Policy Issues in the DNS

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About this slidedeck

This slidedeck is intended to help both
- new At-Large Community members
- persons that could become At-Large Community members

to

- learn about the various ICANN policy issues of interest to end users,
- why end users should care about these issues, and
- how as part of the ICANN At-Large Community they can become involved.

At-Large members can use this slidedeck to present a FEW issues at a time
(NOT the entire slidedeck) if talking about ICANN At-Large to public audiences,
either in person or on conference calls.

Key Policy Issues of the At-Large Community

WHOIS / Registration Directory Services	IANA Functions & Stewardship Transition	Contracted Party Agreements
Internationalized Domain Names	New Generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs)	Public Interest
Internet Governance	ICANN Policy Processes	Accountability and Transparency of ICANN
ICANN Operations / Finances	Reviews at ICANN	Engagement & Outreach

WHOIS / Registration Directory Services

WHOIS / Registration Directory Services

Policy Summary

- Every year, millions of individuals, businesses, organizations and governments register domain names. Each one must provide identifying and contact information which may include: name, address, email, phone number, and administrative and technical contacts.

- This information is often referred to as "WHOIS data."

- WHOIS service is not a single, centrally-operated database. Instead, the data is managed by independent entities known as registrars and registries. Any entity that wants to become a registrar must earn ICANN accreditation.

- WHOIS data is key for fixing system problems, maintaining Internet stability, and enhancing the accountability of registrants.

WHOIS / Registration Directory Services

Why should end users care?

- The "one-size-fits-all" disclosure of identifying information may also expose registrants, especially individual registrants, to potential spam, phishing, and identity theft.

- Due to its implication in privacy, data protection, policing, security, and malicious use and abuse, WHOIS matters to end users, especially individual registrants.

WHOIS / Registration Directory Services

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments on WHOIS by the ALAC
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/whois

- The Registration Issues At-Large Working Group where you can find At-Large Community members interested in WHOIS / Registration Directory Services :
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/registration-issues

- ICANN's Whois site at https://whois.icann.org/

IANA Functions & Stewardship Transition

Policy Summary

- The IANA functions are comprised of domain names, Internet Protocol (IP) addresses, and a standard set of protocol parameters. They work together to enable your computer to reliably find and connect to other devices, things, or information sources on the Internet no matter where you are physically located in the world.

- ICANN has been performing the domain names related IANA functions under a contract with the US government (specifically, the National Telecommunications & Information Administration - NTIA), along with the Internet Engineering Taskforce (IETF) for IP addresses and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB) for protocol parameters.

  In March 2014, the US government announced its intent to end the contract with ICANN and transition its stewardship role to the global Internet community.

IANA Functions & Stewardship Transition

Policy Summary

- Various groups were set-up for the design of the transition plans. At-Large community appointees in each of the groups not only actively participated, but also often held Chair or Vice Chair positions in leading the work and shepherding the processes. The ALAC coordinated the action of its appointees through its own working group on IANA Stewardship and ICANN Accountability by holding weekly calls with its stakeholder community.

- The transition proposal has been approved by the ICANN community and NTIA, and the post transition implementation is currently underway.

- In the proposed transition plan, an ALAC Liaison is involved in the operational oversight, previously performed by the NTIA and will then performed by a Customer Standing Committee (CSC), as it relates to the monitoring of ICANN's performance of the IANA naming functions.

- The ALAC will also appoint representatives to the IANA Functions Review Process as per the proposal's requirements.

Why should end users care?

- Although the IANA functions are operational functions, they do require global governance and stewardship, in which end users play an important role.

- Within the ICANN's multistakeholder environment, end users don't have any vested commercial interests or political agendas in the IANA transition. They simply want the DNS to remain secure, resilient, and interoperable. End users are a stabilizing influence in the transition process.

- Ultimately, the Stewardship Transition matters to every end user, as its success will allow for the continued expansion, diversity, and innovation of one open, unified, and interoperable global Internet.

