ICANN

Draft Applicant Guidebook, v3
Module 2

Please note that this is a discussion draft only. Potential applicants should not rely on any of the proposed details of the new gTLD program as the program remains subject to further consultation and revision.

2 October 2009

Module 2

Evaluation Procedures

This module describes the evaluation procedures and criteria used to determine whether applied-for gTLDs are approved for delegation. All applicants will undergo an Initial Evaluation and those that do not pass all elements may request Extended Evaluation.

The first, required evaluation is the **Initial Evaluation**, during which ICANN ~~first~~ assesses an applied-for gTLD string, an applicant's qualifications, and its proposed registry services.

The following assessments are performed in the~~elements make up~~ **Initial Evaluation**:

- String Reviews
    - String similarity~~confusion~~
    - Reserved names
    - DNS stability
    - Geographical names
- Applicant Reviews
    - Demonstration of technical and operational capability
    - Demonstration of financial capability
    - Registry services reviews for DNS stability issues

An applicant must pass all these reviews to pass the Initial Evaluation. Failure to pass any one of these reviews will result in a failure to pass the Initial Evaluation.

Extended Evaluation may be applicable in cases in which an applicant does not pass the Initial Evaluation. See Section 2.2 below.

2.1   Initial Evaluation

The Initial Evaluation consists of two types of review. Each type is composed of several elements.

String review: The first review focuses on the applied-for gTLD string to test:

- Whether the applied-for gTLD string is so similar to others that it would cause user confusion;

- Whether the applied-for gTLD string might adversely affect DNS security or stability; and

- Whether evidence of requisite government approval is providedgiven in the case of certain geographical names.

Applicant review: The second review focuses on the applicant to test:

- Whether the applicant has the requisite technical, operational, and financial capability to operate a registry; and

- Whether the registry services offered by the applicant might adversely affect DNS security or stability.

2.1.1 String Reviews

In the Initial Evaluation, ICANN reviews every applied-for gTLD string. Those reviews are described in greater detail in the following subsections.

2.1.1.1 String SimilarityConfusion Review

This review involves a preliminary comparison of each applied-for gTLD string against existing TLDs and against other applied-for strings. The objective of this review is to prevent user confusion and loss of confidence in the DNS. This review involves a preliminary comparison of each applied-for gTLD string against existing TLDs and against other applied-for gTLD strings.

The review is to determine whether the applied-for gTLD string is so similar to one of the others that it would create a probability of detrimental user confusion if it were to be delegated into the root zone. The visual similarity check that occurs during Initial Evaluation is intended to augment the objection and dispute resolution process (see Module 3, Dispute Resolution Procedures) that addresses all types of similarity.

This similarity review will be conducted by a an independent String Similarity Panel.

2.1.1.1.1   Review Procedures

panel of String Similarity Examiners. It will be informed in part by an algorithmic score for the visual similarity between each applied-for string and each of other existing and applied-for TLDs. The score will provide one objective measure for consideration by the panel.

The String Similarity Panel's examiners' task is to identify visual string similarities that would create a probability of detrimental user confusion. The examiners will use a common standard to test for whether string confusion exists, as follows:

Standard for String Confusion – String confusion exists where a string so nearly resembles another visually that it is likely to deceive or cause confusion. For the likelihood of confusion to exist, it must be probable, not merely possible that confusion will arise in the mind of the average, reasonable Internet user. Mere association, in the sense that the string brings another string to mind, is insufficient to find a likelihood of confusion.

The panel performs this task of assessing similarities that would lead to user confusion in standard will be applied in three sets of circumstances, when comparing:

- Applied-for gTLD strings against existing TLDs and reserved names;

- Applied-for gTLD strings against other applied-for gTLD strings; and

- Applied-for gTLD strings against strings requested as IDN ccTLDs.

Similarity to Existing TLDs – This review involves cross-checking between each applied-for string and the list of existing TLD strings to determine whether the two strings are so similar to one another that they create a probability of detrimental user confusion.

All TLDs currently in the root zone can be found at http://iana.org/domains/root/db/.

An application that fails the string confusion review and is found too similar to an existing TLD will not pass the Initial Evaluation, and no further reviews will be available.

In the simple case in which an applied-for gTLD string is identical to an existing TLD, the application system will recognize the existing TLD and will not allow the application to be submitted.

Testing for identical strings also takes into consideration the code point variants listed in any relevant language reference table. For example, protocols treat equivalent labels as alternative forms of the same label, just as "foo" and "Foo" are treated as alternative forms of the same label (RFC 3490).

An application that passes this preliminary string confusion review is still subject to challenge by an existing TLD operator or by another gTLD applicant in the current application round. That process requires that a specific objection be filed by an objector having the standing to make such an objection. Such category of objection is not limited to visual similarity. Rather, confusion based on any type of similarity (including visual, aural, or similarity of meaning) may be claimed by an objector. Refer to Module 3, Dispute Resolution Procedures, for more information about the objection process.

Similarity to Other Applied-for gTLD Strings (String Contention Sets) – All applied-for gTLD strings will be reviewed against one another to identify any strings that are so similar that they create a probability of detrimental user confusion if more than one is delegated into the root zone. In performing the string confusion review, the panel of String Similarity Examiners will create contention sets that may be used in later stages of evaluation.

A contention set contains at least two applied-for strings identical to one another or so similar that string confusion would result if more than one were delegated into the root zone. Refer to Module 4, String Contention Procedures, for more information on contention sets and contention resolution. ICANN will notify applicants who are part of a contention set by the conclusion of the Initial Evaluation period. These contention sets will also be published on ICANN's website.

An applicant may file a formal objection against another gTLD application on string confusion grounds (see Module 3, Dispute Resolution Procedures). Such an objection may, if successful, change the configuration of the previously configured contention sets in that the two applied-for gTLD strings will be considered in direct contention with one another (see Module 4, String Contention Procedures). The objection process will not result in removal of an application from a contention set.

Similarity to TLD strings requested as IDN ccTLDs -- Applied-for gTLD strings will also be reviewed for similarity to TLD

strings requested in the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process (see http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/). Should a conflict with a prospective fast-track IDN ccTLD be identified, ICANN will take the following approach to resolving the conflict.

If one of the applications has completed its respective process before the other is lodged, that TLD will be delegated. A gTLD application that has been approved by the Board will be considered complete, and therefore would not be disqualified based on contention with a newly-filed IDN ccTLD request. Similarly, an IDN ccTLD request that has completed evaluation (i.e., is "validated") will be considered complete and therefore would not be disqualified based on contention with a newly-filed gTLD application.

If the gTLD applicant does not have the required approval from the relevant government or public authority, a validated request for an IDN ccTLD will prevail and the gTLD application will not be approved. The term "validated" is defined in the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process Implementation, which can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn.

If both the gTLD applicant and the IDN ccTLD requestor have the required approval from the relevant government or public authority, both applications will be kept on hold until the contention is resolved through agreement between the parties, i.e., resolved by the government.

2.1.1.1.2 Review Methodology

The String Similarity Panel is informed in part by an algorithmic score for the visual similarity between each applied-for string and each of other existing and applied-for TLDs and reserved names. The score will provide one objective measure for consideration by the panel, as part of the process of identifying strings likely to result in user confusion. It should be noted that the score is only indicative and that the final determination of similarity is entirely up to the Panel's judgment.

The algorithm used supports the most common characters in Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic, Devanagari, Greek, Japanese, Korean, and Latin scripts. It can also compare strings in different scripts to each other.

The algorithm, user guidelines, and additional background information are available to applicants for testing and informational purposes.[1]

The panel will examine all the algorithm data and perform its own review of similarities between strings and whether they rise to the level of string confusion. In cases of strings in scripts not yet supported by the algorithm, the panel's assessment process is entirely manual.

