

[background conversation]

Kurt Pritz: So this is a small but important group, since I know you all that are here, so thanks for coming to this session. It's one of a series of ongoing sessions about ICANN's Strategic Plan that we're working together as a community. And we'll just, as soon as Carole's done shutting down her notifications so we can all see the profanity that comes across the ICANN jabber. That was a joke.

[background conversation]

Kurt Pritz: Okay, great. So if you could have the first slide, if you would bring up the next slide. What we're going to talk about today is the ICANN planning cycle. Then as part of the Strategic Planning process ICANN has had a set of community consultations already with many constituency groups, but they've also reviewed the Draft Strategic Plan with a Board Working Group created specifically for this purpose, and the Board has made several constructive suggestions regarding the plan. And I wanted to share those with you.

And then we've changed the Plan since last year, so why do you change a Strategic Plan? Well, you don't want to change a Strategic Plan much because it's your long-term strategy, but you change your Plan either because you did something so you need to reform that goal, or the community has decided that certain obligations in the Plan should either be added, amended or deleted; or you might just sharpen things up. But generally speaking you

don't want to change your Plan too much from one year to the next.

So the ICANN updates are how ICANN staff updated the Plan based on the accomplishments of last year, and then the Plan has changed in many areas due to response from community input. We've had consultations with many groups including two with ALAC, with two different RALOS, with the GNSO leadership, with the ccNSO Operations & Strategic Planning Group. And so many changes to the Plan have been made based on that.

And then you know, to the extent we want to participate as a group I'd ask for your consideration in each of ICANN's four focus areas on the Strategic Plan. So I'll review with you graphically what the changes to the Plan are and then the Plan going forward.

Carla, could you hand these things out? So some of these things are eye charts, so for the eye chart ones there's handouts; and for those of you watching at home you'll be able to make it out because you're watching on your computer. Carol, can I have the next slide?

So ICANN's planning cycle has changed somewhat, evolved somewhat over time. We had this planning cycle where we had six months of strategic planning followed by six months of operating planning.

[background conversation]

Kurt Pritz:

So what we've heard from the community based on that, though, is there's not enough time, especially in the operating and budgeting planning for community input so that ICANN in building its budget can consider requests from the community and hard bake those into the Plan; that ICANN's spending is more or less settled and then we get requests from the community. So what we're doing is really extending the operating plan and budgeting cycle.

So what does that mean for us here talking about strategic planning? It just means that strategic planning and operating planning are essentially going on at the same time a little bit, for an overlap period. We don't see that as too much of a detriment given that the Strategic Plan is more slower moving and slower to change over time. But if you see strategic planning activities and budgeting activities going on at the same time, that's why.

So we've posted a Draft Strategic Plan, and when you look at it you'll see that in one sense the format at least hasn't changed much since last year; that last year we put a lot of work into developing a one-page version of the Plan that at least in bullet form highlights all the objectives for ICANN, both strategic objectives and then the community work, project work, and staff work that has to occur in order to support those objectives. But there's been a lot of community input into the Plan and when you look at the Plan you see those areas of change highlighted on the one-pager, and then if you read the prose behind it, there's prose associated with each area of the Plan – all the underlying sections in the posted Strategic

Plan are there as a result of the community dialog that's occurred to date.

So already the Plan's been changed considerably, and the Board looked at this and they've suggested some changes, too, so that we're not talking with firm objectives in mind here, so we're talking in the abstract a little bit. But if you think about the Strategic Plan there's certain objectives where ICANN has a lot of control and influence. So for example, contractual compliance activities, ICANN has hard agreements with gTLD registries and registrars and completely controls its objectives with regards to contractual compliance; or you know, as far as that affects DNS security and stability.

But there's also objectives about ensuring DNS uptime, where ICANN doesn't have control – it just has a little bit of sphere of influence in that whole big DNS. So but it's still admirable and worthwhile for ICANN to use its bully pulpit and other forms of influence in order to ensure DNS uptime and DNS security and stability, and so what the Board suggested is as we amend this version of the Plan that we identify which areas we have control and which areas where we only have influence; and then be clear about the levels of engagement regarding each type of objective.

