Communications and Coordination Work Team (CCT)

Final Consolidated Recommendations Approved by the Operations Steering Committee

Submitted to:

GNSO Council

09 April 2010

Contacts:

Mason Cole, Chair
(503) 459-5702
(503) 407-2555
mcole@oversee.net

Steve Holsten, Vice Chair
(703) 948-4357
sholsten@verisign.com

Table of Contents

Chapter I. Background and Context

1.0 ICANN Board Recommends GNSO Improvements

One of the five major areas of the ICANN Board's directive to restructure and improve the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) relates to communications and coordination both internally within the GNSO and externally between the GNSO and the extended ICANN community.

Key elements of the Board's desired outcomes include:

- Maximizing the ability for all interested stakeholders to participate in the GNSO's processes; and

- Improving communications and administrative support for GNSO activities.

More specifically, the Board added, "There should be more frequent contact and communication between the GNSO Council, GNSO Constituencies and the members the Council elects to the Board, and among the Chairs of the GNSO, other Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs)..."

2.0 The Communications and Coordination Team (CCT)

The CCT was chartered by the Operations Steering Committee (OSC) in March 2009 and its mission was formulated as follows:

> "The GNSO Communications and Coordination Team will develop proposals for Council consideration based on the Board's endorsement of recommendations outlined in the 3 February 2008 Report of the Board Governance Committee GNSO Review Working Group on GNSO Improvements (BGC WG Report). Those recommendations for increased communication effectiveness and efficiency within the GNSO and improved coordination with other ICANN structures - including members of the ICANN Board, other Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) – include, but are not limited to:
>
> 1) Improve the GNSO's website
>
> 2) Improve the GNSO's document management capabilities
>
> 3) Improve the GNSO's ability to solicit meaningful public comments
>
> 4) Improve GNSO's coordination with other ICANN structures"

3.0 The CCT's General Process

As part of its early research, the CCT reviewed the London School of Economics (LSE) report[1], which identified certain specific shortcomings applicable to GNSO

---

[1]The foundation for initial GNSO restructuring recommendations to the Board.

communications, and the 3 February 2008 Board Governance Committee Working Group (BGC WG) report on GNSO Improvements.

Before formulating its recommendations, the CCT undertook a comprehensive analysis of the tools available to the GNSO and its Constituencies as well as typical communications behavior within the GNSO and discussed with community participants additional areas that merited attention.

The CCT took care to focus on those specific areas where the GNSO can have the most immediate and productive impact toward the objective of improving communications. Over the course of its nine months of deliberations (see Appendix B for meeting dates), the team found substantive opportunities for near-term improvement (see Chapter II, Section 3.0 and Chapter III, Section 5.0) -- well beyond the Board's directed areas of review.

4.0 Two Part Structure of the CCT Final Report

Given the breadth of the issues it was asked to consider and to take advantage of individual team members' skills, interests, and expertise, the CCT elected to subdivide the larger group into various sub-teams. Chapter II-Technology of this report contains recommendations endorsed by the entire CCT, but largely fashioned by the sub-team which focused on those communications areas related to the website, collaboration tools, and document management. Because that work was completed earlier than others and certain preliminary design and implementation activities could commence within the ICANN Staff, the CCT elected to prepare its recommendations in two sections. Chapter III of this CCT report addresses the remainder of the non-technology recommendations, which are categorized as Communications and Coordination.

Chapter II. Technology Report and Recommendations

1.0 Initial Problem Compendium

The CCT began its deliberations by considering specific problems published in various reports by the LSE and BGC. Several "technology" deficiencies are noted below although the team undertook additional analyses on its own working with the ICANN Policy Staff:

- The GNSO's external visibility on the Internet is very low due to serious deficiencies in the design of ICANN's web sites. (LSE Report, p. 50).

- Languages other than English (Patrick Sharry p9 BC comments; Summary of Board Actions p8, p12 3ii, 3iv; BCG/WG pgs 42/43)

- Usability, including review of statistics ([London School of Economics](#) (LSE) p12, Rec7, par. 3.8 3.10; Summary of Board Actions p12 3iii)

- Search engine optimization and content inventory

- Ability for stakeholders to find out what is going on (LSE p48 3.1, LSE Rec10)
- Poor organization and inconsistent document management making progress and decisions difficult to track (LSE Report, p. 53)

The above deficiencies deal with a broad range of issues concerning the GNSO's state of communications technology, especially related to its current website. The following section addresses how the CCT validated the above issues, determined a set of improvement priorities, and scoped the work effort to be undertaken.

