ICANN Transcription

IDNs EPDP

Thursday, 23 September 2021 at 13:00 UTC

Note: Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the proceedings at the meeting, but should not be treated as an authoritative record. Attendance and recordings of the call are posted on agenda wiki page: https://community.icann.org/x/qABmCg

The recordings and transcriptions of the calls are posted on the GNSO Master Calendar page
http://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/calendar

JULIE BISLAND: Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, everyone. Welcome to the IDNs EPDP Call taking place on Thursday the 23rd of September 2021. In the interest of time, there will be no roll call. Attendance will be taken by the Zoom room. If you're only on the telephone, could you please let yourself be known now?

It looks like today we have apologies from Nigel Hickson. All members and participants will be promoted to panelists for today's call. Members and participants, when using chat, please select Panelists and Attendees or select Everyone, depending on your Zoom update, in order for everyone to see the chat. Observers will have view only chat access.

Statements of Interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. Seeing

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

EN

no one, if you do need assistance updating your Statements of Interest, please e-mail the GNSO secretariat.

All documentation and information can be found on the IDNs EPDP Wiki space. Recordings will be posted on the public Wiki space shortly after the end of the call.

Please remember to state your name before speaking and, as a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multistakeholder process are to comply with the expected Standards of Behavior.

Thank you. And over to our chair, Edmon Chun. Please begin.

EDMON CHUNG: I see a queue forming. Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off. But Jeff, I think you bring up a very good point and I'll probably … Do put your hand back up again because I want you to answer probably a question of how you see this might actually fit into it. Because if you appeal a process—this process is automated—it actually means appealing the entire Root Zone LGRs. So how it might fit into it might be a little bit different.

But I have a good few hands up. Dennis first.

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Edmon. I think I tend to agree with several points that Jeff just stated. I want to stress one. And also it might help the group to put this into context. We're not talking about applying the Root Zone LGR in a vacuum but in an application window process where several applicants are put in there, the [strings] in front of

an application process to be validated, and so on and so forth. So what we're talking about here, this use case, and what we're seeing in a3 is a platform TLD label which WHOIS script is supported by the Root Zone LGR.

But the Root Zone LGR, this automated tool and maybe ancillary processes and criteria define the term [that is invalid] and could be valid because it does not conform to the rules, either [inaudible] that were outside their repertoire or other rules informing the label or, for example—and I'm thinking out of the box here—it's invalid or cannot proceed or may proceed through a [non-objection]—or, I'm sorry—could proceed but it's going to be put into a contention set as Jeff kind of alluded to. And that result of the evaluation might be something that the applicant might want to challenge for.

So [inaudible] we need to think of the Root Zone LGR as being applied in a context of several applicants going through an application process, that TLD string that they are applying for might have variants that could be in contention sets with already existing, non-delegated [withheld] for the registry operator. Strings that are already out there and maybe not explicit for the new applicant could be in contention sets with other already-applied-for strings.

And therefore the complexity in how the applied-for TLD string is going to be look at just grows in complexity. So I just want to flag these for the group. Thank you.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Julie. And thank you and welcome everyone to this session. I will start with a few updates. And then the agenda is pretty straightforward, which is just to jump right into continuing the discussion through the charter questions over topic A. A3 to be precise.

So I'll jump right in. If there are any thoughts on the agenda, please put up your hand. But I'll keep going with the updates first. I think this was mentioned a few meetings before. One of the things that the group will do is put out an outreach to the so and ACs to seek their early input into the work here in the EPDP. A brief outreach e-mail has been drafted and it should be circulated to this group shortly after this meeting.

Emily, I just want to check if it has been circulated or if it would be circulated right after. I just want to make sure I give the right information. Right after the call. Okay, thank you, Emily.

It's a brief draft just to reach out to the SOs and ACs, list out the topics—the base, over-arching topics A to G—and seek their input. So please take a look at it and respond further. If you have any suggestions or thoughts. Or else we will try to push it out to the SOs and ACs to seek their feedback. So that's #1, and I have a few more.

#2, last meeting we kind of set off staff to work with us on the data and metrics to inform our discussions, especially with the Root Zone LGR and how it applies to the existing gTLDs, especially IDN gTLDs and the variants.

