from:

Questions for the community and responses:[1]

Authors to date: Avri Doria, Klaus Stoll

Question 1

What are some concrete examples of concerns that the community has with regards to staff accountability? Are the concerns about individual service delivery/individual staff, or about the potential that staff might cause a violation of ICANN policies, processes, or Bylaws?

Answer 1

The concerns of the community are with both, individual staff and staff as a group violating ICANN policies, processes or Bylaws.

The "classical" example for conflicts between staff perceived interests and the community is: "Outreach".

ICANN is devoting considerable resources to outreach efforts but such efforts have been greeted with limited success. This limited success has to do with a fundamental misunderstanding of context and the nature of the challenges faced both by ICANN and by those underrepresented stakeholder groups. The main barriers and challenges are:

a. ICANN centricity resulting in lack of relevance. A detailed look at ICANN's website resources shows that ICANN's awareness and capacity

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[1] Note: This is a draft document that does not yet have subgroup consensus

building is focused on promoting and explaining ICANN as an organization. As well intended as these efforts are, they are having minimal impact on informing and engaging a wider range of DNS users and Internet ecosystem stakeholders. A basic disconnect exists as these efforts are relevant to promote ICANN as an organization but they do it without making it relevant to the targeted stakeholders.

b) Staff centered strategy. A current handicap for ICANN outreach and awareness building is the idea that it should be mainly executed and guided by ICANN staff, which is contrary to ICANN's bottom up process of governance and engagement.

c) Materials and language. As a direct result of being staff centric, ICANN's current outreach strategy devotes considerable effort and resources to the production and access to document and educational materials. Much of that material reads mainly as navigational tools for understanding ICANN. The material can be dense, in the language of ICANN, inappropriate in terms of the remits of the intended stakeholders, and occasionally already available in more suitable form from prospective outreach collaborators.

d) Lack of understanding volunteer's realities and needs. The large majority of Internet citizens, be they individuals or representing, not-for-profit, civil society and community organizations, participation in Internet governance is as volunteers whose time and effort are over and above, or apart from, their jobs and primary activities. In contrast, contracted parties and much of the non-contracted business community engage in ICANN's policy development and processes as part of their job or, in the case of those such as lawyers and academics, as part of building career capital. The time and effort required for engagement effectively excludes broader and deeper engagement by individuals and not-for-profit, civil society and community organizations. They simply do not have the resources and cannot provide the necessary time.

Overcoming barriers

How can we begin to overcome the barriers and challenges? On the one hand ICANN needs to reflect on how to make its processes more readily "digestible" for easier engagement. On the other hand it needs to reflect on how to make volunteer engagement easier. It needs to explore ways to facilitate the ease and effectiveness of volunteer effort in its governance processes, and it needs to do so by consulting with the constituencies and not by focusing on top down process assistance.

Reversing the roles between ICANN staff and ICANN's constituency organizations.
The first step would be a reversal of roles between ICANN staff and ICANN's constituency organizations. A communications strategy for outreach and engagement needs to start from ICANN's supporting organizations (SOs), advisory committees (ACs) in collaboration with the stakeholder constituency groups who are the target of the outreach and greater engagement. ICANN staff should assist SOs and ACs, etc., to build strategy on a constituency understanding of context, and with the engagement of local expertise.

b) Relevance through the creation of win/win situations.
The starting point of all engagement has to be what is "in it" for everybody. Where is the win-win for both ICANN and the not-for-profit, civil society, community organization constituencies? Part of this will involve greater engagement within ICANN governance processes. Part of this will be greater involvement in the DNS system, as domain name holders and website owners. Part of this will be greater stakeholder involvement in the broader Internet issues as stakeholders and citizens of the Internet ecosystem. All of this can only be achieved by greater collaboration and clearer mutually agreed upon deliverable goals. In order to make ICANN relevant and for outreach to succeed, there has to be a "win" for them to become engaged in policy as citizens of the Internet ecosystem.

c) Making the DNS the focus
From a strategic perspective, efforts should not start with a focus on the inner working of ICANN, its multi stakeholder model or its policy

development processes. Efforts can start by stressing the advantages of a secure, stable and reliable DNS, and the principles of a free and open internet, and they must quickly turn to Internet issues that confront not-for-profit, civil society and community groups from within the Internet ecosystem, or interest and attention will be lost. The task of outreach, with the goals of awareness and engagement, is to build an understanding of where, within the policy processes of the Internet, specific individual and organizational self-interests are on the policy agenda**.**

