

CEO Report to the Board

Period Covering: 1 April 2021 – 30 July 2021

September 2021



TABLE OF CONTENTS

OFFICE OF THE CEO	3
ORGANIZATION: PEOPLE	5
ORGANIZATION: FINANCES	9
PROCUREMENT	16
GOVERNANCE: LEGAL, BOARD OPERATIONS, AND COMPLAINTS OFFICE	18
GLOBAL DOMAINS AND STRATEGY	22
REVIEWS: SUPPORT/ACCOUNTABILITY	28
REVIEWS: IMPLEMENTATION	32
CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE	34
RISK MANAGEMENT	38
PLANNING	39
GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCES, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, SECURITY OPERATIONS	40
ENGINEERING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	42
IDENTIFIER RESEARCH, OPERATIONS, AND SECURITY (IROS)	46
Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)	46
Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)	48
GLOBAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (GSE), MEETINGS, PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY SUPPORT (PRS)	50
GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS & LANGUAGE SERVICES	53
POLICY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT	56
GOVERNMENT AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ENGAGEMENT	65
REGIONAL OFFICE REPORTS	69
Asia Pacific (Singapore)	69
Europe (Brussels)	73
Geneva Engagement Office	75
Middle East and Africa (Istanbul)	76
Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo)	78
Washington, D.C. Engagement Office	80
ICANN BOARD SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT	81

Office of the CEO

Göran Marby, President and CEO

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Launched the first Operational Design Phase (ODP) to evaluate the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) to nonpublic registration data. A second ODP to assess the recommendations resulting from the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process has been recommended to the Board of Directors.
- Continued a thorough risk assessment and developed the processes and procedures necessary to ensure the health and safety of the ICANN community and staff during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Engaged with the community to discuss and plan how our meetings and events will be structured in the future to ensure representation and fulfill the promise of the multistakeholder model.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

Several community-led initiatives with substantial impacts are nearing implementation. I remain focused on bolstering our planning processes before we move to implementation so that we may accurately and appropriately prioritize the variety of work in front of us. The ODP is an important tool to help in this effort. Initiated by the Board and executed by the org, the ODP is a detailed process to assess the resource requirements, timelines, dependencies, and risks associated with Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council policy recommendations. The resulting Operational Design Assessment will provide a valuable analysis and information to help Board in its deliberations on whether to approve said recommendations, including whether the recommendations are in the best interests of the ICANN community or ICANN.

The first ODP, launched in April, will assess the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) to nonpublic registration data that was outlined by the Phase 2 of the Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data. The SSAD ODP team is focusing on assessing the anticipated volume of requests for nonpublic registration data and the resources needed to potentially implement the SSAD. The second ODP, if directed by the Board, will evaluate recommendations resulting from the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process.

ICANN org continues to monitor developments of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and is planning for a return to the office, travel, and face-to-face meetings as soon as is possible to do so safely. While vaccine access is slowly improving in parts of the world, the evolving trajectory of the virus, including the emergence and spread of new variants, creates an unpredictable risk. Our dedicated team considers a broad spectrum of risk factors, such as COVID-19 infection rates as well as the travel and visa landscapes. Our goal is to build a framework to assess, approve, and support the safe and efficient resumption of normal operations when possible.

ICANN71, previously planned to be held in The Hague, Netherlands, was held as a Virtual Policy Forum from 14-17 June. ICANN72, planned to be held in Seattle, United States of America, will be held as a Virtual Annual General Meeting in October. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have innovated our virtual work environment and enhanced our technical fabric to

offer safe and robust virtual tools. These efforts to upgrade our global community's ability to work together remotely will continue even after travel restrictions lift.

We have engaged with the community to consider how our Public Meetings can best support the important policy, technical, and implementation work that needs to continue, either virtually, in-person, or some hybrid of the two formats. As requested by the Board, we are examining how to hold smaller in-person or hybrid community meetings before the end of 2021. We want to work toward providing a meaningful "virtual first" experience for ICANN73 if it is safe to hold with an in-person component from San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 2022.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

In collaboration with the Executive Team, I will work to make sure ICANN org prioritizes the projects in front of us and ensure they are appropriately resourced. Our top goal remains, as always, to enable the ICANN community, Board, and organization to serve the ICANN Mission.

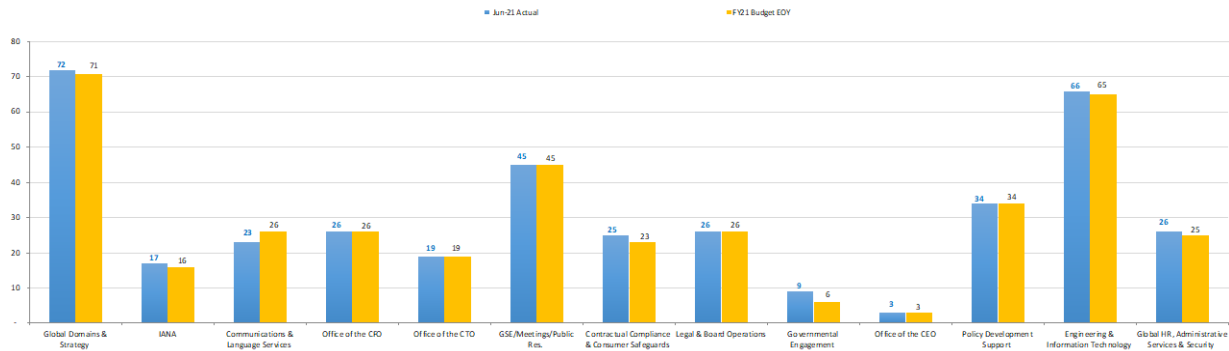
Organization: People

Gina Villavicencio, SVP, Global Human Resources

HIGHLIGHTS

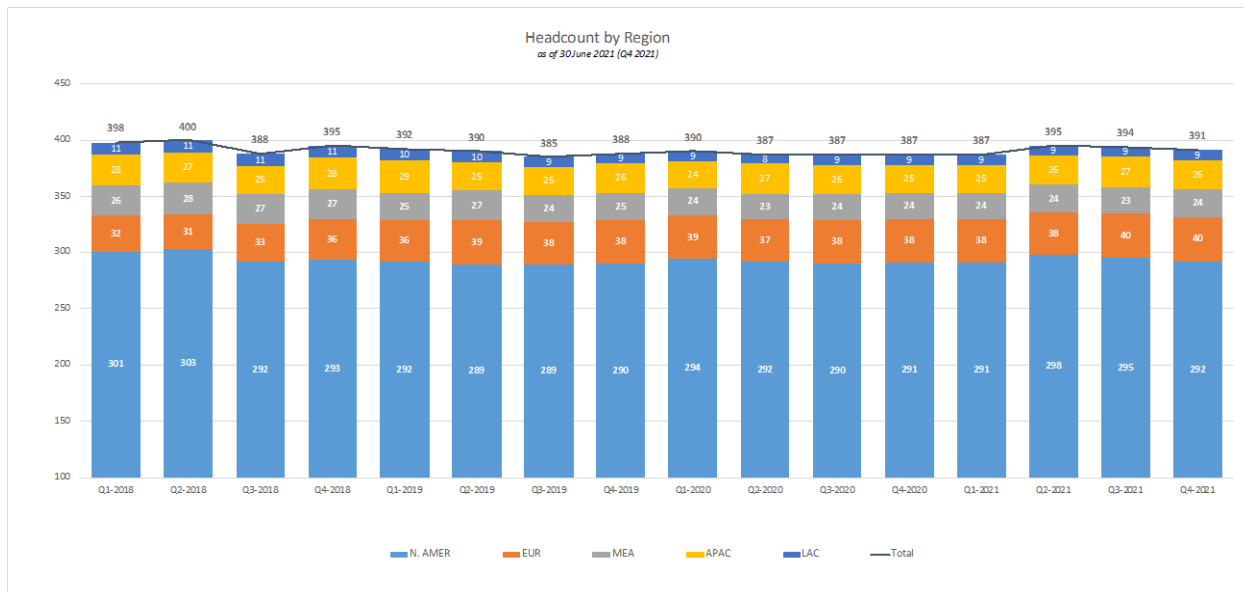
Since the last report, ICANN org metrics as displayed below remain relatively stable.

As of 30 June 2021, ICANN org had a headcount of 391 active staff. One pending new hire was confirmed after 30 June.

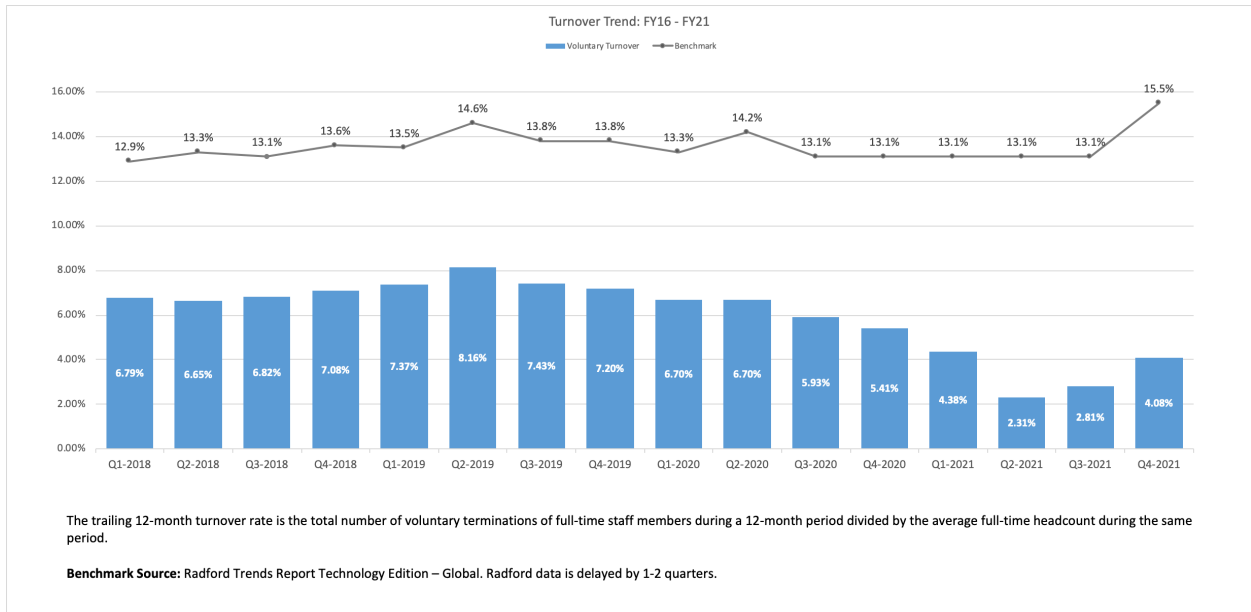


***Any hires or internal transfers after 1 July 2020 were not accounted for in the FY21 adopted budget. In previous fiscal years, new positions were accounted for in the department headcount. As of FY21, all new positions are held in an unallocated pool at the corporate level. Due to this new org process, attrition and contingency has been removed from the chart. In some departments, headcount will appear to exceed the FY21 budget, but that is not the case. The FY21 budget allotted for 15 unallocated positions held at the corporate level, for a total headcount of 400.*

ICANN Org by Regions: As of 30 June 2021, the staff distribution by region was 292 (75%) in North America, 40 (10%) in Europe, 24 (6%) in the Middle East and Africa, 26 (7%) in Asia Pacific, and 9 (2%) in Latin American and Caribbean.



Voluntary Turnover as of 30 June 2021 was 4.08%, increasing slightly from the previous quarter end rate of 2.81%. Voluntary turnover has remained substantially lower than the worldwide voluntary turnover benchmark.

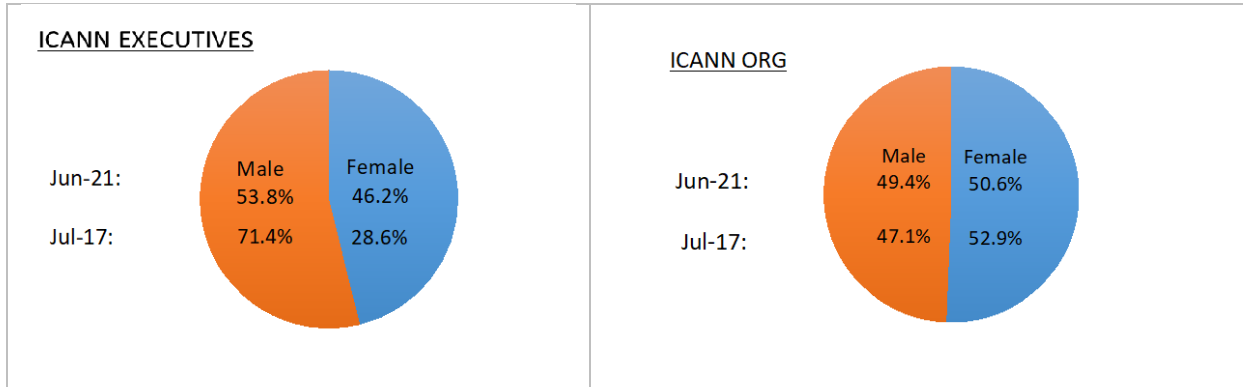


Over the last three months, six staff members joined ICANN org and nine departed, resulting in a growth rate of 0%.

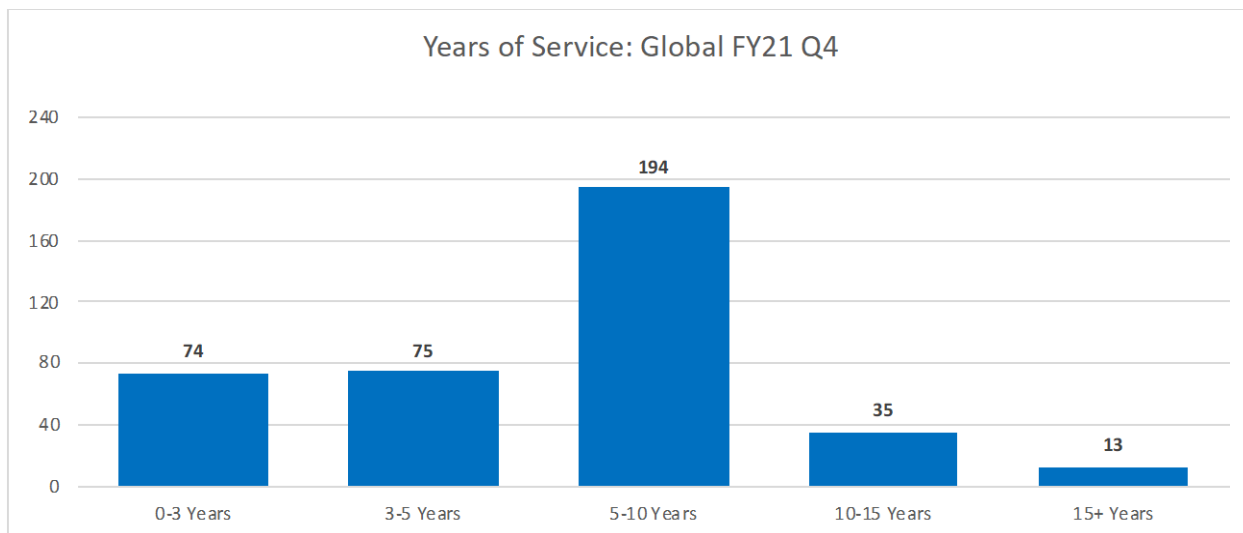
Annual Growth Rates (from June to June):



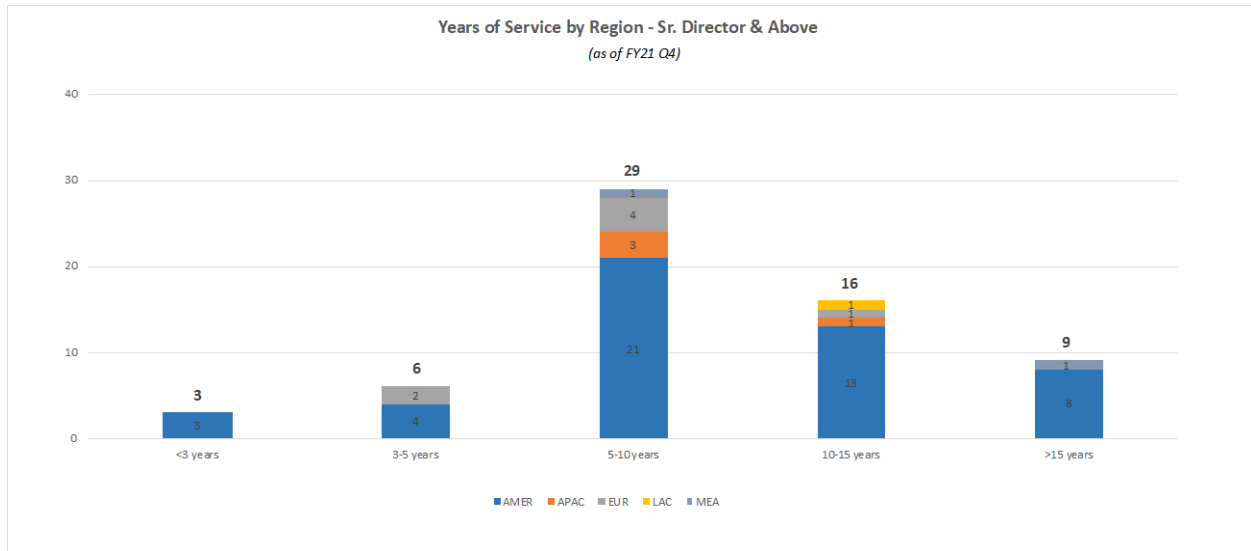
ICANN org gender diversity continues to be well-balanced with females (50.6%) having a slight majority. The Executive Team has made substantial progress in leadership roles since FY17, improving its gender composition by 50%. ICANN org is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion at all levels of leadership.



Age distribution has also been stable over the last four years, averaging around 45 years of age and represents the typical mid-point of most professional careers. The organization’s average **years of service** as of June 2021 is six years, reflecting consistent growth and stability in ICANN org positions.



Sr. Director & Above global distribution has remained stable for the last couple of years, with the largest population between five and 10 years of service. This reflects ICANN org depth of experience among senior leadership.



Organization: Finances

Xavier Calvez, SVP, Planning & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Financial Overview

This section summarizes the financial highlights covering 12 months of FY21 unaudited financials ending June 2021. This report covers the most recently completed fiscal year.

The FY21 Budget included adjustments due to the global pandemic for less Travel and Meetings for the first three months of the year, as well as a decline in funding. FY21 Actual Funding continued to grow at a modest rate, as it has in prior years. This is in contrast with the budget, which assumed negative impact from the global pandemic. Travel restrictions extended longer than assumed in the budget.

Funds Under Management have increased versus the prior year despite market volatility due to the global pandemic.

USD in millions Unaudited	FY21 Actual	FY21 Budget	Under/(Over) vs. FY21 Budget	FY20 Actual	Under/(Over) vs. FY20 Actuals
	Total ICANN Operations	Total ICANN Operations	ICANN Operations	Total ICANN Operations	ICANN Operations
Funding	\$141.4	\$129.3	\$12.1	\$140.7	\$0.7
Personnel	75.7	76.0	0.3	74.8	-0.9
Travel & Meetings	1.1	11.3	10.2	9.3	8.2
Professional Services	16.7	18.9	2.2	12.4	-4.3
Administration	15.5	16.3	0.8	15.8	0.4
Capital	1.5	1.6	0.1	5.8	4.3
Contingency	6.0	5.2	-0.8	6.6	0.6
Cash Expenses	\$116.4	\$129.3	\$12.9	\$124.8	\$8.4
Net Operating Excess/(Deficit)	\$25.0	\$0.0	\$25.0	\$15.9	\$9.1
Active Headcount ⁽²⁾	382	400	18	381	(1)

1) Expenses exclude depreciation, investment income, and F/X translation

2) Reflects end of period headcount excluding leaves of absence for Actuals (Budget does not include adjustment for leaves of absence)

Net Operating Excess at the end of June is \$25.0M, which is \$25.0M higher than budget and \$9.1M higher than the prior year.

June year-to-date net excess is \$25.0M higher than budget due to higher-than-planned funding \$12.1M, and lower-than-planned expenses \$12.9M.

- Funding is \$12.1M higher than budget, driven by:
 - Higher-than-planned transactions fees, registry fixed fees, and registrar accreditation \$11.5M due to the higher-than-planned number of contracted parties (transaction volumes and the number of contracted parties were projected to decline in the budget but have experienced little to no impact resulting from the pandemic so far).

-
- \$0.4M of SSR Contribution was recognized for work performed January through June 2021
 - Cash expenses are \$12.9M lower than budget driven by:
 - \$9.9M across all cost categories due to ICANN69, ICANN70, and ICANN71 being held virtually. Actuals expenses are primarily related to Language Services.
 - \$3.7M related to ICANN69. Actual expenses were \$0.5M versus a budget of \$4.2M.
 - \$3.2M related to ICANN70. Actual expenses were \$0.4M versus a budget of \$3.6M.
 - \$3.1M related to ICANN71. Actual expenses were \$0.6M versus a budget of \$3.1M.
 - \$4.6M due to travel restrictions, including GDD Summit/DNS Symposium and Board Workshops.
 - \$0.6M from office parking and expense savings.
 - Partially offset by travel and meeting write-offs (\$1.1M) and incremental contingency spend for ITI and legal matters (\$0.8M).

June year-to-date net excess is \$9.1M higher than the prior year due to higher funding of \$0.7M and lower expenses of \$8.4M.

- Funding is \$0.7M higher than prior year driven by:
 - Growth in Legacy transactions \$4.9M partially offset by a decline in New gTLD transactions (\$3.8M) due to promotions last fiscal year that did not repeat this year (namely from .icu and .top)
- Expenses are \$8.4M lower from the prior year driven by Travel and Meetings – \$8.2M due to travel restrictions from the global pandemic and holding ICANN69, ICANN70, and ICANN71 virtually.

Funding

Funding Year to Date Twelve Months Ending 30 Jun 2021 (Unaudited)					
In Millions, US dollars	FY21 Actual	FY21 Budget	Inc/(Dec)	FY20 Actual	Inc/(Dec)
Transactions					
Registry transaction fees - Legacy	\$52.4	\$47.7	\$4.6	\$49.6	\$2.8
Registry transaction fees - New gTLD	4.7	4.5	0.2	7.0	(2.3)
Registrar transaction fees - Legacy	33.4	29.7	3.6	31.3	2.1
Registrar transaction fees- New gTLD	4.2	3.5	0.7	5.7	(1.5)
Sub-total	\$94.1	\$85.5	\$8.7	\$93.6	\$0.5
Registry Fixed Fees	\$29.7	\$28.4	\$1.3	\$30.1	(\$0.4)
Registrar Accreditation					
Application fees	\$0.6	\$0.0	\$0.6	\$0.3	\$0.3
Accreditation fees - annual	9.9	8.4	1.5	9.8	0.1
Per-registrar variable fees	3.4	3.4	(0.0)	3.4	(0.0)
Sub-total	\$13.9	\$11.8	\$2.2	\$13.6	\$0.4
Contributions					
SSR Contribution	\$0.4	\$0.0	\$0.4	\$0.0	\$0.4
ccTLD	2.4	2.3	0.1	2.2	0.1
RIR	0.8	0.8	-	0.8	-
Meeting Sponsorships	0.0	0.5	(0.5)	0.3	(0.3)
Sub-total	\$3.6	\$3.6	\$0.0	\$3.4	\$0.2
ICANN Ops Total	\$141.4	\$129.3	\$12.1	\$140.7	\$0.7

FUNDING VERSUS BUDGET

FY21 Funding is \$12.1M higher than budget driven by higher-than-planned transactions fees, registry fixed fees, and registrar accreditation due to the higher-than-planned number of contracted parties. Transaction volumes and the number of contracted parties were projected to decline in the budget but have experienced little to no impact resulting from the pandemic so far.

Funding for the full 12 months of the fiscal year is \$12.1M higher than budget primarily due to higher-than-planned:

- Transaction Fees from Legacy \$8.3M and New gTLD \$1.0M due to less negative impact from the pandemic versus plan.
- Accreditation Fees \$1.5M due to less negative impact from the pandemic versus plan.
- Registry Fixed Fees \$1.3M due to less negative impact from the pandemic versus plan
 - FY21 Actual of 1,184 TLD operators average in Q1-Q4 versus FY21 Budget of 1,137 (+47)
- Application Fees \$0.6M driven by a drop catching entity applying for 50 new registrars in September 2020 (the budget assumed no new applications in FY21).

FUNDING VERSUS PRIOR YEAR

FY21 Funding is \$0.7M higher than prior year driven by growth in Legacy transaction fees partially offset by New gTLD transaction fees. See details below.

Funding is \$0.7M higher than prior year due to:

- Legacy transactions fees \$4.9M.

- Application Fees \$0.3M driven by a drop catching entity applying for 50 new registrars in September 2020.
- Partially offset by:
 - New gTLD transactions (\$3.8M) due to promotions last fiscal year which did not repeat this year (namely from .icu and .top).
 - Registry Fixed Fees (\$0.4M) driven by a decline in registry operated TLDs.
 - FY21 Actual of 1,184 TLD operators average in Q1 – Q4 versus FY20 Actual of 1,202 (-18)
 - Meeting Sponsorships (\$0.3M) as ICANN hosted a face-to-face AGM meeting last year (all meetings since then have been virtual).

