
BUENOS AIRES – Global Domains Division Update

Monday, June 22, 2015 – 14:00 to 15:30

ICANN – Buenos Aires, Argentina

AKRAM ATALLAH:

Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to the GDD update.

I hope that now, you know, this is the third time we do this update. And I hope that you're getting familiar with the idea of talking about what we've achieved since last meeting, what we are trying to accomplish here in the meeting and our set of goals for the next -- before the next meeting. So we'll walk through the same process today. And we will leave enough time for questions, I hope, and that we can address them all for you today. Okay?

Basically, since Singapore, we set out a scorecard on what we're going to -- a set of goals that we wanted to achieve. And today we will talk about what we've accomplished and what still needs -- remains to be accomplished and a few things that maybe we postpone.

So from last meeting we had -- we achieved about 55% of our goals. And by that I mean that they were completely finished during the trimester. There are a few ongoing projects that we'll probably finish in the next few weeks as well as some that got postponed for one reason or another. And we can provide you more details on each one of these things as we move forward.

Since ICANN 52, we've done many different things. But I will focus on a few key accomplishments.

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The technical team, led by David Conrad, delivered some identifier security operations training across all of the ICANN regions. They also did the public consultation on draft plan for rolling the root scone, DNSSEC, key signing key. So these are major accomplishments for the technical team.

As you heard earlier, David Conrad has actually been promoted to report to the CEO. So, therefore, him and his team will not be part of the GDD moving forward. So I won't have to report on his goals and how well he did next meeting.

Next we've -- okay. That's not working. Okay. Thank you.

On the IANA side, we've executed the plan to upgrade the cryptographic hardware for signing root zone. We published a booklet describing the IANA functions. And you will be able to get a copy of that here, I heard, on your way out. And also we met all the service level agreement for names, numbers, and protocol parameters.

As you heard earlier, we have a quarterly update, a quarterly call that we do about a month after each quarter. So we close our books, and we report on our financials but also on our operational achievements every quarter.

And here you can see a set of numbers that were reported on the 23rd of April for the Q3 metrics in IANA. And you can see how many requests we've gotten. And we've seen a large number of -- a large increase, if you want, on the name side, of course, with all the new gTLDs coming online and the new delegations that will increase over

time as well. And so it's important to report that we've been able to absorb all of these increases in IANA operations without any degradation of our SLAs. So great job for the team there.

On the domain name industry engagement side we have actually done a few things as well. And these are a few samples of the achievements.

The standing panel -- the PICDRP standing panel has been expanded from, I think, three panelists to seven panelists now. And we will continue to work on this.

But that's a great achievement. The PICDRP panel has not been exercised yet. We have not used the panel. But we are ready for when some complaints come our way. So that's a great move forward.

The new gTLD program reviews issued the first survey. And this is a global consumer survey that has a lot of information. Now, I know a lot of people will be questioning the methodologies and the questions, how clear the questions were for the users. But the important part to notice is that this is a consumer survey that was done earlier in the year, and it will be repeated 12 months later. And the idea of that is to gauge the awareness, increase from the beginning of this year to beginning of next year of the gTLD program. And so, although maybe anybody that will look at any survey will have suggestions of doing it differently or better, focus on the repeatability of the survey 12 months later and to see the increase and the improvements in the awareness of the new gTLD program, I think that's the key there. And I think that still the survey itself has very meaningful and very important findings in there.

The -- talking about surveys, the registry engagement test team lunched a survey to measure their performance. So, as you know, we've been improving our engagement with our contracted parties both on the registry side and the registrar side. And we have people dedicated to these functions.

So we've put this survey together to see how that's working for the registries. And, hopefully, we can get some feedback and continuously improve our performance there.

On the registrar accreditation, we have had initiative to look at how we can help increase participation from the development world in the registrar accreditation program. And we've actually finalized some recommendations there to revise agreement to help underserved regions.

And on the WHOIS we finalized with the community and clarified the provisions for registries and registrars agreement on the WHOIS SSAC advisory.

We call the universal acceptance and the IDNs as initiatives because these are fairly new but important and critical endeavors that we need to make sure are successful for ICANN to continue to be successful in the marketplace.

