
ABU DHABI – Joint Meeting: ICANN Board & Security & Stability Advisory Committee
Thursday, November 2, 2017 – 10:30 to 11:30 GST
ICANN60 | Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

RAM MOHAN:

Good morning. This is the scheduled session of the joint meeting of the ICANN Board with the Security and Stability Advisory Committee. My name is Ram Mohan. I'm the SSAC's liaison to the ICANN Board. We have on our agenda a few specific topics. My role here will be to moderate and to move the topics forward, and we'll go from there.

So there are six items on the agenda. Our plan here is to go through these items in the time that we have allocated. And if we have further questions and follow-ups, we will -- the Board will make sure to take note of it, and we'll respond back to the SSAC in writing.

We have board operations staff members who are taking notes, and I will -- it will be my responsibility to figure out whether there are actions and follow-ups to be taken.

Without -- Without further ado, we'll get started.

May I ask John to start from you and just do a quick round of introductions. Just go around and say who you are and what your affiliation is.

Thank you.

JOHN LEVINE:

Yeah, I'm John Levine. I'm on the SSAC.

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

JONNE SOININEN: Jonne Soininen, the IETF liaison to the ICANN Board.

GEORGE SADOWSKY: George Sadowsky, ICANN board member.

JEFF BEDSER: Jeffrey Bedser, SSAC.

PATRICK JONES: Patrick Jones, invited participated from ICANN org to SSAC.

JAAP AKKERHUIS: Jaap Akkerhuis, SSAC.

MERIKE KAE0: Merike Kaeo, SSAC.

CRISTIAN HESSELMAN: Cristian Hesselman, SSAC.

ROBERT GUERRA: Robert Guerra, SSAC.

BENEDICT ADDIS: Hello. Benedict Addis, SSAC.

RUSS MUNDY: Russ Mundy, SSAC.

GEOFF HUSTON: Geoff Huston, SSAC.

JIM GALVIN: Jim Galvin, SSAC vice chair.

RAM MOHAN: Ram Mohan, SSAC.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Patrik Faltstrom, SSAC chair.

ROD RASMUSSEN: Rod Rasmussen, SSAC and hopefully SSAC chair in the future.

JULIE HAMMER: Julie Hammer, incoming SSAC vice chair.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Kaveh Ranjbar, RSSAC liaison to ICANN Board.

RON DA SILVA: Ron da Silva, ICANN Board.

WENDY PROFIT: Wendy Profit, ICANN org.

MIKE SILBER: Mike Silber.

MATS DUFBERG: Mats Dufberg, participant.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Chris Disspain, ICANN Board.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Rinalia Abdul Rahim, ICANN Board.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Maarten Botterman, ICANN Board.

ASHA HEMRAJANI: Maarten Botterman.

LITO IBARRA: Lito Ibarra, ICANN Board.

AKINORI MAEMURA: Akinori Maemura, board member.

AVRI DORIA: Avri Doria, incoming to the Board.

RAM MOHAN: And Steve.

STEVE CROCKER: Steve Crocker in transition.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you. Without further ado, I'll throw the ball to you, Patrik, to go through our first agenda item.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Can we do background slide, please.

So one thing I would like to do is allow the incoming chair and vice chair of SSAC, Rod and Julie, to give an introduction.

Rod.

ROD RASMUSSEN: Thank you, Patrik. And assuming everything goes as planned, I look forward to taking on the mantel of SSAC chair going forward following in the very giant shoes of Patrik, to try and fill those, and of course Steve before that. So I am humbled and honored to take on this task from -- that my fellow SSAC members have put before me. And this week at ICANN I've managed to get fully involved already. So it's going

to be an interesting times. We have some major projects upcoming. I know that there -- the Board will be likely looking to us to do some major work. I feel the membership is well prepared to do that. We have brought on some really good members lately, and I thank Jim and the Membership Committee for doing that over the past several years. And I think we're in very good shape to be able to take on a lot of things going forward.

I know many of you but not all of you. Just for some background on myself, I'm a now-retired, largely retired as I say, cybersecurity professional. I built and grew a company that did work in instant response and took -- tackled a lot of those abuse issues that are germane to the ICANN community that we are in discussions around almost constantly it seems.

So with that background, that's why I actually started coming to ICANN meetings many, many years ago to try and raise attention and build consensus around how to deal with those problems.

Clearly I haven't succeeded yet, but will keep trying.

Anyway, that company was purchased a couple of years ago, and that company got purchased. So I have been free and at loose ends and have plenty of time to attend towards doing this kind of work. I do the work here, and I do volunteer work for the Anti-Phishing Working Group as well, just to give you background there. And I'm very happy to be able to take -- I don't know if we're going to do questions or anything like that. I'll be happy to take them at the -- as you see me in the halls or what have you.

RAM MOHAN: And if you have questions, why don't we take them after Julie is done. And given that we had 11 minutes and we are six minutes in, so, Julie, if you finish before another five, then there might be time for questions.

JULIE HAMMER: Great. Thanks, Ram. And I'm not quite sure -- quite sure what it means for SSAC when I also say that, like Rod, I am a retired person. So maybe it means that we've got enough time to devote to SSAC to perhaps do it justice, because it is really important work.

