
ICANN75 | AGM – New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Operational Design Phase Q&A
Wednesday, September 21, 2022 – 09:00 to 10:00 KUL

JUSTIN HO:

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Any message sent by the panelists or a standard attendee to another standard attendee will also be seen by the sessions host, co-host and other panelists. With that I hand the floor over to Karen Lentz.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Justin, and welcome, everyone to this session. So if we can go to the agenda, please. Next slide. So I will give a brief background on what is the Subsequent Procedures Operational Design Phase. My colleague, Chris Bare, will talk about the project information latest, and then my colleague Aaron Hickmann will go through the business process design, this will be the bulk of the session.

This is based on the outputs of the Subsequent Procedures policy recommendations. So this is the business process for what the process would look like based on those recommendations. This is important because this is also the basis for the resource and cost estimates that we're doing as part of this project, which we'll talk about here.

We also tried to allot quite a bit of time for Q&A. In the event we run out of time, the team will still be here today and the rest of this meeting. We also have an email address that you can send questions into, which is open 24 hours a day, the

subproodp@icann.org. So can we go to the next slide, please?
Next. Next.

So this topic has been around for quite a while in the history of ICANN. This is all about allocation of names, how names get added into the domain name system, into the root zone? What kind of names under what conditions? What are the requirements that we're talking about? This is a topic that has been the work of the ICANN multi-stakeholder community for many years.

So there are a lot of milestones, but I'll just run through a couple on this slide 2012 was the date when ICANN opened an application process for new generic top level domains. As you see on this slide, we received close to 2000 applications and ended up delegating over 1000 new top-level domains of different types.

With that, the community's attention turned to what happens next. What have we learned from this experience? What can we apply to continuation of the program to reach the goals that were set out?

So the second milestone that you see on the slide is the Subsequent Procedures policy development process final report that was completed and approved by the GNSO Council in 2021, and then forwarded to the ICANN Board. So the board is the currently the holder of the next steps on these recommendations.

Next slide, please. So, the board's action and first action in response to these recommendations was to ask us as ICANN organization to undertake an operational design phase.

They asked for us to answer some questions about the recommendations in 12 different scoping areas that range from risks to criteria for certain processes, to communications and languages, so many different scoping areas to look at as part of this phase.

The board also allocated a budget for us to undertake this work. We report on the spending on our budget as well as all the progress we have on our SubPro ODP web page, which we'll put in the chat. So the key objectives of this phase are really to help the board make a good decision to provide good information.

Good thinking about given all of the recommendations in the final report, what would this look like, what would be the most efficient and cost effective and sustainable way to implement these recommendations? When we are looking at the working with the final report, there are a couple of different permutations.

There are policy recommendations, there are affirmations of previous policy, and there is quite a bit of implementation guidance when we're working with these as part of the ODP team and we consider the policy recommendations and affirmations of

previous policy as pillars that we need to build around. So those are our straightforward requirements.

When we look at the implementation guidance, that usually contains details or suggestions about how something could be accomplished, that's out in the policy recommendations, but that's also guidance that we take, and also consider looking at the recommendations as a whole, if there are areas that we think we can optimize, or adjust, and then to be transparent in our work about where we've done that and why we suggest any kind of variation. So that is all what we were and will create.

As a result of this operational design phase, the output is called an Operational Design Assessment or ODA, which you will hear us talk about and we are on track to deliver that to the ICANN Board by December. I'm going to turn it over to Chris next who will tell you more about the ODP work. Chris.

CHRIS BARE:

Thank you, Karen. Can we go to the next slide and one more? All right. So the ODP work itself that we've that we're doing is been broken down into four main tracks that we're doing activities in. The first one up there, you'll see is policy analysis, and this is where we put together teams to review the outputs from the final report, and to analyze whether there were any concerns with what was stated in those outputs in our ability to implement.

Also, we came up with a set of assumptions based upon each of those as well, each area or topic within the final report would elicit some ideas on how we might want to implement or how we would actually plan things out in the implementation. So what you'll find is there are, I think we had close to 400 assumptions or well over 300 assumptions that we've published so far, they are available on our website to look at.

They share some of the thinking or some of the principles, ideas of what went into the implementation planning. The analysis also resulted in several sets of questions which we've shared with the GNSO Council liaison and gotten responses from them as well. That helps us to better understand or clarify if there was any questions that we had in that analysis. So that is pretty much complete as listed here.

The next thing is actually the main topic focus today in the next part of the presentation, and that's the process development. You'll find that we went back to the 2012 guide back and used a lot of what was in the prior process as the baseline thinking for a lot of what we've developed, an Aaron, we'll go over that in detail.

As you can guess, a lot of the work that we do is heavily cross functional within the organization itself, it touches upon a lot of points, and so as these things are developed, we go through several reviews internally to make sure we're aligned with an

understanding across the different team members as to what's being presented.

