

IANA Report on the Redelegation of the .GS Top-Level Domain

Subject: Request of Government of South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands for the .GS Top-Level Domain

Date: November 2005

The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (the IANA), as part of the administrative functions associated with management of the domain-name system root, is responsible for receiving requests for delegation and redelegation of top-level domains, investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and reporting on the requests. This report gives the findings and conclusions of the IANA on its investigation of a request for the redelegation of the .GS, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands country-code top-level domain (ccTLD).

Factual and Procedural Background

In July of 1997, IANA approved a request for the establishment of the .GS ccTLD. At that time and today, that two-letter code was and is set forth on the [ISO 3166-1 list](http://www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/iso3166ma/index.html) (<http://www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/iso3166ma/index.html>) maintained by the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency (ISO 3166/MA) as the approved alpha-2 code for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

At present the domain is delegated to Sean Jackson of AdamsNames, Cambridge, England. Sean Jackson serves both as the administrative and technical contact, and has been handling all the duties of managing the .GS top-level domain. Sean Jackson resides in England and operates the registry through AdamsNames as a private enterprise. The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) has expressed on several occasions the government's wishes to assert control over the .GS top-level domain.

The GSGSSI has submitted a request to redelegate the domain to the government, to be managed by Project Atlantis, a not for profit organization, embedded in the University of Dundee and works of behalf of the GSGSSI.

Project Atlantis has the authorization of the GSGSSI and the local internet community to administer the .GS top-level domain. The redelegation request names new managers for the domain with David Nicholls as the administrative contact and Paul Shafi as the technical contact carrying out the duties of administering the domain. Project Atlantis is also a member of the Council of Country Code Administrators Limited (CoCCA), a non profit member owned company. Paul Shafi, the proposed technical contact, has provided the IANA with detailed plans to administer the registry after the redelegation is completed. IANA has successfully completed a technical verification on the proposed name servers for the .GS top-level domain.

Sean Jackson, the current administrative and technical contact, has historically been resistant to redelegation of this domain, but now agrees to the redelegation. Project Atlantis is technically able to take the responsibility of administrative and technical contact. David Nicholls has accepted the role of administrative contact and Paul Shafi has accepted the role technical contact.

On 08 November 2005 the ICANN board of Directors authorized the president of ICANN to move forward with the redelegation from Sean Jackson to Project Atlantis.

Evaluation

This report is being provided under the [contract for performance of the IANA function \(http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm\)](http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm) between the United States Government and ICANN. Under that contract, ICANN performs the IANA function, which [includes receiving delegation and redelegation requests concerning ccTLDs \(http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm#C.2.1.1.2\)](http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm#C.2.1.1.2), investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, making its recommendations, and reporting actions undertaken in connection with processing such requests.

In acting on redelegation requests, the IANA currently follows the practices summarized in “Internet Domain Name System Structure and Delegation.” ([ICP-1, http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm](http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm)) ICP-1 represents an update of the portions of [RFC 1591 \(http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt\)](http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt) which was issued in March 1994) dealing with ccTLDs, and reflects subsequent documents and evolution of the policies followed by the IANA through May 1999. Relevant guidance is also provided in the GAC Principles.

In considering delegation or redelegation of a ccTLD, the IANA seeks input from persons significantly affected by the transfer, particularly those within the nation or territory which the ccTLD has been established to benefit. As [noted in ICP-1 \(http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm#a\)](http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm#a), the parties affected include especially the relevant government or public authority: “The desires of the government of a country with regard to delegation of a ccTLD are taken very seriously. The IANA will make them a major consideration in any TLD delegation/transfer discussions.”

Based on the materials submitted and the IANA’s evaluation of the circumstances, Project Atlantis qualifies as an appropriate manager for the .GS registry, with support from the South Georgina and the South Sandwich Islands community, including the relevant government.

Mutual agreement of the old and the new delegees is a factor that ICANN takes very seriously when considering redelegation requests. Here, the former administrative and technical contact supports the change in delegation.

The GAC Principles serve as “best practices” to guide governments in assuming proper roles with respect to the Internet’s naming system, which the GAC has observed is “a public resource . . . administered in the public or common interest.” (<http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#5.3>) In general, they recognize that each government has the ultimate responsibility within its territory for its national public-policy objectives, but also that ICANN has the responsibility for ensuring that the Internet domain-name system continues to provide an effective and interoperable global naming system. The GAC Principles recommend that governments and ICANN pursue their respective roles by creating a framework for accountability memorialized in communications with each other and with the ccTLD manager (see [clause 2, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#2](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#2)). The

GAC Principles guide governments on how to responsibly structure their relations with ccTLD managers (see [clauses 5.5, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#5.5](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#5.5) and [clause 9, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9)). Among these specific principles, the best practices contemplate that governments will assist in ensuring that the ccTLD manager complies with ICANN policies related to global coordination of the Internet DNS ([clauses 9.1.7 and 9.1.8, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9.1.7](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9.1.7)).

The proposed redelegation will promote service to the local Internet community and will help assure continued Internet interoperability through the global technical coordination that ICANN was created to provide. In this regard, the recognition contained in the South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands government's discussion of the need for close coordination between ICANN and the government is particularly noteworthy.

Conclusion

The proposed structure for the administration of the top-level domain is to have Project Atlantis undertake the management of the .GS ccTLD under appropriate oversight of the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands concerning the national policy interests. Project Atlantis and the GSGSSI also acknowledge and support ICANN's responsibility for coordinating management of the DNS, including the .GS ccTLD, to safeguard global technical coordination interests. In reviewing the request, in light of the GSGSSI endorsement of Project Atlantis as the appropriate all inclusive caretaker, the IANA concludes that the .GS ccTLD should be redelegated to the GSGSSI, with Project Atlantis as the manager of the domain.