

**Transcription ICANN Singapore
Registrars Stakeholder Group
Tuesday 10 February 2015
Afternoon Session, Part 2
12:00-12:30 SGT**

Note: The following is the output of transcribing from an audio. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the proceedings at the meeting, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

On page: <http://gns0.icann.org/en/calendar/#feb>

Michele Neylon: Jeffrey Eckhaus, are you a registrar or registry? Please decide.

Jeffrey Eckhaus: Why?

Michele Neylon: So I can decide whether I have the right to yell at you or not. That's why.

Jeffrey Eckhaus: You never have the right.

((Crosstalk))

Michele Neylon: Okay. So we have Akram and Cyrus as I've already mentioned. So do you guys have slides or do you have anything specific you want to talk to us or can we just lay into you?

Jeffrey Eckhaus: Lay into it. Come on.

Michele Neylon: Okay. I'll open up a queue. So we have Akram and Cyrus. Okay. I'll tee this off I suppose. During the meeting we had with yourselves on Sunday

evening, out of nowhere was this idea of a further three intercessional meetings. Can you speak to that a little bit and perhaps explain where your thinking is on this and what you're planning so we have an understanding of what you actually are doing rather than what we've understood you're doing because there may be a difference between the two things? Thanks.

Akram Atallah: Do you want me to? Okay. This is Akram. So basically, we wanted to provide an opportunity between ICANN meetings for the registry and registrar contracted parties to have an opportunity to come to a meeting where we can do our business, the business between you and ICANN, between the registries and the registrars and make it an opportunity to get together outside the ICANN meeting and deal with whatever issues you guys would like us to do. So you're going to be seeing engagements from our team, from ICANN and the team to define what this main thing would be.

The idea is to do a pilot in April and I think some of the spaces I'm seeing here I've seen in the registry meeting earlier where we explained those as well but the idea is to give you an opportunity to come to an intercessional, do your business there and we want to shape it around your needs and not what we think those meetings should be but what you would ask us to do. The frequency of these meetings will depend on how successful the pilot is, does it meet your needs, how frequency you want to have these meetings.

We're not doing this for us. We're doing it for you. So we want to define it with you and we want to be able to get you the services that you need from us and first one we would like to do in Los Angeles in, like I mentioned, toward the end of April. I think 22 Cyrus?

Cyrus Namazi: Yes, 22 through 24 as a tentative date. You'll get a notice from us when it's firmed up.

Akram Atallah: So you'll get save the date and maybe an opportunity to propose ideas for what to do in the meeting and any format that you'd like to see. There will be

remote participation as well so that you don't have to attend the meeting unless if you want to. Compliance will be there as well. So again, the idea is to figure out what do you need us to do to provide you better service and we're going to put it together. That's it in a nutshell.

Volker Greimann: Thank you McCalla. Volker speaking. Volker Greimann for the record. In general, I think such an intercessional meeting is a good idea. The (unintelligible) really could use such a meeting. However, I think that such a meeting should happen on the terms of the contracted parties, i.e. when we see a need for this, we should schedule one. Not have one scheduled and then have to look at how we fill this up with time.

This is a bit of a surprise to us that this meeting is announced. It does not match the planning phases that many of us have. For many of us who are operating businesses, it's very hard to justify time away on quite a short notice from our businesses to just meet because ICANN had the idea that we should meet.

In general, I think it's a good idea to have the opportunity for such a meeting but it should be better planned, better prepared, with a more longer runway up to it that allows us to integrate that into our planning. Another question that I would have is would it be similarly funded as far as travel expenses go as the non contracted, (unintelligible) house, intercessional meeting or would we be expected to make our own way?

Akram Atallah: So again, we are looking for your feedback on how we do this including what you need to make it happen. I don't have any presupposed format or locations or anything there. It's not a mandatory meeting. It's not like we're saying everybody has to attend and if you don't feel the need to attend, you don't have to. We're making this a business meeting. We're trying to put some space in the ICANN meetings for policy development and the work that you do in the stakeholder group. We want to provide you a different venue to get your work done.

