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[background conversation]

Kurt Pritz:

Okay, if everyone would take their seats we'll get started. Welcome, everyone and thanks to those who are attending online. We're just getting started now as people come in. For those of you watching at home we're in a large tent. It's kind of warm so I heard that if you don't move, that's the path for most cooledness.

Peter, I think when you talked about us having a party, I think this is what you meant, right? Meeting together in a tent to talk about new gTLDs, what could be better than that? Thank you, everyone, for coming to this session. It's entitled the "New gTLD Update."

What does that mean in this environment when we're preparing to launch the program, getting ready to accept applications starting on December 12<sup>th</sup>? Well, things continue to evolve so there is some new news. A lot of what you hear you might have heard before if you've attended others of these sessions, but I think that's valuable, too, because we want to demonstrate there's a consistency to the approach and in fact, ICANN – meaning all of us – are following on with what we planned to do when we decided to launch this process with respect to timeline, but also with respect to how we're going to conduct the process.

So let me give you the order of battle. This is the agenda for today. Changes or items of note in the Applicant Guidebook – we'll discuss that first, and Karen Lentz, ICANN's Director of

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Policy and Operations Research will lead that talk for us. Then sadly for you I'll take back over, talk a little bit about the evaluation process but importantly there's a more detailed session on the evaluation process tomorrow that Trang Nguyen and I will lead, and I'll also talk a little bit about operations in ICANN and how the ICANN staff and its partners are getting ready to run this process. So you might find that useful.

There's still some remaining issues up for discussion that are taking place at this meeting, so we'll at least cover those and point you to where those discussions are taking place. Some of them already took place earlier in the meeting but they're still happening right now. And then Scott Pinzon, ICANN's Communication Director and Trang Nguyen, our Senior Manager of Customer Service, will talk about communications – both communications with applicants and the ICANN global communications and outreach program to ensure that all those that are interested in participating in new gTLDs in some way, either an applicant or a benefiter of new gTLDs, are being communicated with.

So that's the path for this session. We want to get through the material which isn't too voluminous and then turn it over to you for any questions you may have. So Karen, can you join me? But don't trip. So, ladies and gentlemen, Karen Lentz.

Karen Lentz:

Thank you, Kurt. So there have been a few changes to the Applicant Guidebook since it was approved in Singapore, and I'll

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start off this morning by taking you through those briefly. There was a set of changes that the Board authorized when they voted in Singapore and directed us to update the Guidebook in the following areas. So that's been done, reflected in the latest version of the Guidebook which was posted in September.

So some of those changes concern, the first item – the certain names that were requested for protection by the International Olympic Committee and Red Cross based on their status of legal protection in many countries. They are included in the Guidebook as prohibited from delegation as TLDs in the first round so they are not reserved names at this point. There could be policy development activities surrounding names such as those, but currently they are in the Guidebook as having a certain level of protection.

The next area which I will talk about in a little more detail in a bit concerns the early warning and advice processes from the Governmental Advisory Committee. So these are processes that were discussed quite a bit leading up to the completion of the Guidebook and the approval of the program by the Board. So there has been some language in the Guidebook concerning those processes which was revised a little bit in order to make it more flexible for the GAC to come up with the rules and procedures and processes that they wish to use in providing an early warning to an applicant or providing GAC advice on applications.

Finally there was discussion concerning the uniform rapid suspension or URS concerning at what point there might be a

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loser-pays model instituted for that process. And so the threshold was lowered for loser-pays from 25 to 15.

Okay, other changes: this is the first time the Applicant Guidebook has had dates in it. The dates for the application submission period are included. The period opens on January 12, 2012. There is an interim date that has been in there, which has also been filled in, which is 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 2012 – that is the last day for new user registrations in the application interface.

And the reason for that date is there are a number of steps involved in creating a new user and going through the necessary steps, and submitting the fees and submitting the application. So that date is in place to ensure that applicants will have enough time to go through all those steps and complete their application, and have their complete application in by the time the window closes. And then the closing date of the submission period is April 12, 2012.

And the other item of note here has to do with resources for applicant assistance. This is also something that has been discussed a lot at this meeting and previously, and that has to do with, given the goals of diversity and widespread participation in the New gTLD Program, how can we put mechanisms in place to support applicants from developing areas or who have circumstances where they might be requesting or requiring support of various types?

So that discussion is continuing about the best ways to do that. One of the things that we have put in place – there are a number of

steps that we have taken to assist applicants, one of them being making the materials available in several languages. And the link that you see here has been added to the website, and it contains a directory for potential applicants who are interested in finding sources of support, potential sources of support of various types for their applications; and it's also a place for organizations who have, who are offering support of various types to find applicants who are interested in receiving that. So that's been included.

I'd like to go into a little bit of detail on the GAC early warning and advice processes. They've been discussed quite a bit and are outlined in the Guidebook. The early warning is a step in the early part of the process that provides notice to an applicant that there may be a potential problem with their application, that at least one government sees it as potentially problematic.

So there's a period concurrent with the 60-day application comment period in which the GAC early warning can be issued, and the early warning is a notice. It provides notice to the applicant that there's an issue that they may want to pay attention to. It's not a formal objection; the early warning by itself will not disqualify anybody, but it does provide the applicant with notice that that could occur – that there could be objections or advice against their applications.

And the process as laid out here is fairly simple. A government would work through the GAC to notify, provide notice of concerns that they might have about a specific application. The GAC would issue an early warning to the Board. The applicant would then be

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notified “You’ve received an early warning,” and then they have the option at that point to either withdraw the application – and there’s a refund provided at that point if desired; or they can choose to continue the application, also with the option of course of meeting with the relevant governments and trying to address whatever the issues might be with the application.

So a couple of recommendations that are in the Guidebook: one is that the GAC early warning should be taken seriously. It’s an indication that there may be an objection filed or that GAC advice might be issued on that application. And all applicants are encouraged to identify what the potential sensitivities might be around their application – who are the parties who might be interested in this, what concerns might they have – and take steps to contact those people and educate them and work out any concerns they might have in advance of submitting the application, rather than the risk of being slowed down or having that occur after the application has been submitted.

On GAC advice, so this can occur through a longer period of time. It should be submitted from the GAC by the end of the objection filling period, and it’s intended to address the applications that a government considers to be problematic. For example, they might violate a law or just be sensitive to a particular government in a particular area.

So it is the GAC’s intention to develop a standard set of rules and procedures to develop the terminology that they use in providing their advice so that it’s clear to all parties what they are intending

to communicate in their advice. Once that advice gets issued to the Board the applicant does have opportunities to submit a response before the advice is considered by the Board. The Board does take the GAC advice very seriously and if they for some reason decide to act not in accordance with the GAC advice, they're required to provide rationale for that.

I will turn it back over to Kurt to go through the evaluation process.

Kurt Pritz:

Thanks, good job. Thank you, Karen. Like I said, I'll briefly touch on the evaluation process here but there'll be more detail in a session tomorrow about that.

