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| **Question(s):** | RG-WM | Geneva, 22-26 January 2024 |
| **TD** |
| **Source:** | Rapporteur, TSAG Rapporteur group on working methods |
| **Title:** | Draft new Supplement A.SupplRA to the ITU-T A-series Recommendations "Guidelines on the appointment and operations of registration authorities" |
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| **Abstract:** | This is the latest draft of a new A-series Supplement on "Guidelines on the appointment and operations of registration authorities". |

**Action**: RG-WM is invited to continue discussing this document.

**History:**

In 2012, a TSAG correspondence group on the synchronized appointment of a registration authority by ITU-T and JTC 1 agreed to recommend to TSAG that it develops a supplement to the ITU-T A‑series Recommendations entitled "*Guidelines on the appointment and operation of registration authorities*."

Excerpt of the report of the correspondence group on the synchronized appointment of a registration authority by ITU-T and ISO/IEC JTC 1 (TSAG-[TD391](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=T09-TSAG-120702-TD-GEN-0391) [2009-2012]):

No rules are defined for the mutual agreement of an RA (associated with a joint or twin text) by an ITU-T study group and the collaborating JTC 1 sub-committee. While this has not posed problem for many years, in two recent cases (joint work between ITU-T SG 16 and ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 31; joint work between ITU-T SG 17 and ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 6) this absence resulted in difficulty to establish the coordination. This generated a lot of discussions and concerns between the involved groups, and the result was not satisfactory for the ITU-T study group.

The first draft of this proposed Supplement (developed in 2012 as TSAG-[TD393](https://www.itu.int/md/meetingdoc.asp?lang=en&parent=T09-TSAG-120702-TD-GEN-0393) [2009-2012], with a few editorial updates) was based on ISO/IEC JTC 1 Standing Document 16 which has been withdrawn in the meantime but Annex H of the [ISO/IEC Directives](https://www.iso.org/directives-and-policies.html) contains similar material (ISO and ISO/IEC JTC 1 have had quite detailed guidelines on the appointment and operations of registration authorities for many years).

**This document also includes:**

* contribution [DOC6 (230223)](https://extranet.itu.int/meetings/ITU-T/T22-TSAGRGM/RGWM-230228/DOCs/T22-TSAGRGM-RGWM-230228-DOC-0006.docx) from the United Kingdom to the 23 Feb 2023 interim meeting of RG‑WM;
* contribution [C047](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0047/en) from the United Kingdom to the 30 May – 2 June 2023 meeting of TSAG;
* ideas from the [ISO/IEC Directives](https://www.iso.org/sites/directives/current/consolidated/index.html#_Toc134090845), Annex H;
* answer from SG11 ([TD364](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-240122-TD-GEN-0364/en)) and from SG2 ([TD392](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-240122-TD-GEN-0392/en)) to the liaison statement from TSAG ([TSAG-LS 23](https://www.itu.int/net/itu-t/ls/ls.aspx?isn=29553)).

**Editor's note**: Changes shown like this have been introduced by the editor to show what would be necessary to change the status of this document from (draft) Supplement to (draft) Recommendation.

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| DRAFT [Supplement n to ITU-T A-series Recommendations | Recommendation ITU-T A.RA]Guidelines on the appointment and operations of registration authorities |

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| SummaryThis [Supplement | Recommendation] provides guidelines to aid ITU-T study groups in developing Recommendations with a registration function and in selecting a registration authority to provide this function.KeywordsIdentification, registration authority |

DRAFT [Supplement n to ITU-T A-series Recommendations | Recommendation ITU-T A.RA]

Guidelines on the appointment and operations of registration authorities

# 1 Scope

Interoperability between information systems in the field of telecommunications/ICT sometimes requires specific identifiers to be assigned by a competent body designated as a registration authority.

Study groups developing Recommendations shall make every attempt to avoid the necessity for registration and registration authorities in particular. Where this is not possible, the use of existing registration processes (e.g. use of [b-ISO 3166-1] for country codes) is preferred to creating a new process.

This [supplement | Recommendation] concerns study groups which develop Recommendations with a registration function and which need to select registration authorities that provide this function. This [supplement | Recommendation] does not apply when the TSB is the registration authority for a particular Recommendation.

In case of joint work with ISO/IEC JTC 1, clause II.5 of [b-ITU-T A.23] gives guidance on the synchronized appointment of a registration authority by both an ITU-T study group and an ISO/IEC JTC 1 sub-committee.

# 2 References

None.

# 3 Terms and definitions

## 3.1 Terms defined elsewhere

None.

## 3.2 Terms defined in this supplement

This [supplement | Recommendation] defines the following terms:

**3.2.1 applicant**: An entity (organization, individual, etc.) which requests the assignment of an identifier for an object (of interest) from a registration authority.

