
ICANN84 | AGM – Joint Session: ICANN Board and CPH
Tuesday, October 28, 2025 – 10:30 to 12:00 IST

WENDY PROFIT

Hello, and welcome to the joint meeting of the ICANN Board and the CPH, Contracted Party House. My name is Wendy Profit, and I'm a participation manager for this session. Please note that the session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct, ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. Interpretation for this session will include English, French, and Spanish.

Please observe the following guidelines to participate in this session. We'll also post them in the chat for your reference. This is a meeting between the Contracted Party House and the Board, and so we won't be taking questions from the audience during the session, unless we have time at the end. For the remote participants of a Contracted Party House, if you would like to speak during the session, please raise your hand in Zoom.

When called upon, you'll be given the permission to unmute in Zoom, and the onsite participants, you can use a physical microphone that's here at the table if you would like to speak. Please state your name for the record, the language you'll speak if speaking a language other than English, and speak clearly and at a

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

moderate pace. I'll now hand the floor over to the ICANN Board chair, Tripti Sinha.

TRIPTI SINHA

Thank you, Wendy. Welcome everyone to today's second bilateral meeting between the Contracted Parties House and the Board. We welcome these discussions, they're candid, and they help us move the ball forward on many issues. The facilitator for this meeting is Becky Burr, who's going to chair the session. Becky.

BECKY BURR

Thank you so much. It's a pleasure to be here, and good morning in Dublin wherever you are. I think we didn't discuss whether we were gonna do your questions first or ours.

BETH BACON

It's your party.

BECKY BURR

Let's go for yours.

BETH BACON

Thank you, Becky. This is Beth Bacon, I'm the chair of the Registry Stakeholder Group. I think just starting with the usual, we really, really do appreciate this time with the Board as a Contracted Party's House, we find it really valuable, as you say, to have nice candid conversations about issues of the day. And I think maybe

I'll depart from one talking point and say that we're really, really sad that this is our last one with Becky. But we love that you've been here for so long and we look forward to Greg filling your shoes.

So, we started the ICANN question to us with regards to priorities, but we did also want to flag some CPH topics. The issues that we have had lately are mostly impacting policy development and implementation, internal ICANN governance, and then broader internet governance ecosystem. And we have kind of couched our items underneath those with regards to priorities, which we can get to when we talk about the ICANN questions.

But from the CPH perspective, RDRS coupled a little bit with urgent requests and then DNS abuse and topic from the registrars, which is registrars in underserved areas are items of importance for us that we were gonna discuss. So, we're happy to take those in any order you like.

BECKY BURR

Definitely.

BETH BACON

Okay. I think maybe let's hop in. I'm gonna look to Chris and we'll talk about urgent requests a little bit first.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Start with RDRS, I think.

BETH BACON

It's a combo, I feel like, so you guys can fight it out.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Marc can start.

BETH BACON

You can fight for it.

MARC ANDERSON

All right. I think I'll start off. Good morning everyone. Marc Anderson, Verisign, but I'm speaking as the registry representative to the RDRS standing committee. So, I'll be wearing that hat today. And on the topic of RDRS, I want to first acknowledge the great work and collaboration that occurred on RDRS. It was a novel approach gathering data to inform policy development.

I don't know of anything quite like this that's happened before, and so we want to acknowledge that and appreciate the support of the Board on the pilot, as well as all the work from Org, from Staff that went into standing up the pilot and and supporting the standing committee and its work.

We're aware of the conversations that have occurred here at ICANN84 around RDRS. We know you've spoken to other groups on this topic, and we've heard about the RDRS policy alignment

analysis. I believe that's the new word, I'm sure Becky will correct me if I'm wrong on that one.

But we're aware that this document is pending and we look forward to seeing it published. But specifically on the topic of RDRS, we want to hear from the Board what the Board thinks about how the pilot went, what it sees as next steps, and what are desired outcomes.

BECKY BURR

So, I'm gonna answer this question and then open it up to everybody else on the Board. I think that the point of a pilot is to gather information, and we gathered some information that I think was quite helpful in understanding sort of whether SSAD as originally designed, is practically implementable, what those issues are and gives us a sense of what direction we need to head.

The board does see the need for to continue RDRS in operation for up to two years, that's the resolution that we'll be voting on on Thursday. As Curtis will tell you, there are some enhancements that we know need to happen at some point. We know it needs to be easier both for registrars to have this integrated so that they're not duplicating systems, processes and the like, and we know it could be easier for users as well.