This is, I've noted here as nearly complete, so we're getting close to the end on that. The next step, which is what we're heavily into at the moment is the operational assessment, and Karen hinted at this as well. This is where different parts of our team are looking at the impact to the organization in order to implement.

So this would be staffing resources, potential of using vendors or contractors, we would also look at things like the development costs to develop systems, as you hopefully are aware. None of the systems we used in 2012 are around anymore, so we'll be building new systems.

So this is where that type of assessment occurs. We're still doing that, because as you can imagine, it does touch multiple parts of the organization and we are working to get that information from them. Those assessments will then all be put together with the analysis above, and that goes into the ODA drafting, which is currently in progress. Let's see, I think if we go to the next slide.

This is the high-level timeline that we've shared in the past, it's on our website if you wanted to go look there. You can see the great outline kind of shows where we're at today, you'll see that's really hard to see on the screen that I'm looking at. There's a small blue

square above the grey line, that's ICANN75, that's where we are today.

If you look, there's a green square after that, that will be our next community status update. We've had a couple of those to date, the next one is going to be in October 15, I believe. Well, we'll have some more information in that as to what's going on. We have in that red box up there, that's our pens down date.

That's our internal data and what we want to have our drafting done so that we can start the process of reviewing and getting the document ready for publication and presentation to the board. So this timeline, we've updated at once back when the WHOIS Disclosure System work was being done.

Aside from that, the timeline has not changed, except for the addition of one additional, that one community status report that you see up there, that's the most recent one. Can we go to the next slide? So this slide is intended to show or to give a sense of what needs to happen once the ODA is delivered. There's a lot of stuff up here when you look at it.

I think it's logical these things that need to happen, but wanted to keep into context, the colors up there, the blue section is the policy development section, the orange section is the implementation and capacity building, the actual design of

processes and building out the tools, and then the green is the operations, that's once we launch.

The idea here was to show where we are, you see the red arrow there, we're in the middle of creating the ODP, or we're ready to handle it to the board, and then at the point the board approves the final report, you'll see a little red box right in the middle of the screen, that's the activity where the board would actually approve the final report and initiate implementation.

That's not to say other work might not be going on, that's the time but it's considered a milestone for that to happen. So this is to get an idea that there is a lot of activity to happen.

If you look here, we also have broken it down by different groups with the communities and put the boards and putting the of course the orgs responsibilities as well. With that, I'm done with my section, I'll hand it off to Aaron, who will be talking about the business process design.

AARON HICKMANN:

Great. Thanks, Chris. All right. So as Chris and Karen noted, I'll be covering a summary of the proposed end-to-end process for future rounds. Just to be clear, what I'm discussing today is our current thinking and so there may be some additional evolution

that occurs prior to the final ODA, but obviously, in the final ODA, you'll see all the details.

So to note here, the proposed design was created using a number of sources, Karen mentioned a few of them, but we obviously use the final report, we used the program implementation review report that the ICANN Org had produced back in 2016, general experience running the round in 2012, until today, and then operational experience that we've gained from supporting contracted parties since around 2014.

So here, we're going to be talking about a level of detail that's at the moderate summary level, we won't go into every exception and detailed workflow, not enough time for that, and it's probably not appropriate here. Then to note here, too, that the business process, as Chris mentioned, will require system support, we need to build systems and tools.

Just wanted to note that when we think about those tools, we want to make sure we provide a system and interface to applicants that is straightforward with clear information provided so that they know what to do at any given point.

Then lastly, we'll jump into the actual process is that we're not going to be presenting specific details like application questions or evaluation criteria. Those are going to be developed and confirmed during the implementation process with the

implementation review team. So this is really at that higher levels. If I can get the next slide, please.

Okay, so I know this is small, and it's probably even smaller in the room, we're not going to spend a ton of time on this, but the purpose for this is to show that this is a fairly long process, multiple steps, we're going to dive into each one of these, we'll zoom in a little bit to the diagram overall first, just to give people a sense of what we're going to be talking about. Then I'll go step by step along the way.

For those who might be having trouble seeing this on the projected screen, this deck is available, it's posted on the session page, yes, as Jonathan noted in that chat there, so you can download that and then zoom into it if you'd like to get a better look.

Next slide, please. So this view is just a zoom in of the blue sections. That's the first section, and so we'll be talking about some of the elements that are going to happen prior to the round, and then the application submission process flow.

Next slide. Then this is the second half of that diagram, and so we'll be going through dispute resolution, application evaluation, contention resolution contracting, and then post contracting for those applicants that end up becoming Registry Operators.

So over the next eight slides, I'll be going through each of those steps. Next slide, please. Okay, so one thing that's not shown here is that there will certainly be a communications and awareness effort that'll lead up to this, but there are two aspects of the next round that we see as beginning prior to application submission.

