



.SPORT POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL

August 20, 2009

Mr. Peter Dengate-Thrush
Chairman
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330
Marina del Rey, CA 90292-6601

VIA EMAIL

Mr. Rod Beckstrom
President & CEO
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330
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Reference: International Sport Federations Support for an Orderly Introduction of New Top-Level Domains (“TLD”)

Dear Sirs:

The purpose of this letter is to advise ICANN of the support and concerns of the international sports family, comprised of over one hundred diverse international sports federations (“IFs”) and other sport organizations that, taken as a whole, are represented by the .SPORT Policy Advisory Council (“PAC”).

The concept of ‘sport’ is recognized around the globe; and athletic activities and events associated with sport take place at all levels in countries both rich and poor. Individuals, governments, and organizations all value and engage in sport activities, and these vary greatly from culture to culture, language to language, but are tied together with a commonality of spirit and commitment to ideals of performance excellence. The PAC has been formed specifically to guide policy development for the .SPORT TLD Registry, which dotSport LLC has declared an interest in managing. The PAC is working closely with dotSport LLC because we support the notion of a new Internet platform for innovation, visibility and e-commerce to serve the international sport family and, equally important, millions upon millions of sport fans the world over.

The PAC would like to underscore its support for Mr. Ron Andruff’s July 21st, 2009 posting on your site (<http://forum.icann.org/lists/e-gtld-evaluation/msg00016.html>) requesting ICANN establish a definition of top-level domains vis-à-vis the Draft Applicant Guidebook. Mr. Andruff noted: *We recommend that the definition [of a top-level domain] should be **the apex of a well-defined human activity, a community or a sector**; the key word in that definition being ‘apex’, which directly equates to the word ‘top’ of ‘top-level domain’.*

IFs are the embodiment of sport; through its very being .SPORT is the embodiment of sport solidarity. The approach that dotSport LLC is proposing will enable the stronger IFs to support those IFs that are smaller in presence, or that represent a unique, highly specialized sport, and are therefore less well identified. The goal of .SPORT is to enable

democratic principles to operate within our global community and politically strengthen all federations through shared aims. Thus, the international sport family fully supports ICANN's desire to **logically** expand the Domain Name System in an orderly manner and looks forward to seeing .SPORT on the Internet very soon.

However, we also take this opportunity to raise a serious concern and hereby inform you that we emphatically oppose any diminution of .SPORT and will take all steps necessary to ensure that the top-level domain for our sector is properly protected. We are concerned that ICANN may be prematurely entertaining a process that will allow proliferation of names in sub-categories or individual sports, which will lead to confusion in the marketplace of users. We cannot accept ICANN approving any applications for top-level domains that could diminish the solidarity implied with .SPORT.

Our concerns about diminution of an apex TLD include, but are not limited to:

- (1) the concern of Internet user confusion;
- (2) the possibility of ICANN putting into question the international sport family's ethos of solidarity and mutual support by expanding the number of top-level domains to include those that are part of the international family of sport;
- (3) potentially opening the door for applicants who have no relationship to sport, but believing there may be a business case that warrants an application for a sport-related TLD, apply for them. An approval would lead to highly-unpopular and unnecessary defensive registrations for trademark holders and other .SPORT registrants; and the potential for insidious activities by the registry itself should it not come through the global sport community endorsement process; and
- (4) sabotaging the orderly development of our Internet identifier – .SPORT – at the top-level of the Domain Name System. It would lead to the fragmentation of sport and the sporting community on the Internet, which would defeat both sport solidarity and the very purpose of having top-level domains.

We are certain that ICANN understands and appreciates that the roll-out of new top-level domains will impact every sector of industry and commerce in the world. Consequently, we believe that ICANN will eliminate the potentially harmful impact wherever and whenever possible. By establishing an appropriate definition of a top-level domain, ICANN ensures that no applications for sub-categories of apex TLDs can be accepted, resolving this area of concern for the sporting community. It will indeed clarify the matter for all potential new TLD applicants.

We wish ICANN continued success with the development of the Final Draft Application Guidebook. Our international sport family looks forward to the release of .SPORT in 2010.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Head of the General Association of International Sport Federations New Media Committee
International Olympic Committee Member

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Vice Chairman, .SPORT Policy Advisory Council
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Richard Bunn
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Tom Dielen
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President, Association of IOC Recognized International Sport Federations

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Hagen Hultsch
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President, Association of Summer Olympic International Sport Federations

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