

**Transcription ICANN Singapore  
Discussion with Theresa Swinehart  
Sunday 08 February 2015**

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Volker Greimann: Can I ask the meeting to order again, please? I would now like to welcome Miss Theresa Swinehart who will present to us together with Margie Milam. We have a presentation so I would like to just hand over the floor quickly and get the session started.

Theresa Swinehart: Well thank you, everybody, again for the opportunity to be here. I know this is sort of our stop-by visit on everything we're doing in the Strategic Initiative Team. I've actually asked Margie to join me up here at the last minute. I didn't give her too much of a heads up because Margie has the complete overview of a lot of the stuff, in particular the Whois. And so I'd rather have any questions in her presentation be covered there as opposed to me trying to do that with less eloquence.

So let me just start out first by thanking all of the community members for all of their work in particular in light of the transition related work that's also come up in addition to the workload that exists on all the other topics. I know that there's been a huge amount of effort throughout the holiday period, a huge amount of effort in time zones that are sometimes less than desirable.

So I just wanted to acknowledge that from ICANN's perspective and that it's really an important contribution to this historical time in the history of the organization and it's very much appreciated and acknowledged. And if there's anything we can do from a staffing standpoint to better support you in that to please let us know.

So I'm not going to spend too much time on the stewardship transition part. I will fly through a few obvious slides on the substantive issues. I think many of you are very engaged in that and I would defer any questions to members of the community with regards to that.

But let's go to the next slide. Let's see, next slide after that. So I think we all know that the announcement on the 14th of March was quite historical. I found it sort of a bit of a Groundhog Day, to use an American expression, to come back to Singapore where we began the discussions around what kind of processes should be put into place in order to have the process for this transition and the community driven processes for that.

So it's very nice to be back in a place close to a year later so to speak and to see how much progress has been made and the important discussions that are taking place.

Next slide. I like to use this slide a little bit as just a reminder as we get into the details and nuances of some of the discussions and really working hard to find solutions that in the end what does need to be achieved is a proposal that's complemented and informed obviously by the accountability process that really meets the four principles that have been set out by NTIA.

I look at these on a regular basis just to remind myself what we're all striving for. And I find it helpful just to put it here, again, that this is what we're trying to achieve and what NTIA is also going to be measuring against when they review the proposal for implementation.

Next slide, please. I think there's - everybody's pretty familiar with the process overall. The one point I do want to reiterate and I know that you've also heard this from NTIA themselves, is that the accountability process in the Work Stream 1 very intentionally will inform and be part of the proposal that needs to go to NTIA and they have an expectation that that track on the accountability process is addressed.

And I think for the naming community in particular there's obviously some strong areas where the accountability Work Stream 1 will need to address certain topics that the naming community would like to ensure are addressed. So we're quite cognizant of that. And for those who are not involved in the day to day this image may be helpful.

Next slide. I think most people are probably aware but for those who haven't spent their day to day activities on this, the IP addressing community has provided their proposal to the IANA stewardship coordination group which has responsibility for consolidating the proposal going to NTIA as has the protocol parameter group and the naming community is working very hard on reaching consensus on their proposal. And I know many of you in the room here are active participants in that and thank you for your efforts there.

Next slide. Crashed, okay. Or...

((Crosstalk))

Theresa Swinehart: Okay, there we go. Next. And any of the participants here want to speak on any of these topics then please do. Again, accountability process had been identified as the core issue to be addressed in the transition in particular with the changing historical relationship with the US.

And the Work Stream 1 is working very hard, had a face to face meeting in Frankfurt recently and is looking at the details of what they will identify and

focus in on in the Work Stream 1 for this process with the expectation of a timeline to deliver by the ICANN meeting in Buenos Aires so ICANN 53.

Next slide. Maybe. Not - there it is. There's the information for obviously what everybody needs for information on where the processes are. Now I realize it may come as somewhat of a surprise but actually the strategic initiative team works on a wide range of other issues. This is not what we do on our 90% of the time.