It seems that ICANN meetings are getting too crowded for the business constituencies for the contracted parties to do the policy work, to participate in the other internet governance issues, to do everything that ICANN is driving and then also to do your business with that and get your business with the registries done.

So we've heard that from you, this request from you, and we're trying to set this to give you another space to get your business done with that end and with the registries. So please help us define it the way you like it. It's a pilot in April and if it works for you, then we will decide on the next one and the next one and then the frequency as well as the format. So it's up to you guys.

Volker Greimann: Okay. Volker Greimann again. We appreciate the intent that's behind the meeting and I think it's a good idea to offer this. However, it's very short notice, it gives us not enough time to prepare both from making that time available from our busy schedules and also to prepare image that makes sense to us. Imagine you hold this meeting in April and nobody shows up. Wouldn't that be a waste of money?

I would suggest that you offer this as an opportunity over the course of this year and the combined contracted parties would come back to you with a suggested date that makes sense to us or a list of dates that makes sense to us later in the year. I think that would be the better way to go about this than to say April 4, this is your date, take it or leave it. Here, we did something for you.

Akram Atallah: So I think it's important to step back and look at this. This is not only a registrar event. This is a registrar and registry event, it's ICANN operations and then compliance operations that are there for your service. We're putting a space for you to come and do this. Again, you don't have to attend if you don't want to. We're trying to do a pilot. The pilot is put in Los Angeles to

minimize the cost, to give us an opportunity to work with you on a format that works. I don't know how many ways I could...

Michele Neylon: Akram, with all due respect, McCalla speaking, there's a couple of issues around how you're positioning this that I think you may have overlooked. First off, while we do appreciate having the ability and the opportunity to engage with ICANN staff, as far as I can tell, neither the registrars nor the registries were consulted in advance of you pushing a particular hard date for this pilot.

While the costs to ICANN's staff might be reduced by holding an event in Los Angeles, last time I checked, there wasn't a particular high density of either registrars or registries in the greater Los Angeles area with the exception of one or two. If you look at the Legacy registries, for example, there's a fairly high density of them in the greater Washington, DC area. I don't know of the exact geographic disbursement of the registrars but it's definitely not all that side. (Kelly) may be able to speak to that.

(Kelly Peterson): There's an alarming number of us in Florida. So whether it's Web.com or DNC Holdings has an office in Florida, I'm all for that but seriously, I think we need to look much deeper at what's convenient, not only for the ICANN staff, but also for the contracted parties that you're hoping to get there. I know I'm not alone in wanting additional opportunities but I think we all need to be considered in that decision.

Michele Neylon: Cyrus?

Cyrus Namazi: Thank you McCalla. Yes. Cyrus Namazi, ICANN staff director. Thank you for your feedback. I totally sympathize with the point that between now and April, there's very, very little time and really, realistically to do this right, we should probably give...

((Crosstalk))

Michele Neylon: Excuse me just one second. I'm sorry. Just to interrupt there. I'm afraid - this actually - I'm actually calling (unintelligible). Akram, I'm sorry. That is out of line. That is completely out of line. That is completely unacceptable. That is completely unacceptable and if you wanted to make that kind of comment, then I'm afraid there is absolutely no way we can continue having conversations here.

Man: What did he say?

Michele Neylon: What did he say? He just says to me that every time they suggest something we, "exploitative on us" and I'm sorry. That's no.

Akram Atallah: If you want, we can with what I said.

Michele Neylon: No. I'm sorry but if you wanted to engage with us, we can engage with you maturely and as adults. We can have a conversation. We can have a dialogue. You cannot - I'm sorry but you cannot just simply throw something at us, get a bit of criticism, get a bit of pushback and have what is effectively a tantrum. I'm sorry. I'm not going to have these conversations.

