
ICANN74 | Policy Forum – GNSO: NCSG Membership Meeting
Thursday, June 16, 2022 – 09:00 to 10:00 AMS

ANDREA GLANDON: Hello, and welcome to the NCSG Membership Meeting. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior.

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With that, I will hand the floor over to Bruna Santos. You may begin.

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BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you so much, Andrea. Good morning, everyone in The Hague and online. Welcome to the first NCSG hybrid or half face-to-face membership meeting in the past year two and a half years. I'm really happy to have you all here. Happy to see everybody.

Before we start, I just wanted to ask how many new members or newcomers, ICANN Fellows we have in the room. It can be NextGeners as well. If this is your first time attending either an NCSG or an ICANN meeting, please put it in the chat or raise your hand around, just so we can direct—thank you—acronyms and so on.

NCSG stands for the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group. We are part of the Generic Names Supporting Organization at ICANN, and mostly advocating for end users' right in this space for civil society and academia inside of the GNSO to those of you who are here for the first time.

We have a small agenda for this meeting. This is going to run for the next one hour. I'm going to start with some introductions and updates. Then we're going to have Graeme from the Domain Name System Abuse Institute. And then he's going to run a NetBeacon presentation. I'm going to let him talk a little bit about it soon. Then we're going to have Matthew Shears with some Board updates. I think Avri will also help with this. I'm not too

sure, but this is also supposed to be an open conversation with everyone. And then I'll leave some space for AOB.

In terms of the first agenda item, Introduction and Updates, I just wanted to let everybody know that we finalized our elections recently. I will leave the position of chair in September. So after the AGM, I'm leaving this and passing the baton to [inaudible] who's going to be our next chair. And we will be working on transition details in the upcoming months, and so on. So, yeah, that's it in terms of transitions.

We're also having leadership transitions for our constituencies. We all have run elections as well, so this is going to be a new team. And I wish everybody good luck into the transition period. It's good that we're going to have three months to do so, so that's very nice.

In terms of also our follow-up meetings, coming up to this ICANN we asked for meetings with the GAC. I will do a follow-up for us to have this conversation online in the upcoming weeks because the closed generics discussion is something ...We still want to talk with them, and they're willing to do this meeting next week. So, also something I wanted to let .

I don't know if anyone has any questions about transition or this initial period. I don't know, [inaudible], if you want to say anything as well. But I'm just going to open the floor briefly if anyone wants to intervene on that.

Okay, so I guess we can move to Agenda Item #2. And then, Graeme, I'm going to pass you the floor to talk a little bit about NetBeacon and initiatives from the Institute. Thank you.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Thank you, Brenda. Good morning, everyone. My name is Graeme Bunton. I'm from the DNS Abuse Institute. Going to talk to you a bunch this morning about an initiative that we've launched called NetBeacon, but first it's a real pleasure to be in an ICANN meeting again. It's great to see all of your faces in person. Thank you for having me.

I have been doing a bit of a road show this week talking about this thing, and so I'm a little bit worried that many of you have seen this before. But maybe not. Can I get maybe a show of hands of people who've seen me do this NetBeacon talk already this week? We've got one. Quite a few. Okay.

But also, that was slightly less than half the room, I think. So apologies for those of you who have seen this before. I'll try and move through this relatively quickly so that we can probably have some discussion and a little back and forth.

Okay, I'm going to share my screen. Great. So, NetBeacon. First, a little bit about myself and the DNS Abuse Institute. It was created last year by Public Interest Registry who run the .org TLD. They are a not-for-profit and have public interest commitments as part

of their organization to make the Internet better. And abuse seemed like a place where they could make a difference, and so they created the Institute to try and do that. We have a couple of pillars—education, collaboration, and innovation. I’m talking to you mostly this morning about one of those innovation pillars.

, abuse is complicated. It's a global problem that requires coordination, and no one was well positioned to do that. And so, here we are with the Institute 18 months later. I think of the Institute as a function to find areas of complexity and friction in dealing with issues of DNS abuse, and to see if we can find opportunities to move that into the Institute, making it easier for registries and registrars to mitigate abuse.

There is some ICANN basis for the work that we've been doing. There are a couple of key recommendations that I think are still currently with the ICANN Board, although Becky and Matt can correct me. SSR2 Recommendation 13.1, SAC115—it’s actually 115 not 15—and some recommendations from the CCTRT all talk about something like a centralized Abuse Reporting Tool, which is to say a single place to go and report abuse across the entire DNS ecosystem.

So, there are two fundamental problems as we see it in reporting abuse right now. It's very difficult to do for the end user. For anyone who wishes to report abuse across the ecosystem, you need to be able to identify a registrar which requires, essentially,

WHOIS knowledge. There are no standards for evidence. There's no consistent implementation, so it's very difficult to do in general. To try and do it across multiple registrars at once is even worse.