IANA Functions & Stewardship Transition

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments on IANA by the ALAC
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/iana

- The At-Large Evolution Working Group where you can find At-Large
  Community members interested and participating in the discussions
  related to the post IANA transition and to the discussions in
  the Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/icann-evolution

- ICANN's site at https://www.icann.org/stewardship-implementation

Contracted Party Agreements

(Registry Agreement,
Registrar Accreditation Agreement)

Contracted Party Agreements

Policy Summary

- A registry operator of a top-level domain (TLD) must enter into a contract known as a <u>Registry Agreement (RA)</u> with ICANN in order to operate and maintain a generic TLD (gTLD)

- Registrars that offer domain name registration services with a direct access to TLD registries are also required to obtain accreditation from ICANN (i.e. <u>Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA)</u>.

- ICANN's <u>Contractual Compliance Department</u> ensures registries and registrars are in compliance with those agreements.

- The RA and RAA are also subject to changes by consensus policy developed through the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO)'s bottom-up, consensus-based Policy Development Process (PDP).

Contracted Party Agreements

- Policy changes to the RA and RAA directly affect individual registrants' rights, obligations, and overall experiences using the domain name registration services.

- As contracted party agreements are critical to the security and stability of the domain name system and have implications to the public interest, they also affect end users who do not have domain registrations.

- Individual registrants and end users can contribute to shaping contracted party agreements, specifically the RAA, through GNSO processes.

Contracted Party Agreements

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments on Contracted Party Agreements by the ALAC
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/contracted-party-agreements

- The Registration Issues At-Large Working Group where you can find At-Large Community members interested in reviewing the scope of the Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA), looks at the challenges faced by Registrants, and seeks to make recommendations to mediate those challenges.
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/registration-issues

- ICANN's site on Compliance : https://www.icann.org/compliance

Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs)

Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs)

Policy Summary

- IDNs give users around the world the ability to access the web in their native tongue, making it easier for them to discover/remember websites and promote local content via service providers likely in their own countries.

- It is expected that IDNs will increase the Internet penetration in emerging economies of Asia Pacific, Africa, and Latin America where English is not the primary language.

- Due to the lack of universal acceptance, using IDNs can be challenging across browsers, emails, and mobile apps.

http://افغانستان.example
http://বাংলাদেশ.example
http://中国.example
http://இலங்கை.example

And possibly I've been able to contribute to this initiative in this way.

http://österreich.example
http://беларусь.example
http://ελλάδα.example

Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs)

Why should end users care?

- ICANN's work on the universal acceptance, <u>Label Generation Rules</u>, and other key IDN issues will ultimately improve user experience, increasing the IDN uptake and making the Internet truly multilingual.

Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs)

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments on Internationalised Domain Names
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/idn

- The IDN Policy At-Large Working Group where you can find other At-Large
  Community members that are interested in IDN issues :
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/idn-policy

- IDN Background : https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/idn/background

New Generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs)

New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs)

Policy Summary

- A TLD is the rightmost label starting from the last dot in a web address (e.g. .com, .net, .biz). The domain namespace originally had eight TLDs.

  In 2000, seven new TLDs were introduced, and in 2004, eight more were made available. In 2012, ICANN launched the New gTLD Program which resulted in the massive expansion of the domain namespace.

  As of today, more than 1,000 new gTLDs have been delegated to the root zone.

New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs)

Why should end users care?

- New gTLDs offer greater flexibility for individual registrants to create memorable, innovative names for their websites. They also ease the overcrowding in the legacy gTLD domain market.

- As New gTLDs open up opportunities for new registries and registrars to enter the domain name industry, individual registrants have more choices when purchasing services.

- New gTLDs also could cause widespread confusion, as users may have to learn the new addresses of websites that they are using.

- In addition, users may be exposed to fraud, counterfeiting, and identity theft when criminals take advantage of this confusion to create hostile sites with new gTLDs.

New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs)

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC on new gTLDs
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/new-gtlds

- The new gTLD At-Large Working Group where you can find other At-Large Community members that are interested in issues related to new gTLDs :
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/new-gtlds

Public Interest

Policy Summary

- Discussions on the topic of "public interest within ICANN's remit" has been ongoing for years within the ICANN Community. Some community members are advocating to devise mechanisms that will more effectively address the public interest.

