New gTLD Program Evaluation Panels: Geographic Names

Decision Tree/Process Flow for Geographic Names Evaluation

Contents

New gTLD Program Evaluation Panels: Geographic Names 1

Decision Tree/Process Flow for Geographic Names Evaluation 1

1. Overview 2

2. Automatic/Basic Lookup 3

2.1 Is the applied for Name a country or territory name or reserved or otherwise ineligible for Delegation? 4

2.2 Has the applicant indicated on the application that the applied for Name is a Geographic Name? 4

3 Initial Evaluation 5

3.1 Has the applicant submitted sufficient documentation? 6

3.2 Is the documentation submitted by applicant valid? 6

4 Initial Evaluation—re-review 7

4.1 Has the applicant re-submitted sufficient documentation? 8

4.2 Is the documentation submitted by applicant valid? 8

1. Overview

Strings—otherwise known as "Names" or "gTLDs" (for generic Top Level Domains)—may be applied for as Geographic Names (Geo Names) or not as Geographic Names. Applications for gTLD strings must ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the interests of governments or public authorities in geographic names. A determination, based on the string, and the completeness and validity of supporting documentation must be made before a Geographic Name will be awarded to an applicant.

Some strings are ineligible for gTLD status during the new gTLD application round. For instance, applications for strings that are country or territory names will not be approved. Those strings will be identified at the outset of the review process—during the Automatic/Basic Lookup phase. All strings will undergo review during the Automatic/Basic Lookup phase (Section 2.2.1.4.4 of the Applicant Guidebook).

