

INTRODUCTION

Spoor & Fisher is a South African based law firm specializing in Intellectual Property.

In today's competitive commercial arena, qualifications and competency alone cannot assure the protection of intellectual property. Since our foundation by Alfred Spoor in 1920, the firm has developed into a dynamic and progressive firm of over fifty lawyers, able to provide sound and innovative solutions across the full spectrum of intellectual property law.

The firm has evolved from one focusing on the filing and prosecution of patents and trademarks into a practice which, now provides advice throughout the full life cycle of intellectual property rights including;

- Creation
- Protection
- Management
- Enforcement
- Exploitation

Spoor & Fisher assists clients in obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights throughout the world via our close relationships with overseas intellectual property practitioners.

RANGE OF SERVICES

The capabilities of the firm extend beyond the traditional filing and prosecution of patents and trade marks.

- Filing, prosecution and renewal of patents, trademarks, registered designs and plant breeders' rights
- Contentious and non-contentious opinion work in the field of intellectual property, including;
 - Searches (infringement, registrability, availability and novelty searches)
 - Due diligence
 - Intellectual property audits
 - Clearance and freedom-to-operate searches
 - Litigation and anti-counterfeiting
 - Commercial advice including;
 - Drafting and negotiating agreements
 - Corporate, tax and financial structuring; and
 - Early stage technology investment and venture capital work
- Consulting services, including;
 - Valuation; and
 - Portfolio management

Our trademark practice, in addition to the normal service offering, has particular expertise in dealing with ambush marketing and advertising disputes. We also have an anti-counterfeiting unit with a dedicated investigator to assist in identifying counterfeiters, conducting surveillance exercise and identifying counterfeiting activities 24/7, 365 days of the year.

Our patent practice is further divided into areas of specialization according to scientific and engineering disciplines. Each of these groups comprises of professionals with the appropriate scientific and engineering qualifications, together with legal qualifications and experience.

- Biotechnology and life sciences
- Chemistry and chemical engineering
- Civil and mining engineering
- Computer implemented inventions (including business methods)
- Electrical and electronic engineering
- Mechanical engineering
- Nanotechnology

HISTORY

Spoor & Fisher was established as a boutique Intellectual Property firm in South Africa in 1920. The practice has grown to a compliment of 29 partners over 40 lawyers and over two hundred staff in South Africa having offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria. Johannesburg is the industrial, commercial and financial hub of South Africa. Cape Town is the legislative capital as well as becoming an important centre in the biotechnology arena. Pretoria is the seat of the South African Patent and Trade Mark office, as well as the Court of the Commissioner of Patents.

There is an associated office in the Channel Islands, [Spoor & Fisher Jersey](#), which was established in 1977. Situated in Jersey, Channel Islands (which is in the English Channel between England and France), its main area of activity is the filing and maintenance of patents and trade marks across the African continent (apart from South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which can best be handled by the South African Offices), the Caribbean and the Middle East.

RECOGNITION / AWARDS

[Spoor & Fisher voted best IP law firm in South Africa for the fourth year in a row](#)

In 2007, for a third year in a row, Spoor & Fisher received the award for the top IP firm in South Africa in the annual PMR survey conducted amongst South African companies. Respondents were asked to rate the legal firms overall and across a range of 18 attributes.

[Spoor & Fisher recognized as a leader in IP on a global level](#)

Spoor & Fisher is consistently ranked in the top tiers for both Patents and Trade Marks in South Africa in the Managing Intellectual Property (MIP) worldwide survey which is recognised as the largest survey of its kind worldwide. In 2007, Spoor & Fisher achieved a Tier 1 ranking in the Patents categories (MIP February 2007). We are awaiting the 2007 Trade Marks results.