EXPENSES

USD in millions Unaudited	FY21 Actual	FY21 Budget	FY21 Actual vs. Budget		FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual vs. FY20 Actual	
Personnel	\$75.7	\$76.0	\$0.3	0%	\$74.8	(\$0.9)	-1%
Travel & Meetings	1.1	11.3	10.2	-91%	9.3	8.2	88%
Professional Services	16.7	18.9	2.2	-12%	12.4	(4.3)	-35%
Administration ⁽¹⁾	15.5	16.3	0.8	-5%	15.8	0.4	2%
Capital	1.5	1.6	0.1	-5%	5.8	4.3	74%
Contingency ⁽²⁾	6.0	5.2	(0.8)	15%	6.6	0.6	10%
Cash Expenses⁽¹⁾	\$116.4	\$129.3	\$12.9	10%	\$124.8	\$8.4	7%

(1) Excludes depreciation, bad debt, investment (income)/ expense

(2) Contingency actuals have been extracted from their respective cost categories and aggregated on this line.

Expenses are \$12.9M lower than budget due to:

- Personnel expense is \$0.3M lower than budget driven by lower average compensation and benefit expenses
 - Personnel costs are inclusive of enhancements the org has made to staff working situations, such as Be Well Days (one day off per month).
- Travel and Meetings expenses are lower than budget \$10.2M due to holding ICANN69, ICANN70, and ICANN71 virtually and current travel restrictions. Travel restrictions from the global pandemic were included in the FY21 budget for July through September.
- Professional Services are \$2.2M lower than budget primarily due to:
 - \$2.2M across all departments due to ICANN69, ICANN70, and ICANN71 being held virtually.
- Admin is \$0.8M under budget driven by:
 - Regional Offices are \$0.6M under budget due to office closures and receiving parking credits at the LA Headquarters.
 - \$0.2M under budget for supplies and promotional items due to ICANN69, ICANN70, and ICANN71 being held virtually.
- Capital is \$0.1M under budget driven by less than planned internal software development related to the ITI, RZM, and NSp projects.

NEW GTLD YEAR TO DATE FINANCIALS (FY21)

USD in millions Unaudited	FY21 YTD Actual New gTLD	FY21 YTD Budget New gTLD	Under / (Over) vs. FY21 Budget New gTLD	FY20 Actuals New gTLD	Under/(Over) vs. FY20 Actuals New gTLD
Funding	\$5.3	\$5.9	\$0.6	-\$8.8	(\$14.0)
Cash Expenses ⁽¹⁾	\$3.5	\$5.3	\$1.8	\$3.6	\$0.1
Risk Costs	\$4.4	\$0.0	(\$4.4)	\$3.6	(\$0.8)
Excess/(Deficit) Before Contribution	(\$2.6)	\$0.6	\$3.2	(\$16.0)	(\$13.4)

1.) Expenses exclude depreciation, investment income, and FX translation

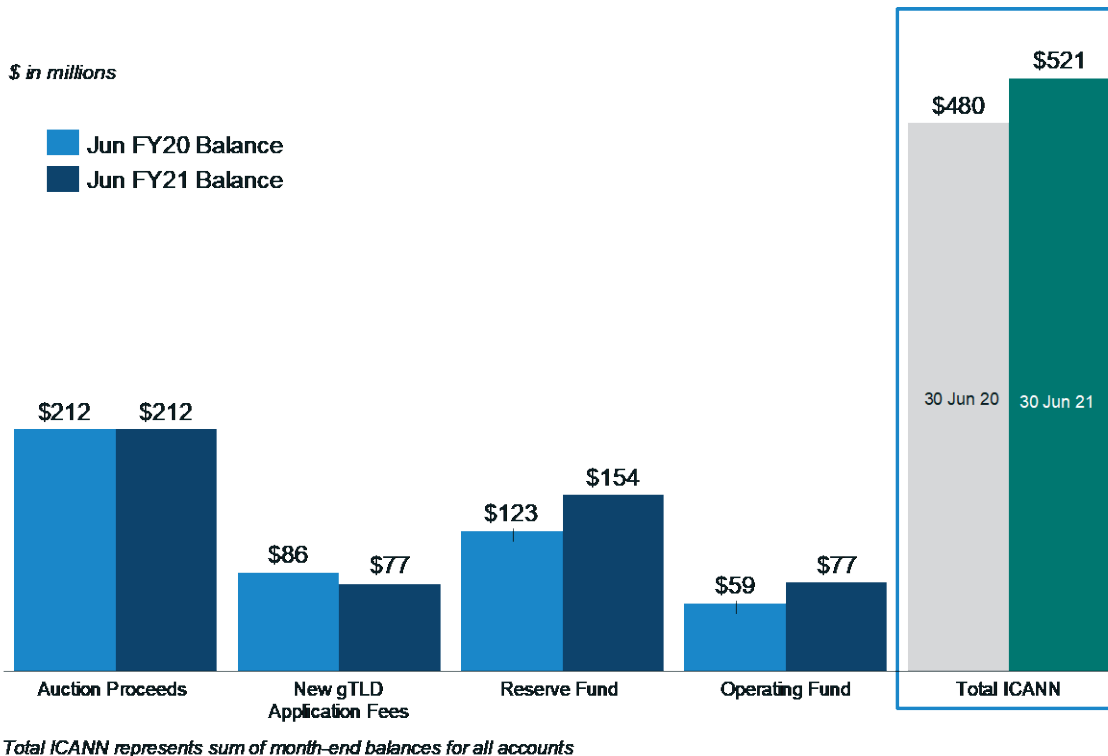
- Cash Expenses were lower than planned primarily due to less expenses for Universal Acceptance and technical enhancements for RDAP and IGO/NGO names clearing house capabilities.
 - Cash expenses are aligned to the prior year.
- Risk costs are not budgeted due to the difficulty in estimating these expenses.
- FY20 Funding of -\$8.8 million includes an accounting adjustment to reduce the total program revenue recognized since 2012, resulting from an extension of the projected end of the program to 2024.
 - The overall Funding for the New gTLD program (*see table below*) has not changed; however, there was a specific change to the recognition in FY20.

NEW GTLD MULTIYEAR PROGRAM

New gTLD Program 2012 Round	Statement of Activities by Fiscal Year					Statement of Activities for Full Program (Jun 2021) Current Estimate
	FY12 - FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Budget	FY23 & Beyond Forecast	
New gTLD Applicant Fees	335	(8)	5	10	19	361
Refunds	(50)	(0)	(0)	(1)	(1)	(52)
Applicant Fees (Net of Refunds)	\$ 285	\$ (9)	\$ 5	\$ 9	\$ 18	\$ 308
Initial and Extended Evaluation	(68)	-	-	-	-	(68)
Quality Control and Objection Processes	(11)	-	-	-	-	(11)
Pre-delegation	(12)	-	-	-	-	(12)
Program Costs	(35)	(2)	(2)	(4)	(10)	(55)
Staff Costs	(55)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(61)
Operating Expenses	\$ (181)	\$ (4)	\$ (4)	\$ (5)	\$ (12)	\$ (206)
Historical Development Costs	(32)	-	-	-	-	(32)
Risk Costs	(22)	(4)	(4)	-	-	(30)
Non Operating Expenses	\$ (54)	\$ (4)	\$ (4)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (62)
Other Income/(Expense)	\$ (2)	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (2)
Investment Income/(Expense)	\$ 9	\$ 2	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11
Total Expenses	\$ (229)	\$ (5)	\$ (8)	\$ (5)	\$ (12)	\$ (259)
Net Remaining New gTLD Funds	\$ 56	\$ (14)	\$ (2)	\$ 4	\$ 6	\$ 49

- Risk costs and Investment Income are not projected due to the difficulty in estimating these items.

FUNDS UNDER MANAGEMENT



Funds Under Management as of 30 June 2021 increased by \$40M as compared to 30 Jun 2020 (end of FY20) driven primarily by net excess in the operating fund and market gains from the Reserve Fund.

- Auction Proceeds increased \$0.3M due to investment gains.
- New gTLD Application Fees decreased \$9.2M due to a transfer for cost reimbursement to ICANN Operations of \$7.1M, expenses paid of \$2.4M, partially offset by investment gains of \$0.3M.
- The Reserve Fund increased \$31M due to \$21M of investment gains and a transfer from the Operating Fund of \$10M.
 - The Reserve Fund Replenishment Strategy is tracking well ahead of the Board approved strategy, and now covers 13 months of budgeted expenses.
- The Operating Fund increased \$18M due to:
 - \$25M of net excess from this fiscal year
 - \$4M receipt of SSR Contribution
 - Partially offset by a transfer of \$10M to the Reserve Fund
- The Board approved a \$5M transfer from the Operating Fund to the Reserve Fund and a \$15M transfer from the Operating Fund to the SFICR in July 2021. Those transfers are not reflected in the above image because they were not approved in FY21. This report covers FY21, 1 July 2020- 30 June 2021. These transfers will be reflected in the next report which covers FY22.

Procurement

Xavier Calvez, SVP, Planning & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

Procurement supported the organization in a variety of purchasing-related activities throughout the reporting period to ensure that goods and services were procured at the right time and place, and at the right price. Procurement also supported the org with strategic sourcing (RFP) efforts and supplier negotiations. Progress was made with the implementation of the Procurement 2.0 initiative by planning for the activities to be conducted over the next few months to increase the function's level of maturity over time.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

Procurement Operations: Purchase orders for April thru July 2021 totaled \$11,535,488, issued to 210 unique suppliers with an average Purchase Order (PO) amount just over \$38K. The PO amount for this period was a reduction of 15% compared to the activity during the same period last year, which was \$13,571,443. This decrease indicates the continuing trend of reduction in spending driven by the pandemic, notably reduced spending for face-to-face meetings and related activities (e.g., catering, hotels, vendor services, etc.).

A summary of procurement operations metrics for the reporting period is provided below:

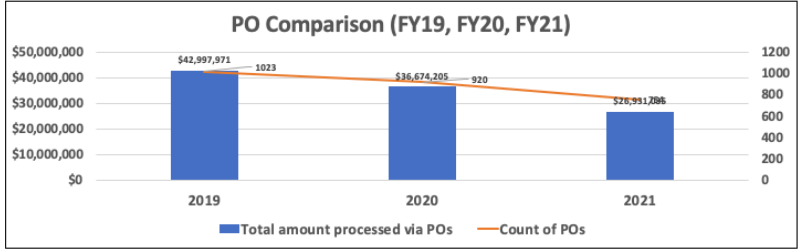
Purchasing Operations Metrics for Reporting Period (Apr 2021 thru Jul 2021)					
Metrics	Reporting Period (April '21 - July '21)	July '21	June '21	May '21	April '21
Number of PO's	303	68	119	69	47
Total PO Amount (\$)	\$11,535,488	\$3,971,349	\$4,319,285	\$2,232,210	\$1,012,644
Average PO Amount (\$)	\$38,071	\$58,402	\$36,297	\$32,350	\$21,546
Average Cycle time ¹ (days)	17.2	15.5	17.1	18.3	18.5
Number of unique suppliers that were issued POs	210	56	97	56	39

1. Cycle time is defined as the number of days it takes from submission of a purchase request in Oracle to creation of the associated purchase order (PO). Steps included: Approvals per contracting & disbursement policy; contract revisions by Legal-Contracting; and obtaining contract signatures.

Trend Analysis (annualized): This reporting period includes the fiscal year end for 2021. A trend analysis for purchase orders over the last three fiscal years is provided below:

FY21 saw a 18% decrease in the number of POs created compared to FY20 (754 versus 920) and a 26.3% decrease compared to FY19 (754 vs 1023). Notably, the total dollars processed by POs in FY21 decreased by 26.6% compared to FY20 (\$26.9 M in FY21 vs \$36.7 M in FY20) and decreased by 37% compared to FY19 (total PO amount was approx. \$43 M in FY19). This is illustrated in the table and chart:

Fiscal Year	Total amount processed via	Count of POs
2019	\$42,997,971	1023
2020	\$36,674,205	920
2021	\$26,931,035	754



Strategic Sourcing (RFPs): Procurement continued to support the organization with the various phases of sourcing (RFP) activities throughout the reporting period. Four (4) sourcing events (RFPs) were concluded within the reporting period, while four (4) new RFP processes were started in the same period. This is an increase of 100% (double) of RFPs from the previous reporting period, indicating a comeback as we edge toward the end of the pandemic.

Governance: Legal, Board Operations, and Complaints Office

John Jeffrey, General Counsel and Secretary

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- The Board Ops team proposed, coordinated, and supported a Board-wide chairing skills training (26-27 July 2021) while it also worked on scheduling upcoming onboarding training sessions for the newcomers to the Board.
- With respect to litigation and arbitration matters:
 - Three of the four claimants in the .HOTEL Independent Review Process (IRP) filed a lawsuit against ICANN regarding the IRP Standing Panel and Ombudsman review of Reconsideration Requests; ICANN has asked the court to dismiss the case.
 - Following numerous written submissions and appearances in insolvency proceedings regarding an ICANN-accredited registrar, the Court dismissed its interim order following which ICANN terminated the Registrar Accreditation Agreement and transferred the registrations to a functioning registrar.
 - The Panel in the Afilias IRP (.WEB) issued its Final Declaration; Afilias subsequently requested “interpretation and correction” of the Final Declaration.
 - GCCIX initiated an IRP regarding its .GCC application.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

BOARD OPERATIONS

- The Board Ops team organized the eighth (30 April-2 May) and ninth (10-12 June) virtual Board Workshops since the start of the pandemic. As part of its operational excellence principles, the team focused on process improvements on a reporting and action items tracking system that will allow key decisions to be followed over time across the Board and the org.
- In June, the team supported the planning and logistical organization of the remote Policy Forum (ICANN71) and contributed to the content preparation of the Board - Stakeholders sessions in close cooperation with the Policy, Communications, Meetings Technical Services, and Meetings Teams.
- The Board Ops team continued to organize regular Board Info calls in addition to Board Meetings, Committee Meetings, and Caucuses/Working Groups meetings (several meetings per week) to allow the Board and org to deliver on their commitments and responsibilities within deadlines.
- As part of its day-to-day activities, Board Ops played a key role in the transparency efforts of the Board vis-à-vis the community: supporting the publication online of relevant materials (such as Minutes), reports (such as the biannual committee activity reports), and blogs. It also participates in the Board Operational Priorities process, ensuring due coordination with the org.
- This period was particularly busy in terms of correspondence as 54 letters were sent on behalf of the Board on various topics such as IGO, the Rights Protection Mechanisms Policy Development Process, and the Operational Design Phase (ODP) for upcoming projects.

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- Thirteen Board members attended a total of 22 virtual trainings. The Board Ops Team organized its own internal Strategic workshop in June to keep growing and learning as a team.

COMPLAINTS OFFICE

The Complaints Office received three new complaints during the reporting period. Of the 59 complaints submitted to date, approximately 60% of closed complaints have led to ICANN org improvements, while 31% have resulted in opportunities to educate complainants about the multistakeholder model, ICANN org's remit, or opportunities to provide input into the multistakeholder model.

DISPUTE-RELATED MATTERS AND INTERNAL SERVICES

In addition to the key litigation and arbitration activities highlighted above, the team also handled:

- **Accountability Mechanisms:** The BAMC summarily dismissed a Reconsideration Request (Request 21-1), challenging actions taken by a registrar relating to a domain registration renewal because the challenged actions were not taken by ICANN Board or staff. There are four pending IRPs:
 - Afiliias IRP (.WEB) – briefing is in process regarding Afiliias' request for "interpretation and correction" of the Final Declaration issued by the Panel
 - .HOTEL IRP – briefing is in process regarding Claimants' request that the IRP not proceed any further until resolution of the pending lawsuit
 - Namecheap IRP (.ORG, .INFO, .BIZ) – Extensive disputes and motion practice regarding discovery took place, review and production of documents is in process
 - GCCIX IRP (.GCC) – Claimant initiated IRP and briefing is in process regarding ICANN's request that confidential material not be used as evidence in the IRP

One of the .HOTEL applicants initiated a Cooperative Engagement Process (CEP) regarding the BAMC's summary dismissal of Reconsideration Request 21-1.

- **Subpoenas and Legal Inquiries:** Since April 2021, ICANN has responded to three subpoenas regarding information mostly concerning reserved or Special Use IP addresses that have not been assigned to any particular entity or individual for use.
- **Internal Services and Legal Support to Board:** Advised Finance team on various matters, including review and revision of ICANN and PTI 990 forms and finalization of planning and budget documents; facilitated organizational compliance tracking; worked with Contractual Compliance and Global Domains Strategy teams on issues regarding registrar termination; supported the Nominating Committee on due diligence of Board and community leadership candidates; advised HR on various matters; advised 401(k) plan committee on various matters; and provided lead staff support to three Board committees and legal support to all other Board committees and the Board.

LEGAL CONTRACTING

Advised ICANN org on a variety of ongoing contracting-related issues, with approximately 380 new requests for contract drafting or advice during the period. The team handled contract

negotiation, drafting and/or advice for all ICANN org functions, which included such work on the following representative projects:

- **For Global Domains & Strategy:** (1) Registry Agreement assignments and Registry Operator change of control transactions from Minds + Machines Group Limited, Top Level Design, LLC and .Club Domains, LLC to subsidiaries of GoDaddy, Inc.; (2) Registry Agreement assignments proposed by UNR Corp. to various entities after a portfolio auction; (3) ongoing work on the addition of data processing terms to the agreements with certain Contracted Parties; (4) .AERO Registry Agreement renewal and .WED RFP; (5) numerous amendments, assignments and terminations of Contracted Party agreements; and (6) vendor agreements related to Universal Acceptance readiness.
- **For Other ICANN org Functions:** agreements and amendments related to (1) the renewal of leases in Los Angeles and Singapore; (2) ongoing work for the Information Transparency Initiative; (3) various software licenses; (4) the ICANN71, ICANN72, and ICANN73 Public Meetings; (5) the Identifier Technology Health Indicators Initiative; and (6) various sponsorship and trademark licensing engagements with organizations that are linked to ICANN's Mission and Strategic Plan for 2020-2025.

LEGAL SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL DOMAINS AND STRATEGY AND POLICY TEAMS

The Governance Function continues to provide legal and other strategic support on projects across the organization including:

- **Consensus Policy Implementation Activities:** Supported implementation activities for Phase 1 recommendations of the Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data (EPDP), as well as the Operational Design Phase for the Phase 2 recommendations of the EPDP regarding the System for Standardized Access and Disclosure. In addition, supported the work of the Board Caucus Group on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures (SubPro) to continue deliberations on the outputs of the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Final Report, and preparation for possible Board initiation of an Operational Design Phase for SubPro.
- **Data Privacy/Protection Matters:** Supported ICANN org projects related to the GDPR and other global privacy legislation, including advising in preparation for ICANN org outreach on the proposal to revise the existing European Union Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS Directive), on the proposed Digital Services Act, and on proposed personal information protection and adopted data security legislation in China.

LEGAL SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF IANA STEWARDSHIP TRANSITION

Provided legal advice supporting key areas of work across many aspects of ICANN org's work including:

- **Specific and Organizational Reviews:** Supported ICANN org and Board efforts to reach a timely decision on recommendations within the SSR2 Final Report; supported Board efforts on consideration of the Nominating Committee Review Implementation Working Group proposals and engaged directly with Working Group on key deliverables; supported ICANN org consideration of ccNSO organization review outcomes; and support to other ongoing planning and implementation efforts.
- **Community Initiatives:** Engaged with the Root Server System Governance Working Group to begin providing legal inputs to proposals; engaged with the ccNSO's policy development effort on establishing review processes; provided internal legal support on

the implementation of Work Stream 2 recommendations on Enhancing ICANN Accountability; supported Board consideration of the IANA Naming Function Review recommendations and participated in implementation planning efforts; continued direct engagement with the Implementation Oversight Team for the Independent Review Process, as well as internal work on development of a standing panel.

- **Engagement Efforts:** Supported the development and execution of Memorandum of Understanding with the Arab Information & Communication Technologies Organization; provided advice and support to a wide range of engagement activities for ICANN's Governmental Engagement and Global Stakeholder Engagement functions, including supporting the Government Engagement team in publishing updates and information to the ICANN community.
- **Internal Org Efforts:** Provided legal advice to support ICANN org's continued response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, including preparations to bring ICANN org back into offices, return to travel, and hosting ICANN meetings; provided strategic and legal advice to the team coordinating a successful ICANN71; advising on the development of the Operational Design Phase.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

We provide support and briefing documents in ongoing litigation, in support of Independent Review Process filings concerning new gTLD Program applications. The litigation issues are mitigated by maintaining a litigation readiness plan for relevant legal filings as well as utilization of the Risk Fund for costs. We provide an attorney-client privileged version of a litigation report to the Board under separate cover. Ongoing litigation activities are published on the litigation page on the ICANN website: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/governance/litigation-en>.

Global Domains and Strategy

Theresa Swinehart, SVP, Global Domains & Strategy

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY

EPDP Phase 1

- On 21 June 2021, the Board [adopted the EPDP Phase 2 Priority 2 Policy Recommendations 19-22](#) for the new Consensus Policy on gTLD Registration Data as set forth in Section 3.6 of the Final Report, and directed ICANN org to develop and execute an implementation plan and to continue communication with the community on such work.
- Implementation for the four recommendations has been added to the work scope for the Registration Data Policy implementation team with the support of that Implementation Review Team. The team is completing analysis of these recommendations to determine the implementation requirements and tasks.
- ICANN org and the contracted parties are continuing discussions to define appropriate data protection arrangements in support of Recommendation 19 of the EPDP Phase 1 recommendations.

EPDP Phase 2

- On 19 April, the staff [Summary Report of Public Comment Proceeding was published for the Public Comment proceeding](#) to obtain community input prior to Board action on a subset of final policy recommendations of the Generic Names Supporting Organization Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data (EPDP) – Phase 2. Specifically, this Public Comment proceeding sought input on a set of final recommendations that relate to a proposed System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) to nonpublic registration information.

EPDP Phase 2A

- On 3 June, the [Initial Report of the Expedited Policy Development Process \(EPDP\) on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Team – PHASE 2A](#) opened for Public Comment, ending on 19 July. The EPDP Team is reviewing the public comments received and is scheduled to deliver its Final Report to the GNSO Council by 31 August. However, the EPDP Team may decide to request additional time from the GNSO Council to finalize its work.

System for Standard Access/Disclosure (SSAD) Operational Design Phase (ODP)

- On 26 April, the Executive Team authorized the org to begin work on this project. The team established a project governance structure, which included team selection, budgeting, creation of a charter and high-level timeline, and established a meeting schedule with the GNSO Council liaison.
- On 21 June, the SSAD ODP team [opened](#) a Request for Information (RFI) to better understand what may be commercially available in the marketplace to deliver some or all of the SSAD, including existing methods for identity verification. An ICANN org [blog](#) was published before the RFI opened to help prepare the community and garner interest ahead of time. The RFI closed on 19 July.
- In July, the SSAD ODP team engaged with an external consultant, Kirei AB, to assist with research related to the SSAD identity verification requirements.

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- On 8 July, the SSAD ODP team issued two questionnaires, [one aimed at the community and](#) the other for contracted parties, to help the ODP team determine how many potential users are expected to use the SSAD and the anticipated volume of requests if it is implemented.
 - On 13 July, the SSAD ODP team held a webinar to update the community on the project's progress and next steps. Recordings are available [here](#).
 - Throughout this period, ICANN subject matter experts conducted assessment work that will help inform the Operational Design Assessment (ODA).

REGISTRANT PROGRAM

The goal of this program is to educate registrants on their rights and responsibilities.

- The team collaborated with Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) and Office of the CTO-Technical Engagement (OCTO-TE) teams to deliver a seven-part interactive [webinar series](#) to members of the Not-For-Profit Operational Concerns (NPOC) Constituency and others from the broader community. The webinar series covered topics such as registrant rights and responsibilities, domain name registrations, transfers and renewals, and best practices for keeping domain names secure. The webinars were recorded and the average attendance for each webinar was between 30-40 participants.

INTERNATIONALIZED DOMAIN NAMES (IDNS) AND UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE (UA)

IDN Program

- Published a [blog](#) to emphasize the importance of IDNs and an accompanying progress [report](#) on their usage around the world.
- Published [Public Comment](#) for Greek Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR).
- Released the [fifth version](#) of the Maximal Starting Repertoire ([MSR-5](#)) after [Public Comment](#) concluded.
- Released a [pilot version](#) of the IDN Table Review Tool which gives gTLD registry operators and registry service providers the ability to check IDN tables they have designed before submitting them for review by ICANN org.
- Published [Second-level Reference Label Generation Rules](#) for the Arabic, Hebrew, and Sinhala Scripts, and Hebrew Language.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Arab Information and Communication Technologies Organization (AICTO). The MoU outlines how the organizations will work together to support the use of IDNs and to promote Universal Acceptance in the region.

UA Program

- [Conducted](#) four UA training sessions that attracted over 150 participants from 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries.
- Conducted more than 15 educational and technical training sessions.
- Worked with APTLD to publish a [white paper](#) on the role of ccTLDs in achieving UA readiness.
- The UA Program hosted the ICANN71 Prep Week Session, "[Universal Acceptance \(UA\) Community Update \[icann.zoom.us\]](#)," which featured renowned panelists from across the Internet and domain name ecosystem, including various ICANN SO/AC leaders. In addition to receiving an update on UA training, research, and outreach efforts, session participants had the chance to hear pragmatic insights from each panelist on what they believe is needed to achieve an Internet for all.

