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ICANN79 GAC Discussion on New gTLD Program Next Round

3 March 2024

Agenda

1. Introduction & New gTLDs Team - Nigel Hickson (5 minutes)
2. GAC Discussion on Applicant Support - Rosalind Kennybirch (30 minutes)
3. Implementation Review Team - Marika Konings, Lars Hoffmann (20 minutes)
 - a. Update
 - b. GAC questions/discussion to ICANN org
4. Cost/benefit analysis of new gTLDs - Nigel Hickson (10 minutes)
5. AOB

1. GAC New gTLDs Team

Nigel Hickson (UK), GAC Vice Chair

GAC New gTLDs Team

- As a next round of new gTLDs approaches, the preparation and policy work continues to increase, including:
 - *Policy Development Processes,*
 - *Implementation Review Team outputs,*
 - *Public comment proceedings,*
 - *Cross Community Small Teams,*
 - *Community Consultation processes,*
 - *Drafting Teams, etc.*
- To address this challenge, and in the midst of continuing committee turnover, the GAC leadership has recognized the importance of expanding the GAC team focusing on new gTLDs;
- The aim is to have collective coverage from GAC members on all the priority topics areas associated with new gTLDs.

GAC New gTLDs Team

- Following a recent call for volunteers, the following GAC members were identified as interested in supporting this effort, coordinated by Jason Merritt (Canada):
 - Ken-Ying Tseng (Chinese Taipei)
 - Rosalind Kennybirch (UK)
 - Thiago Dal Toe (Colombia)
- All other interested GAC members are encouraged to join the team of volunteers who will help prepare the committee for the next round of new gTLDs.

Thank You!

2. GAC Discussion on Applicant Support Program

Rosalind Kennybirch (UK)

I. Brief History of ICANN Applicant Support (1 of 3)

- A. Conceptualization of Applicant Support
- B. Original GAC Interest in Applicant Support
- C. Joint Community Work to Establish Applicant Support
- D. Established Applicant Support Framework in Previous New gTLD Round (2012)

I. Brief History of ICANN Applicant Support (2 of 3)

A. Conceptualization of Applicant Support

1. 2006 - “*merit in graduated application fees*” - GNSO Council New gTLD Committee
2. 2008/09 - growing community interest in supporting concept but no type of fee reduction in draft Applicant Guidebooks

B. Original GAC Interest in Applicant Support

1. 2009 GAC advocates for support - “*a single fee structure creates limitations, notably by skewing the market in favor of applications from the developed world and those with significant financial resources*”

C. Joint Community Working Group to Establish Applicant Support (JAS WG)

1. 2010 - ICANN Board requested working group “to develop a sustainable approach to applicants requiring assistance in applying for and operating gTLDs”
2. Nominal participation by the GAC in WG
3. JAS WG Final Report Recommendations (Sept 2011)

I. Brief History of ICANN Applicant Support (3 of 3)

D. Applicant Support Framework in New gTLD Round (2012)

1. Considered by ICANN Board (Oct '11)
2. ICANN org and Board approved (Dec '11)
3. ICANN Launches program / produces Financial Assistance Handbook (Jan '12)
4. Key Features:
 - a. Access to Pro Bono services for “startup” registries
 - b. Financial assistance (fee of 47k USD vs. standard 185k USD fee)(2M USD Fund)
 - c. Promo efforts (e.g., web site, guidebook, fact sheets, etc.)

GNSO Guidance Process on Applicant Support

- In August 2022 the GNSO Council [approved](#) the GGP Initiation Request to provide additional guidance to support the eventual implementation efforts relating to the Applicant Support Program.
- GAC Members appointed to the GGP on Applicant Support effort included:
 - ✓ Argentina
 - ✓ United Kingdom
 - ✓ Universal Postal Union.
- The [Final Report](#) was submitted to the GNSO Council on 8 December 2023 and adopted by the GNSO Council on 22 December 2023.
- As such, the [GNSO Council Recommendations Report](#) regarding the adoption of the Final Report was submitted to the ICANN Board for consideration on 8 January 2024.

