
ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum – Customer Standing Committee (CSC) - IANA Naming Function Session
Wednesday, June 16, 2021 – 16:30 to 17:30 CEST

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Hello and welcome to the Consumer Standing Committee and IANA Naming Functions Session. My name is Claudia Ruiz and I, along with Kimberly Carlson, are the remote participation managers for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session questions or comments submitted in chat will only be read aloud if put in the problem form as I've noted in the chat.

I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the moderator or chair of this session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room, and once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. When speaking, be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace.

This session includes automated real-time transcription. Please note that this transcription is not official or authoritative. To view the real-time transcription, click on the closed caption button in the Zoom toolbar. Thank you very much and welcome, Liman. I now turn the floor over to you. Thank you.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you. Hello and welcome, everyone. My name is Lars-Johan Liman. I am the current chair of the Customer Standing Committee, and

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we have in front of us a 60-minute session where we will do updates from the Customer Standing Committee and also, actually, the major part will be from the PTI that operates the IANA function. We will hear from me a little, but also from Brett Carr who is the vice-chair of the Customer Standing Committee, from Lise Fuhr who is the chairperson for the Board of Directors of the PTI, and also from Kim Davies who is the president of the PTI.

So the CSC and the PTI were created in the stewardship of the IANA Function was moved from the NTI to ICANN a couple years. The CSC is more or less an auditing function for the PTI, so we look at the various tasks that the PTI is supposed to perform in relation to the IANA naming functions. IANA has three major legs, but we only look at the naming part of it. So, this is how the naming customers of the IANA services—the registries, ccTLD, and gTLDs registries—monitor the functions performed by the PTI.

Today's agenda is going to be that we will first have a report from Kim Davies regarding the operations of the PTI for last year and what's been going on there. We will have a short Q&A session after that. Following that, Brett Carr will give an overview of the CSC and what we have done in the past year and what we are looking at in the future. Following that, Lise will give some perspectives from the PTI Board. And finally, Kim will come back and talk about the future and strategic planning for the PTI.

So that is what we have in mind for you. With that, I would like to give the floor to Kim Davies. Please give us an update on what's been going on over the past year. Kim, please.

KIM DAVIES:

Thank you and hello, everyone. Obviously, when we were asked to talk about the previous year, there's only really one word that comes to mind which is the pandemic. So, really, the focus of this update is a little different from the usual updates we give to the ICANN community in that is focused on how we've coped, what changes we've made, what's different, what's the same with the IANA functions during the pandemic. Next slide, please. Yep, next slide.

All right. Just a refresher just in case we have folks on this meeting that are unfamiliar. The IANA functions are divided into a few key subsections. The one that is in the scope of the Customer Standing Committee and of great interest to this community is the IANA Naming Functions.

Of the IANA Naming Functions, the key role there is administering the DNS root zone. This is maintaining the content of the root zone which involved receiving requests from TLD managers or prospective TLD managers; reviewing those requests against the various different policies; and then upon processing, implementing the associated changes in the root zone data. In doing this, we work with various partners such as the Root Zone Maintainer organization, root servers, etc.

Another key part of administering the DNS root zone is administering what's called the trust anchor for the root zone. This is a cryptographic key that is used to secure the root zone using a technology known as DNSSEC. The way we administer that cryptographic key is a bit unusual

in that, usually, cryptographic key management is shrouded in mystery. But we adopt a highly transparent approach where we do very public ceremonies that encourage broad participation by the community and that we believe engenders trust in the way that we do that particular function.

We also have a few additional services that follow under the remit of the naming functions. The most obvious being the Label Generation Ruleset repository that we maintain, as well as administering the .int top-level domain which is used by intergovernmental treaty organizations. Next slide, please.

So, what did our operations look like before the pandemic? We had a team of roughly 16 people. Most of our team were based in Los Angeles, and at the time, if you spoke to us a couple of years ago, we would say that we consistently met our service level agreements across all of our functional areas. Whilst we would occasionally miss an SLA here or there, it was never considered indicative of a negative trend.

Usually, it was a result of the framing of the SLA, and the way it was described was triggered by some kind of issue that was beyond IANA's control. For example, some technical failure at the TLD meant that one of the SLAs was breached because we took a long time doing technical checks for that TLD.