My background is in the military. I did 28 years in the Royal Australian Air Force, and my focus throughout that career was on electronic warfare and then later in my career on command and control systems is finally I ended up as the defense chief information officer looking after its comms and I.T. platforms at a very high management level, not the deep techie stuff that Rod is familiar with.

Subsequent to that, I spent nine years on the board of .AU working with Chris and finished in that role last year along with some other board roles that I've subsequently finished on.

So it was in that context of .AU that I started coming to ICANN meetings every now and again, not particularly regularly. And then I was approached to see if I would be the ALAC liaison to the SSAC to have my name put forward. And of course the SSAC requires that person to be a full member of SSAC and to pull their weight. I realized

-- before doing that, I thought I'll do my due diligence, so I spoke to Bruce Tonkin and I spoke to Chris Disspain, and both of them lied through their teeth to me and said, oh, this won't take much of your time (laughing). And subsequently having spent quite a lot of my time devoted to both ALAC and SSAC over the last few years and thoroughly enjoying both communities, I'm truly honored to be coming in as the vice chair of SSAC.

And what I do really enjoy about what I have been doing is the breadth of the community that I have been able to engage in, and not only through ALAC and SSAC but also through working on the CCWG. So I'm hoping that in my role I can continue that really broad set of relationships and build on them so that we can actually achieve more in SSAC.

Thanks.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Julie. I also corrections that Cherine Chalaby, our incoming chair, has also joined us.

Are there any questions for Rod and/or Julie?

Okay. Great. Thank you.

Patrik, on to the next topic.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

Yes. I would like to -- The next point on the agenda, the review process. I just want to bring up with the Board that our -- the SSAC understanding is that we are currently delayed regarding the external review of SSAC. It is delayed because of the Board selection of the party that will conduct the review. That's our understanding.

Regardless of how delayed that will be, for whatever reasons, we want from SSAC to let the Board know that that is by no means whatsoever delaying our own review of ourselves. So our internal review, SSAC review on SSAC, that is continuing of course. There are certain directions between the external and internal review that we envision later on -- further on in the process but we are not there now so we are moving on with our reviews anyways.

Are there any comments on that? Rinalia.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM:

Hi. I chair the OEC, the Organizational Effectiveness Committee, which is very controversial at this stage in ICANN (laughing). I just wanted to correct something that you said.

The OEC and by virtue of OEC, also the Board, we're not selecting the independent examiner. We are confirming the selection that is being made by staff. And so we need to do our due diligence to make sure that the process are complied with and that we are satisfied that everything that needs to be done have been done to vet the capabilities of the entities that will be doing this review. And because the -- your advisory committee is actually core to ICANN's mission, you

are very important. We don't really want to mess this up and that's why we're taking our time. And when we're ready, you'll know. Thank you. And I'm glad that you're moving along with your own self-assessment.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Thank you very much for that clarification. It's noted, and it's already in -- in the SSAC internal documentation.

Yeah, sometimes we're moving quite fast, yes.

Anyone else that would like to say something?

Okay. So the -- the next point on the agenda regarding some information regarding the Board Technical Committee.

Kaveh.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much, Patrik. So as I guess you must know by now, the Board has started a new committee, Board Technical Committee. The charter is also posted online. I will give you a very short summary of the charter. Basically it has three different roles or three aspects of focus. One is the ICANN org oversight, which actually matches with Board's internal Block 2. This is basically the Board's fiduciary responsibility towards ICANN internal I.T. operations, and it will be coordinated within -- within that workstream.

The other one is community engagement and external relationships. So input from different SOs and ACs when it has technical aspect, it will first come in through this stream and will be discussed within BGC and then go to the Board. That's, for example, the .HOME, .CORP, .MAIL I guess would be a good example.

And finally the strategic and forward thinking. This is mostly -- And this matches with Board Work Block 3. This is mostly looking to the future and working with the office of CTO on things that might disrupt the way we work or might affect us.

This is in short. I wanted to emphasize that Board Technical Committee is not a decision-making body, so there are no resolutions or no decisions directly coming out of BTC. It will recommend to Board and will help the full Board to basically understand the issues and make decisions.

One last thing. We're really -- so we're trying to format it more like IETF style, so agenda bashing is more open to all of the board members. They can come up with agenda items. We're also trying to be as open and transparent as possible. So, for example, we started with the session C fully open to observers. We are aiming to make session B, the community engagement, open to observers. The internal oversight, sometimes it (indiscernible). We still need to understand that. This is something that's evolving as also we are trying to figure out how we can make relationships and how we can make this more effective. But this is the current situation.

We had our first meeting earlier this week, and, yeah, please keep an eye on the website. Agenda and everything, we'll post it for future meetings.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Kaveh. Just a follow-up for you to share with the SSAC those -- in the charter, one of the things that it says is that the Board Technical Committee will, you know, be the primary place where technical matters are looked at and that the SSAC's recommendations to the Board will get reviewed there. So I think it will be helpful to provide the SSAC an idea of whether there's a change in the process of how the Board reviews SSAC advice and what the Board Technical Committee's role is going to be in reviewing the SSAC's advice and recommendations and how it will share that with the rest of the Board.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

So from an external point of view, if you look at the stuff externally, I don't expect any changes, but internally, as you know, I mean, even within BTC and within the Board, the level of technical understanding is different as level of other, including legal understanding and other stuff. So what we're trying to do is within BTC is basically to digest the technical advice that comes in and try to make sure it's at a level that all of us are comfortable with and that we can easily share with rest of the Board.