We have a fantastic team in place that's looking in - on the organizational reviews and the reviews required under the Affirmation of Commitments which we'll touch on briefly. The other area is obviously the Whois area and so these are very, very important areas of the organization's work. More broadly we work across all the departments and the communities.

And I'll get to the organizational reviews shortly after Margie speaks. But one of the things that I think is important is that those reviews are structures that are intentionally in the system both through the Affirmation of Commitments and through the organization reviews and the bylaws that are part of the continued evolution of the organization. And I know that one is particularly focused in on the GNSO review which I'll touch on briefly after this.

But if I may I'm going to actually ask Margie to talk a little bit around the Whois area if I may?

Margie Milam: Okay. Thank you, Theresa. And hello, everyone. As Theresa mentioned our team also takes a look at some of the Whois issues. I think of the purpose of this discussion I probably won't go in other expert working group discussion since Susan covered that at the - yesterday and so you guys are fully briefed on that.

If we could skip these slides? I can take questions at the end of there's any additional questions related to that. Yeah, go to the - go back. Hold on. Sorry, too far. Go back. Right there, okay.

And so just to kind of provide an overview of what's been going on on the Whois issues. You know, it's a complex area that ICANN is trying to tackle. And it was kicked off back in 2012 with the Whois review team recommendations. And so essentially the Board kicked off this parallel path approach to improve Whois through a number of activities and we've published an annual report that kind of highlights what's been going on with respect to Whois.

And then also to see if there's potentially a replacement system that could serve the needs of the community going forward. And that's the expert working group that you heard about yesterday.

And all of this is leading up to, as Theresa mentioned, several reviews that are required under the Affirmation of Commitments. The Whois review team - the second review is scheduled to kick off this year. And so as we prepare for that review and imagine all the input we're going to need from the community and volunteers to participate in that. We wanted to share some of the highlights on what's going on in Whois so you can get a snapshot of where we are.

And I've provided a link to the annual report that kind of talks about some of the key milestones that have been achieved under that work that's been taking place since 2012. And I hope some of you maybe have taken a look at the Whois Website. For any of you that are new to the topic, it's an extensive library of issues and explanation for how Whois operates and all the different policies behind it.

And we've published what we call a Whois primary which tries to simplify the language that's in the contracts into something that - just someone could read without really having a full technical background.

We've also spent a lot of time on the - what we call the ARS. And we'll talk a bit about that tomorrow in the All Things Whois session. That is part of the recommendations that were adopted through the - following up on the Whois review team and that's really a system that's being built by the GDD team to analyze the accuracy level of Whois records.

And so that's probably the biggest project underway internally with respect to the implementation of the Whois review team recommendations. And there'll be some discussions on it tomorrow so we invite you to attend the session on All Things Whois in the afternoon as we'll go into some of the more details on what needs to happen with respect to finalizing that design.

And then there's also a lot of PDP work that I think you've probably been briefed on through the various community groups. Probably the most pertinent to the Whois issue is the privacy and proxy. And I think you guys probably know more about that. And also the internationalized registration data - the question about whether there should be translation or transliteration of Whois contact data. And I believe there's an initial report out on that topic. So all of that feeds into how ICANN is addressing the Whois review team recommendations.

And then as many of you may know, we've actually launched a look up service through the ICANN Website, you can do a Whois look up search right there and be able to find the contact information related to a domain name. So that's all part of what's in the annual report. And I invite you to take a look at that and the link is on this slide.

Next slide, please. And so as I mentioned the ARS, the Accuracy Reporting System, is our attempt to try to take a look at the Whois records and

determine whether there's - what the accuracy rate is associated with that. We went through a pilot last year and published the reports right before the Los Angeles meeting and published a final report for public comment in December.

