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Council of European National Top Level Domain Registries

Report on

ICANN53

Buenos Aires

21 - 25 June 2015

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Executive Summary

IANA and Accountability

For regular ccNSO or GAC attendants, ICANN Buenos Aires was a meeting unlike any other. For GNSO participants, however, it was more business as usual, even though they also had their fair share of discussions on the Post Transition IANA (PTI) and accountability mechanisms.

As could be expected, the IANA Stewardship Transition discussions and the ICANN Accountability improvement work dominated the ccNSO meeting. In five long sessions, every aspect of the proposal from the Cross Community Working Group on the IANA Stewardship Transition was analysed and (to a lesser extent) discussed. On its session on Wednesday afternoon, the ccNSO attendants did what everyone expected them to do: they unanimously supported the proposal and its submission to the next step in the transition process: the IANA Coordination Group (ICG). There was general agreement that the proposal was as good as it could get, given the fact that it is a compromise, the result of many months of exceptionally hard work.

Compared to the comments the CENTR Board submitted in May following the second proposal, all but one have been appropriately addressed. The main concern that still need to be resolved is the lack of detail on the Service Level Expectations. While there is agreement that the current *de facto* service delivery standards will be used as guidance, and not the more relaxed standards from the NTIA contract, the details still need to be worked out in the coming weeks.

As all other Chartering Organisations of the CWG on the IANA Stewardship Transition gave the proposal the green light, it has been forwarded to the ICG, where it will be assembled with the proposals from the numbering and protocols communities.
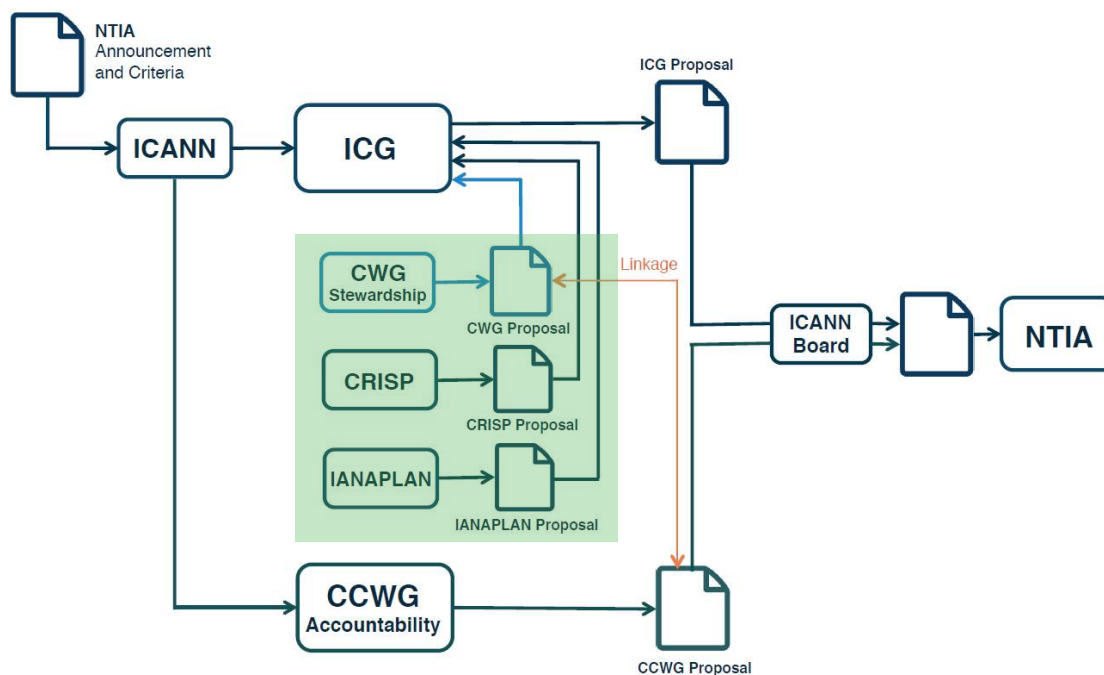
In parallel, the work of the CCWG on the ICANN accountability improvements steadily progresses. The latest proposal was presented to all SOs and ACs. Feedback from these exchanges will be incorporated in the second draft, to be published by the end of July for a 40-day public comment period. While feedback from most SOs and ACs was positive, it is still unclear what the position of the GAC will be. Even though the proposed membership structure might not fit with their traditional working methods, their support will be necessary to move forward. As in the new model the GAC could remain in their advisory role (membership would be optional), there does not seem to be any fundamental obstacle that prevents them from supporting the proposal. We strongly encourage CENTR members to engage in this conversation with their GAC members. A lack of GAC support for the CCWG accountability proposal would derail the transition.

It is expected that the ICANN Dublin meeting will see the conclusion of the CCWG's work. This would coincide with the finalisation of the work from the ICG, therefore allowing both required parts of the transition proposal to be submitted to the US government for approval.

