
ICANN75 | AGM – Being an ICANN Accredited Registrar - Global and APAC Perspectives
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MELODY AU:

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For the benefit of other participants, please state your name for the record and speak at a reasonable pace. During this session, questions or comments may also be submitted in chat. These questions or comments will only be read aloud if put in the proper form, as noted in the chat. I will read them aloud during the time set by the facilitator of this session.

With that, I will hand the floor over to our facilitator for this session, Valerie, to start us off. Valerie, please.

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VALERIE HENG: Thank you all for taking time to join us. My name is Valerie from ICANN Organization and your facilitator. For those in the room, don't be shy. Come and join us at the table.

This session is an opportunity to learn a network with our regional and global registrars. Now can I have a show of hands who are ICANN registrars? Okay, thank you.

So on screen now is the agenda. Next slide, please. We'll leave time for questions and discussions towards the end. And now let's welcome Jia-Rong Low, the managing director of ICANN's Asia Pacific office to give the opening remarks. Jia-Rong, please.

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you, and good afternoon, everybody. If you missed the Welcome Ceremony this morning, again a big welcome to Malaysia. Welcome to the region. I'm Jia-Rong. I'm the Managing Director for the ICANN Asia Pacific office. I'm very happy to be with all of you today.

For the Asia Pacific office, amongst other amongst other things, one of the rules we have is to facilitate conversation amongst the community. And a key area is the network amongst the Asia Pacific community, especially within the industry. So one key area we've launched this year in March was the Asia Pacific DNS

Forum, or APAC DNS Forum. We launched it together with MYNIC. And I'm aware, today, MYNIC also helped to bring some of their own resellers who might have the capability of becoming ICANN accredited registrars to join us today.

So, I'm really looking forward to the conversation today and to be able to keep in touch with all of you. So if there's more requests, you hope to receive more training or learn more about this topic, feel free to reach out to me or my team. We'll be in touch, and we can always organize more in-depth conversations or training for you. So, I really wanted to make this point so you know who to look out for and who to be in touch with.

Now, tied to what I mentioned about APAC DNS Forum, again it's about facilitating conversation. So while we're all here in the region, we're very happy to have our global speakers from all over the world.

Sorry, I'm a little out of breath because I ran over from the other side of the hall. So very proud to have speakers today to share with you challenges, trends, and opportunities in the industry. So very excited to be able to hear from them, and I hope that we can all keep in touch as a network and help to explore how to collaborate and how to work with one another going forward.

So with that, again, a big welcome and looking forward to the discussion. Thank you.

VALERIE HENG:

Thank you, Jia-Rong. [inaudible] the domain name [industry] is constantly changing. We are very pleased today to have three well-known registrars to share with us their thoughts on the development. Let me introduce them.

On my right is Eric Rokobauer, Corporate Compliance Manager at Newfold Digital. He has been doing dedicated ICANN registrar work for the past five years. Before that he was in the domain name industry for almost a decade. He began in support operations as a reseller for small to medium sized businesses.

Next, TK Tans, CEO of Quinetics Group. TK is widely known as the Internet industry pioneer in Malaysia. He founded several Internet businesses, including the domain name registrar service, WebNIC. He's also the president of Internet Alliance Malaysia, an association of leading digital service providers.

Third, Volker Greimann, General Counsel and Policy Manager at Key-Systems, part of CentralNIC Group. He manages the registrar divisions' Legal and Compliance Team. He's particularly interested in contributing to the ICANN multistakeholder model by participating in policy developments that are of interest to the registrars. So let's begin.

So Eric, being an ICANN registrar, what is a significant trend that you observed recently that's worth noting for our audience? And what advice would you give them?

ERIC ROKOBAUER:

Thank you, Valerie. Again, this is Eric Rokobauer. Hi, everyone. I appreciate the opportunity to be here, and excited to see those interested to be here.

So as far as significant trends, through and post COVID, the pandemic, it gave the entire industry a boost, specifically due to more people wanting to be connected online. There was an opportunity to get connected with others, whether that be to share information or to get shops online. Registrars and resellers saw new domain registrations come as a result of that.