- Finalized two evaluations regarding the UA-readiness of WordPress plugins (UASG032) and GitHub code libraries (UASG033) to spread awareness among the developer community regarding which tools support UA.
- Published an update to UASG004 with an expanded set of new multilingual UA and EAI testing resources anyone can use to evaluate their email provider's digital inclusivity. A test bed for internationalized email addresses has also been set up based on UASG004.
- Additionally, the program finalized and published a detailed case study regarding the EAI-readiness efforts of Coremail, an email technology provider in China, and the Thai Network Information Center Foundation (THNIC), the domain registry for .th and .ไทย (.THAI).
- Published weekly social media content to promote UASG resources, blogs, and industry news. Continued the #PeopleofUASG social media campaign by highlighting Q&A responses from UA Working Group leadership.
- Published educational material including:
 - Case Study
 - [Email Address Internationalization \(EAI\): Coremail and the Thai Network Information Center Foundation \(THNIC\) \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - Documentation
 - [Test Domain Names and Email Addresses for UA Readiness Evaluation \[uasg.tech\]](#) (UASG004 update)
 - [UA of Content Management Systems \(CMS\) Phase 1 - WordPress \[uasg.tech\]](#) (UASG032)
 - [UA-Readiness of Open Source Code Pilot \[uasg.tech\]](#) (UASG033)
 - Blogs/Announcements
 - [ICANN70 Showcases Universal Acceptance \(UA\) Progress \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - [WordPress and Its Plugins Support Internationalized Domain Names, but Barriers Remain for Internationalized Email Addresses \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - [Supporting a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Internet Through Email Address Internationalization \(EAI\) – How Coremail and THNIC Made it a Reality \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - [Global Internet Leaders Chart a Path Forward to Achieve Universal Acceptance – UA Insights from ICANN71 Prep Week \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - [Test Your Email Provider's Support for Digital Inclusivity \[uasg.tech\]](#)
 - [GitHub Pilot Identifies Most Relevant Coding Libraries for the Universal Acceptance of Domain Names and Email Addresses \[uasg.tech\]](#)

CONTRACTUAL ACTIVITY

- Completed the de-accredited registrar transition process (DARTp) for registrants previously registered with Net 4 India (IANA 1007) to publicdomainregistry.com (IANA 303). Information related to this process can be found in this [announcement](#) and related links that are included in the “You May Also Like” section at the bottom of the page.
- Terminated registrar Pheenix (IANA 888) and completed the DARTp for previous registrants to move to Encirca (IANA 455).
- Completed the diligence and approved the assignment or change of control of registry operator to GoDaddy Registry for .CLUB, .DESIGN and 25 others from Minds + Machines Group.

CONTRACTED PARTIES

- Continued to directly engage with contracted parties individually, with the Registry and Registrar Stakeholder Groups, the Contracted Parties House.

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- Key events included holding a roundtable “unconference” with contracted parties, educational IDN Review Tool webinars, and supporting the Registry Operator Workshop (ROW).
 - [Announced](#) that ICANN is developing a request for proposals to identify a successor registry operator for the .WED gTLD, that had its registry agreement terminated by ICANN in September 2020 and has been in the Emergency Back-end Registry Operator (EBERO) process since December 2017.
 - [Published](#) updated metrics for the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators initiative on 10 May.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

ICANN71 VIRTUAL MEETING

- The GDS team held two Prep Week sessions leading up to the ICANN71 Policy Forum:
 - [ICANN Reviews and Implementation Update](#): covered the progress of ICANN Reviews, implementation planning, and the scheduling of related Board-approved recommendations.
 - [Universal Acceptance Community Update](#): a panel discussion with community leaders from the ICANN Board, GNSO, APRALO, ccNSO, and UASG that focused on the work that community groups are undertaking to drive the UA of all domain names and email addresses.

NEW GTLD PROGRAM - NEXT ROUND

- Facilitated and supported Board review and discussion of Subsequent Procedures policy recommendations.
- Facilitated and supported Board review and discussions on New gTLD Program Next Round Operational Design Phase (ODP) scoping and resource needs.
- Advanced organizational project planning and resourcing processes for the expected ODP.
- Shared information on current work in blog post: [Next Steps Toward the Next Round](#) (26 July 2021).

DOMAIN NAME SYSTEM SECURITY THREAT MITIGATION PROGRAM

ICANN org's DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program strives to make the Internet a safer place for end users by reducing the prevalence of DNS security threats across the Internet. The Program enables a collaborative platform that provides visibility and clarity over the org's various DNS security threat-related initiatives and projects and allows for the formation and execution of a centralized strategy. During the reporting period, many activities were conducted:

- Held a community [webinar](#) on the ICANN DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program. Published recordings in the six United Nations languages and Portuguese.
- Published a [blog outlining DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program](#) internal and external activities including introduction of new [webpage](#) consolidating related information and resources.
- Participated at [ICANN71 Virtual Policy Forum - Plenary Session: Understanding Reputation Block Lists panel](#).
- Published a [joint blog](#) from GDS and OCTO about a potential plan to expand the Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR) to registrar level metrics. The plan requires the use of an existing data set from registry operators to enable the expansion and ICANN has made a proposal to the registries to gain access to this data. Announced that the [Domain Name Security Threat Information Collection and Reporting \(DNSTICR\) project](#)

has increased the linguistic diversity of the search strings studied in response to reports of COVID-19-related Domain Name System (DNS) security threats.

- Published a [blog](#) outlining DAAR monthly report improvements and translation efforts for the DAAR dedicated webpage and FAQ.

OPERATIONS, SERVICE DELIVERY, AND SUPPORT

Responsible for GDS operations, Contracted Party service delivery, registrar application processing, vendor management, and worldwide support for community members and registrants. Activities included:

Global Support

- The Global Support team answered 2,711 phone calls and closed 11,712 cases. ICANN Contracted Parties represented 8 percent of the case volume while the remaining 92% were from registrants and the community. The team sent 40 [notifications](#) to Contracted Parties during this period. The overall satisfaction score for Contracted Parties was 4.8 on a 5-point scale for the question “How satisfied are you with the service you received from ICANN?”

Contracted Party Service Delivery

- A total of 1,457 service requests were completed during the period. Five hundred eighty-four Registrar Accreditation Agreements (RAAs) were renewed and eight RAAs were terminated (seven voluntarily and one involuntarily). Sixty-four new registrars were accredited in three regions: 78% in North America, 20% in Asia Pacific and 2% in Europe. Fourteen Registry Agreement (RA) assignments were completed for 31 gTLDs, 12 Material Subcontracting Arrangement requests were completed for 12 gTLDs, and 5 gTLD RAs were terminated (all voluntarily). One hundred twenty-eight Continued Operations Instrument (COI)-related cases were completed, and 181 COI obligation end notifications were sent out for 276 gTLDs.

Board Advice

- The ICANN Board received 12 advisories related to ALAC, RZERC, RSSAC, and SSAC advice. The advisories translate to 64 pieces of individual advice as advisories often contain more than one piece of advice. Fifty-seven items require action from the ICANN Board, and seven are statements and/or informational advisories that do not contain a specific recommendation for the ICANN Board.

Correspondence

- ICANN org handled 342 cases related to the work of processing Correspondence. Of those, 53 were letters resulting in substantive responses and were published on the ICANN Correspondence page. ICANN also published 38 letters directed to the ICANN community to inform the community or request information on various topics.

New gTLD Program

- As of 30 July 2021, 32 applications remain in the 2012 round with 2 applications actively working toward contracting. During this period, 2 applicants withdrew from the new gTLD Program, and agreements for 5 TLDs were subsequently terminated and removed from the root zone.

Public Comment Activity

- Maximal Starting Repertoire Version 5 (MSR-5) (opened 27 April, closed 8 June).

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- Proposed Renewal of the .AERO Registry Agreement (opened 6 July, closed 16 August).
 - Proposal for Greek Root Zone Label Generation Rules (opened 15 July, closed 26 August).

Reviews: Support/Accountability

Theresa Swinehart, SVP, Global Domains & Strategy

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Supported the work of one Specific Review – Board consideration leading to Board action for the SSR2 report and recommendations; one Organizational Review in preparation for Board consideration – ccNSO; and two Organizational Reviews during their implementation work (NomCom and RSSAC).
- Supported the Implementation Operations Team in developing the Implementation Planning Roadmap for WS2 Recommendations 7.2-7.3.3 related to ICANN Accountability mechanisms and Service Level Agreements.
- Continued engagement with the communications team and Implementation Operations team to establish an overarching strategy for communicating the full lifecycle of reviews in a seamless manner from the planning and execution of ICANN reviews through prioritization and implementation of review recommendations.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

SPECIFIC REVIEWS

Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency Review (SSR2)

- On 22 July 2021, the Board [took action](#) on each of the 63 recommendations issued within the [SSR2 Review Team Final Report](#).
- See Maarten Botterman's [blog](#), [Board resolution](#), [rationale](#), and [Scorecard](#) for further details.
- The report contains recommendations in the areas of:
 - The extent to which prior SSR Review recommendations have been implemented and whether implementation has resulted in the intended effect.
 - SSR within ICANN.
 - Contracts, compliance, and transparency around Domain Name System (DNS) abuse.
 - Additional SSR-related concerns regarding the global DNS.
- The Board developed six categories of action to move some recommendations to final action now, while allowing sufficient additional time for fulsome analysis and consideration of the relevant significant factors impacting the feasibility of implementing other recommendations. The [detailed rationale](#) for each recommendation sets out the specific reasons for the Board's decision:
 - Recommendations the Board approves, subject to prioritization, risk assessment and mitigation, costing, and implementation considerations; and recommendations that the Board approves, with the understanding that they are already fully implemented.
 - Recommendations the Board rejects because the recommendation cannot be approved in full.
 - Recommendations the Board rejects.
 - Recommendations the Board determines to be pending, likely to be approved once further information is gathered to enable approval.
 - Recommendations that the Board determines to be pending, holding to seek clarity or further information.

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- Recommendations the Board determines to be pending, likely to be rejected unless additional information shows implementation is feasible.
 - As part of the Board's continued analysis and assessment of the pending recommendations, the Board and ICANN org will engage with the [SSR2 Implementation Shepherds](#). The Board will also take into account the differing opinions registered through [Public Comment](#) suggesting that more community engagement and discussion may be required to consider how to best address overarching issues in a balanced way.

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEWS

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO2) Review

ICANN org worked with the ccNSO Council to update the previously submitted documents, to reflect the progress made by the ccNSO toward completing the implementation work. On 17 June 2021, the ccNSO Council [confirmed](#) its agreement with the [comparison document](#) and with the level of remaining implementation work, e.g., that no further action is required from the ccNSO at this stage in implementing the recommendations of the ccNSO2 Review.

Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Review

On 21 June 2021 the Board [resolved](#) to defer the initiation of the third GNSO Review (GNSO3) until such time as the Board, community, and org better understand the impact of the third Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3) recommendations on the next Organizational Review cycle, as well as in consideration of the current community workload.

Nominating Committee (NomCom) Review

- The NomComRIWG has made progress, especially with regards to:
 - Completion of implementation for Recommendation 1 on job description for NomCom members to emphasize experience, diversity, and independence.
 - Proposal for Recommendation 10 on rebalancing of the NomCom and the NomComRIWG's community consultation process on that proposal; and
 - Revised draft charter for the Standing Committee (Recommendation 24), developed in collaboration with ICANN org.
- Recognizing that participation in the group has been waning for some time, the NomComRIWG co-chairs issued a [blog](#) to provide a progress update and invite participation in the group. A participation [Fact Sheet](#) has been updated through 30 June 2021.
- The OEC and NomComRIWG held a joint meeting on 22 April (see [minutes](#), [supporting documents](#), and [NomComRIWG meeting record](#)) in which the OEC raised potential concerns with implementation transparency, and inquired regarding rationale for proposed changes, to make sure it has broad support and understanding in the community.
- In response to questions from the OEC, the NomComRIWG developed a [Summary of its community consultation and feedback on implementation of Recommendation 10 \(Rebalancing of the NomCom\)](#). ICANN org submitted this summary to the OEC in July, on behalf of the NomComRIWG and the OEC discussed this topic at its 20 July meeting.
- The OEC discussion on 20 July led to the recommendation that the OEC engage with the SO/AC leadership in informal conversations on areas of RIWG's work that will require Bylaws changes and will have far reaching governance implications. The expectation is that constructive dialogue would pave the way for the NomComRIWG proposals to be further socialized and advanced, considering their importance and impact.

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- This informal engagement would occur before any formal steps are taken on modifying the Bylaws (which will include Public Comment). In line with the RIWG's second Progress Report from December 2020, the OEC confirmed that all proposed Bylaws amendments coming out of the NomComRIWG work will be packaged together, to make it easier for the community to understand the full scope of the proposals.
 - Plans have been made for the ICANN CEO to meet with the leadership of the NomComRIWG to discuss several topics, including:
 - Questions about the transparency of NomCom staff support and RIWG requests to ICANN org to preserve institutional knowledge.
 - NomCom staff reporting lines.
 - NomCom Resources and Budgeting.

Second Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC2) Review

- The RSSAC2 Review Implementation Work Party submitted their third implementation progress report to the OEC, reporting that out of the six recommendations, two have been implemented, two are in progress, and two have not yet started, as they are dependent on the progress of the [Root Server System Governance Working Group](#). Implementation continues on two recommendations in progress and has been completed on two recommendations. The implementation progress of the remaining two recommendations is dependent on the progress of the Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSSGWG).

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

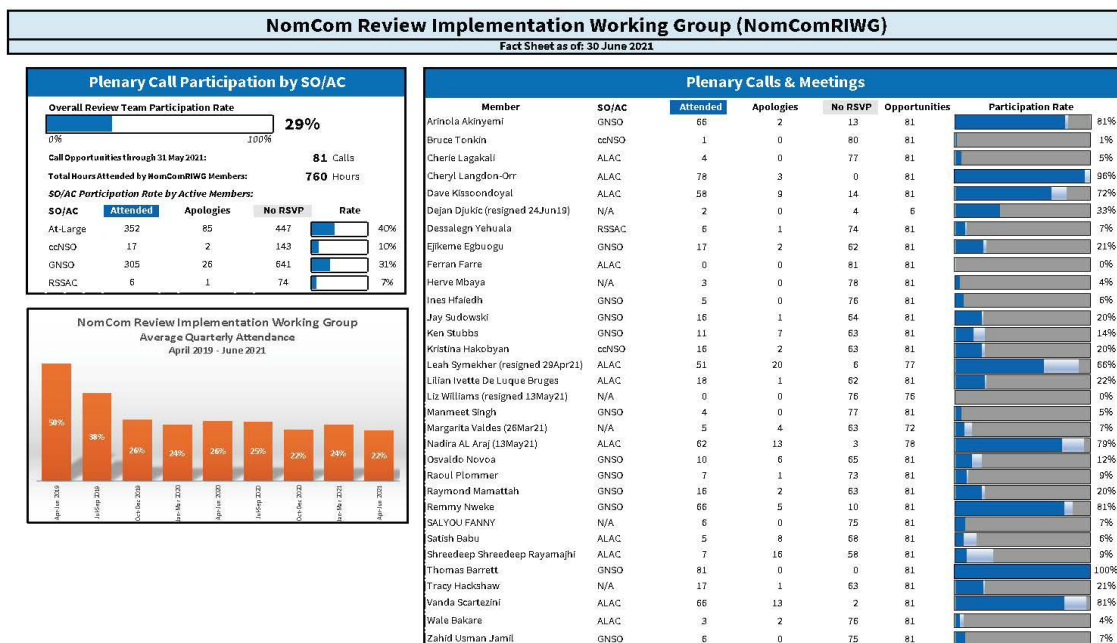
In connection with the Board action on the SSR2 Review, the Board acknowledged process restrictions that require the Board to "reject because the recommendation cannot be approved in full," even though the Board agrees in principle with the intent of the recommendation. The Board encourages ICANN org to work with the community on ways to address these process restrictions. This could include socializing the existing process restrictions and the associated gaps via a thought paper. Addressing possible existing process restrictions will proceed in collaboration with the ICANN community within the context of broader work to improve future outcomes from ICANN's review program.

FACT SHEETS

Nominating Committee Review Implementation Working Group (NomComRIWG) - FY21 Fact Sheets

Key Data Points for FY21 (Q4):

- Participation rate: 29%
- Milestones completed: 81 calls | 760 hours



Second Security, Stability and Resiliency Review (SSR2) - [Final Fact Sheet](#) (March 2021)
 Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3) - [Final Fact Sheet](#) (June 2020)
 Registration Directory Service Review (RDS) - [Final Fact Sheet](#) (August 2019)
 Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice Review (CCT) - [Final Fact Sheet](#) (October 2018)

Reviews: Implementation

Xavier Calvez, SVP, Planning & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- On 25 May 2021, the Implementation Operations team held a webinar to provide an update on the implementation of over 100 consensus recommendations contained in the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability, Work Stream 2 (WS2) Final Report. More information about this presentation and the recording of the webinar can be found [here](#). During this webinar, the ICANN organization discussed progress made in addressing the WS2 recommendations, which were adopted by the ICANN Board in November 2019. As the list of recommendations need to be addressed by both community organizations and ICANN org, in many instances the completion of WS2 implementation requires action and collaboration from all three components of ICANN: the community, Board, and org. ICANN org presented an overview of roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in the implementation of these recommendations and encouraged the community to provide any feedback they may have regarding these roles and responsibilities.
- On 2 June 2021, the Implementation Operations and the Review Support and Accountability teams, jointly, participated in the ICANN71 Prep Week by hosting a webinar and presenting on the progress of ICANN Reviews, status of implementation work pertaining to the Board-approved recommendations resulting from Specific Reviews (CCT, RDS-WHOIS2, and ATRT3), the CCWG-WS2, the community following its work on the Evolution of the ICANN's Multistakeholder Model, and the work being done toward establishing periodic reporting to keep the community informed of the progress of work with respect to the implementation of these recommendations. More information about this presentation and the recording of this webinar can be found on the ICANN71 [site](#).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

ICANN org is processing the Board-approved recommendations from the CCT, RDS-WHOIS2, and ATRT3 review teams; the CCWG-Accountability-Work Stream 2 (WS2) recommendations; and the work on the Evolution of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model through various steps, including the development of an implementation plan, prioritization, scheduling of the implementation into the strategic and operating plans of the organization, and actual implementation.

Given the complexity of most of these recommendations, the long lifecycle of reviews and implementation, and the dependencies on other community work and events, having a structured and cohesive reporting platform in place that shows the current and historical progress of work will provide more transparency in the work of ICANN org and keep the community informed. To further enable the organization to improve its implementation efforts and provide the community with more transparency, ICANN organization's Implementation Operations function continues to work toward designing an implementation platform that will inform the community by providing up-to-date, timely, and detailed information on implementation efforts.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

Recommendations generated by community-led review efforts are numerous, complex, and require significant time and resources to implement effectively. In some instances, there are dependencies on other community work and events. As many recommendations emerge from reviews and other community-formed groups, there is a need to ensure that the org has the tools and processes in place to absorb, appropriately implement on Board-approved recommendations, and transparently report on the progress of work.

ICANN org has established the implementation structure to address the many questions on how to implement Board-approved community recommendations more effectively, with an eye toward refining implementation efforts to be effective, efficient, timely, and sustainable. Currently, ICANN org is working on developing a more frequent and detailed reporting mechanism to provide updates to the community as we make progress toward implementing the accepted recommendations resulting from reviews of cross community working groups. This is in addition to the *Annual Review Implementation Report* that ICANN org produces per our Bylaws, to report on progress update on the reviews and implementation of its recommendations annually.

Contractual Compliance

Jamie Hedlund, SVP, Contractual Compliance and U.S. Government Engagement

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

AUDIT PROGRAM: DNS ABUSE REGISTRAR AUDIT

The audit, aimed at verification of registrars' compliance with DNS security threat obligations, concluded at the end of June. The draft consolidated public report is being reviewed by ICANN Legal and Communications. The report will be shared with the RrSG and then published.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE ENFORCEMENT

All notices can be found [here](#).

NOTICES OF BREACH, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION AND NON-RENEWAL

- On 8 April, ICANN sent a [Notice of Breach](#) to the registry Joint Stock Company "Navigation-information systems" which operates the GDN top-level domain (TLD). The registry operator is in Canada. The breach was the result of the failure of the registry operator to comply with the Registry Performance Specifications for operation of the TLD. Specifically, its Registration Data Directory Service (RDDS) exhibited intermittent downtime between 28 March and 2 April 2021, which ultimately resulted in exceeding the Emergency Threshold under Section 6 of Specification 10 on 31 March 2021, and the Monthly Service Level Requirements under Section 2 of Specification 10, on 30 March and 2 April 2021. The registry operator was requested to provide corrective and preventive measures to ensure that it will consistently comply with the Registry Performance Specifications for operation of the TLD. The deadline to cure was 8 May 2021.
- On 23 April, ICANN sent a [Notice of Breach](#) to the registrar Pheenix, Inc. The registrar is in California (US). The breach was a result of the failure of the registrar to make registration data and records available upon request by ICANN; specifically records related to several transfer and renewal requests made by registrants. The deadline to cure was 14 May 2021. On 20 May, ICANN sent a [Notice of Termination](#) for failure to cure the 23 April 2021 breach notice.
- There were no breaches or suspensions in May thru July 2021.
- There were no new terminations in April; however, on 27 April, the insolvency court in India vacated the interim order directing that the termination issued to Net 4 India Limited (Net 4 India) on 26 February 2021 (effective 13 March 2021) not be given effect. ICANN org immediately invoked the De-Accredited Registrar Transition Procedure to provide relief to Net 4 India registrants. On 11 May, ICANN org [announced](#) the selection of the gaining registrar for the bulk transfer. During the month of April, Contractual Compliance continued collaborating with ICANN Legal in gathering data regarding complaints and providing information to registrants who filed complaints daily due to Net 4 India Limited's unresponsiveness and lack of services.
- There were no notices of termination issued during June and July, and no enforcement notices escalated to legal (mediation) during this reporting period.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE TEMPORARY SPECIFICATION FOR GTLD REGISTRATION DATA VIA THE INTERIM REGISTRATION DATA POLICY

In April, Contractual Compliance initiated three new inquiries concerning third-party access to nonpublic Registration Data in the RDDS (Section 4.1, Appendix A). In May, Contractual Compliance initiated five new inquiries concerning third-party access to nonpublic Registration Data in the RDDS (Section 4.1, Appendix A) and one new inquiry concerning the provision of nonpublic Registration Data in the RDDS to UDRP providers upon notification of UDRP complaint (Sections 1.1, Appendix E). In June, Contractual Compliance initiated two new inquiries concerning third-party access to nonpublic Registration Data in the RDDS (Section 4.1, Appendix A), and one new inquiry concerning Consent to Display Registration Data in the RDDS (Section 7.2). In July, Contractual Compliance initiated one new inquiry concerning the display of Registration Data in RDDS (Sections 2.2-2.6 Appendix A).

During this reporting period, the Compliance team continued: providing contractual compliance input for implementation of EPDP Phase 1 recommendations, specifically concerning policy language and enforcement; and attending internal EPDP Phase 2A meetings to provide compliance input, as needed. The team also attended Board Caucus calls concerning GDPR and EPDP Phase 2 recommendations; and provided metrics related to complaints received related to alleged violations of the Temporary Specification and compliance notices and inquiries sent and closed during the month. In addition, the Compliance team presented updates to the GAC PSWG concerning compliance activity related to enforcement of the Temporary Specification during the pre-ICANN71 GAC PSWG informal meeting in June.

COMPLIANCE MATTERS RELATED TO REGISTRARS AND REGISTRY OPERATORS

From April to July 2021, Contractual Compliance received a total of 8,241 new complaints (7,678 in registrar complaint types, and 563 in registry operator complaint types) and sent 920 inquiries and notices (collectively referred to as “compliance notifications”) to contracted parties. This number (920) refers to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd compliance notifications and does not account for notifications sent to request clarification or additional evidence following a contracted party’s response.

Most notifications sent to registrars addressed obligations related to Registration Data Inaccuracy, Abuse, and Transfer. Most notifications sent to registry operators addressed obligations related to Zone File Access. From April to July 2021, Contractual Compliance closed 10,012 complaints without contacting the contracted party due to the complaint being out of scope of ICANN’s policies and agreements. Examples of complaints closed without contacting the contracted party include those in which the complainant: did not respond to ICANN Contractual Compliance’s request for evidence; complained about a domain registered in a country-code top level domain; or submitted a duplicate complaint before resolution of original complaint or about an issue already resolved at the time the complaint was reviewed (e.g., domain subject to WHOIS inaccuracy complaint already). In all cases, the Compliance team educated complainants on ICANN’s scope and provided alternative means for pursuing their complaints.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT - MONTHLY DASHBOARDS

- [ICANN Contractual Compliance Dashboard for April 2021](#)
- [ICANN Contractual Compliance Dashboard for May 2021](#)
- [ICANN Contractual Compliance Dashboard for June 2021](#)

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- [ICANN Contractual Compliance Dashboard for July 2021](#)

REGISTRATION DATA ACCESS PROTOCOL (RDAP) IMPLEMENTATION

The Contractual Compliance team continued processing Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) service-related compliance notifications. From October 2019 to June 2021, the Compliance team has continued to process notifications related to the implementation of RDAP service and registration of base Uniform Resource Locators (URLs). Current information indicates that three TLDs and 135 registrars have not yet uploaded their URL to the Naming Services portal (NSp) or registered their URL with IANA and uploaded their URL to the Naming Services portal (NSp). The number of registrars has increased due to an increase in recent registrar accreditations. Nevertheless, the Compliance team continues to collaborate with these contracted parties that have not yet implemented RDAP, and those that have presented remediation measures to become compliant. These contracted parties are requested to provide regular updates to their open compliance tickets regarding their progress toward remediation. To date, Compliance has received no third-party complaints concerning RDAP. There has been no indication that any registrars or registry operators have ceased to operate WHOIS services.

