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ICANN

25 February 2019

RE: Response to Complaint 00007263 re: Issues with Remote Participation Services Provided by the ICANN org During ICANN63 in Barcelona

John Poole
DomainMondo
Via electronic mail

Dear John Poole,

Thank you for your submission. I'm following up on the complaint you submitted on 24 October 2018 regarding issues you were experiencing with remote participation during ICANN63 in Barcelona, Spain. I appreciate you bringing this to the attention of the ICANN org (all subsequent uses of "ICANN" refer to the ICANN organization). I've researched the issue with various ICANN departments and worked with them to provide you with this response.

In your complaint you indicate that the remote participation services provided during ICANN63 were deficient and that you experienced technical failures with live transcript, livestream video, audio sync, audio quality, and video replay failure. Your complaint also included three specific questions regarding remote participation services.

Research Findings:
In researching your complaint within ICANN, the team attempted to recreate results that resembled the issues you described. While the ICANN team tested various scenarios that could lead to the experiences you described, it is difficult to recreate and troubleshoot your problems once they have passed and without understanding all aspects of the technical environment you were attempting to participate from remotely. Additionally, ICANN is not aware of receiving reports from other participants experiencing similar issues. Not being able to observe your experiences when they occur or shortly thereafter, having limited information about your technical environment, and not having reports from other participants to benchmark against makes it difficult for ICANN to identify root cause or whether improvements are needed.

ICANN meeting participation, both onsite and remote, is a Tier 1 service that is provided by the ICANN org Meeting Operations and Technical Services teams. ICANN has established a 99% uptime service-level-target for Tier 1 services. While ICANN's meeting participation services have occasional outages, such as the Adobe issue we experienced during ICANN61, the org consistently achieves its 99% up-time target on a year-over-year basis. ICANN meetings have two primary room configurations for remote participation: Standard Meeting Room, and Large Meeting Room configurations. In addition to the two meeting room configurations, there are a variety of meeting participation services that the org provides during ICANN meetings including but not limited to, audio, video, streaming, translation, transcription, etc. Of the remote participation services that ICANN provides, several of them are available via multiple software platforms. This means that the available services and the platform(s) by which they are delivered can vary depending on the requirements of a given session and the meeting room configuration. This is sometimes confusing because participants don't always realize what software platform is providing which services since the service types and the naming conventions are the same, or similar.

ICANN's Response:
It is always the ICANN org's goal to ensure that ICANN meeting participants are able to easily and timely access the participation services provided. ICANN genuinely wants meeting participants to have a good experience and while we are not infallible, we have a strong track record with respect to meeting participation services. Although ICANN has been unable to determine what led to the remote participation issues you experienced during ICANN63, the team has come up with some deliverables to provide better visibility to you and the ICANN community regarding meeting operations and technical services.

- On 14 December 2018, ICANN's CIO published a blog entitled [Remote Participation at ICANN Meetings](). The purpose of the blog is to provide the community with more transparency regarding the scope and scale of network and audiovisual logistics required to operate an ICANN meeting. The blog includes a time-lapsed video to show the community what a meeting facility looks like from the moment ICANN arrives to an empty room until the room is fully configured (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3h-qRxFLZF4). Note, this video shows a full room set up and includes more than just the technical set up.
- In considering your complaint, the team noticed that the ICANN org's [remote participation page]() provides a description of the various services, but it doesn't provide a graphic of how the services interact with one another. Therefore, the team developed a high-level schematic of the two meeting room configurations, which is currently in DRAFT form. As a point of reference, I have included the DRAFT as Drawing 1 at the end of this document. Once it is finalized it will be published on the meetings remote participation webpage.

In addition to the materials described above, the team also made two suggestions as to how ICANN can work with you to troubleshoot any future issues you might incur and to ideally be able to see the issues as they are occurring.

- As soon as you experience an issue, please put something into the chat pod in the Adobe Connect Virtual Meeting Room. The meetings team actively watches the chat pods so they can assist users who are having trouble, are aware of the complaints you have submitted, and can look into what is happening while it is happening.
- The ICANN org would like to have one of our technical team members work directly with you, either at a meeting or remotely, so they can see what your technical configuration is, so they can observe what you're experiencing, and can then assess what may/may not be broken and if there is something ICANN needs to fix.

