

Domain Name Moderation

Principles for approval of Third Level Domain (TLD) names within .parliament.nz

Background

.parliament.nz is moderated by the Parliamentary Service. The principles that will be applied to this moderation have been developed to ensure that trust and integrity of communication with users of on-line services is as high as can be achieved. The approach needs to preserve the over-arching identity of .parliament.nz (the Parliament), as a collective entity that is separate and distinct from executive government and guard against fragmentation of the identity while balancing this with the needs of the parliamentary agencies and parliamentary political parties to efficiently and effectively deliver services and information.

Principles for parliament.nz domain names

Third-level domain (TLD) names will be issued for:

- Parliamentary agencies or their common-use acronyms (e.g. ooc.parliament.nz and ps.parliament.nz)
- Offices of Parliament, such as the Office of the Ombudsman, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and the Auditor and Controller General
- Parliamentary political party sites, such as labour.parliament.nz
- Individual sites for elected members of parliament, such as MemberName.parliament.nz

Third-level domain names will not normally be issued for marketing campaigns or branding exercises. These can either be conducted through the use of the fourth level domain (eg, election.labour.parliament.nz) or, if there is a desire, through the creation of an association separate from the parliament identity, eg, through the use of a .org.nz, or .net.nz domain name.

Policy for Moderation and Regulation of .parliament.nz 2nd level Internet domain names

Version 2.0, September 2005
The Parliamentary Service

Moderation and Registration

Scope of this policy

The scope of this policy is the .parliament 2nd level domain namespace of the New Zealand Internet sector (or .nz).

The New Zealand Internet Sector

The New Zealand Internet sector has 12 second-level domains or namespaces (2LDs). Four of these (.govt, .mil, .cri and .iwi) have strict requirements for registering 3LDs, or third Level Domain names (e.g. www.ssc.govt.nz or www.wcc.govt.nz). These are called "moderated domains".

The New Zealand Government recognises the nature of delegated domain spaces, as per RFC 1591 (www.iana.org), and the policy of InternetNZ and others that domain names are licensed for limited periods rather than sold outright (<http://www.internetnz.org.nz/>). The Government views the .govt.nz domain names as held and managed by the Crown, *via* individual government organisations (including territorial and regional local authorities).

What is moderation and registration?

In the context of the naming of Internet web sites used by organisations associated with the New Zealand Parliament, moderation is the process of assessing the suitability of an internet web site name (hereafter "name"), and determining whether the proposed use is appropriate.

Moderation is a quality management system designed to achieve valid, fair and consistent assessment of requests for names. Moderation of .parliament.nz is the responsibility of the Parliamentary Service. Registration is the process by which the licence to use a name is recorded and passed to New Zealand Registry Services (NZRS). A registration gives the organisation the exclusive right to use of the name for the initial registration period and the right to renew that registration for as long as the name is required.

Why .parliament.nz is moderated

The namespace is moderated to preserve the authoritative nature of the websites and email addresses and enable users to easily find their way through the intricacies of government and parliamentary organisations and to give citizens confidence in communications to and from parliamentary entities.

Standard Setting Body for .parliament.nz 2nd level domain

The Parliamentary Service is responsible for developing, writing and reviewing the policies and procedures that govern the .parliament.nz namespace. This body is also responsible for moderating the namespace.

Who may apply for a .parliament.nz domain name?

The .parliament.nz namespace is reserved for parliamentary agencies, Offices of Parliament, and parliamentary political parties and their elected members. This does not include government agencies. Each decision is arrived at case by case, and no decision should be interpreted as a precedent.

Generally speaking, if an organisation has a question about their potential eligibility, they should contact moderator@parliament.nz for confirmation.

Process

Parliamentary entities will use an approved registrar to request a name, using the registrar's system. The registrar will pass the request to the appropriate Parliamentary Service and a decision will be made. The moderator will use the approved registrar's system to record the decision to approve or decline the name.

The registrar will advise the applicant of the decision and, in the case of approval, will pass the request to the Registry for inclusion. The Registry is managed by .nz Registry Services (NZRS). NZRS updates the DNS zone files hourly, on the hour, (<http://www.nzrs.net.nz/>) so the name can be activated within a short space of time after approval.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate a business need as part of their application for a name. Applicants will be required to provide the following details:

- Domain name requested
- Business reason for the application (brief but comprehensive)
- Legislative authority (i.e. qualification to be in the .parliament.nz space)
- Organisation or Entity Name
- Parent Organisation (if applicable)
- Type of Organisation: (e.g. Office of Parliament, Parliamentary Agency, Parliamentary political party, Member of Parliament – Please note: the registrant name recorded on the .nz register must be that of a person or a properly constituted organisation)
- Postal Address
- Name, telephone number and email address of person in the organisation who is responsible for the registration of this domain name (business, not technical)
- Name of Chief Executive (if applicable)
- Chief Executive's Title (if applicable)
- Any other such information as required under the .nz policies and procedures

Other information may be required from time to time.

