
ICANN82 | CF – Learn About Evaluation and Testing for Next Round Registry Service Providers
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 – 09:00 to 10:00 PST

ANDY NEWTON

Hello, my name is Andy Newton, and I'll be monitoring this chat and the QA pod in this role. I am the voice for remote participants. Please note that questions and comments will only be read aloud submitted within the Q&A pod. I will read them aloud during the time set by the chair or moderator of the session. Questions and comments placed in chat will be considered part of the chat and will not be read out aloud on the microphone. If you wish to speak during this session, raise your hand and Zoom, use your table microphone or queue at the aisle microphone as directed. Please note all chat sessions are being archived. As a reminder, participation in ICANN, including this session, is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior and the ICANN community anti-harassment policy. Thank you.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Thank you, Andy. This is Gustavo Lozano, ICANN staff. Next slide, please. Next slide. Let's go to slide number five. Yeah, so I want to go through the slides as quickly as possible so that we have as much time as possible for questions and answers. Right. So let's start. I think that in this group, most of the participants know what an RSP is. Basically an RSP or registry service provider is the back

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end for the gTLDs in the DNS space. They provide critical registry services on behalf of those registry operators. Sometimes it's the same entity, sometimes it's a third party, but at the end of the day, within the ICANN ecosystem, the RSPs are basically, as I was mentioning, the back ends. What are the types of services that they provide? Well, we have, for example, DNS, DNSSEC. RDAP, EPP. Next slide, please. All of these services, I'm pretty sure they are familiar to the participants in this room, but basically those are one of the examples of the critical functions that are required to be provided per the registry agreement. It's important to mention that some RSPs, they provide additional registry services. These additional registry services are optional for most of them in the case of the registry agreement. And they are complementary to the critical functions that are called in the contract. Next slide, please. So what is the RSP evaluation program? The RSP evaluation program is a program that is being set up as part of the next round. And the idea is to do evaluations of the registry service provider. It's important to mention that this is a technical evaluation, and the idea is to have certainty that those RSPs that are going to be providing services in the next round comply with all the technical requirements so that we have a stable and secure DNS. The idea of this program is to improve the efficiency of the gTLD evaluation because an RSP needs to be only evaluated once and then they can provide services to as many gTLDs as they select to provide services within the gTLD application. This program ensures that, as I was mentioning, that those RSPs have the proper technical qualifications. We have two evaluation periods. This is very

important to mention. Right now we are in what is called pre-evaluation, probably should have been called early evaluation. But the idea of having this early evaluation is that those RSPs can go through the program and once they are evaluated, they can make it to the list or the list of RSPs that we're going to publish in December. And the idea of publishing this list is to provide ample time to potential gTLD applicants to start negotiations with those RSPs for the next round. We will have an additional period. That period is going to open and close at the same time as the gTLD evaluation submission period. But if you are interested in participating, if you are interested in making it to the first version of the list that is going to be published in December, probably is a good idea to participate in the early evaluation phase. Next slide, please. This is how the timeline looks like for the whole next round program. We have, as I was mentioning, the RSP evaluation program that is running right now or the early evaluation program is running from November 19 and is going to close on May 20. By December 9, that's the first time that we are going to publish the list of evaluated RSPs. And that's only the first version. We know that some RSPs may take more time to do technical testing, for example, and they may be able to clear it later. And that's fine. We are going to continuously update that list. But obviously, probably is a good idea to try to make it to the first version. So you are first to the market and then you start having those negotiations with your potential gTLD applicants. At the top, we have the other evaluation period that is going to be running concurrently with the gTLD evaluation period that is at the bottom. So this is how the

timeline looks like. Next slide, please. Something that is new in this evaluation program from what we did back in 2012 is that now we have different types of RSPs. We have discovered over all these years working in the gTLD space that there is a specialization within the RSPs. So some RSPs, they only provide DNS services, for example. There are some RSPs that only provide DNS, so basically they receive a zone, they sign the zone, and then they provide a signed zone to a DNS provider. So we are trying to be as flexible as possible so we can accommodate different business models. And these are the different types of RSPs that we have discovered exist, and those are the ones that can be evaluated. So you can be a main RSP. Basically, if you're going to provide EPP, RDAP, Data Escrow, you're going to maintain the registry database. There is the DNS RSP. Typically, they are known as secondary DNS services or DNS operators. We have the DNSSEC RSPs. Basically, as I was mentioning, they just sign the zone. And the proxy RSPs. These are needed in case that you need to have regulation, local presence in certain jurisdictions, so that's the way that's supported. It's important to mention that you can be evaluated for one or more types of RSPs for the same fee. So if you want to be main, DNS, DNSSEC, or even proxy at the same time, that's completely possible in the program. And in the case of main RSPs, you can optionally be evaluated for additional registry services or IDN tables if you want to support IDNs or internationalized domain names. Something that is very important to mention and my team told me to mention during this session is if you're applying to be a main RSP, but you also sign the zone, for example, in the case of DNSSEC, or if you also

