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RE: Response to Complaint Regarding Lack of Accessibility of the ICANN Website to the Visually Impaired

Jackie McBride
Via electronic mail

Dear Jackie McBride

Thank you for your submission. In your complaint (see: https://www.icann.org/complaints-report) you explain that the icann.org website lacks accessibility to the visually impaired and you cite two examples; CAPTCHAs do not provide an audio or re-CAPTCHA alternative, and infographics are not accessible via screen readers. I appreciate you bringing this to the attention of the ICANN organization (all subsequent uses of "ICANN" refer to the ICANN organization). I've researched this issue with various departments inside ICANN and write to provide you with this response.

Following my research and internal discussions, I found that the current icann.org website does not meet some accessibility standards. As a global and inclusive organization with stakeholders all over the world, accessibility is important to ICANN and this is something ICANN is working to fix.

In September 2017, the ICANN Board passed a Resolution approving the Information Transparency Initiative (ITI) project. There are three key areas for which the Information Transparency Initiative is aimed at improving: the ICANN organization's internal and external content governance, its public content findability in all six U.N. languages, and its technical foundation for the entire ICANN ecosystem (community, Board, organization).

Following the ICANN Board Resolution, the ICANN org kicked off the ITI project in January 2018. This initiative was launched to, among other things, improve the findability of ICANN's public content. The Information Transparency Initiative's effect on improving findability will help ICANN's stakeholders navigate icann.org by:

- Improving content accessibility for people with disabilities by following Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- Providing better search capabilities in the six U.N. languages by applying a consistent taxonomy to all www.icann.org content.
- Enabling ICANN ecosystem wide search by using the www.icann.org taxonomy as a foundation for all SO/AC sites.
- Allowing you to find content more easily by enhancing site navigation.
- Providing links to relevant content based on what you are searching for or looking at.
- Making better use of databases to simplify search of specific content types like correspondence, registry reports, and glossaries.
- Creating a new, intuitive user experience, which has been based on your input, feedback, and user journeys. This experience will include improved features like Public Comment, and Public and other ICANN meeting registration.
- Ensuring you can access content on your mobile phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop by adhering to mobile-first standards.

You will note that improving accessibility is one of the eight key improvements to findability on icann.org.

ICANN is creating guidelines based on the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA specification](#) created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The W3C is an international community that works together to develop Web Standards. ICANN is in the process of implementing these guidelines as part of ITI, which will improve accessibility on icann.org. The org's aim is to implement as many Level A and Level AA requirements as possible within the constraints of our budget and resources.

ICANN's new guidelines will include the ability to provide text alternatives for screen readers for infographics. One approach ICANN is considering is to add a 'show text version' link to sections surrounding infographics to allow users to toggle between the actual infographic and a curated text-only version to help provide context for what information is conveyed in the original infographic.

Regarding CAPTCHA and accessibility concerns, [on 14 February 2019, the WC3 posted a draft on the Inaccessibility of CAPTCHA.](#) ICANN is reviewing this draft and exploring options to help develop an accessible experience for all users while maintaining security to mitigate spam and bot submissions.

ICANN appreciates you taking the time to submit your complaint. ICANN is committed to always working to increase its effectiveness and to provide additional transparency and accountability, all in service of ICANN's mission. Your willingness to submit this information helps us to achieve these commitments.

Thank you again for your feedback and your patience as we work on improving the accessibility of our platforms. Our goal is to launch an improved icann.org, which meets more accessibility requirements in 2020.

To learn more about the Information Transparency Initiative please visit:
https://feedback.icann.org/

Kind regards,

Krista Papac
Complaints Officer
ICANN