On the other side, what people don't often see is that the abuse reports that registries and registrars are getting are, by and large, awful. They're unstructured. They're unevidenced. They're duplicative. They're often not domains that belong to them. They're unactionable. And so registries and registrars spend huge amounts of time triaging abuse reports for very little value. They're not making the Internet any safer.

And both of those problems can be solved by setting up, essentially, an abuse intermediary. Something that makes it easy to report abuse into it. It does magic to it, standardized and enriches, and then gets it to the right place. And so that's what we've tried to do. We've built a free, easy-to-use place to report abuse that reduces the barriers to action from registries and registrars.

So right now, we're accepting abuse reports for phishing, malware, botnets, and spam. We standardize those reports into a format called XARF, which is eXtended Abuse Reporting Format, if you're particularly nerdy.

And we enrich those reports. So, we take the submitted domain names and we check them against a variety of sources for domain

intelligence. So that's going to be things like block lists. Spamhaus and SRBL are the big ones. There's abuse.ch. Just to see if anybody else has flagged that domain name as potentially abusive. And then we distribute it to where it needs to go.

I will say none of this, I think, is rocket science. I think this is pretty straightforward. It's useful for the community. It's useful for the Internet. And, ideally, it helps reduce abuse.

This, again, is sort of talking a little bit about the scope of this work. We're not trying to scan all of the domains that belong to a particular registrar or registry. We're really focused on cleaning up this manually-reported abuse problem because that really is the issue that consumes large amounts of registry or registrar time.

This is an example of what the forms look like. Pretty straightforward. UI is pretty good. I think we can still make some improvements to make this easier for people to use. You have to create an account, or auth, with ... Currently we only have google-auth integrated, but we'll integrate a bunch more.

Which is to say you can't report abuse anonymously. We need to have a verified e-mail address to use the service. And that's really because anonymous abuse complaints to registries and registers are frequently weaponized. And they may require more information, so we need to enable that back and forth.

So people create an account. They step through a form to report abuse. And it says “thank you” and it sends that onto the registrar.

A couple of other features that it's got is that you can report via API, although we have yet to enable that for anybody. We need to make sure that abuse reports going through this system are high quality. That they're better than what registries and registrars are getting currently. And so allowing people to do that at Internet scale at this moment is a little risky. So we're going to make sure everything is working before we allow people to do that.

There's an API for report consumption so that registries and registrars can integrate with this service by API instead of just e-mail. And then these forms are embeddable.

We want to see if we can improve the process of reporting abuse across the whole ecosystem. So we essentially allow registries and registrars, and potentially others, to take these easy-to-use forms and embed them on their own website. That way they get the value add of the standardization and the enrichment and the easy-to-use forms without having to do any of that development work themselves.

Some notes on what this service is not. It's not an abuse management tool. We don't expect registries and registrars to go in there and manage abuse cases. It's really about getting those abuse reports to where they should be. We have some features that allow registries and registrars to label reporters and make

sure abuse gets to where it needs to go. But it's kind of a set-it-and-forget-it for the most part.

I think, very important for this audience, is that it doesn't make determinations. We're categorizing abuse the best we can. We're adding information to it. But we cannot make a registry or a registrar do anything, nor are we trying to. We're trying to make it easy for them to make a choice. We're trying to move some of that investigatory burden from the frontline compliance person and into the service itself. But at the end of the day, it will always be the registry or registrar's choice on what to do.

We're also not permanently storing these abuse reports. I think it generates a risk for the Institute as well as for registrars if we have some giant library of everybody's dirty laundry. And so we'll keep abuse reports for something like 30 days. We'll keep aggregated statistics about stuff, but we're not going to keep the underlying details for longer than that.

And this also not about registrant information. I'm very deliberately staying away from that space because it's privacy. It generates all sorts of complexity that we don't need to deal with. Registries and registrars have that information already. We don't need to provide it to them for them to mitigate abuse. And by and large, mitigation does not require it. So this is just about getting abuse reports to where they need to go. It's not about trying to build some sort of SSAD system.

We've got a long list of to-dos, though, so that we can keep making this bigger and better. We want to be able to integrate hosting and content distribution networks, e-mail service providers, and ccTLD so that you can report abuse across the infrastructure ecosystem. That enables us to do things like, for compromised websites where someone's running, say, a WordPress and it's been hacked. So, it's engaged in phishing, but it's not a malicious project from the registrant.

We can route that abuse to the hosting company first. You know, provide them with useful information. And then at some point, in some arbitrary amount of time, we might want to escalate that to the registrar. And now, there is a clean line that the registrar can see where they'll be like, "Okay, this abuse has been reported to the host, the proper place for this type of abuse, and it hasn't been cleaned up." Now they can choose to act if they want to.

