
Board-GAC Interaction Group (BGIG)

*Pre-ICANN83 Meeting
07 April 2025*

Agenda

- Welcome Remarks – Tripti Sinha
- Opening Remarks – GAC Vice Chair and Becky Burr
- Discussion of the ICANN82 GAC Communiqué Issues of Importance
- AOB
- Closing Remarks

GAC ICANN82 Communiqué Issues of Importance

The ICANN Board notes the Issues of Importance contained in the ICANN82 Communiqué:

- 1a. Domain Name Registration Data: **Urgent Requests for Disclosure of Registration Data**
- 1b. Domain Name Registration Data: **Registration Data Request Service**
- 1c. Domain Name Registration Data: **Accuracy of Registration Data**
- 1d. Domain Name Registration Data: **Other Public Policy Concerns Regarding Registration Data**
- 2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: **Applicant Support Program**
- 2.b. Next Round of New gTLDs: **Application Fees and Refunds**
- 2.c. Next Round of New gTLDs: **Global Outreach and Promotion of “ICANN in Your Language”**
3. **ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct Concerning Statements of Interest**
4. **DNS Abuse**
5. **WSIS+20**

1a. Domain Name Registration Data: Urgent Requests for Disclosure of Registration Data

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC notes action is still pending on its Advice on this matter contained in the ICANN79 San Juan Communiqué and its Follow-Up on Previous Advice in the ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué. However, the GAC appreciates its productive trilateral discussions with the Board and the GNSO Council regarding the GAC’s proposal to pursue two tracks of work in parallel: one on determining the appropriate response time to authenticated Urgent Requests, and another supporting Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) efforts to develop a scalable authentication process for Urgent Requests.</p> <p>The GAC appreciates its shared understanding with the Board and GNSO Council that the existing Registration Data Policy Implementation Review Team (IRT) is the best venue to discuss the response timeline for authenticated Urgent Requests. The GAC urges the start of these IRT discussions as soon as possible and looks forward to a timeline from the GNSO. While the GAC recognizes that an agreed-upon authentication solution must be in place to finalize the approach to Urgent Requests, the GAC also expects that starting IRT discussions in parallel will assist the community in advancing toward consensus on the response timeline. The GAC reiterates its previous position from the ICANN77 Washington Communiqué that, given the vital public safety interests related to Urgent Requests, responding to such requests within 24 hours is considered an appropriate timeline. The GAC also notes the previous Board’s statement that “a much shorter response timeline, i.e., minutes or hours rather than days, would seem to be more appropriate”.</p> <p>The GAC supports the PSWG’s establishment of a Practitioners Group to advance its technical work toward authentication solutions, which is focused initially on authenticating law enforcement requestors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Board acknowledges the status of the GAC’s advice from ICANN79 to “act expeditiously to establish a clear process and a timeline for the delivery of a policy on Urgent Requests for domain name registration data, to respond to the vital public safety interests related to such requests. Such a process must ensure appropriate participation of the community, including the GAC.”● The Board likewise appreciates the productive trilateral calls and its discussions on this topic with the GAC at ICANN82. The Board believes the discussions since the ICANN79 Communiqué have been fruitful in allowing a community conversation to take place and align on a path forward.● The Board understands that the org is ready to facilitate further conversations in the Implementation Review Team on a timeline for urgent requests. The GNSO Council provided a communication to ICANN org on 27 March, confirming its agreement with the GAC’s suggestion that the discussion regarding the response time for urgent requests could continue within the EPDP - Temp Spec Phase 1 IRT. Accordingly, the org is now preparing materials and expects to schedule these IRT meetings beginning in mid-April.● The current path forward, with timeline discussions in the IRT and a PSWG effort on authentication, appears to be in line with the GAC’s suggestion from October 2024 to proceed in two parallel tracks.● The Board also welcomes the establishment of a Practitioners Group on authentication solutions, and understands that the org is also supporting this effort to provide inputs as appropriate.

1b. Domain Name Registration Data: Registration Data Request Service (1 of 2)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC notes with interest the Board's support for maintaining and enhancing the RDRS. The GAC supports this concept and suggests that steps towards improving the pilot system should already be taken based on the results of the first year. The GAC sees substantial room for the RDRS to generate additional value, including for requestor communities, especially if the system can be adequately enhanced based on users' feedback and usage metric reports. The GAC recommends taking steps to make RDRS participation mandatory for all gTLD registrars.</p> <p>The system's ability to address requests for data underlying privacy and proxy registrations should be improved. The RDRS should incorporate APIs to better facilitate RDRS usage by requestors and registrars and to make it ready to incorporate future authentication solutions for law enforcement requestors.</p> <p>The GAC reiterates its invitation to the Board and the ccNSO to explore ways to overcome the existing challenges to allow the voluntary participation of ccTLDs in the system. In its engagement with the RDRS Standing Committee, the GAC will continue to follow the development of a final report to the GNSO Council to convey findings from the RDRS pilot. The GAC also continues to support efforts to promote awareness and usage of the RDRS and to identify further improvements to the system's usability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Board appreciates the GAC's interest in maintaining and enhancing the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS). Throughout the RDRS pilot, ICANN org has taken steps to improve the tool based on enhancement recommendations from GNSO's RDRS Standing Committee, as outlined in Section 4.1 of the RDRS Annual Report. ICANN org also continues to collect RDRS user feedback through surveys and user experience interviews during the pilot's second year.• The GNSO Standing Committee has also indicated that they do not plan to request any further enhancements to RDRS for the remainder of the pilot, as their focus shifts to drafting their findings report for the GNSO Council.• The Board supports mandatory participation of gTLD registrars in line with policy recommendations from the EPDP. The Board also supports policy development to require the participation of registrar-affiliated privacy/proxy service providers in RDRS. As previously discussed, we are aware that there is at least one registrar participating in RDRS currently providing the underlying privacy/proxy data during the pilot period.