**3.2.2 candidate registration authority**: An entity (government entity, private organization, general partnerships, unincorporated association, sole proprietorship[, individual]) which answers to a call for offers to become a registration authority.

**3.2.3 object (of interest)** [b-ITU-T X.660]: Anything in some world, generally the world of telecommunications and information processing or some part thereof, a) which is identifiable (can be named); and b) which may be registered.

**3.2.4 procedural Recommendation**: ITU-T Recommendation specifying the procedures for a registration authority to follow.

**3.2.5 register**: A set of files containing the identifiers assigned by a registration authority and the information associated with the object (of interest).

**3.2.6 registration**: Assignment of a unique identifier to an object (of interest) in a way that makes the assignment available to interested parties.

**3.2.7 registration authority**: Entity entitled and trusted to perform the registration service as described in an ITU-T Recommendation, and to maintain a register of assigned identifiers.

**3.2.8 technical Recommendation:** ITU-T Recommendation containing the definition of the classes of objects (of interest) requiring registration.

# 4 Abbreviations and acronyms

None.

# 5 Conventions

None.

# 6 Guidelines for procedural Recommendations

**6.1** For every type of registration involving a registration authority, two different Recommendations are required. The first is the technical Recommendation in which the objects (of interest) to be registered are defined. The second is the procedural Recommendation which defines the procedure according to which the registration authority and TSB shall work, and specifies its duties and obligations.

**6.2** Where a registration authority is required, the study group responsible for the technical Recommendation also develops the associated procedural Recommendation based on the requirements in clause 6.4.

**6.3** After checking that the guidelines in this [Supplement | Recommendation] have been implemented, the technical Recommendation is consented for AAP Last Call (or determined for TAP consultation) at the same meeting where the procedural Recommendation is determined for TAP consultation.

**6.4** A procedural Recommendation includes:

* when not already included in the technical Recommendation, a description of the identification scheme, the syntax of identifiers used and, if applicable, the conditions and the process to re-use or reclaim identifiers (see clause 6.6);
* criteria for applicants for registration (organization meeting specific criteria defined in the technical Recommendation, etc.);
* information to be included on application (see clause 6.7) including (when applicable) the technical definition of the object (of interest) to be registered;
* if applicable, requirements for confidentiality of portions of the information;
* steps involved in review and response to applications including the process by which the definition of the object (of interest) is validated (possibly by consulting with the study group in charge of the technical Recommendation) and maximum time intervals between steps;
* assignment process for identifiers such that assigned identifiers are unique within the register and the same identifier is not assigned to another object (of interest);
* criteria for rejection of applications (see clause 6.10), including an appeals process (see clause 10);
* procedures for maintenance of a register (see clause 6.11), including review of successful applicants on a periodic basis;
* if applicable, procedures for publication of the register (see clause 6.9).

**6.5** A procedural Recommendation is not to include:

* the name of the registration authority;

Note – The name and contact information of the registration authority for a given Recommendation can be found on the web site of the study group in charge of that Recommendation. Instead, a link to the web site is provided as a note or a footnote.

* contractual or other legal aspects;
* the types of fees and amounts;
* a copy or an adaptation of the selection process in clause 7.

**6.6** Wherever possible, the identification scheme should be open-ended to accommodate future registration requirements. In selecting the identification scheme, the following should be considered:

* the reservation of space for special assignments;
* the syntax (e.g. numeric, alphabetic, alphanumeric, etc.) from which the identifiers are assigned;
* the length of the identifier;
* the matching criteria to be used for determination of duplicate entries.

Depending on the volume of registrations anticipated, and technical and other considerations, reuse of identifiers may be necessary. The procedural Recommendation states if:

* an identifier can never be re-used; or
* an identifier can be re-used after a specific time period to identify another object (of interest).

To be available for re-use, previously assigned identifiers may either be given up voluntarily or be reclaimed by the registration authority. In both cases, the conditions and the process are described in the procedural Recommendation.

**6.7** The contents of forms for registration application, request for update, notification of assignment or update, and rejection of application include:

* name of applicant;
* postal/email address, telephone/facsimile number of applicant;
* if the applicant is an organization, the name, title, postal/email address, telephone/facsimile number of a contact person within the organization.

Depending on the type of form, additional information to be included are:

* authorization to release specific data (registration application);
* any justification required for the assignment (registration application);
* where required by the technical Recommendation or the associated procedural Recommendation, a technical definition of the object (of interest) to be registered (registration application);
* data to be updated, old and new values (request for update);
* reasons for action taken (notification of assignment or update; rejection of application).

The procedural Recommendation may define additional information relevant to the class of objects (of interest) to be registered.

**6.8** After the assignment has been made, the identifier and associated information are included in the register, and the registration authority informs the applicant of the assignment in a timely manner (within the maximum response time specified in the procedural Recommendation) using the information in clause 6.7.