Next Steps

- On 22 December 2023, the GNSO Council voted to approve, by a GNSO Supermajority, all nine (9) final consensus recommendations contained in the Final Report of the GNSO Guidance Process (GGP) for Applicant Support.
- The GNSO submitted a Recommendations Report to the ICANN Board (8 January 2024) for its review of the recommendations approved by the GNSO Council, which the GNSO Council recommends be adopted by the ICANN Board.
- The Board is considering the recommendation report.

Applicant Support Program Handbook - Public Comment

- The Applicant Support Program (ASP) is intended to provide financial and non-financial support for eligible entities that demonstrate financial need and work in the public interest.
- The ASP Handbook offers a step-by-step guide to applying for support and includes information on application deadlines, criteria, processes, and evaluation.
- The handbook is part of ICANN's effort to implement the policy recommendations on Topic 17: Applicant Support of the [Final Report on the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process](#) while taking into account the Board's pending consideration of guidance provided by the [GNSO Guidance Process \(GGP\) for Applicant Support](#).
- For each section of the [Applicant Support Program \(ASP\) Handbook](#), commenters may indicate whether the section in question accurately reflects the policy recommendations on Topic 17, Applicant Support, based on the recommendations of the [Subsequent Procedures \(SubPro\) PDP Final Report](#) and the guidance of the [GNSO Guidance Process on Applicant Support](#).
- The Public Comment period will close on **2 April 2024**.
- GAC members are welcome to submit input to this public comment proceeding.

3. Implementation Review Team Update

Rida Tahir (Canada)

Marika Konings (ICANN org)

Lars Hoffmann (ICANN org)

Implementation Review Team (IRT) - Recent Updates

- The IRT commenced its work in May 2023 and is expected to draft the next Applicant Guidebook (AGB) in preparation for the next round of new gTLDs.
- The GAC appointed a representative and an alternate to participate in the process, provide input to the IRT and report back to the broader committee on areas of importance to the GAC.
- GAC members appointed to the IRT are:
 - ✓ Canada (Representative)
 - ✓ UK (Alternate).
- Since ICANN78, the IRT has met approximately 22 times, and will meet in-person at ICANN79 three times.
- On 1 February 2024, the IRT posted a [first public comment proceeding](#) in a series of proceedings.
- Public comment seeks input from the ICANN community on proposed language for the AGB for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

Proposed Language for Applicant Guidebook - Public Comment

- First in a series of proceedings seeking input on proposed language for the AGB for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- In this proceeding, ICANN org is seeking community input on the following sections:
 - ✓ Predictability Framework (based on the outputs from Topic 2 of the Final Report);
 - ✓ Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines
 - ✓ Conflicts of Interest Process for Vendors and Subcontractors
 - ✓ Applicant Freedom of Expression
 - ✓ Universal Acceptance
 - ✓ Reserved and Blocked Names
 - ✓ Geographic Names
- The Public Comment period will close on **19 March 2024**.
- GAC members are welcome to submit input to this public comment proceeding.

GAC Discussion on New gTLD Program Next Round

ICANN79

Marika Konings
Lars Hoffmann

3 March 2024, 13:15-14:30 AST / 17:15-18:30 UTC



Agenda

1. Update on the implementation of the new governance model
2. IRT update
3. GAC Topics of Interest Highlights
4. What to expect at ICANN79

Update on the implementation of the new governance model

Agenda Item #1

Recent developments

- Appointment of new leadership team (1 November 2023):



