
COPENHAGEN – Introduction to Registry Stakeholder Group

Sunday, March 12, 2017 – 16:00 to 16:30 CET

ICANN58 | Copenhagen, Denmark

PAUL DIAZ:

Welcome, everyone. Thank you for coming back. I'm sorry, we're going to start a couple minutes late since [inaudible] course should get later in the day.

My name is Paul Diaz. I am Vice President of Policy at Public Interest Registry. We manage .org. I am also the current Chair of the Registry Stakeholder Group. So, our session this afternoon, I'll be joined by my colleague Chuck Gomes from Verisign. He's to give you some insight into the Registry Stakeholder Group, the registry operators, where we fit in this ICANN ecosystem. Between Chuck and I, there's quite a bit of history and Chuck is one of the originals, and I've been doing this for quite sometime as well.

So, we would really like to try and be light on the slides in the background and really answer more questions you may have. As I start flipping through, yes, and we will end on time. There's the two of us, the contact info.

The Stakeholder Group – and we'll have a slide in a few moments – where it fits in in terms of the policymaking in ICANN apparatus. But we are the constituent group made up of

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.

accredited registry operators. The Stakeholder Group has four elected officers. You see the four of us here and Samantha, our Vice Chair of Admin has joined us today as well. We're all elected officers, so we run two-year terms. We stagger the terms.

We've expanded. We used to only have one Vice Chair but with the huge growth in the Stakeholder Group's membership, thanks to the new 2012 round, I see some colleagues that are members of that class.

So, we've had tremendous growth. We've gone from 22, 23 members to about 90 now and there's still room to grow because while we represent – our membership – represents a significant majority of all TLDs under management, we still have ways to go to get to a majority representation of all of the accredited registry operators.

And so, with the Fellows program, I'm not sure if we've got some stats on who you all are, where you came from. I don't believe anybody's registry operator. But in another session I will be doing later in the week focused on the Asia Pacific Region. A lot of new TLD operators that hail from the region, in particular, China, were making an extra effort to explain what we are, what we do and what we can do for those folks in this community and hopefully build our presence in the Asia Pacific Region.

So, a little bit more about the Stakeholder Group. We've got a website. Everybody has got a website. That's the whole point. Our website is managed by our Secretariat, Cherie, who's walking around the room in her deputy. A lot of information is available there.

So, for the members, it's a one-stop shop you can go. They can find when we do public comments, membership list rosters or events calendar, all those sorts of things. We try and make it easy for our members to have one place they can go to get the information that they need. It's dynamic. It's updated regularly. And that's one we're proud of. If you compare our website to some of the other constituent groups, you'll see we do make a bigger effort. A lot of the others are looking kind of 1990s. So, let me address this slide and then I'm going to turn it over to Chuck.

This is our breakdown of where our members are based. And again, with the stats that are provided to us in advance, you'll see there's a very big difference between URLs demographic background and the registry operators. Even with the new TLD program, the North America and Western European presence dominance is very distinct or very different than what we're doing in the Fellows program, the Newcomers program have to remember why is that in the kind of – this is not deliberately discriminatory.

For the Registry Stakeholder Group, the first really, the one core criteria is that you're an accredited registry operator. You can't join our group unless you have that status. You've signed an agreement with ICANN, so that means we can do outreach, we can talk to folks from other regions [one up], but if you're not a registry operator, you won't become a member of this group.

As a result, this is where we are in terms of where those operators are based. And again, it's not meant to be discriminatory or anything. It's just what it is. I just wanted to try and draw this distinction because there's far graded diversity from the geographic regions that you all hail from versus ours.

That said, we have seen a marked improvement in Asia Pacific in particular, Africa now and Latin America since the 2012 round. We have a more diverse space. In fact, one of our GNSO Counselors is from Brazil, so we've also seen more diversity in our leadership positions as well.

I'll give Chuck a chance.