The panel will use a common standard to test for whether string confusion exists, as follows:

Standard for String Confusion – String confusion exists where a string so nearly resembles another visually that it is likely to deceive or cause confusion. For the likelihood of confusion to exist, it must be probable, not merely possible that confusion will arise in the mind of the average, reasonable Internet user. Mere association, in the sense that the string brings another string to mind, is insufficient to find a likelihood of confusion.

String Similarity Algorithm – The String Similarity Algorithm ("Algorithm") is a tool the examiners use to provide one objective measure as part of the process of identifying strings likely to result in confusion. The Algorithm will be available in multiple scripts. The Algorithm is also available to applicants for testing and informational purposes. The Algorithm, user guidelines, and additional background information are available at http://icann.sword-group.com/icann algorithm/.

The Algorithm calculates scores for visual similarity between any two strings, using factors such as letters in sequence, number of similar letters, number of dissimilar letters, common prefixes, common suffixes, hyphenation, and string length2. Note that hyphens are ignored when performing the comparison, so the string "E X A M P L E" would be scored by the Algorithm as identical to the string "EXAMPLE."

2.1.1.1.3 Outcomes of the String Similarity Review

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[1] *See* http://icann.sword-group.com/algorithm/

[2] ICANN received some questions concerning the Algorithm's incorporation of factors such as keyboard proximity, to guard against typosquatting. Keyboard proximity is not addressed as a special category of similarity, as gTLDs are used globally, and keyboards vary from one country to another. However, the purpose of the string similarity check is to avoid confusion and it is expected that typosquatting attempts by applicants will be recognized by the Algorithm or by the Examiners.

An application that fails the string similarity review and is found too similar to an existing TLD will not pass the Initial Evaluation, and no further reviews will be available.

An application found at risk for string confusion with another applied-for gTLD string will be placed in a contention set.

An application that passes the string similarity review is still subject to challenge by an existing TLD operator or by another gTLD applicant in the current application round. That process requires that a string confusion objection be filed by an objector having the standing to make such an objection. Such category of objection is not limited to visual similarity. Rather, confusion based on any type of similarity (including visual, aural, or similarity of meaning) may be claimed by an objector. Refer to Module 3, Dispute Resolution Procedures, for more information about the objection process.

An applicant may file a formal objection against another gTLD application on string confusion grounds (see Module 3). Such an objection may, if successful, change the configuration of the preliminary contention sets in that the two applied-for gTLD strings will be considered in direct contention with one another (see Module 4, String Contention Procedures). The objection process when initiated by an applicant cannot result in removal of an application from a contention set.

2.1.1.2 Reserved Names Review

The Reserved Names review involves comparison with the list of top-level Reserved Names to ensure that the applied-for gTLD string does not appear on that list.[3]

Top-Level Reserved Names List

AFRINIC	IANA-SERVERS	NRO
ALAC	ICANN	RFC-EDITOR
APNIC	IESG	RIPE
ARIN	IETF	ROOT-SERVERS

ASO	INTERNIC	RSSAC
CCNSO	INVALID	SSAC
EXAMPLE*	IRTF	TEST*
GAC	ISTF	TLD
GNSO	LACNIC	WHOIS
GTLD-SERVERS	LOCAL	WWW
IAB	LOCALHOST	
IANA	NIC	
*Note that in addition to the above strings, ICANN will reserve translations of the terms "test" and "example" in multiple languages. The remainder of the strings are reserved only in the form included above.		

If an applicant enters a Reserved Name as its applied-for gTLD string, the application system will recognize the Reserved Name and will not allow the application to be submitted.

In addition, applied-for gTLD strings are reviewed in a process identical to that described in the preceding section to determine whether they are similar to a Reserved Name. An application for a gTLD string that is identified as too similar to a Reserved Name will not pass the Reserved Names review.

2.1.1.3   DNS Stability Review

This review determines whether an applied-for gTLD string might cause instability to the DNS. In all cases, this will involve a review for conformance with technical and other requirements for gTLD strings (labels). In some exceptional cases, an extended review may be necessary to investigate possible technical stability problems with the applied-for gTLD string.

2.1.1.3.1   DNS Stability: String Review Procedure

New gTLD labels must not adversely affect the security or stability of the DNS. During the Initial Evaluation period, ICANN will conduct a preliminary review on the set of applied-for gTLD strings to:

- ensure that applied-for gTLD strings comply with the requirements provided in section 2.1.1.3.2, and

- determine whether any strings raise significant security or stability issues that may require further review.

There is a very low probability that an extended review will be necessary for a string that fully complies with the string

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requirements in subsection 2.1.1.3.2 of this module. However, the string review process provides an additional safeguard if unanticipated security or stability issues arise concerning an applied-for gTLD string.

ICANN will notify applicants who have not passed the Initial Evaluation due to security or stability concerns about the applied-for gTLD string by~~at~~ the conclusion of the Initial Evaluation period. Applicants will have 15 calendar days to decide whether to proceed with Extended Evaluation. See Section 2.2 for further information on the Extended Evaluation process.

2.1.1.3.2 String Requirements

ICANN will review each applied-for gTLD string to ensure that it complies with the requirements outlined in the following paragraphs.

If an applied-for gTLD string is found to violate any of these rules, the application will be denied. No further reviews are available.

Part I -- **Technical Requirements for all Labels (Strings)** – The technical requirements for ~~the selection of~~ top-level domain labels follow.

- 1.1 The ASCII label (i.e., the label as transmitted on the wire) must be valid as specified in ~~the~~ technical standards *Domain Names: Implementation and Specification* (RFC 1035), and *Clarifications to the DNS Specification* (RFC 2181). This includes the following:

    - 1.1.1 The label must have no more than 63 characters. ~~In the case of Punycode (IDNA2008 A label) representations of IDN labels (U-labels), this includes the four initial characters (xn--).~~

    - 1.1.2 Upper and lower case characters are treated as~~considered to be syntactically and semantically~~ identical.

- 1.2 The ASCII label must be a valid host name, as specified in the technical standards *DOD Internet Host Table Specification* (RFC 952), *Requirements for Internet Hosts — Application and Support* (RFC 1123), and *Application Techniques for Checking and Transformation of Names (RFC 3696).* This includes the following:

1.2.1 The label must consist entirely of letters, digits and hyphens.

1.2.2 The label must not start or end with a hyphen.

1.3 There must be no possibility for confusing an ASCII label for an IP address or other numerical identifier by application software. For example, representations such as "255", "o377" (255 in octal) or "0xff" (255 in hexadecimal) as the top-level domain can be interpreted as IP addresses. As such, labels:[4]. Therefore an ASCII label must not be:

1.3.1 Must not be wholly comprised of digits between "0" and "9". A decimal number consisting entirely of the digits "0" through "9";

1.3.2 Must not commence with "0x" or "x," and have the remainder of the label wholly comprised of hexadecimal digits, "0" to "9" and "a" through "f." A hexadecimal number consisting of the digit "0" followed by the uppercase or lowercase letter "x||X" followed by a sequence of one or more characters all of which belong to the set of uppercase or lowercase letters "a||A" through "f||F" and the digits "0" through "9"; or

Must not commence with "0o" or "o," and have the remainder of the label wholly comprised of digits between "0" and "7".

1.3.3 An octal number consisting of the uppercase or lowercase letter "o||O" followed by a sequence of one or more characters all of which belong to the set of digits "0" through "7."

1.4 The ASCII label may only include hyphens in the third and fourth position if it represents a valid internationalized domain name in its A-label form (ASCII encoding as described in Part II).

