**Background on the issue relating to the:**

**CCNSO EXTENDED PROCESS SIMILARITY REVIEW PANEL (EPSRP) REPORT and**

**SSAC’S REJECTION OF THE ORIGINAL VERSION IN NOVEMBER 2016**

June 2013 – the **EXTENDED PROCESS SIMILARITY REVIEW PANEL** was introduced to look into **the FAST TRACK PROCESS** following a review of IDN ccTLDs**.** It appears that concerns were raised at the time by the CCNSO about the Fast Track Process.

Sept 2014 – The EPSRP was asked to review the findings of the **DNS STABILITY PANEL** with respect to three strings (one in Cyrillic and two in Greek script). Their published report and recommendation stated that one of the applied Greek strings in UPPERCASE could be considered confusingly similar with two two-letter codes – yet when the letters were in lower case should not be considered confusingly similar.

June 2015 – After the third review of the **FAST TRACK PROCESS**, the ICANN Board requested the ccNSO, in consultation with other stakeholders including ALAC, SSAC and the GAC, to **provide further guidance on and refinement of the methodology of the second string similarity review process, in particular on the interpretation of its split recommendations.**

So the ccNSO established a working group that, in accordance with the Board request, was LIMITED IN ITS SCOPE, with a focus on the split recommendation of the former EPSRP report (and its uppercase and lowercase recommendations).

The Working group produced two documents:

1. One with observations to record the general discussion of the working group
2. One to provide further guidance and refinement of the methodology of the EPSRP as requests, which was subject to public consultation

ALAC, GAC and Versign submitted comments which were supportive of the recommended guidance, and useful comments were incorporated into the WG’s final version of the revised guidelines and recommendation paper.

SSAC comment (SAC084) rejected the proposed guidance and recommended that the Board not accept the proposed guidelines stating that the EPSRP guidelines did not respect the 3 core principles of RFC 6912 which should also apply to decisions concerning the inclusion of IDN labels in the root zone.

**These principles included the CONSERVATISM Principle, the INCLUSION Principle and the STABILITY Principle.** **SSAC state that adherence to these principles is critical for continued interoperability and stability of the DNS Root Zone and deviation would increase the risk of root zone instability**.

After a meeting in Hyderabad between the SSAC and the CCNSO, the SSAC then produced SAC statements 088 and 089 that asked that the principles be entrenched into the SPSRP report.

**Following a request by the ccNSO Council, the EPSRP WG:**

1. Agreed to review and update its report to take the SSAC statements into account, and clarified that its guidance should be interpreted in a way that is consistent with the RFCs (particularly RFC6912, paragraph 6).
2. Noted that the Conservatism Principle (and erring on the side of caution rather than allowing TLD applicants to put themselves at risk in relation to spoofing and phishing) is important and should be supported. So that a reference to it is now explicitly included in the updated version of the report.
3. Noted that the Board had specifically asked for guidance for a very limited set of cases where there had been split finding by the SPSRP. Their work was intended as a general overhaul of the procedures.
4. However, that being said, the COUNCIL has added a request to the Board that the current rules under the FAST TRACK PROCESS are applied disproportionately, and in fact are potentially discriminatory compared to the new GTLD process. They are requesting that the Board reconsider the overall IDN CCTLD policy recommendations as submitted to the Board in 2013, as apparently foreseen in one of the ICANN Bylaws to replace the Fast Track process

**THE FINAL REPORT WAS ENDORSED BY THE CCNSO COUNCIL AT THE JANUARY 2017 MEETING AND SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD**.

Therefore the ALAC is being asked.. do we still agree to support the CCNSO report?

The SSAC issues have been addressed, and there has been no response from them since the new report was submitted to the Board.

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Maureen