We have had a brief discussion. Well actually, the staff team had a brief discussion with the IDN Team. The ETA, the estimated time, is still to be determined. So there may need to be a bit more clarifications. We're hoping that we would be able to at least give an ETA shortly. But that's not ready yet. We'll come back to that. But I guess we'll continue to forge ahead and park issues if there are these type of issues. So that's #2.

#3 number. We have an incoming chair, so congratulations to Donna as the new incoming chair once that's confirmed. As mentioned, I will need to step down as I join the Board. But our vice-chair will become our new chair. So congratulations, Donna.

And then I guess with these two, the data and metrics and also Donna and the little bit of a transition for this, the leadership team with this group—and that's just myself and Donna and Farell as the GNSO liaison—will be planning for a meeting with the ICANN support team to organize a little bit for the transition and also the logistics for it.

So for the time being, we will continue to first walk through the charter questions. Again, this is the first walk through and we expect to come back to each item. So those are the updates. Any questions or thoughts before we get started? Or Donna, is there anything you want to add as the new incoming chair?

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Just to say that I'm kind of excited about taking this on, but I can assure you that I don't have the level of knowledge that Edmon has in this topic area. So that will be a loss

EN

for us. And I thank you for getting us on the path, Edmon. So a lot of work ahead, but I'm looking forward to it. And if you can just bear with me on some of the details, I'll pick it up along the way. But I certainly won't be as knowledgeable in this space as what Edmon has been. So thanks, Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Oh, actually, thanks to you. I'm certainly not as knowledgeable with the GNSO processes as you are, so I guess we each have our knowledge to give. But thank you for taking this on. And I have already hinted how this group could potentially get me back on. And I wouldn't want to leave you guys, but we'll try to see if that works out.

So with that and seeing no other hands, let's jump right into where we left off. In the last meeting it was in a3, actually. And a3 is talking about the situation where the applied-for string or applied-for variant is not valid and whether, if the applicant would wish to challenge the process, how we would go about it. The general question, I guess, the key question is, whether the SubPro challenge process is the right framework to handle this type of situation.

This a situation whereby a submitted IDN or ASCII TLD application coming in is determined through the Root Zone LGR to be invalid and the applicant wishes to appeal the process. So the main issue is, of course, whether the SubPro's challenge process framework would fit for something like this.

I wonder if there are … Oh, there are questions. Anil.

EN

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Thank you, Edmon. Since we have already allocated a good number of IDNs in the past—to my understanding around 90 plus or so—can we take input from the staff whether there is any issue which has been raised in the challenge process which is defined by SubPro [inaudible] date? And I feel that this process is quite okay, but in case we are able to find any problem in between, then definitely the working group can reconsider it. Thank you, Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Anil. So this is precisely what we're hoping the data and metrics would do. So if you go to the section on data and metrics in the charter document, you will see a list of this type of data that we are asking staff to try to obtain and provide as information to allow us to deliberate on this issue further. As I updated, we hope to get that as soon as possible, of course, but staff team might need a little bit of clarification. And once that clarification is complete, we could potentially get an estimated time of availability—the ETA—for when we will get that information. But you are quite right. That's very critical information for us to think about this.

I then have Jeff and then … Oh, Jeff and Dennis. I think, Anil, that's probably an old hand. But Jeff first.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, thanks. So a couple things, and I think someone put it into the chat. But this challenge process is new. So it's recommended for the next round, but it's never been done before. And perhaps it

might help to go into a little bit of background as to why we added a challenge process—in SubPro, sorry. For those of you that may not be aware, I was one of the co-chairs of the SubPro PDP.

So in the last round, anytime there was a dispute over anything in the evaluation process, whether it was because of someone who disagreed with the similarity of strings or whether it was that they disagreed with the technical evaluation, or whatever it was, there was no process to have that discussion or to challenge that finding by the evaluator. It was pretty much that the evaluator decides it and that's it.

The only thing that was done, therefore, was that you had multiple challenges in the form of reconsideration requests to the ICANN Board. Reconsideration requests are generally for violations or alleged violations of the ICANN bylaws. They're not meant to address mistakes made by evaluators, differences of opinions. Right? The bylaws reconsideration process essentially looks to, does the Board or staff, when it makes a decision, is it doing so in good faith, essentially. I'm kind of oversimplifying it.

So the problem was … And if you noticed, 90% or more of the reconsideration requests that were filed were denied not necessarily because there was any looking at the merits of why the challenge was issued, but because the Board found that the staff's reliance on the evaluators was fine and therefore didn't violate the bylaws. All of that is a condensed way to say that the SubPro felt like these are the types of issues that should never go to the Board.

