



Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited

香港互聯網註冊管理有限公司

Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited

香港域名註冊有限公司

A Wholly-Owned Subsidiary of HKIRC

www.hkirc.net.hk

Public Consultation Paper
on
.hk Chinese Domain Name
Soft Launch
and
Reserved .hk
Chinese Domain Name Categories

Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited
Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited

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1. PURPOSE

This Consultation Paper (abbreviated to ‘the Paper’ or ‘this Paper’ hereafter) sets out:

- (a) the soft launch period¹ arrangement of .hk Chinese domain name (CDN); and
- (b) the categories of reserved .hk CDN

proposed by Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited (HKDNR) and invites comments from the public.

2. BACKGROUND

Internet Domain Name

2.1 An Internet domain name, a character-string representation of an IP address, provides an easy-to-remember and convenient-to-find location for a website on the Internet. All such names can be broadly divided into two categories: generic top level domain names (e.g. ‘.com’, ‘.org’) and country-code top level domain names (e.g. ‘.hk’, ‘.cn’, ‘.au’).

2.2 Currently, seven categories of .hk domain names are available for different sectors and entities in Hong Kong. They are: (1) ‘**.com.hk**’ for businesses or commercial entities; (2) ‘**.net.hk**’ for entities managing network infrastructures, machines and services licensed by the Office of Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR); (3) ‘**.org.hk**’ for non-profit-making organizations; (4) ‘**.gov.hk**’ for bureaux and departments of the HKSAR Government; (5) ‘**.edu.hk**’ for registered schools, tertiary institutions and other approved educational institutions; (6) ‘**.idv.hk**’ for residents of Hong Kong; and (7) ‘**.hk**’ for all individuals and entities.

2.3 To meet the needs of our society, .hk CDN will be launched in the third quarter of 2006.

Please see Sections 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 of this Paper for details.

¹ Soft launch period is a registration period prior to the official launch. It does NOT operate on a first-come-first-served basis though which applies to the official launch. Please see Sections 2.8 and 3 of this Paper for details.

HKIRC and HKDNR

2.4 Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited or HKDNR, the operation arm and a wholly owned subsidiary of Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC), has been set up to manage Internet domain names under .hk country-code top-level domain.² Its scope of work covers registration and assignment of domain names ending with ‘.com.hk’, ‘.org.hk’, ‘.gov.hk’, ‘.edu.hk’, ‘.net.hk’, ‘.idv.hk’ and ‘.hk’. Its mother company, HKIRC, is a non-profit-making organization which pays no dividends to its shareholders and relies on domain name registration fee for its operating income. It is overseen by a Board of Directors with 13 members from six classes, namely User, Service Provider, IT Industry, Commerce and Industry, Tertiary Institution and Government Classes. Please refer to <http://www.hkdnr.hk/eng/about/hkirc.html> for an up-to-date list of Directors in 2005/2006.

Chinese Domain Name

What is .hk Chinese Domain Name

2.5 A .hk Chinese domain name or CDN contains at least one Chinese character. The rest of the string may be composed of other character(s) like English letters (A-Z, a-z), Arabian numerals (0-9) or a hyphen (-). The total number of characters in the string of registration should not exceed 20. A hyphen should not appear at the beginning and/or at the end of the string of registration nor as the third and the fourth characters.

² All domain names ended with ‘.hk’ are administered by HKDNR except those ended with ‘.edu.hk’ and ‘.教育.hk’ that are administered by the Joint Universities Computer Centre and those with ‘.gov.hk’ and ‘.政府.hk’ by the HKSAR Government.

