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## ICANN Transcription

### IDNs EPDP

**Thursday, 17 August 2023 at 12:00 UTC**

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DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the IDNs EPDP call, taking place on Thursday, 17 August 2023 at 12:00 UTC.

All members will be promoted to panelist, observers will remain as an attendee, and will have view access to chat only. Statements of interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you need assistance updating your statements of interest, please email the GNSO Secretariat.

All documentation and information can be found on the IDNs EPDP wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly after the end of the call. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript.

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As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multi-stakeholder process are to comply with the expected standards of behavior. Thank you and over to our Chair, Donna Austin, please begin.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks very much, Devan, and welcome everybody to today's call. Just by way of a reminder, we won't have a call next week because there is a council meeting at the same time, so we have a clash, so we'll defer to council. So you can have a break next week. And the other reminder is that the draft text that we put out for phase two, the deadline for that I think was yesterday, but Ariel can confirm. So hopefully folks have had a chance to take a look at that. Ariel's saying the 22nd of August, so there's a couple of more days for folks to look at that. Just if you think you need extra time, if you could let us know sooner rather than later, so that that can help with our planning on working through the text or adopting the text.

It might seem a little bit far away at the moment, but just a reminder that our face-to-face workshop is, the workshop dates are the 6th to the 8th of December, but we still don't have a location. So unfortunately I can't help you with that part, but at least if folks could at least get in their diary that from the 6th to the 8th, we will be having the face-to-face meeting. We don't really know what the agenda for that meeting is going to be yet. It's a little bit too soon, but I would think that after we get through ICANN in Hamburg, we'll have a better sense of what we're going to be talking about in December.

So I guess while I'm talking about deadlines, the phase one report, we did promise council that we would have that to them sometime in November. So I'm starting to get or feel a little bit of pressure that we perhaps need to speed up our review of phase one so that we can ensure that we meet that deadline. So the good news is that we got through all the initial reading of the comments last week. So now all we need to do is, Justine and I have a little bit of work to do in reviewing the feedback and working through revised recommendations where we think that's necessary based on the comments that we've received. And then swing that back around with the group again so that we can run through it again and agree to the any language changes.

So I guess that's it by way of updates or reminders. The other good news is that we're hoping to get through this conversation today reasonably quick. So we will see how it goes, but it shouldn't take two hours. But I have come to learn that you can never predict how long these conversations are going to take. Most of our conversation today is we're going to switch back to phase two and talk a little bit about or continue and hopefully finish our discussion around the source domain name, which was a conversation we didn't get to finish under some of the phase two discussion. Michael, I see your hand up. So go ahead, please.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Just a quick question regarding the face-to-face meeting. You said the date is fixed, but the location is not yet. So the dates definitely won't change because I've got a second event around that time where I will most likely have to fix the date quite soon. And it

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would be a pity if I fix them not at our face-to-face date, but then our face-to-face meeting changes the dates.

DONNA AUSTIN: Ariel, could you confirm that we're getting those dates?

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, this is Ariel. So I will also confirm with the meetings team after this call, but my understanding is they're using these dates for the venue selection and negotiation. They are already moving forward to that stage. So it's very unlikely it's going to be changed because every change will take weeks for them to get a new quote, so we don't have the luxury of time to further change that. But I will confirm with the meetings team and get back to the group.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. So, Michael, hopefully that gives you some level of comfort that the dates are locked in. Dennis?

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Donna, and good morning. Afternoon, everyone. Dennis Tan, Registries. Just acknowledging that the Registries Stakeholder Group were asked to provide feedback on two preliminary recommendations, 71 and 73. So we have feedback on it, but I don't want to disrupt the agenda, so we can provide the feedback on those two recommendations offline on the mailing list.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Let's see how we go at the end of this source domain name discussion, Dennis, and then I'm pretty sure we're going to have some time, so maybe it might be helpful if you can give us a heads up so that...

DENNIS TAN: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. We can do an AOB as well.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. All right. Let's do that. Okay. So with that, I will hand it over to you, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG: Okay. Sounds good. And this discussion is mainly based on conversation that Michael generated in the working group when we talked about the source domain name. And also, I have to give credit to Michael, who provided ideas how to address deletion or modification of source domain name issue, and he provided a lot of examples. And my job was simply try to visualize it and try to explain it to the group. So it's all Michael, basically. And I will invite him to chime in whenever he feels necessary and maybe some of the examples need some further explanation. I hope that Michael could help for this.

So this slide is kind of a refresher about source domain name. I understand we talked about this more than a month ago now. And we also have the draft text out for the group to provide comments.

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So hopefully you got a chance to read it. And in our draft text, we have developed a preliminary recommendation five. It says a registrant and its sponsor registrar must jointly determine the source domain name for calculating the variant domain set. The registrants and the sponsor registrars of the grandfathered variant domain names pursuant to preliminary recommendation three are exempt from this requirement.

So you probably don't need to worry too much about the second sentence here. It's just to provide the complete draft text for recommendation five. It's basically just that source domain name is necessary and it must be identified. And it's a joint responsibility between the registrant and the registrar. They can figure out a way that's most suitable based on the registrar's policy or business model. So that's the recommendation.

And also in the same time, staff is developing a glossary for phase two initial report. We have an entry for source domain name and this is what it means. So I'm just going to read it here. In the context of this phase two initial report, a source domain name is a registered domain that serves the central role of the source for calculating its variant domain set. The variant domain set consists of the selected variant labels at the top level along with variant label sets at the second levels. Oh, sorry, this should be second level, not S. The source domain name also determines which variant domain names in the variant domain set are allocatable or blocked. The EPDP team recommends that the source domain name must be identified between the registrant and the sponsor registrar as a joint responsibility. So it's just a kind of expanded explanation of what source domain name is and what it does. It's

sort of consistent with the recommendation. But you know, of course, this is a text that you haven't already seen. It's just doing the glossary Google Doc that's pending review by the leadership team. And then we will send to the group for review later. So you will get to see it and we'll have a chance to further refine this.

So these are the two remaining discussion questions related to the source domain name. And these were asked by Michael a month ago or so. And we didn't draw a conclusion on this. So that's why we're coming back to this and see whether they need to be answered and if so, is there a need to develop recommendation language around that. So the first question is, after a source domain name is identified, can it be changed? That's the first question. And then the second question is, can a source domain name be deleted? And if so, what would be the implication of that? So these are the two discussion questions. And so the next slide, this one, we have some proposal from Michael, but I see Anil has his hand up. So I will stop here and see. And Anil, yeah, please go ahead.