Those are the applicant support program, and the RSP, or Registry Service Provider pre-Evaluation Program. These two elements are currently proposed open 18 months before gTLD application submission occurs. Both of these are intended to provide applicants more predictability, and so I'll drill into each one of these.

The Applicant Support Program is intended to provide financial assistance and facilitate access to other services, pro bono in nature, for qualifying applicants. Applicants who are seeking support will need to demonstrate that they have a financial need, have financial capability at the same time to operate a TLD, and then have a public interest mission or goal, that kind of thing.

In the 2012 round, applicants who were looking for that level of support, but did not qualify, weren't able to continue in the round as a sort of standard applicant. This version of the final report removes that restriction, so applicants who do not receive support will be able to submit and proceed with a regular

application even if they don't receive assistance. Similarly, the Registry Service pre-evaluation program will allow for RSPs, who want to opt in to become pre-approved for that round.

Those folks will go through a comprehensive evaluation and testing process, and it will be subject to a fee, but it will simplify the application process for applicants who use those pre-approved providers as they won't need to undergo duplicative technical evaluation or testing.

We do intend that both of these programs will end about six months prior to the main application submission period so that applicants will have an understanding of whether they receive support or not or qualify for support, I should say, and they'll be able to contract and work with pre-approved registry service providers as they're working to build their applications when the period opens.

Next slide, please. Okay, this one's pretty simple, but as with the 2012 rounds, prior to the application submission period, we'll open up a registration period, individuals can log in create accounts for themselves. We'll want to have at least two individuals on each account so that we have the ability to contact them if one person leaves, and then also provide security for applicant accounts.

In that process, the system will certainly do its part to make sure it can require the data we need. So anything that's required, you'll be noted, you'll be able to see. Email addresses, for example, will be checked for format and to make sure that it's functional, so that process will happen as well. So pretty simple here.

Next slide. So this is where we get into the heavier bits. So this is obviously the application submission process. This period will be open for about 15 weeks. The workflow that each application session will go through may vary. There's different application types, for example, a brand applicant might have additional questions or things that they'll need to provide. A geographic string might be the same way, that kind of thing. Once the application process is complete and submitted, there'll be an administrative completeness check.

So, ICANN Org will review each application to make sure elements that cannot be checked programmatically are verified. So things like is that document that's uploaded legible, and does it look like the document type that folks said it was? That kind of thing, and if not, we'll reach out to folks and work through that with them.

Applications that get through the completeness check will then move into a prioritization process. That prioritization process is detailed in the final report. The formula is fairly straightforward,

but includes a prioritization for IDN applications. So those are internationalized domain names. So those applications will receive priority bumps, if you will.

Then lastly, once that's done, well, the public portions of applications will be published, and these applications will be kept up to date throughout the round, so if an application change request comes in, and it affects the public portion of an application, that will be updated on wherever we end up publishing that.

Next slide, please. Okay, so when after the publication occurs, that's when it opens up a number of dispute resolution activities. So the three big ones here are the ability to comment. So anyone can sign up, they'll have to agree to some terms and conditions and so forth, but people can sign up and provide comments, anyone in the world can do that.

That can be on the application or the applicant, and comments that are submitted in the first 60 days will be sent over to particular evaluation panels that may incorporate those into the evaluation. Additionally, this period allows for formal objections to be filed, and so the types are listed here on the slide.

Those are the same four types that were allowed in 2012, and each of them has restrictions on who is allowed to file those in the form of word called standing. So those who have standing can

file those types of objections, and those will go through a dispute resolution service provider. Then lastly, this period is also where the Governmental Advisory Committee, the GAC, may issue early warning notices to applicants or issue advice to the board on applications.

Next slide, please. Okay, so we've gotten all the applications in, so it's time to start looking at them. The important thing to note here is there's two different kinds of application evaluations. There's evaluations that occur on the string level, and then evaluations that occur into more detailed, which is usually a combination of the applicant and the string and that kind of thing.

So the first group, just to note are things like string similarity, do any of these strings look visually similar to one another, or actually match completely, there could be multiple applicants for the same string, geographic, those kinds of things, those are all at the string level.

Then below that, there's a group where we talk about financial evaluations, does the applicant have the financial wherewithal to operate a TLD, and that kind of thing, and so, those are all listed there. So, as I noted before, there is a prioritization process. So as the evaluation process starts, it goes in evaluation order.

So we look and say, well, one goes first, then two, then three, et cetera. Now, it's also important to note that sometimes an application may be on hold because of an application change or something, and so we move on to the next one. So we'll operate in priority order to the extent possible.

Then just to note too, that as that evaluations occur, especially when we talk about the more complicated ones in the second group there, evaluation panels may issue clarifying questions, also known as CQ, to allow the applicant to provide additional information, clarifying information, or respond to specific questions so that the evaluation panel can complete its work and then evaluate and hopefully pass the applicant. The idea behind the CQ is to be helpful and make sure applicants have a chance to sort of explain themselves.

