
ICANN75 | AGM – GAC Capacity Building and Outreach Workshop 7: DNS Roles and Responsibilities - GNSO Registries
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(Recording in progress)

JULIA CHARVOLEN: Hello and welcome to the GAC Capacity Building Session: DNS Roles and Responsibilities Session with the GNSO Registries on Sunday, 18th September at 7UTC. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior. During this session questions or comments submitted in the chat will be read aloud, if put in the proper form. If you're remote, please wait until you are called upon and unmute your Zoom microphone. For those of you the GAC room, please remember to raise your hand via the Zoom room. For the benefit of other participants, please state your name for the record and speak at a reasonable pace. You may access all available features for this session on the Zoom toolbar. With that I will hand the floor over to Karel Douglas. Please, Karel.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Good afternoon, everybody, or should I say good morning. Good afternoon or good evening. Depending on where you are viewing this. And welcome back. At the last session we had an extremely interesting session about the ccTLDs and gTLDs. And now we are moving to the session with the GNSO Registry Operators, who will explain their role in the domain name registration process and where they sit within the industry, and how it fits in the ICANN community.

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Speakers will discuss one or two current topics of mutual interest for registries and governments within ICANN. That would include, of course, introduction to registries and their roles, and the domain name registration process and so forth, and topics of mutual interest.

Without further ado, I do know we have a panel, so I'm not going to attempt to introduce the panel but I'm going to introduce Samantha Demetriou, who is a chair of the panel and she will take it from here and introduce the panel. Thank you so much.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU:

Thank you so much, Karel. Hello, GAC members. I am Samantha Demetriou. I am the Chair of the Registries Stakeholder Group. I also work for Verisign, which is the company that operates .com and .net, and a handful of others gTLD registries. So, as Karel so beautifully introduced, we are going to take some time today to explain what registries are, what we do, how we fit into the broader ICANN community. I know that there are a lot of new folks who have joined the GAC in recent years, so we are hoping that this will be informative. We also definitely want to encourage people to ask questions, if there's anything that we cover today, that is unclear, or if, you know, we use terminology that is a little too technical, any of that, please, feel free to put your hands up and interject with questions at any time. We'll also schedule a couple of concrete breaks to ask questions or get feedback from the membership.

So, before we dive into the substance, I'm going to let the rest of the folks here introduce themselves. I will start with Beth.

BETH BACON: Hi, folks, thanks so much for having us in, today. I'm Beth Bacon. I'm with Public Interest Registry. We run .org, along with another handful of top-level domains. I'm the Senior Director of Policy and Privacy there and I am the Vice-Chair of Policy for the Registries Stakeholder Group.

ALAN WOODS: Hello, folks. My name is Alan Woods. I'm the Vice-Chair of Administration for the Registries Stakeholder Group Stakeholder Group and I work for a company, Identity Digital, which is a registry operator for about 290 of the new gTLDs and a few legacy TLDs, as well, so one or two in our portfolio.

NACHO AMADOZ: Hello, everyone. I'm . Nacho Amadoz from .cat, just the first cultural linguistic TLD. It was I who created it, and I'm here as President of the GeoTLD group, which is also a member of the Registries Stakeholder Group Stakeholder Group.

BENJAMIN LOUIS: Hello, my name is Benjamin Louis. I am the CEO of a company named Sparkling. And the company runs the GeoTLD dotAlsace, it's a region in

France.

KAREN DAY:

Hello, everyone. My name is Karen Day. I am here as a Treasurer of the Registries Stakeholder Group Stakeholder Group. I work for a software company and we have two dotbrand TLDs that we applied for and operate out of the last round. Thank you.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU:

All right. If we could go to the first slide, please. All right. So, as we mentioned, today is going to be an introduction to the Registries Stakeholder Group Stakeholder Group and to gTLD registries, in general. It's great that we are coming on the heels of the ccNSO operators that you guys have heard from a little earlier. We are also coming just before the Registrar Stakeholder Group, Stakeholder Group so you guys are getting a full afternoon of how the Domain Name System works and what the different parties are who operate in it.

Next slide, please. Okay. So, as you can see here, the primary role of the Registries Stakeholder Group is to represent the interest of gTLD -- that stands for Generic Top-Level Domain -- operators within ICANN's multistakeholder community. We are a Stakeholder Group within the generic name supporting organization. , the GNSO, and along with the Registrar Stakeholder Group we make up the Contracted Parties House. That's one house of two within the GNSO structure.

What is unique about our Stakeholder Group is that all our members -- I'm sorry, I'm going to remove this, if you guys don't mind. It's getting in my way a little bit. All of our members have to have a Registry Agreement, which is a contract that they have with ICANN organization in order to operate a specific gTLD or, in some cases like Alan's company, multiple gTLDs. So, at this point we have 82 members and they represent over 600 gTLD operators. That's about half of the total gTLDs that are out there in the Internet space at this time.

And you can see from the graph here, we have membership from all five of ICANN's geographic regions and we are always looking to recruit more members, however that ability is a little bit constrained because members have to have this contract with ICANN. So, you know, looking to maximize the membership among the gTLD operators who are out there and then as future gTLD rounds become available, we will look to those to get new members as well.

Go to the next slide, please. So this here is a diagram. It's very basic diagram about how to a domain name is registered, how a domain name comes into existence. And I find this really helpful, to understand the role of a Registry in the Domain Name System and in the kind of space. So you can see here is a brief description about each of the parties. So you start with a registrant; and that is the entity that is seeking to acquire the right to use a domain name, possibly to host a website, possibly for email purposes or a whole host of other reasons.

