



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

8 September 2014

Statton Hammock
Vice-President, Business & Legal Affairs
United TLD Holdco, Ltd. t/a Rightside Registry

Dear Mr. Hammock:

Thank you for your letter of 12 August 2014 regarding the status of the "Proposed Review Mechanism to Address Perceived Inconsistent Expert Determinations on String Confusion Objections." We appreciate your comments, and we have posted the letter to the New gTLD correspondence page (<https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/hammock-to-chalaby-12aug14-en.pdf>). We would like to address your concern that "the importance of the Review Mechanisms has been ignored or forgotten."

As you are aware, on 10 October 2013 the Board Governance Committee (BGC) asked ICANN staff to draft a report for the New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC) relating to certain String Confusion Objections (SCOs) as some requestors commented on "inconsistencies" in certain SCO Expert Determinations (<https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-bgc-2013-10-10-en>). Following discussions of this matter, at its 5 February 2014 meeting, the NGPC resolved to initiate a public comment period to receive community input on the framework principles of a potential review mechanism to address these perceived inconsistent determinations (<https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-new-gtld-2014-02-05-en>).

The public comment period was open between 11 February 2014 and 12 March 2014, with a reply period between 13 March 2014 and 3 April 2014 (<https://www.icann.org/public-comments/sco-framework-principles-2014-02-11-en>). ICANN consolidated the community's contributions and on 24 April 2014, published the Report of Public Comments (<https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/report-comments-sco-framework-principles-24apr14-en.pdf>).

The proposed mechanism, if adopted, would constitute a change to the String Confusion Objection process in the Applicant Guidebook, which was developed through years of debate and public comment. Such a change is not considered lightly, and the proposal and comments received have been considered by the NGPC several times.



On 14 May 2014 and 6 June 2014, the NGPC engaged in discussions on this matter, and it continues to do so. For more information, please review the minutes of these NGPC meetings at <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-new-gtld-2014-05-14-en#2.c> and <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/minutes-new-gtld-2014-06-06-en#1.e>.

The NGPC will be discussing the issue further on 8 September 2014 (<https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/agenda-new-gtld-2014-09-08-en>). For information on the outcomes of this NGPC meeting as well as future NGPC activities, we encourage you to monitor the ICANN website (<https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/meetings-2014-01-06-en>).

Thank you for your communication and your participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder process. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Customer Service Center at newgtld@icann.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine A. Willett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "W".

Christine A. Willett
Vice President, GDD Operations