In your complaint you also asked three questions. I've provided the questions below, edited for appropriateness, as well as a response to them.

Question 1: Who at ICANN is hiring the outside vendors?
Answer 1: ICANN has a procurement process it follows when researching and selecting outside vendors, and vendors are approved by appropriate members of the related department's leadership. When there is an issue with a vendor's performance, the appropriate ICANN org members work with the vendor to resolve the issue. If a vendor is not meeting its agreed contract terms, service level commitments, or if ICANN's requirements outgrow the product offering, ICANN will research additional options and make changes where appropriate.

Question 2: Why doesn't ICANN drop livestream and use YouTube VideoLive and Replay which are likely cheaper and better?

Answer 2: As discussed above, ICANN has not observed the issues you are having with Livestream. Meaning, as ICANN monitors the various rooms, we are not seeing problems with Livestream nor have we had a meaningful number of issues raised by others. This is not to say you're not having the issues, but to explain that we can't identify a solution to fix it if we don't know what is causing the problem. Specific to your YouTube suggestion, YouTube is a service that ICANN has and is exploring to see if it meets the needs of an ICANN meeting and other uses, however no decisions have been made at this time.

Question 3: Why aren't the Adobe Connect replay links published according to the service-level-targets on ICANN's remote participation webpage?

Answer 3: Schedule.icann.org has the most up-to-date remote participation links which include Livestream.com video, Adobe Connect live meeting room, audio mp3 recordings, transcripts, etc. Livestream.com video links are available shortly after a session concludes. Other archived media is posted within 6-12 hours after a session concludes. Official transcripts are published within seven days of the session concluding. ICANN strives to achieve its service-level-targets 100% of the time, however there will always be a limited number of occasions where there is a problem with the media or ICANN's posting process. In such cases, as soon as ICANN is aware of an issue, it investigates and resolves the problem as quickly as possible.

It is important to be aware of the scale and scope of network and technical logistics that the ICANN org manages during an ICANN meeting. There are 1000's of touchpoints, 100's of hours of audio, video, transcription, scribing, multiple platforms, and a dedicated team of people. For example, for ICANN63 the org published 3,701 various remote participation links between October 1-25, over 880 hours of .mp3 audio recordings, over 450 hours of Adobe Connect recordings, over 175 hours of Livestream video content, and over 600 documents. It is also true that computers crash, networks get interrupted, software freezes, typos happen, and people make mistakes. The combination of scale, technology and humans means that while ICANN strives for perfection, there will always be the potential for a few minor errors to occur. I provide this information not to sidestep ICANN's commitment to quality deliverables and providing a meeting participation experience that is as flawless as possible, but instead to set expectations and provide factual information regarding what is required to produce an ICANN meeting. If something isn't working -- the ICANN org wants to know about it and will fix it as best it can.
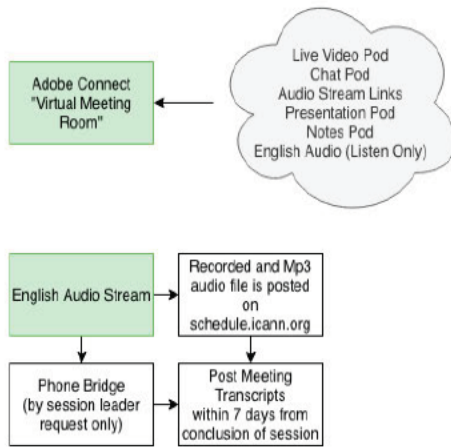
Lastly, I understand you're frustrated and I'm always here to help. However, I respectfully request that you abide by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior (https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/expected-standards-2016-06-28-en) and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy (https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/community-anti-harassment-policy-2017-03-24-en). Using derogatory terms when taking part in the ICANN multi-stakeholder process to describe or address anyone in the ICANN ecosystem is unacceptable and I ask that you please refrain from doing so in future interactions.
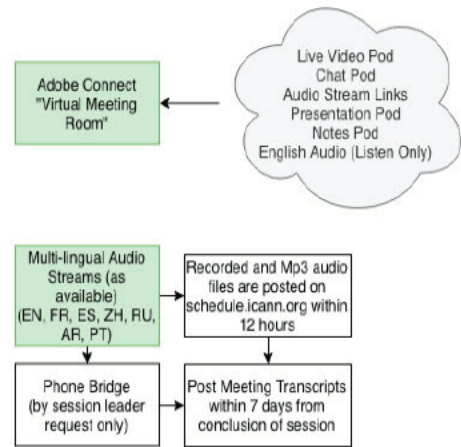
Kind regards,