Marika Konings, Program Owner



Lars Hoffmann, Program Manager

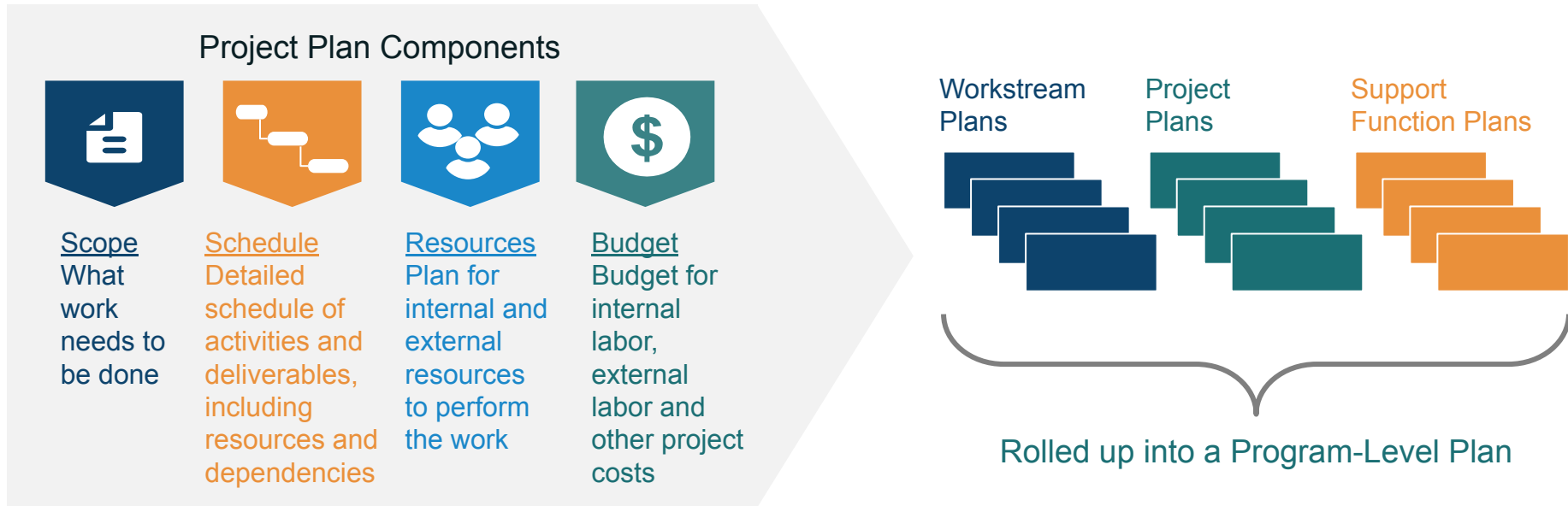


Julie Hoffmeister, Implementation Manager

- Program Organization, including establishment/confirmation of leadership at workstream, project and functional level

Program Governance Recap and Progress to Date

Objective: Align the overall program plan to each workstream, project, and supporting function to provide increased visibility, ownership, and governance.