The Board is responsible for looking at the overall issues of the organization, and they shouldn't be involved in the day-to-day decisions or technical disputes or whatever it is at an evaluation level. And on the other hand, applicants should be able to have their questions or challenges responded to by the evaluators if they disagree with the results of the evaluation. And there wasn't that kind of process for the last round in 2012.

So SubPro essentially developed a challenge process—and I'm only talking about challenges right now, not appeals—whereby applicants who are dissatisfied with the finding of an evaluation panel could "challenge the decision of the evaluator." And so that's what we put in for pretty much every element of the evaluation with the exception of the IDNs issues, this issue here, because we felt it would be best to be looked at by this group.

The second part of this, and I kind of over-simplified in a way that the … And I'll get to Donna's question in a second. But the second part of it—and I miss-stated it a little bit—it's not really just for applicants to challenge. But let's say there was decision by an evaluator to put a particular string in a contention set with another string. That would leave open the ability to challenge not just of the applicant which was decided to be put into a contention set, but also other members of that contention set could challenge as well to say, "Hey, look. This is not really similar."

IDN variants—at least the proposal, right, that we're looking at— whether something is a variant of another string that's been applied for or whether something is a variant of a string that already was delegated is s something that we are recommending that there would be an evaluation of.

EN

And therefore, this would be the right of an applicant or someone else impacted by a decision of an evaluator where there's a finding that one string may be a variant of another and therefore either not allowed or, if it's the same applicant, it would be allowed. Or if it's different applicant, then they may be put into a contention set. I hope that makes sense, and I'll stop there.

EDMON CHUNG: I see a queue forming. Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off. But Jeff, I think you bring up a very good point and I'll probably … Do put your hand back up again because I want you to answer probably a question of how you see this might actually fit into it. Because if you appeal a process—this process is automated—it actually means appealing the entire Root Zone LGRs. So how it might fit into it might be a little bit different.

But I have a good few hands up. Dennis first.

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Edmon. I think I tend to agree with several points that Jeff just stated. I want to stress one. And also it might help the group to put this into context. We're not talking about applying the Root Zone LGR in a vacuum but in an application window process where several applicants are put in there, the [strings] in front of an application process to be validated, and so on and so forth. So what we're talking about here, this use case, and what we're seeing in a3 is a platform TLD label which WHOIS script is supported by the Root Zone LGR.

EN

But the Root Zone LGR, this automated tool and maybe ancillary processes and criteria define the term [that is invalid] and could be valid because it does not conform to the rules, either [inaudible] that were outside their repertoire or other rules informing the label or, for example—and I'm thinking out of the box here—it's invalid or cannot proceed or may proceed through a [non-objection]—or, I'm sorry—could proceed but it's going to be put into a contention set as Jeff kind of alluded to. And that result of the evaluation might be something that the applicant might want to challenge for.

So [inaudible] we need to think of the Root Zone LGR as being applied in a context of several applicants going through an application process, that TLD string that they are applying for might have variants that could be in contention sets with already existing, non-delegated [withheld] for the registry operator. Strings that are already out there and maybe not explicit for the new applicant could be in contention sets with other already-applied-for strings.

And therefore the complexity in how the applied-for TLD string is going to be look at just grows in complexity. So I just want to flag these for the group. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG: Yes, Dennis. I think, as you build on Jeff's point, if certain variants happen to be conflicting with other existing or applied-for strings as common variants, that creates an additional level of complexity.

But I also challenge you to think through that. If that happens and someone wants to challenge, if the applicant is to become

EN

successful, ultimately it would require an update in the Root Zone LGR. And how we utilize this challenge process to perhaps or encapsulate the root zone LGR review or update process into it might be something we need to think about.

Next I have Justine and then Sarmad. Justine.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thank you, Edmon. The discussion that's been going on is very interesting. I wanted to just clarify in my mind. I'm getting a little bit confused, I suppose.

Now are we talking about challenging applications for IDNs or IDN variants or both? Because if it's just the IDN, then my understanding is that ICANN does the evaluation, and the so-called evaluation would just be taking the label and marking it off of a preset checklist. So if there's something that doesn't get checked off in the list, then that application would automatically not be allowed to proceed. So the evaluation panel or the evaluation entity, [so to speak], would be ICANN.