ANIL JAIN:

Ariel, thank you very much. Just for an explanation, I want to understand whether the source domain name has to be determined at top level domain or at the second level domain. Now, these are the two different source domain name at top level and second level. Thank you.

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ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, thanks, Anil for the question. So the source domain name is already a domain name. So it includes both top level and the second level. So the top level is basically a gTLD that's delegated. And then we also need to take into consideration the variant gTLD for that gTLD if it's already also have any delegated ones. So that's what top level consists of is the given gTLD and its variant label if delegated. And then the second level, that's what the registrant choose to register. So the registrant has to decide what label to register at the second level. And then if the source domain is identified between the registrant and the registrar, it has to consist of both second level and top level. So it's not just a top level. Otherwise, it's not a domain. I mean, it's not a domain name. I hope it explains a little better.

ANIL JAIN: Yeah, Ariel, thank you very much.

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, no problem. Okay, so we can probably take a look at Michael's proposal here in answering those two questions. And Michael, please feel free to raise hand whenever you want. That's your proposal. So I'm just gonna try to explain it to the group. What Michael proposes is that a source domain name should be allowed to be deleted or changed as long as its active variant domain names remain allocatable. So hopefully that makes sense. So what Michael proposes, there shouldn't be any restriction for change or deletion of the source domain name as long as this doesn't impact any registered variant domain names associated with that source domain name. And you know, make sure they are



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still allocatable and not change their disposition value due to the change of the source domain name. So that's his proposal.

And the rationale include a few points. The first point is that the specific details in the domain name lifecycle management are based on the discretion of the registrars, registries in accordance with their business interests, policies and practices. So it's based on what registries and registrars decide really for the specific details of domain name lifecycle management. And the second point is as long as the change or deletion of the source domain name does not make any active or registered variant domain names associated with the source blocked, it should not create potential grandfathering situation or other operational complexities. So that's the main point of this proposal, is make sure any already registered variant domain names can still remain registered and it won't make them blocked as a result of this change. And then finally, it's just to summarize, there's no need to prescribe any additional rules or constraints beyond what is in the proposal. Hadia, please go ahead.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. I have a question here. So does the usage of the domain name play any role here? So we are linking the source domain name with the active variant domain name. So we are saying we could actually delete the source domain name as long as its active variant domain names remain allocatable. So we are assuming there is a relationship there, which obviously there is. But usage, is there a usage relationship? Because as far as I remember for second level domain names,

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the domain names and their variants should not or are not required to act to be used similarly or act similarly. Thank you.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Hadia. I think when we talk about the source domain name concept, usage didn't really come up. It's mainly served as the source for calculating the variant domain sets. And as you said, all the variant domains, they shouldn't be required to behave the same. But I see a few hands up and Sarmad and Maxim, please go ahead. I guess Sarmad, please go ahead first.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Thank you, Ariel. This is Sarmad. So a few things. First of all, if I think this change is to be made, this should be made by the registrant and perhaps not triggered by the registrar. The reason I'm making that statement is because in the previous recommendation or rationale, it was being said that it's jointly managed by registrant and registrar. So that's, I guess, one thing we should probably clarify. The second, perhaps in this particular case, it should only be changed and not deleted. So because if you delete, then you go into a situation where there is no source domain until another one is actually set. And that's probably not a good condition to be in. So what should happen is that first the source domain should be changed to something else. And then the previous source domain, which is no longer the source domain, could be deleted. So maybe in this, it should just be changed and deleted should be handled separately for non-source domains. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. So can I just interrupt for a sec just to say that this is Michael's proposition. What's going to follow in this slide deck is a number of scenarios to test the proposal. So this isn't something that we are suggesting that we accept. What the idea is here is this is Michael's proposal. And in the slides that follow, we will test whether this makes sense or not. Michael, go ahead.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes, thanks, Michael for the record. Just a quick comment to Sarmad. I think there are situations where it's not possible to delete, to make another domain, the source domain name without deleting the current source at the same time, because there may be situations, and I think the example will show that, where you cannot make any other domain, the source domain name while keeping the current source, because it would become a blocked variant of the new source. But the following example should show this.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. So Ariel's going to work through the slide deck for us. So hopefully that will provide a bit more clarity around the consequences of if you delete or if you change. So Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Okay, sounds good. Yes, indeed, this is a little abstract to look at the proposal on paper. That's why we developed this example and scenarios to help the group discuss whether this proposal makes

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sense. So, okay, so this is the example. We have a variant domain set. It's just based on our assumptions. It has four variant domain names in the set. So this is the example that Michael proposed. The first one is, Michael, you can say it much better than me in German, but I think it's a [inaudible] like a big street, and you will see the sharp S in the both top and second level labels. So that's a first domain, domain A. And then domain B is a variant because at the second level, you will see the sharp S becomes the double S. And so that's also true for the RZLGR calculation. It has that relationship from sharp S to double S. So domain B is a variant domain of domain A for sure, at the second level in particular. And then domain C is also a variant domain because here, if you look at that compared to domain A, the top level, it's a double S. So it corresponds to the sharp S at a top level. The second level, it's the sharp S. So it's the same as domain A, but it's a variant for domain B at the second level. And finally, domain D is also a variant domain, and it's using double S at both second and top levels. So this is the variant domain set by way of example. We have a couple of presumptions for this variant domain set. One presumption is that no matter which variant domain is used as the source, the variant domain set will be the same. So basically, I think this is consistent with our IDN table harmonization requirement as well as you have to generate a consistent variant domain set based on a given label. So that's the first presumption. And the second presumption is the disposition value could change based on which domain is determined as the source domain. So the next couple of slides, we will show you how it looks like in terms of the change. But I see Hadia has her hand up.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Ariel. This is Hadia for the record. So just to understand the proposal, how I understand it is that the source domain name would be suspended, not deleted, or even if it is deleted. But I say suspended and not deleted because we were not assigned another source domain name. And thus, theoretically speaking, this suspended domain name is actually the source, but it doesn't exist. But the others still exist. Is that the proposal? Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: So, Hadia, can you just hold that question until we work our way through the rest of these examples? Because I think some of the questions you're asking might be answered. So if we can just give Ariel a little bit of time to work through the slides, then it might become a little bit clearer. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Yes. Thanks, Donna. Thanks, Hadia. And keep your question in mind. And also, I think Dennis wrote something very important in the comment, and I think it should be on the slide, too. There's another presumption, is that the top level, it's basically they have to be delegated. So both the sharp S strasse and the double S strasse, these two have to be delegated. It's not based on the RZLGR calculation exactly. Yeah, they're definitely allocatable variant domains for each other. But we're not taking into consideration any, for example, blocked top level domain. Because if that's the case, it doesn't really make sense, because