A registrant works with a company called a Registrar in order to make

the registration of the domain name on their behalf. In some cases -- and you will see this is in the kind of dotted line box, there's an intermediary party to works on behalf of the registrar that's called a Reseller. The Registrar is the company that then makes the change in the database at the Registry level in order to provision that domain name to the registrant. So it's really kind of a two-step process.

It looks like a one-step process to the consumer, right, to the registrar -- to the registrant, I'm sorry. But when they acquire a domain name, they're usually working through a registrar, who then comes to us, as the registry operator, to make sure that domain name gets officially activated on their above. So, as a registry, our main role is to operate the authoritative database of all the domain names in a given gTLD.

So this makes us different from registrars, and you're going to, like I said, you're going to hear from them right after this. And they are also going to give a bit more detail about the how the industry works and some of the economic aspects of the industry, so we are not going to go into a lot of detail about that today.

The key thing to remember here is that the primary role of the registry is to make those domain names function, and then also to provide resolution services for those domain names so that, if an end user types a domain name into an Internet browser, it resolves to the appropriate content that may be hosted on that domain name. Not every domain name hosts content but the ones that do host a website, we make sure

that the content is accessible.

However, that's pretty much the end of a registry's relationship to the content that's on a website. We often get the question of, you know whether we control the content in our gTLDs, whether we have visibility into the content of our gTLDs, and in most cases the answer to that question is no. There is a big difference -- oh, no, a big distinction in the kind of levels between the registrant, who acquires the domain name and may choose to use it, to put up a website that hosts content, and then all the way up the chain to us, as the registry operator. When we get questions like, "Can you control the content that's on the domain names in your registry?" the answer usually is no, right.

The only ability we have to influence that content is to take the domain name itself offline, which doesn't always mean that the content is no longer accessible. It just means that when you type in the domain name, it won't bring you to that content directly. I think it's also important to remember that registries are also very different from online platforms or Internet platforms. We've heard over the years some conflation of those two concepts. But we're just very different entities online. So, I want to just make that very clear, especially because I think at this point a lot of folks who come to Internet Policy and Internet Governance Policy, their first introduction is often through the concept of platforms.

And what I mean by that is social media platforms like Facebook or online marketplaces, like Amazon or even search engines like Google.

Companies like that are very different from registries, and like one big reason for that is because the way I think of it is: a platform is a single place where users come together to interact with each other in kind of a single place. Whereas, as you can see from this chart, the -- a registry and the whole Domain Name System is much more distributed. Millions of registrants around the world work with thousands of different registrars to register with hundreds of different gTLD registries.

So it's just a very different kind of structure and a very different paradigm. So I just want to make sure that distinction is kind of well understood because I think it's a pretty key aspect to understanding what registries are and how we function in the ICANN space and in the Internet overall.

So, we could go to the next slide, please. So, here you see the same kind of flowchart but this slide gives you an overview of the contractual relationships that exist between registries and the other parties in the Domain Name System, as well as with ICANN. So we talked -- I talked a little bit before about the fact that all gTLD operators must have a Registry Agreement, which is a 2-way contract between ourselves and with ICANN. Registrars, similarly, have their own contract with ICANN, and gTLD registries have a contract with registrars that basically -- they set the terms for how we do business together.

We don't have a direct contractual relationship with the registrar, or sorry, with the registrant -- see, the terminology is so confusing that I even mess it up from time to time. So, yeah, you can see here, we don't

have a direct contractual relationship with the registrant, who is the person who goes and registers and gets the right to use the domain name. That relationship is, in almost every case, through the registrar company.

This also is something that makes us different in the gTLD space than ccTLD or country code top-level domain operators. Not all country codes, but some of them do have direct contractual relationships with the registrants of domains in those ccTLDs, and that is just a very different structure in the generic top-level domain space and the members that we have in our Stakeholder Group.

Next slide, please. So with this I'm going to turn over to Karen, who's going to talk about the different kinds of companies who make up the membership of the Registries Stakeholder Group and the operators of gTLDs on the Internet today.

KAREN DAY:

Thanks, Sam. As you can see from this slide, there are, within the gTLDs, just as we are different from ccTLDs, there are several different types of top-level domains within the gTLDs. The ones that you are likely most familiar with are the open generic TLDs. That's the .com, the .org, .club, .biz that anyone -- there's no registration restrictions. So you, your cousin, any one, a business can go to a registrar and, if available, register a name in these top-level domains.

The next market, which is a smaller market, is the niche market, which

these are open. These are commercial, commercially available top-level domains, but they target specific markets. There's .design, .art, .software. These are targeting specific sections of the global population, mainly commercial.

Then, following onto that is the -- what we call the verified or restricted top-level domains. These are top-level domains which are available for sale. They're commercially available, but you have to meet specific requirements to be able to register one of these top-level domains so that the consuming population, the customer is aware that everyone who operates a .pharmacy or a .bank has been through the protocol established by the registry, has been verified, and is -- this is a level of trust, this is a level of assurance, of safety in these top-level domains where there are strict requirements for having a registration.

The next level down is the .brand, which, as I said, my company operates two .brand registrations. The thing that makes the .brand registry different from all the other ones is that ours are noncommercial. Any second level domain registrations in a .brand, such as .google, .fox, .audi, is only allowed to be used by and registered to that company, that registry operator or its affiliates.

So, again, in the sense of consumer awareness, consumer safety, how the important role that the .brands play is you know that, if you get something from a .Google, then you know it has come from Google. If you get something from .jmp, which is one of my company's software brands, you know that it has come from that company because no one

other than our company can use that domain.