Generally speaking, I think we have a high level of customer satisfaction. This is evidenced by annual surveys that we do of our communities as well as a new post-interaction survey that we implemented a couple of years ago. Here, we poll our customers shortly

after their interaction with us to see if they were satisfied by the way things went.

In pre-pandemic we tried to regularly engage face to face with the community. We did this a variety of different ways. We attended ICANN meetings, IETF meetings. We went to regional meetings whether it was regional TLD meetings, regional Internet registry meetings, regional NOG meetings, those kinds of things. Our participation in those meetings was a mixture of scheduled presentations like this one as well as sitting down one on one with individual customers and working with them.

Also, a part of our engagement involves working with various working groups. For example, the policy working groups within ICANN, usually in the role as either a liaison or a subject matter expert so that we can provide advice that would result in better outcomes in terms of informed policy. Next slide, please.

So, the pandemic started. We started work from home operations for our team at the beginning of March 2020. Around that time we already anticipated working from home just because, if you recall, ICANN67 was quickly switched to remote only meeting and the guidance that all of ICANN staff, basically, was given was to work remotely if possible. This was to allow the meeting with just staff to set up camp in our Los Angeles offices to support the meeting at relatively short notice. The intention was that we'd work from home for a week or two maybe, but it's now 15 months and counting. Next slide, please.

Day-to-day request processing has essentially been unaltered. We still do that core functional activity the same way we always have. What's changed is the way our team works with one another. Rather than having, obviously, in-person coordination meetings, we've adapted by using online meetings.

But beyond that, our systems are online and our staff has been successful interacting with them on a remote basis. Obviously, engagement opportunities have been reduced. Most of our partner communities—the RARs and so forth—that initially reduced their meetings or canceled their meetings altogether now have reintroduced meetings but on a reduced basis. And even though some of them are having virtual events, the scope of their agendas are usually much shorter. I think that's true of ICANN, too. So, the number of actual speaking opportunities at these meetings has greatly reduced.

Another impact during pandemic operations was our project run-rate. I think where we felt it most acutely was where there was a benefit in deep collaboration within our team—brainstorming sessions. So, I think some of the project-based work, not the core operations work, but the forward-looking work was a bit hampered by that.

And also, coincidentally, by reduced personnel. We had some open positions. Filling those were particularly difficult during a pandemic. So, with a reduced headcount, that had an impact as well. Next slide, please.

But I'd be remiss to omit the key ceremonies. As I mentioned, they're highly public by design. We fly people in from all around the world to

participate as, really, part of the security design to make sure the participants were widely spread around the world. But that, obviously, is a hindrance when travel is forbidden and meeting is forbidden. So, we had to rapidly and significantly alter our approach there.

Fundamentally, I don't have a lot of time, but the highlights are that we did move to an online-predominant model. We reduced headcount at these ceremonies to the bare minimum. That headcount was filled solely by staff, and we used extra precautions around staff security, testing, so forth. We moved the ceremonies to a nine-month cadence from the normal three months. So, we're only holding a ceremony every nine months. And various other mitigating controls were put in place.

The idea here was to retain the same level of confidence in the system despite quite a significant change to how we did those ceremonies. Next slide, please.

So, where are we now? Our team is still fully remote. I'm sitting at home right now talking to you. But we are dipping our toes into the water to be prepared for when the restrictions lift. The first such step in that direction is that just last week, we did maintenance on one of our key management facilities in Virginia. That meant some of our team had to fly across the country and do operations over there. And the goal of that maintenance was to perform some deferred maintenance we really should've done last year, but really to ready the facility for a proper ceremony.

So, I'm glad to report that that maintenance went off without a hitch, and we think that ceremony room is ready to go. So if circumstances

continue to improve, we do need to hold our next key ceremony in the 4th quarter of 2021 and we're hopeful that we can do it in a close to normal fashion at that time.

We're also kicking off our planning for our next fiscal year. I'll come to that later in the presentation, but the assumption there is that we will resume travel and normal operations for the next fiscal planning year. Next slide.

So in sum, what's the result? We continue to meet our performance targets. We continue to have a high level of SLA adherence. In fact, I think we've had some of our highest adherence to date. Similarly with our customer satisfaction scores. For the first time in the last 12 months, we scored 100% across the board in every possible category. And the key ceremonies have continued with full support from the community.

