Details

- Ref. Name:
  **AFPUB-2010-GEN-005**
- Policy Affected:
  AFPUB-2008-GEN-001
- Status:
  **Implemented**
- Date:
  **11 Nov 2010**
- Author:
  **S. Moonesamy**

## 1) Incentive

The initial policy development process (AFPUB--2004-GEN-001) used by AfriNIC was meant to be a transitional process. A revised policy was specified once AfriNIC was well established. The existing policy (AFPUB-2008-GEN-001) does not specify what should be done in the event that the PDP-MG cannot attend an public policy meeting or if a person disagrees with an action taken by the PDP-MG.

The lack of information affects the transparency of the policy development process. It has a negative impact on the decision-making process as issues that have been discussed and resolved on the mailing list are reopened during the public policy meeting because the community is not aware of the mailing list discussions. There is also a lack of documentation about the procedures used, and the approval and implementation of a policy.

The steps used to determine consensus leads to a situation where comments provided during online discussions do not bear the same weight as those made during the public policy meeting.

There is also a lack of awareness and a lack of understanding of the principles upon which the policy development process are based. Although the existing policy does not explicitly mention the principles, it follows the same principles mentioned in this document.

It is proposed to revise the existing policy so that the principles and procedures are documented. This document adds procedures to the policy development process to deal with disputes and the recall of the Chair. It also adds some flexibility to vary the process in the case of an emergency.

## 2) Introduction

This document describes the AfriNIC Policy Development Process (PDP). The policies are documented AfriNIC community decisions that directly determine the rules by which AfriNIC manages and administers Internet number resources.

The procedures described in this document are designed to be fair, open and objective and are intended to:

- provide ample opportunity for participation and comment by all interested parties;
- establish widespread Internet community consensus.

These procedures adopt generally accepted practices and provide the flexibility to adapt to a variety of circumstances that can occur in a process. This document obsoletes AFPUB-2008-GEN-001.

## 3) Scope

The Policy Development Process covers the development and modification of policies for handling Internet Number Resources within the AfriNIC service region. Changes to the Policy Development Process itself will also follow the process.

Internet number resource policies are distinctly separate from AfriNIC general business practices and procedures. General business practices and procedures are not within the purview of the Policy Development Process.

This policy will take effect at the first AfriNIC Public Policy Meeting following the ratification by the AfriNIC Board of Directors.

## 4) Policy Development Principles

All policies are developed by the Internet community following three principles: openness, transparency and fairness. The Internet community initiates and discusses the proposals. If consensus is reached on the draft policy, it is recommended to the AfriNIC Board of Directors for adoption as a policy.

### *3.1 Openness*

All policies are developed in an open forum in which anyone may participate. There are no qualifications for participation.

### *3.2 Transparency*

All aspects of the Policy Development Process are documented and publicly available via the AfriNIC website. The discussions are publicly archived. All procedures that are developed to implement the policy are documented by AfriNIC and are publicly available.

### *3.3 Fairness*

The policies are to ensure fair distribution of resources and facilitating the operation of the Internet.

Actions are taken within a reasonable period of time.

## 5) Policy Development Working Group

The Policy Development Working Group (PDWG) discusses about the proposals. Anyone may participate via the Internet or in person. The work is carried out through the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list (RPD) and the Public Policy Meeting (PPM). Any person, participating either in person or remotely, is considered to be part of the Policy Development Working Group.

The Policy Development Working Group has two Chairs to perform the administrative functions of the group. The Working Group Chairs will be chosen by the AfriNIC community during the Public Policy Meeting and they will serve staggered two-year terms. The term ends during the first Public Policy Meeting meeting corresponding to the end of the term for which they were appointed. A term may begin or end no sooner than the first day of the Public Policy Meeting and no later than the last day of the Public Policy Meeting as determined by the mutual agreement of the current Chair and the new Chair.


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As a special case for the two Working Group Chairs appointed when this policy first takes effect, one of the Chairs will be appointed for a two-year term, and the other Chair will be appointed for a one-year term.

If the Working Group Chair is unable to serve his or her full term, the Working Group may select a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. If the Working Group Chairs are unable to attend the Public Policy Meeting, the Working Group shall nominate a Chair for the session. Anyone present at the meeting, whether in person or by remote participation, may participate in the selection process for a temporary Chair.

## 6) Policy Development Process

Anyone can submit a proposal. Policy proposals are submitted to the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list by the author. AfriNIC will provide administrative support and assist the author(s) in drafting the proposal, if requested. AfriNIC shall also provide relevant facts and statistics if requested during the discussion.

### *6.1 Draft Policy*

During the development of a policy, draft versions of the document are made available for review and comment by publishing them on the AfriNIC website and posting them to the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list. The document shall include the information mentioned in Appendix A. Each draft policy is assigned a unique identifier by AfriNIC. The website shall also contain the version history and the status of all proposals.