It's been well-communicated, I think, when the evaluation window opens and closes – the application window. It opens on January 12 and closes on April 12, but what I really want to bring your attention to and what's really clearly written in the Guidebook but hasn't been discussed much, is that there's a March 29 date that's a closing date for... You could call it "reserving a slot" in the application window, and that's because certain legal checks have to take place. So what's required by March 29 is that a slot is reserved by supplying certain minimal information and a \$5000 deposit. That also enables access to TAS and access to all the rest of the tools. So please write that down.

The application process is pretty simple. Register in TAS, pay the \$5000 fee requesting an application slot; and then at your timetable

but certainly before April 12, complete the application, upload any necessary reporting documents and provide the full evaluation fee. So all these things have to be done in order for the application to be considered complete.

At that point the evaluation will start immediately upon April 12, and this is one of the oldest slides in the book although we've made the font a little bigger. And so the application process just tracks the Applicant Guidebook so read the Applicant Guidebook. There's an initial evaluation phase that measures the applications. All applications go through an initial evaluation and it's our expectation that most applications only go through initial evaluation. There's a set of 50 questions on the application form, and applicants demonstrating certain competencies will be designated as registries.

There are sidetracks: applicants that don't pass the initial evaluation can apply for an extended consideration where they can supply additional clarifying information but not materially change their application – that's called extended evaluation. That's done without fee and at applicant request.

There's a process as Karen described for formally objecting to a gTLD application. The Guidebook in Module 3 sets out the rules for resolving that dispute between the applicant and the objector. The objector can object on certain specified grounds and require some sort of standing to object, and has to pay for a filing fee. Those objection dispute resolution processes are completed on a loser-pays model so that the party that prevails in the objection has

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to pay little or no fees. And then finally there's another sidetrack if there's applications for identical TLDs, or TLDs that are so, so similar that they raise a likelihood of user confusion if both were to be delegated.

So the evaluation process then just tracks to the Guidebook, and then finally in transition to delegation the successful applicant executes an agreement with ICANN, completes pre-delegation testing and then gets delegated into the root zone.

So let's see how repetitive I will be. The basic evaluation path, the one that we think nearly all – well, that all applications will go through but we think most will only have to go through this – is that there will be an administrative check in the first two months. Why is this two months long? Well, it really accommodates the new GAC early warning process, so it allow the GAC to consider the applications for two months and then make their notices through the GAC early warning process.

I just want to point out, too, that those applicants who receive GAC early warning, that's just a notice so they don't have to drop out; but those receiving a notice will receive a heightened level of refund if they do drop out within 21 days of that notice. I'm going into too much detail, aren't I? Then the initial evaluation will take about five months and we'll talk about what that is a little bit on future slides, but each application will be evaluated against these seven criteria.

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And then finally we expect the transition to delegation to take between two to five months, so all-in we'll see the first delegations maybe at the end of December 2012, but we think January 2013. And that transition to delegation of course includes those steps that I mentioned.

So let's just review the key dates again, and this provides a little bit more detail: the application window opens on January 12. You have to reserve a slot by March 29. The window closes on April 12. We expect that the strings and applications will be posted two weeks later, a little over two weeks later on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Coincident with that we'll open an application comment period so the public can comment on any application – those comments will be available to the evaluators. The GAC, the Governmental Advisory Committee early warning window opens as does the objection period, so objections can be filed starting with the posting of the applications.

And after administrative reviews, initial evaluation begins in earnest on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Sixty days after the applications are posted the GAC early warning window closes, so applicants will know by that time if there's a GAC early warning, and the comment period on each application closes. The initial evaluation predicted to take five months will end on November 12<sup>th</sup>, and those results will be posted. All the results from the applications evaluated in that batch will be posted.

Applicants that don't succeed at initial evaluation will have a couple weeks to elect whether to enter into extended evaluation,

which will start on December 1<sup>st</sup>. So while those applicants are going through extended evaluation the steps in transitioning to delegation will start for the applicants that passed the initial evaluation. Coincident with that is when the objection period closes and the GAC advice window closes. So it's kind of complicated to follow, but the idea is that those that wish to object can wait to see if an applicant passes initial evaluations, so will hold the objection until then. But the idea is during this time parties can prepare objections but not go to the expense of filing them until after they're sure an application has passed initial evaluation.

On April 30<sup>th</sup> extended evaluation closes. The dispute resolution window closes and results and summaries are posted. So between December 1<sup>st</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> you'll see those dispute resolutions resolved. And then after that, the last string contention opens so as applications pass and are identified as being in contention, that contention can be resolved.

I want to talk a little bit about the types of evaluation panels you're going to see. ICANN is engaging with different independent entities, companies to conduct each one of these evaluations. So remember, there's four evaluations on the string itself and three evaluations on the applicant. Each application is evaluated for whether it's too similar to an existing string or another application, whether the string itself might break the domain name system in a way; whether the registry services offered by the applicant would cause possible stability and security issues in the domain names

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system, or unfair competition issues may arise so the application will be evaluated that way.

Each string will be evaluated to determine if it's a geographic name within the meaning given in the Guidebook. If it's a geographic name within the definition of the Guidebook then the approval of the relevant government is required. And then finally, each applicant entity itself is evaluated: does it have the technical and financial wherewithal to operate a registry? And in cases where a registry holds itself out to be a community registry, we need a service provider to determine if it meets the criteria of a community TLD.

So prior to all this happening we're going to do background checks. In accordance with all the work this community's done getting ready for this, one of the measures to prevent malicious conduct or to at least mitigate it is to do enhanced background checks. And then overlaying this whole process will be a quality assurance function that I'll talk a little bit more about.

So we're currently negotiating with panel services contracts but I'm going to tell you a little bit about who they are, and we're working through a simulation exercise on evaluation procedures. So these are the firms with whom we've negotiated master services agreements to provide services, and so what are we aiming for here? Well, in almost every instance we have more than one service provider, and that is in place for two reasons. One is bandwidth, to make sure there's enough bandwidth to perform the evaluations; and two is to resolve or avoid conflicts. So in the case

where one firm may have a conflict with an applicant we can revert to the other firm.

So I'm pretty proud of the fact that ICANN has associated itself with these firms going forward. I think that they demonstrate a competency that's recognized around the world and also a global orientation with offices all over the world that will allow them to access the kind of cultural, language and other types of skills that are necessary to evaluate applications from all regions.

So some of these are familiar to you. I didn't know about InterConnect Communications earlier but their prime subcontractor on this job is the University College of London who brings vast linguistic expertise to this party. So in assessing string similarity and geographic names we have the linguistic expertise of the University College of London which is fantastic. Interisle has partnered with ICANN for a long time and delivered technical consulting services in a very effective way.

With regard to geographic names, I think we're all familiar with *The Economist*. The Economist Intelligence Unit is the arm of *The Economist* in the UK. For the most complex, I think, technical operations and financial evaluation we've engaged with Ernst & Young – this is in alphabetical order – JAS Advisors and KPMG. And then for performing the kind of subjective community priority examinations we again rely on *The Economist* and InterConnect and the University College of London which we think is well-suited to performing those types of evaluations.

