

Criteria for the recognition of NIRs in the APNIC region

APNIC Document identity

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Please note:	Noting that the EC passed a resolution on 27 February 2012, to impose a moratorium on accepting any new NIR applications, having considered the future of the NIR program, the EC resolved that this moratorium be made permanent. As a result, this document is deprecated with immediate effect, without prejudice to existing NIRs, which will be unaffected by this change.	

About this document

This document describes criteria for forming and recognising new National Internet Registries (NIRs) in the Asia Pacific region. The criteria are also intended to be adopted as standards that all recognised NIRs should meet at all times.

1. Introduction

Internet resources (such as IP addresses and Autonomous System numbers) are currently distributed through a structure of delegated Internet Registry responsibility. IANA allocates address space to APNIC as a Regional Internet Registry (RIR). Address space is further allocated by APNIC either to Local Internet Registries (LIRs) or to NIRs. While LIRs are generally ISPs that assign addresses to their own infrastructure and end-user networks, NIRs play a role which is much more similar to that of an RIR, having responsibility for allocation of address space to LIRs within their particular geographic domain.

NIRs have long existed within the APNIC structure and have fulfilled an important role in serving organizations within their respective countries or economies. NIRs can satisfy the need for procedures and services that take account of local cultural differences; however, it is important to note that NIRs must operate in a way that is consistent with regional and global resource management policies. It is also essential that NIRs are neutral, open, and transparent in all their operations

A fundamental aspect of the NIR structure in the APNIC region is that responsibilities which have been delegated to APNIC are partially redelegated to another body, namely the NIR. The conduct of that NIR in carrying out its delegated responsibilities may have serious impact on the overall management of IP resources in the Asia-Pacific region, and is therefore of critical ongoing interest to APNIC.

While not providing performance or quality criteria for NIRs, this document does provide a number of technical and operational requirements with which any new and existing NIRs should always comply. These are objective criteria which are consistent with the criteria by which RIRs themselves are recognised, and which have been deemed by the Internet community globally¹ as essential to the responsible management of Internet resources.

2. Principles

2.1 Geographic service region

An NIR must operate within the borders of a particular country or economy which is uniquely identified by an ISO3166 code. In each such country or economy only one NIR will be recognised by APNIC

2.2 Selection and recognition of NIR

The selection of a candidate NIR to serve a particular country or economy is a matter for that community. It is not possible for APNIC to select an NIR which satisfies the preferences of any community, or to select between competing candidates for recognition.

The recognition of a new NIR is a responsibility of the APNIC Executive Council (EC) as representatives of the APNIC Membership. A candidate NIR will be recognised by the EC in accordance with the policies in this document.

2.3 Policy framework

All NIRs operate within the policy framework of the APNIC region and of the wider global Internet community, and should implement and enforce regional and global policies at all times.

An NIR may implement local policies, however these should not conflict in any way with regional or global policies. Any substantial policy change proposed within an NIR's community should be brought to the APNIC community for approval through existing open policymaking mechanisms.

2.4 Local procedures

NIRs are expected to implement operational procedures which suit the specific conditions of the environment in which they operate, and they should have maximum flexibility and autonomy in the development of those procedures. However, such procedures must be consistent with APNIC operational requirements, as detailed below.

2.5 Choice of registry by ISPs

ISPs in the service region of an NIR are not bound to use the services of that NIR, and may choose to join and request resources from APNIC. APNIC and each NIR must cooperate fully in facilitating the free choice by ISPs of their preferred Internet registry. However, an ISP may receive resources from only one registry at any one time.

APNIC recognises that the applicable NIR should be the "first choice" for any ISP requesting APNIC membership. APNIC will always refer new membership queries to the NIR where it exists, and will then only accept new membership from within the NIR's constituency where a specific reason and/or preference is expressed.

2.6 Membership of APNIC

Each NIR must join APNIC as a member and enter into the applicable membership agreement with APNIC.

3. NIR criteria

3.1 National endorsement

An organization wishing to be recognised as an NIR must have formal endorsement at the national level by the appropriate Government body.

3.2 Organizational model

3.2.1 Non-profit structure

An NIR must be an independent legal entity established on a non-profit organizational structure.

3.2.2 Neutrality

An NIR must be able to demonstrate that it holds a neutral position with respect to the Internet industry that it serves. NIRs should not provide ISP services to external entities on a commercial basis. Furthermore, apart from securing appropriate Internet connectivity, NIRs should not have any special corporate or contractual relationship with any ISP within their service region.

3.2.3 Funding

An NIR must be able to demonstrate a stable funding model and funding base which will ensure sustainable and reliable services.

3.2.4 Capacity

An NIR must have the organizational and technical capacity to thoroughly implement all aspects of APNIC address management policies at all times. While operational procedures governing an NIR's interaction with APNIC are designed to provide appropriate verification and audit mechanisms, the NIR must nevertheless maintain the capacity to undertake those procedures correctly, and to implement policies faithfully.

3.3 Operational procedures

An NIR must satisfy all operational requirements deemed necessary for it to carry out its delegated responsibilities. These requirements relate to resource services provided by the NIR to its members, procedures for interaction between the NIR and APNIC, internal record keeping, database registration, confidentiality, audit and appeal processes, and other requirements which may be developed.

Operational requirements are not detailed here, but can be found in the draft APNIC document "Operational Policies for National Internet Registries in the APNIC Region"².

4. Recognition of new NIRs

4.1 Responsibility

The recognition of new NIRs in accordance with this document is a responsibility of the APNIC Executive Council (EC).

In the interests of openness and transparency however, the APNIC EC will accept comments from any interested stakeholders before making a final decision on recognition of an NIR. For this reason, any such application submitted to APNIC will be considered a public document and posted for public review to the APNIC website.

The APNIC Secretariat will implement and maintain a system by which a formal “Application for Recognition as an NIR” can be submitted to the APNIC EC, published for comment, reviewed and approved.

4.2 Change of recognised NIR

In order to be recognised as a new NIR in a country or economy which already has a recognised NIR, the new organization must submit to APNIC an Application for Recognition as an NIR.

Such an application will be accepted and reviewed by the APNIC EC on the same basis as described in this document. In particular, the application will have to demonstrate clearly that the nationally-determined choice of NIR (as described in 3.1 above) has been altered.

4.3 Withdrawal of NIR recognition

The APNIC EC may decide to withdraw APNIC’s recognition of an NIR, either because of demonstrated failure by that organization to adequately carry out its responsibility, or as a result of recognition by APNIC of another organization as NIR for the country or economy concerned (as described in section 4.2 above).

4.4 Dispute resolution

APNIC’s existing mechanisms for appeal of decisions and resolution of disputes will apply to decisions in relation to recognition of NIRs. For more information, please see the APNIC Bylaws³.

5. References

1. [ASO Recommendation Concerning Establishment of New Regional Internet Registries](#)
2. [“Operational Policies for National Internet Registries in the APNIC Region”](#)
3. [By-Laws of APNIC, s.71 – s.81](#)