ICANN Monthly Magazine

Executive Staff Focus By Doug Brent—ICANN COO

The "Executive Staff Focus" is a monthly report about what is on the minds of ICANN executives. Each month will be written by a different ICANN executive. This month's report is written by Doug Brent, ICANN's Chief Operating Officer.

Happy 2009 to all! Clearly 2009 will be a significant year for the ICANN community with new TLD implementation, new IDN country code implementation, new automated root zone processing, DNSSEC operational readiness - and more. There is also continued work on GNSO improvements, organizational reviews for ALAC, Board, At Large, SSAC and RSSAC, ongoing policy development work, establishing community agreement on a security framework for ICANN, and running the planning processes around the budget and operating plan. Even this is a partial list. The potential impact of community work this year will be significant.

From a staff viewpoint, the holidays were a time to read through the 300+ pages of comments on the new gTLD program. As stated in a recent ICANN release, comments ranged from detailed concerns regarding specific implementation points, to broader concerns about brand protection issues, financial considerations, the registry

agreement, and the impact of new gTLDs on the global marketplace. The ICANN staff, Board and community have an opportunity to show how the ICANN model works by thoughtfully considering and responding to these concerns. Processing, summarizing, considering and recommending responses to this feedback is the major focus for many staff during January. Clearly, the staff work is just the beginning of broader consideration.

Without going through the current status and story behind staff support work on each major initiate mentioned above, it might be helpful to briefly mention one of the more prosaic ones: the fiscal year 2010 budget (covering 1 July 2010 through 30 June 2011). The one-year ICANN budget is derived from the activities outlined in the strategic plan (likely to be approved by ICANN's Board on 3 February, 2009). By mid-February - earlier than ever before - a multi-year budget framework will be posted for consideration.

The goal here is to provide enough information to the community to start the discussion and debate on ICANN's budget with plenty of time to get comment, revision and consensus prior to Board consideration in June. Some key questions to be answered in this budget: How big does ICANN need to be? How can we accurately capture important work that takes place across the organization (e.g. Security initiatives)? How will we handle some of the uncertainty related to scale, cost and revenue in the new TLD program?

Related to the budget, you may have also noted an ever-expanding list of dashboard reports on ICANN's homepage, and with more coming. Accountability is a major theme of the Board and executive staff, and full accountability demands adequate community reporting.

Best,

Doug

Inside This Issue:

Links

Policy update:

http://www.icann.org/en/topics/policy/

Compliance newsletter:

http://www.icann.org/en/compliance/newsletter/

Monthly magazine:

http://www.icann.org/en/magazine/

Blog:

http://blog.icann.org/

Announcements:

http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/

What's Your Address? Latest News on New gTLDs

The first public comment period on the Draft Applicant Guidebook for new gTLDs closed on 7 January. It has received over 300 comments from individuals and organizations representing intellectual property interests, brand owners, business owners, ICANN supporting organizations, domain name industry players and governments from 24 different countries. Respondents had the option to comment on the Guidebook as a whole or on one of its six modules. Just over half (55 percent), chose to

comment on the Guidebook; the rest commented on specific modules or topics. The fifth module, covering the base agreement between new registries and ICANN, received the most comments (around 30 percent). The responses received are now being compiled, summarized and evaluated. An analysis of the comments will be posted next month. Alongside the feedback received from a number of outreach events, this summary and analysis will inform ICANN staff through the next program development phase,

including re-examining and amending the current guidebook where appropriate. While this analysis is ongoing, a preliminary review has drawn out some key concerns raised by the community. They are:

- Brand protection issues and the impact on brands and trademark owners;

- Financial considerations, including evaluation fees, ongoing registry fees, and refund procedures;

- Various issues surrounding the proposed registry agreement, particularly, price controls, registry/registrar separation, the management of future agreement amendments, equitable treatment, and others;

- General comments and concerns related to expanding the top level and its impact on the global marketplace, specific industries and Domain Name System stability.

ICANN staff also acknowledges the concern that a number of parties have

raised regarding the current global economic crisis and the impact it may have on potential new gTLD applicants. As the new gTLD program progresses, there will be a number of additional consultation and outreach events, details of which will be posted on the ICANN website in February.

We have heard your comments on New gTLDs!

All your comments and concerns regarding new gTLDs will be considered and a response will be provided. A comprehensive analysis of the comments receive is being written and will be released in

early February. There is no doubt that we need to address these and other legitimate concerns before proceeding to open the application process. We are developing our overarching message though open communication with the community. Conferences will be held in different global locations to further explain the Guidebook, the changes envisaged and to continue dialogue.