Staff have been largely successful working from home. Operations have continued, as I mentioned. We've adjusted our approach in some of the non-operational work, and some of our staff are really appreciating the new way of working. They appreciate the quiet time that they get. But of course—and all of you have the same experience, I'm sure—that some are eager for some more in-person interaction and itching to get back to the office. Next slide, please.

So I think that's the last slide for this section. Lessons learned, this was a real-life case study for disaster preparedness, and I think it was successful. But what it will do is inform our future continuity planning. We hold an annual exercise where we test different scenarios, and

we've already done such an exercise in the last 12 months. And we use some of these pandemic-inspired scenarios to test our resiliency in that regard.

One thing that I will note is that our continuity plan from previous years kind of assumed we could work remotely for a couple of days and then we would necessarily have to regroup in an office. I think it's fair to say that we are now very confident we can work remotely indefinitely, so we've adjusted accordingly. And, obviously, this helps us consider new resiliency scenarios from the pandemic.

And lastly, it's also tested our workforce flexibility and, I think, tested in a good way. So I think that's my last slide, if I'm not mistaken. So, with that, I think it's the CSC update, so I'll hand it back to Lars-Johan. Thank you.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you very much, Kim. That was a very good report. Are there any questions or comments for Kim at this point? There will be a second chance at the end of the session, but if anyone has any specific questions regarding this. I don't see any, so I will then ask Brett Carr to continue with the CSC overview. Brett, please.

BRETT CARR:

Thank you, Liman. Hello, everybody, from a very warm United Kingdom. So I'm going to give you a quick overview of the CSC and a little bit of historic and a little bit of future. Next slide, please.

We're going to talk an introduction about the CSC, talk about SLAs, the compliance and performance remediation on some things that the CSC have got planned. Next slide, please.

I think Liman already covered most of this already, but to give you some background as to where CSC came from. The CSC was put in place to monitor the SLAs that were put in place as part of the IANA Transition. Liman said a couple of years ago. I think it was quite a lot longer than a couple of years ago now. Time flies.

The CSC basically look at the results that are provided by the PTI each month in relation to the SLAs that were put in place some time ago and have been partially modified since. Next slide, please.

This little diagram just shows our relationship with the PTI and how the PTI relate to ICANN. And, obviously, the customers use the PTI services and we represent the customers. Then there is a periodic IANA Function Review that may or may not alter the SLAs that we monitor. Next slide, please. Next slide, please. Next one, please. [inaudible]. Next slide, please.

The CSC produces a monthly report based on the following rankings. Excellent, where the PTI meets 100% of their SLAs. Satisfactory, where they missed some small thresholds. And then Needs Improvement. If an SLA is not met, then an explanation is expected and needs to be understood by the CSC. I'm glad to say that the vast majority of months, we see Excellent and some Satisfactories now and again. Next slide, please.

As you can see the table here bears out what I just said. In the vast majority of cases, we're seeing 100% hit of the SLAs. And there's the odd drop now and again. The PTI always explain the background where that failure exists, and then we have a conversation on that to see if there's any action needed. Next slide, please.

Back in 2018—so about three years ago—the CSC and the PTI worked on a process for amending the IANA Function Service Level Agreements to make it easier for us to amend them without impacting the whole agreement and the procedure for modifying the process for amending those agreements. Those processes became effective with an amendment to the INFC in March 2019. Next slide, please.

We along with the PTI identified four categories. One was to change of the threshold metric only within an existing SLA. The second one was to remove an SLA item completely, the third was to redefine the SLA, and the fourth one was to define a new SLA. For two, three, and four a public consultation was required. But for the first one, a change of the threshold, no consultation was required.

Today we've made very few SLA changes. We've made some technical checks where we've reviewed those with the PTI to make sure that their technical checks meet slight changes to the SLA. We've added new SLAs for IGN Label Generation Rule tables and a new SLA for measuring ccTLD creation and transfer processes.

We're currently in a discussion regarding the SLAs currently referred to as calendar days rather than business days, and we're just having a

discussion to see if whether that is still appropriate. Next slide, please.
Next slide, please.

This section is where we talk about complaints and performance issues for mediation processes. So the CSCs charter specifically prevents us from being involved in individual complaints—what they’re about, whether they’re to monitor the PTI’s overall performance and to identify any systemic or persistent issues, and to monitor PTI’s overall complaints system. Not to focus on individual issues.

