Policy Development Process: New Generic Top-Level Domain Subsequent Procedures

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT ICANN68 IN RELATION TO THIS TOPIC?

The New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group is set to meet on Tuesday, 23 June 2020 from 00:30-02:00 UTC. The working group also expects to meet at one of its normally rotating times on Thursday, 25 June, where it will at a minimum allow observers. The working group will continue reviewing draft final recommendations and seek resolution for outstanding topics.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

The PDP on New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Subsequent Procedures was initiated in December 2015 and chartered in January 2016. It aims to determine what, if any, changes need to be made to the existing policy recommendations from the 2007 **Final Report on the Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains**, such as:

- Clarifying, amending, or overriding existing policy principles, recommendations, and implementation guidance.
- Developing new policy recommendations.
- Supplementing or developing new implementation guidance.

It should be noted that the existing policy recommendations adopted by the GNSO Council and ICANN Board have "been designed to produce a systemized and ongoing mechanism for applicants to propose new top-level domains."[1] Essentially, this means that these recommendations will remain in place unless the working group determines that changes are needed.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The New gTLD Program marked a seminal moment in ICANN's history. In spite of great interest and over 1,000 successful TLD delegations, changes to existing policies and implementation guidance might be needed for future gTLD launches. The **Final Issue Report** and the working group **charter** identified a number of subjects that require analysis and potential policy development.

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[1] GNSO Summary of Policy Recommendations: http://gnso.icann.org/issues/new-gtlds/summary-principles-recommendations-implementation-guidelines-22oct08.doc.pdf

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE PROJECT?

The working group started its work on 22 February 2016 and over the course of several years, has convened several subgroups and undertaken extensive deliberations on the long list of topics in this working group's charter. This work has included numerous opportunities for community input, including the publication of its **Initial Report** for Public Comment on 3 July 2018, a **Supplemental Initial Report** on October 2018, and an additional report from the PDP's Work Track 5, devoted solely to the issue of geographic names at the top-level.

The working group reviewed all of the community input received in detail and has spent the majority of 2020 refining its draft final recommendations to be included in a draft Final Report. This has included seeking resolution on topics where open issues remain, such as closed generics, string contention resolution mechanisms, and a predictability framework.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

The working group is devoting nearly all of its time to the task of agreeing on draft final recommendations and in limited circumstances, focused questions where additional public input appears to be needed. The working group will package the draft final recommendations and questions into a draft Final Report, which will be published for public comment. Because the majority of the content has been put out for public input before, and in some cases multiple times, the public comment period will seek to draw attention to new aspects and solicit new information, rather than requiring commenters to argue for or against draft recommendations again. These draft final recommendations and questions will form the basis for discussions at ICANN68.

After the public comment period concludes, the working group will turn its attention to evaluating input received and making adjustments as necessary. The working group is expected to deliver its Final Report to the GNSO Council no later than the end of December in 2020.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

This working group is open to all participants. If you are interested in joining, please email **gnso-secs@icann.org**. As the working group has already been in operation for a substantial amount of time and is transitioning toward drafting final recommendations, newcomers are expected to catch up on the discussions to date and to not reopen previously closed topics unless new information is presented.

MORE INFORMATION

- Working Group Initial Report: **https://go.icann.org/2Q2pnjd**

- Working Group Supplemental Initial Report: **https://go.icann.org/2BsFcuH**

- Work Track 5 Final Report: **https://go.icann.org/399nef1**

- Work Track 5 Supplemental Initial Report: **https://go.icann.org/2SxaXgA**

- PDP webpage: **http://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/active/new-gtld-subsequent-procedures**

- Working Group workspace: **https://community.icann.org/x/RgV1Aw**

- Working Group Charter: **https://go.icann.org/2G7BdUf**

- Final Issue Report: **https://go.icann.org/2Eoutkv**

BACKGROUND

While the application submission period for the initial new gTLD round closed in June 2012, the GNSO Council continues to play a role in evaluating the first round and proposing policy recommendations for changes to subsequent rounds, if necessary. A **discussion group** was created to begin the evaluation process and identify areas for future GNSO policy development. Upon considering the deliverables of the discussion group, the GNSO Council requested a Preliminary Issue Report to be delivered by the ICANN organization. After incorporating public comments on its Preliminary Issue Report, staff prepared and delivered the Final Issue Report. Subsequently, the GNSO Council initiated the PDP and adopted the working group charter.

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