

GNSO gTLD Registries Stakeholder Group Comments

Issue: ICANN Future Meetings Strategy

Date: 24 April 2014

Issues Report URL: <http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/meetings-strategy-25feb14-en.htm>

The Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) thanks the Meeting Strategy Working Group (MSWG) for the work they have undertaken in preparing their proposed recommendations.

We also acknowledge the challenges faced by the ICANN Meeting Team in finding venues that can cater to the ever-expanding nature of the ICANN meetings. This not only includes accommodating growing numbers of participants, but also the increasing number of sessions requested during the meetings, diverse meeting room requirements, translation facilities, etc.

Finally, we fully acknowledge that the status quo is not sustainable, and that efficiencies are required in order to maintain the value of ICANN meetings.

The RySG has four areas of concern with the proposed “ICANN Future Meetings Strategy”:

Session Scheduling

The RySG notes that one of the guiding principles for the MSWG was to ‘promote efficient use of community and ICANN staff time with less session conflicts.’ We agree that this is a key consideration. To this end, we believe that ICANN should explore allocating session time and resources in “streams” of interest to most members of the community. This could have the dual benefit of reducing scheduling conflicts and encouraging cross-community interaction on key issues.

Critically, though, the report is absent any practical detail about how ICANN staff intends to promote efficient use of time and/or minimize session conflicts. The community must have some indication on how this effort will be managed given that requests for sessions are evaluated and agreed to (or not) by staff. Whereas some RySG members expressed a willingness to extend the length of the Meetings while others want to see all sessions only held Monday – Friday, we cannot fully address concerns about session scheduling until ICANN staff provides needed guidance.

Public Forum

The Public Forum is an important element of the ICANN culture. It is one of the most transparent aspects of the system that allows people to directly ask the Board questions and receive answers either immediately or in written form after the meeting.

It is the RySG’s understanding that the MSWG proposes to reduce the total time for the Public Forum to 3.5 hours. If implemented, 1.5 hours would be allocated on Monday for a version of the

Public Forum that allows community leaders to outline the work to be undertaken during the week and pose some questions, and then 2 hours for a traditional format session at the end of the week.

Given that 4.5 hours were allocated and fully used for the Public Forum in Singapore, the RySG has serious concerns about reducing by more than half the amount of time dedicated to the latter session. This key element of the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder process is a unique opportunity to directly engage with Board members on key concerns in a cross-community environment.

Community members must have sufficient time at the end of the week to ask questions of the Board and/or provide statements on topical issues from the week. Even the introduction of a 2-minute clock for comments often leaves insufficient time for some question and answer exchanges. This critical part of ICANN's meetings must not be compromised by an overriding imperative to "save" time.

At the least, rather than reject the MSWG proposal outright and/or remain with the status quo, the RySG recommends that a number of pilot tests based on community suggestions be conducted of Public Forum formats and evaluated in order to understand the best format and timeframe for the public forum that meets the expectations of the community.

Meeting 2--Venue

The RySG understands that part of the rationale behind the Meeting 2 scenario is to allow the ICANN Meeting Team to select venues that are smaller than those required for Meetings 1 and 3. In theory, this should allow the continued meeting rotation through all of ICANN's five regions, and could facilitate the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder process while supporting outreach efforts.

The RySG accepts these goals in principle. We also support the idea of a dedicated Supporting Organisation/Advisory Committee working meeting, which would also allow for more cross-community interaction.

It is important, however, that a contingency be considered when planning the second meeting each year. Even if the second meeting is in a small venue, it's critical that the venue be able to handle a surge in interest if something "big" comes up. The contingency could be a satellite meeting in a hub city, a remote only Public Forum, or maybe additional hotels in the area on standby. Importantly, the selection of "smaller" venues must not slow down or in any way become an impediment to the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder policy development process.

