

**Transcription ICANN Singapore
New gTLD Applicant Group (NTAG) Meeting
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On page: <http://gns0.icann.org/en/calendar/#feb>

Cherie Stubbs: If everyone would like to have a seat we'll get started. Oh that's interesting. We can start the recording now. And while that's being done I'll just quickly introduce myself, I'm Cherie Stubbs. I'm the Secretariat of the Registry Stakeholder Group. And I would just like to remind everyone if you are speaking to please announce your name for the purposes of the recording or those who may be participating remotely.

And, Nathalie, did we have anyone on remote? Okay. All right, I'll turn the meeting over to Samantha.

Samantha Demetriou: Hi, everyone. Welcome to the New TLD Applicant Group meeting here at ICANN 52 in Singapore. To get started we'll just quickly introduce the ExComm. I'm Samantha. I'm the chair. I work for a company called FairWinds Partners. We applied for dotFairWinds and helped some other brands apply for brand TLDs.

Susan Payne: Hi, I'm Susan Payne. I work for Valideus and I'm a member of the NTAG on behalf of Amazon who are a new TLD applicant. And I'm the Secretary of the NTAG.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba (unintelligible), we are a registry for Moscow (unintelligible), vice chair.

Samantha Demetriou: And we also have Will Ellis who is our - oh, sorry - who is our treasurer who wasn't able to join us for the Singapore meeting but he's here in spirit I guess.

So as you can see from the screen up there we have our agenda for today. Just as a general kind of rule of thumb we want to make sure that there's not too much overlap with the agenda and topics that we go over today and what's going to be discussed tomorrow at the day long Registry Stakeholder Group meeting. There will be, of course, some overlap; there's some common ground there. But, you know, we're trying to reduce the number of repeated conversations for you guys to keep things interesting.

So before we get into the agenda and, you know, start with the updates and stuff, we do have a happy birthday wish to Cherie. So feel free to go embarrass her after the meeting.

((Crosstalk))

Samantha Demetriou: Susan, we're going to pass around a sign-in sheet too to see - so we can keep track of all you guys and email you incessantly. Okay so today we'll start off with a little bit of an update from yesterday's joint ExComm meeting that it was the Registry Stakeholder Group, Registrar Stakeholder Group and NTAG ExComms met with the GDD staff and a few other members of the ICANN staff.

We will then move on to an update and discussion on the future of the NTAG plans. As we do the update from the ExComm meeting we're going to move up Yasmin's update on the GDD feedback scorecard because she needs to leave a little bit early so we'll kind of do that all part and parcel.

And then we also have some members of the GDD staff with us here today who will bring up a couple of issues. I'm actually going to turn it over to Maxim to lead that discussion if that's okay?

And then later on we'll have the ombudsman with us. Susan circulated his most recent report and, you know, it was something that we had invited him to the meeting in - was it London? So we're going to have him back basically to give people a chance to ask him questions, help understand his role a little bit better since a lot of what he has been working on has to do with the new gTLD program.

And then finally we'll wrap up with some update from the different working groups within NTAG. And, you know, at any point feel free to chime in, feel free to come up to the mic and join the conversation. Okay.

So to start off with the update from last night's joint ExComm meeting, one of the first topics of conversation was about the GDD scorecard. And the feedback we got from ICANN staff was that they're getting ready or they'd like to begin to move off of the scorecard to sort of put more I guess long-term processes in place for feedback and make it more of a two-way communication street as opposed to a constant kind of recording mechanism

And so Krista is here if she wants to chime in on anything and update the group. But I guess it think this would be a good point to bring Yasmin in to give her update from the working group and, you know, any reactions that she has to that. And like I said, feel free to ask any questions and chime in.

Yasmin Omer: Okay thanks, Samantha. So as far as the working group is concerned we have been making some good progress with ICANN staff. Early on in the process we did - just of course I guess by way of background relates to the letter that the NTAG and Registry Stakeholder Group and the Brand Registry Stakeholder Group sent to ICANN in June of last year.

And that letter outlined a number of recommendations to improve the level of customer service of the GDD and a system in meeting the requirements of registry operators. Early on we did prioritize a number of recommendations and those related to designating an account manager and having a SLT in place.

And the intention there was to address the key issues that we as registry operators and applicants were facing regarding, one, having opening up communication lines with ICANN and promoting a level of operational predictability for registry operators and applicants.

And I guess that operational predictability would come from the SLTs that were published which would provide a level of transparency to the registry operators.

We prioritized those two efforts. We - account managers were designated before the LA meeting so that was really good to see. And the SLTs were published quite recently, which is also excellent to see.

The - as I said, look, we have been making good progress. I would like to see the progress - I guess from the working group's point of view would like to see the progress sped up a little bit more but understanding of course that there are issues that have led to that.