We do have remedial action procedures in place which can be invoked if the CSC determines that there exists a performance issue. But to date, this has never been used. It’s in place, but it’s never been used. Next slide, please.

So, this little diagram basically is an overview of the remedial action procedure. It ensures that the CSC would find that a performance issue exists, speak to the PTI about resolution. That would invoke the RAP. Hopefully, a corrective action plan will be agreed by the CSC and the PTI.

If that didn’t resolve it, then it would be escalated to the [PTI] Board, to the ICANN CEO, and to the ICANN Board. In extreme circumstances, a special IANA Function Review might be put in place. Next slide, please.
Next slide, please.

So, an upcoming CSC-related event is that we are changing some of our membership currently. Where organizations such as the ccNSO and the GNSO and others are selecting and appointing members. And new

membership will be taking their seats on the 1st of October 2021. There will be some continuity, though, because all the seats don't expire at the same time.

Then, secondly, we've got a review of the CSC effectiveness. This happens every few years. This is the second time we've had one. Basically, it's a review involving several stakeholders to review whether the CSCs are doing their job well and whether it's still valid and whether there are any changes need to be put in place. That's due to start in October 2021. Next slide, please.

This is just a list of a few resources that will give you a little bit more information about some of the things I've spoken to in today's presentation if that's helpful to you. And I think that's my last slide, so I'll hand it back to Liman.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you very much, Brett. As you will probably note, the CSCs are a rather quiet committee. They're very small. We have a very focused remit, and we have a very well-functioning organization to monitor. So there isn't a whole lot to do, but it's an important function to keep track of things so they don't derail. Thank you very much, Brett.

Are there any questions or comments for Brett? Seeing and hearing none, I move to the next item on the agenda which is an update from Lise Fuhr from the perspective of the PTI board. Lise, please.

LISE FUHR:

Thank you. I'm the chair of PTI and I'm here today to just give you a quick update on what we do as the PTI board. You've heard a bit about the construction. Brett showed you a slide of the setup around PTI and the IANA functions, but I'm here solely to focus on the PTI board and our achievements. Next slide, please.

Just to be very brief on our role and composition, we have a narrow scope. Our main focus is, of course, oversight of the IANA Functions for ICANN. And also, we're looking into performance against the operating plan and budget, and we've been responsible for creating a strategic plan together with the team.

It's a small board. I'm there together with James Gannon. We're the community appointees. Then we also have three ICANN staff: David Conrad, Jia Rong Low, and also Kim Davies who is the PTI President. Next slide, please.

We have published the first strategic plan last year and they have—in the strategic plan—there are five key objectives. That is to maintain the stakeholders' trust; secure IANA operations; maintain and enhance service delivery; achieve operational excellence; and governance to improve openness, inclusiveness, accountability, and transparency.

It's very important to understand that the strategic plan is also depending on the ICANN's strategic plan, so we cannot make a plan that's not aligned with whatever comes out of ICANN's strategic plan. And I would also like to thank the PTI team for very good drafting of the strategic plan and very good cooperation with the PTI board. Next slide, please.

So what we have achieved is that we have done the strategic plan, but we're also very focused on governance-related strategic objectives and the implementation of governance-related issues.

And what's extremely important for us right now is to sync the strategic plan cycle with ICANN's. Right now, ICANN has a five-year cycle and we have a four-year cycle, so we need to find a way to make this aligned in a way so that we're not making ... It's becoming too cumbersome to review the ICANN strategy and PTI strategy at the same time. It needs also to be easy to align PTI strategy with ICANN's.

Another one is the budget cycles. We are looking into the possibilities of how we can simplify the review process so the community doesn't have to look into too many reviews of both the PTI and the IANA budget. Plus, you have ICANN's budget on top of all of this. Again, PTI's budget needs to be there before ICANN's budget, and it is very dependent on the approval of the final ICANN budget.

So we are trying to reduce, also, oversight complexities here. It's extremely important that we avoid any form of duplication, or some of the reports might not be needed. So, we're trying to see where we can actually improve things. If a report is not used, why then report on it?

