For Discussion: Change Review Process – gTLD Applicant Guidebook
19 September 2011

The Applicant Guidebook is the implementation of Board-approved consensus policy concerning the introduction of new gTLDs, and has been revised extensively via public comment and consultation over a multi-year period. The Guidebook was approved by the Board of Directors in June 2011 after intensive multi-stakeholder deliberation that included substantial contributions from virtually all stakeholders, including governments through the GAC.

Section 1.2.11 of the Guidebook provides that:

> *As approved by the ICANN Board of Directors, this Guidebook forms the basis of the New gTLD Program. ICANN reserves the right to make reasonable updates and changes to the Applicant Guidebook at any time, including as the possible result of new technical standards, reference documents, or policies that might be adopted during the course of the application process. Any such updates or revisions will be posted on ICANN's website.*

This document is intended to propose a process to be followed for various types of updates that may occur.

Changes generally will fall into one of a set of categories, as described below. This Change Review Process is not meant to supplant the policy development process or other existing relevant ICANN processes. The Change Review Process describes the minimum threshold test for any change.

A. Administrative Updates, Error Corrections and Clarifications

1. <u>Administrative Updates</u> are changes that do not require stakeholder discussion or Board resolution. Examples of such changes might include updates to references based on changes to an RFC or ISO list, re-ordering or re-organization of sections.
2. <u>Error Corrections</u> will be made if it is determined that erroneous information is included in a published version of the Guidebook.
3. <u>Clarifications</u> are changes made by staff to incorporate material provided in the Applicant Guidebook FAQ or knowledge base, to provide guidance where there are a number of questions or misunderstandings. In most cases, such clarifications will be provided through supplemental resources rather than directly in the Guidebook. However, if it is determined that the Guidebook requires clarification, this type of change may be made. Changes of this type should only offer amplification or clarification to existing requirements: they should not impose new requirements.

B. Changes Requiring Public Consultation

A determination of whether public comment is required is generally based on whether a proposed change would be a material change, as determined using the following considerations:

1   Would the change have a substantial effect on ICANN?
2. Would the change have a substantial effect on the DNS?
3. Would the change have a substantial effect on potential new gTLD applicants or objectors, or Internet users generally?
4. Would the change be seen to create a new precedent?
5. Would the change substantially affect the security or stability of the DNS, as defined in the registry agreement?

If required, a public comment period will be opened for at least 30 days. As per usual practice, a summary and analysis of public comment will be posted. In some cases Board consideration will then be required, depending on the materiality of the proposed change.

C. Other Changes as Directed by the Board

These are changes explicitly authorized by a resolution from the ICANN Board of Directors. Examples of such changes might include an update based on approval of a new consensus policy, or other directive.

Maintenance and Version Control

The Guidebook will be maintained on the ICANN website. Each revision to the Guidebook will be designated by a version number (*e.g.,* 2011-09-19). An explanation of changes will always be provided. The most current version of the Guidebook will always be available at a stable URL. All previous versions will be archived and available for reference. A new version of the Guidebook (including associated translations) will be published whenever required by the volume or materiality of the changes.