provide DNS services, you need to apply to the different types of RSPs. If you only apply to main RSP, from the program perspective, that means that you are only going to maintain the registry database, EPP, RDAP, and data escrow, and nothing else. Most of the main RSPs, usually they also sign the zone, so probably you also need to apply for DNSSEC RSP. And if you have your own Anycast cloud of DNS servers, you also want to apply for DNS RSP. Next slide, please. This is how the evaluation program interacts with the gTLD application program. Once the gTLD applicants go into the system to apply for a particular string to become a gTLD, they need to select the RSPs that are in dark blue. So basically they will need to select one main RSP, at least one DNS RSP, and one DNSSEC RSP. They can select multiple DNS RSPs if they want to have secondary services, for example. And optionally, the gTLD applicant may select a proxy RSP if they need to comply with certain privacy laws, let's say, in a particular jurisdiction. Next slide, please. Sorry, can you go back to the previous slide? So as I was mentioning, if your company is going to provide DNS services, is going to sign the zone, and is going to provide EPP data escrow, then your company is going to be selected for those three types of RSPs. Next slide, please. So technical evaluation. This is similar to what we did back in 2012. We have a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains the criteria that we are looking for, and the RSP applicant needs to complete that questionnaire. After that questionnaire is complete, then that questionnaire is going to be evaluated. After the questionnaire is complete, then that questionnaire is going to be evaluated. It's important to mention that back in 2012, for those of

you that applied in the round 2012, you may remember that we have like 20 genetic, technical questions, and the criteria was kind of genetic. This time it's completely different, right? Now this time we have hundreds of questions because we want to specify the criteria as much as possible so that it's clear what we as ICANN are looking for. It's also important to mention that more than 50% of the questions are yes or no questions. If in one of those questions you want to select no, then you have the opportunity to provide a justification of why you are saying no. But it's important to mention that most of the questions or a high percentage of the questions are yes or no questions. Every question must be answered, and all the questions must have a pass grade in order to clear technical evaluation. Next slide, please. It's also important to mention that if for some reason during the evaluation process, the evaluators needs more information in order to be able to clear that particular question, the applicants will be able to clarify that information. That's what we call CQs within the program or clarifying questions, and those are questions that are sent from ICANN.org to the applicant so they can provide additional information for a particular question. Next slide, please. So I mentioned before, some, if not most of the RSPs, they provide additional registry services, and you can apply for those during the RSP evaluation program. It's important to mention that the RSP evaluation program is the only mechanism within the Next Round program to apply for those additional registry services. So if one of your gTLD applicants is trying to have an additional registry services, that registry service must be evaluated within this program. Once the

gTLD applicant goes into the gTLD application program, they will be presented with the menu of all the additional registry services for that particular RSP. So it should be pretty simple for the gTLD applicant. It should be pretty simple to generate the base registry agreement. You just select which additional registry services you want to support as a gTLD applicant, and everything should be automatically generated. Next slide, please. So how the additional registry services are evaluated? We have three tracks. The first track is for those registry services that are categorized as fast track registry services, and you have the link there. Those are going to be automatically approved for all the main RSPs. For example, BTAPPA is one of those services. Registry Lock is another example. And in the case of registration validation per jurisdiction with a proxy, that's when you also will need to provide a proxy RSP in the case that you want to support that particular additional registry service. An RSP that is already operating in the market, they can be evaluated for the registry services that they currently provide. It's a very light process. Basically, you just need to tell us in which gTLDs you provide the service and the description of the service, and it's going to be evaluated. It's a light evaluation because you are currently offering that service in the gTLD space. And finally, we have a third track. This is if you want to provide a new registry service that you are not currently providing in the gTLD space, or if you are a new entrant and you want to provide those additional registry services, that's the track that you need to use. It's similar to the RSEP. So basically, you have a questionnaire with questions that you need to provide answers to so that we can do the