The universal acceptance, as you all know, is critical not only for the new gTLD program but also for the IDN success. So, from that perspective, it's critical that we all participate in this. And there is a meeting in this -- there is a session in this meeting to actually help

move this forward. Please do participate. The universal acceptance initiative will not be -- will be as successful as the number of participants from this community. So we need you all to participate so that we can actually reach out to other communities in order for us to make improvements in the universal acceptance.

So we've made some progress. We've sat the steering group now. We've also had an executive briefing paper produced. And we've set up an email address. So small but important steps in the right direction here, and we need to make more progress. But we need your help in there.

On the IDN side, I think there has been a lot of progress there. As you very well know, there are a lot of different scripts. And the way this process is working is we broke it down into separate scripts. And then at the end of the day we're going to take all of the input from all of these scripts and integrate them into a set of rules in order for us to address a lot of the IDN issues.

So that's happening. And there will be sessions on that as well. And we've added now Armenian, Ethiopic, Khmer, Myanmar, Thaana, and Tibetan scripts to the repertoire. That means, basically, the IDN is gaining momentum and gaining a lot more interest. So very exciting news.

On the new gTLD program, we are -- we continue to drive toward closing this round.

As you can see, we right now see about 1277 potential unique strings. We've already delegated 660. We have contracted an additional 318 strings. There are 259 in contracting and 40 just prior to contracting.

So we're very close to finishing this program. And I'm very happy to say that just previously in the -- in our session with the Board, with the NGPC board, we actually closed on the category 2 advice, the GAC advice category 2, which was holding us up on exclusive generic use of TLDs. And the resolution should be published shortly. And that will allow us to move these strings forward as well.

So I think that we're making a lot of progress here.

The 600 delegations, as you can see, are pretty well distributed across the globe commensurate, of course, with the number of applications from every region. And that progress, hopefully, will be much more intensified in the next -- before we see you in Durban -- in Dublin, sorry.

On the auction proceeds, it's very important to note that, from our perspective, the proceeds are segregated. They're not commingled with the new gTLD funds or the operating funds of ICANN. And those proceeds are set aside until there is a consensus on how to use them and what to use them for.

So I think that the community's already engaging in a dialogue on how to dispense of the funds but also what to dispense it on.

And these two questions need to be answered before we can, you know, start spending these resources. And the community and the

Board are working on that, and I hope that this meeting will start this dialogue and we get to a good understanding on how to best spend these resources.

So far it's important to note that we've closed about 88% of the contention sets. So out of 233, there are 204 that were resolved. And since Singapore, 40 sets resolved. And there are 29 sets remaining. 13 sets in total resolved via ICANN auctions, and 3 resolved since Singapore in ICANN auctions.

The net proceeds to date, 58.8 million. All of this information is available for you to look at on the Web site. And there is a session Wednesday that will start the dialogue on the spending of the proceeds. Please participate. Every opinion counts.

On the operations side, we've actually released the two-character requests. And we processed about 154 requests for 498 TLDs. I think we've released over 210,000 combinations of two letters to TLDs.

In the meantime, there were some objections on those two characters by some governments. We actually did not release those that were objected by governments. But we are finalizing a process that will allow us to go back to the governments that have objected and ask them to provide the rationale behind their objection, therefore, allowing our registries to provide, basically, solutions to the confusability issues that the governments are concerned about and, based on those, decide whether we can release them or not. As per our contract, the two characters are -- the registries have the ability to release these two characters if they mitigate any confusability issues.

And so, therefore, we want to have a mechanism that's very clear on how to explain the confusability issues that the governments are concerned about but also providing the registries with an ability to mitigate those confusability issues and then make sure that we look at both and arbitrate and release those requests.

We've developed a customer satisfaction survey tool so that ---

Joint facilitation but I think that it's important to see this work in action and if you participate in a lot of these meetings, you will see our staff engaging with you and helping you move your issues forward as well.