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there's no way to register a second level under a blocked top level variant domain. So at the top level, both are delegated variant domain. That's what's going to the variant domain set. So hopefully, that makes sense to others. But that's definitely the case. And thanks, Dennis, for putting that comment. I think I saw a question from Farrell. Yeah, definitely. The source domain has to be unique, because otherwise, all the domain names by nature, they have to be unique, right? So it's a unique, yeah, you have to choose one and have to be different from others. I hope that answers your question, Farrell.

DONNA AUSTIN: And I guess, just sorry, Ariel, just to be clear here, the source is required to generate the domain name set. So that's the importance of the source and why we're talking about source. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes, thanks. Just a quick correction, Donna. The source is not required to calculate the variant set. The variant set is always the same. The source is just needed to determine the disposition values. So which of the variants that exist may be allocatable and which will be blocked.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay.

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ARIEL LIANG:

Yeah, thanks for the discussion. And Farrell, your question probably can be answered in one of the slides down there about why change may be permitted. So it's still unique. It's just you can't have two sources. You have one. But the example Michael has thought about is you can change it. So, okay, so this slide is to kind of follow up on Michael's point about the source important value in calculating the disposition of the rest of the variant domain names. So, for example, if we treat the domain A as the source domain, then B, C, D, they're all allocatable. Also, this is consistent with RZLGR too, like from the top level, the sharp S has the allocatable variant double S. And now we have the same presumption, the IDN table follows the same logic. The sharp S can have allocatable variant double S. So B, C, D, they're all allocatable as a result of domain A being the source. But if you use domain B as the source, then you will see there are some blocked disposition value being calculated, it's A and C. They become blocked. The reason is, for example, we assume the IDN table determines that double S cannot have allocatable variant label as the sharp S, then double S to sharp S at the second level become blocked. And the same logic applies to B to C. So double S to sharp S, sharp S become blocked. But domain D is allocatable, because you can still have allocatable variant derived from the sharp S at the top level to the double S at the top level. So D become allocatable with this change of source. And then in a similar vein, if you use domain C as the source, then our presumption is that domain B become blocked due to the same situation I explained earlier, like double S cannot have allocatable variant label as the sharp S, they're blocked. But then D still remains allocatable here. And then this is another scenario if we

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use domain D as the source, then A, B, C all become blocked, because domain D has double S at both top and second level, and then our presumption is that it cannot have allocatable situation for going to the sharp S. Sharp S is a blocked variant label of a double S, so it become blocked for the rest of the domain names. So that's how this position value may change based on the change of the source domain. I'll just pause for a second and see whether everybody is still following or you have any questions. And welcome. Yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN:

So just something that I want to call out that's been stated in chat, and that's from Sarmad that the IDN table may be different for the variant TLDs. So variant calculations under variant TLDs may not be the same. And Michael has confirmed that he's assumed the root zone in LGR for the second level as well, just for simplicity. So these are examples. And they're illustrated. So if folks can just keep that in mind. Okay. Keep going, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Okay. All right. Sounds good. Okay. So this is the scenario one. So this is our starting point of scenario one. So our presumption here is A is a registered domain and it's used as the source domain. And then if you remember, if A is a source, B, C, D are all allocatable. And then the registrar decides to register D and E as well. So out of the variant domain set, three of the domains are registered. And I saw Dennis has his hand up.



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DENNIS TAN: Yes, Ariel. Thank you. Sorry to interrupt. But I think at this juncture, I think it's important to make an observation that I would like us to in terms of terminology and how we refer to how variants become activated, we refer as activation enabling or allocation instead of registration. There's a substantial or material implications when we say that variants needs to be registered because that translates to transactions, fees and what have you and conversations that we have had from an operational standpoint is that variants can be activated or enabled in different manners, not just by registration, which will call to mind an EPP transaction. So just make that decision. When we talk about the source or primary domain name, it's fine because that's a registered domain name, right? An object in the registry database. But as far as variants, let's use enable, allocate, allocate it or activate it just to create that distinction. And thank you.

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah. Thanks, Dennis, for the technical terminology correction. And I understand it does have these implications what term we use and activation is in the registry agreement. So, yes. So we'll say domain A is registered as a source domain and the variant domains C and D are activated as a result of that. So this is our starting point.

And this slide talks about what might be workable based on Michael's proposal, is domain A somehow kind of enters the expiration phase and eventually it has to be deleted. So the registrant lets that happen, basically didn't renew it and then just let it to be deleted. But at the same time, the registrant kind of figured this out with the sponsor registrar and say since we

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already have two activated variant domains, C and D, let us just make domain C as the source domain. And then the registrar said, okay, sure. Let's do that. Then now we'll make domain C the source domain. And then it didn't change much because based on the calculation that we showed earlier, domain D is still allocatable, variant domain, and it is activated already. So the change of the source domain to domain C doesn't change its activated status for domain D. But we do know this change would make domain B a blocked domain. But it doesn't really matter because domain B was never activated. So this particular scenario that the source, the original source domain A got deleted, but then the change to domain C didn't change the activated status of domain D is still a workable path. So that's what Michael's proposal was getting at. But I will stop here. I know this could be a little bit of a mental gymnastics to understand this scenario. So I just see whether there's any question. I see Hadia has her hand up.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much, Ariel. So this does make sense. But if actually B was registered or activated, I don't know which term to use now, then it would have mattered. And that's why deleting the source is not a good idea. Or maybe if you want to do that, then you should put a condition if the disposition changes to blocked, then to one of the activated domain names, then the source should not be deleted. Thank you.

