GAC Advice Response Form for Applicants

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) has issued advice to the ICANN Board of Directors regarding New gTLD applications. Please see Section IV, Annex I, and Annex II of the GAC Beijing Communique for the full list of advice on individual strings, categories of strings, and strings that may warrant further GAC consideration.

Respondents should use this form to ensure their responses are appropriately tracked and routed to the ICANN Board for their consideration. Complete this form and submit it as an attachment to the ICANN Customer Service Center via your CSC Portal with the Subject, "[Application ID] Response to GAC Advice" (for example "1-111-11111 Response to GAC Advice"). All GAC Advice Responses must be received no later than 23:59:59 UTC on 10-May-2013.

Respondent:

Applicant Name	IRB Strategic Developments Limited
Application ID	1-994-63638
Applied for TLD (string)	.RUGBY

Response:
The International Rugby Board (IRB), applicant for .RUGBY, appreciates this opportunity to provide comments to the ICANN Board regarding the GAC Advice set forth in the Beijing Communiqué.   The recommendation enumerated by the GAC in Section IV(1)(e) – Community Support for Applications recognizes the significance of prioritizing applications that have worldwide community support:

e. Community Support for Applications - The GAC advises the Board: (i) that in those cases where a community, which is clearly impacted by a set of new gTLD applications in contention, has expressed a collective and clear opinion on those applications, such opinion should be duly taken into account, together with all other relevant information.

The IRB fully supports the GAC's recommendations and strongly requests adoption by the ICANN Board.

The consideration of community support as a prioritizing factor in the new gTLD process was initially highlighted back in November 2012 through the Early Warning process. Two governments (UK and Greece) issued Early Warnings advising the prioritization of applicants that have their own community world governing body (such as the IRB) and that have demonstrable support from their respective communities over competing applicants with neither the support of nor any affiliation to such community (See GAC Early Warnings – November 21, 2012). These GAC members recognized that these particular community applicants were best-placed, as trusted and respected representatives of their communities, to ensure responsible and measured growth for these new gTLDs.   Now the entire GAC agrees that the communities' opinion must play a prominent role in this process, particularly where the string is part of a contention set.

In our case, the IRB is the world governing body for the sport of rugby, with a membership of 118 national federations and over 5.5 million players worldwide. Our mission is to globally promote the sport of rugby, its development and growth and Its social and character building values. Our global rugby community has repeatedly voiced its opinion on multiple fronts throughout this new gTLD process. Through public comments to ICANN, letters to GAC members, and support in the objection process, the rugby community clearly prefers the IRB (as the world governing body) to be the trusted steward of the .RUGBY string. Most importantly, the community expressed significant concern and objection to entrusting the competing applicants (with no affiliation to rugby) with the development and growth of this new domain space. Failure to consider these valid concerns and to allow applicants with no community support and in fact, significant opposition to delegation of the string, threatens the integrity of the new gTLD process. It diminishes the importance of the communities' opinions and dissuades current and future world governing bodies from seeking expansion in the new gTLD arena.

The IRB urges the Board to heed the GAC's Advice and strongly consider the communities' recommendations in the new gTLD delegation process.