TORONTO – DNS Risk Management Framework Working Group
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ICANN - Toronto, Canada

BILL GRAHAM: Okay. We have the all clear. So this the DNS Risk Management Framework Working Group public session. The agenda today is really to present to you the consultants who have been engaged to do the work on helping us set up this framework and have them walk through some information about their plans for the study.

The objective really is to get feedback from you in the room as to how this is all shaping up, do you have any information that we should be aware of that would be useful in conducting this study and that sort of thing.

With that I will introduce the members of the group who are here. I am Bill Graham, I am on the Board. This is Ray Plzak to my left here, also ICANN Board. Ram Mohan from Afilias, and also ICANN Board. Roelof Meijer from SIDN also on the working group, and at the end there, Patrik Faltstrom of the SSAC. I remembered. And with Netnod; right? Excellent.

So we're here to listen to you and not listen to us. And with that, I'd like to introduce the consultants working with us whose names I forgot to write down.

I'll ask them to introduce themselves.

First names I remember.

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.

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VAUGHAN RENNER: I'll help you out. Vaughan Renner and Colin Jackson from Westlake Governance.

BILL GRAHAM: There we go. Had we had that, we could have done this.

Vaughan and Colin are here with us. Richard was unable to join us from New Zealand for the Toronto meeting but he will be working on the project.

So with that, I will turn it over to you, Vaughan and Colin.

Thanks.

VAUGHAN RENNER :   Thank you very much. Well, as you can see, there are three of us on the project team. We are four days officially into this project, so we are here absolutely to learn rather than try to tell you too much about where our thinking is at. We have a very short presentation. This is the first slide, just to give you a view about who we are.

Westlake Consulting is a boutique governance consultant from Wellington, New Zealand, miles and miles from here and in a very different time zone which we've struggled with a bit over the past few days.

Let me just pass over to Colin who is going to run through a couple of slides, and then we are really keen to get input from everybody that's here.

Thank you.

COLIN JACKSON: Thank you, Vaughan. I'm Colin. I will just add that the reason we've put our ugly mugs up on the screen there is we're rather hoping you will approach us and come and tell us things. It's not mere vanity.

Now, we're focusing on risk management framework for the Domain Name System, and that's a very interesting thing when you start to unpack it. But the first question is what do me mean by risk management framework. And rather than read out my slide, I'm going to assume that -- and people can all see that, the point is that this is -- this is a framework. We're not offering to work our way through all the many and varied risks on the DNS because there are people in this community who are far better qualified to do that, but we are doing here is putting together a framework for assembling these risks, for managing them, and so that decisions can be made about whether some of them should be mitigated and what priority should be associated with that.

There are a lot of risk frameworks out there. This is -- Saying it's a solved problem is perhaps overstating the case but it is something that is widely done.

There are risk frameworks that have been endorsed by various standards bodies or industry bodies. They all look pretty much like that one in the middle, which I might add you're not expected to be able to read at that range, but it does say the kind of things you would normally expect: establishing contacts, identifying risks, analyzing risks. The reason why they're not all the same, different frameworks, is that the problem domains vary.

The domain here -- and I appreciate I'm overusing the word "domain" but bear with me, please. The domain here, the DNS, is fascinating and peculiar in the real sense of that word in that we have an environment where the DNS is distributed not just geographically and technically but politically, for some value of that word. The DNS, as we all know, is operated, maintained by a diverse array of organizations and people.

Typically, a risk management framework tends to assume that the person operating that framework has control over everything they are trying to manage.

Now, that is perhaps a heroic assumption in this case.

So that is one of the factors which is going to cause us many interesting discussions in our team as we go ahead and come up with a framework for management in the Domain Name System.

Of course the other things are the highly technical nature of some of the risks; the balance -- the notion that technical risks actually have to be balanced against political risks, and, to some extent, by taking the most technically conservative path is perhaps the most politically courageous path on occasion and we would need to find some mechanism for

balancing those or at least a way of offering a way for sensible decisions to be made about that balance.

From here, the process. Obviously there's a tick against our first item: Come to Toronto to gather information.

And I will emphasize that we want to hear from people. We have only hours left in Toronto.