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ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Hadia. You were thinking ahead, actually, because that's on the next slide about what is not workable. But I do know there's a comment in the chat from Edmon. This sounds like a kind of transfer not contemplated by existing provisioning protocol. So Edmon, if you have a chance to speak up, I would love to have you clarify or expand on the comment. Because in this scenario, it's still the same registrant. So I'm not sure exactly what transfer implies. The registrant is still the same. It's just based on what registrant decides which registrant which is the source domain name. That's a difference. But if you're not able to talk, it's okay. We can come back to that comment. Okay.

So this is the slide about something workable. It's a little different from what Hadia mentioned, but kind of same logic. Is that, for example, if the domain A is still active and registered, and then for some reason, the registrant feels like, oh, let's just change it to a domain C as the source. But domain A is still active. Then that can't happen. Because if you do change the source to domain C, domain A will become blocked due to this disposition value change. But then it's already activated and registered. So that will conflict with this blocked disposition value. So for this kind of scenario, the source domain cannot be changed. So that's not something workable and shouldn't be allowed. So that's the unworkable path based on scenario one. And I'll just pause for a moment and see if everybody is still following. And it seems to be the case. Okay.

I know Farell is still calling on the definition of the source domain. So we'll go back to that definition at some point. But I think most folks understand that it serves as the source for calculating the

variant domain set and the disposition value of all the variant domains in the set. So I think it's understood. But we can refine the definition.

And we also provided some additional examples. So we're looking at scenario two now. This is the starting point. So the starting point is that domain B is the registered domain that's acting as the source. And in that case, only domain D is allocatable based on the disposition value calculation. And the registrant also decides to activate domain D as its variant domain. So that's the starting point.

In terms of a workable path here, this is the one I personally struggle a little bit. So I would definitely welcome Michael to chime in here. The registrant sees the opportunity to actually change the source domain identification to domain A instead. So the registrant decides to make domain A the source domain, even in the starting point, it's blocked. But the registrant decides to make that source and also register domain A. And then in this case, B, C, D all become allocatable. And that's okay, because B and D, they are already activated. So it's still consistent with its starting point. If you look at this starting point, it's still consistent. But it has the added benefit of making C also allocatable and can be potentially activated in the future.

So this is something potentially workable, but I'm not 100% sure because I struggle with the notion of how do you actually register and make a block domain activated in this change. But maybe I'm missing something. So I will invite Michael to chime in. And Michael, please go ahead.

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MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes. Thanks, Michael for the record. So you're right that there is currently no technical support for this. But then again, there is no technical support for defining source domain labels at all. And I don't want to say that registries have to do this. I just don't want us to make a policy that prohibits registries. If they want to implement some way where the sources may be changeable, then I think they should be allowed to under the assumption which I put at the beginning that at all cases, we never have a situation where you have a source domain and allocated domain which should actually be blocked. That situation should be forbidden in all cases. And the reason why I think this scenario too might be necessary or might be a wanted path is that if -- could you turn back to page 15, please? The previous page. If you have this situation, some registrant has registered B and also activated B, and then at some point their use cases change or they sell the domain or whatever, and they now also want A to be -- to use that. And if we do not allow the change of the source domain, the only way to achieve this would be to delete the whole domain set, wait 30 days where none of the domains will work because that's a deletion period. And then after that, they have to re-register it and hope that no one in the meantime grabs that domain name away from them. And I think that's a situation we certainly don't want to have. For that reason, we should give the -- yes, Maxim, 30 days plus something, it's up to the registries, actually. And for that reason, we should give the registries freedom if they want to allow changing of source labels, do it as long as you never introduce a situation where you have a blocked variant label allocated. Thanks.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Michael. Donna, please go ahead.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, thanks, Ariel. So I have a question about -- so the original recommendation here is that the registrant and the registrar would determine what the source domain would be. So where does the discretion come in from the registry about changing the source or the disposition values? So I'm not sure I know how that would work.

MICHAEL BAULAND: The registry would have to have a policy that they allow changing of the source because there must be probably via an EPP extension some way to change it. Because with normal EPP commands, they don't know what the source domain is, and therefore, there's no way to change it. So while you are right that the registrant and registrar will have to determine whether they want to change it and to what domain they want to change it, it's still up to the registry whether they allow changing at all. And if so, they have to define how the change of the source will be possible. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. Dennis?

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DENNIS TAN:

Thank you, Donna. The more I think about this, I think the more I lean towards the conclusion we should not issue any policy and let the registries define their policy in terms of whether they want to allow this or not. Just thinking operationally, it becomes very complex once a domain name is registered, the variants are calculated, and then the registrant deploys services on top of those domain names. And making changes on the fly is just going to be very complex. I mean, the registries could opt to allow some changes perhaps as long as the registrant walks back all the -- you know, to a state of nothing is offering those domain names so that they can restart. Or they might want to do changes on the fly. But I don't think we need to issue or prescribe any policy one way or the other. Just let the registries do it because they have to do the control of what is the variants set, how they control what is registered, what is activated. And they will know whether they allow the complexity to be ingrained in their system. I just think all these conversations about changing the source and how that applies to the allocated variants or blocked or changing the source, it just makes it very complex. One thing that I think it's important to note here that probably it's already thinking down the road, but the important thing here is that the registrant of the domain name, right, the source domain name, has the right to the other variant domain name, the allocatable variant domain name, and any allocatable non-activated variant domain name is withheld for the same registrant. So that principle alone will give the registrant some comfort that nobody else could take those labels or domain names, right? The registry will have at least the policy to construct, build any systems around that variant set and the way they see fit. Again, right, there are different operational

models, one where each variant domain name is a object in the registry database, which means each one is a domain name on its own right, and potentially movements across those domain names it's easier or less complex, whereas in the other model where there is only one registered domain name, meaning the source domain name and the other objects are attributes, then how do you go from a registered domain name -- I'm sorry, from an attribute to a registered domain name? So that adds another complexity, right, to the whole thing.

So the more I'm thinking and processing all this information, the more I'm leaning towards let's not prescribe any policy, just stick with the same entity principle, provide the registrant the comfort that any variant domain name calculated by the IDN table will be withheld for them and only them as long as they have the source domain name. And I think those two policies, recommendations will just create the environment in which registrants can solve for registrant needs, whatever those registrant needs might be in the future. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. Michael.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Dennis, this is exactly what I intended to propose here, that we don't do any policy regarding this source domain name with the additional requirement that at any point in time, all existing allocated variants must be of the disposition allocatable and there



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must never be an existing variant that is of the disposition value blocked. I think that's the only policy we need.