So that's one of the changes we're going to see to the Plan coming up, and two is based on community input and our own desires we've moved towards more measureable objectives, clear definitions of the desired outcome. And I think if you read through

the prose you see that, but it could be more clearly laid out and there could be more measureable objectives. So I think you'll see that going forward.

So the reason this slide's here is that as we discussed the Plan, to the extent we discuss it in here or you take it home and discuss it, any recommendations you have regarding ways to reorganize the objectives or make the objectives more measureable would be greatly appreciated.

So how has ICANN changed the Plan to date? So on stability and security issues we've changed the focus. Our focus last year was to implement or sign the root zone, so that's done. So well what's the next step? We want to encourage adoption of signing their own zones by TLDs and registrants, so our focus is on DNSSEC adoption by TLDs.

And then boy, there's been a lot of community input about our activities regarding security and whether or not a DNS CERT should be approved, so you know, the community feedback has certainly been to focus away from a specific DNS CERT solution and to support the broad community discussion on DNS security.

With promoting consumer choice and competition... Last year delegation of IDNs was a goal, launching the Fast Track process, so that's done. And now the work needs to be made, focused on making those IDNs more useable, to make them always respond in a consistent fashion by implementation of the DNS/DNA protocol

– you know, pushing that down to the application layer and also implementing variant management solutions so that variant TLDs can be delegated so IDNs are more useable by those that have a need for them.

So we're adding specific protections for registrants by referring to the Registrants' Rights charter and RA amendments and WHOIS accuracy improvements. And we want to improve our communication efforts, picture a specific targeted effort on the new gTLDs communication plan.

So besides these two areas of update, the other two areas of staff update have to do with core operations. So one pillar of the Strategic Plan focuses solely internally on ICANN and trying to make our operations more excellent, and this originally started as purely an IANA objectives but we think that all ICANN, we should have a strategy regarding continuous improvement of all ICANN operations. And specifically in the plan there's an IANA excellence initiative that is self-assessment of IANA and continuous improvement.

And ICANN's also launched an organizational effective initiative across the company that through our company survey identifies areas for improvement and cherry picks the three ripest ones, and works on those and finishes them; and then we'll pick the three next ones. So that's ongoing, and then a focus finally on implementing the IANA automation that has been so long-waiting.

And then what's an internet ecosystem? I think that's code words that- I don't know if I like it so much but we can talk about alternatives, that what's the ecosystem? It's the bottom-up policy process and improving that, and ensuring that this multi-stakeholder model is truly international, is truly global and for us to increase participation in that. And so we have a set of changes in our Plan this year to improve policy processes and increase participation and collaboration with other groups, particularly in forums such as the IGF, OECD and other opportunities that ICANN has to participate in discussing internet governance; and then finally improving communications and assessability through such things as making our website better.

And then briefly, and this is slightly repetitive, but we also changed the Plan in response to community input, which has told us to strengthen our key stakeholder relationships, to do these things. So in our goals, you know, we wanted to increase adoption of IPv6, increase adoption of DNSSEC, and we've been told "Well, the way to get that done is strengthen your stakeholder relationships with technical and other parties across the DNS, and gather those that way." So we did that.

There's changes of wording in continuing the IDN expansion, to make sure we do that; to increase registry/registrar/regional diversity. So we see the IDN program and the New gTLD Program as a way of adding, actually having gTLD registrars in South America, actually having gTLD registrars in Africa – areas where there aren't any. And then you know, for awhile we've kind

of gotten away with our partnership with ISOC and our training activities for registries around the world, and so we've been asked to reinsert that training as a goal. What are you looking at?

[background conversation]

Kurt Pritz: Actually there's a great time for input but you know, there's only a few of us here so go ahead.

Avri Doria: Okay, I was actually wondering- A few words on what's being done to increase the number of registrars and registries in Africa and other places. So you know, I think it's a great bullet; I was just wondering what's in that.

Kurt Pritz: I think three things. So one is the combined effects of the IDN program and the New gTLD Program will increase participation in the DNS in those regions – that's one of the goals. But just launching those programs by themselves I don't think will do it, so how do we facilitate that? Well one is the communications plan that's associated with the New gTLD Program is not meant as a marketing program for new gTLDs but it's meant so that we generate an awareness of new opportunities in all regions, so that- The goal is that somebody doesn't raise their hand at the end and go "Gee, I didn't know anything about these new..." We won't achieve that goal but-

And so to increase awareness there, and then the second is, you know, ICANN still does but needs to do more, partner with ISOC



and go to different ccTLDs and provide operator training. And as part of that, you know, talk about new gTLDs, encourage and discuss the gTLD landscape and encourage participation in that arena, too. So that's the best answer I have; I don't know if it's a good one. Go ahead to the next slide.