Again, another thing is that we are keen on communicating PTIs remit, our scope. It's important that people understand we're not completely autonomous from ICANN. We are a part of ICANN and we are very dependent on what is happening in ICANN. We're a technical organization and not a political organization.

It's also one of the focus areas, how to communication and be transparent as PTI. We're trying to simplify the terminology, but also it's important that we make people understand, first and foremost, what we're doing but also the whole setup around PTI and ICANN.

Last but not least, we are supporting any organizational reviews that are happening and we find that is, of course, an important role for us, too. Next slide, please.

Historically, we have been working face to face during ICANN meetings. We've had the board meetings around the ICANN meetings, plus we have had one board workshop every year in January. Of course, we've had to reassess how to work, and needed to evolve another way of working during the pandemic because it's been impossible to meet in person.

So because of this, we have actually been meeting more often but had shorter meetings. And we have spread out over some months what we used to do in January in a couple of days. So it's not easy to do strategic and strategic planning online when you used to actually having more interaction in a two-day meeting. Next slide, please.

So for us, when we have looked and worked on the strategy, one part that has been extremely important for us has been the engagement strategy. Because of the pandemic, of course, it's also been extremely difficult to get the more informal feedback from the community. So, for us, at the same time, we actually decided to roll out the PTI strategy even though it was done with online meetings and not in a physical ICANN meeting.

It has been important to try to work with the community in a way to inform them both of our strategic direction, but also give people the confidence that we're taking care of the oversight of PTI and the governance issues even though we're not attending physical ICANN meetings.

Again, we are also keen on making sure that the community and key community personnel are knowing the different parts of the PTI board and different persons in order, if there is an issue, it's important for us to make sure that people feel comfortable to reach out to us both on a formal basis and an informal basis.

Last, but not least, we want to promote interest in the NomCom process because we think it's important that we have some good candidates to feed into the PTI system. So, we have worked a lot on identifying the communities of interest. And to me it's a balance of making the community aware of our work and also to be open to feedback and to listen to what comes from the different communities.

At the same time, we shouldn't overdo it so people are stressed by a lot of meetings, a lot of online events. And we want to make sure that we hit the right balance of doing outreach, being available without just tiring people with too many meetings or outreach events.

As you know, the PTI board is consisting of the naming community, but we also need to make sure that we serve the numbering and the protocol communities and we need to do it on an equal basis. So that has been one of the areas that we have paid some attention to, so we're

actually trying to identify if there are any gaps or how we actually perform with the outreach to the different communities here.

So that was my last point. As the PTI board we're always keen to listen to any input from the community, so if you want to have a conversation with us, we all remain available, of course. I don't know if we have our e-mails online, but you can reach out to Kim and then we will be able to have conversations with you. But an event like this is an opportunity to have a dialog with us, but we remain open also on an informal basis. Thank you.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you, Lise. We've received a couple of questions in the chat. I see two, and the first one relates to your presentation here. And the second one goes back to Brett. So I suggest we take the first one here.

Claudia, do you have it in front of you?

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Yes, one moment. The first question was, "Brett, in IANA, what is criteria through which you close a compliant ticket number? As I understand, performance is based on the closure of numbers of complaints over a period of time."

LISE FUHR:

I think that one is for Brett, right? Not for me.

CLAUDIA RUIZ: That one's for Brett.

BRETT CARR: I think it is for me, but I think it's not something ... I mean, the question was aimed at me, but I don't think you said anything I can answer because the CSC doesn't close complaint tickets. If it's complaint tickets, they're going to be closed by PTI.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Yes, thank you. I'd like to fill in there that the CSC is only looking at strategic issues or has an overview of the overall performance. We don't look into specific complaints or specific problems or specific transactions of the PTI, but we look at the overall numbers seeing that things move on in a smooth fashion as they should. I think I heard Kim trying to interject as well. Kim, was it? Please.

KIM DAVIES: I was going to add something very similar. I will also add that I think there are a set of SLAs that were defined by the community that govern the relationship, and a lot of the work between the CSC and PTI is reviewing monthly performance against those SLAs. I would encourage you to review those SLAs, but they generally speak more to things like timeliness, accuracy, and those behaviors as opposed to specific complaints. Thanks.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Thank you. So, Claudia, we have the second question and this one is for Lise.