So, very safe space in the Internet system. And then, the next category that we have is the Geo category, which my colleague, Nacho, will brief you on in much greater detail, but I will just say that these are geographical indicators, they have support of the governments and most often they will have a Nexus requirement, such as you have to operate a business in Berlin to register a .Berlin. You have to live in Cape Town to register a .Cape Town. There's some sort of Nexus there with the Geo territory that has been designated as top-level domain.

As you can see from that, we are within the domain system, in our little corner of the domain system we've got a very varied and -- population, and our membership is comprised of all of these, and we all make up a part of the ICANN community.

Next, pass it over to Beth.

BETH BACON:

Thank you so much. Again, I'm Beth Bacon, I'm the Vice-Chair of Policy and I'm going to talk to you a little bit -- Sam covered already what a registry is and how we fit operationally into the domain name lifecycle. I'm going to talk more about how a registry fits then into the ICANN multistakeholder community.

The slideshow -- I'm going to try desperately not to read the slide to you because you can all do that at your leisure but the slideshow is the

general framework for the operations and requirements for registries and the two standard means of engagement for registries in that multistakeholder policy development process. And those are via our Registry Agreements, essentially the contract, and consensus policy development process. And for the benefit of folks who are new, the consensus policy development process is kind of a capital C consensus, in that, as you can see from the slide, once a consensus policy is adopted and implemented by the Board, it then becomes binding as a requirement on the registries.

And so, while the process and the scope of policy development is defined by the ICANN Bylaws, it's also important to note that there are a lot of the other ways outside of those PDP, the policy development process, and contracts that registries and the community can collaborate to address concerns, issues, questions, across, you know, outside of the registries, things that touch registrars. , things that are just of concerns to governments or law enforcement, there's lots of ways for us to get together and work together to fix things without, you know, immediately hitting the contract or going full policy development process, because that's, frankly, slow and cumbersome. Takes some time.

For example, in collaboration and consultation with the community, registries have created several Best Practice documents. Those clarify processes and policies. They also provide resources for other contracted parties, frankly. Law enforcement partners, governments, those who are just trying to figure out you know what a registry does,

where you fit in the ecosystem.

Some of those things, some of those best practices, the topics have been covered, our Trusted Notifier Frameworks, the contracted party house definition of DNS AbuseAbuse. , the framework for domain name generating algorithms -- I say that slowly, because I ruin it every time -- and we've also done other items like webinars. We have on your registry and registrar sites, we have a presentation on data disclosures and our prospectus as a registry and registrars.

We routinely engage with the community via Outreach sessions. I'm sure that you, guys, were all busy, but right before this we had a DNS AbuseAbuse Working Group Outreach session and that's where the contracted parties give updates and get input from the community. on DNS AbuseAbuse efforts. : what we can do next, how we can work together. Those are all the recorded. I really encourage everyone to go back and take some time once you're home and have a free hour, listen to that.

But it's also important to note that how registries participate go hand-in-hand with ICANN SCOPE and our operational functions as registries. For example, registries deal in domain names and we have a finite number of tools. Sam touched on this, also. A finite number of tools and actions that are disposal, such as locking or suspending a domain name. We do not have the same tools available to us, for example, as a platform or another intermediary. , which would have control over the content on a website, or be able to have access to

someone who would have the tool. to take action on the content of a website.

And when I say all of that, I mean, if there's a concern about a particular piece of content on perhaps a large forum web page, that's something that has, you know, thousands of web pages attached to it, and it's one domain name. A registry can only take the action to suspended the entire thing and that often has the unintended consequence of, you know, as Sam touched on, taking down hundreds of web pages, associated e-mails, and just making everything attached to that domain name not reachable and not function properly. So we're really very focused on staying within our scope and our roles, because we do only have those finite tools.

But I think, in general, what we would like you to take away from the registries roles in the ICANN community, is that the registries are dedicated to working with the community on issues in many, many ways. Whether that be discussing our contracts, how they work, what they mean, what those requirements are. Whether that means going into PDPs and we had great GAC participation in PDPs and really appreciate the GAC's efforts over the past few years to kind of figure out how at that works best for you to engage in those policy development processes. Because that input is really important and really valuable.

And just working together to make sure we can be with the community. Work on issues. , make sure the multistakeholder model itself has winds, that's strong and makes progress. So that we can continue to

address those issues that are important to the ICANN community. So, please feel free to reach out with questions or concerns, ideas on how we can do all that better.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: All right. Thanks very much, Beth. And Karen, thanks for that. So, before we go into the next section, which is to talk about a few topics of shared interest between our Stakeholder Group and the GAC, government representatives, we wanted to pause here and see if there are any questions about what we've covered so far in our presentation, or if you just have any other questions about registries, the businesses that make up our Stakeholder Group, or the way we participate in the ICANN community and the things that are important to us?

ALISA HEAVER: Hello. This is Alisa Heaver, for the record, from the Netherlands. I was wondering if a domain name is bought via a reseller, does the registrant have a contractual relationship with the registrar? Or with the reseller? Thanks.

BETH BACON: Some of that varies with the reseller-registrar relationship, and I am going to punt hard to the registrars who are coming in next, and they can answer this very definitively, but the registrars are -- sorry -- we could have done a remember job naming these, guys, out of the gates.

So the registrar is required to have a contractual relationship with their reseller and there are some requirements in the registrar accreditation agreement for them to have context and with the -- through their resellers and the registrant, but they are not universal and they are not uniform.

They can implement them in different ways, so I'm going to say that yes, most of the time, but please ask the registrars and they will give you an better answer.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: We had another question right behind.