We have a bunch of moving parts here. One is the final report from the RDRS standing committee and the recommendations that have come out of that. We also have a pile of SSAD related policy

recommendations that the Board has never acted on and will have to just deal with in some way, and then we've had lots and lots of conversations.

So, the purpose of the policy alignment analysis is to basically say, take those, take where we are, take the standing committee's paper and look at what the path is to consider how we get to a final resolution in the next two years. We have some of the policies that the Board has been talking about for a while, is we have a policy recommendation from the SSAD that when there is a registration data request system, all registrars should be required to participate in that.

That's a community recommendation that the Board is on record as supporting, but we haven't acted on that. We do have some policy implementation in the area of privacy proxy going on, and we also have some recommendations coming out of the SSAD again unresolved by the board on privacy and access to privacy and proxy data.

Fortunately, we are getting some experience with that because two registrars who are participating in RDRS are making that data available through RDRS, which is very helpful to get some experience with that. The better integration with the registrars and requester systems for the request portal, we do have a policy recommendation regarding urgent requests and some significant collaboration in the community about the timeline on urgent requests.

Meanwhile, when the Board dug into this issue, it became clear, and the community, I think, agreed with us that law enforcement authentication was a necessary prerequisite to any kind of time sensitive urgent request response, SLA, and the GAC has accepted that as a necessary precondition. So, we've got a lot of paths feeding in, and the point of the alignment paper that will be coming out is to say, how do we get from where we are now to where we want to go forward on a continuous basis?

Some of that will require policy development, some of it may require the Board, well, it's almost certainly will require as the standing committee is recommended, the Board rejecting a bunch of the SSAD policy recommendations, and then working with the Council to get supplemental recommendations that help us align those things.

So, the paper that you will see on Thursday or Friday, whenever it comes out, is really to generate comments and input from the community to inform primarily the first conversation that needs to happen between the Board and the GNSO Council on the SSAD recommendations that are out there and supplementary recommendations for that.

JIM GALVIN

And I would just like to add for the absence of doubt, okay, no concerns here, this is just informative, not prescriptive in any way.

Let's just put that on the table right up front so when the time comes, we can all talk about it. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

Go ahead, Chris.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Thanks, Jim. Thanks, Becky. Just to pick up on the urgent request point, and we do not wish to get down into the weeds on urgent requests in this session, but you said yesterday in the GAC that you, and I'm paraphrasing here, but you thought that we could organize an authentication mechanism without the need for policy, and I was wondering if you could talk a bit about that and what that means so that we can take it away and figure out how we feel about that.

BECKY BURR

So, we do have a policy recommendation which came out of the SSAD, the EPDP work regarding-- and the policy was very carefully phrased to say, consider an urgent request system. I think the Board looked at that and said, yes, and then said, yes, but authentication. So, we do have a policy recommendation regarding response timeline for urgent requests. The exact timeline itself was not part of that policy, so I'm not suggesting that.

But the notion that there would be a requirement to respond to urgent requests, which we now will define as authenticated

requests coming from law enforcement or authenticated requests, that's policy. And so, we probably do not need new policy to get to urgent requests. The authentication piece is kind of a new piece, and so we need to look at how that works. And I think we're thinking of doing that hopefully through supplemental recommendations, but that is all to be determined.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Thank you. That makes sense. I just want to make one distinction and then we can probably move on, which is to say that I think there's a difference between deciding to build an authentication mechanism, which is a decision, and then there's a whole raft of policy around that. How do you get into it? What does it mean to come out the other end of it, all of that stuff. That's all policy.

BECKY BURR

Exactly, and there's no authentication system built in to RDRS. So, there are a lot of open issues. I'm not suggesting that any of them are closed, but we don't know the extent to which there may need to be policy around the edges with respect to that.

ROGER CARNEY

Thanks, Becky. This is Roger Carney with the Registrar Stakeholder Group. It's been our opinion, we've indicated in several public comments that phase two, EP phase two recommendations were a package. So, I'm not saying that you throw them all away, I'm saying I can't take pieces of it without taking that to policy.

So, I think if we like five things that came out of it, I think we have to take those to a policy process to make sure those are still valid on their own and not within that package. We know that all PDPs are compromises made to get to a point, and one recommendation may be dependent on a compromise of another one. And if you're taking one, it kind of defeats that purpose of the whole ground up multi-stakeholder model. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

So, I hope you're gonna forgive me if I confess that I cannot remember exactly which phase every single policy recommendation came out of it. Like I try really hard. But I thought the urgent request was part of an earlier packet. Okay. So, with what we understand is with 2A, that the standing committee has recommended that we reject them all as a package because of the recommendation, that they be considered as a package and then deal with supplemental policy development in the Council in the usual way.