Categories of .hk Chinese Domain Name

2.6 The seven categories of CDN are as follows:

Domain Name Type	Requirement of Registration ³
.公司.hk	Similar to ‘.com.hk’, ‘.公司.hk’ is available for commercial entities registered in HKSAR. Eligible applicants should provide a copy of their Business Registration Certificate issued by the Inland Revenue Department or the Certificate of Registration of Overseas Company by the Companies Registry of the HKSAR Government as documentary proof to HKDNR.
.網絡.hk	Similar to ‘.net.hk’, ‘.網絡.hk’ is available for entities managing network infrastructures, machines and services licensed by OFTA of the HKSAR Government. Eligible applicants should provide a copy of their PNETS (IVANS/ISP) licence issued by OFTA as documentary proof to HKDNR.
.組織.hk	Similar to ‘.org.hk’, ‘.組織.hk’ is available for registered or approved non-profit-making organizations in HKSAR. Eligible applicants should provide HKDNR with documents which prove their status as statutory bodies in HKSAR, or non-profit-making entities registered with the Companies Registry, or entities with a Certificate of Registration of a Society from the Hong Kong Police Force, or as other approved non-profit-making entities.
.政府.hk	Similar to ‘.gov.hk’, ‘.政府.hk’ is available for bureaux and departments of the HKSAR Government. Eligible applicants should provide HKDNR with documents which prove their status as such.
.教育.hk	Similar to ‘.edu.hk’, ‘.教育.hk’ is available for registered schools, tertiary institutions and other approved educational institutions in HKSAR. Eligible applicants should provide a copy of their Certificate of Registration of a School issued by the Education and Manpower Bureau of the HKSAR Government or other documentary proof to HKDNR.
.個人.hk	Similar to ‘.idv.hk’, ‘.個人.hk’ is available for all residents of HKSAR. Eligible applicants should provide a copy of his/her valid HKID card to prove his/her identity as a resident of HKSAR. If the applicant is a minor, a copy of the HKID card of his/her parent or guardian and a copy of his/her Certificate of Birth/Guardian Certificate (as applicable) are required as documentary proof to HKDNR.
.hk	All interested individuals and entities are eligible to register second level CDN. Applicants are not required to provide any documentary proof to HKDNR.

³ Additional requirements may be placed on applications in the soft launch period.

Technical, Registration and Administration Standard

2.7 CDN supports both traditional and simplified Chinese characters. The registration and administration of CDN will be based on the Joint Engineering Team (JET) guideline for Internationalized Domain Name (IDN), RFC3743 managed by Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Prepared by JET, which consists of members from CNNIC, TWNIC, KRNIC and JPNIC as well as other industry experts, the guideline has been adopted by ccTLD registries in many countries/regions. It describes the registration and administration of IDN (of which CDN is a subset) and is available at the IANA website at www.iana.org or <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc3743.txt>. The guideline addresses the issue of character variant in particular. Chinese characters may exist in variant forms. For example, the characters ‘遊戲’ in full traditional form are ‘遊戲’ while ‘游戏’ is the full simplified form. There are also combinations consisting of both traditional and simplified forms such as ‘游戏’ or ‘游戲’. Therefore CDN registration will involve a package of domain names consisting of different character variants (e.g. ‘遊戲.hk’, ‘游戏.hk’, ‘游戲.hk’ and ‘遊戏.hk’). Only the full traditional and simplified forms in the package will be made available for use. If the string of a CDN contains a combination of both traditional and simplified characters, it will not be made available for use. These combinations will also be restricted from registration by others.

In relation to the processing of IDN, there are technical considerations to ensure compatibility with the English only domain names. In this respect, CDN will follow international standards RFC3454, RFC3490, RFC3491 and RFC3492 managed by IETF. (For details, please refer to <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc3454.txt>, <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc3490.txt>, <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc3491.txt> and <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc3492.txt>.)

When a CDN is being disputed, the whole package, including the full traditional form, the full simplified form, and combination of traditional and simplified characters will be considered as one CDN under the dispute.

Language Table

Language tables prepared by groups of experts list out Chinese characters and their equivalent character variants (e.g. the traditional form of a simplified Chinese character or vice versa) to facilitate the formation of CDN packages described in the first paragraph of this Section. There are currently two Chinese Language Tables, namely, .cn Chinese Language Table and .tw Traditional Chinese Language Table. (For details, please refer to <http://www.iana.org/assignments/idn/registered.htm>.)