And so now this trend, we're moving past that pandemic and registrars and resellers have an opportunity to try and find ways to make the experience valuable to keep those customers. Right? We want to be able to have them renew the domain names that they registered. And so finding ways to make that valuable is something to make it worthwhile.

And then as far as advice, I think for resellers and prospective registrars, we would say is to solidify your brand's identity. Regardless of market conditions, customers want to be loyal. Customers want to believe in a brand. If they're going to be giving

money to buy these domains and get the services, they want to believe in what they're paying for. And so that's one thing I would recommend, for resellers to figure out what that is and stand by that. Thanks.

VALERIE HENG: Very good advice. Volker, what is your view on the trend?

VOLKER GRIEMANN: Yes, thank you. Volker Greimann from CentralNIC. Pleased to be here and pleasure to address you all.

From my legal perspective, I see mainly two trends that are maybe also connected to each other. The first trend is increasing regulation from both governmental sides but also from registry sides that impose new obligations or codify existing obligations for registrars. Registrars in Europe, at least, are now also subject of legal regulation and are specifically mentioned in new European directions and laws. So we are pretty much in focus for lawmakers.

And the second trend that may follow from that is that we are seeing a lot of consolidation in the market with registrars joining forces, merging, being bought up by other registrars which may be a result from smaller registrars not wanting to deal with all of

that regulation anymore and just wanting the benefit of the experience that larger registrars already have in that field.

VALERIE HENG: Okay. TK, then what are your thoughts on the market trend and challenges during COVID and beyond?

TK TAN: Yeah. Before I start talking about that, I am sitting in between two giants. Yeah? Since you talk about merger and acquisition, these two big giants have been acquiring many smaller players. I'm glad that WebNIC is still independent. We have about close to [a million] names, and we're one of the largest registrars in Southeast Asia.

Of course, we see that pandemics do help to grow the adoption of the Internet. Some of the industry players told me that in 2020, we saw three times search in adoption, especially in e-commerce. But the trend has actually come down here in 2021 and has slowed down in 2022.

We don't see a super-duper jump in terms of domain name registration. We don't have ... Our Shopify equivalent doesn't have that much adoption, partly because many people [stayed out of] shops in marketplaces and social media. But nonetheless,

the growth of the domain name website/e-commerce store is still there. Yeah.

VALERIE HENG: So Eric, what is a major challenge registrars face and how do you overcome it?

ERIC ROKOBAUER: This is Eric Rokobauer again for Newfold Digital. A challenge I would say, a constant one, is education of the different requirements involved with selling and servicing domain names, especially for all parties involved. We're talking about requirements for the registrars and those resellers, and even the end users—the customers, the registrants.

And so with all of those requirements, it's finding ways to make it digestible, put it in an easy manner for folks to understand those. And I think how to overcome that ... I mean, that's a big reason why we're all here. Right? I think what ICANN and the ICANN community, and specifically the Registrar Stakeholder Group, or the RrSG—which you'll hear about later, that Newfold is proud to be a member of—that group comes together to build resources to find ways to go through those requirements together.

A lot of those contracts, we all have to follow those and so there's an opportunity there to work and learn. And if you have

questions, you can use that group to find those answers and feel comfortable to ask those questions.

VALERIE HENG: And Volker, can you share with us the challenges from the regulation side?

VOLKER GRIEMANN: Yes. The main challenges that we see is that we have to basically make sure that our systems and the way that we provide our services remains compliant with our legal obligations, both contractual towards ICANN and the registries but also within the countries that we operate. And the more countries we operate in—and that just does not only mean the countries where we have offices but also the countries where we have customers—the more complicated it gets.

For example, it means that if we are doing business in certain countries—let's say India—then we have to follow their tax regimes and have to make sure that we comply with that and deduct the right taxes and pay those taxes to the correct authorities. And this is getting more complicated as we speak, basically, as more countries are realizing that their citizens, their populations are not only buying services from companies in their own countries, but internationally.

And therefore, they regulate for that. And I think that's a natural progression and a natural development, but we have to take care of that so we remain compliant and do not face the dangers of being fined for violations.