It is expected that the US government would then need 4 to 5 months to approve the proposals. In the meantime, the implementation can be prepared. This will require both operational and legal changes. While the implementation of the proposal of the PTI will be complex, it is expected that the required changes in the ICANN bylaws will be the biggest challenge in meeting the timeline.

In other news

Focus of the GNSO Council centred around work relating to new gTLDs (auction proceeds, subsequent rounds), continued efforts in improving GAC input and knowledge on GNSO policy (consultation group, GAC liaison) and the final vote on the CWG IANA Stewardship Transition, which contrary to what one might expect, received relatively little airtime, at least at Council level. Other milestones were made relating to policy work on translation/transliteration of contact data and a WG on policy and implementation.

The two proposals captured most of the debate within the GAC. Next in line – certainly in terms of relevance to ccTLDs – was the topic of country and territory names at second level. A survey was circulated within the GAC at the request of the GAC's working group on underserved regions as a means to collect best/good practices. The survey asks GAC members to provide details on the legal nature of the relation with the local ccTLD. The ccTLD community offered to share recent research on the subject. During the meeting with the ICANN Board individual GAC members discussed how they envisage the future role of the GAC. It revealed a wide spectrum of views within the GAC community.

Following years of requests from the SOP WG and hard work from the ICANN finance team, a new KPI dashboard will be launched. This will allow detailed tracking of progress up to project level.

The ICANN Board approved the FoI working group report and the FY 2016 Operating plan and budget.

IANA Stewardship Transition
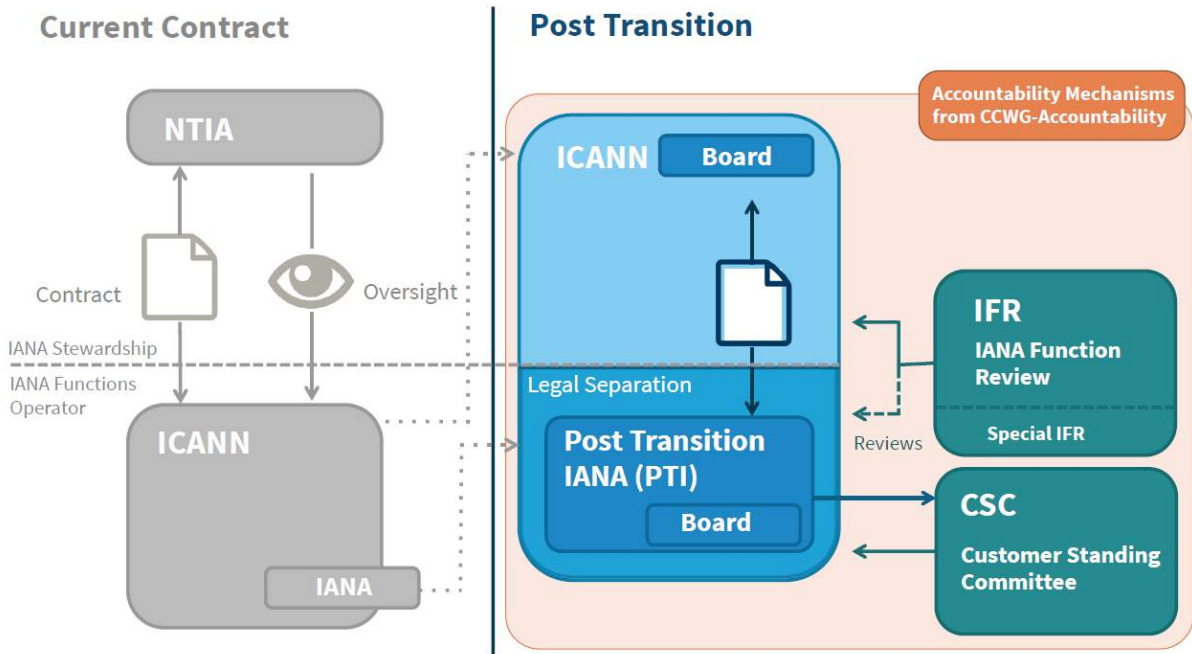
General Overview

The (now approved) CWG proposal relies on three elements:

1. A Post Transition IANA will be created. This entity will be wholly owned subsidiary of ICANN. It will have a Board consisting of ICANN staff and two independent directors. It will handle the operational management of the IANA functions operator. ICANN will enter into contract with this entity. This contract will include the crucial Service Level Engagement.

2. A Customer Standing Committee (CSC) will overview the quality of IANA services on a monthly basis. It will primarily consist of IANA customers.

3. An IANA Functions Review Team (IFRT) will, on a scheduled basis, do a thorough review of IANA. This will include a public comment period and might lead to changes in the IANA contract. The first review will take place two years after the transition. Subsequent reviews will be done every 5 years. In addition, the ccNSO and the GNSO can jointly trigger a non-scheduled special review by supermajority.