Akram Atallah: Okay. So McCalla, we're putting a proposal in front of you and we're asking you to tell us how you would like us to do it. I don't know what more open to dialogue we can do. I don't know and we've been asked to do this. We've been asked from the registries and registrars to have intercessional.

Volker Greimann: Volker Greimann speaking. You're right Akram. We have asked for this but if we make suggestions on how to better structure this, listen to us please. I mean, we're working on this together. We try to figure out how to work this. If we tell you that April may be too soon for us to arrange it because we have schedules planning in advance for months.

We have no spare time at this area, why don't you appreciate that when we say, don't cancel it. Postpone it. Let us come back to you with proposed

dates or ranges of dates when we think we can make it possible, make it work for us and that is a sensible time for us to get together and have a worthwhile meeting that works for both us and you? Where's the problem with that?

Akram Atallah: The issue is that this is not only between us and the registrars. If it was only us and the registrar community, we would be able to work with that between the two but it's also the registries. So now we have to get a three way agreement on a time and it can become much more difficult. Also for us, when we say we're going to have an intercessional, that means basically we have to budget for it. We have to put it in the budget, we have to have time scheduled on it. It's much more material for ICANN expenses to do one of these things than it is for any one company. When we do an intercessional, there's probably 20 to 30 staff members that have to be there versus any of your organizations that have to send two or three people. So size wise, it's a lot more material for our planning to do that.

Now, I'm not saying that I don't want to work on the dates with you or anything like that because if you look at the time period between now and Buenos Aires, April is in the middle. End of April is in the middle of that period which is then what the definition of an intercessional. So, look, I want to do this for you. I don't want to do it for me.

The reason I get upset was because we're coming here, we're thinking we're bringing good news and all we got is pushback. So okay, let's step back, let's reset and let's go do it the way you guys want to do it. We'll get back with you, we'll get some dates from you that work or maybe it's not this period, it's not between here and Buenos Aires. Maybe it's the next intercessional. I don't know but we will start working with you on finding the right time and then we'll start from there.

Michele Neylon: Okay. I have Ollie, (Kelly) and then Tom and Jeff.

Oliver Hope: Thanks. Ollie Hope. Yes. I guess a couple of points really. One, you've answered it in a way but perhaps a good way to actually take something productive of this would be to simply just throw out a quick survey where everyone can put some dates in but I guess the reason behind that is it would just be nice to be included in that decision making process. I think most people in this room aren't just policy staff. That's part of our problem and I don't know. Maybe you guys aren't aware. We should be more communicative with you because we do all have other jobs that we do.

So it's not always that easy and we do have schedules piled up for at least one or two or three quarters but I think as well, we probably need to work on how we can actually improve this and by this, I mean our relationship. There's no benefit to either side here having an aggressive relationship. So let's try and take something from that. I don't think you're getting complete pushback. I think we're all very grateful. We like your suggestion. We just want to be a bit more included and it is difficult for us.

Again, most people in the room, we have to get that travel commitment signed off by our boss and I'm sure a lot of other people in the room also get well, do you really need to go three times a year? So when I've already got that booked out to go back and say, I don't need to go again in 9 or 10 weeks, it's just an extra headache. So let's all be friends.

Michele Neylon: (Kelly) and then Tom.

(Kelly Peterson): Thank you. This is (Kelly Peterson) again. Akram, agreed. We've been asking for this and we want this but by your very comment that you guys have to organize this for yourselves, we do have to organize it for us and as Ollie mentioned, my day to day job includes not just compliance issues. It's running an entire organization. So not only do I have to figure out the budget for something like this because I want very much to be involved. I want to be involved more than I am today but it's simply another time away from the office that I wasn't planning on. So I'm encouraged by the fact that this is on

board but very much want to work together to find dates that work for all of the organizations. Thank you.

Michele Neylon: Tom, then Jeff.

Tom Keller: Yes and I'm not going to suggest we have it in Boston for a few months but I would like to suggest that we maybe spend some time talking about what would take place in these sessions. A date in my mind is less important than the so called work we would get done and why we feel we need to hold these special meetings. I wonder if you could take some minutes and talk about that?

