

Ratification Report for the Policy Proposal, Hierarchical Names for

New AS-SETs AFPUB-2026-ASN-001-DRAFT02

Introduction

In line with the Policy Development Process, we would like to inform you that the above-mentioned policy proposal attained rough consensus at the last Public Policy Meeting, held in hybrid format in Nairobi, Kenya, on 24 June 2026, during AFRINIC-37.

Co-chairs believe that the current version of the proposal (DRAFT02) addresses the notes and observations made by interested community members who participated in discussions during the life-cycle of the proposal since the first draft. The Last Call period concluded at 23:59 UTC on 31 July 2026.

The table below shows the milestones in the policy proposal's progress:

Date	Milestone / Activity
15 May 2026	The policy proposal "Require newly created AS-SETs to have hierarchical names" was posted on the AFRINIC website and announced on the RPD mailing list by the author, James Bensley (Inter.link GmbH), as AFPUB-2026-ASN-001-DRAFT01 — https://lists.afrinic.net/pipermail/rpd/2026/014746.html
8 June 2026	The author submitted a revised version of the proposal, incorporating feedback received on the mailing list, given the ID AFPUB-2026-ASN-001-DRAFT02.
24 June 2026	Proposal AFPUB-2026-ASN-001-DRAFT02 was presented and discussed at the AFRINIC-37 Public Policy Meeting, held in hybrid format in Nairobi, Kenya. The PDWG Co-Chairs determined that the proposal reached rough consensus — https://afrinic.net/ppm-afrinic-37.html
16 July 2026	The PDWG Co-Chairs announced the start of the Last Call period on the RPD mailing list — https://lists.afrinic.net/pipermail/rpd/2026/015004.html
31 July 2026	Last Call closed at 23:59 UTC. A closing deadline reminder had been sent earlier the same day — https://lists.afrinic.net/pipermail/rpd/2026/015452.html

Additional Notes

The AFRINIC PDWG Co-chairs have gone through the discussions on the RPD mailing list during the Last Call and prepared this report. As supporting documentation, the summary of the assessment conducted is as follows:

During the Last Call , this proposal received a high number of comments from the PDWG ,We noted that those who contributed in the policy discussions from submission to the AFRINIC-37 PPM reiterated their support of the proposal.

19 participants raised objections (101 posts in total), that are summarised in the table below.

A substantial share of Last Call messages (63) also formed a parallel discussion questioning whether a cluster of objecting posts was AI-generated or coordinated ("astroturfing") — see <https://lists.afrinic.net/pipermail/rpd/2026/015071.html> onward. This did not alter the Co-Chairs' assessment of the objection themes below, which is made on the substance of each argument rather than on the volume or authorship of the posts raising it.

Summary of the Assessment

Concerns (Summarised)	Addressed / Pending	Notes
The registry's role should stay narrow (record, coordinate, protect uniqueness); this proposal is argued to expand governance beyond that, with no operational failure demonstrated. Raised by: Nia Petronella, Gugu Dhlamini, Nonjabulo Sphilile, Asamkele Menzeleli, Nyasha Ndemo, tshepo mavhungu, Mphoentle Mokheseng, Tshepo Masuku, PAULO MSABA, Nthabiseng Tshehla, Thandeka Mseleku, Thulisile Mazomba, Taye Medoye, Simphiwe Ngubane (17–20 July 2026).	Addressed	This was treated as a question about the scope of the Policy Development Process itself rather than a defect in the proposal. If registry mandate scope is a concern, it should be addressed through the PDP (CPM Section 3). AFRINIC Bylaws Article 3.4(iii), (v), and (vi) support the PDWG's authority to introduce proposals like this.

Hierarchical naming only authenticates who created an AS-SET; it does not verify that the object's membership/contents are accurate, current, or authorised. Raised by: Asamkele Menzeleli, Gugu Dhlamini, Nia Petronella, Thulisile Mazomba, Thandeka Mseleku, Fundiswa Nadia Maseko, Nyasha Ndemo, Simphiwe Ngubane, Mphoentle Mokheseng (18–30 July 2026).	Addressed	This concern was already discussed on the mailing list and at the PPM, where the PDWG supported the proposal's narrow scope as per the problem statement. The proposal addresses non-uniqueness of AS-SET names within the AFRINIC IRR; the accuracy of an AS-SET's contents remains the responsibility of the object's creator.
A related set of messages defended participants' right to use AI/drafting tools and pushed back on being characterised as a coordinated "faction", rather than raising a new technical argument against AS-SET naming. Raised by: 11 participants including Nia Petronella, Tshepo Masuku, Fundiswa Nadia Maseko, Thulisile Mazomba, Nonjabulo Sphilile and Phetulo Dhlamini (18–20 July 2026).	N/A — not a policy objection	These messages do not raise a new technical or policy argument against AS-SET naming. They form part of a separate dispute over whether a cluster of objecting messages was AI-generated or coordinated (see Additional Notes below) and are not treated as grounds bearing on ratification.