1b. Domain Name Registration Data: Registration Data Request Service (2 of 2)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC notes with interest the Board's support for maintaining and enhancing the RDRS. The GAC supports this concept and suggests that steps towards improving the pilot system should already be taken based on the results of the first year. The GAC sees substantial room for the RDRS to generate additional value, including for requestor communities, especially if the system can be adequately enhanced based on users' feedback and usage metric reports. The GAC recommends taking steps to make RDRS participation mandatory for all gTLD registrars.</p> <p>The system's ability to address requests for data underlying privacy and proxy registrations should be improved. The RDRS should incorporate APIs to better facilitate RDRS usage by requestors and registrars and to make it ready to incorporate future authentication solutions for law enforcement requestors.</p> <p>The GAC reiterates its invitation to the Board and the ccNSO to explore ways to overcome the existing challenges to allow the voluntary participation of ccTLDs in the system. In its engagement with the RDRS Standing Committee, the GAC will continue to follow the development of a final report to the GNSO Council to convey findings from the RDRS pilot. The GAC also continues to support efforts to promote awareness and usage of the RDRS and to identify further improvements to the system's usability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Board has also discussed the following points, commonly raised by stakeholders, with the RDRS GNSO Standing Committee, as they prepare their findings report for the GNSO Council:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Need to continue RDRS operations until missing policy elements are in place.○ Need for the mandatory participation of registrars○ Need for a policy that mandates the participation of registrar-affiliated privacy/proxy service providers in RDRS.○ Need to develop requirements for an API.○ Need to develop an authentication/accreditation mechanism in parallel with the Board-GAC-GNSO Council discussion on a timeline for processing urgent requests.○ Need to ensure consistency in policies related to nonpublic registration data for domains registered under privacy/proxy providers.● The Board acknowledges the GAC's invitation to explore ways to overcome technical and policy challenges that currently make ccTLD inclusion in RDRS difficult. ICANN org is exploring logistical and operational options for voluntary ccTLD participation in RDRS, including the requirement that only those ccTLDs using RDAP would be eligible to participate.● The Board encourages the GAC's continued participation in the RDRS Standing Committee to raise new ideas for system enhancements and encourages the GAC to help promote awareness and usage of RDRS.

1c. Domain Name Registration Data: Accuracy of Registration Data

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>Accuracy of domain registration data remains a pressing concern for the GAC, who continues to urge greater progress on this issue at ICANN. The GAC remains particularly concerned about the pause in the work of the Accuracy Scoping Team since 2022. The GAC notes that the GNSO is considering possible next steps on this issue based on responses received to its recent threshold questions, including a submission from the GAC. The GAC also notes the importance of data and evidence guiding any discussions about policy changes. In that respect, the GAC considers that it would be helpful to receive more information about the current levels of compliance with existing requirements related to accuracy in ICANN’s Registrar Accreditation Agreement. The GAC also welcomes any ideas that may allow for an assessment of the effectiveness of the current practices in ensuring accuracy of registration data. Furthermore, the GAC supports engagement with Contracted Parties, ccTLDs, and any other stakeholders who could share good practices in relation to this issue.</p>	<p>The Board appreciates the GAC’s participation in the GNSO’s continuing work on registration data accuracy. The Board also notes the GNSO Council’s discussion at ICANN82 on next steps, including reviewing the various inputs to the Council’s questions on accuracy and determining where there is overlap in community concerns, to determine how best to address the issue, whether via policy work or otherwise.</p> <p>With regard to data on current levels of compliance with existing requirements related to accuracy in ICANN’s Registrar Accreditation Agreement, the Board notes that ICANN Contractual Compliance (“Compliance”) has published additional data related to audits of current accuracy-related requirements tested in past rounds of the Registrar Audit Program of the Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA). These reports are available here and here. The Board understands that Compliance will continue to include accuracy-related testing in ongoing audits, including the 2025 Registrar audit and will make this data available as part of their regular reporting. The Board welcomes more information from the GAC on what additional information it would find helpful in light of data processing limitations that exist under applicable data protection laws/regulations and the existing contractual requirements, as detailed in ICANN’s Assessment of Registration Data Accuracy Scenarios report that was provided to the GNSO Council.</p>

1d. Domain Name Registration Data: Other Public Policy Concerns Regarding Registration Data

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>When reviewing the progress of implementation of its strategic plan, the GAC noted concerns related to one of its expected outcomes for 2024-2025, “to track developments related to the collection and publication of registration information related to legal entities.”</p> <p>In particular, the GAC is concerned by the lack of any progress regarding the implementation of EPDP Phase 2A recommendations, which the Board adopted in 2022. The GAC reiterates its position expressed in the ICANN77 Communiqué that “contracted parties should collect and make data of legal persons publicly available.”</p> <p>Additionally, the GAC supports transparency regarding the entities involved in a domain name registration. Registration data is most useful when it accurately reflects the full reality of how a registration occurred. Hence, the data should make clear the distinct roles, responsibilities, relationships, and contact information of the chain of entities involved, beginning with the registry, the registrar, and then identifying those additional entities, if any, between the registrar and registrant, such as resellers. The GAC emphasizes the need to require the collection and publication of reseller data. The latter is especially critical to identifying the parties responsible for selling domain names directly to registrants and to highlight an important point of contact that may be best positioned to provide meaningful data on these registrants and/or to support investigation and mitigation of abuse that may be conducted by those registrants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● EPDP Phase 2A recommendations are in the queue for implementation, which is subject to the completion of EPDP Phase 1 implementation work now underway.● It is important to note that the Phase 2A recommendations relating to data of legal persons are ultimately guidance, and not binding on contracted parties, as reflected in the Board’s resolution on the recommendations.● That is, the EPDP Phase 2A recommendations that require the creation of fields that differentiate between legal and natural person registration data, and whether that registration data contains personal or non-personal data, are optional for contracted parties that choose to implement these, as the EPDP team created this guidance to assist those contracted parties that decide to differentiate.● ICANN’s Contractual Compliance enforces the requirements established in the RA, RAA, and ICANN Consensus Policies, as recognized in the ICANN Bylaws.● Guidance and best practices exist outside of these agreements and do not create contractual requirements. Therefore, ICANN Contractual Compliance does not have the authority to take enforcement action against a contracted party for failing to implement such best practices or guidance, even if these were developed through the EPDP process.● Regarding reseller data, the Board recalls that the EPDP Phase 1 team recommended that the collection, transfer, and publication of the reseller field remain optional. The Registration Data Policy reflects this recommendation.