Jeffrey Eckhaus: Thanks. It's Jeff Eckhaus here and I don't want to go into the specifics about this meeting and I completely appreciate - I've been to the offices and I know how many people you'd place in, how much facilities cost and the details of this. I think what Akram and Cyrus, maybe something you've realized you've touched a nerve on. It's not necessarily about this intercessional meeting and oh my God, we only have six weeks and who's going to go and I think what you touched a nerve upon and you've heard this from us in other areas is that we're contracted parties but we feel - every time we feel we're on the short end of the stick of being the other side of the party. Meaning, if you had a business meeting with one of your vendors or somebody you had a contract with, you would both work together on putting together that meeting.

Things along the lines where we have contract issues and we say, hey, let's discuss and then ICANN says, well, we'll send out a notification or an update to clarify the issue and even though we're both parties to the contract, we get this on the other side where they're saying, we feel like we're uneven partners on this contract. So I think it's not necessarily about this meeting.

I think that it's just you touched a nerve that we've felt this in so many different areas and then this meeting might have been the final straw and I know you guys really wanted to do this meeting and I think it's great and

thank you for taking the initiative but I wouldn't get to hung up on the intercessional and the timing and the other piece but to me, I think it just touched a nerve that we're not getting the communication and that it seems to be very one sided of this is what we think, this is what we want to do, this is when we're going to do it, take it or leave it.

Akram Atallah: Jeff, thank you for your remarks. The point was taken. I didn't think it was coming out this way but maybe if I put myself in your shoes, I could see how you could see it that way and I apologize for that. Our intention is really to do something you guys want and at the end of the day, if you don't want it a two month timeframe, it's too quick, whatever it is, at the end of the day, we're doing this for you guys. So let's sit down and figure out what works and we'll plan it accordingly.

We have no preference in reality. I mean, I tell you, we thought of this date and I have a board meeting happening at the same time and I have a quarterly call happening at the same time but we thought that - so it's not the best day for me either but it is in the middle of the period. So let's figure out what works better.

Jeffrey Eckhaus: Yes. You're never going to make everyone happy right? We might have an earnings call that week for our company. I mean and I agree, I think it was Ollie that mentioned it. There are a lot of parties involved that are not going to do it but a Doodle Poll saying, what do we think, here are some dates, here are some times and if we hit some certain threshold but again, I think it's just about working together with the other party because we all want to do this together and it comes off as here's when we're doing it, here's our interpretation, take it or leave it and we just want to get past that.

Akram Atallah: Thank you.

Michele Neylon: Cyrus and then Tom.

Cyrus Namazi: Thank you McCalla, thank you Jeff for your feedback. Cyrus Namazi, ICANN staff. I think this whole conversation actually got off on the wrong foot quite frankly. I sense there's a perception here that we actually like doing this stuff. We don't. It's a lot of work. It's a lot of work to pull this off in eight weeks or so. I don't have any of my staff on the register services team aside from (Kateman) actually based in Los Angeles. I don't live in Los Angeles. So when I hear that there is this implication of ICANN's convenience comes into the conversation, I'm a little taken aback.

It's a substantial amount of work to pull together an undertaking like this for potentially hundreds of people which very definitely is a short period of time. The reason that we're doing this is because we got feedback from you and from our registry partners that there's a vacuum, there's a need for it to be filled. So we rolled up our sleeves and we said, we can pull this off in a short period of time and as was mentioned earlier, really the date that works out to be equally distance between Singapore and Buenos Aires is sometime in the latter part of April and that's how the date was decided and then the logistics of pulling a thing like this together in a short period of time are also very complex from finding the venue for it, to lining up the right resources, to really get this through the workload of the likes Mike Zupke and our meeting team and myself and such in a short period of time. This is all added on top of the 120% workload that we have.