The discussions in the GNSO, ccNSO and GAC focussed on the following:

GNSO

Discussion at GNSO Council level was not contentious and not particularly extensive. Updates and discussions on the topic during GNSO sessions were generally high level summaries of the final proposal and did not create big discussions during Council working sessions. This is perhaps expected given the very diverse nature of the GNSO with Registries (a constituency of the GNSO) as arguably the most impacted group. The condition of final proposal upon outcomes of the CCWG-Accountability was however of particular interest and importance. At the level of the Registries (RySG), topics were dedicated more to the practical aspects, such as how IANA would function post-transition (performance metrics, KPIs, change request, etc.), rather than the CWG proposal itself.

The GNSO Council voted unanimously to adopt the final proposal (motion) in what probably took around 10 minutes. The only comments made on the motion came from the NCSG who noted that there is nothing in the CWG proposal that deals with IANA trademark issues. In another working session, the Intellectual Property Constituency (IPC) also noted they had concerns that there was no appeal mechanism in place for ccTLD delegations/redelegations.

ccNSO

Main discussions in the ccNSO dealt with the nature and composition of the PTI Board. Some felt that having ICANN staff in its Board would undermine the entity's independence while others felt strongly that it should be dependent from ICANN.

The missing Service Levels were discussed as well. It is crucial that non-discriminatory service levels are in place before the transition moves forward. It was confirmed that the current service levels will be used as a basis, and not the service levels reflected in the NTIA contract.

GAC

Discussions

Questions for clarification during the discussions included: the independence of Board members, the differences between the special and periodic review, the multistakeholder dimension in the model (Norway); the role of the GAC (and GAC advice) and who would take a final decision, if no agreement would be reached by the Board (Indonesia); applicability of US jurisdiction (Spain); the question of total separation (Iran); whether the funding of the PTI budget by ICANN would not jeopardise the independent functioning of the PTI and if the PTI, in the long run, would achieve self-finance status (Peru); if and how the GAC could contribute to the CSC or IFRT (Spain).

Outcome

The GAC took pride in being the first committee to agree on (yet not issue) a statement supporting the submission of the CWG proposal to the ICG. Of utmost importance was the dependency and conditionality of both the CWG and CCWG proposals. It is clear that if the CCWG accountability mechanisms do not meet the requirements stated in the CWG proposal, the GAC will not support it. The GAC welcomed that the delegation and re-delegation of ccTLDs were clearly excluded from the proposal. Please refer to the Communiqué for the final text.
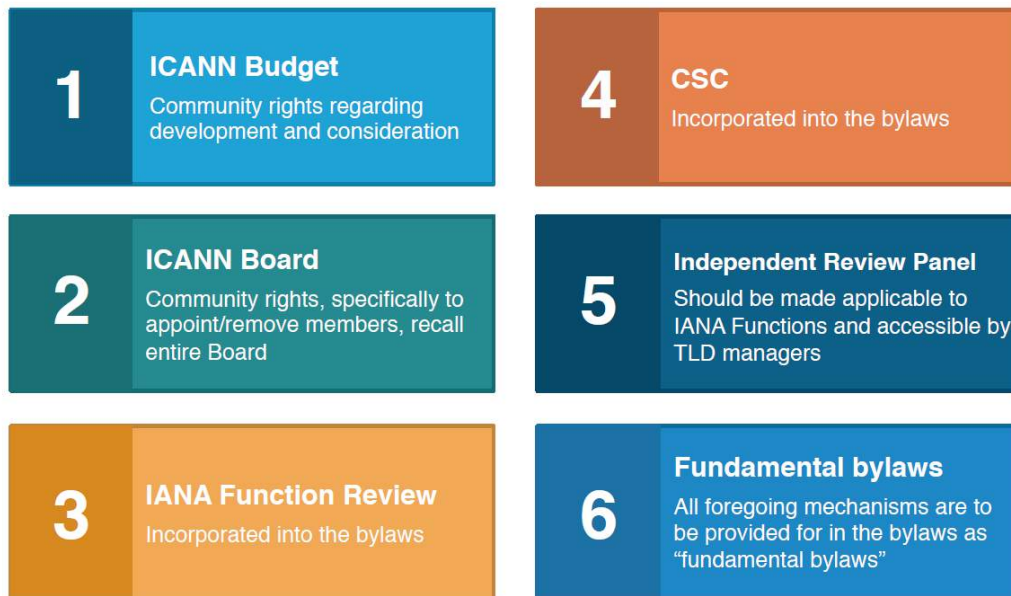
ICANN Accountability Improvements

General overview

The proposal rests on 4 building blocks:

- **Principles** (constitution, core values): the Affirmation of Commitment will be included in ICANN's bylaws and essential bylaws needing supermajority to be changed will be identified.
- **Empowered community**: the community can take action in a restricted number of situations. It can reject the ICANN budget, it can reject the strategic and operational plan and it can recall the entire Board. Individual ACs/SOs can recall the Board Members that they have appointed.
- **ICANN Board** (in charge of managing the corporation, selected by the community, CEO reports to Board)
- **Independent review mechanism** (judiciary review): an independent Appeals Panel consisting of 7 standing members will deliver decisions that are binding on ICANN. The process will cost less and will be more accessible than it is the case today. The decisions will review both the merits of the case and compliance with the process.