DONNA AUSTIN: Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. So what Michael said is pretty much what I raised my hand to say. And let me see if I do understand it right. So I do agree with Dennis that putting a general rule doesn't really work. The deletion of the source, the impact of it on the variants would differ from one case to another. So it doesn't make sense to have a general rule.

However, two rules are very important. One is having the same registrant, same entity principle. And the other is that if the removal of the source is to change the status of one of the variants to blocked and that variant is actually registered, this should not be allowed. So this also requires a policy. So apart from that, I don't think we need any other rules. We just need to like clearly state those two rules. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Hadia. Ariel, does it make sense to continue through the rest of your slides or are we in a situation where we can go back to the recommendation and see whether folks are still comfortable with it or not?

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ARIEL LIANG:

Yeah, thanks, Donna. That's a question I have as well. But based on what Dennis said, it seems to be there's a proposition to not develop additional rules or recommendations associated with the change or deletion of the source domain and just let registries and registrars to determine based on their policy. But I see that Michael still has kind of a proposal to at least have some prescription embedded there as to make sure if deletion and changes allowed, if that's allowed, then you cannot make already activated variant domain name become blocked. So I don't know whether this is something the rest of the group agrees to add or this is something the rest of the group don't even think it should be added. So I think I just want to confirm about that. I see Edmon has his hand up.

EDMON CHUNG:

Yeah, Edmon here. So I think, Ariel, what you said is generally correct, except one particular point. From what I understand, and Michael, please correct me, Michael is not saying that if it is activated, it cannot be changed. It is only that once it's changed, then anything that's activated cannot be a blocked variant. So there's a nuance there. You can make that change, but the change should automatically clean up anything that was activated. And if it's blocked, it shouldn't continue to be activated. And if they want to activate something at that point, it cannot be something that disposition is blocked. So just a slight nuance to Ariel, what you said.

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ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Edmon. I think I may have said it not super clearly, but I'm on the exact same page as you are in terms of what Michael proposed. I still see some pushback from Dennis, I think, at least from the chat. And I think Dennis may have the concern is IDN table is what registry operators manage, and the disposition value for second level labels in the IDN table is something determined by the registry operator. So I just wonder, is that a concern? If we do add Michael's proposal there, would that potentially interfere how registry operators manage their IDN tables? I'm just wondering.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Maybe Ariel, can we go back to the recommendation? So the actual recommendation, five point whatever it was, or 7 point something or the previous slide, I think. Okay. So, I think where we were going to incorporate Michael's proposal was somewhere within this preliminary recommendation. And Dennis, I'll come back to you. So don't necessarily take your hand down. So I guess there's a question here of whether we need to be explicit about whether the source domain name can be deleted or changed. And by the nature of the registration cycle, at some point, a source domain probably won't be renewed. So, well, it may be renewed in perpetuity or it may not be renewed. So at some point, the source domain will be deleted. So that seems, and a consequence of that would be that the remainder of the set would go away with that, because that's what ties them together. And the change, that's not so clear or clean, I suppose.

But I think what I'm hearing from Dennis is the ability to delete a source domain name or change it is discretionary within the

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registry policies. So it's not for us to propose as a capital P policy. So I must admit, I'm a little bit muddled-headed on where this has ended up. Michael, go ahead.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks. So maybe as a small background, I think we all agree on this preliminary recommendation five, that the source domain name has to be defined somehow. And if we agree to that, then my obvious question is what is on the next slide, namely, does this mean we can change the source domain name or can't we change it? And for that, I say we should not make a policy whether it's changeable or not, but maybe it makes sense to put a comment there that with recommendation five, we are not saying that it must stay the same. We are saying it's up to the registry to define whether the source domain always stays the same or whether it's changeable. And that's the background where I come from.

DONNA AUSTIN: Justine, are you with us? I'm just wondering if you, in listening to this, have a clear vision for how we could address this because I'm a bit lost. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. So I generally do agree with Dennis that we don't need to put policy or rules for that. And it's up to the registry and registrants and registrars to decide on this. However, I do think that there is one condition that we need to avoid. So what if changing the source would lead to an activated or registered domain name becomes blocked? I think this is also what Michael

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is saying. So if we have this situation, it shouldn't happen because it will impact users, actually, who are using this registered domain name. And then they wake up in the morning and this domain name is blocked. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Hadia. Yeah, so Hadia, Dennis is saying is that that would create a situation where the registry is not complying with its own IDN table. Therefore there'd be a compliance issue. Registries want to comply with the contracts, therefore no need for additional policy that's enforced by other means. So if a registry is not complying with its own IDN table in the management of the TLD, then Compliance can take action against that. Just one last time. Can I hear from Michael and Dennis about their proposed positions here so I can try to get a sense of how far apart we are or how far together we are? Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Yes, I agree with Dennis. We don't need a new policy. And maybe with this comment regarding the compliance case, we don't even explicitly have to state that a blocked variant may never be allocated. But I would like to see some explanation, some comment, something that makes it clear that with the recommendation five, we are not stating that this source domain name must always be the same. Because that's a question that occurs to me when I read that recommendation and I'm wondering, would I be able to change the source? Is this prohibited in this recommendation? Therefore, just some comment, some explanation would be fine for me.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. Dennis?

DENNIS TAN: Thank you. My reservation with including here registrar, it's implying a coordination, collaboration, or what have you, which might not exist in reality, right? Because there are a number of resellers, I mean, registrar use resellers and there's no relationship, direct relationship for that matter with the registrar. So just thinking about the unintended consequences of this language here when you bring resellers into the mix and where there is no direct relationship between registrant and registrar. So just be mindful of that. I mean, that's just my only observation. Thank you. I'm sorry. Just final. I think the key part here is the registrant. So the registrar piece that it just seems a little bit off because of how the relationship in the registration process works.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. So I think one of the reasons that we involved the registrar in this is that a registrant isn't going to know that in the act of registering a domain name, they could be creating a source domain that's calculating a variant domain set and that they have rights associated with the other strings that are part of that set.