2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: Applicant Support Program (1 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC welcomes the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the engagement of ICANN org with the GAC on its progress, and welcomes the monthly updates received on numbers and regional diversity of applications. The GAC is eager to see the ASP play an important role in making the upcoming round successful.</p> <p>The GAC wishes to see equitable participation in the application process, and thus the GAC requests a clearer picture about how many applicants from specific countries within the broad categories of ICANN regions are actively applying to the ASP. Providing precise distribution data to the GAC, rather than relying on general regional data, will empower GAC members in underserved countries to partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries. This more granular data, which, as indicated, is available through "applicant's primary place of business information", is critical for targeted action.</p> <p>Furthermore, some GAC members expressed their concerns with the low number of applications progressing beyond the "Draft" or "Initiated" status. With just over 10% of applications progressing to the "Submitted & In Review" stage to date, the GAC recommends that ICANN org promptly identify potential obstacles preventing these applicants from proceeding forward with their applications. With this information being made available, the GAC, ICANN org, and the entire community are invited to collaborate to develop and execute strategies that expedite these applications to the submitted stage. This will allow for timely assessments, decisions and resource allocation to be made based on available budget and resources ensuring the process remains efficient and effective.</p> <p>The GAC noted the ongoing uncertainty on the reduction of the ASP fee, which will be set between 75% and 85%, determined by the number of applications received. Some members suggested that specifying an 85% reduction now might encourage further applications from underserved regions.</p> <p>This approach is particularly crucial to ensuring that applicants from underserved regions receive adequate support and opportunities to participate fully.</p>	<p>Regional Diversity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board appreciates the GAC's enthusiasm and willingness to help with local, national, and regional outreach and engagement activities. 2. The Board understands that ICANN org is providing monthly updates on ASP application statistics, communications, and engagement activities via the IRT—including information about the geographic distribution of ASP applications within each ICANN region. This information is also available here: https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/reports. 3. The Board expects that ICANN org's Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) of Global Stakeholder Engagement will work with GAC members (and other community members, as appropriate) that express interest in helping with outreach and engagement in their respective countries. The RVPs will be equipped to provide guidance about which countries may need more attention for awareness-raising and engagement activities. 4. The Board, in accordance with the provisions of the policy regarding privacy of respective applicant data, will not ask ICANN org to publish reports on application numbers for specific countries. 5. The Board continues to be grateful for the community's ongoing role in raising global awareness and interest in the ASP and the Next Round, and kindly requests GAC members to continue working with their RVPs going forward.

2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: Applicant Support Program (2 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC welcomes the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the engagement of ICANN org with the GAC on its progress, and welcomes the monthly updates received on numbers and regional diversity of applications. The GAC is eager to see the ASP play an important role in making the upcoming round successful.</p> <p>The GAC wishes to see equitable participation in the application process, and thus the GAC requests a clearer picture about how many applicants from specific countries within the broad categories of ICANN regions are actively applying to the ASP. Providing precise distribution data to the GAC, rather than relying on general regional data, will empower GAC members in underserved countries to partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries. This more granular data, which, as indicated, is available through "applicant's primary place of business information", is critical for targeted action.</p> <p>Furthermore, some GAC members expressed their concerns with the low number of applications progressing beyond the "Draft" or "Initiated" status. With just over 10% of applications progressing to the "Submitted & In Review" stage to date, the GAC recommends that ICANN org promptly identify potential obstacles preventing these applicants from proceeding forward with their applications. With this information being made available, the GAC, ICANN org, and the entire community are invited to collaborate to develop and execute strategies that expedite these applications to the submitted stage. This will allow for timely assessments, decisions and resource allocation to be made based on available budget and resources ensuring the process remains efficient and effective.</p> <p>The GAC noted the ongoing uncertainty on the reduction of the ASP fee, which will be set between 75% and 85%, determined by the number of applications received. Some members suggested that specifying an 85% reduction now might encourage further applications from underserved regions.</p> <p>This approach is particularly crucial to ensuring that applicants from underserved regions receive adequate support and opportunities to participate fully.</p>	<p>ASP Application Processing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board understands the concerns from some GAC members about the number of ASP applications that are still in the early stages of the application process. 2. The Board understands that ICANN org has already proactively reached out directly to ASP applicants in progress to provide ASP application readiness materials including a QuickStart Guide, an ASP Applicant Checklist, and an ASP Application System User Guide. 3. The Board anticipates ICANN org will continue to engage with and provide resources to ASP applicants, as appropriate and in-line with ICANN's principles of privacy and security by design. 4. The Board also notes that only a limited number of required ICANN staff involved in processing applications have access to application-specific data in the ASP Application System per ICANN's principles of privacy and security by design. 5. The Board has requested ICANN org to identify, consistent with ICANN's data privacy obligations, obstacles that may be hindering further progress on ASP applications that could be shared with the community for potential collaboration in remedying. This includes language obstacles, noting the Next Round's recent announcement about the new gTLD Program in YOUR Language—recognizing that the community could play a role in requesting and facilitating additional translations of materials.