ROS KENNYBIRCH: Yes, thank you. Ros KennyBirch, UK. I actually had a very similar question, so that's fine, but I did have a second question, and it's just when I thought it would be helpful to contextualize, as a newer member, as well, that had this question and has been re-visiting it, maybe if we just laid out the difference between regional Internet registries and how they differ from your role, because they're quite separate, I think. Thanks.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: Yeah, thank you very much for that question and this gets to the question of the names versus the numbers in ICANN. So the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, we often think of domain names as the name side and IP addresses as the numbers side.

So the role of regional Internet registries, and again, we could have chosen better words, that are less confusing instead of naming everything almost the same thing -- regional Internet registries are responsible for provisioning IP addresses, which is a more technical function in a lot of ways.

To go kind of a little bit deeper into the way domain names work; domain names are alphanumeric labels for IP addresses that are easier for humans to remember, and to use on a day-to-day basis. It's a lot easier to remember something like ICANN.org than 3.16.217. however many there are, right? So domain names translate IP addresses on the Internet into something that humans can read, remember, use and things like that.

So that's how we differentiate ourselves, registries, gTLD registries and also ccTLD registries. , domain names registries collectively. We are responsible for being databases of the domain names themselves. And they are organized per the extension at the end: .com, .net. .club. .digital, all those. Versus the IP addresses, which are just number blocks and get provisioned to registries, to other kind of software operators for all different kinds of purposes for use on the Internet. But that's a great question, and thank you for asking it.

ABDALMONEM GALILA:

Yeah. This is Abdalmonem Galila, for the record. I will be speaking in the scope from the registry side, away from the registry side. So, the relation between the registry and ICANN; you said that inside the graph,

that it is Registry Agreement. You mean by that, it is an obligation from ICANN to the registry, or what? Or it is a commitment for registry to comply for something? Thank you.

ALAN WOODS:

Hello. Alan Woods, for the record. Yes. We all have Registry Agreements with ICANN and in those agreements there are a lot of requirements on the registry: how to run a registry, elements of the registry and also, which is obviously a very important, of importance to the GAC, would be things such as public interest commitments that we have in the schedule. So all the Registry Agreements for the new gTLDs, the new generic top-level domains are publicly available on the ICANN website. They are rather long but they are somewhat uniform.

Obviously, the different types of registries that Karen went into will have different flavors but generally very uniform. So I would encourage you to -- if you have the legal background to -- or not. If you enjoy legal documents, go in and have a look at them and specifically the specifications, which come at the end and it kind of tells the story of what we, as registries, need to do.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU:

Just to add one more detail to that, there is a unique and distinct Registry Agreement, so an individual contract for every individual gTLD that exists out there. So, even Alan's company that operates almost 300, that means there's 300 contracts with ICANN that govern each

individual gTLD's requirements, and other commitments and things that have to be met. Go ahead.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yeah, again, Abdalmonem Galila from Egypt. So, in some countries, maybe I am a person, I could own the registry. I have the delegation from ICANN to me as a person, not for an entity. Okay? That is a problem, how could we resolve that? At some time, in some countries that the registry itself doesn't operate any more. So how could resolve something like this? Okay?

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: I am going to try to take that in two parts. One part is about whether an individual person could have a Registry Agreement contract with ICANN. That's something that is not currently permitted, and that is part of the policy that governed -- and has traditionally governed the new gTLD program. So one of the aspects of that policy, one of the rules in the Applicant Guide Book was that it had to be a corporate entity. So individuals could come together and establish a corporate entity and then apply for a TLD with ICANN, but that's just a rule that was set and has been set for a long time and I think the only way to change that would be through some kind of new policy making within ICANN.

The second question about when one company is -- I just want to clarify that I understood the question -- when a company operates a gTLD but then stops operating it? Or if it kind of goes out of existence? So there

is an ability to transfer the operation of a gTLD from one entity to another. ICANN reviews both companies, makes sure that there is a clean and functional process to transition all of the domain names from one company to another, so that all of the registrants still have access to their domain names, can still use all the services, websites, e-mail and all of that stuff. So that becomes a bit of a legal process, right, of a transfer of the contract and then a new, entities takes over the Registry Agreement from the old operator and can continue to operate it.

There have been cases where some gTLDs are, for lack of a better word, de-commissioned or not -- like not delegated or undelegated from the route where they go out of existence. And in that case the registrants just no longer have the ability to operate domains under that specific gTLD. So it is something that does happen. It's just quite rare, and when there's a gTLD that has a lot of domain names under management and a lot of registrants that are using those domain names, ICANN has a number of processes in place to make sure that the gTLD does not go out of existence just because the business that operated it failed for some reason.

So they have a lot of back stops and back up measures to make sure that that doesn't happen.

BETH BACON:

Just to add to that. Some of those measures and things are outlined. The basic ones are outlined in the Registry Agreement. If you take a quick pass at even the headings, there there's emergency escrow, all of

these requirements to ensure that registrants are protected.

LUCIANO MAZZA DE ANDRADE: Yes, thank you. Is Luciano, from Brazil. . One of the first charts you showed there, about the percentages, I wanted to understand it better. This was 2% of registries from Latin America and 1% from Africa. This chart shows the members of the group or is it a reflection of the number of registries around the world? What's the implication of these. ? What is your feeling why you have such a low representation for those regions. ?

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: That is a great question. This is actually just the raw numbers of our membership, so these, in total, should -- if my math is correct -- add up to 82, so it's not 1% of our members are from Africa. We have a single registry right now, a member from Africa.

This is not an exact microcosm of the gTLDs that exist out in the world. It's not -- I wouldn't say it's a one to one relationship. But I would say it's fairly reflective of the distribution of gTLD operators throughout the world. One of the things that is a big topic -- it was a topic in the 2012 round of new gTLD applications and I think will be a big topic in the next round, is how to get more participation from different parts of the world where there isn't a lot of registry operator or also -- and I'm sure the registrars can speak to this in the next hour -- a lot of registrar representation.

