



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

30 April 2014

Lesley Cowley OBE  
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Dear Ms. Cowley,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 March 2014 regarding your timeline and request for approval of your Approved Launch Program application. We have posted the letter to the New gTLD correspondence page (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/correspondence/cowley-to-willett-20mar14-en.pdf>). We note your concerns and appreciate your patience during the development of the Qualified Launch Program (the "QLP"). Our goal is to expedite and support registry launch activities as much as possible, and the newly established QLP is also intended to increase efficiencies for registry operators.

On 13 February 2014, a draft Qualified Launch Program Addendum was posted for public comment to allow interested stakeholders a chance to review and provide feedback (<http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/qlp-addendum-13feb14-en.htm>). The addendum was drafted with the intention to create a path that would cover requested areas in many proposals, e.g., mechanisms for allocating names for promotional activities prior to Sunrise, and for allocating names to public authorities. The range of input received during the public comment process for the Qualified Launch Program was taken into consideration during the analysis regarding the feasibility of and implementation mechanics of the program.

For those Approved Launch Program requests that appeared to be able to be satisfactorily implemented via a Qualified Launch Program, we notified the requestors that we would defer determination on their requests until the comment period had closed.

As of 10 April 2014, the Qualified Launch Program, as referenced in Section 4.5.1 of the Trademark Clearinghouse Rights Protection Mechanism Requirements, became available. We encourage you to review the Qualified Launch Program closely, as it sets forth the guidelines



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under which names may be allocated or registered under the QLP  
(<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-10apr14-en>).

Subject to the terms of the Qualified Launch Program, registry operators may register up to 100 domain names to third parties prior to the Sunrise Period for purposes of promoting the TLD. As noted in your letter, it is important to secure a proper balance between maintaining the carefully developed intellectual property safeguards and providing registries the flexibility to promote their TLD launches, and the QLP has been developed in accordance with that balancing. We encourage you to consider whether the Qualified Launch Program fulfills the purpose of your applied-for Approved Launch Program.

In regards to the timing of the contract execution of the .WALES and .CYMRU TLDs, we would like to clarify that the earliest deadline for executing a Registry Agreement with ICANN is 29 October 2014, not 29 September 2014 as stated in your letter. We hope that the efforts we have made to make the Contracting and QLP processes as efficient as possible will allow you to progress to contract execution before this deadline.

Again, we want to thank you taking the time to write to us and for sharing your concerns. We appreciate your participation in the New gTLD Program and look forward to continuing to support you in serving your communities.

Sincerely,

Christine A. Willett  
Vice President, gTLD Operations