The proposal includes a membership model based on membership of SOs and ACs on a voluntary basis. Alternatively, ACs can stick to their current advisory role.

All approvals by the SOs and ACs of the CWG IANA Stewardship Transition proposal are conditional upon the implementation of the recommendations from the CCWG. There are 6 items where the work of both groups overlap: ICANN budget, ICANN Board, IANA Function Review, CSC, Independent Review Panel and fundamental bylaws.

1 ICANN Budget — Community rights regarding development and consideration

2 ICANN Board — Community rights, specifically to appoint/remove members, recall entire Board

3 IANA Function Review — Incorporated into the bylaws

4 CSC — Incorporated into the bylaws

5 Independent Review Panel — Should be made applicable to IANA Functions and accessible by TLD managers

6 Fundamental bylaws — All foregoing mechanisms are to be provided for in the bylaws as "fundamental bylaws"

The discussions in the GNSO, ccNSO and GAC focussed on the following:

GNSO

Co-Chair Thomas Rickert provided updates (slides) to the GNSO Council from this group with strong links described by Jonathon Robinson to the linkage to the IANA transition work. He also noted that the timeliness of the CWG work had put a (positive) pressure on the Accountability work, highlighting also the distinction between work stream 1 (pre-transition) and 2 (post-transition). The concept of community empowerment was described (eg. vetoing strategic budgets, removal of directors), representation in that area of SOs/ACs as well as independent appeals mechanisms. Other aspects of the work were outlined; however, due to limited time as well as questions, there was very little discussion in the GNSO on this topic. It's expected that it will receive a little more focus in the coming weeks and months.

ccNSO

In the ccNSO the main discussions focussed on the role of the Board, the right to recall the Board members appointed by the ccNSO and the fundamental problem of the lack of trust between the communities and the ICANN Board. There seemed to be general agreement that the mechanism to recall Board members was the essential element in the proposal.

Mathieu Weill, co-chair of the group, confirmed that proper preparation in advance of the approval would result in timely implementation.

GAC

No outcome (yet)…

Instead of sending an agreed upon statement, which would be hard to achieve, the GAC decided to collect a number of questions within the committee to which each GAC member would be invited to reply by 10 July 2015 ahead of the face-to-face meeting of the CCWG in Paris on 17-18 July. This would then reflect the different views within the GAC and could serve as guidance to the CCWG. Mathieu Weil (.fr), co-Chair of the CCWG, made it very clear that if the GAC did not approve the final report, this would jeopardise the entire transition, as time would run out.

During the GAC/SSAC (Security and Stability Advisory Committee) meeting, the SSAC-Chair, Patrik Fältström, established the link between the ongoing implementation of ATRT2 recommendations and the CCWG proposal, which says that these recommendations need to be implemented before the IANA Stewardship Transition (ATRT2 constitutes formal advice of the AC and must be taken on board by ICANN Board).

…but discussions:

During various sessions, the GAC discussed what the future role of GAC should be within the new framework. Views ranged from "certainly not less powers" (Norway), over "no change to current role" (US), to "more powers" (China) – in order to make sure that public policy considerations would be taken into account. The list of questions will be sent to the CCWG ahead of its face-to-face meeting in Paris, on 17-18 July. Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Italy, and Spain sent in their contributions during the public comment period. The UK stated that it had tasked its own legal advice team to go through the proposal before presenting it to its stakeholders.

The following is a **draft** list of questions that was discussed during the GAC meetings (state of affairs on 26 June 2015).

- What role does the GAC and its members wish to have in the new framework so that it can provide advice on public policy issues?
- Does the GAC want to continue to have an advisory role (as it is today) with respect to the ICANN Board?
- Does the GAC want to participate in a membership-based community empowerment mechanism?
- Does the GAC wish to exercise any of the proposed community powers with regards to ICANN, and if so which ones?
- In what ways would the proposed improvements of IRP be satisfactory for public policy and governments' needs, eg. in terms of increasing transparency, increasing focus, etc.?

Other questions raised during the different sessions: Could/would the GAC participate as an organisation with voting seats? Will policy considerations be taken into account in new structure? Can ICANN bylaws be changed to allow for ICANN advice to be proposed through the community empowerment mechanism in addition to advising the Board? What is the applicable jurisdiction and/or what should it be? Does the independent review panel really increase transparency? What about its composition and competences? How to avoid the risk of capture? What is the stress test 18 about and are other stakeholders subject to such tests? Appeal mechanisms – how to ensure that minority groups are heard? How to make them affordable and with low entrance barriers?

The use of country and territory names
(in TLDs and second level domains)

Country, Territory and Geographic Names

The subject of country/territory and geographic names falls within several communities in ICANN which in itself is creating a little confusion. There is a cross community working group working (CWG) on how country and territory names (either in 2-3 character codes of complete names) are to be (or not) used at the top level and in parallel, in the GAC there is work dealing with geographic names (see below). Further to this, the Registry SG are having discussions on the release of 2-letter country codes at second level. The below describes the first two areas.