During this reporting period, the Compliance team continued participating in regular cross-functional meetings surrounding the status of RDAP enforcement, development of RDAP implementation into contractual amendments and timeline of transition from RDAP to sunset of WHOIS.

REGISTRAR AND REGISTRY COMPLIANCE CHECKS

In response to requests from Global Domains Strategy (GDS) to verify that a contracted party is in good standing, a total of 1899 registrars, three gTLDs registry operators, and four gTLDs went through compliance reviews during this reporting period.

ANNUAL COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION REVIEW EFFORTS

A total of seven registrars have failed to submit the Annual Registrar Compliance Certificate to ICANN for calendar year 2020 and three have not submitted certifications for calendar year 2019. Compliance is currently following up with those registrars. All registrars that are party to the 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA) are required to complete and return to ICANN an annual certificate certifying compliance with the terms and conditions of the registrar's RAA within 20 days following the end of each calendar year.

NSP COMPLIANCE

During this reporting period, the Compliance team continued working with E&IT and the rest of the cross-functional team to complete the migration from the Kayako ticketing platform to NSP Compliance.

POLICY AND WORKING GROUP EFFORTS

The Compliance team worked with the Global Domains Strategy team on multiple reviews assessing the recommendations produced by review teams. The following activities took place:

- Provided input regarding metrics used for the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators initiative.
- Continued providing contractual compliance input for implementation of the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 1 recommendations.

-
- Reviewed SSR2 Review Team final recommendations and provided input from Contractual Compliance perspective.
 - Reviewed Policy Development Process to Review the Transfer Policy. We provided updated transfer-related metrics for the period before and after implementation of Temporary Specification to demonstrate the changes in trends, provided input regarding the nature of transfer complaints, and issues usually reported by complainants during discussion of AuthInfo codes; participated in discussions related to Losing FOA, stating that is important evidence used by Compliance team to investigate complaints related to unauthorized transfer reports.

COMPLIANCE OUTREACH

Jamie Hedlund was the guest speaker for the second [ICANN APAC-TWNIC Engagement Forum](#) held on 15 and 16 April 2021. In May 2021, the Istanbul team conducted a series of online regional sessions held in the EMEA region in collaboration with GSE teams. The goal of these outreach sessions is to increase awareness among contracted parties in the region who are not able to attend ICANN meetings, as well as to:

- Provide an opportunity to better understand ICANN Contractual Compliance process and approaches and contractual obligations.
- Discuss topics of interest and ask questions in local languages.
- Exchange ideas and experiences.

More specifically, training and outreach sessions were conducted in Russian and Turkish languages for Turkish and Ukrainian registrars. Topics covered during the sessions included:

- Local data protection regulations.
- Temporary Specification/Interim Registration Data Policy Disclosure of gTLD Registration Data and Consent to Display Registration Data.
- Abuse Reports requirements.
- Audit activities.
- ICANN's Contractual Compliance approach and process.

Additionally, the ICANN Compliance regional team attended the Africa Engagement Forum and provided updated information about ICANN's Compliance function.

On 10 June 2021, the Compliance team held a Registrar Outreach session to address a list of topics and questions that were brought forward by the Registrar Stakeholder Group compliance subgroup.

On 22 July 2021, ICANN Compliance participated in ICANN's DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program Webinar and presented updates on registrar audits, abuse complaint metrics, and information on how to file an abuse complaint with ICANN Contractual Compliance.

Top Issues and Mitigation

None during this reporting period.

Risk Management

Xavier Calvez, SVP, Planning & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Fully implemented the Risk Management Target Model

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

The Risk Management function worked with the org-level CEO Risk Management Committee and the Board Risk Committee to review the status of the risk management target model (Model) and considered whether the Model should be updated to reflect developments since it was established. With only minor gaps remaining, and in some cases the org exceeded the target or various elements of the Model, the CEO RMC and BRC agreed that the maturity level of the various elements of the Model, and therefore the org Risk Management Framework, is appropriate. The current state of the Model maturity was also presented to the Board as part of the semiannual BRC Report to the Board.

Two action items were discussed with the CEO RMC, BRC, and Board to complete the remaining gaps to fully implement the Model. A communication plan, consisting of a public document to provide an overview of the org's Risk Management Framework, is complete and will be presented at the next appropriate ICANN Public Meeting. The other proposed action is to further enhance the Risk Register assurance process to test and validate risk controls and mitigations. Implementing activities have been scheduled through the end of the 2021 calendar year.

Separately, updates to the BRC Charter were supported by the BGC. The updated BRC Charter will be recommended to the Board for approval.

Planning

Xavier Calvez, SVP, Planning & Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- The ICANN Board [adopted](#) ICANN's FY22-26 Operating and Financial Plan and FY22 Operating Plan and Budget on 13 May 2021. The Empowered Community petition period terminated and the [FY22 ICANN Plans](#) went into effect at the beginning of the FY22 on 1 July 2021.
- Completed the second step (trend analysis) of three steps of the Strategic Outlook process.
- Engaged with the community during [ICANN71](#).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Planning team continued the FY23 Strategic Outlook process with the trend analysis. From January to April, the Planning team convened 16 Strategic Outlook sessions with 300 participants from the community, Board, and org, resulting in 1,232 data points collected. The data analysis and reporting took place in May and June. The last step of the process consists in a trend impact assessment that will be conducted between July and September.

OPERATING PLANS AND BUDGET

Following the Public Comment period and ICANN70, ICANN org presented the [Proposed for Adoption](#) FY22-26 Operating and Financial Plan and FY22 Operating Plan and Budget to the ICANN Board. On 13 May 2021, the ICANN Board [adopted](#) the proposed plans. There was no pending Empowered Community rejection process at the end of the Empowered Community consideration period, and the [adopted plans](#) went into effect on 1 July 2021.

In preparation for the FY23 planning process, the Planning team collaborated with the IANA team and hosted two informational webinars in July on the IANA Operating Plan and Budget. The team explained the planning process, the proposed operational priorities for FY23, timelines and key planning assumptions. Click [here](#) to learn more. ICANN org will host webinars about the ICANN FY23 Operating Plan and Budget in September 2021.

PRIORITIZATION OF ICANN'S WORK PROJECT

"Prioritization of ICANN's Work" is a key targeted outcome of the "Planning at ICANN" operating initiative in ICANN's Operating Plan. After launching the project in April 2021 with a [public webinar](#), the Planning team is holding consultation workshops with various stakeholders, discussing the different elements to form a proposed prioritization framework.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

None.

Global Human Resources, Administrative Services, Security Operations

Gina Villavicencio, SVP, Global Human Resources

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Continued our support of the org's response to COVID-19 and the work-from-home requirement for all staff. All three departments played critical roles in preparations and planning for staff's eventual return to offices, travel and face-to-face meetings as well as establishing dedicated communication channels to improve communications among staff and collaboration with internal partners.
- Launched a new Career Framework for all staff to provide more clarity on options for career growth, consistent criteria for advancement, and a refreshed salary grade structure.
- Other key accomplishments include conducting the annual Staff Engagement Survey for 2021, relocation of our Geneva office, and renewal of the lease for our Singapore office.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCES

- Continued to support the ongoing requirement for all staff to effectively work remotely as part of the org's response to COVID-19. The priority focus was on the development of procedures and protocols to minimize any health and safety risks when conditions allow for the eventual return of staff to ICANN offices and the suspension of travel and face-to-face meeting restrictions. The most notable change to the org's health and safety protocols was to mandate proof of COVID-19 vaccination for staff wishing to voluntarily enter offices at this time, where applicable, contingent upon local laws and conditions.
- During this reporting period, nine vacancies were filled in the Los Angeles and Istanbul offices, two of which were at director level. Nine staff left the org, and we are recruiting for 22 open positions.
- The annual Staff Engagement Survey was completed in June 2021 with 94% participation and an overall favorability score of 82% (+2% higher than the 2020 results). The org's overall results were shared with all staff and functional and regional debriefs are scheduled for August 2021. The priority focus areas continue to be staff growth and development, work prioritization and planning, and collaboration.
- A new Career Framework for staff was launched, including comprehensive career paths and levels to ensure consistent criteria and application across the org while enhancing staff's understanding of growth and development opportunities. The org's salary grade structure was refreshed, all jobs were mapped into the new framework, and staff were trained to better understand the new career framework.
- The SR2 FY21 semiannual performance review cycle was successfully completed, and the corresponding At-Risk payments were distributed to eligible staff by the end of June. The FY21 Annual Compensation/Merit Review (ACMR) process was completed for all staff by 31

July 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- Continued support of the org's response to COVID-19 for ICANN staff working remotely and for preparing for return to normal operations, including cross-functional collaboration as part of the regional crisis management teams planning, partnering with Security Operations and other teams to assist with development of protocols and procedures, and arranging for needed equipment and supplies to staff, while maintaining the offices globally daily.
- Relocated the Geneva office to a new location and negotiated the lease for that new space. Renewed the lease for the Singapore office's current location.
- Global Health and Wellness program events included a special global program for Mental Health Awareness month (May 2021) and refocused efforts on planning and support of global and local wellness for FY22.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

- Continued to drive ICANN's response to COVID-19, including operationalization of the return to office process and development of a methodology and framework for return to travel and face-to-face events as well as ongoing COVID-19 assessments to inform the org's operational planning for these events and travel. Integral to the success of ICANN's return to normal operations has been the role of the Regional Security Managers (RSMs), who provided critical planning and communications conduits to their regions.
- Continued support of the Travel Safety Committee (TSC) with numerous requests for exception to travel and conduct face-to-face activities during the org's ban ensuring that all potential risks were successfully identified, assessed, and mitigated.
- Began the optimization of the org's crisis management program to create synergy and consistency between ICANN and IANA's various incident response mechanisms.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

- Ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic; no significant impact to ICANN's operations have resulted to-date as the org continues to be agile in its responses.

Engineering & Information Technology

Ashwin Rangan, SVP, Engineering & Chief Information Officer (CIO)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

The most important milestone for this period is the significant progress made on the systems necessary to support a return to normal office operations. Upgrades to equipment, visitor management, and global space management systems will support a measured return. Other work includes the approval of the travel support modernization effort, with initial solutions now being posited and researched. ICANN Join, a significant improvement for the community to find, join, and manage working group participation is completing internal testing and will be deployed once the final data privacy checks are completed. Technical Compliance Monitoring also was deployed to production in April. The Technical Compliance Monitoring (TCM) system automates periodic monitoring of several technical provisions found in ICANN's consensus policies, as well as the provisions described in the 2017 gTLD Base Registry Agreement and the 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

FRONT OFFICE RELATIONSHIP & DELIVERY (FORD) TEAM

Platform Reduction: The E&IT platform reductions continue and remain on track. During this period the team has been able to move or merge four additional legacy ICANN org services. Reductions will continue during CY2021 and beyond through 2024. A comprehensive, multiyear plan – both presenting the opportunity to further consolidate platforms and seeking Executive team support – was presented during this quarter to the Executive team. This information will be cascaded and socialized.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION PILLAR

Information Transparency Initiative (ITI): The ITI team (members of Global Communications and E&IT) have completed enhancements to the authoring application. The team is now completing the Public Comment process, including Content Subscription for Public Comment, and is on course for a 31 August deployment.

ICANN Join: Final testing in progress with internal stakeholders. Initial rollout targeted for GNSO Council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PILLAR

Single Sign-On: Continued progress has been made to move community-facing services to ICANN Account, our single sign-on (SSO) and secure authentication solution. Pathable (Meeting Schedule and Mobile App) was added and additional security features to provide Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) capability were completed.

Travel Support Modernization: A cross-functional team has looked at improving efficiencies and the onboarding experience for Funded Travelers. Initial research on solutions has begun. Göran has requested Sally Costerton prepare and present a case to the Executive Team.

Community Relationship Management (CRM): Phase 2 for data cleanup is complete. Normalizing regional processes continue for connecting the org, including Events 2.0, which will

provide holistic event planning and an improved integrated public facing calendar on the ITI website. Phase 3 is in planning stages for capturing further engagement activities requirements.

CONTRACTED PARTIES PILLAR

Naming Services Portal: The NSp team started work on Compliance 2B to bring Iron Mountain reporting into NSp with a scheduled release date of 30 July 2021. Along with this functionality, we migrated some compliance email addresses and configured a new feature for Compliance staff to be able to send faxes within the system. After this release, we will be closer to retiring Kayako.

Additionally, the NSp team has delivered the following small projects as part of our Maintenance and Enhancement track:

- RDAP URL Validation for Registrars, including integration to IANA service.
- Helped SD/Compliance teams close over 4000 cases related to Net4India termination.
- SLAM/RRI bulk events hitting Salesforce limits (scheduled for release with Compliance 2B on 7.30.21).

TECHNICAL SERVICES PILLAR

MoSAPI Enhancements Phase-1 was deployed to production in May. MoSAPI replaced NFS file calls with HTTP-based requests to obtain Zabbix's SLA API files and deployed in May. Phase-2: Registry Watch Is close to complete. User Acceptance Test (UAT) is in-progress and will be deployed to production in early August.

Migration of SLA Monitoring system to Red Hat Enterprise Linux V8 was deployed to production in June. SLA Monitoring (SLAM) System has been rebuilt with approx.150 VMs/servers from scratch to migrate from legacy CentOS7 to the latest RedHat Enterprise Linux OS. This provides operational stability and security to critical systems.

Zabbix Test Automation for SLA and Data Export was deployed to production in June. This is the test framework to build the platform to continue increasing test coverage for Zabbix's SLA Monitoring (SLAM) system test automation. Automated test cases cover faster regression testing for bug fixes and/or new functionality.

Technical Compliance Monitoring was deployed to production in April. The Technical Compliance Monitoring (TCM) system automates periodic monitoring of several technical provisions found in ICANN's consensus policies, as well as the provisions described in the 2017 gTLD Base Registry Agreement and the 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement.

STAFF OPERATIONS PILLAR

Return to Normal Operations (RTNO)

Significant progress in the program to be prepared for Phase 1 of the return to normal operations. The infrastructure and software are ready for production for the visitor's management system, and we are planning for the implementation of the global space management system to allow Facilities and HR to automate some of the required tasks for the coming months. The plan is to have all the components for the program ready in Sep. 2021.

SOFTWARE ENGINEERING

Testim Tool Implementation: Software Engineering has integrated Testim into our Continuous Integration toolchain for further automation in more than 8 applications. Testim has proven to be a valuable tool for ICANN by providing significant time savings with an increase in overall quality

for application testing. Continuing to build high quality tests and further automating the test execution cycles remains a focus point for the near future.

Continuous Integration & Continuous Delivery (CI/CD): Software Engineering has continued to improve the overall CI/CD footprint for application management. Most non-production Software Engineering application environments have been migrated from the existing Kubernetes clusters to the newer OpenShift clusters. OpenShift provides a more up to date, stable, and metric-rich environment for applications to run with more flexibility and reliability. Some production migrations have taken place and will continue to be a focus point soon.

Process Improvements: Software Engineering has begun a process improvement cycle to leverage SmartSheets for technical project tracking according to the Project Management Framework. This will allow Software Engineering to use a unified approach across the entire application portfolio and provide better, more efficient, data for project tracking and future estimation.

CMM: Software Engineering has begun work against the previously identified four goals to actively pursue to increase the CMM level of the department. These goals include suggested specifications for requirement consumption, regularly published technical roadmaps, architectural review processes, and architectural change management processes. The goal relating to requirement specification is considered completed with the updates made to the Application Development Guidelines document currently in review by the E&IT Leadership Team.

DATA CENTER & CLOUD OPS (DCCO), MEETINGS TECH SERVICES (MTS) & END USER SUPPORT (EUS)

DCCO – IANA Audit Support: We are making excellent progress toward completing all infrastructure related IANA control evidence production and expect a clean audit for FY22. DCCO has a significant role with respect to numerous critical controls.

DCCO – Authentication Standardization and Audit: We are on schedule with the remediation of services against our updated authentication standards, which expands our multi-factor usage. We have completed our initial list of services and are now going back through all services with priority on data sensitive services. We expect six new planned improvements to be completed in FY22 SR1.

DCCO – Email Address Internationalization Readiness: We have completed two of the three main milestones for EAI readiness with our core email systems. The remaining milestone is for Proofpoint Email Protection to complete their updates to support EAI and they are on track for an updated release by FY22 SR2. In cooperation with GDD Tech Services, we completed the EAI community test bed project in FY21 SR2.

MTS – Virtual Meetings: Successfully transitioned ICANN71 to a fully virtual meeting with key improvements to automated real time transcription for interpreted sessions, primarily At-Large sessions. The improvements have been extended to the regional DNS Forums, IDS 2021, and the Africa Engagement Forum, including interpretation integrated into the Zoom platform, Automated RTT, and YouTube streaming.

MTS – Hybrid Meetings: We are starting to define “hybrid meeting” and anticipate all the features in use in an all-virtual format will be available in a hybrid format.

EUS – Laptop Support and Management: Google Inbound sharing enabled, a long-awaited request from community facing teams.

EUS – Technical Support Requests Trend: For the six-month period of 1 Jan 2020 to 30 June 2020, End User Support fielded 4,197 general support requests. The same period in 2021, 1 Jan to 30 June, EUS worked 3,396 general support requests, a 19% reduction. The trend of decreasing support is in line with long term EUS goals. This is the result of improved automation, standardization, and cross functional documentation. EUS has projects underway to continue to improve ICANN org’s device and software experiences, and we expect a further reduction as we move forward.

SECURITY AND NETWORK ENGINEERING

Network and DNS Engineering – Architecture: A project to redesign the ICANN network infrastructure (at data centers and office locations) is in the ideation phase after a report was delivered that identified several deficiencies impacting the future scalability and adaptability of the corporate network to new services and technologies. It is expected that a decision on this long-term project will be delivered to the Executive team within the next three months.

Information Security – Overall Information Security Posture: The vulnerability discovery and reward program through HackerOne was restored, with a focus on rewarding for Critical severity bugs. Since reinstatement, one Critical, four Medium and five Low valid bugs have been submitted. The InfoSec team has created and run several Incident Response Tabletop Exercises (TTX), with each exercise targeting an E&IT plank and tailored around their processes and technology stacks. These InfoSec created and led TTX will continue through the year and expand their focus to other E&IT planks and pillars. In addition, two high-level management focused TTX proctored by an external party are scheduled to take place; first one to fulfill the IANA Audit, and then one targeted at ICANN Executives and leadership. Implementation of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) continues, with a focus on completion of the Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder to understand the effectiveness of our information security risk management efforts and identify improvement opportunities in the context of the E&IT organization, assisting in building our self-assessment.

Identifier Research, Operations, and Security (IROS)

David Conrad, SVP & Chief Technology Officer

Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Program Management of SSR Contribution
- Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR)
- Domain Name Security Threat Information Collection and Reporting (DNSTICR)
- Trust and Public Safety Engagement
- Overall Community Technical Engagement increased
- Artificial Intelligence Research Platform
- Name Collision Analysis Project (NCAP) Study 2 Continues
- OCTO continues to publish documents of value to the technical community

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OF SSR CONTRIBUTION

The Office of the CTO (OCTO) is responsible for the overall program management of the SSR Contribution funds that have been given to ICANN to utilize as defined in Section 2 of the [Letter of Intent](#). OCTO has finished the program charter, accepted candidate projects from the org, and started work on some of these identified projects.

DOMAIN ABUSE ACTIVITY REPORTING (DAAR)

A [new format of the report](#) incorporating many of the suggestions from the Registry Stakeholder Group (RySG) DAAR working group was published starting in April 2021.

OCTO will continue to improve DAAR based on community input. The DAAR project leads are currently working closely with their colleagues in the Global Domains and Strategy group to gain access to the BRDA data for research purposes. Discussions with the Contracted Parties House on this issue have been largely positive and are ongoing.

Currently, 17 ccTLDs have agreed to participate in DAAR. OCTO staff are distributing individualized monthly reports to those participants that show data from their ccTLD in relation to the regular DAAR monthly reports. Multiple new ccTLDs are in the process of joining the program.

DOMAIN NAME SECURITY THREAT INFORMATION COLLECTION AND REPORTING (DNSTICR)

OCTO staff continue to monitor for new registrations related to the COVID-19 pandemic and report those to the sponsoring registrar where sufficient evidence of phishing or malware distribution is found.

Recently ICANN has worked with the GAC to enable governments to suggest strings related to the pandemic in their local region and languages to the platform. It should be noted that these strings are used to seed initial discovery of suspicious domain names which are then subject to

our evidentiary discovery and standards that are required prior to reporting a name as potentially abusive.

TRUST AND PUBLIC SAFETY ENGAGEMENT

ICANN recently created a new position within the OCTO Technical Engagement Team which will lead ICANN's technical engagement with civil, criminal law enforcement, and national cybersecurity centers as well as with the cybersecurity industry, including incident response (CERTs, CIRTs, CSIRTs and other similar structures), threat intelligence, operational security, trust-groups, and organizations like the National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance (NCFITA), the Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST), the Messaging, Malware and Mobile Anti-Abuse Working Group (M3AAWG), the Global Cyber Alliance, and the Cyber Defence Alliance, among others.

OVERALL COMMUNITY TECHNICAL ENGAGEMENT INCREASED

During this quarter, OCTO Technical Engagement (TE) staff conducted 96 outreach and training sessions throughout the world based on our catalogue now published [online](#). Sessions were conducted in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, and were held for stakeholder audiences in Africa (Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Senegal, South Africa, Benin, Mali, Liberia, Ghana, and Mauritania), the Middle East (Morocco, Turkey, and United Arab Emirates), Europe (Hungary), APAC (Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei, South Korea, India, and Fiji), Latin America (Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Costa Rica) and the US.

OCTO staff also continue its efforts in working with the ICANN Universal Acceptance Working Group to provide training on Email Address Internationalization (EAI) and to socialize the important efforts of UAWG.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH PLATFORM

OCTO staff is investigating accelerated-hardware solutions to conduct research that requires the usage of deep learning algorithms. Cloud-based instances that provide graphical computing units (GPUs) are being tested as well as different AI frameworks such as Torch, Keras and Theano among others. This platform will be used to train the deep learning models used for the project on predicting domain names threats. On top of the GPU-intensive instances, ultra clusters are also being evaluated for operations where a single node is not enough to train the models.

NAME COLLISION ANALYSIS PROJECT (NCAP) STUDY 2 CONTINUES

The NCAP Discussion Group (NCAP DG), continues its work on NCAP Study 2. This group consists of SSAC members and other parties interested in the issue of name collisions. Unlike NCAP Study 1, which was performed by a contractor, the NCAP DG itself is completing the work for Study 2 with some assistance from a contracted technical writer and technical investigator. ICANN org is providing secretariat and project management services. Study 2 is expected to be completed in mid 2022.

NEW OCTO DOCUMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS PUBLISHED

The Office of the CTO (OCTO) team published seven documents in the OCTO document series:

- [OCTO-024](#), A Primer in Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) Performance
- [OCTO-025](#), Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI) Retrospective and Proposal
- [OCTO-026](#), Non-IP Networking (NIN)

TOP ISSUES AND MITIGATION

- OCTO continues to see a growing demand for technical engagement and continues to seek innovative solutions to meet engagement needs by best using our finite resources.

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)

Kim Davies, VP, IANA Functions

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- The IANA services met or exceeded all the service level agreements for the period.
- Core IANA request-processing activities have been sustained at normal levels during COVID-19-related restrictions.

PERFORMANCE IN BRIEF

This represents a summary view of comprehensive reporting available on the IANA website at <https://iana.org/performance>.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Overall
DNS Root Zone					
SLAs Met	100%	98.4%	100%	100%	99.6%
Metrics Met	64/64	63/64	63/64	64/64	—
CSC assessed satisfactory or higher	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Request Volume	98	714	480	562	1854
TLDs in Root Zone	1498	1498	1498	1498	—
DNS Root KSK**					
Metrics Met	—	—	—	—	—
Scheduled Items Met	—	—	—	—	—
.INT Top-Level Domain					
New .INT registered	0	0	2	2	4
.INT modifications	1	4	4	2	11
Request Volume	47	26	16	18	107
Protocol Parameters					
SLAs Met	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Met MOU requirement (90%)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Met internal target (95%)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request Volume	300	259	266	217	1042
Number Resources					
SLAs Met	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Metrics Met	4/4	4/4	4/4	4/4	—
Met SLA requirement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request Volume	0	1	0	0	1
Label Generation Rulesets					
New LGRs posted	115	615	14	0	744
LGRs modified	10	161	5	0	176
Request Volume	11	19	9	0	39
General Enquiries					
Request Volume	126	161	111	83	481

** Only applicable to months where ceremonies are held. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the February 2021 key ceremony generated signatures for three calendar quarters. No further signatures will be generated until Q4 2021.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

- IANA continues to measure customer satisfaction after requests are completed. For this reporting period, overall customer satisfaction rated 99% while the participation rate was 38.1%.