evaluation for the registry service. To start the three tracks, and this is slide, please. IDNs, this is also something new from what we did back in 2012. As you know, one of the new features of the Next Round program is the ability to support variant TLDs. This is something that was not available back in 2012. And for a particular RSP or main RSP, we have three levels of support for IDNs. The first level of support is when you don't want to provide variant TLDs and you don't want to provide variants at the second level. This could be for a, let's say, a Spanish, for example, maybe you are not interested in providing variant IDNs. Then we have the second level of support. The second level of support is if you are not going to support variant TLDs but you are going to support variant IDNs at the second level. And the highest level of support, which was not available back in 2012, is level number three. This is when you want to provide variant TLDs and you also want to support variant IDNs in the second level. So you can choose any of those levels of support and you're going to be presented with a questionnaire for that particular level. And obviously, that's going to allow you to apply for IDN tables based in the fact if you're going to support variant IDNs at the second level or not. It's important to mention that we have published something that we call the second level generation rules with full variant set. I'm going to talk about that in the next slides. But if you choose to use those pre-generated and pre-approved IDN tables, then the evaluation for the IDN tables is automatically. So basically, it's a direct past. Next slide, please. This is how the evaluation process workflow was defined. First, you have the applicant onboarding. This is where you provide all the

information about your organization, director, executives, so on and so forth. Then we do what we call the compliance check. It's a verification by ICANN staff to verify that the information appears to be correct. Once the information appears to be correct, then we go through what we call the legal compliance. We verify the individuals and organizations using what is the OFAC list from the U.S. government. And if everything clears, then we have the different parallel tracks. You can apply for a main RSP, additional optionally for registry services, IDN service applications. And then we have all the different types of RSPs. You can start drafting the application, but you cannot submit the application. In order to submit the application, you need to clear payment and background screening. We define the process in this way so that people can start working on their applications right away while the payment and the background screening is clear. For background screening, we have a third party provider that is doing the background screening for the organization and the individuals. Next slide, please. And once payment and background screening is clear, then you can submit your application, and that's when the evaluation starts. First, we have the technical screening or technical evaluation. That's when the evaluators are going to review the questionnaire. Then we have what we call registry system testing. That's something also, this is also something new from what we did back in 2012. Back in 2012, you told us, hey, this is what I'm going to do, this is how my system works, and that's it, right? Someone evaluated that questionnaire, the answers, and if everything appears to be fine, then we approve the technical

evaluation portion. Now it's a little bit different. We go through the questionnaire, we verify that everything appears to be fine based on the answers, but then we go and test your RSP platform. So we are going to test your RSP platform to verify that the actual infrastructure is capable of providing what you mentioned in the questionnaire. This is called technical testing, and we're going to use the system, registry system testing version 2.0. I'm going to talk about that system in the next slide. And once everything is clear, then we go to publication in which your company is going to be part of that list of evaluated RSPs. Next slide, please. I think that I already mentioned this. We have the list of evaluated RSPs, and gTLD applicants, they are going to select or choose from that list of evaluated RSPs during the gTLD application phase. And based off the main RSP, they can select IDN tables, they can select additional registry services, and once those selections have been made, we are going to tell the RSP, hey, this gTLD is saying that you're going to provide services to them, and then you're going to confirm that you are willing to provide services for that particular gTLD, and that you have the capacity to support all the gTLDs that have been selected for your specific company. So that's how we close the loop. Next slide, please. This is the fee. The fee is 92K. If we receive certain number of paid RSP evaluations during the early evaluation phase, then the fee is going to be lower, and you are going to get a refund. That's the only refund that is available in the program. If you apply and you don't clear evaluation, there are no refunds. Next slide, please. So these are questions that we have received frequently from applicants. So I want to mention them. The first

question that we are getting a lot of questions about is the yes or no questions. If you answer a no to one of those yes or no, you have the opportunity to provide a justification of why you're saying no, right? Answering no doesn't mean that it's an automatic fail. Obviously, as ICANN Org, we are looking for those questions to be a yes, right? But we know that there could be circumstances in which is not the answer that you can provide. So once you provide that justification, it's going to be available to the evaluator and it's going to be evaluated as part of the technical evaluation phase. Next slide, please. This is also an interesting question that we have received a couple of times. Within the ICANN website, you can find two different LGRs that we have produced over time. One is what we call the second level reference LGRs and the other one are the LGRs with full variant set. So what is the difference? The difference is what we call the LGRs with full variant set, those have been processed to contain the common LGRs. So if in the future you want to use them, you should not have issues of, you don't need to do harmonization on those pre-approved tables because we have already processed them to be fully harmonized, let's say. And it's pretty simple. If you go and use the LGRs with full variant set, those are going to be automatically approved. So there is not going to be any kind of manual review and it's going to be a light verification. If you decide to use custom IDN tables, and next slide please, Andy. If you decide to use custom IDN tables, then there is going to be a manual review. So that manual review is going to take more time than if you were using the pre-approved tables. That's basically the difference. The link to the LGRs with full variant set can be found

within the new utility program RSP microsite. Next slide. Now I'm going to talk about RST version 2.0, but if there are questions about the RSP program, I think this is probably the right time to ask those questions.

