

From: [Director Discretionary Decision](#)
To: Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com; [Director Discretionary Decision](#); [Director DI](#); [Trials](#)
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com
Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Reply Brief
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 9:47:21 AM

Patent Owner is authorized to file a 4-page reply in IPR2026-00268, due no later than Monday, July 20, 2026, limited to addressing the matters raised below. Petitioner is authorized to file a 4-page sur-reply, due no later than Thursday, July 23, 2026.

From: Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 7:48 PM
To: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>; Trials <Trials@USPTO.GOV>
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com
Subject: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Reply Brief

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To the Honorable USPTO,

On July 13, 2026, Petitioner filed its Opposition to Patent Owner's Request for Discretionary Denial in IPR2026-00268. In its Opposition, Petitioner submitted additional evidence, testimony, and information that it had not previously provided in response to the May 7, 2026 Order of Chief Judge Deshpande granting Patent Owner's motion for additional discovery. This newly submitted material includes information regarding Petitioner's corporate structure, its relationship with the Chinese government, the identities of employees referenced in previously produced evidence, and meetings concerning this IPR.

Accordingly, Patent Owner respectfully requests authorization to file a four-page Reply Brief addressing this new evidence, testimony, and information. Petitioner opposes this request.

If a conference is desired, the parties are available at the following times:

- Friday (7/17): 10 AM – 12 PM ET
- Next Monday (7/20): After 2 PM ET
- Next Tuesday (7/21): 10 AM – 11:30 AM, 12:30 PM – 5 PM ET

Best regards,

Trenton Ward
Counsel for Patent Owner

From: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 3:21 PM
To: Ward, Trenton (Shld-ATL-IP-Tech) <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>; Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>; Trials <Trials@USPTO.GOV>
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs <Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com>
Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for New Schedule

The proposed schedule is approved. No stipulation or motion is necessary. Patent Owner's Preliminary Response will also be due on July 10, 2026.

From: Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 12:33 PM
To: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>; Trials <Trials@USPTO.GOV>
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com
Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for New Schedule

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To the Honorable USPTO,

On May 7, 206, Chief Judge Deshpande granted Patent Owner's motion for additional discovery in IPR2026-00268. In the April 22, 2026 email below, the Office stated that a *"new schedule that includes a new date for Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request will be set."* The parties have not yet received this new schedule.

The parties have met and conferred regarding the timing for Petitioner's discovery responses and subsequent pre-institution deadlines to allow the parties' briefing to address these discovery responses. Below is a proposed revised schedule for the pre-institution deadlines:

Deadline	Deadline
Petitioner's Discovery Response	May 29, 2026
Preliminary Response and Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request	June 12, 2026

We request the Office's guidance on whether the above schedule is approved and if a stipulation or motion is necessary to implement these modifications. The parties are available at the following times for a conference call:

- Wednesday (5/20): 3-5 PM Central
- Thursday (5/21): 1-5 PM Central

Best Regards,
Trenton Ward
Counsel for Patent Owner

From: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 2:48 PM
To: Ward, Trenton (Shld-ATL-IP-Tech) <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>; Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs <Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com>
Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Motion for Additional Discovery

In view of the pending motion for additional discovery, the due date for Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request will be extended beyond Monday April 27, 2026. Once a decision on the motion for additional discovery has been made, a new schedule that includes a new date for Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request will be set.

From: Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 10:09 AM
To: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>; Trials <Trials@USPTO.GOV>
Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com
Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Motion for Additional Discovery

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To the Honorable USPTO,
Patent Owner filed a motion for additional discovery on Mar. 27. Patent Owner desires to have the materials sought in the motion for additional discovery for purposes of Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request, currently due on Monday April 27, 2026, as these materials relate directly to the Director's considerations for discretionary denial. Please let us know

whether the Office plans to provide guidance on the motion for additional discovery in advance of deadline.