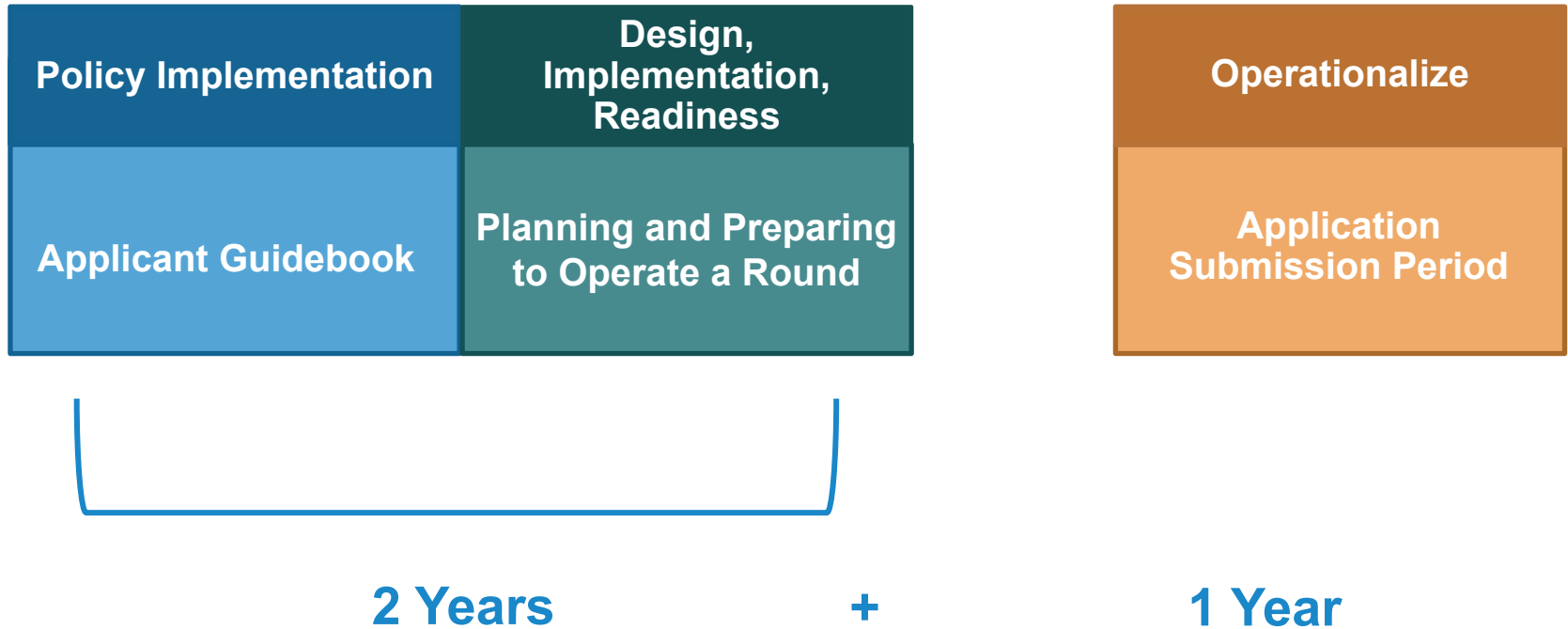
Next Steps:

- Teams continue to develop detailed plans, with support from program management
- Development of program-level plans based upon a roll up of detailed plans
- Documentation of a critical path to open the round, including dependencies within the program and external to the program
- Identification of major risks and issues with the detailed plan

Next Round Program Status Dashboard

Workstream / Project / Function	Status				
	All	Scope	Schedule	Resources	Budget
Overall Next Round Program	●	●	●	●	●
Workstreams					
Policy Development	●	●	●	●	●
Program Design	●	●	●	●	●
Infrastructure Development	●	●	●	●	●
Operationalization	●	●	●	●	●
Projects					
Project Foundations	●	●	●	●	●
ASP	●	●	●	●	●
RSP	●	●	●	●	●
TAMS	●	●	●	●	●
Contracting	●	●	●	●	●
Post Contracting & Ops	●	●	●	●	●
Fee Structure	●	●	●	●	●
Engagement, Comms and Website	●	●	●	●	●
RST	●	●	●	●	●
Support Functions					
Program Management	●	●	●	●	●
Finance	●	●	●	●	●
Human Resources	●	●	●	●	●
Vendor Management	●	●	●	●	●
Legal	●	●	●	●	●

Path to the Next and Future Rounds: “2+1”



Current target date for opening of the application window: April 2026

IRT Update

What has happened since ICANN78?

- Discussions around the draft **policy language** for the following topics were initiated with the IRT:
 - Topic 3 | Applications Assessed in Rounds
 - Topic 6 | Registry Service Provider Pre-Evaluation
 - Topic 17 | Applicant Support
 - Topic 19 | Application Queuing
 - Topic 28 | Role of Application Comment
 - Topic 30 | GAC Consensus Advice and GAC Early Warning
 - Topic 31 | Objections
 - Topic 39 | Registry System Testing
 - Root Zone Label Generation Rules module
- Three **sub-tracks** were launched:
 - [Applicant Support Program](#)
 - [Registry Service Provider Evaluation](#)
 - [Registry System Testing](#)

What has happened since ICANN78? (cont'd)

