GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House session
TRANSCRIPTION
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Coordinator: I would like to remind all parties the call is now being recorded, if you have any objections please disconnect at this time. And thank you, you may begin.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, (Elan). Good morning, good afternoon, good evening everybody. Welcome to the GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House Session on 8 May 2014.

On the call today we have Avri Doria, (Farsineh), Krishna Kumar, (Siva) (unintelligible). From staff we have Marika Konings, Terri Agnew, Kathy Schmidt and myself, Nathalie Peregrine.

I'd like to remind you all to please state your names before speaking for the purposes of the transcription. Thank you very much over to you, Marika.

Marika Konings: Thanks, Nathalie. I think it's actually over to Avri for today's call.

Avri Doria: Yes but as we suggested - hi this is Avri Doria. I guess I'm one of the cohosts we call them for this open house session. I'm one of the volunteers who, unfortunately in looking back, realizes that I've been party to setting up much

of the process structures that we have and therefore it makes sense that I should have volunteered for this.

Might as well move to the next slide. Okay and I'd like to ask Marika to sort of take us through the GNSO policy support team which are the folks that are sort essential to making sure that the GNSO gets any policy work done.

Marika Konings: Thanks, Avri. So my name is Marika Konings. I'm a Senior Policy Director and responsible for the GNSO team. I'm actually based in the ICANN office in Brussels.

And as Avri said, you know, we're here with a team of people supporting that GNSO activities, you know, of that the Council level but also at the working group level and that ranges from, you know, helping scheduling and setting up calls to, you know, supporting the meetings, providing information, you know, trying to help groups move forward, synthesizing comments and input received and as well in many occasions providing drafts of reports for working group review.

So as you're all new I thought it would be good to just show our pictures and, you know, when you have the opportunity to either see us at ICANN meetings or in the virtual world you're always encouraged and free to reach out to us with any questions you may have and let us know in any way which we can help you and support you in the GNSO activities.

So our fearless leader, David Olive, is based in the ICANN office in Istanbul so he's the Vice President for Policy Development. Underneath that there are different other teams that also support other parts of the ICANN policy development community.

Glen de Saint Géry she is the GNSO Secretariat based in Cannes in France. Mary Wong, Senior Policy Director based in the US New Hampshire; Julie

Hedlund, also Policy Director based in Washington DC; Lars Hoffman, a Policy Analyst based in Brussels (unintelligible) the office.

We also have support from Berry Cobb as a consultant to our team and Nathalie who's on the call today as well who supports most of our working group efforts from a secretariat perspective in scheduling and making sure everyone gets their reminders on time and shows up for the calls.

So I think with that we actually go to the goals for this session and I'll hand it back to Avri.

Avri Doria: Okay so the agenda for this is flexible. The basic idea is to go through some of the processes. It's an informal sharing of experiences. Even I can ask any questions you may have and hopefully I can provide you with some tips and tricks to finding your way around.

And in fact we did already have a question that I'm not quite sure how I'm going to fit in yet but just to bring it up before I move on because the question said, even before the session begins some thoughts that occurred to me just by looking at the topic.

The session appears intended to orient newcomers to the GNSO working groups but a lateral thought is this, why not GNSO participation priority for newcomers uncertain working groups with lighter more generalized policy topics?

Newcomers would be encouraged to join such lighter working groups, gain a bit of experience of on the way of working and on the policy processes and get prepared to move on to really serious policy topics.

Well, now I'm not quite sure I understand the question but of course the whole point of this meeting, as I understand it, is - this webinar - is to get people prepared.

Now I don't know how you judge a lighter policy topic from a heavier policy topic. Certainly there are no working groups that are constructed just for experiments or just for let's have a talk about policy. All of them that get started have some purpose, have some goal, have some piece of work to accomplish.

Now the whole point though is to get newcomers involved as soon as possible in any working group that meets their interests. So I guess I would put the question in a different way as sort of here's going to be a quick introduction to what it's about? You know, what are working groups? What are they for? Why are we doing them? What are some of the processes they feed into? How can you all get involved in these things?