**6.9** At a minimum, the register contains:

* the assigned identifier;
* name of initial applicant;
* address of initial applicant;
* date of original assignment;
* date of last transfer of assignment, if allowed (updatable);
* name of current owner (updatable);
* postal/email address of current owner (updatable);
* if the owner is an organization, the name, title, postal/email address, telephone/facsimile number of a contact person within the organization (updatable);
* date of last update (updatable);
* where required by the technical Recommendation or the associated procedural Recommendation, a technical definition of the object (of interest).

The procedural Recommendation may define additional register information relevant to the class of objects (of interest) to be registered.

**6.10** The criteria for rejection of applications include the following as well as any additional criteria deemed necessary:

* ineligibility of applicant;
* the absence of proper fee;
* incomplete or incomprehensible information in application;
* the justification for inclusion in the register (as defined in the procedural Recommendation) is not adequate;
* the object (of interest) to be registered does not conform to the technical Recommendation.

**6.11** The requirements that the registration authority should follow for maintenance of the register include, at a minimum:

* mechanisms for maintaining the integrity of the register including adequate backup (such as off premises storage) and records retention requirements. In addition, there shall be provision for the owner of an identifier to provide updated information;
* mechanisms for maintaining confidentiality of data elements where such confidentiality is required.

# 7 Selection and appointment of organizations to fulfill registration authority functions

**7.1** The selection process needs to be open and transparent. It begins with a call for offers made by the study group to all stakeholders (in particular, members of the study group). The call for offers is published as a TD of the study group at least three months before the plenary meeting which will select a candidate registration authority. It is also sent as a liaison statement to TSAG for information.

NOTE – It is recognized that study groups may have difficulties identifying organizations willing to assume a registration authority function and it may be necessary to approach particular organizations which may be able to fulfill the function. Such a process shall be done with full transparency through liaison statements.

**7.2** Nominations are received no later than ten days before the plenary meeting which will select a candidate registration authority and published as a TD of the study group. Each nomination shall include a statement stipulating that the candidate registration authority is willing to assume the responsibility. If applicable (see clause 8), the nomination also describes the fee structure.

**7.3** Once the deadline for receiving nominations is reached, they are reviewed by the study group and a report is produced as a TD. In consultation with the ITU Member State where the candidate registration authority is based and, if necessary, with the ITU legal adviser, the study group ensures that the selected candidate registration authority is a legal entity. This means that the entity has been formed under the laws of a particular jurisdiction and that it is therefore subject to governance related rules. This requirement promotes a higher level of assurance regarding the accountability and credibility of the entity selected to be the registration authority.

**7.4** The report is presented for approval at a plenary meeting. It is then sent as a liaison statement to TSAG for information, and the study group submits the name and any relevant information about the organization to the TSB for formal designation.

**7.5** When a (technical or procedural) Recommendation is revised, the study group reviews and decides whether the existing registration authority should continue or if a selection process should be launched to select additional candidate registration authorities (see also clause 11).

# 8 Charging of fees for registration authority services

**8.1** Registration authorities may charge fees for the services they provide subject to authorization by the study group. The level of such fees would be set on a cost-recovery basis. The proposed fee structure is included in the answer of each candidate registration authority and considered by the study group in its decision to authorize the charging of fees.

**8.2** The registration functions undertaken by a registration authority under the provisions of the relevant procedural Recommendation require no financial contribution from the ITU.

# 9 Oversight and accountability of registration authorities

**9.1** Study groups have the main responsibility for the oversight of registration authorities. They maintain ongoing communication and remain informed of the activities of the registration authority relative to its function in relation to ITU-T Recommendations. Study groups require registration authorities to provide annual activity reports which are published as a TD.

**9.2** Registration authorities are required to indicate clearly in their operations that they have been designated by an ITU-T study group.

# 10 Dispute resolution

**10.1** Although instances of disputes between registration authorities and applicants are rare, it is expected that the registration authority will make reasonable efforts to resolve the dispute. The procedural Recommendation addresses any specific requirements for this informal process.

**10.2** Additionally, to resolve the dispute, the procedural Recommendation defines a formal appeal process for use when the informal efforts to resolve the dispute fail. The study group in charge of the procedural Recommendation participates in any formal appeal process.

# 11 Termination of a registration authority

**11.1** When the study group decides to replace a registration authority, it notifies the current registration authority and clause 7 is applied in the selection of a replacement registration authority.

**11.2** When a designated registration authority decides to cease its operation, clause 7 is applied in the selection of a replacement registration authority. In the meantime, the study group should exercise particular oversight to ensure that the registration service is maintained during the transition period and that the register of assigned objects (of interest) is transferred to the new registration authority.

**11.3** When a procedural Recommendation is withdrawn, the study group notifies the current registration authority.

Bibliography

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