We are working on the new gTLD program reviews and there is a session on that on Monday, today, right after this. Please participate. There is a lot of work being done here, both internally and externally, and so it's very important that we get everybody involved in here to participate. We want to hear about your experiences as well as what we -- you know, as we develop the best practices for the next round as well as we work with the GNSO on the policies and the next steps for the next round.

On the universal acceptance, as I mentioned earlier, there is a session later on today. Please participate. This is a very important initiative.

The IDN, again a session on Wednesday. Critical. Two sessions actually. Please, do participate and support the IDN. It's -- whether you are a user of a different script or not, the next generation of users of the Internet will be coming from people who use different scripts

than Latin and whether you're a business that wants to participate in that or whether you're a -- you're a user of another script, please participate and learn from this and make sure that we hear your voice in that process.

On the registration data access protocol, there is a session also on Wednesday and this is very important. The RDAP will be the next step for the WHOIS. We need to make sure that we're all aligned so that we can roll it out and use it all together in a way that's interoperable and beneficial. And RDAP is actually a good protocol that uses -- that provides us with a lot of redundancy and more interoperability and usability for anybody to be able to access the WHOIS data. So it's very important that we see progress there.

The registrars and law enforcements, this is a very important session also to see how we've implemented a lot of new requirements in the 2013 RAA. It's important to see the benefits of these requirements and then also understand what can be done better there as well. So this is a very good session that's happening on Wednesday.

And last but not least, we have the thick WHOIS policy implementation on Wednesday and the next step for the WHOIS accuracy reporting which is a -- something that we're working on per the review team's recommendation and the GAC advice and we're trying to put these -- these accuracy reporting online for you to be able to look at and see how we're improving in that area.

Now that we move on to the what we're going to achieve between now and Dublin. And these are only a few of the goals, not all of the

goals. The orange colors depict the things that we've already had committed for that are going to be finished -- were supposed to be finished before Argentina but we are going to finish them in the next few weeks. So on the IANA side, we are refreshing the pool of trusted community representatives. As you know, we have the keys distributed with a bunch of community people and they travel from all over the world to actually do the key -- the DNS key change, and we need to make sure that this pool is continuously full so that we can have the volunteers that we need to actually make this program successful.

We are going to execute on the plan to add additional HSMs. So HSMs is hardware security modules that we use for the key signing key. So it's important that we refresh these. And we did the refresh. Now we want to add some additional modules.

And then we have the regular customer survey on IANA. It will be performed in the next trimester and we will hopefully be able to show you the results of that next meeting.

On the industry engagement and services, we will post the final policy and announce implementation of the IRTP C. Now this -- this recommendation has some issues from the community -- are starting to surface on this initiative. We need to make sure that we do it right and we -- we do not have any problems as we are implementing it, but hopefully we can get it done all in the next trimester.

We have a lot of case -- cases that we log in for the users and we want to improve our case management and make sure that we provide you with the data and our performance on those.

And then finally, we want to -- not finally, but this is a very important thing that we want to do, accomplish next trimester. We have developed an API for the registries to actually be able to access our SLA monitoring system so that when they see a problem they can have access to the same data that we have internally so that they can debug their problems and fix their operations just like we would be right now guiding them and they would have to wait for us to get in with them on a phone call or something to facilitate this. We want to give them direct access so that they see the same thing that we see, and hopefully facilitate and accelerate the resolution of these issues.

On the new gTLD program, we want to execute Registry Agreement for brand applicants with the 29 July contracting deadline. So in the next -- in the next month we have a set of registries that will need to sign their agreements. So we will have -- we are expecting a large number of agreements to come in our way, and we need to make sure that we have the capacity to handle them all and not -- not have anything go past the deadline. So we're gearing up for this. We also want to deploy a Continuing Operations Instrument amendment process. We've got -- we've been asked by a few of the registries that -- the ability to change their COI given that they -- their expectations -- their original expectations were not accurate and there is -- there -- they're much lower than projections and they have some money tied up in the COIs so we want to provide them with an amendment process that

allows them to address that issue while they stay in compliance with their contract but they -- allowing them to remove some of the money that is tied up in the COIs. So we would be rolling out this next trimester. Also, we want to get more of the signed contracts into delegation, get them through the testing process and make sure that they get delegated in the next trimester.