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[4] Refer to http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/update-dns-stability-18feb09-en.pdf for further background on octal and hexadecimal representations, and on the changes in this section.

- 1.5 The presentation format of the domain (i.e., either the label for ASCII domains, or the U-label for iInternationalized dDomain nNames) must not begin or end with a digit.[5]

Part II -- *Requirements for Internationalized Domain Names* – These requirements apply only to prospective top-level domains that contain non-ASCII characters. Applicants for these internationalized top-level domain labels are expected to be familiar with the IETF IDNA standards, Unicode standards, and the terminology associated with Internationalized Domain Names.

- 2.1 The label must be a valid internationalized domain name, as specified in ~~the technical standard~~ *Internationalizing Domain Names in Applications* (RFC 3490). This includes the following, non-exhaustive, list of limitations: ~~or any revisions of this technical standard currently underway within the IETF. Due to this ongoing revision, the IDN-related technical requirements are subject to change. This includes, but is not limited to, the following constraints. Note that these are guidelines and are not a complete statement of the requirements of the IDNA specifications. The label:~~

  - 2.1.1 Must only contain Unicode code points that are defined as "~~Protocol~~ Valid" ~~or "Contextual Rule Required"~~ in The Unicode Codepoints and IDNA (http://tools.ietf.org/wg/idnabis/~~http://www.ietf.org/internet-drafts/draft-ietf-idnabis-tables-05.txt~~), and be~~that are~~ accompanied by~~, in the case of "Contextual Rule Required," by~~ unambiguous contextual rules where necessary.[6]

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[5] The primary concern relating to the use of leading- or trailing-numeric labels is due to issues raised by bi-directional scripts when used in conjunction with those labels. Experience has shown that presentation behavior of strings with leading or trailing numbers in bi-directional contexts can be unexpected and can lead to user confusion. As such, a conservative approach is to disallow numerals leading or trailing top-level domain labels.

This concern also applies to all-numeric strings; however, a larger concern with those strings is the risk of confusion and software incompatibilities due to the fact that a top-level domain of all numbers could result in a domain name that is indistinguishable from an IP address. That is, if (for example) the top-level domain .151 were to be delegated, it would be problematic to programmatically determine whether the string "10.0.0.151" was an IP address or a domain name.

[6] It is expected that the IDNA2008 protocol will be completed and conversion tools will be available before the Application Submission period begins, and that labels will be checked for validity under IDNA2008. In this case, labels valid under the previous version of the protocol (IDNA2003) but not under IDNA2008 will not meet this element of the requirements. Labels that are valid under both versions of the protocol will meet this element of the requirements. Labels valid under IDNA2008 but not under

2.1.2   Must be fully compliant with Normalization Form C, as described in *Unicode Standard Annex #15: Unicode Normalization Forms*. (sSee also examples in http://unicode.org/faq/normalization.html).

2.1.3   Must consist entirely of characters with the same directional property. (Note that this requirement may change with the revision of the IDNA protocol to allow for characters with no directional property defined in Unicode to be available along with either a right-to-left or a left-to-right directionality.)

2.2   The label must meet the relevant criteria of the ICANN *Guidelines for the Implementation of Internationalised Domain Names*. See http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/implementation-guidelines.htm. This includes the following, non-exhaustive, list of limitations:

2.2.1   All code points in a single label must be taken from the same script as determined by the Unicode Standard Annex #24: Unicode Script Property. Exceptions are permissible for languages with established orthographies and conventions that require the commingled use of multiple scripts. However, even with this exception, visually confusable characters from different scripts will not be allowed to co-exist in a single set of permissible code points unless a corresponding policy and character table are clearly defined.

2.2.2   Exceptions to 2.2.1 are permissible for languages with established orthographies and conventions that require the commingled use of multiple scripts. However, even with this exception, visually confusable characters from different scripts will not be allowed to co-exist in a single set of permissible code points unless a corresponding policy and character table are clearly defined.

IDNA2003 may meet the requirements; however, applicants are strongly advised to note that the duration of the transition period between the two protocols cannot presently be estimated nor guaranteed in any specific timeframe. The development of support for IDNA2008 in the broader software applications environment will occur gradually. During that time, TLD labels that are valid under IDNA2008, but not under IDNA2003, will have limited functionality.

~~The IDNA protocol used for internationalized labels is currently under revision through the Internet standardization process. As such, additional requirements may be specified that need to be adhered to as this revision is being completed. The current status of the protocol revision is documented at http://tools.ietf.org/wg/idnabis.~~

Policy Requirements for Generic Top-Level Domains – Applied-for gTLD strings must be composed of three or more visually distinct letters or characters in the script, as appropriate.[7]

2.1.1.4 *Geographical Names*

~~ICANN will review all applied for~~Applications for gTLD strings ~~to~~ must ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the interests of governments or public authorities in country or territory names, as well as certain other types of place names. The requirements and procedure ICANN will follow are~~is~~ described in the following paragraphs.

2.1.1.4.1 ~~*Categories of*~~ *Strings Considered Geographical Names*

The following types of applications are considered geographical names and must be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant government(s) or public authority(ies):

1. An application for any string that is ~~a meaningful representation of~~ a *country or territory name.* A string shall be considered to be a country or territory name if: ~~listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard (see http://www.iso.org/iso/country-codes/iso-3166-databases.htm), as updated from time to time. A meaningful representation includes a representation of the country or territory name in any language.~~

~~A string is deemed a meaningful representation of a country or territory name if it is:~~

~~○ The name of the country or territory; or~~

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[7] ~~ICANN received a number of comments suggesting that gTLDs consisting of fewer than three characters should be allowed in some cases, for example, in scripts featuring ideographs. The issues with defining requirements for certain cases are discussed in further detail in the Public Comment Analysis at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/public-comment-analysis-18feb09-en.pdf and ICANN invites further input on solutions.~~ The requirement for gTLD strings to consist of at least three visually distinct characters remains under discussion. An implementation support team of technical and linguistic experts is currently engaging in work on a proposed solution to enable gTLDs of fewer than three characters where appropriate. The proposed solutions will then be made available for public comment.

o ~~A part of the name of the country or territory denoting the country or territory; or~~

~~A short-form designation for the name of the country or territory that is recognizable and denotes the country or territory.~~

   i.   it is an alpha-3 code listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard.

   ii.   it is a long-form name listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard, or a translation of the long-form name in any language.

   iii.   it is a short-form name listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard, or a translation of the short-form name in any language.

   iv.   it is the short- or long-form name association with a code that has been designated as "exceptionally reserved" by the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency.

   v.   it is a separable component of a country name designated on the "Separable Country Names List," or is a translation of a name appearing on the list, in any language. See the Annex at the end of this module.

   ~~o~~vi.   It is a permutation or transposition of any of the names included in items (i) through (v). Permutations include removal of spaces, insertion of punctuation, and addition or removal of grammatical articles like "the." A transposition is considered a change in the sequence of the long or short–form name, for example, "RepublicCzech" or "IslandsCayman."

●2. An application for any string that is an exact match of a *sub-national place name*, such as a county, province, or state, listed in the ISO 3166-2 standard[8]~~,~~ ~~as updated from time to time~~.

3.　　An application for any string that is a representation, in any language, of the *capital city name* of any country or territory listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard.

4.　　An application for a *city name*, where the applicant declares that it intends to use the gTLD for purposes associated with the city name.

5.　　An application for a string which represents a *continent or UN region* appearing on the "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list ~~at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm~~.[9]

In the case of an application for a string which represents a continent or UN region, documentation of support ~~, or non-objection,~~ will be required from at least 69%~~a substantial number~~ of the relevant governments in the region, and there may be no more than one written objection to the application from relevant governments in the region and/or public authorities associated with the continent or the UN region.

