
ICANN77 | PF – APAC Space
Wednesday, June 14 2023 – 09:00 to 10:15 DCA

ALAXYS LIU:

Hi, everyone. Welcome to the session, APAC Space. My name is Alaxys, and I'm the participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is being governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior. If you would like to speak during this session, please raise your hand in Zoom. When called upon, virtual participants will unmute in Zoom, and on-site participants will use a physical microphone to speak. 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 format, which I will share in the chat shortly. I will read them aloud during the time set by the facilitator of this session. Next slide, please.

In today's session, we have quite an exciting and packed program lined up for you. For the segment on community updates, we have three speakers who will share with us some of the latest developments and updates. We have Donna, who will give us an update on the expedited policy development process for internationalized domain names. Anil, who will give us an update on Universal Acceptance Steering Group. And Diana from ICANN Org, who will walk us through an update on the Registration Data Request Service. Satish is our community facilitator today, and he will be leading the community update segment, which will also include the Q&A and discussion. After the community updates,

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we will end the session for online participants. For on-site participants, please stay with us for a networking session. Now, without further ado, I will hand the time to Jia-Rong for his welcome remarks. Jia-Rong, please.

JIA-RONG LOW:

Thanks, Alaxys. Good morning, everybody, and thank you for getting up early to join us. And for those sitting at the side, we have a small group, so please join us at the table. So, welcome again. Great to see everybody. The last time we had APAC Space was in Kuala Lumpur. Between that meeting and this meeting, we reached out to everybody on the mailing list to ask, how would you like APAC Space to be going forward? And there is a preference for us to meet together as much as possible in person.

So how we are going forward with APAC Space from now is we will try to have an APAC Space at every ICANN meeting, however short the session may be. And we will build in time, half the time for a formal agenda, exactly as today's agenda. Half of the time, we will do that. And the other half, we will build in time for networking and getting to know one another better. I think that's something that we've all missed a lot during the pandemic. So today, we've done the same. The second half of this session will be networking. We got some coffee. Then we'll get up together and just network and catch up with one another.

So just quickly, we'll talk about what is APAC Space again for those joining us the first time. APAC Space is literally a space for our community members from the region just to get together during the pandemic. And even before that, we will try to have bimonthly sessions,

either in a web conference or face-to-face format. Like I mentioned, going forward, we will try to have APAC Space at every ICANN meeting. But in between ICANN meetings, if we like to have any discussion on any topics, the webinar is still an available platform. So I wanted to assure you, it continues to be a space for us to work with one another.

The APAC Space also serves as a practice ground to facilitate discussion in a very friendly space where we all know each other. We're all from the same region. We tend to share similar perspectives to discuss on various topics. And that's why the formal agenda for today covers the current discussions that's happening here at the ICANN meeting. So that when we're doing the networking, if we don't know what else to talk about besides the weather, we can always dive into talking about the RDRS and what's our view about it. So that's something we want to plan time for. So that's the whole idea of APAC Space.

So if you have not joined us on the mailing list, write to subscribe at APACspace.asia. All the discussions on the mailing list are discussed at APACspace.asia. And we also have a website which keeps all the presentations and the notes of discussions on the website so that you can visit it at any time. Next slide, please. And that's it from me. Thank you.

ALAXYS LIU:

Thank you, Jia-Rong. Now I will hand the floor to Satish to facilitate the community update segment. Satish, please.

SATISH BABU:

Thank you very much, Alaxys. My name is Satish, and I am part of the At-Large Advisory Committee, ALAC. So today we have three presentations on very important topics that are currently being discussed. But we are very short on time, so without much ado, I'd like to invite Donna, who chairs the EPDP on Internationalized Domain Names, for her presentation.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Satish. Can you hear me okay around the room? Okay. Donna Austin, chair of the IDN EPDP. So the IDN EPDP was intended to consider charter questions that would allow the introduction of variant IDNs at the top level. So some of you may be aware that in 2012 round of new gTLDs, applications could be submitted for internationalized domain names at the top level, but there was no mechanism to introduce variants as well. So there's been considerable work done over the last 10 years around IDNs, and in particular the development of the root zone label generation rules. So that's been an important factor in enabling us to now consider how to introduce IDN variants at the top level.

So we started our work, the first meeting was on the 11th of August, 2021, and a few months ago we released our initial report for our Phase 1. Now Phase 1 specifically relates to the introduction of variants at the top level, and it has recommendations relating to the application process, the timing of applications for not only prospective TLD applicants, but also existing IDN gTLD registry operators. So there's provision to allow them to apply for their variants, which they couldn't do previously. We discuss application processes and fees. So what

we've agreed is that rather than, if an applicant applies for one variant, for an IDN gTLD and up to two or three variants, then they won't be charged for application fees, it will be just the one application fee.