[Spoor & Fisher receive Star of Africa Award – September 2006](#)

The AmCham Stars of Africa Awards programme created by the American Chamber of Commerce is an annual event designed to recognize truly sustainable and replicable programmes that address the many and varied social and environmental needs in South Africa. [Spoor & Fisher's Adult Education Centre](#) took the Silver award in the education category.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Pre-2007 Spoor & Fisher has donated funds to more than 30 charities in their communities and even more significantly the people of Spoor & Fisher have invested their time and heartfelt care in social responsibility projects.

[Adult Education Centre](#)

In September 1994 Spoor & Fisher opened an adult education centre under the auspices of Project Literacy, after establishing the need for such a centre through a community survey. The scheme is committed to reducing the backlog in education caused by the inequalities of the past and aims to provide literacy skills and educational upgrading with job-related training for as many educationally disadvantaged adults in the Centurion area as possible. There is no cost to the students for their studies or examinations.

[Habitat for Humanity](#)

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, an international housing organisation operating in more than 100 countries which focuses on eliminating substandard housing and homelessness, KAVOSHS has over the years been building homes for its members.

Spoor & Fisher's social responsibility programme has been in place for well over the last 10 years and has now been expanded to include a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to build a house for families who are members of KAVOSH (Kathehong South & Vosloorus Self – Help Housing Scheme). The entire company becomes involved and the staff who do not give of their time in building donate clothes, household goods, trees and grass for a garden and supply furniture.

In 2007, Spoor & Fisher, Habitat and KAVOSHS, in conjunction with three law firms from Pretoria and Johannesburg namely Smith Tabata Buchanan Boyes (STRB), Spoor & Fisher and Werksmans representing the Gauteng Legal Community, built houses for James, Nonkosi and Sara. The three families, who had waited years to receive their homes, received the keys to their new homes on 5 August 2007.

OFFICES

- [Pretoria](#)
- [Johannesburg](#)
- [Cape Town](#)
- [Jersey](#)

Ever since its creation, Spoor & Fisher has always had an active interest in the African continent. By the mid-1970's, the African section of the practice (that is to say Africa excluding South Africa and its immediate neighbours) was showing such growth that the African work had become a section in its own right.

This led to the establishment of Spoor & Fisher Jersey in 1977 whose initial objective was to handle the ever increasing Africa practice more effectively.

The office is situated in Jersey, Channel Islands which are in the English Channel between England and France. Jersey is part of the British telecommunications and postal network, and has excellent and direct communications with all African countries and, of course, with other countries around the world.

In the years since the office opened, the Africa practice has experienced enormous expansion, and from its initial complement of two, Spoor & Fisher Jersey now has a total complement of over 60 (sixty); including five resident directors.

Spoor & Fisher Jersey's main area of activity is the filing and maintenance of patents and trade marks across the African continent (apart from South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which can best be handled by our South African Offices), the Caribbean and the Middle East.

In addition, there has been significant growth in litigious matters in Africa. Indeed there are over 800 active contentious matters (oppositions, infringements etc.) on our files at any one time.

Spoor & Fisher Jersey is increasingly involved in matters in the Caribbean and the Middle East, and has built up a substantial measure of expertise in what might be regarded as small and awkward jurisdictions in all parts of the world. The computerised patent renewals of the firm as a whole are also handled out of Jersey.

Where possible Spoor & Fisher Jersey deals directly with local Trade Mark and Patent Registries. However, it also has offices, an extensive network of local employees, and other contacts and associates spread across the continent.

With its years of practical experience and an extensive network across the continent, Spoor & Fisher Jersey is ideally placed to assist both local and overseas clients in securing trade mark and patent protection throughout Africa, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

CATEGORIES:

Law Firms of Africa / Trademark Law Firms / Patent Law Firms / Intellectual Property Law Firms.

SUMMARY

Headquarters: **Pretoria, South Africa**

No of offices: **4**

No of attorneys: **59**

Major Practice Areas: **Intellectual Property law**

Date Founded: **1920**

Company Type: **Partnership**

Website: **www.spoor.com**