And then picking something that is of interest to you is probably the best way to get started because the easiest subjects are often the ones you're most interested in. But, you know, but certainly there's never been a notion of let's have some easy policy working groups so that we can bring along newcomers.

And I don't really think that that would work but perhaps it's something we can talk about at some other point.

Let me know do the slides. Okay so what do you want to learn more about? So your questions so there are standard questions. What is the GNSO policy development process? What is consensus policy? What's this picket fence that people keep talking about? Are there guidelines for working groups and what are those guidelines? And what does it mean to be a guideline?

Other things on mechanics about the wikis, the Adobe Connect. We're using Adobe Connect at the moment. Adobe Connect is a wonderful tool. And then there's tips and tricks for finding information. That's one I can't help you much on because I constantly have trouble finding stuff and I find that I really just

have to look at things because the wiki's and the webpages change quite dynamically.

But I'm told that there is a working group that's out there now making it easier so that one day even people like me will find things easily.

So the policy development process, and please if you want to stop me and ask a question raise your hand and I'll stop. So here's a design of the process. The GNSO Council is the manager of the policy development process; it is not the legislature, it is not the maker of policy it is the group that manages the process and decide when a recommendation is ready to go on.

So it starts out with a request for an issues report. An issues report can be requested by any number of the groups - any number of groups from the Board to any advisory committee or any other and SO. Obviously it can also be requested within the GNSO.

Then there is a decision whether to initiate a policy development process or not after the issues report. If the policy is initiated and a working group is formed. There is the gathering of public comments both from the constituencies and the community at large. That when says there's a specific request for those constituency statements which are public comments.

The working group puts out an initial report. It has basically talked about things; it's come up with an initial report. That goes for public comment. Questions are asked.

Then using that as input and any other information that has been gained along the way the working group produces a final report which is sent to the GNSO Council. The GNSO Council is supposed to look at that, make sure that the due process of the policy development process working group has happened comment that the issues have all been explored, that the

comments have been dealt with adequately and basically that the report is as it should.

Now there's an arrow put in at this point because the GNSO Council is not really supposed to decide differently than the recommendations that came from a working group that the GNSO Council can very well look at the report and say has this issue been dealt with adequately? They can send back questions; they can send back the work and sort of say, you know, we don't think it's quite ready. It's not something they've done very often if at all but it is one of the looping mechanisms that's available.

So if the GNSO, in its deliberations, gets to appoint and says well there's this policy question that was not answered, the GNSO Council it's not really supposed to make the decision at that point, they're supposed to kick it back to the working group and say hey.

Now hopefully that won't happen because there's a great amount of interaction between the Council and the working group while the work is being done. But it could happen.

Once the GNSO approves it and - on a policy development process we'll get to later, there's a very complicated set of voting rules to decide that - it is made a recommendation to the ICANN Board. It has, you know, extra information added to it. Again public comments are gathered on the GNSO's recommendation.

Now these comments are for the Board to look at in terms of it. At the same time the ICANN staff prepares other background information that may be necessary to the Board in making their decision. There's a Board vote.

Again, this vote is constrained. If the GNSO Council had approved this thing by a super majority then the Board would need to have a super majority to overrule it. That has not happened very often, if at all.

Again, there's an arrow here because the Board can, based upon its consultations with other stakeholder groups, based upon the public comments, based upon its own discretion, could have further discussions. Again, the Board is not supposed to be making policy recommendations; it's supposed to be looking at the work that was done, judging its adequacy, judging that indeed all of the community and even beyond the community was involved in doing it.

And if they don't feel that's the case they too can send it back. So it's not as straight a linear as it sometimes look. And in fact we see occasions, fairly recently, where the Board is asking questions of the GNSO Council.

I see a hand raised. (Shawn). Please go ahead. Are you mute perhaps while you're talking or you just want me to answer the question that you put in the chat. I can do that.

So you asked, "What are the factors that determine what makes an issue worthy, qualified to go to the next step, i.e. the PDP?"