Next slide, please. Okay, so I mentioned string similarity before, and it's important to note that when that is triggered, and we have multiple applications for the same or a similar string, those applications are placed in a contention set.

So when that occurs, it means generally only one string within a contention set may be invited to contracting, so that requires the contention set to be resolved in some way. There is certainly the ability for contention sets to be resolved among those in

contention, and that's usually called Private Contention, or sorry, Private Resolution.

Then there's also for community applications, there's an option to go through community priority evaluation, also known as CPE, and that would also allow contention to be cleared if that community applicant prevails in community priority evaluation.

Lastly, if resolution does not otherwise occur, ICANN Org can conduct an auction of last resort similar to that which occurred in the 2012 round, and so those are conducted. They're conducted by ICANN, and then the funds are returned to an auction fund.

Next slide, please. So assuming applicants are able to clear contention, and pass all evaluations, and everything, then they'll move to contracting. That means that no open processes are pending, so there aren't any open change requests, there aren't any accountability mechanisms, that sort of thing that are happening.

Once the applicant is invited, they have nine months to go through the contract execution process, and so that usually includes the exchange of information, need to know who the signatory is, things like that, we would produce a draft agreement for review by the applicant, and then ultimately would end in the execution of a registry agreement, and then they become a registry operator.

Next slide, please. So that leads us to post contracting, so an applicant has now become a Registry Operator, and so there's a number of things that the applicant who is now Registry Operator is required to do. Certainly, the first thing is to go through the process of delegation.

So that requires the onboarding step where they provide information about their technical operations, provide contacts, that sort of thing. There's a number of steps that we'll the Registry Operator through to get through to delegation, and once they're added to the route, they can move through the other steps to launch which include the trademark Clearinghouse certification process that's required by the rights protection mechanisms, and then providing an approved and compliant TLD Startup Launch Plan, and then the Registry Operator is able to launch.

Along with the launch process, ICANN Org also provides a number of services to registry operators. There's a number of things in the agreement that they need to follow or request. So they need to do a name change, or some other sort of operation underneath the agreement, they can submit a request, they'll have access to lending services portal, that kind of thing.

Then, of course, as a contracted Registry Operator, they're subject to all the terms and obligations within there. So

contractual compliance, and ICANN monitors contracted parties for adherence to service levels and things like that, as well as receives complaints from parties that they investigate and then pass along to Registry Operators as required. So that's sort of the end process.

So I'm happy to answer any questions. I think we're going to be moving to the Q&A process next. I'm not sure if I'm going to Karen or Chris, but I'll pause there.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you very much, Aaron. So pretty much right on time. We are starting the Q&A portion. In your Zoom, you can raise your hand, I see one already, but I will give people an opportunity to consider, you can also add your question in the chat, but please flag it with the word question in all caps so that we know to identify it as a question. Okay, great. I see some hands. So first is Michael Flemming.

MICHAEL FLEMMING:

Thank you. Michael Flemming, GMO, for the record. Chris, you mentioned that you're building out new processes and that we have nothing to utilize from the 2012 round, but my question, and I'm trying to articulate this in the best way possible, looking at the process design, you're nearly complete.

If you when you look at moving forward of the tools and the mechanisms you need to build for implementation, do you have perhaps a breakdown of what may be complete or moving forward, how long each of those mechanisms or tools would take to be built at? Does that question make sense? Okay, thank you.

CHRISTOPHER GIFT: This is Chris Gift with Engineering and IT, ICANN Org. Yes, we're certainly working on that. Right now, where we're at is an overall system design and architecture. As part of the ODA, not only do we want to attach that, but a roadmap of when these would be built and associated when they're needed, obviously, things like systems to support the RSP will come first, followed by application, and so on and so forth.

KAREN LENTZ: Okay, thank you. There was a hand raised in the room, and I'm sorry, I can't see your name from here. Please, go ahead.

KATHRYN KLEIMAN: Hi, Karen. It's Kathryn Kleiman. So thanks for the presentation. I have a question about the commenting. This may be too detailed for right no, but let me ask it. So you mentioned that the public portion of the application will be posted and there will be comments.

Those comments will probably be asking for changes to the application, in which case those changes may be made. So my question has to do with flagging the public portions of an application when they're changed? How will the public know when an application has been changed? How will that be posted? How will we be able to see it and monitor it?

There should be a red line, some ideas or a red line notification in the comment string when an application is changed, or even notification of the commenters when an application has been changed. Let me ask you, is there any planning for what we'll do when a public portion of the application is changed midway through the application process? Thank you.

CHRIS BARE:

I'll go ahead and attempt to answer that if anyone else wants to add to it. So I don't know if you're aware of what we did in the last round, we did have an application change log whenever a change occurred, and there was usually a period that people were allowed to even comment on the change if there was any concern with the change that was allowed.

