

Life of ISO 3166 Code

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Why this presentation?

- There is a relation between (de-)selection of IDNccTLDs and ISO 3166
 - Territory must be listed on ISO3166
 - Retirement policy discusses process of removal and identifies trigger events for start of (IDN)ccTLDs
 - Includes removal of county code \leq name change, dissolution of territory
- Explain ISO 3166 purpose and scope
 - ISO 3166 is often referred to in discussions without proper understanding
 - eg: ISO 3166 is about names

Dynamics of 3166

- Triggers in ISO 3166 standard changes
- Trigger for ccTLD policies as well?
 - Undefined in RFC 1591
- (Limited) Scope of ISO 3166 important for discussion

Disclaimer & Hat

- Member of ISO 3166 MA & liaison to TC46/WG2
 - I can delegate for ISO 3166 work
 - In case of opinions, they are mine (jaap)
 - Will try to stay out of the Policy discussions
 - Still, all opinions are personal
- Using (mostly) ISO terminology in these slides

ISO Standards

- Voluntary—No International law or treaty
- Helps to be consistent in use of objects
 - Promotes interchange of goods and ideas
 - Can also protect markets
 - Cost reductions, interchange

ISO Organisation

- **Non-governmental International membership organisation**
 - One member per country
- **Standardises Lots of things**
 - Technology, Healthcare, Food safety, Business processes etc
 - ISO Published 21884 Standards
- **Cooperates with IEC** (International Electrotechnical Commission)
 - Joint Technical Committee: 3161 ISO/IEC standards

ISO 3166

Codes for the representation of name of countries and their subdivisions

- Part 1: Country Codes (alpha-2 & alpha-3 codes)
- Part 2: Country subdivision Code
- Part 3: Code for formerly used names of countries

ISO/TC 46/WG 2

Coding of country names and related entities

- WG 2 is the “Owner” ISO 3166
 - Can make substantial changes of the standard
- WG 2 ± 25 members
 - ICANNs role: Liaison type D—Information only
- Changes proposed by WG 2 needs to be ratified by TC 46 (Information and Documentation)

Maintenance Agency

- Body which maintains the “ephemeral” part of a standard
- In Internet terms: a registry for a ISO standard (or part of)
- Maintenance of contents of ISO 3166 and editorial changes
 - Saves lengthy change process
 - Online database of some tables
 - Subscriptions available

Origins of 3166 (1974)

- Increasingly urgent need for a universally applicable codes for the representation of names of countries
- Code system has been derived largely from the designations established under the Convention on Road Traffic, and other codes
- Elaborated in coordination with CCITT, ECE, FAO, IAEA, IATA, ICC, ICS, IFLA, ILO, ITU, UNCTAD, UPU, WIPO, WHO

paraphrased from first edition 3166 (1974-12-15)

Purpose of 3166

Scope: for use in any application requiring the expression of current country names in coded form

country name: name of a country, dependency, or other area of particular geopolitical interest

Focus on Part I Country Codes

- Alpha-2 and alpha-3 codes assigned together
 - Same eligible entities
- Lot's of uses of both
 - alpha-2 *Electronic* readable travel documents
 - alpha-3 *Machine* readable OCR travel documents
 - With variations and additions: FIFA, IOC etc.
- Alpha-3 Not mentioned in RFC 1591
- Code format: QQ, QQQ

Uses of alpha-2 Codes

- Country Code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs)
- Travel documents
 - ICAO DOC 9303 (*electronically* readable passports)
- International Transport (freight containers)
- Finance related
 - ISO 4127 (Currency codes)
 - IBAN (International bank number)
 - Swift or BIC codes
 - ISO 6166 ([International Securities Identifying Number \(ISIN\)](#)).

Eligible Entities

- **Independent territories**
 - UN members
 - Areas of geopolitical interest, at the discretion of MA
 - Subdivisions Of Part 1 eligible for Part 2
- **Note: all areas administrative entities**
 - Not necessarily geographical names

Names & Codes

- Names mainly from UN Terminology Database
 - Names do change more often than people expect
- Codes should have some relation to (short) names
 - There is limited choice in codes
 - nearly all alpha-2 codes starting with “S” are assigned
- Visual association between the country name (in English or French) and code element to be determined by MA

Format of Codes: “Letter”

- Alpha-2 codes
 - AA to ZZ
- Alpha-3 codes
 - AAA to ZZZ
- Alpha-4 codes
 - Combination of former used codes and/or other codes

Format of Codes: “Number”

- **Numeric-3 codes**
 - 000 to 899
 - Not assigned by ISO but by UN Statistics Division: M.49
- **Numerical representation or the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 code elements**
 - 1101 to 1876
 - (but the first “1” may omitted in closed systems)

Code Types

(ISO 3166-1, alpha-2)

