



Comments to the proposed change to the charter of the Registry Stakeholder Group June 2015

Background

Following discussion which began in 2013, the ICANN Registry Stakeholder Group (RySG) started to explore options for changes to its charter. These changes had two drivers. Firstly, an expectation of an expanding group: this led to the current proposal for certain administrative amendments to the charter. Secondly, structural changes based on an expectation of new types of registries such as .brands and .geos wishing to join. The Brand Registry Group (BRG) recognises that discussions around these structural changes are ongoing. The BRG has participated in these discussions and continues to do so. In this participation the BRG has followed seven core principles.

Principles

1. The RySG structure should be simultaneously RELEVANT for its members, while recognising DIVERSITY, and facilitating the most EFFICIENT means of policy development.
2. Registries should be free to choose where to participate.
3. Registries should be able to participate in one representative body which reflects their commonality and allows for interaction in the wider group of all registries.
4. There should be no prohibition on participation both directly in the RySG and in an RySG Association member.
5. Any new RySG structure should not cannibalise the existing stakeholder group.
6. Participation and influence are more important than voting mechanisms.
7. GNSO council seats are a separate issue and will be dealt with via the process of GNSO reform.

BRG comments on the current RySG charter changes

These changes reflect the growth in the size of the RySG.
The BRG supports the proposed changes.

Why these changes are not enough

There are two fundamental changes required to the RySG charter that are not covered by the current proposal:

1. reform of the system of weighted voting
2. to allow membership of the RySG by associations of registries.

1. Weighted Voting

The reason that the RySG has weighted voting (as a function of second-level registrations) was identified in the RySG Evolution 1 working group:

“Currently, the number of second-level registrations is a proxy measure for the economic and operational impact of policy outcomes”.

And the same RySG group identified the limitations on this rationale in the future:

“Registrations are not a proxy measure for the economic and operational impact of policy outcomes for some new types of registries such as .brands.”

The BRG calls on the ICANN Board to recognise the above and ask the RySG to bring forward proposals to reform weighted voting.

2. Association members

Unlike the BC, IPC and NCSG, the RySG has no facility for association members. This is another historic legacy issue. Yesterday there were no such associations. Today there are. The BRG is one such association. BRG members tell us they want to join the BRG and expect focused .brand-relevant services filtering the complexity and customising information for them. Besides expanding participation of registries in ICANN, this will give the BRG a home within the GNSO. It is a home that the current charters of all Constituencies and Stakeholder Groups currently deny the BRG.

The BRG calls on the ICANN Board to recognise the above and ask the RySG to bring forward proposals to allow membership by associations representing registries.