If we're talking about IDN variants then, in terms of confusion or similarity, then we're looking at the String Similarity Panel. I think that's what it was called. In which case, yeah, then possibly a challenge might make sense because this is a separate panel.

But then again, as Anil has pointed out earlier, I would love to have some data as to the frequency that a challenge could have arisen from the applications in the 2012 round to see how rampant this problem is. Thank you. I'll stop there.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Justine. Yes, I think you bring up a pretty good point. We need to clarify whether the variant set is creating a conflict with some other variant set as an exact, well, identical, if you will, variant that conflicts each other. Or it creates a similarity situation with another TLD. And I think maybe those are two different questions because one would be a contention set in the sense that it's a conflicting variant. Another would be a contention set potentially because they are considered similar strings. So they are related but separate issues, and both we probably need to work through.

Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you Edmon. So, yes, I think there may be many types of, I guess, challenges or objections possible in the application round. But I just wanted to share that if any of those challenges eventually require an update to the Root Zone LGR. The update process is, I guess, already defined within the Root Zone LGR mechanism, which is that the request goes back to the Generation Panel which is a community-based panel which has developed the original proposal. It considers the input, decides for or against that, and then if it does require any change then it goes back to review, to the Integration Panel. And then there is a discussion between Integration and Generation Panels to finalize. And then following that, the updated version—if it does go through—goes through a public comment process and then gets published.

EN

That's the same process that's used to develop the Root Zone LGR. So any updates to the Root Zone LGR, if any objections or challenge process requires it, I guess it's [at least] [inaudible] recommended that we go take it to through the Root Zone LGR update process and not potentially create a process outside it or parallel to it because that actually would be quite detrimental to the Root Zone LGR itself. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Sarmad. I think that's a very good point to note. If in order to resolve a challenge, it ends up needing any update to the Root Zone LGR, this challenge process can only probably be a trigger for that Root Zone LGR review or update process. It cannot replace that Root Zone LGR or update process. So this is something that I think is important to note.

Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks. And while this is a good discussion, I think we need to take this question, a3, up like 10 levels. If you boil this down to its basic premise—that there is going to be an evaluation—if, for whatever reason, automated or not, if the result of the evaluation is something that an applicant believes is wrong—either because the script that was used was fallible or human intervention was fallible, it really doesn't matter—the point is that if there's a decision that goes against an applicant and the applicant feels that the decision was wrong, it should have a right to challenge. That's all the first part of the question is.

EN

And I think the answer, 10,000 feet up, is that regardless of what the data says in the past as far as whether this happened or not, the ability for an applicant to challenge a decision it believes is wrong should be a no-brainer. Right? We should all say yes. And then once we say yes, we go to the next question which is, "Okay, what are the types of challenges they may have?" And then you look at that.

And then you say, "Okay, if the challenge is because the LGR is wrong, then it goes to the solution, to what Sarmad and Edmon have been talking about." Right?

If it wasn't a problem with the LGR but a problem with the application—the script that was written across for the LGR—then that's something different. I don't think we need to get into every possible thing that could go wrong, I think all we need to do is sign off and leave it to an implementation team. But basically sign off on the notion that if an applicant believes that the decision was wrong, it should have the opportunity to challenge. Period. Then you go on to the next couple of questions. Right?

But to talk about whether this has happened before or what's the data like, I think that just gets us too much into the weeds of something that we don't need to do and is more implementation. Thanks.

EDMON CHUNG: Thanks, Jeff. Yeah, I get what you're saying. I mean, we should have that level. Some examples to walk through, possible scenarios, I think might be useful also And I just want to note that

EN

staff … I want to first thank Steve for actually drafting a very rough concept of how this part might fit into the challenge process. Right after this series of hands, I'll ask Steve to share that. And maybe that will clarify our conversations a little bit more.

But first I have Maxim and then Quoc. Maxim.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Do you hear me?

EDMON CHUNG: Yep. [inaudible].

MAXIM ALZOBA: All right. I think we need to just at least [relate] the processes which might happen. I think we [may face a situation] where either the IDN part or variants part is challenged and [inaudible] what can happen. In each of those cases where the complainant or applicant prevails in demand to change something, there will be need to freeze applications of all applicants within the same IDN or variants because, potentially, there might be changes to either the Root Zone LGR or something in guidance about variants. And it will be applicable to all similar applications.

