GDD POLICY CHANGE CALENDAR

May 2015

Introduction

Contracted parties have asked ICANN to bundle implementations in a more predictable fashion to aid their planning and preparation. ICANN Global Domains Division (GDD) staff aim to support contracted parties and create an efficient process for updating Consensus Policy compliance requirements. A clear process for rolling out new Consensus Policy requirements will also provide added internal structure and increase transparency and accountability surrounding the implementation of Consensus Policy recommendations. These procedures are being established on a trial basis, and will be reviewed for possible modifications after they have been in use for at least one year.

Default Six-Month Policy Change Cycle

1. **Bundle.** GDD staff will monitor GNSO policymaking to identify groups of implementations that may be bundled together, based on the estimated timing of GNSO Council approval and Board adoption of Consensus Policy recommendations.

   GDD will initially bundle groups of implementation projects together based on the projects' estimated dates of adoption by the Board and the estimated time the projects will take to implement. GDD staff will post these bundling projections on the GDD implementation status page on ICANN.org. GDD staff will update these projections as projects proceed and staff can project anticipated effective dates with greater accuracy.

2. **Evaluate.** GDD staff will consult with the Implementation Review Teams/GNSO Council, service providers, and/or contracted parties to carefully evaluate the estimated level of effort and the volume and complexity of changes for each bundle. If the cumulative work effort for any bundle becomes too great, the effective dates will be determined by project priority. Effective dates for lower-priority changes may be scheduled for the next or a subsequent cycle.

   Factors that staff will consider in evaluating total implementation work effort include (a) the predicted amount of time and cost to implement a change; (b) an indication of how technically difficult the change will be to implement; (c) which contracted parties are affected; (d) the degree to which registrants are affected; and (e) the predicted amount of time for ICANN and other relevant service providers to implement a change.

3. **Announce.** As the implementation projects in each bundle near completion, GDD staff will officially announce the implementation bundle's effective date. The effective date will be at least six months after the announcement. For example, GDD staff might announce on Feb. 15 that a bundle will go into effect on Aug. 15 of that year.

4. **Update (if Required).** If the effective date of any implementation in the bundle must be changed, the effective date for all of the implementations in the bundle will be pushed back to the same date.

5. **Repeat.** GDD staff may announce the next bundle's effective date at any time after the prior bundle's effective date. This will minimize overlap of multiple implementation efforts on contracted parties. For example, if bundle A goes into effect on Aug. 15, bundle B could be announced Aug. 16, at the earliest, with an effective date of Feb. 16 of the following year.

Exceptions to Default Six-Month Cycles

GDD staff will make every attempt to follow the default six-month cycle. However, staff retains discretion to deviate from the default cycle, if required. For example, staff could elect to deviate from the default cycles in the following situations:

1. **Slight Impact.** Staff could deviate from the default six-month notice and bundling protocols where the impact of an implementation on contracted parties is expected to be very slight.

2. **Emergency Situations.** Staff might deviate from the default cycle in emergency situations, as determined by the ICANN Board or the GNSO Council (by a consensus vote)[1].

3. **Other Situations.** Staff might determine that a deviation from the default cycle is required in additional, yet-to-be-identified situations, for example, where there are interrelated policies that would benefit from being coordinated. In any situation where staff deviates from the default six-month cycle, staff will consult with the IRT and/or other impacted parties to carefully evaluate the impact of the deviation and the burden imposed by the deviation on contracted parties and the broader community.

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[1] See 2013 RAA Consensus and Temporary Policies Specification, https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/approved-with-specs-2013-09-17-en#consensus-temporary; Base Registry Agreement Specification 1, Consensus Policies and Temporary Policies Specification, http://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/agreements/agreement-approved-09jan14-en.pdf