CHUCK GOMES:

Hi, he's introduced me, so I won't repeat that. But like Paul said, we'd really like it to be interactive. So let me add just one comment before I see if there are any questions at this point. And, who has the mic? Cherie, do you have the mic? So, if we

could have that ready in case somebody wants to ask a question. We'd like rather respond your questions and bore you with a one-way lecture.

With regard to membership, none of us here are members because members are organizations that are registries. We're all delegates of members of the Registry Stakeholder Group, which makes us a little bit different. Registrars are in the same boat like that. So we're as a lot of the organizations in the GNSO, the members are individuals or companies or something like that. Companies can be in our group if there are registries.

So, anyway, does anybody have a question of what Paul went over? Let me ask a question of you and just how many of you have a domain name? Good. Okay. And, you have a registrar, right? And, the registrars are our customers. Most of you probably knew that but that's kind of a fundamental fact that's important.

Now, what you see in front of you there on either one of the slides right or left is a high-level view of ICANN. Have you seen this slide before because I don't want to...? If you have, then there's no need for me to go through it. So you have seen it before. Anybody not seen it before? Okay, you haven't.

Okay, so you can see the ICANN Board of Directors in the middle there and if you'll look – oh, thank you, Cherie. You said – you

promised me you'd bring that. Okay. So, let's see. I guess I can only do it on one but you can see the different elements of the ICANN organization and the – where are we? There we are. And, we're in the GNSO, the Generic Name Supporting Organization. Okay.

You can see there are the elements of that. It's actually divided into two houses. I think we probably have another slide on that but you can see the makeup of the GNSO are registries, registrars, IP interest and Intellectual Property, ISPs, businesses, noncommercial interests, not-for-profit operational concerns.

And you can see the others. You have the ccTLD registries, many of you are probably familiar with your ccTLD, your country code top-level domain. And, the ccNSO and the GNSO are the two of three policymaking bodies in ICANN. The other one is the ASO, the Address Supporting Organization.

There's less interaction between the ccns and the Gs with the ASO because they have a very different mission. So, the internet protocol addresses, okay.

You can see the other groups that participate. How many of you are just here as an individual, not representing a company? Most of you are representing a company? Okay, we got one back here. Okay. So, one of the areas where you may fit in and they probably already told you this is the At-Large. I don't know if

that works for you or not but let's see. Well, those are the At-Large right there. So there's a place for most people.

Now, we have one reseller here. That's a gap in the structure right now. Because there's no – where do resellers fit? That's a question that hasn't been answered and hopefully it will be in the not too distant future. But that doesn't mean you can't participate in ICANN but there's not a well-defined – you could participate I think as part of the Business Constituency or if you're interested in protecting your IP interest and so forth, you're not.

So, probably, the Business Constituency might be the best fit and I'm not up to speed on their requirements. I know that if you're a registry operator of a certain size, you can't participate. But I don't think there's any. Their new charter that they're working on may have some restrictions there but that's a possibility, okay?

All right. And, anybody have any questions about this slide? I didn't go through every element. We have some technical groups like the Root Server Advisory Committee and the Security and Stability Advisory Committee. Those are made up of specialized experts or in the case of the Root Server Operator Committee, those that operate the root servers around the 13 root servers around the world.

Okay, let's go to the next slide. Oops, I'm pressing the wrong button. Okay. So, here you see – you saw that we're part of the Generic Name Supporting Organization, okay. And it is made up into two houses. The contracted party house, that's the registries, us and the registrars because we all have contracts with ICANN. And then, we have the non-contracted party house, which is just what it says. That's the businesses, the ISPs, the Intellectual Property Interests, the noncommercial organizations and so forth.

I'm not going to bore you with the numbers. If somebody wants to ask a question about that, I'd be happy to go into that but that's just a voting structure. Basically, the GNSO is structured so that contracted parties and non-contracted parties have the same level of voting power in the GNSO. And, we can talk about that if anybody is interested why that is but I won't bore you with it unless you ask.