2.0 CCT Analyses, Work Products, and Scope Considerations

As part of its approach to developing a coherent set of recommendations addressing the problems and deficiencies mentioned in various published reports, the CCT, supported by the ICANN Policy Staff, undertook five specific action steps:

1) Business Requirements: a set of requirements were initially developed in late May 2009 for a new or replacement GNSO website. The document went through multiple iterations and a final draft version was published on 17 July 2009 (see Appendix C). The Business Requirements document (v1.2) was circulated to OSC Members for feedback on 22 July 2009. It was also forwarded by Mason Cole to the Registrars and input was received by ICANN Staff.

2) Background Migration to Drupal: in July 2009, working closely with the Corporate Affairs[2] web development team, the CCT and Staff arrived at a ground-breaking idea that enabled the entire existing GNSO website to be converted to Drupal while maintaining the current page layout and look/feel. By migrating all of the content to Drupal and storing it in a database ahead of the new site design, it became possible to begin tagging[3] the documents/files so that, when the new website is finally developed, it will be possible to turn up the production environment more or less immediately versus having to start the tagging operation at that stage. The database conversion effort was completed by the end of August 2009 with no disruption to the existing GNSO website. Tagging operations commenced immediately thereafter on a part-time basis, by members of the ICANN Policy Staff, and were completed by 1 November 2009. As new documents are being created/added to the site, they are being tagged actively so that there will not be any substantial additional work effort required once the new website is developed and ready for production.

3) Taxonomy: In cooperation with the Corporate Affairs Web Team, ICANN's existing taxonomy[4] was exhaustively reviewed and analyzed by members of the ICANN Policy Staff and CCT. As a result of that effort, a substantial number of additions and changes were made to the taxonomy, which was then made

---

[2] The web development team reported to Corporate Affairs at that time; however, it has since been transferred to the Information Technology department within ICANN.

[3] **Tagging** refers to the assignment of keywords to facilitate indexing and searching capabilities.

[4] A **taxonomy** contains a set of terms, grouped by category, that are used to "tag" content so that it can be easily queried and located based upon one or more tags assigned.

available to the GNSO content tagging team prior to the data migration which completed at the end of August 2009.

4) Website Survey: On behalf of the CCT, the ICANN Policy Staff conducted a set of interviews late August 2009 among GNSO "power users" to determine how they use the current website and what features/functionality they perceive to be the most important. The outcome of this survey is included in Appendix D. In addition to this undertaking, ICANN conducted another survey related specifically to its master site (icann.org) and collected input from 230 users. These two outputs were used to (1) confirm the formal business requirements, previously developed, and (2) inform the actual design elements of a new online web presence for the GNSO.

5) Website Design Sessions 1 & 2: during the first and last weeks in September 2009, members of the ICANN Policy Staff and the CCT sub-team met in California and Virginia to begin developing a framework/layout for a new GNSO website utilizing all of the foundational work that preceded this step. The output of these design sessions was a set of detailed "wireframes[5]" that attempt to achieve the design goals and objectives identified in the surveys and requirements documents and, at the same time, accommodate the entire set of GNSO content in a flexible arrangement that permits users to locate information in multiple ways.

Several presentations were arranged in the months prior to and during Seoul to show various GNSO groups the "wireframes" and to solicit feedback as to the overall website direction. The feedback from all sessions has been extremely positive, corroborating the team's design approach and providing the needed impetus to continue moving forward purposefully.

Keeping in mind the team's intention to deliver a set of actionable recommendations, it became clear that certain facets of the website improvement effort could not be reasonably entertained in the near-term. To be specific, based upon technical consultation with ICANN's Information Technology experts, the two specific areas of document management and enhanced collaboration were found to be too difficult to accommodate in the Phase I effort, which is focused on building a platform to address the most critical enhancements including: navigation, usability, organization, search, content management/sharing, and ease of administration. Although some modest recommendations for document management and collaboration were included in the Phase I scope, the more sophisticated capabilities were deferred to a subsequent phase yet to be determined.

3.0 Recommendations

The CCT recommends the following tactical actions as contributions toward improving communications within the GNSO.

---

[5] A **wireframe** is a basic visual design schematic used to depict the skeletal structure of a website including navigational concepts, page content/layout, and relationships between pages. Typically, wireframes are completed before any artwork and graphics are developed.

3.1 GNSO Website

Because a properly designed GNSO website can provide a productive environment to support both communications and coordination—and serves as a hub for inter- and intra-organization communication and information storage—it is the area where the CCT focused more than half its effort.

The CCT coordinated closely with various members of the ICANN Staff including the Corporate Affairs web development team as well as Information Technology (IT) to understand what efforts were already under way in the organization and what architectural requirements were foundational to any improvements being contemplated.

The CCT fully endorses the Board's recommendation to develop a new GNSO online web presence and, as an integral step toward that goal, it has fashioned a set of Business Requirements (Appendix C) including, but not limited to, usability, navigation, search, content management, collaboration (initial phase), document management (initial phase), and administration.

