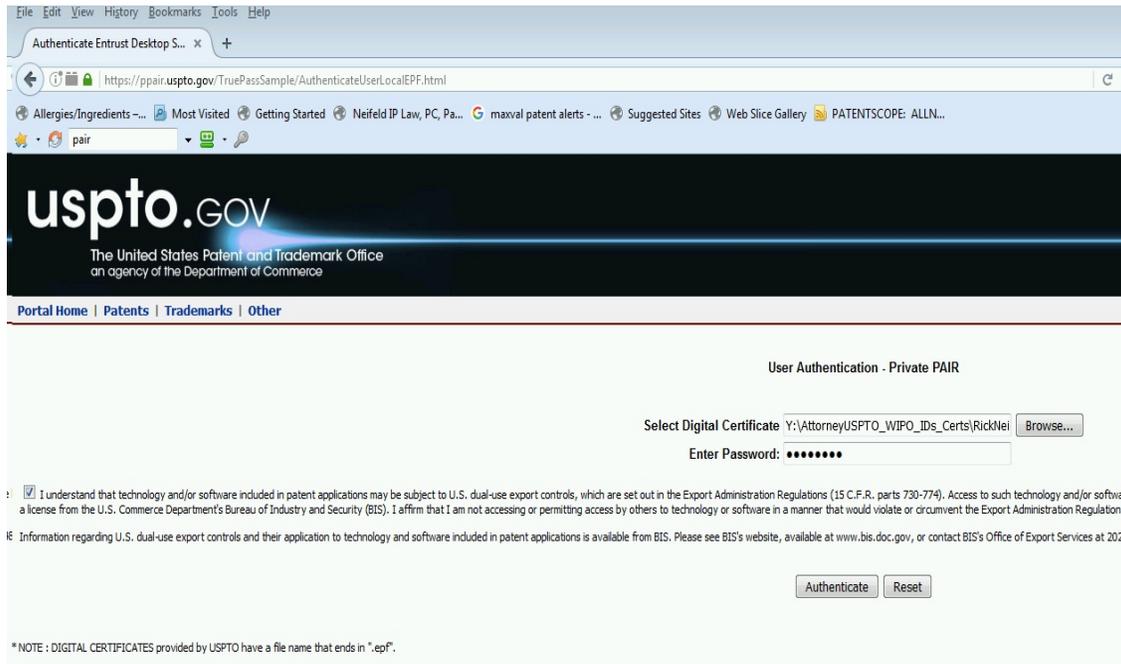
I. In Firefox

The first section

A user first navigates to the URL:

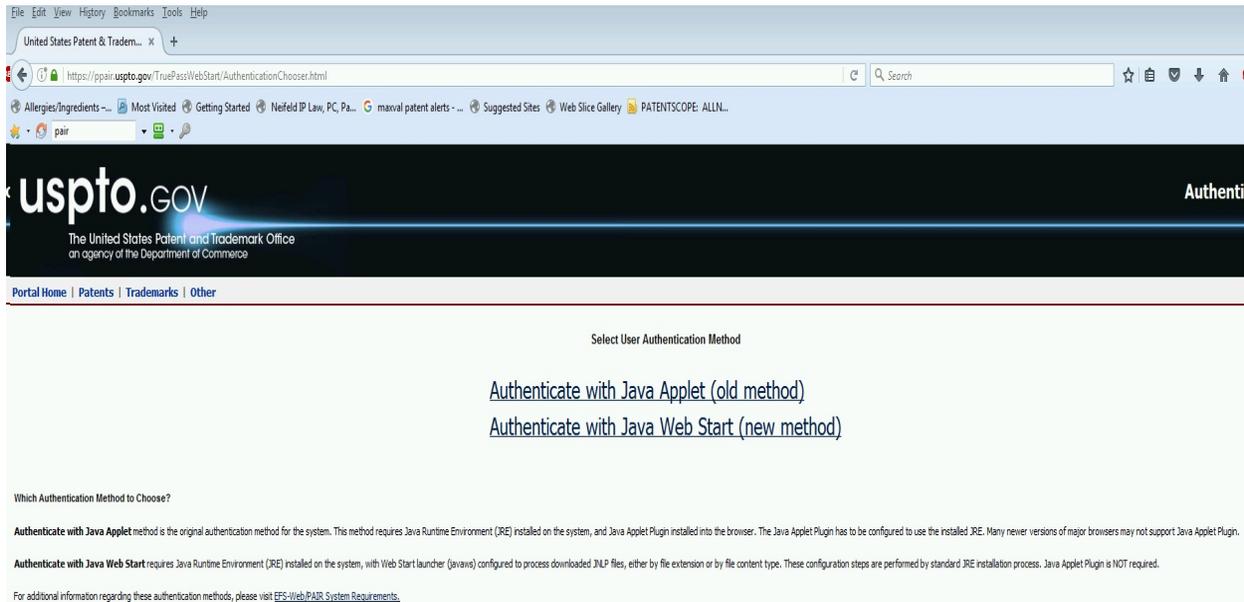
<https://ppair.uspto.gov/TruePassSample/AuthenticateUserLocalEPF.html>