The important thing, I suppose, is that that's out for public comment at the moment, so if anyone has time to have a look at it, the public comment process will close on the 19th of June, and then the working group will consider those comments and see whether any of our recommendations need adjusting. What we're hoping is that we won't need considerable rework of the recommendations that we have for Phase 1.

More recently we've started our work on Phase 2, and Phase 2 relates to the treatment of variants at the second level. So you can register an IDN at the second level of a gTLD. The registry operator at the moment basically decides how to manage their IDNs at the second level, so what we're trying to introduce is some kind of consistent treatment. So there's still going to be a lot of discretion for the registry operators at the second level, but there are some high-level principles that we're discussing about, particularly around the same entity. So which would apply to the registrant. So if a registrant applies for a second-level domain that is an IDN, and it happens to be part of a variant label set, then it's the principle to ensure that only that registrant has access to those second-level domains. So that's what we're discussing here this week.

Some of you may have heard that the GNSO is currently in the process of responding to a number of questions that the ICANN board posed in relation to potential dependencies for getting the next round of new

gTLDs underway. We have been identified as a dependency, and at the moment our time frame has us finishing our work at the end of around November 2025. But what we have agreed to do is that we will have a better idea of how long it's going to take us to get through all of our work once we receive the public comment input on the Phase 1, and also how much work we've managed to get through this week. So it wasn't our intention to start work on Phase 2 until November this year, so we're a little bit ahead of the game. So we will revise that timeline in about two or three weeks' time.

So that's kind of where we are. It's a pretty high-level overview, but I think we're making some really good progress. Satish is a member of our team and also Anil, and I must say that it's nice that it's not a very controversial PDP, so we don't have too many disagreements. It's a very congenial group to deal with, which I'm very pleased about. So thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Donna. As she said, both of us are actually part of the EPDP, and it's been a very interesting journey. And I think this is the only EPDP which has got working sessions every day of the working week this time. So the group is working really hard. So before we proceed, please note your questions. You can either post in the chat box or you can raise your hands. After all the three presentations are over, we will come back to the questions. Next, it's over to UASG, and we have here the chair, Mr. Anil Kumar Jain. Over to you, Mr. Jain.

ANIL JAIN:

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, depending on the time of the online participants and in-person participants at ICANN 77. I think all of us are aware about the journey which UASG has started in 2015, and until that time in the last eight years, we have traveled a lot and we have achieved a lot. So let us just have an overview on this. Next slide, please.

So here I am going to cover what a UASG is there. Then recently there is a new UASG leadership which has taken over in the month of May. And last year we started a new process for awareness about the Global UA Day celebration. So the first Global UA Day celebration was held on 28th of March this year, and we would like to update on that. The next is the new financial year FY24 UASG action plan, and UASG is run by several working groups. So we'll discuss on this, and then finally call to action what is required from the various stakeholders, that is an individual or a government or a registrar, what is required to be done. Next slide.

So basically in one word, the universal acceptance is acceptance of a domain, and that domain we are all aware, and acceptance of an e-mail address in all the software applications. And in case the software application is throwing away any error and not accepting the domain, when we are undertaking a browsing or a search or we are using an e-mail in a particular software for registration or for seeking information, that is the problem of universal acceptance.

So universal acceptance is basically accepting the content which we are feeding in the software, and then the software should validate properly that content. The system should process that particular request, store whether it is stored at the recipient, at the computer or any server or at

the recipient side in the proper format which is required for IDN, and the recipient should be able to see the display in the format which is actually intended by the sender for the recipient to see. So these are the five steps which are required in universal acceptance. Next slide.

So this is the new leadership. I am from India, and there is a company called National Internet Exchange of India where I am working as a CEO. In addition to this, I was also chair of communication working group of UASG. In addition to that, for ccNSO, I am vice chair of IDN ccPDP Working Group 4, and also I have taken over as vice chair of IGLC recently.

We have three vice chairs. One is from Morocco, Mr. Nabil Benamar. He is a professor of computer science, and he is very active in UASG since several years. Then we have a new person from China, Mr. Haixin Duan, and he is also a professor of computer science. Then the third vice chair is from India, Nitin Walia. Nitin is working in an organization, Exgen, which claims to have, is managing millions of e-mails in local domain. Nitin is based at India. Next slide, please.