So I think what we were trying to overcome here is how is the set calculated and who can be responsible for that? So we, I think we kind of acknowledged that the registrant is probably just trying to register a domain name that happens to be a variant. And you know, while they're only registering one, the act of registering that

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domain name may result in a variant domain set, but the registrant isn't going to know that. So I think one of the reasons we incorporated the registrar here is because they would be more knowledgeable and they have that connection back to the registry. So you know, they would be able to do that. So I think that's why we included the registrar here, Dennis, and I'm not 100% sure there's another way to do this. And to be honest, I can't remember what the charter question for this is anymore. So it would be helpful if we had that.

So I guess what I'm hearing is that, the problem we were trying to solve is whether it's possible to change or delete the source domain name. And I think what I've heard is that that's discretionary for the registry. So I think we have to acknowledge that somewhere in the rationale or somewhere that while we're not setting policy on whether the source domain name could be changed or deleted, that it is discretionary so we can handle it that way. I'm sorry, I'm really quite confused about this. Dennis, please go ahead.

DENNIS TAN:

Yeah, thank you, Donna. Don't have an answer to what's the charter question, but this conversation about the source domain name, the potential for confusion, education to the registrant, I agree all of this goes—let me use this word for lack of a better term, mainstream, if you will. I mean, even though banned domain name has existed now for a number of years now, but the gTLD, the top level component of it creates a different level of complexity.

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I think on the part of the registry, there will be more education to do, right? Whenever the registry operators opt to offer IDN variants second level, top level, they need to offer certain educational material for the registrars and the registrars flow down to their resellers if that's the model that they use so that when registrants want to register a domain name, they'll potentially have variant domain names. The registrant has resources in order to understand what they are registering and what other identifiers they have available with that registration. So, again, I think I can see a policy in which requires registries to conspicuously advertise and provide educational materials to the registrar and the channels at large how variant domain names work in their registry TLDs. And that information can flow down to the registrant in a way that the registrants understand what they are registering, what's a source of the main name and what variations they can do in order to achieve what they want with the variant set, right? Because as we all understand very well now, the source domain name dictates the disposition values, right? What is allocated or what is blocked. And that key information needs to be very well, the registrant needs to be very well aware of this situation right now. So again, right, not exactly addressing your question, but I think something that registries must do in the future in order to help registrants understand how Variant domains work. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. Thanks, Dennis. Hadia?



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HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. So we are talking now about the registrant, and maybe that's not directly related to this recommendation. However, according to the policy, we will always have the same registrant for all variants. So by default, when the registrant actually registers a domain name, it has its variants as well. So how this happens, like whether the registrant understands it or not is another issue because many registrants are not really, I guess, are not really versed on domain names and might not even understand what blocked or allocatable or those dispositions are. But the registrant registers one and finds himself with five or four or two. That's the situation. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Right. So I think Dennis's point about education is an important one. And maybe at the time that a registrant registers an IDN variant, to your point, Hadia, about they don't even know that they have these other domain names that are set aside or withheld and specifically available to them, maybe that's something that could be part of a notification at the time of registration. But that's kind of, I guess, that we're getting into implementation detail here that we don't necessarily need to get into. So I think we've had a good discussion here and there's some good pieces of information that have come out. I don't know that we're looking to change this recommendation here, but perhaps we can talk a little bit in the rationale about what happens if a source domain is deleted or changed. And we recognize there are consequences, but that will be determined by the policy set by the registry. Okay. Does that make sense? And I'm sorry, it's not very coherent, but it's best I've got for now. Okay. So Michael's been kind. All right. So I think

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we're okay on this one. And I did promise folks that we have an early night tonight or early morning, whatever it might be, early afternoon. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes. So I raised my hand for another point. I just want to confirm with the group. I don't know whether we have to incorporate this in the recommendation language for five. Is the source domain name required to be registered? You know, logically, it is the case. If you don't register a domain, how do you actually identify that as a source domain? But at the same time, I'm not completely sure whether we have to specify this in the recommendation or this is, again, up to the discretion of registries and registrars based on their policies and practice. So I just want to confirm with the group regarding the status per se for the source domain.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. And this was something that we discussed at the leadership level. We thought that perhaps it would make sense to have a source domain needs to be registered. But based on the conversation we just had, I'm not sure that there would be support for that. So it might be that a source domain is decided, but it's not the one that the registrant decides to register. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Okay, thank you. This is Hadia for the record. So I was about to put my hand down. But anyway, since I have the floor. So I was wondering, so Dennis did say, of course, that if this block situation happens where a registered domain name actually becomes

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blocked, that would mean that the registry is not complying with its IDN tables, which is absolutely true. But should we put it somewhere in the recommendation, like instead of like putting the situation itself, but like a general statement that says, for example, that the registry needs to at all times comply with its IDN tables, or maybe this already exists as a standalone recommendation? Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Hadia. Any thoughts from folks on Hadia's suggestion? I would hope that we would cover off that within the rationale, Hadia. I understand that it's quite a bit of difference between the rationale and something that's a recommendation, but anything that's a recommendation becomes policy. So we need to be sensitive to that. So perhaps the best way to deal with it is to capture as much as we can within the rationale. And once we come back and reconsider the rationale associated with this recommendation, there might be something that we decide needs to be elevated up into a recommendation. But for now, perhaps we just capture as much as we can in the rationale and see what comes out of that. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Yes. Thanks. One question that just occurred to me when talking about ICANN may find this out that the domains are not according to the IDN table and would be in breach. But I'm wondering, is there a way to publicly see what is the source domain? Will it be published in the RDDS in some special way stating like, oh, yeah, this is a source domain and these are the variants? Because in

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the DNS, you won't be able to see what is the source domain. And also in the escrow files, you won't be able to see what is the source domain. So I'm just wondering, is it possible for ICANN to find out that some registry would be in breach according to their IDN table?

DONNA AUSTIN: I don't know how this all works technically.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Currently, it's not working technically because we haven't—the source domain as a thing does not yet exist.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. Right. Okay, Ariel. Good question, Michael.

ARIEL LIANG: Yes, Michael's question reminded me we do have a charter question. It's a catch all question, but it may be a place to address it. It's actually something Edmon asked a while back. It's about in terms of the registration data, what modification may be warranted to the registry WHOIS and the WHOIS, the general one. I need to find the exact wording of that question. But I think it may be a place to address what Michael asked so we can maybe table that till we get to that question.

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DONNA AUSTIN: I'm thinking maybe we can put something in implementation guidance under this one. So it's more explicit. Well, it's more obvious. Dennis.