2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: Applicant Support Program (3 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC welcomes the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the engagement of ICANN org with the GAC on its progress, and welcomes the monthly updates received on numbers and regional diversity of applications. The GAC is eager to see the ASP play an important role in making the upcoming round successful.</p> <p>The GAC wishes to see equitable participation in the application process, and thus the GAC requests a clearer picture about how many applicants from specific countries within the broad categories of ICANN regions are actively applying to the ASP. Providing precise distribution data to the GAC, rather than relying on general regional data, will empower GAC members in underserved countries to partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries. This more granular data, which, as indicated, is available through "applicant's primary place of business information", is critical for targeted action.</p> <p>Furthermore, some GAC members expressed their concerns with the low number of applications progressing beyond the "Draft" or "Initiated" status. With just over 10% of applications progressing to the "Submitted & In Review" stage to date, the GAC recommends that ICANN org promptly identify potential obstacles preventing these applicants from proceeding forward with their applications. With this information being made available, the GAC, ICANN org, and the entire community are invited to collaborate to develop and execute strategies that expedite these applications to the submitted stage. This will allow for timely assessments, decisions and resource allocation to be made based on available budget and resources ensuring the process remains efficient and effective.</p> <p>The GAC noted the ongoing uncertainty on the reduction of the ASP fee, which will be set between 75% and 85%, determined by the number of applications received. Some members suggested that specifying an 85% reduction now might encourage further applications from underserved regions.</p> <p>This approach is particularly crucial to ensuring that applicants from underserved regions receive adequate support and opportunities to participate fully.</p>	<p>ASP Application Processing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1014 268 1796 472">6. The Board also understands that feedback on the ASP and gTLD application processes, including factors that applicants may have found hindering, will be assessed in the ASP Continuous Evaluation and Monitoring research conducted for continuous improvement and future iterations of the ASP.

2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: Applicant Support Program (4 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC welcomes the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the engagement of ICANN org with the GAC on its progress, and welcomes the monthly updates received on numbers and regional diversity of applications. The GAC is eager to see the ASP play an important role in making the upcoming round successful.</p> <p>The GAC wishes to see equitable participation in the application process, and thus the GAC requests a clearer picture about how many applicants from specific countries within the broad categories of ICANN regions are actively applying to the ASP. Providing precise distribution data to the GAC, rather than relying on general regional data, will empower GAC members in underserved countries to partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries. This more granular data, which, as indicated, is available through "applicant's primary place of business information", is critical for targeted action.</p> <p>Furthermore, some GAC members expressed their concerns with the low number of applications progressing beyond the "Draft" or "Initiated" status. With just over 10% of applications progressing to the "Submitted & In Review" stage to date, the GAC recommends that ICANN org promptly identify potential obstacles preventing these applicants from proceeding forward with their applications. With this information being made available, the GAC, ICANN org, and the entire community are invited to collaborate to develop and execute strategies that expedite these applications to the submitted stage. This will allow for timely assessments, decisions and resource allocation to be made based on available budget and resources ensuring the process remains efficient and effective.</p> <p>The GAC noted the ongoing uncertainty on the reduction of the ASP fee, which will be set between 75% and 85%, determined by the number of applications received. Some members suggested that specifying an 85% reduction now might encourage further applications from underserved regions.</p> <p>This approach is particularly crucial to ensuring that applicants from underserved regions receive adequate support and opportunities to participate fully.</p>	<p>ASP Level of Support/ gTLD Fee Reduction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Board understands the GAC's point about continued uncertainty in the level of support or fee reduction, for the gTLD evaluation fee.2. The GNSO Guidance Process (GGP) for ASP which was tasked with recommending a methodology for allocating financial support where there is inadequate funding for all qualified applicants.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The GGP provided three interdependent guidance recommendations indicated, in summary: 1) ICANN should provide equal fee reduction across all qualified applicants (GR7); 2) ICANN should designate a minimum level of support each qualified applicant must receive (GR8); and 3) ICANN should develop a flexible, predictable and responsive program to communicate the results of the evaluation and to allow applicants to know their range of support as early as possible (GR9).b. Following Full Consensus within the GGP Team—of which the GAC was an active participant— on all nine guidance recommendations and the subsequent GNSO Council approval by a GNSO Supermajority, the Board adopted all nine guidance recommendations.