So, you can see registries, registrars, commercial, noncommercial. So, each of those houses are divided into two stakeholder groups as shown on the bottom row there. Any questions?

Again, I won't go into too much detail here but I told you that the GNSO is one of three policy development organizations in ICANN. If there's any consensus policy and it has to come from

one of those three organizations and in the case of top-level domain names, it's the ccNSO and GNSO that do that. And you can see this is the GNSO process. I won't go through each one of those individually unless you want me to but that basically shows a process.

Now, are all of you familiar with the term of multistakeholder? So, this is part of – anybody not familiar with that term, multistakeholder? So you know that ICANN is a multistakeholder organization. It's very important and because the bottom-up policy development process that is multistakeholder is described is right here for the GNSO. It takes a long time to develop policy because we have interest.

If I was to ask some question of this group on policy, we probably just in this small group here have people with very different viewpoints because you come from different legal jurisdictions, you come from different cultural situations. And so, that's the story of ICANN. It's very diverse. And so, if that looks like it might take a while, it does. Because we have to try and come to consensus on any policies that are recommended. Any questions? Okay.

Policy development happens in the GNSO using working groups. What you see here are active working groups in the GNSO right now. And you may see one that you are actually might have

interest in. And by the way, this is an area where anybody can participate. Every one of you could participate in a working group if you were interested in that. And most of the work happens on e-mail and in teleconference calls, and in more remote regions, they would generally do a call out if you're unable to call in. A lot of times, most of the times, they provide toll-free numbers. But let's just look at that. Again, you don't have to be part of a constituency or a stakeholder group to participate in these working groups. You can do it just as an individual. Cherie.

CHERIE STUBBS: You just answered my question like that that might help.

CHUCK GOMES: Okay.

CHERIE STUBBS: Anybody [inaudible]. Yes.

CHUCK GOMES: Yeah. Quite a few years ago now, the GNSO made it clear that working groups were open to anybody. And oftentimes, you can participate as a member. They don't use voting very much. They'll take polls, which are informal. They're not votes. When it

does come time for final recommendations, they will assess what people specifically support in terms of the recommendations and there's always a chance for minority opinions. But you can also participate in working groups as an observer. Now, you don't have as much options to actively participate but if you want to just watch it for a while and later become a member, that's perfectly possible.

Yes, how do you join a working group? On the GNSO website, they have an e-mail address. So what you can do is go to the GNSO website – by the way, any of us if you wanted to e-mail us, we could tell you that, too. But on the GNSO website, all you got to do is send an e-mail in, say, "I'd like in."

Now, you'll have to submit a statement of interest. They have a form for that to make it easy and that's it. And then, it's up to you to keep track. There'll be a list, an e-mail list for that group and you can track that as actively or as inactively as you want, participate in e-mail discussions. You'll get call information. If you're a member, you can participate in the calls.

And, you can see – I'll just let you look through those working groups. Do any of you have a question about any of those working groups? Maybe a better explanation of what it is? Sherry, I want you to have the mic ready in case somebody has

that, has an interest. Any of those look interesting to anybody, you have a question about it?

CHERIE STUBBS:

Chuck, [inaudible] just have a comment. On the brochure you were given, our website is on this brochure and we have links to the GNSO website and we keep current information on our website about the active working groups, so that's another quick resource if you're feeling a little overwhelmed about connecting with different resources.

CHUCK GOMES:

Thanks, Cherie. I appreciate that. And, notice that these working groups aren't unique to the Registry Stakeholder Group. We have people from the Registry Stakeholder Group participating and probably – I hope all of this. I didn't actually do that check. I happened to be chairing one of them, this one right here, the Next-Generation gTLD Registration Directory Services.

How many of you have heard of WHOIS? Okay, so, another way to define this one would be to call it Next Generation WHOIS, okay? And, that's a complicated one that will go several years. In fact, most of the PDPs – PDP stands for Policy Development Process, okay? Any questions about any of those?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: When a working group is active –

CHUCK GOMES: I'm sorry. What was that?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: When a working group is active, can you still join it?