The expectation will be we'll have something similar this time, and I believe in the recommendations or one of the guidance points, there's actually request to have notifications.

The last time, we had to pretty much actively go look for those, the idea now would be you could kind of go on a service to find out when things are changed. I don't know the details of how that will be implemented, but it is one of the aspects that needs to be included. Oh, Chris.

CHRISTOPHER GIFT: This is Chris Gift. Yes, same thing, then we don't have the details yet, but the idea that you could be able to subscribe to an application and therefore get notifications around that nor change notifications around that application is sort of what we have in mind right now.

KATHRYN KLEIMAN: Thank you.

KAREN LENTZ: Thank you, Kathy. We have a question next in the chat. I believe.

CHING CHIAO: This chat question comes from Ching Chiao. In the 2012 round, there was the NTAG Applicant Group to help move things forward as a non-contracted entity. In the subsequent round, it seems that no such force exists, and instead its existing RA holders pushing or slowing the process. What is ICANN's plan to invite

more real new applicants and its awareness campaign in the pre-launch phase?

JEFFREY NEUMAN:

Hi, this is Jeff Neuman. I'm the GNSO liaison to the ODP, and I think at least the first part about the end, I guess I'll just make a little pitch for the Registry Stakeholder Group. I think as this next round becomes more real, I know the Registry Stakeholder Group has discussed creating another constituency or I shouldn't say creating another.

The NTAG was just sort of put in a dormant phase until just before this next round, and I think that once it becomes more definitive, at least from past discussions within the Registry Stakeholder Group, very likely to start that up again. Ching, it's a great question, and I'll make sure at least that part of it, I'll make sure to bring that back to the registries again.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Jeff. This is Karen Lentz, I'll add to that. The NTAG, at least from what I recall, came about at some point midway through the evaluation process, and as Jeff was saying, there is an interest in the stakeholder groups that work in this space.

I think your question is great, Chang, in terms of the community of applicants or not yet applicants or potential applicants, and

how we can think about using all of those channels for raising awareness. So that's an interesting component of this communications planning, so thank you for asking that. Next, in the queue, we have Jim Prendergast.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Yes, thanks, Karen. Jim Prendergast what the Galway Strategy Group, for the record. It's exciting we're actually talking about implementation finally after suffering through the policy part of itself, it's sort of goosebumps, so it's good to hear things are moving forward. On slide nine, I'm going to put you on the spot, December 12, we're a little less than three months away, how confident are you on that date?

CHRIS BARE: Well, we're still working on that date, and so far, we believe we can hit that date. We are working diligently, I'll say that meaning we're very busy right now we're doing that, but the intent is to have it ready by that point. In fact, considering the last few weeks of that are actually administrative cleanup of the document, we actually have to get it ready before that, but we're comfortable working towards that.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Okay. Then if you skip the slide 10. There's a lot on here, and it's not to scale, correct?

CHRIS BARE: Correct. So the idea being that part of what we're doing with the ODA is to get a sense of what the scale needs to be for each of these activities to occur. Obviously, some of the bigger milestones like the creation of the AGV, and things like that, we'll have a better sense of what we think the timing is on that, and that will be part of what we put into the ODA.

The main purpose of this slide was to level set that there is a lot to do still, it's not like it's a done deal from that perspective. We'll get a better sense of where those fit together and present that as part of the ODA.

JIM PRENDERGAST: So you're answering my question without me even asking it if the ODA will have some estimates on some of these major milestones?

CHRIS BARE: Yes, and I'll caveat that obviously, there's a lot of variables in that, but there will be something in there to work off of.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Great. Excellent. Then, Aaron, for you, I guess, slide 16 to 23, I switched my PDF handler, and I was able to see them. Can you flag for us maybe just, I know, the RSP pre approval process as a new feature for this round, in what you walk through those processes, is there anything else that's a major change from 2012 that you could flag for us right now?

AARON HICKMANN: Major, I think moving applicants support upfront and changing the rules is probably pretty significant. I think we've understood the need for more communication, and awareness building as well, which I think everyone was, well, I don't want to speak for folks, but there was a palpable disappointment I guess with the results there.

So I think those will be big in terms of efforts. Really, I didn't talk about the comp plan that'll come in the ODA, but that's pretty significant. Then a lot of things are in line with the financial final report outputs were evolutionary in nature. So I don't think you're going to find a lot that's terribly different in one area, but you'll find a lot of things that are different throughout the entire process.

So, that's a fairly big deal. I think you mentioned RSP pre-approval as being a big part, and that's one of the biggest changes in my mind, because it's going to allow us to streamline

applications significantly. We're not going to have to re-evaluate the same technical and infrastructure over and over again, which we had to do in 2012.