ANDY NEWTON

Yes, Gustavo, there are six questions. So from Maxim Alzoba, if a potential RSP applies for main plus DNS plus DNSSEC, does it all cost the same fee for each or each costs separately?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

It's just one fee, and yeah, you are going to just pay one fee and you can apply for any type of RSP or multiple types of all the types.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, next question is from Rubens Kuhl. Since 2024 RDAP profile testing will only be available in October, does that mean that testing will only start in October for RDAP?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

That's a very good question. I'm going to discuss that in the next slides.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, from Maxim again, question for page 14 main requires EPP escrow RDAP, but the note to P14 says that not all required. How could it be those are among the five necessary services?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Oh, yeah, so that note on slide 14 is about the additional registry services. Like for example, if you offer registry log, if you offer, I don't know, some kind of protected mark list, if you offer BTAPPA, those kinds of services are the ones that are referenced there as not required to be, basically they are optional, right? A gTLD applicant may choose to support them or not.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, question from Atsushi Endo regarding slide 15 and 16. Regarding slide 15 and 16, after pre-evaluation windows period closes, if applicant wants to be evaluated additional registry services, including the IDN tables, is it possible to be tested additionally as needed?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yes, we know that you're going to be listed as an evaluated RSPs, and maybe you're going to get some business relationship with some gTLD applicants, and maybe they're going to tell you, hey, I want to support this additional IDN table or these additional registry services. So the answer is yes, you can apply for additional IDN tables and registry services.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, and we have a question from Alexander Merhoff. If a question is determined not to pass, will there be an option for the RSP to resubmit more information or justifications?

GUSTAVO LOZANO Yes, that's the CQ process. Before we grade one of those questions as not pass, there is going to be an opportunity to provide additional information.

ANDY NEWTON All right, another question from Maxim. Is there a definition of the harmonization used by the back-end testing?

GUSTAVO LOZANO So we're not testing for harmonization within the RSP program, but the LGRs with full variance set that we have published, those went through a harmonization process, but there is no testing for harmonization.

ANDY NEWTON Okay, and another question from Alex. What is the information fields that will be published in the RSP pre-approval list? Will there be an option to add a well-known brand name in addition to the company name?

GUSTAVO LOZANO Oh, that's a good question about the additional company name. We're going to take that one to discuss internally, but that's a good question.

JAROMIR TALIR

Just to clarify, the first publication will be on 9 December, which means that until this date, it's possible to clear all the issues like found during the evaluation period, but you mentioned that it's possible even to clear it after and to get to the next, maybe next publication. So it's not limited that the clearance can be done all the way over time during the year. Do I understand correctly?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yes, so on May 20th, you are not going to be able to create any more organizations right within the system. That's the object that we call for the application system, let's say. But if for some reason, as I was explaining, you want to add an additional IDN because you have a potential customer that wants to support that IDN, you can create an application for that IDN table, for example. And if you're applying for a main RSP, if it takes you more time, for example, to do technical testing, that's fine, but probably you're not going to make it to the first version of the lease, right?

YARMIR TALIR

Okay, and exactly what you mentioned about the deadline of this May 20, how it's related with the payment. This is the deadline for creating the organization, or is the deadline for the payment?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So that's the deadline for creating the organization, then we have certain deadlines for payment and the process, right? So what is going to happen if you apply, let's say, two weeks before we close the window and payment takes more time to be clear, then it's

going to reduce your opportunity to be on the first version of the lease, right? Because you will have more things to do and probably you're not going to make it.

YARMIR TAL

And on one of the slides you mentioned that there will be the list of the publication of evaluated RSPs, as in like a positively-evaluated or also all negatively-evaluated RSPs?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

All the applications are going to be made public.

YARMIR TAL

Okay, so if somebody will not get through though, it will be shown that this RSP didn't make it?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

I mean, it's not going to say like that, but you can make the assumption based on who is in the evaluated lease and the applications that were published, right? Okay, thank you.

