



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Federal Trade Commission
Office of International Affairs
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

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Shaul Jolles, CEO
Dot Registry, LLC
208 W. 19th St.
Kansas City, MO 64108

Dear Mr. Jolles:

Thank you for your November 14, 2013 letter to the Federal Trade Commission supporting the Commission's advocacy for stronger consumer protection safeguards in connection with ICANN's expansion of generic top-level domains (gTLDs). I was asked to respond to your letter because the Office of International Affairs for Consumer Protection works closely with the Department of Commerce via the Government Advisory Council (the GAC) to advise ICANN of concerns and make recommendations. The FTC has been involved in ICANN-related matters for over ten years, pressing ICANN and other stakeholders to improve policies that cause harm to consumers engaged in e-commerce or that impede law enforcement efforts to identify and locate bad actors. In addition, our involvement has included testifying before Congress, participating in ICANN meetings, and issuing statements on various ICANN policy initiatives.

We appreciate your concerns over the launch of TLDs, such as corporate identifiers (e.g., .inc, .llc, .llp, .corp), without proper safeguards. As you know, the Commission has expressed similar concerns, albeit in a broader context, with proposed domains associated with various regulated or professional sectors, including corporate identifiers.¹ FTC staff advice and concerns about the need for further consumer protection safeguards for regulated and professional extensions are reflected in the GAC Beijing Communiqué issued on April 11, 2013: <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/Governmental+Advisory+Committee>. The communiqué set forth several concerns regarding the new gTLDs. In particular, the communiqué recommended three additional safeguards for market sectors that have regulated entry requirements such as corporate identifiers. They are: 1) verification and validation of registrant's credentials for participation in the sector specified in the domain name; 2) consultation with relevant supervisory authorities in case of doubt regarding authenticity of credentials; and 3) post-registration checks to ensure registrant's validity and continuing compliance with their credentialing requirements. We believe this is the type of proactive approach required to combat fraudulent websites.

¹ See <http://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2011/12/ftc-warns-rapid-expansion-internet-domain-name-system-could-leave>

We will continue to monitor ICANN's response to the communiqué and work with the GAC to help ensure that the communiqué's recommended consumer protection safeguards are implemented in a concrete and meaningful manner. We will also continue to work with our law enforcement partners to share information and perspectives about how to best protect consumers from illicit activities associated with the domain name system.

We appreciate you taking the time to raise the concerns expressed in your letter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (202) 326-3237.

Very truly yours,

Laureen Kapin