

# Charter Working Group Retirement of ccTLDs

## 1. Goal, Scope and issues to be addressed

### 1.1 Goal

The goal of the working group (WG) is to report on and recommend a feasible policy for the retirement of the delegated Top Level Domains associated with the country codes assigned to countries and territories listed in the ISO 3166-1 within the framework of the ccNSO Policy Development Process.

### 1.2 Scope

To achieve its goal, the WG shall focus on, without limitation, examination of the topics and issues raised below in section 1. 3

As this WG will undertake its activities within the framework of the ccNSO Policy Development Process, the limitations with respect to the scope of a ccPD, specifically by Article 10 and Annexes B and C to the ICANN Bylaws shall also limit the scope of the WG's work.

If issues become apparent that are considered out of scope of the WG, the Chair of the WG shall inform the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager accordingly. If the Council concurs with the WG, the ccNSO Council is expected to deal with it appropriately.

### 1.3 Issues to be addressed

#### Introduction & Background

To date, only a limited number of ccTLDs have been undelegated. The majority of these cases are recorded in the Delegation Redelegation working group (DRDWG) final report on the retirement of ccTLDs<sup>1</sup>. Since publication of this report in 2011 only one more case of retirement has occurred<sup>2</sup>. As the DRDWG has noted, although the frequency is very low and there is no policy regarding the retirement of ccTLDs, the practices seem to provide an insufficient basis to properly frame such a critical activity.

Looking at the recorded cases of undelegation (retirement), most cases appear to be initiated when the name of the country or territory was removed from the ISO 3166-1 list. Country names might be removed from ISO 3166-1 for various reasons<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/drd-wg-retirement-report-07mar11-en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The retirement process of .AN was completed in 2015, see <http://www.iana.org/domains/root/db/an.html>

<sup>3</sup> This is language that is not included in the official standard, but for illustration from the ISO 3166 website: [http://www.iso.org/iso/country\\_codes\\_glossary.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/country_codes_glossary.html)

February 2017

- A country might change a significant part of its name, for example Burma (BU) was changed to Myanmar (MM) in 1989. The alpha-4 code element for the formerly used country name is therefore BUMM.
- A country may divide into two or more new ones, for example Czechoslovakia was divided into Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. The code element for the formerly used country name Czechoslovakia is CSHH, HH meaning that no single successor country exists. Later is CS used for Serbia causing all kind confusion worldwide. With the subsequent separation of Montenegro as a separate country the code CS got retired again and the alpha-4 code for CS is also CSXX so there are now two different statuses for CS: *Formerly used* and *Transitionally reserved*.
- Two or more countries may merge for example Democratic Yemen (YD) and Yemen Arab Republic (YE) merged into the Republic of Yemen (YE) in 1990. The code element used for the formerly used country name Democratic Yemen is YDYE.

### High Level overview of Issues pertaining to Retirement

Based on an initial analysis of the cases of retirement to date the following initial topics and issues that may need to be addressed emerge:

- Consistency of terminology

The terminology around the retirement of country codes and country code Top Level Domains does not appear to be consistent.

- What triggers a retirement?
  - Change in ISO 3166-1?
    - Substantial Change of name in case of IDN ccTLD?
    - Change of status (from Assigned / to?)
    - Merge or Division of a country?

- Who triggers retirement process?

Which entity should trigger the "retirement" process?

- IANA Function operator?
- ICANN?
- ccTLD manager? Relevant Government?
- Significantly Interested parties? Is there an impact on SIP

- Additional conditions for retirement of a ccTLD?

What are conditions for actual retirement of a ccTLD? Is the occurrence of a triggering event sufficient or should additional requirements be in place? For example:

- No more domain names under management?
- Do Significantly Interested Parties need to agree?
- Only future cases?
- Requirement to assist with retirement? To date, in some cases a prospective ccTLD manager was required to assist with retirement of a ccTLD. Should a (prospective) ccTLD manager be required to cooperate with the retirement of another ccTLD?

- Compliance with conditions?

Assuming retirement of a ccTLD is conditional, who will monitor, and who will be held accountable, if at all, if requirements are not met?