We will publish the first economic study report on the performance on the new gTLDs. This again is the same thing as a survey that we've done. The first report will talk about competition and the economic issues of the gTLD program. Then we do one a year later and we measure the difference and see if that -- those trends are going the right direction.

We want to start a root stability study and publish the program implementation review report. And that's not going to be happy reading. I think that the size of this report is growing by the minute and -- but, you know, hopefully you'll have as much insight as we've had during our operation of the new gTLD program after this report is out.

And then on the operations and customer service side, we are targeting to deploy the customer satisfaction survey. We are also targeting to measure and -- set up the measures and report on the new key performance indicators for the phone service that we're providing, both on the quality and customer satisfaction, make sure that it's working like you would like it to work. And then keep enhancing it, and hopefully you will test us and you will give us your

feedback. And then we want to, of course, improve the effectiveness of some of the key processes that we have in place for you and, you know, for example the -- we're improving the two-character process, release process, and there's some online stuff we're doing -- we're making improvements on that we will target for next trimester.

On the initiatives side, universal acceptance is first and foremost very important for us again. And we will define our success factors hopefully through -- with your help and starting this session and then we can start making measurements and we'll be able to report our progress next trimester. And then on the IDN program, this is a bit ambitious but I hope that we can release the first version of the label generation rule set for the Internet's root zone. And WHOIS, finally publish the WHOIS implementation advisory group report, and that's also critical because the WHOIS has so many initiatives and we want to make sure that we pace ourselves and get the work done carefully and in the right order so that we don't have to redo things multiple times.

Now, as you all know, we've been putting an information booth here at every meeting, so the information booth this meeting is on the first floor near the registration. Please visit and ask your questions. Schedule an appointment with GDD staff or discuss any operational issues or give us any feedback that you want. That's what the team is there -- is doing. It's there for your support. And there -- they'll be there pretty much from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day except on -- on Thursday. So please use it and give us your feedback.

Finally, thank you, and I will take questions, if you have any. Please step up to the mic, or if we have a portable mic, we can also take questions. Or come and join me here and you can ask your questions also sitting down, if you prefer. So, please.

Maybe we're doing such an excellent job that I -- we've answered all of your questions. Please.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Testing. Hi. You mentioned the API integration for the monitoring. Has that been done or is there a release date for that?

AKRAM ATALLAH: Do we have a release date for the API? Is Francisco here? Dublin. So as usual we will not do anything until the last day possible.

[Laughter]

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (Off microphone).

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Thank you, kindly.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So the API is being developed and we -- we will have it by Dublin. We want to test it as well and then make sure that it's working. But it will be ready by then.

JORDYN BUCHANAN:

Jordyn Buchanan with Google. I was so close to the mic I couldn't resist. So there's a number of places in the presentation where you talk about measuring customer satisfaction. Can you give a -- shed a little bit more light on you're going to go collect -- two questions. Number one is you're going to do one-time surveys and collect some data about how people are feeling, I guess, which is great. It's probably good information for you. What are you going to do with that information? And number two is, have you given thought to a more continuous process to be collecting customer satisfaction information about every interaction with the GDD as opposed to just doing it periodically?

AKRAM ATALLAH:

So actually these are ongoing programs. So the surveys that you are talking about are not one-time surveys. They're ongoing surveys. So as you -- for example, as you reach us online, we're working on introducing the survey at the end of your interaction so that you can always give us feedback. But also in the phone service always also give you the opportunity to provide feedback on a regular basis. And we are always engaged, so you have your team. We always look forward for your feedback on anything that we do. And as we will post some of our SLAs online, we are -- we already have the tool available to -- to post -- I sound very loud in my own ears, so -- so we're trying to post surveys online for you to provide instant feedback on a regular basis so that we can continue to improve things. So absolutely, we --

we will take these inputs that we get and we will fine-tune the way we're doing work with you, the way we interact, and what our priorities should be as well. So use the feedback mechanisms to give us both what's important as well as the things that we could do better.