The - as far as - I don't know, I mean, I wasn't at the - I wasn't at the meeting yesterday but I think having the scorecard there and maintaining the scorecard as a measure of - sorry, as a mechanism to track the

implementation of the recommendations is quite important. And it's important because what we don't - we have developed an iterative process in the scorecards with respect to the implementation of the recommendations.

And that involves firstly assessing - well the GDD assessing the recommendation. That being scoped, implemented and then finally closed off. And it's iterative in that the, for example, before a recommendation is moved from scoping to implementation we work with - we work with staff to ensure that what is being scoped actually is in line with the intention of the recommendation.

And what we're trying to avoid there is having staff implement a recommendation thinking that it's in line with what we actually wanted and that not being the case. So we're trying to make the process as efficient as possible.

The - and of course recognizing that, you know, the needs of registry operators and applicants are evolving so we're trying to make sure that what is being implemented finally is actually in line with what we want.

I will provide a - I know this hasn't been brief but I will provide a more detailed update as the - of what we actually have gone through within the context of the working group tomorrow during the Registry Stakeholder Group call. But I guess this serves as a brief update so if anyone has any questions please come up.

Reg.

Reg Levy: Hi, this is Reg Levy from Minds plus Machines. And I just want to sort of reiterate to everyone here that ICANN is working hard to work for us. And they are - they may be approaching you to watch you use the GDD portal, for example. And I know that that was really helpful for me to understand what their mindset was when they created certain things. And I think it was helpful

for them to understand what I'm doing when I use it and how I use it. So if you have that opportunity please do take them up on it.

Samantha Demetriou: Thanks, Reg. I think that's helpful. Krista, did you want to respond at all?

Krista Papac: Thanks for the opportunity, Samantha. Krista Papac for the transcript. Yeah, so we did get the letter, as Yasmin outlined, the sort of key topics that were in it, in June of last year. And we have undertaken the scorecard effort which has proven helpful both for the staff and for the people that we support which are both applicants and registries.

The majority of the items - there are sort of major buckets of items on the scorecard and most of them have been addressed and closed off. One of the work streams has to do with the tools that support you which are - was initially the GDD portal was sort of the focus of the letter. But that continues to evolve over time because there are other - well the portal itself evolves over time and there are other tools that support you that you guys bring into the conversation.

And that is more of a - the interaction regarding the tools that support you is more of a user's work group like you would have in any other business situation where you have the software development effort and users that are providing feedback on functionalities and features and things like that. And our vision is that that would - it's not even a vision - the reality is that that should continue to go on. The best way for us to build tools that best support you is to continue that engagement and work through that.

I believe that a lot of the timing challenges revolve around the development of those tools and as we're scaling to meet this expanded base of customers it takes time to make sure that we develop those tools appropriately.

As far as the rest of the scorecard goes, again, the majority of those items have been dealt with. And we've gotten to a point where - and we - this was

discussed on the Registry Stakeholder Group call a couple weeks ago, Fadi was there, Akram was there, I'm sure many of you were there. Scorecards are a tool that a lot of us use in our businesses and it can be a very useful tool and in this case it has been.

But sometimes they end up just taking a lot of time, keeping track of things and that takes away from the time of actually getting the work done. And it, you know, from our perspective we've been able to really improve the engagement and the communication and the interaction with all of you and all of our registries.

It's actually kind of a shame that stuff was - all of the things in the scorecard were actually underway at the time that the letter came. But from my perspective, and I think the rest of the staff, our feeling was it doesn't matter if it was underway, if you guys didn't know it was underway that, you know, there's a communication problem.

And so we feel like a lot of that's been corrected and rather than wasting tons of man hours a month tracking and retracking and, you know, going back and forth on the scorecard those hours could actually be dedicated to getting the work done and that we have these really good communication channels now, the NTAG meeting, the Registry meeting.

We have ExComm meetings, we have road shows that we've conducted, we have engagement managers, we have customer support team that is continuing to be built out. That you guys would want us to focus our time on doing the work rather than tracking this scorecard. So I put that out for consideration and that's it.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. Small note to the ExComm meeting - yesterday ExComm meeting - as I remember both sides agreed that scorecard should be cleaned out from the old resolved ICANN and the important things should be separated from small time unimportant things. And thus we expect to have

some interaction with the like cleaning out all the items because if the unresolved items such as severity of case, which is important, and it saves your time and your efforts.

If we have five items to track it's manageable. If we have 200 it's just waste of time. So we recommend to come back to us with the effort to clean it, to make it manageable again.

Krista Papac: Thanks, Maxim. So just one thing I've forgotten there, actually to your point and then I want to come back around because you reminded me of, you know, how do we - if there was no scorecard how do we engage on items, issues, problems, etcetera.