So hopefully, that helps a little, ultimately, the ODA is going to have a lot of that chip, and so, here, it's hard to pinch us on that. Hopefully that answers your question.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Yes, it does. Thanks a lot. That's all I've got.

KAREN LENTZ: Thank you, Jim. We'll go next to another chat question.

CHRIS BARE: We have two questions in the Q&A pod. The first is from Phil Buckingham, "Getting approval for the TLD Startup Launch Plan post contracting, this seems to be new from the 2012 round. Could you explain more on this?"

AARON HICKMANN: Yes, thanks for the question, Phil. Actually, it's not new. I don't know if we really described it the same way in 2012 as I did today, but essentially, the TLD startup plan is where ROs provide, sorry, Registry Operators, I don't want to kill folks with acronyms.

Registry Operators provide the details on their timing. So according to the RPMs, for example, they have to have a sunrise if they're not a brand, and they have to claims period, and they might have other periods as well. There was also an ability for a few different variations to have an approved launch plan, which was different from the standard and that thing. So that absolutely did exist in 2012.

I just don't think we use the same terminology, perhaps and that might be why it sounds new, but there aren't any new requirements from that perspective. It's the same requirements that are in 2012.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Aaron. Should we do the other chat question?

CHRIS BARE:

This question comes from Werner Staub, "Is priority for IDN TLDs the only criterion in the context of prior authorization for application evaluation?"

AARON HICKMANN:

Thanks, Werner. Actually, yes, the prioritization that occurred in 2012 was all random, so it was a draw process. In this case, and I would direct you to the full formula that's described in

recommendation 19.3, and essentially, it describes a process whereby a number of batches are created by a random draw and those batches of 500.

If there are 125 applications or more for IDN strings, then the first 25% of those are placed in the first group. So that gives internationalized domain name applications a little bit of a bump, but only within their group of 500.

So it's not as if they all go to the front of the line. It's just some of them be a random process will be prioritized above others in the same group. Hopefully that helps.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Aaron. Next in the queue is Jeff Neuman.

JEFFREY NEUMAN:

Hi, this is Jeff Neuman just asking a question? Well, let me make a comment first just to address Jim. What I found from this group is that they've made every single deadline that they've set forth, so I think, between Karen, Lars, Chris, Aaron, and everybody else, Michael, everybody else working on this, I think they've done an amazing job meeting every deadline, including all the status reports, and all that.

So I think if they say they're going to get it by then, unless something drastic happens, I think they'll make it, and if they don't, they'll let us know. So, one of my questions.

During the CPH meeting with the board yesterday, the CPH had raised some questions about other work going on in parallel, and if I understood Aaron correctly, he said that other than the ODA, there was other work going on, and I was wondering if you had sort of a summary, one of the things he said was there was work already being done on the applicant guidebook. I think he mentioned that as an example. Is there anything else that perhaps we don't know about that might be going on that you guys could share?

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Jeff. In a way, it's hard to separate the other work from the ODA because to answer the questions in the ODA, we need to go away and do some analysis or investigation on thing, and so I guess we don't think of it as separate.

To give some examples, yes, in some cases where we feel like we're stable as far as how something will work, we are in the process of drafting guidebook language like, okay, this is pretty clear, this can change this way, or in other instances, well, what would it look like this way, et cetera. We also, as part of going through our archives cost estimates if I can reference the work of

Chris Gift's team, has gone through looking at a number of different options as far as platforms and software and so forth, and maybe you want to speak about that for a moment.

CHRIS GIFT:

This is Chris Gift with Engineering and IT. Yes, so we're doing some effort in that area, evaluating platforms and trying to narrow it down, and not just so that we can understand the cost, because obviously, there's going to be a cost impact for whatever platform we choose, but also, we want to get a leg up and try to have that selected as early in the process as possible. So we are actively engaged in that right now.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Chris. I'm going to go next to Tijani in the room, and while Tijani prepares the question, I wonder if as I go through the queue, there have been a couple of questions on the GNSO guidance process on applicant support. So Jeff, if there's anything you want to add on that to clarify some of those questions, feel free to do that. So, Tijani,

TIJANI BEN JEMAA:

Thank you very much, Karen. Tijani BEN JEMAA from At-Large. I have a question and a hope. My question is, in 2012, around, we

added at the very end of the process, the public interest commitment, which wasn't really binding.

My question is, have we got rid of this for the upcoming round? My hope is that I hope that I will see results, I will see applicant supported by the Applicant Support Program this round, because in the 2012 round, we worked very hard on the JAS working group, and we had money to support up to 14 applicants, none was supported. Thank you.

KAREN LENTZ:

So, Tijani, I think you're first asking about the commitments from applicants? Correct? Okay. So there were different flavors of those kinds of commitments. Some were applied to everybody, some were voluntary proposed by applicant, some resulted from the GACs advice on certain categories. So the requirements differed according to which path they came through.

