

# IANA Report on Redelegating of the .tf Top-Level Domain

Subject: Request of AFNIC for Redelegating of .tf Top-Level Domain  
Date: May 2004

The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (the IANA), as part of the administrative functions associated with management of the domain-name system root, is responsible for receiving requests for delegation and redelegation of top-level domains, investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and reporting on the requests. This report gives the findings and conclusions of the IANA on its investigation of various requests for redelegation of the .tf (French Southern Territories) country-code top-level domain (ccTLD).

## **Factual and Procedural Background**

In 1997, the University of Southern California's Information Sciences Institute (which then performed the IANA functions) approved a request for establishment of the .tf ccTLD. At that time and today, that two-letter code was and is set forth on the ISO 3166-1 list maintained by the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency (ISO 3166/MA) as the approved alpha-2 code for French Southern Territories.

Upon its establishment in March 1997, the .tf ccTLD was delegated by Dr. Jon Postel (then in charge of the IANA function at the Information Sciences Institute) to Jaune Hostmaster from AdamsNames, as administrative contact, and Sean Jackson, from AdamsNames, as the technical contact.

In March 2000, ICANN received an expression of interest to redelegate the .tf ccTLD to AFNIC, then another request in July 2003. Those requests were supported by the French Government. The French Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry recognized AFNIC as the appropriate delegee for the .tf ccTLD and expressed an interest to have AFNIC formally recognized by ICANN as the delegee for the .tf ccTLD. AFNIC is a non-profit organization governed by the July 1, 1901 law. It was created jointly in December 1997 by The French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control ([INRIA, http://www.inria.fr/](http://www.inria.fr/)) and the French Government, represented by the Ministries of Telecommunications, Industry and Research. AFNIC took over the activities of NIC-France / INRIA on January 1, 1998, "to improve the manner in which all Internet, public and private players are associated with its action, and to achieve management flexibility that was impossible with a research organization, active within the local Internet community."

AdamNames, the existing manager of the TLD has expressed support for the redelegation request.

To clarify and document the relative roles and responsibilities of AFNIC, the Government of France, and ICANN, representatives of the parties have drafted bilateral communications between each pair of the three parties. An AFNIC-ICANN Agreement was entered in April 2004. The French Government has also sent ICANN communications recognizing ICANN's role in coordinating the DNS to preserve global interoperability. In December 2003, AFNIC expressed its desire to execute the appropriate ccTLD Sponsorship Agreement with ICANN, and on April 2004 the ICANN Board authorized the entry of such an agreement with AFNIC.

## Evaluation

This report is being provided under the [contract for performance of the IANA function \(http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm\)](http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm) between the United States Government and ICANN. Under that contract, ICANN performs the IANA function, which [includes receiving delegation and redelegation requests concerning ccTLDs \(http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm#C.2.1.1.2\)](http://www.icann.org/general/iana-contract-17mar03.htm#C.2.1.1.2), investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, making its recommendations, and reporting actions undertaken in connection with processing such requests.

In acting on redelegation requests, the IANA currently follows the practices summarized in "Internet Domain Name System Structure and Delegation" ([ICP-1, http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm](http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm)). ICP-1 represents an update of the portions of [RFC 1591 \(http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt\)](http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc1591.txt), which was issued in March 1994) dealing with ccTLDs, and reflects subsequent documents and evolution of the policies followed by the IANA through May 1999. Relevant guidance is also provided in the GAC Principles.

In considering delegation or redelegation of a ccTLD, the IANA seeks input from persons significantly affected by the transfer, particularly those within the nation or territory which the ccTLD has been established to benefit. As [noted in ICP-1 \(http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm#a\)](http://www.icann.org/icp/icp-1.htm#a), the parties affected include especially the relevant government or public authority: "The desires of the government of a country with regard to delegation of a ccTLD are taken very seriously. The IANA will make them a major consideration in any TLD delegation/transfer discussions."

Based on the materials submitted and the IANA's evaluation of the circumstances, AFNIC qualifies as an appropriate manager for the .tf registry. It has the support of both the French Internet community, and the French Government. As noted above, the government of France has formally endorsed AFNIC as the appropriate delegee for the .tf registry.

Mutual agreement of the old and the new delegees is a factor that ICANN takes very seriously when considering redelegation requests. Here, the former

administrative contact supports the change in delegation, and the technical contact has stated that it has no objection.

The GAC Principles serve as "best practices" to guide governments in assuming proper roles with respect to the Internet's naming system, which the GAC has observed is "a public resource . . . administered in the public or common interest." In general, they recognize that each government has the ultimate responsibility within its territory for its national public-policy objectives, but also that ICANN has the responsibility for ensuring that the Internet domain-name system continues to provide an effective and interoperable global naming system. The GAC Principles recommend that governments and ICANN pursue their respective roles by creating a framework for accountability, memorialized in communications with each other and with the ccTLD manager (see [clause 2, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#2](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#2)). The GAC Principles guide governments on how to responsibly structure their relations with ccTLD managers (see [clauses 5.5, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#5.5](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#5.5) and [clause 9, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9)). Among these specific principles, the best practices contemplate that governments will assist in ensuring that the ccTLD manager complies with ICANN polices related to global coordination of the Internet DNS ([clauses 9.1.7 and 9.1.8, http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9.1.7](http://www.icann.org/committees/gac/gac-cctldprinciples-23feb00.htm#9.1.7)).

AFNIC has committed itself to abiding by RFC 1591 in a letter to ICANN CEO Paul Twomey. The French Government's letter also recognizes the desirability of sound technical coordination of the Internet on a global scale, and affirms that it is committed to ICANN and "considers ICANN to be the appropriate international entity to oversee the technical coordination of the Internet in a manner that will preserve it as an effective and convenient mechanism for global communication and commerce."

By migrating the delegation of the .tf ccTLD to a more formal, legally enforceable set of arrangements between a delegee organization, the relevant government, and ICANN (which performs the IANA function); the proposed delegation will promote service to the local Internet community and will help assure continued Internet interoperability through the global technical coordination that ICANN was created to provide. In this regard, the recognition by the French Government's discussion of the need for close coordination between ICANN and the government is particularly noteworthy.

According to the relevant communications, AFNIC is well-suited to be inclusive of, and accountable to, the French Southern Territories Internet community; and to operate through appropriate open, transparent, and inclusive processes.

## **Conclusion**

The structure proposed by AFNIC and endorsed by the French Government is to have AFNIC undertake management of the .tf ccTLD under appropriate oversight of the French Government concerning national policy interests. AFNIC and the French Government also acknowledge and support ICANN's responsibility for coordinating management of the DNS, including the .tf ccTLD, to safeguard global technical coordination interests. In reviewing the request in light of the French Government's endorsement of AFNIC as the appropriate manager, and in view of achievement of agreements documenting the framework of accountability described above, the IANA concludes that the .tf ccTLD should be redelegated to AFNIC.