So we really are trying to do this for you but if your feedback is that in spite of all the benefits it just doesn't meet the threshold of being useful to you in April, then just let us know. We won't do it. I'll be more than happy not to do it. I'll tell you that. This is a lot of work for us. It's not a matter of convenience for us. The last point I want to make is Los Angeles is the ideal location for it is because to pull something like this together takes an immense amount of number of people actually to support it from IT, to meetings people, to compliance people, to legal department and for us, this is a pilot. We haven't done this in a very long time. Having real time access to them in a matter of a

30 minute drive to pull it off just makes it that much better for you really. So that's what I wanted to share with you. Thanks.

Michele Neylon: Before I go to anybody else and any queues or anything else, just so you are aware, the Adobe Connect System is currently -- and I swear to God, this is what I'm being told -- is they're conducting maintenance so it's offline. So if you get any emails from anybody trying to follow this meeting remotely, that's what's going on. Unfortunately I have no way really of communicating with them beyond sending an email to our mailing list which I'm about to do but if you get anything from people asking has the network in Singapore fallen over? No it hasn't. There's nothing wrong with the audio in the room. It's just the Adobe Connect System is currently doing maintenance. Volker and (James), fight it out between the two of you. Who was first?

(James): I just wanted to say I'm not ready to close the book on whether or not this would be completely useless. I think it's an idea worth exploring. I have issues with just the timing and I think that's what a lot of folks are saying and obviously we'd have to make an agenda, put an agenda together that makes sense. So I didn't want to close the book on it. Cyrus, I think you said you were doing this for us and if we don't find any value in it, I'm not ready to say there's no value in it.

I'm not ready to say I'm not surfing plane tickets for April because I don't know if I can go in April. It's too quick and we have budgets that we have to plan out as well and then there's this cultural thing that if you put three of them out there and you say, look, we're going to rotate this regionally so everybody is easier, you know we're going to come to all three. We have to. So I'm not ready to say throw this overboard but I am saying that we did not have enough time to digest this and we need to ruminate on this a little bit more.

Volker Greimann: Yes. Along the same lines, we support the idea of having an intercessional. We like the idea of having an intercessional. We want you to organize an

intercessional. The problem that we are trying to outline is not that we do not want an intercessional. The problem is maybe something that's along the lines of some complaints that we have raised in other circumstances from time to time which is the one direction of communication and planning sometimes, i.e. we would like to see and the registries - we have talked to them just a half an hour before you came in about the same issue they shared of you.

We would like to be involved in such planning at an earlier stage so we can maybe advise you what would be a better time to plan this. What kind of pre warning we would need to include this in our schedule to make this as good as it can be because having a meeting that nobody attends because it was too short notice is not of good value to anyone.

It would be a waste of your resources, your time, of our money and essentially what we are trying to get you to understand is work with us from day one. When you have the idea to do the intercessional, when you decide that this is something that ICANN wants to put effort behind, come to us, come to the registries, talk to us, ask us what our input is and we would not have had this entire half hour of discussion.

Michele Neylon: (Rob). I'm sorry. Jennifer and then (Rob) and then we need to close this out because we're running over again.

Jennifer Standiford: Jennifer Standiford. I think the action item on behalf of the registrars and obviously the registries will be participating as well is that we'll get back to you on the proposal giving dates, potential locations and response and can we commit to a date as far as when we'll respond so we can move this along?

Michele Neylon: I'm sorry Jennifer. What are we actually answering a question on? I'm sorry.

Jennifer Standiford: The registrar stakeholder group will be answering the question of if we want to move forward with the intercessional and other dates and times that would work for the registrars.

Michele Neylon: Well, I think the thing is we can't impose the dates on ICANN. ICANN has to - well, we can...

Man: We can suggest a time period.

Michele Neylon: Yes. If you can suggest some time...

((Crosstalk))

Akram Atallah: I'm sorry to keep beating up on this topic. We did actually consider a much later period of time than April for 2015 to do this and I think you'll see it when you all start looking at the calendar of events but with the date of June in Buenos Ares, I think it's a September date in Dublin if I'm not mistaken or early October. Yes. Then the entire half of the globe shuts down late in July and all of August.