JORDYN BUCHANAN: So it sounds like -- the answer to my first question it sounds like -- so the answer to my second question sounds like you're already doing that. Great. And the answer to first question it seems like you're saying it's you're just using this information as internal guidance to better tune your internal processes, is that --

AKRAM ATALLAH: We're using it as a tool for continuing improvements. So as we get your feedback, then we will prioritize our work based on that feedback, right? So if we have a -- if we're releasing a service and then we're going to work on a 2.0 of that service, it's important that we get your feedback in order for us to say what is going to be included in that 2.0 of that service so that we can improve on it and get you what you need. Okay? Thank you.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Hi. Anne Aikman-Scalese with the IPC. I think you mentioned a forthcoming resolution with respect to exclusive use of Generic Top Level Domain terms, and mainly because I'm just not up on where we are on that, I was wondering whether there are any conditions with those going forward on an exclusive use basis for generic terms other

than that they simply not be limited to registrations for entities controlled by the registry.

AKRAM ATALLAH:

So basically we receive GAC advice that required -- I don't -- don't quote me on the specific words here, but the advice said something like the TLDs in general should be open but general -- TLDs in general should be open, and in the case where they want to be exclusive use of the TLDs, it has to be in the public interest, or something along these lines. So implementing such an advice is pretty difficult. So we actually now have, I want to say, five strings that are still stuck because we have not addressed this GAC advice. We have a resolution that should be public -- publicized today, I think, that will address this tomorrow. Tomorrow that will address this issue. And hopefully allow for the five strings to move forward. But more importantly, three strings out of the five are actually in contention and, therefore, there are other parties who do not want to be closed generics that are being held up because of that, so we finally got the resolution that allows us to move this process forward. And we will announce this tomorrow.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE:

And so does that involve a set of Public Interest Commitments that are then enforceable via the PIC DRP?

AKRAM ATALLAH:

So this is policy, so I think that the resolution will be very clear about basically not doing -- developing policy by the Board and, therefore, it

will actually push the development of these policies back to where they belong in the GNSO and it finds a way out for the applicants to move forward.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Thank you.

AKRAM ATALLAH: Thank you.

RUBENS KUHL: Akram, it's Rubens from .BR.

You mentioned a number of registrars already on 2013 contract.

Has that triggered the clauses in the .ORG, .INFO and .BIZ renewals that required them to only operate with 2013 registrars when the number of registrars reached certain conditions?

AKRAM ATALLAH: That's a good question. I don't have the answer to that, but I will look it up and get back to you, Ruben.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you.

AKRAM ATALLAH: Thank you.

WERNER STAUB: Werner Staub from CORE. I have a question about the TLD stuck on hold because of the IRP proceedings, which is maybe only partly a GDD problem, but let's say it is at least partly one.

And one of the problems is that formally, the IRP is a proceeding between the complainant and ICANN. However, the key affected party of course may be another applicant or an entire community, and there is no channel for those parties to at least communicate with ICANN about their concerns. And right now there's a great lack of information about what is going on in those proceedings.

And there's a danger, of course, of important information being missed by the panels because this channel is not open.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So for those who don't know, the IRP is one of our accountability mechanisms, and basically, typically the IRP is between a complainant and ICANN, although it could affect a third party, like an applicant or a registry or registrar.

So basically what you're asking is very important, but I want to get back to you in writing on this question.

WERNER STAUB: Okay.

AKRAM ATALLAH: But I can assure you that our -- our mechanism allows for transparency, and we share a lot of the information that we have with the affected party, and we keep them abreast of the progress because of course they are affected by these proceedings.

At the same time, we cannot share confidential information. But anything that we can share, we do share with them, and we are very transparent with this. And if there is a specific case that you are interested in, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We will make sure that you get to voice your opinions and share it with our team. And the team is more than willing to support the affected parties and share information with them that they can. And we've done that already, I know for a fact, with multiple affected parties when possible, and I don't see why we cannot do that with -- in your case as well. So....

WERNER STAUB: Okay. Thank you.

AKRAM ATALLAH: Okay?

All right. That was easy. I'm starting to like that job. (Laughing.)

All right. If there are no more questions, thank you very much, and looking forward to seeing you and reporting again in Dublin. Thank you.

[Applause]

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