We will be sitting in the next session, the DSSA, and then after that we will be in the exhibition hall and we welcome people coming to see us.

The next item is looking at a principles approach. We imagine that the first stop we will do is brainstorm a set of principles, and I should add we will be working with the working group throughout on this.

Candidate frameworks. Now, I should say there has been a lot of fine work already done on risk management framework by the DSSA, and there is no assumption in our mind that that will be automatically swept away and replaced. In fact, that would be silly.

We will certainly be building on that.

Whether we take over the modified NIST framework that DSSA used, we don't yet know, but it's certainly a strong candidate. So we will pick that up as input on our way through this process.

Clearly, the multistakeholder environment, which I've already alluded to, is one of the major factors we're going to have to bear in mind. And then we will execute a few example risks that we will get from the DSSA

practice through this to see how it works out. And we will present at Beijing, at the Beijing meeting in April.

That's really all I have to say about what we're doing. I have one further slide, though, which is "Let's talk."

So here we are, we have, as I say, hours left here. We're always on e-mail just like everyone else is always on e-mail. And, in fact, coming from a tiny country down at the bottom of the Pacific, e-mail is really important to us.

So thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Chair and that's the end of my remarks.

Okay. Maybe just back the slide up one to -- maybe two. Yeah, there, I'm thinking that might be a good one to keep on the screen while we talk. Thanks.

So there is the plan I would appreciate it if you have any comments on the plan overall or how any of these different tasks could be accomplished. Are there any documents or organizations that Vaughan and Colin and Richard should be aware of as this goes forward.

Roelof, please.

ROELOF MEIJER: Yeah, I have -- well, I hope Mikey is going to ask the other question I have in mind. It has to do with the slide we discussed at the previous ICANN meeting, remember, where your working group has set out we think that this is the work that the DNS risk management framework

should do. I think it would be good that we get that slide and get your opinion about that.

My question would be in your introduction you mentioned that the DNS is a very complex environment to do a risk management or to build a risk management framework for, but the focus of this framework is supposed to be limited to the limited technical mission that ICANN has in the DNS. You are aware of that, I think; right?

Do you have any ideas already of how you are going to make the distinction between the whole DNS and the part ICANN is doing in it?

COLIN JACKSON: Yes. That's a good question. I don't have clarity on answer yet.

We're at the stage now where the questions are becoming clear.

I'm afraid it's a little early to expect me to be able to give you a flat-out answer for it.

BILL GRAHAM: Mikey.

MIKEY O'CONNOR: Mikey O'Connor for the basement.   And toiler in the basement of working groups. That's my role for ICANN, and I am very involved in the DSSA, and I sort of want to make a statement more than a question, and that is there has been a lot of conversation about the respective roles of the DSSA and the work of this committee, and as far as I can tell in

conversations with consultants and with your chair and with a lot of the members of this working group, there is absolutely no daylight between the position that this group is taking and the position of the DSSA on who is doing what.

So let me try and take a crack at it, because I've been at it for longer than you guys, and so I might be able to use words that will help you.

I've talked to these lads a lot, and as far as I can tell, everything is fine. That's sort of the short version but let me give you the longer version.

One way to look at this is that there are two projects running, and if we aren't careful, we might accidentally commingle our scopes, and neither of us want to do that, for all the obvious reasons. But I do not think there is commingling of the scopes. I think that the DSSA and the DNS Risk Management Framework Working Group alternate on scope.

So in terms of this process, the scope of this committee is broader than the DSSA.

The DSSA is focused on risk assessment. We don't do all the rest of that stuff. We don't do -- treat the risks, we don't evaluate the risks, we don't analyze them much.

We identify them. We do a little analyzing. We don't do any monitoring. And because we have kind of a blabbermouth chair, we do a fair amount of communicating. So we're narrower and we communicate about the narrow thing that we do.

So from a scope of the framework, what parts of the framework? This committee's group is broader than DSSA. On the other hand, the

reverse is true when you take a look at the scope of the DNS. And this is the point that was just made, which is the scope of this committee is to look at the DNS in the context of the limited technical mission of ICANN.