And the unpleasant thing is that potentially it might be relevant also to the applicants in that round which already passed that stage. And it's [muddy] but we at least will need to investigate potential three of options here.

And what I may say is that the changes resulting from the decision of such panel will have to be implemented fast. Thanks.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Maxim. Yes, I quite agree that it would be kind of a tree because there are going to be a few scenarios. And we probably do need to think through some of it, even if not all-exhaustive of this point because, as Jeff mentioned, the minute details could be in the implementation part as well.

Quoc.

QUOC PHAM: Hi. I'm going to take Jeff's 10,000-foot view and drag it up another 10,000 and make it 20,000. And I'm going to really oversimplify this with the contention that, to me, there are a couple of categories that apply regardless of the string type—is it IDN or is it ASCII?

And basically the first set for me is, is a TLD being applied for causing a similarity or confusable variation of something that already exists? For example, if you put an "s" at the end of a string and that makes it plural. Right? So, "come/comes" as an example. So number one, is it similar to an existing TLD?

When it comes to IDNs, it comes down to something that's a little bit more unique because then it has to be judged. In this IDN string, this IDN TLD, is it confusable or similar to something that already exists in context of the text itself and what it means in that specific language or script?

EN

Then number two is, based on the variant rules, that's another set of confusables. But on a more technical or a more academic level which is— for me and my core understanding of the language— simplified and traditional Chinese, is one thing, is that string containing characters, the makeup of that string, a variant of another string, not through the fact that it's a confusable string where it's similar to it but not quite like making something plural? Or is it in written language where it's written down on a piece of paper that it could really be confused. Right?

So that to me, I think, is everything wrapped up in a really simple way that helps me understand it. Anyway.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Quoc. The way you're thinking about it is that, at least the direction I think, is in the right direction. Of course there are some nuances, even for a simplified traditional Chinese. It may be a situation where two traditional Chinese maps to one simplified Chinese. And therefore you could have situations where it's not as straightforward and people might argue that the original applied-for string is different and they want to go into an appeal.   But here nor there. I take that, and I think the direction is right.

As I mentioned, Steve … Since we are into that conversation, Steve, if you can show your very rough draft of what it looks like if it's put into that challenge process, it might actually help people think through this a little bit more. But I still have Dennis and Hadia before we go to that. But those who are seeing the screen, you can take a look. Thank you, Maxim, for putting your hand … I was just going to ask.

EN

Dennis.

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Edmon. In hearing all the previous comments and the complexity around this, I think I want to walk back my earlier observations and offer this. [inaudible] the charter questions, the table mostly in front of this, and recollecting the discussions in the TSG about the utilization of the Root Zone LGR, perhaps that's the key issue here.

The key question in a3 is that the Root Zone LGR is only used for the technical validation of the string whether or not it is a conforming DNS label at the core. And so that's the only use case that perhaps we need to think about. And then leave anything else—contention sets, all the reviews—for a further-down-the-line process which they have already established ways of [inaudible] challenges, procedures, etc.

So this one question that we have in front of us is whether or not the applicant accepts or not the results of this tool—whether it's valid or invalid which has several criteria/parameters. And I believe the TSG also offers a path to resolution, if you will. Which the table that we have in front of us here on the screen goes into the gist of it, appealing to the Generation Panel and subsequent Integration Panel and seeing that the challenge can be overcome.

But, yeah, I'm saying that we need to just focus on … We have one string at hand as being applied for. You apply the rules by the Root Zone LGR where the [co-points] are varied, any [whole label] [validation] rules are conforming. And you calculate the variants.

EN

And that's it. That's what the applicant gets away from that specific one step of the process. And then move on to the next one which could be contingent sets or whatnot.

But on this one, the [inaudible] validation of the string itself, whether it's a DNS label conforming to the top-level domain name rules, that's only it. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Dennis. I think that's a good point. And you brought up part of the discussion for a4 as well. Not to say that this is out of scope. I actually think that a3 and a4 are something that we can talk about a little bit together because a4 is precisely what the TSG has talked about in case of an invalid. But, yes, I think that's quite relevant.

So now I have Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Edmon. Another challenge I'm thinking of, if two applicants apply for an IDN gTLDs and one of them might be the variant of the other, who determines which one is the valid one and which is the variant? Because in this case, one of them would be allocated and one of them could actually be given the string and the other not.