CLAUDIA RUIZ: Yes. For Lise, “IANA work is very critical and involves decisions related to TLDs, particularly in case of delegation and re-delegation as well. For such entity, R&D within the entity is very important. My question is what % of your budget is allocated for the R&D activity for better strategy development, governance, and overall smart, efficient and takes evidence-based decision making.

LISE FUHR: First and foremost, on the delegation and re-delegation, the decision on that doesn’t belong to PTI. That is ICANN deciding on the delegation and redelegation. We’re a technical organization and we need to comply with whatever rules are set by ICANN and the community.

On R&D, we do R&D on a project basis. So I wouldn’t say we have a specific percentage allocated for this. What we do is we plan for a project and then we do allocate the budget for it. We have \$0.5 million allocated if there are things coming up that wasn’t planned for and we can use for specific things.

But I’m actually going to look at Kim—if you have a more precise answer to this question.

KIM DAVIES:

Thanks, Lise. I don't think we have a specific percentage I can just tell you off the top of my head, but I think what is important to convey is that we definitely recognize the need for continuous improvement through what you call R&D and development of a strategy and so forth. And to that end, I think just off the top of my head we have two dedicated staff whose full responsibilities are supporting this kind of strategic development—auditing, QA processes within our team—that provides the constant feedback loop and a constant reassessment of the way we do things that informs our growth as we go forward.

In addition to that, we have two full-time software developers that build and improve our systems, so from a systems perspective where we're constantly improving, too. That's a significant chunk. You know, I mentioned we have around 16 staff, so that's a big chunk of our staff that are dedicated to renewal internally.

And beyond that, even, I will just also finish by saying that we periodically do quality assessment review following the EFQM model. And we've, in the past, even brought in external assessors as well. We also do an annual audit, so these are all things I think combine to an approach that we have that has very much focused on continuous improvement through revising our strategy, looking at the way we do things, and working out how we can improve things. Thanks.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you. Are there any more questions or comments? Well, the chat is still there if you want to write them in the chat. But we will continue with the next item on our agenda which is, again, back to Kim for a bit

of an update on your strategic planning and anticipated projects. Kim, please.

KIM DAVIES:

Thanks. For this piece, which is the final segment for our discussion, we wanted to talk about our forward planning for the next fiscal year. In this discussion, I'm joined by my colleague Marilia Hirano. She has graciously asked me to present, but I wanted to highlight her because she really leads this activity within our team and is instrumental in our annual process and planning cycle.

So, our objective when we go through this exercise every year is to devise our operating plan and budget. Here, we're taking our strategic objectives, which you heard are defined in the strategic plan, and we turn them into tangible outcomes that we think we can achieve within the particular fiscal year. As part of going through that exercise, we're looking to make sure we have right level of funding so that we can actually execute against those objectives.

We usually kick it off around this time of year during the middle ICANN meeting for the following fiscal year which is a full 12 months away. Now, this fiscal year we're talking about today commences in July of 2022 and runs through June 2023. We start now by basically doing a consultation on what our high-level priorities should be, and we're also looking to vet some of our assumptions to make sure that they're agreed or if there are additional assumptions that should go into our initial planning.

Based on the feedback we get over the next month or so through these kinds of engagement, we're looking to turn that into a draft operating plan and budget. Then that draft operating plan and budget will go through a more formal review later in the year.

We start this process fairly early in the cycle just because there is a lot of process steps involved. The IANA Transition resulted in a lot of checks and balances that are built-in. Some of them are in the bylaws, some of them are elsewhere. So, in order to have all those steps sequenced correctly and being able to be executed, it doesn't mean we have to start budget and planning a full 12 months prior to the start of the fiscal year.

Most notably, there is a specific bylaws requirement relating to the PTI Board, in that the draft internet and planning budget needs to be before the PTI board by the 30th of September. Following that, it will go out for a formal public comment period. Then once it's gone through the whole development process here, it gets rolled up into the larger ICANN budgeting process. Next slide, please.

For those that are keen observers of this process over recent years, I just wanted to highlight what's changed in the process this year. We have adjusted the timelines a little bit. We're trying to obtain maximum alignment with the ICANN budget process where we can. And Lise spoke to that being one of our strategic objectives. We're trying to make it easier for the community, basically. Trying to consolidate as much as we can so when you put your focus on these matters, we don't have to

come back to you again and again in slightly different formats to get the same feedback.

