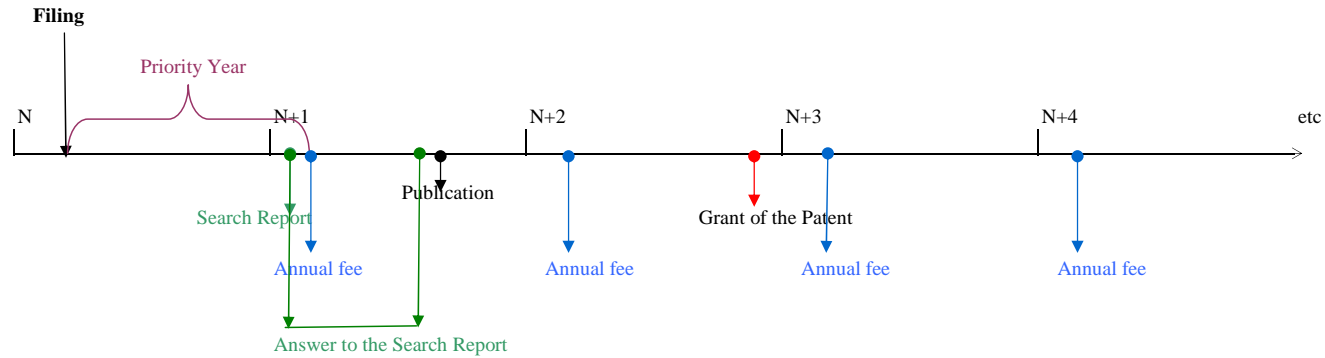


**MAIN TIME LIMITS FOR A FRENCH PATENT**  
**EXEMPLE OF A FILING ON APRIL 1ST OF YEAR N**



From the date of filing

- Filing :** a filing fee and a search fee have to be paid. An additional fee is due for any claim above the 10th.
- 5 months maxi. **Disclosure authorization :** authorization to disclose and use the invention. Its purpose is to release the applicant from his secrecy obligation towards the Ministry of Defence. It takes place 5 months after filing at the latest.
- about 10 months **Search report :** it is issued following the search performed by INPI in view of finding out possible prior documents which could impair novelty and inventive step of the invention. According to the ranking of the cited documents, it is compulsory or not to file an answer disproving the documents and/or modifying the claims. The time limit for this answer is 3 months upon receipt of the Search Report (can be extended once by 3 months).
- 12 months **Priority Year :** First year of the patent application. The patent applications abroad can enjoy a priority date of filing which is the date of the French filing. It is also possible to claim an "internal priority", that is a new French filing which will enjoy the date of the first filing for the teachings of this first filing.
- 18 months **Publication of the Application :** the application is made available to the public on data bases. The publication date is the last limit to file abroad on the same invention.
- Each year **Annual fee :** this fee must be paid each year in order to maintain the application, then the patent, for a maximum of 20 years.
- 2 to 3 years **Grant :** a fee for grant has to be paid to get the official patent specification. If this fee is not paid, the patent is rejected and becomes public ownership.