The comprehensive analysis of the comments alongside the feedback received from these and other outreach events, will inform ICANN staff through the next program development phase, which will mean amending the current

guidebook. Thank you to all those that contributed their responses to the first public comment period. ICANN looks forward to continuing a productive dialogue on this that will result in amendments to the application process.

New gTLDs

For on-going updates:
http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtld-program.htm

How the Fellowship Program is Benefiting the Internet Community
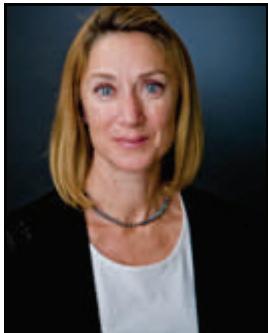
Welcome to the world of ICANN Fellowships!

As the manager of the ICANN Fellowship program, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to some, and further elaborate to others in the ICANN community, what this grant program is all about. As with most stories, it is best to start at the beginning….

The fellowships program is the result of Item 4.3 in the 2006-07 Strategic Plan: Implement a program to enhance and develop relevant skills and knowledge in existing participants and in the next generation of ICANN leadership. According to the project charter, the main goal was to: develop and implement a mechanism for transparently and accurately providing financial scholarships to individuals from developing countries in order to facilitate their participation in ICANN meetings.

To accomplish this, ICANN sought to enable improved participation for least and less developed economies, in particular governments, ccTLDs, non-profits not involved in or associated with the at-large advisory committee and the private sector. It is a means-tested program so applicants must be citizens of economically eligible countries. We use the World Bank classification of low, lower-middle, and upper-middle economies. For more information on this, please go to the Fellowship webpage at:

http://www.icann.org/fellowships

The program is part of ICANN's Global Partnerships department, and is a one-time grant awarded by an independent selection committee based on a mix of criteria including applicant experience and references, geographic proximity to meeting, receipt of past fellowships, and so on. The fellowship covers the cost of airfare and hotel, as well as providing a stipend after successful completion of the program, in order to assist in covering some basic expenses.

Since its inception, the program has expanded its base to include not only the three times a year participants, but also an active alumni group. At the end of each ICANN meeting, the successful participants (and by successful, we mean that the participants are required to attend daily morning briefing ses-

sions which are highlighted with speakers from both ICANN staff and community; provide daily updates and engage in discussion on previous days' events and discussions; and take advantage of opportunities to speak out in public forums or meeting venues) are added to a continually updated alumni email distribution list and internal wiki. Both of these venues allow for opportunities to share information on: local, regional and global events, workshops and conferences, ask questions of each other or the ICANN staff, and receive support from those that they have bonded with through the fellowship experience.

The fellowship program provides an opportunity and experience like no other in the ICANN community. It develops and fosters a passion for the Internet community and the opportunity to become part of a larger cause. By allowing individuals to become a fellow more than once, the knowledge and networking gained from successive or multiple opportunities comes is showcased in the number of fellows who are gaining a voice in the ICANN community. The first time any of us attended an ICANN meeting, we remember a sense of feeling overwhelmed and small (how will my voice count and how do I start to know where to go or what to do?) The mentoring and guidance given in

this first meeting by myself or other members of the community, encourages individuals to step up, learn, and find their voice. By the second experience, the fellow is able to create their own agenda, participate more fully and begin to mentor others to keep the circle of learning alive. A third selection brings a fully engaged and knowledgeable community participant into the meeting, and this is the point where they are the leader, and mentor, who can now fly on their own.

In this past year, individuals from the fellowship alumni program have put themselves forward to the Nominating Committee; joined or attended their first GAC meeting; spoken and contributed to ccNSO meetings and the main Public Forum (something acknowledged by the Chairman, Peter Dengate-Thrush), or joined another supporting organization such as the GNSO and ALAC.

As this program continues to grow, we will bring the ICANN community monthly updates from the alumni themselves, sharing what they have learned, how they have benefited and grown due to the fellowship program, and their expectations of participation and leadership in the future.

For more information, go to:
http://www.icann.org/fellowships

2008 Annual Report Published

ICANN's third annual report covers in detail the organization's achievements and progress during 2008, including three major initiatives ICANN has undertaken this year: the process for introducing new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) to the Internet; the introduction for the first time of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs); and an extensive Improving Institutional Confidence (IIC) consultation, to enable the conclusion of the Joint Project Agreement (JPA) with the United States government in September 2009.