Even narrowing the - so we did talk about, you know, cleaning out the things that are done, which we've kind of been doing but we hide them but - we don't want to lose track of them or lose the record of them. But even if we're tracking five items, tracking for the sake of tracking sort of becomes - even if that takes a few hours it's, you know, it's maybe not - it's not necessarily effective use of people's time.

The - more importantly - which I think this is the thing you guys would really care about is, you know, when there are issues - there's always going to be issues. We're all growing very quickly. Things - the world changes. We have to figure out how to adapt to it both on the ICANN side as well as the applicant and eventually registries side or registries and those of you that are applicants will eventually be registries hopefully.

So as those issues come up we propose, you know, the way that we handle them is kind of how we're doing it now with those things that are not on the scorecard where we talk about them, you know, they get raised to myself and the team. We talk about them in the Registry Stakeholder Group. Sometimes we're able to address them right then and there.

And other times they're bigger, deeper issues that are going to require some small subset of people to get together from your teams as well as from our teams to collaborate on how we work through it. And so I don't want to lose the - excuse me, the opportunity to work through the challenges.

And I think, again, because we've done such a good work - done such good work and collaborated so well over the past nine months to improve the communication that we have that channel now that I hope continues to grow.

Because from my perspective it's so much better now when you guys come and tell me what's not working where it used to be we get, you know, a letter or some other mechanism. It enables me to go and communicate back into ICANN and get the right people engaged or get to the bottom or root cause of the issue so.

Susan Payne: Thanks. So, Krista, we will I guess the working group will discuss - we'll discuss it further. And we do have a meeting tomorrow. But just before that just so I have an idea of the level of work that you're talking about I would imagine that - so most of the recommendations are - that were put forward has been accepted. And they're in that stage where they're being assessed and scoped and implemented by the GDD.

I would imagine, given that, you know, you've agreed to - that you've accepted these recommendations internally you would have to track them anyway. And so is it just an issue of reporting to us that is taking the time that you feel is actually taking time away from doing the actual work?

Krista Papac: Yeah and we do track them internally but we track them through whatever, you know - whatever operational mechanism is, you know, being worked on. So service level targets, you know, the team that's responsible for those service levels are out collecting them and compiling them and publishing them and then somebody else has to sort of go and, you know, get all kinds

of, you know, what's going on with this one? What's going on with this one?
Rather than they're just being published.

So they certainly get tracked internally but that mechanism is much different
than the scorecard tracking mechanism and so it's just sort of double -
creating a lot of extra man hours.

Samantha Demetriou: Okay well, thank you guys. I think that was - I think even just having this
conversation - this really open conversation about the way we communicate
and the way the interaction takes place is an improvement upon maybe past
methods of operating. So I think that's great.

And I think, you know, what we just need to keep in mind is having - the open
communication is great but having something that's very consistent that
everyone can check against I think is the bigger takeaway here. And so we'll
continue this conversation tomorrow and within the working group.

Okay, so to move on to another major topic that kind of took up the majority
of the time during the joint ExComm meeting, it was this issue of the
contractual compliance as it pertains to like aspects of the agreement that are
up for interpretation.

So this is - it's been kind of a - it's been brought up on Registry Stakeholder
Group calls. It's not been brought up as much on the NTAG. So I imagine this
will be a big topic for tomorrow's conversation.

But for anyone who has been dealing with this just and, you know,
compliance issues in general just know that it is something that's very much
like on the radar and it is being talked about and it's being talked about with
staff as well. I don't want to go into too much detail about it because I think it's
going to be a big topic of conversation tomorrow. But if anyone wants to
address this point or ask any questions I'll open the floor for it.

Susan Payne: Hi, it's Susan Payne for the record. I was just going to add to what Samantha said. One of the things that did come up quite strongly during the conversations we had yesterday was that we on our side, on the NTAG, on the Registries side and indeed on the Registrars side, have all been trying to talk at quite high levels about the concerns we have. And that on the staff side they're very keen to have sort of concrete examples and move to resolving specific issues.

And one of the things that came up quite clearly was that it's quite difficult for a group of people who are essentially in the room with their competitors to be sort of airing their dirty laundry in public. So, you know, if you have had a compliance complaint you don't necessarily want to be talking about it very publicly in front of everyone else particularly if it was a sort of slightly problematic one which related to something like a difference of interpretation.

So we did come to the conclusion that the way forward was to try to come up with some kind of sort of case studies, effectively sort of anonymized examples. And so I think one of the messages to people is if you have had one of these issues and you think it would be a useful thing for a discussion for a case study if you will reach out to Krista and tell her about the particular issue that you had and so identify it for there, they can then anonymize it appropriately.

Because obviously you don't even want to kind of be raising it in an anonymous fashion amongst the registries - the other registries and NTAG members because that, you know, immediately identifies it as being your problem. And we felt that that would be quite a useful way forward.