We just don't see as many who come from the African region. , the Asia Pacific region, and even the Latin American and Caribbean region. I, personally, am not an economist. I can't speak well to the business reasons why that might be, but I think there is a lot that we, as operators, and we, as an ICANN community, can do to make the environment welcoming so that people know about ICANN, know about gTLDs, know about domain name registrars and hopefully want to pursue that business at some point.

Was there another hand on this side of the room that we missed? All right. Then, at this point, just to keep us on schedule for time, I'm going to hand the floor over to Alan,. who's going to talk a bit about DNS AbuseAbuse, as we know that that's a major topic of interest for the whole ICANN community. This meeting. And then we do need to make sure to leave time and then the GOs are going to take over for us.

ALAN WOODS:

Alan Woods, again, for the record, and obviously, when you hear the term "DNS AbuseAbuse" you're going to think straight way that that is a very large, very, very large and very broad concept to try and fit in in less than ten minutes. So this is just going to be a very high-level introduction to DNS Abuse, and how a registry will deal with it.

Luckily, my colleagues have already dealt with a few of the key themes that I'm going to be going through on this. So, we'll start -- can you go to the next slide, please? So, just to say, these slides, I would encourage

you to read yourselves. I use them more kind of as a reference point after this. So please feel free to look at them, there's a few links in there which I think might be very helpful for you, if you want to delve a little bit deeper into the role of us, as registry operators.

So, as Sam and Beth touched on earlier, there's a lot of abuse online and I think we need to be very open, and very blunt on that the Internet is used for abuse, a lot. But within that there are layers. And I would ask you to consider the layers that are within abuse as a concept. So, as Sam pointed out, there's abuse on social media platforms. They are instances of abuse that should be dealt with by the social media platform themselves, as opposed to by the registry.

There's abuse on major marketplaces, so if there was an illegal item, say on a large -- Amazon.com or on eBay, it would be inappropriate for a registry to take down that entire domain. It would need to go to that marketplace to deal with, on their own terms and conditions, and their own platform. And then, there's also abuse of services.

So not just looking at the platforms. Looking at things such as a website, where the content is on a website. You know, it is up to maybe the website provider, or the hosting provider who actually has that content on their servers. To deal with that particular instance of abuse. much more directly and much more surgically. Or even e-mail. So again, if a registry is asked to take down a malicious e-mail, the only thing we can do in our action is take down every single e-mail associated with that domain. Not the account, not that one issue of an

e-mail, but absolutely everything, so we need to be very mindful of our role in that.

So, as a subset, DNS Abuse, when we talk about it, is actually another layer, another chunk of the much broader problem of Internet abuse. And just doing a bit of a statement there saying that us, as the Registry Stakeholder Group, we acknowledge that DNS Abuse does occur and we do have definitely a role in the mitigation of that abuse. But we are not alone a solution to Internet abuse as a whole. And I think that's a very important starting point to understand that we all would love to do as much as possible, but you know, our actions can have a very damaging broader collateral effect, and we have to be mindful of that.

So, if I can move on to the next slide, please. Thank you. So when a registry is trying to deal with DNS Abuse, we, and again, as I mentioned this earlier, we have a very, very limited and blunt set of tools, and even on a set of tools, it's really only comes down to one thing. And that is removing the resolution of that domain from the Internet. So a person going to their Web browser, putting in, you know, compliance.ninja -- that's my one -- it will not go to compliance.ninja. It just will not exist on the Internet, in fact.

So the registry -- we don't delete any content associated with the domain, and again, Sam mentioned this. If we take down the resolution of a domain, the content which may have been damaging and which a person may have complained on is still accessible. And to go back to the IP address, if you knew the IP address, for instance, of that domain,

you could just type that in and that avenue of access still remains. Our action does not affect the content. Just a means of access of that content. So again, we need to temper our response knowing that perhaps our action isn't actually going to stop that particular issue.

So, another important thing, when you think of registries dealing with abuse.

The key concept -- and again, this is very high-level, so apologies that it is this high -- but happy to answer any questions. Our action can have a huge effect. So if we, for instance, got a report of abuse on say, ICANN.org. We can't say, we can take down that little piece of abuse and it's all fine. No, we will take down all of ICANN.org. But that's not just the website, ICANN.org. Every single e-mail address that ICANN.org relies on for their day-to-day business, will also disappear. If, for instance, they had an app and an app in the background on your phone, and it required there was an infrastructure for ICANN.org. Then that would also cease to function properly.

I use apple.news. Not many people know but apple.news is one of our -- .news is one of identity digitals as top-level domains. Apple.news in the background has a lot of apple.news/thecontent. So again, we would not want to take that down, as it would take down Apple.news for the entire world, with one single action. That would be disastrous.

And then platforms, as well. When you're thinking about the content and the abuse that might be coming through on platforms, and again,

we all know of things that have happened, perhaps on large social media platforms, the Meta's, the TikTok's. The only action that a registry, if a complaint came to us as a registry, would not be to take down that particular Facebook profile but every single profile on Facebook, and anything through the app properly. I don't know their infrastructure but it probably would have a huge effect.

So with one small click of a button on our end, as a registry, we can cause ridiculous amounts of collateral damage. We need to be clear when we take an action. And maybe we go to the next slide, please. When we take that action, we weigh up the proportionality of it. And that is as simple as we are the most appropriate party to take the most appropriate action, but with the least amount of collateral harm possible, because the hosting company, the platform, the e-mail service provider, might be able to surgically remove that particular abuse as opposed to the domain, which will remove everything. So it's a weighty responsibility and something we take exceptionally serious.