An applied-for gTLD string that falls into any the above categories is considered to represent a geographical name. In the event of any doubt, it is in the applicant's interest to consult with relevant governments and public authorities and enlist their support or non-objection prior to submission of the application, in order to preclude possible objections and pre-address any ambiguities concerning the string and applicable requirements.

In the event that there is more than one relevant government or public authority for the applied-for gTLD string, the applicant must provide documentation of support or non-objection from all the relevant governments or public authorities.

It is the applicant's responsibility to:

- identify whether its applied-for gTLD string falls into any of the above categories; and

- determine the relevant government(s) or public authority(ies); and

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[9] *See* http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm.

- identify which level of government support is required.

The requirement to include documentation of support for certain applications does not preclude or exempt applications from being the subject of objections on community grounds (refer to subsection 3.1.1 of Module 3), under which applications may be rejected based on objections showing substantial opposition from the targeted community.

2.1.1.4.2 Documentation Requirements

The documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant government or public authority should include a signed letter of support from the relevant government or public authority. Understanding that this will differ across the respective jurisdictions, the letter could be signed or non-objection from the by the minister with the portfolio responsible for domain name administration, ICT, foreign affairs or the Office of the Prime Minister or President of the relevant jurisdiction; or a senior representative of the agency or department responsible for domain name administration, ICT, foreign affairs, or the Office of the Prime Minister. To assist the applicant in determining who the relevant government or public authority may be for a potential geographic name, the applicant may wish to consult with the relevant Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) representative.[10] If there are reasons for doubt about the authenticity of the communication, ICANN will consult with the relevant diplomatic authorities or members of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee for the government or public authority concerned on the competent authority and appropriate point of contact within their administration for communications.

The letter must clearly express the government's or public authority's support for or non-objection tofor the applicant's application and demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding of the string being requested and intended use.

The letter should also demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding that the string is being sought through the gTLD application process and the applicant is willing to accept the conditions under which the string will be available, i.e., entry into a registry agreement with ICANN requiring compliance with

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[10] *See* http://gac.icann.org/index.php?name=Representatives&mode=4.

consensus policies and payment of fees. (See Module 5 for a discussion of the obligations of a gTLD registry operator.)

It is important to note that a government or public authority is under no obligation to provide documentation of support or non-objection in response to a request by an applicant.

If there are reasons for doubt about the authenticity of the communication, ICANN will consult with the relevant diplomatic authorities or members of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee for the government or public authority concerned on the competent authority and appropriate point of contact within their administration for communications.

2.1.1.4.3   *Review Procedure for Geographical Names*

A Geographic Names Panel (GNP) will be established to confirm whether each applied-for gTLD string represents a geographical name, and to verify the relevance and authenticity of the supporting documentation where necessary. It is the intention that ICANN will retain a third party to perform the function of the GNP. The Panel will examine applied-for gTLD strings against a composite database of geographic names drawn from authoritative sources, and review supporting documentation. The GNP will comprise individuals with linguistic, geographic, and governmental expertise. The Geographic Names Panel may consult with additional experts as necessary.

The GNP will review all applications received, not only those where the applicant has noted its applied-for gTLD string as a geographical name. During the Initial Evaluation period, ICANN forwards each application to the GNP for a determination of whether the applied-for gTLD string is a geographical name (i.e., falls into any of the categories listed in subsection 2.1.1.4.1).

For any applications where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is not determined to be a geographical name, the application will pass the Geographical Names review with no additional steps required.

For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is determined to be a geographical name (as described in this module), the GNP will confirm that the applicant has provided the required documentation from all relevant governments or public authorities, and that the communication from the

government or public authority is legitimate and contains the required content. In this cases, where an applicant who has not provided the required documentation, the applicant will be contacted and notified of the requirement, and given a limited time frame to provide the documentation. If the applicant is able to provide the documentation before the close of the Initial Evaluation period, and the documentation is found to meet the requirements, the applicant will pass the geographical names review. If not, the applicant will have additional time to obtain the required documentation; however, if the applicant has not produced the required documentation by the required date time frame is not met, the application will be considered incomplete and will be ineligible for further review not pass the Initial Evaluation. The applicant may reapply in subsequent application rounds, if desired, subject to the fees and requirements of the specific application rounds.

Note that the GNP will review all applications received, not only those where the applicant has designated its applied-for gTLD string as a geographical name.

If there is more than one application for a string representing a certain geographical name as described in this section, and the applications are considered complete (i.e., have requisite government approvals), the applications will be suspended pending resolution by the applicants.

If an application for a string representing a geographical name is in a contention set with applications for similar strings that have not been identified as geographical names, the string contention will be settled using the string contention procedures described in Module 4.

2.1.2   Applicant Reviews

Concurrent with the applied-for gTLD string reviews described in subsection 2.1.1, ICANN will review the applicant's technical and operational capability, its financial capability, and its proposed registry services. Those reviews are described in greater detail in the following subsections.

2.1.2.1   Technical/Operational Review and Financial Reviews

In its application, the applicant will respond to a set of questions intended to gather information about the

applicant's technical capabilities and its plans for operation of the proposed gTLD.

Applicants are not required to have deployed an actual gTLD registry to pass the Technical/Operational review. It will be necessary, however, for an applicant to demonstrate a clear understanding and accomplishment of some groundwork toward the key technical and operational aspects of a gTLD registry operation. Subsequently, each applicant that passes the technical evaluation and all other steps will be required to complete a pre-delegation technical test prior to delegation of the new gTLD. Refer to Module 5, Transition to Delegation, for additional information.

The questions provided for applicants in the application form are available athttp://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/draft-evaluation-criteria-18feb09-en.pdf.

Applicants respond to questions which cover the following three areas in relation to themselves: general information, technical and operational capability, and financial capability.

Applicants should be aware that the application materials submitted in the online application system, as well as any evaluation materials and correspondence, will be publicly posted on ICANN's website. The sections in the application that are marked CONFIDENTIAL will not be posted. Any sections of the application that ICANN has not designated CONFIDENTIAL will be posted.

The applicant questions cover the following three areas:

General Information – These questions are intended to gather information about an applicant's legal identity, contact information, and applied for gTLD string. Failure to provide any part of this information will result in an application being considered incomplete. Required documents will also be requested and supplied here.

Demonstration of Technical and Operational Capability – These questions are intended to gather information about an applicant's technical capabilities and plans for operation of the proposed gTLD.

Applicants are not required to have deployed an actual registry to complete the requirements for a successful application. It will be sufficient at application time for an applicant to demonstrate a clear understanding and accomplishment of some groundwork toward the key technical and operational aspects of running a gTLD

~~registry. Each applicant that passes the technical evaluation and all other steps will be required, following execution of a registry agreement, to complete a pre-delegation technical test before delegation of the applied for gTLD. Refer to Module 5, Transition to Delegation, for additional information.~~

~~*Demonstration of Financial Capability* – These questions are intended to gather information about an applicant's financial capabilities to operate a gTLD registry business and its financial planning in preparation for long-term operation of a new gTLD.~~

2.1.2.2 Financial Review

In its application, the applicant will respond to a set of questions intended to gather information about the applicant's financial capabilities for operation of a gTLD registry and its financial planning in preparation for long-term stability of the new gTLD.

Because different registry types and purposes may justify different responses to individual questions, evaluators will pay particular attention to the consistency of an application across all criteria. For example, an applicant's scaling plans identifying system hardware to ensure its capacity to operate at a particular volume level should be consistent with its financial plans to secure the necessary equipment. That is, the evaluation criteria scale with the applicant plans to provide flexibility.