In response to community input you know, while the IANA contract renewal is always in our minds that we should put a specific objective around that and that's a good idea. When we talk about continual improvement, we received advice to model this after the European Quality Management System, which I think is in America, for those of you from there we have the Edward Deming school of continuous improvement, so those sorts of standards.

More measurement and feedback mechanisms, so building on what we've done in our dashboard to report results. A specific project around improving the PDP process and then strengthening strategic relationships. This is a direction that ICANN does not really engage well with our technical community, and we've gotten a lot better with it but in discussions about variant management, say, the IETF is not working on this problem because ICANN or anybody else has not identified a problem for them to work on.

And it's, I think that's not a failure of the IETF; it's partially a failure of ICANN to collaborate and interact effectively with the IETF to try to identify what that problem is.

And then also interact better with root server managers, and where we're doing better on that is the New gTLD Program where we're talking to them to get ready. So we met with them to exchange ideas on what the delegation rates would be and the upcoming change in the environment. So that's getting better but ICANN should be very facile in working with those two very important groups.

And then finally at the bottom of this slide, some changes to supporting the big ICANN's policy development capabilities and getting more participation in the model, and I think these bullets sort of stand by themselves. One discussion I want to have in a minute is this last bullet about increased participation with these folks, and I want you to think about how ICANN can interact in internet governance forums and what our strategy should be for interacting there.

But we had a bullet that says "Improve our interaction in the IGF," and our discussions with the community have told us "Toward what end?" So the IGF is just one venue, so rather than just focus on that look at all the opportunities available for ICANN to interact with the community in internet governance discussions, and figure a strategy or a plan for increasing the effectiveness of our participation there, which I think- To those of you who want to contribute, I think that's a really hard problem for ICANN, to try to develop a strategy for doing that.

So now what I want to do is I hope- So I want you to know that the Draft Plan is open for public comments, so there you go. Go ahead. So there's the version of the one-page plan that you all have with you or you can all hopefully see on your monitor. And we're going to go on to the next slide here in a minute but not yet, and so you might want to- If you're playing at home and can't flip back and forth you might want to bring up the Plan from the link and then from what's posted on the ICANN website so you have that.

So I just want to, you know, maybe this should have been one of the first slides, but just to briefly describe it; an attempt that's been pretty well-received, I think, to at least identify in shorthand each of the objectives associated with the ICANN plan. And it's the four pillars of ICANN's mission that we've always had over time: ensuring DNS stability and security, promoting consumer choice and competition, ensuring that ICANN's core operations including IANA are excellent, and promoting a healthy internet ecosystem, which again, means broad based, bottom-up policy development and international participation in a multi-stakeholder model. Wow, those words just roll off my tongue.

And so what I'd like us to do if you want to help is this. What we've done is take each one of those pillars, right – that's the proposed Plan – and done this. So what's on the left is what the staff proposed as the new Strategic Plan for this year, and what's on the right is what we've heard from the community as changes. So there's a lot of changes in the text to the Plan, but there's also

changes to the bullet. And so if you want, what I'd like to hear from you really is this, that- Whoa, sorry. Here I'm going to briefly describe how we changed the Plan since last year and then just scanning through them, if you think things should be better said or added or deleted I'd like to hear it.

So again on this one, what did we change? We got away from 100% DNS uptime with recognition that we don't really affect that; we only influence it. So we changed that. We changed signing the root zone to adoption, DNSSEC adoption. And the DNS CERT that we were proposing last year we've modified to facilitating the community work on security without specifying that DNS CERT might be the outcome of that. So that's a combination of what we thought the changes should be and what we've heard from the community.

But I'll pause and if anyone here has suggestions for improvement to the language or something new, or how something should be measured more closely or if something's not strategic in nature so we should think about it at a higher level – those are the sorts of comments we've heard so far. Okay, good.