ANDY NEWTON

And we have a hand from Lars.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN

Thank you, Lars Liman here from Netnod. So many questions, but let me begin with this one. The applicant organization is evaluated and not until it has passed the first stages, not until then is it

possible to submit an application and not until that has been evaluated is it possible to enter into the technical tests. That's a very serial path. And it also relies very much on ICANN's ability to process the information that an applicant supplies. And during the evaluation process within ICANN, there's no feedback regarding when a response to that is about to happen. And so the applicant is working in a limbo until they get a response from ICANN says, yes, now you can do technical testing. But if we don't know when we're going to be let into the technical system, we cannot allocate our resources, our technical staff that need to work with the technical testing. So how can we get better feedback from when things are going to happen along this ladder?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Okay, so for technical testing, we're going to use RST version 2.0. I'm going to talk about that system in the next slides. I'm going to talk a little bit about the test environment available since November. So you can point your technical folks to this OT&E and they can start exercising those test cases to see that your infrastructure is going to be able to go through technical testing. Technical testing is completely automated. So if your infrastructure, for example, passes all the different test cases in OT&E, once you go to technical testing within the program, it should be as simple as in a few hours to clear technical testing. So my recommendation is to start working in the OT&E right now.

LARS LIMAN

Yes, we'll do that. Thank you.

ANDY NEWTON

And we have another remote question from Davy Song. Is the RSP evaluation, the precondition, a must to serve a TLD? For example, if I'm going to apply for a new gTLD next year, do I need to pass that evaluation before I can apply for a new gTLD next year?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yes, you do. So I think that's a good question. Do I need to pass that evaluation before I can host my new gTLD? No. As a gTLD applicant, you need to select an RSP that has been evaluated. That could be a third party, or if you want to provide the back-end services, then yes, you need to go through the RSP evaluation program if you're going to provide those back-end services for your gTLD.

ALISON MANKIN

Hi, it's Alison Mankin. This is hypothetical, but I just want to make it really clear about it. You've got two organizations. One is the RSP for another and has had a long relationship. The organization which is not the RSP is applying for new gTLDs. Does their incumbent registry service provider have to go through this testing? Can they just select their incumbent and not have them go through the testing?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So all the gTLD applicants must select and evaluate RSP that has gone through the RSP evaluation program if they want to participate in the next round.

ALISON MANKIN

So in order to get any new gTLDs, you have to select somebody who has gone through it, and your incumbent has to go through it in order to do that?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yes.

LARS LIMAN

Again, a little back to the fees. If an applicant was to apply for two, you have the four different versions, different fees you can apply for. Is it possible to apply for two now, go through the early evaluation, and then for the next thing in 2026 apply for a third one riding on the same fee?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

That's an interesting question. I'm going to take that one to discuss with my team.

KROPOPA SHAH

Okay, thank you. Just a clarification question. If you start your application for one type of RSV, like a DNS, for example, can you go

back and add or add it to your application to support another type of RSV, or do you have to do it all in one go?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So the applications are independent.

MAXIM ALZOBA

Maxim Alzobov, for the record. The question is, as I understand, the number of applicants for back-end testing changes the price or costs of the testing itself. When the number is going to be published? I mean, for example, during the back-end testing, 40 companies applied. And is it accumulating? Like, 40 applied and 30 passed, 10 didn't. And during the new gTLD application time, in 2006, another 20 companies applied, organizations applied. And does it mean that those who applied in the end of the queue, they have lower fees? How is it going to be procedurally calculated? And when? Thanks.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yeah, it's at the end of the pre-evaluation period. So on May 20th, well, we're going to have some slack there, but when we close the application period, we're going to look at the statistics of how many paid applications we have. And if we reach one of those thresholds, then the fee is going to be lower. So anyone that applies on the next round, well, not the next round, the next window, sorry, for RSP program, they are going to be charged the new fee. And

those that paid the 92K, they're going to receive a refund based on that threshold.

MAXIM ALZOBA

Just clarification. Does it mean that those two windows, one, the current back-end testing application window, and the new gTLD, do they have separate calculation windows, like the counter goes to zero for the application, or is it cumulatively?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

No, it's not cumulative. So it's two separate windows. For the fee threshold reduction, the only window that is being considered is the current window, the pre-evaluation window.

MAXIM ALZOBA

So in the end, you are going to publish a published number somehow.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

We are publishing the numbers right now. If you go to the new gTLD microsite for RSP, we have been publishing numbers on a monthly basis. So you can see how many applicants there are, how many have paid, and all of that.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, we have a question from Werner Staub.

