MONTREAL – GNSO - RySG Working Lunch
Tuesday, November 5, 2019 – 12:15 to 13:15 EDT
ICANN66 | Montréal, Canada

[SAM]: It is Tuesday, November 5, 2019, at ICANN 66 in Montreal. This is the GNSO RySG working lunch at 12:15 in Hall 511C.

GAURAV VEDI: Thanks, Sam. Hello everyone. This is Gaurav for the record, and I'm a member of the Customer Standing Committee. With me is Lars. He's from RSSAC, and he's the current Interim Chair of the Customer Standing Committee. With me, also, Dmitry. He's the new member of our Registry Stakeholder Group representing the Customer Standing Committee, as well. Next slide, please.

Just a little bit of background of what the CSC does for those who are not aware. The Customer Standing Committee was established in 2016, and it provides operational oversight for the operations performed by the United States Department of Commerce NDIA as it relates to the monitoring of the performance of IANA naming functions here. So, the mission of the CSC is to ensure continued satisfactory performance of the IANA functions for their direct customers who happen to be TLD registry operators and also root server operators and non-group [root zone] functions there.

Now, in a nutshell, PTI generates monthly reports and the CSC provides operational oversight for those reports and ensures PDS

compliance with respect to naming functions agreements, including SLAs and metrics here. Next slide, please.

A couple of months back the CSC lost a couple of their key members including the Chair, Byron Holland, and Vice-Chair, Elaine Pruis, and that created a timing issue with respect to having a full slate of CSC members not there at the right time. That somehow delayed the process for electing a chair and a vice-chair so the CSC will be appointing a new chair and vice-chair by December 2019. It's confirmed? It's done? Confirmed? All right.

We have appointed our new chair. Lars will be taking on, as a full-time responsibility, as Chair of the CSC and Brett Carr from the ccNSO will be the Vice-Chair for the CSC. Next slide, please.

This is the current roster for the CSC. Two gTLD members, myself and Dmitry, two ccTLD members, Brett Carr and Alejandra. We have four liaisons from different organizations and one liaison from PTI, Naela, there. Next slide, please.

As I explained earlier, the core responsibility of the CSC is to monitor and report on PTI's compliance with the naming functions agreement including service level agreements. By service level agreements, we mean there are 62 different individual metrics arranged in seven different groups involving technical checks and other related stuff.

The SLAs were doubled-up three years ago because the CSC was formed in 2016 based on some initial data which was collected at that point in time. But the expectation was built that as and when we'll

have more data collected so the CSC was flexible enough to go back and look at the new data in time and be willing to modify SLAs' thresholds as and when needed, here. Next slide, please.

Monthly monitoring reporting. As I mentioned earlier, PTI generates monthly reports summarizing the performance based on the percentage. We can word that percentage and we map that percentage to a corresponding categorical rating in terms of "excellent," "satisfactory," or "needs improvement." Anything which meets 100 percent SLAs is marked as "excellent," anything below it is "satisfactory," and anything which has been known as a severe degradation of the performance is marked as "needs improvement" for corresponding SLAs. Next slide, please.

This is just an extract from a PTI monthly report, and as you can see on the left-hand side we have corresponding metrics defined under corresponding groups like [submission] technical checks. Each metric, as you can see … For example, acceptance recognition is repeated across five different categories: routine technical, nontechnical, gTLD creation/transfer, ccTLD, and other changes. So, that's how the entire report has been published each month. A CSC committee monitors the PTI's compliance with respect to the corresponding SLAs as defined in the naming functions agreement. Next slide, please.

This is the historical data based on the monitoring of PTI's performance. As you can see, most of the time the performance has been exemplary, between 95 to 100 percent. In the last year or so it's between 98 to 100 percent. Thanks to the PTI team for taking care of

that. Most of the time we have met 100 percent SLAs. Occasionally, there have been missed metrics with 98.4 percent SLAs. And as I mentioned earlier, these missed metrics resulted from SLA metrics which changed because three years ago, when we had a very limited amount of data to start with, those metrics were defined based on some expectations. As and when the new data is available we are looking into corresponding data and we have modified existing thresholds for some of those technical checks which were missed in previous reports. Next slide, please.

The process to change those corresponding thresholds was not an easy one and both the CSC and PTI had to create two different processes to amend IANA naming function service level agreements and also a process for modifying the process for amending the IANA naming function service level agreement. Because the current structure was so rigid that it did not allow us to modify existing SLAs we had to create additional processes around it to modify these thresholds and SLAs. So, we have defined four additional categories of change: addition of new SLA items, removing SLA items, changing SLA items' definition, and target threshold and change SLA item target threshold only. Next slide, please.