As an outcome, I don't expect any change, but I expect better understanding and alignment within the whole Board for making decisions. And hopefully, anyone, if they have questions, any board member will be on the same level to answer questions on understanding of any technical decisions which are made.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you.

Ron.

RON DA SILVA: Thank you. I just wanted to add to Kaveh's commentary there. Certainly the challenge is -- you know, we've conscripted most of the technically apt board members into this committee, and there could be a tendency that we're going to focus too much of the technology there at the expense of the remaining board members not in this committee not getting the same level of competence and understanding the technology issues.

So I wanted to, in response to your comment there, raise that awareness and just look for SSAC to be aware of that with us so if we have this tendency to focus too much on the technology just in the committee, that we jointly pull away from that and ensure that the full Board gets the advice from SSAC on technical matters and we don't, you know, neglect the rest of the Board in the process.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you.

Steve.

STEVE CROCKER: Let me cover the same thing from a sort of different perspective. Prior to the existence of the Board Technical Committee, advice would come in from SSAC and other technical matters would arise and they would come to the Board. Coming to the Board is a very vague, amorphous term, and in practice, that would mean somebody would read it. Maybe me, maybe Ram, maybe somebody else who's tuned to it.

The notion of the Board attending to a particular matter either requires formally setting it up on the agenda, allocating time during workshop session or, if it requires a resolution, during board meeting, or having one or two people have a discussion on the side.

A perhaps somewhat peculiar way to look at what we've done is -- well, let's say one more thing. During any discussion that would take place for the full board, as is natural in any group, some people will be more engaged and other people will be sort of following along or not following along.

What I hope we have done and what really was the motivation was a kind of way of getting extra board attention by creating the Board Technical Committee that has got the people who would be paying attention if we were having a session of the full board and not requiring everybody else to sit there while we do that.

So it's a kind of hamburger helper extender, if you will, for the way the Board's organized.

The Board Technical Committee is not like other committees that are kept fairly small. This includes all the people who are technically astute and interested. And I think, Ron -- who used the word conscripted? You did.

So it tends to raise the level of attention on technical matters not to provide a gating or road block mechanism. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. Let's move to the next topic.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

The next topic was related to GDPR. And we got at SSAC the question from many parts of ICANN. We at SSAC have been looking at WHOIS related issues for quite a long time. It's actually the case that SSAC document number 3 from 1st of December 2002 was the first document that SSAC produced that talked about issues with WHOIS access to registration data. And we have produced a series of documents since then that, from an SSAC perspective, do point out much of the stress that we do see in discussions at the moment.

We have repeated our recommendations for quite some time. And they include -- and I will mention a few things.

The first one is that we pointed out a couple times that what is needed to be able to have the discussion moving forward is that we use a

single and coherent terminology. Such simple things actually makes things better, makes it easier to understand where there is agreement and disagreement.

There is also, because of the global nature of the Internet and, of course, the use of domain names and other identifiers, a need to have a single coherent policy that is predictable. And that policy, of course, needs to be able to be implemented across all different kinds of layers in the society, everything from contracts to location legislation in various jurisdictions, which, of course, may vary and that, by definition, do create a lot of stress because jurisdiction by definition is defined by jurisdictions area.

Operational differences, of course, will always exist. And that leads to issues when different organizations adopt different solutions. And this, in turn, leads to operability issues from a pure technical standpoint.

It might also in many cases lead to everything, of course, from the inability to build efficient business models to ability for law enforcement and other crime preventing organizations, which include private sector, to try to make Internet work more smoothly, which means pure operational matters. It just makes it hard to make the Internet work if it is the case we get too many of these differences in interoperability.

Regarding GDPR more specifically, SSAC has been talking about interoperability and globalization issues for quite some time. And we don't see things have moved forward as much as we would have liked.

The different organizations that are to implement the GDPR, they, of course, have to make their own determination on various different specifications of the regulation. For example, all the discussion about who is a processor for what data and what attribute, et cetera, are determinations that each organization, of course, are doing themselves.

We believe from SSAC's side is that the discussions within ICANN is good. But what needs to happen and maybe could happen a little bit better is that ICANN, as a coordinator, might help organizations to make more coordinated and informed decisions when they are determining how to implement GDPR.

We believe that this is actually an opportunity to understand not only how to implement a regulation that is so drastic even though it is only in one jurisdiction around the globe, how to implement those globally. This is something we in ICANN community can learn from.

We should probably do a post mortem on how this came together. Because a regulation like GDPR is, of course, not something that whoever is creating a regulation is coming up with in a week. This is something that most certainly have been discussed for years. And the question is then were we in the ICANN community sleeping by the wheel? Was there something we could have done to participate in the actual process for creation of the regulation earlier? What could individual participants in the ICANN community have done? There is a -- there could be some need for the community to not only, of course, solve and coordinate how to implement the regulation that is now

coming in May next year within the EU member states, but also try to understand how to move forward in a more general sense.

That said, to conclude, we in SSAC are following the current situation, and we are discussing the next steps. We have been trying -- I think in all cases by referring to previous statements that we have made, we are trying to help the discussion move forward. We have not seen any need for us specifically to come up with any new statements or participate actively.

