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Dear ICANN,

fTLD Registry Services, LLC (fTLD), the community-applicant for the .bank and .insurance generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs), appreciates the opportunity to provide this reply on ICANN's Public Interest Commitments (PIC) Specification. Furthermore, fTLD is a member of the Community TLD Applicant Group (CTAG), and supports the comment¹ it posted on this topic on 21 February 2013.

On 6 March 2013, ICANN posted the PICs submitted by new gTLD applicants. While fTLD welcomes those applicants that have taken the opportunity to participate in this process, we remain concerned about the impact on the financial services community and the consumers it serves of the allocation of the approximately 40 new gTLDs that appear to target this community. Moreover, a number of these applications target regulated industries and these must be treated with a higher degree of care and scrutiny because of the unique trust implications and public policy considerations for this type of gTLD. The special treatment of these applications is consistent with ICANN's Applicant Guidebook question 30a that calls for "security levels to be appropriate for the use and level of trust associated with the TLD string, such as, for example, financial services oriented TLDs."

Despite the fact that fTLD has significant reservations about when and how ICANN introduced the PIC, we believe it could serve a useful purpose if administered properly. fTLD has carefully reviewed the PICs submitted by applicants for financially-oriented gTLDs and does not believe they have adequately responded to Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) member Early Warnings² that claim that specific applications do not appear to have proposed sufficient mechanisms to minimize potential consumer harm. Moreover, that the ICANN process allows for a PIC to be amended over time (or a registry operator claims to unilaterally discontinue its PIC representations) creates a moving target for the GAC and ICANN's objections Dispute Resolution Service Providers (DRSPs). The GAC (i.e., whether or not to issue Advice) and DRSPs (i.e., resolving disputes) are basing their decisions upon information available at a specific point-in-time and that information could be modified in the future and materially impact the operations of a gTLD registry and thereby its targeted community.

In summary, fTLD believes the PIC could be an effective tool to protect consumers, but that in its current form would not provide the intended benefits it appears to have been created to achieve. fTLD further suggests that the PICs submitted by applicants for financially-oriented gTLDs are on the whole inadequate to produce real and enduring results for the financial services community and the consumers it serves.

Sincerely,



Director

¹ <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments-base-agreement-05feb13/msg00003.html>

² <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/GAC+Early+Warnings>