CWG on use of country and territory names as TLDs (UCTN)

This group follows a study group within the ccNSO on the same topic and has good representation from the ccTLD community. The group has reviewed the work of the study group, contrasting it to existing ICANN policy and is now focused on 2-letter codes at the top level (later work will move to 3 letter codes and full length names of countries/territories). The aim is to advise on the feasibility of developing uniform definitional framework which could apply across SOs/ACs.

A set of options in relation to how country/territory names are used at the top level has been developed which ranges from the *status quo* to very unrestricted options. Each received comments from members giving thoughts on benefits and disadvantages. Discussions at the working group meeting related to these options - selected points:

- The *status quo* option (all 2-character strings reserved for use as ccTLD only and ineligible for use as gTLD) is considered to be less confusing for users and retains a clear distinction between gTLDs and ccTLDs. Some brought up that the ccTLDs which are more "commercial" in their approach, while others noted that *how* a ccTLD operates is effectively their own choice. A key benefit of this approach is that it would allow for future additions to the cc space, therefore not discriminating against future countries.
- The ISO list is dynamic – countries come and go. Questions were raised on how countries get on to this list (ISO-3166-1) as well as noting that there may be new countries/territories in the future.
- Considerable concern related to lack of GAC input to the WG as well as ongoing work in the GAC on protection of geographic (see below) – the overlap, if it produces different outcomes to the CWG, is stated to have implications as to the validity of the WG UCTN. This point was also raised at the joint ccNSO/GNSO council meeting.
- 2-letter codes to be finalised, then group will move to 3-letter codes by ICANN54.

Geographic Names and the GAC

The GAC's sole focus is on country and territory names (CTN) at *second level* in new gTLDs, as Country and Territory Names are excluded under the current round. At ICANN52, the GAC initiated a public database, i.e. a mechanism to help registries identify which governments required (what type of) notification if a CTN were to be used at second level. Meanwhile, the GAC have developed an "opt-out" list for country names at second level. All governments (also non-GAC members) are invited to indicate the following: name of country/territory in English (official names will be derived), if they do *not* require notification (i.e. the country waives its right to authorise the release of the CTN), if they do *not* require notification for brand TLDs (Specification 13), remarks to specify cases (eg. if their name is used in one or more languages, Specification 5), and a (GAC) contact. The list should be finalised by end of July 2015 and published on the GAC website. Germany mentioned that it contemplated to completely open up the use of the country name at second level for new gTLDs. GAC members were invited to visit the .vote/.voto stand, who approached governments for the use of country names at second level.

GAC coordination with CWG on UCTN

On different occasions the GAC members were asked to more intensely coordinate the work of its geographic names working group with the CCWG on the use of country and territory names (UCTN) as TLDs. Annebeth Lange (.no), co-Chair of the CCWG, also urged them to get more involved, as their voice was needed among that of the other members, i.e. gTLDs, ccTLDs and ALAC.

The remit of the GAC's WG not only pertains to geographic names as mentioned in the Applicants' Guidebook (AGB) (such as capital cities, other cities or UNESCO regions), but – according to their principles on new gTLDs – also to country names. The reason for this is that CTN are excluded in the first round of new gTLDs, but not necessarily for future rounds.

Whereas the GAC seemed generally open to more coordination and more participation in the UCTN, there were no signs of willingness to further align (or even merge) the two WGs. The GAC, however, follows with interest any work related to a definition of a "geographic name".

It is, however, important to keep in mind that the UCTN's scope is restricted to ISO 3166-1, i.e. it does not cover regions or geographical names as such. It covers CTNs as TLDs (eg. 2-letter, 3-letter codes and full country and territory names), but not at second or other level.

During the debate, the GAC voiced some concerns (examples): ensure at least an equal level of protection under the second new gTLD round, be aware of assigned and non-assigned 2-letter codes as new gTLDs and CTNs (Norway); follow closely the work of the CCWG especially on definitions (UK, US); protection refers to protection from abuse, not necessarily blocking or reserving names (Netherlands, Germany), but giving guidance to applicants for geographic names (Germany).

Background on geographic names issues

.patagonia, .amazon – their application was rejected despite the fact that the former is not a "geographic name" in the definitions in AGB and the second cannot be assigned to a particular country. Some GAC members seem to like to see the scope of the AGB extended to cover more than the geographic names of today. Yet, not all GAC members agree on this. Ultimately, the GAC and GNSO would stand in outright opposition.

ccNSO Report – Other news

The FoI was finally formally adopted by the Board. The Board is asking the community's support to implement it. (It should be underlined that the FoI will be used by ICANN post transition, and not on PTI level.)

The Strategic and Operational Planning WG was pleased to announce great progress by the ICANN finance team. The Key Performance Indicator dashboard is truly excellent. It is fair to say that this will have an immediate impact on transparency and accountability the moment is will be launched as it allows the community to track into detail progress on all ICANN projects.