And so if it's inside the ICANN boundary, that's what these folks are building a framework to address.

The DSSA is broader in scope.

We are analyzing and doing a risk assessment of the DNS. We've put some edges around it, but it's much, much broader than just the ICANN part of the DNS.

And both groups have spent essentially the interim between Prague and now clarifying all that. And I'm pretty comfortable as the chair of the DSSA that we're very clear on the edges of this, and that we're not trading on each other much at all. So that's sort of the long version of everything's fine.

BILL GRAHAM: Thanks, Mikey. And I have to say that the working group and Patrick Jones to my right here, who I should have introduced earlier, our staff support, spent quite a bit of time working on a definition of the DNS for this purpose when we met earlier in the year.

And I think we came up with a pretty tight definition of what the DNS consists of for the purpose of this examination.

So we've all spent time, I think, with the folks from Westlake walking through that and being sure it's clear to them.

So I agree with you -- long way of saying I agree with you. I think we've got a pretty good understanding of where the bounds are and what work has been done.

Anyone else?

Questions or comments?

Please.

JONATHAN CURTIS: Hi there.

BILL GRAHAM: Could you identify yourself for the scribes, please.

JONATHAN CURTIS: Yep, it is Jonathan Curtis with the CRTC. And I'm just wondering if there's room for when you get to evaluating the risks, before you treat it, is there like a spot where you're going to evaluate the options for treating that risk? You know, I don't know whether that's articulating -- do you know what I mean by that? And then a sort of feedback loop that -- maybe that's in the monitoring and review but I will let you –

VAUGHAN RENNER: Yeah, it was my hope I had got that too small for anybody to read it.

[Laughter]

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Thank you. You are right. Really that is thrown up by way of an example to try and demonstrate what we mean by a framework, and you are right. There is work to be done on that. That is purely an example, and we would certainly look at such things as a process for generating options, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

JONATHAN CURTIS: Thank you.

BILL GRAHAM: Anyone else? This may be the shortest session in ICANN history.

                        [Laughter]

                        Mikey, please.

MIKEY O'CONNOR: Let me address another issue that a lot of people have asked me about over the last several months, and that is the question of methodology that may fall out.

                        One of the things about the DSSA is that when we got into doing our risk assessment, we realized that we needed a methodology in order to do it.

                        And in the fullest spirit of building your airplane while you fly it, we quickly ran around looking for a methodology that we could use to do our risk assessment. And our criteria were different -- and this is the thing I really want to emphasize. The criteria we used to select our

methodology were it's got to be free, it's got to be open to the community and it's got to be in English because the guy that was doing most of the tailoring is not multilingual.

And so we landed on the NIST methodology, which is pretty close to aligned to the ISO series methodologies but has the advantage over the ISO being free. And we tailored it to the DNS so that we could do what we're chartered to do.

However -- and people have said, Well, what are these people going to do? Are they just going to throw all that work away? (Making noise)

Everybody got kind of bent out of shape about that. And so I want to sort of put that issue on the table and then put it to rest because I don't want -- and I'm speaking personally now, not as the chair of the working group because I haven't checked with the working group on this. But I don't want the DNS risk management framework group to feel constrained by the choices that we make.

We did this almost accidentally. We did it because we sort of had to do it in order to get our work done. But this project is chartered to do that. It's the primary deliverable of the project. And I'm confident that whatever comes out of this project we will just steal because it will be close enough to what we're already doing and it may be much better, in which case we'll just steal it.

And so if you all want to steal our stuff, that's great. And if we can help you steal it, we will certainly help you do that.

But I don't want you to feel any pressure from the community that you're going to get anybody's feathers in a bundle if you elect not to use what we've done because I think that would be a disservice to the mission of both of our groups.

And so to the extent that there's an issue there and you're unhappy with what I said, I will see you outside about that.

But I want to make it really clear that there is absolutely no pressure from the DSSA to constrain what you're doing on this, and we'll just steal whatever work you do. Hopefully, it will be free so that we can steal it back because we are constrained. We can't take proprietary methodologies because our constituencies can't afford to pay for -- I mean, ICANN can afford to pay a fee for a methodology. But if you could do it in such a way that you would steal bits of it and put it out into the world, that would be helpful.

