# IANA Report on the Redelegation of the .za Top-Level Domain

Subject:     Request of the .za Domain Name Authority for the .za Top-Level Domain

Date:        November 2004

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 various requests for the redelegation of the .za (South Africa) country-code top-level domain (ccTLD).

**Factual and Procedural Background**

In November of 1990, IANA approved a request for the establishment of the .za 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 Africa.

The .za TLD was delegated first on 07 November 1990 to the UNINET Project with the late Vic Shaw as administrative contact. Mike Lawrie took over as UNINET Manager in 1994 and inherited the function. In 1995 the Internet community requested that he continue as administrator.

At the same time, the co.za domain was delegated to Uniforum, a not-for-profit company and the model of delegated second level domains was established then in 1998, under the auspices of the local Chapter of ISOC and Mike Lawrie himself, moves were started by industry to establish a more appropriate administration.

.za has always operated as a non-income ccTLD.

In 2001 IANA received an official request to redelegate the domain. At the time of submission, agreement did not exist in the local Internet community regarding the proper course of action. Therefore, ICANN took no action on that request, but continued to monitor the situation, and communicate with members of the government and the local Internet community.

The South African Parliament passed the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 25 of 2002 in terms of which the .za Domain Name Authority (a non-profit South African corporation) was designated to accept redelegation of the South African ccTLD (.za).

As a result of revisions to the new legislation, Mike Lawrie served on the selection panel which recommended the Board of Directors of the .za Domain Name Authority. Mr. Lawrie also serves on the Authority's Technical Committee and remains a vital and important contributor to the Authority on both technical and policy matters.

The South African Government, the current administrator, and the local Internet community have accepted the .za Domain Name Authority as the new administrator of the South African ccTLD (.za).

On 15 November 2004 the ICANN Board of Directors authorized the President to complete the redelegation process.

**Evaluation**

This report is being provided under the contract for performance of the IANA function (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), 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) ICP-1 represents an update of the portions

of RFC 1591 (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), 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, The .za Domain Name Authority qualifies as an appropriate manager for the .za registry, with support from the South African community, including the 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 contacts both support 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 polices 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 African Government's discussion of the need for close coordination between ICANN and the government is particularly noteworthy.

**Conclusion**

The structure proposed by The .za Domain Name Authority and endorsed by the South Africa Government is to have The .za Domain Name Authority undertake management of the .za ccTLD under appropriate oversight of the South African Government concerning the national policy interests. The .za Domain Name Authority and the South African Government also acknowledge and support ICANN's responsibility for coordinating management of the DNS, including the .za ccTLD, to safeguard global technical-coordination interests. In reviewing the request, in light of the South African Government's endorsement of The .za Domain Name Authority and the Chairperson of the Authority as the appropriate all inclusive caretaker, the IANA concludes that the .za ccTLD should be redelegated to The .za Domain Name Authority.