Secondly, "does this mean every request that makes it to PDP has a new working group set for it?"

Okay, so what makes an issue worthy of going forward is if the Board sends the issue - if the Board requested the issues report it goes forward. They sort of have an automatic PDP. If the Board once a policy development process done it moves forward. There still needs to be an issues report, etcetera, but it does move forward.

In terms of all the others it's based upon a vote of the GNSO Council so it's the GNSO Council that reads the issues report, read within the issues report whether the ICANN staff thinks it's in scope or not in scope. And this preliminary stuff is probably in the slides. Not there yet.

So - and I'm probably not doing it well with the slides that are there in the future but we'll get back to them. So anyhow that's that.

In terms of working groups, yes, there's a new working group formed for every PDP. And the work of a PDP is that. Now you have some cases where we had the so-called IRTP A, B, C, D groups and that was the Inter Registrar Transfer Protocol.

And that was a serious set of work, series in terms of more important than others but just incredible list of hard questions to answer that that was divided into multiple policy development processes each of which had their own working group. But I'd say 80% of the population in those groups was probably the same people.

So, yes, what I meant the Board - thank you, Marika, for showing it. Okay, so then let me move on the next slide. I've actually never done one of these before where I was changing the slide.

So a PDP working group requirements. So when a working group starts first of all the constituencies and stakeholder groups are asked to respond to the PDP issues, to the PDP question. Often the working group will define a particular set of questions that they would like the constituencies to respond to.

Not all constituencies are good at getting this done. Often it requires reminding them multiple times. But they do get essential information that then basically the working group has a basis upon which to start discussing the issues. There are also the other comments.

There is a formally seeking the opinion of other ICANN advisory committees and supporting organizations, so at the same time usually that the constituencies are being requested statements a request will go out to the

other ACs and SOs often with the same questions, sometimes perhaps with other questions.

It's also hoped that at this time they become aware of the work. And if they didn't respond to some of the early calls for participation they may see in this an issue where they do want to contribute.

And as I probably didn't say yet, but the working groups are open to everybody and not just members of the GNSO. And in fact there is a very strong call and a very strong desire to make sure that working groups have a full diversity of perspectives.

Then there's development of an initial report. The initial report takes a first stab at the questions that have been asked in the policy development. So whatever issues the policy is being developed for the group will put those down.

And perhaps if they have further questions perhaps in some cases, you know, they've been talking about possible policy but there's ambiguity or there is difference of opinion that sometimes the initial report will frame some of those questions and discussions in such a way that people can actually have access to the open issues and can comment on them and hopefully give, you know, some substantive comments that allow the working group to have a better chance to actually fulfill its mandate and come to a reasonable set of recommendations.

The next step is incredibly important, the review of comments. A lot of times people put comments into various places and it's somewhat like a black hole. Within GNSO working groups, and this is orchestrated beautifully by a process that Marika and others in the process have put together, there is a slow march through each and every question, through each and every comment made looking at the parts of the text that it affects. And a decision is made on each one on how to handle it.

Now that doesn't mean that every comment will result in a change but it does mean that every comment will be looked at, will be discussed and will have some sort of response entered into a table that's the policy staff keeps on behalf of the working group.

And looking at any of these working group artifacts will convince anybody, I hope, that in terms of reviewing comments working groups in the GNSO are really quite serious and take this as one of their more important tasks.

At the end of that a final report is written. It is approved by consensus even if everyone in the group doesn't agree with every point that's made in the thing and has entered minority views or what have you, they all have to agree in a consensus manner to the report itself going forward.

I see no questions. I'll move to the next slide. Let me know if I'm talking too much.

So there's further reading. Annex A of the ICANN Bylaws is the touchstone that no matter what other rules we make they always have to be consistent with that.

There's the PDP manual that gets into big detail about all of the issues report, the stages of the issues report and such. And then there's that consensus policy overview.