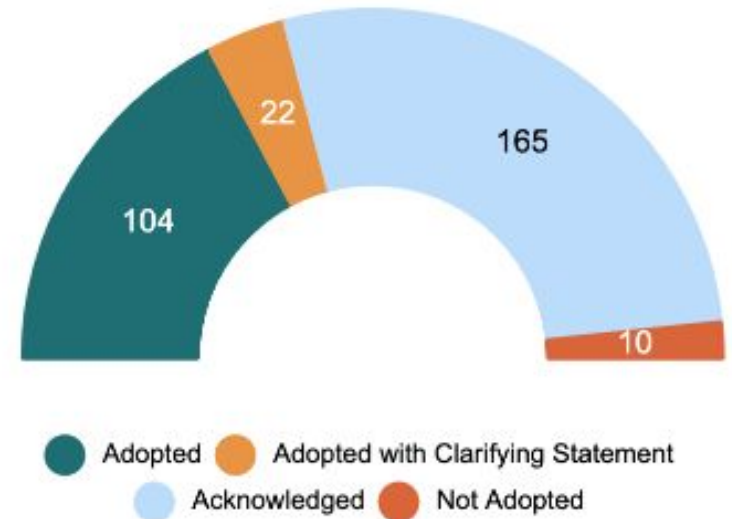
- An initial **Public Comment** proceeding was [launched](#) on 1 February 2024 and will stay open through 19 March 2024.
 - Next Public Comment proceedings of draft AGB sections planned for Q3 2023
 - The entire draft AGB will go through a final round of Public Comment prior to the launch of the Next Round.
- Work on the **Community Consultation on Public Interest Commitments/Registry Voluntary Commitments (PICs/RVCs)** was [started](#), with the objective to ensure that the framework for implementing the relevant Final Report recommendations, adopted by the ICANN Board on [26 October 2023](#), remains consistent with the ICANN Bylaws.
 - A [webinar](#) was held on 18 December 2023.
 - The Community Consultation was launched on 21 November 2023.

What has happened since ICANN78? (cont'd)

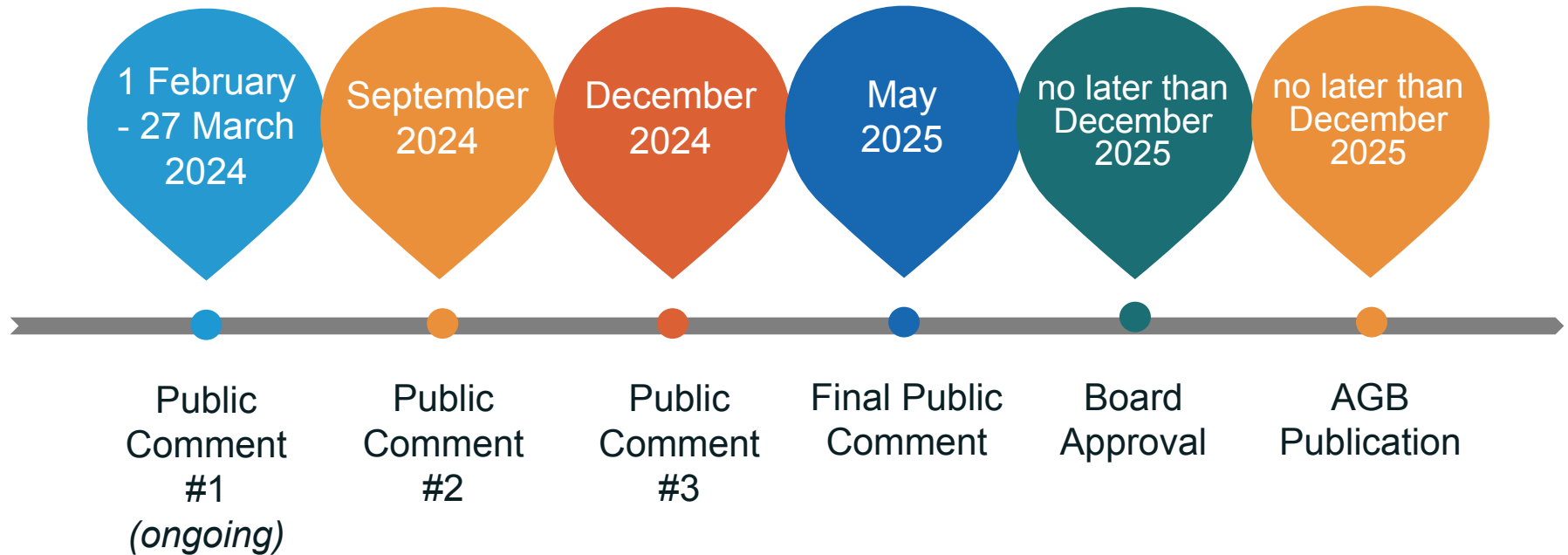
- The Board acted on the GAC Advice on Closed Generics and in a [letter dated 22 January 2024](#), the ICANN Board informed the At-Large Advisory Committee and the Generic Names Supporting Organization Council of its decision that “***closed generic gTLD applications*** will not be permitted until such time as there is an approved methodology and criteria to evaluate whether or not a proposed closed domain is in the public interest.”