2.1.2.~~2~~3   *Evaluation Methodology*

Dedicated technical and financial panels of evaluators will conduct the technical/operational and financial reviews, according to the established criteria and scoring methodology included as an attachment to this module. ~~Initial Evaluations~~ These reviews are conducted on the basis of the information each applicant makes available to ICANN in its response to the questions in the application form.

The evaluators may request clarification or additional information during the Initial Evaluation period. The applicant will have one additional opportunity to clarify or supplement its application in areas requested by the evaluators. These communications will occur via the online application system, rather than by phone, letter, email, or other means. Such communications will include a deadline for the applicant to respond. Any supplemental information

provided by the applicant will become part of the application.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the questions have been fully answered and the required documentation is attached. Evaluators are entitled, but not obliged, to request further information or evidence from an applicant, and~~ICANN and its evaluators~~ are not obliged to take into account any information or evidence that is not made available in the application and submitted by the due date, unless explicitly requested by the evaluators.

~~It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the questions have been fully answered and the required documentation is attached. Evaluators are entitled, but not obliged, to request further information or evidence from an applicant. The Initial Evaluation period provides for one exchange of information between the applicant and the evaluators.[11] Any such request will be made solely through TAS, rather than by direct means such as phone, letter, email, or other similar means.~~

~~Because different registry types and purposes may justify different responses to individual questions, evaluators will pay particular attention to the consistency of an application across all criteria. For example, an applicant's scaling plans noting hardware to ensure its capacity to operate at a particular volume level should be consistent with its financial plans to secure the necessary equipment.~~

2.1.3   Registry Services Review

Concurrent with the other reviews that occur during the Initial Evaluation period~~string reviews described in subsection 2.1.1~~, ICANN will review the applicant's proposed registry services for any possible adverse impact on security or stability. The applicant will be required to provide a list of proposed registry services in its application.

2.1.3.1 Definitions
Registry services are defined as:

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[11] ~~Some comments suggested that there was a lack of flexibility in the limitation to one exchange between applicant and evaluators during the Initial Evaluation. The design goal is an efficient and predictable process. The opportunity for one communication is a compromise that reduces the bottlenecking issue that would likely occur in an open-ended dialogue, but does afford the opportunity for an applicant to provide any necessary clarifications.~~

1. operations of the registry critical to the following tasks: the receipt of data from registrars concerning registrations of domain names and name servers; provision to registrars of status information relating to the zone servers for the TLD; dissemination of TLD zone files; operation of the registry zone servers; and dissemination of contact and other information concerning domain name server registrations in the TLD as required by the registry agreement;

2. other products or services that the registry operator is required to provide because of the establishment of a consensus policy; and

3. any other products or services that only a registry operator is capable of providing, by reason of its designation as the registry operator.

Proposed registry services will be examined to determine if they might raise significant stability or security issues. Examples of services proposed by existing registries can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/. In most cases, these proposed services successfully pass this inquiry.

Registry services currently provided by gTLD registries can be found in registry agreement appendices. See http://www.icann.org/en/registries/agreements.htm.

A full definition of registry service can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/rsep.html.

The following registry services are customary services offered by a registry operator:

- Receipt of data from registrars concerning registration of domain names and name servers

- Provision of status information relating to zone servers for the TLD

- Dissemination of TLD zone files

- Dissemination of contact or other information concerning domain name registrations

- Internationalized Domain Names (if applicable)

- DNS Security Extensions

The applicant must describe whether any of these registry services are intended to be offered in a manner unique to the TLD.

Any additional registry services that are unique to the proposed gTLD registry should be described in detail. Directions for describing the registry services are provided at http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/rrs_sample.html.

Registry services are defined as:

1. operations of the registry critical to the following tasks: the receipt of data from registrars concerning registrations of domain names and name servers; provision to registrars of status information relating to the zone servers for the TLD; dissemination of TLD zone files; operation of the registry zone servers; and dissemination of contact and other information concerning domain name server registrations in the TLD as required by the registry agreement;

2. other products or services that the registry operator is required to provide because of the establishment of a consensus policy; and

3. any other products or services that only a registry operator is capable of providing, by reason of its designation as the registry operator.

Proposed registry services will be examined to determine if they might raise significant stability or security issues. Examples of services proposed by existing registries can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/. In most cases, these proposed services successfully pass this inquiry.

Registry services currently provided by registries can be found in registry agreement appendices. See http://www.icann.org/en/registries/agreements.htm.

A full definition of registry service can be found at http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/rsep.html and in the draft registry agreement at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtld-draft-agreement-18feb09-en.pdf.

For purposes of this review, security and stability are defined as follows:

Security – an effect on security by the proposed registry service means (1) the unauthorized disclosure, alteration, insertion or destruction of registry data, or (2) the unauthorized access to or disclosure of information or resources on the Internet by systems operating in accordance with all applicable standards.

Stability – an effect on stability means that the proposed registry service (1) does not comply with applicable relevant standards that are authoritative and published by a well-established, recognized, and authoritative standards body, such as relevant standards-track or best current practice RFCs sponsored by the IETF, or (2) creates a condition that adversely affects the throughput, response time, consistency, or coherence of responses to Internet servers or end systems, operating in accordance with applicable relevant standards that are authoritative and published by a well-established, recognized and authoritative standards body, such as relevant standards-track or best current practice RFCs and relying on registry operator's delegation information or provisioning services.

2.1.3.2 Methodology

The Rreview of the applicant's proposed registry services will include a preliminary determination of whether any of the proposed registry services proposed registry service requires further consideration based on whether the registry service may raise significant security or stability issues and require additional consideration.

If theICANN's preliminary determination reveals that there may be significant security or stability issues (as defined in subsection 2.1.3.1) surrounding athe proposed service, the application will be flagged for an extended review by the DNS Stability Technical Panel (as performed by experts on the existing Registry Services Technical Evaluation Panel (RSTEP), see http://www.icann.org/en/registries/rsep/rstep.html). This review, if applicable, will occur during the Extended Evaluation period (refer to Section 2.2).

In the event that an application is flagged for extended review of one or more registry services, an additional fee to cover the cost of the extended review will be due from the applicant. Applicants will be advised of any additional fees due, which must be received before the additional review begins.

Definitions for security and stability applied in the registry services review are:

Security – an effect on security by the proposed registry service means (1) the unauthorized disclosure, alteration, insertion or destruction of registry data, or (2) the unauthorized access to or disclosure of information or resources on the Internet by systems operating in accordance with all applicable standards.

Stability — an effect on stability means that the proposed registry service (1) does not comply with applicable relevant standards that are authoritative and published by a well-established, recognized, and authoritative standards body, such as relevant standards-track or best current practice RFCs sponsored by the IETF, or (2) creates a condition that adversely affects the throughput, response time, consistency, or coherence of responses to Internet servers or end systems, operating in accordance with applicable relevant standards that are authoritative and published by a well-established, recognized and authoritative standards body, such as relevant standards-track or best current practice RFCs and relying on registry operator's delegation information or provisioning services.

2.1.4 Applicant's Withdrawal of an Application

An applicant who does not pass the Initial Evaluation may be permitted to withdraw its application at this stage and requestfor a partial refund (refer to subsection 1.5.5 of Module 1).

2.2 Extended Evaluation

An applicant may request an Extended Evaluation if the application has failed to pass the Initial Evaluation elements concerning:

- Demonstration of technical and operational capability (refer to subsection 2.1.2.1). There is no additional fee for an extended evaluation in this instance.

- Demonstration of financial capability (refer to subsection 2.1.2.21). There is no additional fee for an extended evaluation in this instance.