To go briefly, and again, very high-level, is the general registry process. On a day-to-day basis we get a lot of reports of what people claim to be domain abuse, all the caveats that I've said to you before in play. A lot of them, we monitor, we have statistical and technical analysis that we must do in our contracts; so we do a level of monitoring. There's a lot of sources that we can look at. But a lot of the sources out there, and a lot of the sources that are used day-to-day in ICANN parlance, and when we are talking about DNS Abuse, they don't come with any evidence of the abuse.

So most of the time -- not all, but some of them -- most of the time we need to enrich those reports. We need to see whether or not those reports are valid. That there is any evidence to support the action. And also, are we simply the most appropriate party to take action at that time. ? So there's a lot of work. It's not just, there's something reported. , we will then take action. There's a whole story in between. And with the evidencing we must, as I said, make sure that when we take an action -- because ultimately, what we're doing, we are forcing a breaking of a contract that when we do take that action, when we interrupt that domain from resolving that there is a due process. That there is a reason behind us taking that action to break that contract, so we can justify that action.

Made a point here, as well, and it is very important, and the registrars will probably talk about this as well. They jealously guard their ability to intervene because they are the ones that hold the contract with the registrant. They have that direct relationship and they don't necessarily appreciate when a registry comes in and runs roughshod over them. We work together, for the most time exceptionally well, and therefore we will always try and defer to the registrar in the first place, to help ensure the minimal impact. Because they have data, they have information and they have a relationship that might indicate that the domain isn't actually malicious, it was compromised or hacked in a way, and they are the only ones that can really delve into that, when it comes to the domain use.

That's the general DNS Abuse kind of process. And we can go to the next slide, please. And I'm very mindful, I literally want to give you all the time possible. This has a lot of writing on it, and I apologize for this, but this is more of a primer for you. If you want to have a look at a few of the initiatives that we, as the Registry Stakeholder Group, in connection with the registrars and the contracted party has put together in some instances. , the framework on Domain Name Generation Algorithms. We worked with the PSWG, which is the Public Safety Working Group, for those who are very new. That is a sub-committee of the GAC. We have a Guide to Abuse Reporting. And also, we have a Trusted Notifier Framework. Now, I won't go into that but, as the name would suggest, these are reporters who we might have a specific relationship with and it's based on the level of evidence and what we can do. It's understanding between reporters and the registry or registrar.

Very quickly, the supported third-party initiatives. ICANN is not the only forum in which we work on matters such as DNS Abuse, because ICANN is very much specifically only to do with DNS Abuse. It does not touch content. And those conversations are very hard to have. Therefore we must also look to different forums where we can have those conversations, to figure out, is it ever appropriate for a registry to intervene. So, I would ask you to look at the Internet & Jurisdiction Policy Network. The top DNS, which is another kind of group of registries and registrars, and industry people who are trying to deal with the DNS Abuse issue.

The DNS Abuse Institute, which was set up by Public Interest Registry, is a very good place to go, specifically to further the conversation beyond the ICANN sphere. And also looking at something called NetBeacon, which is -- and I'm sorry, I'm going to eat into your time a little bit on this one -- it's very important for you to know of NetBeacon, because this is a new initiative where it is a single point for the escalation and the reporting of DNS Abuse that will be able to be sent to individual registries and registrars, without having to go to each individual one yourself.

So, for your consumer affairs departments and people, I would suggest that NetBeacon is something I would ask you all to look at and see how it can be used to further the action of anti-DNS Abuse.

We have efforts under way. I'm not going to go into them. We are constantly working in order to improve education and evolve, and I would ask you perhaps to look at the links that I have included in that, as well. And if you go to the next slide very quickly, this is something that ICANN themselves put out. Just to show that, we are not saying that the DNS Abuse isn't happening. DNS Abuse is happening. And we are trying our best to deal with it as comprehensively as possible. And over the last 4 years, you can see there is an inexorable trend downwards. We are not there yet, but we're getting there. And I think it's very important to look at this and see; we are doing a lot, in toward get those numbers to trend down and we will continue to do so.

And with that, I'm going to stop and apologize to Nacho for eating into

his time.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU: I think, what we'll do is Nacho will turn over to you and then save, if we have time, for any questions about Alan's presentation and your presentation.

NACHO AMADOZ: Sure. Thank you, Sam. As you have there, we are going to be introducing the GeoTLD Group. So, we provide an extra layer of yet another concept, but things that apply and that have been explained to the gTLDs, also apply to the GeoTLDs. Because we are just a gTLD with, in some cases, certain specific characteristics that we thought might be good to layout, for you to understand, and to identify what we are and what we are doing.

Go to the next slide, please. So, as you can see, we are a group. As a group, we are part of the Registries Stakeholder Group but we are also an international not-for-profit association based in Belgium and we represent the interests of the geographic top-level domains that represent a city, a region, a language or a culture. That is important for us to highlight because within the ICANN definition, a GeoTLD is a gTLD that has the name of a city, or of a region, but we go beyond that as a group; because we think that that narrow definition is not necessarily the best suited to represent us as a group, because we have certain TLDs, such as .cat, that identify a language and a culture.

Some others represent clearly a region, .eus, some others, cities, such as Cape Town or Miami, but there are some others that are NYC, for example, that is not a geographic TLD itself, but it's obvious that it's representing the city of New York. So we go a little bit beyond that and you can see what's the composition of our members if you go to our website. We have members and observers, .Swiss for example is an observer, but is also part of the group and a very active part of the group.

