

Draft cover letter

January 27, 2010

Dear ICANN,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comment on the Draft Expression of Interest (EOI) Model for the implementation of the new gTLD introduction.

Japan Internet Domain Name Council (JIDNC) is a private sector-led membership organization established in September 2009 to facilitate the smooth introduction of both new IDN ccTLD for Japan and geographic TLDs for local governments in Japan and thus contribute to the sound development of the domain name market in Japan.

Since there was very limited time to prepare the comment to meet the deadline, we could not organize the regular Board meeting to approve this comment. Therefore, we hereby submit this through the Steering Committee of JIDNC which is under the supervision of our Board.

We believe that the substance of the comment reflects the opinion of our entire membership and hope ICANN community to consider them seriously and constructively.

Sincerely,

Hiroyuki Kuwako,
Chair, Steering Committee
Japan Internet Domain Name Council

Comment on Expression of Interest (EOI) draft model from Japan Internet Domain Name Council (JIDNC)

January 27, 2010

We welcome ICANN's initiative to implement preliminary study on various issues related to the introduction of the new gTLDs and using EOI as real world "testing" of the gTLD application process.

However, though some of the local governments in Japan are seriously considering applying for the new geographic TLD, there may still be other local governments who are yet to be fully prepared. We hope EOI will not foreclose these applications from them.

There is also concern that the \$55,000 deposit as well as \$185,000 overall application fee are too high for some local municipalities, smaller non-profit and cultural entities and thus they may act as an entry barrier for those who want to have distinct identity yet cannot expect mass volume of registrations.

While we are aware of the mandatory condition for any applicant to obtain consent (or non-objection) from the local government for geographic names, it is not clear whether that is also the case for the EOI process or not.

There is some possibility where a local government makes a preliminary decision to give consent for sending EOI since it is mandatory for the first round, and then later decide to withdraw it.

Therefore, we request ICANN to consider the followings:

1. Allocate sufficient time and resources for outreach to implement the EOI process so that most, if not all, parties who are serious to apply the geographic gTLDs and relevant local governments will have enough time and understanding to prepare.
2. Clarify how the endorsement from the local governments for geographic TLDs is

treated at the EOI process.

3. Consider different application fee structure for geographic names for small municipalities (eg. with prospective registrations of less than xx thousand domain names declared) that will make them easier to apply. This could be combined with some kind of retroactive “penalty” scheme if the number of registration exceeds the declared number.

4. Make sure to start EOI process *after* the publication of Application Guidebook V.4 with most details clearly articulated.

5. Prepare a well-defined process to allow refund for the initial application deposit in case of withdrawal when local governments are enforced to do so with due process (in addition to the terms mentioned in the model) and granted by ICANN as an exceptional case. This exceptional case should be only applied to those municipalities with little room for taking the risks while their intentions to apply for the TLDs are genuine. We are open to define the process in detail once this is agreed by ICANN.