And my understanding is that the Board hasn't decided what it's gonna do, but that's what the proposal is the recommendation we've received from the standing committee. Thank you for forgiving me for not-- if I could remember which phase those things were in, it would be great.

MARC ANDERSON

Marc Anderson. If I could just confirm that, yes, you're right. The urgent request languages from EPDP phase one, the SSAD recommendations are the first 18 recommendations in EPDP phase two, and it was specifically those 18 recommendations from phase two that the working group recommended be treated as a package as Roger was suggesting. So, I think that's what we were all saying, but just to confirm that that is the case.

ROGER CARNEY

Thanks, Becky. Roger Carney again. You mentioned that the Board is probably gonna let RDRS continue for a couple more years, not as a pilot anymore, but actually as a system. And I think one of the things out of that phase two was the financial stability of a request system. Can you explain the Board's thinking on how the RDRS will be funded for those two years, and then is there a difference in-- does that change after those two years? Thanks.

BECKY BURR

So, we know that there is a policy recommendation that the system that was formerly known SSAD or whatever it is ultimately known as cost recovery. The resolution that the Board will consider on Thursday continues RDRS for up to two years while this policy work is going on. It does not contemplate cost recovery because it is not the system formally known as SSAD.

There's supplemental policy work that's needed to get there. Having said that, that's part of the phase 2A recommendations

package that will go to the Board and then be the discussion of supplemental policy work and the like. The Board has not taken a position on the cost recovery pieces of that. So, I think in the fullness of time, there will be a consideration.

The Board will determine whether it thinks that policy recommendation is in the best interest of the ICANN community in accordance with the bylaws, but that call has not been made. This decision to continue RDRS for up to two years is completely neutral on that point.

BETH BACON

I feel like that might be it from us on RDRS.

MARC ANDERSON

Yeah, I was just gonna say thank you, Becky, for your comments and feedback. I think that that covers all the points, and we'll throw it back to Beth for the next topic.

BETH BACON

Thanks. We're gonna turn to DNS abuses next on our list, and Catherine is gonna enlighten us.

CATHERINE PALETTA

Thanks. This is Catherine Paletta from Identity Digital and the Vice Chair for policy of the Registry Stakeholder Group. We've heard a lot about DNS abuse already this week and for the past few years. There's a lot of energy in the community around moving quickly to

get some PDP started and completed. We were going to raise this as well in response to the Board's question about focus for 2026.

And som I'm gonna kind of link these two conversations to say the community has a lot of energy around this, and we're really focusing on having really narrowly targeted achievable, quick moving PDPs to make a difference on DNS abuse. And we'd like to see the boards similar align with that goal, moving quickly to review the recommendations that come out of a PDP and get those towards implementation.

We know we've heard from staff this week in the GNSO session with some concerns about resourcing for two PDPs, PDPs in phases, et cetera. And we know that this is a topic of high priority for the community. And so, looking to the Board to kind of reinforce that with Org and allocate the resources necessary to get those done, but then also do the Board's job.

The community can move as quickly as possible or as quickly as it could move, but then the Board needs to pick those up in a timely manner. We think that this is a great opportunity to help prove the multi-stakeholder model works, and we can only do that when we all move expeditiously. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

Thanks, Catherine. Jim and Sarah are gonna kick this off.

JIM GALVIN

Thank you. Jim Galvin for the Board. I think the important thing to start with here is to acknowledge that the Board shares the community's priority work item DNS abuse. It is a high priority item for us too that we pay a lot of close attention to. We certainly appreciate and very much applaud the community's work thus far, especially in the DNS abuse amendments last year and all of the activity and work that's going on.

We're certainly supportive of that and appreciate all of that collaborative work. Going forward also, we are tracking very carefully the work that's going on in the community and thinking about new PDPs. I think just the fact that this work is moving forward and you're going to launch some effort, we welcome that and look forward to it, and we are committed to meeting the community's energy and process in moving forward with this.

So, as quickly as the community can come out with this, I think it's fair to say that we would also commit what's necessary for the Board to do its part in moving that work forward, and I'm sure that Kurtis would agree the org will do anything that they have to do to continue to move this forward.

SARAH DEUTSCH

Hi, Sarah Deutsch. I just wanted to thank you for flagging that and just reassure you that the Board does consider this a priority, and it was very encouraging to read the report and see each of the areas in the PDPs. Even though these are small scoped areas, my reading of them is each of them, if they could be resolved, would make a

meaningful difference to improve DNS abuse. So, we do take it seriously, and I don't think the Board intends for this-- the Board won't be the bottleneck.