VALERIE HENG: And Volker, what can we do to influence those outcome?

VOLKER GRIEMANN: Some of those outcomes cannot be influenced because we are not represented very well in certain countries. But we can influence our ability to comply with them. One is information sharing amongst registrars, with the RrSG being a prime mover for discussions. We can inform ourselves of challenges that we face and address them as a team instead of fighting alone.

And the other is that we act proactively in the jurisdictions where we are present, engage with prominent players from other industries, be president in trade associations, engage with lawmakers, and share our views so we can ensure that while not everything might be going as we wish it, the most harmful effects are avoided.

VALERIE HENG: Okay. TK, where do you see the market growth prospects or potential in the coming years?

TK TAN: In Asia Pac there are still [inaudible] opportunities where countries are underserved. There is still a lot of young populations coming up with ideas and startups. So this area where registrars' opportunities are there.

And of course, they're also outside the [inaudible]. People talk about new technologies like Web3 and so on. So those are confusing factors that come along which could be disturbing as well.

But I want to stress the difference between reseller and registrar. Since there are many aspiring resellers who want to become registrars to be aware, apart from the challenges of the businesses. This group here does help in terms of compliance as well as dealing with all of the challenges that a registrar will face. So this is actually a good support group that whoever joins the registrar should also take note of this group here.

VALERIE HENG: Eric, your final thoughts on opportunities?

ERIC ROKOBAUER: Oh, so a lot of comments that TK has made since speaking, I'll kind of ride on that a little bit. I think the world is working hard to get more and more online, and so there's ... To TK's point, there

are more regions coming online and so there's a lot of opportunities. And that's great for resellers and prospective registrars and current registrars to get into those markets; and an opportunity to be tailored to those markets, too. Yeah, I'll [leave] with that. Thank you.

VALERIE HENG:

All right. Thank you to the panel for sharing their perspective and all of the great advice. I hope you find them useful. I will leave time for questions and discussion later.

Next, we shall learn about the benefits of being an ICANN accredited registrar and what are the requirements. My colleague, Mukesh Chulani, will walk you through. Mukesh, please.

MUKESH CHULANI:

Hi, everyone. It's Mukesh Chulani. I represent ICANN's Global Domains and Services Division. Val, are you driving the slides? Okay. Can we move a slide forward, please?

So I'm going to cover, really, three major things—the benefits and considerations of accreditation, the application process, and then the fees associated with being an ICANN accredited registrar.

Of course, to a large extent the benefits and considerations, we've discussed some of those. Our prior panelists have discussed some of them at least.

In the next slide, it's very much reputation boost as reported to us, at least, by accredited registrars. To be accredited by ICANN as an accredited registrar provides a boost to the reputation. This is one of the prime benefits of accreditation.

Of course, beyond taking the ... The reseller market is often very competitive, but you don't have that access to the registries for negotiation. And that's one of the other benefits reported by registrars to us. The accreditation allows you to negotiate directly, and that provides some additional benefits assuming you have the scale.

Third is the participation at ICANN. So of course you don't have to be a registrar to be heard and to participate at ICANN, but while resellers can participate, there's no single voice for a reseller. And as an accredited registrar—you're going to hear from Ashley as well later—the Registrar Stakeholder Group serves as that single voice for accredited registrars. And so there's that ability to give your give your perspective to the stakeholder group and have representation within the wider discussions within the ICANN platform.

And of course, ICANN of course also provides regular outreach. We have educational events, regional educational events, and we provide registrars a means to participate. We often also link the expert accredited registrars like you have at this table with others in the ecosystem to teach, to help. And so that's one of the other benefits as well of being a registrar. If you move to the next slide. Thank you.

So of course, some of the considerations are the fees. And we'll go through that separately. There's a separate slide to go through the fees. A key consideration, I think, that prior panelists have also noted that's not to be understated is the compliance obligations. They are noteworthy. As the reseller, your registrar is on the hook to keep you in line. And essentially moving to the big leagues as an accredited registrar puts you on the hook for those compliance obligations.