So really this is a call to everyone that if you have had specific kind of interactions with sort of compliance notices and you think it would be a useful way to start sort of building a few case studies could you please reach out to Krista and start doing that and then we can try and move the discussion forward a little.

Samantha Demetriou: Okay. And so just to conclude this section, the final items we touched on in the joint meeting were universal acceptance and an intercessional meeting that ICANN is going to be hosting for contracted parties which can you guys confirm the date - I think it was the 22nd and 23rd of April.

Cyrus Namazi: Hi, Samantha. Cyrus Namazi with ICANN staff for the record. Yes, tentatively we've set 22nd through 24th of April as the date. The location is going to be Los Angeles although we're still working out the details of the logistics. So pencil that in. We're checking that date against other industry venues that might actually keep some people away from it. But at the moment it looks to be the right date for us.

One more thing, we really would love to hear from you in terms of, you know, what you want to hear, you know, what types of agenda items you want us to put on there. We want this to be a collaborative sort of development of something that helps you so that it's not just the staff actually sort of again feeding information and giving presentation and things like that. We'll do that as well but if there are other things we should be considering and doing for you please let us know. That would help us.

Yes, in fact, Krista just reminded me that we are going to send out a survey to solicit your feedback and input. Thanks.

Samantha Demetriou: Thanks, Cyrus. So look forward to that survey and, you know, take the time to fill it out and such. All right so now we'll move on to an update and discussion about the future of NTAG and the outreach that we've done to other groups while, you know, NTAG is still alive and kicking, if you will. So we have done a little bit of outreach to some of the other community groups within and around the ICANN community.

Susan, do you want to start off by talking about some of your conversations with the BRG?

Susan Payne: Yes, Susan Payne. Yes, we've - obviously we've been talking ourselves within the NTAG quite a lot about what to do with the NTAG, you know, when to mothball or so.

And we did feel that it would be a useful - before we make final decisions and before particularly we talk about, you know, when we think the role of the NTAG is over that it would be useful to kind of reach out to some of the others who aren't actually NTAG members to just make sure that they don't have issues that we could perhaps be sort of collaborating with them on or that they would want to sort of see us still taking forward.

So, unfortunately, the timing has not worked out particularly well for us. We did have an arrangement that we would go to the BRG meeting which was due to be on Wednesday and then unfortunately had to be rescheduled. So they're actually meeting now at the exact same time as we're having our meeting which is not ideal but it does mean we'll have - we will be still having just a kind of little catch up with some of the BRG people on Wednesday.

And I guess we'll then, you know, we'll have that discussion and kind of report back. But we did think it was quite important just before we sort of decide the role of the NTAG is kind of finished for now until there are future round issues we did think it was important to just make sure that we kind of, you know, we've discussed that with anyone who may still be an applicant.

Samantha Demetriou: Yeah, I mean, I think - and what I'd like to move on to discuss in another minute once Maxim gives a quick update about the people he's reached out to is, you know, the big outstanding question is we've decided now that we're going to sunset NTAG and the question is when. And a big factor in that question, at least for me, has been is there anyone we're not reaching? Is there anyone that we might be kind of leaving out in the cold if we sunset too early?

And so part of this outreach is just to make sure that, you know, we're spreading our reach as far as possible beyond just people who are on the mailing list and such. I see some people in the back. There are seats at the table. They're totally open if you want to come sit.

So in addition to the BRG Maxim has talked with the geo applicants, correct?

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. Yes, correct. As participant of geo I'd say group - because formally it's not an interest group. And thinking about how to begin it and processing charter and in general (laying) the motion to become an interest group within Registry Constituency but is still in the process.

So we offered them a hand saying that if you have issues or you want to just be able to resolve some of them or need some assistance just feel free to talk to us and we will try to help you.

Samantha Demetriou: And that really goes for anyone else who, you know, knows of applicants or is working with other applicants who aren't as engaged, aren't as, you know, involved in either NTAG or the process in general or the ICANN community. NTAG is still around, it's still a resource if there's any issues that they're facing and they want some community support from.

So at this point I'd like us to kind of turn to the big question of how to sunset NTAG and what kind of timeline we're looking at for that. I think there's a couple different ways of approaching this issue. One is by just picking a date and, you know, the various aspects that go into picking a specific time.

A different way of looking at it is by looking at it from a threshold perspective when X percent of applicants are through the contracting process and, you know, have signed their registry agreements. So I'm really going to open it up to the floor. I'd love to hear feedback from people about what they think in terms of when we should shut this show down.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. Formally we need at least three persons in NTAG because they should be someone to vote for and someone to be able to vote. But it's better to - not to keep it alive to this threshold. It's better to make it frozen before that when there are at least few more persons left in the phase of being like applicants. So any ideas on - to be short it's when and how. So do you have any ideas, any of guys in the room or maybe remote participants?

