



Policy Development Process Retirement Working Group

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By Email

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ccTLD Manager Definition in the Current ICANN Bylaws

Dear Colleagues,

As you will recall, I mentioned during our Council Meeting at ICANN 63 in Barcelona that the Policy Development Working Group on Retirement of ccTLDs has developed some concerns regarding the exact definition of a ccTLD Manager, and in particular, the association between a ccTLD, the ISO 3166 two letter code table, and the IANA Database. This has implications for our deliberations going forward with respect to the development of an IANA retirement policy regarding ccTLDs.

The Working Group has noticed that in the process that produced the current Bylaws, which came into effect in October 2016, part of a sentence was deleted in the article (Section 10.4(a)) that defines a ccTLD manager. Specifically, the text shown below in bold face was removed:

[...] a ccTLD manager is the organization or entity responsible for managing an ISO 3166 country-code top-level domain **and referred to in the IANA database under the current heading of “Sponsoring Organization”**, or under any later variant, for that country-code top-level domain [...]

There is no record of any discussion or explanation for this change, and it is likely that it could be the result of an editing error. Intentional or not, the removal of the reference to the IANA database in this text is significant. In addition, without this text, the mention of a “later variant“ makes no sense.

The PDP Retirement Working Group notes the change in definition and is of the opinion that the definition of a ccTLD Manager has been fundamentally altered, as it is no longer associated with the IANA database as a “Registrant“ (formerly, “Sponsoring Organization“) entry.

The lack of a reference to the IANA database in Section 10.4(a) of the current Bylaws with respect to the definition of what constitutes a ccTLD manager poses a significant challenge to the relevance of the work of the PDP Retirement Working Group.

As you know, the work of the PDP Retirement Working Group is focused on formulating policy for the IANA Naming Function Operator with respect to the retirement of ccTLDs once their corresponding ISO 3166 two letter code is retired by the ISO Maintenance Agency. If there is no clear association in the ICANN Bylaws linking ccTLDs with the IANA database, which has historically (with respect to ccTLDs) been based on the ISO 3166 table (as per RFC1591), then I, as the Chair, have to ask, “what are we doing here?”

I therefore request, on behalf of the PDP Working Group on the Retirement of ccTLDs, that the ccNSO Council propose a Bylaw change, for the ICANN Board’s consideration, that addresses the lack of association between the definition of a ccTLD and the ISO 3166 two letter table.

The Working Group seeks your support for this solution.

On behalf of the PDP Working Group on the Retirement of ccTLDs,
with Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen Deerhake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Stephen Deerhake
Chair