

Response to the Working Group on Internet Governance

Introduction

1. This response paper is an effort to provide the WGIG with APTLD's perspective of the ccTLD-related issues being discussed in this forum.
2. This area was first covered in the *Draft WGIG Issue Paper on the Administration of Internet Names and IP Addresses* ("First Draft WGIG Issue Paper") released in March 2005. Currently, there is a second series of papers released for public comment. We would like to submit a broad overview of the issues faced by our community today that are discussed in the following papers:-
 - *Towards a Common Understanding of the Roles and Responsibilities of all Stakeholders in Internet Governance*, and
 - *Cluster One B2 Assessment Report Issue: Domain Names Management* ("Cluster One B2 Report").

Governance and ccTLD operators

3. The governance of ccTLD policies functions and services is a local matter and is influenced and developed by the local Internet community for a majority of ccTLDs.
4. Government's involvement in ccTLDs is as diverse as the ccTLD community. They range from:-
 - no involvement
 - general oversight of the ccTLD
 - part of the local Internet community; and
 - running the ccTLD.

APTLD and ICANN

5. ccTLDs governance at a global level is limited to a narrow technical scope.
6. With regards to global governance, APTLD believes in the following:-
 - stability and security of the DNS functions at the layer of Top Level Domains in a multi-party environment
 - close global cooperation of all relevant players
 - transparent, bottom-up and multi-stakeholder principles
7. This principally involves ICANN¹ and APTLD agrees with its narrow technical mission of coordinating Internet resources at the global level. APTLD and individual AP ccTLDs have been involved with the ICANN experience since prior to its formation.
8. The avenue for ccTLD participation is in the country-code Names Supporting Organisation (ccNSO). It is not a legal entity in itself, and comprises individual members and a Council.

1 Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (www.icann.org)

9. Currently, ccTLD regional associations (such as APTLD) have established roles in the ccNSO² policy development process and acts as a liaison member in the ccNSO Council. APTLD's role is critical in providing the region's perspective into the process, regardless of ccTLD's membership in the ccNSO. Hence non-ccNSO operators may participate in the ccNSO process through this channel, if they so wish.
10. The *Cluster One B2 Report* (Section 5, last paragraph on page 5) states that the lack of contractual relationships between ICANN and a majority of ccTLDs is "one problem of concern". While APTLD considers formal arrangements with ccTLD operators a desirable goal, we would like to clarify that existing IANA and ccTLD arrangements have been by and large stable and satisfactory.
11. We are unclear as to the basis for the statement that there is no special coordination mechanism between the DNS and other applications and services such as eCommerce and eGovernment (Section 6 page 8).

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) and ccTLDs

12. In section 5(c) of the "*Towards a Common Understanding of the Roles and Responsibilities of all Stakeholders in Internet Governance*" paper, it is stated that GAC's function is advise ICANN. However, we would like to clarify that the GAC Principles³, despite its advisory status, has been applied in change of ccTLD operators' situations (referred to as "delegation" and "re-delegation" in the GAC Principles). This is supported by the *Cluster One B2 Report* in section 4(e) (2nd last paragraph page 5).

Other issues

13. We have also participated in ICANN's evolution activities. Recently, APTLD has provided comments to the Strategic Roadmap and will continue to be involved in this process.
14. In particular, we will continue to monitor the development of ICANN's Memorandum of Understanding and efforts in paving the way to greater independence.
15. We agree that more needs to be done on outreach activities. This is also a vital activity for APTLD and APTLD is keen to collaborate with others (such as ccNSO and the World Wide Alliance of Top Level Domains) in order to achieve this objective.
16. ICANN's global technical coordination role as carried out by its IANA division is important for ccTLDs. We look forward to more dialogue and resolution of a clearer delineation of IANA activities and transparency of its budget in relation to ccTLDs in the near future.
17. Lastly, section 7 (page 9) of the *Cluster One B2 Report* calls for WHOIS and DRP to be reassessed for possible improvements. However, the basis for this has not been clearly set out in the Report.

² Country Code Names Supporting Organisation, a constituency in ICANN (<http://ccnso.icann.org/>)

³ Issued in 2000

Conclusion

18. We welcome the Working Group's efforts in stimulating debate and discussion on this matter. We hope to offer our perspective on the debate as it progresses in the hope of creating a better understanding of the issues.

Brief Background on APTLD

APTLD (Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association) is a membership based organisation for ccTLD (country-code Top Level Domain) operators in the Asia Pacific (AP) region.

APTLD works as the forum of information exchange regarding technological and operational issues of domain name registries in the AP region. Also, as an interface to other international Internet coordinating bodies, APTLD fosters and elevates participation of AP ccTLDs in these global fora, as well as acting in the best interest of APTLD members in global Internet policy making process.

For any further information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat.

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