There's obviously other requirements which your registry operators may impose upon you as an accredited registrar. Some of these could include account funding requirements. So this is something that ought to be discussed between accredited registrars, but it is a consideration between the registrar and the registry operator. Resellers may not have these upfront costs. So as I mentioned, there's some type of stepping up and so there's a scale required there in order for that to make sense. next slide, please.

Just some of the compliance requirements. So there's, for instance, a CEO Compliance Certification. On an annual basis a registrar/CEO must attest in writing that their organization remains compliant with all of the policies. There's abuse complaint handling and there's active discussions on abuse and how to really deal with it. There's other requirements as well such as data validation, verification, retention of data.

And then as I mentioned earlier, if you as a registrar choose to do business through resellers, then your agreements with resellers need to stay compliant with ICANN policies as well. And so that enforcement of any non-compliance is placed on you as an accredited registrar.

So the application process. I wanted to mainly just cover the main criteria, essentially, that we look at when we receive an application. What is it that we're evaluating here? And if you go to the next slide, kindly.

So we're primarily looking at five areas and the application form reflects that. First off is really to evaluate the business plan. The domain name business is not a startup business. It's a very mature industry, and so we're looking to see that there is some type of coherence in the business plan placed by applicants. Of course, the staffing requirements in light of the expected revenues or business to be gathered by that entity.

There's a whole slew of questions on the operational technical capabilities. What certifications does the entity have in terms of security resiliency? Is there data center redundancy? Where are the data centers located? Access protocols, etc.? That's very detailed coverage of operational technical requirements.

There is also a lot of focus on an understanding of the contractual side of things. So the 2013 RA/RAA is not an insignificant document. We look to evaluate that there is sufficient understanding of those requirements.

There is also an assumption of sufficient capitalization for the organization. There's a rough line placed of 70,000 US dollars working capital. But it's a line. So, of course, based on an entity's location, based on their business plans, that is not necessary. But should the entity have lower capitalization, we look to evaluate that they have sufficient capitalization. So the applicant has to explain why they feel this is sufficient.

And of course, we also look at risk management. So what are the plans for continuity? If the entity goes out of business, what happens to the registrant? So there's these types of questions built into the application form as well.

And the next slide essentially is the process here. So the application is submitted. It used to be submitted in paper, but then we realized the first word in ICANN was actually about the

Internet so we allowed submission by the Internet, eventually. Once the application was accepted, a quick review of it is made just to make sure that we are able to accept the fees from the entity. We don't request the fees up front because we have to conduct background checks to make sure that we can take the fee from the applicant.

Once the fee is provided, the background checks and the follow-up questions to those considerations I posted in the prior slide are conducted. It's a bit of a ping pong match, so there's responses provided and follow-up from our end.

And then assuming approval, the RA/RAA is offered to the applicant. Once the applicant completes and signs the RA/RAA and signs the escrow agreement, then ICANN would counter sign, welcome the new registrar, and announce their accreditation to registries. This is essentially the signal for the new registrar or for the registries to approach the registrar to begin signing RRAs between both entities.

And the last slide I wanted to cover was the fees. So if you could just move a couple of slides forward, I think. Thank you.

So there's the application fee of \$3,500. The annual accreditation fee is built quarterly in the total amount, and an annual basis is \$4,000. The quarterly variable fee is actually not correctly noted here because that's an amount that is divided amongst the total

number of active registrars. So the amount comes out to roughly \$1,000. But not quarterly. That's annual. So it's, I think, roughly \$1,200, but that's an annual amount.

And there is some forgiveness provided to smaller registrars so that there's a discount. You can think of it as a progressive fee, in that sense. Beyond that, there is the transaction fee of 18 cents per transaction. So that is an add, a renew, or a transfer of a domain. That would incur an 18 cent per transaction annual fee.

And aside from that, there's of course registry side fees. But we don't cover those and we don't have mandate over those.

So with that, I end the session here. And I think Ashley will cover the next topic.

VALERIE HENG:

Thank you, Mukesh, for the detailed information. And finally, let's learn about the Registrar Stakeholder Group from Ashley Heineman, the chair of RrSG. Ashley, the floor is yours.