Approvals of applications for names are not automatic or guaranteed. All applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. There is an appeal process for applications which have been outlined in this policy.

No approval or refusal of an application can be taken as a precedent for a subsequent request. Each registering organisation must enter into a formal agreement with the registrar. This agreement will be based on the core terms and conditions prescribed by InternetNZ for agreements between registrars and registrants.

In some matters (such as transfer of names to a different registrant), there may be apparent conflict between the standard terms and conditions and this policy. In those cases, this policy over-rides the standard terms and conditions.

Approved Registrar

The approved registrar is yet to be decided. Details will be provided prior to .parliament.nz going live.

Names

Acceptability

Names are not automatically acceptable, merely because the organisation is permitted to use the namespace. Each request is judged on its own merits. Organisations are required to have a solid business case around the need for a name and should consider carefully possible conflicts or confusion

Avoiding confusion

Names will need to be chosen which avoid confusion with other organisation. Three or four letter names will normally be used only to represent departments or other central or local government bodies where the abbreviation is widely recognised by the general public (e.g. OOC, PS)

Generic names

Generic and project names should be registered in the domain only where they are organisational and of national significance.

Ethics, values and standards

Names will not be accepted which might bring Parliament into disrepute inadvertently or otherwise. Particular care should be given to acronyms that might be pronounced as a word.

Branding

Names should clearly indicate the organisation or service. Domain names should not be used for branding purposes for individual projects.

Alternatives

When a name is not approved, organisations may consider using a 4th level name from their own standard name e.g. selectcommittee.ooc.parliament.nz and are reminded that the www. prefix is optional.

An organisation's rights and responsibilities

An organisation using a .parliament.nz name should ensure that the use is in accordance with all appropriate governance requirements. These may include any or all of the following:
Legislation (Official Information Act, Privacy Act etc)
Governance documents for the organisation (articles of incorporation, Statement of Intent, Strategic Business Plan etc)

Applicable government or organisational policies and guidelines (such as SIGS - Security in Government Sector, New Zealand Government Web Guidelines, Policy Framework for Government-held Information, the organisation's ISSP, Information Architecture and security policy, etc)

Moderator rights and responsibilities

The moderators exist to maintain the integrity of the namespace. Historically, this has been by restricting entry but changes to Internet governance in NZ and world-wide means that moderators have to take a proactive role in managing the spaces they control.

The .parliament.nz namespace is moderated by the Parliamentary Service. The moderators have the authority to approve or decline entry to the .parliament.nz namespace. The moderators will give a reason for any declined applications.

The moderators will give due consideration to each case. In normal circumstances, where no issues are raised, the process should be completed within 10 working days. The moderators do not guarantee any particular timeframe, however, and applications should be made well in advance of the business need.

Applications will not be approved on the basis of stationery or promotional material having been printed. Organisations must ensure that approval is gained before the domain name is used in any way.

Withdrawal of a domain name

By the organisation

An organisation may cease use of a domain name at any time. They must advise the moderator that a name has been abandoned. Abandoned names will generally not be reissued, to prevent confusion, but will be cancelled to reduce cost to the Parliamentary Service.

By the moderator

The moderators' role is not merely a gatekeeper on the domain, but a manager of domain names on behalf of the Parliamentary Service, the Parliamentary Service as a whole stands to benefit from having an authoritative domain, and bears the costs of maintaining it.

The moderator has the right to review and terminate all registrations, existing as well as proposed. If a registration is deemed to be invalid, for technical reasons, incorrect usage or because it was incorrectly permitted under previous regimes, the moderator will enter into negotiation with the nameholder to transition to a valid name, or to withdraw the 3LD delegation in the case where a name has been invalidly granted.

The moderator will from time to time review the currency of existing domain names and may enter into negotiation with a nameholder to withdraw a name which is not being used, or issue 30 days notice of intention to terminate, subject to appeal.

Appeal procedure

If a moderator declines an application for a name, or terminates a registration the affected organisation may appeal the decision. All appeals must be submitted in writing to the General Manager of the Parliamentary Service . The General Manager of the Parliamentary Service will consider the appeal. Consideration may or may not include a request for additional information or for a conversation with the appellant.

The appeal should provide additional details of the business needs outlined briefly in the initial application, and state why the organisation feels the moderator's decision should be reviewed. Each appeal will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The success or failure of any appeal will not set a precedent for any other appeals.

Address for appeals

Appeals should be addressed to:
The General Manager
The Parliamentary Service
PO Box 18-041
Wellington

Exclusion of Liability

The moderators and the registrar will not be liable to a registrant for any action or failure to act (unless in bad faith) in connection with the operation of the .parliament.nz domain.