And this is really where we want community input to really get understanding of whether we've designed the system correctly, whether the methodology used is something that should be deployed on an ongoing basis. And we used real data - looked at 100,000 records and I can send you links to some of the webinar and other information related to that. But that's been the underlying activity as we try to build out the Accuracy Reporting System.

The public comment period is open until February 28. We certainly want feedback. And part of the future design is to look at accuracy from different perspectives. The pilot looked at accuracy from a syntactical point of view and an operational point of view.

But one of the questions we'd like to hear community input on and that'll be the session tomorrow in the All Things Whois is should we also try to take a look at doing identity validation checks as part of this ARS. And that's something that we have some panelists that'll look at the different perspectives.

Next slide, please. So just this slide identifies the timeline. As we (unintelligible) the system we're going to try to go live (unintelligible) the middle of the year is going to really focus on the syntactical elements of Whois records; Phase 2 later in the year will be the operational validation and then if we attempt to do identity validation checks that'll be Phase 3 and we still have to decide how and when that might be done.

Next slide please. Okay. So any questions on Whois?

Volker Greimann: James over there.

James Bladel: Hi, Margie. Thanks. James speaking for the transcript. And thanks for the update. So - and I know we have a session coming up on All Things Whois and that's going to be just tons of fun.

But just given that all of the efforts that are currently underway - that fall under the umbrella of Whois policy, and this other massive effort that was presented to us yesterday to completely reinvent a successor to Whois, I'm really curious as to kicking off a Whois review team if that makes - because I was on the last one and I know how long that took and how much work it was. And I'm wondering if that makes a whole lot of sense to study something that is in flux in so many ways and in fact might be one foot out the door.

So is there any leeway under the AOC to maybe abbreviate this Whois review or postpone it or anything like that? I'm just thinking that, you know, it's the same, you know, this is a very small limited set of folks that are probably going to have to devote a lot of time to something that ultimately will be obsolete by the time the ink dries on the report. And I'm just concerned about that - setting that whole process in motion with everything still moving.

So I don't know if you - if staff has any thoughts on that or other councilors have any thoughts?

Margie Milam: Unfortunately the Affirmation of Commitments isn't really clear on how you link the three years. But the latest point seems to be three years from when Board resolves, you know, to accept the recommendations and that was 2012.

We recognize this is a large effort and we're worried about volunteer resources. I mean, that's - the overload, you know, and all the work that everyone is doing is something that's very keen and we're worried we're going to have difficulty staffing - not necessarily staffing like getting community involvement at the level you need to do a review.



So, you know, this may be one of those things that you may want to bring up with the Board or in public forum to see whether there's some community interest in delaying the review team to another point. But at this point we don't have any feedback from the community on whether that would be a wise thing to do. I don't know, Theresa, if there's anything you want to add on that?

Theresa Swinehart: Yeah, we're also running - when I get to the next part we're also having a session - I think it's on Monday afternoon or I need to check the exact time - which is actually looking at the timeline of all the different reviews and that's also an opportunity to raise these kinds of points of, you know, the timing and the phasing and specifically with this.

Under the Affirmation of Commitments we have obligations to run the reviews but we also have to have the conversation with community feedback on how to calibrate that against everything else. So you raise an important point and one that we're quite cognizant of and want to have the conversation with in that session as well.

Volker Greimann: Donna.

Donna Austin: Thanks, Volker. Donna Austin. So just to support James's point, I think there's a lot of activity on Whois that's going on. And it would be useful to understand how it all fits together, how it interrelates and how it's going to be managed moving forward.

And I think the GAC is actually (after) some kind of roadmap because I think they're struggling with how to manage this and how to get on top of it. And I share James's concern, an Affirmation of Commitment review at this point in time seems just bizarre and untenable given all the other work that's going on.

I mean, is it a case that the EWG work has to actually go on hold for that AOC review to happen? I mean, that's the kind of conversation that I think has to happen.

Theresa Swinehart: Thanks.

Volker Greimann: Do you want to answer?

Theresa Swinehart: No, thanks, Donna. You're raising - these are two really important points that we'll bring back as well. Thanks.

