



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

12 March 2013

Rt. Hon. Carwyn Jones  
First Minister of Wales  
Welsh Government  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Ty Hywell  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your letter dated 29 November 2012, regarding the applications for .CYMRU and .WALES. We appreciate your interest in the New gTLD Program, and we have posted your letter to the New gTLD correspondence page at (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/correspondence/jones-to-chehade-29nov12-en.pdf>).

The New gTLD Program intends to open up the top level of the Internet's namespace to foster diversity, encourage competition, and enhance the utility of the DNS. ICANN sought public input on how to order applications for evaluation in a way that would be equitable and ensure the security and stability of the DNS. The comment period was open from 29 July 2012 to 19 August 2012, and over one hundred community submissions were posted to the forum. To view the summary of public comments, see (<http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/report-comments-gtld-batching-05sep12-en.pdf>). While the prioritization of certain categories of TLDs, such as geographic TLDs, was suggested by some members of the community, there were differing opinions on which categories should be prioritized.

Before proceeding with the Prioritization Draw, ICANN asked for public input regarding its use. The period was open between 10 October 2012 and 9 November 2012; you can view the submitted comments at (<http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/drawing-prioritization-10oct12-en.htm>). The majority of comments submitted were in favor of the proposed Prioritization Draw, and there was significant support for prioritizing internationalized domain names (IDNs). ICANN proceeded with the Prioritization Draw with the support of the Board of Directors.

The New gTLD Prioritization Draw was held on 17 December 2012. Each application received a prioritization number to allow us to establish an order for completing initial evaluations and subsequent phases of the process. .CYMRU received prioritization number 244, and .WALES received prioritization number 807. Please note that because different applications may follow different paths in the evaluation process (e.g., string contention, objections), prioritization number is not an absolute indication of when a TLD will be delegated.



We recognize that the issue of paired delegation of Welsh and English TLDs is important to the Welsh community, and we appreciate your comments in this regard. However, we must process applications based on the decisions that were reached through public comment and that have been supported by the ICANN Board of Directors. As such, we will process the .CYMRU and .WALES TLDs according to their priority numbers. However, once the evaluation process is complete, applicants are not required to begin contract execution and pre-delegation testing immediately following evaluation. An application that completes evaluation may refrain from transitioning to delegation until a later date (e.g., until its paired application has also completed evaluation). For more information on the transition to delegation, see Module 5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

We thank you for communication, and we look forward to your continued participation in the New gTLD Program and ICANN's multi-stakeholder model.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine A. Willett", is written in a cursive style.

Christine A. Willett  
Vice President, gTLD Operations