Notes SOP Working Group Telephone Conference
18 May 2011

Attendees:

Lesley Cowley, .uk
Sabine Dolderer, .de
Atsushi Endo, .jp
Byron Holland, .ca
Roelof Meijer, .nl (Chair)
Debbie Monahan, .nz
Paulos Nyirenda, .mw
Giovanni Seppia, .eu
Peter Van Roste, CENTR
Mathieu Weill, .fr

Staff:

Bart Boswinkel
Kristina Nordström
Juan Ojeda
Gabriella Schittek

Apologies:

Fahd Batayneh, .jo
Jessica Calvo, .cr (Observer)
Oscar Robles-Garay, .mx
Leonid Todorov, .ru

- *Juan Ojeda,* ICANN Controller, was invited to present the newly posted Draft Budget ([http://icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-17may11-en.htm)](http://icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-17may11-en.htm).

  It was noted that the current budget no longer presents a deficit: Operating expenses have been reduced by US$2.5 millions. Cost reductions were performed in areas such as travel (reduced by US$ 2 millions) and professional services (reduced by US$ 500 000).

  Extra revenues have also been added, as the agreement with the .xxx registry ICM is now set and over US$ 500 000 is anticipated to go into the ICANN budget as a result of that.

  Areas, where more spending is anticipated, is increased staffing, Board compensation (to meet the ATRT Review recommendations), IDNs, meeting costs and additional travel support to SO/AC community members.

  The SOP Working Group members noted that professional services were budgeted at US$ 17,212,000 in the earlier Framework and now at US$ 17,267,000 in the present draft, meaning an increase of US$ 55,000 and not a reduction of US$ 500,000 as stated by Juan.

Juan added that working on the assumption that 500 applications would be filed under the new gTLD programme, ICANN is in the process of developing an excess fund for the application fees. It is currently drafting policy, which will be posted as soon as ready and it will be open for public comments.

• SOP Working Group members expressed their surprise that "ccNSO Support" is anticipated to take up 18.3% of the budget (in total US$ 12 261 000), particularly that it had gone up by US$ 3 million compared to the previous year. They therefore asked for a better breakdown of where these costs are allocated. It was confirmed by Juan that "ccNSO Support" should be read as "ccTLD Support"

Furthermore, an explanation of what had caused the increase was requested.

It was also felt that it would be useful to get a breakdown of costs, not only related to the ccTLDs, but also in areas such as the IANA function and Regional Liaisons.

Juan explained that some of the increased costs were bound to the IDN Fast Track, but committed to provide the requested break-down by the mid of the following week.

• The SOP Working Group members noted that the average ICANN salary of US$150 000 is rather high. An introduction of a benchmarking scheme was requested in order to measure the salaries.

Juan Ojeda replied that periodic benchmarking studies had been done and that they are posted on the ICANN website. He would point the ccNSO to these studies.

• It was asked how ICANN is measuring "Community input" versus "individual input" and whether ICANN considers "no input" to a project to be supportive.

Juan considered "no support" as being supportive.

• It was asked how comments get selected in the ICANN responses. It was felt that it was hard to find any specific references to SOP Working Group input and that the replies seemed rather vague.

Juan replied that rather than answering each individual question, all similar questions get categorised by their nature.

However, if the SOP Working Group is not satisfied with the responses to their input, he would be happy to address them separately.

• It was asked what ICANN meant by "vigorously pursue additional ccTLD contributions" as written in the Draft Budget.

Juan clarified that this was aimed at internal management; that ICANN staff needs to prioritise the topic more and not delay the posting of contribution letters, as happened in the current year.

The group noted that it is rather strong language and suggested re-phrasing that part in order to avoid misunderstandings.

- It was felt amongst the SOP Working Group members that it would be useful to make another submission to the ICANN Budget, as much input had been omitted and would need to be repeated. Therefore, another call is scheduled to take place on 25 May, at 11.00 UTC.

  Each of the SOP Working Group team leaders were tasked to go through their part of their team's submission and compare it to the Operating Plan & Budget. Comments that were not fully, or not at all taken into account should be highlighted and presented during the 25 May call.

  The comments should be finalised and submitted to Roelof Meijer and/or Bart Boswinkel before 30 May 2011.

  Roelof and Bart will then compile the omitted comments from the various teams into a new SOP Working Group Comment on the Operating Plan & Budget and will have it ready for submission on the 6 June 2011.