Strings that are identified during the Automatic/Basic Lookup phase as Geographic Names will continue through the review process to the Initial Evaluation phase. Depending on the outcome during that phase, some applications may proceed to the Extended Evaluation phase.

There are several possible outcomes to Geographic Name Evaluation:

- Determination that an applied for string is ineligible for Delegation of any gTLD during the application round (Section 2.2.1.2 and Section 2.2.1.4.1 of the Applicant Guidebook) = **FAIL**.
- Determination that an applied for string is not a Geo Name and is otherwise eligible = **PASS**.
- Determination that an applied for string is a Geo Name and is eligible for Geographic Name gTLD (documentation is complete and is determined to be valid) = **PASS.**
- Determination that an applied for string is a Geo Name but is not eligible for Geographic Name gTLD (documentation is complete but is determined to be invalid, OR documentation is incomplete) = **FAIL.**

The three phases of Geographic Name Evaluation and corresponding processes and actions (Automatic/Basic Lookup, Initial Evaluation, Extended Evaluation) are described in the following sections.

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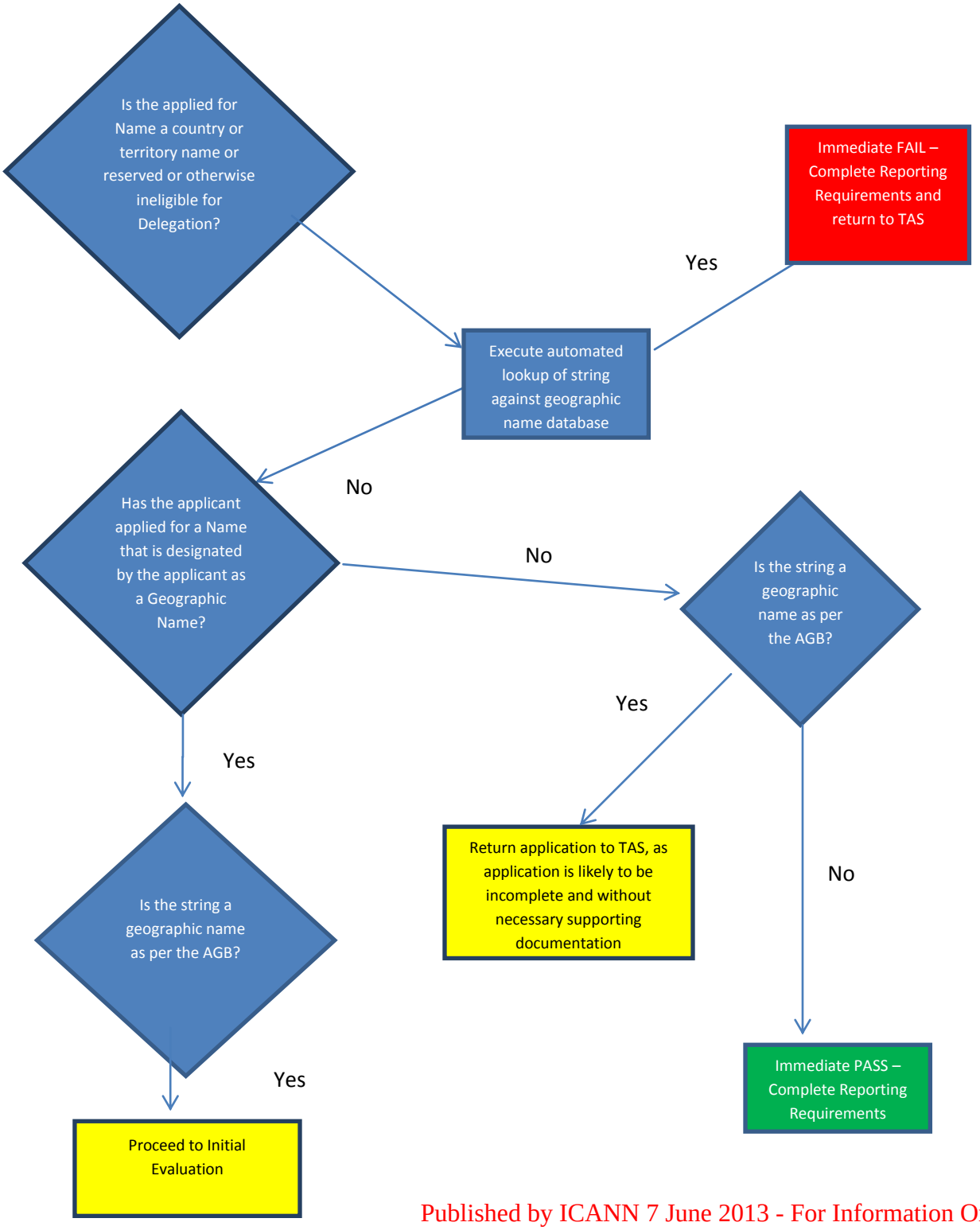
2. Automatic/Basic Lookup

