



Comments to the ICANN Board on the Topic of the RFP for sTLDs at the Public Forum, Montreal, June 25, 2003

We thank the Board – as well as the ICANN Staff – considering the considerable transition and final ERC activities they are dealing with – for bringing forward this long-awaited sTLD RFP.

While it has taken some time, we are pleased that it provides the ICANN Community with substantial progress on the issue of new Top Level Domains. This is a milestone in the dialogue on a logical expansion of the name space, and one which the travel and tourism industry is extremely grateful to see!

We need to give the documentation more careful study, however, in-keeping with our comments noted in Rio and the Public Comment section on the Proposed Criteria on the ICANN web site we would like to respond to the issue of the definition of Sponsor.

We still feel that any legal entity which has the ability to commit the necessary resources – managerial and financial – on behalf of the constituency it serves, COUPLED WITH a policy making body which is representative of that community, should be allowed to Sponsor an sTLD.

The burden of requiring a global constituency or Sponsored Community, to establish a new organization with the requisite staff and funding to assume responsibility for selecting the Registry Operator, establish roles played by Registrars, etc. is – we believe – more onerous in its implementation than may have been contemplated in the drafting of this RFP.

The implication of the current definition of “Sponsor” forestalls organizations such as ours that are willing to take the financial risk and put forward the resources, as Tralliance has for the past 2 years.

We believe that this definition creates a layer of organizational structure that is unnecessary and cumbersome. Therefore, we would respectfully request that it be expanded to allow the Sponsored Community to rely on organizations such as Tralliance Corporation to fulfill these functions on its behalf. Lest we forget, an ICANN sTLD contract, signed by the Sponsor, is a renewable contract, so clearly a Sponsored Community retains an ability to change its Sponsor should that Sponsor not be appropriately meeting the needs of that community.

Now that the RFP for sTLDs is on the table, we look forward to working with the Board and Community to expeditiously complete this process and we trust that the release of “.travel” will not be unduly delayed. It is our hope that the incoming Board also

recognizes and understands how important this sTLD is to the travel and tourism industry.

In real terms, this constituency represents:

1. > 194 million jobs worldwide
2. > US\$ 4.5 billion of world economic activity
3. > 10% of the total world gross domestic product (GDP)

As a key driver of the global economy, the industry has called on ICANN to grant it the “.travel” TLD to specifically assist it, in this recovery.

The expeditious award will benefit ICANN, the ICANN Community, Internet users the world over, and the travel and tourism constituency – enormously.

Thank you for delivering the Draft RFP here in Montreal and for your consideration of our request.

Respectfully submitted by:
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