But currently right now, there's a lot of "Have you reported this to the host?" and they get fuzzy answers back or no answers back. And this helps clean that process up.

And then, ultimately, we want to get to things like reporter reputation. People who report abuse want to be able to demonstrate that they are good at it for their own commercial reasons. But then also, registries and registrars wants to know that the people they're getting abuse reports from have credibility and are trusted by other people within their

community. So we're looking at how to do that. Although, I will say there's no real code written for the reputation function yet. We're really still figuring out the requirements.

FAQ. These are questions that have come up as I've been doing this presentation recently.

“Do registrars have to sign up?” No. GTLD registrars are obligated to publish an abuse contact. And by default, we are sending to those. So we can send reports across the entire gTLD registrar industry.

We e-mailed every single one of them last week just to see how they respond to such things. And we've got probably about eight or so that automatically redirect to a form rather than respond to the e-mail directly, and so we need to make sure we have deliverability with those. But by and large, we're able to report abuse to registrars. Again, that doesn't guarantee they will do anything. But we can send to them.

“Is it easy for end users?” Is it easy to report abuse? It's not bad. I think it's pretty good. I definitely think there's room for improvement. That could mean things like a Pro mode versus a regular mode for more sophisticated users. It could also be the interface, rather than asking people to categorize what harm they think it is—because, generally, people aren't great at that—to step through a series of questions that sort of gets us to what type of harm it is.

“Will we publish data?” I talked a little bit about aggregated statistics, and so I think we need to demonstrate that the service is working in some fashion. But this service, I think, is successful if we have broad adoption. And if I’m to use the data that’s flowing through it in a way that’s a cudgel or a disincentive to adoption, I think that would be a mistake. So, we’ll be careful with that data. And that’s sort of a philosophy in general for us, that adoption is more important than some sort of enforcement mechanism.

People ask about closure and notifications. Again, this is always up to registries and registrars to respond to abuse complaints that they get from NetBeacon directly. The reports come as though they were from the person who submitted it to us, and so they can respond to them however they see fit. I think there’s room for work in the community around this. Expectation management, I think, goes a long way. So just accepting abuse reports into a black hole generates needless controversy, I think.

Why us? I get this is a little bit, too. When you look at abuse, it very quickly crosses ICANN’s remit. You get into places like hosting and CDNs and e-mail—organizations that have no contractual or otherwise relationship with ICANN. So if you want to do this in a robust fashion, if you want to really try and clean up abuse, you need to work in a context that’s bigger than just this space.

And so we have, obviously, coming from PIR. And many of you might know me. I spent 10 years as a registrar. We have lots of

familiarity with the space, but now we also have the freedom to work a little bit broader. And so I think we're going to be able to make a bigger difference in abuse by not having the constraints of being just ICANN.

There's also a more complicated one, which is if it were just within ICANN's remit things, it would sort of force registries and registrars to bifurcate their abuse reporting. And that generates confusion for everybody.

Supporting this work has been PIR as well as CleanDNS. CleanDNS is an abuse management service that donated some of the technology as well as the development time. So we're deeply appreciative of their contributions.

And this is my brief ask. If you're interested in trying to report abuse, it's live. You can go do it. And in fact, domain names are flowing through the service already. We've seen a couple of reports come through that we enriched and we sent to the registrar. And the registrar investigated and they took those domains offline. And so that's kind of fun, that it seems to be working.

But please feel free to go check it out. You can reach out to me for more information. And if you're interested in disrupting abuse or have some connections there, I'm happy to talk with them, too.

I'd love to take some questions and have a bit of engagement if there's a time and interest. I'll stop presenting. Thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you so much, Graeme. We have one question in the chat. Andrea, I don't know if you want to read it. But we also have Ken with his hand raised in the room. So we can go with the chat and then the room. Right?

ANDREA GLANDON: Okay, we do have a question in the chat from Bukola Oronti. Question, "Keeping information for 30 days. Is that not a bit short? What if registrars do not visit to know about an abuse within the time frame? Does that mean after 30 days, the slate is now clean for the reported abuse?"

GRAEME BUNTON: Right. So, the abuse report should be sent to the registrar basically within seconds of submitting through the service. So they're really not expected and don't have to go into the service to see the abuse. They're getting it to where it needs to be. And so I don't think that's going to be an issue.

In terms of measuring abuse in general, the DNS Abuse Institute has an entire separate program to measure DNS abuse. I'll talk about it probably in more detail at the next ICANN meeting, but

we're looking at measuring malware and phishing across the ecosystem at the TLD and registrar level and producing public reports around that. And that project is academically robust. And measuring stats out of this particular subset of abuse I don't think is going to be particularly effective.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you, Graeme. We have Ken, Kathy, and then Farzi with their hands up. So I'm going to hand it to Ken now.