IANA update - Kim Davies presented IANA's work on the next generation WHOIS protocol: RDAP. IANA is implementing RDAP itself to use RDAP to search IANA records. The implementation of the Framework of Interpretation will start immediately following Board approval. IANA will be seeking help from the ccNSO, who will need to advise. Additional input will be sought during a public comment phase. IANA is also supporting the Stewardship Transition by providing support for design teams, by drafting internal plans for expected changes and by helping to define the SLEs. Other service enhancement underway are improved technical check for root zone changes.

The ccTLD news session included sessions on the introduction of the second level in .PY and .NZ, an overview of the new communication plan for .AR, dispute resolution in .FI and the LACTLD Anycast project. At the time of writing the presentations were not available yet, but they will be uploaded here.

GNSO Report – Other news

GNSO/GAC engagement and input to GNSO policy

There are several aspects to the interaction between the GNSO and the GAC: the GAC-GNSO consultation group which was formed in 2013 and aims to help the GAC in early engagement in GNSO policy development (via a "quick look" mechanism) and the GNSO to GAC liaison. The early engagement strategy is aimed at allowing the GAC to input, at an early stage, to the GNSO policy development process in cases where the topic may have an impact on public policy. Although the group, and GAC liaison Mason Cole, are only one year into the arrangement, it's considered valuable and at the GNSO Council meeting, the role was extended for a second term. In the meantime, the GNSO also applied for travel funding for the liaison role, which was approved.

At the joint meeting, the GNSO also updated the GAC more broadly on ongoing policy development work (eg. purpose of gTLD registration data, potential subsequent rounds in new gTLDs, review of rights protection mechanism in legacy and new gTLDs, and others). The GNSO also outlined their plans to informally respond to GAC communiqués after each ICANN meeting aiming to help the Board understand the GNSO position on the topics (where applicable) the GAC have raised in their communiqués. The ICANN53 GAC Communiqué will be considered soon by the GNSO at their next Council meeting.

Next-generation gTLD Registration Directory Services (RDS)

The task for the GNSO is to work out how to incorporate the work of the Expert Working Group (EWG) into a GNSO PDP. A group was formed at ICANN51 (LA) made up of GNSO and Board members and a preliminary issue report is being worked on and expected shortly after ICANN53. This work is considered by most very large and will most likely take quite some time to get through. There was little talk about it during ICANN53 as staff notified Council that the initial report would be due shortly after the meeting (not during the meeting, as previously planned).

New gTLDs Auction Proceeds

There is roughly 58 million USD resulting from 13 contention set auctions (and quite a few more coming) as part of the new gTLD program. The funds have been segregated in ICANN financials and discussions on how best to process and allocate these funds are increasing.

For the moment, discussions are based around the process of how to manage the process, rather than actually what to do with the funds (although there are of course a few suggestions floating around). The GNSO has begun work in this area by way of a call for volunteers with the intention to start a cross community working group. It's felt that a group of this nature is perhaps the best way to handle this topic; however, many agree that it's still relatively early days and that there is no urgent deadlines to come up with conclusions or recommendations.

The ccNSO responded to the call for volunteers stating they do not feel it appropriate to get involved in the work as the funds came from activities in the gTLD space. They did, however, offer their support in providing input in the form of experience in handling fund allocation in communities. Those ccTLDs (CIRA, SIDN and Nominet) gave their input at a dedicated session during ICANN53. The GAC have had limited discussion on the topic but is interested to contribute to the discussions.

This subject is likely to span many months of discussion and a CWG is likely going to be the way forward in dealing with the process. Various comments from the community around this subject:

- Funds came from gTLDs, should they go back to applicants?
- ICANN did not perform well on involving developing economies – funds should go to support them
- Funds at least in part should go to support universal acceptance efforts
- ICANN is not-for-profit – this may impact how funds are spent

- Previous communication from Steve Crocker to GNSO, which suggested Board had intentions to lead the work, have since calmed and the work is likely to result in a cross community working group
- GNSO encourages ccNSO to keep an open mind and consider participation into a CWG

See slides from a dedicated session for more details. It's likely that the next step will be a draft discussion document.

New gTLD subsequent rounds

A discussion group on this produced a comprehensive list of topics based on experiences from the first round of applications.

The topics were consolidated and the GNSO formally requested an issue report that will analyse subjects that may lead to changes or adjustments for subsequent new gTLD Procedures. There are concerns with this work given reviews, such as AoC reviews, and others such as the new gTLD reviews (consumer choice/competition etc). In summary, there is a feeling of caution among the GNSO as to this topic. Despite this, a motion for an issue report to be produced was approved in the GNSO Council meeting. The issue report is often a pre-cursor to a PDP.

See slides for more information

Policy and Implementation WG

The work of this WG relates to the creation of a set of principles that would underpin GNSO policy and implementation related discussions. The Final Recommendations report contains a number of recommendations that will require changes to the ICANN bylaws – the report obtained consensus support of the Working Group, was submitted to the GNSO Council and approved at the Council meeting. Key areas in the report:

GIP (GNSO input process) - To provide non-binding advice, which is expected to concern topics that are not gTLD specific that no policy recommendations have been developed to date.

GNSO Guidance Process (GGP) - To provide guidance that is required to be considered by the ICANN Board, but which is not expected to result in new contractual obligations for contracted parties.