This section of the report will not attempt to address each of the more than forty (40) individual recommendations contained in the Business Requirements report (Appendix C) let alone the numerous design improvements reflected in the dozen or more wireframes that have been developed thus far. The team does wish to highlight a few of the more significant areas that will remedy major deficiencies in the current website.

Content Management/Sharing: A fundamentally critical aspect of these recommendations is to build a platform[6] that will permit content sharing across multiple ICANN sites. In today's GNSO web environment, the content is <u>static</u>, which means each document/file is stored in a location that is essentially isolated. The new GNSO website's requirement is to house all content in a relational database complete with robust tagging capabilities so that documents/files can be accessed <u>dynamically</u> based on usage. The other major benefit to this recommendation is that content can be much more easily shared among ICANN websites without inefficient replication that is necessary in the existing environment.

Usability: The survey conducted in August 2009 (Appendix D) informed the team that the three most important reasons why the GNSO website is accessed are:
- Information retrieval
- Calendar-related activities
- Location of information based on "Issues"

The survey input was a significant factor in the design of a top-level page structure that includes:

---

[6] Drupal had been previously selected by the IT Staff as the platform of choice for ICANN.

HOME / ABOUT / NEWS / ONGOING WORK / GROUP ACTIVITIES / LIBRARY / BASICS /

A key objective in the development of these pages (and their lower level descendants) was taking advantage of the dynamic content management capabilities provided in the new platform[7]. Responding to the user survey feedback, the team wanted to make it possible to locate a document/file based upon multiple aspects, e.g.:

- What is it (e.g. minutes, transcript, report);
- Who developed it (e.g. Staff, Council, Work Team);
- When was it created (e.g. year/month/day);
- What issue(s) does it represent (e.g. a PDP initiative, GNSO Improvements); and
- What group(s) does it belong to (e.g. Working Group, Constituency, Council).

In addition to multiple page cross-linking, there is also a robust Library page where users can browse/search using simple or advanced terms/tags.

Based on input from the user community, another prominent usability feature of the improved GNSO site will be an implementation of what is being termed "Acronym Helper." Already designed and prototyped by one of the CCT sub-teams members (Chris Chaplow), it will enable anyone to type in a few initials and determine the referent for commonly used Internet, ICANN and GNSO acronyms that may be unfamiliar to some participants.

Multi-Language Support: The CCT considered it very important to make the GNSO's new website more accessible to non-English language users. The Business Requirements address this topic in 2.1.1-2 which states:

> "The website must be capable of displaying and searching translated content in at least those languages determined by the ICANN Translation Policy and, where feasible, integrating industry standard translation tools. Distinct URLs should be available for supported language versions. There should be readily visible indicator text in native language and script to highlight specific pages available in corresponding languages; if no page is available in that language the indicator text should not appear." Although the final protocol for language presentation has yet to be finalized for all of ICANN, the team is pleased to note that provisions have been identified and accommodated in the "wireframe" models that have been developed.

The major output of the CCT's efforts is a set of more than a dozen design schematics (a.k.a. "wireframes") that are recommendations for building new GNSO website pages. A sample of the Home page wireframe (PDF format) is included as Appendix E.

---

[7] Existing GNSO pages/content were migrated to Drupal and have been in production since 31 August 2009. Almost immediately thereafter, ICANN Staff began tagging thousands of documents/files which were largely completed by 1 November 2009. All new content is being actively tagged as it is created.

The CCT believes that a more creatively organized, intuitive, and easier-to-navigate, web site will go a long way toward improving the GNSO's communications efforts and encouraging more productive participation.

3.2 Document Management

As outlined in Section 2.0 above, it became clear to the team, working closely with ICANN IT Staff, that substantial improvements to both document management and enhanced collaboration would be impractical to consider in the short-term (labeled Phase I). The BGC was certainly insightful in targeting those elements for attention; however, the major challenge is that there are not clear technology solutions that are compatible with the architectural platform selected by ICANN (Drupal).

ICANN Staff is currently undertaking various product reviews and internal tests with the objective of recommending workable solutions in the future. Once the GNSO has its new platform up and running, it will be positioned to integrate whatever solutions are ultimately recommended. These team decisions are reflected in the Business Requirements Project Summary (see also Sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4).

The CCT recommends that, once the new GNSO website is operational, ICANN Staff should be directed to develop a detailed set of business requirements which would include such elements as document check/in-out, version control, repository management, and multi-platform support.

3.3 Collaboration Tools

The Business Requirements document (Appendix B, Section 2.1.3) includes six separate recommendations for improvements in the area of collaboration, which address essential areas such as calendaring, wikis, threaded discussions, online meeting capabilities, and a database/repository of GNSO participants to facilitate communications. While not all of these features may be possible to integrate seamlessly in the Phase I development effort, they have been documented so that subsequent enhancement efforts will be able to include them.