HKDNR will refer to both .cn Chinese Language Table and .tw Traditional Chinese Language Table to establish a set of Chinese character variants for CDN.

Soft Launch Period

2.8 The launch of CDN is scheduled for 2006. To ensure systematic and coordinated implementation, a priority period of registering CDN (also known as CDN soft launch period) will come before the official launch. The soft launch does not operate on a first-come-first-served basis. The proposal in Section 3 of this Paper is based on the soft launch arrangement for .hk second level domain name in 2004, slightly revised due to the differences in domain name types.

Reserved .hk Chinese Domain Name

2.9 Reserved CDNs are domain names which will not be made available for registration by the public. This applies to CDN registration in the soft launch period, the official launch and thereafter. The reserved CDN list will be published at www.hkdnr.hk.

The purpose of CDN reservation is to minimize public confusion and the possibility of domain name disputes. Most domain name registries in other countries/regions maintain their reserved lists to suit local requirements.

All current reserved .hk English domain names (EDN) will also be applied to third level CDN, i.e. domain names like ‘.hk.公司.hk’ and ‘.com.公司.hk’ will be also reserved. For details on reserved .hk EDN, please refer to <http://www.hkdnr.hk/eng/reservedlist/index.html>.

Public Consultation

2.10 A CDN Public Consultation Committee (the Committee) has been formed to discuss the comments of the public received through available channels during the consultation and to finalize the CDN soft launch arrangement and the categories of reserved CDN. The Committee consists of the Board

members of HKIRC with the presence of HKDNR staff and/or independent individual(s) who may add value to the consultation.

2.11 The public will be notified of this consultation through public announcements. The consultation period will last for seven weeks from 27 February 2006 to 13 April 2006 (both days inclusive). Please refer to Section 5 of this Paper for feedback channels.

3. PROPOSED SOFT LAUNCH ARRANGEMENT

In the soft launch period, priority will be given to registered Hong Kong trademark/service mark holders and existing .hk EDN holders. The first-come-first-served principle is not applicable in this period.

3.1 Timeline of Registration Period

There will be three registration phases in the soft launch:

Name of Period	Duration	Applicant
Phase I		
Priority Registration Period	8 weeks	Registered Hong Kong trademark/service mark holders
Objection Period	2 weeks	
Phase II		
Pre-Registration Period	5 weeks	Existing .hk domain name holders registered before a specific day
Objection Period	2 weeks	
Phase III		
Sunrise Period	2 weeks	The public
Objection Period	2 weeks	
Official Launch		

3.2 Priority Registration Period

Eligibility

3.2.1 In the first phase, registered Hong Kong trademark/service mark holders meeting the specific requirements of different categories of domain names can register. For example, if ‘美麗酒家.公司.hk’ is to be registered in this period, the applicant has to provide: (1) a copy of the Registered Hong Kong Trademark/Service Mark Certificate which shows the mark ‘美

麗酒家’ or the mark containing the sequence ‘美麗酒家’ with other marks; and (2) a copy of other valid documents required for the registration of the specific domain name category.

3.2.2 Characters like ‘政府’, ‘銀行’ and ‘保險’ have to be handled in a manner complying with the Laws of Hong Kong and HKDNR Domain Name Registration Agreement for .hk Domain Names.

Domain Name Registration

3.2.3 Each eligible trademark/service mark holder can register more than one CDNs in different categories if the requirement(s) of the specific category is/are met.

3.2.4 All Chinese character(s) contained in the mark shall be included in the domain name.

3.2.5 The CDN registered shall follow a top-left, top-right, down-left, down-right (where top prevails over left) sequence of characters/words appearing in the trademark/service mark. For instance, the CDN registered in connection to the trademark/service mark below shall be ‘美麗酒家’, not ‘麗家美酒’ and other orderings.

美	麗
酒	家

If the CDN applied does not comply with this rule, the applicant shall provide proof for the common use of the desired sequence. HKDNR will make the final decision whether to accept such exceptions.

