



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

27 June 2013

Mr. Craig S. Schwartz
CTAG Coordinator

Dear Mr. Craig Schwartz:

Thank you for your letter dated 7 June 2013, sent on behalf of the Community TLD Applicant Group (CTAG), regarding the Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) process. We appreciate your interest in the process, and we would like to address the questions raised in your letter.

- 1. At the recent ICANN meeting in Beijing, you shared that guidance to CPE service providers will be developed and provided to applicants and the community in advance of any CPE reviews. We look forward to hearing about the mechanism to facilitate this and the anticipated timing of when it will be complete. Per our 23 April 2013 letter to you, we reiterate our willingness to be helpful with this.**

Thank you for your offer to help with the CPE guidance development process. While we appreciate your interest, it is important to understand that CPE is a process that affects all applicants in contention sets with community-based applications. If an application passes CPE, it will gain priority over the standard applications in its contention set. As such, it is not appropriate for a group such as the CTAG, which exclusively represents one type of applicant, to be uniquely involved in the development of this evaluation procedure.

That said, ICANN is currently coordinating with the Community Priority Evaluation Panel to complete the evaluation procedures. We intend to share those procedures in an effort to be transparent as to the CPE process. We are open to feedback from the community and can share such feedback with the evaluation panel for their consideration, with the understanding that they are bound by the guidelines set forth in the Applicant Guidebook. While we endeavor to share the evaluation procedures prior to Durban, the exact timing has not yet been determined.

- 2. Regarding the timing of CPE reviews, it's our understanding that if an applicant is not the subject of an objection then its review can commence as soon as its initial evaluation is complete. Please confirm if this understanding is correct.**

We confirm that your description of the process is accurate. However, an application cannot proceed to CPE until the process is operationally ready. As previously

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communicated, we expect to commence CPE in September 2013. At that time, applications that have passed evaluation, have no outstanding objections, and are not being held due to Board consideration of GAC Advice will be invited to formally elect and proceed with CPE.

As noted in your letter, interested applicants may also indicate their intent to elect for CPE in advance of the launch of CPE operations. For more information, please view the announcement made on 14 June 2013 (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-4-14jun13-en>).

- 3. Section 4.2.1 of the Applicant Guidebook provides that, "Before the community priority evaluation begins, the applicants who have elected to participate may be asked to provide additional information relevant to the community priority evaluation." In the event an applicant wishes to provide additional information to ICANN or the relevant community priority evaluation panel, what is the process to facilitate this and are there restrictions on the form and content of this information?**

ICANN and the evaluation panel are considering what additional information may be requested, if any, in accordance with the aforementioned section of the Applicant Guidebook. If it is determined that a request for additional information is necessary, that request will be made via the Customer Portal. Guidelines for the form and content of such a request will be provided in advance of the request and prior to the start of CPE.

- 4. ICANN has historically conducted workshops/open forums during its public meetings on implementation details of the New gTLD Program (e.g., Dispute Resolution, Trademark Clearinghouse, Registry Agreement, IDNs, etc.). CTAG requests that ICANN schedule a CPE session at the upcoming meeting in Durban. We would also request that ICANN invite representatives from the Economist Intelligence Unit and InterConnect Communications to participate and to share their best current thinking about CPE.**

An update on CPE operational readiness will be covered by ICANN staff in the New gTLD Program Update session in Durban. The CPE panel is currently documenting the CPE process and evaluation procedures. Once this has been completed, ICANN will share the information for community feedback.

- 5. Given the New gTLD Program Committee's acceptance on 6 June 2013, of GAC Advice regarding community support for applications, CTAG requests this information be provided to the International Center of Expertise of the International Chamber of**



Commerce, the Economist Intelligence Unit and InterConnect Communications on an expedited basis.

We acknowledge this request and note that New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC) resolution is consistent with the Applicant Guidebook, which calls for the evaluators and dispute resolution service provider (DRSP) to consider community comments within the respective CPE and objection procedures. ICANN will work with the DRSP and CPE panel to ensure that they understand the scope of the evaluation per the Applicant Guidebook, with which they are contractually obligated to comply. As such, we respectfully assert that it is not necessary to separately provide the NGPC response to the DRSP and CPE panel.

In regards to your inquiry about the expected duration and fees for CPE, the duration for the entire String Contention process (including Auction) is not expected to exceed 6 months, and dependent upon the number of applications participating, it may be shorter. For more information, please see Section 1.1.3 of the Applicant Guidebook. The required fees indicated in the Applicant Guidebook are based on early estimates. Actual costs may be higher, and ICANN will communicate the cost for participating in CPE in the near future.

We will share additional details about CPE as they become available. Please continue to visit the New gTLD Program's microsite (<http://newgtlds.icann.org>) and view the Program's webinars (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/webinars>) for additional updates about CPE. A CPE-specific landing page will be launched in the coming weeks, and a CPE-focused webinar can be scheduled after the Durban meeting as necessary.

Thank you for your participation in ICANN's multistakeholder model. We value your feedback, and we look forward to future conversations about the CPE process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine A. Willett", written in a cursive style.

Christine A. Willett
Vice President, gTLD Operations