shown below.



Enter the user digital certificate and password, just as you always did.

This page appears.



This page contains the note:

Authenticate with Java Web Start requires Java Runtime Environment (JRE) installed on the system, with Web Start launcher (javaws) configured to process downloaded JNLP files, either by file extension or by file content type. These configuration steps are performed by standard JRE installation process. **Java Applet Plugin is NOT required.**

Select the new method, "**Authenticate with Java Web Start (new method)**".

The following pop-up appears:



Check the "Do not show" checkbox, and click "run." This pop-up will not appear again if you click-the-box.

The following pop-up appears:

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "USPTO User Authentication". The header features the "uspto.GOV" logo and the text "Authenticate User" and "The United States Patent and Trademark Office an agency of the Department of Commerce". Below the header, there are two input fields: "Select Digital Certificate" with a "Browse..." button, and "Enter Password:". A checkbox is present next to a paragraph of text regarding dual-use export controls. Below this text is another paragraph providing information about U.S. dual-use export controls. At the bottom, there are "Authenticate" and "Cancel" buttons. A status box at the bottom left shows the environment details: "Environment: Java HotSpot(TM) Client VM 1.8.0_111_x32 (25.111-b14) on Windows 7 x86 v.8.1", "Checking environment... done", and "Checking redirect URL... done". The footer text reads "USPTO WebStart Authenticator v.1.0.4.63 Thu Oct 06 15:43:14 EDT 2016".

USPTO User Authentication

uspto.GOV Authenticate User
The United States Patent and Trademark Office
an agency of the Department of Commerce

Select Digital Certificate

Enter Password:

I understand that technology and/or software included in patent applications may be subject to U.S. dual-use export controls, which are set out in the Export Administration Regulations (15 C.F.R. parts 730-774). Access to such technology and/or software by any person located outside the United States or by a foreign national inside the United States constitutes an export that may require a license from the U.S. Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS). I affirm that I am not accessing or permitting access by others to technology or software in a manner that would violate or circumvent the Export Administration Regulations.