Jim Prendergast: Yeah, hi. Jim Prendergast. I mean, just looking at the calendar, you know, all throughout - at the next meeting in Buenos Aires, I mean, that gives four, five months to get a handle on whatever remaining issues are out there if there are any. Just looking at sort of what we're discussing here I don't see anything that's necessarily unique to applicants that doesn't impact other parties as well. So I don't know if there's a - unless you've got a list of issues you think that the NTAG does need to address between now and then that might be a - just works well on a calendar sort of date.

Samantha Demetriou: Yeah, I mean, that's definitely been a big part of this discussion. And the decision to sunset NTAG has been, you know, as these meetings go on and as we have, you know, monthly meetings and these are your ICANN meetings there's less and less to talk about that's unique just to applicants.

It is really - we really are moving into where we're kind of being pulled back up into the Registry Stakeholder Group. And that was the decision we reached at the last ICANN meeting was to really just kind of let NTAG sunset. And I'm just giving people who aren't familiar with the process a little bit of background here.

And, you know, allow it to open up again in future rounds. And really that's what we mean by like sun setting as opposed to just, you know, killing it off entirely. But so, you know, I think Buenos Aires is a good date to aim for. Does anyone have any opposing ideas? Show of hands in support? All right, it's good enough for me.

Okay well then - actually we're doing really great on schedule. Sure.

Susan Payne: I guess I was just going to say we probably should do a vote on the list I guess. And one of the things that's been sort of slightly concerning me is just the sort of technicalities of winding something up. If we get to the point where we don't have anyone left who's able to vote. So I think we need to kind of vote on this now and sort of say, right, this is what we're going to do. Otherwise we'll suddenly have no NTAG members who are still voting and we won't actually be able to wind ourselves up. So that's the plan I think. Look out for something on the list and please just kind of respond.

Samantha Demetriou: Okay. Then actually that puts us pretty good in terms of the agenda to move on to discussion with staff. Maxim, do you want to queue us up for this since this is...

((Crosstalk))

Samantha Demetriou: Oh, sorry, Susan wants to jump in one more time.

Susan Payne: Sorry - just - Susan Payne again. Just quickly to give Krista's apologies; she had to dash off because she now has gone off to actually there is a sort of (unintelligible) question on whether talking about some of the registry agreement renegotiation on the technical aspect. So she gave her apologies. But obviously we have a number of other ICANN staff still with us who, you know, are ready to hear from us.

Maxim Alzoba: Questions we'd like to ask relating to the operational issues. The first thing which actually directly affects business of all registries is the account and operations because to have business we need predictability and we need like some channel of interaction.

Because our experience, for example, with last quarter says that no one received their invoices on time. Usually in real world we don't see a picture of

the customer chasing the vendor to beg for an invoice. Usually it's just bit different from that.

And it's not that jokes because in some of jurisdictions the tax agencies they tend to read contracts really thoroughly because you send money outside of country so they read what's in the contract. And if it says it's quarterly payments then you should be able to either predict it or to report spendings on a quarterly basis.

And if they see no report for three months they just fine, they don't talk with you. So it's better to have at least (unintelligible) ready. And with current state of affairs where we see no automation of - almost no automation of the process.

We have the operational issues so we would like to be able to predict - at least predict amounts of money they want from us or to be able to request something. Because, for example, this quarter invoice we asked about the date a month before the end of the year.

It was promised to be delivered in the 30 days. On the 27th day of January they were asked for invoice; silence. Then we made a small poll within the group - actually it was within the Registry group asking for the experiences like who had invoice and nobody said yes. Most they reply unfortunately not.

Christine Willett: Christine Willett. Thank you, Maxim. To make sure I understand the issue I was briefed on a number of billing and invoicing issues. Lack of timeliness of invoices was not one of those items, however. So are you saying that uniformly you're not receiving invoices within 30 days of the end of the quarter? That's what I'm hearing. Okay.

Sarah Falvey: This is Sarah from CRR. And it's actually another issue, at least for us. And I don't know if other people are having this problem. But I don't think uniformly the accounting department is pulling the POC that's in the GDD portal. So we

were getting invoices that were being sent just like to random people. And we're a big company and so we were not paying our invoices on time because we had no idea where they were going.

And when I pressed the accounting department on this they were using the wrong POC from like it was right in the portal for us but it was just going to random other people that - who's email addresses appeared in other POC slots. So there may be a technical disconnect there as well that you might just want to check on. And I don't know if it's just our problem but it's been going on for quite some time and we just recently I think figured out what the problem was.

Christine Willett: Thank you, Sarah. This is Christine. Yes, so I am aware of the contact issue. I think you all know that we sailed for as our system and we'd like it to be our true system of record and get to the point where it's integrated and all of the key information is integrated from Sales force to our billing system, to our finance system, which happens to be Great Plains; you don't really care what systems we use.

