



19 February 2020

Maarten Botterman
Chair, ICANN Board

Dear Maarten

Release of IGO Acronyms at the second level

During the ICANN Board [meeting](#) with the Contracted Parties House in San Juan on 13 March 2018, members of the RySG raised concerns with the Board about the inability to release IGO acronyms at the second level, even to IGOs that had made enquiries with registry operators to use the strings or to third parties with the express approval of the relevant IGO. It was noted that the reservation of IGO acronyms were only intended to be 'temporary' pending the resolution of conflicting GAC advice and GNSO PDP recommendations. This temporary reservation has now been in place for almost seven years.

During the exchange it was argued that this is not a policy issue, but rather a contractual one because Specification 5 Section 6 of the Registry Agreement provides that the registry operator will implement protection mechanisms determined by the ICANN Board of Directors relating to the protection of identifiers for Intergovernmental Organizations. Therefore, the Board is able to release the acronyms contingent on agreed protection mechanisms.

During the discussion it came to light that the INGO/IGO Curative Rights PDP had incurred significant delays. As there was no imminent policy resolution and given the time that had elapsed since the temporary reservation it was agreed that it was worth discussing the available contract options. Such an approach would not be inconsistent with the approach adopted by the Board that allowed for the release and use of two characters at the second level of new gTLDs.

This issue continues to be a problem for registry operators, with a number reporting the frustrations that they and the IGOs are experiencing because there is no mechanism to release acronyms even to the IGOs themselves or with their consent. Although ICANN staff have been receptive to internally considering such requests, it is clear that the lack of a formal mechanism, is as much a hindrance to them, as it is of frustration to us as registries.

As a matter of priority, the RySG is requesting that a mechanism be put in place that will allow registry operators to release IGO acronyms to the relevant organization as requested, or to a third party who has obtained the written approval of the relevant IGO organization; and that a separate discussion commence to determine protection mechanisms that would effectively remove the temporary reservation of IGO acronyms at the second level.

Yours sincerely

D. Austin

Donna Austin
Chair, RySG

cc. Cyrus Namazi, Senior Vice President, Global Domains Division
Russ Weinstein, Senior Director, gTLD Accounts and Services