EDMON CHUNG: That is a possible scenario, but we need to consider whether its variants would rule out another application. Right now I think the

EN

assumption is that if there are two applied-for strings or one is existing and one is applied for, if their variant set has a conflict—that's one or more variants overlapping—then it's a first come, first serve rule. The latter one will not be there. Or if it's in this contention set, then …   Well, if it is in the same round, then it becomes a contention set regardless of the applied-for string or the set of variants. At least that's the current assumption.

Quoc.

QUOC PHAM: That's such a really interesting statement or question on what is a very variant. To put it this way, before anything exists, both strings are variants of each other because what the variant listing there means is that it basically says, "I am not unique to you, but you are not unique to me."

But in the context of if a TLD already exists and a new TLD gets applied for and that new TLDs which is an IDN, and that IDN happens to—in context of language and script—not be considered unique to any existing TLD, then the one that's being applied for which is a variant of an existing TLD would be blocked based on the language rules. Right?

So, yeah, it's really interesting definition of terms of what is a variant because what I see now … And I'm by no means a language expert in Cyrillic and the Cyrillic alphabet. And I see Maxim [inaudible], and hopefully he can correct me. But in the Cyrillic script, there's text in there that looks like ASCII script or English. Right?

EN

And if, for example, .co—Cyrillic C and Cyrillic O—was applied for, then that would be a very similar looking TLD to .co for Columbia, the country code. So under the variant rules of languages, LGR Root Zone and Cyrillic c and Cyrillic o should be blocked and saying, "Well, you're not a unique string because something already exists out there. And the reason why it's being rejected is because, from a language and script point of view—and also trying to protect against homoglyph attacks—that's the basis for the rejection."

Hopefully that made some sense because I don't know if "Cyrillic c" and "Cyrillic o" is an actual word. But, yeah, that's my take.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you. Yes and no, I guess. It depends. I actually haven't looked at the Latin Generation Panel and whether those characters are considered variants. And that's why the list of background documents is very important. I think for our deliberations here, the only things that are considered IDN variants or what is generated by the LGR. If it's not generated from the LGR, they cannot be considered variants.

They may be considered confusingly similar from other processes, but for the Root Zone LGR, for IDN variants or variants, it has to be from the Root Zone LGR. That, at least, is the assumption here. So I think that's an important clarification.

I had Jeff and then, Steve, did you want to jump the line? Or it's because you're co-host that you jumped the line? But I guess—

EN

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Edmon. I did not mean to jump any lines.

EDMON CHUNG: Okay. You can go after Jeff.

STEVE CHAN: I can definitely go after Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, okay. Thanks, Steve. So help us walk through something then. And maybe Sarmad can help. If there is an application and the application goes through the Label Generation Rules—it goes through the automated process—assuming it is a properly constituted string, meaning for the other DNS stability rules, everything should be declared valid. Isn't that correct? It's not like the Label Generation Rules would make an assumption. If there are no strings that exist that would be variants that this …

Sorry. You have one application. The application goes in. It looks to see whether that application is a variant of an existing string. If it is a variant, it would be denied. Right? It would be invalid. But if there are two applications who end up being variants of each other, they're both still valid in the sense that they would both go on to the contention set. And then one of them would be delegated eventually. [And it would only be the next round after that that there was an application that would be found to be invalid if there was a variant of that one]. Right?

EN

So we need to be very clear here that there is no main one and variant if there is nothing that exists already to compare it to, if that makes any sense. Right?

EDMON CHUN: Yes. I think, Jeff, you're quite right. At least I got it quite clearly. And you're right. I mean, if it's in the same round, then it goes into contention set. If it's a different round, it's a first come, first serve. The latter becoming invalid. Yeah.

So then I have Steve and then Donna. Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Sure. Thanks, Edmon. This is Steve from staff. I thought it might be helpful to walk through what's in the document that you're looking at. As Edmon mentioned, it's very rough and it was just an attempt by staff and leadership to try to get a sense of what it could look like.

It's obviously not intended to be prescriptive, but what is in here sort of lines up with what Dennis is saying. The outcomes that might be challenged here, we're just looking at the outcomes of the RZ-LGR, essentially. And so what we thought is that it could be from several different angles. One is whether or not the string itself is valid, which is the first line here. And then the second and third, actually, are about variants.

And so the challenge in the second line here is whether or not the RZ-LGR determines what the variants are. And so perhaps the applicant would disagree with what the proposed variants are as

EN

opposed to what the RZ-LGR says. And then the last one is about blocked variants.