Implementation Plan Overview

- An updated version of the Implementation Plan was published on the [SubPro IRT workspace](#) in February 2024.
- Updates reflect:
 - The new governance model,
 - The developments with the outstanding dependencies,
 - The [October 2023 Scorecard](#), following the [Board Resolutions](#) approved on 26 October 2023.



Remaining Timeline for AGB



Open for submission

Topic
2. Predictability
8. Conflicts of Interest
10. Applicant Freedom of Expression
11. Universal Acceptance
21. Reserved Names
21. Geographic Names

N..B. No extension will be granted.

Public Comment #2 | September 2024

Topic	IRT Discussions
30. GAC Consensus Advice and GAC Early Warning 28. Role of Application Comment 3. Applications Assessed in Rounds	✓
24. String Similarity Evaluations Root Zone Label Generation Rules 19. Application Queuing 31. Objections	ongoing
20. Application Change Requests 5. Applications Submission Limits 16. Applications Submission Period	March 2024
23. Closed Generics 22. Registrant Protections 25. IDNs	April 2024
18. Terms and Conditions 33. Dispute Resolution Procedures After Delegation	May 2024
15. Application Fees 27. Applicant Reviews	June 2024

All dates are TBC.

Topic	IRT Discussions
35. Auctions 32. Limited Challenge/Appeal Mechanism	July 2024
36. Base Registry Agreement 4. Different TLD Types	August 2024
29. Name Collisions 7. Metrics and Monitoring DNS Stability	September 2024
34. Community Applications 9. Registry Voluntary Commitments / Public Interest Commitments	October 2024

Remaining Dependencies for Policy Implementation

1. GNSO Council issuance of supplemental recommendations, if any, with regard to those outputs that the Board did not adopt and the Board's subsequent consideration of those recommendations.
2. Completion and/or Board consideration of the following dependencies:
 - a. IDN EPDP Phase 1 and Phase 2 Final Reports,
 - b. NCAP Study 2.
3. Board action on all outstanding Advice pertaining to the Next Round.
 - a. GAC: Auctions; Applicant Support (ICANN77 Communique),
 - b. ALAC: Closed Generics (Nov 2023),
 - c. SSAC: SAC114 (Comments on Draft Final Report),
 - d. Board to establish framework for PICs/RVCs.

GAC Topics of Interest Highlights

Agenda Item #3

GAC Topics of Interest Highlights

- **Geographic Names:** [Proposed language](#) out for Public Comment.
- **Reserved and Blocked Names:** [Proposed language](#) out for Public Comment.
- **GAC Advice and Early Warning:** [Language](#) shared with IRT.
- **Applicant Support:** [Draft Handbook out for Public Comment](#); [Support Applicant Review Panel RFP Announcement](#) published.
- **Private resolution of contentions sets:** Board to act on GAC advice; ICANN org working with auction expert.