And then underlying this all, JAS has been obtained to perform the quality assurance function. I'm going to tell you a little about that. So you see JAS is sort of a tertiary source for providing the financial and technical evaluation, not one of the primary ones, but is there in case both of those other firms are conflicted out. As far as a background screening provider, an RFP was issued in August. We've already heard from eleven global firms and vendor selection is underway.

So what about quality assurance? I think this is a very important aspect of this project. What are we after? We want the applications to be scored consistently. We want accountability of the panelists and of the firms managing those panelists, continual improvement and some transparency into how the project operates.

So we've developed this four-step or four-prong process to quality assurance and quality control. One is presently we're performing simulation exercises, so we have these firms scoring simulated applications and then comparing notes and doing normalization exercises so there's some consistency across the application. Then once the process launches, in our terms we talk about F'12, and we're not settled on this number but the first twelve applications. So we'll evaluate twelve applications and then stop, and then look for consistency across evaluators, across regions, across panelists to ensure there's a normalization across those; and then reset.

And then once we start evaluating in earnest we'll do blind evaluations. So our quality assurance provider will rescore 15% of the applications, and in cases where there's differences stop, go

back to the evaluators, do a check to see how a certain question is being scored – why there was a difference in score; and then reset the process across all the evaluators. So that 15% is a significant number. I'm an old QA guy and we used to have all these military standards in the United States that would help us pick samples and we'd measure the right size, and if you find something wrong you go back and examine the whole lot.

So those very basic QA principles are being applied right here by people much more competent than I because I've forgotten all that stuff to this process. We're also doing random procedural reviews to ensure that each evaluator is running the procedures in exactly the procedural way that we've specified. This is our approach to quality assurance.

And then overarching all of this there'll be a program governance program. So if you think about the different prongs to the New gTLD Evaluation Office, there'll be a program management oversight function to assure that all these functions are integrated and performing as they should. So I'm going to talk a little bit about that program management office now.

First, we've talked about this before and I'm boring you enough so I'm not going to give you a lot of numbers, but ICANN's gone through a process where we've identified the key functions necessary to support new gTLDs once they're in place – the IANA function, registrar and registry liaison, our Legal Team, our Finance Team. We've flowcharted out processes and we've put staffing plans in place to grow the organization with the intended

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new influx of services that ICANN has to provide – new services and breadth of services.

As far as our New gTLD Program Office, Mike Salazar as the Director of that program has built, I think, a nearly fleshed out and competent organization that has these different functions: program governance – that includes quality control and reporting out; service providers – that manages the evaluation panels, so reporting to that function there will be so many coordinators like one coordinator for every 50 applications I think it is, is that right? Something like that.

There's a separate function that just manages the application system. There's a link to supporting processes where Finance and Legal are matrixed into the program; and then Trang that'll talk in a minute will run customer service, so I'll let her talk about that.

Once new TLDs are delegated we've also committed to performing new functions, especially with regard to trademark protections. So here's a status on how that's going: an emergency backend service provider will be in place to take on five critical registry functions in the case that a registry fails. ICANN has posted a request for information that closes November 30. After that closing date ICANN will enter into negotiations with parties that respond to determine probably an award of multiple emergency backend providers. So I'm going to talk for a bit about that process.

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We're posting RFIs, requests for information, and not RFPs – requests for proposals – because we think there's some detail left to be worked out with the ultimate service provider, and we want to provide flexibility in the solicitation process to fleshing out each individual program and then negotiating the best price and best value for the registrants. So we post these RFIs with the idea of understanding who the interested parties are and then entering into negotiations to finally craft the process and get the best deal and the best value.

So for example, for the trademark clearinghouse you've seen that an RFI was opened. That closes on November 25<sup>th</sup>. For the independent objector we're going to launch an RFP shortly, and similarly with a uniform rapid suspension provider. So I think those of you who have read the Guidebook, which I think is every darn person in this room because you're all the way here sitting in a hot tent to learn about it – that's the status of those things.

There's a few open issues still being discussed, so that's the nature of ICANN. The current status of vertical integration, the ability for registries and registrars to be co-owned or for a registry to own a registrar and sell names in that registry is this: for new gTLDs, registries will be able to compete with registrars, so registries and registrars can be co-owned. The registrar can sell names in that registry.

For existing registries, they can also own registrars and those registrars can sell names in any new gTLDs that that registry applies for and obtains through this process. Not yet can existing

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registries own a registrar and sell their own names, so the existing TLDs cannot use their co-owned registrars to sell names. We've been in contact as many of you know. We've heard from certain governmental authorities on this issue. We're in contact with competition authorities in those regions, working to develop details and conditions under which these gTLDs, these existing gTLDs can own registrars and sell names in their registries.

With the launch of the New gTLD Program and the introduction of new gTLDs expected early 2013, we expect this will be resolved in time for existing registries to compete in this arena but we've not lost our sense of urgency about it and are moving those discussions along as we can.

Batching: so what happens if we receive more applications than our evaluation panels can process at one time within the five-month window. This has been previously agreed to as being about 500 applications for a couple reasons. One is, when we developed that 500 number, we thought that for consistency, quality assurance regions in the first round we didn't want to make that number too big because we wanted to maintain close control; and also then it becomes sort of a self-metering delegation rate process. ICANN has made a commitment to the root servers, operators and others in the security and stability community that we will not delegate more than 1000 TLDs a year. By processing batches of about 500 we meet that goal. So then we might be forced with the need to batch applications.

So why is this still an open issue? Well, here are the objectives of any batching process: it's got to be fair and objective, comply with applicable laws, consistent with the Guidebook because our goal is not to change the Guidebook. At the end of the day we're not going to exceed the 1000 delegation per year heading and we don't want to have some process that could be gamed or abused. And finally we want the process to make sense. So one example we all talk about is if two TLDs are in contention we want them to be in the same batch. We don't want a TLD to be approved and then having that applicant standing around or sitting around waiting for the future ones.

So it's not settled yet but here's some possible approaches. First, we want to reduce the need for batching if we can. So what are ways to reduce batching? Some of these are good ideas; some of them I'll tell you are not good now. So we've heard in public comment fora talking about the new gTLD process that we should afford entities the ability to opt in or opt out of a last round. So some applicants may not be fully subscribed or have their plans fully fleshed out for a new TLD and they may wish to be not considered in the initial batch. So that wish can be accommodated.

So we expect some, and I think not surprisingly non-negligible numbers of applications will have that – that they'll opt out of the first round. There's a thought that we could actually lengthen the initial evaluation period and do more than 500 applications, perhaps many more. That's only a partial solution I think. First of all, we only want to delegate 1000 a year, and second of all, in the

spirit of that we don't want to delegate the 1000 all on the same day. And secondly, increasing the size of the batch leads to procedural and operational concerns afterward. So you might see the initial batch, an increased number of contracts come into execution on the same day – that could not be accommodated. So we're building the model around the 500.

So depending on how many applications we get, we could incrementally increase the size of the batch but probably at the end of the day not too much, so that's what's being discussed now. So what's that number – 600? I don't know. Is it 531? If we receive 1200 applications could we accommodate them in two batches? Probably. So we want to reduce the need for batching.