BECKY BURR

Chris.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Thanks, Becky. I have a suggestion. I had the privilege of being at the SO/AC leaders meeting the other day with Kurtis and various other Board members, and Ram talked about efficiencies and effectiveness, and then we had this conversation about looking backwards, looking forwards, et cetera.

It struck me when I was listening to this just now, that this upcoming PDP may well be an opportunity for us to look forward at the effectiveness and efficiencies by using that as an exemplar and actually saying, transparently what is happening as we go through that process once it leaves the DNS, so it goes to implementation.

Why don't we use that as an example and focus in on exactly what's happening and find out where the bottlenecks are. Not suggesting it will be the Board, just we know it's coming up soon, we know it's gonna be the next cab off the rank, we should probably use that to our advantage. Thanks.

KURTIS LINDQUIST

Absolutely. But our ambition is to do this for all policies, not just for this, so, absolutely.

BECKY BURR

Yeah, that was exactly what I was thinking when we were talking about this in the SO/AC leaders round table because I do think this coming down the road provides an opportunity to be self-consciously aware of what we're doing, especially given the work on the review of reviews, it all dovetails pretty nicely. Just on terms of the funding issue, as Jim and Sarah both said, the Board is definitely committed to supporting-- if the GNSO Council recommends moving forward with the PDPs, the Board is definitely committed to supporting that.

Obviously, all of the things that we're doing have to be doable with the resources that we have, and they have to be planned. There has been money or there is being money moved into this sticker, which is a potential source of support for it. So long as the PDPs, the charters are in fact sufficiently narrowly scoped, that's the critical issue. If they're narrowly scoped, hopefully, we learn how to do these things efficiently with the resources that we have.

BETH BACON

Well, we fixed DNS abuse. Way to go, guys. I think turning to Owen is on the next topic from registrar.

OWEN SMIGELSKI

Thanks, Beth. Hi, everyone. Owen Smigelski from the registrar Namecheap, I'm also the current chair of the Registrar Stakeholder Group. And so, we're gonna kind of bring up something a little bit different than what normally we'd raise here, and this is something that came out after the Prague meeting. The Registrar Stakeholder Group had an all-day strategy planning session talking about how do we improve the stakeholder group, how do we expand the stakeholder group, get more engagement?

And it came up from one of the registrars would, was at the meeting in Kigali, they had hosted an event with some local registrars who were not ICANN accredited but they were primarily .rw and another ccTLD type things, or they were resellers, and ICANN was at that session. And the question from these small registrars were we want to become ICANN accredited, but the \$70,000 working capital requirement is too much for us, is there's there some flexibility on that? And they were told no.

And that's essentially what that is, they have to show that they have that amount of money or that they're able to liquidate assets to be able to have access to that amount of money. We don't really know where that \$70,000 figure came from or when or how it was determined, and we don't really understand what that justification is. \$70,000 in the United States or the EU is a lot different than \$70,000 in Rwanda or Brazil or Indonesia. And so this could be a significant barrier to trying to get new registrars involved.

Along with the next round of the new gTLDs that's coming up, there's an Applicant Support Program, and there's a lot of enthusiasm about getting more registries, especially those, and using the word underserved regions. But somebody raised earlier that perhaps that's not the best term for that. So, workshopping that idea, if you have any suggestions, please do bring that up. But there's a lot of effort to help registries people or entities become registries and get that support, but we don't have that necessarily for registrars.

And a lot of times having that local registrar partner can make a TLD be more successful. There are certainly registrars of mine, others in the room here, and members who do serve those regions for customers. But being able to have that local presence, who knows that the audience would be beneficial. We're also looking that way we could have increased participation throughout ICANN. Currently right now, a reseller doesn't have a constituency that they could join be part of, so we want to broaden the scope and the participation in there.

So, not necessarily coming up with a solutions or ideas right now, but we just wanted to put this forward as an idea for the ICANN Board to consider. There's gonna be a working session tomorrow that we're doing with the ALAC for registrars and registries and underserved regions, we're discussing that.

Want to engage the GAC with this as well, too, to see how they can assist that, but there's certainly requirements that ICANN's got a

pretty hard line there in terms of the working capital requirement, which I'm not saying make it easier to become a registrar because there are technical requirements and things like that, but leveling the playing field so that those who may not necessarily have those types of resources, but still would have a valid, legitimate business that's been in business for a number of years, but just might not have that amount of cash sitting around, allowing them to become a registrar.