BILL GRAHAM: Thanks, Mikey. That definitely makes sense. And, of course, the purpose of doing this work and establishing the framework is so that there can be a well-functioning risk management function built up within the -- within ICANN staff itself. So that's the -- what will finally be done with the framework. So it's important that it be something that can be freely stolen.

Anyone else?

Patrick.

PATRICK JONES: Patrick Jones from staff. Julie Hammers have posted a comment through remote participation chat. She says that she thinks Mikey's got the issues covered. However, she would like to make a comment that she's had the opportunity to work with this team in the past and have confidence in their capability. So she says: I think ICANN has chosen well. So thank you, Julie.

Before I turn it over, Bill, can you talk a little bit, and the rest of the working group members, about the timing once the framework is developed and presented, the life cycle that might be expected for the working group and where this effort may transition in oversight within the board. And also from a staff side I can talk about that.

BILL GRAHAM: Okay. I will take a shot at it and invite other members to pitch in.

The risk management framework working group was put together at the board level to make sure that this got a high level of profile and oversight and that the job gets done in a timely fashion because there have been a number of internal and external expressions of concern about the stability of the DNS and whether risks are being appropriately managed. That's why it is a board working group.

We reached out into the community and added non-board members so that we would have the expertise we needed to oversee this. And the charter then of the group is to get this project done and see it passed into staff and proper risk management function up and running.

At that point, I would see this particular working group going away and the continuing oversight probably would go into the board Risk Committee. Seems to me that's the appropriate place for it to live, and we don't need to continue existing as a working group. This really is seen as being a time-limited and certainly functionally limited group.

Anyone else?

Olivier, please.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Bill. Olivier Crepin-Leblond. I am one of the co-chairs of the DSSA. I was a few minutes late. Just checking on the timetable of the actual work of Westlake. What is your time frame on to when your deliverables will arrive?

COLIN JACKSON: Thank you. We will deliver the framework at the Beijing meeting.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: That's the end. Beyond that you're not remaining involved, beyond the –

COLIN JACKSON: Our engagement also has potential for us to assist with the first execution of the cycle through the risk framework. I haven't focused on that at this meeting. That is a matter for the working group to determine.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Okay. Another question.

BILL GRAHAM: We definitely see this as phase 1, coming back to the community for comment but essentially finishing at Beijing. I'm sure there will be some shining and polishing to do after that just to make sure we've got it right.

There's been consideration of a possible phase 2. But since that's currently outside the mandate of the working group, not too much more than talking about it.

You have another question?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: And it's Olivier again for the transcript. Second question, unfortunately I'm going to have to leave and miss the DSSA session because I have to chair another meeting.

But with regards -- when your work takes place, I would like to extend or remind you that the DSSA working group is always open to liaise if there are any questions as to the work that it will have done. I'm sure Mikey will do a fantastic job in the next session to take us through the latest developments. But it is certainly interested in lending a hand if there are any questions.

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COLIN JACKSON: Thank you. I should say that we have already spent quite some time with Mikey and other members of the DSSA. But we do appreciate the support and assistance it is giving us. And we are particularly appreciative of the approach that the DSSA is taking of letting us be free to go out and do what does appear to be the best for the mission and as Mikey stressed a few moments ago. Thank you.

BILL GRAHAM: Thank you. Other comments or questions?

I don't see any. Nothing online?

Okay. Well, maybe the best thing to do then is to adjourn if there is nothing further to say. Vaughan and Colin are available for one-on-one chats now until the plane leaves later today, I guess. So thank you for the presentation.

VAUGHAN RENNER: Thank you very much. Other than we are sitting in the DSSA session that's coming at 11:15. Thank you very much.

BILL GRAHAM: Mikey?

MIKEY O'CONNOR: I want to put in a plug for the DSSA session which is likely to go right till the very end, an hour and a half. Don't go away. It is the perfect break.

But don't leave because we've got stuff that we want to show you and get your help with.

BILL GRAHAM: Mikey is now locking the doors.

[Laughter]

And this session is adjourned. Thank you very much.

(Meeting adjourned.)

>> END OF SESSION