- The Public Interest is a key topic of the At-Large Community. It has established a Public Interest Working Group. In particular, the European Regional At-Large Organization (EURALO) has advocated for related principles such as Open Access, Free Software, and Creative Commons since its inception.

- One sub-topic that At-Large cares deeply about is the Public Interest Commitments (PICs), especially pertaining to the Category 1 TLDs related to sensitive strings as defined by the Government Advisory Committee (GAC), such as .doctor and .bank.

Public Interest

Why should end users care?

- The Internet has become a critical part of the global public sphere. As the influence of commercial interests and state powers has been increasing, stakeholders need to work together and form a comprehensive vision on the Internet that addresses the protection of civil liberties, such as free speech and privacy.

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to public interest issues
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/public-interest

- The Public Interest Working Group where you can find other
   At-Large Community members that are interested in issues related
   to the public interest:
   https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/public-interest

Internet Governance

Internet Governance

Policy Summary

- Underrepresentation of any stakeholder in Internet Governance will adversely affect the Internet's smooth operation. End users' freedom to innovate is at the core of the Internet's success.

- At-Large Community members are very active in various Internet Governance fora at national, regional, and global levels.

Internet Governance

- End users' participation ensures that the Internet Governance ecosystem is not dominated by vested interests. Within ICANN, members of the At-Large community advocate for the best interests of end users.

- End user involvement contributes important skills and expertise to the Internet policy making process, as well as establishes a means to rapidly analyze the implementation of Internet governance policy and the impact on end users.

- Given the geographical diversity of the At-Large community, the diverse interests among users worldwide are represented in ALAC policy advice.

Internet Governance

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to Internet Governance and news on how At-Large Community members are involved in Internet Governance
https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/internet-governance

- The Public Interest Working Group is where you can find other At-Large Community members that are interested in issues related to Internet Governance
https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/public-interest

ICANN Policy Processes

ICANN Policy Processes

Policy Summary

- As an ICANN Advisory Committee, the ALAC publicizes, analyzes, and provides advice on ICANN policy proposals and decisions that reflect the views and needs of individual Internet users at regional and global levels.

- The ALAC acts in the best interests of individual Internet users. They include registrants, consumers, and Internet users.

- Not only does the ALAC advise on the DNS policies developed through ICANN's Supporting Organizations, but it also advises on the work deliverables from ICANN Community, Board, and Staff on a wide range of topics.

ICANN Policy Processes

Why should end users care?

- The multistakeholder model of ICANN allows individual Internet users to influence the evolution of the critical logistical infrastructure layer of the Internet. They can do so by engaging in both the policy development process within the GNSO and Cross-Community Working Groups, as well as the advice development activities within At-Large.

- The direct involvement of all stakeholders, especially end users, in the development of ICANN policy is unique in the field of Internet governance.

ICANN Policy Processes

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to ICANN Policy Processes https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/policy-processes

Accountability and Transparency of ICANN

Accountability and Transparency of ICANN

Policy Summary

- End users are an integral part of ICANN's multistakeholder community. Through the At-Large Community, they play an important role in holding ICANN accountable.

- Their contributions are essential, especially since they are the primary affected party in matters of public interest. Working within ICANN and other Internet Governance fora, they are frequently able to propose innovative solutions.

Those are very important mechanisms that are available

Accountability and Transparency of ICANN

Why should end users care?

- In the Internet Governance ecosystem, ICANN is the only organization where end users form a critical element within its structure and have an influential voice. End users cannot effectively impact the evolution of the Internet if ICANN loses credibility and ceases to exist.

- End users' participation will ensure the legitimacy in the process of enhancing ICANN accountability. Their participation will also strengthen an inclusive, transparent, global, and collaborative model of governance fit for our present and future.