Avri, got anything for me? It's perfect? Okay. So Avri has noted-

Avri Doria:

Perfection, a concept that I don't even believe in.

Kurt Pritz:

If you don't believe in a concept you can say it now or later, but- So the next- Yeah, hi.

Rosemary Sinclair:

Hi, Rosemary Sinclair. I think my comment is a general comment. When I look at this, and I guess we've just come out of a workshop on promoting consumer choice and consumer confidence and competition, so we've been using the exact words out of the AOC. And when I look at this I see that it's very internally-focused; it's not using words that kind of grab that agenda that the end of all of this is consumer confidence.

So one suggestion I would have, and it's a general thought, I think, is to pick up the language from the AOC into this Strategic Plan so that we've got congruence between those two really important documents. And particularly on something like stability and security where it's really easy to get very internally-focused and very technical about things, to have that overarching outcome that what we're trying to do here in part I know is trying to promote consumer confidence in the whole system.

Kurt Pritz:

I really understood two comments, and they are interrelated but one is about a focus on consumer confidence. And there could be a bullet about that but it could be like sort of a change of language across the board to state that. And then one of the tools for doing that is to use the language in the, identify the language in the AOC and use that, too. I think that made having the whole meeting worthwhile.

Anything else? So thank you, Rosemary, thank you very much for that.

The next pillar of the plan has to do with enhancing consumer choice and competition, and not surprisingly this includes the IDN Fast Track program and the New gTLD Program. Also included in this importantly, I think, are WHOIS program improvements. So ICANN's developed a project for managing WHOIS policy improvements on four fronts really. One is just supporting the GNSO studies that are occurring; one is participating and hoping to lead the technical discussion in how WHOIS might morph into the next version of it that could better accommodate IDNs. One is making our contractual compliance program as effective as possible and the last, finally, is the AOC study that's upcoming and supporting that.

So this Plan has changed the focus of IDNs, as I said before, from one of starting to one of implementation. It still focuses on new gTLDs but also talks about WHOIS. Yes, Avri?

Avri Doria:

Yeah, in this one I did find the first change – “maintain single authoritative root” – as an interesting one, certainly an aspirational one. I can certainly see ICANN wanting to say something that they want to maintain the current root as worthy of being the single authoritative root, but to say that you will maintain it as the single authoritative root seems to go beyond- Unless you're taking to swords and shields it seems to go beyond, you know.

So I've wondered about that statement as a blank statement. I understand yes, we aspire for it to remain a single authoritative

root, but only by being really good and really open and receptive to people can you achieve that.

Kurt Pritz:

Yeah, and even if we do that we might not, right? But if- So that's kind of an interesting discussion because if we don't, a single authoritative root is not maintained, then ICANN will kind of have failed. Cause that's sort of in the- One of the whole purposes of forming ICANN was to help ensure that, so while not having the authority to get that done, you know, to a certain extent we feel a responsibility.

I think there's a couple areas where we directly affect that. When we – the big ICANN – decided to launch the Fast Track process it was with the knowledge that there were certain entities thinking about forming alternative roots in order to accommodate, in order to have TLDs in their own language. So that was an effort not just to launch IDNs for all the good reasons we're launching IDNs, but also to prevent some unfortunate behavior.

So I think you're exactly right. This has to be identified as one of those areas somehow where we have influence. We might have some influence but not control to that. Okay.

Rosemary Sinclair:

Rosemary Sinclair again. This is a process question I think, because I know there's a WHOIS review upcoming. Once that process is completed and we've got findings of one sort or another, what's the kind of path back for those findings that may be

relevant to the Strategic Plan to find their way into it? Do we do an annual update or-

Kurt Pritz:

Yeah, so that's- You know, I think your two comments are playing together because that review is driven by the AOC, right? Yeah, so putting words in here about the AOC is important. So I think the model is also we can go to school on the ATRT work. So the ATRT work is ahead in the cycle. That panel has delivered a report... Well, it hasn't delivered a report quite yet but we have an inkling about what's in it. And that will trigger an implementation project so that ICANN will implement the recommendations of the ATRT report.