There are a number of recommendations in the final report that affirm the continuation of the mandatory public interest commence for all the applicants. There's also a provision for voluntary commitments to be proposed by applicants that would also go into the agreements, and some recommendations around how those can be proposed, and then how they ultimately would become part of the agreement.

So it's an area that the working group spend a lot of time on, there's a lot of-- that section of the final report is quite long, and so we are very carefully going through that to look at the recommendations and also what that looks like for the longer term of the Registry Agreement.

Okay, we're running short on time. I appreciate all the questions, so we will go I think, Jim, your hand is still there from previously. We have then Kenny, Amadeu, Martin, Donna, and then Phil, and then we'll close the queue. So Kenny Huang, please.

KENNY HUANG:

Actually, I'm outside, so I can talk from here. Kenny Huang, co-chair of Chinese Language Generation Panel. We just had a request from ICANN request the CGB working group to working on a single character top level domain application policy requirement. So we agree to move on and to study the potential policy recommendation for single character top level domain application, but I'm just curious whether the process is going to impact a potential tentative schedule for a SubPro. Thank you.

KAREN LENTZ:

So thank you, Kenny. There were some references to this in the final report. As it stands now, I don't think that, at least I don't think I think we envision that needing to -- I don't think that time

we plan to exceed from what we know, would exceed the time that we would spend on implementation. So we don't see it as something that would hold up the round. We will let you know more about, the specifics than I do at the moment. Does that answer your question?

KENNY HUANG: Partially because we still need to assemble the group learning the expert not only from language community, but also from technical and RALOs security community as well. So, we need to estimate how much time we have and how potential tampering we allow to produce a potential outcome. Thank you.

KAREN LENTZ: Okay, great. Let us then connect after this session. Thank you. Okay, we have one more that I didn't realize in the chat. So let's go to that one.

WERNER STAUB: This is question from Werner Staub. In the 2012 round, a continued operations instrument COI was required, will that also be the case now?

AARON HICKMANN: I can answer that. this is Aaron Hickmann. Werner, that's correct. In 2012, everyone needed a COI. In the final report, however, there were a number of scenarios in which applicants would not need a COI, and we also had the opportunity to investigate a potential alternative or alternatives to the COI, and so that work is ongoing.

We may end up being able to do something different from the COI, but if the COI is capped, there will be certain applicants that will need to provide one going forward, while others will be able to move through per the recommendations. So, that's sort of TBD, and we hope to certainly have a proposal for that in the ODA.

KAREN LENTZ: Thank you. Next is Amadeu. Amadeu Abril, can you hear us? All right, let's go then to Martin, maybe Amadeu can work out that audio. Martin.

MARTIN SUTTON: Thanks, Karen. Martin Sutton, and thanks to the rest of the team here. I think this is really good work. Lots of it very familiar, so we're not seeing tremendous amount of change, but there are some key components outlined on page 16, which I've got a question about, which is, first of all, the evaluation start 18

months before the application submission period starts for Applicant Support Program and the RSP Pre-Evaluation Program.

Just what to understand the rationale for the time period for that, and on top of that, is there any indication how long it would take you to actually have those programs up and running? So what would be the lead time ahead of that?

KAREN LENTZ:

I'm going to hand it to Aaron to answer that one.

AARON HICKMANN:

Yes, hi, Martin. So with regard to the timing, what we thought was, by bringing those forward, we'd allow some clarity, and it's a little bit of a different reason for each. So for RSP pre approval, bringing that forward 18 months would allow us to have at least 12 months, well, up to 12 months to evaluate those folks. It may take shorter, it may take longer, we haven't done our pre-approval before, so that's just our estimate at this point.

The idea would be to have a list of the pre-approved RSPs available at least six months prior to the application submission period so that we give folks that much time to engage with RSPs and work out whatever terms they'd like to and select a partner to provide their technical infrastructure. So that's the idea there.

For the Applicant Support, a similar idea in the sense of giving folks clarity and about what they're going to qualify for well in advance of the actual application process starting because if you're, for example, not for profit, and you don't receive support, for some reason, you might still be able to write raise funds and apply as a standard applicant. So we wanted to provide folks a number of options there for both those. So hopefully, that provides some context.

KAREN LENTZ: Thank you, Aaron. Looks like Amadeu was having trouble unmuting. Is there a way we can unmute him or can you hear us now, Amadeu?

AMADEU ABRIL: Hello, can you hear me now?

KAREN LENTZ: Yes, we can.

AMADEU ABRIL: Okay, it seems it works. Sorry about that. I want to ask a question regarding the procedure for evaluation against that, like in 2012, most of the evaluators will primarily be external people, not ICANN staff, and these committees have tensions, especially in

certain kinds of applications work, for instance, financial aspects, like asking for shareholder lists and advocate balances for governments or city halls that don't go that way.