There really was not a period of time that would be in between, half and half, between the meetings and then you're going to start hitting toward the end of the year, holidays and all that but go look at it and come back and let us know. More time for us is actually quite ideal because we are really scurrying to pull this thing together and if it needs to be at a later date, more power to it, of course.

Michele Neylon: (Rob).

(Rob): I disagree with Jennifer. I think you're perpetuating exactly what was just done to us so I have two comments. This is the first. We shouldn't be weighing at them here's what we want just like we don't want them weighing

at us and here's what they want. We should designate on or two people to sit down with them and say, here.

Let's talk it out and we'll go back to your community, you go back to yours and socialize and pick dates together as opposed to us pronouncing what we want and then pronouncing what they want because that's what's not working. So I'd rather see a collaborative effort and I know you probably didn't mean it the way you said it.

Jennifer Standiford: That wasn't my intent. My intent was let's have a collaborative approach and respond accordingly.

(Rob): Right. I would just rather you sit down with Cyrus in a room for an hour and figure it out as opposed to us pronouncing and back and forth...

((Crosstalk))

(Rob): Okay but my bigger (problem) is Cyrus, you're in a perfect storm of bad dates. We just came from NamesCon, we're here now, now you're saying April and then we've got June. So it's the perfect storm of poor planning because this meeting was so close to NamesCon and we were all at NamesCon. Most of us were at NamesCon. I would like to see you tee it up with something along those lines. You just had all the registries and registrars for the most part out at a big event six weeks ago. You were there. I mean, why don't we tee up next year with them to do it then because I think the ICANN is in March next year and start planning around other events that we all go to.

((Crosstalk))

(Rob): Right, so.

Cyrus Namazi: There are several events. I'm not saying that they're all going to be ideal. Like, WHD in Germany, loads of us go to that.

((Crosstalk))

(Rob): Right. So if that's where most of the European registrars go, do it then and if GoDaddy and we have to come, okay, maybe we will, maybe we won't but we get more than one thing...

((Crosstalk))

Akram Atallah: That's a great idea actually. That's a great idea and we're open to that. We were saying let's go about how we do it and what we do but maybe the dates were fixed and we shouldn't affect the dates. So okay. No problem.

Michele Neylon: Okay. Tom and then we really have to finish this.

Tom Keller: All right. Thank you. Tom Keller speaking. The one thing that interests me, I wanted to (unintelligible). I don't think that everybody wants an intercessional meeting. For me, the question is why the heck do we have to have them? Apparently, we have too much work to do and it's one thing potentially to work more or actually reduce the workloads and we already have three meetings we fly out to and there's already a lot of stuff going on and the question is whether we cannot actually restructure what we do and become more productive instead of putting more work into it which is more load on your side and it's more load on our side. I'm not fancying flying out to anywhere even if it's in Europe or in my hometown six times a year. I have other day jobs I have to attend and every hour I'm out of the office, I'm getting hundreds of emails of my employees asking for certain things.

So I think just putting up more time on the whole issue is not going to solve it. We really have to think about how we can be more structured, how we can be more productive and how many topics we as a group can work and what

together we want. I spend in here seven days in Singapore and I haven't seen a single meeting on the whole schedule where we sit together and debate three issues until we find a solution, period.

I don't see that and that's exactly what I would like to have in these meetings. So this is what I would like to have as a general thinking to sit down together and find out how we can become more productive than we are currently.

Michele Neylon: Okay. Thank you. I think we've run over and you probably didn't actually get to talk about anything that you actually wanted to talk about. Not really. I mean, we already said that we'd have a meeting with you on Sunday evening and we are - just in case it isn't 100% clear, the registries and registrars (ExComs) do meet with the GDD staff on the Sunday evening plus it's not like they don't know how to find us between meetings anyway. So I mean, there's - usually apart from meltdowns like today, there are usually channels of communication.

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