3.2.6 If any English letters are present as part of the trademark/service mark, an applicant may choose to register the CDN with all the Chinese character(s) and with or without the English letter(s). If an applicant chooses to include the English letter(s), all such letter(s) present in the mark shall be included and the sequence shall follow what is stipulated in paragraph 3.2.5 If the CDN applied does not comply with this rule, an applicant shall provide

proof for the common use of the desired sequence. HKDNR will make the final decision whether to accept such out-of-rule sequence registration.

3.2.7 If any Arabic numerals are present as part of the trademark/service mark, an applicant may choose to register the CDN with all the Chinese character(s) with or without the Arabic numeral(s). If an applicant chooses to include the Arabic numeral(s), all such numeral(s) present in the trademark/service mark shall be included and the sequence shall follow what is stipulated in paragraph 3.2.5. If the CDN applied does not comply with this rule, an applicant shall provide proof for the common use of the desired sequence. HKDNR will make the final decision whether to accept such out-of-rule sequence registration.

3.2.8 If any letters or characters present in the trademark/service mark are of a design, they shall be easily perceived as equivalent to the character(s), English letter(s) or Arabic numeral(s) present in the domain name applied. HKDNR will make the final decision whether to accept such a domain name registration.

Domain Name Allocation

3.2.9 If more than one applicants register the same CDN, allocation of such name will be decided by random draw.

Length of Period

3.2.10 The duration for priority registration will be eight weeks.

3.3 Pre-registration Period

Eligibility

3.3.1 Existing eligible .hk EDN holders who are holding active .hk domain name(s) with a commencement date on or before a specific day may register in this period. (The specific day will be set before the soft launch arrangement details are released and the date will be announced in due course.) Applicants can register the domain name online. No document is required except when the ‘re-registration status’⁴ of the domain name is incomplete or when characters like ‘政府’, ‘銀行’ and ‘保險’ which are required to be handled in a manner complying with the Laws of Hong Kong and HKDNR Domain Name Registration Agreement for .hk Domain Names are involved. The name of an applicant registering a CDN shall be the same as that of the existing .hk EDN.

Domain Name Registration

3.3.2 Existing eligible .hk EDNs shall be on an identical level and in an equivalent category of the .hk CDNs. Please refer to the following equivalent category matching table:

Existing Eligible .hk English Domain Name	Equivalent Category of .hk Chinese Domain Name
.com.hk	.公司.hk
.edu.hk	.教育.hk
.gov.hk	.政府.hk
.idv.hk	.個人.hk
.net.hk	.網絡.hk
.org.hk	.組織.hk
.hk	.hk

3.3.3 Each EDN will give the holder an opportunity to apply for CDN of an identical level and equivalent category. Two EDNs will give two and so on. The CDN being applied can be of any character(s). No matching or proof of relationship is required between the EDN and the CDN.

3.3.4 A relevant EDN shall be provided for each application of CDN in this period. Holders of more than one EDNs are required to indicate which EDN corresponds to which CDN being applied for. This would help HKDNR identify the correct EDN in case reference has to be made to its commencement date.

⁴ This status means that no documentary proof has been provided since the application of the domain name. Those domain names were registered mainly before HKIRC assumed the role of .hk domain name management in 2001. For details on status, please refer to WHOIS database at www.hkdnr.hk.

Domain Name Allocation

3.3.5 Applications for third level CDN⁵ will be collected in one batch during the soft launch. If more than one applicants apply for the same CDN, priority in domain name allocation will be given to the applicant having an earlier commencement date for the relevant EDN over those who have a later date. If the commencement date of the relevant EDN of such applicants is the same, allocation of the domain name will be decided by random draw. (See Illustration 1.1)

3.3.6 In the case of second level CDN⁶, applications for the same .hk domain name will be resolved based on the sector type of the applicants. Priority will be given firstly to government departments, then statutory bodies, followed by organizational applicants and lastly individual applicants. If there are more than one applicants applying for the same second level CDN in the same sector, priority will be given to the applicant with the earliest commencement date. If applicants in the same sector have the same commencement date, allocation of such name will be decided by random draw. (See Illustration 1.2)

Length of Period

3.3.7 The duration for pre-registration will be five weeks.

⁵ Third level CDNs are domain names not immediately ended with '.hk' but with one more level between the CDN applied and '.hk'. The third level CDNs available for registration are those ended with '公司.hk', '網絡.hk', '組織.hk', '政府.hk', '教育.hk' and '個人.hk'.

