

GNSO Activity Update Mar 2016 (ICANN55)

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Executive Summary

- CCWG Accountability –good support for overall package (vote on 9 March). No surprises expected (more detail below)
- Next-Gen Registration Directory services (RDS): Work plan in coming weeks, group to outreach to SO/ACs. First phase defining requirements for registration data regardless of system used. Timeline expected to take years.
- RDAP: Concerns with potential obligation for Registrars to implement RDAP given thick Whois policy requiring certain additional fields. General concern by potential deployment prior to completion of RDS PDP. ICANN considering moving forward with RDAP implementation without need for differentiated access.
- New gTLD auction proceeds: 100 million, discussion paper out and drafting team working on work plan. Key point to ensure separation between those that decide direction, choose projects and receive funds.
- New ICANN meeting structure: Concerns on limited time for GNSO F2F time in Meeting B as well as clarity of ‘outreach’ component if meeting is in Helsinki. Meeting B is supposed to help progress policy.
- Subsequent new gTLD rounds – Group getting started on work and reaching out to SO/ACs. Key aim to determine if changes needed to previous new gTLD policy recommendations.
- Interaction with incoming ICANN CEO. Councillors: this CEO job is not like others. Engage with community. Ensure multi-stakeholder model healthy. Help us with volunteer burnout.
- Geo-TLDs group – more formalisation (considering association) and specific projects discussion (PR work, stats, government relations and a website for the group)
- GNSO to vote on charter for WG to review all RPMs in all gTLDs

ICANN accountability discussion

(note: given speed of topic and vote on Wednesday, below represents mostly from recent discussion over weekend in Marrakech)

GNSO discussed with Thomas Rickert and dedicated considerable to method to vote for the supplemental proposal (rather than substance of it). The GNSO are due to vote on the proposal during the [council meeting](#) on Wednesday 9 March 2016. Vote is likely to allow councillors to single out specific recommendations for vote, however if a single recommendation does not meet the threshold, a vote on the overall package will be triggered. Selected points from discussions:

- Comment: community have good control on accountability process with this proposal – we got what we wanted.
- Discussions on contingencies:
 - o The ‘empowered community’ - those who run/use the DNS have the authority.
 - o System is bullet proof. Bylaws ensure ICANN won’t run away rogue.
 - o Stephanie p – what about the risk you don’t predict? Rapid response team? Emergency communications process should be in place. Unexpected issues can threaten multi stakeholder model fast in terms of perception.
- All bylaw changes will require public comment period before accepted/implemented.
- Cc’s – reserved IRP for ccTLDs .. they have framework of interpretation. (on delegation)
- Don’t hold process hostage for smaller issues. We need to find compromise. Can we accept this in total?
- Conscious there is a lot of implementation work to be done. Responsibility of GNSO to monitor closely and provide input to ensure implementation to the policy
- Accepting board late bomb shell shouldn’t have happened. Should have followed process.

Incoming ICANN CEO visits GNSO

Göran Marby visited the GNSO council in a relatively informal session on Sunday during ICANN55. Given that Göran does not official begin the role for several months, conversation was more to give a flavour of how the GNSO works and some advice for the incoming CEO. Selected points:

- Volunteer burnout is a major problem that needs help
- CEO needs to be very much a part of the community. Understanding the role of the CEO is complicated not like any other CEO position. Göran notes many have already drilled this home to him.
- Focus on ensuring multi-stakeholder model is healthy and protected.
- ICANN is becoming an adult after it's teenage years. When we are adult, there will be less time for mistakes.
- Göran expressed interest in getting details of the upcoming GNSO meetings

Next Generation gTLD Registration Directory Services

What's this about: Board-initiated PDP to define purpose of collecting, maintaining and providing access to gTLD registration data, and consider safeguards for protecting data, using the recommendations in the Expert Working Group Final Report as an input to, and, if appropriate, as the foundation for a new gTLD policy.

Status/updates: The WG commenced deliberations in January 2016 and have developed a draft work plan (ready in coming weeks) and there are 134 members (one of the largest GNSO WGs). Key tasks in phase one of the work is to define requirements for registration data services (regardless of system) such as users/purposes, access, accuracy, data elements and privacy aspects. Based on this they will also look at whether a new RDS is needed or whether the existing could be modified.

Selected points from GNSO sessions:

- Group will outreach to SO/ACs and GNSO SG/Cs aiming at getting views on specific areas in the work as it happens. There will therefore be multiple outreaches in this topic.
- High chance of offering 'differentiated access' (an aspect of the RDAP protocol)
- Comments: We should be discussing why we even have a Whois. Be careful talking about specific elements (access, accuracy etc) as they may detract from overall 'does whois need an overhaul' yes/no style question.

[More information](#)

RDAP implementation

Background: ICANN-accredited registrars subject to the 2013 RAA, registry operators from the 2012 New gTLD round and several other gTLD registries are contractually obligated to deploy RDAP (Registration Data Access Protocol). Linked to this is the requirement of "thick" WHOIS services for all gTLD registries. The GNSO Implementation Review Team that was formed for the Thick Whois Policy Implementation agreed with the proposal of ICANN staff to synchronize implementation of the policy with the adoption of RDAP.