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Donna. Since we're talking about the same subject, the Registry Stakeholder Group support team has been talking about along these lines, the minimum requirements or minimum standards, not the standards, but minimum tools, let me put it that way, that the registries would need to put out and offer to the registrar channel in terms of information about variant domain name, right, how a registrar would know whether a domain name will trigger a variant calculation and what is allocatable, what is not, what's the status of each, can they register or not, all those things that will happen behind the scenes. Of course, the registry is in the position to offer that to the registrar channel. So that was still in the earlier stages, how to talk about that and whether ideas of an EPP extension has been thrown for the check command, the info command and update commands as well. So again, I cannot say more than that, but that's something that we are discussing and what the registries need to do in order to promote the adoption and registration of variant domain names and how registrars can best utilize these resources. Just wanted to offer that. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. So Ariel has noted that there's a catch all where we could potentially pick this up, but maybe it wouldn't be so obvious if we put it there and maybe there's some kind of

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implementation guidance that we could add about the source domain and calculating the variant domain set, or maybe it's a separate recommendation, but that's something that we'll take on board and see if we can find a place for it. It's good to know that the registries are thinking about these things now. So Ariel, was that all that we had for discussion today? I know we've got AOB that Dennis mentioned.

ARIEL LIANG:

We have, but I don't think I heard any answer to my previous question about the registered or active status of the source domain name. Is that what the group thinks, it doesn't necessarily need to be specified in the recommendation? I just want to make sure we close that loop here.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Any thoughts on this one? So it was something that Justine and I discussed and we thought it made sense that the source domain name has to be registered because that's what triggers calculating the variant set. But based on the conversation we've just had, I'm not so sure that that is a requirement anymore, that a source domain could be determined to calculate a variant set, but it's not necessarily the source domain within the set that would be registered by the registrant. So I don't know if prescribing that is going to create unforeseen consequences. So any thoughts? Dennis?

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DENNIS TAN: Yeah, thank you. I think that would overcomplicate things. I think the source domain name and primary domain name is the first registered domain name. And I think that's keep things simple, straightforward, without complicating an already complicated, complex system. And yeah, so source, primary is the first registered domain name and that defines the variant set and the disposition values. That's where we should keep it simple.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes, I tend to agree with what Dennis said and what Edmond wrote in the chat, that the domain has to be registered, but it does not have to be activated. So in the sense that it's not in the DNS because you put it on something like EPP client hold state or you don't use name servers, those are possibilities to not activate a registered domain. So you can hide the source domain name in the DNS sense. That's totally fine. But it must be registered and it must exist in the WHOIS and escrow and this kind of stuff. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So we could add something in here. I think Dennis said the source is the first registered domain name. So we could have a registrant and sponsoring registrar must jointly determine the source domain name, which is generally the first registered domain name for calculating the variant domain set. So we could put something in parentheses or something. I have a question. So

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if it's registered but not activated, then why has it been registered?  
I'm having a bad night. Sorry, folks. Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. And again, I wanted to be clear on this. So registered means that if I look it up on WHOIS, I will find it if I query the domain name, but if I actually type the domain name, registered but not activated. If I look it up, I will find it. But if I actually type it in, it will lead nowhere because it's not activated. And that maybe could lead—I'm trying to think of technical issues that could be associated with that. Would, for example, name collisions, if a name collision would actually happen, it won't because it's not actually there. I don't know what other technical issues might be there. I don't know even if they're relevant. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Hadia. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Yes. Thanks. To respond to your question, Donna, what might be the use case for registering it and not activating it? That's exactly the examples which we've seen earlier because you wouldn't like to be able to activate all variants from this set, A, B, C, D, what we have seen. The only way to do that is to register A. Even if you don't want to use it right now, you can leave it inactive with no DNS, but this allows you to also register or activate the other existing variant.



DONNA AUSTIN: All right. Thanks, Michael. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yes. Thank you, Donna. This is Sarmad. I guess this discussion ties up to that earlier comment I made as well, but I'm still not able to clear that, at least on my end. So there is this discussion that somehow a source domain or a registration under one TLD is shared across variant TLDs as well. So as per the example that if you're registering something, a second level domain under one TLD, it somehow also creates, I guess, variants under other TLDs. Again, maybe I'll try to see how that is going to be possible. One example which was coming to my mind was that a source—because each variant TLD has its own IDN table, the source potentially could be an invalid label under a variant TLD. And so may actually not be able to create any variants in the variant TLDs. Again, still trying to think through this concept, which at least to me is new, which was introduced in this call. But just wanted to raise that. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. I'll assume that you'll take that away, nibble on it, and come back to us if you have further concerns or it's not quite gelling with you, I suppose. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here speaking personally. I guess in response to Sarmad's question, in my mind, what happens is that the entire set

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of variants include both the second level and the top level, right? I mean, when you register a domain at the second level, the set of variant actually includes all of the variant TLDs under registration for whatever you're trying to register. So the source includes both the second level and the top level, and that's the source. And you can create permutations from there to the different "TLDs," but because of the same entity rule, essentially that whole set needs to be coherent. And that's sort of how I see it.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Edmon. So I guess it would be good to get some clarity around that. Because I must admit that my thinking on this was close to the Sarmad's. So Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Yeah, I'm not going to belabor this too much. But again, my understanding was that there's a different source label under each variant TLD. The reason is because it's not clear to me how we can carry a source from one variant TLD to another variant TLD. Because as I said earlier, each variant TLD has its own IDN table. And that's sort of the space in which all the variants are being created, how that gets ported to another IDN table under another variant TLD. That's I guess what I'm trying to parse in my mind. And one issue which I potentially see, as I shared earlier, is that the source label under one variant TLD could actually be invalid or not even possible under another variant TLD because the IDN tables are so different, even though they're consistent. Thank you.

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DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. So we've got Edmon and then Ariel. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Quickly in response to Sarmad. So in that case, in the case that you explained, then the set of allocatable variants for a particular TLD or a particular variant TLD might be zero, right? I mean, you're simply saying a case whereby a source domain registered by one entity ends up with one of the variant TLDs allocatable variants being zero, including itself. So that I think is totally valid, right? I mean, you're registering a particular domain and it's valid under a particular, maybe the source TLD, if you will, quote unquote, and that's what you want. And if you actually want to have the variant work, then actually, essentially the variant is supposedly linguistically or whatever, LGR, it's the same domain, right? So the same entity. So you would activate it. But if the case is that the LGRs and everything determined that it's not activatable or it's not allocatable, then that essentially means that registrant, sorry, you're trying to game the system. You're trying to have two domains in one registration, which is not allowed, I'm sorry. And it's a first come first serve rule. You've got this one and therefore you can't have that one. In the case where there would be allocatable variants, then of course you can actually allocate it across different TLDs. That's sort of how I would envision it.