So as far as universal acceptance, global universal acceptance was there. It was celebrated in more than 40 countries, and the total number of functions which were undertaken under the Global UA Day was more than 50. So it was a great success. Next slide, please. If you see that how the whole division was there, we received more than 89 proposals, out of which 50 events were shortlisted. Shortlisted means that those events which required funding from ICANN, and some of them don't require funding from ICANN also. And if you have seen that maximum number of applications or the request proposals came from this region,

Asia Pacific region, 41 proposals were received, and a good number of countries were covered, like Bangladesh, China, India, then Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan. And total number of attendees who attended the Global UA Day celebrations was more than 9,000, and UA Day was held in more than 22 languages. Next slide, please.

So as far as the planning is concerned, this year planning was slightly delayed because of Global UA Day and followed by the selection of the leadership. So we started the process in April 2023. UASG worked with various working groups. We have a working group for tech, which is chaired by Satish, who is sitting next to me. Then we have a working group of EAI, which is headed by Nabil. Then we have a working group of measurement, which is headed by Mark, and working group on communication, which is headed by me.

In addition to that, UASG worked with local UASG ambassadors. We have 13 ambassadors which are working as on date. And we have local initiative, one initiative per country, that is what we have planned. And those people are working to ensure that objectives of UASG are met and the message of UASG is spread in the whole country. So the working groups have reviewed the financial year 23 work and discussed what they can take up in 24. And we have presented what action plan we have drafted on 30th of May as the ICANN prep week. We have put on the UASG community and we hope that in next one week we should be able to get the complete detail from the community to work on this. And then we can finalize the financial year 24. And I am very happy to inform you that despite there was a delay because of global UA day and new leadership, we are on time to put financial year 24 in action. Next slide, please.

Now this is what I want to appeal to the people in business, government, and academia. For the business, we are suggesting that let us organize internally and assess if the business systems are compliant to UA. And in case it is not, please update your own IT system to make UA ready. For this, there are helps which are available on UASG.tech, that is UASG 024 for UA readiness framework, UASG 004 for test cases and code samples. For government, it is very, very important because the message of UA has to be taken by the government. Yesterday also I was with GAC chair and I suggested GAC chair Nico to take this on priority basis. And of course, we are supposed to coordinate with the local ccTLD manager and ICANN government advisory committee GAC delegates to participate in and strengthen the UA related action. For academia, it is also important because they spread not only for the present population, for the future also to upgrade their email to support the AI and also upgrade their IT curricula to include UA as the teaching and learning methods on internet. Next.

So, basically, I request who have not joined the UASG, you can please join us on UASG.tech website, please come there and you can join the discussions on the UASG on UA discuss group. So, this is all from my side. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Anil Jain. So, the UA day has been a kind of spectacular success, especially for Africa and Asia Pacific regions. And some of us in ALAC are actually trying to learn from the success of the model, the community driven model, it required funding. ICANN had to work out this funding, you know, modalities. But despite all that, it was

a success. So, we are trying to perhaps adapt it to other contexts where we can do a similar kind of approach. We now move on to the third presenter. The presentation is on an update on registration data request service, RDRS. And it's over to Diana Middleton.

DIANA MIDDLETON:

Thank you. Hello, my name is Diana Middleton. I'm a senior program manager at ICANN and project manager for the registration data request service implementation project or RDRS. Today I'm happy to provide an update on the development of the service. Next slide, please.

The RDRS was previously referred to as the who is disclosure system. The name was changed during the development process to reflect the service more accurately. The RDRS is a proof of concept service that will handle requests for access to non-public registration data for gTLD domains. It connects the data requester and the participating ICANN accredited registrars who hold the registration data for gTLD domain names. I say participating because the participation of registrars to the service is voluntary. Next slide, please.

So, why is it being developed? Instead of a system for standardized access to disclosure, the RDRS was proposed in response to the GNSO council's request for ICANN Org to implement a proof of concept system to gather usage and demand data that would inform community discussions and the ICANN board consideration of the phase two recommendations of the expedited policy development process relating to the SSAD. The request came from the GNSO council because the SSAD was very costly both in funds and resources to develop, especially taking into consideration that we did not have any visibility

into the demand or usage data for such a ticketing system. The RDRS will run up to two years for the purpose of collecting this usage and demand data, and the data collected by the service is incredibly important as it will help inform the board's decision on next steps with regards to the SSAD. It also has the potential to influence the creation of a better tool that can connect data requesters and data holders. I should note that the usage and demand data will be shared publicly on a monthly basis to keep the public informed. Next slide, please.