BECKY BURR

Thanks, Owen. This is a very interesting topic, and probably this has gotta be the beginning of a longer conversation, but I'm turn it over to Tripti for the Board's initial response.

TRIPTI SINHA

Thank you, Becky, and thank you, Owen for bringing this discussion. ICANN is very committed to serving registrars in underserved areas, and at the same time, maintaining the high standards that are required to ensure the internet security and stability and resiliency. So, when ICANN go through the application process in accrediting a registrar, there are three elements that are looked at.

And one of them, as you can imagine, is to look at the technical function of the registrar, the technical capabilities, operational, financial, and all these aspects of just running that operation. It needs to be robust, it needs to be able to scale. And when you look

at their technical capabilities, they have to be able to secure the information, authenticate the gTLD registries, and also ensure just that registrants data is managed appropriately and they have access to the services.

And of course, there is a \$3,500 application fee that comes with it, and this is a really aim to just defray the cost of doing the background checks because ICANN does do their due diligence in validating these potential applicants. So, looking in what's been done to right set the barrier so we're not making it too high or too low, is that in the recent past, there was a requirement for registrars to carry commercial general liability insurance up to \$500,000 US.

And it turns out, when it was looked at more closely, it did not effectively protect registrants and had limited accreditation opportunities in some regions of the world. So, accordingly, at the time, the ICANN Board waived that particular requirement.

Also, GDDs accountant services team work very closely with the Registrar Stakeholder Group to continue to support membership base, and the team has worked to update the registrar handbook so that they can include details about the new registrar's observer pilot program, which actually allows them to observe the good work of the stakeholder group.

And additionally, they do a significant amount of outreach to potential applicants, and they avail of our meetings, for example, the regional meetings where they're recently at ICANN75 in Malaysia, ICANN80 in Rwanda, and the 23rd of September, they had

a semi-annual meetup in Turkey where they hosted meetings and invited potential applicants and existing registrars to provide feedback and learn about the program.

So, they are doing quite a bit, and believe me, we're very committed to serving the underserved community. And I'm gonna now open the floor to Kurtis and others, if you'd like to add to this.

KURTIS LINDQUIST

So, I definitely wasn't here when the 70K was, but I'd like to point out that actually it doesn't say that you have to have 70K liquid. It says that you have to have the equivalent to support that. So, I think that there is a start of a discussion there.

What that means? Don't ask me. But I think that it's a good point though, but I do think that there is an opening in indirect accreditation agreement as to what that means, and we can then have a discussion of how we would measure that in different areas right now.

BECKY BURR

We have some remote speakers.

WENDY PROFIT

Mouhamet, you can unmute yourself and ask your question in the room, please.

BECKY BURR Wendy, could you repeat that, because I'm not sure people heard?

WENDY PROFIT We have a hand up in the Zoom, and I was letting the participant know that he could unmute himself and ask his question.

BECKY BURR So, if you're in the Zoom room and you're have your hand up, you can unmute yourself now and ask the question.

MOUHAMET DIOP My name is Mouhamet Diop and I'm from Senegal. I'm from the AFREGISTRAR Organization, and this topic really hit one of our major concerns regarding the registrar participation in underserved regions. I heard about what the registrar constituency said regarding this barrier, but there are more other barriers that need to be considered. The participation of registrars in the registrar constituency.

Registrars in underserved regions have two major barriers. The first one it's already been expressed is the different financial things. But the second one is there is an increase in the participation fee of being part of the policy, like being a member of the registrar constituency that have been raised that add to other barriers for people to participate. If you look at the number of registrars in the region, especially in [inaudible – 34:34] where we are only 13, for more than 54 countries, it means a lot.

It shows that anything that create another barrier for people to participate in the policy, will not help increase or address all the challenges that we have. Ask how many active registrars are part of the registrar constituency? If we answer that question, it's gonna help. We are from the contract party, all of registrar are implicitly in the contract party house, but how many are actively participating in the registrar constituency?

So I think that people need really to consider all the barrier, not only the one to become registrar, but the one to participate in the policy and in the ICANN life. And I think that this also has to be discussed.

Why do we increase the participation of people who already address all the technical requirement, the financial, to participate in the policy discussion, just because they increase the fees? So, is that any discussion that the Board or the registrar can come and sort out this problem regarding the registrars in underserved regions? Thank you.