And then, as far as batching goes there's a couple different models for consideration. One is random selection. This has been talked about a lot in public, I think it might be the wisest approach but there are legal implications with conducting a random selection. So we're looking at that – it's sort of a complex issue. We're looking at the laws in the state of California where ICANN is incorporated and other jurisdictions to determine that we can conduct random selection. If not, we'll have to develop some other means.

And I think it was in a ccNSO meeting or maybe a GAC meeting, I don't know – the “secondary timestamp” is a really bad way of putting it but we need an objective, arbitrary way of assigning priorities to TLD applications after they've been approved. So I want to state very clearly that in no way will the order in which

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applications are received affect the priority of the batching, but there's some other means of assigning priorities other than random; some other way of handing out – if you go to concerts – handing out wristbands or some other priority.

So if you think of contests way back in the 1900's, people could mail in something and we could have different mail depot receipt areas around the world to receive mails and then open them up, and that would be the order. So I picked kind of a poor example because I don't think that's the way we're going to do it, but some way of assigning priority there. So there's a very concentrated effort that took what was thought to be a pretty darn simple problem and resolve it.

I think Karen already talked about the Applicant Support Program. That's already posted on the website so I'm not going to talk more about that there. I will tell you that the Board has had several sessions and appointed a separate working group to take the input of the JAS and develop ideas for determining how close we can get to providing applicant support to needy and worthy applicants in a way that approaches what the JAS is requesting. So to the extent you have comments about the JAS report and how meaningful support may be provided to applicants, I urge you to come to the Public Comment Forum tomorrow, I think it is, and tell the Board your opinion on that.

So with that I'm going to close my rather longwinded discussion and talk about something more important – that's communications. So I'm going to ask Trang and Scott to come up, and Scott needs

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another handheld microphone, Paul, if there's any way? Oh, you can switch off? Okay.

So I gave you their titles before; here's Trang and Scott. Thanks.

Trang Nguyen:

Good morning, everyone. So customer service is not really a new concept. We've been accepting questions and answering questions that are provided to us through the [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org) email address, so it's not new.

What is new is that in November we are going to be launching a customer service portal. That's going to be available on the New gTLD website, and the portal is going to provide you with a couple of things. First, it's going to provide you with one additional way to get in touch with us. You can continue to use the [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org) email address but you can also go to our website and use an email web form to send us your questions.

So are we going to treat questions that we get on the website differently than questions that we get through [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org)? No. All questions are going to be treated the same. What we're doing here is simply providing you with an additional way to get in touch with us.

The other thing that the customer service portal is going to do is it's going to give you access to a new and searchable knowledge base. The knowledge base is going to contain FAQs; it's going to contain the subsections and the various sessions of the Applicant

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Guidebook. It's also going to have new gTLD reference materials, and we're also going to include a brand new set of knowledge base articles.

So what are these knowledge base articles? Well, they are basically all of the questions that we've received from you and we've received quite a few of them over the last few months. So what we've done is we have rewritten the answers that we've provided in a knowledge base article format and we're posting it in this knowledge base; and moving forward, as we receive new questions from you we're going to post the new answers in the knowledge base as well so that everyone gets access to the same information.

So that's the basis for these knowledge base articles. And one of the things that I'm really excited about with this knowledge base is it's actually going to provide you with one central place to go to find all of the information that you need. So instead of having to go to one webpage to get to the Applicant Guidebook, another to get to the FAQs, another to get to the reference materials, now you just have to go to the knowledge base and input your keyword, and the knowledge base will present back to you a set of articles that match your search criteria. So it's really going to be a timesaving tool for you and we're excited to be offering this new tool to you.

The other thing that I wanted to share with you is when we launch the customer service portal we are also going to be providing customer service in the six UN languages. So up until now we have only supported English but when we launch the customer

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service portal you're going to be able to send us questions in any of the six UN languages and then we'll be able to respond back to you in the language that you sent the question in. And that holds true for everything that is in the knowledge base as well: all of the articles, the Applicant Guidebook, the FAQs, the reference materials, all of the knowledge base articles will be in the six UN languages and you will also be able to perform your search in any of the six languages within the knowledge base. So that's really exciting.

The other thing that you may wonder is "If I'm an applicant do I get any sort of privileges or priorities with regards to customer service?" And the answer is yes. During the application window, all questions that we receive that come from applicants are going to get prioritized ahead in the queue and the reason we're doing that is because applicants are constrained by a three-month window in order to apply, and so their questions are a bit more time-sensitive. Now, that doesn't mean that we're not going to treat all of the other questions in a timely manner as well; it's just that we're going to prioritize those questions that we receive from applicants just a bit ahead of the queue.

So that's all for my update. I will turn it over to Scott to talk about communications.

Scott Pinzon:

Thank you, Trang. Where Trang has the daunting task of providing all the materials that an applicant would need, my team

has been working on materials that make the program a little bit more understandable to potential applicants who may not necessarily already be operating inside this sphere of ICANN. So here are some of the tools that we provided towards that end.

You hopefully have noticed that we launched a whole new gTLD microsite. This was back in mid-September. It's a fairly-memorable URL at least for ICANN standards – it's [www.newgtlds.icann.org](http://www.newgtlds.icann.org). And if you go there, there are quite a number of resources available. My team has been cranking them out as fast and hard as they can.

We have fact sheets in the six UN languages and we are adding to that collection all the time, so if you represent a government entity and you're wondering what's in the New gTLD Program for you, there are fact sheets addressing you. If your angle is really more interested in IDNs there are fact sheets in six languages about that.

If you know for certain you don't want to apply, you just want to know how you can protect your trademark, well there are fact sheets in six UN languages for you, and all of these are really kind of abbreviated highlights out of the Applicant Guidebook so that you can get a sense of what it's about before you read 340 pages.

We also have educational videos up there ranging from just a basic introduction to “What is this?” to CEOs of existing registries speaking very candidly about what it's like to run a registry. So to operate a TLD is to be a registry, so if you would like some insight into what that's like there are videos there. You'll also find a

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calendar of upcoming events where we're going to explain to live audiences about TLDs. You can see where we're going to be and where we've been.

And speaking of that roadshow, we have now been involved in over 35 events in more than twenty countries, and that's just since June 20<sup>th</sup>, raising awareness about gTLDs. And we have more outreach events planned. This is still in rolling full mode, so we'll be in Moscow, Beijing, Jakarta, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, much more to come – other stops in Asia, also. So we're doing the best we can to get the word out that there's an opportunity that almost any institution should evaluate.

And if you'd like to know more about upcoming events or see little reports from the places we've been there's a URL there for you. If you get to the new gTLD site, one of the main tabs is "Program Status." If you hit that you'll find your way to the events reports.

And then finally also to get the word out we've had a stunning amount of what they call "earned media" – stories written about us not because we bought an ad but because the press finds the story interesting. Since the June 20<sup>th</sup> approval of the program well over 5000 articles have appeared, and this covers a range of media from the *NBC Nightly News* in America to the front homepage of the BBC website, the *Hindu Business Times* – I mean all over the world there's been thousands of articles about this and again, more coming all the time.