WERNER STAUB

I have a question about the DNS RSPs. How do you count them? I mean, what is going to be a different DNS RSP from another? For instance, in the logic of having more than one DNS provider for the same TLD, which is of interest in terms of diversity.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So in the case of gTLDs, we are only requesting them to have one DNS RSP. Obviously, when we are doing the evaluation for that DNS RSP, they need to have Anycast, and they have to have a good footprint so that they can provide a stable service. If you want to have more than one, Anycast cloud, that's when you are going to probably choose multiple DNS RSPs.

WERNER STAUB

So if you want to have more than one DNS provider, would both of those have to be accredited? Would that mean that there would be ultimately less name servers available? Or would you then say that they could just take responsibility for a name server operated by somebody else? Because it is always a chain of sub-service provision. And then who do you count as being the service provider? Because there's always going to be a subcontractor and the subcontractor of the subcontractor, because these networks are complex.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yeah. We have a question in the FAQ that tried to clarify that web of subcontractors, right? The idea is, those DNS RSPs, they have the personnel, they have the staff, they manage the infrastructure.

Obviously, they can use cloud services because everybody uses cloud services right now, right? But basically it's that delineation of responsibility for that company to provide those services. And we have seen in the market there are gTLDs that use multiple Anycast clouds from different providers.

ANDY NEWTON

All right. I have a question in the Q&A pod from Alex Marahoff. Will the successful RSP evaluation also be a requirement to transition existing gTLDs? If yes, from which point in time will this be required?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yeah, that's a good question. That's a question that we have received multiple times. I don't have an answer, unfortunately. That's something that we are still trying to define internally.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay. And we have a hand from Atsushi Endo. Okay. Here.

ATSUSHI ENDO

Thank you very much for your answering for my question on Zoom that I asked that is there additional evaluation is fine or your answer is it is possible. So for the clarification that I'd like to know that when it's additional evaluation for the additional services or additional IDN tables that the not next year, that right after we pass the evaluation, it means that in September or October or right after the list of DRSP published in December or it's up to the applicants

or your answer means that the next year's additional evaluation period this I'd like to clarify this.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So if you apply for IDN tables and additional DRSP services right now, they are going to be public and you go through the process and they are clear, they are going to be part of that list of the RSPs. So your potential customers will see in the list of evaluated RSPs that your company has been evaluated as a main RSP and is going to offer, I don't know, the following IDN tables. So to me, if I were an RSP applicant, I would try to apply for most of the each-engine registry services and IDN tables now so that I can signal to the world what I'm going to support, right?

ATSUSHI ENDO

That's so if apply once first application include it's not included in the initial things that is it possible to add and again add before? Okay, is it possible? Thank you.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Okay, I think that we need to start with technical testing. If not, we're going to run out of time.

ANDY NEWTON

We have one more question from Gordon Dick, more raised hand.

GORDON DICK

Okay, so I just wanted to really clarify and the point around Werner's said in the questions on DNS. If you're a DNS provider who uses an additional cloud that you deal with or an additional DNS provider, but you take responsibility for that whole chain, do you also need your other provider that you're subcontracting that additional part to sign up? Or is that taken as part because it is a whole part of what our DNS offering?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So let me see if I understand the question. You are, let's say, a DNS RSP. You have your own Anycast cloud that you manage. But in addition to that, you have a subcontractor that it's going to offer an additional Anycast cloud for that particular gTLD?

GORDON DICK

Yes, and it's the default scenario for every gTLD you offer that you use both clouds and you direct that other Anycast operator to set everything up in the way that you're wanting it.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So maybe, Gordon, if you can send that question through the portal, because I understand, I kind of understand the ramifications of all the different subcontractors, but I will need to review with legal. Okay, so let's start with technical testing. Next slide, please. Technical testing is the step that happens after you have been cleared for technical evaluation for that questionnaire with all the different questions. We're going to use a system called Registry System version 2.0. Currently, as I can or we have a system

