ICANN | GNSO
Generic Names Supporting Organization

New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP
March 2017 Newsletter

Note: all upcoming meetings referenced in this newsletter are subject to change. Please check the GNSO Master Calendar for the most current scheduling information. Working Group members may also find the informal Working Group scheduling document helpful.

CURRENT STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Working Group

Current Status:

- Continuing to prepare preliminary outcomes for the overarching subjects in the WG's Charter, incorporating input received through Community Comment 1 (CC1).
- Convening three drafting teams to help drive that effort. The drafting teams focus on different TLD types, predictability/community engagement, and "rounds" for application assessment. Sign up for drafting teams here.
- Finalizing the list of questions for the WG's second round of Community Comment 2 (CC2), which will focus on topic areas considered in each of the Work Tracks.

Next Steps:

The Working Group will hold two meetings at ICANN58. The longer working session on Day 1 will focus on discussion of CC2, including substance of issues raised in CC2. The 90-minute session on Day 5 will offer the community an opportunity to interact with WG leadership, ask questions, and provide input on the PDP. See the ICANN58 schedule for session details.

The full Working Group will be considering input from a number of sources in its upcoming meetings, including:
- Issues raised and input received during ICANN58 sessions.
- Responses to Community Comment 2.
- Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice Review Team (CCT-RT) outputs, including the CCT-RT Final Report when it is available.

For a full summary of deliberations in the Work Tracks, see the WT working documents: WT1, WT2, WT3, WT4.

Work Track 1

Current Status:

In February, the WT focused on a Registry Service Provider Accreditation/Certification/Approval Program and Application Fees.

On 14 February, the group discussed:
- A potential accreditation/certification/pre-approval program for Registry Service Providers while noting a possible initiative from the Global Domains Division (GDD) addressing issues involving the change of RSPs in existing TLDs and how both may be addressing overlapping issues.
- Pros and cons for having different cost models for different types of new gTLD applications.
- The need for GDD to generate invoices for applicants during the application process.
- The funding models for future gTLD applications, including whether such fees should be based on pure cost recovery or some other model. In addition, the group discussed possible guidance on the use of excess fees or shortfalls in revenue.

The WT met on 28 February and discussed:
- The Applicant Guidebook's format and content. The group agreed that separating information from rationale, background and "legalese" would be beneficial.
- Systems and Communications, in particular ways to improve customer service for applicants, including real-time communication (i.e. chat) with customer service and allowing correspondence from ICANN via direct email rather than publishing the material in the customer portal.

Next Steps:

The next WT1 meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 March and will address any issues and outcomes of the Copenhagen meeting.

Work Track 2

Current Status:

In February, the WT focused on Registrant Protections and Terms & Conditions.

On 2 February, the group discussed:
- The effectiveness of background checks as a measure to protect registrants and whether any changes might be needed to the 2012 approach.
- Whether there was evidence of issues with the background screening process in the last round.
- If background screening is necessary in all cases. The group generally agreed that it is important for protecting registrants and ICANN as an organization.

WT2 also had a call on 16 February and discussed:

- Module 6 of the Applicant Guidebook, TLD Application Terms and Conditions. Some WT members raised concern about the level of discretion given to ICANN under the T&Cs to reject applications and/or change the application process, and expressed support for greater accountability.
- Draft policy language regarding the new gTLD Program appeals mechanism.

There was a WT2 call on 2 March, which focused on Closed Generics. A summary of this and other March meetings will be provided in the next newsletter.

Next Steps:

The next WT2 meeting is scheduled to take place on 30 March and will address any issues and outcomes of the Copenhagen meeting.

Work Track 3

Current Status

In February, the WT focused on Legal Rights Objections, String Confusion Objections, and String Similarity Reviews.

On 7 February, the group discussed:
- A strawman proposal to revise the Legal Rights Objection text in the Applicant Guidebook broadening Legal Rights Objections to include "abuse."
- That the WT may first choose to consider broader policy recommendations regarding Legal Rights Objections, and then consider potential revisions to AGB text within the policy framework.
- An introduction to the topic New gTLD Applicant Freedom of Expression.

On 21 February, the group discussed:
- Introductions on two topics: String Similarity Review and String Confusion Objections.
- A draft proposal from a group of registries suggesting changes to the String Similarity Review and String Confusion Objection. More specifically, the registries submitted proposals to clarify that singular and plurals of each other in the same language would be considered similar in subsequent application windows.
- The experience shared by special guest Karen Bernstein regarding her experience with a string confusion contention set in the 2012 round.

Next Steps:

The next meeting for WT3 is scheduled to take place on 7 March. The group will continue to discuss String Confusion Objections and String Similarity Reviews, and additional elements from the registries' proposal on Confusing Similarity Objections and the SWORD tool. The WT will also begin to look at Community Applications.

Work Track 4

Current Status:

In February, the WT focused on Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance.

On 9 February, the group discussed:
- A presentation by Sarmad Hussain providing an update on the IDN Project.
- An upcoming study of problems and possible solutions related to the use of variants at the top-level, and whether WT recommendations should be contingent on the results of this project.
- The prohibition on applying for single-character IDNs at the top-level and coordination with the SSAC on this issue.

On 23 February, the group discussed:
- An overview of the topic of Universal Acceptance, presented by Universal Acceptance Initiative Manager Don Hollander.

Next Steps:

The next meeting for WT4 is scheduled to take place on 6 March and will likely focus on Security & Stability and Name Collisions.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

In June 2014, the GNSO Council established a Discussion Group that was intended to evaluate the experiences of the 2012 round gTLD Program and to identify possible areas for future GNSO policy development. The Discussion Group's deliverables served as the basis for the GNSO Council's request for a Preliminary Issue Report in June of 2015.

Following the publication of the Final Issue Report, the GNSO Council adopted the Charter for the PDP Working Group, which began its work in February 2016. The Working Group initially concentrated on a set of overarching issues, and has since established four separate Work Tracks to consider specific topic areas: Work Track 1 - Overall Process/Support/Outreach, Work Track 2 - Legal/Regulatory, Work Track 3: String Contention/Objections & Disputes, Work Track 4: Internationalized Domain Names/Technical & Operations.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Discussion Group on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures identified a number of subjects that may require further analysis and possible formulation of policy language. There are existing policy recommendations adopted by the GNSO Council and ICANN Board, which will remain in place unless the PDP WG determines that changes are needed.

> **To join this effort, please email the GNSO Secretariat: gnso-secs@icann.org**
> **All are welcome!**

MORE INFORMATION
- PDP Working Group Workspace Wiki: https://community.icann.org/x/RgV1Aw
- PDP Working Group Charter: https://community.icann.org/x/KAp1Aw
- PDP Working Group Active Project Page: https://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/active/new-gtld-subsequent-procedures