KEN HERMAN: Thank you, Bruna. Thanks, Graeme, for an interesting presentation. It's always good to see it even more than once. And you get more. I have a couple of questions. First is, how long has the service been running? And what has been your acceptance rate? How are the statistics looking?

I also have a question about reporting. You did say on the slide that reporting is planned, but you haven't proceeded with that yet. I would advocate for aggregate reporting by abuser, as it were, where the statistics are being sent. I think it would be useful to know which registrars are getting the most the abuse reports.

And my final question has to do with marketing. Besides the presentations here at the ICANN, what are your plans for communicating the service to the entire rest of the world? Thanks so much.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Thank you. Right. Reporting. Again, I think if you really want to understand abuse, we need to come at it from a different angle rather than the subset. But we will do some high-level aggregated reporting. Unsure exactly what that looks like right now.

How many? It's early days for this service and we haven't done a lot of outreach to a wider reporting audience, and so there's not been a ton of abuse reports that have gone through it. I don't have currently any way of knowing ...

So I can certainly tell you how many abuse reports have gone through it. I can't tell you what the outcome of those are because that requires a registry or a registrar to tell us whether if they determined that the abuse was real and if suspension was an appropriate mitigation method. And by and large, registries and registrars are focused on throughput, not measuring it. So I don't have that data.

We're looking at measuring it. And that technology, I think, is fuzzy at best. But I'm very aware that success for an abuse report is not necessarily suspension. And so measuring it that way would be a mistake.

On the marketing front, it's an interesting problem. We'll do stuff to drive general traffic to it. Buy things like Adwords so that when people Google "report phishing," they end up here. But we'll also

look at things like integrations with browsers and e-mail clients to see if we can get automatic abuse reporting flowing through it. But that project of really driving traffic is going to be, I think, years long.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you. Kathy.

KATHY KLEIMAN: Great. Thanks so much. Can you hear me?

BRUNA SANTOS: Yes, we can.

KATHY KLEIMAN: Okay. Good morning, Graeme. Good morning, everyone. And it's really a good early morning here on the East Coast. So I'm participating remotely.

Graeme, I wanted to ask you a little bit. You said it in passing. I'd like to dive a little deeper. Congratulations on this initiative. Let's talk a little bit about weaponizing abuse complaints, whether it's based on your experience of PIR or, of course, your keep experience at Tucows. What is it you're concerned about here? I have a sense, but it would be worth putting it in words.

And also, interested in diving in a little bit more about looking at the requester and how to know if the requester is making a legitimate complaint, say, within the scope of something a registrar can act on. And again, kind of thinking about what's in the remit and what's not and ranking these things.

So very big questions about weaponizing complaints, and then looking at requesters. And I really liked this idea of balancing both requesters and the request because there are things that are asked for that registries and registrars can't do. Thanks much.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Thanks, Kathy. Nice to see your face. Re-weaponizing reports. So, it's not a frequent occurrence, but it does happen where people are using abuse reporting functions to try and get a website taken offline. Something like that.

There's a certain amount that we can do on this from the tools perspective. When we're doing this enrichment function where we're checking a domain name across a whole bunch of services, if it's not showing up on any of those, that's an indication that it might not actually be abusive. Registries and registrars will still need to conduct their own investigation.

We've also provided them with tooling inside the service to reflect whether the abuse report was good or bad. Essentially, was it in good faith or not? And so my hope is—it hasn't actually been used

in this way yet—that where they’re getting abuse reports they think are abusive themselves, like exploiting the service, they have the opportunity to let us know either via e-mail or via API within the service so that we can begin to see who is trying to exploit NetBeacon.

And we can suspend their service. We can force them into a caching where we have to manually examine the reports as they're going through. Or just remove their access to the whole thing.

KATHY KLEIMAN: Thank you.

GRAEME BUNTON: And then on the requesters bit, all of that just requires more thinking. We haven't really figured all of that out yet, so it's to come.

KATHY KLEIMAN: Thank you very much.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thanks again, Graeme. Andrea, we have one question from the chat. Right?

ANDREA GLANDON: Yes, we do. We have a question from Tomslin Samme-Nlar. “Will NetBeacon accept non-technical content abuse, etc., reports soon? And what do you envision [R/RA] to do with such reports?”

GRAEME BUNTON: Many registries and registrars accept reports, or reports, for things beyond DNS abuse. Most do, I think would be the fair answer. I don't have the link handy. I'll see if I can dig it up. But one of the things we did was as we were building this and developing the requirements is that we went and looked at the top 70 or so registrars and 50 or so registries to find their abuse reporting pages and look at what they accepted abuse reports for. Because ultimately, we need overlap with that so that if we really want them to replace their clunky reporting functions with these nice forms to make it easier, they can't bifurcate those abuse reporting processes. They need to be able to say, “Report abuse through this.”