If, over time, other topics and issues become apparent that are relevant and need to be addressed and included, the WG should take these into consideration, and inform the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager accordingly.

## **2. Membership of WG**

### **2.1 Members and other participants of the WG**

Membership of the WG is open to representatives of ccTLDs, participants from other stakeholder groups, observers and experts. There is no requirement for a ccTLD to be a member of the ccNSO. Members, participants, and experts commit to participate actively and regularly in the work of the WG and are expected to have at least a basic understanding of the reference material (section 6).

The membership of the WG will be subscribed to a mailing list, which will be archived after closure.

The names and affiliation of the WG members and other participants will be published on a dedicated WG page on the ccNSO website.

At any time WG members, participants, observers and experts may resign from the WG, by informing the Chair of the WG, who will then inform the ccNSO Council. After receiving a notification the ccNSO Council will seek replacement.

#### **2.1.1 Members**

The working group should have at least 10 members, who are representatives from ccTLD managers or their nominees (two from each of the 5 ICANN Geographic Regions), including the (vice-)chair of the ccNSO.

If less than two (2) nomination are received from Geographic Region, the ccNSO Council will actively the members from the region to seek additional nominations. In the event there are 3 or more ccTLD nominations from the same Geographic Region the ccNSO Council will decide if and how these additional nominees will be appointed.

The WG members shall nominate a chair and alternate chair from the members of the Working Group, who will be appointed by the ccNSO Council.

#### **2.1.2 Participants, experts and observers to the WG**

In addition, the WG is open to participants, who shall not be considered members of the WG. Participants are entitled to participate on equal footing with members, unless the charter states otherwise. The ccNSO Council will request the following stakeholders to appoint at least one participant in accordance with their own rules and procedures:

February 2017

- Each of the Regional Organisations as defined in Section 10.5 of the ICANN Bylaws;
- ALAC
- GAC
- GNSO
- SSAC

#### *Experts to the WG*

The ccNSO Council may also invite and appoint experts as advisors to the WG. Experts shall not be considered members of the WG, but are entitled to participate on an equal footing in their area of expertise. The Council will at least invite the following persons:

- PTI staff
- Expert on the ISO 3166-1 list.

#### *Observers*

The WG will have the following observers:

- The Issue Manager for the ccPDP
- Any person appointed as observer by the chair of the WG

### **2.1.3 Staff Support**

ICANN will be requested to provide adequate staff support to the WG

### **2.2 Chair and vice-chair**

At the nomination of the members of the WG, the Chair and vice-chair of the WG will be appointed by the ccNSO Council. The chair and vice-chair should be members of the Working Group.

The Chair together with the vice-chair, will manage the ongoing activities of the WG and ensure an appropriate working environment by:

- Promptly sharing relevant information with the entire WG.
- Planning the work of the WG to meet the WG goals and leading the WG through its discussions.
- Regularly assessing and reporting on the progress of the WG to the Council and broader community.
- Keeping track of WG participation. Where a WG member does not regularly participate, the Chair will reach out to the member to engage that person in the WG. If, after a conversation that member does not regularly participates, the Chair will advise the Council, so that further steps can be taken to resolve the situation.

The Chair is the representative of the WG. If the Chair of a WG is not a member of the ccNSO Council, the ccNSO Council will appoint a ccNSO Council liaison, to act as an intermediary between the WG and the ccNSO Council or invite the chair to Council meetings to regularly inform the Council on progress made, take questions and participate in any deliberations related to the WG.

The chair and vice-chair will regularly inform the broader community on progress of the WG and seek (informal) feed-back from the community.

### **3. Operations of the WG**

#### **3.1 Working Method**

The first work item of the WG is to develop and agree on its working methods that will guide how the WG intends to conduct its business. These working methods will be made publicly available and be guided by the following principles:

- The meetings will rotate from a timing perspective to share the burden as the membership is distributed over different time zones.
- No firm decisions are taken during any single meeting without the substance of those decisions having been discussed and open for review / consideration by those that may not have been present during the meeting.
- Efforts should be made to ensure that non-native English speakers can participate on an equal basis in the discussions
- The WG will consider public comments and other input as appropriate, and it its reasonable discretion. The WG is not obliged to include such comments or other input, including comments submitted by or input from any one individual or organisation.
- The Secretariat will set up conference calls, maintaining mailing lists, etc. at the direction of the chair and vice-chair of the WG. At the request of the chair the Secretariat or other ICANN staff will also provide other forms of assistance, for example providing advice or an expert opinion.