DONNA AUSTIN: Go ahead, Sarmad.

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SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. So just to give you an example. So suppose I have two variant TLDs, one for Arabic language and one for Persian language. And the IDN table under Arabic language has Arabic language kind of variants. And the Persian one has Persian variants, and those two are not overlapping. Then if I create a source label in Arabic, that would be an invalid label in Persian. And so I'm not really sure how I'll carry the source label from Arabic language to the Persian language. I think that's what I'm trying to think through. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So Sarmad, could I ask that you give this some more thought and perhaps send something to the list around this? And we'll see if we can work through this so that we're all on the same page and have the same understanding of what we mean by, well, it's really about the variant domain set, I think here, and whether it is intended to be the same across the variant set at the top level, as well as the second level. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Yes. And I think I may not understand exactly what Sarmad was getting at, but I just want to remind everybody, we do have the IDN table harmonization requirement. So regardless what IDN table is used under which gTLD, the variant domain set or the variant labels that are generated for the second level should be the same based on that requirement. The disposition value may be different based on what the source is, but the set should be the same, especially after the harmonization requirement kicks in. That's what I understood, but maybe I'm not getting this right.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. So Michael and then Hadia. Yeah.

MICHAEL BAULAND: The sets don't need to be the same because you can have some code points under one of the TLD IDN labels, which is just not allowed at all. So it's not just the disposition value is blocked. It may be that the code point itself is forbidden. And then I think you may have the problem which Sarmad just described, in which I try to put an example in the chat, rather abstract example, but at least theoretically it's possible. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. So actually if what Michael put in the chat is what Sarmad means, my answer would be no. But so the question Michael is putting, are those variants? My answer according to our policy is no. I don't know how Michael sees it. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: So I think Sarmad, if you're okay to kind of dig into this a little bit and put something to the list and we'll see if we can come to an agreement on what we mean here. Because I think it's important that we all have a common understanding of what we're talking about, or at least a consistent understanding of what we're talking

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about here. I think it's important. So if I could ask you to think about that, put something to the list and please, others, if you can engage, even as to say you agree with Sarmad or you disagree for whatever reasons, that would be helpful to us. So Sarmad, if you're okay with that. Thank you.

All right. Okay, so we've got 10 minutes left. So I'll draw a line on this conversation. It's been messy and convoluted, but hopefully it will lead to a good output. So thanks everybody for the conversation. Dennis, are you able to just give us a heads up about the registry thinking on 7.1 and 7.3? Not that I know what those numbers mean or what the topic is, but if you can enlighten us, that'd be great. Thanks.

DENNIS TAN:

Sure. Happy to, Donna. This is Dennis Tan of the Registries Stakeholder Group. Yeah. So we were asked to provide additional feedback pertaining to 7.1, 7.3, because potentially this group will change or soften the language. I think that was the conversation on those two recommendations based on other constituencies' feedback. So 7.1 pertains to the SLA and I think the Registries Stakeholder Group put additional language and the question was whether the qualifier substantially similar meant the same. And I think the short answer is yes. At that point in time, we were not quite sure. So substantially similar seemed the right level threshold, if you will. But I think after further conversation, yeah, it's okay to put the same SLAs. We don't envision a situation where different TLDs will have different SLAs, right? Especially if they are variant TLDs. So changing that to the same is fine. But

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that's 7.1 and I'll pause here if there are any other comments or questions.

Okay. So hearing none. And then on 7.3, this pertains to the exception on the one single base registry agreement. So the conversation, I think what we want as Registries Stakeholder Group is a situation where a legacy gTLD, meaning those gTLD registry operators of the 2012 round that have potentially allocatable variants based on their root zone LGR, that they are not forced to transition to a new RA. We understand and we appreciate the need to simplify the management of registry agreements and not have one registry operator with two base registry agreements. So we appreciate that. I think we can achieve the same objective, meaning not forcing the registry operator to transition to a new version of the RA just to get the allocatable variants, especially when we are issuing all the policy recommendations to encourage registry operators to apply to the variant TLDs that were prohibited to do so in the previous round.

And one avenue to achieve that, and this is where we offer this as a counteroffer or as in the consideration for the additional language that's going to be adjusted, that the variant TLD obligations are housed or drafted in a single document such as a specification document that any registry operator can adopt as they want to activate or not activate the variant labels. In that way, a legacy TLD can stay within the same base registry agreement, but adopting the new obligations based on the new specification. Let me choose number, I think 15, that's the next available number or 14 maybe, I don't know. So again, adopting a specification type of vehicle will allow to acquire all these

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obligations on managing variant TLDs without forcing the legacy TLD to transition to a new base RA. So that's the feedback that we've got from the stakeholder group and hopefully that provides an avenue to achieve what the group wants to do with the recommendation here. So I'll pause here and happy to expand, answer any questions. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. So what the Registries Stakeholder Group is suggesting is that whereas we had a recommendation for existing operators to stay on the 2012 agreement, if they had variants and they would have a new agreement, what you're suggesting here is that the 2012 agreement be augmented to include a schedule for the new variants that an existing registry operator has applied for. So we maintain that one registry agreement, but it's not that 2012 moves on to the new one. It's that the 2012 agreement becomes an addendum to the existing agreement.

DENNIS TAN: Yeah. That's right, Donna. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yeah, and just a quick comment that we should not restrict this to the 2012 round because there are gTLDs before 2012 and they



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also have variants. So we should say maybe 2012 round and before or something like that.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. All right. So thanks for that heads up, Dennis. I think that's helpful. So I did promise everybody an early mark today. So you've got four minutes. There you go. Sorry about that. And just a reminder that there's no call next week. But you do have some homework to get done by the 22nd. So we look forward to getting your comments on the Phase 2 language. Thanks for the discussion today and sticking with it, everyone. Much appreciated. We will talk to you in two weeks. Thanks. Devan, You can end the recording now.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**