

## New gTLD Applicant Update Webinar – 19 September 2013

### Additional Questions & Answers

We receive questions during webinars that go unanswered due to time constraints. Because all participant questions are important, we've provided responses to these additional questions below. Questions are grouped and ordered alphabetically by subject.

#### Auction

**Q. When will you publish information about the ICANN Auction process?**

A. In the [19 September 2013 Applicant Update Webinar](#), New gTLD Program staff provided an updated timeline, which includes publishing documentation for Auctions in mid-October. Additional information on Auctions will be communicated as it becomes available.

**Q. When the ICANN Auction guidelines and processes are published, will they address all points raised in the letter Valideus sent to ICANN?**

A. ICANN is currently working to define the Auction process and establish operational readiness. The [Valideus letter of 30 Aug 2013](#) brings to light a number of valid questions surrounding details of Auction proceedings. ICANN has also received questions from other applicants regarding the Auction process. ICANN will publish documentation with detailed Auction rules and instructions in mid-October so that applicants are informed of the process.

**Q. In what order will invitations for auction be sent to eligible contention set members?**

A. The Auction notification process will likely begin in late October 2013. All members of an eligible contention set will receive notification of Intent to Auction. Notifications will be issued to contention sets in order of eligibility and lowest priority number. ICANN expects that several contention sets will be notified concurrently, and that multiple auctions may take place at the same time or in close proximity to one another.

**Q. How many invitations are expected to be sent each week and how many auctions can take place at the same time?**

A. ICANN and its auction provider are prepared to host as many auctions as are necessary to resolve string contention as the mechanism of last resort. The invitation schedule is still being determined and will be communicated as soon as it is available.

**Q. Why would Name Collision delay an Auction?**

A. Per the Applicant Guidebook, the ICANN Auction will only proceed after all members of a contention set have completed all previous phases of the application process. The Name Collision issue and risk mitigation requirements may affect a bidder's valuation of a TLD. ICANN seeks to ensure that any program elements that may impact a bidder's decision are known and resolved prior to forcing the resolution of a contention set through a Last Resort Auction.

**Q. How long is the one-time extension that an applicant can request during the Auction process?**

A. If requested by all members of a contention set, ICANN will consider a one-time extension of up to 90 days. ICANN continues to encourage applicants to resolve contention amongst themselves and utilize the ICANN Auction process as a method of last resort. ICANN intends to resolve contention sets eligible for Auction as quickly as possible.

**Q. When will the process for seeking an Exemption to the Code of Conduct be available? Will it be subject to a Public Comment period?**

A. ICANN is actively drafting a process for managing Exemption to the Code of Conduct requests. ICANN recently circulated a draft process and collected feedback, and the final version is currently being crafted. For transparency purposes, the finalized process will be published on the microsite in the next few weeks. However, no further feedback processes are planned. The Code of Conduct Exemption Request documentation outlines an operational process that ICANN will use to review and make determinations on such requests. We encourage you to monitor the microsite for updates related to Contracting, including the publication of the Code of Conduct Exemption Process.

**Q. Because the Exemption to the Code of Conduct Process has not yet been published, how should an applicant complete the “Code of Conduct Exemption Request” that must be attached to our Contracting Information Request (section 6) response?**

A. Though the process is currently being finalized, the criteria for the Exemption to the Code of Conduct have not changed. The applicant will need to demonstrate to ICANN’s reasonable satisfaction that all of the criteria described in Section 6 of Specification 9 have been met. To request a Code of Conduct Exemption, please do so during Contracting or following the execution of a Registry Agreement.

**Q. How long do you anticipate it will take for ICANN to process a request seeking an Exemption to the Code of Conduct?**

A. The length of time required to review an exemption request and make a determination is dependent on the circumstances of each request.

### **Community Priority Evaluation (CPE)**

**Q. Will applicants in a contention set with a community applicant be notified when the community applicant's Community Priority Evaluation process has started?**

A. All applicants in a contention set with a community applicant will be notified via the Customer Service Portal upon the community applicant's invitation to CPE. Information regarding who has been invited to CPE and when they were invited will also be published on the [CPE page of the microsite](#).

**Q. How many CPE cases will, or can be, dealt with in parallel?**

A. After analyzing the contention sets, ICANN is confident that the CPE panel will have sufficient capacity to conduct all of the evaluations per the stated cycle times. The panel is prepared to scale its resources up or down to accommodate fluctuating volume of CPE reviews, and has confirmed it is ready to begin the evaluations immediately.

## GAC Advice

**Q. Will ICANN consider publishing a revised list of applicants (not strings) that are subject to Category 2 GAC Advice based on applicant responses to ICANN's questions about registry operation type? How will the NGPC be addressing Category 2 Advice?**

A. ICANN will publish applicant responses to Category 2 GAC Advice regarding the intention to operate a TLD in an exclusive access manner this week.