Chapter III. Communications and Coordination Report and Recommendations

1.0 Initial Problem Compendium

The CCT began its deliberations by considering specific problems published in various reports by the LSE and BGC. Several communications and coordination deficiencies are noted below although the team undertook additional analyses on its own working with the ICANN Policy Staff.

2.0 Community Feedback Solicitation

General Problem: Ineffective mechanisms for soliciting meaningful feedback (BGC Report, p. 37, par. 8). Initial Board recommendations include:

- Prepare revised process for gathering and addressing public comment on policy issues
- Take into account developments in technology that facilitate community interaction (deferred to Technology sub-team -- included in Chapter II)
- Prepare a translation plan for documents associated with policy development
- Recommend ways to monitor and improve effectiveness
- Author documents explaining the importance of significant issues

3.0 Board-GNSO and Cross SO/AC Communications

General Problem: Few formalized channels for GNSO Council to communicate with ICANN Board as well as other Supporting Organizations (SO) and Advisory Committees (AC). Board recommendations include:

- Improve GNSO's coordination with other ICANN structures *(LSE Report Recommendation 15)*
- Arranging conference calls and meetings of the SO and AC chairs to better coordinate their activities, also to include more substantive communication
- Helping Board members elected by the GNSO stay up-to-date with pending GNSO issues so they can help keep the board informed of the work the GNSO is undertaking
- Consider developing more formal processes for seeking input from other ICANN organizations on proposed GNSO policies

The CCT agrees that more can and should be done to strengthen communications between the GNSO and the ICANN Board as well as among the SOs and ACs and that much can be gained by improved information sharing.

Following are two brief examples which illustrate the synergy between and among SOs and ACs and how, as a result of collaboration and information sharing, increased communications and productive outcomes can be realized. In particular, the CCT notes that several recent GNSO Working Groups were convened following the publication of advisories issued by the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC). In other recent cases, requests by the At Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) led to subsequent GNSO policy making. These examples demonstrate that an issue identified by an advisory group can lead to the initiation of a GNSO policy activity. Several recommendations, described further below, are designed to encourage more information sharing on issues of mutual interest.

In addition to considering these concerns, the CCT determined that there were other facets within the broad arena of communications and coordination that also merited attention. The next section identifies several additional problem areas that occupied the CCT's focus.

4.0 CCT Additional Problem Analyses

As part of its objective to develop a coherent set of recommendations addressing the communications and coordination problems and deficiencies mentioned in various published reports, the CCT, supported by the ICANN Policy Staff, undertook additional analyses and uncovered a number of issues beyond those addressed by the LSE and the BGC. These additional areas are summarized below with specific recommendations presented in Section 5.0.

4.1 Time Demands and Work Prioritization

The CCT has become aware of observations in the community that the GNSO's workload has very likely exceeded its capacity. Given the plethora of issues being actively worked, the community and Staff are stretched thin. There is not sufficient time for thoughtful consideration of issues, constructive dialogue with the community, and exchanges with the Board and other stakeholders.

As a result, the GNSO appears to be "skipping across" the surface of issues rather than having penetrating and substantive discussions. Accordingly, the effort to address all issues *concurrently* makes it difficult to communicate thoroughly and thoughtfully about any one effort, thus exacerbating the problem of lack of meaningful engagement.

A contributing problem may be that the threshold for introduction of an issue into community debate and/or the policy development arena is sufficiently low such that almost any project can be added to the workload at any time. Because the GNSO has not yet implemented mechanisms to prioritize its work[8], issues are being accepted as they arise and are processed concurrently. Without adequate time allocated for careful and focused communication on each, the GNSO risks not having issues appropriately understood and discussed by all stakeholders.

4.2 Simplifying Complex Terminology to Ensure Common Understanding

Terminology used in ICANN circles can be hard to understand, particularly for a newcomer. Many in the community have observed that it takes at least several months, if not years, to become proficient with ICANN-related acronyms and terminology. This language challenge, by itself, can hinder and even dissuade participation.

Further, because ICANN is an international body with a very diverse community of well-intentioned participants, individuals tend to speak in diplomatic tones and strive to find common ground. While decorum is always helpful, the desire to define areas of consensus can lead to the use of oblique language that finesses areas of concern. This may unintentionally confuse issues and discourage direct and candid discussion of contentious issues and recommendations that are not actionable.

---

[8] The CCT notes that the GNSO commissioned a Work Prioritization Model (WPM) Team at the Seoul ICANN Meeting which is working on this problem.