Directing Resources
Whilst the ICANN community is involved in the overall ICANN budget process, it is at the discretion of individual ICANN staff how available resources are spend. Again, outreach is a good example. ICANN staff is interested to promote ICANN.org whilst stakeholder groups are interested first in engagement, awareness and capacity building of their constituents first followed by a second step of engaging people in the ICANN policy making processes. Thus, in the past, requests from the community to fund the first steps where denied and funds for the second step where made available, resulting in ineffectiveness and waste of resources.
In the context of outreach constituencies suggested ICANN staff to support certain activities only to receive the response from staff: "But we would like you to do XY&Z and you will only receive resources for that." Which constitutes a direct violation of ICANN processes policies and bylaws.

Staff decision making
The community finds itself often in the situation that staff informs the community that they have made a decision, but the community was not involved in the process of decision making or are getting told that the community has been "consulted". A complete transparency about the staff decision making processes is required always and on all issues.

Staff evaluation of the community
Much has been said about the evaluation of staff, but there also exists various evaluation methods where staff is evaluating the community. This starts with attendance records, over requests to constituencies to submit

reports, (like outreach plans), that are evaluated and commented on by ICANN staff against ICANN.org criteria. None of these evaluation methods by staff of the community are transparent and fully documented. In order to build trust between ICANN.org staff and the community it is supposed to support, all staff evaluations needs to be made transparent.

It has become clear that ICANN staff confronted with the demands of ICANN.org, sees the community and the resources that should be made available to the community and community control as free labor and tools to achieve their own. performance indicators. The support role between Staff and community has been reversed.

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Question 2

In the staff accountability group, there have been suggestions that people within the ICANN Organization are afraid to speak to the community. Can you provide more detail to support these suggestions? Is the reluctance to speak based on perceptions of how the ICANN. Organization will respond, or how the community will respond?

Answer 2

As I, Avri, am one of the ones who have said this, I have to say that everything that has been said to me has been confidential. Since ATRT2 and the confidential work that ended up with the recommendation for review of the ICANN whistleblowing policy, various staff members have spoken to me confidentially about issues of concern to them. When I tried to recruit them into the group they told that they just couldn't; they needed their jobs.

There was one person who spoke to me of being concerned that the community would take things wrongly.

I understand that this can therefore just be categorized as hearsay, just unnamed sources. Though I would notice that despite widespread appeals and recruitment, no one from the staff has joined the group. Perhaps they are all afraid of how the community would react. That too would be a problematic indicator.

As we have noted there are direct conflicts between the interest and actions of ICANN.org staff and the interests and actions of the community.

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This results in a permanent frustration by all involved. The reversal of the support role between staff and community has been pointed out by community member's numerous times with very limited or no success, which resulted in a loss of trust and communication.

Question 3

ICANN expects all people within the ICANN Organization to be respectful to the community in interactions. If the community is not treated with respect, that would clearly be an issue about which ICANN should be made aware. What is the expectation for the community in addressing members of the ICANN Organization?

Answer 3

As in the second question, direct conflicts between the interest and actions of ICANN.org staff and the interests and actions of the community, resulting in the reversal of the support roles of staff and community, constitutes the root of the problems between staff and community. The expectation of the community is:

·   That governance role of the community is fully respected by ICANN.org staff.

·   That all attempts by staff to use the community to achieve their internal goals are reversed and stopped

·   That budgeted resources are spend per the directions of the community

·   That staff evaluation of community members is made fully transparent.

·   That a complete transparency about the staff decision making processes is required always and on all issues.

Question 4

Do you think that there should be areas where people in the ICANN Organization should be directly accountable to the community? What would this look like, and how could it be done in a way that does not interfere with the employer relationship? Are the enhancements of the Reconsideration and IRP Process, where staff action can be challenged directly, sufficient to address the subgroup's concerns.   How does one prevent inconsistent feedback to ICANN.org employees?

Answer 4

People in the ICANN Organization should be directly accountable in **all areas** to the Community. Which form this accountability should take should be determined by the community.

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in all areas by relevant parts of the community.
also seems that the professional organization should also have a say in how the partnership works as they are they ones that need to be effective.

Commented [3]: in all areas by the whole community, I would say
Don't quite get the part with the professional organization, if you mean ICANN.org staff, I agree.