Both PTI and the CSC we have discussed internally, and we have identified three SLAs which needed to be changed including three technical checks, new SLAs for IDNs, label generation to set tables and ccTLD delegation and transfer. As of today, the current status of SLA changes is that all three technical checks have already been completed and operational by PTI. And new SLAs for IDN and LGR

tables are already in front of the ccNSO and the GNSO Council so we are just waiting for approval. CcTLD creation transfer is open for public comment, please, and I think the 25th of November is the deadline for public comment for that. Next slide, please.

One thing I would like to highlight here is the CSC's role is limited to monitoring PTI's overall complaint management system and providing operational oversight. It prevents it from becoming involved in individual complaints. We haven't seen any unresolved complaints in the last two years, which is a good thing. Thanks, again, to the PTI.

But, again, if there is any individual problem that represents any systematic trend of patent or persistent issues, then, in that case, we need to invoke remedial action procedure. Next slide, please.

Now, as part of that remedial action process, if the CSC determines that there is a systematic problem that exists based on the trend, then PTI is obligated to prepare and follow a remedial action plan. Now, failure to follow the plan can actually result in a three-level escalation starting from PTI Board to ICANN CU and then the ICANN Board. We are fortunate that we haven't had the privilege to escalate any of the issues so far, and thanks again to the PTI team for maintaining that.

Lastly, the remedial access process was approved in March 2018 and updated in January 2019. In case there are any issues with the consistent monitoring or trends identified in the degradation of performances then the CSC usually reaches out to the ccNSO and GNSO Councils and both councils can initiate a special IANA functions review for those. The next slide, please.

Again, as I mentioned, PTI generates monthly reports and those reports are reviewed by the CSC. They are presented to the ICANN community. This is just a general information where open … The CSC Committee meets twice a year, usually around public face-to-face meetings at ICANN community forums and annual general meetings, and the CSC also meets with ICANN and PTI Board.

Now, PTI recently conducted a customer survey with IANA engagement and overall there is a high rate of satisfaction with approval growing across all the different tiers that are based on the report there, which is a good sign for our Customer Standing Committee. Overall, the CSC was reported highest in pretty much all the tiers. That's a good sign for CSC performance overall. Next slide, please.

The first CSC charter was reviewed in June 2018 and the CSC Effectiveness Review was started last year, 2018, completed in March 2019, and the corresponding recommendations have already been implemented in the CSC charter. There is a separate committee, IANA Functions Review. Based on ICANN bylaws, Article 18, the ICANN Board is required to perform periodic reviews of PTI's performance against the naming functions agreement. I think that the status is still pending. The team is getting formed currently. As and when we have more status updates, we'll be definitely providing more, there. Our next slide, please.

In general, PTI's performance has been extremely good, meeting "excellent performance" most of the time. There's some minor metrics

missed for obvious reasons, but the process is, overall, working exceptionally well for us. If there are any problems areas that have been identified, those problem areas are discussed within CSC/PTI thorough consultation, and we double-up corresponding measures around it immediately. Both PTI and the CSC have been working diligently in full cooperation to mitigate any issues there. That's all from my side. If you have any further questions, please feel free.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you so much. Actually, we're running a little short on time and we still want to give Kim and Lise time. So what I'll do is I'll ask if anyone does have any follow-up questions or input for our reps, please email Gaurav. You guys know him, you love him. Thank you for all your service on it. Dmitry, thank you for volunteering to join the team. Elaine's not here, but thank you for the work that she has done. And I'll turn it over to you guys now.

LISE FUHR: Well, thank you. While we get the slides up … First of all, bon appetit. I hope you're enjoying the lunch, and I hope you're not getting too tired from eating. I know it's hard to speak after lunch, but we will do it very quickly. We have max 10-15 minutes.

I just wanted to remind you of the composition of the PTI Board. We are three ICANN-appointed members. That's Kim Davies, that's David Conrad, and the last one is Jia-Rong Low, who is the ICANN VP Stakeholder Engagement and Management Director in the Asia

Pacific. He's not formally appointed. He's going to be appointed by the next board meeting at ICANN.

Then, I am a NomCom appointee. My name is Lise Fuhr. I come from ETNO. ETNO is a European trade association in Brussels, so I come from the TelcoWorld. And we have Wei Wang from China who's working for Google, who's also a NomCom appointee. His term is about to come to an end and then he either needs to be reappointed or someone else. I just started my new term after this meeting with three years.