OWEN SMIGELSKI

Hi, this is Owen Smigelski. Thank you for raising that. As I mentioned at the start of my intervention here is that the Registrar Stakeholder Group had a strategy planning session after the Prague ICANN meeting, and that was one of the things we discussed at length is how do we increase the participation of registrars. We recently had a vote and changed how our

membership fee structure is done where we went from a one membership price for all to a tiered membership.

So, registrars with more domains under management now pay more. And so, the plan is we don't have this fully thought through or implemented yet, but the plan is to do perhaps a reduced membership or a subsidized membership for those who would have a much different from a lesser region or something along those lines.

So, we do have an observer program now where any ICANN accredited registrar can participate in the Registrar Stakeholder Group for six months at no cost and see what's there and benefit, take part in some of our working groups as well too. So, we are trying our best to do other things, but we do welcome outside suggestions and considerations, and it's something that the stakeholder group excom takes seriously and we are trying to increase the participation of registrars that already do exist.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. Go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN

Thanks. This is Jeff Neuman. I'm a member of the Registry Stakeholder Group, but I've also operated registrars and advise registrars. I think we're kind of thinking about support in a very narrow way. ICANN is doing great in terms of outreach and training

on how to comply with ICANN requirements or fill out their application, do those kinds of things.

But when we talk about support, we're talking a much broader category of things, treating or training registrars on how they do their day-to-day things, how they deal with registries, how they go about their business. This type of support is not the type of thing that is or even can be provided by ICANN staff.

So I don't think any of us are making or criticizing what ICANN is doing already. I think what we're saying is the type of support that ICANN provides is very narrow and not the complete scope of support that either registrars or even the ASP program actually need. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

Jeff, can I just follow up on that because I'm not sure I understood. You were saying this is not the sort of the capacity building, piece of this is not something that ICANN can provide.

JEFF NEUMAN

No. Sorry if I gave that message. The training of how to be a registrar itself is not the type of thing that ICANN staff I think is equipped or even should necessarily provide. That said, they can work with existing registrars, and frankly, even in the ASP program, existing registries, to give them training on exactly how to be a registry or registrar.

What do you have to do? How do they interact with each other? How do they approach each other? How does a registrar go to a registry to carry their TLDs? ICANN's training right now or ICANN's outreach is solely related to how to apply to be a registrar, not how to be a registrar.

BECKY BURR

Okay. That's very helpful. I think that you're right, there are all kinds of support issues and barriers to participation, and they can be approached in a variety of ways, capacity building, using the resources of existing registries and registrars to supplement that makes a lot of sense.

JIM GALVIN

So I would like to just put a question on the table, and I got peaked by this listening to Jeff because I agree with his comment there. This phrasing of the bullet item does say accreditation and engagement, and there's a very real difference in those two things. So the 70k, of course, is part of the accreditation part, and so that's a different sort of discussion to have about the rules, the requirements of being a registrar, and is there things that ICANN might consider doing?

Does the community want to change the rules of what it requires to be a registrar and what that looks like. And that's a very different question from the engagement side of, okay, I'm operating as a registrar, what kinds of things could we do to facilitate that and

make that better? And I'm seeing a lot of nodding over there from Prudence, so maybe I'll let her add to that observation. Thanks.

PRUDENCE MALINKI

Prudence Malinki, [00:41:13 -inaudible], RRST. Thank you so much, James. That's completely correct. And although there were some really good points raised by Jeff, initially, the topic is to do with how to ensure that we are reaching all the registrars who want to engage, and looking at ways that we can improve or refine the accreditation process to ensure that when we are in regions where people have the eligibility requirements, but there's just barriers that we can help them with, that we explore ways that we can do that.

The event that Owen was originally speaking about that happened in Rwanda, we had quite a significant turnout of local registrars who were so keen and passionate and wanting to engage with ICANN, but were experiencing this genuine barrier with engagement to the point where it became really apparent that this is something that we should discuss and something that we should try and see if we can look into refine review because it is genuinely an impact.

And if it's happening in one region that we've experienced on the ground, then there must be additional regions around the world that are also experiencing this problem. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

Anybody else want to weigh in on this? I think this is, as I said when we started this, the beginning of a conversation, and thank you for bringing it up. If I read this list correctly, that brings us to the end of your topic. So, shall we turn to the question that the Board asked?

So, this question is a question that we have asked pretty much all of the SOs and ACs as we kick off the new year after the Annual General Meeting, what do the members of the Contracted Parties House believe should be the Boards and ICANN's organizational policy priorities in 2026, taking into consideration the new five year strategic plan, the WSIS+20 review, and the recently launched cross community group on review of reviews.

