



REGISTRY SERVICES, LLC

February 27, 2026

Ms. Tripti Sinha
Chair, ICANN Board of Directors
12025 Waterfront Drive, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90094-2536

Re: Registry Compliance and Safeguarding Registrants

Dear Ms. Sinha,

As the global coordinator of the Internet's unique identifiers, ICANN's fiduciary obligation to ensure the security and stability of the Internet extends beyond the allocation of a TLD. For example, ICANN must ensure that Registry Operators adhere to the representations made in their applications and to their respective Registrant communities. Unfortunately, a dangerous trend appears to be emerging where ICANN is allowing the abandonment of these obligations, as evidenced by its actions in the .XXX and .RADIO TLDs.

Why This Matters

TLDs are not only critical internet infrastructure, but also valuable commercial assets. Therefore, ICANN must ensure that prospective Registry Operators are not in a position to game ICANN by preferentially acquiring these assets under one premise and then blindsiding Registrants at a later date. In 2004, ICANN approved seven "sponsored" TLDs. These sponsored applicants were able to proceed in 2004. Disappointingly, two out of the seven TLDs approved from the 2004 round (.XXX and .MOBI) have been converted to standard TLDs. In 2012, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) was able to move to the front of the line in resolving its contention set against three other .RADIO applicants by prevailing in its Community Priority Evaluation (CPE).

Last month, ICANN approved the assignment of the .RADIO TLD from EBU to Dignity, LLC which appears to have no existing relationship with the originally stated radio community. While there appears to have been no material changes in the operation of the TLD at this time, the same cannot be said for other Specification 12 Community TLDs which have been assigned since 2012. Originally applied for as a Community TLD in 2012, .ARCHI has since been assigned twice, with no mechanism / process for reviewing whether it's still compliant with its Specification 12 obligations.

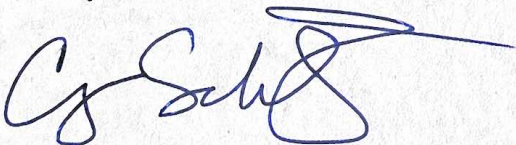
Action Items

In light of the fiduciary duties that the ICANN Board has to the global internet community, it is respectfully submitted that the ICANN Board should direct ICANN Org to take the following actions to preserve Registrants' rights and to minimize future gaming of the ICANN TLD application and assignment processes.

- Direct ICANN Org to conduct a public comment period in connection with any proposed assignments of Sponsored, Community, or Geographic TLDs in accordance with Article 3.1 of the ICANN bylaws requiring it to "operate to the maximum extent feasible in an open and transparent manner."
- ICANN Org must ensure that ALL Registry Operators are in compliance with their Specification 12 contractual obligations, including any ICANN Community TLD Change Request process, prior to public comment and/or assignment of that TLD.
- All TLD Registry Operators with a Specification 12 shall be required to undergo a mandatory ICANN audit within three years of being assigned to ensure ongoing compliance with its contractual requirements and commitments. Further, all TLD Registry Operators with a Specification 12 shall be required to periodically undergo the same audit.
- Direct ICANN Org to undertake a comprehensive economic analysis of the entire domain name marketplace (primary, secondary, registrar listing fees) under the contractual authorities granted to it under Article 2.15 (Cooperation with Economic Studies) of the Base Registry Agreement. Included in this comprehensive study, external experts should look at pricing trends for gTLDs, ccTLDs, and the impact of ICANN's decision to permit vertical integration.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding the steps the Board will take to ensure that non-standard TLD Registry Operators, e.g., Sponsored, Community, and Geographic, adhere to the representations made in their applications and to their respective Registrant communities, and what safeguards are being implemented to prevent erosion of trust for the next round of gTLDs. I will be in Mumbai for the ICANN meeting and welcome an opportunity to meet with you and/or the relevant staff and stakeholders on this topic.

Sincerely,



Craig Schwartz
President
fTLD Registry Services | .Bank & .Insurance

Cc: Nicolás Caballero, GAC Chair