We're also looking at the actual document itself. And in previous years, we've reused the same structure year-on-year. This year we're really taking a clean-sheet approach. We're trying to design a brand-new format. Our objectives here are to reduce the jargon in the document, make it more accessible to the community so we get better feedback on what we put in there, highlight those key details we think the community is interested in.

In the past, we've had a PTI budget and an IANA budget. They are required to have two different budgets, but we're possibly trying to eliminate the repetition between the two so it's a one-document approach that's split out into its relevant parts.

Now that we have a strategic plan in place, we're also looking to have a clearer linkage between the strategic plan objectives and what's in the operating plan.

In terms of our engagement—due to the pandemic, we're still adapting to that. Normally, pre-pandemic it was very much based on interactions and face-to-face meetings. Obviously, we can't do that. So this year we're doing a mixture of e-mail exchanges, online meetings like this one. And, again, we will be having a community-wide webinar that's open to anyone that's interested sometime in July in various time zones. All-in-all trying to make this process simpler and more straightforward so that it's easier for you to contribute. Next slide, please.

So, what are our assumptions? These are just some high-level assumptions that are going into our planning. And, really, I'm sharing them with you now to basically tell me if I'm right or if I'm wrong or if I missed something. And we will take that feedback into consideration as we evolve through this process.

The first assumption we have, which is continuing, is that our customers are fundamentally happy with our services. That means that there's no need to radically alter the way we do things. We're talking about things like refinement, evolution as opposed to a revolution in how we deliver service. We believe this based on the feedback we received including those measures I spoke about earlier in the presentation on customer satisfaction.

The next assumption is that now that we have the strategic plan that's being vetted by the community, that strategic plan remains fit for purpose and properly captures what our priorities are over the four-year period. And therefore, we can derive what we need to achieve in this fiscal year from that strategic plan.

Another restatement is that we know we need to continually improve our services to maintain happiness whilst everyone in the community seems to be more or less happy with the service we provide. That can't be taken for granted and there's an expectation that we continue to keep up and—as noted by the question we received in the last section—do R&D, do research, do investment in how we do things.

The next assumption is that funding for PTI operations will remain a priority and we will receive the support we need for the expected operating expenses.

And lastly, we believe we have to assume, for planning purposes, that travel and meetings will resume a normal schedule by July of 2022 for the purposes of planning. Next slide, please.

So this slide of assumptions really relates to project activity that we see on the horizon that we think will hit in this time period. Notably, it would be TLD variants. This will be implementing operations and procedures of delegating variants of TLDs—be it ccTLDs or gTLDs. There's a subsequent round of New gTLDs. There's a possibility that IANA will have operational work or preparatory work in this period around that process.

We expect to increase the cadence of KSK rollovers now that we have a tried and tested process from 2018. We'd actually expected to be in this process now, in fact, but the pandemic has definitely put a pause on that. But when things are safe, we expect to resume an increased cadence of those rollovers. We expect to continue our system development and workflow enhancements that I mentioned before.

Then we have at least two areas of community study that will probably have implementation impacts on us. One is the findings of the SSR2 activity done by ICANN, and the second is an ongoing study happening right now on Root Zone Management evolution. We expect there to be findings there that will recommend ways we can enhance our Root Zone Management service that we will need to put into practice.

So, really, we're looking for feedback on these. Are these on track? Are there key things on this list that I've missed? Are these things here that you don't think are a priority? This is the feedback that would be particularly useful as we go through this process. Next slide, please.

System evolution—so, by the time we get to FY23. We've been building, for the last couple of years, a new Root Zone Management platform. It's a little bit delayed right now, but we're expecting this coming fiscal year, FY22, that will be launched.

But what we've done is to reign in this project and make it deliverable, as we've deferred some of the functional improvements from our wish list—if you will—and focused on the essentials and some of the key things we've discussed for the community: things like a new authorization model, things like that. And some of the other things have been deferred for later development.

So, we expect to pick up those deferred items in FY23. And also, as these policies and programs evolve—whether it's SubPro, whether it's the Review Mechanism coming out of the ccNSO, things like that—we will need to implement them in systems as well.

Speaking of Review Mechanism—I'm not sure yet, it's early days—but perhaps that will be ripe for implementation in a time period we're envisioning.