⁶ Second level CDNs are domain names immediately ended with '.hk'. e.g. '我的公司.hk' and '美麗酒家.hk'.

Illustration 1.1

**Allocation for third level Chinese domain name
with more than one applicants**

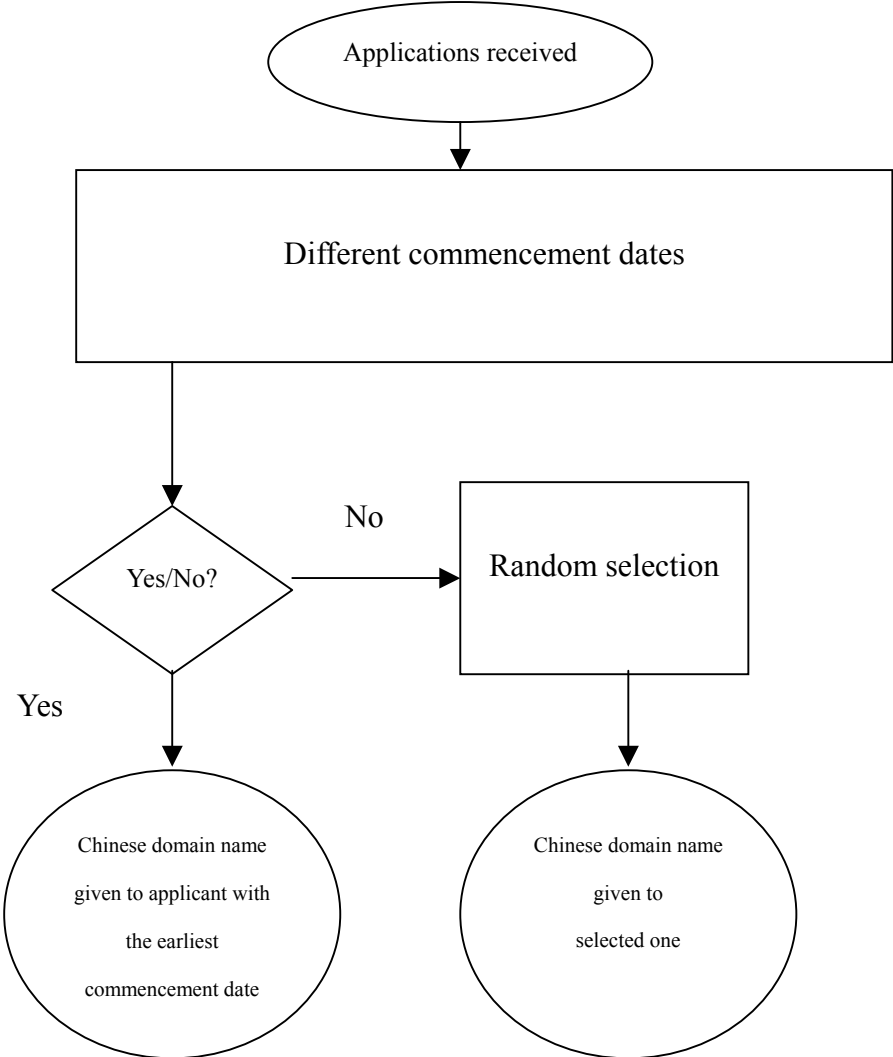
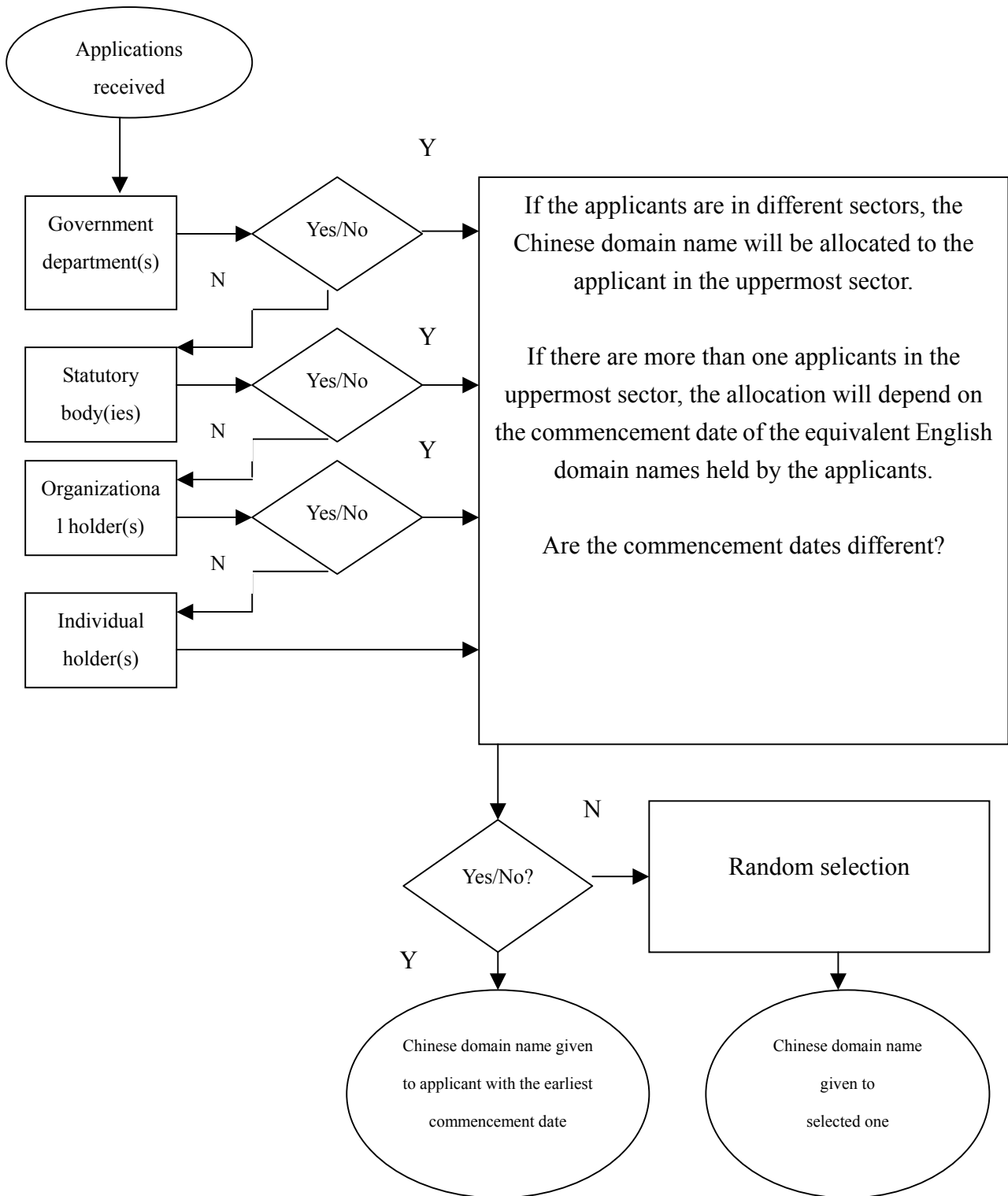


Illustration 1.2

**Allocation for second level Chinese domain name
with more than one applicants**



3.4 Sunrise Period

3.4.1 Application is open to the public in this period. Companies, businesses or individuals in Hong Kong or overseas meeting the requirements of different domain name categories are eligible to apply. The applications in the sunrise period are not processed on a first-come-first-served basis. Applications will be collected in one batch. If more than one applications are received for the same domain name, allocation of such name will be decided by random draw.

