



23 April 2013

Lesley Cowley, Chair, ICANN CCNSO

Dear Lesley,

Cross Community Working Groups

As you are aware, there has in recent times been an increased use of cross-community working groups (CWGs) i.e. chartered by more than one Supporting Organization (SO) or Advisory Committee (AC). Also, as the number of CWGs has increased, so has their perceived importance, which has raised questions about whether special rules or guidelines are needed for these groups.

The GNSO created a drafting team to develop such guidelines. This team included representatives from all the GNSO stakeholder groups, most of the constituencies, and from the ALAC. The drafting team created a set of principles (see <http://gns0.icann.org/drafts/draft-principles-for-cwgs-23dec11-en.pdf>) for CWGs that could be a potential departure point for developing broader community agreement on CWGs, including their role, function, and method of conducting joint activities.

The GNSO approved the principles in March 2012 and then circulated them to other ICANN SOs and ACs. The ccNSO helpfully provided feedback on these principles, which was further discussed in the joint GNSO-ccNSO meeting at the ICANN meeting in Prague. One of the outcomes of that meeting was an intention to form a Cross-Community Working Group to review the principles in further detail, with the aim to come to a common set of principles that would guide future CWGs. However, despite several calls for volunteers, we have not been able to gather critical mass to take this effort further. As a result, we would like to propose an alternative approach outlined below.

We would like to ask the ccNSO, based on its feedback, to suggest proposed modifications to the guidelines, which then can then be reviewed by the GNSO. As part of this process, we can then also encourage other SO/ACs to weigh in and ideally come to agreement on a common set of guidelines for CWGs that are supported by all ICANN SO/ACs. Looking ahead to Durban, this could possibly be a concrete work item for a joint session there?

I look forward to receiving your feedback on this approach.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Robinson
Chair, ICANN GNSO Council