

Scenario: change of name or code element

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One of the scenario's potentially resulting in retirement of a ccTLD is the change of the country name or the two-letter code.

The model is

Retirement process

End stage/change of category ISO 3166-1 -----> Un-Delegated¹ ccTLDs

Scenario: Change of code element

End stages/change of listing ISO 3166-1. To date, following the discussions of the WG and original email discussion, the WG marked the following changes as scenario: the change of listing category of the two-letter code (country code) on ISO 3166 – 1 due to a change in code element. In terms of ISO 3166 standard section 7.4 Alterations to country names or country code elements, second sentence: *“A significant change of name may require the ISO 3166/MA to change the alpha code element concerned. ..”*

Examples, among others, are:

AI (French Afar and Issas) to DJ (Djibouti) (1977)

HV (Upper Volta) to BF (Burkina Faso) (1984)

BU (Burma) to Myanmar (MM) (1989)

BY (Byelorussian SSR to Belarus, no change in code elements) (1992)

ZR (Zaire) to CD (Congo, Democratic Republic of) (1997)

TP (East Timor) to TL (Timor-Leste) (2002)

The codes ZR, TP and BU are included in the Online Browsing Platform (OBP) in the list of transitionally reserved codes. Note that transitionally reserved is NOT a category of codes defined in the Standard. In addition, AI is now assigned to Anguilla, HV is listed as unassigned (see Online Browsing Platform Country Codes, ISO).

Change of Code Element cause for Retirement of ccTLD?

1. Did the change/ scenario cause for a retirement process?

Based on an initial analysis by the DRDWG and IANA reports, the following changes of code elements did cause the retirement of the ccTLD. In particular in the following cases:

The change of name from Zaire to Congo, Democratic Republic of, and the related change of code element from ZR to CD and to retirement of .ZR as ccTLD.

¹ This term is not defined. It is used as an overall, heuristic concept to describe the stage where the delegation has ended.

The change from East Timor to Timor-Leste and the related change from TP to TL caused the retirement of .TP as ccTLD^{2 3} .

Under this scenario, the practice to date has been that the removal of the code element from the list of officially assigned codes⁴ / list of Country Names⁵

2. Who initiated the retirement process?

Based on the documents available:

.ZR case

The change of name from ZR to CD in 1997 caused that at the request of the ccTLD manager of ZR at the time .cd was delegated to the same ccTLD manager in 1997. Based on the documentation the request for delegation of .cd was done to “replace⁶” .ZR. In 2001, following a request for “redelegation⁷” of both the .CD and .ZR domains, ICANN responded that as the .ZR is to be retired, it could not be redelegated in this manner. Based on the document available it is not clear who initiated the retirement process.

.TP case

According to the Board resolution on delegation of .TL⁸, *the alpha-2 code " TL" was assigned to the ISO 3166-1 list in May 2002 for the Democratic Republic of East Timor. In November of 2002, the name of the country was also changed on the ISO list to Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.*

According to the IANA report on the removal of .TP top level domain: *“The ISO 3166-1 code for Portuguese Timor was removed in the year 2002. When a ccTLD is no longer eligible due to the country or code’s removal from the ISO 3166-1 standard ..., the operator is expected to develop a transition plan to the successor ccTLD(s) and ultimately retire the domain. “*

In addition, *The Government of the DR Timor-Leste endorsed the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) at the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Public Works as the appropriate entity to both hold the delegation of administrative authority for the .TL ccTLD and to manage the process of migration from the legacy .TP ccTLD.*

² Note that the retirement process for .zr was initiated before ICANN was established. See: <https://www.iana.org/reports/2011/cd-report-07jan2011.html>

³ Based on publicly available documents checked to date, the code elements BU, HV have not been used as ccTLD. AI is currently in use as ccTLD, but relates to Anguilla and BY is still in use.

⁴ Term used in the Online Browsing Platform ISO, country codes

⁵ Term used in ISO 3166 Standard part 1, section 6.1

⁶ Emphasis added to underscore this is an undefined term: replacement of a ccTLD.