Right now we've suffered - we've been using a manual integration to push data between systems and from a contact perspective. So, you're right, we have a gap there. It's been identified. We have remediation plans. So we're looking to address that in the very short term.

Going back to the timing of the invoice issue is that also consistent that that's not the quarterly invoices are not received within 30 days? I can look into it further from our end.

Samantha Demetriou: Has that been your experience, Maxim, that the timing of the invoices has been really inconsistent?

Maxim Alzoba: Actually if we see our experience over three quarters; first time we were - we had notifications that we failed to pay invoice. Actually we never received

one. And then we realized that it was issued two months ago and, yeah, everything else.

Second, third quarter it was invoice sent to wrong email box which was full and nobody checked it and it was not on point of contact list. The third time we asked for invoice in advance like in one month to ensure that we have it on time. Then we asked few days before the end of the period. We had response from accounting that, thank you for contacting us. And then we received it finally in more than 30 days. So three quarters of the year were issues of invoice. It's not good we think.

Christine Willett: Are there other billing invoicing issues we want to talk about?

Woman: (Unintelligible) FairWinds Partners. So my question is more on the RPM pass through fee. So my first question is, is the 30-day timeline for that the same as the quarterly delegation invoices that you should receive those within 30 days?

Christine Willett: I actually expect my finance department to issue those sooner than that. It's supposed to be a weekly invoicing cycle. If you're not receiving those...

Woman: Yeah.

Christine Willett: ...within 30 days.

Woman: So we - I know it was towards the end of the year so a lot of, you know, especially with the brand incorporations were very eager to get those before the end of their fiscal year. And those were taking close to a month and only after following up. And then, secondly, some of those - so we've been seeing some get mailed - via physical mail and some being emailed.

So for example one I know it was like October when I followed up with I think it was (Ann) it was ICANN accounting it was sent like a month after we

executed the Registry Agreement. So and it was never received since it was mailed. So kind of all over the place.

Christine Willett: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We'll definitely get with our finance department and look into these issues.

Samantha Demetriou: Okay. And the next topic we had were issues related to the CDDS. Maxim.

Maxim Alzoba: Yeah, Maxim Alzoba. CDS2 is a tool of interaction of, yeah, third parties like (unintelligible) and registries. Third parties ask for like permission to download zone files; registries should agree if everything is fine with the information.

Actually CDS portal has few minor issues which could be corrected. And we have a really nice example of interaction, it's GDD Portal user group. So we might need something like that for CDS portal because the issues are just (unintelligible) to few things like users are able to feed, for example, on the 20% of what we need for the contract.

They don't field phones, faxes. The address is without country or, for example, without the street or basically asking persons to field phone at least will minimize the number of interactions by 20% or something.

And if you read the history of interaction between registries and the third parties most time we ask for finishing the profile of the user and reapplying again. Also there are a few like minor things like if you want to approve or deny few things in a row it doesn't allow you to set number of days for approval so we have to go each time for each string and approve these amount of days.

Or what registry needs when it receives the application, it needs to see history. Now we have to - we have to go through few screens to understand

the history of interaction. For example, if we see that we gave permission to this particular user and the profile is still the same it's more or less reasonable to give them twice the amount of time or to approve it again. But we have to - we can't keep in memory few hundred items. So we have to go through each time.

So what we are asking for is the creation of small work group which actually mimics how the GDD portal user group works to settle these things. It will just simplify interaction of sites and, yeah, makes life easier.

Christine Willett: Christine Willett. Thank you, Maxim, for the feedback. So we recognize that contracted parties interact with more than just the GDD portal. And yesterday at the GNSO session I mentioned our plans to migrate registrars off of RADAR and onto Sales force; to migrate compliance from the existing Kayako system onto Sales force so looking at some significant architectural changes.

With this in mind we're looking to expand and perhaps reform what we've been calling the GDD portal users group. And I don't have a new name for it yet but to expand that to cover more systems and more technologies that contracted parties are interested in.

CDDS has, you know, both a role for registries to play as well as the general public. So we're also exploring how do we get the appropriate feedback from outside non contracted parties for tools that they want to use as well? So I think that that - this user group beyond the GDD portal would be a mechanism to provide that feedback on CDDS and other systems.

Samantha Demetriou: All right well so I guess I would ask that you guys keep everyone, you know, apprised of the further efforts. And I would ask in response - would it be helpful if we compiled these questions and issues into a single form and sent them over, I don't know, to Krista or to you guys?