Here is a high-level timeline of the project status. In this timeline, you can see the three major milestones expected for the development of the RDRS along with coinciding webinars. We've purposely tried to plan webinars to allow enough time for you to see what has been developed and to provide an opportunity for feedback to ensure alignment. We are planning to provide registrars early access sometime in September so they can have time to opt into the system, set up their persona within the system, and configure the PGP key for encryption email should they desire to do so. We are encouraging registrars to sign up early so they are accessible to requesters when we fully launch in late November. Next slide, please.

So this has been a quick, hopefully, and brief introduction into what RDRS is, what it can do, and when it will be available. As mentioned, the data collected through the proof of concept is very important, and the more participation we get from both ICANN-accredited registrars and data requesters, the better data we can collect. So we would very much appreciate if you could please spread the word about our soon-to-be-launched service, if you know of anybody who may fit the user criteria. And we plan to actively host webinars, as I previously mentioned, and

other informational sessions to stay transparent with our progress. You can stay informed on our various activities through our web page, which includes links to the last two webinars we conducted. Thank you for your time today.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much, Diana, for that update. Do you have a question? Yes. Please.

SIVASUBRAMANIAN MUTHUSAMY: This RDRS is meant to replace or enhance the WHOIS data system. In ICANN process, both the planning and implementation takes years, and it has taken a lot of time so far and is still going to take a lot of time. Even before this new process with a new name with expanded functionality or limited functionality came into force, WHOIS is completely gone. So why did ICANN allow the WHOIS to go away, either within its control or beyond its control? But there's no WHOIS, as it was before. Before a new system was implemented, the old system was gone, with the result that we can't look for the owners of the domain name or the contacts of the domain name. Would ICANN pay attention to that? Thank you.

DIANA MIDDLETON: So I think you're asking why is WHOIS gone, and that's in response to the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation. So it's required by law. So our efforts here are to provide access to the WHOIS data to those parties that have a legal basis for it. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much. So the floor is now open for any questions or comments. Please raise your hand in Zoom. Oh, sorry. Yes, Michael, please go ahead.

MICHAEL FLEMMING: I actually have questions for each of our presenters today. So actually, first I wanted to ask a question on the RDRS. You said that you didn't necessarily have data going into this to understand the demand, but I would think that there might be some kind of data perhaps from ICANN compliance in regards to perhaps the registrars that aren't necessarily showing information in regard to, like—I'm sorry, I'm just trying to think of the English word—claims that were sent in by perhaps those that were requesting data from registrars who were not compliant in providing that information, even though it was a, I would once say—my English is not what it used to be—that have the grounds for submitting that request. So thank you.

DIANA MIDDLETON: Yes, thank you for your question. I think what you're asking is did we already have some piece of the data available to us. And, yes, there may be various places where we can get some sort of data, but what we're trying to do is get an accurate, as best as we can. So that's why we're launching the system, service. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Before I go to Michael's second question, does anybody else have a question, just to be fair? Not seeing any hands. Michael, please go ahead.

MICHAEL FLEMMING: Thank you. The second one was actually kind of a statement, more so in regards to the UA. So what we do over at GMO is we take, we work with a lot of the brand TLDs that are experiencing these problems and issues within UA, and we try to facilitate a lot of those requests for organizations and companies that do not have UA compliance with their online services through ICANN to better assist. And one of the things that we actually went through is there's a lot of governments, like not necessarily, you know, obviously government has many bodies and pieces, but different subsectors within governments. They could not register accounts, for example, with their emails that were created specifically with this brand TLD, for example. So one would think that, of course, you know, very large brands, even with their brand TLDs, you know, dot Microsoft, dot Sony, you would think that they would be ready and could easily use them, but that's not the case. So I really have to echo what our presenters said here today. UA readiness is very important, especially for the next round, for not just the next round, but for even future endeavors for everybody. It's something that needs to be communicated and echoed across the world. It's kind of like a Y2K problem in a little bit, but that's the first thing I can remember to relate it with. So thank you.

ANIL JAIN:

Michael, thank you very much for raising those concerns which you have raised. And let me go with the reverse direction, the sequence of your question. One thing is that next billion Internet who are going to join in the Internet ecosystem are expected to come from non-English speaking, you know, people. That is what is the aim which we have made. Now there are three issues these may concern which UASG has found. Number one is that, you know, we are trying to get the four big tech companies like Google, Amazon, to be part of the UA process. We are requesting ICANN Org also to facilitate that to UASG to reach out to them. And this work is on for the last one year. And I'm very happy to inform you that a good number of them has already taken initiative. For example, Google has announced that they have already made their search engine UA enabled in 77 languages. So that work is going on.