All strings will undergo review during the Automatic/Basic Lookup phase (Section 2.2.1.4.4 of the Applicant Guidebook).



2.1 Is the applied for Name a country or territory name or reserved or otherwise ineligible for Delegation?

2.1.1 Criteria

Refer to Section 2.2.1.2 and Section 2.2.1.4.1 of the Applicant Guidebook.

2.1.2 Action

If the Name is reserved or otherwise ineligible, **IMMEDIATE FAIL**. End of Geographic Names Evaluation. Complete required reporting requirements.

If the Name is not reserved or otherwise ineligible, proceed to 2.2.

2.2 Has the applicant indicated on the application that the applied for Name is a Geographic Name?

2.2.1 Criteria

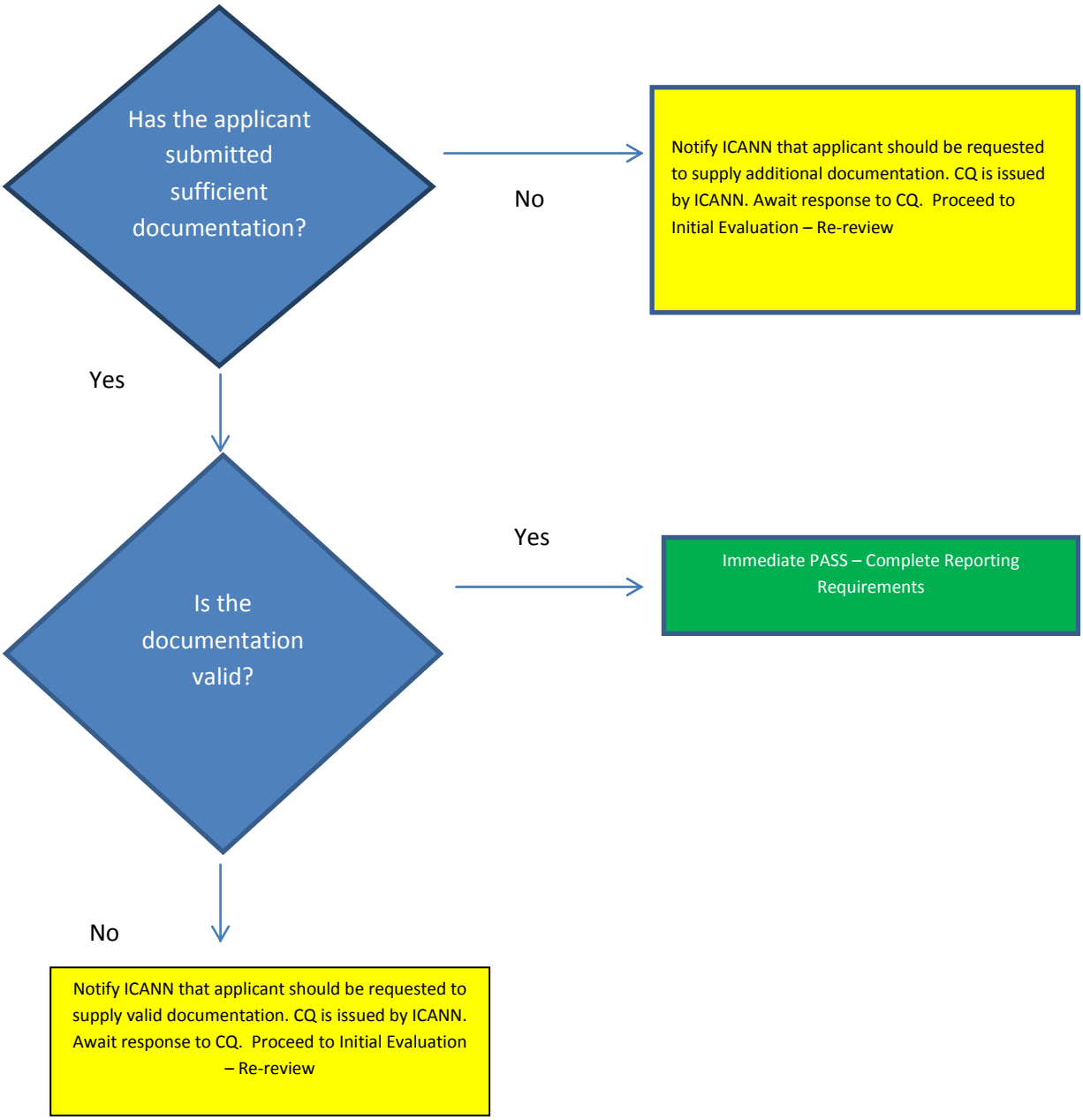
Does the application indicate that a Geographic Name is being applied for? The application, itself, provides the information needed to make this judgment.

2.2.2 Action

- If the application indicates that a Geographic Name is being applied for, the evaluator will determine whether the applied for Name is a Geographic Name as per the applicant guidebook.
    - If the applied for string is a Geo Name as per the applicant guidebook, proceed to 3.1.
    - If the applied for string is not a geographic name as per the applicant guidebook, PASS.
- If the application does not indicate Geo Name, proceed/continue with Basic Lookup.
    - If a Geo Name is not found during Basic Lookup, PASS.
    - If a Geo Name is found during Basic Lookup, indicate to ICANN that applicant should be contacted to request that application be re-filed as a designated Geo Name with accompanying paperwork.

3 Initial Evaluation

Strings that are Geo Names as per the AGB will continue through the review process to the Initial Evaluation phase.



3.1 Has the applicant submitted sufficient documentation?

Documentation includes either letter(s) of support or non-objection.

3.1.1 Criteria

Refer to Section 2.2.1.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook.

3.1.2 Action

- If the applicant has submitted sufficient documentation, proceed to the next question (on validity of documentation).
- If the applicant has not submitted sufficient documentation, craft auto response to ICANN, indicating that applicant should be prompted to submit documentation.
    - Application should be marked "incomplete," and queued in incomplete queue, awaiting further review (either during Initial Evaluation of, if IE time has expired, during Extended Evaluation). Complete required reporting requirements. Continue to section 4.