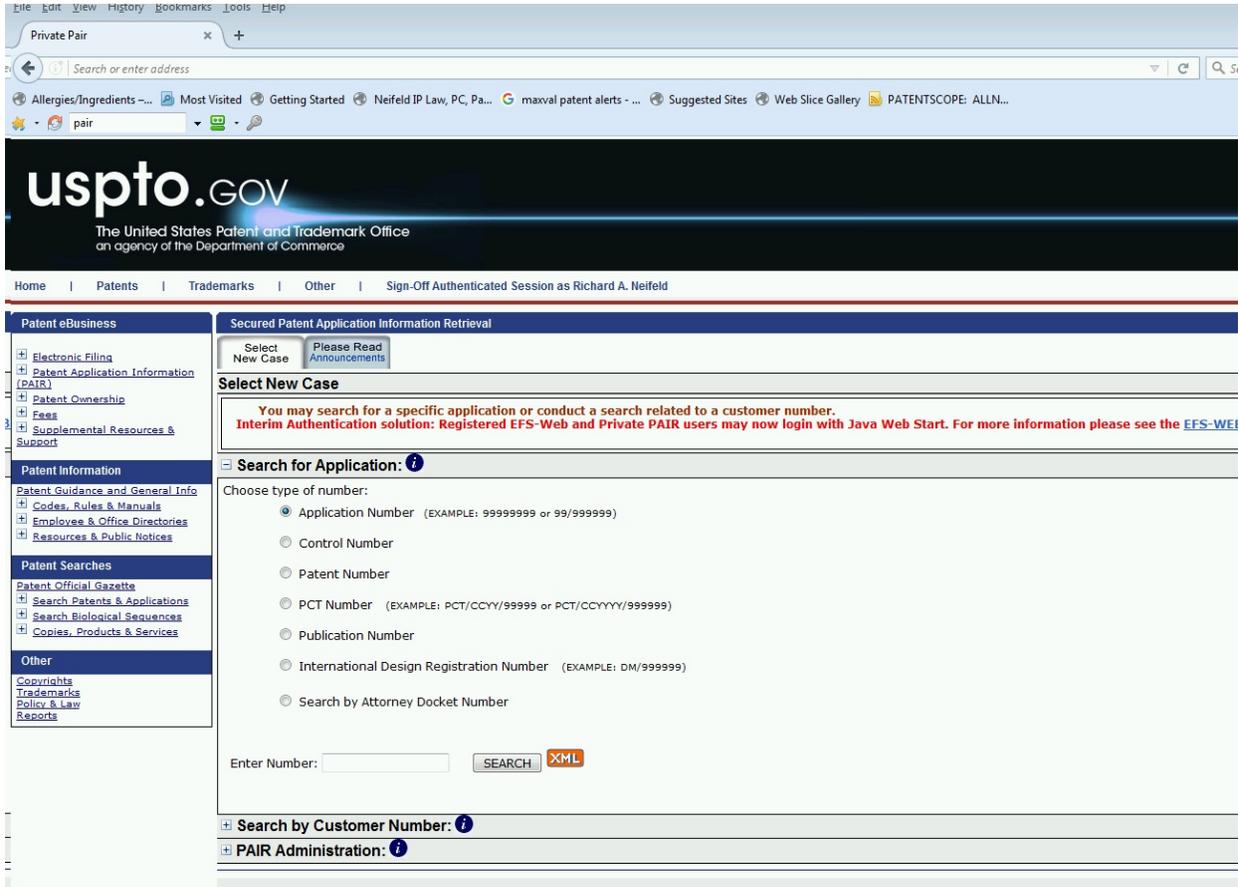
Information regarding U.S. dual-use export controls and their application to technology and software included in patent applications is available from BIS. Please see BIS's website, available at www.bis.doc.gov, or contact BIS's Office of Export Services at 202-482-4811.

 Environment: Java HotSpot(TM) Client VM 1.8.0_111_x32 (25.111-b14) on Windows 7 x86 v.8.1
Checking environment... done
Checking redirect URL... done