And so just to wrap this all up, what these three lines are looking at is purely from an RZ-LGR perspective. And to Jeff's questions here, I guess what the point is intended to do is to separate what the RZ-LGR does in its algorithmic outcomes versus all the other mechanisms that are part of the new gTLD application process. So, string similarity, objections, and all the other additional elements that might be impacted by the existence of variants which makes things more complicated.

So we looked at it purely from the perspective of the RZ-LGR and its outcomes and whether or not the applicant should or could challenge these. And I think one of the things that Edmon had mentioned beforehand very early in this meeting is that what a challenge mechanism might look like for just the RZ-LGR outcomes is potentially a trigger point for having the RZ-LGR actually re-evaluated.

So hopefully this is making some sense. There are two aspects here of challenging the outcomes of the RZ-LGR versus all the other mechanisms in the new gTLD application process that might have impacts from the existence of variants.

Hopefully that made some sense. Maybe it only made sense to me, and maybe Edmon or someone else. But I guess I'm just trying to separate the two things. It's important to think about whether or not the string similarity process would change because there is similarity between variants. But I think it's potentially two concepts that this group will need to think about. Thanks.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Steve. Yes, at least it's useful for me. As I mentioned in the chat, this is certainly not the final format, but it hopefully gets things started in terms of discussion. And I think we will take a few meetings to come to a clearer grasp and common understanding of some of the things that we talked about. But it's important to explore the entire spectrum of stuff, I think.

So I have Donna, Satish, and then Jeff. Donna.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. So, more a clarifying question for my own purposes. So Edmon, you said a variant is what's generated by the LGR. But I wonder if, in the context of a next round or a Subsequent Procedures process, whether that definition of variant is the same. So what I'm trying to understand is if an applicant applies for an IDN and, with that application, they have two variants that they have determined are variants, does that have to go through the LGR process?

And Jeff, you might have more of an idea of this, but to identify what the variant of that IDN is, does that have to go through the LGR process prior to putting in the application or is that something that happens after? Because I think there is a difference in the terminology when we say "variant" in a Subsequence Procedures process and the variants that we talk about that you've called out, Edmon, as generated by the LGR. So I just want some clarification on that if possible.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, quickly. And I think Jeff mentioned it on the chat as well. The specific scenario that you talked about, which is the generation the variants and challenge on that, that's a4 which is related to a3 that we are talking about. And again, I am completely fine with kind of mixing a3 and a4 in the conversation, at least to begin with. As we clarify, I think they are two different issues, but there's no harm at this point talking about them together.

So, yes. But there are two yeses here. One yes is that the primary applied-for string is also run through the Root Zone LGR to see if it's valid, first of all. And then secondly, as it is run through the variants that will be produced and the allocated will variants or blocked variants will be generated. And that needs to be matched with the application, what they declare.

So before it's submitted, it's not checked, of course the applicant can use the Root Zone LGR Algeria check it. But they can also challenge the Root Zone LGR. And that's part of the challenge process. Right? You're applying for—I don't know, Nepalese, for example—and you think the Root Zone LGR is wrong. "This is what I want to apply and this is what I think the variants are. And the Root Zone LGR was wrong." So it might come back as invalid. Now you will need to go through the challenge process which potentially might trigger the Root Zone LGR review process and update that. And then the Root Zone LGR would make your application valid.

I'm speculating very far, but that's essentially what we're talking about. Should we put this process in place? And if we do, how would it look like? So hopefully that's clearer for you.

EN

Satish and then Jeff. Satish.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Edmon. So the ALAC Team on this group, we have a prep meeting and Wednesdays. And yesterday we had a bunch of questions relating to the early technical/algorithmic validation of an IDN label that's I didn't applied for. I'm not talking about variants, but I'm talking about the only string that I'm applying for. Presumably it is put through an evaluation, through the automated process of the Root Zone LGR and it gets rejected.

We were wondering how it can get rejected because the applicant is a language speaker. He or she has identified a string. But RZ-LGR says this is invalid. So were looking at, how inclusive is LGR? What [inaudible] LGR revisions? A bunch of questions which we don't want to discuss in detail in this meeting. So were wondering if EPDP can organize a session for anybody interested from this group to know more about this whole process of how would [inaudible] in the first place.