And so that requires other harms to be able to go through it. That, I think in a sense, is just going to be a pass through. We're not concerned ... I mean, I'm concerned about online harms in general, but it's not the point of this service. And again, it's always up to the registry or registrar to make a choice.

How long will it be until we have some of those other harms? I think fraud and scam are sort of what seem to be the most common ones that I was seeing from register abuse pages. I

would say it's probably going to be in the next six months. We've got a bunch of things to clean up and bugs to fix. And de-duplicating reports is actually the most important thing right now. So, soon. Within a year, for sure. TBD exactly what that looks like. Thanks.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you so much, Graeme, again. We have a few other questions, but we ran out of time for this agenda item. But I guess I'll invite you guys again to come to one of our meetings so we can continue this engagement because there are some questions about privacy policies. How much time should registrars talk to take action upon those reports and so on. But I think these are some of the things we can discuss together in the future. So, thank you for attending this meeting and doing this conversation with us.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Thank you, Bruna. Thank you, everyone, for having me. I really appreciate the opportunity. And, boy, I really welcome feedback. And so if people have concerns or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Awesome. Thank you so much. We're going to move now to our third agenda item, which is that we're going to have our Board

members. Matthew is going to lead a discussion on Board updates. So I'm not going to take any more time and give you the floor, Matthew. Thank you so much.

MATTHEW SHEARS:

Thank you very much, Bruna. And I just want to say that we also have Avri and Becky here from the Board as well to answer questions. And hopefully, we can have a bit of a discussion rather than ... We don't have a presentation or anything in particular to share with you.

Thanks, Graeme. That was really interesting. Really appreciate that.

So first of all, let me just say I think, on behalf of all of us, how delighted we are to be here. It's been too long, and while we're still wearing these masks, it's just very nice to see everyone. And I know it's been difficult for some who haven't been able to make it, but let's hope this is the beginning of a way of meeting that's going to evolve back to the way we were before two plus years ago.

I guess in terms of just giving you a sense as to where we are on the Board, many of the issues that you've seen that have been discussed in this policy forum are the issues that are top of mind with the Board, obviously. And we can go through some of those.

Just in terms of some of the bigger issues that we've been concerned, and the community's been concerned about, one of those, obviously, is the issue of workload. How do we move things through the process? How do we address the “backlog,” etc?

And one of those issues that we've been looking at very carefully is how do we move things through. Now one of the big questions as been, how do we get things off our plate. How do we move things along? And what's the process for doing that?

And one of the things that, obviously, we've been discussing and has just concluded is this prioritization process. And we're quite pleased with the way that has worked. Obviously, it's a way of moving things into implementation stage that frees up the mechanism of bringing things to the Board and to moving things along, which is a key thing.

So that's one thing that's been top of mind over the past couple of months. Well, much longer, in fact. So we're seeing progress on that front, which is very important.

A couple of other issues ... And we can go into more depth. Then I can ask Avri and Becky. But obviously, we have SubPro next round, a whole range of work that's being done on that. It's a big resourcing task. There are numerous different issues that are being addressed through the work that we're doing in conjunction with Org, of course. And Avri may want to come in on that when I'm done here.

The other one is SSAD. Again, what's the best way forward? How do we find a tool that can progress that particular discussion? And I think we've heard a lot about SSAD Light. We've had numerous presentations, both from Org and from people in the community as well on that particular issue. What are the models that we can make progress on that front?

Other ones. Multistakeholder model evolution. Another key issue. We had presentations last week in the Prep Week from Org in terms of the work that they're doing to move that forward and to look at ways of measuring how the various initiatives are going to progress the multistakeholder model, and also how we can take a strategic look at the multistakeholder model going forward and see how that ties into all of these other initiatives such as the Holistic Review, the continuous improvement programs from the ATRT3, for example.

A lot of these issues are really tied together. From a Board perspective, what we're looking at, really, is how do we improve processes and how do we improve engagement across the organization and the ecosystem. And so, when you think about privatization, you think about multistakeholder model, you think about the big picture. You see that many of these things tie in and are important components of the work that we're doing.

I think also that, looking forward, we really need to get back on track in terms of the policy work. How do we really progress the

evolution of the organization of the community and the engagements that we have in the way we have them working? We've had a really good session this week on the strategic planning and prioritization. And I think there's some very interesting comments in that session about how all parts of the community need to step up and the Board needs to step up.