The draft policy shall be available for review for at least four weeks before the next Public Policy Meeting. The author(s) shall make the necessary changes to the draft policy according to the feedback received. The Working Group Chair(s) may request AfriNIC to provide an analysis, technical, financial, legal or other, of the impact of the draft policy.

A draft policy expires after one calendar year unless it is approved by the AfriNIC Board of Directors as a policy. The timeout period is restarted when the draft policy is replaced by a more recent version of the proposal. A draft policy can be withdrawn by the author(s) by sending a notification to the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list.

### *6.2 Public Policy Meeting*


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The draft policy is placed on the agenda of the an open public policy meeting. The agenda of the meeting shall be announced on the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list at least two weeks prior to the meeting. No change can be made to a draft policy within one week of the meeting. This is so that a stable version of the draft policy can be considered at the meeting. The Chair(s) determines whether rough consensus has been achieved during the Public Policy Meeting.

The Chair(s) shall publish the minutes of proceedings of the Public Policy Meeting not later than three weeks after the meeting.

### *6.3 Last Call*

A final review of the draft policy is initiated by the Working Group Chair(s) by sending an announcement to the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list. The Last Call period shall be at least two weeks. The Working Group Chair(s) shall evaluate the feedback received during the Public Policy Meeting and during this period and decide whether consensus has been achieved.

### *6.4 Approval*

The Working Group Chair(s) shall recommend the draft policy to the AfriNIC Board of Directors for approval if it has the consensus of the Policy Development Working Group. The recommendation shall include a report of the discussions of the draft policy and feedback from the Last Call. The draft policy shall be ratified by the AfriNIC Board of Directors.

### *6.5 Implementation*

The adoption and implementation date of the policy is announced on the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list. The implementation date should be less than six months after the end of the Last Call unless a waiver is requested.

## 7) Conflict Resolution

A person who disagrees with the actions taken by the Chair(s) shall discuss the matter with the Working Group Chair(s) or with the Working Group. If the disagreement cannot be resolved in this way, the person may file an appeal with an Appeal Committee appointed by the AfriNIC Board of Directors. An appeal can only be filed if it is supported by three (3) persons from the Working Group who have participated in the discussions.


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The appeal must be submitted within two weeks of the public knowledge of the decision. The Appeal Committee shall issue a report on its review of the complaint to the Working Group. The Appeal Committee may direct that the Chair(s) decision be annulled if the Policy Development Process has not been followed.

Anyone may request the recall of a Working Group Chair at any time, upon written request with justification to the AfriNIC Board of Directors. The request must supported by at least five (5) other persons from the Working Group. The AfriNIC Board of Directors shall appoint a recall committee, excluding the persons requesting the recall and the Working Group Chairs. The recall committee shall investigate the circumstances of the justification for the recall and determine the outcome.

## 8) Varying the Process

The process outlined in this document may vary in the case of an emergency. Variance is for use when a one-time waiving of some provision of this document is required. The decision to vary the process is taken by the Working Group Chair. There must be an explanation about why the variance is needed. The review period, including the Last Call, shall not be less than four weeks. If there is consensus, the policy is approved as described in Section 5.4 and it must be presented at the next Public Policy Meeting.

## 9) Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge that some text and procedures in this document have been adapted from RFC 2026. Thanks to Adiel Apklogan and Alain Aina for their insight, and Alan P. Barrett. The author only documented the process; full credit belongs to the AfriNIC community.

## Appendix A

### Draft Policy Template

The Draft Policy shall include:

1. Unique identifier (assigned by AfriNIC)

2. Draft Policy Name

3. Author(s)
(a) Name
(b) Email address
(c) Affiliation, if applicable

4. Draft Policy Version
5. Submission Date
6. Changes to existing policies (updates, obsoletes), if applicable
7. Summary of proposal
8. Proposal
9. List of changes between previous versions of the draft, if applicable

| History | |
|---|---|
| 25.06.2010 | 15 Days Last Call period starts |
| 03.06.2010 | Proposal reaches consensus during AfriNIC-12 in Kigali |
| 11.03.2010 | Author posts version 4. New reference now AFPUB-2010-GEN-004 |
| 11.03.2010 | Author posts version 3 to mailing list. New reference now AFPUB-2010-GEN-003. |
| 23.03.2010 | Author posts updated version to mailing list. New reference now AFPUB-2010-GEN-001 |
| 19.01.2010 | Author posts a change to incentive section |
| 10.12.2009 | Policy first proposed by direct submission to rpd mailing list and discussions commence |
| 11.11.2010 | Notification of board approval sent to rpd mailing list. |
| 24.11.2010 | Board sends communique to clarify some implementation details. Due to there not being enough time for proper elections, board proposed that S. Moonesamy and Paulos Nyirenda be interim chairs. Paulos declined on the 25th and Alan Barret volunteered. |

| Previous Versions | |
|---|---|
| | 1. AFPUB-2009-GEN-001<br>2. AFPUB-2010-GEN-001<br>3. AFPUB-2010-GEN-003<br>4. AFPUB-2010-GEN-004 |