And then finally in social media, when this program first started Karla Valente started our Twitter account, singlehandedly built it up to about 400 followers; and then as we got the approval from the Board and the program has gotten farther along, now we have more than 1300 Twitter followers. We're tweeting every day and so this is another way you may help others find resources that they might need if they're considering whether or not to be an applicant.

So those are some highlights of what we've been doing to make the world aware of the opportunity, and I believe we're going back to Kurt for some concluding comments. Okay.

Kurt Pritz:

So there's a few more sessions here in Dakar. There's a trademark clearinghouse session right after this, and to encourage you to attend I understand they're working on the air conditioning right now. And so if you'll stay you'll get cooler, and I will bring water. And then there's a session tomorrow to discuss the Continuing Operation Instrument and a possible alternative to that, so I think that's important in the very ornate amphitheater. And then tomorrow here we will ensure it's cool again; we'll talk more in-depth about the evaluation process, the application and evaluation process.

So with that we're done, and if anybody has any questions we'd be happy to take them. Hi Brad.

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Brad: Can I just steal the microphone? Good. I have a couple of easy questions for you and maybe a more complex question. The easy questions are the [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org) website, are questions that go there public or private; and if they're public where are you posting the responses?

Trang Nguyen: The questions that go there are private. When I say we post the answers we don't literally just post the exact question and answer provided – we've typically rewritten them, taking away any kind of identifiable information.

Brad: Okay. And then the second question is the Guidebook talks in terms of pages, you know, “A good answer should be eight to ten pages.” The TAS talks in terms of character limits and I was hoping that we could reconcile those as we're preparing the application.

Trang Nguyen: There is a maximum page limit as indicated in the Applicant Guidebook, and what we've done in TAS is actually – and you'll see it on Thursday if you come to the session – provide a space in TAS that coincides to the maximum number of pages provided in the Guidebook. So for example, if a question in the Guidebook says “This question should not exceed five pages,” we've allotted

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equal to that 20,000 characters – 4000 characters per page – as an allotted slot for you to enter in your answer.

Brad: Will that be published? Because I saw it on the demo but it was a very small type. I couldn't actually read what the character limits were but I saw that you had them in there.

Karen Lentz: Can I just add to that? That conversion actually is in the Guidebook. It's probably difficult to find but it is in the first, in the Application Questions and Criteria section. Where it first gives the limit it gives the estimate for how you can convert the two, but it doesn't repeat that in every question so probably we could make that more prominent.

Brad: Okay, thanks. And then the harder question was on batching, and Kurt, you talked about maybe trying to avoid the need for batching. And I'm wondering whether looking at substantially identical applications may be a way forward there. I mean for example, if I have my .shoe application in Batch 1, why should my substantially identical .boot application be held up in Batch 2? Because if I pass the initial application for .shoe, I mean it's the same application – the financials are maybe a little bit different on my projections but all my policies are the same, my infrastructure is the same, the applicant is the same. And maybe that's a way of

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saying that's an application that doesn't actually need to wait because we've already done 95% of the work in Batch 1.

Kurt Pritz:

So very similar applications might be batched but I don't think we can commit to that at that time, and that's going to be one of the learning exercises the panels and ICANN go through as it evaluates applications and gets a real sense for the similarity among applications and how we can take advantage of that and make things more economical, and group things better. So that's a really good suggestion.

Brad:

Do you have a sense of when you're going to figure out the actual batching mechanism?

Kurt Pritz:

Yeah, well so I don't want to commit to an answer but I know that it's being worked on actively, and I would put it in weeks and not months.

Brad:

Okay, thanks.

Werner Staub:

Werner Staub from CORE.

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Kurt Pritz: Hi, Werner.

Werner Staub: I've got many questions but I'll keep it to four short ones. First of all, thank you for having posted a demo which enabled me to find a piece of information I did not know, which is about the payment and I will implore you to change it. Right now it says that the applicant will only receive the information enabling the applicant to pay after having completed the application. Do I understand correctly?

Kurt Pritz: Do you want to answer that?

Trang Nguyen: No. You will be required to believe questions one through twelve at which point in time you'll be prompted for payment for the deposit, which is a \$5000 deposit. Once we reconcile that payment then you will be granted access to the application in order to complete it.

Werner Staub: No, I'm talking about the \$180,000 after that.

Trang Nguyen: Are you asking when that is due or...

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Werner Staub: Yes, the demo says that “Be sure you have enough time after completing all the questions and not being able to make any changes thereafter, to make the payment,” which implies that the payment can only be made once you’ve completed all the questions. Is that correct?

Trang Nguyen: So we actually have decoupled the process, and that is to allow people to complete the application without having actually making a payment. So for example, if you wanted to complete the application 30 days into the application window but wait until the end of the application window to make your payment you can certainly do that, but you cannot make the \$185,000 payment until you have actually completed all the application questions in TAS.

Werner Staub: Okay, that’s what I’m saying. Please change it.

Trang Nguyen: But you can have- I’m sorry. You do have the opportunity to go in and continue to modify your questions up until the time when the application window closes, even if you have submitted your application.

Werner Staub: I’m not worried about the questions; I’m worried about the payment.

Kurt Pritz: So make your point again.

Werner Staub: The payment is a problem. The US, inside of the US it may be very straightforward to make a payment, but when making the payment into the US it can be a nightmare and it is highly unpredictable. So essentially this would mean, if you keep it like that there would be people outside of the US, take Africa for instance – it may take weeks for a payment to get through if you want to be sure that it gets through. And there are anti-money laundering and all kinds of restrictions.

Let's say the intercontinental payment systems aren't really well connected so please allow people to make a payment as early as they possibly can.

Kurt Pritz: Okay, I've got that. Thanks.

Werner Staub: Another one is would it be possible to have machine access to the TAS system?

Trang Nguyen: Do you mean offline access?

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Werner Staub: No, machine access – other than by typing on a screen. The universe of the question is, is ICANN now a provider for word processing equipment. Or let's say, can we do our word processing the way we do it and then write the script that actually sends it in, which is much more secure with respect to all the errors that may occur in the way of handling it?

Trang Nguyen: So currently uploading of information into the allotted space for the answers in TAS is not something that is provided. From a security perspective there are several security measures that we have taken and we'll be publishing something soon outlining what those security measures are. But no, at this point in time you would have to manually log into the system online and enter in the answer to each question.

Werner Staub: Okay. I mean I would like you to consider that in any kind of system that many people have to access, the attempts to prevent machine access is a misguided solution. You should think of machine access as a normal way of doing things because people will eventually have to and it's a strange substitution – human labor for machine labor, because it's actually a machine tool.

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Kurt Pritz: Yeah. So Werner, to capture your question, would you mind very much entering it into that [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org) mailbox instead of us going through the transcript?

Werner Staub: Yes. Final one: for the six languages, will there be a terminology database? I see that we have already a big quality problem for the translations and the terminology is highly unstable. Can you make sure it's...

Kurt Pritz: So like a glossary of selected terms?

Werner Staub: Not just selected terms – all the technical terms are being used, and also for the benefit of the translators for that matter.

Kurt Pritz: I understand, okay. Hey Carole, how many online questions do you have? Okay, can we... Are you done?