Length of Period

3.4.2 The duration for the sunrise period will be two weeks.

3.5 Objection Handling

Objections can be made within 14 days from the date on which the registration results for the phase concerned in the soft launch period are announced. Only when evidence is given to demonstrate that the result does not comply with the CDN soft launch period rules will the case be considered. A person raising such objection shall complete and return an Objection Request Form together with such evidence by post to the Convenor of the Objection Committee at the HKDNR office. The Objection Committee, composed of HKIRC Board members, will handle the case.

Objections handled may result in re-allocation or cancellation of an individual CDN. Therefore the allocation result during the soft launch period shall not be considered final until all objections are settled and the decision implemented for various phases.

No fee will be charged for objection handling.

4. PROPOSED CATEGORIES OF RESERVED .hk CHINESE DOMAIN NAMES

To avoid public confusion and minimize the possibility of domain name disputes, a set of words/characters will be reserved from CDN registration in all CDN categories.

The categories are proposed with reference to .hk EDN. All reserved .hk EDNs will be applicable to third level CDN. For example, domain names like ‘.hk.公司.hk’ and ‘.com.公司.hk’ will be reserved.

Proposed Categories of Reserved .hk Chinese Domain Names

- o The Chinese translation of generic top level domains (gTLD) and sponsored top level domains (sTLD) such as ‘公司’, ‘機構’, ‘網絡’, ‘軍事’ and ‘博物館’.
- o Names of Chinese-speaking countries/regions such as ‘中國’, ‘香港’, ‘台灣’ and ‘澳門’.
- o Common technical terms related to domain names and related international domain name associations such as ‘域名’ and ‘互聯網訊息中心’.
- o Types of school in different levels and educational institutions in Hong Kong such as ‘學校’, ‘大學’, ‘中學’, ‘小學’, ‘國際學校’, ‘高校’, ‘大專’, ‘專上教育’, ‘專上學校’, ‘學位’, ‘初中’, ‘高中’, ‘英中’, ‘中中’, ‘小學’, ‘幼兒園’, ‘幼稚園’, ‘成人教育’, ‘職業訓練’ and ‘培訓’.
- o Common Chinese surnames in Hong Kong such as ‘李’, ‘王’, ‘張’, ‘劉’ and ‘陳’.
- o Domain names that are or contain a reference to the words/characters ‘government’, ‘bank’, ‘insurance’, ‘finance’, ‘military’ and ‘securities’ or any of its derivatives in Chinese, or use of the words/characters in Chinese in that order. Examples are ‘政府’, ‘香港政府’, ‘香港特區政府’, ‘銀行’, ‘保險’, ‘金融’, ‘金-融’, ‘軍事’ and ‘證券’.

5. CONSULTATION

Members of the public are invited to comment on the proposed soft launch arrangement for .hk CDN and categories of reserved .hk CDN. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the proposed soft launch arrangement will be suitably revised for implementation. Please send your opinion to the CDN Public Consultation Committee on or before 13 April 2006 through any of the following channels:

Mail: CDN Public Consultation Committee
 Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited
 Units 2002-2005
 20/F, ING Tower
 308 Des Voeux Road Central
 Sheung Wan
 Hong Kong

Fax: (852) 2319 2626

Email: consultation@hkdnr.hk or consultation@hkirc.hk

Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited
Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited
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Annex

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDN	.hk Chinese Domain Name(s)
CNNIC	China Internet Network Information Centre
EDN	.hk English Domain Name(s)
gTLD	Generic Top-Level Domain
HKDNR	Hong Kong Domain Name Registration Company Limited
HKIRC	Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
IANA	InterNet Assigned Numbers Authority
ICANN	Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers
IDN	Internationalized Domain Name(s)
IETF	Internet Engineering Task Force
JET	Joint Engineering Team
JPNIC	Japan Network Information Centre
KRNIC	Korea Network Information Centre
RFC	Request For Comment
sTLD	Sponsored Top-Level Domain
TWNIC	Taiwan Network Information Centre