4.3 The "Clutter" of Communications

The GNSO's universe is dense with work, conversation, meetings, documents and communications. This complexity often engenders excessive repetition, for example, reciting the background/history/context of an issue in most, if not all, communications on the topic. This practice, while laudable for its goal of being thorough and explicit, actually burdens the community with even more content, is wasteful and an inefficient practice.

Further, historically, the GNSO has not done a good job of centralizing and organizing data and making it readily accessible. Information about the GNSO itself, its current work and collaborative efforts are not centrally located, nor is there a robust, searchable repository available.

Stakeholder Groups, Working Groups, Advisory Councils, etc., keep data in a non-systematized manner or place and without helpful access to others in the GNSO community. The CCT notes that recommendations contained in its Report I-Technology address many of these concerns in the redesign of the GNSO website, which will become a central repository with multiple ways to access data including a full library search capability.

4.4 Lack of Visibility into Board Discussions/Considerations of GNSO and Stakeholder Group Input

In conversation with others in the community, the CCT found that lack of visibility into the Board's discussions prior to making a decision is frustrating and leads to confusion. While the Board is entitled to a reasonable measure of privacy and non-public discussion, the GNSO community does not always believe that its input on issues was always constructively considered.

4.5 Lack of Known Desired Outcome or Ultimate Objective

The CCT is concerned that too often, ideas (and work teams) are formed to deal with an ambiguous or not well-defined topic, causing the group to wander. In the view of the CCT, this problem is inherent to many policy debates. It is common to begin with a policy "problem" or topic that a group may think needs a policy change without suitably defining or substantiating an actual problem, knowing what the change should be, or what the options are or what the impacts are to stakeholders from various possible options.

Communications within the GNSO and to its outside universe would be much more productive and efficient if presented with the context of a hoped-for outcome. It would be helpful, particularly to new participants, to establish context and orient communications in a way that demonstrates an activity's progress toward a clearly-stated, agreed-to goal.

4.6 Degradations in Civility

The CCT found that some in the GNSO community have been discouraged and dismayed by what is viewed, at times, as an uncivil or combative tone in online discussions as well as telephone and face-to-face meetings. There is ample room for candid and frank discussion; however, interpersonal communications need not be uncivil, combative, or condescending.

5.0 Recommendations

The CCT recommends the following tactical actions as a way of contributing toward the improvement of communications within the GNSO.

5.1 Community Feedback Solicitation

The CCT believes that one of the most constructive ways to increase community feedback (or not inhibit it) is to make original communications more accessible and intelligible. As a result, the CCT has fashioned several recommendations aimed at increasing clarity.

a) *Provide the opportunity for the community to comment on pending GNSO policy-related activities with greater frequency.*

   The CCT notes that the GNSO Policy Development Process provides several opportunities for members of the public to offer comments on pending policy activities, and that the viewpoints expressed in these forums are a vital component of ICANN's open, bottom-up policy process.

   The CCT observes that during the course of work conducted by any particular PDP, there may be instances where members of the public wish to comment on a working group idea in-between comment periods, or in the formative stages of a particular discussion. Currently there is no way for this to be done.

   Thus, the CCT recommends that further mechanisms be developed to allow those to wish to comment to do so at more frequent times during the life cycle of a group. For example, in a simple implementation of this idea, the public could be invited to send email comments to a designated policy mailbox, monitored by Staff, that could then be shared with a specified working group. This way of sharing comments could be advertised in the monthly policy update currently published by ICANN.

b) *Link GNSO and ICANN Websites*

   Access to the GNSO site should be readily available from the ICANN web page, to make it easier to find GNSO related activity from the ICANN home page. Interested members of the ICANN community will be more likely to comment if

they can find relevant materials, including notices of open comment periods, quickly and easily.

c) *Summarize Documents*

All GNSO documents subject to public consultation should have summaries. The GNSO should consider recommending use of links to these summaries as a way to avoid re-stating the history of issues repetitiously and unnecessarily.

d) *Easier Document Search System*

The GNSO should endorse the CCT's recommendation as outlined in Chapter II, which prescribes a new website that will, among other important enhancements, store documents in a relational database complete with index tagging that will allow users to search/find information in a multiplicity of ways. The recommendations also include a new top-level page, currently called "Library," that will facilitate document browsing by tags as well as sophisticated advanced search capability.

e) *Make Localization Policies Consistent*

The CCT notes that ICANN has a published set of Translation Principles and is working on a formal policy. The GNSO should continue encouraging consistent localization policies, including multi-lingual vocabularies of often-used terms. The GNSO should take into account in its planning that localization requires devotion of sufficient time and cost to be consistent and informative. Specifically, the CCT urges the GNSO and its Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies to let their voices be heard concerning the value of translations when ICANN is requesting feedback at its periodic budgetary and funding cycles.