ASHLEY HEINEMAN:

Hello, everyone. Nice to see so many folks in the room. This is really encouraging to see so many different people interested in becoming a registrar and hopefully also considering to become a member of the Registrar Stakeholder Group.

So I am currently the chair of the RrSG. I work for GoDaddy. But just want to give you a flavor of what we are as an organization. And in a nutshell, we are the group that represents domain name registrars in ICANN. We participate in ICANN policymaking processes, and we just do our best to be the voice of registrars in what happens at ICANN.

In terms of how we fit in, in ICANN, with other groups, we are part of what is called the Generic Names Supporting Organization, or the GNSO. And that is basically the policymaking body within ICANN. So you'll hear references to policy development processes and that sort of thing. And we do participate in those as the Registrar Stakeholder Group.

We also have three representatives to the GNSO Council, which I'll go over again in a little bit. And these councilors are tasked with putting forward registrants' points of view and voting on policy matters that happen there.

And we also have an individual in the RrSG who serves on the ICANN Nominating Committee. And that committee is responsible for appointing certain members to the ICANN Board. So have some influence there as well. Next slide, please.

This is our current leadership, and I am very lucky today. I have Owen Smigelski here in the corner. He is our vice-chair of Policy.

We also have Eric who you've already heard from today. He is our secretary. And then who else?

Oh, well I'm getting to her. We have Catherine Merdinger here, who is chairing one of our newest committees which has to do with coordinating our views on amendments to our Registrar-Registry Agreement which was noted earlier, which is basically the agreements that we have to have in place with the registries.

And we also have Antonia Chu remotely, who is one of our councilors who is from the APAC region. But we also have Greg DiBiase and Theo Geurts who I do not believe ... I know Theo is not here, but I don't believe Greg is in the room. But we're also very lucky to have Pam Little over here, who is representative to the Nominating Committee. And she has a long tenure in our leadership in the past as well. So she definitely knows how the Registrar Stakeholder Group works. Next slide, please.

So some of the things that we ... Well, we do a lot in the Registrar Stakeholder Group. And as you can see here, we have a number of subgroups. And when I say subgroups, these are more of our permanent groups. And that includes our ExCom that meets regularly, which includes the list of people that we saw on the previous slides.

But we have a Policy Team led by Owen that deals with any policy-related issues that are coming up in ICANN as well as

drafting and putting forward comments on behalf of the registrars.

We have a compliance group that works with ICANN on a regular basis to work through issues regarding our compliance with our contracts with ICANN.

We also have a DNS abuse group. If you've been here this week, I'm sure you've heard about DNS abuse and all of the attention that there is there. So we have a group dedicated to DNS abuse, coming up with voluntary ... We draft documents that articulate certain things like what kind of information we need to act upon abuse reports because it's not always clear to people what we need from them to be to act upon their abuse complaints.

We have a Finance Team. I noted before that we have the RA/RAA Amendment Review Team. But we also have groups that we work with, our counterparts on the registry side including another DNS abuse group. It's clearly an issue of importance right now.

I'm not going to go over all of these, but I think this gives you a good flavor. But I think it's worth noting that when there is a policy development process, we tend to have groups that are put together and exist for the lifespan of that policy development to make sure that we are well-prepared to engage in the policy development process. And we're basically able to represent not only ourselves individually, but as the registrar community itself.

So I will stop with that, but feel free to ask any questions about these various working groups. Next slide, please.

And this is just a pointer to some additional information, largely on our website. We do have a website that we keep up to date. This includes our Charter. We have a list of members.

I do want to say that we're always looking and hoping to engage with more registrars from the APAC region. We have lots and lots of registrars from Europe and North America. We would love to have more representation from Asia, in particular, but also from South America and Africa as well. So one of the reasons why we're so glad to see so many faces today is that we would love to have more participation and members from this region. Next slide, please.

And that's it from me, but I am going to turn it to Pam for a second so she can give some views on her perspectives as a registrar from the APAC region.