And somebody suggested that we need to just do it. That's a complicated way of looking at it, but certainly I think that's a goal. How do we streamline processes? How do we tweak things so that we're more efficient and we get more things done and completed?

So those are some of the bigger issues that were we're facing. And maybe I can ask Avri or Becky to jump in and see what I've missed. And then let's just open it for discussion. Becky or Avri?

AVRI DORIA:

Yeah, Matt. Thanks. The only thing that I would add is trying to deal with the reviews and trying to get the Holistic Review going. Having an interesting experiment there in terms of getting one of the committee, the OEC committee to work in cooperation with the shepherds from ATRT3 to figure out the terms of reference for it, which was actually a very good experience where we managed to put together a working group that in, like, four meetings managed to get through all our issues. So that would be the only thing I would add to the list that you gave.

BECKY BURR:

Yeah. I don't have anything really to add. I think a critical feature is making sure we've understood all of the things across the entire environment that make it hard for us to get stuff done. And taking a hard look at that and adjusting those what those roadblocks, whatever they are.

And then on the SSAD Light which Göran has now renamed the WHOIS Disclosure System. I'm sorry, Avri. [inaudible]. I'm very anxious to make sure that the community is aligned and has a clear understanding of what that system would produce so everybody's on the same page with the same expectations about what comes out at the end of it, should we decide to go forward with it. So that's a discussion that I've been focused on this week.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you so much, Becky, Avri, and Matthew. I'm going to open the queue. I don't know if we have any questions or comments from our members, or any additional points you would like to make.

[It's] open both on the Zoom room and here. If you just want to say anything, raise your hand and I'll hand the floor over.

MATTHEW SHEARS: Bruna. I don't see any questions, but maybe it would be useful for us also to get a feel for what is top of mind for you. That may be a way of starting a conversation. Thanks.

BRUNA SANTOS: I see Farzi's hand up, but I can start to enter this question. I believe that a lot of our conversations recently about how this community has changed—and this is something that we have been talking about these past days as well—was mostly to hear from you guys on policy implementation/recommendations and all the last moments of a PDP after the GNSO processes, and so on.

And we just wanted to hear from you guys. How have you been thinking or considering this community has evolved in the past months or in the past two and a half years? And some of the talks we had also on the note of prioritization and how are you envisioning this in the near future for the entire community?

I guess one other comment we had was on representation. I know this is something that goes beyond the Board, but there is a concern for this community that we're having a smaller space or less voice within the processes, and so on. So this was also something we have been trying to talk to the broader community with. So this is what started this conversation.

MATTHEW SHEARS: Farzi, did you want to jump in?

FARZANEH BADII: I just have a few points to make. Should I make them now? Do you have an answer to the points Bruna raised?

MATTHEW SHEARS: Yes. So, there's been quite a bit of discussion about what new tools or new processes are being put in place to achieve some of the goals and moving the work forward and resolving some of the backlog. I think, from the perspective of the Board, it's not so much tools that reshape or redefine what some of those accepted processes are, but rather more ways of moving either the dialogue or moving the workload.

So, the Prioritization [inaudible] is a case in point. Right? So I think that looking at it, you know, a very compressed timeline, representatives from the community who are supposed to be there in their individual capacity, a significant number of Board-approved by the recommendations to address. But the I think the outcome of it ...

And Avri and I were observers from the Board on that process. I think the outcome of it shows that we do perhaps need to be a little bit innovative. And I'm not even sure that's the right word. But look at alternative ways of moving work forward. And in that sense, being able to have the community prioritize the

implementation of those pieces of work was seen as a good tool for doing so.

It's important because, in many ways, when you're dealing with issues of resource limitation, etc., it's important for the community to make the choices in terms of which pieces should be prioritized. The same kind of approach, really, is true of other things. I suspect there will be questions about the question of closed generics, for example.

The way we look at that is really that we need to address some of these particular issues that have been challenges in finding common purpose on these issues in the past. So, what approaches can we take that would bring people to the table, have them discuss the issues, and hopefully find a basis for compromise or a basis for working together and taking the issue forward.

So like I said, I think, certainly from my perspective, these are important ways of addressing some of the challenges in the community. And I don't think it changes, necessarily, the bigger picture in terms of the balance or the PDP process or things like that. But it allows for things to be, hopefully, resolved or prioritize and then taken forward.

I don't know if Becky or Avri wants to add.

AVRI DORIA:

If I can. I think the only other thing that we've been looking at ... Perhaps not the only. One is, how can we, in some cases, do certain things in parallel? The negative side of that is that to do things in parallel uses more bandwidth. It uses more resource. So, how do we find the balance in that in terms of, for example, as we did with the Prioritization and getting the pre-work done for the Holistic Review, even though it hadn't been prioritized yet. So, to what extent could we do the two efforts together?