Volker Greimann: Thanks. Susan, please.

Susan Kawaguchi: Susan for the record. So I would like to disagree. I think the Affirmation of Commitments provides us - the community - a way of making sure things are moving forward. And, yes, there's a lot of moving pieces right now but just like Steve Metalitz said not too long ago, the conversion from thin Whois to thick Whois has been ongoing for four to five years.

I think maybe a new review - Whois review team would not have the same challenges we did but it would be good to have a thorough review of everything that's going on, have the community really look and say, okay, this is, you know, we all sort of pay attention to different parts of the Whois and they could do an overall review.

Would it be okay if it slipped six months? I think that's probably fine. But I would hate to say oh we've got all these moving pieces, let's not do a review; I think it would be very healthy for the community.

Volker Greimann: James, please.

James Bladel: Yeah, just to respond. I mean, it's not the question of disagreeing, Susan, I just see that every person that volunteers for the upcoming Whois review

would probably be better served if they could take the same amount of time and put it on towards like EWG. Those two efforts are going to be fighting for the same pool of volunteer hours and expertise that it just seems like where do we want to spend those hours?

Because I just - I feel like they're going to be contending for the same community resources. And so I mean, that's just something else to think about, it's like why would we have them review something when we could actually have them, you know, fixing it.

Susan Kawaguchi: This is Susan. So I agree with that thought process but I also think because there are so many different elements to the Whois and, you know, what if the EWG or what if we don't implement that, you know, what if that doesn't move forward? I just think we're - if we delay it - the Whois review, you know, sort of temporarily it may be one thing but just put it on the back burner because of resources I think is going to be detrimental to the community so that's my position.

Volker Greimann: Stephanie, please.

Stephanie Perrin: Stephanie Perrin for the record. And Susan will no doubt have heard this when I served on the EWG. It seems to me very important to understand why there has been an impasse in Whois for the last 14 years and this pitched battle between those in favor of privacy and those less in favor of privacy to boil it down to one simple element of the impasse. And I realize there's a whole lot of things in Whois. But let's just take that one.

And unless you do the gap analysis, and I said this yesterday in a slightly different way in a different context, unless you figure out what those gaps and all the missing bits are I really fear that we will move forward in one piece when we haven't sorted it out over here and the foundation piece you needed for the bit over here is then going to have to be changed.

And anybody who's ever changed a foundation of a house, risky as it is to start with a meme or a metaphor, anybody who's ever tried to dig out a foundation knows how bad that can be.

So there's a reason why this thing has been stalled for so long. We need to stop everything and have a look at everything, I would say. So I think I'm more in James's camp on this particular issue.

Susan Kawaguchi: So actually I think that is exactly why we need - you may have just been more eloquent about it. I think you need the overall look of the Whois review team and they could do, you know, the Whois review team could recommend that. And, you know, who knows, maybe they would get that done before the EWG was launched, you know, the PDP, who knows? I don't know, you know, we'd have to have a crystal ball to know the timing.

But I think that that is the job of the Whois review team is to look at Whois holistically, look at the whole picture where the EWG, you know, we looked at a replacement system, we didn't really necessarily go back and say oh is the existing Whois really work or could we just tweak this a little bit or should we just say this is the best model we're going to get. And so I think that a holistic review of the Whois is important. And I think it's a - it's a tool that we were given and I think we should utilize it.

Stephanie Perrin: If I could just respond to that, again, Volker? My worry is this doesn't look like a de novo gap analysis; it's not feeling like it. And maybe I've missed something and haven't read documents that I should have read. So if someone can show me the terms that explain how this is going to actually start from absolute scratch. Because as you know, I think part of the problem with the EWG is we didn't, we started with a set of assumptions.

Volker Greimann: We still have a couple slides to go through and even though Fadi is not here we're already in his time so I would like to move ahead and reserve the questions for later if - it's just a small one?