PAM LITTLE:

Thank you, Ashley. Hello, everyone. My name is Pam Little. I'm with Alibaba registrar, and I apologize for being late. I was at another session that conflicted with this session, but I tried to get here as early as I could.

I would like to share with you just very briefly our journey within the Registrar Stakeholder Group and our experience and that it's just really our own individual experience as an ICANN accredited registrar based in the Asia Pacific region.

As I said, I'm with Alibaba registrar. But Alibaba didn't have a registrar. They actually acquired a business called HiChina. Folks might have heard of the name HiChina. It was established in 1996, kind of one of the early Internet pioneers or businesses in China, Beijing, founded by a brother of two in China. And they started to offer domain name registration, e-mail services, and hosting services.

And HiChina became an ICANN accredited registrar in 2001. So I guess that's pretty early in the scheme of things in terms of ICANN accreditation, especially from that part of the world in 2001. And in 2009, Alibaba Group acquired a controlling interest in HiChina.

And you will remember, there was a 2012 round new gTLD program. And oddly, Alibaba Group also applied for four brand TLDs and one generic TLD. And at that time, for some reason, Alibaba Group thought it will be useful or really meaningful to join the Registry Stakeholder Group. So our business actually joined the Registry Stakeholder Group before it joined the Registrar Stakeholder Group, despite its bulk of business really was more focused on the registrar side.

So in 2017 when I joined Alibaba, I looked at this membership thing. I thought that didn't make a lot of sense. Given our main business at the time was still on the registrar side, we should probably pay more attention to the Registrar Stakeholder Group or the activities in the Registrar Stakeholder Group. So we then joined the Registrar Stakeholder Group in 2017. So that's from 2001 to 2017, for 16 years, we were completely out of the loop or in the dark, so to speak.

And so from 2017 until now, we remain a registrar, and I'm the representative of Alibaba on the registrar. And I have my colleague, as Antonia is also in the Registrar Stakeholder Group representing Asia Pacific, one of the Council seats on the GNSO Council.

So that's us. And you might have heard earlier what the Registrar Stakeholder Group does and its mission and all of that, but I wouldn't repeat that. Just really, in a nutshell, it represents registrars within the ICANN ecosystem. And as you know, as a business, as a registrar, we're basically subject to the local laws and regulation in the country you operate your business in. And we're also subject to ICANN's contract, ICANN's policies.

So to me, it's almost a no-brainer that within this multistakeholder model if something as important as ICANN policies and we have an opportunity to shape that policy or to

influence the outcome of a policy or to change the policies, that we don't take the opportunity to be part of that process.

So I really encourage folks who have not joined the Registrar Stakeholder Group to consider joining. And for those who have joined but have not been super active in the group, please also try to get engaged and see what you can do and contribute to this process.

I feel like, with a body like the Registrar Stakeholder Group within ICANN, it is the diversity that makes the best decision. So your different perspectives, especially from the regions Ashley mentioned—the APAC region, Latin America, African regions—really, it would enrich our decision-making process and enable us to make the best decisions. So I will just share what I feel is the tangible benefits from our journey and why it is important to for you to think about it or consider joining.

So I would look at that from two aspects. One is from an organizational perspective, i.e., your business. I feel if you are Registrar Stakeholder Group member, your registrar will get to know what's going on in ICANN much earlier than perhaps non-members. I will just give one example.

As you may know—for non-members you may not know—now in our contracts we are transitioning from the WHOIS protocol to the RDAP protocol very soon. Or not very soon. We're in the process

of doing that. And ICANN Org has put out a public comment proceeding for the public to comment on that.

If you are in the Registrar Stakeholder Group, that process has been ongoing, actually, for some time. So you would have known that this was forthcoming and perhaps you would have had opportunity to participate in what goes into the contract.

For example, this new Service Level Agreement requirement in the contract, if the newly-negotiated service level targets actually feels too harsh or too challenging for your registrar, you could have added that view or input into that process when that negotiation was going on. But if you are not there, if you don't have a seat at the table, then your voice won't get heard. Right? And that is really important, especially when it comes to SLAs and time-bound obligations.