CHUCK GOMES: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: At any point in the present?

CHUCK GOMES: Any point. Now, it's important to understand that if you come in after it started, it's your responsibility to get up to speed because one of the things that becomes very inefficient as you can imagine, if every time a new person joins, we have to go back and review all of that. It would not be a good use of time. But all the materials, all e-mails, any reports and all that will be on a wiki page generally, so you can get all that. And of course, there are always people to help you do that.

We have in the Policy Development Process, we have great staff support from ICANN that are also very helpful when you join. Okay.

PAUL DIAZ:

Yeah, just to add, Chuck. So the various ICANN departments that you'll need, David Olive's team, the Policy staff, my personal opinion is probably the best people in all of ICANN. They are really, really excellent and they are the ones who support these initiatives.

But to answer your question if you come into – in some of these PDPs, the Policy Development Process and then going on for a year or more already, so they well into it, they always welcome fresh perspective and new blood. Chuck and I – Chuck is currently chairing. I've been Chair of PDPs in the past. To this point, it's uncommon on you to get up to speed. It's very easy to figure out where the group currently stands.

It also creates the opportunity for you if you come in and you do have a different perspective that group is thinking. That's the whole point of the multistakeholder, the bottom-up process. You come in, you convince your colleagues that your perspective, your idea is a good one, that's consensus-driven and the group can adapt that and then move on from there.

Again, strongly encourage participation. Don't think that, "Oh, I'm new. I can't." But nobody has got the secret sauce, the magic way of doing these things. It's all discussion and consensus building and moving forward. When there are very specific technical issues, there are those who have the advice, they get the rest of us up to speed. But for the most part, it's just you've got an idea, you've got a perspective, you work with your colleagues and you move towards a consensus recommendation at the end.

I would note that the PDPs do track participation stats. So if you join in the middle, at the end of the report, they'll have your name as a participant on that and if you're only there for half as much time, there might be a little [asterisk] and say, "That individual joined halfway through," or what have you.

CHUCK GOMES: Thanks. Any other questions? Go ahead. I don't keep the mic.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. No need to. I was going to ask if there's like how many members are generally in a working group and if that's like a fixed number that makes a quorum?

CHUCK GOMES: Good question. There's no limit. This working group that I'm chairing, there are well over 135 members and there are over 100 observers. Now, how many participate actively? Typically, it's much smaller but there are usually a core hopefully represented of the different interest groups. We try to track that to make sure key groups are there.

There's one that's even bigger than that. We saw it today. It was the Rights Protection Mechanisms. That one, IP rights, etc., that one is even larger than the one that I'm chairing in terms of – but again, everybody doesn't participate actively. A lot of the members sometimes are a little more than observers, reality, okay? But we try to keep it balanced so that all impacted parties are involved, otherwise, you get to the end and you miss something.

CHERIE STUBBS: And, to get to your question about a quorum or a level of agreement, most of it is just on rough consensus, right Chuck?

CHUCK GOMES: Yeah. And, in fact, in the GNSO Policy Development Procedures, voting is discouraged until you get to the very end and you have to show the level of support. And by the way, the Registry Stakeholder Group in our charter, it's the same way. We try to

reach to make decisions based on just – anybody object? I mean, can we find it? So, we rarely vote on positions if we can reach a position that most everybody supports.

Sam, thanks for that. And this group right here, what we're doing right now, we've got about 19 tentative conclusions that we come to. All we ask around that is rough consensus. And, as long as it's strong enough, not too weak, no strong objections, we'll accept them but we'll come back and revisit those later when we have to and then we can change them. So, very, very good point.

Maxim, yeah.