- DNS stability – String review (refer to subsection 2.1.1.3). There is no additional fee for an extended evaluation in this instance.

- DNS stability – Registry services (refer to subsection 2.1.3). Note that this investigation incurs an additional fee (the Registry Services Review Fee) if the applicant wishes to proceed. See Section 1.5 of Module 1 for fee and payment information.

- Geographical names (refer to subsection 2.1.1.4) – There is no additional fee for an extended evaluation in this instance.

An Extended Evaluation does not imply any change of the evaluation criteria. The same criteria used in the Initial Evaluation will be used to review the application in light of clarifications provided by the applicant.

From the time an applicant receives notice of failure to pass the Initial Evaluation, eligible applicants will have~~it has~~ 15 calendar days to submit to ICANN the Notice of Request for Extended Evaluation ~~through the online application interface~~. If the applicant does not explicitly request the Extended Evaluation~~, and~~ (and pay an~~y~~ additional fee in the case of a Registry Services inquiry)~~s as applicable,~~ the application will not proceed.

2.2.1   Technical~~/ and~~ Operational or Financial Extended Evaluation

The following applies to an Extended Evaluation of an applicant's technical and operational capability or financial capability, as described in subsection 2.1.2.~~1.~~

An applicant who has requested Extended Evaluation will again access the online application system and clarify its answers to those questions or sections on which it received a non-passing score. The answers should be responsive to the evaluator report that indicates the reasons for failure. Applicants may not use the Extended Evaluation period to substitute portions of new information for the information submitted in their original applications, i.e., to materially change the application.

An applicant participating in an Extended Evaluation will have the option to have its application reviewed by the same evaluation panelists who performed the review during the Initial Evaluation period, or to have a different set of panelists perform the review during Extended Evaluation.

The Extended Evaluation allows an~~one~~ additional exchange of information between the evaluators and the applicant to further clarify information contained in the application. This supplemental information will become part of the application record. ~~~~Such communications will include a deadline for the applicant to respond. ~~Applicants may not use the Extended Evaluation period to substitute portions of new information for the information submitted in their original applications.~~

~~The same panel that reviewed an application during Initial Evaluation will conduct the Extended Evaluation, using the same criteria as outlined at~~

~~http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/draft-evaluation-criteria-18feb09-en.pdf, to determine whether the application, now that certain information has been clarified, meets the criteria.~~ [12]

ICANN will notify applicants at the end of the Extended Evaluation period as to whether they have passed. If an applicant passes Extended Evaluation, its application continues to the next stage in the process. If an applicant does not pass Extended Evaluation, the application will proceed no further. No further reviews are available.

2.2.2   DNS Stability -- Extended Evaluation

This section applies to an Extended Evaluation of DNS security or stability issues with an applied-for gTLD string, as described in subsection 2.1.1.3.

If an application is subject to Extended Evaluation, the DNS Stability Panel ~~an independent 3-member panel~~ will ~~be formed to~~ review the security or stability issues identified during the Initial Evaluation.

The panel will review the string and determine whether the string fails to comply with relevant standards or creates a condition that adversely affects the throughput, response time, consistency, or coherence of responses to Internet servers or end systems, and will communicate its findings to ICANN and to the applicant.

If the panel determines that the string does not comply with relevant technical standards or creates a condition that adversely affects the throughput, response time, consistency, or coherence of responses to Internet servers or end systems, the application cannot proceed.

2.2.3   Registry Services Extended Evaluation

This section applies to Extended Evaluation of rRegistry sServices, as described in subsection 2.1.3.

If a proposed registry service has been referred to the Registry Services Technical Evaluation Panel (RSTEP) for an extended review, the RSTEP will form a review team of members with the appropriate qualifications.

The review team will generally consist of 3 members, depending on the complexity of the registry service

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[12] ~~Some comments were received indicating a preference for a new panel to perform the Extended Evaluation. ICANN will consult with the evaluators retained for this role for their recommendations on what is standard in analogous situations.~~

proposed. In a 3-member panel, the review could be conducted within 30 to 45 days. In cases where a 5-member panel is needed, this will be identified before the extended evaluation starts. In a 5-member panel, the review could be conducted in 45 days or fewer.

The cost of an RSTEP review will be covered by the applicant through payment of the Registry Services Review Fee. Refer to payment procedures in section 1.5 of Module 1. The RSTEP ~~team~~ review will not commence until payment has been received.

If the RSTEP finds that one or more of the applicant's proposed registry services may be introduced without risk of a meaningful adverse effect on security or stability, these services will~~may~~ be included in the applicant's contract with ICANN. If the RSTEP finds that the proposed service would create a risk of a meaningful adverse effect on security or stability, the applicant may elect to proceed with its application without the proposed service, or withdraw its application for the gTLD. In this instance, an applicant has 15 calendar days to notify ICANN of its intent to proceed with the application. If an applicant does not explicitly provide such~~this~~ notice within this time frame, the application will proceed no further.

2.3 Parties Involved in Evaluation~~Channels for Communication~~

A number of independent experts and groups play a part in performing the various reviews in the evaluation process. A brief description of the various panels, their evaluation roles, and the circumstances under which they work is included in this section.

2.3.1 Panels and Roles

The **String Similarity Panel** assesses whether a proposed gTLD string is likely to result in user confusion due to similarity with any reserved word, any existing TLD, or any new gTLD string applied for in the current application round. This occurs during the String Similarity review in Initial Evaluation.

The **DNS Stability Panel** will review each applied-for string to determine whether the proposed string might adversely affect the security or stability of the DNS. This occurs during the DNS Stability String Review in Initial Evaluation, and may occur again if an applicant does not pass the review in Initial Evaluation and requests Extended Evaluation.

The **Geographical Names Panel** will review each application to determine whether the applied-for gTLD represents a geographic name as defined in this guidebook. In the event that the string represents a geographic name, the panel will ensure that the required documentation is provided with the application and verify that the documentation is from the relevant governments or public authorities and is authentic.

The **Technical Evaluation Panel** will review the technical components of each application against the criteria in the Applicant Guidebook, along with proposed registry operations, in order to determine whether the applicant is technically and operationally capable of operating a gTLD registry. This occurs during the Technical/Operational Reviews in Initial Evaluation, and may also occur in Extended Evaluation if elected by the applicant.

The **Financial Evaluation Panel** will review each application against the relevant business, financial and organizational criteria contained in the Applicant Guidebook, to determine whether the applicant is financially capable of maintaining a gTLD registry. This occurs during the Financial Review in Initial Evaluation, and may also occur in Extended Evaluation if elected by the applicant.

The **Registry Services Technical Evaluation Panel (RSTEP)** will review the proposed registry services in the application to determine if any registry services might raise significant security or stability issues. This occurs, if applicable, during the Extended Evaluation period.

Members of these panels are required to abide by the established Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest guidelines included in this module.

2.3.2 Panel Selection Process

ICANN is in the process of selecting qualified third-party providers to perform the various reviews.[13] In addition to the specific subject matter expertise required for each panel, specified qualifications are required, including:

- The provider must be able to convene – or have the capacity to convene - globally diverse panels and be able to evaluate applications from all regions of the world, including applications for IDN gTLDs.

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[13] *See* http://icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/open-tenders-eoi-en.htm

- The provider should be familiar with the IETF IDNA standards, Unicode standards, relevant RFCs and the terminology associated with IDNs.

- The provider must be able to scale quickly to meet the demands of the evaluation of an unknown number of applications. At present it is not known how many applications will be received, how complex they will be, and whether they will be predominantly for ASCII or non-ASCII gTLDs.