The annual report encompasses reports from the chairs of ICANN's Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees as well as detailed rundowns of each department's activities during the year.

The report also recognizes ICANN's work since its inception 10 years ago with a brief history of its achievements linked to its 33 international public meetings. Fittingly, the report includes a special memorial to Jon Postel, one of the Internet's pioneers, from former ICANN chairman Vinton Cerf.

Further contents include:

- A brief biography for each member of the Board of Directors

- Messages to the ICANN community from the CEO and Chairman

- Highlights of the organization's Strategic and Operating plans

- An in-depth look at the New Delhi,

Paris, and Cairo meetings

- A detailed description of ICANN's framework for corporate governance and accountability

- ICANN's financial report for 2007–2008

- ICANN's compensation practices and salary structures for the corporate officers

The complete annual report is available online at http://www.icann.org/en/annualreport/annual-report-2008-en.pdf. Printed books will be available in late January 2009, and can be requested from Corporate Affairs at publications@icann.org.
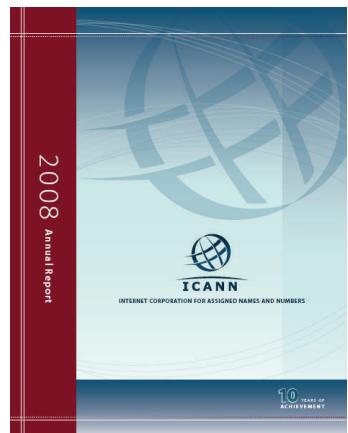
APRALO IGF Planning Chronicles—Report on APRALO's Participation at IGF 2008 (December 8, 2008)

APRALO successfully organized and completed two events at the recent Internet Governance Forum (IGF), including some impressive outreach.

A main Session on Realizing a Multilingual Internet was webcast and translated. APRALO's representatives, Hong Xue and other colleagues, worked diligently with the other co-organizers and workshop planning was discussed at every monthly meeting of APRALO from June 2008.

Hong was behind a huge amount of document drafting, program development and other arrangements. She attended all the face-to-face meetings in Geneva, Cairo and Hyderabad and joined the discussions on the list. Finally, on December 3, 2008, the first IGF Main

Session on Realizing a Multilingual Internet was successfully held in Hyderabad.

The Panel was chaired by Mr. Ajit Balakrishnan, CEO of Rediff.Com, and moderated by Ms. Miriam Nisbet, Director of the UNESCO Information Society Division. The panel discussed issues related to multilingualism and promoting diversity on the Internet, including accessibility and the importance of enabling access for people with disabilities. The session identified the critical issues such as contents in local languages, localization and availability of tools and internationalize domain names in the tri-layer of technology, language and culture.

A second workshop was also held on

Internationalized Domain Names: Myths and Opportunities (also transcribed and translated). Co-organized by APRALO, ALAC and ICANN, it was held the day after the first session, on December 4. The workshop explored how the domain name system itself create new possibilities for broader Internet accessibility and discussed the effect the proposed standard changes have on additional scripts and mnemonics and on applicability of possible existing registrations. Hong, along with the representatives from IETF, ccNSO, Egyptian Government and ICANN Board, talked about the technology, policy and legal issues on IDN imminent implementation, with Hong focusing on individual users' concerns and expectations for IDNs.

HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Visit the Public Participation Site and let us know what you think about the current issues.

If you care about the Internet and how it evolves, your voice will only be heard if you get involved.

We look forward to seeing you.

Board of Directors Update

There is no January Board meeting. Due to the Board meeting that will be held at the Mexico City meeting on Friday 6 March, the first Board meeting for 2009 will be held on Tuesday 3 February.

The agenda is online at:
http://www.icann.org/en/minutes/

Highlights include:

- Reports from Board Committees

- 2009-2012 Strategic Plan

- Updates on the Fast Track, Compliance, Mexico City and others

Board of Directors Update Continued...

- Two redelegations - Somalia's .SO and Belarus' .BY

- Bylaws changes regarding the NomCom and Board Committees

- GNSO Improvements

The Board will also be holding a special meeting on 12 February to review progress on the Applicant Guidebook in time for the Mexico City meeting.

The agenda will be posted a week before the meeting at the following web address:
http://www.icann.org/en/minutes/

A new aspect regarding Board minutes and increased transparency is the release of Board Committee minutes. From now on, minutes will be made public for each Board Committee as soon as they are approved (typically at the following meeting).

So far, there are three Board Committees that have posted minutes (you can see all the Board Committees here: http://www.icann.org/en/structure/boardcomms.html).