The CCT recognizes that the PDP Work Team and the Working Group Work Team are also making translations recommendations as related to policy development. The CCT urges the GNSO to ensure that consistency is achieved among all groups addressing themselves to the matter of translations.

The CCT acknowledges that more work needs to be done in the area of translations and recommends that the GNSO make a point of reevaluating the organization's achievements and progress in a year's time. In particular, the GNSO should determine how well the implementation is reaching under-accessed communities and what kind of enhancements might be made including budget implications.

5.2 Board-GNSO Communications

The CCT has developed the following recommendations, recognizing that the time burdens currently facing the Board and GNSO Councilors may call for gradual adoption over time.

The CCT recommends the following:

- Annually, the GNSO should articulate for the Board and the community its near-term objectives for policy development and coordination. (Note: the CCT recognizes not all objectives can be fully anticipated, but many can be.)

- Following each public ICANN meeting (three times per year), ICANN Staff assigned to GNSO support should prepare an update of GNSO activity against its objectives and, after vetting it with the Council, present it to the Board.

- Council and Board members should receive a briefing on the effective use of the revamped GNSO website.

- Staff supporting the Board and the GNSO should make efforts, in a carefully focused way, to link the GNSO website to the ICANN site.

- Promptly prepare and post detailed minutes from Board and GNSO meetings.

- The CCT recognizes that one of the most important areas of communication between the Board and the GNSO is with regard to pending policy recommendations that the GNSO may approve from time to time for Board action.

  Currently there is no process for the Board and GNSO Council to engage in a dialogue to discuss GNSO-related policy recommendations pending before the Board. The ability to allow give-and-take would enable the GNSO Council to answer questions and share perspectives that may be useful to the Board in deciding how to proceed. The CCT therefore recommends that the PPSC's PDP WT consider developing such a process for Board-GNSO consultation and incorporating it into the revised PDP currently under development.

- The Board noted that steps might be taken to help Board members elected by the GNSO stay up-to-date regarding pending GNSO issues so they can help keep the Board informed of the work the GNSO is undertaking. The CCT endorses this recommendation and further recommends that the GNSO Council conduct periodic calls with GNSO-elected Board members to facilitate information sharing. The schedule for these calls should be determined as issues mature to the point where upcoming Board consideration is anticipated.

5.3 Cross SO/AC Communications

The CCT thinks that benefits can be derived from greater information sharing and collaboration between and among SOs and ACs.

- The CCT concurs with the Board recommendation that the SO and AC chairs arrange conference calls and meetings to better coordinate their activities, and also to allow opportunities for more substantive communication, especially regarding issues of interest to the broader ICANN community beyond the GNSO.

  The CCT notes the recommendation that this might be especially useful in advance of each public ICANN meeting and further recommends that ICANN policy staff work with the SO and AC chairs to schedule such meetings where

feasible, especially when there are pending work items that are particularly relevant to multiple SOs and ACs.

- The CCT recommends that more formal processes be developed for seeking input from other ICANN organizations on proposed GNSO policies when working groups are underway. The GNSO Council has been very well served by the non-voting ALAC liaison who participates actively on Council calls and in various policy working groups.

  The CCT also recommends that the active engagement of liaisons be encouraged along these lines, recognizing that it may be more difficult for some ACs, such as the GAC, to participate in such a manner. The CCT further notes that there have been several recent cases where early work by the SSAC in identifying and analyzing emerging technical concerns has led to the convening of GNSO working groups to consider policy recommendations related to those issues. This underscores the important contribution that SSAC work has made in informing the GNSO on new issues and trends, and the CCT recommends that a consultative process be formalized between the SSAC and GNSO, to facilitate consultation on areas of mutual interest earlier in the development cycle, even prior to release of SSAC advisories so that both groups can be better informed about the perspectives of the other.

- Maximize use of existing processes for promoting input and dialogue. GNSO Working Groups are open to all, and members of other SOs and ACs should be encouraged to participate on topics of mutual concern. The GNSO community has partnered at recent ICANN meetings on holding joint workshops, this trend should continue. Advisory committees can and should collaborate more with the GNSO on requests for Issues Reports when potential new topics arise. In particular, the SSAC should consider reaching out to the GNSO early on – especially to consult about the policy implications of SSAC recommendations – so that both groups can benefit early on from discussion of the perspectives of the other.

5.4 Time Demands /Work Prioritization

As an outgrowth of the GNSO reform effort, the CCT encourages the GNSO to begin a process that will carefully prioritize its business so as to not overwhelm the community and unintentionally hinder active participation. If thoughtful deliberation and attention -- and the quality interchange of views -- are to be part of the GNSO's process, this is an important issue to tackle. Time management, in any context, requires flexibility to address exigencies and the GNSO would be well-served to set big-picture goals that will keep it directionally on track and avoid getting mired in distractions. This group notes that the Council has recently convened a small drafting group to develop a methodology to help the Council prioritize work more effectively in the future, which is responsive to this recommendation.