Christine Willett: So, yes, so Krista will be communicating through her regular channels with the RySG NTAG calls. This is on her plan. So in terms - once we get this group reformed and the scope expanded I'm hiring product managers so I need to add some staff to cover all of these systems. So once we are reformed as a team then we'll also be able to engage on broader systems issues. So in the meantime please keep a list and feel free to send it to myself or to Krista.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. Also we have something we had conversation about before. The CDDS is the, I'd say, legal gap between our contract as a registry and the click-through agreement on the portal which formally it doesn't feed well. Is it going to be resolved via the same group you suggested?

Cyrus Namazi: This is Cyrus Namazi at ICANN staff. I'm not familiar with the issue that you raised. Maybe you can either offline let me know, I'd be happy to respond, or if this is the right forum we can discuss it.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. To be short, it's contract of registry says that they have to provide any third party with the agreement and if third party agrees then they're able to use the CDS tool for downloading zone files. And the current agreement on the Website it says that it's concluded on behalf of registry which is not true.

Cyrus Namazi: Thank you. Let me go look into that and report back to you, sure. Thank you for bringing that up.

Jon Nevett: Samantha, thanks. It's Jon Nevett. I think the last 20 minutes shows, you know, why we need to sunset the NTAG because these were all registry issues; there were all contract issues related to contract parties and they're not the right people necessarily in the room today. So we should make sure that if we're talking about NTAG issues let's keep it to applicant issues.

And so getting back to the last conversation I looked back and we approved our charter on June 26, 2012. And that might be a good date in 2015 to sunset at our third birthday. So I can't make a motion but perhaps that might be a date, while we're in BA for that meeting on the 26th, that might be a nice time to do that.

Susan Payne: Just to quickly respond to what you're saying - it's Susan Payne. I agree with you. But I think we were conscious we've tried really hard to not overlap with what's being dealt with tomorrow in the Registry Stakeholder Group. But we're also really conscious that they've got an incredibly packed schedule and some of the things that we want to talk about were never going to make it onto that schedule.

And indeed some - the next item as well, you know, it keeps being on the agenda for meetings we have with people. And we run out of time before we ever get to it so.

Man: Sorry about this. Hi, (unintelligible) for the record. I just have a quick question for staff. How long do you think it's going to take to get this group set up and everyone employed so we can actually start resolving issues - these issues. Because they are current issues, I mean, they are things that are ongoing.

Christine Willett: Thank you. Christine Willett. I expect in the April timeframe we'll be able to reform ourselves and look at an expanded scope. In the meantime we do have staff that supports CDDS so it's not unsupported as an application. So I'm sitting next to (Mert) who is - works with - on Krista's team and he's the business owner at ICANN of the system. So, you know, it already has our attention.

Samantha Demetriou: Okay and the last issue that we wanted to chat with you guys about - and, apologies, Jon, it is kind of an overlap with registries - is the response you guys have been undertaking in - sorry, the actions you guys have been undertaking in response to the spear-phishing attacks at the end of the year.

And if you can share with us anything - any efforts you've been taking to harden your systems against security breaches and things like that.

It's something that, you know, we've kind of on the list have - it's bubbled up a little bit but we haven't had a chance to really ask ICANN and get your thoughts.

Susan Payne: Yeah. Yeah, and just to quickly add to that, I was at a meeting in January that - where Fadi was present and he mentioned, you know, how seriously obviously this has been taken and that there are various efforts to kind of harden up systems but also in relation to staff training to kind of ensure that security is taken sufficiently seriously. You know, we all recognize that ICANN is bound to become more of a target in the future.

And he said that he was anticipating there would be a session here during this meeting where we would have a proper explanation of what happened and what has been done. But I have not been able to see that anywhere on the agenda. And as far as I can tell it's not on the - really on the agenda for the SSAC meeting for example.

So part of the question was, you know, is there a session or has there been a session on this in Singapore or will there be a session some time to kind of explain what happened and what is being done?

Christine Willet: Thank you, Susan. Christine Willett. To my knowledge, I agree, I don't believe there is a public session. It is - the issues are getting a great deal of attention internally from training to systems reviews and analysis, enhancements, security access controls, all dimensions are being looked at.

That work is being led by our IT group, Ashwin Rangan, CIO, is leading that work. So I will definitely bring this to his attention and make sure that he's aware that the community is looking for a briefing on this; I'm not sure not just the NTAG but I'm sure all of the contracted parties have an interest in this so

let me take this back to him and see if there's another forum in which he can share some information about this.

Susan Payne: Thank you.

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. Small moment for this issue with this, yeah, attack. Actually it involved social engineering so the changes should be made to some processes - internal processes to make these kind of social engineering attacks be like harder to carry on or just to make them impossible. So not just technical side should be looked into but the processes between people they should be looked into.

Samantha Demetriou: Thanks, Maxim. Good point. So now I guess we can move on to our discussion with the ombudsman. Is he with us?

((Crosstalk))

Samantha Demetriou: Well I think we have a few more minutes until then. Jon.