And looking for more opportunities to be able to do that to move things ahead without having to use an incredible amount of extra people's time, etc. So that's one of the issues that gets looked at a lot.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you so much, Avri and Matthew. I'm going to hand the floor to Farzi to make her comments. Go ahead, Farzi.

FARZANEH BADI:

Thank you. So we discussed, we have this concern about the Governmental Advisory Committee influencing more and more the policy outcomes and processes. And we related this concern to you.

And yesterday I found out that there is this group called ... This, kind of like, interaction group, like a GAC-Board interaction group that ... I don't know if this has been convened. This kind of

formalizes another channel, and you have so many channels to work with GAC. You have the scorecards. You have other ... This just also change the nature of GAC which is an advisory nature.

So I'm concerned about this new group. I don't know how transparent it's going to be. So that's one concern.

And the other issue that I see in these meetings, and I have raised it—and this is a personal thing, it's not an NCSG position—is that WHOIS, in terms of talking about ... First of all, we keep calling it WHOIS. And I was surprised that we called it WHOIS disclosure this time as well. It's actually RDAP. Isn't it? So we are kind of doing that transition, which is a small point of naming the initiative. But I think that we need to move on from calling it WHOIS.

But in the accuracy discussions, what worries me is that we use RDAP or the registration of a domain name as an identification tool for the domain name registrants. And if we do that, it is very worrisome for marginalized groups and groups that are in danger in some countries that when they want to have an online presence, they want to remain anonymous. And if we go that route, then that would be dangerous for them. So that's another comment.

And one small issue that I noticed this meeting is that ICANN has a really important mission, but it's pretty narrow in scope and on the Internet. So, I mean, we are not here to rescue the whole

Internet, and we can't. But considering this narrow mission, I think we are having way too many processes and we are turning this into a multistakeholder theater, to be honest. Thank you.

BECKY BURR:

Thanks, Farzi. So the Board-GAC Interaction Group (BGIG), which I think actually existed before I got on the Board. So it's more than six years old. And it is entirely procedural. We don't have substantive discussions. We talk about how the Board and the GAC interact. And it has led to things like clarifying that if advice comes to us in a written form, it's called out as advice. It's not everything that's in the GAC Communiqué.

So it's had the effect of clarifying expectations on all sides about what constitutes advice and what isn't advice. We essentially talk about ways of communicating and all of the substantive conversations are sort of at the plenary level. So it is simply a working on how to communicate.

If the NCSG thinks that we need better ways to communicate with NCSG, I'm sure we're also happy to do that any time that you want to talk about doing it. My sense is that this began at a time where there were significant tensions between the Board and the GAC, probably coming out of the last round. And there was a view that better communication mechanisms were needed. So it is really mechanical.

And I certainly would be happy to talk with any group about how to improve that. Just my personal observation is that I think, across this community, we need to have more conversations to begin with before we launch into processes because when we send letters back and forth over the transom, we often miss the point of our communications. We went round and round and round with the GNSO Council on a couple of the PDP Phase 1 recommendations that probably could have been resolved with a conversation a lot more quickly. So I think that is the nature of that group.

What was your second point?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: WHOIS.

BECKY BURR: WHOIS? Well, I meant ... No, there was a different one that I really wanted to talk to. So tell me what your second point was.

FARZANEH BADI: So, there was the multistakeholder theater and also WHOIS an identification of oh okay so on that WHOIS identification [inaudible].

BECKY BURR:

Oh, okay. So, on the WHOIS identification, I think you're absolutely right. We shouldn't be referring to it as any ... The accuracy shouldn't be related to identification. The point is, can you get in touch with the registrant when you need to do something? And so that is why, in the Accuracy Scoping Team, I've been pressing so hard about the need for data. We need to know the extent to which there are inaccuracies in the registration data—[not] what kind of inaccuracies that are—and whether they prevent the contactability and the incidence of that inaccuracy before we design solutions.

We just have to know what the problem is, and I don't think we have that data now. So I see that as a real problem. But I completely agree with you. We have to have a conversation about whether, you know ... What matters is inaccuracies that prevent contactability and communication between the parties. Identification is not necessarily the point. So, I totally, absolutely agree with you on that.

And I don't know what the next steps are with respect to the Accuracy Scoping. We may get some assistance in terms of being able to proactively conduct a GDPR-compliant assessment of the data set. But we need access to a representative sample of data to get anything useful—so a representative sample of data across the gTLD space and across the registrar space to make that work. And right now, we don't have access to that data.

And then finally, on multistakeholder theater. I think all of us agree that we need to find solutions rather than just throwing new processes on, adding more and more processes. I think there was a time that we were doing way too much on the fly. We may have overcorrected. And I'm saying "may." We've overcorrected. We need to get back to more efficient and effective interactions and problem resolutions, which is another reason why I have been advocating more informal communication and less process up front.