called RST version 1.0. That's the system that we use, for example, in case of MSAs, pre-delegation testing for 2012 round applicants. And this system contains automated and manual evaluation components. So basically, it's pretty simple. We need to have highly skilled engineers to execute the testing. Why? Because it's a manual system. It was developed back in 2012, and that was the design that was used at that time. For the next round, we are creating a new system completely from scratch. It's called RST 2.0. This is a completely automated system. It's an API. So once you are ready to go to technical testing, you are going to be authenticated into the system. You're going to provide information like the IP addresses of your DNS servers, the IP addresses of your EPP servers, etc., etc. And the system will automatically connect to all those servers, execute testing, create domain names, create contacts if necessary, transfer domain names, and it's going to provide that your infrastructure is capable of providing the critical functions. Next slide, please. The development of this system started back in September 2023. We have a hierarchical structure. We have test plans. So we have a test plan for DNS RSPs. We have a test plan for main RSPs, and so on and so forth. Then we have test suites within those test plans. And finally, we have the actual test cases. Those test cases have a pass or fail kind of result, but there are multiple error codes or result codes for every test case. Next slide. The idea of this system is, well, in addition to have a greater scope than RST 1.0 and being automated, we are also adding new functionality. For example, we are going to test for RDAP. We are going to test for DNSSEC algorithm rollovers. And also, we are going

to test that your infrastructure is capable of supporting the minimum RPMs, which are the right protection mechanisms. So that you have implemented the EPP launch extension for the telemetry in-house aspects of the contract. Next slide, please. How does authentication works? We are using the same authentication mechanism as in MOSAPI or RRI. We use TLS client authentication. And the way that we find out your certificate, it's through TLSA records. So you're going to provide a host name in the RSP portal. From that host name, we retrieve the TLSA records. And that's the way we authenticate your TLS client certificate. If you have not used this kind of authentication methods, please start working on it because it's not that common. But we have been using it for incumbents for MOSAPI and RRI for years. We know it works. It's, well, TLS client authentication is, you can consider the gold standard, right? Or one of the gold standards for authentication. Next slide, please. And this is the timeline. It's very important. And this is going to address the question from Rubens. So on November 2024, we launched the OT&E. We have limited coverage of test cases. It was a beta version kind of system. On February 2025, a couple of weeks ago, we reached 100% coverage of the test cases. If you go to the RST specifications, we have hundreds and hundreds of test cases. I mean, it's a lot. On March 31st, we want to reach what we call production ready code. So right now we are doing UAT and QA. And by the end of this month, we are going to consider that code to be production ready. And by the end of May 2025, we are planning to finalize all the test plan that we have for this system, right? So by the end of May, we are going to consider the system to

be fully tested. Obviously, it's impossible to say free of bugs, but hopefully with the least amount of bugs that we can have in the system, right? And Rubens was asking about the support for the gTLD RDAP profile 2024. We are going to start doing the evaluations right after we close the window. So we close on May 20th. On May 21st, we're going to start doing the evaluations. If an RSP clear technical evaluation and they can start technical testing, they may not be tested for the gTLD RDAP 2024 profile. They may only be tested for compliance with the RSCs for RDAP. But when they go through PDT, years in the future when the gTLD RDAP application window opens in PDT, we are going to test them for 2024 profile. If an RSP has not gone through technical testing by October 2024, we are going to test them for the 2024 profile. Now, it's important to mention that we are currently working to try to have the support for the gTLD RDAP 2024 profile in RST early in October. We're working on that. Hopefully, we can have good news in future presentations. But as of now, that's the current thinking. Next slide, please. And these are some of the questions that we have received. So one of the questions is which TLDs are going to be used in technical testing? We're going to use fake TLDs. They start with CC dash dash. So if your system validates IDN 2008 compliance for the TLD string, let's say. Obviously, CC dash dash may not be considered an [RLDH.] So try to adjust your system because these are the TLDs that we're going to use for testing. So for example, if you're applying for main RSP, we're going to use CC dash dash main dash D or M. I think it's for main and then the application ID. The application ID is just letters and digits, so it should be fine. No

issues. And it's important to mention that for every IDN table that you apply, we're going to do a testing phase in technical testing. So if you apply for Spanish, we're going to do testing for Spanish. If you apply for Chinese, we're going to do a testing for Chinese and so on and so forth. And that's how we're going to define those testing TLDs. Next slide, please. So what domain names are used for testing the IDN tables? If you choose to use those pre-evaluated LGRs with full variant sets, we have already generated the testing second level domain names that we're going to use. You can find them on that link. If you're going to use a custom element, I'm going to talk to you a little bit about what is LGR, then we're going to manually generate testing second-level domain names that are, that corresponds to that LGR, right. Next slide, please. So for RPMs, we're going to test that your platform is capable of supporting the right protection mechanism, for example, all the connections to the Tremor database. We're going to use testing SMDs and testing DNLs, domain name label list. You can find all the information on that link. So you don't require to onboard or be a customer of the [Tremor] database. We are going to use testing cryptographic material so that you don't need to onboard with the clearinghouse at this point. Obviously, once you are elected by some gTLD applicants and those gTLDs are delegated to the root, well, you will need to connect to the [inaudible], but that's in the future. For now, it's just using testing material. Next slide, please. This is also an interesting question. There are RSP platforms, they support different modes of operations because they may need to have different modes depending on the market or jurisdiction. If your

