



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Telecommunications and**  
**Information Administration**  
**Washington, DC 20230**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT USTLD LOCALITY DOMAINS AND DELEGATED MANAGERS**

February 2007

### **What is the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)?**

NTIA, an agency of the U. S. Department of Commerce (the Department), is the President's principal adviser on telecommunications and information policy issues. The U.S. Department of Commerce has been managing the .us top level domain since 2001 for the benefit of all Americans and is committed to preserving the stability and security of the Internet domain name and addressing system. Therefore, NTIA advises the Department on a variety of Internet issues and supervises administration of the country code top-level domain for the United States (usTLD or .us domain). For more information, see <http://www.ntia.doc.gov>

### **What is NeuStar, Inc.?**

NeuStar, Inc. is a publicly traded company that provides clearinghouse and directory services to the global communications and Internet industry. For more information, see <http://www.NeuStar.biz>. Since 2001 NeuStar has managed the usTLD for the Department under a contract that expires on October 25, 2007. Under the direction of the Department, NeuStar is responsible for improving the .us locality space by: providing support service to existing delegated managers and undelegated sub-domains; modernizing usTLD locality-based processes; and creating delegated manager and WHOIS databases. The contract is available at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/domainname/usca/index.html>

### **What is the .us locality domain space?**

The usTLD locality space is composed of domain names reflecting political geography based on two-letter state abbreviations and divided further into localities, including cities, counties, parishes, townships, or local names (e.g., <Alexandria.va.us>). In addition to geographical locality names, the space also includes certain affinity names such as, for example, STATE, FED, K12, LIB, and NSN.

### **What is a delegated manager?**

As domain name registrations in the .us domain increased, Dr. Jon Postel, one of the original usTLD administrators, delegated management of localities within the usTLD hierarchy to individuals, organizations, and State governments. Delegated managers frequently perform registry and registration functions as volunteers, and often at no fee. According to the guidelines the original .us administrators drafted for operation of the .us domain and that continue in effect, delegated managers:

are trustees for the delegated domain and have a duty to serve the community. The designated [delegated] manager is the trustee of the domain for the domain itself and the global Internet community. Concerns about “rights” and “ownership” of domains are inappropriate. It is appropriate to be concerned about “responsibilities” and “service” to the community.” Section 3.3, Delegated Subdomains, Request for Comments (RFC) 1480, A. Cooper and J. Postel, June, 1993.

Therefore, delegated managers are essential to the successful operation of the .us locality space. For more information about NeuStar’s delegated manager policies and support, see [http://www.neustar.us/delegated\\_managers/index.html](http://www.neustar.us/delegated_managers/index.html).

### **Why is NeuStar requiring delegated managers and locality domain name users to execute an agreement?**

To improve services provided to State and local communities and to enhance technical stability and accuracy of contact information, the Department requires each delegated manager to enter into a service level agreement with NeuStar. Prior to the Department’s management of .us, delegations occurred without adequate records. Consequently, the identity of many delegated managers and the contact information for .us domains they serve was, and remains, unknown. The .us domain administration contract requires NeuStar to make the .us domain more robust and reliable by improving the locality space, developing a delegated manager database and a WHOIS database.<sup>1</sup> Among the improvements NeuStar is implementing with NTIA’s approval is a requirement that delegated managers execute an agreement stating their compliance with certain technical and service requirements, as well as with WHOIS and dispute resolution procedures. The delegated manager agreement also requires locality domain managers to provide contracts with the .us name holders it serves to ensure that these requirements and policies flow through to all .us name holders.

In April 2006, NeuStar began working with known delegated managers to execute service level agreement. In time, NeuStar discovered that some it contacted were merely using a locality domain name without serving any other .us domain names. Therefore, NTIA approved a locality registration agreement for NeuStar’s use in such instances. The deadline for delegated managers and locality name registrants to execute their respective agreements expired on January 30, 2007. NeuStar, in consultation with NTIA, began on February 20, 2007, a phased process to reclaim the locality domains of unknown or uncooperative delegated managers.

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<sup>1</sup> The WHOIS database provides a publicly accessible tool to look up records in the .us domain space, including the registrant’s name and contact information, as well as the registrar’s identity. For more information see <http://www.whois.us>. The WHOIS database is necessary to: facilitate civil and criminal law enforcement actions involving the Internet; support network operators responsible for Internet operations, security, and stability; and enable consumers and businesses to file complaints about fraud, phishing, spamming, and other law violations.

### **What happens when a delegated manager desires to discontinue in that role?**

Recognizing that some delegated managers may no longer desire to continue in that capacity, NeuStar is requesting that such managers provide NeuStar with the contact data necessary in order to assume the exiting manager's role. NeuStar will not charge a fee to either the delegated manager or the domain name holder for this service. Therefore, to facilitate an orderly transition, exiting delegated managers should provide NeuStar with the zone file for all registrants and notify each registrant that NeuStar will become the new delegated manager.

### **What if my delegated manager refuses to provide NeuStar with the zone file or sign the service level agreement?**

The deadline to sign the service level agreement expired on January 30, 2007, and since that time, and under the direction of the Department, NeuStar has begun a phased transition in which it will assume responsibility for .us names from the uncooperative delegated managers. NeuStar requires registrants' zone file information to provide registry domain name services and to ensure that operation of .us domain names occurs in the event of a service failure. Therefore, uncooperative delegated managers are putting .us names entrusted to their care at risk of disrupted service by failing to sign the service level agreement or refusing to provide NeuStar with the zone file. Therefore, contact NeuStar as explained below to minimize service disruptions.

### **What should I do to minimize website and e-mail service disruptions?**

You may protect your .us locality domain name by quickly contacting your delegated manager to inquire whether the manager has executed a service level agreement with NeuStar. In addition, urge your delegated manager to execute the service level agreement or to otherwise cooperate with NeuStar in the transition. Finally, if you are unable to contact your delegated manager about the status of your .us locality domain remains unclear, contact NeuStar as soon as possible by e-mail at <support.us@neustar.us> or its through its toll-free telephone number at (888) 415-0365 for further assistance.