

## Subsequent Rounds of New gTLDs

### Session 11

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### Session Objective

GAC Members to discuss GAC positions on key topics for potential GAC Advice to the ICANN Board relative to Subsequent Rounds of New gTLDs, and to review recent developments on the Operational Design Phase - including the proposed GAC/GNSO Small Group on Closed Generics, and potential follow-up to the GAC Collective comment<sup>1</sup> filed in June 2021.

### Leadership Proposal for GAC Action

1. GAC to receive ICANN org update on the Operational Design Phase and consider contributing as warranted consistent with GAC positions on issues of importance to the GAC.
2. GAC Chair to update GAC membership on the proposed Board facilitated GAC/GNSO Small Group on Closed Generics.
3. GAC Members to discuss priority topics pertaining to the SubPro PDP WG Final Report with the aim to prepare, if needed, potential GAC Consensus Advice and/or any other input for the ICANN Board.

<sup>1</sup>

## Recent Developments and Status for GAC Member Consideration

### Operational Design Phase (ODP)

At the moment of this briefing, ICANN org [advised](#) the Board that the Operational Design Phase (ODP) has begun (17 December 2021) following three months of preparations, organizing and allocating resources to execute the ODP work. It is envisaged that the ODP will last approximately 10 months, followed by 3 additional months for the ICANN Board's consideration on the Final Report Outputs.

The ODP is a period in which ICANN org develops and provides the ICANN Board with relevant information to facilitate the Board's determination of whether the Policy Development Process recommendations are in the best interest of the ICANN community or ICANN. This ODP will provide the Board with an understanding of the operational impacts of accepting the recommendations, including potential obstacles, expected costs, and the timeline to implementation. More information on the ODP process can be found on the [ODP webpage](#).

In September 2021, the ICANN Board [approved](#) the initiation of an Operational Design Phase (ODP) relative to the [Sub Pro PDP WG Final Report](#), as outlined in the New gTLDs Subsequent Procedures ODP [Scoping Document](#).

### Closed Generics

As part of the ODP work, several policy issues were identified for the ICANN Board to address, including closed generics, since the SubPro PDP WG did not reach consensus on policy recommendations on closed generics. [GAC advice from 2013](#) states that *“for strings representing generic terms, exclusive registry access should serve a public interest goal”*.

The ICANN Board discussed the possibility for a GAC/GNSO collaboration - with ICANN Board facilitation - in a small focused group with subject matter experts from both groups to attempt the development of a framework for closed generics. The focus for this small group would be to find a compromise solution on closed generics, taking into account the GNSO position of allowing closed generics, with the GAC position of serving a public interest goal.

In December 2021, the ICANN Board reached out informally to the GAC and GNSO Chairs to receive initial feedback. GAC Topic leads were consulted by the GAC Chair for their initial reactions and agreed to move forward with this approach in principle. Formal outreach from the ICANN Board is expected imminently to launch this process with a specific framing/scoping document shared with both parties outlining roles and responsibilities, the process and expected timing.

Should the GAC and GNSO reach agreement on a framework, the broader community will be invited to provide feedback. Following community input, the proposed framework – if agreed upon – can be considered through the appropriate GNSO policy development process. If the dialogue does not result in a mutually agreed framework, the Board will need to consider appropriate next steps.

## ICANN73 Focus and Next Steps

ICANN73 provides an opportunity for the GAC to review its materials and positions on subsequent rounds of new gTLDs in preparation for submission of potential GAC Advice to the ICANN Board regarding the next round of new gTLDs (implementation not anticipated before 2023-2024).

Additionally, GAC membership may wish to monitor and consider contributing to studies and deliberations of either (or both) Operational Design Phase and Implementation Review Team, consistent with GAC positions on issues of importance to the GAC.

Now that the ICANN org has began the Operational Design Phase, next steps with varying timelines include:

- i. ICANN org to conduct ODP and deliver Operational Design Assessment (ODA) to the ICANN Board for consideration
- ii. ICANN Board consideration of the PDP recommendations as adopted by GNSO Council - opportunity for GAC Consensus Advice to the ICANN Board;
- iii. ICANN Board vote;
- iv. ICANN org (as directed by the Board) to begin implementation of the policy recommendations (which will likely include a revised Applicant Guidebook).

Upon completion of these successive steps ICANN org would be expected to start a new round of applications for gTLDs sometime tentatively around 2023-2024, to be confirmed.

## Key Reference Documents

- [Final Report on the new gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP WG](#)
- [GAC Consensus Collective Comment](#) (1 June 2021) on GNSO New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Final Outputs for ICANN Board Consideration.
- New gTLDs Subsequent Procedures ODP [Scoping Document](#).

## Further Information

- GAC Policy Background Document on Subsequent Rounds of New gTLDs: <https://gac.icann.org/briefing-materials/public/gac-policy-background-new-gtlds-subsequent-rounds.pdf>

## Document Administration

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