And I think just one observation. I don't know if you guys feel this, but it's been my experience, at least in some spaces, that interactions between the Board and different SOs have actually gotten better as they've become less formal over the course of the pandemic. And I'm not quite sure why that is, but I do think...

We have more conversations than when used to. We're not coming to you with a script. We didn't know what your questions were, for example. And a couple of years ago, we would have come in here knowing your questions and having scripted answers. So I think in that way, there's something that's happened over the past two years that we need to grab and preserve.

Avri, yeah?

AVRI DORIA: I just wanted to add one thing on the first topic about the Board-GAC Interaction that actually came out of a recommendation of ATRT2 that basically said the Board and the GAC had to figure out how to talk to each other. Because at that point, there was too much friction. So that's where that one came from.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thanks, Avri and Becky and Matt. We can go five minutes over time. This has a hard stop now, but I see that Matt wants to say something. And Milton also has his hand up. Then let's go to ... Okay, let's go to Milton. Then the Board team can close up [inaudible]. Thank you so much.

MILTON MUELLER: Wow, it looks like we've run out of time and I'm going to raise a huge issue. We have gone through representational adjustments. Sometime around 2007, we created the new two-house GNSO. That was a major reform for the better. We created a balance between the contracted parties and the non-contracted. And within non-contracted, we had a balance between the commercial and non-commercial groups.

Since then, of course, the Commercial Stakeholder Group was not happy with that rebalancing, and we have noticed in numerous contexts that we are still treated as if ... Well, let's say the Commercial Stakeholder Group is still treated as if it is three

constituencies instead of a single stakeholder group. So in representations on working groups, EPDPs, and so on, all three of their constituencies are given essentially the same level of representation as the entire NCSG.

And we're really tired of that. It's sort of like ... It's just not way the structure is set up. And is there any way that the Board can signal to David Olive and the people who run the GNSO and the GNSO Council chair—because we've made this point and it doesn't seem to sink in—that the Commercial Stakeholder Group is a stakeholder group and it has the exact same status and representational level and time slots in meetings as the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group?

AVRI DORIA:

I haven't figured out a way to do that yet, to be totally honest. I mean, I've seen it. Was concerned about it before I got on the Board. Largely, it isn't GNSO issue because these are GNSO bottom-up. They're going to have an event. So, I don't know.

At some point, the GNSO would come up for a periodic review. The OEC would have to deal with that. That would be an opening for it. But other than that, I have not seen a way where the Board would have the entry to basically interfere with that particular GNSO practice. And until such time as GNSO or the Commercial Stakeholder Group is going to through a review or a recharter or a charter review, there really ...

That is one of the limitations, kind of, in the bottom-up. I'm not sure if there are other ways that NCSG can approach it. Have you talked to David? I mean, have you guys been persistent? I really don't know.

It's the same issue we've got in another place. One place where it did kind of come up is the review that's being done of NomCom and the NomCom group. And the group there had within its thing a reapportionment, and the GNSO was asked, "We've got a reapportionment." And everyone said, "Nope. We don't have a solution for that." So it remains a pending issue.

That particular one is one that is sort of on my plate to figure out what can be done about it with everybody refusing to really do anything about it. And I don't know. But it is a problem. It is on the plate. And in that particular one, in terms of the NomCom, because there was a recommendation of a reapportionment, I still have a dangling obligation to figure out what can be done—and still looking.

I don't know if that helps, but that's about all the answer I've got.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you so much, Avri. I just so everybody knows, I asked David for a meeting on this topic, specific about representation. We're still figuring out the slot and everything else, but this is something we will take to him as well. And I have been trying to do so in my

one-on-one interactions with Göran as well. So, this is something that they're fully aware.

I don't know if you guys want to say anything else before we close this meeting, but I'll give you the chance.

MATTHEW SHEARS:

Thanks, Bruna. Actually, back to Becky's point about early engagement. I mean, it's not just in terms of policy and other things, but it's just in terms of talking more and being more available and just reaching out to each other. I think the lesson that we're learning is that the more that we talk, the less friction there is. So just to pick up on Becky's point.

It was a pleasure being here. Hopefully, we'll continue to meet. And maybe we'll be able to take these masks off someday, but this is a good start. Looking forward to Kuala Lumpur. Thanks a lot.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thanks to you, to the three of you. And thanks to the Board as well for the continuous interaction. I guess we're going to close this meeting now. I just wanted to remind everybody that we're going to have a giant meeting for NCUC and NPOC following after the coffee break, so please come back to this room and we're going to continue some of these interactions. So, thank you all for being here. We can call this meeting off. Thank you, Andrea.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you. You can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]