

- Coordination Group Charter, Public Comments -



Over the past month, discussions by the IANA Stewardship Transition Coordination Group, or ICG, through its mailing list entitled Internal-CG, have culminated in the proposal of a charter to guide a favorable outcome. The draft has evolved from internal discourse, and public comments have been solicited in response to topics concerning Scope, operations, and stakeholders.

The draft charter Defers opportunities to discuss accountability to the scope of a parallel and related process on enhancing ICANN accountability. In the spirit of the language within the accountability section of ICANN's website, such opportunities must aspire to be as easy to find and utilize as the ICG microsite itself, and any proactive charter should at least include a link to where the parallel discussions of such a Separate, external group are going to eventually take place.

In contrast to the NTIA's broad Definition of directly affected parties, minimally comprising the IETF, IAB, ISOC, RIRs, TLD operators, root zone maintainer, and other interested global stakeholders, the charter designates three operational communities as privileged to develop proposals for review by the ICG. This restriction precludes meaningful participation by global stakeholders such as international organizations and prominent NGOs, especially as they relate to the salient consequences of monopoly power over root maintenance in shaping language for effective implementation.

The discernible import of root zone maintenance is not in the creativity that it imparts to nations. Broadly speaking, root zone maintenance is the charge incumbent to edit the file that effects to map domain names to physical machines via IP addresses. Without multilateral accountability, the power to annex a country code top-level domain vests in the hands of the root zone maintainer. Given that a country's name is the global reference to its domain, it is no wonder that a good actor would have been historically compelled to hold ccTLDs to a higher standard than physical property, notwithstanding any motivation by entities to otherwise suggest.

Threats to undermine the neutral execution of changes to the root zone are exacerbated by the potential for Collective fusion of the IANA functions and root zone maintenance, foregoing the common effectiveness of the former, in a reaction accelerated by the introduction of competing business interests to the root, via new gTLDs.

Short of solutions to preserve root neutrality, a transition to cardinal IANA functions encompassing administrative responsibilities of the root zone and coordination of root zone management, as delineated by ICANN's transition FAQ, is an indicator of disorder in an inevitable acclimation of root federation. If the viability of such a scenario is not enough of a deterrent, prior to the expiration of any contract and the natural progression thereafter, perhaps choice itself will serve to neutralize dominant forces in order to achieve net stability. To this end, it is incumbent upon global stakeholders to collaboratively contribute to shaping the structures which together vest duty of determination within themselves and hence render them responsive to the doors of multilateral, multistakeholder sufficiency.

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August 14, 2014

General references:

- US-NSI. Contract amendment 11. *Root zone maintainer may not change root file on ICANN's instruction without counter signature.* [[Archive](#)] [[Source](#)]
- US-VeriSign. Contract amendment 32. *Section 3.2 ICANN covenants, 3.2.C ICANN authorization.* [[Archive](#)] [[Source](#)]
- US-ICANN. IANA functions contract. *C.2.9 four IANA functions and C.8.1 verbatim.* [[Archive](#)] [[Source](#)]
- ICANN. IANA Transition FAQ. *#2 five IANA functions, #16 paradox.* [[Archive](#)] [[Source](#)]
- ICG. Draft Charter. *pg. 5, sec. 3, para. 1 (end), ICG/coordination group redundancy requires clarification.* [[Archive](#)] [[Source](#)]