5.5 Simplifying Complex Terminology to Ensure Common Understanding

As noted in Section 4.0, ICANN terminology can be difficult to understand. The GNSO should be mindful of ICANN's intent to be an inclusive organization and encourage participation through use of everyday language and minimal use of acronyms or jargon.

In this regard, the GNSO and ICANN should actively support development and continued maintenance of a dictionary containing commonly used Internet, ICANN and GNSO acronyms. Conversely, ICANN and the GNSO should endeavor to use fewer acronyms whenever possible. The CCT notes that, in Chapter II of this report, the new GNSO website is recommended to implement an acronym helper tool; a prototype has actually been developed to demonstrate how it would work.

The CCT also considered ways to discourage use of vague or ambiguous language that may unintentionally obscure or neglect areas needing further discussion or consideration. The CCT recognizes that there is no single recommendation that will "solve" this challenge but urges the GNSO community and staff to attempt to draft work products and express themselves generally in simple and clear terms that can be commonly understood and easily translated. If a term is used in an ICANN document in a way that may differ from common use of the term of other contexts, then a specific definition should be developed and referenced.

For GNSO participants who author documents using Microsoft Word, the CCT suggests using the "Readability Statistics" feature which is an option attached to the Spelling and Grammar Checker. To enable it in Word, select Preferences from the top menu, then Spelling and Grammar. Enable the checkbox for "Show Readability Statistics" and click OK. The statistics will display at the conclusion of performing a spelling and grammar check on a document. Where possible, the CCT suggests that documents rating a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level higher than 12 should be edited to reduce complexity. For documents that are targeted for non-native English speakers, CCT recommends striving toward the goal of an average sentence length of 15 words and a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level rating of 4. These levels will not always be achievable and it is not the intent to mandate a given readability level. However, in the CCT's view this approach represents one quantifiable way for each author to gauge his or her personal progress toward writing more understandable English and encourages GNSO authors to develop the habit of monitoring their "Readability Statistics" and trying to lower them wherever possible.

5.6 Uncluttered Communications

GNSO work groups and other participants should endeavor to make presentations and discussions fully relevant, while not revisiting the entire history of a process when not necessary and using plain English. Once again, the CCT recommends linking to summaries and histories to help with this issue.

In addition, as outlined in the Chapter II's recommendations, the new GNSO website will store documents only one time (non-repetitively); but, through database searching via tagging, those documents will be accessible in multiple ways including via simple and sophisticated browse/search capability.

5.7 Lack of Visibility Into Board Discussions/Considerations of GNSO and Stakeholder Group Input

The CCT encourages the Board to provide additional rationale behind its decisions, including what was considered from GNSO input on any decision.

In addition, as mentioned above, the CCT recommends that an opportunity be created for certain involved and knowledgeable Board members to have a dialogue with the GNSO Council about a GNSO Council recommendation prior to Board action. Allowing for Board-GNSO consultations or discussion prior to Board action on Council recommendations might facilitate the sharing of such information.

5.8 Lack of Known Desired Outcomes or Ultimate Objectives

The CCT believes that the GNSO's work and communications would be much more efficient and easy to handle by all participants if proper context is established, including a clear explanation of the outcome that the Council hopes for in convening the Working Group or work activity. The CCT recommends that Working Group charters be drafted with careful attention to the issues or questions that should be considered and the outcomes desired. The CCT acknowledges that the Working Group Work Team is developing a set of guidelines that will recommend more precision in the drafting of charter documents and it fully endorses this effort.

The CCT also notes that Working Group success is often contingent upon Chairs ensuring that outcomes follow the expectations defined in charters. Not only is there value in properly written charters, but it is also important for Chairs to manage and lead their teams so that they are operating in accordance with charters. When teams begin to lose their way, it is incumbent upon the Chair and each team member to utilize whatever means are available to help reposition the effort so that it is directed toward the missions, goals, and objectives.

5.9 Degradation in Civility

As reflected in the following ICANN Board Resolutions, the CCT encourages ICANN, Staff, and the GNSO to remind participants frequently of its standards for behavior:

"It is hereby RESOLVED (2010.02.04.16) that the Board affirms that all participants in ICANN are expected to adhere to the Expected Standards of Behavior as published in the ICANN Accountability & Transparency: Frameworks and Principles.

It is further RESOLVED (2010.02.04.17) that the Board requests that the CEO direct ICANN Staff to provide at least annual reminders of the Expected Standards of Behavior to the membership of ICANN's supporting organizations and advisory committees, and to consider the other proposals by the Ombudsman to enhance civility."