Another example I will use is the transfer emergency contact. There's something in the Transfer Policy where a registrar on the other side of the world could send you a communication telling you a domain had been hijacked and you have to respond within four hours. For me, that's something that always struck me as, how could this happen?

Like, we don't all live in one time zone and for a registrar who is a very small operation, they just don't have the 24/7 manpower to monitor that communication channel. And if that communication

didn't get respond to as required in the Transfer Policy, it could be a grounds for reversing the domain name to the Losing Registrar.

So fortunately the Transfer Policy that is under review at the moment will look at this issue. But it just gives you an example of why it is important to have different views from the different regions and to be part of that decision-making process. So that's why I feel it's important. You get to know what's going on in ICANN and then you have your voice heard.

And you can advocate for new policy or changes to policy. And you can do this directly as a Registrar Stakeholder Group's representative in a PDP effort or you can also provide input when we are doing the public comment period as a group. Right? Collectively, the registrar would usually comment on some of the changes or whatever PDP or policy recommendations that are being proposed. We also participate in that as a group.

So if you are a member, you can really have your voice heard through those processes. And why that is important? It's particularly important in the post—what we call it here in ICANN called PDP 3.0. That basically is some improvements to the policy development process.

In the PDP 3.0 improvements, one of these changes was a so called represented model in participating in a PDP. So in the

previous days, we had PDP that had 200 people, 300 people, which is too hard to manage. And so one of the solutions was to maybe change that to, say, have less people. You have 20 [inaudible] people in a group, but then those people have to be appointed by the stakeholder groups or constituency.

So that makes an even more compelling reason for you to join the Registrar Stakeholder Group, because by joining, you will have the opportunity to be appointed and representing the Registrar Stakeholder Group to participate in those PDPs. Because, individually, it will become harder and harder to participate in PDPs if you're a non-member.

The other benefit I feel really for me, personally and for our business, you get access to people who really have a wealth of knowledge and experiences because some of them have been involved in ICANN for so long since its inception. For me, I have been involved in ICANN since 2009, but I feel I'm still learning. There's always something new.

And you might have heard Ashley say we have a number of subgroups that have subject matter experts. I personally often reach out to our colleagues within the Registrar Stakeholder Group. Maybe when I have a compliance issue, I will ask Owen. When I have an abuse issue, I could ask someone else. Say, “Hey, how do you handle this type of case?” And they are always

welcoming and open and generous with their time and knowledge and share with us.

I feel that is really something I feel very grateful, and very tangible as a benefit. Also, I feel another benefit that people often overlook is really how precious this ICANN multistakeholder model is. And you can be part of that ecosystem. ICANN is still evolving. The model is imperfect.

So we as a member, as a Registrar Stakeholder Group, we participate in this process. We will make sure we keep an eye on ICANN's budget, ICANN's efficiency and effectiveness, accountability, and a number of specific reviews or structural organizational reviews. We can input to that process to make sure this multistakeholder model continues to evolve and be relevant and be efficient and effective. So I feel that's something really precious and we need to nurture it by everyone putting their effort and being proud of that.

The final point I want to make really is a personal benefit. At a personal level, I feel it's [inaudible] the friendship that you build in this community. That is really something and you get to know people from all walks of lives and from all over the world with different cultures, different background. I feel that was just the most wonderful and rewarding thing, and it's been a very, very

important part of my life. And I feel very privileged to be in this community.

I will stop there and be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

VALERIE HENG:

Thank you, Pam. So following up on Pam's, she mentioned there'll be contract changes. So we need the registrars to vote on the amendment, please, when it comes for the voting process.

So we now have time for questions from the audience. You can raise your hand or type in the chat, and we're going to toggle between the participants in the room and online. So please state your name, organizations, and to whom your question is addressed to. Anyone here? Melody? No questions? Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

I'm one of the MYNIC resellers. Only one question. To become an ICANN registrar, where can I get the [inaudible]. Where can I get the form and where should I submit the form?