Meeting 2—Board participation

The Meeting 2 proposal is absent any mention of whether the ICANN Board would be in attendance and in what capacity. We would ask that further information be made available on this issue. As envisioned, if Meeting 2 is a 'working meeting' then there would be value in having Board members attend working group sessions so they can see the process first hand. The Board should also be present during time allocated for cross-community interaction.

RySG Level of Support

1. Level of Support of Active Members:	Supermajority
1.1 # of Members in Favor:	21
1.2 # of Members Opposed:	0
1.3 # of Members that Abstained:	0
1.4 # of Members that did not vote	8

2. Minority Position(s):

1. Level of Support – Active Members: (Majority or Supermajority)
 - Total # of eligible Voting RySG Members¹: 30
 - Total # of Voting and Non-voting RySG Members: 34
 - Total # of Active Voting RySG Members²: 29
 - Minimum requirement for supermajority of Active Voting Members: 20
 - Minimum requirement for majority of Active Voting Members: 16
 - # of Members that participated in this process: 34
 - Names of Members that participated in this process:
 1. Afiliast, Ltd.
 2. Charleston Road Registry (non-voting member)
 3. .CLUB Domains LLC
 4. CORE (non-voting member)
 5. Donuts Inc.
 6. DotAsia Organisation
 7. dotBERLIN GmbH & Co. KG
 8. dotCooperation
 9. Dot Kiwi Ltd.
 10. Dot Latin, LLC
 11. DotShabaka Registry
 12. dotStrategy Co.
 13. Employ Media LLC
 14. Famous Four Media

¹ All top-level domain sponsors or registry operators that have agreements with ICANN to provide Registry Services in support of one or more gTLDs are eligible for membership upon the “effective date” set forth in the operator’s or sponsor’s agreement (Article III, Membership, ¶ 1). The RySG Articles of Operations can be found at http://gtldregistries.org/sites/gtldregistries.org/files/Charter_of_the_gTLD_Registries_Stakeholder_Group.pdf

² Per the RySG Articles of Operations, Article III, Membership, ¶ 4: Members shall be classified as “Active” or “Inactive”. A member shall be classified as “Active” unless it is classified as “Inactive” pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph. Members become Inactive by failing to participate in a Constituency meeting or voting process for a total of three consecutive meetings or voting processes or both, or by failing to participate in meetings or voting processes, or both, for six weeks, whichever is shorter. An Inactive member shall have all rights and duties of membership other than being counted as present or absent in the determination of a quorum. An Inactive member may resume Active status at any time by participating in a Constituency meeting or by voting.

15. Fundació puntCAT (inactive)
16. GMO Registry, Inc. (non-voting member)
17. ICM Registry LLC
18. Minds + Machines
19. Museum Domain Management Association – MuseDoma (inactive)
20. Neustar, Inc.
21. Plan Bee LLC
22. Public Interest Registry - PIR
23. Punkt.wien GmbH
24. Punto 2012 S.A. de C.V.
25. Rightside Registry (non-voting)
26. Societe Internationale de Telecommunication Aeronautiques – SITA
27. Starting Dot Limited
28. Telnic Limited
29. The Foundation for Network Initiatives “The Smart Internet”
30. Top Level Design LLC
31. Tralliance Registry Management Company (TRMC)
32. Uniregistry Corp. (non-voting member)
33. Universal Postal Union (UPU)
34. VeriSign
35. XYZ.COM LLC
36. Zodiac

- Names & email addresses for points of contact
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 - Alternate Chair: Paul Diaz, pdiaz@pir.org
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 - RySG representative for this statement: Donna Austin, donna.austin@ariservices.com, and Paul Diaz, pdiaz@pir.org

Regarding the issue(s) noted above, the following position(s) represent(s) the views of the ICANN GNSO gTLD Registry Constituency (RySG) as indicated. Unless stated otherwise, the RySG position(s) was (were) arrived at through a combination of RySG email list discussion and RySG meetings (including teleconference meetings).