James Bladel: I just wanted to respond that, you know, one of my favorite classes in university and one of my minors and probably where I should have gone instead of the turn I took that brought me here, was astronomy.

You know, and I just - I feel like this review at this time would be like pointing, you know, a very powerful telescope at a galaxy, you know, hundreds of millions of light years away and we get to see how it was, not how it is or where it's going now. And I think that that's somewhat unknowable with all these things in play. And I just - that's my only concern. It just feels like there would be better uses of those resources. Thanks.

((Crosstalk))

Theresa Swinehart: Next slide. So this is a really very useful conversation though. So very quickly on the reviews, mainly the AOC, we'll start with that one. On the status of the implementation for the ATRT 2 we have a project a management system and there's a Website there specifically that is looking at the implementation underway and you can track that and follow that.

Likewise on the SSR there's continued work and commitment to the implementation and again the information there is also provided on the Website. We're trying to really put into a system also the ability for greater visibility on the implementation of the recommendations themselves as they're moving forward.

And then to the topic we just touched on with regard to the Whois, continued commitment on the implementation and, again, there's the work that Margie had just described now and more information available.

Next slide please. So this is just an overview of the proposed timelines of both the upcoming AOC reviews and the organizational reviews required under the bylaws as well. And this timeline and some of the discussion will be

occurring this week at a special session regarding the reviews overall and where we are with them including the preparations leading into them, the conducting of the review and then the implementation itself.

But I think this provides an important overview of where we are and where we anticipate to be both on the AOC and the on the organization review processes here.

Next slide. We seem to have some gaps or technical glitches. There we go. Moving past the technical glitches, whatever those were, sorry about that, just a very quick update on the GNSO review, I know that you're getting a full session of that on Wednesday with a discussion around a draft working document there.

The 360 assessment was conducted. Interviews were conducted. The reviews and observations obviously put into place. There's a working party meeting, there's been outreach on this and engagement. And there's a special session of this on Wednesday so I won't go into detail here, I'll leave that for the Wednesday discussion.

Next slide. I think this just provides a good overview of - for the strategic initiatives department all the different sessions that are being run. Obviously the transition ones you can see had already started on Friday. There's a session this evening which is a public session just on an update of the transition overall to the broader ICANN community who may not be involved in some of the day to day activities.

On Monday the IANA Coordination Group is holding a session with the community members and the operational community members. As Margie highlighted All Things Whois, there's a special session on that so some of the dynamics and dialogues that occurred here would also be important to raise in that session.

AOC and organizational reviews, and a discussion around the timelines and the reviews that are underway, again, a session focused on that on Monday so this is also an opportunity to raise any points around, you know, the timings of these, any of the points that were raised in this discussion here.

And then the Accountability Working Group is having a session on Monday afternoon. Wednesday, Accountability Working Group is having a session. The GNSO review working party meeting and then the naming community is having its meeting. And again on Thursday the Accountability Working Group is having a meeting and the naming community is having a meeting.

So quite a lot of activity. I know that in addition the respective supporting organization and advisory committees are having discussions around a range of topics not only around the transition but areas that our team is dealing with as well.

And the GAC is having a session right this morning so that's why I was late, my apologies. And with that we had some questions and answers. And I see that our CEO, Fadi, is also here already so I don't want to intrude on his schedule.

Volker Greimann: Are there any other questions? Chuck, go ahead.

Chuck Gomes: Chuck Gomes from VeriSign. Theresa, I want to thank the ICANN staff and you and Sam Eisner in particular for the support you're giving to the CWG work with regard to finding legal advice. That is a really critical component as I know you understand very well. And from what I can see as just a participant in the group the support has been excellent. Thanks.

Theresa Swinehart: Thank you, Chuck. Thank you.

Volker Greimann: Seeing that there's nothing further, I would like to thank Theresa and Margie too for your presentations. I think we have some interesting sessions to look forward to this week.

Theresa Swinehart: Thank you.

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