That said, we have many SSAC members that actively participate in the various discussions. Specifically, we do find that we have a lot of expertise regarding the need for private sector that do, for example, fight spam and other kind of misuse of Internet resources to -- we do have a lot of experience from those entities that we encourage to participate in the various discussions.

And I'm really happy, as chair of SSAC, to see how well their advice has been received. Although, once again, they speak on their behalf as individuals that happen to be SSAC members and not on behalf of SSAC. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Patrik. Are there any questions? Okay. Patrik, you stopped all questions on this topic on GDPR! I mean, that's a record here.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

Whoa! I didn't sort of train that that much. But anyways --

RAM MOHAN: Okay. So we're done with GDPR. Let's go to the SSAC's question to the Board.

Patrik, do you want to pose the question? And then, you know, we can have the Board provide a response or have board members provide a response.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Yes. We are watching what is going on in the PDP. That is the subs -- as a non-native English speaking person, I urge everyone that is actually coming up with these names to choose simple wording. Anyways, there is this discussion and work going on to look into a potential next round or new round of gTLDs. We at SSAC would like to, of course, stay informed not only by following the work going on in the various other SO/ACs. We'd like to explicitly know the view from the Board on what the situation is and key potential issues that you believe exist. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Who would like to volunteer? Cherine?

CHERINE CHALABY: Thank you, Patrik, for raising this question. So there's a couple of things here. One is specific issues that could be of interest to SSAC. And also, generally, the timing of the next possible round.

Let me address the second point first. And then I'll talk about specific issues. Right?

So there's been a lot of opportunities where the community has asked the Board and looking for the Board to set a timing for the next round. And the Board response has been and would consistently be that there are current reviews taking place. And we are waiting for those reviews to be completed and for the community to indicate that this work is done, is completed. And then it's only at that time that we will then take into account the community's recommendation, consider those, and think of the next round.

So we don't want to at this stage sort of put dates or put any anchors. We're waiting for the community to complete its work, make a recommendation, and then we will consider it.

So, in terms of the actual PDP work that's going on and the various reviews, what are some of the topics that would be possibly of interest to you? So the -- we're looking closely at issues of universal acceptance. I think that is an important topic that needs to be observed. Because there's no point having all these TLDs that are not accepted and not operational and not universally viable from a commercial point of view.

The second thing is the stability of the root. So we talked a lot about the 1,000 sort of limit. Is 1,000 is too much, too little? Is it -- and so on.

So we need to make sure that what does it mean from subsequent round? Is there impact on stability of the root or not?

The next point will be the issue of collision. You're aware of the issues we discussed about .HOME, .CORP, .MAIL. And we could have passed a resolution asking and working with SSAC in terms of collision in general. And I think this will be an important part, an important input into the next round.

Another point was string similarity. That was another issue that we encountered during the first -- the previous round.

And that as well needs to be sorted out.

There are discussions also about geographic names. So in the first round, the Applicant Guidebook gave a clear set of rules regarding sort of countries, cities, and territories but no discussion around geographic names. And so this also needs to be clarified and sorted out.

So those could be others that are of interest to you. But I kept a long list of -- because we were running this new gTLD program. And we run a long list of all of these issues that were not sorted out in the first Applicant Guidebook.

And the real success is, if we launch the next round, if and when, without the need of creating a new gTLD program, to resolve issues.

I mean, it ought to be complete enough that the whole process runs itself in a very efficient and effective manner. So those were some of the points in mind. Is there anything else that you guys have that I did not cover?

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Thank you very much, Cherine.

Ron?

RON DA SILVA: Thank you. I just wanted to comment a little bit more about the string similarity problem. Because today I think it's primarily a manual process with human involvement to assess whether there are some similarities. And I think, if we have another round with a bunch of more strings and add in a bunch of IDN, that problem becomes not very scalable.

So I'm wondering if there's some interest research or some clever technology that can be inserted in there somehow to do an initial pass.

Akinori and I were talking about this at dinner last night. How do you get a first pass on candidates string similarities and then still probably need a human element to look at it and say, oh yeah, these different IDNs and these strings look like they're the same thing. Thus, there's some concerns about how somebody might be confused with them. But I wonder another round with a significant amount of information going into the DNS, that's not very easy to address on a human basis. There's an area that could be interesting to see some innovation.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Ron. Patrik?

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

Sure. First to answer Cherine. I think you covered the issues that we are also looking at, the issues that are most important to us that we are watching.

To phrase it in our terms, we're looking at the KPRs and root scaling issues which also Ron mentioned. We have also the various name collision issues and internationalized domain names.

And to then go over to what Ron talked about regarding combinatorial explosion. That is actually something that we are looking at in one of our work parties that we currently are reviewing -- we're doing a gap analysis between the various confusability and comparison rules and processes across the ICANN community where there might be differences. Let me phrase it that way.

So we're currently in the phase where we are doing an investigation and the gap analysis to see where there are differences. We do believe there are. But, of course, we cannot guess these kinds of things. We need to really compare.

Given that gap analysis, if it is the case that there are any gaps and differences, we are to -- the next step is to investigate whether those gaps by themselves do create SSR-related issues. For example, that you have different policy for the characters that you can use in trademark clearinghouse compared to, for example, the ccNSO fast track process for IDNs. Is the difference between the two which we already identified, is that a problem?