Satisfaction in Brief

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Response Rate	43.5%	27.5%	47.2%	38.6%
Satisfaction	100%	100%	100%	95.5%

OTHER UPDATES AND INITIATIVES

- Our last KSK ceremony was successfully conducted in February 2021, and planning is underway to resume a normal quarterly cadence starting in the 4th quarter of 2021. COVID-19 related mitigations will still be in place for in-person attendance.
- The FY23 budget process commenced in June with targeted outreach to key stakeholder groups. A draft operating plan and budget will be put for Public Comment in September.

Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Meetings, Public Responsibility Support (PRS)

Sally Costerton, Sr. Advisor to President & SVP, Global Stakeholder Engagement

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Meetings, and Public Responsibility Support (PRS) continue to deliver and participate in a variety of virtual regional events. There is strong demand for ICANN org trainings and webinars on the DNS security threat mitigation program.
- PRS continued to respond to the demand for remote training for the community with new online learning content during this period, launching the flagship training produced in collaboration with Human Resources: *ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Training*. Another highly anticipated course, *Introduction to Universal Acceptance*, was also recently launched. Forthcoming course launches will emphasize technical training and translated content.
- The Meetings team supported the delivery of the ICANN71 Virtual Policy Forum meeting and engagement with the Board on plans for returning to hybrid and face-to-face meetings when feasible. Virtual ICANN71 By the Numbers data report can be found here: [ICANN71 By the Numbers Report](#), and other [previous meeting reports](#).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

GLOBAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- With the continued suspension of global travel and in-person meetings due to COVID-19, GSE supported a variety of online engagement events and trainings between April and July 2021. These included ICANN-supported regional events: ICANN71 Readouts for the APAC Space, China, India, Middle East; eco (for the German Internet community); Japan; 2nd APAC-TWNIC Engagement Forum; Eastern Europe and Central Asia ICANN Readout; and an EIF virtual debate featuring the ICANN CEO.
- GSE delivered virtual lectures for Leiden University (Netherlands), Anna University (India), Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Budapest University of Technology & Economics (Hungary).
- The GSE Africa team delivered the 9th Africa DNS Forum from 27-28 July 2021. There were 273 attendees for this virtual event, which compares well to the previous Africa DNS Forum held virtually in July 2020. The Africa team also facilitated the first Cameroon DNS Forum in June 2021. This is the fourth country-specific DNS Forum in Africa after events in Benin, Chad, and Zimbabwe. In May, the Africa team conducted the first Africa Engagement Forum. The two-day event had 211 virtual participants.
- The GSE Middle East team facilitated the MEAC School on Internet Governance 4-8 July 2021. Participants were from 17 countries, 16 within the Middle East region. The team also conducted the 7th Middle East DNS Forum, which had 203 virtual participants. In India, the team facilitated an Advanced DNS Security training with C-DAC as part of the Centre for Excellence in DNS Security. In June, GSE hosted a webinar for the Middle East Space focused on DNS security threats, which featured several ICANN Board members and the

CEO. The team worked with OCTO to deliver DNSSEC workshops for the United Arab Emirates, Mauritania, and Morocco. GSE worked with the Compliance team on a training for Ukrainian registrars. The Middle East team delivered a training for IEEE Turkey and a webinar on DNSSEC for OIC-CERT.

- GSE also participated in the Canadian IGF Talks; Africa Lawtech Festival 2021; PacNOG 28; HostObzor Conference in Moscow; 4th Chinese IDN Innovative Application Forum; RANS Conference; Russian IGF; Bangladesh School on Internet Governance; among other regional events.

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY SUPPORT

- During the ICANN71 Prep Week, PRS and the GSE Europe team hosted the “What to Expect at ICANN71” newcomer session.
- At this meeting, ICANN accommodated 10 fellows deferred from ICANN68 and 12 NextGen@ICANN participants. The fellows and NextGen@ICANN participants attended a session with the ICANN Board members and CEO as well as a tailored training on consensus building (“Consensus Playbook”) by the Policy team. Fellowship Program community-appointed mentors provided fellows with a deep dive into SOs/ACs operations and guidance on important sessions to participate. All NextGen participants presented on various topics such as emerging digital technologies, phishing, and cybersecurity challenges.
- Due to the virtual nature of ICANN71, the [ICANN Community Childcare Grants Pilot Program](#) was canceled; the grant will be available to the community at the next in-person meeting.
- For ICANN72, ICANN org has selected 34 fellows and 12 NextGen@ICANN participants.
- PRS continues to support ongoing cross-functional Workstream 2 implementation planning efforts in the areas of diversity and human rights.

GLOBAL MEETINGS OPERATIONS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all face-to-face meetings have been cancelled through 31 August 2021. ICANN Meetings and Events staff have been focusing their energy on:

- Improvements to the virtual meeting experience and implementation of new features to facilitate networking opportunities for participants.
- Continued consultation with the community on future meeting strategy.
- Involvement in Crisis Management Team (A-CMT) discussions and planning on the return to normal operations, specifically for ICANN in-person meetings and events, including a regional meeting strategy for meetings and travel.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

GSE has expanded its virtual interactions with regional partners and stakeholders, to actively encourage new participants in ICANN webinars, trainings, and informational sessions. The team is currently facilitating a discussion within ICANN org to capture lessons learned from engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify practices that may need to evolve as the community and org seek to return to face-to-face meetings.

During this time, the Meetings team continues to support internal initiatives including investigating whether it is feasible to start hosting smaller in-person or hybrid meetings prior to ICANN73 as well as planning for ICANN73 as a potential hybrid meeting with in-person and virtual attendees. The Meetings team also consulted with the community and org to better define what a “hybrid” meeting will look like for ICANN and community meetings.

The team continued work on the following: the Bandwidth Reimbursement program for ICANN72; Return to Normal Operations roadmap (w/SecOps, A-CMT); Travel Modernization Project; Meetings Business Architecture mapping; Meeting data analysis and trends; supporting initiatives related to participation data analysis of COVID-19 impacts; virtual meeting enhancements; and several other related papers and initiatives. The Meetings team also supported planning for the community-driven virtual meeting for ICANN72, and future planning for ICANN73 and ICANN74.

PRS continues to support two ICANN Board Operational Priorities for calendar year 2021: Developing a Public Interest Framework and the Working Group on Anti-Harassment.

Global Communications & Language Services

Sally Newell Cohen, SVP, Global Communications

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

- Global Communications provided comprehensive support for key ICANN org initiatives, including the Operational Design Phase (ODP) launched in April to assess the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) to nonpublic gTLD data, planning for the next round of new gTLDs, and GSE targeted engagement efforts.
- The Language Services team played a vital role in enhancing the virtual meeting experience at ICANN71 and increased the number of sessions available in multiple languages to 45.
- The Information Transparency Initiative (ITI) continued to deliver upgrades to <https://icann.org>, the authoring platform, and training to the community on the upcoming improved Public Comment feature.
- Information regarding our social media engagement is available in the ICANN Board Social Media Report at the end of this report.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

SSAD ODP COMMUNICATIONS

The System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) Operational Design Phase (ODP) project team began its work in April 2021:

- During this time, the Communications team coordinated a variety of public announcements and promotions, including the [ODP launch community webinar](#), and the [Request for Information](#) to [gather data](#) on what may be commercially available to deliver some or all of the SSAD.
- Contributed to the SSAD ODP [homepage](#) and [data protection/privacy](#) pages to provide the community with the most up to date information.
- Engaged with ICANN community members via the SSAD ODP [community feedback tool](#) and published direct communications to SSAD stakeholders.

NEW GTLD PROGRAM - NEXT ROUND COMMUNICATIONS

- Facilitated planning for expected Next Round ODP, including reviewing ODP Scoping Document and Board Paper with the Board, and developing a communications plan to share updates with the community as the work progresses.
- Updated community on progress: [Next Steps Toward the Next Round](#).
- Launched a Request for Proposal to select a Public Relations and Communications agency to create an awareness campaign in support of the next round of gTLDs. The selection process will be conducted over the next quarter.

WEB CONTENT

- **Information Technology Initiative:** Hosted several webinars, including a [Prep Week session at ICANN71](#), leading up to the 31 August launch of the enhanced Public Comment feature. The webinars outlined the new submission process, provided [step-by-step guidelines](#), and showcased the improvements for the Public Comment feature. The team published several blogs and conducted multiple social media campaigns since the March 2021 ITI release to communicate updates on ITI's progress. The blogs are available [here](#).

LANGUAGE SERVICES

Over the last quarter, Language Service Team translated more than two million words, provided interpretation support in at least three languages for 79 calls, and transcribed 450 hours' worth of meetings. The streamlined Remote Simultaneous Interpretation support provided at ICANN71 allowed participants to connect to the language of their choice all in one place on the Zoom interface, an easier and more inviting interaction in their native language.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Communications continued support for the Board's ongoing community outreach, including facilitating the first "Meet the Board Committee" webinar. The first webinar featuring the Board Technical Committee was well-received, and planning has started on the next two committee webinars. Published several blogs to update the community on Board decisions and ongoing work.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Focus remained on regular and ongoing communication with staff during the pandemic and related period of remote work.

- Coordinated weekly Info Calls to provide updates and support to staff as well as to share project-related updates to increase cross-team awareness.
- Supported Human Resources in the launch of the new Career Framework, which is intended to define growth and development opportunities and aid staff satisfaction and retention.

REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS HIGHLIGHTS

Asia Pacific (APAC)

- **ICANN APAC-TWNIC Engagement Forum:** Produced social media teasers before the event to raise awareness, and facilitated and promoted blogs from select speakers including ICANN's [Jia-Rong Low](#) and [Adiel Akplogan](#).
- **DNS Project Competition:** Developed content for launch and amplified a [blog](#) from ICANN's Head of India, Samiran Gupta.
- **Chinese IDN Forum:** Collaborated with colleagues to produce video speeches with Chinese subtitles from Göran Marby and Sarmad Hussain discussing ICANN's UA and IDN initiatives.
- **APIGA:** Supported the launch of the DNS Competition through joint announcements and social media promotion.
- **Internet Society of China 20th Anniversary:** Produced video welcome from ICANN Board Chair Maarten Botterman, which will be used for other ISC events.

Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA)

- **ICANN and the Arab Information and Communication Technologies Organization (AICTO) signed an [Memorandum of Understanding](#):** Developed a joint announcement and promoted on social media.
- **Africa Engagement Forum:** Built and implemented a communications plan to support the launch of the pilot Africa Regional Engagement Forum.
- **The 9th Africa DNS Forum:** Provided a full communications plan and support to the organizing committee, created and updated website content, developed branding and a social media campaign, and spearheaded media outreach.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

- **LACRALO Universal Acceptance Training Program:** Collaborated with the LAC Regional At-Large Organization (LACRALO) to host a Universal Acceptance (UA) training series. Over 150 participants from 14 LAC countries took part in one of the four sessions offered.
- **DNS Security – Regional Social Media Campaign:** Launched a targeted social media campaign in Spanish, Portuguese, and French to educate users on DNS security issues.

North America (NA)

- **Regional Engagement Plan:** Identified engagement opportunities and raised awareness about the open Public Comment proceeding on the resulting [draft plan](#).
- **New Webinar Series:** Supported the launch of a new webinar series to bring timely topics to the community for discussion.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- [Göran Marby – BBC Interview with Rory Cellan-Jones](#)
- [It's all about domains... with Chris Mondini from ICANN](#)
- [Preventative actions to safeguard your domains and recover from domain name hijacking](#)
- [Dan Kaminsky's death leaves vacancy among holders of 'keys to the internet'](#)
- [APTLD Papers Series No.6: White Paper-The Role of ccTLDs in Achieving Universal Acceptance](#)
- [Hello World: Enabling Internationalized Domain Names](#)
- [What if we get tech right?](#)
- [Burkinabe Minister of the Digital Economy, Sanon: "Africa must manage its digital identity"](#)
- [End of the 9th African Forum on the Domain Name System](#)

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

- Global Communications is developing detailed communications plans and messaging for important ICANN org initiatives including the next round of new gTLDs and DNS security threats. Engagement and outreach with stakeholders will be crucial to the success of both initiatives.
- We have made progress in our collaboration with GSE to identify and define target audiences for our regional engagement in support of the Make New Friends initiative. Our next step is to develop targeted awareness-raising strategies and content.
- To be more responsive to growing support and service requests, we have reorganized our team resources based on ICANN priorities. This will result in more consistent messaging and reduced duplication of efforts across teams. We will continue to look for opportunities to be effective partners and adjust our priorities accordingly.

Policy Development Support

David Olive, SVP, Policy Development Support

HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

- On 12 May 2021, the ICANN Board approved the FY22 Operating Plan & Budget and the FY22-26 Five-Year Operating & Financial Plan. No petitions seeking to reject these documents were filed. On 14 June 2021, the Empowered Community Administration confirmed that the Rejection Process outlined in the ICANN Bylaws had been terminated. The FY22 Operating Plan & Budget and the FY22-26 Five-Year Operating & Financial Plan took effect on 1 July 2021.
- In May 2021, the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) announced that ccNSO Chair Alejandra Reynoso would replace Stephen Deerhake as the ccNSO representative to the Empowered Community Administration.
- In June 2021, following the conclusion of the Address Supporting Organization (ASO) selection process, the Empowered Community designated Mr. Alan Barrett to Seat 9 on the ICANN Board, with effect from the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in October 2021.

ADDRESS SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (ASO)

- James Kennedy joined the ASO Address Council; Kennedy represents the Réseaux IP Européens (RIPE) service region.
- In June 2021, the ASO Address Council selected Alan Barrett from a field of 10 nominated candidates for ICANN Board Seat 9. Barrett begins his term as an ASO-appointed ICANN Board member during the Annual General Meeting in October 2021.
- In July 2021, the ASO Address Council selected Brajesh Jain as delegate to the ICANN Nominating Committee. Jain begins his term during the Annual General Meeting in October 2021.

COUNTRY CODE NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (CCNSO)

Policy Development Processes (PDPs)

- **ccNSO PDP3 on Retirement of ccTLDs and Review Mechanism**
 - Following a Public Comment proceeding, the ccNSO Council decided in May 2021 to separate part 1 (retirement) and part 2 (review mechanism) and continue to work on both independently.
 - At its June 2021 meeting, the ccNSO Council adopted the Final Report, including the proposed policy on retirement of country code top-level domains (ccTLDs).
 - After a vote on 28 July 2021, the ccNSO Membership supported the proposed policy: 100 out of 172 members voted (58%), of which 94 expressed their support and six did not.
 - Part 2 on the development of a review mechanism continued to meet every two weeks. The working group also provided an update during ICANN71.
- **ccNSO PDP4 on Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLD String Selection**
 - The ccPDP4 is organized as four work tracks: the main track is reviewing, and where needed, updating the basic policy proposals already developed in 2011-2012; three sub-groups are addressing issues around variants, de-selection of Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLDs (to complement the proposed retirement policy), and

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- confusing similarity. Both the working group and variant management sub-group have made considerable progress.
 - During ICANN71 the working group sought feedback and input on the proposals they have developed to date.

Other Highlights

- The ccNSO Council has established the ccNSO Outreach and Involvement Standing Committee. This ccNSO Council committee will focus on coordinating outreach and involvement activities and efforts under auspices of the ccNSO, ranging from organizing webinars to selecting supported travelers.
- The ccNSO Guideline Review Committee has created a subgroup to review and develop a new set of internal rules that will guide the relation between ccNSO members and the ccNSO Council. The current set of rules has been in place since December 2004. During ICANN71 the subgroup consulted the ccNSO membership on what to include, which was then followed-up with a survey in July 2021.

GENERIC NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (GNSO)

GNSO Council Resolutions

During this reporting period, the GNSO Council passed several resolutions, including several that initiated new work:

- Initiated the Expedited Policy Development Process on Internationalized Domain Names (EPDP-IDNs) and adopted its charter.
- Confirmed the formation of the Accuracy Scoping Team, including the operating instructions for the team. This team will consider 1) enforcement and reporting and 2) how accuracy levels can be measured. The team will utilize these considerations to determine whether contractual data accuracy requirements are effective at ensuring accurate registration data and then determine if improvements are needed.
- Initiated the GNSO Framework for Continuous Improvement Pilot Project, which will focus on process and procedural improvements not directly connected to policy development. If the pilot is successful, it may be extended to advance GNSO Council efforts related to accountability recommendations from Work Stream 2, the third Accountability and Transparency Review Team, the Evolution of the Multistakeholder Model initiative, and PDP 3.0.
- Approved the GNSO Review of the Governmental Advisory Committee Communiqués for ICANN70 and ICANN71 for submission to the ICANN Board.
- Completed several appointments and confirmed leaders, including the second GNSO representative to the Community Representatives Group (CRG) that will nominate the Independent Review Process (IRP) Standing Panel, the GNSO Council liaison to the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure ODP, and the chair of the EPDP-IDNs.

Policy Development Processes (PDPs)

Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification (EPDP-TempSpec) for Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Registration Data Phase 2A

- Initiated in December of 2020, the EPDP Phase 2A met for the first time in late December 2020. This effort focuses on two subjects: 1) Legal vs. natural persons and 2) Feasibility of unique contacts to have a uniform anonymized email address. The EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2A Team published its Initial Report for Public Comment on 3 June 2021 and considered the feedback received. The team is working toward completing its Final Report.

Review of the Transfer Policy PDP

- Initiated in February 2021, this two-phased PDP to review the Transfer Policy is tasked with determining if changes to the policy are needed to improve the security and efficacy of inter-registrar and inter-registrant transfers. The working group held its first meeting in May 2021 and has completed early PDP requirements like reviewing the charter, developing a work plan, and seeking Supporting Organization, Advisory Committee, Stakeholder Group, and Constituency input for the PDP to consider. The PDP has begun initial substantive deliberations on charter topics like Losing & Gaining Form of Authorization and additional AuthCode security measures.

IGO-INGO Access to Curative Rights Protection Mechanisms

- The International Governmental Organization (IGO) Work Track began meeting in February 2021 and has made significant progress. The Work Track has largely agreed on what should be contained in the Initial Report and is working toward publication for Public Comment in September 2021.

EPDP-IDNs

- The EPDP-IDNs was initiated in May 2021, and the GNSO Council approved Edmon Chung to serve as its chair. The EPDP-IDNs Team met for the first time on 11 August 2021 and will start with preliminary steps such as reviewing the charter, developing a work plan, and seeking input from community groups for the EPDP-IDNs Team to consider.

AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ALAC) AND THE AT-LARGE COMMUNITY

During this period, the ALAC and At-Large community continued to focus on their 2021 priority activities within the three tracks of policy advice, outreach and engagement, and operations. ALAC and the five Regional At-Large Organizations (RALOs) completed the 2021 leadership elections, selections, and appointments. Newly elected leaders will begin their terms during the Annual General Meeting in October 2021.

Policy Advice

- The ALAC published seven policy advice statements, notably policy advice statements to the ICANN Board related to the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLD) Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process, and the Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification (EPDP-TempSpec) for gTLD Registration Data.
- The ALAC also submitted statements on the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review Final Report, GNSO Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms in All gTLDs Policy Development Process Phase 1 Final Recommendations for ICANN Board Consideration, and the Registrar Stakeholder Group Draft White Paper on Registrant Protections in DNS Abuse Mitigation.
- The At-Large Consolidated Policy Working Group (CPWG) is organizing how ALAC adapts its representation to GNSO policy development processes (PDP) according to GNSO PDP 3.0. The CPWG develops consensus positions within the At-Large community as input to the PDPs. This includes the recent GNSO Transfer Policy Review PDP and EPDP-IDNs.

Outreach and Engagement

- Two ICANN Learn courses about the At-Large community were published to introduce the At-Large community and to focus on its advisory role in policy development: *ICANN At-Large: Welcome to Our World* and *At-Large Policy Development at ICANN: A Guide for Participants*.

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- The Capacity Building Working Group continued its monthly webinar series covering a broad spectrum of policy topics as well as skills development.

Operations

- The At-Large Operations, Finance, and Budget Working Group (OFB-WG) held a series of sessions to prioritize the FY22-25 operational initiatives. A survey resulted in the identification of the top five priorities:
 - Strengthening the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation
 - Strengthening ICANN community decision-making processes (tie)
 - Universal Acceptance (tie)
 - Planning at ICANN
 - Monitoring legislation that may impact the mission of ICANN
- The OFB-WG worked closely with the ICANN org Planning team to identify the most effective timing to contribute to Public Comment proceedings on the FY23 Operating Plan and Budget.
- The OFB-WG Recommendation Prioritization Small Group met weekly to rank the recommendations from various reviews. This work will be discussed by the OFB-WG and the ALAC.

Membership

- One new At-Large Structure (ALS) increased the total number from 250 to 251.
- Total individual members increased from 146 to 150.
- There were no new observers, and the total remained at 20.

Regional At-Large Organization (RALO) Activities

- **African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO)**
 - The African community held the Joint AFRALO-AfrICANN during ICANN71 to discuss regional issues and finalize the joint statement on “DNS Abuse Mitigation Strategies”.
 - AFRALO completed its FY22 Outreach and Engagement Plan.
- **Asian, Australasian, and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO)**
 - APRALO submitted a statement to Public Comment proceeding on GNSO New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Final Outputs for ICANN Board Consideration, noting its support of the ALAC advice on the topic.
 - Activity continued within the APRALO Policy Forum, including holding an APRALO webinar on Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs).
 - Work started on the APRALO Mentorship Program.
- **European Regional At-Large Organization (EURALO)**
 - EURALO held four sessions during ICANN71 and an ICANN71 Readout session.
 - EURALO continued its series of roundtable discussions; the latest focused on developing regional policy measures for Domain Name System abuse.
- **Latin American and Caribbean Islands Regional At-Large Organization (LACRALO)**
 - Members of LACRALO completed the course on Universal Acceptance as part of a series of work organized by the LACRALO Universal Acceptance Working Group, ICANN org, and the Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

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- **North American Regional At-Large Organization (NARALO)**
 - NARALO completed its FY22 Outreach and Engagement Plan.
 - Monthly NARALO webinars have explored the following topics: Development and Implementation of Accessibility at ICANN, Development and Implementation of Human Rights at ICANN, History and Development of Domain Name System Security Extensions, Protecting Yourself Online: A Practical Approach to Domain Name System Abuse, and Internationalization of Domain Names: Opportunities and Risks.

GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC)

- For only the second time in the past year and utilizing an updated drafting and production process, the GAC developed Consensus Advice for the ICANN Board in the GAC ICANN71 Communiqué. Specifically, the GAC included Consensus Advice and its accompanying “rationale” regarding International Governmental Organization (IGO) protections.
- The GAC Communiqué also reflected on matters related to previous Consensus Advice provided to the ICANN Board, including the Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review Recommendations, GNSO Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification (EPDP-TempSpec) for gTLD Registration Data Phase 1 policy implementation, and Privacy Proxy Services Accreditation implementation.
- The GAC also provided information and views in the Communiqué on several “issues of importance” to the GAC, including subsequent rounds of new gTLDs, DNS abuse; accuracy; EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2 ODP; EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2A; and additional references to the CCT Review recommendations. The ICANN71 Communiqué content was the subject of a clarifying call with the ICANN Board in July 2021.

GAC Operations

- During this period, the GAC continued to make progress on assessing and implementing the recommendations of the Work Stream 2 accountability effort. As of 13 August 2021, the GAC has completed implementation of 16 recommendations. Implementation of eight recommendations is in-progress and 14 recommendations are still in pending status awaiting assessment.
- The conclusion of ICANN71 marked the start of a new election period for GAC vice chairs. All five vice chair positions are open for election. The nomination period began on 19 June 2021 and will extend through 9 September 2021.

GAC Membership, Outreach, and Engagement

- There are now 179 member governments and 38 observer organizations in the GAC. Of those, representatives from 71 member governments and 5 observer organizations participated in ICANN71.
- As part of a broader effort to increase GAC engagement and participation, in May 2021 the GAC initiated a webinar program for new GAC participants. The program will be conducted every four months for new GAC participants.
- Additionally, in July 2021, the GAC completed a redesign of the GAC website. The design changes were intended to improve the user experience on desktops, tablets, and mobile devices, while transforming the website to match more closely the overall icann.org design as part of the Information Transparency Initiative (ITI).

ROOT SERVER SYSTEM ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RSSAC)

- On 3 June 2021, RSSAC submitted its third progress report on the implementation of recommendations from its second organizational review.

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- On 7 July 2021, RSSAC published “RSSAC055: Principles Guiding the Operation of the Public Root Server System”. This document identified eleven key principles that guided the success of the Domain Name System (DNS) in general and the root server system (RSS) in particular. The 11 principles were first published in 2018 as part of RSSAC037. RSSAC055 adds more context and detail to the existing principles.
 - On 7 July 2021, RSSAC published “RSSAC056: RSSAC Advisory on Rogue DNS Root Server Operators”. A rogue root server operator (RSO) has the potential to adversely affect the trust in the DNS in general and RSS in particular, this advisory examines both measurable and subjective activities of a root server operator that could be considered rogue. The advisory aims to inform future RSS governance bodies who need to judge the actions of a rogue RSO and take appropriate actions.