Accountability and Transparency of ICANN

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to Accountability and Transparency of ICANN
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/accountability-transparency

- The Public Interest Working Group is where you can find other At-Large Community members that are interested in issues related
  to Internet Governance:
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/public-interest

ICANN Operations / Finances

Policy Summary

- End users are able to review and provide comments on ICANN's strategic plans and operating budget, as well as monitor and voice issues of concern.

- The At-Large Community can request additional funding through ICANN's special budget request process. Once approved, the At-Large Community can apply the resources to advance end user interests.

2 Support a healthy, stable, and resilient **unique identifier ecosystem.**
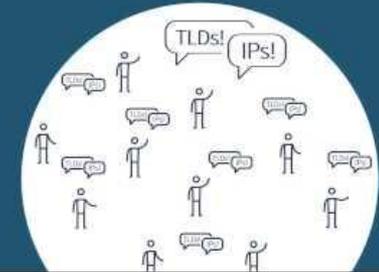
Why should end users care?

- Since ICANN is the organization that manages the DNS, end users should care about its operational excellence and financial well being and responsibilities.

ICANN Operations / Finances

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to ICANN Operations / Finances.
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/operations-finances

- The Finance and Budget Subcommittee focuses on issues related to the development of ICANN Fiscal Year Budget and reviews and submit At-Large Budget requests. Its meetings are open to observers
  https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/finance-budget

Reviews at ICANN

Reviews at ICANN

Policy Summary

- ICANN's ongoing commitment to its own evolution and improvement has been incorporated into its Bylaws. In particular, the Article IV, Section 4 of the Bylaws require the periodic review of relevant ICANN organizations and committees including each of the Supporting Organizations (SOs), each of the Advisory Committees (ACs), and the Nominating Committee.

- A review of At-Large, focusing on the Regional At-Large Organizations and the At-Large Structures, is currently underway. This Review evaluates the organizational effectiveness of the At-Large Community and how well it has fulfilled its mission of acting for the interests of end users worldwide within ICANN. Inputs from end users are essential.

Reviews at ICANN

- End users have a critical role in holding ICANN accountable. Their expertise, knowledge and experience are needed in various review processes.

- Specifically, end users are directly impacted by the Organizational Review of the At-Large Community. Recommendations developed from this Review, once implemented, will likely bring about improvements to the At-Large Community, impacting on the representation, participation, and influence of end users in ICANN.

Reviews at ICANN

At-Large Involvement

- See past comments issued by the ALAC related to Reviews at ICANN
  https://atlarge.icann.org/topics/reviews-improvements

Engagement and Outreach

Engagement and Outreach

Policy Summary

- Engagement and outreach efforts are a focus of the At-Large Community.

- At-Large has been collaborating closely with ICANN Staff on the development and implementation of a variety of programs and events, which aim to get end users involved in ICANN.

- Promoting diversity and inclusion, At-Large leads initiatives that target underserved communities (e.g. the Applicant Support Program for New gTLDs applications, Captioning Pilot, Tribal Ambassador Fellowship, etc.).

Engagement and Outreach

Why should end users care?

- Outreach and engagement efforts are critical for maintaining a sustainable source of end user volunteers from diverse regions, ensuring that they are versed in ICANN policy issues and can effectively engage with other stakeholder groups.

Engagement and Outreach

At-Large Involvement

- There are several At-Large WGs that assist with Outreach and Engagement :
  - **At-Large Outreach and Engagement** - Oversees and coordinates the outreach and engagement efforts of the At-Large Community at local and regional levels; aims to build awareness of ICANN, recruit new members, and engage current members. https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/outreach-engagement

  - **At-Large Technology** - evaluates and reviews different technologies and tools that can help the ICANN At-Large Community communicate, collaborate and accomplish their goals and objectives for ICANN activities. https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/technology

  - **At-Large Social Media** - Develops a strong and sustainable presence of the At-Large Community on social media; coordinates the content creation for At-Large's Twitter and Facebook accounts. https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/social-media

  - **At-Large Capacity Building** - Focuses on the capacity building activities within At-Large, including developing webinar series to improve members' knowledge in ICANN policy issues. https://atlarge.icann.org/working_groups/capacity-building