Jon Nevett: Yeah, I've got to run but if we can move my - the RAA negotiation stuff up I'm happy to do that.

Samantha Demetriou: Take it away.

Jon Nevett: Before I leave. Okay. So we are in the process of negotiating potential amendments to the registry agreement that would apply to both existing registries from the 2012 round as well as applicants. And so we've been - we triggered this off in the summer and it's been a process going back and forth. We met with ICANN staff after giving a redline over just before the meeting so they have some time - we went through it and now they have some time to digest it. And hopefully they'll get back to us, maybe right now they're having a meeting on the process for some of the technical issues so the pure tech

people are getting together and see if we could come up with alignment on that. And I'm optimistic that, you know, we're not that far apart on a lot of these and that we'll get something done hopefully in the next month or so.

Samantha Demetriou: Great. Thanks, Jon.

Jon Nevett: Sure.

Samantha Demetriou: Does anyone have any questions for Jon on the RAA renegotiation issues? Okay. All right, Maxim, while we wait for the ombudsman to join us do you want to go through your working group updates?

Maxim Alzoba: Maxim Alzoba. First I will start from - with the report on Cross Community Working Group of use of Country Codes and Territory Names as TLDs, basically group is moving to direction to actually proven that the document which (unintelligible) used in two years ago it's still good enough for the next round with all the definitions of the country and territory names with methodology etcetera.

Also the group is going to have some interaction with the GAC where the sub group called the same use of - and country territory codes and territory names as TLDs have (unintelligible), yeah, to be sure that the GAC group is aware of the text of the documents. And, yeah, might use it. Basically that's it. The next meeting of the group is just in an hour so nothing new to report at the moment.

And the other group I participating is a GDD portal user group. It's made good progress of the time of existence of the group. Last time the meeting was held and one of the outcomes was that it was agreed that before design some really new things it would be discussed with the group on the state where just pencil drawings to be sure that things we (grab) but might be not necessary for the users just stay on the design phase and that time and effort and money are not spent on not necessary things. Basically that's it.

And the next meeting of the GDD portal users group is, yeah, in the future - I think it's tomorrow maybe.

Samantha Demetriou: Yeah, I think it's on the schedule for Wednesday if I'm not mistaken?

Maxim Alzoba: Yeah.

Samantha Demetriou: And, you know, as Christine has discussed, if this group is going to continue to evolve and address other touch points and systems and stuff that might be a good meeting for people to attend to just stay abreast of what's going on, on that stream of work.

Dennis Chang: So this is Dennis Chang from ICANN staff. GDD portal user group is an open meeting that will be held at 1700 to 1800 on Wednesday.

Samantha Demetriou: Great. Thank you. We got confirmation on that. Okay well since we're already run through almost all of the working group updates we just have one left, I figure we might as well wrap that up before we go over to the ombudsman. Is Bret here to give an update from the new gTLD rounds discussion group? I don't think so.

((Crosstalk))

Samantha Demetriou: So Susan and I just mutually realized that we're not really sure what the ombudsman looks like so are you here?

((Crosstalk))

Samantha Demetriou: All right, guys, well we still have 30 minutes left so I guess this would be a good point to open it up if anyone has any questions or anything else that they want to bring up. We'll leave the floor open, otherwise you all can go and enjoy an early lunch.

Susan Payne: I guess if anyone is really keen to hear from the ombudsman, you know, I am expecting him. I was in correspondence with him this morning so I guess he's just like running a couple of minutes late. So if people want to kind of hang on for a couple of minutes and see if he turns up that's up to you. Hopefully he will.

Cherie Stubbs: Ladies and gentlemen, while we're waiting for the ombudsman I just wanted to say we have a couple of individuals from the ICANN fellowship program that are following Registry Stakeholder Group activities this week. (Samir), are you here? And (Abdelomon Osmun). (Samir Kahil) is from Lebanon and (Abdelomon Osmun) is from Sudan so if you happen to see them in our meetings please take an opportunity to welcome them and introduce yourself. Thank you.

Samantha Demetriou: All right, before this gets anymore awkward we're going to end the meeting. Thanks for those of you stuck through to the bitter end. I want to thank the - my fellow ExComm members for being here and helping lead the meeting. A big thanks to Cherie and to Sue Schuller for all the technical support and secretary support that she does.

Cherie Stubbs: You are most welcome. Thank you.

Samantha Demetriou: All right. And so big takeaway from today, we're going to get on the NTAG email list and take a vote and solicit input about the target date for sun setting the NTAG. And I guess I'll see you crazy kids tomorrow at the Registry Stakeholder Group meeting.

Maxim Alzoba: Also I'd like to thank ICANN staff for joining us and for providing valuable input.

Cherie Stubbs: Thank you, everybody. We can end the recording now. Have a good remainder of your ICANN meeting.

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