Werner Staub: Just one about batching – please consider batching by sector. There will be mostly, most of the applications will be brand applications – not much of a registry actually – but for a brand, if the competitor goes ahead and you cannot that's really terrible.

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Kurt Pritz: Yes, I understand that. Carole, can you ask a question? Can we take a question from the outside, Anthony? Thank you.

Carole Cornell: Thank you. The first one was from Yannick: “Will ICANN or InterConnect.com provide examples of string similarity?”

Kurt Pritz: Probably not. We probably won’t provide examples. There’s an online tool that’s an algorithm that will score, and there’s a standard that’s written in the Guidebook but I don’t think it’s for ICANN to preordain which strings would be too similar and which not.

Carole Cornell: This is just the second question: “Has there been a decision about the above? What percentage according to the algorithm will be considered string similarity?”

Kurt Pritz: Well, we don’t know that yet, and I just want to reiterate that a determination of similarity and too similar is a human determination. It’s not based on the algorithm. The algorithm is just a guide that will allow the evaluator to, you know, if there’s a million combinations, get through the first 900,000 of them pretty fast and run their finger up to the higher scores. Thanks for the question. Antony?

Antony Van Couvering: I'm Antony Van Couvering from Minds + Machines. A quick question but perhaps one that many people will be wondering about as soon as they get to it: in the financial projections spreadsheet, the registry continuation question mentions vital business functions. Can you please help me out with what those are? Is that customer service, credit card processing, abuse points of contact – what are these things? Thank you.

Karen Lentz: So if I recall correctly that there is actually a definition in that question the first time it's used, but what it is essentially is we've defined in the Guidebook the five critical registry functions that have to be kept running and that everyone must do. So the vital business functions question is really meant to give the applicant a way to identify those processes that they consider vital to their businesses, so it could vary depending on what the business is, what services they consider critical to their...

Antony Van Couvering: So it could be coming to ICANN meetings for instance.

Karen Lentz: If you consider that vital, yes.

Antony Van Couvering: Thank you.

Kurt Pritz: Carole, after Chuckie you can ask a couple more. Okay, Carole, do you want to ask another one?

Carole Cornell: Okay, the next one is from Ann: “How will ICANN ensure the privacy of personal information provided as part of the application?” Second question: “How long will the personal information for e.g., background or screening, be saved and when will it be deleted?”

Kurt Pritz: I think that’s a very good question and there’s been other specific questions about that. My opinion is that ICANN should develop rules about how it handles personal information and exactly how it disposes of that information and in what timeframe, because I know many are concerned with personal information such as addresses being entered into the system. Of course that’s not going to become public but how do we assure through our own security that they’re not divulged; and two, that we don’t have access to them anymore or anyone has access to them anymore after the evaluation period is closed.

Carole Cornell: Great, thanks. The next one is from Rubin: “Can continuity instrument be in the currency that the expenses are made? Can

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continuity be composed of more than one payment instrument, each in a different currency and maybe different banks?”

Kurt Pritz:

So the continuity instrument calls for getting a letter of credit essentially, so the letter of credit doesn't have to happen in the United States – it can happen in the jurisdiction or country where that TLD will be located. What's important is that the emergency backend registry operator can access those funds in order to operate and perform those five critical registry functions, so I don't see the type of currency as being a requirement. Hi, Chuck.

Chuck Gomes:

Chuck Gomes. Thanks to all of you for a good presentation and all your hard work on this. First question: in at least three cases the evaluators, there are at least two, maybe three different evaluators. Is it anticipated that each one of those evaluators could do the whole evaluation in that particular category, or would they be assigned particular types of evaluation with that? For example the financial/technical/operational evaluations, would it be divvied up to different players or would one do all?

Kurt Pritz:

So for those of you participating remotely, I want you to know that Chuck is reading from a book and he's on page one.

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[laughter]

Kurt Pritz:

So it's envisioned that the evaluators share the evaluation task because we want both sets of evaluators or both teams to be fully energized and fully competent, especially in the instance of overcapacity or in the instance of conflict. While it's not completely determined there's been some determinations: one set of evaluators, one firm is more likely to get more of the evaluations than the other based on cost and value provided. So we want to ensure that there's ongoing competition between the evaluators in order to provide the best value.

And this is even the case as the evaluation process continues, either from batch to batch or round to round, that evaluators that furnish good quality but for a lower cost would get more of the evaluations going forward. So it's sort of a flexible scheme to keep driving value.

Chuck Gomes:

Just for a little added clarity, so it's anticipated then that on a given application one evaluator would do that whole evaluation. They wouldn't split it up except maybe for quality control.

Kurt Pritz:

Right.

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Chuck Gomes: Thanks. And just to set your minds at ease, I'm only using a portion of one page. In the case where RFIs have been sent out, is it anticipated that they would be followed with an RFP once the decision – more complete information like you said is needed – is done, or are we concluding that you'll go straight from the responses to an RFI to an award? That's kind of what it looks like, I'm just curious.

Kurt Pritz: So one of the benefits we think of the RFI scheme is that it is flexible; that we can elect to go on to a request for proposals. We would rather just elect parties because it's quicker, so if we can locate competent participants and then just negotiate as a result of the RFI that's our preferred route. I don't know – Karen is running the trademark clearinghouse procurement. Does that agree with what you think?

Karen Lentz: Yes, absolutely.

Chuck Gomes: Thanks. And my last question is for Trang: in the case of the knowledge base, will there be cross-referencing? And by that I mean will it be possible to search by topic, by section of the Guidebook, etc.?

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Trang Nguyen: So in November you'll be able to search by keywords. I am implementing a browse capability so that you could browse and drill down to a particular topic or category if you like, but by November you'll be able to search by keywords. And what it will pull is any subsections within the Applicant Guidebook where that particular keyword appears.

Chuck Gomes: And what about section numbers of the Guidebook?

Trang Nguyen: Yes.

Chuck Gomes: Okay, thank you.

Leonid Todorov: Hi, I'm Leonid Todorov, .ru. I have a couple of questions and some concerns really to share with you. Number one, communication: we've sent a message to the frequently asked questions team, and we sent that a week ago and haven't got any response so far. Should I take it that all these questions will be sort of say "page up" for those knowledge base papers or whatever it is; so that we would have more like a paper answering many questions from many purviews rather than we will be dealt with on an individual questions?

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I mean we have these questions obviously, so you guys have gone incommunicado for a week. So shall we assume there will be a knowledge paper that will answer all our questions say by mid-November? Or we should still anticipate your answer sometime later?

Trang Nguyen:

Yeah, so my team is usually very good in terms of getting back to the customer in pretty quick order with regards to either an answer or the next step and the next step could be “Your question is complicated and we require that we need time to do some additional research, etc.” We’ll tell you that in a pretty timely manner. If you submitted your questions a week ago you should have gotten something back but if not I’ll take a look into it.

We have in the recent months issued a response along the lines of “Additional guidance will be provided” on certain questions that you have submitted, and the reason we’re doing that is because the answer would constitute new information; and any new information, we like to make that available to everyone at the same time rather than just respond to each party and to have that one party be privy to the information.