- The provider must be able to evaluate the applications within the required timeframes of Initial and Extended Evaluation.

It is anticipated that the providers will be selected during this year. Additional updates will be posted on ICANN's website.

2.3.3 Code of Conduct Guidelines for Panelists

The purpose of the New gTLD Application Program ("Program") Code of Conduct ("Code") is to prevent real and apparent conflicts of interest and unethical behavior by any Evaluation Panelist ("Panelist").

Panelists shall conduct themselves as thoughtful, competent, well prepared, and impartial professionals throughout the application process. Panelists are expected to comply with equity and high ethical standards while assuring the Internet community, its constituents, and the public of objectivity, integrity, confidentiality, and credibility. Unethical actions, or even the appearance of compromise, are not acceptable. Panelists are expected to be guided by the following principles in carrying out their respective responsibilities. This Code is intended to summarize the principles and nothing in this Code should be considered as limiting duties, obligations or legal requirements with which Panelists must comply.

Bias -- Panelist shall:

- not advance personal agendas or non-ICANN approved agendas in the evaluation of applications;

- examine facts as they exist and not be influenced by past reputation, media, accounts, etc about the Applicants being evaluated;

- exclude themselves from participating in the evaluation of an application if, to their knowledge, there is some predisposing factor that could prejudice them with respect to such evaluation; and

- exclude themselves from evaluation activities if they are philosophically opposed to or are on record as having made generic criticism about a specific type of Applicant or application

Compensation/Gifts -- Panelist shall not request or accept any compensation whatsoever or any gifts of substance from the Applicant being reviewed or anyone affiliated with the Applicant. (Gifts of substance would include any gift greater than US$25 in value).

If the giving of small tokens is important to the Applicant's culture, Panelists may accept these tokens however, the total of such tokens must not exceed US$25 in value. If in doubt, the Panelist should err on the side of caution by declining gifts of any kind.

Conflicts of Interest -- Panelists shall act in accordance with the "New gTLD Application Program Conflicts of Interest."

Confidentiality -- Confidentiality is an integral part of the evaluation process. Panelists must have access to sensitive information in order to conduct Applicant evaluations. Panelists must maintain confidentiality of information entrusted to them by ICANN and the Applicant and any other confidential information provided to them from whatever source, except when disclosure is legally mandated or has been authorized by ICANN. "Confidential information" includes all elements of the Program and information gathered as part of the process – which includes but is not limited to: documents, interviews, discussions, interpretations, and analyses – related to the review of any new gTLD application.

Enforcement -- Breaches of this Code, whether intentional or not, shall be reviewed by ICANN, which may make recommendations for corrective action, if deemed necessary. Serious breaches of the Code may be cause for dismissal of the person, persons or provider committing the infraction.

Affirmation -- All Panelists shall read this Code prior to commencing evaluation services and shall certify in writing that they have done so and understand the Code.

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2.3.4   Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Panelists

It is recognized that third-party providers may have a large number of employees in several countries serving numerous clients. In fact, there is possibility that the a number of Panelists may be very well known within the registry / registrar community and have provided professional services to a number of potential applicants.

To safeguard against the potential for inappropriate influence and ensure applications are evaluated in an objective and independent manner, ICANN has established detailed Conflicts of Interest guidelines and procedures that will be followed by the Evaluation Panelists. To help ensure that the guidelines are appropriately followed ICANN will:

- Require each Evaluation Panelist (provider and individual) to acknowledge and document understanding of the Conflicts of Interest guidelines.

- Identify and secure primary, secondary, and contingent third party providers for each of the evaluation panels highlighted in the Applicant Guidebook.

- In conjunction with the Evaluation Panelists, develop and implement a process to identify conflicts and re-assign applications as appropriate to secondary or contingent third party providers to perform the reviews.

Compliance Period -- All Evaluation Panelists must comply with the Conflicts of Interest guidelines beginning with the opening date of the pre-registration period and ending with the public announcement by ICANN of the final outcomes of all the applications from the Applicant in question.

Guidelines -- The following guidelines are the minimum standards with which all Evaluation Panelists must comply. It is recognized that it is impossible to foresee and cover all circumstances in which a potential conflict of interest might arise. In these cases the Evaluation Panelist should evaluate whether the existing facts and circumstances would lead a reasonable person to conclude that there is an actual conflict of interest.

Evaluation Panelists and Immediate Family Members:

- Must not be under contract, have or be included in a current proposal to provide Professional Services for or on behalf of the Applicant during the Compliance Period.

- Must not currently hold or be committed to acquire any interest in a privately-held Applicant

- Must not currently hold or be committed to acquire more than 1% of any publicly listed Applicant's outstanding equity securities or other ownership interests

- Must not be involved or have an interest in a joint venture, partnership or other business arrangement with the Applicant.

- Must not have been named in a lawsuit with or against the Applicant

- Must not be a:

  o Director, officer, or employee, or in any capacity equivalent to that of a member of management of the Applicant;

  o Promoter, underwriter, or voting trustee of the Applicant; or

  o Trustee for any pension or profit-sharing trust of the Applicant.

Definitions--

Evaluation Panelist: An Evaluation Panelist is any individual associated with the review of an application. This includes primary, secondary, and contingent third party Panelists identified through the Expressions of Interest (EOI) process.

Immediate Family Member: Immediate Family Member is a spouse, spousal equivalent, or dependent (whether or not related) of an Evaluation Panelist.

Professional Services: include, but are not limited to legal services, financial audit, financial planning / investment, outsourced services, consulting services such as business / management / internal audit, tax, information technology, registry / registrar services.

2.3.5   Communication Channels

Defined channels for technical support or exchanges of information with ICANN and with evaluation~~its~~ panels~~evaluators~~ will be made available to applicants during the Initial Evaluation and Extended Evaluation periods. Contacting individual ICANN staff members, Board members, or other individuals performing an evaluation role in order to lobby or obtain confidential information is not appropriate. In the interests of fairness and equivalent treatment for all applicants, any such individual contacts will be referred to the appropriate communication channels.

Annex: Separable Country Names List

Under various proposed ICANN policies, eligibility for country name reservation or allocation is tied to listing in property fields of the ISO 3166-1 standard. Notionally, the ISO 3166-1 standard has an "English short name" field which is the common name for a country and can be used for such protections; however, in some cases this does not represent the common name. This registry seeks to add additional protected elements which are derived from definitions in the ISO 3166-1 standard. An explanation of the various classes is included below.

Separable Country Names List

Code	English Short Name	Cl.	Separable Name
ax	Åland Islands	B1	Åland
as	American Samoa	C	Tutuila
		C	Swain's Island
ao	Angola	C	Cabinda
ag	Antigua and Barbuda	A	Antigua
		A	Barbuda
		C	Redonda Island
au	Australia	C	Lord Howe Island
		C	Macquarie Island
		C	Ashmore Island
		C	Cartier Island
		C	Coral Sea Islands
bo	Bolivia, Plurinational State of	B1	Bolivia
ba	Bosnia and Herzegovina	A	Bosnia
		A	Herzegovina
br	Brazil	C	Fernando de Noronha Island
		C	Martim Vaz Islands
		C	Trinidade Island
io	British Indian Ocean Territory	C	Chagos Archipelago
		C	Diego Garcia
bn	Brunei Darussalam	B1	Brunei
		C	Negara Brunei Darussalam
cv	Cape Verde	C	São Tiago
		C	São Vicente
ky	Cayman Islands	C	Grand Cayman
cl	Chile	C	Easter Island
		C	Juan Fernández Islands
		C	Sala y Gómez Island
		C	San Ambrosio Island
		C	San Félix Island
cc	Cocos (Keeling) Islands	A	Cocos Islands
		A	Keeling Islands
co	Colombia	C	Malpelo Island
		C	San Andrés Island
		C	Providencia Island
km	Comoros	C	Anjouan
		C	Grande Comore
		C	Mohéli
ck	Cook Islands	C	Rarotonga
cr	Costa Rica	C	Coco Island
ec	Ecuador	C	Galápagos Islands
gg	Equatorial Guinea	C	Annobón Island
		C	Bioko Island
		C	Río Muni
fk	Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	B1	Falkland Islands
		B1	Malvinas

