

KwaZulu-Natal Gay & Lesbian Tourism Association (Non-Profit Organisation Registration 096 435 NPO)

In association with the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority

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To ICANN and the Board Governance Committee

Re: Reconsideration Request 14-44 (.GAY)

I write to you as Chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Gay and Lesbian Tourism Association (KZNGALTA) regarding a matter of grave concern – The .GAY community application by Dotgay LLC.

KZNGALTA is a non-profit community organisation based in Durban, RSA which in 2014 celebrated 10 years of existence. KZNGALTA's main objectives are to a) empower its membership through official representation at other tourism platforms; b) promote the province of KwaZulu-Natal as a gay and lesbian friendly tourism destination; c) educate the provincial tourism community of KZN about the positive attributes and the significant benefits of niche-marketed gay and lesbian tourism in the province and d) promote acceptance of the gay and lesbian community as a positive contributor to society. As such we liaise with and advise the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority (TKZN) on its broader tourism development strategy and specifically on those aspects involving or aimed at gay and lesbian tourists and tourism products; provide a forum for gay and lesbian participants in the broader tourism sector to interact, network and develop business ties.

It is important that ICANN be reminded of the challenges that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people face as a community on a daily basis, both from those who inadvertently repress or discriminate and those who maliciously take aim at our fundamental human rights. Our role as an organisation is to help tackle these societal challenges, rooted in sexual orientation and gender identity, through advocacy and education. If we don't do it ourselves as a community, the challenges will continue.

LGBTI people are considered a vulnerable population by international bodies and nation states, and that title does not come without cause. Despite this recognition, it remains the painstaking effort of LGBTI

people and our allies to create change; through public policy, legal protections and cultural acceptance. It needs to be stated that societal change would not exist without our own community's sweat equity.

What is found to be concerning about the CPE evaluation of the Dotgay LLC application is the lack of transparency, overlooked communication blunders, inconsistent application of the rulings, weak metrics and documented violations of the CPE rules. In any arena of review this would be a red flag, but when you add the context of the vulnerable population being on the losing end of the decision it only creates a greater grade of concern.

A global community effort went into creating a community model for .GAY. ICANN has failed to recognize the value of this at every level and continued to side with those who aim to profit from the community instead of acknowledging a community effort that simply aims to protect and support itself. We have deep questions about how ICANN is serving the global public interest by forcing the community to buy the .GAY TLD.

We look forward to ICANN putting careful review into the reconsideration request by Dotgay LLC and expect that ICANN will take the necessary steps to ensure it is granted.

Kind regards,

Shaun Kruger,
Chairperson

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south africa
(NPO Registration :: 096-435 NPO ::)

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