

# Internationalized Domain Names Expedited Policy Development Process

E7 (B5)



IDN-EPDP Team Meeting #62 | 15 December 2022

# Agenda

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1. Roll Call and SOI Updates (2 mins)
2. Welcome and Chair Updates (5 mins)
3. Charter Question E7 (Catch All Question) (80 mins)
  - a. Singulars / Plurals in String Similarity Review
  - b. Evaluation Criteria for Requested Variants of Applied-for Strings with Restrictions
4. AOB (3 mins)

# Singulars / Plurals in String Similarity Review

# Jeff's Question for Consideration

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**Did the EPDP Team consider singulars and plurals when deliberating on the String Similarity Review involving variants?**

# SubPro Context

**Recommendation 24.3:** ...the Working Group recommends **prohibiting plurals and singulars of the same word within the same language/script in order to reduce the risk of consumer confusion**. For example, the TLDs .EXAMPLE and .EXAMPLES may not both be delegated because they are considered confusingly similar. **This expands the scope of the String Similarity Review to encompass singulars/plurals of TLDs on a per-language/script basis.**

- An application for a single/plural variation of an existing TLD or Reserved Name will **not be permitted if the intended use of the applied-for string is the single/plural version of the existing TLD or Reserved Name.**
- If there is **an application for the singular version of a word and an application for a plural version of the same word in the same language/script** during the same application window, these applications will be placed in a contention set.
- Applications **will not automatically be placed in the same contention set** because they appear visually to be a single and plural of one another but **have different intended uses**. For example, .SPRING and .SPRINGS could both be allowed if one refers to the season and the other refers to elastic objects, because they are not singular and plural versions of the same word.

The Working Group recommends **using a dictionary to determine the singular and plural version of the string for the specific language**. The Working Group recognizes that **singulars and plurals may not visually resemble each other in multiple languages and scripts globally**. Nonetheless, if by using a dictionary, two strings are determined to be the singular or plural of each other, and their intended use is substantially similar, then both should not be eligible for delegation.

# SubPro Context (Cont.)

**Implementation Guidance 24.4:** All applicants should be required to respond to an application question asking the applicant to **explain the scope of intended use of the TLD, including any ways the applicant does not intend to use the TLD**. If two or more applicants in the same round apply for strings that appear visually to be a single and plural of one another, and it is not clear to evaluators based on the applications whether the intended use is the same or different and therefore whether one string is a singular or plural of another, ICANN should issue a Clarifying Question.

**Recommendation 24.5:** If two applications are submitted during the same application window for strings that create the probability of a user assuming that they are single and plural versions of the same word, but the applicants intend to use the strings in connection with two different meanings, **the applications will only be able to proceed if each of the applicants agrees to the inclusion of a mandatory Public Interest Commitment (PIC) in its Registry Agreement**. The mandatory PIC must include a commitment by the registry to use the TLD **in line with the intended use presented in the application**, and must also include a commitment by the registry that **it will require registrants to use domains under the TLD in line with the intended use stated in the application**.

# Effect of SubPro Recommendations

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Expand contention set to include singulars and plurals of the same words. The singulars and plurals may or may not visually resemble each other but nonetheless could create a probability of user confusion.

# Possible Scenarios Involving Singulars/Plurals & Variants

#	Possible Scenario	Example	Placed in a contention set?
1.	String 2 is the plural of String 1	String 1: 他 String 2: 他们	Yes  <i>Both strings should be placed in a contention set unless the strings have different intended use.</i>
2.	String 2 is a variant of the plural of String 1	String 1: 他 String 2: 他們	Yes  <i>Variant of a plural is considered the same as the primary plural. Unless String 2 has a different intended use from String 1, both strings should be placed in a contention set.</i>
3.	String 2 is visually similar to the plural of String 1	String 1: 他 String 2: 她们	No  <i>The two strings represent completely different words. Unless String 1 and String 2 are visually similar, they should not be placed in a contention set.</i>
4.	String 2 is visually similar to the variant of the plural of String 1	String 1: 他 String 2: 她們	No  <i>The two strings represent completely different words. Unless String 1 and String 2 are visually similar, they should not be placed in a contention set.</i>



# Question for EPDP Team's Consideration

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**Should any additional recommendation be developed to address the singulars / plurals of variant gTLDs in String Similarity Review? Or are the existing recommendations sufficient?**

# Evaluation Criteria for Requested Variants of Applied-for Strings with Restrictions

**B5:** Do restrictions that apply to a TLD (e.g., community TLDs, dot brand TLDs) also apply to its variants? Are these labels equally treated as different versions of the same string, or completely independent strings not bound by the same restrictions?

## What types of gTLDs does this charter question refer to?

Existing and future gTLDs that have different application questions, evaluation processes, contractual requirements, post-delegation activities, and other non-standard treatments, including but not limited to:

- **Community-based TLDs** - *application questions, evaluation process, contractual requirements*
- **Brand TLDs** - *application questions, contractual requirements*
- **TLDs Subject to Category 1 Safeguards** - *evaluation process, contractual requirements*
- **GeoTLDs** - *application questions, evaluation process*

# Preliminary Recommendation & Rationale

**Recommendation 2.8:** In future new gTLD application processes, the primary applied-for gTLD and its allocatable variant labels requested by the applicant are to be treated as different versions of the same string and will be bound by the same restrictions.

## Rationale

- Discussed this charter question in the context of future new gTLD applications
- Agreed that restrictions applied to the primary gTLD will also apply to its allocatable variant labels requested by the applicant in the same application
  - e.g., If the primary applied-for gTLD is a Brand TLD, its allocatable variant labels requested by the applicant should also be treated as a Brand TLD and be bound by the same restrictions
- Had limited discussion regarding evaluating applications of such gTLDs and their allocatable variant labels
- Reaffirmed its [Recommendation 2.5](#), allowing applicant to submit one application covering both the primary new gTLD and the allocatable variant label(s) the applicant wishes to activate
- Agreed that the evaluation criteria will apply to the set in the same application; all applied-for labels in the set are expected to go through the evaluation, objection, public comment, and each stage of the New gTLD Application process together

# Follow Up Question for Deliberation

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**Should the requested variants meet the same application requirements and evaluation criteria as the primary gTLDs?**

# Examples of Existing gTLDs with “Restrictions”

## Community-based TLDs

*Examples:* .كاثوليك .天主教 .政务

**A gTLD operated for the benefit of a clearly delineated community**

- Submit written endorsement by established institution(s) representing the community
- Community Priority Evaluation to resolve contention
- Specification 12

## GeoTLDs

*Examples:* .ابوظبي .深圳, .广东

**A gTLD denoting geographical, geopolitical, ethnic, social or cultural representation**

- Provide a documentation of support or non-objection from relevant governments or public authorities
- Applications evaluated by the Geographic Names Panel (GNP)

## Brand TLDs

*Examples:* .アマゾン .微博 .電訊盈科

**A gTLD using a brand name and operated by a corporation that owns the brand**

- Submit proof that the applied for string is identical to a registered trademark of the Registry Operator
- Cannot be a Generic String
- Specification 13

## TLDs Subject to Category 1 Safeguards

*Examples:* .クラウド .健康 .書籍

**A gTLD deemed applicable to highly sensitive or regulated industries**

- Adopt relevant Category 1 Safeguards as contractually binding requirements in Specification 11 (mandatory PIC)
- For future gTLDs, a specific evaluation panel to confirm whether applied-for gTLDs fall into the category