MUKESH CHULANI:

Hi. Mukesh Chulani, ICANN staff. So the form is available on the ICANN Org website. There's section on the left-hand navigation that says How to Be an Accredited Registrar. I realize I've covered

the material with great speed, and I'm happy to chat and then to discuss what you might need to do. I'll be here the rest of the day, the rest of the week. So you can feel free to grab me and we can chat further after the session with you and anybody else who wants further information.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay, thank you.

VOLKER GRIEMANN: Hello. It may also be helpful for a lot of resellers that should know that a lot of reseller registrars offer services that allow resellers to become registrars under the same platform. That helps resellers fill out the applications and takes away the need to do all the technical implementations of the registries, assists them with certain compliance functionalities so that a reseller can ease into becoming a registrar with the help of their current registrar.

That also removes the need to transfer the domain names to a different system because they can continue managing in their old system. And this is a service that I believe currently all or most reseller registrars offer.

MUKESH CHULANI: I might add also to what Volker raises, a really, really good point. ICANN is not a market-facing organization, so it's really a good

thing for you to socialize and to network with all of these entities here. The members of the Registrar Stakeholder Group, yes, they're policy driven. They focus on policy in some cases. But a lot of the individuals here are very, very strong with their market knowledge. They're savvy and they can really provide you with great advice. So please take advantage of that as well.

VOLKER GRIEMANN:

Maybe also a different point that might be interesting. Someone who's not familiar in this market may not know what this community is or how it works. We, while we are all competitors in a way, are still a part of a larger community. We share the same interests and, more often than not, we work together rather than opposed to each other. That means that we'll cooperate on certain initiatives, fight common battles together, and more often than not find ways to work together and develop new business opportunities.

So in many cases, some of the registrars that are present here are resellers of our registrars and we are resellers of their registrars for other TLDs. So this is more a community that works together and cooperates than a group of competitors, and I think understanding that is very helpful to understanding what the benefits of this community and the stakeholder group, as well, are.

JIA-RONG LOW:

Thank you. So just echoing some of what Volker said as well. Where do you start if you're not sure. Right? ICANN can sound like a very complicated place. Or even for resellers, if you're thinking about being accredited, it can sound like a very complicated procedure. Actually, you just start by building your network.

We have a lot of experts here, part of a community. And like what Volker said, on the one hand you may be competitors in the marketplace. But on the other hand, we are one community working towards making the Internet better. And we start from building a network, getting to know one another. I know for Asians, we tend to be very shy. We may not want to speak up in a large setting. But after the session, feel free to exchange name cards and keep in touch with one another.

And like I said, if there's interest to know more and you'd like for my office to organize another session to have a deep-dive discussion, we're happy to do that. And for the region, like I mentioned, we launched the APAC DNS Forum. Hopefully, I can invite some of the speakers back as well to share some of your experiences and we can continue to network from there.

So encouraging everyone to get in touch with one another, don't be shy, and we can continue to collaborate. Thank you.

VALERIE HENG: Any final ... Okay, we have a hand raised.

LAM PHAM: My name is Lam Pham with Com Laude, second time for ICANN. So I have a question about the fees, if we could go back a few slides. So about the variable fees, it says here there's a possible two-thirds reduction for smaller registrars. I just wonder what is your definition of small registrars? Is that based on domain size? Portfolio?

MUKESH CHULANI: Hi. It's Mukesh Chulani again, from ICANN. So it is exactly based on the transaction volume that the registrar incurs over a specific period. And that's automatically reviewed by our Finance Team. So there is no need to apply for it. They simply look at that and make that adjustment directly.

LAM PHAM: Thank you.

TK TAN: I just want to add on. MYNIC resellers who wants to become ICANN registrars, definitely there's some differences between MYNIC versus the gTLD registry. I'm happy to share the knowledge. What are the gaps? And we can take it offline and we

can talk about it. And we can even organize a session among ourselves so that we have [inaudible]. Feel free to reach out.

VALERIE HENG:

Okay. Thank you, TK, for the offer. And now if we have no more questions, let's thank all of our presenters with an applause. Thank you for coming to these sessions, and if you have any additional questions feel free to reach out to any of the speakers here directly. We hope you enjoy the rest of the ICANN75.

This session is now close, and please stop the recording. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]