Regarding the combinatorial explosion --

Regarding the combinatorial explosion, that is something that I can speak about because we actually discussed that on the SSAC meeting the other day, where in the work party we actually brought up the fact that some of the solutions to alternative variants -- let me phrase it that way, is to allow a registry to register all the different variants as TLDs. So if it is the case for example that you have, for example, two different variants only in the TLD, that's one thing, and that it looks nice and dandy, but on the second-level domain to be able to create all different kind of combinations, you need to have four different domain names on the second level, two under each one of the TLDs and that will then explode with the power of two on each one of the levels on the tree. So if you look at the full domain name instead of just the TLD, that's where you get the combinatorial explosion. So if it's the case you would like to register, regardless of whether it's like CNAME or BNAME or DNAME, whatever other kind of technical solution you try like to select here, there is a big issue if it is actually the case that you want to register sort of all different kind of domain names or make them available in the DNS.

So to answer your question, yes, we are absolutely looking at these combinatorial effects, and we are looking at what kind of policy at the top-level domain might have implications further down the tree for the full domain name, although discussion about policy for the full domain name is slightly different from policy for the root zone, which is something else.

We do believe that -- that we all the time we are coming back to the mission of ICANN. And this is what we always, always, always are looking at in SSAC; that the mission of ICANN is the following. The mission of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers is to ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems. Period. This is what ICANN is doing. And that is what we should focus on, and that's what we in SSAC is focusing on.

Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you so much.

Cherine, did you want to do a quick response?

CHERINE CHALABY: Can I follow up?

RAM MOHAN: Please.

CHERINE CHALABY: So I think we are in line with all of that, and the question is, hearing you talking, Patrik, means that -- and mentioning the mission, by implication you would say you would have concerns that subsequent round has started without all of these issues started out beforehand. Is that what the -- by implication? Or putting word in your mouth, but I think it's just having a dialogue on that. That's all.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

Oh, absolutely. And to be more specific, what we are doing and what we have been doing together with the Board is to -- is to ensure that, for example, that there are certain -- there are a couple of things that are happening in parallel here. First of all, we have to the -- to the subsequent procedures, the people that work with that, we have given at first very general pointers to the recommendations we have presented earlier. We are, over time, giving pointers -- refining the pointers to what recommendations we think still is valid.

We have, together with the Board, been looking at the implementation of the Board Advice Tracker which we think now works really well, and it's still improved all the time, and I advise everyone to have a look at that one because that way we can see what recommendations SSAC did to the previous round are still not implemented. And there we see -- so for each one of the recommendations, we do have a dialogue on the status of the recommendation.

But to be able to help that and make it even -- even better, sort of backward pointer from SSAC, we have also for some time been re-reviewing our own recommendations. So we have been going through all our previous advice. We have categorized them in -- in different -- in different classes depending on whether we think the recommendation is still valid, whether we think it should be repeated but changed and updated to the current context, or if it's overtaken by events. And this, independently of the status of the recommendations in the Board Advice Tracker. We -- At the moment we are at the point

in time where we have gone through all the recommendations, and we now know the most important one to go through them again and send them in. So we are trying to make our homework to sort out exactly which one of the recommendations that we do believe must be taken into account before we move into a potential new round.

So we are working on making that -- what you just mentioned easier, because we do understand that that question will come.

There was one that -- Rod told me there was one question that I did not -- from you regarding the thousand -- thousand new TLDs that I didn't give a response to. My apologies for that.

We have got a question related to the thousand new -- new entries in the root zone. We are working on a response. We have not responded to it yet, but I can already hear in this room say that we in SSAC have -- have always said that the most important thing is to have a system in place so that you can stop the addition of new TLDs and even remove some in the case that you detect any problems. That is the most important thing.

And our recommendations has always been that the most important thing is to have a monitoring system and feedback system that can control the rate of change, because the rate of change is the important one. And I think that is what probably will be sort of the overarching message in the response that we will give.

Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Patrik.

In the queue for this topic are Jonne and Avri, and then we will move to the final topic of the day.

Jonne.

JONNE SOININEN:

Thank you, Ram.

So I wanted to address the point of -- of variants. And in the Board IDN Working Group, we have been looking at the variant issue for quite some time. Well, it was called the Board Variant Working group before. It's now basically -- the scope of the working group was also expanded to look at other IDN issues.

But what we have been looking there is that not only the variants itself but also what would be the risks that if variants are introduced to the root and when they are introduced to the lower levels.

And that work is still in progress, but what we're trying to do is identify the risks, identify the possible mitigations for those. And I'm looking at the chair of that working group who is Ram.

Ram? Ram? (Laughing) Yeah, I'm looking at you as the chair of the IDN Working Group, but maybe when we get a little bit further with the risks and the mitigation proposals, that might be something that we want to look together with the SSAC as well.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Jonne. I think that's a good idea, and I'll add that to a list of actions arising out of this meeting.

Avri.

AVRI DORIA: Thank you. First I guess I've got to use a word that Steve used in that I am most definitely in transition. And so in talking about this, I'm transitioning from having been steeped in new gTLD for almost my whole time at ICANN and just having stepped down as co-chair of the sub pro which is the easier way to say it versus subsequent procedures, new gTLD scent procedures, and just about to enter the Board.