Other RIRs (LACNIC, RIPE NCC, ARIN) implement equivalent hierarchical naming through operational or consultation processes rather than binding policy. Raised by: Kone, Tshepo Masuku, Nia Petronella, Thandeka Mseleku, Gugu Dhlamini, Mendie Sweetness Mguqulwa (20–21 July 2026).	Addressed	AFRINIC's WHOIS rules already derive from a combination of policy, RFCs and best practice, and each RIR determines its own implementation approach and AFRINIC Bylaws Article 3.4(iii), (v), and (vi) support the PDWG's authority to introduce proposals like this. Adopting hierarchical naming via policy is consistent with existing practice.
The proposal's original wording (exceptions "MUST be allowed") and the staff-recommended wording ("may be granted where necessary") are materially different, leaving restoration outcomes to staff discretion. Raised by: Thulisile Mazomba, Tshepo Masuku, NP Petronella, Nonjabulo Sphilile (27–30 July 2026).	Addressed	The proposal text as discussed by the working group, on which rough consensus was reached, prevails and will be included in the Consolidated Policy Manual upon ratification and implementation. Staff may use existing practices - Policy Implementation Experience Report (PIER) to report on any issues pertaining to the wording of the text.
The proposal does not specify what happens to a hierarchical AS-SET's validity when its anchor ASN changes holder, is deleted/reassigned, or when RFC 2622 delegates control to another maintainer. Raised by: Tshepo Masuku (27–29 July 2026).	Addressed	The policy manual (CPM) is silent on the transfer of child objects. Handling of AS-SET validity on ASN transfer, deletion, or reassignment is an operational matter governed by existing transfer and M&A procedures, rather than a gap in the policy text.

Because RFC 2622 hierarchical authorisation works only within a single IRR, the same AS-SET name could still be created, non-authoritatively, in another IRR (e.g. RIPE, RADB). Raised by: Phetulo Dhlamini (27–30 July 2026).	Addressed	Hierarchical AS-SET remains unique across all RIRs. Policy scope is limited to the AFRINIC service region unless a proposal is explicitly designated a global policy; this proposal is not a global policy.
The proposal controls only the top-level AS-SET name; RPSL's recursive "members:" attribute means a compliant new object can still nest an ambiguous or conflicting AS-SET name inside it. Raised by: Nonjabulo Sphilile (27 July 2026).	Addressed	Out of scope of the problem statement defined by the proposal, which addresses top-level AS-SET naming only.
The proposal's text requires only that the name's leading element "consist of an ASN", without requiring that ASN be globally assigned, present in the AFRINIC database, or authenticated. Raised by: Taye Medoye (27 July 2026).	Addressed	Reflects a misunderstanding of what the AFRINIC WHOIS database contains.

Because pre-implementation flat AS-SETs remain valid and editable indefinitely, an operator could register desirable flat names before the cut-off date and repurpose them afterward. Raised by: Nonjabulo Sphilile (27 July 2026).	N/A — not a new objection	Raised once and addressed on the list by a supporter (Jaco Kroon); not independently assessed as requiring further action.
The proposal applies only to newly created AS-SETs and creates no mechanism for resolving name collisions or squatting in objects that already exist (e.g. the AS-GOOGLE two-object case). Raised by: Tshepo Masuku (23 July 2026).	Addressed	Raised once, within a point-by-point response to a supporter's questions; treated as out of scope, consistent with the proposal's stated new-objects-only scope.

Conclusion

Based on the above information, we advise the AFRINIC Board to ratify the draft policy proposal Hierarchical Names for New AS-SETs AFPUB-2026-ASN-001-DRAFT02 at its earliest convenience.

Haitham El-Nakhal & Darwin da Costa

PDWG Co-Chairs