Second, as I said in my brief presentation also, that government is a very important catalyst in ensuring that the systems are UA because the public facing services are which motivate people to develop their system into the UA readiness. Just an example, I just want to tell you that Government of India has formed a committee called Multilingual Internet Process which has already submitted a report on the UA readiness and how to get it implemented. And right now that committee is in the process of making it UA readiness in the system.

The third most important component which we found is important is to ensure that there are agencies who are able to help government, industries to make their system UA ready. So we find that people who are supposed to help us in making website UA ready or email UA ready are quite less. So UASG will facilitate more number of organizations to

come in the fold to ensure that the big dream of one billion internet users should come as soon as possible. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much for that. Now, Michael, do you have a third question for Donna?

MICHAEL FLEMMING: I do. So Donna, I actually kind of wanted to ask. I've not been heavily involved in the EPDP for IDNs, unfortunately. There's a lot of things at ICANN that take up one's time nowadays. But you mentioned that the second phase was looking at the standardization of variants at the second level. Can you kind of give us a deeper look at what that might be or what they're considering?

DONNA AUSTIN: So really it's primarily two issues. So currently registry operators have IDN tables at the second level, which you're aware of. So we've had discussions around a requirement to harmonize those tables. So it doesn't mean that the registry operators will need to have the same IDN tables, but within their IDN tables themselves make sure they're harmonized so that the variants are obvious and calculated as such. And the second part of it is the same entity principle, so ensuring that the registrant of any variant label set is the same across the set. So at the moment we understand that somebody can register an IDN at the second level and somebody else can register a name at the second level in that same set. So what we're looking at is whether it makes sense to have a same entity principle where the registrant has to be the same.

Probably the other thing that's important that we're looking at is the mechanism by which the IDN guidelines are updated. So currently there's an IDN guidelines version 4 that hasn't been fully implemented because of the way that it was developed, I suppose, and it's only supposed to be guidelines. So we're going to look at that and what's the mechanism for constituting that work.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Donna. We have a comment in chat from Siva, but it's about GDPR and I don't want to open a can of worms, so let us set it aside with your permission. We have a hand up from Jamie of GAC. Are you here in the room?

JAMIE MCPHERSON:

Yes, sorry. Hi, everyone. Jamie McPherson from the Australian Government. This is a little bit of a newbie question because this is my first APAC space session. I'm just interested to understand the topics that were picked for this session. Would you all describe them as sort of the number one priority topics for the region and are there any other topics that are sort of top of mind?

SATISH BABU:

Thanks for the question. I'll ask Jia-Rong to answer this.

JIA-RONG LOW:

So these are the current topics that are also quite relevant for everybody. So on IDN EPDP, it being a dependency on the next round is important, and also the other portion is we try to encourage

participation from the region. Donna mentioned there is a public comments window that's open right now, and we can think of participation in different forms. One of them is being in the working group, but we need not be in the working group directly. So we could actually just participate by writing a public comment, and you don't have to have anything too critical or can be a criticism of the draft report, but rather even just by saying that you support a particular area is also participation. So I'd like to encourage everybody to participate in that sense.

Universal acceptance is also a very relevant topic, especially for the region, because most of our region, we don't use English as the base language. So when we avail domain names in other scripts, it has to be usable. So that will really improve the user experience, and that really is also another key high-priority topic. So these couple of areas. On the RDRS, I will also add that we do need help, because the more people that are using the RDRS as a prototype, the more people are using it, then the better the final system will be, because then we get the right data. And within the region, actually, the requester community, a lot of them will be law enforcement agencies, and I was in a session yesterday. It was identified that it's very hard to target law enforcement agencies as a group. In other words, all of us can play a role, because just linking us up with the law enforcement agencies in your country will really help us be able to do that reach-out, and I think we will rely on our network here as one region to help one another. So that's something I really make a shout-out to and ask for help. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Jia-Rong. We are really seriously over time, so I'd like to stop it here. But before we stop and hand it back to Alaxys, there is one more thing that we have to do. This is about Pam Little. I remember the times when Pam was actually doing the job that I'm doing today, facilitating the APAC space meeting. So we would like to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of Pam Little. You don't have to rise. Can be seated, but silence for some time. Thank you. It's now back to Alaxys for closing the meeting.

ALAXYS LIU:

Thank you, Satish. And thank you very much to all our speakers and everyone for joining the session today. For online participants, the session will end now. Thank you so much for your participation. And for on-site participants, please stay with us for networking and take this opportunity to say hi to everyone in this room. Thank you. You may stop the recording now.

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