One of the things that I can say is that the issues that you've all brought up are, indeed, being discussed in that group, perhaps in different words, perhaps not quite as fixed on removal of names from - from the root. I think that, you know, there's over 90 issues that the - that the PDP has been working through, and as I come into the Board, I'm hoping over the next couple of months to sort of, you know, talk about most of those within the Board context, especially the ones that people have brought.

Not at the point that I can say anything has been decided, because really they haven't. They're going through a very careful process of first identifying the questions, then going out to the community with questions, now about to enter a period where they start to look at the questions.

And the group works with a very solid -- there is an existing policy, there is a de facto policy in the Applicant Guidebook, and only if there is consensus to change something will they be able to recommend a change. They're not creating a policy from new.

So getting comments in to them, getting information in to them, getting the Board's perspective, getting the SSAC's perspective and others into that in as much detail, as early as possible, especially -- The hope is they will have their first draft recommendations in the first quarter of '18. It slipped some but it's in progress.

So I'm hoping while I'm very transitional to be able to sort of help the Board and the PDP sort of start talking about these things. But hopefully that's what you wanted from me.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Avri. You have about seven hours left for that excuse.

Patrik.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

Thank you very much for telling us this, Avri and that is exactly what we sort of have guessed and heard and whatever. And this is why we -- that's why we are trying to deliver information incrementally.

So -- So my message to that group, whoever in the room happens to sort of participate there, is that even though you might see the fist messages from us in SSAC are a little bit hand waving and whatever,

that is just because we want to give a heads up and you will get refined information from us over time.

Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. Let's move to the final topic on the agenda, which is collisions. And particularly, .HOME, .CORP, .MAIL.

So the SSAC's question to the Board really, what does the Board -- if you go to the next slide, please. What is the Board's latest thinking on collision issues, specifically on .HOME, .CORP, and .MAIL. And I wonder whether Cherine or Steve, you can take the lead on what the Board is intending to do. I can provide a bit of a summary of the discussion we have had, but then in terms of where we're going and particularly the work that is likely to come to SSAC. It will be helpful if -- okay. So Steve has put his hand up to do that.

Let me just say this briefly. In just the 2017 calendar year, the Board has had several in-depth sessions to first get a basic understanding of what are name collisions and what constitutes the phenomenon that has been seen, to get an understanding of control interruptions, et cetera. So there has been a level set, and that was led by Jonne from the -- it was a technical oriented session.

Following that, the Board has had several more discussion sessions about the general idea of name collisions. And in the most recent few months, there was a clear realization that the request from multiple places, but specifically from the SSAC, to conduct further studies and

to go get a basis of data before making conclusions, which the Board had already said was the right thing to do. The Board started to move down the path of actually going and executing on it.

So there has been quite a vigorous and robust conversation about name collisions in general, and most recently a deeper level of discussion on .HOME, .CORP, and .MAIL.

So with that as a background and preamble, I'll pass it to you, Steve and Cherine after that, if you want to speak.

STEVE CROCKER:

Thank you. So I've got several -- several things to cover, and I'll try not to be too long but I do have several things.

First of all, just on a very personal note, I step down tonight as chair of the board. But I remain a member of SSAC for another couple of months. My membership continues.

And, although I have not been very active, this is one topic that I expect to stay active on. And, in addition, I've offered to Cherine and to Goran that there's a small set of topics that I'm willing to stay engaged in without official portfolio. And this is, in fact, one of them.

As Ram has said, this issue has been very actively under discussion. And we are about to this very evening, I think, pass a resolution in which the Board will formally ask SSAC to take up this matter or these matters, actually. I think we've got it structured as a pair of resolutions.

And I want to expand on that and say a bit more about what I hope follows from that, not all of which is written out in fine-grained detail in the resolution, but all of which I think is fully intended.

To speak quite frankly, we, ICANN as a whole, has been kicking the can down the road without digging in and getting to a definitive answer about what to do for names that -- for strings that are already showing up heavily in the root but have not yet been delegated, .HOME, .CORP, and .MAIL being three particular examples.

Those examples are of particular interest because there have been applicants for that. And so, from a business point of view, there's some urgency to resolve that.

But from my perspective -- and I think the proper perspective -- those are -- whatever the urgency there is, the real task is to look at the broader issue of strings that are already in heavy use even though they haven't been formally delegated into the root, what would happen if they were delegated? The fact that some are pending in an application and some may not be is a kind of separable matter. So that's just one partitioning of the issues.

There's -- it's easy to focus on the quantitative aspect of the -- you know, there's a large number of queries. And you can measure them over time, see if they change. You can ask questions about could you make something that would make the number of queries go down or whatever.

I think it is absolutely vital to explain what the causes are and to untangle those causes, else there isn't any way to have a substantive discussion about what the impact would be or whether there's any ways to make changes in the behavior, so-called mitigation.

And a footnote with respect to mitigation, the term "mitigation" suggests that there is a very well-defined sense of what direction is good, which is to reduce the use of these strings.

