

4 December 2019

Dr. Hamed bin Salim Al-Rawahi
Executive President
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority
PO Box: 3555, PC: 111
A'Seeb, Sultanate of Oman

Dear Dr. Hamed bin Salim Al-Rawahi

I would like to thank you for your [letter of 19 June 2019](#) regarding the registration of the two-character code “om” at the second level. I would like to give you some information about the process and ways to address your concerns.

Specification 5, Section 2 of the gTLD [Base Registry Agreement](#), which was developed with substantial community input via the open and transparent multi-stakeholder approach, specifies how gTLD Registry Operators subject to this provision may release otherwise reserved two-character labels (emphasis added): “All two-character ASCII labels shall be withheld from registration or allocated to Registry Operator at the second level within the TLD. Such labels may not be activated in the DNS, and *may not be released for registration to any person or entity other than Registry Operator, provided that such two-character label strings may be released to the extent that Registry Operator reaches agreement with the related government and country-code manager of the string as specified in the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 standard.* The Registry Operator may also propose the release of these reservations *based on its implementation of measures to avoid confusion with the corresponding country codes, subject to approval by ICANN.*”

An objective of this provision is to mitigate any user confusion between two-character labels at the second level with the country codes or affiliated government. However, these provisions do not grant a global authorization process for governments to approve or deny a gTLD Registry Operator’s release of two-character labels at the second level.

To support the implementation of measures to avoid confusion with corresponding country codes when releasing letter/letter two-character labels, ICANN org has developed the following measures for gTLD Registry Operators, in conjunction with issuing an [authorization for release](#) of these labels:¹

- A dedicated **Registration Policy** (mandatory): Registry Operators must include a provision in the registry’s public registration policy requiring registrants to avoid misrepresenting affiliation with a government or country-code manager;

¹ If you believe a Registry Operator subject to these mandatory measures has failed to comply with them, you may contact ICANN Contractual Compliance by filing a [complaint](#). However, please note that ICANN org has no ability to terminate second-level domain name registrations, as it is not a gTLD registry operator or registrar.

- A **Post-Registration Complaint Investigation** (mandatory): Registry Operators must investigate and respond to reports of confusion from government or ccTLD operators; and
- An **Exclusive Availability Pre-Registration Period** (voluntary): Registry Operators may implement an exclusive availability pre-registration for governments or country-code managers to register domain names corresponding to their country codes, before the names are generally available.

Additionally, a [search tool](#) has been developed which allows Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) representatives to login to the GAC website to monitor whether and where there have been registrations of their country's two letter codes at the second level (upon GAC Leadership request).

If you need any clarification regarding the above measures, please contact Mr. Laurent Ferrali (laurent.ferrali@icann.org).

Sincerely,



Göran Marby
President and Chief Executive Officer
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)