2.a. Next Round of New gTLDs: Applicant Support Program (5 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC welcomes the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the engagement of ICANN org with the GAC on its progress, and welcomes the monthly updates received on numbers and regional diversity of applications. The GAC is eager to see the ASP play an important role in making the upcoming round successful.</p> <p>The GAC wishes to see equitable participation in the application process, and thus the GAC requests a clearer picture about how many applicants from specific countries within the broad categories of ICANN regions are actively applying to the ASP. Providing precise distribution data to the GAC, rather than relying on general regional data, will empower GAC members in underserved countries to partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries. This more granular data, which, as indicated, is available through "applicant's primary place of business information", is critical for targeted action.</p> <p>Furthermore, some GAC members expressed their concerns with the low number of applications progressing beyond the "Draft" or "Initiated" status. With just over 10% of applications progressing to the "Submitted & In Review" stage to date, the GAC recommends that ICANN org promptly identify potential obstacles preventing these applicants from proceeding forward with their applications. With this information being made available, the GAC, ICANN org, and the entire community are invited to collaborate to develop and execute strategies that expedite these applications to the submitted stage. This will allow for timely assessments, decisions and resource allocation to be made based on available budget and resources ensuring the process remains efficient and effective.</p> <p>The GAC noted the ongoing uncertainty on the reduction of the ASP fee, which will be set between 75% and 85%, determined by the number of applications received. Some members suggested that specifying an 85% reduction now might encourage further applications from underserved regions.</p> <p>This approach is particularly crucial to ensuring that applicants from underserved regions receive adequate support and opportunities to participate fully.</p>	<p>ASP Level of Support/ gTLD Fee Reduction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The Board understands that ICANN org worked with the ASP-IRT to determine a "minimum level of support" in-line with the GGP recommendations to support as many applicants as possible on an equal basis and to provide a meaningful level of support. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Based upon input from the ASP-IRT, the Board understands that the draft ASP Handbook that was issued for public comment proposed a range of 50-85%. b. Public comments received indicated that 50% was too low to be meaningful and the ASP-IRT advised on the 75-85% range which was published in the ASP Handbook and adopted by the Board. 4. The Board is sympathetic to the fact that this range of support does not provide certainty to ASP applicants. At the same time, the Board notes the multiple steps of ICANN's multistakeholder process—in which the GAC participated—ultimately informed this approach and decision. 5. Ultimately, the level of support provided above 75% will be determined by the number of qualified applicants. Changing the minimum range of support would run counter to the aforementioned multistakeholder processes and the information published in the Board-adopted ASP Handbook and could reduce the number of applicants that could be supported.

2.b. Next Round of New gTLDs: Application Fees and Refunds

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>GAC members continue to have concerns on how the applicant fee level will affect applications from underdeveloped and underserved countries. Some members also queried the level of applicant refunds, especially where an application is withdrawn early (for various reasons). In such circumstances a refund category above the planned 65% might be appropriate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Board appreciates the GAC's input on this topic and notes that Topic 15: Application Fees is currently also out for public comment (see: https://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/proceeding/fourth-proceeding-for-proposed-language-for-draft-sections-of-next-round-agb-14-02-2025).2. The Board encourages the GAC to provide its input as part of the public comment period. Comments may be submitted until 16 April 2025.3. The Board would like to remind the GAC that per the SubPro Final Report recommendations, the new gTLD Program is expected to be cost recovery (meaning, ICANN org does not generate excess nor deficit from implementing the new gTLD Program: Next Round). This cost recovery approach is reflected in the gTLD evaluation fee that has been set as well as the refund percentages that have been proposed.4. The Board notes that the objective of the Applicant Support Program is precisely to make applying for a new gTLD and operating a registry more accessible to applicants who would be otherwise unable due to financial and resource constraints.

2.c. Next Round of New gTLDs: Global Outreach and Promotion of “ICANN in Your Language”

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC encourages ICANN org to further develop and promote its on-demand translation of the New gTLD Program materials (“ICANN in Your Language”) to enhance outreach and engagement in the next round, extending coverage beyond the 6 ICANN languages.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1016 239 1812 344">1. The Board appreciates the GAC’s support for language diversification via the recently announced New gTLD Program In YOUR Language.<li data-bbox="1016 351 1812 801">2. The Board understands that the New gTLD Program in YOUR Language is indeed the mechanism by which the community can request additional translations of materials, beyond the six ICANN languages. ICANN org created this process to partner with volunteers from the ICANN community in order to provide translation for New gTLD Program materials when they are requested (in other words, on demand), and hence the program’s success will also depend on close collaboration between ICANN and volunteer community reviewers.<li data-bbox="1016 808 1812 993">3. The Board anticipates that ICANN’s Communications and Engagement teams will continue to raise awareness of this new initiative among the ICANN community and prospective gTLD applicants.

3. ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct Concerning Statements of Interest

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC has addressed the matter of transparency and Statements of Interest (SOI) in prior GAC Communiqués since ICANN76 and issued a letter to the ICANN Board Chair on this subject, since transparency in ICANN's Multistakeholder Model remains a top priority for the committee. The GAC notably included language to this effect in both the ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué and the ICANN81 Istanbul Communiqué, recalling that ICANN Bylaws require ICANN and its constituent bodies to “operate to the maximum extent feasible in an open and transparent manner and consistent with procedures designed to ensure fairness.”</p> <p>The GAC firmly supports transparency within ICANN, and considers it inconsistent with the ICANN Bylaws if ICANN participants are permitted to decline disclosing who they represent. Therefore, the GAC recalls its input to the Public Comment proceeding on the draft ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct on Statements of Interest, and reiterates its support for the proposed draft, as well as the approach to a General Ethics Policy that includes this Code of Conduct. The GAC welcomes the cross-community discussion held on this matter during ICANN82.</p> <p>Going forward, the GAC is of the view that the clear line approach contained in the draft Code of Conduct, stating, inter alia, that “Specifically, all who participate in ICANN processes are required to disclose the interests influencing their participation” and “When disclosure cannot be made, the participant must not participate in ICANN processes on that issue”, must be maintained in the final version of the Code of Conduct. Such simplicity and clarity is the cornerstone for a well-functioning and applicable framework.</p> <p>ICANN org should support consistent implementation of the Code of Conduct by developing brief and simple guidance on its application, by providing specific training and educational materials to community leaders and participants, tasked with applying and respecting the Code of Conduct, as well as by foreseeing adequate data collection points and periodic review tools on its practical application.</p> <p>The GAC intends to continue reviewing the progress of this process, and engaging with the Board and community on the matter, and looks forward to a speedy completion and adoption of the Code of Conduct.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1020 239 1789 496">1. The Board appreciates the GAC’s continued support for the development of an ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct Concerning Statements of Interest, including the Public Comment submitted by the GAC as well as the GAC’s participation in the session during ICANN82 regarding enforcement thereof.<li data-bbox="1020 504 1789 654">2. The Board anticipates a further draft to be posted for Public Comment by May 2025, taking the community’s input into account, and looks forward to the GAC’s further participation.