Chapter IV. Conclusions

The CCT would like to extend its deep appreciation to the ICANN Staff members (Appendix A) who supported this effort throughout its existence by organizing conference calls/meetings, producing summaries/minutes, drafting documents/reports (including this one), maintaining the Wiki space, and providing knowledge, expertise, and guidance.

The CCT recognizes that the broadening of ICANN's scope has significantly increased the level of worldwide interest and participation in ICANN's work. The initiative to reform and restructure the GNSO is a reflection of the need to enhance its infrastructure to accommodate input, work, and policy development more efficiently and effectively.

Though ICANN has made tremendous strides toward inclusiveness in recent years, people and institutions impacted by ICANN's work (and, by definition, the GNSO as a primary policymaking body within ICANN) remain largely unaware of ICANN and its activities. In order to better reflect global service provider and user perspectives, ICANN and the GNSO need to improve ways of soliciting input and making users aware of policy-making work. Moreover, coordination between the GNSO and other parts of the community is sporadic -- even between GNSO bodies themselves – which leads to inefficiency, missed opportunities for collaboration and information sharing, and needless difficulty in work and output.

Now that the GNSO restructuring effort is nearly concluded and the new Council seated, the GNSO will benefit from articulating its mission to the broader Internet community and focusing on improvements to its communications infrastructure.

The CCT hopes that the OSC and GNSO Council will find this report instructive and its recommendations actionable. In the technology arena, much progress has been made to-date in developing requirements and designing a new GNSO online web presence that will bring needed enhancements to the user experience. The team wishes to emphasize that there is considerable work ahead, predominantly by the ICANN Staff, to make these concepts and ideas fully operational.

The CCT is strongly committed to the idea that the GNSO Council considers introducing a formal follow-up and/or tracking mechanism (e.g. Standing Committee) to ensure that the recommendations of the CCT as well as other Work Teams are realized in the coming months. The GNSO Council should direct Staff to implement these recommendations, working with other ACs and SOs as appropriate, and review and assess the progress of all GNSO Improvements in a year's time.

APPENDIX A: CCT Membership

LIST OF CCT MEMBERS

Sedar Acir	Registrar contact for Turkish Registry
Fouad Bajwa	Non-Commercial Users Constituency
Chris Chaplow	Commercial and Business Users Constituency
Mason Cole	Registrar Constituency
Steve Holsten	gTLD Registries Constituency
Helen Laverty	DotAlliance
Zbynek Loebl	Intellectual Property Interests Constituency
Catherine Sigmar	gTLD Registries Constituency
Antonio Tavares	Internet Service and Connectivity Providers Constituency
Jaime Wagner	Internet Service and Connectivity Providers Constituency

LIST OF ICANN STAFF MEMBERS

Gisella Gruber-White	GNSO Assistant
Glen de Saint Gery	GNSO Secretariat
Julie Hedlund	Policy Director
Ken Bour	Policy Consultant
Scott Pinzon	Director-Policy Communications
Kieren McCarthy	(Formerly Corporate Affairs)
Rob Hoggarth	Senior Policy Director

APPENDIX B: Meeting Attendance Roster

OSC Community Communications Coordination (CCT)

Participants		11.03	18.03	25.03	1.04	15.04	29.04	13.05	27.05	10.06	8.07	22.07	5.08	19.08	2.09	16.09
	Others															
Chris Chaplow	CBUC	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Zbynek Loebl	IPC	1				1									1	
Antonio Tavares	ISPCPC				1											
	NCUC															
Sedar Acir	Registrar		1													
Mason Cole	Registrar – WT Chair		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
Sub-Total...	**Registrars**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Catherine Sigmar	Registries Constituency				1											
Steve Holsten	Registries	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Helen Laverty	Dot Alliance Registry		1			1	1		1							
Sub-Total...	**Registries**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Total Participants		3	5	3	5	5	4	3	4	2	2	3	3	2	3	3
TOTAL Calls		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gisella Gruber-White/Glen de	Staff									1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Julie Hedlund	Staff	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Kieren MacCarthy	Staff					1			1							
Scott Pinzon	Staff												1	1	1	
Rob Hoggarth	Staff	1		1	1	1	1			1		0				
Ken Bour	Policy Consultant	1		1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sub-Total...	**Staff**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**4**	**2**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**4**

APPENDIX C: Business Requirements (v1.2)

[Note: Double-click the icon below to open the entire document]

Business
Requirements-GNSO \

APPENDIX D: GNSO Web User Analysis

[Note: Double-click the icon below to open the entire document]

GNSO Web User
Analysis (SPv1).doc

APPENDIX E: GNSO Website Wireframe-Home Page

[Note: Double-click the icon below to open the entire document]

WF01.pdf