(Incidentally, the Executive Committee has always posted its minutes. See: http://www.icann.org/en/committees/executive/)

The currently available Committee

minutes are:

Audit Committee.
Its 3 December meeting minutes are at http://www.icann.org/minutes/minutes-governance-03dec08.htm

Finance Committee.
Its 18 November meeting minutes are at http://www.icann.org/en/minutes/minutes-finance-18nov08.htm

Public Participation Committee.
Its 16 December meeting minutes are at http://www.icann.org/minutes/minutes-participation-16dec08.htm

We Want to Hear From You

If you have a comment about an article you've read, want to know more about a particular topic, are confused about an acronym, or if you would like to submit an Op-Ed article? We invite you to submit your thoughts, ideas, and feedback to us at: Michele.jourdan@icann.org

ICANN Acronyms Explained

GNSO—Generic Names Supporting Organization

The GNSO is one of ICANN's three supporting organizations and helps to promote the development of Internet policy and encourage diverse and international participation in the technical management of the Internet.

The GNSO Council is currently comprised of two representatives from each of the following constituencies:

- gTLD registries (under contract to ICANN)

- Registrars (accredited by and under contract to ICANN)

- Internet Service and Connectivity Providers (ISPs)

- Commercial and Business Users (both large and small)

- Non-Commercial Users

- Intellectual Property Interests

The GNSO is one of the three supporting organizations (along with the ASO and ccNSO) that contribute to the development of Internet policy based on input from their constituencies and in conjunction with the other two supporting organizations.

Some current GNSO issues are Whois,

Fast Flux, Domain Tasting and Front Running to name just a few. For more information on the GNSO visit: http://gnso.icann.org/

(If you'd like to learn more about any of the above issues, please let us know!)

IDN—International Domain Names

Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) are domain names represented by local language characters. Such domain names could contain letters or characters from non-ASCII scripts like Arabic or Chinese. Many efforts are ongoing in the Internet community to make domain names available in character sets other than ASCII. These "internationalized domain name" (IDN) efforts were the subject of

a resolution by the ICANN Board of Directors, which recognized "that it is important that the Internet evolve to be more accessible to those who do not use the ASCII character set," and also stressed that "the internationalization of the Internet's domain name system must be accomplished through standards that are open, non-proprietary, and fully compatible with the Internet's existing end-to-end model and that preserve globally unique naming in a universally resolvable public name space."

For an IDN Fast Track update go to: http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-22jan09-en.htm

Nominating Committee

ICANN accomplishes its work through various entities such as the Board of Directors; the three supporting organizations GNSO, ccNSO and ASO; and the At Large Advisory Committee.

The Nominating Committee selects well-qualified, accomplished individuals to serve in the four sets of leadership positions.

Available Leadership Positions Include:

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS—3 Seats

- AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ALAC) - 3 Seats

- COUNTRY-CODE NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONCOUNCIL (ccNSO) - 1 Seat

- GENERIC NAMES SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION COUNCIL (GNSO)

- 2 Seats

An Invitation for Statements of Interest and Suggestions for Candidates for ICANN's Nominating Committee has been posted on ICANN's website at http://nomcom.icann.org/invitation-2009.html

The Nom Com is responsible for selecting all ICANN Directors (except the President) and those selected

by ICANN's Supporting Organizations. For more information on the Nominating Committee go to: http://nomcom.icann.org/

Statements of Interests should be received before 15 April 2009 and the selected appointees will be announced by early September 2009.

February 2009

Upcoming Meetings

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Board Meeting	4	5	6	7
8	9 Board Finance Committee Meeting	10	11 Board Govern-ance Committee Meeting	12	13	14
15	16 IANA Committee Meeting	17 IANA Public Participation Committee Meeting	18	19	20	21
22	23 APTLD meeting in Manila, The Philippines. Details at www.aptld.org	24	25	26	27	28

- 3 Feb—Board Meeting
- 9 Feb—Board Finance Committee Mtg.
- 11 Feb—Board Govern-ance Committee Meeting
- 16 Feb—IANA Committee Meeting
- 17 Feb—IANA Public Participation Committee Meeting
- 23-24 Feb—APTLD meet-ing in Manila, The Philip-pines. www.aptld.org

Ciudad de
NO. 34 MÉXICO
1-6 march 2009

ICANN's 34th International Public meet-ing will be held in Mexico City on **1-6 March 2009**.
For the most updated information on the Mexico City Meeting, please visit:
http://mex.icann.org/