GNSO Expedited PDP (EPDP) - To develop recommendations that would result in new contractual obligations for contracted parties that meet the criteria for "consensus policies" as well as criteria to initiate a PDP.

More details: see slides

Translation and Transliteration of contact information

Key questions in this PDP were (1)whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script; and (2) who should bear the burden.

A motion to adopt recommendations (number 1 through 7) in the final report was adopted at the GNSO Council meeting. The next steps for the Council will be convene an implementation review team to assist staff in developing the implementation details for the new policy, once approved by the Board.

New ICANN meeting strategy

The GNSO circulated a detailed format and structure of GNSO meetings as they relate to the new ICANN meeting strategy, which will come into effect in mid-2016. Selected points from a session on this topic:

- Not all groups have provided feedback yet
- A skeleton exists, but there are still some overlaps
- Meeting B: more challenging (4 days only), will require rethinking/cutting, including option of no GNSO Council meeting
- GNSO may write to Board to give feedback

More details

GNSO meeting with Fadi Chehadé

Given the recent announcement of Fadi's departure from ICANN, the GNSO focused their session on Fadi's time at ICANN rather than on specific policy issues. As one GNSO councillor put it, an employee is the most truthful at the point of starting a job and ending it. Fadi was particularly candid in this session making the following (selected) points:

- Fadi offers to help next CEO in providing a as long as possible overlap period. Understanding the community and workings of ICANN and the industry is extremely important.
- There were 3 jobs: (1) Servant CEO job – not really CEO because he doesn't make decisions; (2) Political appointee – politician without a flag; and (3) Community facilitator – this should have been the focus (mistake that it wasn't)
- Fadi will not be on the search committee for the next CEO
- ICANN needs someone else now, someone who knows the complexity of the ecosystem from day 1
- Recommends a 2-day retreat with community leaders, not just Board
- Political aspect will fade out after IST
- Meeting between ICANN's executive staff team and GNSO suggested by Fadi
- Challenges for next CEO? Depends on IST, if it fails or succeeds, ICANN will need a different kind of CEO
- ICANN should withdraw from NetMundial

New gTLD Program Reviews

IAG-CCT – Jonathan Zuck, Chair, IAG-CCT – Data collected so far: internal and external sources. IAG/CCT data will be updated on a regular basis and will all be made available.

CCT Metrics – Eleeza Agopian, ICANN – focus on metrics and targets, consumer trust survey: outside help was needed, economic studies (pricing study in gTLD space), 66 metrics identified.

Global Consumer Survey – David Dickinson, Nielsen – Highlights include 86% awareness and visitation rate for ccTLDs (highest among all TLDs), close behind are legacy gTLDs (79%) and still low are new gTLDs at 14%. Factors include familiarity and awareness, as well as relevance and longevity. The total awareness rate of nTLDs is 50% and still very low for IDNs (6%). Overall there is a positive association with nTLDs, intention to visit nTLD is very high. Trustworthiness: 94% for ccTLDs, 90% legacy gTLDs, about 50% for nTLDs.

Economic Study – Greg Rafert, Analysis Group – Goal is to look at the competitive effects of ICANN's new gTLD program. Highlights include a minor price differentiation (no price difference from legacy gTLD after new gTLD introduction), legacy gTLDs registration volumes don't seem to have been impacted, add-on offerings taken into account, 15 ccTLDs included in study and 100 new gTLDs (which account for 80% of total nTLD registrations), manual retail price and add-ons benchmarking from 35 registrars: within the new gTLD space, nTLDs do more price differentiation. Final report expected in August 2015 and data will be updated in a year.

Program Implementation Reviews – Trang Nguyen, ICANN – They are self-assessment by ICANN staff to examine effectiveness and efficiency of ICANN's implementation of the program, it is not a review of GNSO policy or of the applicant guidebook. The final report is to be submitted to the CCT review team, broad participation, 6 review dimensions, 26 review topics, progress is good, still to be done: internal reviews, update of final stats and to write an executive summary – final report expected in December 2015, public comment period in September and October 2015 – longer period (60 days) because the report will be close to 300 pages.

Rights Protection Mechanisms Review – Karen Lentz, ICANN – Comment period is closed, GNSO issue report hoped as support. Concerns: premium pricing, reserved names, duration of claims service, URS remedy, blocking services. Hoping for delivery of GNSO issue report in October 2015.

CCT Review Team Prep – Margie Milam, ICANN – Review team will be put together by December 2015, review starts as of March 2016, Board action expected in March 2017.

Root Stability Study – David Conrad, ICANN – Impact of new gTLDs on stability of the system. Project to start in August 2015, draft report expected in May 2016, then public comment period and final report expected in April 2017.

GAC Underserved Regions Working Group – Tracy Hackshaw / Alice Munyua, GAC – Goal is to increase participation of underserved regions in new gTLD programme – facilitation of ccTLD survey among GAC members.