Updates:

- Feedback from community on differentiated access - requirement for differentiated access is premature given ongoing work (RDS PDP) in this area. Those interesting in differentiated access should contribute to RDS PDP work.
- Questions on whether Registrars need to offer RDAP or should Registries show 4 additional fields in their RDDS per thick policy (registrar registration expiry date, registrar abuse contact email/phone, reseller). Registrars argue that RDAP would be temporary given only 3 remaining thin gTLDs (com, net, jobs) resulting in significant costs.
- ICANN considering moving forward with RDAP implementation without need for differentiated access.

[Presentation slides \(GDD\)](#)

New gTLD Auction funds (100 million)

Background: The new gTLD Program established auctions as a mechanism of last resort to resolve string contention. Most string contentions (aprox. 90%) have been resolved through other means before reaching an auction however significant funds accrued for the rest. In March 2015 the GNSO started discussing a possible process for facilitating the conversation around new gTLD auction

proceeds and reached out to other SOs/ACs to determine whether there would be interest to form a cross-community working group on this topic.

Status/updates: Net proceeds now stand at around 101 million (USD). Several SO/ACs are interested in taking part in the CWG although ccNSO have not expressed an interest to contribute at this stage. A [discussion paper](#) out for public comment has been formulated and a drafting team are working on a charter and developing a template for the work process. Selected points:

- Steve C stated in a letter: the WG is to “gather ideas and create one or more proposals which Board will consider in final decision making...”. He also stated that work should focus on principles rather than specific choices of projects. Also that there should be clear separation between those who decide direction, choose projects and receive funds. This is clear to the WG drafting team.
- From public comments, strong need for broad and inclusive participation to the WG.
- Budget for CCWG to come from regular operating budget – not auction funds themselves.
- Board: early days in discussion on this topic. Key focuses are to look at fiduciary duties, ensure no conflict of interests and consider prudent investment. ICANN is not for profit so need to follow rules on mission. May have to set up separate audit procedures

New gTLD subsequent procedures

Background: The PDP is intended to determine what changes, if any, need to be made to the existing policy recommendations from the 2007 Final Report on the Introduction of New Generic TLDs. If the WG were to determine no changes are needed, the existing policy recommendations would remain in place. [More information, WG charter](#)

Status/updates: The WG has selected its leadership (to be ratified at council meeting) and meetings are beginning. Initially is how to organise the work as well as the interaction with other groups in the community reviewing aspects of the new gTLD 2012 round (eg. CCT review team). Other points:

- 100 members in the WG and reaching out to SO/ACs. Hope for more GAC contribution.
- Councillor: AGB did not reflect everything from original GNSO policy recommendation, will this be analysed? A: Group will look at if policies were implemented as GNSO intended.
- More questions and discussion around extent to which original GNSO policy was followed.
- Audience: Role of registrars as exclusive sales channel for new gTLDs makes challenge for registries as sellers. A: this will be considered in one of the work streams.
- CCT review should be looking at this work (a lot of horizontal work going on)

Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice Review (CCT)

Background: Mandate for group is to evaluate if/how the new gTLD program has promoted competition, consumer trust and choice. ICANN also commissioned, in lead up to this work, an economic study and a Nielson survey of registrants and end users.

Updates:

- Begun the review in January 2016 to evaluation in 3 sub teams: 1. competition, consumer trust and choice, 2. effectiveness of application and evaluation processes and 3. safeguards/trust
- Review has 17 members and some independent experts. Members represent GNSO, ALAC, GAC and ccNSO.
- Finalising a work plan and determining whether more data would be required. In Q3 2016 will issue findings of survey results with public comment.
- Team reaching out on following: Can public safely navigate/use new gTLDs? Impact of PICs and safeguards, risks for confusion and abuse, developing countries and trademark issues

[More information](#)

ICANN Meeting B Issues

GNSO are concerned with meeting B structure noting conflicting sessions and questioning the need for outreach given its new location. The Board have pushed back a little on the first question noting the meeting planning group was working for 2 years on this and only now receiving critics when the meeting hasn't taken place. Board suggest giving it a try, being flexible and using the perhaps less

required 'outreach' for further policy work. Board also noted that part of meeting B would be that Board members will be sitting in SG sessions more often to watch and listen.

CZDS platform update

- Plans to re-platform CZDS as it's not scalable or flexible enough in current form. Roll out in July/August 2016 with migrating all data/users by year end.
- Some new features inc: Ability to auto-approval, bulk approve and include better captcha, set number of days request is approved for (by TLD or all TLDs), data export functionality. Bulk rejection (but not auto rejection) and more

Registry SG: 2-character mitigation

Background: ICANN published (2014) general authorization for release of all non-Letter/Letter two-character ASCII labels for all new gTLDs. Process: Operator requests authorization for release of labels followed by 60 day comment period.

Update there is an [online form](#) for registry operators to post mitigation measures to avoid confusion in response to a comment received. Staff are working on principles to get a more standardised methodology of mitigation measures (eg. relating to confusability issues). Some concerns Governments are having veto options on this issue.

[More information](#)