#### **3.2 Internal Decision making**

In developing its output – guideline for operations, working method, work plan and any reports or papers - the WG shall seek to act by consensus. The Chair may make a call for consensus. In making such a call, the chair should always make reasonable efforts to involve at a minimum all members of the WG. The chair shall be responsible for designating each position as having one of the following designations:

- Full Consensus - a position where no minority disagrees; identified by an absence of objection
- Consensus – a position supported by at least 75% of the members a small minority of the total membership objects

In the absence of Full Consensus, the Chair should allow for the submission of minority viewpoint(s) and these, along with the consensus view, shall be included in the report, paper or other relevant deliverable.

February 2017

In rare cases, the Chair may decide to use of a poll to assess the level of support for a recommendation. However, care should be taken in using polls: they should not become votes, as there are often disagreements about the meanings of the poll questions or of the poll results. Such a poll shall be limited to the members, unless the chair decides otherwise.

Any person on the WG who disagrees with the consensus-level designated by the Chair, or believes that her/his contributions has systematically been ignored or discounted, should first discuss the circumstances with the Chair. If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person should discuss the situation with the Chair of the ccNSO or a person designated by the Chair.

If no consensus can be reached by the WG, the Chair of the WG will submit a Chair's Report to the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager. In this report the Chair shall document the issues that are considered contentious, the process that was followed to try to reach a consensus position and suggestions to mitigate those issues, if any. If, after implementation of the mitigating measures, consensus still cannot be reached, the Chair shall prepare a Final Chair's Report documenting the processes that was followed to reach consensus and this Final Chair's Report will be deemed to replace the Final Paper. In this case the ccNSO Council, advised by the Issue Manager, will decide whether to close the WG, or take mitigating measures, for example changing the charter and reconstitute a WG on the basis of the charter.

### **3.3 Standards of Behaviour**

The membership of the WG is expected to behave in a mature and professional way when conducting its business. This includes, but is not limited to communicating with the fellow membership professionally and ensuring that the WG remains inclusive and productive.

To resolve incidents of non-professional communication the following steps should be followed:

- Any concerns regarding the behaviour of one of the members, participants, observers or experts should first be raised with that person.
- If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, a formal complaint may be raised with the Chair of the WG, who will attempt to mediate.
- If that is not possible, or if the complaint is sufficiently serious in nature, the Chair of the WG is empowered to restrict the participation of the person if in the chair's view the continued participation would not be appropriate and/or would seriously disrupt the working group from conducting its business.
- Generally, a person should first be warned privately, and then warned publicly before such the restriction is put into effect; only in extreme circumstances to be determined by the chair and vice-chair together, this restriction may be put in effect immediately.

February 2017

If a WG Member disagrees with an imposed restriction, or the complainant disagrees with a restriction (or the lack of one), or there are other matters regarding the complaint that cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the participant, complainant, or the Chair of the WG may raise the issue with the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the ccNSO Council or their designate(s). They will review the matter and then decide. The ccNSO Council, WG Chair, WG person and complainant shall be informed accordingly.

## **4. Deliverables**

### **4.1. Working Method & Work Plan**

The WG is expected to develop its working methods and a work plan first. The working methods should provide guidance on how the WG intends to conduct its business (see section 3.1). The work plan should include at a minimum, where feasible, timelines and expected outputs of the WG, based on the deliverables outlined in this Charter. Purpose of the work plan is to inform the community and ccNSO on the expected progress and anticipated schedule of public consultations.

Once the work plan is completed, the Time Line as set forth in section 5 shall be updated and published. If in the course of conducting its business the WG or the chair of the WG is of the view that the Time Line is untenable, the chair will inform the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager. The chair will then also suggest an adjusted Time Line to be adopted by the WG. Once adopted, the chair will inform the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager and the adjusted Time Line will be published.