3.2 Is the documentation submitted by applicant valid?

3.2.1 Criteria

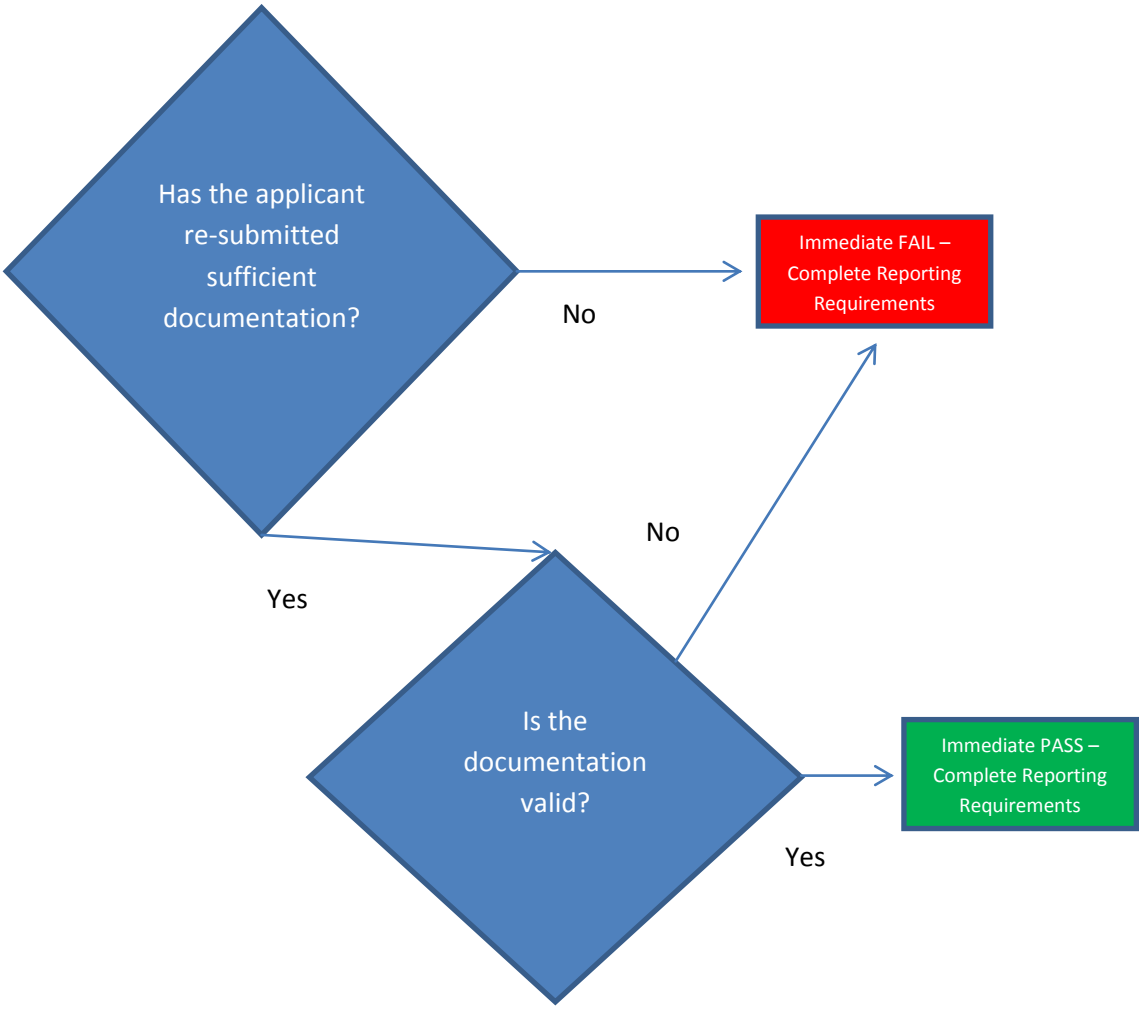
Refer to Section 2.2.1.4.2 and Section 2.2.1.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook.

3.2.2 Action

- If the documentation is investigated and determined to be valid, PASS. Complete required reporting requirements. End of Geo Names Evaluation.
- If the documentation is investigated and determined to be invalid
    - Complete reporting requirement to ICANN, indicating that applicant should be prompted to submit valid documentation.
    - Application should be marked "incomplete," and queued in incomplete queue, awaiting further review (either during Initial Evaluation or Extended Evaluation, if IE time has expired). Complete required reporting requirements. Continue to section 4.

4 Initial Evaluation—re-review

Applications that have been marked "incomplete," either because documentation is insufficient or is deemed invalid (that is, not meeting the requirements established in Section 2.2.1.4.2 and Section 2.2.1.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook), will be returned to the incomplete queue for re-review. In this case applicants have been requested to provide further documentation.



4.1 Has the applicant re-submitted sufficient documentation?

Documentation includes either letters of support or non-objection.

4.1.1 Criteria

Refer to Section 2.2.1.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook.

4.1.2 Action

- If the applicant has submitted sufficient documentation, proceed to section 4.2 (on validity of Documentation).
- If the applicant has not submitted sufficient documentation, notify Applicant. Ineligible as Geographic Name. **FAIL**. Complete required reporting requirements. End of Geo Names Evaluation.

4.2 Is the documentation submitted by applicant valid?

4.2.1 Criteria

Refer to Section 2.2.1.4.2 and Section 2.2.1.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook.

4.2.2 Action

- If the documentation is investigated and determined to be valid, **PASS**. Complete required reporting requirements. End of Geo Names Evaluation.
- If the documentation is investigated and determined to be invalid, notify Applicant. . Ineligible as Geographic Name. **FAIL**. Complete required reporting requirements. End of Geo Names Evaluation.