



Media relations
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Press Release

regarding judgment B-669/2024 of 15 October 2024

No right to continued use of the Swiss coat of arms

The Federal Institute of Intellectual Property dismissed a request for continued use of the Swiss coat of arms that had been filed too late by the Swiss Ice Hockey Federation. The Federal Administrative Court upholds this ruling.

The Coat of Arms Protection Act, in force since 2017, newly provides that the Swiss coat of arms may only be used by the Swiss Confederation. An exception is established for businesses and associations that have used the Swiss coat of arms uninterruptedly for at least thirty years. Requests for an exceptional permit would have had to have been submitted to the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) before the end of 2018.

In June 2018, the Swiss Ice Hockey Federation (SIHF) submitted a request for a permit to use the Swiss coat of arms on the shirts of the Swiss national teams until the end of May 2019. It pursued the dialogue with the federal authorities until October 2021, when it submitted a new request for continued use.

Rejection of the appeal

In its decision, the Federal Administrative Court notes that the SIHF failed to submit the request on time. The Court therefore rules that the Federal Institute of Intellectual Property, entrusted with the matter by the FDJP, was justified in dismissing the request submitted by the SIHF in 2021 without entering into the substance of the case. The Court did not address the question whether the SIHF could have satisfied the strict substantive requirements for the continued use of the Swiss coat of arms.

This judgment may be appealed to the Federal Supreme Court.

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About the Federal Administrative Court

Located in St. Gallen, the Federal Administrative Court (FAC) was established in 2007. With its staff of 375 employees (314.7 FTE) and its 73 judges (65 FTE) it is the largest federal court in Switzerland. The Federal Administrative Court has jurisdiction to hear appeals against decisions rendered by Swiss federal administrative authorities. In specific matters, the FAC may grant review on decisions rendered by cantonal authorities. Recourse actions are also reviewed by the Court. The FAC is composed of six divisions. It renders an average of 6,500 judgments every year.