For more detail on the above areas see the slides

Strategic objectives of the GNSO

- Strengthen working relationship with GAC
- Increase efficiency and effectiveness of Council

- Facilitate entry of new volunteers in WGs
- Acknowledge role and work of GNSO in general and in particular by the Board
- Enhance preparedness and understanding by Council of policy topics
- Role and function of GNSO Council in the GNSO.

The Domain Name Association (DNA) – Marketing Insights

The DNA ran a session aimed at allowing registry operators and applicants to share best practices and share their experiences in running and marketing new gTLDs. The work of the session was conducted under the banner "DNA University" and was attended by GoDaddy, Rightside, Neustar, .co, .club, Donuts, web.com and others. Selected points from the session:

- Promotion of the site www.inthewild.domains aimed at showing good examples of new gTLDs "in the wild". Another website www.name.kitchen aims at educating on name creations.
- Promoting actual use of new gTLDs in important – (youtube video) as gives perspective of registrant
- Awareness is still thin – it's the job of the community (not ICANN) to improve this
- NYC experiences: we are building on a good brand (NYC) - we developed messaging to what it means to own a .nyc and leveraged advocates and influencers. A lot of work was done in social and sales channels. Heavy emphasis was made on sunrise: didn't necessarily work well for us. Timelines can be important.
- On marketing: you need to spend at least 10 times in broadcast as you do in production.
- Long-term value of a registrant is when he has a name most appropriate to him
- Distribution channel is broken as registrars are fed by .com, which pushes it to top of search. Registrars make so much out of bundling. We need new channels. We need registrars to make a long term decision on diversity. We need to remove dependency on .com

GAC Report – Other news

GAC survey on government-ccTLD relationships

At the ccNSO/GAC meeting, Byron Holland, Chair of the ccNSO Council, enquired about the content and intent of a survey on countries' government-ccTLD relationships. The GAC said that the purpose was to have a better understanding of the different models that exist, as a means to share experiences and build capacities especially in underserved regions. It is not clear which country initiated the survey. Once the results are available, the GAC would like to "seek ccNSO's views and assistance to analyse the material". The information could feed into the high-level meeting in Marrakesh (see below). Some GAC cautioned that this relationship could be perceived differently by either governments or ccTLDs and that it was therefore important to get both views.

Byron added that one should not assume that ccTLDs are a homogenous community but "a reflection of our local internet community and very different in terms of governance structure" – what is best practice in one country, might therefore be irrelevant in another. CENTR, having conducted a study on this, was invited to share the information with the GAC and will closely follow further developments on this matter.

GAC: EU Coordination meeting

CENTR and RIPE NCC were invited to join the coordination meeting of the European GAC convened by the European Commission for a mutual update. Mathieu Weill (.fr) and Lise Fuhr (.dk) presented the latest updates on the CCWG and CWG process/proposals. The GAC informed about their views and procedures concerning the proposals. The survey on ccTLD and government relationship was also discussed. CENTR informed about issues raised within the ccNSO regarding the proposals. RIPE NCC gave an update on activities on their side and stressed the differences to the CWG, in particular regarding the contractual relationship between RIRs and ICANN.

GAC: Public Safety Working Group

At ICANN52, the GAC agreed to establish a Working Group on Public Safety (PSWG) to discuss issues pertaining to the welfare and protection of citizens online. Members of the group include government representatives, consumer protection agencies, civil and criminal law enforcement, and others. At its first meeting, the WG discussed mainly its terms of reference and the issues the WG will discuss in the future. CENTR will continue monitoring developments within the WG.

High-level governmental meeting

Morocco will host the High Level Governmental Meeting (HLGM) at ICANN55 (7 March 2016). Themes will be decided at ICANN54. Morocco stressed that the choice of topics was essential to attract high-level officials to attend. Therefore, they should not be too technical. Rather they should pertain to internet governance and accountability more broadly and to "development issues, as they relate to the management and coordination of domain name system, looking also at the issues of security" with a view to formulate recommendations on Internet Governance. CENTR will continue to follow the preparations of this meeting, especially in view of the results to be shared from the GAC survey on government-ccTLD relationships.

GAC/ICANN Board meeting

The GAC/ICANN Board meeting saw a mix of political statements of particular interest of individual GAC delegations (such as .africa for the African Union) and revealing insights into what some governments think what the future role of the GAC within the new framework would/should be. Brazil and others cautioned that the role of the GAC in giving advice related to public policy issues should not be diminished. China certainly sees a stronger role of governments in the future – not least "for the sake of the stability and security of the international internet". The latter triggered Fadi Chehadé to stress the importance of a "delicate balance" (i.e. not changing the GAC's current role) – "for the sake of the stability and security of the internet".

GAC Communiqué Buenos Aires

https://gacweb.icann.org/download/attachments/27132037/GAC%20Buenos%20Aires%2053%20Communique.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1435188375963&api=v2

CENTR is the association of European country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registries, such as .de for Germany or .si for Slovenia. CENTR currently counts 52 full and 9 associate members – together, they are responsible for over 80% of all registered country code domain names worldwide. The objectives of CENTR are to promote and participate in the development of high standards and best practices among ccTLD registries.

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