BETH BACON

I think I'm gonna start us off. So, as we started, we noted in the beginning, we're kind of looking at this in three buckets of things. We've gone into some of the details on our policy priorities, and that's the impact of policy, then the internal ICANN governance, and then the broader internet governance ecosystem.

We think all these things are working together and feeding together and will really contribute to a comprehensive approach to strategic priorities. We do really, really appreciate the Board ask this question of all of us. It's nice to have this dedicated time to identify what we care about from a policy perspective.

And this is implementation as well as development. Catherine-- Ooh, sorry, Catherine's already gone giving into good depth on DNS abuse, and just noting that we really do look forward to continued Board engagement in PDPs that dedicated liaison role.

I think we have found a lot of really good success with, and considering we are trying to make this, I think the technical term is zippy, having the Board there I think contributes to that efficiency. We also really noted that the next round as we are getting into the implementation things, we're not developing anything new there, but we are getting into the implementation.

We are reinforcing our support for ICANN and the Board meeting the deadlines as we get into that kind of crunch time especially noting the importance of integrating those new applicants as sort of along the lines of identifying needs for the registrars, identifying needs for new applicants and focusing on that applicant's support is really important. The registries are in particular going to spin up NTAG, which is the new TLD applicant group for us, so that we'll have that entry into the community.

So for policy, those are our priorities along those lines, demonstrating efficiency and effectiveness of the multi-stakeholder model. As we, again, stay dedicated to efficiency of PDPs, stay on top of those timelines for the next round, we think that really will demonstrate the effectiveness of ICANN and our contribution to the internet governance ecosystem, especially as we go into this WSIS+20 year. I think there's a lot of people here

who have a physical flinch when we say WSIS, we'll stop doing it soon-ish, I promise.

Only temporarily, but we'll give you a reprieve in maybe January. So, we really do think that showing demonstrating progress on PDPs and these things is really gonna help feed into the support of that. I think that also that review of reviews is showing that we are able and willing to look critically at ourselves and how we work and making sure that ICANN is self-aware where we could do better in the community as well as at the board level in the organization. We are looking forward to supporting that.

Registries think that there's a really, I will say, some really great comments from Chris and Becky at this first session yesterday thought that we were really targeting in on a very narrow scope and good narrow scope there. Much with our PDPs narrow scope feeds good recommendations that are implementable. As we move away from the general policy and implementation and governance, we focus a lot on the names and we forget about the numbers. There's a lot of really good governance work happening and really important governance work happening, so we wanted to highlight those as priorities as well. Specifically, the RIR work, ICP2, RSO governance, again, review of reviews.

The CPH has been really supportive of the evolution of ICP2, we think that's really enhancing the governance of the RIRs and we look forward to more work after that first positive step, and just really wanted to reiterate our focus and support for those kind of

brass tack foundational governance issues. Those are the buckets of our priorities. It's a lot. I see also Catherine as well. Go ahead, Catherine.

CATHERINE PALETTA

Thanks. I just wanted to add a bit more color on the next round focus from the CPH, obviously from a registry perspective. As a number of our members are working through the RSP pre-evaluation, we got some concerning news this week about the timing of that program, and we're getting nervous about that April deadline. I think we've heard ICANN Board and Staff reinforce April is happening, April will happen.

But any concern with any delays to the program that might spill over into other areas makes us a little nervous. And so, appreciating the Board's and Org's commitment to meeting that April deadline and sharing information with the community as you have it, especially about that RSP pre-evaluation program. Thank you.

KURTIS LINDQUIST

So, thank you. Let me just give a little bit of background, first off what I believe we have said to what we can say. So, on October 9th, ICANN Org were made aware of that there was a technical issue in the operational test and evaluation environment for the RST. And we took the OT and E system offline under production environment so that we can investigate this issue.

We notified all the RST users. We identified the root cause of the issue, and we resolve the root cause of the issue. And at the moment, we're going through a pretty rigorous test system testing to ensure that both of these environments are functioning properly and as we would expect them to be.

Out of an abundance of caution, we also ask a third-party consultants company to do the audit of our findings to verify that we truly have resolved this and that there is no further issues. We do appreciate that it's really important that we restore this service fast and briskly, but we also want to emphasize that the security and trustworthiness of the systems is of utmost importance.

And we are really committed to resolving all these technical issues, but we're also committed to making sure that they are secure and stable once have addressed the issues. We have kept the RST users updated through the process, and they will all be notified once the system is available again, or both of the environments are available. And we know that this has affected RSP applicant's ability to complete the testing, the technical testing, I should say, by the deadline.