SECURITY AND STABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SSAC)

- The SSAC confirmed James Galvin as the next SSAC Liaison to the ICANN Board for a term that begins at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in October 2021.
- The SSAC published “SAC117: Report on Root Service Early Warning Systems.” In this report, the SSAC proposes a general framework of best practices and processes to streamline reporting abuse of the domain name system. The SSAC reviewed relevant publications on the topic of a root zone early warning system. In addition to providing a summary of each in SAC117, the SSAC came to the conclusion that an early warning system for the root zone is currently infeasible, as was also concluded by OCTO-15.
- The SSAC published “SAC118: SSAC Comments on Initial Report of the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Team Phase 2A.” In this report, the SSAC presents both general comments about the overall EPDP and specific comments on individual recommendations in the EPDP 2A Initial Report.
- The ICANN Board appointed Russ Housley, Jonathan Spring, and Jiankang Yao to the SSAC for terms beginning immediately upon approval of the ICANN Board and ending on 31 December 2024.
- The SSAC believes that it is important for registrants to experience a secure, stable, and smooth transition when transferring registrations between registrars. SSAC published “SAC119: Feedback to the GNSO Transfer Policy Review PDP Working Group” highlighting two related security topics: the importance of continuity in DNS resolution and DNSSEC validation and security best practices related to the management of the AuthInfo code.

CUSTOMER STANDING COMMITTEE (CSC)

- In addition to its monthly regular meetings, the CSC met with the Board Technical Committee and organized a session on IANA Naming Services during ICANN71.
- The appointing organizations of the CSC have started their respective selection processes. The regular terms of two members and two liaisons end on 1 October 2021.
- The ccNSO and GNSO Councils are working on defining the method of the second CSC Effectiveness Review per ICANN Bylaws and CSC charter requirements. The review should start by 6 October 2021, five years after the first meeting of the CSC.

ROOT ZONE EVOLUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE (RZERC)

- On 7 April 2021 the RZERC selected Tim April, appointed to the RZERC by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), as RZERC Chair.
- The RZERC continued to meet monthly to discuss the ICANN org understandings of “RZERC002: Recommendations Regarding Signing Root Zone Name Server Data” and “RZERC003: Adding Zone Data Protections to the Root Zone”.

ROOT SERVER SYSTEM GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP (GWG)

- The GWG continued to refine its Public Root Services (PRS) proposal, including the structure, composition, and relationships of PRS, the Strategy, Architecture, and Policy Council (SAPC), and the Root Server Operator (RSO) Review Panels.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION

- As part of ongoing efforts toward cultivating consensus in the GNSO Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2A, working group members began engaging in a series of small group mediated dialogues.

TOP ISSUES AND MITIGATION

EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

- With the prioritization of Work Stream 2 (WS2) implementation, each of the Empowered Community Decisional Participants will have to review its internal processes (some of which were adopted relatively recently) to determine if additional work may be needed to fully implement WS2 Recommendation 2 concerning Guidelines for Good Faith related to petitions for removing ICANN Board directors. Subsequently, the Empowered Community and the other ICANN community structures will need to discuss whether to implement other WS2 recommendations, such as a uniform framework for Empowered Community petitions.
- More broadly, WS2 implementation planning and prioritization will add to the overall workload of the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees in both the short and longer term, especially given the breadth and number of WS2 recommendations. Facilitating community coordination and prioritization will be important to ensure that community policy, governance, and other work are fully considered and appropriately resourced.

ADDRESS SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (ASO)

- The ASO Address Council is planning a virtual workshop in September 2021 to advance priority work items.

GENERIC NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (GNSO)

- Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification (EPDP-TempSpec) for Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Registration Data
 - Phase 2: In adopting the Phase 2 Final Report of the EPDP-TempSpec and as part of the delivery of the GNSO Council Recommendations Report to the ICANN Board, the GNSO Council noted concerns around the financial sustainability of the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) and whether a further cost-benefit analysis should be conducted before the ICANN Board considers all SSAD-related recommendations for adoption. With the initiation of the ODP for the EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2 recommendations related to the SSAD, the ICANN Board expects that the scope of the ODP is intended to answer the majority of the GNSO Council-suggested operational impact assessment elements. The GNSO Council will continue to receive regular updates from the GNSO Council liaison to the ODP.
 - Phase 2A: As the EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2A Team works toward its expected completion date of 2 September 2021, it is struggling to come to consensus on guidance and other aspects of the Initial Report which it may not be able to overcome for the Final Report.
- Completed Policy Development Processes (PDPs): For both the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP and the Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms in All gTLDs PDP, the GNSO Council has already completed the required steps of transmitting the

Recommendations Reports and Final Reports to the ICANN Board, which in turn conducted Public Comment proceedings. The GNSO Council is carefully observing these two projects as they advance through ICANN Board consideration.

COUNTRY CODE NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION (CCNSO)

- The ccPDP3-Retirement Report for the ICANN Board is expected to be adopted by the ccNSO Council at its 22 September 2021 meeting. After adoption, it will be submitted to the ICANN Board for its consideration.
- The leadership of the ccPDP4 Working Group launched a second sub-working group. As soon as the main working group has completed its review and update of the draft document, it will go into a hiatus, and the de-selection subgroup will start its work in parallel with the variant subgroup.

AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ALAC) AND THE AT-LARGE COMMUNITY

- With the start of FY22, At-Large began the process of implementing several Additional Budget Requests (ABRs), including a professional individual end user poll and studies on diversity in ICANN leadership bodies and protecting the Internet's unique identifier system in an age of disinformation.

GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC)

- The GAC maintained focused attention on several of its top priority issues including subsequent rounds of new generic top-level domains (gTLD), registration directory services/WHOIS and data protection, DNS abuse mitigation, and international organization rights protection mechanisms.
- The GAC has been an active contributor to several Public Comment proceedings and cross-community efforts, including submitting comments on the Final Report of the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review and input to the ICANN Board on the Final Report of the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process (PDP).
- The GAC also sent and received written correspondence regarding various matters of importance to GAC members including the GNSO PDP on the Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms in All gTLDs Phase 1, a GAC response to the ICANN Board regarding the GNSO Expedited PDP on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2 Policy Recommendations 19-22, and New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP Outputs. Correspondence documents related to those matters and others are regularly posted and tracked on a special webpage of the GAC website.

ROOT SERVER SYSTEM ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RSSAC)

- On 3 August 2021, RSSAC approved the creation of a new RSSAC Caucus work party to update "RSSAC047: RSSAC Advisory on Metrics for the DNS Root Servers and the Root Server System." The initial implementation of the metrics defined in RSSAC047 has identified a small number of errors in definitions of some metrics. The purpose of this work party is to discuss and resolve these issues in a second version of RSSAC047.
- The RSSAC Caucus has a work party to develop a tool to gather a local perspective of the Root Server System (RSS). The RSSAC seeks to develop a tool or set of tools that can easily measure the local perspective of the RSS at various points of the Internet. The tool(s) should collect enough information to identify some of the reasons why the local perspective is performing at the measured level to differentiate potential misconfigurations or inadequate infrastructure from the true need for a new instance. Following more than a year of work, the Local Perspective Tool Work Party is nearing the completion of its report.

SECURITY AND STABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SSAC)

- During ICANN71, the SSAC provided updates on topics it is currently examining, including a detailed briefing on Domain Name System (DNS) abuse, routing security, the possibility of a root service early warning systems, and feedback on Phase 2A work of the Generic Names Supporting Organization Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification (EPDP-TempSpec) for gTLD Registration Data. This also included updates on ongoing work on SSAC projects including the Name Collision Analysis Project (NCAP) and the Scan of Threats to Internet Naming and Addressing.
- The SSAC work party investigating Internet routing security issues made progress on its initial publication. The scope of the work party is to examine the security and stability implications of routing security issues on the Internet's routing system and DNS. The SSAC seeks to document this space to help the ICANN and Internet policy communities understand these technologies and the issues surrounding them.
- The SSAC is currently reviewing community feedback from "SAC114: SSAC Comments on the GNSO New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Draft Final Report." The SSAC seeks to provide the ICANN community with clarification on SSAC recommendations in SAC114.

CUSTOMER STANDING COMMITTEE (CSC)

- The ccNSO and GNSO Councils are working closely together to approve the full CSC membership slate as required in the ICANN Bylaws and ensure the adoption of a review method and appointment of a review team by 1 October 2021. The CSC and IANA are expected to appoint liaisons to the review team.

ROOT ZONE EVOLUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE (RZERC)

- The RZERC will soon initiate its first charter review since it is required every five years.

ROOT SERVER SYSTEM GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP (GWG)

- The GWG held a joint meeting with the root server operators (RSOs) in June 2021. The RSOs expressed a fundamental concern with representation in the GWG proposal.
- Considering the RSO concerns, the GWG paused its work and will wait for comprehensive feedback from the RSOs by late September 2021.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION

- There will be ongoing use of small group conversations to facilitate consensus in the GNSO Expedited Policy Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2A and to cultivate greater understanding among participating GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies, other Supporting Organizations, and Advisory Committees to lay productive groundwork for possible future dialogues.

Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement

Mandy Carver, SVP, Government and IGO Engagement

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

ENGAGEMENT AT THE UN IN NEW YORK CITY

- Monitored and reported on the outcome of the final stage of the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on cybersecurity (advancing responsible State behavior in cyberspace in the context of international security).
- Monitored the start of the work of the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG), which will continue until 2025.
- Monitored the start of the work of the UN Ad-Hoc Committee (AHC), tasked with drafting a UN cybercrime convention (first organizational meeting held 10-12 May).
- Prepared and published a paper covering the developments at all three UN General Assembly groups: GGE, OEWG, and AHC.
- On May 20, Government Engagement (GE) held a briefing session for UN diplomats on Technical Internet governance.

ENGAGEMENT WITH EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

- Ongoing engagement with EU institutions on topical legislative initiatives i.e., revised Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS2), Digital Services Act (DSA), and the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime. Engagement efforts included:
 - 3 May, ICANN organized a workshop on the DNS and the NIS2 for the European Parliament staff.
 - 4 May, ICANN CEO meeting with the European Data Protection Supervisor on NIS2.
 - 6 May, Council of Europe public meeting on the Second Protocol to the Budapest Convention.
 - 1 June, meeting with the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU on the NIS2.
 - 3 June, meeting of the High-Level group on Internet Governance (EU Commission group).
 - 24 June, ICANN participated in a forum organized by the think tank CEPS in Brussels on the NIS2. The event is part of a series of meetings organized by CEPS and featuring companies and members of the EU institutions. ICANN will host a specific event on the DNS as part of this series.
 - 24 June, meeting between ICANN (GE and OCTO) with the OECD, Division for Digital Economy Policy, Secretariat on an OECD outline on the security of the DNS.
 - 29 June, ICANN participated in a Security and Privacy in the Digital Economy (SDE) OECD meeting.
 - 13 July, ICANN Webinar on NIS2 and the DNS with Council of EU cybersecurity attaches.

ENGAGEMENT WITH IGOS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- On 7 April, GE participated in a panel discussion at the 11th Russian Internet Governance Forum with the just announced Russian Federation candidate for International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Secretary-General, Rashid Ismailov.
- On 3 May, ICANN hosted a GAC Capacity-Building Workshop on DNS Abuse for African GAC; 12 African GAC representatives participated.
- On 11 June, GE participated in the annual meeting of the cyber network of French Judges, providing an overview of ICANN's governance and remit.
- On 22 June, GE briefed the Internet Governance Coalition on activities at the UN and at the ITU that have the potential to touch upon ICANN's mission; on 24 June GE had similar briefing for the USCIB
- On 20 July, ICANN hosted a webinar with 90 participants on UN and EU issues that may affect contracted parties: "The UN, the EU, and Your Business, what comes next?"

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITY

GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC) ENGAGEMENT

The GE team continued to organize regular calls with the GAC leadership. These calls helped us to move forward on different GAC-related issues (.tw second-level registration, African Union acronym release request) and report about ICANN org and Board participation in major Internet governance events. In addition, the GE team was involved in the preparation of ICANN71 GAC meetings to include briefings, preparatory meetings organized by Africa, LAC GSE teams and France, and preparatory calls with UK and France.

GOVERNMENT AND IGO ENGAGEMENT

The GE team continued to increase engagement with European institutions with activities pertaining to digital policy, especially the EU Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS2) and the Digital Services Act (DSA). In May, GE Brussels organized a workshop for the staff of the EU Parliament drafting the NIS2 Directive. The workshop featured ICANN's CTO who gave an overview on the functioning of the DNS. GE then discussed the implications for the DNS of the proposed NIS2. In the same vein, in July, ICANN hosted a webinar for Council of the EU attachés responsible for cybersecurity policy. GE is also in discussions with cybersecurity companies on the NIS2 and taking part in a forum organized by the Brussels-based think tank CEPS; in this context, GE will organize a session specifically on the DNS in the future. GE Brussels is also engaging with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Division for Digital Economy Policy, on an outline for the security of the DNS.

GE continued to follow three processes at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) First, Second, and Third Committee deliberations, which have the potential to touch on ICANN's mission. The relevant deliberations with the potential to impact Technical Internet governance include the preparation and publication of the report of GGE, which finished its work in May and published a [consensus report](#), the OEWG which began a new four-year (2021-2025) process in June and will be discussing a broad range of cybersecurity and probably Internet governance issues, and the AHC, which is to draft a new UN cybercrime convention. GE monitored discussions and provided educational and technical briefings to ensure decision-making member-states have information and knowledge necessary to craft sound policy and support the multistakeholder model of Internet governance. On 21 July, GE [published](#) an update of all cyber-related deliberations at the UN.

INTERNET AND TECHNICAL INTERNET GOVERNANCE ENGAGEMENT

Global IGF: ICANN engagement in the global IGF 2021 is led by the GE Geneva office. Additional information is in the Regional Office section. Currently, the IGF 2021 is planned as a hybrid meeting taking place online and in Katowice, Poland, 6-10 December. It will be hosted by the Polish government under the overarching theme: “Internet United.” It will feature a virtual preparatory component, building-up for sessions on the IGF 2021 issue areas, intersessional activities, and capacity development.

ICANN’s participation in IGF 2021 will involve several events, including a workshop titled, “the State of DNS Privacy Technologies,” an open forum titled, “Building Blocks to Meaningful Connectivity,” and hosting a hybrid booth in the IGF Village. A session tutorial on the DNS root directed at youth has been proposed. ICANN org’s participation will involve several functions including GE, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Office of the CTO, Meetings Team, Board Ops, and Global Communications staff, as well as the likely participation of the CEO and other members of the Board during High-Level segments in various IGF sessions.

Internet Ecosystem: The GE function continued to publish country-specific reports as part of a periodic series providing an overview of activities relevant to the Internet ecosystem and ICANN’s mission. In April, GE published an update to the Country Focus Report, [Russian Federation Internet-Related Laws and United Nations Deliberations](#). This paper provides an update covering the period from 24 October 2020 to 21 April 2021. In May, GE published the Country Focus Report, [The Netherlands and the Public Core of the Internet](#), covering Internet-related international initiatives and statements, undertaken by the Netherlands government.

GE participated in several events with Technical Internet governance topics including an intersessional call in May, prior to ICANN71, in which the Board Working Group on Internet Governance reviewed and endorsed their charter and received an overview of current geopolitical issues from the GE. On 20 May, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the UN, in cooperation with ICANN, hosted a webinar for UN diplomats titled, “Technical Internet Governance and Cyber Discussions at the UN.” The webinar had over 50 participants and focused on how the outcomes of the deliberations at the UNGA First, Second, and Third Committees could impact the technical functioning of the Internet.

On 9 July, GE presented on Technical Internet governance and collaboration at the annual [Cyber Polygon](#), organized by Bi.Zone, a cybersecurity company that is a subset of the Russian Sberbank.

The UN Economic Social Council (ECOSOC) published the [ECOSOC High-Level Segment](#) including a written statement submitted by ICANN regarding COVID-19 and its impact on the DNS.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

- GE Brussels is continually engaging in meetings with staff of the European Parliament and representatives of EU member states on the NIS2 and DSA to ensure legal clarity and technical feasibility. The team continued to work with DPAs and monitor data protection and privacy discussions at the EU.
- GE continued to monitor, track, analyze, and produce reports on an increasing number of initiatives and statements by Russian officials touching on ICANN’s mission, in particular the Russian Federation’s plan to work for transferring the “management of the Internet” away

from the current multistakeholder model to a UN multilateral framework, specifically at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). In addition to advocating for practically expanding the ITU mandate, Russia has nominated a candidate, Rashid Ismailov, for Secretary-General of the ITU, and has stated that this “transfer” could happen under his leadership and Russia hosting the IGF in 2025 could be beneficial for that goal, as well. In June, Russia and China extended their agreement for good relations and mentioned they are on the same page with regards to Internet governance and leadership positions at the ITU.

Regional Office Reports

Asia Pacific (Singapore)

Jia-Rong Low, VP, Stakeholder Engagement & Managing Director - Asia Pacific

This reporting period saw several events conducted in hybrid format, and we remained engaged with the regional community through virtual participation.

Key Regional Activities

Date	Event Name	Location	Remarks
1 Apr 21 Apr 13 May	ICANN70 Readouts Community-led debrief sessions of the recent ICANN Meeting.	Virtual Beijing, China (Hybrid) Virtual (Japan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A regional Readout attended by 57 participants was held at APAC Space.• Readouts were also conducted in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ China, attended by 44 participants.○ Japan, with 26 attendees.
6-7 Apr	Internet Day in Sri Lanka	Virtual (Sri Lanka)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We participated in a panel discussion at the “Improve Internet Usage by Breaking Language Barriers” session, focusing on Universal Acceptance (UA), Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), and Email Address Internationalization (EAI).
9-10 Apr	Bangladesh School on Internet Governance (bdSIG 2021)	Dhaka, Bangladesh (Hybrid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We provided an introduction on ICANN and Internet governance (IG) in this SIG attended by 256 participants.
13 Apr 27 May	APAC UA Training Program Conducted in partnership with the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD)	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We conducted the second and third training sessions of the Program on topics of “Programming for Supporting UA” and “UA: Its Impact and Next Steps” respectively.• 20 and 29 participants registered for the respective sessions.
15-16 Apr	2nd ICANN APAC-TWNIC Engagement Forum	Taipei (Hybrid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In this cybersecurity-themed Forum, we highlighted the importance of Domain Name

	<p>Co-hosted by ICANN and TWNIC.</p> <p>The Forum also featured the 35th TWNIC Internet Protocol Open Policy Meeting (IP OPM).</p>		<p>System (DNS) security. We also participated in various discussions on addressing domain name abuse, cybersecurity incident response and management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other topics featured include participating in ICANN’s multistakeholder community, as well as UA implementation. • The Forum saw a total of 403 attendees. • We adopted a virtual engagement strategy to reinforce key messages from the Forum via blogs and social media.
20 Apr	Fourth Forum for Creative Application of Chinese Domain Names	Beijing, China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a recorded speech, ICANN President and CEO Göran Marby commended the Chinese community’s IDN/UA contributions, and further highlighted the opportunities and joint responsibilities in making the Internet more accessible with IDNs and UA. • We presented an update on current UA work, as well as next steps at ICANN and the UA Steering Group (UASG). • Over 200 participants attended.
4-5 May	IDN Table Review Tool Training	Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two sessions were conducted for registry operators and registry service providers to introduce the tool for improving efficiency of the IDN Table review process.
29 Jun 30 Jun 20 Jul	ICANN71 Readouts	Virtual Virtual (India) Beijing, China (Hybrid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regional Readout attended by 65 participants was held at APAC Space. • Readouts were also conducted in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ India, with 25 attendees. ○ China, attended by 55 participants.
29 Jun-5 Jul	PacNOG28 PacNOG is the premier event for technical	Virtual (Fiji)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encouraged participation in the Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI) initiative at the

	capacity development for network operators in the Pacific Islands sub-region.		<p>Conference Plenary attended by 48 participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We conducted a four-part technical workshop on “DNS Fundamentals” and “Introduction to DNS Security,” which was attended by 25 participants.
5-6 Jul	Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)- Advanced DNS Security Training Program	India (Virtual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We provided an overview on the topics of DNS over TLS (DoT) and DNS over HTTPS (DoH) in this joint training, which was attended by 65 trainees.
20 Jul	China Space A platform for the Chinese speaking community to discuss DNS industry related topics.	Beijing, China (Hybrid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We participated in a community discussion on potential impacts of local regulations on the domain name industry. This inaugural China Space was attended by 55 participants.
30-31 Jul	Youth Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Bangladesh	Virtual (Bangladesh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We participated in the inaugural ceremony “Toward an Inclusive, Sustainable and Trusted Internet”, and presented in the “About the Youth Internet Governance” session. 115 participants attended the event.

Other Activities

- OCTO Technical Engagement team delivered various technical trainings.**
 - Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team (SL-CERT) webinar (second of the three-part series) on DNS abuse (Apr).
 - DNS investigation trainings with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)--
 - (i) Interpol Training for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) LEAs (Jun).
 - (ii) Korean National Police Agency (Jun).
 - South Asian NOG (SANOG37)/Lanka NOG (LKNOG5) on Encrypted DNS (Jul).
- India**
 - A [DNS Project Competition](#) was launched in collaboration with the National Association of Software and Service Companies Center of Excellence (NASSCOM-CoE) – Internet of Things (IoT) & Artificial Intelligence (AI). The competition encourages students to solve challenges using the DNS.
 - The National Internet Exchange of India (.in) participated in ICANN’s Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR) project.
- IDNs and UA**
 - The following work on Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR) were completed--

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- (i) RZ-LGR-4, including Chinese and Bangla scripts, was published.
 - (ii) The Korean community finalized the Korean RZ-LGR proposal for integration into the root zone.
 - (iii) Second-level reference LGR for Arabic and Sinhala scripts were published.
 - Coremail (China) and the Thai Network Information Center Foundation (THNIC) (Thailand) were featured in UASG's [EAI case study](#), demonstrating notable EAI readiness and adoption progress in the APAC region.

Europe (Brussels)

Chris Mondini, VP, Stakeholder Engagement, Europe & Managing Director, Brussels

We continue to work closely with the Regional Security and Crisis Management teams on plans for eventual office reopening in Geneva and Brussels, though we remain in “phase 0” until pandemic conditions improve. Most offices for ICANN stakeholders remain either closed or only partially open. September 2021 will likely see other organizations’ offices reopening and the likelihood of meetings requested to be in person will increase.

Key Regional Activities

Highlights from recent months included initiatives to reach new audiences, along with successful existing programs.

One new initiative, “ICANN Month,” debuted in Hungary, with four online webinars delivered in April, in cooperation with academic institutions. The Budapest University for Technology and Economics hosted webinars focused on technical Internet governance and Universal Acceptance. We also delivered a presentation on new gTLDs and Rights Protection Mechanisms to the National Scientific Students’ Associations Conference, the largest and most prestigious academic event in Hungary.

In another new endeavor, staff from across ICANN teams joined the Pool of Experts of a new EU initiative, EU CyberNet, making themselves available to share expertise on security-related matters for requestors all around the world. ICANN was invited to give a presentation to EU CyberNet institutional members on the concept of Technical Internet governance, how it relates to DNS security threat mitigation efforts, and current challenges and threats to the DNS.

In South Eastern Europe, ICANN – along with the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration in Bucharest, Romania, and the South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance – convened the second edition of SIDI: the School on Internet Governance, Digital Policies, and Innovation. The event took place from 31 May to 11 June 2021 in a virtual format, attracting 30 graduate students and professionals from 15 countries for a two-week, intensive course tackling all the layers of the Internet stack, applications, regulations, and policies. One highlight was a lecture by ICANN CEO Göran Marby on the future of Internet development.

We continued a series of technical trainings in cooperation with the Association for the Internet Industry (ECO) for members from across Europe and beyond. The trainings covered topics such as DNS for Internet service providers, DNS ecosystem security, and DNSSEC 101. In conjunction with EURALO, we provided a series of ICANN71 Readouts in diverse European languages. The smaller scale of these gatherings encouraged roundtable-style debate of ICANN issues of the day in French and Spanish.

We completed planning and began executing upon a focused United Kingdom engagement plan, bringing all the ICANN talent based in the UK to bear on efforts to reinvigorate longstanding beneficial relationships there. The UK is a significant leading economy and influential voice in global technology policy, now sitting outside the EU. Planning is underway for our participation in high-level government events, and meetings with stakeholders from key sectors, with considerable emphasis on making new contacts.

Internally, we continued with programming for a monthly, virtual regional “mini-retreat” for knowledge-sharing and team cohesion. We were also pleased to review generally very positive results for the employee engagement survey for ICANN staff in Europe.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

- Emerging from remote work, as mentioned above, continues to occupy considerable time, both in terms of contemplating smaller, hybrid meetings in the region and preparing our community for a “virtual first” hybrid ICANN73 next year. Sensing whether relationships have successfully weathered a long period of remote engagement, while preserving the positive “lessons learned” will be among the important tasks for all our community-facing activity in the region.
- Externally, in collaboration with ICANN’s Government Engagement team, we continue to monitor legislative initiatives that will impact either the DNS or ICANN community members. Within the EU, the Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS2) and the Digital Services Act (DSA) are the notable examples. We are also working to raise awareness of their effects and keep ICANN community members informed of their progress.
- Similar work by ICANN in national capitals and among members of parliament in countries throughout the region is also increasingly necessary.
- Beyond legislation, the European Union’s post-pandemic recovery fund places heavy emphasis on digital infrastructure. This, against a background of growing reliance on the Internet for public services and a growing cybersecurity awareness, has resulted in many countries reorganizing or centralizing national agencies and ministries. Such reorganization is aimed giving them higher visibility and (often) a single point of command, allowing them to be grouped into an EU Joint Cyber Unit. This represents an opportunity for ICANN as we will identify additional senior government stakeholders to approach to raise awareness of DNS security issues.

Geneva Engagement Office

Mandy Carver, SVP, Government and IGO Engagement

Due to the ongoing restrictions under the COVID-19 lockdown in Switzerland, face-to-face meetings and conferences continue to be postponed and intersessional work has remained virtual.