MAXIM ALZOBA:

Maxim Alzoba, .moscow. Actually, I have an experience like I wanted to get a grip of how it works, so I joined one of the hardcore groups. It's like about using of country and territory names as TLDs. Only two years, we came to the conclusion that is – it doesn't work, yeah.

But actually, if you join a group, you start reading things, you start asking questions and with time, you will understand the ideas, the terminology, what do they say and what in reality does it mean.

So, just join some group, maybe as an observer, start asking questions, nobody will hate you for that. But if you join as a

member, you will need to participate in calls or send apologies but sending apologies each time it might not work well. Yeah. Basically, that's it.

CHUCK GOMES: Now, you said there's no enforcement of participating calls. It's up to you. Okay. But if you really want to contribute, that's very important. By the way, I don't know if I said this, all calls are recorded. So, if you miss a meeting, you can listen to the recording and then transcribed. So, you – and every – all of us miss meetings. Okay, so that's helpful. Cherie?

CHERIE STUBBS: Well, just a clarification, too. On the transcriptions, aren't they all transcribed in the six UN languages? They are not. Just in English.

CHUCK GOMES: No. Just one of the things that's being talked about, obviously, translation or even is expensive. We're trying to expand that and some of – we're getting better at that but that is – how many are non-English speakers here? We also try to rotate meetings as much as possible so that everybody doesn't always have to call in in the middle of the night.

So, okay. I think we're just about out of time but let me click to the next slide if there is one, okay?

After a policy is approved by the GNSO Council and then approved by the ICANN Board, then it has to be implemented. Implementation Review Teams are then formed to try and work through the process of implementing the policy coming out with recommendations making sure – and I won't go into too much detail there – but you can see up there that several policies are currently in the process of an implementation plan being developed and then ultimately being implemented. Okay.

Now, you can join those, too. Typically, it's people that are directly impacted but that's a pretty open process. Obviously, you need to be familiar with the policy or at least become familiar with the policy to be constructive in that. Any questions on that?

There are tons of resources on the ICANN site. Are they going to be given a presentation?

CHERIE STUBBS: Yes.

CHUCK GOMES: Yes. So you'll get a copy of the presentation, so you'll have these links, you can just scroll at your own leisure and find out more information. Any questions on that?

PAUL DIAZ: Not to be a smart aleck about it but the glossary is probably your best friend for the remainder of the week. We have our own and GNSO provides one. We tried but there are so many acronyms and terms of art in this community that often makes our head still spin and as newcomers, I'm sure it's a challenge. Yeah. Maybe bookmark that one, keep it close on your phone and you can look up what the heck is whatever the acronym that we're using means.

One acronym that you will hear a lot and we didn't touch on, we talked about the Policy Development Process (PDP). When those processes go all the way through and things were implemented, the recommendations are now are in the status of consensus policy. That means that as contracted parties, we, registries or registrar colleagues, we must abide by whatever the community came up with.

There's a newer flavor called a Cross-Community Work Group. Similar concept, people can join but it's important to note as you hear the CCWG acronym used a lot, recommendations that come out of those are not binding on the contracted parties. And

it may seem like a settled difference and not very important to newcomers but for contracted parties, it's actually critical because if one of these CCWGs comes up with a recommendation, we're not obliged necessarily to follow it. We may think it's a good idea and we may do it voluntarily but that's just something because there are a number of initiatives underway under the CCWG framework and you may hear about them throughout the week while you're here.

But again, it's just an important distinction. It's the PDP, those outputs, they become binding on us, these contracted parties. And to date, I think there are about a dozen that reach the level of consensus policy. Some of them may have A, B, C, D multiple steps but ultimately, there's only about a dozen of those things that had made it all the way through and became parts of our contracts with ICANN and the rest of the community.

CHUCK GOMES:

Any other questions? I don't know if how quickly your next session is but if there are a few minutes and you want to hit any of us up the private question, feel free to do that. We're more than happy to do them. Okay.

Thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you guys.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Enjoy your week.

CHERIE STUBBS: Thank you, everyone.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]