What to expect at ICANN79

Agenda Item #4

Next Round Related Sessions @ ICANN79

Time UTC	Time AST	Session
Saturday, 2 March 2024		
13:00-14:00	09:00-10:00	GNSO: IDN EPDP Working Session
14:30-16:00	10:30-12:00	GDS: SubPro IRT Work Session (1 of 3)
Sunday, 3 March 2024		
14:30-16:00	10:30-12:00	GNSO Council Working Session (2 of 3)
17:15-18:30	13:15-14:30	GAC Discussion on New gTLD Program Next Round (1/2)
Monday, 4 March 2024		
14:30-16:00	10:30-12:00	Plenary Session: Community Consultation on PICs and RVCs
17:15-18:30	13:15-14:30	Name Collision Analysis Project (NCAP) Discussion Working Group Meeting
19:00-20:00	15:00-16:00	Name Collision Analysis Project (NCAP) Discussion Working Group Meeting
20:15-21:30	16:15-17:30	GDS: Subpro IRT Work Session (2 of 3)

Next Round Related Sessions @ ICANN79 (cont'd)

Time UTC	Time AST	Session
Tuesday, 5 March 2024		
19:00-20:00	15:00-16:00	New gTLD Program Next Round: Planning for String Similarity Review Work Session
Wednesday, 6 March 2024		
14:30-16:00	10:30-12:00	GNSO SubPro Supplemental Recommendations Community Consultation
20:15-21:30	16:15-17:30	GDS: Subpro IRT Work Session (3 of 3)
Thursday, 7 March 2024		
13:00-14:00	09:00-10:00	GNSO Council Small Team Plus - SubPro Supplemental Recommendations Work Session



Thank You and Questions

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4. Cost/Benefit Analysis on New gTLDs

Nigel Hickson, GAC Vice Chair (UK)

Overview of the issue

- GAC submitted advice to the ICANN Board in the ICANN56 Helsinki Communiqué (30 June 2016) noting:
 - *Future gTLDs Policies and Procedures: The GAC advises the ICANN Board that: [...] An objective and independent analysis of costs and benefits should be conducted beforehand, drawing on experience with and outcomes from the recent round [...]*
- GAC submitted follow-up advice to the ICANN Board at ICANN78 (30 October 2023) noting:
 - *The GAC recalls its advice to the Board in the ICANN56 GAC Helsinki Communiqué (30 June 2016) that "An objective and independent analysis of costs and benefits should be conducted beforehand, drawing on experience with and outcomes from the recent round." So far the GAC is not certain of the availability of such analysis called for by the GAC. The GAC is looking forward to receiving such analysis at the earliest opportunity and ahead of ICANN79.*

Overview of the issue

- ICANN org compiled an Overview of Analyses of Costs and Benefits of a Next Round of the New gTLD Program (22 January 2024) in response to the GAC follow up advice;
- Said document provides a high level analysis of the identified costs and benefits of a next round of new gTLDs based on three reports related to the new gTLD program:
 - The Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice Review Team Final Report (CCT Final Report);
 - The Final Report on Subsequent Procedures for the New gTLD Program;
 - The Operational Design Assessment.
- This document complements the ICANN Board response to the ICANN78 Communique as noted in the Communiqué Board scorecard.

Cost/Benefit Analysis of a Next Round of New gTLDs

GAC Views

- GAC leadership reviewed this item during their retreat in Brussels in February 2024, noting that initial feedback from GAC members noted this document did not meet anticipated expectations.
- GAC members noted to GAC leadership that the document is neither objective nor independent (compiled by ICANN org), nor does it represent a cost/benefit analysis.

GAC members to discuss whether the document meets expectations

Next Steps

- GAC members to consider:
 - a response to the ICANN Board via correspondence; and/or
 - GAC advice to the Board