And so those instances where we’re saying the information will be available soon, yes it will be available in a knowledge base.

Leonid Todorov:

So we hope that we will have that answer then at least?

Trang Nguyen: Yes, I'll circle back with you.

Leonid Todorov: In a timely manner as you've just indicated?

Trang Nguyen: Yes, I will circle back with you right after this.

Leonid Todorov: Thank you. Now, I have a couple of other questions and again, concerns, because we have certain policies and regulations in my country. For example, speaking of that letter of credit open to a reputable, AAA-rated bank – for example, we don't have any in my country, I mean in Russia. We have only BBB-rated banks. So does that mean that we should go and search for any bank?

Plus, part of this question is that for example, we're even pretty much triple in time. What if we manage to place this letter of credit with a reputable bank, and then all of a sudden its rates rating has been downgraded? Does it affect the quality or the overall score of our application?

Kurt Pritz: I can't answer your question with specificity because I'm not an expert in these things, but we understand the complexity and possible difficulty with complying with a AAA US rating and what

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the parallel is in different jurisdictions. So we'll make an accommodation for that in some way. Do you have a better answer?

Trang Nguyen:

So just to follow up with Kurt, we did issue an FAQ along the lines of we will definitely take another look at the AAA requirement. So that is something we're taking a look at.

Leonid Todorov:

So again, we should anticipate this in a timely manner to be delivered? Okay. And then another question which is also important I believe, is that for a number of countries, as it has already been asserted, there are certain foreign exchange policy regulations. Like for example in Russia, you cannot do any FOREX-related transaction unless you have a contract at hand, a legally-binding contract; which means, for example as far as Russian-perspective applicants are concerned, there is no chance for us to place such a deposit unless we have a contract, which is a kind of discriminative matter. And I believe there are certain jurisdictions to which this national legislation also applies, so just for you to think.

And the last question, for example we have a number of supporting documents including let's say some auditor's paper, whatever evaluation – I mean some national auditor's evaluation. Should we translate it or get it translated to English, or we can leave it as it is in the Russian language?

Karen Lentz: Right. So on the last question, any supporting documents we say in the Guidebook can be submitted in the original language, so you would not need to provide a translation. We would do it if it was required.

Leonid Todorov: Right. And as for the foreign exchange policy, I would just urge you to think of this.

Kurt Pritz: Have you written that question down, too, in your set of questions that haven't been responded to yet?

Leonid Todorov: No, I believe not. Okay, thank you. And the last question: your presentation, will it be available shortly after this session?

Kurt Pritz: Yeah, it's posted online. It's not posted online? It will be.

Leonid Todorov: Shortly after, alright.

Kurt Pritz: Jim, is it alright if Carole asks another couple questions from cooler areas?

Carole Cornell: The next one is from Yannick: “If ICANN receives more than qualified 1000 applications moreover than 1000 unique strings, when will postponed gTLDs then be delegated? Do you consider publishing any criteria for selections and timeframes?”

Kurt Pritz: So we talked about batching methodology already, and then Trang or Karen, have we published... I mean I know we’ve done extensive timelines for batches and the timing of when they would all be processed. Do you know if we’ve posted those timelines?

Yeah, so we’ve done a lot of work to slide in all the different batches, and how long they would take and how the processes would interlock so we could do those as quickly as possible. And we should probably publish those. You’ve got one more, Carole? Okay.

Jim Prendergast: Jim Prendergast, Galway Strategy Group, probably in your spam filter for using the [newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org) email too much but I do appreciate the quick responses and the answers I’ve gotten so far.

A question regarding public comments: will applicants have the opportunity to respond to the public comments submitted during that first 60-day period? I know there was a test of a reply comment period recently; my concern is that a potential applicant could get hit with a flood of comments on their application within

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the last few hours and not have a chance to respond in a public manner.

Trang Nguyen:

Yes, I believe you're referring to application comment, which is distinctly and separate from ICANN's public comment period. The process itself is very different and if an application receives comments during the application comment period there are a couple of mechanisms that could be done. The applicant, him or herself could submit another application comment responding to the comment that the person made on his or her application. Both of those comments will go to the evaluation panel for consideration.

The other thing is that during the evaluation process, if the panel takes into consideration a comment that was submitted in the application comment forum and that particular comment for some reason may change the scoring of a question, the evaluation panel will issue clarification questions to the applicant and give the applicant an opportunity to respond.

Jim Prendergast:

So I guess the advice to potential applicants would be monitor the comment period and try and sneak one in at the last second that may address all of the previous comments that have been filed?

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Trang Nguyen: Yes, you may do that or the panels will reach out to the applicant as well.

Jim Prendergast: And will you give the evaluators any guidance on comments?

Kurt Pritz: Yes, that evaluators can take them into account. We're not necessarily for sneaking. You know, there's an interesting question here – if there's comments to an application but the application passes then does anyone care? So in one set of circumstances no, so like when I took the bar exam, if you passed you didn't know your score because who cares? If you failed then you got your score.

So the scheme that Trang described is if an evaluator sees a comment that might affect the scoring then it'll give the applicant full ability to respond to that comment and take it into account through a clarifying question. So I think that's the most reasonable for moving ahead in economic value.

In a sense there's a reputational effect too, right? If somebody makes a comment there, it's posted and you don't have a ready avenue for responding. So if we think that's important we could provide an avenue for that, but we're really concentrating on doing applications in an economical way and not creating a public forum debate where one's not really necessary because the application has already passed.

Jim Prendergast: Thanks.

Male: What was your score, Kurt?

Kurt Pritz: Seven. What score?

Male: On the bar.

Kurt Pritz: Thanks! Missed it by that much.

Male: At the GAC and Board meeting yesterday, we heard a lot of solemn undertakings about not contacting potential applicants in an inappropriate way and we heard today also about how applicants would have some priority during the application window. But how do you know who is an applicant and who is not? And there are in fact in this room many companies who are acting for applicants who are not acting in their name.

So it seems to me that those who declare that they are applicants are at a disadvantage. How are you going to address that?

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Kurt Pritz: I'm sorry, I don't... Do you understand the issue?

Male: So who is an applicant? An applicant is someone who files an application. Prior to the application no one knows who an applicant is. How are you going to address not being able to speak to potential applicants prior to them having filed an application?

Kurt Pritz: Oh, you mean ICANN?

Male: Yeah, you guys.

Kurt Pritz: Yes, so we're treating everybody as an applicant. Go ahead.

Male 2: I think the question in a way misses the heart of the rule. We were told "Be careful when you're speaking to applicants," but it's the content of the conversation that matters, not necessarily who it is. So as soon as the conversation wanders into questions that would advantage an applicant, it kind of doesn't matter who we're talking to – we're going to be careful.

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Male: We heard earlier from Trang that during the application period there'd be priority for applicants over questions from non-applicants. Again, how do you know who that is?

Trang Nguyen: So we are actually implementing a CRM system on the backend. It will act as a circuiting system and will provide a secure portal for you to submit a question. So when a question is submitted we will check it against your credentials that are provided in TAS, and that's how we will determine if it's an applicant or not.