It was like a ping pong asking for that question. We telling them that this will not applicable, and then we're saying, well, you have not provided we ask that. So my question is whether this time, there will be some more explicit way to escalate to ICANN staff when there are some disputes with the evaluators of what we should provide, especially in the qualifying questions. Thanks.

KAREN LENTZ:

Amadeu, this is Karen, I think you may be referring to the clarifying questions process of a few different loops. That is an area that we have looked at quite a bit as it was a fairly labor intensive for all of the parties involved, so I don't know, Aaron, if you want to elaborate on anything else with regard to that, but I can tell you, Amadeu, it is something that we're that we're looking at.

AARON HICKMANN:

Yes, I was going to just say, I think it's something we're going to need to look at an implementation. We certainly learned a lot from 2012, in terms of what's possible and not possible, and we still have relationships with some of those folks.

So we hope to bring that information forward, and the recommendations, or sorry, the outputs from the final report, and this version also offers a number of different types of financial evaluation. So I think there'll be additional options available that we'll be able to really tease out during implementation.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Aaron. One other thing that I'll mention, to your point, Amadeu is, there were recommendations in the final report for an appeal mechanism and a challenge process at different points of the evaluation steps. So in the event that there is some issue that relates to that or the process, that is another mechanism that will be available.

Okay, we have Donna, and then Phil. Donna. Could we unmute Donna? While we're working on that, Martin, I think yours is previous, and then Phil, I don't know if yours is previous or this was a new question. Looks like Donna's unmuted. Donna.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Karen. Donna Austin. So speaking with my chair of the IDN PDP Working Group hat on, the question that Kenny asked a little while ago about single character IDNs, there's actually a charter question from the IDN EPDP.

We have sought the assistance of generation panels to help us out with that single IDN character issue, and there was actually a meeting this morning, which I wasn't able to attend, but we're actually seeking expertise from that group to help us out with that charter question that's related to single character audience.

What Kenny raised is related to the, it's not really a question, but during the IDN EPDP meetings that we had earlier this week, we put up a process flow, which was pretty much based on the, well, it was based on the 2012 new gTLD program. What we've tried to do is identify where our recommendations fit within the process.

I think what is going to happen and there will need to be some coordination, I think, with what's going on with the ODA is that some of our recommendations are going to impact some of the processes for the new gTLD process.

When the charter for the IDN EPDP was developed, there was an assumption that the IRT from SubPro would be operating at this point, and that there would be the opportunity for conversation so that we could, sorry, sort out any problems from a process perspective, but obviously, we haven't been able to do that.

So, we do have Michael Karakash from, I don't know, whether it's your team or not Karen, that's paying attention to the work that we're doing, and we are hoping that there are going to be opportunities for us to have conversations to ensure that what

Karen is doing with ODP, we're kind of cognizant of that and make sure that whatever we're doing isn't going to be a conflict work comes out with the ODA.

Sorry. So I guess so just a question from IDN EPDP perspective is that the timeline for when you're reporting back to the board on this is pretty important. We are hoping that we'll have an initial report on one part of our work in the next couple of months, but I think just to flag that we are going to need some coordination. Thanks, Karen. Sorry.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Donna, and thank you for providing the context. I was thinking of the single character idea and in particular, has been mentioned in a few places. So thanks for calling attention to that the IDN EPDP, and, yes, Michael is indeed on my team, helping follow and coordinate that work, and I think we'd be pleased to have a conversation to elaborate on some of the impacts. Alright, last, Phil Buckingham, you have the last word.

PHIL BUCKINGHAM:

Hi, can you hear me?

KAREN LENTZ:

Yes, we can.

PHIL BUCKINGHAM: Yes, I was just following up on my question before. So, once they've got -- ICANN's got post contracting, they've gone through that. So therefore, they've got to do sunrise or landrush, or something like that. So is that now going to be compulsory, they have to do it? Or can they opt out of that?

AARON HICKMANN: So this is Aaron. Can you clarify? Are you saying, do they have to launch?

PHIL BUCKINGHAM: Yes, they have to launch, they have to do a sunrise, I have to do a landrush or whatever is required.

AARON HICKMANN: Right. My best recollection is that that did not change as a result of the final report outputs, and so the registry agreement merely requires delegation, all the steps, you have to complete all the steps for delegation within 12 months.

PHIL BUCKINGHAM: Yes, that's what I was thinking. Right. So it hasn't changed at all. Okay.

AARON HICKMANN: No, but you do still need to provide a plan that meets all the requirements.

PHIL BUCKINGHAM: Yes, sure. Okay, thank you.

KAREN LENTZ: All right. Thank you for all of the good questions. Thank you for attending this session. As I said at the beginning, you can always find us via email at subpro-odp@icann.org, and we'll also be here at the meeting, so if you didn't get your question answered or want to talk more, here we are. Thank you everybody. Bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]