And I think the same will happen in WHOIS, but I think it's really important, too, for ICANN to get out in front of that a little bit; that there's- You know, we have to decide what we want to do in WHOIS and drive some changes or improvements there, but it's always been a very- Well, you've been around but it's always been a very contentious discussion, the WHOIS discussion. But I think a lot of people are looking to ICANN as the mechanism for affecting some change there; and just like, you know, the single inoperable root, we want to be able to succeed there as a way to prove that the ICANN model is the appropriate model for internet governance.

Can I have the next slide? So trying to make ICANN internal operations perform admirably. Again, where we've changed this year's Plan is we've initiated in-house some very specific



continuous improvement measures. One is the IANA excellence effort that's been going on for over a year, and then more recently the organizational effectiveness initiative that has gone on. So I described both of those before. Interestingly- And then what's here is our root zone management or our code words implementing IANA automation.

Interestingly, we have some input from the community, the very last bullet: staff retention and engagement. So there's been some discussion about that. You know, ICANN actually if you look at it has very low turnover rates, even though there's been some turnover of the senior staff. But putting measures in for staff retention I think is very good. Interestingly enough, that organizational effectiveness initiative, one of the three first projects is about that. So that's one thing.

Strengthening ICANN's regional presence is another topic that's been added by the community, and something we'll want to talk about in the future is how do we do that? I remember the first time we discussed that, you know, should there be regional offices. And we finally wound up with the Global Partnerships Teams, which I think are terrific; and how are we going to continue to expand that to get more presence and more sub-regions?

And so anyway, those are essentially the changes for this part of IANA and the rest of ICANN operations. If anyone has any comments they're welcome. This is the most straightforward one.

Rosemary Sinclair: Again, it's just a very general comment, Kurt. There's a lot of monitor and things that take me to the issue of indicators and measurements, so and I'm just not sure whether that layer sits under this or whether that work still needs to be done to be more specific without tying ourselves in unhelpful knots.

Kurt Pritz: So when you started talking I thought you were going to say "Monitor performance and then improve it," you know? Have some sort of feedback mechanism in there, because I think looking at it, that seems like it's a blank to me.

And then but your question really goes "Is that an operational detail or is that a strategy?"

Rosemary Sinclair: I guess- I think we're probably in furious agreement here. I was going from monitor to actually measure, so rather than monitor as a general statement, do we have indicators that we measure against? And then you added the next step in the process, which is when you do have indicators and you're measuring, then the next thing you do is to improve. You look at the outcomes and if you don't like what you see you improve. So I think we're on the same kind of process chain here, yeah.

Kurt Pritz: Thank you. Avri?

Avri Doria: A quick comment again on my problem with absolute words, like "flawless." A single flaw means you've failed. Now, I know a very few things and you know, that's why people talk about 6-9's,

8-9's, 12-9's whatever, but I worry when you say something as absolute as "flawless," and perhaps this comes into the measurements. So perhaps flawless is aspirational but is there an underlying- And I haven't delved into it – is there an underlying realistic goal that if there is a flaw you have not absolutely failed in your year's goal on this?

Kurt Pritz:

Can't you see that modifier in really tiny font up there? Yeah. So when we were talking about this we looked at last year's Plan, right? And we said "flawless IANA operations" – well, how do we change it? And then everybody says "Oh, they're backing down from- ICANN decreases goals for IANA operation." Yeah, so that's very well taken.

Can I have the next slide? A healthy internet ecosystem is somewhat more controversial, and I think one of the most complex areas is our role in internet governance. And where we've gotten feedback is that participation in internet governance is not a means to itself. So you know, we go to the IGF or we don't go to the ITU plenty pot because we're not invited, so we- But other members of the ICANN community go and represent us, the staff and the entire ICANN organization very well.

So how do we deal with that and how do we participate in those fora? And the feedback we're getting on this plan is you know, participation in fora is not the end in itself, right? The end in itself is the promotion of the, or ensuring the continuing existence and efficacy of the ICANN model, cause the reason we travel all the

way here is we think this is the tool for internet governance that brings the most benefit to internet users.

And so how do we affect the ongoing nature of that role given the opportunities? And not just the IGF or ITU plenty pots, but also other opportunities – the OECD and other organizations that have meetings or take advantage of the opportunity to write papers and participate in offline discussions. I just repeated some of the words that are down in the prose, but so that’s one difficult area in this slide.