An alternative point of view is that these strings are, in fact, being used for something. And one could say, well, doesn't that have a purpose or isn't that fitting into the ecology in some way even though there hasn't been a formal delegation of these strings? So there is a policy discussion that follows on. I just want to note that and leave that hanging and then come back to the role of SSAC. So what we're expecting very much and willing to be very supportive for SSAC to do is do an in-depth, solid piece of work looking at the phenomena, looking at the alternatives, looking at the consequences, et cetera, and to do this in a fashion that is rigorous and is open and inclusive across the board. It is not intended to be a closed process for the -- for SSAC members to sit in a room and have a discussion about it and then write a report. We need considerably more. We chose not to set up a Cross-Community Working Group. We chose not to send this over to the GNSO. We chose not to make this a joint GNSO/SSAC effort. Because, at least speaking strongly for myself and I think shared among a number of us, if not uniformly, we think that there is a very substantial core of technical analysis, technical investigation and reporting and explanation that needs to be done before we get into

policy and values discussions. But we do need -- absolutely do need for this to be a wide open, inclusive and, to some extent, an extended process so that there is an opportunity for people to offer their points of view, offer their data, for there to be consideration and back and forth and subsequent follow-on.

So the message that I'm trying to convey here is that, as we toss this to you in a formal sense in our resolution tonight, we are very consciously asking that you allocate the resources within SSAC, that you identify what additional resources that you need, that you set up a game plan for proceeding that is aimed at making this process as I said, inclusive, thorough, and well-documented.

So that's the main part of that. And by "well-documented," I mean not only in ways that technical experts can understand but also accessible to a much broader audience.

Two more things that I want to cover. This will be a big event.

And in ways we were here once before with Site Finder in 2003. These things come along every once in a while not by design but by just circumstances. But the consequences are multiple. They're not only focused on the event itself or the incident or the technical issue, but they also have a secondary effect in terms of credibility, relationships, and so forth.

I don't want it to be a distraction. But I do think it's useful to be aware that, as this process proceeds and as it comes to a conclusion, afterwards, it's likely that there will be consequences with respect to

the relationship with the technical community, with the IETF on the one side, with the business community and various aspects of vested interests on the other side with the stature of SSAC as an institution within ICANN and the stature and credibility of ICANN as a whole.

And I'm hoping for positive results all around, frankly.

But not -- but not that you should pursue those and -- explicitly. But I think that they will have some consequence. And so it's one of the things to keep in mind.

The last thing that I want to say is a bit of a recap of some of the things I touched on. There's some complexity involved here.

The causes for strings to be used without delegation are probably not all the same. And it's probably helpful to identify the ones that we can identify and explain those. I think, as I said, it's important to cover not only the .CORP, .HOME, and .MAIL but others as well.

One of the rather nicely contained examples is Belkin. They built the string into their product and had it leak out onto the net.

Some years ago, in anticipation of the gTLD program, we had discussions within SSAC about what would happen if Belkin applied for that string. Is that a good thing? Bad thing? Should we recommend that it shouldn't happen and so forth? I don't want to necessarily say what the answer is. But there's probably a series of different causes. And it's probably helpful to -- well, not probably. It will be helpful to go into a bit of tutorial mode to make this process -- these causes accessible.

Equally, it will be important to make the consequences of delegation accessible to a broad readership. And, in my mind, I tend to divide those consequences up into two. What would happen, just by the mere fact of delegation no matter what the delegee -- is that a word? -- what the TLD operator chooses to do with the queries that might come to it. And then there is a subsequent set of consequences depending upon the behavior of the TLD operator. They might be clueful and try to be helpful with these errant queries. Or they may be clumsy or even malicious in terms of exploiting them.

So there are multiple things to look at. With respect to mitigation, one of the things that I think is very important is to understand the enormous inertia that is built in to the Internet system. We have working examples of very long tails in trying to -- watching the slow rate at which names or numbers, for that matter, that are no longer operative continue to be referenced.

We have the .CS case for a particular top-level domain. We have renumbering of roots and so forth. And I don't have enough data to be able to connect all the dots. But I think it is important to bring these examples up, look at them, and understand something about, if there are proposed courses of action, what data do we have to suggest what those consequences might be.

And there's others. There's a number of technical issues to look at.

So the first thing to do, I think, in addition to organizing a work plan, is to get a kind of starting list of issues to look at, socialize that, and try to draw people in.

This will be a highly visible activity. Enjoy it. Embrace it. Or brace yourself, depending upon your point of view.

The Board is very supportive and understands that resources will be required. Ideally, the process will not drag on for years and years. But I think it is important to be focused on quality and thoroughness first and not feel the sense that this has to be done by a date certain.

And so work out what the reasonable course of action is. And in all -- by all means, maintain a high degree of interaction and communication. We are also assigning to the Board Technical Committee, which you've heard mention of already, the task of maintaining a strong communication and liaison with SSAC on this matter in addition to all the usual things. So this will be a high visibility effort. Everybody will be watching. The Board will be paying attention. But, as I said, the emphasis will be on thoroughness and explication as well as analysis.

Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Steve. I think that was quite a thorough explanation to the SSAC of what the expectations are. Cherine, for your brief comments. And then I'll toss it to you, Patrik. And then we'll draw the session to a close shortly thereafter.

CHERINE CHALABY: Yeah. So there isn't much I'd like to add from Steve's other than the emphasis, really, is on the impact on existing users rather than on the workload on the TLD operators. That's quite important. What is the impact and the mitigating factors?