That was a bit on the composition of the PTI Board. What we want to do today is discuss a bit with you on the strategic process. It's not very in-depth because we don't have the time in those 15 minutes we have allocated for this. Next slide, please. What I want to do is make you aware that we're starting our strategic plan and to develop it, and also to let you know that if you have any input, anything you would like us to put into the strategic plan, please let us know. Next slide, please.

Formally, we need to have our own strategic planner as PTI. We have a four-year circle for the strategic plan where ICANN has a five-year circle. We're actually striving to have the strategic plan ready at the same time as the ICANN strategic plan because we find that it's important that we start having that going in parallel with the ICANN strategy. Of course, we're depending on part of the ICANN strategic objectives. We have actually made an analysis of which ones depend on PTI and, where are the gaps? Are there any areas where we will need to have our own strategic objectives? So, of course, we will take

care of the strategic objectives that are in the ICANN strategy but we're also looking into our own parts of this.

We'll still have a continued focus on consumer needs. We will have a strong culture of operational excellencies. Trust is important and, of course, security is one that is key for us. We will look into if we should align with ICANN's strategic term, that's a five-year term but we wanted to get the strategy in place and then see if we need to change the PTI bylaws in order to align on the five-year circle that ICANN has. That being said, it's not that we will set a four-year strategy. We will have a strategy for four years that we will look at every year to see if we need to change part of it. It's more a matter of that we need to do some long-term planning but it's not that this can't be changed. Next slide, please.

What we also needed to look into is when we look at a strategy we're also going to look into the vision. Do we need to change the vision? We actually met in May, and we found that we should look into defining a new vision. So, what we will consult you about is both a vision but also, of course, a new strategy.

The plan, as I'm doing now, is we're initiating engagement right now. We're trying to let people know that we're working on this so you can actually engage with either Kim, me, or anyone else from the PTI staff or the PTI Board. Then, we will have a workshop in January where we will finish the plan or the draft of both the vision and also the strategy and we will send it out for public comment in March 2020. That is, of course, at the same time as the ICANN meeting in Mexico. There, we

will engage with all of you in order to get some discussions going and then there will be the public consultation in writing. So, the aim is to be effective as of July 2020. With that, I'll actually hand it over to you, Kim, to …

KIM DAVIES: I see a platoon of ICANN staff are entering, so I'll be quick. Next slide, please. I wanted to bring your attention to the PTI and IANA budget development process. For those that are not familiar, this budget process happens prior to ICANN's budget process due to bylaws requirements. It is now in public comment. The headline, I just want to bring your attention, is essentially we're proposing operations be stable year-on-year. The budget is very similar to what it was in the previous year. There's no big headline stories to share with you. Nonetheless, it is for public comment and upon the closure of that public comment period we seek to approve it as a board at the end of the year and it'll be rolled up into the ICANN budget process early next year. Next slide, please.

Every year, IANA does an annual survey of its customers. We've done this 2013 but this year we've changed our approach based on feedback from previous years. We often ask questions about what our service was like and a lot of the feedback was, "Well, you know, I used your service, like, ten months ago. I don't even remember what the interaction was like."

So, what we've done this year is split our survey approach into two different strategies. One is whenever a customer completes a request

we immediately send them a survey and we ask for their impression on the services we delivered right away. We've changed our annual survey to be more focused on engagement, "is the IANA team engaging in your communities in the appropriate way?", and to rate us on different measures associated with that.

We've just got the results in the last few days so we don't have a full presentation to give on that. We will issue a complete report in December but I did want to share with you just a few numbers that I think are worth considering. Next slide.

Generally, I think Gaurav just mentioned as well, the results are pretty positive across all the different areas. Again, it's hard to make a year-on-year comparison because the format has drastically changed versus last year's survey. Nonetheless, in all the different categories we have, we've been rated highly. Next slide.

I'm going to pause on this slide for a second. We have different customer segments across our different areas of operation. Here is just the segments that are pertinent to the gTLD community. I wanted to highlight a particular trend that is pretty emphatic in the results, which is that in the segment we have for the GNSO Council and Registry Stakeholder Group Chair the scores are much lower. Much, much lower. We didn't see this in any other customer segment and, importantly, we didn't see this in other segments that apply to this same community.