For example, a language like Spanish is spoken in many countries, many ccTLDs. But only a single Root Zone LGR. [inaudible]. So how is the diversity of languages managed in this process?

So if the EPDP can consider a session where those interested can attend, it will be very useful for us. Thank you.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Satish. That is certainly a very good suggestion. And I think Donna's earlier question and perhaps Michael's earlier question has some relationship to this as well. So just to reiterate, Satish's suggestion is to have a separate kind of info session for anyone who's interested from this working group to attend. And we will try to invite staff team somehow. I'm kind of putting you on the table here. Please do put up your hand if you have any thoughts or rejection on this.

But the suggestion is to try to have a separate session that would walk people through the Root Zone LGR process and potentially how it relates to this process that we just discussed.

And I see your hand up, so I'll let Jeff go first. And then come to you. And we are running out of time quickly as well. Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: I really appreciate Satish's question, and I'd like to go to that because I don't think there's a—at least I'm not hearing it— consistent definition of what's considered valid versus what's invalid. The case that Sarmad had brought up in the chat is not a validity question to me. If there's no LGR for the script, that's a completely different issue. Is it that they're not using characters that are in that script and they claim it's in that script? There just needs to be something because we're sort of talking past each other as to what it means to be valid and not valid.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: Yes, I agree. I think that from the discussion today, that seems to be becoming more and more clear. And thank you, Satish, for bringing it up. I think it's more shaping up like this is a good idea.

Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. I just was going to comment on the discussion around organizing a session Root Zone LGR. I think what is being asked for, we are actually already organizing something which is very similar to that. And it is going to be as part of the prep session during ICANN72. We actually have an Integration Panel also coming in and explaining how Root Zone LGR should be used.

So I would encourage you all to look out for that session, attend that session. We'll have some Generation Panels—Latin and Japanese—and also a more detailed presentation on Root Zone LGR and how it should be used. So please do look for it and attend it. And we are more than happy to organize any additional sessions if it is needed by the working group. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG: When is that, Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: I think the schedule's is going to be posted soon. So as soon as that's posted, we'll announce it. It's tentatively on the 14th of October.

EN

EDMON CHUNG: 14th of October, got it. So that's still a few weeks—

SARMAD HUSSAIN: 18:00 UTC.

EDMON CHUNG: Okay. That's still a few weeks from now, but that seems okay. I see Jeff's hand is up, but I wanted to add a little bit to this as an action item. Perhaps what we should do—Sarmad, if that works— is that if this group can come up with a number of questions in that session that Sarmad is suggesting already has been planned so the IP … Well, part of the process of the Root Zone LGR people will be there. They would give a presentation and then we could ask more questions.

But in preparation of that, maybe in the next meeting we could talk a little bit about the set of questions additional that we could send to the staff team so as they prepare the presentation, that it would cover our core questions. That might be useful. Sarmad, let me know if that's not right.

But Jeff quickly. And we've run out of time.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah. And Quoc's putting it sort of up there, but where is the definition of the words "valid" and "invalid"? And is it script specific or … Well, it shouldn't be. There should be a definition of, "If something is this, it's valid. If something is not this, it's invalid." And I think that's where we all need to get on the same page.

	And I don't think it can be a reference to an IETF doc. I think there needs to be a written, easily-understood, non-technical definition of what it what it means to be a valid string or a valid TLD, and then you work from there. Because I don't think that's understood, at least by the non- techies.
EDMON CHUNG:	Thank you, Jeff. That's a valid point. Sorry for the pun. And let's pick that up. That's the first thing next week, and also related to preparation for the extra session. I think this is defined by the Root Zone LGR. But I may be mistaken. But let's pick that up. And Sarmad, perhaps we'll come to you to start with. And then let's put some thought together in some questions to add to the session that staff is already planning. And I think that it seems like it's going to be very useful for this group's deliberations.

With that, we're two minutes over time. Not seeing further hands, I will thank everyone for joining. Note that we will pick up as what Jeff mentioned from next meeting, and also take a little bit of time to prepare a set of questions to add to the session for explaining to this group and others what the Root Zone LGR process is and how it relates to our discussion.

Thank you everyone for joining. It was a very fruitful discussion this week, I think. And see you all again next week. |
| JULIE BISLAND: | Thank you, Edmon. Thanks, everyone, for joining. This meeting is adjourned. And you can disconnect your lines at this time. Thank you. |

EN

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]