These responses were provided to the New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC) of the ICANN Board in order to inform its decision-making. The NGPC discussed GAC Advice during its 28 September meeting. For more information, view the NGPC's meeting [Resolution](#).

## Name Collision

**Q. What process will ICANN undertake to review and analyze the comments received during the Name Collision Study public comment period? Will staff recommendations need to be approved by the NGPC? If so, when will this happen? At what point will contracted parties be allowed to continue to delegation?**

A. Staff has followed ICANN's standardized process for considering Public Comments. Staff reviewed and analyzed each comment submitted. A Public Comment Report and staff proposal were published and provided to an expert body for review, in this case the New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC) of the ICANN Board. The NGPC is scheduled to discuss the Name Collision study and recommendations at its 4 October 2013 meeting. Additional information will be published on the ICANN website as part of the NGPC's meeting minutes.

**Q. Why aren't the delays due to ICANN's Name Collision risk mitigation plan shown in the Program Timeline? Do you think that the current Timeline provide is stable enough that we could work off of it?**

A. The Name Collision Risk Mitigation issue is very dynamic. We will update the timeline accordingly once ICANN adopts a plan for addressing this issue. The NGPC was scheduled to discuss the Name Collision study and recommendations at its meeting on 4 October 2013. Additional information will be published on the ICANN website as part of the NGPC's meeting minutes.

## Pre-Delegation Testing / Transition to IANA

**Q. Based on the status of one of our applications, we ascertain that ICANN is currently scheduling PDT appointments at a rate of about 20 per week. This means that applications with priority numbers over 1000 will not be tested until October 2014, and most likely wouldn't launch until 2015. What is ICANN doing to speed up the PDT testing process?**

A. Currently, PDT is operating with excess capacity for weekly PDT appointments. Pre-Delegation Testing is subject to applicants signing the Registry Agreement. Additionally, ICANN and its PDT provider have the ability to increase the capacity for PDT appointments and intend to use it once required by the forecasted demand.

**Q. In regard to PDT, we have received an ERRATA along with some schema changes. When will the actual test cases and schema be updated on the ICANN website?**

A. We published updated [Pre-Delegation Test Preparation Resources](#) on 26 September 2013 that eliminate the need for the ERRATA documents. The ERRATA documents were used to batch items that needed updating to reduce the churn of the overall resources package.

**Q. Why does it take 10-12 days for "data entry" during PDT? What types of data are input for each applicant that signs the Registry Agreement?**

A. The data entered into the PDT System is the technical information that the PDT service provider uses to perform testing. This includes the populated input templates for DNS, Whois, EPP and the IDN tables, the Data Escrow deposit and agreement, the DPS document and self-certifications. Please review the [Pre-Delegation Test](#)

[Preparation Resources](#) on the microsite for more information about PDT requirements. The 10-12 day window was designed based on findings from the PDT Beta program. ICANN will continue to evaluate process durations with the goal of making the process as efficient and effective as possible for all participants.

**Q. Once an applicant passes PDT, what outstanding issues need to be resolved before the delegation process can begin? Can you provide information on the processes and schedules required for resolution of these issues to assist applicants with launch planning?**

A. In an [announcement](#) on 27 August 2013, ICANN explained that delegation of “Low Risk” strings will be held until community comments have been evaluated and appropriate risk mitigation measures have been determined. The Public Comment period – including Comment and Reply – formally closed on 17 September 2013. Information regarding next steps will be communicated extensively as soon as practicable.

**Q. What is the current estimate for the amount of time that will elapse between passing Pre-Delegation Testing and IANA delegation?**

A. Currently, the standard lead-time between completing PDT and obtaining the token to begin the delegation process is less than 5 business days. This process involves receiving point of contact information from the applicant, so process times may vary depending on applicant responsiveness.

**Q. Will you notify an applicant when its application transitions from the gTLD Operations Department to the IANA Department of ICANN?**

A. The applicant will be notified via the Customer Portal when they are eligible to begin the delegation process, which is managed by the IANA department. The communication will include a delegation token and link to the IANA Root Zone Management system. For more information on Transition to Delegation Processes, including Contracting, Pre-Delegation Testing and Transition to IANA, please review the [Customer Portal User Guide](#). Information about the delegation process is available on the [IANA Root Zone Management page](#).

**Q. Will you add a column to the Application Statistics page showing which gTLDs have been sent to IANA?**

A. We are currently in process of updating the [Current Application Status](#) page to better reflect the progress and status of all applications.

## Registry Agreement

**Q. In some signed Registry Agreements, the Supplemental Agreement expires in January 2014, while in others the supplements expire 180 days from the execution date? Why don't all Supplemental Agreements expire at the same time in January 2014?**

A. Supplemental Agreements being signed today will expire in January 2014.

**Q. Have all of the executed Registry Agreements been signed as is, without any changes? If any RAs have been negotiated with different terms, will redlined versions be made public?**

A. As of Friday, 4 October 2013, ICANN had signed 56 new gTLD Registry Agreements, none of which have substantial changes from the approved base agreement (other than any registry-specific Public Interest Commitments or approved registry services described in Exhibit A). Redlined versions will be available in October 2013.