4. DNS Abuse (1 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text

The GAC appreciates the perspectives on DNS Abuse received in conversations with different constituencies at ICANN82, and specifically in meetings with the GNSO, CPH, SSAC and ALAC. These interactions seem to reflect converging views on the relevance of newly available data and evidence (i.e., from the INFERMAL report, Domain Metrica, and the implementation of the DNS Abuse contract amendments) and on the opportunity to plan further work on this critical public policy issue prior to the next round of New gTLDs.

The GAC underscores that it would be helpful to receive more information on ICANN Compliance's updates on the implementation of contract amendments, and their proactive efforts related to investigation and enforcement (such as audits) of said amendments.

At the same time, the GAC highlights the importance that all parties, notably all registrars, cooperate to the utmost extent in fulfilling the new contractual obligations, including duly and timely addressing of abuse complaints filed by law enforcement authorities. Furthermore, the GAC emphasizes the need for Contracted Parties to share information and evidence on DNS Abuse within the community and encourages them to quickly act on DNS Abuse reports.

The GAC also values the investments of ICANN's Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in providing data points for discussions on how to address DNS Abuse. This work from ICANN is helpful and conducive to better decision-making around potential next steps.

The GAC discussed the results of an internal survey aimed at gathering input from GAC members on DNS Abuse policies, practices, and expectations regarding future GAC work on this matter. Building on these results, and on the newly available data and input from other groups, the GAC intends to deepen discussions on next steps regarding the prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse.

The GAC finds the INFERMAL report especially insightful as it contains findings that may further support the need for a targeted Policy Development Process on DNS Abuse, something that was among the options for further work mentioned in the ICANN81 Communiqué. The GAC supports engaging in discussions with the GNSO Small Group on DNS Abuse and other community members to determine whether any policy development building on the findings would be advisable. In particular, the GAC considers it important to look further into the topic of bulk registrations of domain names as one of the most correlated drivers to DNS Abuse, according to the INFERMAL report.

The GAC notes that it would be worthwhile for OCTO to examine the common or underlying factors beneath various variables such as economic incentives, bulk Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) etc. The GAC welcomes further discussion of other findings in the INFERMAL report, including that registration discounts and free services such as hosting were correlated with more abuse, and that contact information validation and registration restrictions were correlated with less abuse. In addition, the GAC notes the observation from multiple presenters that such discussions should include the economic implications for registrars and registrants, possible impacts on legitimate users, and corresponding deterrent effects.

The GAC also considers that proactive practices for addressing DNS Abuse, collaboration within the broader ecosystem, and links between addressing DNS Abuse and work on domain name registration data, should be further examined. Finally, the GAC encourages registrars to explore the use of AI-powered DNS Abuse detection systems and it invites the community to further discussions around privacy and proxy services and their role in DNS Abuse.

ICANN Board Comment

The Board appreciates GAC members' interest and involvement in ongoing community discussions on the topic of DNS Abuse. The Board shares the GAC's perspective on the importance of wider community discourse, complemented by regular outreach and reporting by ICANN on measurements and analysis of the effectiveness of the DNS Abuse amendments, to inform further work on this topic.

ICANN Contractual Compliance (Compliance) has provided, and will continue to provide, regular updates on the enforcement of the DNS Abuse mitigation requirements. Compliance continues to welcome community feedback on Contractual Compliance reporting. The updates provided to date include:

- On 28 June 2024, Compliance began publishing monthly [reports](#) on the enforcement of the new DNS Abuse mitigation requirements. To illustrate historical trends over time, the reports are published as a 12-month rolling series. To align with the effective date and relevant DNS Abuse data that was captured, April 2024 will remain the starting date for the reports until 12 months have passed (March 2025). After that, the series will continue with April 2025 as the starting date.
- Before launching the new reports, Compliance provided an update on the enforcement of the DNS Abuse mitigation requirements during the [Contracted Parties Summit](#) in May 2024, just one month after the new requirements took effect. A [blog](#) with a summary of enforcement actions and outcomes was published a month later.