Krista Papac
Complaints Officer
ICANN

Drawing 1.
Draft

**Standard Meeting Room
Remote Participation**

Adobe Connect "Virtual Meeting Room"

← Live Video Pod
Chat Pod
Audio Stream Links
Presentation Pod
Notes Pod
English Audio (Listen Only)

English Audio Stream → Recorded and Mp3 audio file is posted on schedule.icann.org

Phone Bridge (by session leader request only) → Post Meeting Transcripts within 7 days from conclusion of session

**Large Meeting Room
Remote Participation**

Adobe Connect "Virtual Meeting Room"

← Live Video Pod
Chat Pod
Audio Stream Links
Presentation Pod
Notes Pod
English Audio (Listen Only)

Multi-lingual Audio Streams (as available) (EN, FR, ES, ZH, RU, AR, PT) → Recorded and Mp3 audio files are posted on schedule.icann.org within 12 hours

Phone Bridge (by session leader request only) → Post Meeting Transcripts within 7 days from conclusion of session

Youtube.com Live Video Streaming *Coming Soon* → Livestream.com HD Video Stream → DVR recording & immediate posting on schedule.icann.org

Comment Box
English Audio Stream

Live Scribing Streamtext.net → Live Scribe pod in Adobe Connect

Live Scribe in web browser → Download raw unedited transcripts for live sessions → Official transcripts are posted within 7 days from conclusion of session

Remote Participation Facts

All open sessions are monitored by a technician in the physical & virtual meeting rooms.

The technician monitors adobe connect, livestream.com, live scribe feeds, and all the audio streams, including telephone phone bridges. They are monitoring for a breakdown of the service, or low quality services - and will immediately work to resolve any issues they see or hear, or that are brought to their attention within the Adobe Connect Chat pod, or in livestream.com comments area.

For each session, the technican has a 60 point checklist to ensure that all services are running and operational.

Each meeting averages over 3,000 technical requests for a technical team of 20 people.

Over 3,500 participation urls are posted per meeting on schedule.icann.org, including pre-meeting participation links, post meeting recording links and related documents or transcripts.

Over 630 documents are posted for the average ICANN Meeting on schedule.icann.org

ICANN Meetings have an average of 350 concurrent sessions, with most sessions having some variant of remote participation.

Over 880 hours of audio were recorded for ICANN63.
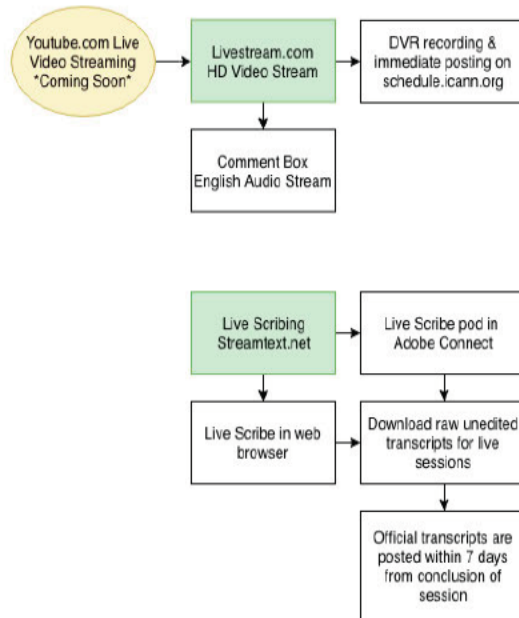
**Note: This draft Drawing is included as a visual aid in response to this complaint. Once the Drawing is finalized, it will be published on ICANN's meeting remote participation webpage at: https://meetings.icann.org/en/remote-participation