## Reserved Names

**Q. How will you handle IGO reserved names in relation to Internalized Domain Names (IDNs)? Will the reserved names be translated "as-is" to IDN scripts?**

A. The list of DNS labels that will be reserved can be found on the [Reserved Names for New gTLDs page of icann.org](#). The list, which is still subject to change, includes IDN and ASCII labels. ICANN and the GAC continue to discuss providing additional protections for the IGOs mentioned, across multiple languages.

## Rights Protection Mechanisms

**Q. What process will ICANN undertake to review and analyze the comments received during the Rights Protection Mechanisms Public Comment period? How long will this process take? Will staff recommendations need to be approved by the NGPC? If so, when will this happen?**

A. The [Rights Protection Mechanism Requirements](#) were published 30 September 2013. The document was finalized after completing ICANN's standardized Public Comment process, which includes analysis of all comments and the production of a staff proposal for review by an expert body.

## Trademark Clearinghouse (TMCH)

**Q. The latest statistics about trademarks submitted to the Clearinghouse are from July 2013, at which time there were only 13 Arabic script records. Why isn't this information publicized more frequently? What is the plan to increase the number of IDNs in the TMCH, and what are the forecasts?**

A. Data on scripts in the Clearinghouse was publicized in the [19 September 2013 Applicant Update Webinar](#), and Deloitte has committed to providing updates to these numbers on a regular basis going forward.

Deloitte has undertaken a number of outreach initiatives and educational events. Currently, the company is rolling out a series of campaign activities targeting the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East.

Education around the New gTLD Program is also part of ICANN's overall regional stakeholder engagement strategy. This includes building awareness about the Trademark Clearinghouse. We encourage suggestions for specific events, groups, or other types of activities to help support this work in all regions.

**Q. Will ICANN consider allowing Registrars to obtain a Trademark Database token and begin testing while they negotiate the 2013 RAA?**

A. Yes, this is being considered currently. More information on the matter is expected to be published soon.

**Q. When will ICANN update its website with the list of Registrars that have completed TMCH Integration Testing as promised in section 1.5 of the 6 August 2013 version of the Rights Protection Mechanism Requirements?**

A. The list of Registrars that have completed testing has not yet been published, but we are aware of the need and will make the information available as soon as possible.

**Q. Can IBM create a permanent OT&E for the TMCH that allows complete end-to-end testing and includes all the functionality found in the production environment?**

A. The OT&E is permanent and includes all the functionality found in the production environment. As Registries and Registrars have entered and used the OT&E environment, they have proposed system enhancements. IBM has implemented some of these proposed enhancements and others may be incorporated into future upgrades.

### Uniform Rapid Suspension System (URS)

**Q. ICANN staff mentioned there may be a call to discuss finalizing the URS Technical Requirements document. When will this call occur? When do you expect to finalize the document, and must that occur before the first new gTLD can be delegated or enter TMCH Sunrise?**

A. ICANN published [draft #3 of the URS Technical Requirements document](#) on 24 September 2013. We accepted comments on draft #3 until 4 October 2013 and will use these comments to determine whether a conference call is necessary.

ICANN expects to publish the URS Technical Requirements Working Version 1.0 in the near future. This document is intended to clarify how to comply with the URS Procedures. Publication of this document will not affect delegation of the first new gTLDs.

## Other

**Q. When will the Registry Reporting Interface, required as per Specification 3 of the AGB, be in production rather than OT&E?**

A. ICANN has a production environment in place. We will provide credentials in the welcome package new Registries will receive during the onboarding process.

**Q. Can ICANN provide details about how and when they intend to make the PR kit available to Registries? What is the process for working with registries that have already signed Registry Agreements?**

A. We will provide details about how applicants can access the Applicant Communications Toolkit in the coming weeks. In the meantime, applicants may email [gtld-communications@icann.org](mailto:gtld-communications@icann.org) with questions.

**Q. We have successfully finished Initial Evaluation. What is our next move?**

A. If your application passed evaluation and does not have any holds, you will receive a contracting eligibility notification and a Contracting Information Request to begin the contracting process. If there is a hold on your application, you will need to resolve the issue before you can move on to the contracting phase of the Program.

Applications with holds include those that:

- are subject to GAC Advice.
- are pending objection determination(s).
- did not prevail in an objection determination.
- are in a Contention Set.

- are listed in the high-risk Name Collision category.

Applicants eligible to begin the Contracting process will be invited according to priority number. ICANN publishes Contracting statistics every week on the [new gTLD microsite](#). Please check our website for up-to-date statistics regarding the Contracting process.