4. DNS Abuse (2 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC appreciates the perspectives on DNS Abuse received in conversations with different constituencies at ICANN82, and specifically in meetings with the GNSO, CPH, SSAC and ALAC. These interactions seem to reflect converging views on the relevance of newly available data and evidence (i.e., from the INFERMAL report, Domain Metrics, and the implementation of the DNS Abuse contract amendments) and on the opportunity to plan further work on this critical public policy issue prior to the next round of New gTLDs.</p> <p>The GAC underscores that it would be helpful to receive more information on ICANN Compliance’s updates on the implementation of contract amendments, and their proactive efforts related to investigation and enforcement (such as audits) of said amendments.</p> <p>At the same time, the GAC highlights the importance that all parties, notably all registrars, cooperate to the utmost extent in fulfilling the new contractual obligations, including duly and timely addressing of abuse complaints filed by law enforcement authorities. Furthermore, the GAC emphasizes the need for Contracted Parties to share information and evidence on DNS Abuse within the community and encourages them to quickly act on DNS Abuse reports.</p> <p>The GAC also values the investments of ICANN’s Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in providing data points for discussions on how to address DNS Abuse. This work from ICANN is helpful and conducive to better decision-making around potential next steps.</p> <p>The GAC discussed the results of an internal survey aimed at gathering input from GAC members on DNS Abuse policies, practices, and expectations regarding future GAC work on this matter. Building on these results, and on the newly available data and input from other groups, the GAC intends to deepen discussions on next steps regarding the prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse.</p> <p>The GAC finds the INFERMAL report especially insightful as it contains findings that may further support the need for a targeted Policy Development Process on DNS Abuse, something that was among the options for further work mentioned in the ICANN81 Communiqué. The GAC supports engaging in discussions with the GNSO Small Group on DNS Abuse and other community members to determine whether any policy development building on the findings would be advisable. In particular, the GAC considers it important to look further into the topic of bulk registrations of domain names as one of the most correlated drivers to DNS Abuse, according to the INFERMAL report.</p> <p>The GAC notes that it would be worthwhile for OCTO to examine the common or underlying factors beneath various variables such as economic incentives, bulk Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) etc. The GAC welcomes further discussion of other findings in the INFERMAL report, including that registration discounts and free services such as hosting were correlated with more abuse, and that contact information validation and registration restrictions were correlated with less abuse. In addition, the GAC notes the observation from multiple presenters that such discussions should include the economic implications for registrars and registrants, possible impacts on legitimate users, and corresponding deterrent effects.</p> <p>The GAC also considers that proactive practices for addressing DNS Abuse, collaboration within the broader ecosystem, and links between addressing DNS Abuse and work on domain name registration data, should be further examined. Finally, the GAC encourages registrars to explore the use of AI-powered DNS Abuse detection systems and it invites the community to further discussions around privacy and proxy services and their role in DNS Abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● On 8 November 2024, Compliance published a six-month report including additional context and examples about the specific enforcement actions taken from 5 April 2024 through 5 October 2024. Compliance intends to publish a one-year of enforcement report. In addition, Compliance will conduct a dedicated webinar, on 23 April 2025, ICANN’s Enforcement of DNS Abuse Mitigation Requirements – A Look at the First Year”.● On 28 October 2024, Compliance launched an audit on registry operators’ compliance with the Registry Agreement, including the new DNS Abuse mitigation requirements. Following the completion of the audit, Compliance will publish a report with key findings and list of auditees.

4. DNS Abuse (3 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>The GAC appreciates the perspectives on DNS Abuse received in conversations with different constituencies at ICANN82, and specifically in meetings with the GNSO, CPH, SSAC and ALAC. These interactions seem to reflect converging views on the relevance of newly available data and evidence (i.e., from the INFERMAL report, Domain Metrics, and the implementation of the DNS Abuse contract amendments) and on the opportunity to plan further work on this critical public policy issue prior to the next round of New gTLDs.</p> <p>The GAC underscores that it would be helpful to receive more information on ICANN Compliance’s updates on the implementation of contract amendments, and their proactive efforts related to investigation and enforcement (such as audits) of said amendments.</p> <p>At the same time, the GAC highlights the importance that all parties, notably all registrars, cooperate to the utmost extent in fulfilling the new contractual obligations, including duly and timely addressing of abuse complaints filed by law enforcement authorities. Furthermore, the GAC emphasizes the need for Contracted Parties to share information and evidence on DNS Abuse within the community and encourages them to quickly act on DNS Abuse reports.</p> <p>The GAC also values the investments of ICANN’s Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in providing data points for discussions on how to address DNS Abuse. This work from ICANN is helpful and conducive to better decision-making around potential next steps.</p> <p>The GAC discussed the results of an internal survey aimed at gathering input from GAC members on DNS Abuse policies, practices, and expectations regarding future GAC work on this matter. Building on these results, and on the newly available data and input from other groups, the GAC intends to deepen discussions on next steps regarding the prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse.</p> <p>The GAC finds the INFERMAL report especially insightful as it contains findings that may further support the need for a targeted Policy Development Process on DNS Abuse, something that was among the options for further work mentioned in the ICANN81 Communiqué. The GAC supports engaging in discussions with the GNSO Small Group on DNS Abuse and other community members to determine whether any policy development building on the findings would be advisable. In particular, the GAC considers it important to look further into the topic of bulk registrations of domain names as one of the most correlated drivers to DNS Abuse, according to the INFERMAL report.</p> <p>The GAC notes that it would be worthwhile for OCTO to examine the common or underlying factors beneath various variables such as economic incentives, bulk Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) etc. The GAC welcomes further discussion of other findings in the INFERMAL report, including that registration discounts and free services such as hosting were correlated with more abuse, and that contact information validation and registration restrictions were correlated with less abuse. In addition, the GAC notes the observation from multiple presenters that such discussions should include the economic implications for registrars and registrants, possible impacts on legitimate users, and corresponding deterrent effects.</p> <p>The GAC also considers that proactive practices for addressing DNS Abuse, collaboration within the broader ecosystem, and links between addressing DNS Abuse and work on domain name registration data, should be further examined. Finally, the GAC encourages registrars to explore the use of AI-powered DNS Abuse detection systems and it invites the community to further discussions around privacy and proxy services and their role in DNS Abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 11 March 2025, Compliance provided an update on the enforcement of the DNS Abuse requirements to the GAC. As explained during this update, Compliance is working on multiple initiatives to continue upholding the new requirements and reporting on it. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, the design of an approach to proactively initiate investigations and enforcement actions related to DNS Abuse. However, it is important to note that Compliance’s enforcement actions have never been limited to the information received through external complaints. For example, Compliance recently launched an enforcement investigation based on information gathered about a significant phishing campaign without receiving a formal complaint. Compliance identified patterns, collected evidence, and took enforcement action that is currently ongoing. Compliance is designing a structured initiative to proactively enforce compliance with the DNS Abuse mitigation requirements that will complement enforcement efforts through complaint processing and regularly-scheduled audits. Details about this approach, once designed and implemented, will be included in future reports.

4. DNS Abuse (4 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text

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ICANN Board Comment

The Board supports the statement by the GAC that it is essential all contracted parties cooperate to the utmost extent in the fulfillment of their contractual obligations. Beyond the language noted on abuse complaints filed by law enforcement authorities, ICANN accredited registrars must comply with Section 3.7.2 of the Registrar Accreditation Agreement on Business Dealings, Including with Registered Name Holders noting that "registrar(s) shall abide by applicable laws and governmental regulations."