So, the previously announced date that was announced for the initial list that the successfully evaluated RSPs was December the 9th. And due to this downtime, we are gonna adjust that date to ensure that all the RSP applicants have the adequate time to complete the necessary technical testing. And we will communicate that date to the RSP applicants directly once we

have brought the platform live again and also we'll make this public announcement.

The downtime and the change of the date of the RSP announcement do not impact the April deadline for the next round. We are certain that won't have any impact on the launch of the next round. And we believe that the RSPs will be given enough time in this to complete the technical testing when we move the date forward.

And so, that's sort of the update we have that we know at the moment. We do apologize for this and we do hope that you have some patience while we work through this issue to make sure that we have the external auditing done as well which is progressing as we speak, and that's where we are at the moment.

CATHERINE PALETTA

Thank you so much. This is Catherine Paletta again. It's great to hear. We love to hear that you guys are taking the security and stability of this so seriously and making sure that everything works. This is an important area for both RSP applicants and next round applicants who are looking to sign contracts with their backend providers and whatnot.

So, we appreciate all the information you can give and look forward to further communications with more detail for both applicants and the community as a whole, because I think that's what maybe

we're missing right now is that we haven't seen public communications. Thanks.

KURTIS LINDQUIST

Yeah. So, we'll share more details once the audit is complete. We're also conscious we don't want to share partial or potentially misleading information before we have an external party audit what we believe we discovered.

BECKY BURR

I guarantee that your lawyer would counsel you against sharing partial and potentially incomplete information. Other comments on the input that we've received from the contracted parties on priorities? I think I can say that none of these are shocking or surprising to me, and they are very much aligned with the Board's priorities as well.

I know we are all anxious to see that the 2026 round that it has a name, 2026 round as opposed to next round. We think that's a commitment. Launches as expected in April. The Board will be considering resolution to approve the applicant guidebook on Thursday. I'm very happy about that. I have to say, I know any of you who have been on the IRT know how hard the ICANN team that's working on this have been working on.

Marika, Lars, Jared, Christie, the whole team has just been astonishingly diligent, creative, and hardworking. And so, for me, it's been a huge pleasure and a harbinger of good things when we

talk about the efficiency piece of this. So, kudos to Teresa who leads that team and to them and to Kurtis for his leadership on that.

BETH BACON

I think just to highlight, I much agree and I appreciate, I think the Board has really taken up as well as the broader community, the focus on efficiency, and it's not just efficiency for efficiency's sake. But as we get into things like review reviews, we're seeing a very aggressive timeline, we're seeing really a dedication to scoping things and again, making things implementable.

So, I think that it's not, again, just efficiency to do it faster, but to do it well and get ourselves back working that muscle. And I think it's been really driven by the Board and accepted by you and picked up by the community, and I think if we can continue to flex that muscle, it's only gonna do good things for us in ICANN.

BECKY BURR

Yeah, I think it's shared commitment across the community. The GNSO Council's work on Board ready recommendations has been another piece of the puzzle. And I think as I said the other day, we all have something to contribute to and a little of the blame for the sometimes lack of steady movement forward. So, I'm really happy to be in a different place. Any other thoughts? Go ahead.

ROGER CARNEY

Thanks, Becky. This is Roger. I'll take Owen's lead because I think he's mentioned it twice now of our strategy meeting that we had.

Since you weren't surprised by any of that, maybe I can surprise you here in that the Registrar Stakeholder Group has created a sub-team for governance specifically. It's something that maybe the stakeholder group should have done a while ago, but at our strategic meeting, we decided that we needed to focus within our stakeholder team. So, we did create that, and I believe Ashley is our chair for that. So, just so that you know. Thanks.

BECKY BURR

That's great news. That really is great news. I know you have a particular challenge when it comes to bringing your community together. By ICANN standards, it is quite large and extraordinarily diverse in all of the ways that you can measure diversity.

So, not an easy task, but a very important one. And I didn't know about it, so I'm surprised. Do we have any other business? Seeing none, let me just say, it's been a pleasure to represent the Contracted Party's House. Thank you very much.

BETH BACON

We truly couldn't have asked for better one, so good luck, Greg.

BECKY BURR

I'm leaving you in very good hand. Greg has already been onboarded and still smiling as of last night, so, all good.

BETH BACON

We appreciate you. Thank you so much, Becky.

BECKY BURR

Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA

So, thank you for this very good dialogue, discussion, and as we just said, this is Becky's last meeting, but also Martin and Chris Chapman, so a round of applause please. Thank you. This meeting is adjourned.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]