And for KSK management, I think there are three key items there. By FY23 there's a potential that we'll be doing the next roll over operationally by that point. We're kicking off R&D on doing an

algorithm roll for the KSK this next fiscal year, but that will probably continue into FY23.

And also potentially doing a facilities review. Currently we have two facilities, both located in the US. I know that there is definitely a desire for some in the community that we review their fitness for purpose and study whether that still remains the best configuration and whether changes should be made to where we have our facilities. Next slide, please.

So, what priorities have changed versus last year? Really, a lot of what I just said now is pretty similar to last year. We're not expecting any fundamental changes. This is all incremental improvement. Our core IANA operations, we're not expecting to change radically in size or scope.

We have had limitations and impediments to progress relating to COVID19. You've heard a lot about them today. We expect those to alleviate and allow us to fully implement against what we're planning.

Some of those items are carryovers. Things we have expected to execute a little sooner. Some of them because the policy development process is taking longer than we expected. Other challenges relating to lack of staffing and project impacts of COVID, stuff like that. Next slide, please.

That's really the high-level summation that I wanted to share with you. Inputs on what I just shared with you are very welcome. That will help seed our work. I only have 10 minutes on the agenda today, but we will

give a more fuller presentation on this during this public webinars that we're scheduling for next month.

And then if you don't want to be involved in this initial seeding process, as in previous years a full complete draft will be put for public comment, and we would encourage your contributions at that point as well.

With that, I'm happy to answer any questions or gather any feedback on this call. Thank you.

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

We do have one question in the chat. I'll read it right now. It says, "In Marrakesh in June 2019, major RZM update to version 3.0 has been announced to be deployed in 2020 that should include new technical checks, new authorization models, etc. What is the status of this deployment?"

KIM DAVIES:

Thanks for the question. So our objective here is to launch it in this coming fiscal year, so probably early next calendar year. The product is almost finished. We're currently developing an operational approach for launching it. There are still some loose ends that are being worked on. I would say overall that project is mostly complete, but it has been probably the most impacted by the pandemic in terms of our ability to execute.

But it continues. It is a priority for the organization. No one more than our staff are keen to put this into service because it will realize quite a lot of benefits for them as well as for our customers. Thank you.

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Okay. And, Kim, we have one final question in the chat. It says, “Kim, can you provide more info about the system development and improvements? Whether such development related to your internal processes and/or customer support for their ease.”

KIM DAVIES:

Thanks for the question. It’s really a mixture of both. During our constant continuous improvement activities, we’re really looking to assess where we can move the needle in terms of the service we deliver. Sometimes that is customer-facing—opportunities for improving the way our customers interact with us, improving service delivery in a number of ways. Sometimes that is optimizing staff as well—building tools and things to support the way staff do their work, due processes, and so forth.

So it’s not really a bright-line there between the two. We deliver a few core services and we have a technical roadmap against each one. When it comes to the naming services we’re talking about today, obviously the Root Zone Management System is a key system there and we’re looking to continually improve that.

But when it comes to our other areas of work, we continue to work on our IETF work for the protocol parameter functions and looking to build

a workflow management system there. In contrast to Root Zone Management, the work that we do for the IETF is highly manual, highly involved. And that's an area where we think we can make significant improvements.

Again, we meet our SLAs and we have high customer satisfaction, but that's not a reason for us to rest and take it easy. We think we can continue to improve those services moving forward.

I hope that answers the question.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

Thank you very much, Kim. Are there any other questions or comments? I don't see any, but I would like to encourage you all to remain in contact with us. I certainly know from the CSC side of things, and knowing Kim and Lise as well, that retaining a good dialog and a good contact with the community is very important because we cannot really work with the community if we don't understand what your requirements and expectations are.

So, don't hold back and please do reach out to us if you have any comments or questions or suggestions for how to improve things. We remain very open. Contact details should be available on the ICANN web pages. And I'm throwing a last glance at the chat and the roster.

So I think with that, I would like to thank all the presenters today. So thank you, Kim, Brett, Lise. And I also thank all of you who have participated in this meeting and I certainly look forward to meeting you in person sometime in the hopefully not so distant future.

Thank you all for participating and good-bye.

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Thank you all for joining. This meeting is now adjourned. You can now stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]