1. N1
   1. If contact verification is employed, should this be repeated for every new trademark record submitted, or could it be only when a new contact record is initiated?
      1. Contact verification should be completed when a contact record is created.  The contact record could be put in pendingCreate status up until the verification is completed, and only set to ok when the information is valid.
      2. Similar validation would need to be done when a contact record is updated, where the update would need to be put into pendingUpdate, validated taking into account the linked rights to the contact.  If there are any issues with the validation on the update, the update should be rejected.
   2. What is the optimal level of authentication of the party submitting the trademark rights to the clearinghouse? How much cost are users willing to bear for additional layers or levels of authentication? For any additional authentication steps proposed, what value would be added for Clearinghouse users?
      1. There looks to be two types of validations that need to be done (1 – validate the contact / user, 2 – validate the mark).  I would assume that any contact / user would need to be validated as a pre-condition to register marks, so there needs to be some form of validation that the contact information is accurate for matching to the marks.  There could be some charge associated with validating the contact (first) and validating the mark (second) when they are registered or even updated.  I don't understand the last question about the value associated with the additional authentication steps.  The users should feel comfortable that only legitimate users / contacts and marks can be added to the TMCH.  I believe that this is a basic assumption that needs to be met.  If the TMCH provide for a direct interface with the TM holders than creating a user might or might not justify a cost.  If the TMCH provides an indirect interface with the TM holders via a TM Registrar, than there might be the need for some form of nominal fee since the TMCH does not have complete control over the process used to create a user.  Since it would be relatively easy for the TM Registrar to create contacts, adding an extra level of authentication at the level of the TMCH might require some form of charge which could be a tiered based on the total number of contacts.

* 1. Is it desirable or necessary to provide a more in-depth authentication of the trademark rights themselves? How much cost are users willing to bear for those additional layers or levels of authentication, and what value do they add to Clearinghouse users?
     1. Same answer to question #2, since if there is some form of validation that might require some manual steps and communication than some cost should be expected.  The value / cost associated with validation of marks might be more based on the variation of the marks and the level of authentication required.  I would think that the complexity of authenticating different types of marks would play into the cost structure.  The cost would be associated with the complexity and effort related to validation, the registration of the mark as well updates if they require additional authentication by the TMCH.
  2. What safeguards or penalties could be established for misuse of data (e.g., a party takes publicly available data and makes submissions to the Clearinghouse in its own name)? Is this a significant concern?
     1. There should be a cost associated with the registration of the contact and marks to account for the required authentication, if it's provided that there is misuse of data than the data would be removed from the TMCH with no credit.  The cost should be a sufficient deterrent.
  3. How can we, and do we need to, mitigate any inequity if some data can be verified online and other data cannot?
     1. If there is effort associated with inequity of validation than those costs should either be applied directly to the applicant or factored into average trademark applicant costs if a fixed fee approach is taken.

1. N2
   1. Is it desirable or necessary to establish more onerous standards for certain parts of the review of samples in validating for use? For instance, should validation for use include consideration as to how the sample matches the class of goods or services? Is there additional value to mark holders and to Clearinghouse users of more detailed (and thus more expensive) examination of samples?
      1. If the mark has been validated with the entity that issued the mark based on the contact / user information, than why does the mark need to be actually used to qualify for it to be entered in to the TMCH?  If use is a requirement, how much use is needed? Could some form of automation be considered for validation based on the user's / contact's web site or via DNS with DNSSEC?
   2. How frequently should proof-of-use be re-verified? For example, could a verified proof of use be valid for a year or more?
      1. Regular re-verification could be done if there was some form of automation.  A mark might have an expiry period that is auto renewed, and re-verified at the time of auto renewal.
   3. What should be the process for notifying the Clearinghouse if the mark holder abandons use of the mark?
2. The mark could be explicitly deleted from the Clearinghouse.  With the auto-renewal and re-validation fee associated with keeping the mark active the user will want to explicitly delete it.  Another question, if there were domains registered with that mark, should the other matching mark holders be notified of the deletion of the mark?