USPTO WebStart Authenticator v.1.0.4.63 Thu Oct 06 15:43:14 EDT 2016

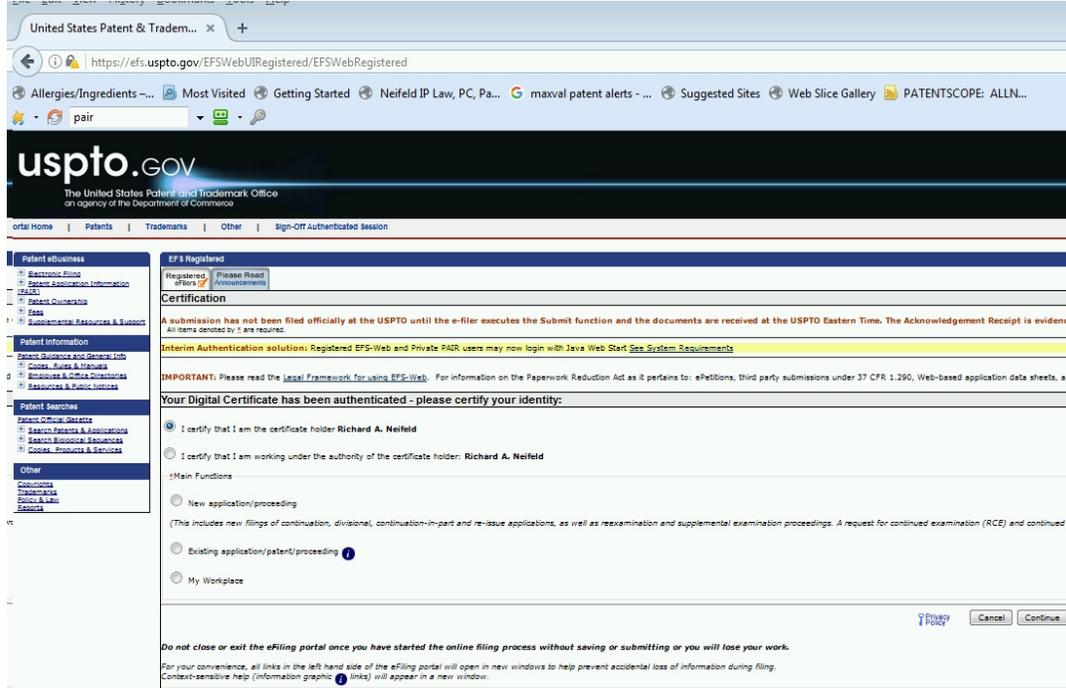
Enter your digital certificate and password again. Click Authenticate.

The authenticated session PAIR URL <https://ppair.uspto.gov/pair/PrivatePair> appears. Your browser should then show the Private PAIR main interface, seen below:



You can now proceed with your Private PAIR actions.

Since your browser is in an authenticated session, like in the past, you can also switch to the "EFS Registered" interface, as shown below.



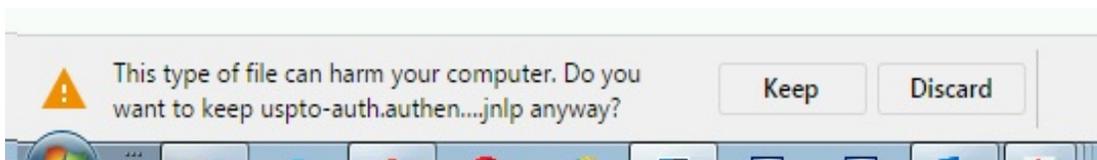
After signing off an authenticated session using Firefox, and then logging back in using Firefox, I found no problem.

II. In IE

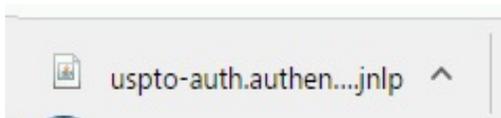
Logging back in using IE, I found no problem.

III. In Chrome

Logging back in using Chrome, I found problems. After clicking "**Authenticate with Java Web Start (new method)**", the web page grayed out and a small pop-up in the lower left corner of the page appeared. The pop-up is shown below:



After clicking "Keep" the following appears in the lower left hand corner:



Clicking the up arrow provides a menu with one option being "open". Clicking "open" results in the following pop-up:



From this pop-up, entering credentials then results in an authentication session at URL:
<https://ppair.uspto.gov/pair/PrivatePair>

After exiting the authentications session open in Chrome and attempting to start another authenticated session, the same sequence of pop-ups occurs.

IV. Summary

The new functionality to log on to an authenticated session for the USPTO Private PAIR and Registered EFS works. But it works better in FireFox and IE, than in Chrome.