So, a different segment we have is a survey we send to all the gTLD managers, sort of the contact points that IANA has directly. There, the

ratings were quite high, a little lower than the average across our whole customer base. And then we have the Customer Standing Committee that has two gTLD representatives, there, and they certainly rated us high, as well. So, there is a bit of disconnect there.

If we move to the next slide, I have some thoughts. I guess more rhetorical questions for you to think about. Is this response from the GNSO Council segment indicative of the sentiment there? As I mentioned, it does not match what we're hearing from the CSC representatives. It doesn't match what we're hearing from the gTLD registries at large. A follow-on question is, if it is indicative, what kind of [additional direct] or change in the dynamic between our team and this group would be warranted? We're very happy to be further engaged in your work as you feel would be appropriate. We don't want to insert ourselves into your operations unnecessarily but, at the same time, we're very open for any kind of engagement that will improve the relationship.

For example, with the ccNSO we have a standing meeting every single ICANN meeting to give an update, to talk about projects that are ongoing and that are impactful to ccTLDs. We're very happy to do that with this group as an example. Sorry. Donna.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Kim. Donna Austin. I don't understand that segment, the GNSO. Is that a survey that went to GNSO counselors and me, or …? I just don't understand the segment.

KIM DAVIES: That was my understanding, yes. It went to every GNSO counselor plus yourself as Registry Stakeholder Group Chair. There are 23 in the group. I don't know if the number there meshes with…

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: [I think there may be] a statistical issue at play here.

KIM DAVIES: Yeah, that was the next bullet point. It might just be an aberration because there were only three respondents from the group of 23. Nonetheless, we didn't want to dismiss the result out of hand. But I just wanted you to take it under consideration that this is something we saw in our survey. We will do more work to understand and maybe we'll have some private discussions to learn more. John.

[JOHN]:   Just another comment, and it's great if the GNSO counselors want to have interaction, but I'm just not sure they have any engagement or relationship in a direct sense with it. So, actually two things, I suppose. One is, I think it's great to see you guys here. I've been aware that you've been interacting with the ccNSO for a while. It may not be that maybe that you don't need to come every time but maybe at the annual meeting or something. Seeing you and having this kind of interaction is great and may well be helpful anyway, but as to asking the GNSO counselors what they think of you and your performance

seems a little … Unless I'm missing something, it seems to be kind of like two things are missing one another. Thanks.

KIM DAVIES: Thanks for the input. We're not sure we have the segmentation right, too. This is the first year doing it this way so we'll definitely take advice on how we can mature the approach moving forward. Next slide, please.

The other thing I wanted to bring to your attention is an operational change we're contemplating in IANA that might be impactful for some gTLD registries. I appreciate not everyone in this room might be involved directly with this but today we have a certain operational model where, if a name server is shared by multiple different TLDs, a change to that name server needs to be consented to by every impacted TLD. The consequence of this, in some rare cases, a simple IP address change to a name server can result in months of work trying to rally together dozens or hundreds of TLDs to all give their consent.

We're deploying a new authorization model in the system that is a lot more flexible but the downside is, if we apply that same permission structure with this new flexible model, it gets even more complex getting everyone to approve.

We're considering a model whereby if there is a change request to a shared glue record, a shared name server … We changed the consent models so not everyone needs to approve. Instead, we will get the

standard approval from the party that has submitted the change request, the TLD that has initiated the change, and then we would advertise some kind of brief opt-out period to all the other TLDs.

For example, notification that we've received this request. It's being approved by a TLD. If you have any concerns or issues with this, you have seven days to notify us. Otherwise, we will proceed.

We're proposing this to greatly simplify operations and to streamline things but I am mindful there might be some negative outcomes of this that we haven't been able to identify. So, I wanted you to consider this. If necessary, take it back to your teams to discuss and if there are any concerns or issues you have with this approach please bring it to our attention. Certainly, this is just an informal engagement to put it on your radar right now. We'll do some more deliberate consultation on it later down the road.

With that, I think that was the last slide. Just double-check. Yes, that is. So, please reach out to us if you have any feedback. Thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: All right. I think in the interest of time, we'll maybe collect questions and submit them to you guys, Lise and Kim. All right. Thank you guys so much for your time. Thanks for coming to see us. We'll start checking our email and filling out the surveys you send.

All right guys, we're going to … Oh, and there are some extra tiny cupcakes. Please help yourselves on the way out. Thank you guys all so much for joining us and for taking the time to update us.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just a point of order, we are going to have to restart the Zoom room so that we can have a separate recording for the session with staff. So, if you are in the Zoom Room, you will have to reload. I'm sorry.

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