cira .ca
acei

Canadian Internet
Registration Authority

Autorité canadienne pour
les enregistrements Internet

February 15, 2008

Office of International Affairs
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 4701
Washington, DC 20230
USA

Attention: Suzanne R. Sene

Dear Ms. Sene:

Re: The Continued Transition of the Technical Coordination and Management of the Internet's Domain Name and Addressing System: Midterm Review of the Joint Project Agreement

---

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Mid-term Review of the Joint Project Agreement (JPA).

The Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) acts as the operator of the dot-ca (.ca) ccTLD on behalf of the Canadian Internet community through the mandate by the Canadian Government and ICANN. CIRA has consistently collaborated with ICANN and has been an active member of the ccNSO since its inception.

CIRA is an advocate of the open, community-driven, bottom-up model upon which ICANN is based. CIRA supports ICANN and its governance model even though we have openly criticized some aspects of the organization in the past. In particular, CIRA has previously been outspoken in regards to issues of openness, transparency, and accountability exhibited by the organization. We are pleased to have witnessed significant progress ICANN has made in these and other areas since the development of the JPA.

CIRA would like to comment on the following subjects at the JPA mid-point review:

Improvements to Transparency and Accountability

CIRA raised concerns regarding ICANN's transparency and accountability prior to the development of the JPA. Subsequent to the adoption of the JPA, CIRA has been pleased to see significant improvement in these areas, specifically through:

- Principle documents to guide the approach the ICANN community will take for issues of significance for ICANN operations;

350, rue Sparks St., Suite 1110, Ottawa, ON   K1R 7S8 ▪ (613) 237-5335 ▪ (613) 237-0534 (fax/téléc.)
Customer support (877) 860-1411 Support à la clientèle
www.cira.ca ▪ **info@cira.ca** ▪ **www.acei.ca**

- Development of the Framework for ICANN Accountability;
- Adoption of OECD best practices for public consultations;
- Appointment of external auditors and external review processes;
- Improved reporting of Board minutes;
- Publication of an ICANN Annual Report for transparent reporting to stakeholders;
- Improvements to ICANN's website to make it more accessible, relevant and timely;
- The addition of an ICANN blog to provide an informal forum for discussion; and
- Publication of a monthly ICANN magazine providing readers with news regarding developments in the organization.

CIRA looks forward to continued demonstrable progress by ICANN on the issues of transparency and accountability.

Development of IDN TLDs

The Internet is a global asset that must adapt to meet the needs of users from a diverse range of cultures, nationalities, and languages. As the Internet becomes more globalized it also simultaneously increases in relevancy to its local community. CIRA is pleased that ICANN is now developing a fast-track approach to the IDN TLD process and that the ccNSO, in conjunction with the GAC, is leading the development as a bottom-up initiative.

The Role of the ccNSO

CIRA has long appreciated the value and benefit of the ccNSO. It played an active role in the discussions which ultimately led to the creation of the ccNSO, and since then, has actively participated in this component of ICANN's structure.

As the Internet has grown and become more diverse and global, the importance of the ccNSO has grown in step; with significant future growth in Internet usage predicted to come from developing nations rather than the developed world, the role of the ccNSO will likely increase. To that end, CIRA is pleased to see that the ccNSO has moved to increase relevance and act as a forum for change.

Particularly, the development of TechDay as part of ICANN meeting agendas to allow emerging ccTLD managers the opportunity to gain knowledge, and the role of the ccNSO in fast-tracking IDN TLDs demonstrates ICANNs commitment to this significant stakeholder group.

The JPA has served as a guideline to bring about positive change within ICANN's governance. At this mid-point review it is important to acknowledge that the JPA is working effectively. However, many of these changes have only taken place recently: ICANN must continue to demonstrate its commitment to continuing this progress not only during the remainder of the JPA's term but also beyond. It is our opinion that continuous improvement must remain an essential, ongoing ICANN objective through the development of timely goals, measured implementation, and critical review. We would also like to see, well in advance, how ICANN proposes to address these matters after the expiry of the JPA term.

CIRA is committed to continued participation in ICANN and looks forward to ongoing improvements to the organization.

Yours sincerely

Byron Holland
President and CEO
Canadian Internet Registration Authority

350, rue Sparks St., Suite 1110, Ottawa, ON   K1R 7S8 ▪ (613) 237-5335 ▪ (613) 237-0534 (fax/téléc.)
Customer support (877) 860-1411 Support à la clientèle
www.cira.ca ▪ info@cira.ca ▪ www.acei.ca