Go to the next slide and I think that we will skip the video in order to make it a bit short and you can go to that one. , as we said, we belong in the gTLD space. We have a Registry Agreement with ICANN. That Registry Agreement has, as Sam or Beth said, sorry, has a uniform model and then, in some cases, and in our case that would be the Specification 12 for those GeoTLDs that are community TLDs. , which are most of us, I think. But we represent what is our community, what are the kind of measures that we are going to be adopting to enforce the eligibility measures that we declared when we applied to create the gTLD. But there is one element that I think that is really specific for us, which is the proximity to a concrete community.

That community, as said before, can be embedded within a region. , within a city, or identified by a language. And in some cases, for some of our members, that could take us to go a little bit away from some of the things that have been said. For example, we consider that, in some cases, we have a direct relationship with the registrant. And that does

not create any problem for us, because we are a very, very specific type of registry that operates under certain premises. And in some cases, and that could create some confusion, might assimilate us through the role that some ccTLDs may play, but in a lower scale and just for a concrete geographic region.

But that is just the way that we work. That doesn't mean that we are not gTLDs, because we are. That also is reflected -- go to the next slide, please. Yeah, in the kind of issues that we are concerned about. We work within the Registries Stakeholder Group to address all these issues, and DNS Abuse, as I was saying, is you know one of the hottest topics because it's taking up all of the space of when we think about: what is the topic that we need to discuss or that we need to present to people, that approach us for the first time, because they are worried that the DNS space is super unsecure and super unsafe. Well, it's not.

The Internet has some things -- the DNS it's just a reflection of that. If you go down to see what is the volume, in our case, and this is, I think, thanks to that proximity and to the kind of model that we have applied in our governance and to the specific connections that we have with local governments, with search, that volume is super low. And that is still concerning, and those cases we care about, and we have the possibility, due to our specific nature, to work out how to prevent them, and how to react to them in connection, first of all, with the fellow registries that we work with. Second, with the registrars, because that's the channel that has been described.

But thirdly, in our case, with the local law enforcement agencies that do tend to regard us as a natural ally when it comes to incidents that happen in the Catalan-speaking area, because we are, in some cases, their gate to the DNS world. So, if there is something that does not depend on what we can do, at least we can help them understand who are the places they can go to, to check out how to work out, how to prevent and resolve, if that is the necessity.

That proximity, I think, is also a part of -- one of the things that, for us, is also one of the hottest topics and that's why Benjamin Louis, from .Alsace here is going to talk later. Which is, how do we represent those local identities and how do we work with regional local governments for that. That is something that he is going to be addressing later. If you go to the next slide. As we said, DNS Abuse is one of the hottest topics and we are going to be having a session on Wednesday about what we are doing as GeoTLD Group, and what our members are doing to give coverage to the issue, and to maximize prevention and to minimize damage.

We have here different approaches, and we are just highlighting two of them. In one case is the .EUS summary of actions that they have been [00:57:01 - inaudible]. This is a presentation that will be run on Wednesday, but we wanted to show how they work specifically with the governments and the kind of agreements that they have. And if you want to know more about how this relationship with the local governments has been established, and is working out, please come to our session on Wednesday.

The next example -- and please go to the next slide -- is what can be done after that to reflect on what is the trend? . Alan's slide shows how the DNS Abuse is going down and it's not going as much down as we would like to, but we were working for that.

And in some cases, like the one we are presenting here, with .Swiss and .ch, we have, in our space, the possibility to co-operate very naturally with ccTLDs, as to analyze what is going on in that concrete subsection. And you have here the reference for an article about how the Swiss government has worked to introduce into their legislation measures to prevent and to react to DNS Abuse. This is very interesting because it's a good experience, it's very well detailed in the article that's referenced on the slide and because it also covers two TLDs. One ccTLD, which is .ch, and another gTLD, which is a member of the GeoTLD Group, even though it is not a geo, by this specific narrow definition by ICANN, which is the .Swiss TLD. So you can have that information. We thought it might be good for you to see how, in different situations, there are different models, but that they are also part of the general trend that we are working together to establish these institutions. , these places where we can all convene and see what are we doing in our different models, that can help others address the issue.

And with that I would like to give the word to Benjamin, to talk about that other topic.

BENJAMIN LOUIS:

Thank you, Nacho. So, Benjamin Louis, for the record, from .Alsace. Just a few words to finish this session, . about the next round of new gTLDs. So, as you heard, most part of the time the TLD owner is a local public authority and that's important. Even if the TLD can be managed by a third party. Everywhere in the world, from some years ago, many actors. of these GeoTLDs, like us, are discussing or working with other public authority who wants to create the top-level domain, so you can see on the screen most of the reason.

So they wait for the next round to develop their own digital strategy, a kind of place of trust, which is often based on those topics so I don't know if you -- I don't have more time, but they really want to offer a new tool to local company, for example, to go online, and by this way they want to build a digital place of trust. That's the most important part.

So it's path of digital sovereignty for a local public authority. So most of them are waiting for this next round. Thank you.

SAMANTHA DEMETRIOU:

All right. Thank you both. I'm very sorry that we ate up so much of the hour. I blame myself. I thought my portion was going to be a lot shorter than it end up being. So, sorry, Nacho and Benjamin. Sorry to cut into your time a little bit.

We are still available. I know it's time for a coffee break but if anyone has any last questions now, or we can be right outside if anyone wants to ask us questions offline, after the fact. Up to you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: We can probably take a couple more questions just before the break. So maybe just -- I know there are a few hands up, so if you can't get to all, as Beth, sorry, said,. by all means, we can meet after. So let's just take one. I see another one in the back, so yes.