It is worth noting that the Contracted Parties continue to hold outreach meetings on actions taken relating to DNS Abuse. Within the near term, this topic will feature prominently in ICANN's Middle East DNS Forum (29-30 April 2025 in Manama, Bahrain), Contracted Parties Summit (5-7 May 2025 in Hanoi, Vietnam), and Asia-Pacific DNS Forum (8-9 May in Hanoi, Vietnam). Such interventions will further help determine what additional measures might be needed to further mitigate or disrupt DNS abuse.

ICANN's Office of CTO Security, Stability, and Resiliency (OCTO-SSR) research team aims to continue enhancing the methodology and data to create DNS Abuse metrics. The ICANN Domain Metrica platform released its first module for the whole ICANN community in January 2025, which allows community members to gather additional one-time and historical information on DNS Abuse related to domains, registrars and gTLDs. The platform also shows additional relevant information on for example how "popular" domains are registered and later used for DNS Abuse purposes [via Tranco popularity ranking].

4. DNS Abuse (5 of 5)

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
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These interactions seem to reflect converging views on the relevance of newly available data and evidence (i.e., from the INFERMAL report, Domain Metrica, and the implementation of the DNS Abuse contract amendments) and on the opportunity to plan further work on this critical public policy issue prior to the next round of New gTLDs.</p> <p>The GAC underscores that it would be helpful to receive more information on ICANN Compliance's updates on the implementation of contract amendments, and their proactive efforts related to investigation and enforcement (such as audits) of said amendments.</p> <p>At the same time, the GAC highlights the importance that all parties, notably all registrars, cooperate to the utmost extent in fulfilling the new contractual obligations, including duly and timely addressing of abuse complaints filed by law enforcement authorities. Furthermore, the GAC emphasizes the need for Contracted Parties to share information and evidence on DNS Abuse within the community and encourages them to quickly act on DNS Abuse reports.</p> <p>The GAC also values the investments of ICANN's Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in providing data points for discussions on how to address DNS Abuse. This work from ICANN is helpful and conducive to better decision-making around potential next steps.</p> <p>The GAC discussed the results of an internal survey aimed at gathering input from GAC members on DNS Abuse policies, practices, and expectations regarding future GAC work on this matter. Building on these results, and on the newly available data and input from other groups, the GAC intends to deepen discussions on next steps regarding the prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse.</p> <p>The GAC finds the INFERMAL report especially insightful as it contains findings that may further support the need for a targeted Policy Development Process on DNS Abuse, something that was among the options for further work mentioned in the ICANN81 Communiqué. The GAC supports engaging in discussions with the GNSO Small Group on DNS Abuse and other community members to determine whether any policy development building on the findings would be advisable. 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In addition, the GAC notes the observation from multiple presenters that such discussions should include the economic implications for registrars and registrants, possible impacts on legitimate users, and corresponding deterrent effects.</p> <p>The GAC also considers that proactive practices for addressing DNS Abuse, collaboration within the broader ecosystem, and links between addressing DNS Abuse and work on domain name registration data, should be further examined. Finally, the GAC encourages registrars to explore the use of AI-powered DNS Abuse detection systems and it invites the community to further discussions around privacy and proxy services and their role in DNS Abuse.</p>	<p>In a broader scope, OCTO-SSR is keen on researching the following two main questions: "What are the main factors that derive DNS Abuse?" and "How can we predict and mitigate an abusive DNS before its registration, from historical patterns?" The INFERMAL study was a study ICANN org funded to look into the first question. It is important to note that while the study found strong and positive correlation between DNS Abuse concentrations and "Discounts" or "Bulk registration" factors, it also highlights two main caveats:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. None of these factors can be a main driver of abuse in isolation, since in practice they are often combined. So, a further study is needed to look into the interaction of the factors that are studied and their relation to DNS Abuse.2. The INFERMAL study has not looked into the pool of registrar-TLDs that have little DNS Abuse, and their corresponding contributing factors. This is important since this gives the ICANN community an indication of good practices. Here also a further study can look into the drivers of "good behaviour" when it comes to DNS Abuse. <p>The Board and ICANN org appreciate the GAC's input, and will continue to receive suggestions from the community on where to take the INFERMAL study next. ICANN org also welcomes proposals from individual research teams who are willing to conduct further research on the topic.</p>

5. WSIS+20

GAC Issue of Importance Text	ICANN Board Comment
<p>ICANN82 witnessed many exchanges between community members interested in the WSIS+20 process, including in bilaterals held between the GAC and other constituencies as well as in a dedicated GAC plenary session. The GAC welcomes the ongoing engagement program of ICANN org on the WSIS+20 process. The GAC intends to continue facilitating exchanges on the matter between its members and other constituencies, showcasing the contributions of the multistakeholder approach to the development of our digital future.</p>	<p>We welcome GAC's continued engagement in the WSIS+20 process and for facilitating valuable exchanges between stakeholders. Our WSIS+20 project team remains committed to providing regular updates on key events, discussions, and outcomes to ensure the GAC stays informed. We appreciate the dedication and contributions of everyone involved in advancing the multistakeholder model approach to our digital future, including through sharing the successes achieved through the applications of the multistakeholder model. Your efforts in fostering collaboration and meaningful dialogue are essential to this process. As subject matter experts, GAC members have the capacity to work closer with their respective colleagues from the Permanent Missions to the United Nations, who will be taking part in the WSIS+20 negotiations. In this context, ICANN's GE team is available for any information that GAC members or diplomats in New York and in Geneva might need.</p>

AOB and Closing Remarks

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