Key Regional Activities

The Geneva-based staff continues to pursue their virtual engagement work with relevant stakeholders in IGOs and NGOs. This includes work with the IGF Secretariat and the organizational work for ICANN participation in the global IGF2021. GE continues to follow the work of the ITU and its resolutions and conference development processes including TDAG, TSAG and the ITU SG discussions, and the “WTSA-21” and “WTDC-21” preparation discussions.¹ Two topic areas continue to be an area of interest – DNS abuse using COVID-19 lures and the ongoing discussions about the concept of “New IP.” In that context, GE continues to promote awareness of the work done by OCTO on the questions of DNS abuse and provide explanatory material on the technical underpinnings of the Internet.

Building on earlier successful engagements GE is planning with OCTO to organize another webinar for the members of the FRATEL, the global network of Francophone regulators, on new IP and ETSI NIN. This webinar was originally scheduled for February 2021 but now has been postponed.

Another area of ongoing work is monitoring the security dialogues currently taking place in several IGO. GE staff in Geneva and Brussels continue to follow the work of the ITAC-OECD involving the Committee on Digital Economy Policy and its working parties on Data Governance and Privacy in the Digital Economy (DGP), and the Working Party on Security in the Digital Economy (SDE) among others. As members of ITAC ICANN has submitted comments on proposed OECD publications relevant to ICANN’s mission.

Additional details on the work of the Geneva-based GE team can be found in the Government and IGO Engagement section of the CEO Report.

¹ The ITU Council is still discussing the specific dates but the WTSA and the Plenipotentiary meeting of the ITU will all now occur in 2022. While the WTDC is still listed as November of 2021 it is anticipated this might formally change once the Telecommunications Development Advisory Group (TDAG) has its virtual meeting 24-28 May 2021.

Middle East and Africa (Istanbul)

Baher Esmat, Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement - Middle East & Managing Director - Middle East & Africa

Key Regional Activities

- On 5-7 April, the 7th edition of the **Middle East DNS Forum** took place attracting 203 attendees across all three days, making it the highest attended forum to-date. A short survey circulated after the forum revealed extremely high satisfaction rates on the virtual setup, content of the agenda, and format and duration of sessions. The forum's website can be found at <http://mednsf.org/>.
- On 19-20 May, the **Africa Engagement Forum**, an inaugural regional pilot event, took place, bringing the African community together and supporting their work within ICANN's ecosystem. Hosted virtually owing to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the two-day event attracted more than 211 remote participants and sought to collate, update, and synchronize the work done by ICANN GSE-Africa, as well provided a platform to share direct updates and feedback from the ICANN staff. It consisted of active high-level panel discussions and sessions covering updates from ICANN and the community at large. Calls to ICANN org to consider running a follow-up study on the African DNS market.
- On 28 May, the Africa GSE team organized a webinar for the French-speaking community on Universal Acceptance (UA) and Email Address Internationalization (EAI). Another UA webinar was organized on July 29th with the UASG for the community in Uganda.
- The seventh edition of the **Middle East and Adjoining Countries School on Internet Governance** (MEAC-SIG 2021v) took place on 4-8 July in a virtual format. It was co-organized with ISOC and RIPE NCC. Preceding the live sessions was pre-work in the form of visual and readable content. The pre-work included 3 ICANN Learn courses.
- On 5-9 July, ICANN org hosted a masterclass session on Internet Governance 101 at the **Africa Lawtech Festival**, an event organized by the Lawyers Hub. It was an opportunity to reach out to a new audience, predominantly lawyers from across Africa, and introduce them both to ICANN and the wider Internet governance concepts.
- On 26-30 July, ICANN org provided support to the **13rd edition of the West Africa School of Internet Governance** and the **West Africa Internet Governance Forum**. The Root Server System was the presentation topic during the school on July 27, 2021. Universal Acceptance was covered during a special workshop on July 29.
- The ninth edition of the **Africa DNS Forum** was held virtually on 27-28 July. ICANN org organized the event in partnership with the Africa Top Level Domain Organization – AFTLD and the Africa Registrar Association – AfRegistrar. The forum's website can be found at <https://dnsforum.africa/>.
- The GSE Africa team continues to work together with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and regularly participates in their Working Group Meetings to inform their policy deliberations touching on Names and Numbers. One such REC is the East African Communications Organization (EACO) where the team participates in Working Group 6 that discusses numbering policies, including IP addressing.

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- **Technical engagement** continued to remain a key engagement vector in the Middle East and Africa. During this time, webinars and workshops were organized for the Computer Emergency Responses Team members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC-CERT), technical community in the UAE, The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA), the technical community in Mauritania, NIC Mauritanie (NIC.MR), the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) members in Turkey, amongst others. Key to note, engagement with OIC-CERT and NIC.MR occurred for the first time.

HIGHLIGHTS & MILESTONES

2 April 2021: First virtual DNS Abuse and Misuse workshop in the Middle East with the Moroccan telecom regulator (ANRT).

5-7 April 2021: First virtual Middle East DNS Forum organized over three days.

8 April 2021: First DNSSEC webinar with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) CERT.

20 April 2021: The Middle East Space discusses New gTLD Subsequent Procedures and provides a submission into the Public Comment Proceeding on the GNSO report to the Board.

19-20 May 2021: First Africa Engagement Forum launched in a virtual setting due to COVID-19.

24 May 2021: ICANN signs an [MoU](#) with the Arab Information and Communication Technology Organization (AICTO) to cooperate on IDNs, UA, and DNS security.

15 June 2021: Legal Hackers Ankara is approved as an ICANN At-Large Structure (ALS); the first ALS from Turkey.

15 June 2021: First DNSSEC webinar with the Mauritanian ccTLD registry (.MR).

4-8 July 2021: First virtual Middle East and Adjoining Countries School on Internet Governance took place.

TOP ISSUES & MITIGATION

While virtual events have proven that they can still be effective and attract attendance, surveys and discussions with regional stakeholders have shown us that in-person events continues to be the preferred choice for most people.

Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo)

Rodrigo de la Parra, VP, Stakeholder Engagement & Managing Director - Latin America & Caribbean

Key Regional Activities

- **LACRALO Universal Acceptance Training Program:** In late April 2021, the "LACRALO UA Training Program" was launched as a joint effort between LACRALO, ICANN, and the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG). This program was designed to increase UA awareness across the LAC region and engage with technical stakeholders directly. The training program consisted of four sessions delivered from 4 to 25 May 2021 covering key topics such as email address internationalization, UA for Java developers, and how to engage in UA activities. Over 150 participants from 14 LAC countries volunteered in the training. Teachers from the ICANN regions of the Asia Pacific (APAC), North America (NA), and Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) kindly shared their knowledge and experiences.
- **DNS Security Awareness Campaign:** As part of ICANN Regional Strategic Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean, the team launched a **DNS Security Awareness Campaign**. During this quarter we shared in social media a kick-off blog, a series of definitions of key acronyms and links to relevant information on DNSSEC and DAAR.
- **Regional Internet Day:** On 17 May, "Internet Day" is celebrated in many countries in the region. This year, ICANN was invited to participate in the Internet Day in El Salvador, México, and Bolivia.
- **Capacity Development:** The regional team has continued its targeted engagement and Capacity Development Program in partnership with the Mexican Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutes (ANUIES).
- **Readout:** ICANN held a special Readout session of ICANN71 with governments from the region members of CITELE of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Date	Event Name	Location	Remarks
20 April	ICANN70 Readout	Online	The Readout included discussions and resolutions, presentation on domain names abuse discussions, an update on new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) Subsequent Procedures, Transfer Policy review, and highlights from the ccNSO.
10-14 May	LACNIC35	Online	ICANN delivered a tutorial on the DNS and DNSSEC and had a virtual booth to share information on key ICANN programs.
24 May	Caribbean Virtual Roadshow	Online	The LAC-i-Roadshow for the Caribbean took place virtually covering the following topics: - What is ICANN? - ICANN Strategic Plan 2021-2025.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building opportunities, mentorship opportunities, and connection with other more experienced stakeholders from the Caribbean. - Securing our Internet activity.
27 May	ICANN LAC Talks ICANN History Project	Online	As part of the ICANN LAC Talks series ICANN presented a session to share the ICANN History Project with the regional community.
1 July	ICANN71 Readout	Online	The Readout included ICANN71 Board discussions and resolutions, a presentation on the post-pandemic future of ICANN Public Meetings, Community Survey, and ICANN71 By the Numbers report, plus summaries of relevant sessions such as the ICANN's multistakeholder model within the Internet governance ecosystem and an overall review of DNS security sessions.

Washington, D.C. Engagement Office

David Olive, SVP, Policy Development Support and Managing Director – Washington D.C. Office

All staff based out of the Washington, D.C. are still working remotely. In consultation with the regional crisis management team, we are consistently evaluating conditions to determine when it's appropriate to reopen the office and allow staff to return. Remote engagement opportunities are continuing.

Key Regional Activities

North American Regional Engagement Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025

The North America Engagement Plan focuses on regional efforts to strengthen engagement and participation in ICANN. The engagement goals are aligned with the goals and objectives defined in the ICANN FY21-FY25 Strategic Plan. The plan will be revisited yearly to ensure that it continues to be aligned with ICANN's overall strategic goals. The regional team opened a Public Comment period from **19 May to 2 July 2021**, to incorporate any input from the North America community and finalize the engagement plan. The draft document is available [here](#).

New Webinar Series on Key ICANN Topics from North America Regional Team

As part of its ongoing effort to strengthen engagement in North America, the North America regional team launched a new webinar series to bring timely topics to the community for discussion. The purpose of this series is to offer learning opportunities and facilitate meaningful participation in ICANN's processes through a virtual environment. The first webinar of the series was attended by 94 community members and featured ICANN's foremost experts on the root zone topic. "The Root Zone from A to Z," was held on **21 April 2021** with presentations on several operations involved in the creation and distribution of the Domain Name System (DNS) root zone. The recordings and presentations are available [here](#).

ICANN Board Social Media Report

Covering Period from 1 April - 30 June 2021 and ICANN71, 14-17 March 2021

Social Media Metrics: Executive Summary

Social media plays an important role in our engagement with global stakeholders. The ICANN organization's Communications team continues to invest time, resources, and budget to expand our global social media reach. The team operates 17 accounts and pages in multiple languages.

ICANN Social Media Accounts

Platform	Accounts	Details	Multilingual
Twitter	8	English, French, Arabic, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, ICANN President & CEO, and ICANN CTO handles	Yes
Facebook	1	Multilingual platform in the six U.N. languages, primarily focused on English	Yes
LinkedIn	1	English	No
YouTube	1	Videos in all 6 U.N. languages	Yes
Instagram	1	English	No
WeChat	1	Chinese	No
Weibo	1	Chinese	No
Youku	1	Chinese	No
Flickr	1	N/A	N/A
SoundCloud	1	English	No

Social Media Strategy

ICANN's social media platforms help increase and encourage engagement with and awareness of our content in multiple languages. Stakeholders also interact directly with ICANN to pose questions or send comments. This allows us to create a direct dialogue with stakeholders that would otherwise not exist. The Communications team responds to hundreds of direct messages posted to our social media channels each month.

The Communications team also amplifies messages from the social media handles and pages of ICANN's Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees (SOs/ACs) and influential ICANN stakeholders. This allows for an even broader reach of content, leveraging ICANN's large follower base to reach a wider audience.

How to Measure Effectiveness and ROI?

Evaluating the effectiveness of social media ROI is not an exact science. The methodologies social media companies use in calculating and reporting metrics are fairly opaque, which can make it challenging to determine the quantifiable impact ICANN's social media activities have on engagement.

Furthermore, there is no **independent** verification of the data that social media platforms provide. It is in the best interests of the platforms to report **more followers** and more **engaged** followers. The data should be viewed with skepticism and used primarily to determine which posts lead to verifiable engagements (clicks to pages, applications, surveys, etc.) as mere awareness is difficult to measure.

The number of followers ICANN has on Twitter, Facebook, etc., should also be viewed with a critical eye as a portion of those followers will be bots (fake followers). Newsletter platform metrics are more verifiable, as subscribers themselves need to opt in and bots and honeypot email addresses will result in suspension of the account.

Although it is difficult to measure the exact effectiveness of social media versus the level of effort, we can show trends in the engagement rate of content posted to ICANN's social media accounts, gauge follower interest in a particular topic, and reach audiences outside our traditional stakeholder base.

Impact of COVID-19 on Engagement and Paid Posts

Globally, companies and institutions continue to report a decrease in engagement as user behavior has changed during the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

Also, social media platforms have ramped up their prioritization of paid posts, meaning organic reach is declining. Newsletter platforms already have a paid model and the content served to the subscriber is independent from the platform's control.

Industry Average and ICANN Key Performance Indicator Targets

Platform	Industry Average Engagement Rate**	Industry Average Click Rate	Industry Average Open Rate	ICANN KPI Targets*
Twitter	0.045%	N/A	N/A	0.5%
Facebook	0.09%	N/A	N/A	1.0%
Instagram	1.22%	N/A	N/A	2.5%
LinkedIn	0.54%	N/A	N/A	2.0%
Newsletters	N/A	17%	10.65%	20% Open Rate 5% Click Rate

*ICANN KPI targets for social media engagement fluctuates based on industry data and changes yearly. ICANN aims to overperform versus the industry average and bases targets on the engagement rate considered “good” for specific platforms for that specific year. ICANN KPI targets for newsletter open and click rates are similarly based on industry data a change yearly. ICANN sets its target to overperform on open rates and while setting a more realistic click rate that is below the industry average.

**The Industry Average Social Media Engagement Rate documented above is based on findings from ICANN’s social media publishing platform Hootsuite data and [Sprout Social findings](#). The Industry Average for Newsletter Open and Click rates documented above is based on ICANN’s newsletter publishing platform [Constant Contact](#).

Key Findings: Cross-Platform

Each platform measures engagement rate differently, but it remains a meaningful metric we can use to observe trends and the effectiveness of platforms:

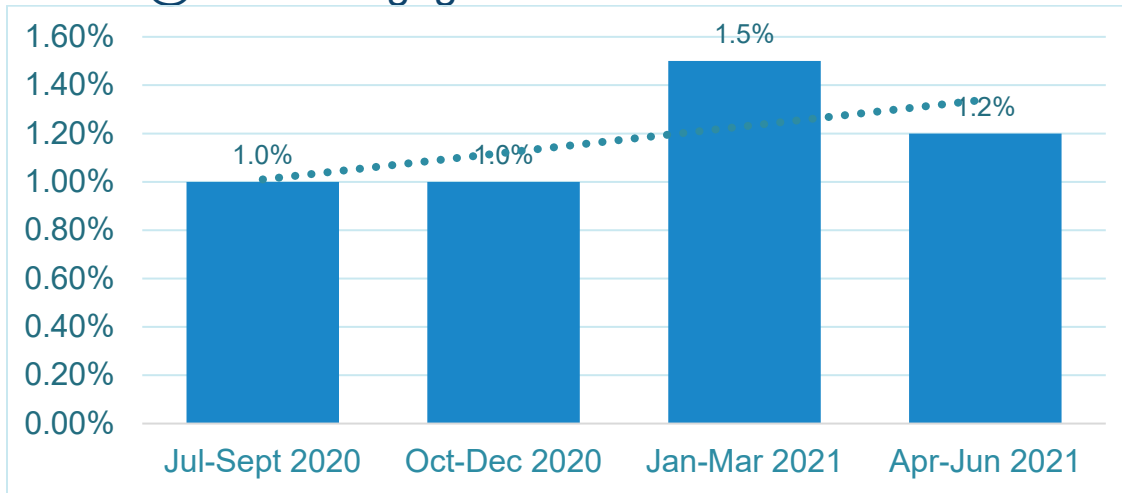
- ⦿ Given the pause on travel and all in-person meetings, this has had an impact on our follower growth and engagement rate. Without the benefits of in-person engagement and ability to capture photos, our level of engagement will remain stagnant or lower.
- ⦿ Despite the impact of the pandemic, ICANN continues to overperform against its KPI targets. And Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, continue to gain followers in 2020, a notable achievement as many businesses and nonprofits are currently experiencing a decrease in followers.
- ⦿ We do anticipate an increase in social media activity when in-person activities resume.

Twitter @ICANN Highlights

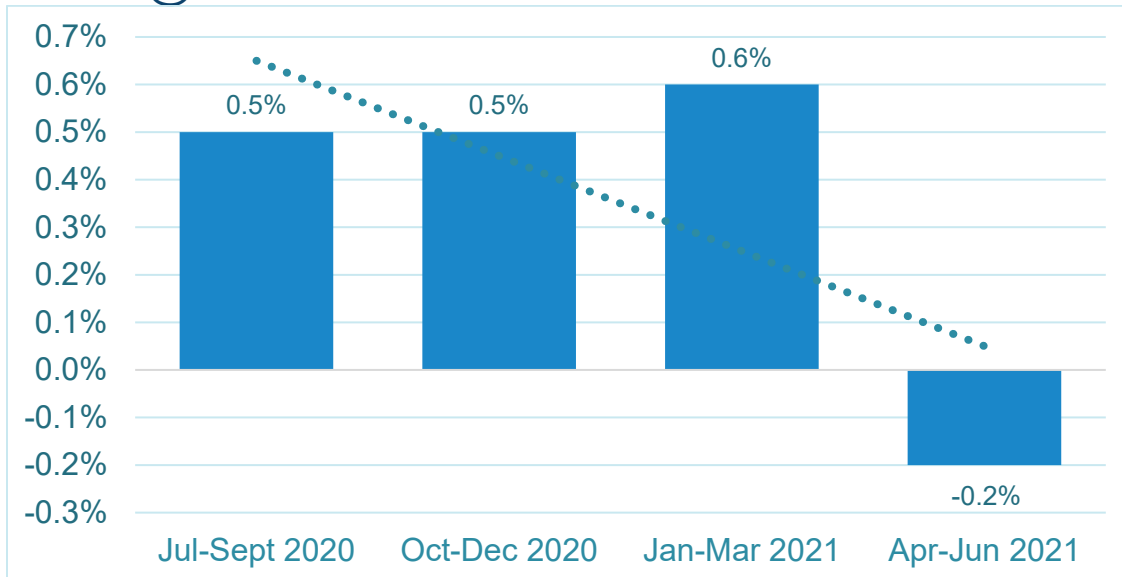
1 January-31 March 2021

- ⦿ The industry average engagement rate is 0.045% and our KPI target is 0.5%.
- ⦿ ICANN earned a 1.2% engagement rate from April-June 2021, overperforming on our KPI target. This is a slight decrease from the previous quarter.
- ⦿ The account saw a decrease in follower growth over the previous three quarters.

Twitter @ICANN Engagement Rate



Twitter @ICANN Follower Growth



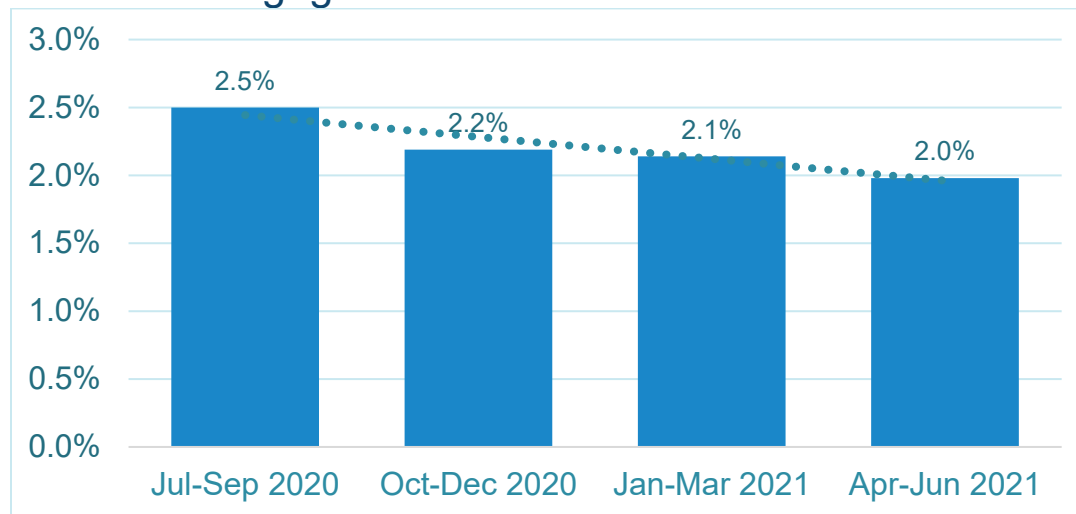
*Note: We did not include data for our other Twitter handles.

Facebook Highlights

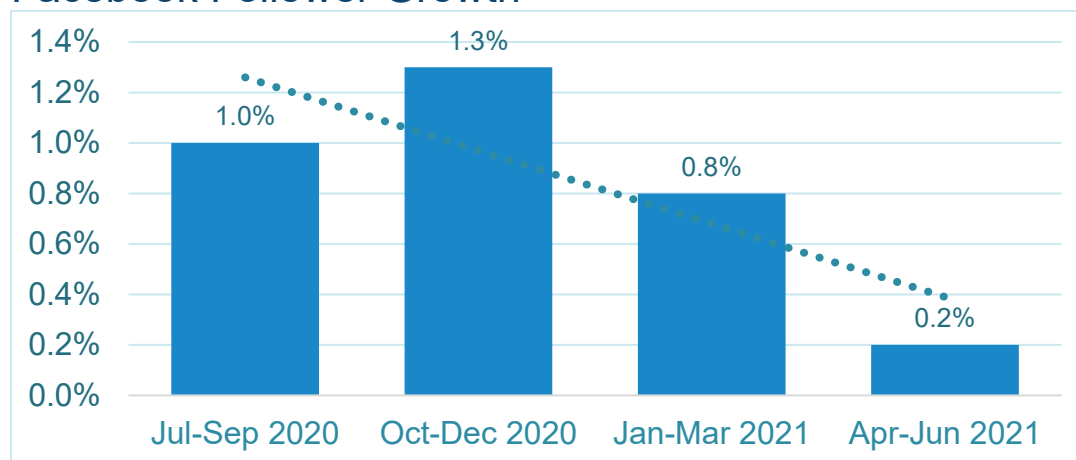
1 April – 30 June 2021

- ⦿ The industry average engagement rate is 0.09% and our KPI target is 1.0%.
- ⦿ ICANN earned a 2.0% engagement rate from April-June 2021, overperforming on our KPI target. The engagement rate is showing a downward trend in activity over the previous two quarters.
- ⦿ There was a decrease in follower growth over the previous quarter and an overall downward trend.

Facebook Engagement Rate



Facebook Follower Growth

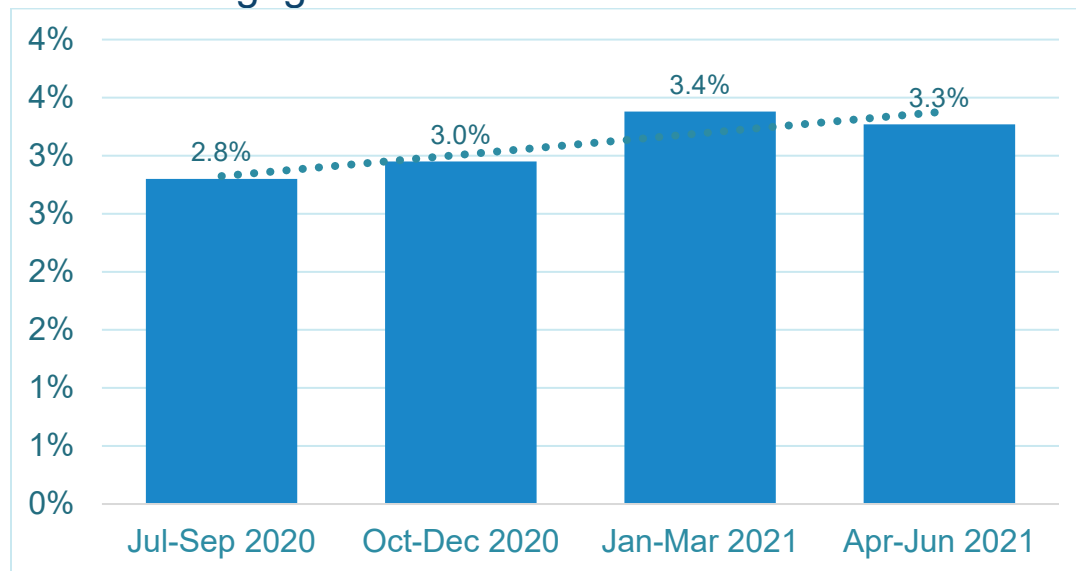


LinkedIn Highlights

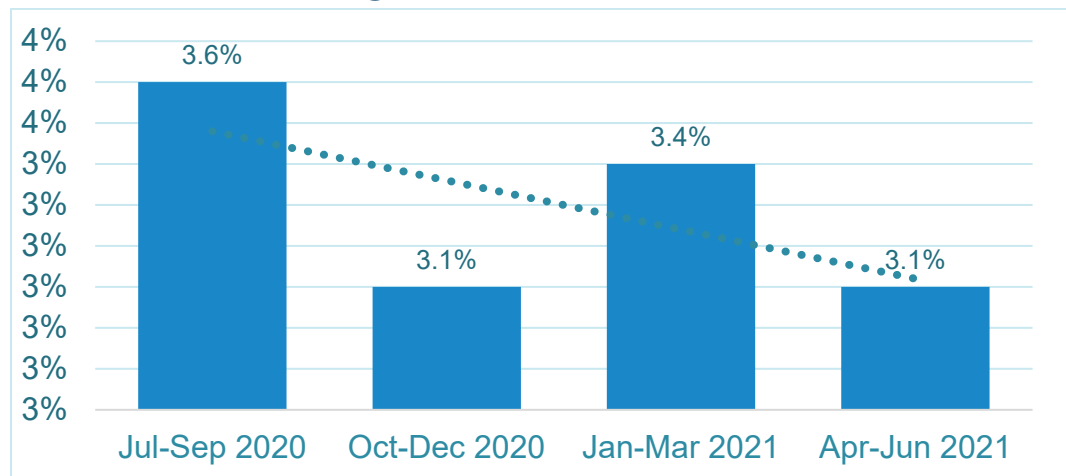
1 April – 30 June 2021

- ⦿ The industry average engagement rate is 0.54% and our KPI target is 2.0%.
- ⦿ ICANN earned a 3.3% engagement rate from April-June 2021, overperforming on our KPI target. The engagement rate saw a very slight downward trend compared to the previous quarter.
- ⦿ There was a decrease in follower growth from the previous quarter and an overall downward trend.

