Purpose and Scope of Activities Emoji Study Group

Background & Introduction

There has been community interest in the use of emoji in domain names and some country code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs) allow domain names with emoji to be registered at the second level, and several registrars accept labels with emoji for registrations in other TLDs. The SSAC has analyzed the use of emoji for domain names and published the findings in the SAC 095 advisory, which was published on 25 May 2017, as a response to this analysis. Based on their findings, the SSAC recommends not allowing the use of emoji in TLDs, and discourages their use in a domain name in any of its labels. The SSAC also advises registrants of domain names with emoji that such domains may not function consistently or may not be universally accessible.

In November 2017 the Board requested that the ccNSO (and the GNSO) engage with the SSAC to more fully understand the risks and consequences of using a domain name that includes emoji in any of its labels, and inform their respective communities about these risks. The Tech WG and ccNSO programme WG have scheduled meetings with members of SSAC respectively at tTEch Day and the ccNSO meeting days in San Juan, during ICANN61.

The Board also requested the ccNSO (and GNSO) to integrate conformance with IDNA2008 and its successor into their relevant policies so as to safeguard security, stability, resiliency and interoperability of domain names.

Purpose

The study group is established by the ccNSO Council to provide to ccTLD community, the ccNSO Council a comprehensive overview of the issues associated with the use of Emoji as second level domains, and the need for and current practice by ccTLD managers to allow Emojis as second level domains. If considered appropriate by the Study group, the Study group may advise on a course of further actions, if any.

Scope of activities

The Study group will:
- Summarise the issues associated with the use of Emoji as second level domains as identified by SSAC in its reports (see references);
- Liaise with SSAC to seek further clarification and input if considered needed and appropriate by the group, for example to better understand the threats that the registration and use of Emoji as second level domains create for Internet users and related issues;
- Liaise with relevant departments of ICANN to seek further clarification and input if considered needed and appropriate by the group, for example to better understand the threats that the use of Emoji create for Internet users and related issues;
- Provide an overview of the references in the Fast Track Implementation Plan and Draft overall IDN ccTLD policy to IDNA 2008 and its successor, which disallow Emoji. If not included suggest a course of action to include it in the overall draft IDNccTLD policy.

- Liaise with the ccTLDs who are currently allowing registration of Emoji to solicit their views and perspective on possible threats and security issues and provide an overview from their prespective;
- If deemed appropriate and necessary prepare a session at a ccNSO meeting, to solicit views of the community and to present and discuss the results of the study to the ccTLD community;
- Provide a final report of its findings to the ccNSO Council.

The study group may also undertake other activities the members deem to be appropriate for the purpose of the study group.

Membership and chairs
The ccNSO Council will appoint one of its Councillors as chairs, and invite a member of SSAC with a relation to ccTLDs and/or member of the Tech WG to co-chair this group.
The ccNSO secretariat will provide support to the group.
The ccNSO Secretariat will send out a call for volunteers to the ccTLD community.
Membership will need to be appointed by the ccNSO Council

Closure
The study group closes at the end of the ccNSO Council meeting the final report has been discussed by the ccNSO Council, but no later than the ccNSO Council meeting at the ICANN meeting 63 (Barcelona, Spain).

Miscellaneous
In addition to these Terms of Reference the Guidelines: ccNSO Collaboration Groups with Limited Scope (see: https://ccnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/filefield_47779/guidelines-collaboration-groups-30mar16-en.pdf) are applicable. In case of conflict between the Guideliens and the term of reference, these terms of reference prevail.

Background material
Board Resolution 2 November 2017: https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2017-11-02-en#1.e

SAC 095: SSAC Advisory on the use of Emoji in Domain Names.
https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/sac-095-en.pdf

Fast Track Implementation Plan: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/idn-cctld-implementation-plan-05nov13-en.pdf

Overall draft IDNccTLD policy:
https://ccnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/filefield_41859/idn-ccpdp-board-26sep13-en.pdf