⁷ According to the FoI of RFC1591 this should be qualified as a “transfer”

⁸ <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-2005-01-24-en>

Initial analysis

Under the scenario under consideration and based on documents consulted to date, it is not clear who has initiated the process of retirement.

It is also not clear what event triggered the process. The change of name of the country was instrumental to initiate the retirement process. In case of the .TP retirement process it was also considered that the “ removal” of the country name, and hence the consideration that a ccTLD is no longer eligible due to the country or code’s removal from the ISO 3166-1 standard caused the removal from the .TP ccTLD. However, in both cases the actual process was triggered by the request for delegation of the replacement (.CD and .TL) i.e. the retirement was not initiated as a process on its own and its own merits but tied to a request and process of delegation.

3. How is retirement initiated? Letter from PTI/ IFO to ccTLDs? ICANN Board decision? Letter from relevant government?

Unclear at this stage.

It was pointed out that in case of the retirement of .TP, IANA staff had informal conversations with the ccTLD manager, before the actual retirement process, was formally initiated.

Initial analysis

Based on the documentation considered, In the two-cases reported (.ZR and .TP) practice is not consistent and evolving. Based on the documentation available the manager of the delegated ccTLD was identified by ICANN Board decision as the entity managing the process of migration.

This appears to have been the communication/decision that initiated the process of retirement. However as noted, in the .TP case, prior to the formal decision, there was informal communication between IANA staff and the ccTLD manager for .TP.

4. What are consequences once retirement process is initiated, if any and for whom?

.ZR Retirement process

After it was clarified that the .ZR ccTLD would be deleted⁹, the manager (of .ZR) performed a transition, populating the .cd top-level domain and emptying the .ZR top-level domain. By an 11 March 2001 message to the IANA, the .ZR manager stated that the .ZR top-level domain had been emptied in preparation for its deletion from the root zone.

⁹ Deletion of .zr is the subject line of the IAN report. Note the term deletion of Top Level Domain is not defined. See: <https://www.iana.org/reports/2001/zr-report-20jun01.html>

In June 2001 the IANA concluded that *“the migration of .ZR has been completed, with all sub-domains within .ZR having been removed”* and *“the .ZR top-level domain should be deleted from the root zone.”*

.TP retirement process.

“Following the successful delegation of the .TL domain, all new registrations within the .TP domain were disallowed, and the existing registry was maintained in a caretaker state to provide existing registrants time to transition to the new .TL domain.”¹⁰

Further, *“following the establishment of the .TL domain name, users of the .TP domain were encouraged to transition from the .TP to the .TL domain name and all registrants under the .TP domain were given matching domain names under the .TL domain name.”*

The removal from the root zone was targeted for 28 February 2015.

Documentation

- IANA reports
 - Deletion of .ZR Top Level Domain(June 2001): <https://www.iana.org/reports/2001/zr-report-20jun01.html>
 - Redelegation of .CD (January 2011): <https://www.iana.org/reports/2011/cd-report-07jan2011.html>
 - IANA Report on the Delegation of the .TL Top Level Domain <https://www.iana.org/reports/2005/tl-report-05aug05.pdf>
 - Report on Removal of the .TP top level domain (January 2015) <https://www.iana.org/reports/2015/tp-report-20150126.html>

- ICANN Board minutes
 - Delegation of .TL (2005) <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-2005-01-24-en>

- Discussion Paper on Retiring Country Code Top-Level Domains (May 2006) <https://www.icann.org/news/announcement-2-2006-12-05-en>
 - Public comments on consultation paper: <https://forum.icann.org/lists/cctld-sunset-comments/>

- Additional documentation
 - Letter from Ministry of Transport and Communication of Timor-Leste to ICANN <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/neves-to-chehade-12aug13-en.pdf>

¹⁰ See Report on Removal of the .TP top level domain: <https://www.iana.org/reports/2015/tp-report-20150126.html>