- Officially assigned (249)
- User assigned (40)
- Other Codes (407)
 - Reserved codes
 - Exceptionally reserved (12)
 - Transitional reserved (7)
 - Indeterminately reserved (30)
 - Formerly used (22)
 - Unassigned (336)
 - Escape code (1)

User-assigned code elements

- AA, QM to QZ, XA to XZ, and ZZ
- AAA to AAZ, QMA to QZZ, XAA to XZZ and ZZA to ZZZ
- numbers 900 to 999
- not guaranteed to be unique

Reservation styles

- **Exceptionally reserved**
 - Is an Exception so no rules
 - Interchange requirement
- **Transitionally reserved**
 - Duration of reservation is unpredictable and up to MA
 - Guideline is 50 years max.

Addition, Change and Removal of Codes

- Major name change (RH)
- Countries merge (DD, VD)
- Countries do split (CS 2x)
- Territories change
 - Changes in Statehood (NL, AN)
 - Still in “limbo” (Kosovo)

Name Change

- Zaire is now Congo, (the Democratic Republic of the)
 - ZR: Transitional reserved, alpha-4 code: ZRCD
- Upper Volta is now Burkina Faso
 - HV: Unassigned, alpha-4 code: HVBF
- Southern Rhodesia is now Zimbabwe
 - RH: Indeterminately reserved for Haiti (UN Road sign convention)

Merging countries

- **German Democratic Republic**
 - Now Part of entry Germany
 - DD is Unassigned, alpha-4 code: DDDE
- **Viet-Nam, Democratic Republic of**
 - Now Part of entry Viet Nam
 - VD is Unassigned, alpha-4 code: VDVN

“Splitting” Countries

- Pacific Islands split into Marshall Islands (MH), Micronesia (FM), Northern Mariana Islands (MP), Palau (PW)
 - PC: Unassigned, alpha-4 code: PCHH
- Gilbert and Ellis Islands (GE) is now Kiribati (KI) and Tuvalu (TV)
 - GE: Assigned to Georgia, alpha-4 code: GEHH
- Canton and Enderbury Islands now part of Kiribati
 - CT: Formerly used, alpha-4 code: CTKI

Splitting CS

- Czechoslovakia (CS) into Czechia (CZ) and Slovakia (SK)
 - CS: transitional reserved, alpha-4 code: CSHH

and then YU got divided ...

Possible Future changes in 3166 Part I

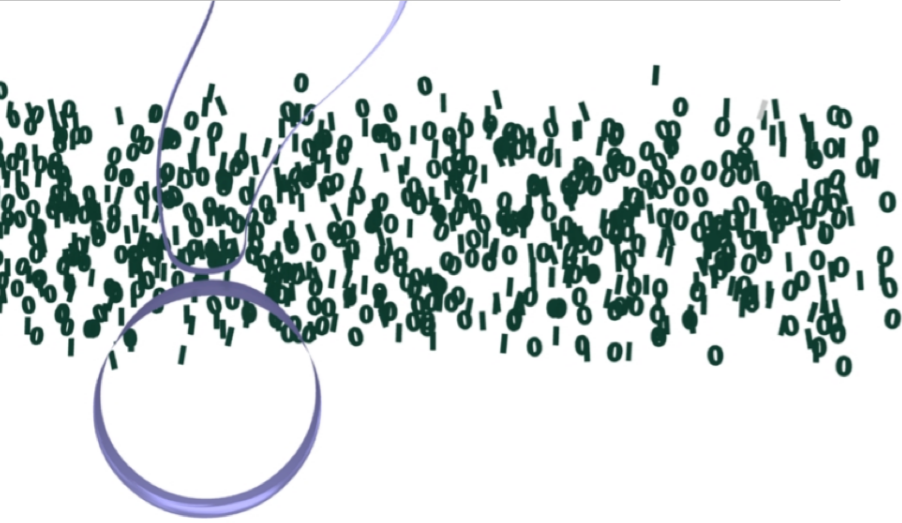
- Name change
- Disappearing country (territory)
 - Pending in the UN
- “Official” script change

Country Name Change

- Just the name
 - For Internal policy reasons
 - Asked the MA for code change
 - Processed by UN
 - (didn't really catch on yet)
 - Code change request still pending
 - MA pointed to possible impact: “it is all or nothing”, all uses need to change as well (Passports, Freight containers etc.)

Impact Possible changes

- Name change
 - should the code change as well?
 - Will be costly because of other uses need to change as well
 - Some Code change request still pending
- “Official” script change
 - country has two languages, for one is a change of script proposed.
 - Will change the name (spelling) somewhat
 - Will that change the ISO code?
 - Asked for a User Assigned code
 - Will the IDN need to change? Remove the current IDN?



Questions?