fo	Faroe Islands	A	Faroe
fj	Fiji	C	Vanua Levu
		C	Viti Levu
		C	Rotuma Island
pf	French Polynesia	C	Austral Islands
		C	Gambier Islands
		C	Marquesas Islands
		C	Society Archipelago
		C	Tahiti
		C	Tuamotu Islands
		C	Clipperton Island
tf	French Southern Territories	C	Amsterdam Islands
		C	Crozet Archipelago
		C	Kerguelen Islands
		C	Saint Paul Island
gr	Greece	C	Mount Athos
gd	Grenada	C	Southern Grenadine Islands
		C	Carriacou
gp	Guadeloupe	C	la Désirade
		C	Marie-Galante
		C	les Saintes
hm	Heard Island and McDonald Islands	A	Heard Island
		A	McDonald Islands
va	Holy See (Vatican City State)	A	Holy See
		A	Vatican
hn	Honduras	C	Swan Islands
in	India	C	Amindivi Islands
		C	Andaman Islands
		C	Laccadive Islands
		C	Minicoy Island
		C	Nicobar Islands
ir	Iran, Islamic Republic of	B1	Iran
ki	Kiribati	C	Gilbert Islands
		C	Tarawa
		C	Banaba
		C	Line Islands
		C	Kiritimati
		C	Phoenix Islands
		C	Abariringa
		C	Enderbury Island
kp	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	C	North Korea
kr	Korea, Republic of	C	South Korea
la	Lao People's Democratic Republic	B1	Laos
ly	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	B1	Libya
mk	Macedonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of	B1	Macedonia
my	Malaysia	C	Sabah
		C	Sarawak
mh	Marshall Islands	C	Jaluit
			Kwajalein
			Majuro
mu	Mauritius	C	Agalega Islands
		C	Cargados Carajos Shoals
		C	Rodrigues Island
fm	Micronesia, Federated States of	B1	Micronesia
		C	Caroline Islands (see also pw)
		C	Chuuk
		C	Kosrae

		C	Pohnpei
		C	Yap
md	Moldova, Republic of	B1	Moldova
		C	Moldava
an	Netherlands Antilles	B1	Antilles
		C	Bonaire
		C	Curaçao
		C	Saba
		C	Saint Eustatius
		C	Saint Martin
nc	New Caledonia	C	Loyalty Islands
mp	Northern Mariana Islands	C	Mariana Islands
		C	Saipan
om	Oman	C	Musandam Peninsula
pw	Palau	C	Caroline islands (see also fm)
		C	Babelthuap
ps	Palestinian Territory, Occupied	B1	Palestine
pg	Papua New Guinea	C	Bismarck Archipelago
		C	Northern Solomon Islands
		C	Bougainville
pn	Pitcairn	C	Ducie Island
		C	Henderson Island
		C	Oeno Island
re	Réunion	C	Bassas da India
		C	Europa Island
		C	Glorioso Island
		C	Juan de Nova Island
		C	Tromelin Island
ru	Russian Federation	B1	Russia
		C	Kaliningrad Region
sh	Saint Helena	C	Gough Island
		C	Tristan de Cunha Archipelago
kn	Saint Kitts and Nevis	A	Saint Kitts
		A	Nevis
pm	Saint Pierre and Miquelon	A	Saint Pierre
		A	Miquelon
vc	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	A	Saint Vincent
		A	The Grenadines
		C	Northern Grenadine Islands
		C	Bequia
		C	Saint Vincent Island
ws	Samoa	C	Savai'i
		C	Upolu
st	Sao Tome and Principe	A	Sao Tome
		A	Principe
sc	Seychelles	C	Mahé
		C	Aldabra Islands
		C	Amirante Islands
		C	Cosmoledo Islands
		C	Farquhar Islands
sb	Solomon Islands	C	Santa Cruz Islands
		C	Southern Solomon Islands
		C	Guadalcanal
za	South Africa	C	Marion Island
		C	Prince Edward Island
gs	South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands	A	South Georgia
		A	South Sandwich Islands
sj	Svalbard and Jan Mayen	A	Svalbard

		A	Jan Mayen
		C	Bear Island
sy	Syrian Arab Republic	B1	Syria
tw	Taiwan, Province of China	B1	Taiwan
		C	Penghu Islands
		C	Pescadores
tz	Tanzania, United Republic of	B1	Tanzania
tl	Timor-Leste	C	Oecussi
to	Tonga	C	Tongatapu
tt	Trinidad and Tobago	A	Trinidad
		A	Tobago
tc	Turks and Caicos Islands	A	Turks Islands
		A	Caicos Islands
tv	Tuvalu	C	Fanafuti
ae	United Arab Emirates	B1	Emirates
us	United States	B2	America
um	United States Minor Outlying Islands	C	Baker Island
		C	Howland Island
		C	Jarvis Island
		C	Johnston Atoll
		C	Kingman Reef
		C	Midway Islands
		C	Palmyra Atoll
		C	Wake Island
		C	Navassa Island
vu	Vanuatu	C	Efate
		C	Santo
ve	Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of	B1	Venezuela
		C	Bird Island
vg	Virgin Islands, British	B1	Virgin Islands
		C	Anegada
		C	Jost Van Dyke
		C	Tortola
		C	Virgin Gorda
vi	Virgin Islands, US	B1	Virgin Islands
		C	Saint Croix
		C	Saint John
		C	Saint Thomas
wf	Wallis and Futuna	A	Wallis
		A	Futuna
		C	Hoorn Islands
		C	Wallis Islands
		C	Uvea
ye	Yemen	C	Socotra Island

Maintenance

A Separable Country Names Registry will be maintained and published by ICANN Staff.

Each time the ISO 3166-1 standard is updated with a new entry, this registry will be reappraised to identify if the changes to the standard warrant changes to the entries in this registry. Appraisal will be based on the criteria listing in the "Eligibility" section of this document.

Codes reserved by the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency do not have any implication on this registry, only entries derived from normally assigned codes appearing in ISO 3166-1 are eligible.

If an ISO code is struck off the ISO 3166-1 standard, any entries in this registry deriving from that code must be struck.

Eligibility

Each record in this registry is derived from the following possible properties:

Class A: The ISO 3166-1 English Short Name is comprised of multiple, separable parts whereby the country is comprised of distinct sub-entities. Each of these separable parts is eligible in its own right for consideration as a country name. For example, "Antigua and Barbuda" is comprised of "Antigua" and "Barbuda."

Class B: The ISO 3166-1 English Short Name (1) or the ISO 3166-1 English Full Name (2) contains additional language as to the type of country the entity is, which is often not used in common usage when referencing the country. For example, one such short name is "The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela" for a country in common usage referred to as "Venezuela."

Class C: The ISO 3166-1 Remarks column containing synonyms of the country name, or sub-national entities, as denoted by "often referred to as," "includes", "comprises", "variant" or "principal islands".

In the first two cases, the registry listing must be directly derivative from the English Short Name by excising words and articles. These registry listings do not include vernacular or other non-official terms used to denote the country.

Eligibility is calculated in class order. For example, if a term can be derived both from Class A and Class C, it is only listed as Class A.