LinkedIn Engagement Rate



LinkedIn Follower Growth

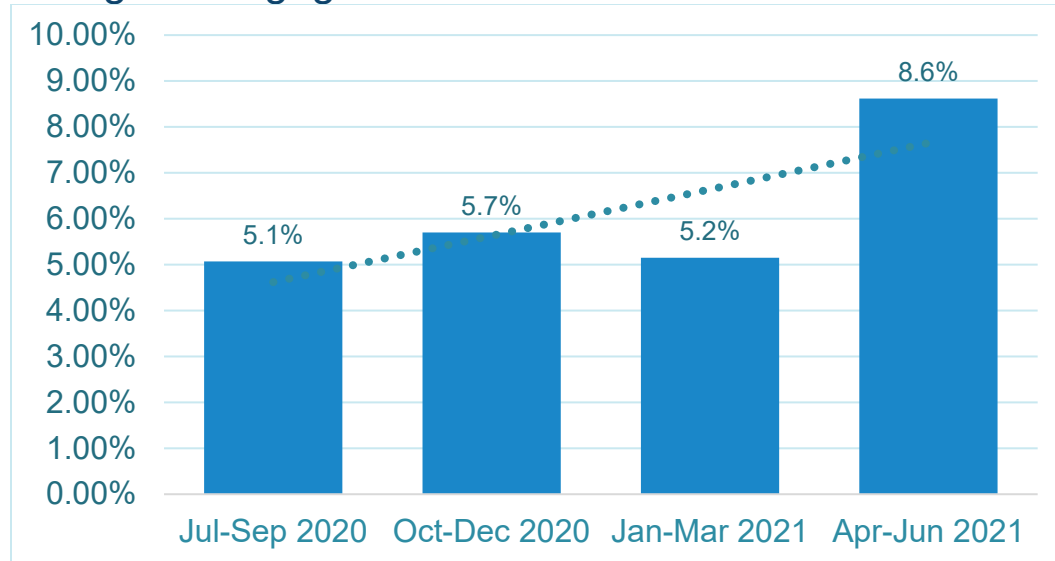


Instagram Highlights

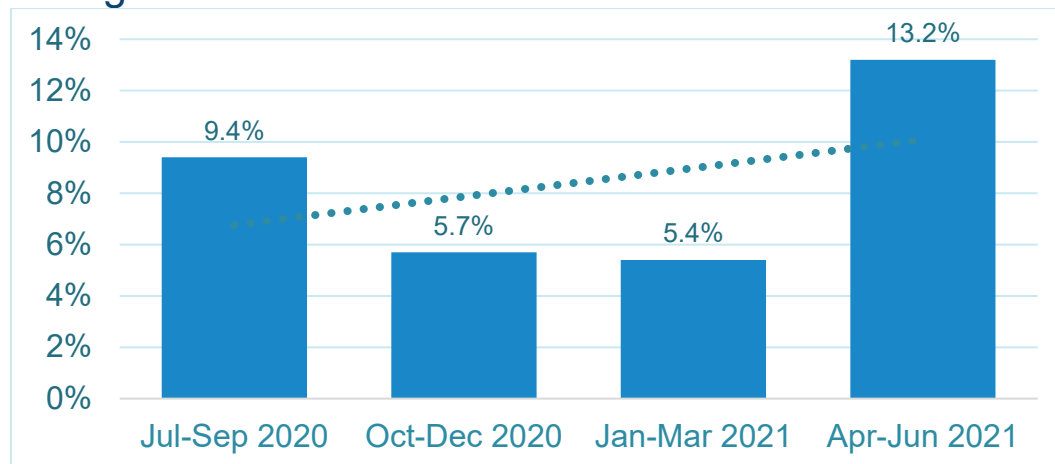
1 April – 30 June 2021

- ⦿ The industry average engagement rate is 1.22% and our KPI target is 2.5%.
- ⦿ ICANN earned an 8.6% engagement rate from April-June 2021, overperforming on our KPI target.
- ⦿ There was an increase in follower growth over the previous quarter.

Instagram Engagement Rate



Instagram Follower Growth

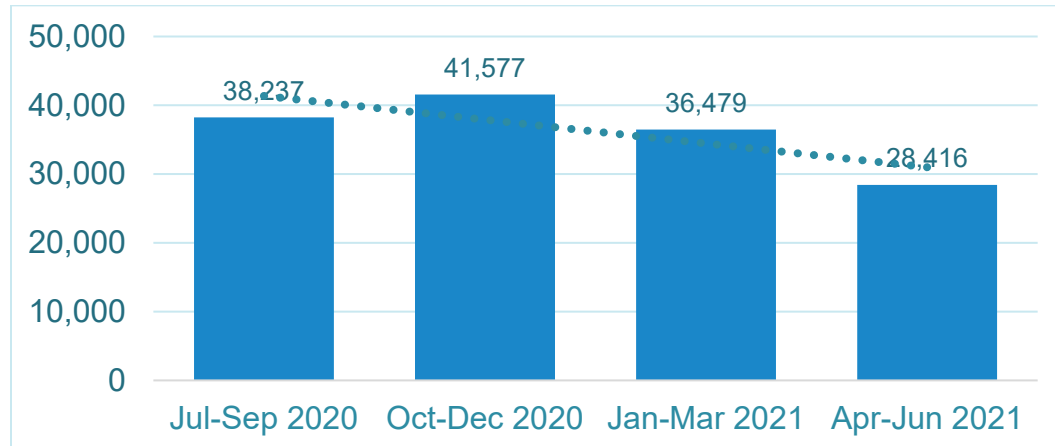


YouTube Highlights

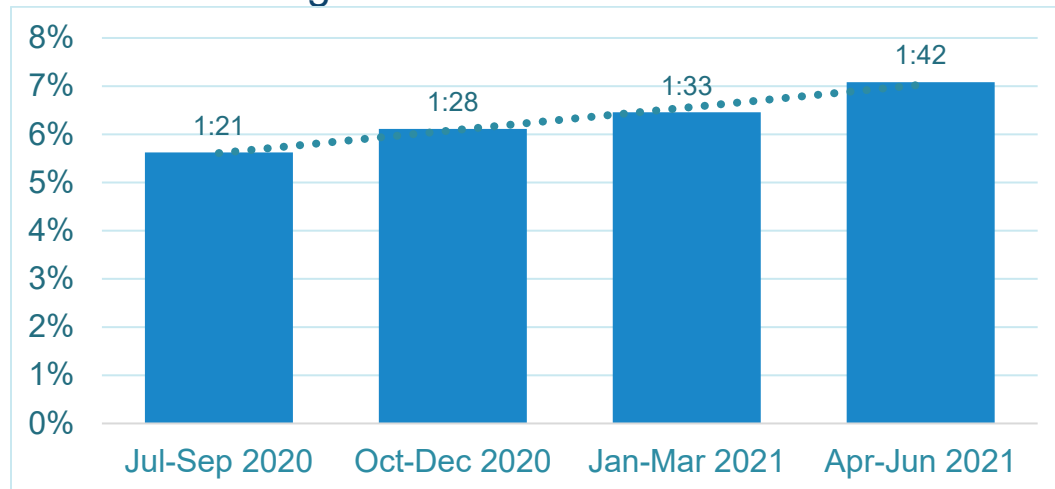
1 April – 30 June 2021

- ⦿ YouTube measures performance using number of views and the average duration of a view. It is difficult to set KPI targets as there are no industry averages.
- ⦿ YouTube views were lower in April-June 2021 (28,416) versus the previous quarter (36,479), a decrease of 22.1%.
- ⦿ The average duration of a video view was slightly higher, 1:42 versus 1:33 in January-March 2021.
- ⦿ The ICANN YouTube channel earned an increase of 529 subscribers from April-June 2021, for a total of 12,658 subscribers.
- ⦿ The ICANN71 Welcome video featuring Göran Marby and Maarten Botterman was the top viewed video posted from April-June 2021, with 442 views.

YouTube Video Views



YouTube Average Duration

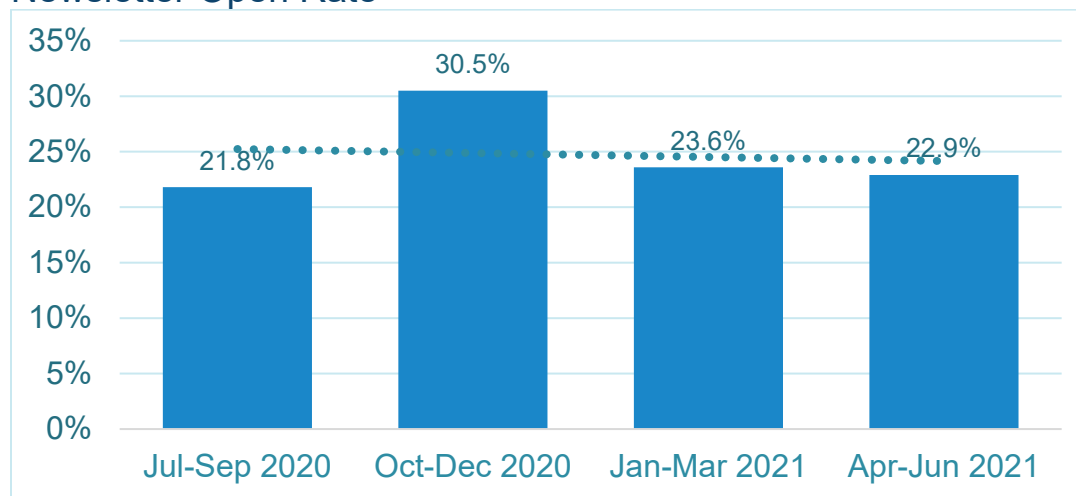


Newsletters Highlights

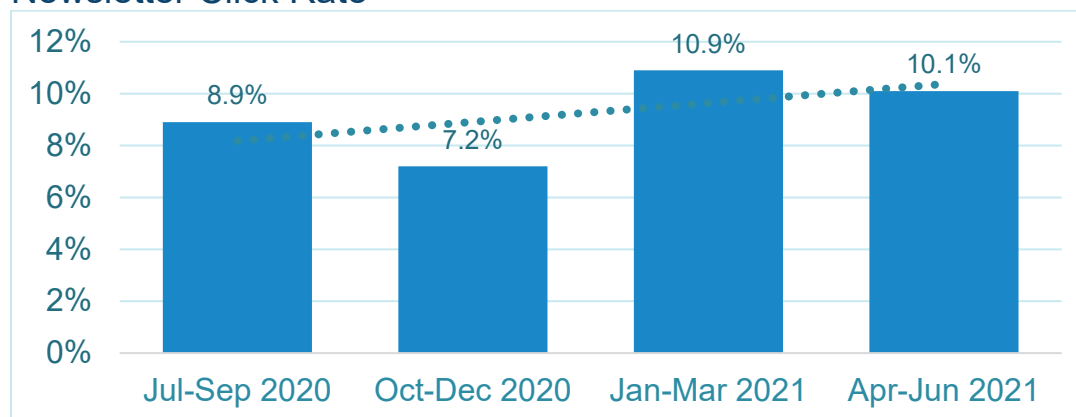
1 April – 30 June 2021

- Newsletter performance is measured by open rate and click rate (the number of subscribers who click on links within the newsletter). The industry average is 17% for open rates and 10.65% for click rates, and our KPI targets are 20% open rates and 5% click rates.
- The average open rate for ICANN regional newsletters was 22.9%, exceeding our target but lower than the previous quarter (January-March 2021, 23.6%).
- The average click rate, 10.1%, exceeding our target and lower than the previous quarter, which earned a 10.9% click rate.
- Our Public Meeting newsletters continue to earn higher open and click rates compared with our regional newsletters. The Public Meeting newsletter with the highest open rate was the ICANN71 15 June newsletter, earning a 51% open rate.
- The Public Meeting newsletter with the highest click rate was the ICANN71 14 June newsletter, earning an impressive 29% click rate.

Newsletter Open Rate



Newsletter Click Rate

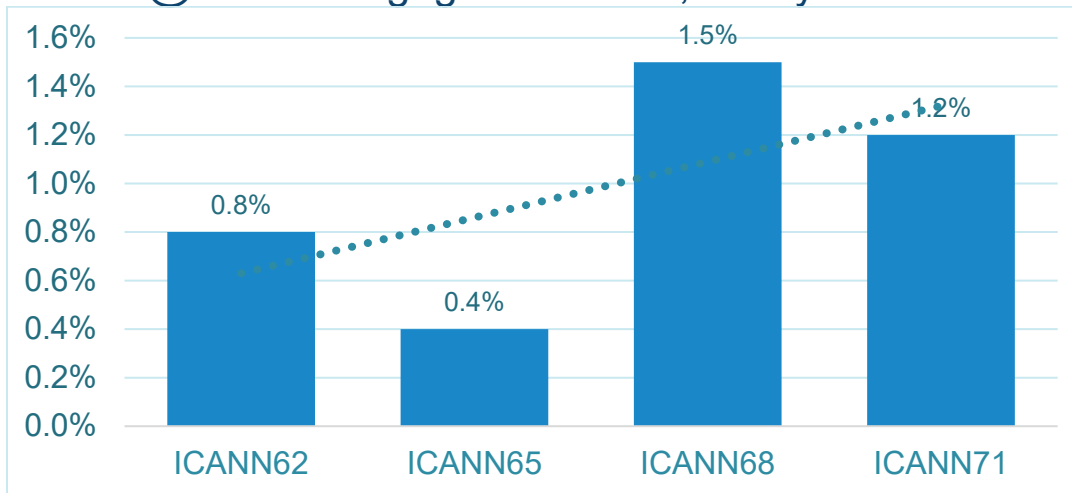


Key Findings: Public Meeting Policy Forums Social Media Highlights

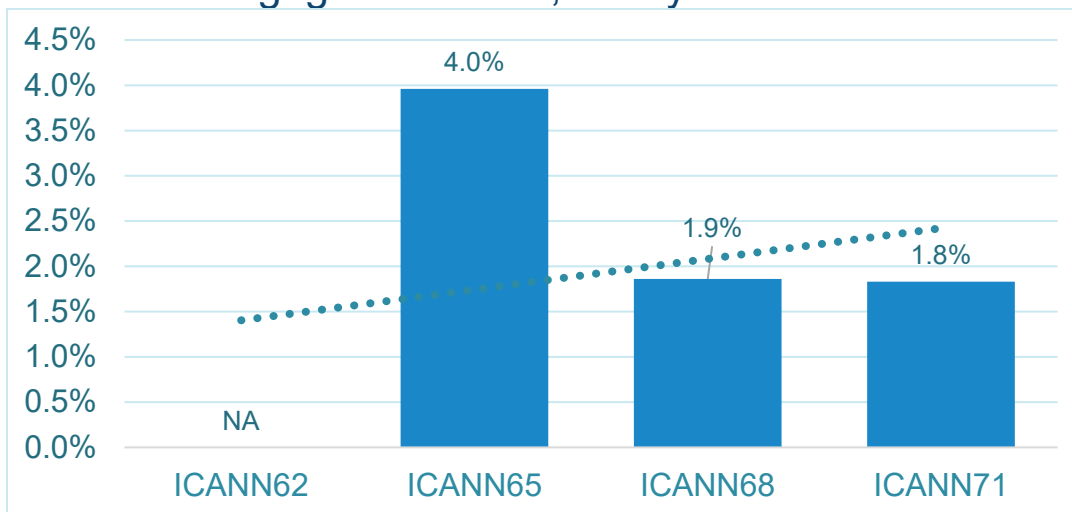
The following data reflects ICANN's social media performance during the previous four Policy Forum Public Meetings:

- Twitter engagement is trending upward over the previous four Policy Forums. Facebook and LinkedIn engagement are trending downward over the previous Policy Forums.
- ICANN71 newsletters earned mixed results over the previous Policy Forums, trending lower in open rates but higher in click rates.

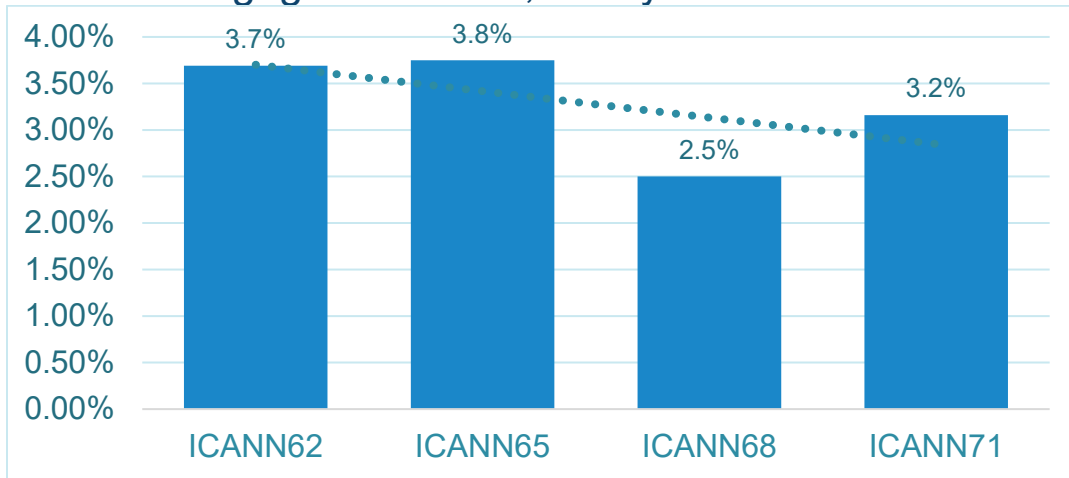
Twitter @ICANN Engagement Rate, Policy Forums



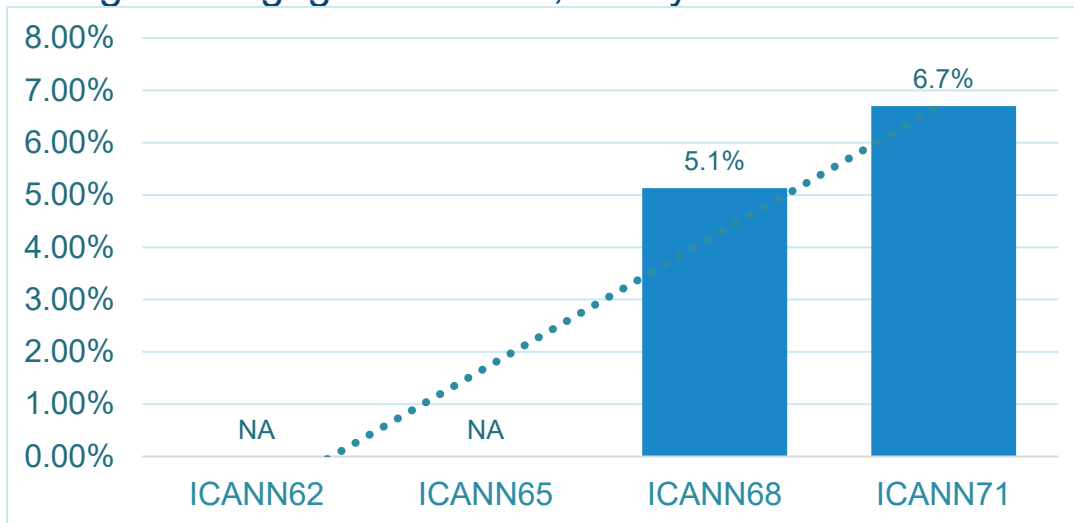
Facebook Engagement Rate, Policy Forums



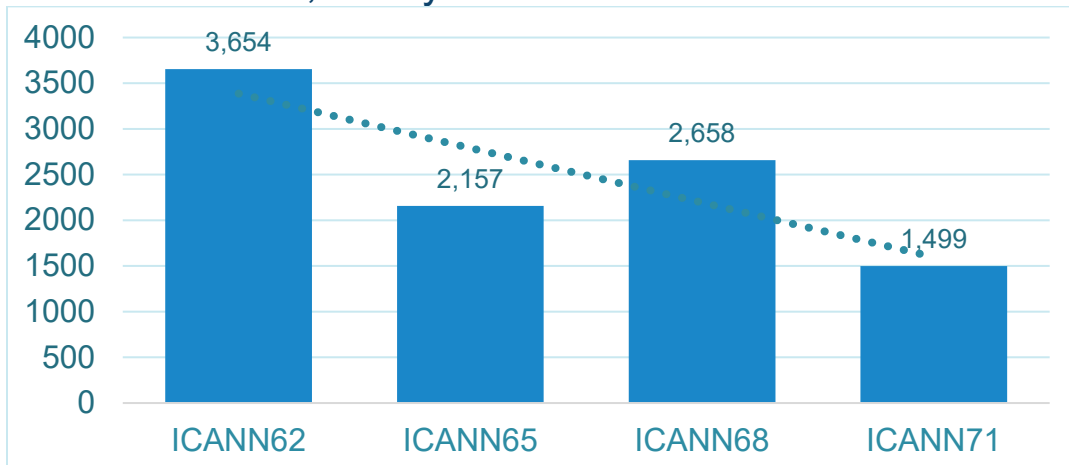
LinkedIn Engagement Rate, Policy Forums



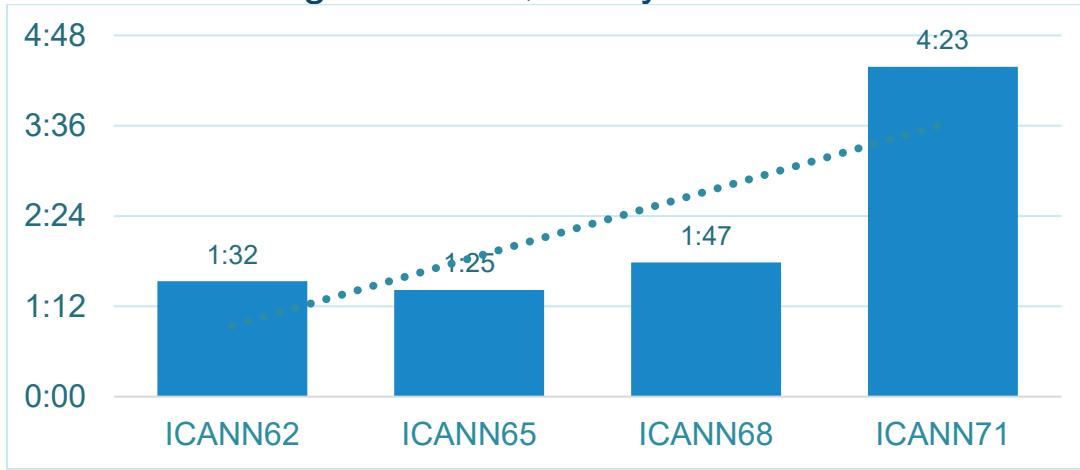
Instagram Engagement Rate, Policy Forums



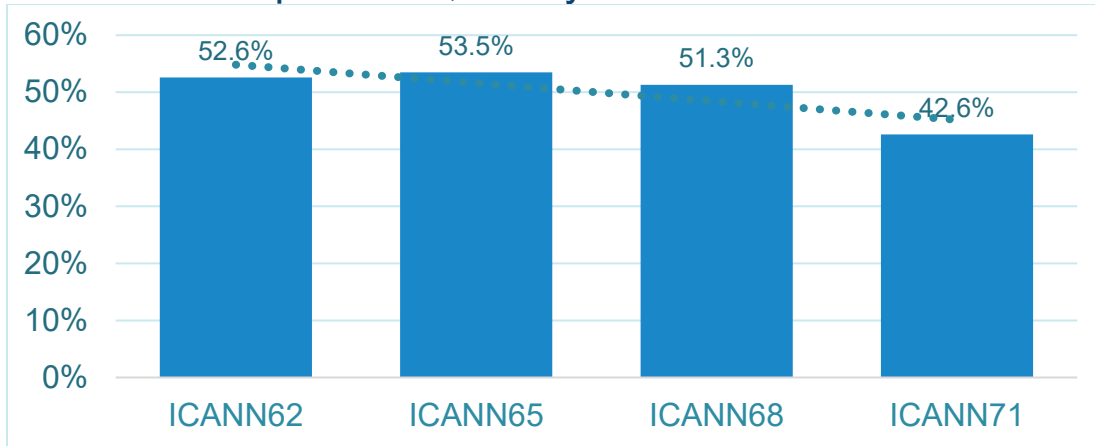
YouTube Views, Policy Forums



YouTube Average Duration, Policy Forums



Newsletters Open Rate, Policy Forums



Newsletters Click Rate, Policy Forums