### **4.2 WG Interim Paper**

The WG shall develop and publish for public consultation an Interim Paper, which shall, at a minimum, include proposals to address the topics and issues identified in the Issue Report, an impact analysis of the proposals and any documentation necessary to make the proposals effective. The Interim Paper shall also contain a review and analysis of comments made on the Issue Report, if any, with respect to the retirement of ccTLDs. The Interim Paper shall be published for public consultation on the ICANN website following the guidelines for public consultations. The consultation should be scheduled in such a manner that it also allows for a public discussion with the relevant stakeholders at a designated ICANN meeting. The chair of the WG will send the Interim Paper to the Issue Manager of the ccPDP.

### **4.3 WG (draft) Final Paper**

After conclusion of the public consultation on the Interim Paper, the WG shall prepare a (draft) Final Paper reflecting the Interim Paper, the comments received on the Interim Paper from the public consultation period.

If the WG is of the view that an additional public consultation is appropriate, it will prepare a draft Final Paper to be published for public consultation on the ICANN website and following the guidelines for public consultations. The consultation should be scheduled in such a manner that it also allows for a public discussion with the relevant stakeholders at a designated ICANN meeting. After conclusion of the public consultation

February 2017

on the draft Final Paper, the WG shall prepare its Final Paper that reflects the draft Final Paper, the comments received and how they have been taken into consideration by the WG, if at all.

The Final Paper will include the proposed policy recommendations. This draft Final Paper shall be published within fourteen (14) days after adoption of the paper by the WG and conveyed to the chairs of the ccNSO and GAC and the Issue Manager of the ccPDP. The Issue Manager shall include the Final Paper in the Interim Report of the ccPDP.

## 5 Miscellaneous

### 5.1 Omission in or unreasonable impact of Charter

If this charter does not provide sufficient guidance and/or the impact of the charter is found to be unreasonable for conducting the business of the WG, the Chair has the authority to determine a proper course of action to mitigate the issue. Such action may, for example, consist of a modification to the Charter in order to address the omission or its unreasonable impact, in which case the Chair(s) may propose such modification to the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager. A modification shall only be effective after adoption of the amended by the ccNSO and after publication of the amended Charter. The chair of the WG shall exercise reasonable discretion with respect to question as to whether this charter does not provide guidance and/or the impact of the charter is unworkable with respect to the conduct of business of the WG.

### 5.2 Closure of the Working Group

If the WG determines that it has completed its work, or if the Wg cannot achieve its goal(s) the Final Chair Report, it will submit a Final Paper to the ccNSO Council and Issue Manager. This report should include a recommendation on the time to close the WG.

A WG is closed by a resolution of the ccNSO Council.

## 6. WG Time Line

Activity	Date*	Closure*	Minimal Duration
Establishment of Working Group			
Publish Interim Report			NA
Public Comment on Interim Paper			40 days
Publish Final Paper			NA
Closure of the WG			

\* Latest date possible to meet minimal duration for public consultation period.



February 2017

\*\* It is assumed in this schedule / time line the Final Paper is presented at an ICANN meeting.

## 7. References

- RFC 1591 (<https://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt> )
- The ccNSO Delegation and Redelegation working group Final report on retirement of ccTLDs, 07 march 2011 (<http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/drd-wg-retirement-report-07mar11-en.pdf>)
- The ccNSO Framework of Interpretation working group Final Report, (<http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/foi-final-07oct14-en.pdf> )
- ISO 3166 standard ([http://www.iso.org/iso/country\\_codes](http://www.iso.org/iso/country_codes))
- CWG-Stewardship Final Report, Annex O: ccTLD Appeals Mechanism Background and supporting Findings Sections 1414- 1428, ([https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/53779816/FinalTransitionProposal\\_11June.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1434047705000&api=v2](https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/53779816/FinalTransitionProposal_11June.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1434047705000&api=v2) ).
- Relevant IANA reports on the Retirement of ccTLDs.
- Issue paper retirement ccTLDs (to be included on webpage drafting team)