Best Regards,

Trenton Ward

Counsel for Patent Owner

From: Ward, Trenton (Shld-ATL-IP-Tech)

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 7:55 PM

To: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>

Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs <Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com>

Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Motion for Additional Discovery

To the Honorable USPTO,

Patent Owner appreciates the authorization for a motion for additional discovery, which was filed on Mar. 27 and Petitioner's Opposition was filed on April 6, 2026. For the benefit of the USPTO and the parties, Patent Owner desires to have the materials sought in the motion for additional discovery for purposes of Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request, currently due on Monday April 27, 2026, as these materials relate directly to the Director's considerations for discretionary denial. Accordingly, Patent Owner would like to inquire as to the status of the motion and/or the possibility of extending the deadline for Patent Owner's Discretionary Denial Request.

Best Regards,

Trenton Ward

Shareholder

Greenberg Traurig, LLP

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From: Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 11:10 AM

To: Ward, Trenton (Shld-ATL-IP-Tech) <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>; Director_DI <Director_DI@uspto.gov>; Director_Discretionary_Decision <Director_Discretionary_Decision@uspto.gov>

Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs <Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com>

Subject: RE: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Motion for Additional Discovery

EXTERNAL TO GT

Patent Owner's request for authorization to file a motion for additional discovery is granted. Patent Owner's motion is due on or before March 27, 2026 and Petitioner's opposition (if any) is due on or before April 6, 2026. The motion and opposition shall be no more than 10 pages in length. In its motion, Patent Owner should explain why additional discovery is "in the interest of justice." See *Garmin Int'l, Inc. v. Cuozzo Speed Techs. LLC*, IPR2012-00001, Paper 26 at 6-7 (PTAB Mar. 5, 2013) (precedential) (addressing five factors used in determining whether additional discovery is in the interest of justice).

From: Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com <Trenton.Ward@gtlaw.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2026 4:14 PM

To: Trials <Trials@USPTO.GOV>

Cc: LZhu@RobinsKaplan.com; CMorton@RobinsKaplan.com; PViswanathan@RobinsKaplan.com; Howmet-IPRs@gtlaw.com

Subject: IPR2026-00268: Request for Authorization for a Motion for Additional Discovery

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To the Honorable USPTO,

Patent Owner seeks authorization for a motion for additional discovery for documents, materials, and information relating to issues regarding Real Parties-In-Interest ("RPI") to Petitioner and the currently designated RPIs in this proceeding. Specifically, Patent Owner seeks information regarding the relationship of Petitioner, Meishan CRRC Fastening System Co., Ltd., and its currently designated RPIs, Nextpower Inc. and Nextracker Inc., to past or current Defendants in the *Howmet Aerospace Inc. v. Stanley Engineered Fastening, LLC*, et al 1-25-cv-01335 (DDE) and Petitioner parties and their designated RPIs in *Stanley Black & Decker, Inc. v. Howmet Aerospace Inc. f/k/a Arconic Inc. f/k/a Alcoa Inc.*, IPR2025-01581 (PTAB). The instant IPR was filed on Feb. 20, 2026, a mere two days after IPR2025-01581 challenging Patent Owner's same '358 patent was denied institution by the Director. However, none of the more than 50 entities listed as RPIs in IPR2025-01581 are identified as RPIs in the instant proceeding. According to its website, Meishan is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CRRC Meishan Co.,Ltd. located in Sichuan Province, China and a supplier of fastening devices to many companies in many industries (https://www.crrcgc.cc/fastening/224_14803/224_14811/index.html). Patent Owner seeks information regarding a relationship between Meishan, Nextpower, and/or Nextracker and one or more of parties named in the Delaware litigation and/or one or more the petitioner parties or the many entities listed as RPIs in IPR2025-01581, none of which have not been listed as an RPI for the instant proceeding.

Petitioner opposes this request. The parties are available for a conference call at the following times:

- Monday (3/16): 2-4 PM Central
- Thursday (3/19): 3-5 PM Central.

Regards,

Trenton Ward
Shareholder

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