And then I think what else do I want to say about this, other than- You know, we had an objective to improve the website and again we’re told that’s not the- The website needs a lot of improving but that’s not the end either; that we want to enhance communications and improve our accomplishment of our mission. And one of the tools there is improving the website.

And then finally you know, some groups asked for increased translations, and translations are very expensive, of course, so we want to- I think we want to increase our translations but ensure somehow that the money is really well-spent, and how to do that is a really interesting problem. But I’d particularly like any comments anybody has about participation in internet governance fora and how ICANN should approach that if we have any...

It’s hard. Okay, Rosemary, thank you so much.

Rosemary Sinclair:

This is, again, when I looked at this and maybe I'll just give you a little teeny background. I've spent my whole life in telecommunications regulatory and policy processes. So I'm deeply aware of that model, so I come to ICANN thinking "Hmm, this is an interesting new model – what do I think about this model?" And as I've become more engaged there are lots of things that I like about this model.

The one thing that I would try to capture in this page is the public interest, and I know it's on the page in a couple of places but it seems to me that what we're trying to do here is use a new model to deliver against public interest objectives. So the outcome is to preserve, protect, enhance, whatever, whatever public interests, and we do that through a healthy internet ecosystem. And the big message for other people is that our part of the ecosystem is a private sector, bottom-up, community-led model rather than the kind of telco model, to use shorthand.

So for me it would be really important for ICANN to put "public interest" somewhere near that phrase in the middle where it says "healthy internet ecosystem" because I think part of the, well, responses from others is that we don't capture it as kind of upfront and center stage for others who are looking at us. And so I think that would be a suggestion I would make.

Karla Valente:

I'm sorry, may I ask for everyone to say their name and affiliation when we speak because of the recording and the public participants are asking.

Rosemary Sinclair: Sorry. So it's Rosemary Sinclair. I'm a GNSO Councilor and a member of the Non-Commercial Stakeholders Group.

Kurt Pritz: I knew that already, Rosemary.

Karla Valente: I have a question from Phil, a remote participant. The question is "What specific compliance improvements are envisaged?"

Kurt Pritz: So I'm going to start by saying that the compliance program has continually improved, that registrar, the accreditations have increased; and in the past say four months, 1600 compliance notices were sent out that aren't readily available to the public because they're sort of confidential information to that registrar. But it's a very active program.

So organizationally, the Compliance Team is being augmented, so a new head, a new Director of Compliance is being recruited and substantial investment has been made to ensure that the best candidate is identified. There's two other open positions in Compliance, one really to focus on WHOIS enforcement, and two is to increase our ability to audit, to conduct more audits and provide some more global expertise in more regions.

So organizationally that's the best way, that's the way we're improving the program. Oh, and finally organizationally, you know, we're getting ready for new gTLDS, right? So we have a plan in place to augment the program in order to address the

introduction of many new registries. We don't expect the first new registry - well, who knows, right - but you know, till 2012 sometime at the earlier to actually start operations. And so we have a plan in place that we haven't executed yet in order to accommodate that.

And then there's a couple other specific initiatives. So a lot of work, analysis and statistical analysis of WHOIS data problem reports has occurred over the last six months, and so we're making very specific improvements to the WHOIS data report system in order to the extent possible make that a tool for improving WHOIS accuracy.

And then at this meeting and other meetings we're working with the community to clearly define the obligation of registrars and registries so there's universal understanding of what we're doing. And then finally we're also working with law enforcement, too, to parse the difference between the role in law enforcement and ICANN's role in enforcing its agreements.

Is that it for online? So great. So again, a small group but actually a list of great bullets that came out of this and other meetings here.

So going forward we're going to sit down to work with this Board Working Group that's been formed to reformat this Plan in a way that achieves the goals we talked about later and reorganize the Plan, so you'll see a new format and with new substance to the

Plan published shortly; and then for public comments so we can submit it to the Board.

So pretty straightforward, you know – we’re probably halfway through our consulting process. All the constituencies represented in this room, and I don’t know about on the phone but I would believe so, will have another chance for an interactive consultation on the Plan before we finish it off. So unless there’s any other comments, again, small but mighty group. But the contributions, you know, Rosemary, thanks a lot and when you get outside thank Avri for me, okay? Thanks very much.

[End of Transcript]