Male: Okay, that's a good answer. Thank you.

Male 3: Hello, just I give thanks for your good presentation. My first question is can I have a brief explanation about your 27<sup>th</sup> slide, about trademark clearinghouse – that's my first question. And my second question is how you manage if you have a conflict between a provider and a customer who's in the application?

Kurt Pritz: So what was your question about the trademark clearinghouse?

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Male 3: There was a trademark clearinghouse in your slide number 27, yes. I need some explanation. I don't understand well. Number 27. Yes here, about...

Kurt Pritz: So do you want an explanation about what the trademark clearinghouse is?

Male 3: Yes.

Kurt Pritz: The trademark clearinghouse is a mechanism for protecting trademark rights. When a gTLD registry or any registry starts operation, it sells names to open its doors. Sometimes preferred rights are given to trademark holders, so in order to accommodate that a new TLD, a top-level domain, will say "All trademark holders register with me, and then once you're registered and validated then you can have first rights to a name in my registry because you own a trademark."

So imagine that each time a trademark owner registers with a registry, it costs some money; and imagine hundreds of new registries. In order to save money for trademark holders we want to create one entity – we're calling it a trademark clearinghouse – so all trademark holders only register once. And then all registries will use that trademark clearinghouse, that database, for understanding which trademark holders get to register names first.

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So the trademark clearinghouse is meant as an aid to trademark holders so they only have to register their trademark once in order to gain a priority in each registry. Is that clear?

Male 3: Yes. But my second question is if you have a conflict between a provider and a customer using the application, how do you manage for this conflict?

Kurt Pritz: So each provider of evaluation services has to provide a statement of interest, so has to provide us with potential conflicts. But more importantly because we don't know who's going to apply, they need a methodology for identifying within their firm conflicts as they arise, and then telling ICANN that there's a conflict in these cases. So as you can imagine these are large firms with great reputations, so we think there's mutual incentive for those firms to protect their reputation by identifying conflicts and not have there be accusations of conflicts of interest.

There's a lot more to that than I've just described but we certainly recognize it as one of the most important issues associated with the evaluation.

Male 3: Okay. And my last question is how long for the new gTLDs, if I need to have a new gTLD, how long is the new deadline?

Kurt Pritz: So when you apply for a top-level domain there's a window for applying that will open on January 12, 2012, and then close three months later on April 12, 2012. And you'll see that in this presentation that's posted.

Male 3: Okay, thank you.

Kurt Pritz: Thank you very much for your questions. Oh yes, and Karen has something to add.

Karen Lentz: I just had one other, it's okay. I just wanted to add one other point on your first question about the trademark clearinghouse, just to add that there's actually a session following this one in this room that will talk about the clearinghouse in more detail.

Kurt Pritz: So stay here for two more hours.

Carole Cornell: Okay, two more questions from the chat, from the Adobe. The question is "In the case of string similarity root variants such as ".pet" and ".pets", will the applicant be required to file two

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applications or will one application for the root new gTLD string suffice?

Kurt Pritz: Each application for a TLD string will be filed separately.

Carole Cornell: The next question, and I'm sorry, I don't know how to say the name but it's Chi Wei: "Should there be an adjustable price for different geographical location applications? Wouldn't the standard fixed evaluation fee create disadvantages for lower GDP country applicants?"

Kurt Pritz: So that's a very good question. Earlier in the ICANN meeting we had a session to discuss potential means of supporting applicants that are deserving and try not to separate them by region or type. And as I said earlier, the ICANN Board and the community are working very hard to devise a method for applicant support in time for this round and are committed to it. Thanks, Carole. Hi, Dirk.

Dirk Krischenowski: Dirk Krischenowski, dotBerlin. We and a lot of other people anticipate that the evaluators of the different areas will be provided with some manuals where they can go through the applications. There might be good examples in it. Will these manuals be public or somehow available to the public?

Kurt Pritz: When you say manuals...

Dirk Krischenowski: The evaluators will be provided with additional materials, how to evaluate the applications and where in detail to look at?

Kurt Pritz: I'm sorry. So you're talking about the evaluators being provided with manuals. Yes, so all the evaluators, the panelists will be onboarded and they will be provided with manuals about how to go about their business – how administratively to do the evaluation. They'll also be afforded some of the work that's going on now with normalization as different panels work through evaluations and work to standardize or normalize their scoring across the scores, across the applications.

Dirk Krischenowski: And these are not public.

Kurt Pritz: So, yeah – there's no secret Rosetta Stone for what constitutes a passing answer and failing answer. I think it's really important to note that the questions and criteria were written to be flexible, to accommodate different types of applications. And so the criteria you see in the Guidebook are the criteria that are being afforded to

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the evaluators. To the extent that additional clarification is provided, I think that should be made public.

Dirk Krischenowski: Okay, thanks.

Male: I was hoping you could talk a little bit about security of the TAS system, and specifically who's going to have access to the answers as they're coming in. Will Ernst & Young, for example, have access before I push the submit button? Who within ICANN is going to have access and how are you going to handle security around the content that people are uploading.

Kurt Pritz: No, I can't. We have Jeff Moss and a team of people who have actually significantly changed how we're managing TAS and where the hardware is located, and what are the structures around it. So from a basic-basic security standpoint I'll tell you there's much more significant investment going on there than we planned, so we're trying to find that money. We found it; we've just got to take it out of another pot.

So there's that level of security. And then we can provide additional information, but I can't right now, about the timing of how information is shared among evaluators – what time it's shared and how much of it is shared with each evaluator and with

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each panelist . So we can work to develop some roadmaps for how that works.

Trang Nguyen:

At the minimum level TAS does provide raw-based access to content and that is something that we've implemented, so certainly ICANN staff isn't going to get access to TAS – only individuals who absolutely need to have access into TAS in order to perform their jobs would be granted access. So raw-based access is something that is a feature that is available in TAS and something that we're fully taking advantage of.

Male:

Thanks.

Kurt Pritz:

Anybody else? Is there another online question? We'll take it. We only have one minute because everybody's pretty darn hot. Okay, go ahead.

Carole Cornell:

The question had to do with transliterations and applying for applicants – can they have more than one transliteration per application?

Kurt Pritz:

So I'll talk a little bit about variants. The first rule is that each application for each string stands on its own, so it requires a separate application and an application fee. There's been sessions here in Dakar discussing under what circumstances variant TLDs might be delegated. Right now the rule is variant IDN TLDs cannot be delegated.

When those rules are fashioned, when the issues are fully identified and those rules are fashioned which is coming, one of those rules will be how those applications might be aggregated in a certain way.

So if nobody else has any question I want to thank you for bearing up under this heat. I know the air conditioning, it felt cooler for a while but now I think we're backsliding a little bit. But the air conditioning is being worked on so I encourage you to go get a cold drink and come back for the trademark session, which I think is important to you but it's really important to ICANN as implementers of the trademark clearinghouse and the associated services to get the input of the experts in the ICANN community on these issues. So thanks in advance for attending that.

And thank you very much for your attention here today, and thanks to you guys. So long.

[Applause]

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[End of Transcript]