CHARLES NOIR: Thank you very much. Hi, my name is Charles Noir and I'm speaking for Canada. Just a quick question going back to the idea of a domain take down. We've seen a lot of seizures in the news. Can, for this crowd, can you explain the difference between a domain take down and a domain seizure? And what's involved? Thank you.

ALAN WOODS: Thank you very much. Alan Woods, for the record. So a seizure, generally speaking, is where we are asked to specifically transfer a domain or intercept the traffic going from a domain. So we can put in specific name servers to, what we call, sink hole a particular domain. The reason why it's considered a seizure. Is it is taking that domain out of the control of the registrant, therefore, generally speaking, as it interferes with the rights of a registrant. , we would normally seek a court order for those, because it becomes more complex. It's not in every case and I would ask you maybe to have a look at the -- there is a malware and botnets at scale. That's not the name of the document, but I have put a link in there, and we talk about -- we worked with the

PSWG to try and streamline that process and talk about the expectations in there.

The actual suspension of a domain is something that can, at times not, actually, interfere with the rights of a registrant, because we might reserve a domain that hasn't been created yet, for the malware purposes or botnets and Domain Generation Algorithms. But, in the interest of time, I would encourage you to look at the document that we did for the contracted parties, as it gives a lot of details on that, hopefully.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you so much. We have a couple more questions and we do have one in the chat, as well. So let me allow my friend from, I believe it is India, correct?

ANAND RAJE:

Thank you very much. Can I see the first slide of the GeoTLD? The second one? Here is the -- For example, Digital Identities; we are talking about the GeoTLD. And then, in the example, you are mentioning the cities, regions, language and cultures.. City, regions, I understand. I just want to know why. Why they mention the language and cultures. ? Is it not more compatible to. commit to TLD, than GeoTLD. ?

NACHO AMADOZ:

. The idea of a GeoTLD is that it's a gTLD with a specific set of characteristics. When we were drafting the Applicant Guide Book for the 2012 round, there were some questions raised about what would happen if somebody wants to have the .Paris and is not sanctioned or authorized by the city of Paris. And the answer was, the city of Paris has to express specific support for somebody applying for that name, and therefore the category for GeoTLD was created.

But, in my view, that is biased, it all got inspired by the .cat, as being the first TLD that used the sponsor TLD category, to use it for a certain human community that was beyond a job or an industry, and that was language and culture. So we think that we all kind of represent identities that are based strictly or loosely, on their geographic and human community terms, and that's why the group is named as GeoTLD, to make it recognizable for people outside the niche of ICANN, but because it represents all these groups that are bound and united by the same idea of operating. a GeoTLD, for a specific human community that might be within a region, within a city, or, like in our case, for .cat in different regions, in different countries, but getting to focus on the language, which is what the GeoTLD in question represents.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you so much. We just could take two more. We have Jorge, in the chat, and Sudan after.

TARIK MERGHANI:

Tarik Merghani from Sudan. I have a question about, is there a difference between Geographic TLD and community gTLD. ? Is there a difference or is it the same. ? For example, I remember when I was in the steering committee, trying to apply. We already applied and those -- we were applying to geographic TLD. but they said no, you will just can't get community gTLD, I don't know what's the difference. And is it a difference about the policy. ? Is there a difference about the policy making, who makes the policy? Do they get policy from ICANN or from the region? And they talk about something like a list of IOS or something, a list from the U.N. so that you can get the -- also it was for a region. You know, Arab States is a big region. That domain was .arab for a reason. So we want to know, is there a restriction to get a GeoTLD. ? You said here it's for cities, region, language cultures, such things. This is my first questions.

The other question is about -- I can't understand what the -- for example EU, .Europe is it a ccTLD or a GeoTLD? Thank you, thank you very much.

NACHO AMADOZ:

In response to the first question, a gTLD is a GeoTLD by the ICANN definition, if it's representing a concrete city or region. So, one good example here to discern between how it works is the .Paris and .NYC. NYC stands for New York City, something recognizable world-wide. Is not a GeoTLD by the ICANN definition, but .Paris is, and in both cases, they got the support from the cities because, you know, NYC is so connected to New York City.

The group is called GeoTLD Group but it gathers TLDs that are not strictly GeoTLDs. Okay?

What is the difference between a community and a geo? If, a community TLD can be a GeoTLD or cannot. .bank is a community TLD, if I'm not wrong, and .radio is another community TLD. And they justify it -- their community status by gathering support from the different organizations that handle the industry.

A GeoTLD can be a community TLD, or it can be not a community TLD, and the difference is that gTLD, being a community TLD needs to abide by some commitments to enforce the eligibility and the name selection, and the terms and conditions that it's going to apply for a specific community, as defined in the application that was issued to ICANN, when requesting the creation of that TLD.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you. I do have to allow Jorge. We are way past the time for the break. So, Jorge, you have two seconds to ask your question and I think we have to take the break. So, Jorge Cancio, please.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you. Very shortly, to thank Nacho and Benjamin for the presentation, and to stress, really, to my colleagues in the GAC that GeoTLDs are, on one side a big opportunity for local, regional, national governments. It's a good thing and there are success stories. I hope

that .swiss is more or less a good success story. And to stress, also, for everybody in the room and for everybody in the community that it's very important, at least to my eyes, to run such applications always in contact and in conversation with the authorities that are affected by that top-level domain. Because that's a precondition for a good success in that application, be it a formal GeoTLD or not. Because, otherwise, you run very quickly into troubles. So, just to stress those points. Thank you. .

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you, thank you so much, Jorge, and thank you, everybody. . I do apologize for us going over time but I do understand interest in this topic. So, ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much. And, ladies and gentlemen, thank you, and we do have a 20-minute break, so we will start back at half past. Thank you so much.

(Recording stopped)

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]