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Council of European National Top level domain Registries

WIPO Conference on IP Questions
Relating to ccTLDs

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Council of European National Top level domain Registries

Best Practice Guidelines for ccTLDs

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About CENTR

- An international association of ccTLD Registries.

- Started as RIPE project in March 1998 (TLD WG).

- Became non-profit organisation in June 1999.

- Small secretariat based in Oxford, UK.

- European focus, but no geographical limits.

- ccTLD representatives form General Assembly.

- Currently 35 Full Members, collectively register over 8.5 million domain names (over 2/3 of global total for ccTLDs)

CENTR Members

Armenia (.am)
Andorra (.ad)
Ascension Island (.ac)
Austria (.at)
Belgium (.be)
Canada (.ca)
Czech Republic (.cz)
Croatia (.hr)
Cyprus (.cy)
Denmark (.dk)
Finland (.fi)
France (.fr & others)

Germany (.de)
Greece (.gr)
Guernsey (.gg)
Hungary (.hu)
Ireland (.ie)
Iran (.ir)
Israel (.il)
Italy (.it)
Lithuania (.lt)
Luxembourg (.lu)
Malta (.mt)

Netherlands (.nl)
Norway (.no, .bv, .sj)
Palestine (.ps)
Poland (.pl)
Portugal (.pt)
Romania (.ro)
Russia (.ru)
Slovenia (.si)
Spain (.es)
Sweden (.se)
Switzerland (.ch & .li)
United Kingdom (.uk)

Associate Members: Japan (.jp), New Zealand (.nz), NSI Registry

Observers: European Commission, RIPE, A. Mamadov (AZ ISOC)

CENTR Objectives

- Forum to discuss matters of policy affecting ccTLDs.
- Act as channel of communication to Internet administrative bodies & other organisations.
- Promote interests of non-profit ccTLDs and lobbies on their behalf.
- Focal point for enquiries about ccTLD practices.
- Document policies and practices of ccTLDs.
- Encourage harmonisation of practices and improve service.

CENTR Activities

- **Legal & Regulatory Group**
  - Registry lawyers & managers collaborating on legal issues:
    - data protection, dispute resolution, contract for services & best practice guidelines
- **Technical Forum**
  - Workshops for technical staff of member registries
  - WGs on issues such as DNSSec, secondary servers, IDNs
- **Exchange of Information**
  - Survey & documentation of registry practices
  - Presentations and discussions at CENTR meetings
- **Domain Name Registration Forum**
  - Open forum at RIPE meetings to exchange information and views with wider domain name industry.

History of CENTR Best Practice Guidelines

- Developed in late 1999 (by CENTR Chairman, Dennis Jennings)

- Member input and consensus building in early 2000

- Amended version adopted by CENTR GA in 6/00

- GAC Principles use some of CENTR text

- Many CENTR registries have now signed up

- Presented to the wider ccTLD community & ICANN

- Referred to under the 'Obligations of the Manager' in CENTR draft Contract for Services with ICANN

CENTR Best Practice Guidelines for ccTLD Managers
Recent Developments

- CENTR draft used as the basis for a ccTLD constituency BP document, 11/00
  - WG formed to merge alternative drafts at a ccTLD meeting in LA

- Introductory text added 12/00
  - Sets out the aims of the document and promotes adoption

- Procedures for Making Changing agreed 12/00
  - Anyone can suggest improvements
  - All suggestions will be reviewed and the document changed if 66% of CENTR members agree.

Objectives of Best Practice Guidelines

- To provide a broad principles which allow specific implementation suitable to specific registry needs.

- Providing a Code of Conduct within the Internet Principle of:
  - Self regulation
  - Bottom up governance
  - Transparency
  - Authority derived from the Local Internet Community including academic community, government, commercial and non-commercial interest group

Operational Detail of Best Practice Guidelines

- **to ensure stability, accuracy, resilience and robustness of the Domain Name System;**

- **to perform the function of a trustee for a public service (though sometimes performed by the private sector);**

- **to establish and publish fair and objective registration policies;**

- **to act efficiently with regard to time and cost;**

- **to act responsibly and lawfully;**

- **to operate with technical competence;**

- **to abide by relevant Privacy and Data Protection laws.**

Why follow Best Practice Guidelines?

- Provides a sign of service quality to consumers
- Identifies the registry as operating in a fair and open manner
- Identifies the registry as a responsible operator in the wider community
- Indicates that the registry:
  - operates under local law and
  - operates primarily for the benefit of the local, internet community

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Specifics of Best Practice Guidelines [1]

- Duty of a ccTLD Manager
  - Public service in consultation with the Local Internet Community
  - No IP or other property rights in the names registered or the 2-letter code (may have rights to other products developed as a by-product)

- Define Local Internet Community
  - Transparent process to define Local Internet Community (LIC)

- Location
  - Manager should be resident in the country/territory of the ccTLD and organisations registered there unless agreed otherwise with LIC

- Financial Basis
  - Cost effective, cost recovery unless otherwise agreed with LIC

Covered in Best Practice Guidelines [2]

- Registration of Domain Names – ccTLD manager must:

  - must register names in efficient and timely manner
  - must develop registration policies & rules in consultation with the LIC and published in a transparent manner
  - must collect necessary contact information to ensure registrant can be authoritatively identified
  - Should have a standard contract with registrants
  - Should recognise the special position of a ccTLD and not abuse the position
  - must be fair to all eligible registrants and apply the published rules in a non-discriminatory fashion

Covered in Best Practice Guidelines [3]

- Technical Requirements – ccTLD Manager must :

  - supervise registration of domain names in the registry
  - supervise operation of the name servers and appropriate zone files
  - ensure 24 hour IP connectivity to name servers and registry servers
  - publish permanently accessible email and Web address contacts
  - operate the database with accuracy, robustness and resilience

- Subcontracting - ccTLD Manager:

  - may contract out any or all of the operation and administration
  - Must contractually oblige sub-contractor to comply with Best Practice Guidelines

Covered in Best Practice Guidelines [4]

- **Governing law**
  - ccTLD should operate under the law of the territory/country where they are located
  - Registry-Registrant relationship should be governed by the law of the ccTLD
- **Data Security**
  - ccTLD managers to take reasonable steps to ensure registry data is secure against loss or damage

- **Technical Requirements**
  - ccTLD manager must supervise the operation of the DNS servers
  - maintain permanent connectivity to the Internet (24 x 7)
  - maintain and ensure the accuracy of the zone files
  - Operate the registration database with accuracy and resilience

Covered in Best Practice Guidelines [5]

- Domain Name Dispute Resolution:

  - ccTLD Manager should define and publish dispute resolution policies and procedures in consultation with the LIC

  - mechanisms should be established to handle fairly and independently any disputes arising

  - making judgements on disputes arising between third parties and domain name registrants is outside the remit of the ccTLD Manager

Making Changes to Best Practice Guidelines

- The document includes a process for anyone to suggest changes to the Best Practice Guidelines

  - Procedures in place to ensure that all suggestions get a fair hearing
  - Document will be If approved by a two third majority

- Possible areas be looked at in future revisions
  - More specific technical requirements to comply with ICANN Agreements
  - Input from the IP community on contact information

- Comments Welcome ϑ