RSP supports multiple modes of operations, so they generate different error codes for certain scenarios, you will need to configure your RSP platform to pass technical testing, right? That's what we're going to test that those error codes that we expect or status codes are there. Next slide. And well, these are the next step, the key dates. I think that I have been mentioning them through the, through this presentation on May 20th, we closed the early evaluation window. On December 9th, first time we published the list of RSPs and the applications that we received. And well, the current planning is that by April 2026, we should be opening the second RSP evaluation program concurrently with the gTLD application submission period. And if you have questions about RST, this is the time for that.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay. We have a remote question, or a question in the QA pod from Atsushi Endo, it's a two-part question. On slide 30, testing TLDs are shown as ZZ type and app ID in case an applicant who applies for main plus DNS plus DNSSEC, testing TLDs are considered to be ZZ-main or using separate ZZ-main plus ZZ-DNS plus ZZ-DNSSEC.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

Yeah, the type is the thing that is going to make the string unique, right? So the string for main is going to be unique from the string used for DNS because we have the type of RSP application within the gTLD name.

ANDY NEWTON

I think the question is though, during testing, is it going to be just main or are there going to be three different TLDs tested?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

No, it's going to be different TLDs. So an application for a particular type of RSP is independent from other applications. So if you want to apply for main, DNS, DNSSEC, those are going to be three testing scenarios within the RST 2.0.

ANDY NEWTON

Okay, and related to this, our understanding is that if the applicant submits together for main plus DNS plus DNSSEC, testing data needs to be linked up among main plus DNS plus DNSSEC. Is that understanding correct?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

No, the testing is independent between the types of RSP. So main may require, for example, that when we create a domain name, that that domain name appears in RDAB, right? But it's independent.

ANDY NEWTON

All right, and we have a hand up from Maxim Alzoba.

MAXIM ALZOBA

My question is, for example, a backend passes the IDN test for a particular IDN table, for example, Hungarian script. And then they

want to add, like, German script. Do they have to pass the RSP evaluation again? I mean, the whole IDN RSP testing process?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

No, you need to pass technical screening for the level of IDN support that you want to provide. So imagine that you want to be level three, which is the highest. You are going to be presented with a questionnaire. Once you pass and you are evaluated for level three, then you can apply for as many IDN tables as you want and you don't need to go back. So once you are approved for Arabic script, then that's it. If you now want to be evaluated for Spanish language, then you just apply for that IDN table and so on and so forth.

MAXIM ALZOBA

Clarification. I meant separate IDN tables for separate customers who are not variants of each other. Does it mean they need IDN one only because they are not variants among each other and second level do not have variants, for example?

GUSTAVO LOZANO

So you should apply for the universe of IDN tables that you are going to support. So if you are planning to support 10 IDN tables, you need to apply for those 10 IDN tables in the RSP program. And once you go to the gTLD submission period, maybe one of your customers is only going to support Spanish. That's fine. They only select Spanish from that menu of IDN tables.

ANDY NEWTON

All right. I do not see any other hands. I can't see in the room, but there are none in Zoom. Yeah. Okay. Oh, there's Werner. Okay.

WERNER STAUB

Yeah. It's just what I didn't get from the ability to add IDN tables. How long does it take to get one added? And will it be available at all times? Can I just say, oh, we need, whatever, Telugu. And now we need Telugu. Will we be able to say, this is going to be done next week? Or, oh, we have to wait until ICANN has an opening of another process and then we may be, you know.

GUSTAVO LOZANO

No. So you can apply at any time for those IDN tables. We have some service level targets of how long it's going to take. If you use a custom IDN table, it's going to take longer than if you use one of the pre-evaluated, pre-approved IDN tables. If you go to that link that I have on the slides, we cover most of the language and most of the scripts. So if you, for example, choose to use one of those, it's going to take all of days, because the system automatically understands that you want to use the pre-evaluated. In fact, there is a question. Are you going to use, if you choose, for example, Spanish language, which is one of those that are there, then you are going to be presented with a question. Are you going to use the pre-evaluated LGR with full variance set? If you answer yes, then the approval is automated or automatic.

ANDY NEWTON

All right. I see no other hands or no questions. Okay. And I don't see no other questions in the room. So thank you so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]