One thing that Steve didn't refer to and that is just, for your information, it's not to do is, while this work is happening, we are going to pass a third resolution to ask our CEO to consider the potential option re: the applicants. Because -- and we want to do that at the next -- at the first board meeting after ICANN60.

So there are 20 applications outstanding for a while. What do we do with those? And we're just asking our CEO to consider the option and bring them up to the Board so we can make a sensible decision regarding the application while the work is going on. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Cherine.

Patrik.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Just a few comments on these name collision issues. First of all, we have, through our liaison, heard the discussion that the Board have had. And we saw your blog post, Cherine. And, since your blog post came published, we have been looking into what we are actually talking about here just in a general sense. Yes, it should not drag on forever. But we do not think that we can do -- we think a reasonable

time frame is that this will, including all the RFP for external partners and stuff, it's still something that will take about 24 months.

So we're not talking about something that can be done quickly.

Mainly because we see three different phases in this project. The first one, just like Steve said, is a data gathering phase where as much data as possible is gathered that can also be reused by others that would like to repeat the work that we're doing, although, of course, we do expect that we both want to and we hope we can get certain data under NDA, which, unfortunately, cannot be shared. But we need to treat it accordingly.

The second phase is that we are to look into what we actually see in this data. And this is the phase where it's also important to, as I said, allow anyone to use the data that we gather in the first phase to be able to repeat and draw their own conclusions from the data.

The third phase is then to look at mitigation methods, just like Steve said, to see what kind of methods might exist, what can be done that we don't know, how effective are they or not.

And what are the secondary effects for -- as you said, Cherine, that we completely support is to look at this from the end user perspective which is underlying issue.

So, just because of these three different phases and all of the different kind of things, we do believe that this is a quite substantial project.

Regarding openness, we don't see any problems whatsoever to conduct this as an open, inclusive -- even though SSAC do its deliberations within SSAC only, we already today have the ability and do invite external parties to work parties. And what we might -- and what we're envisioning now is to have one of those work parties with invited experts to start with. But the only thing that party should be is, basically, be the interaction with the project manager and completely from SSAC separated project that is running this according to whatever the community do believe is needed to be able to reach the goals that the Board -- whatever the Board is saying and is requesting and what we think should be done.

So that is, basically, the setup that we are envisioning.

And regarding openness, once again, emphasize doing data gathering and other kind of things and drawing conclusions that also others can repeat that way through open -- through consultations.

Others that come to different conclusions than us at SSAC can bring it up. So already during the project can discuss whatever gaps there are between our calculations and findings and what others find.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Patrik. That brings us to the end of our planned agenda. I think Patrik, you have one more item on your plate and then Cherine, you have something to wrap.

PATRIK FALTSTROM:

So I've been chair of SSAC for seven years. I would like to take this opportunity to, first of all, thank our excellent support staff to SSAC. Specifically, Julie Hedlund, that, unfortunately, is leaving SSAC to support GNSO. She's not leaving ICANN. We still sort of keep her. I just congratulate GNSO to get more of Julie's time. Thank you very much.

And included in this is also thanks to David Olive that has been my peer and the ICANN staff organization which have been really, really helpful to sort out all the logistics and practical items regarding SSAC. I also would like to, of course, thank my vice chair, Jim Galvin, for his excellent support. And all of you should know that if there are two things that Jim really has been done that I've been sort of able to just lay back and watch it happen is, one, taking care of our operational procedures within SSAC and update that. So that is the reason why everything actually runs smoothly. And he has also been the chair of the membership committee, which is reviewing both incoming SSAC members and also the existing ones.

I'm also very, very thankful for ICANN board. When I started, we had ad hoc meetings. And then we didn't meet. But now we are actually meeting again. And I think the cooperation we have is excellent.

I have so many things to say. Each one of you board members. But I do that privately, so I will not mention any of you. It's not because I don't like you. I do. Thank you.

Last, Steve, of course, everyone is thanking you. I will not give you a glass container you have to carry back anyways.

I would like to thank you, as a member of SSAC, for all the work you've done as a member of SSAC but also as chair of SSAC, as a liaison to the Board, then as a board member, and now chairman of the board.

It's really sad as a member of SSAC, which I, by the way, will continue to be at the end of the year, to see you're also leaving as a member of SSAC. Because, as a member of SSAC, you have and is still -- and I hope you will continue until the end of the year -- continue to add and come with very, very valuable input. And, well, after the end of the year, just like we say to all leaving SSAC members, you know where we are and we know where you are. So we'll probably continue the discussion. Thank you very much, everyone.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Cherine.

CHERINE CHALABY: Well, Patrik and Jim, it's been a ride for six years. And we are, like Steve said, it's always bittersweet moments when people who have been around for a long time and have had such a great impact on us move on to other leadership positions or other things. So we want -- the Board wants to thank you tremendously of all your contribution or effort and the excellent and open relationship we've had together. So we will miss you tremendously.

And then I look at -- to your right, to Rod and Julie and say we're delighted. And we know under your leadership SSAC will continue

great work. And we'll also continue to have an open, transparent, and engaging relationship.

So it's a new era from the Board and from you guys. It's an opportunity to continue on the -- really, on the footsteps and all the contributions that have been forged by our kind of predecessors. So we look forward to working together and continuing on this road. So thank you and welcome and congratulations. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. That concludes this session.

[Applause]

We're adjourned. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]