Consensus policy and the picket fence. Okay so ICANN contracts with registries and registrars; are a distinctive sort of contract in that in many contracts once the two parties at the beginning agree then that's it, and the contract is written, it's in stone, nothing changes unless it's renegotiated by both parties.

In an ICANN registry contract, and in the Registrar Accreditation Agreement, there are actually sections of the contract that are called Consensus Policy. And part of the contract includes an obligation on the registry or registrar to abide by any consensus policy changes made to their contract.

Which means that that GNSO policy development process can reach into an existing contract and materially change the conditions of that contract. That is - there may be other places that do similar things but by and large I think that is one of the big distinctions of an ICANN policy and ICANN's contracts.

So when you hear people talking about a consensus policy it's a specification broadly supported by ICANN stakeholders and buying registrars and registries.

This is also one of the reasons why registries and registrars have an equal voice with other stakeholders in the process and why the voting balance has been decided as it is so that the contracted house, those who are bound by the policy changes, and the non-contracted house, those who are not bound I these contracts but are the users and registrants, have equal voices and equal votes overall on the Council. And that's one of the driving principles of that particular set up in the GNSO Council and in the process.

So the background--and I may have already said this. So yes, there's three conditions under which a consensus policy can be made. And they can't be policies that would favor one registrar over another or favor one registry over another. They can't be things that concern the competition between registries or between - or among - I should say among registries and among registrars.

But they're policies related to where it's a coordinated resolution. So uniform or coordinated resolution is reasonably necessary to facilitate interoperability, technical reliability or stability of the Internet or Domain Name System remembering that ICANN's primary mission is the stability, security and resiliency of the Internet and the naming and numbering systems.

That the registry and registrar policies reasonably necessary to implement consensus policy registry. So it's not just a, oh it'd be nice to have but it's something that's considered a necessary issue that needs to be resolved.

And it has to relates to disputes regarding registration of domain names as opposed to the use of domain names. We do not make policy on use; we do make policies on registration and such.

And the details of consensus policy are defined in the registry and registrar agreement. And indeed to get details sometimes of what's exactly included in the issues when one needs to actually look at those agreements.

A picket fence, the picket fence is sort of an image that's been built to explain what is within the consensus policy and what falls outside of consensus policy.

The picket fence has been variably seen as something that protects the registry and registrar and seen as something that enables the registrars and users. And as the registries and registrars can be certain of certain business conditions that are necessary for them in terms of establishing and running their business for example.

But if there is a serious user issue or a serious registrant issue that does not affect competition and falls within the areas then it can be said to fall within the picket fence and it's a place where ICANN, the GNSO, followed on by the Board with the involvement of the whole community can indeed make policy changes that actually change, as I said, the material conditions of the contract within that's picket fence.

Okay have there been questions I needed to answer? No. Okay so there's more reading about that on consensus policy. And indeed that pile looks somewhat small.

Working Group Guidelines, so now first of all these are guidelines and that word is a seriously meant. So the objective is to assist working groups to optimize their productivity and effectiveness. They are guidelines. Every working group does have an option to decide to what extent it's going to follow the guidelines or not but if it says it has to follow the guidelines then it needs sort of the approval of the GNSO Council as chartering and it needs to have a good reason for it.

The guidelines cover everything including the first meeting, the roles and responsibilities of various working group members, use of teams, briefings, subject matter experts, participation and representativeness. For example, there are very strong statements in the guidelines about the working group chair's responsibility to make sure that the working group is indeed representative of the GNSO and of the wider community.

And if the chair believes that there's an imbalance in the working group they have very strong obligations to do something about it. They have an obligation to moderate participation and notice that, oops, Non-Commercial Stakeholder Groups haven't been participating and send off email to the chair saying, you know, chair, you people haven't been participating. I bring this up because my chair got one of those messages recently.

There's process integrity. There's behavior and norms for established behavior, you know, beyond the normal politeness. There's an appeal process. If people in the working group don't think things are going properly there is a whole set of expanding appeals on the work of the working group chair.

There's often a liaison as a connection between the working group and the GNSO Council. Then there's going to the GNSO Council, there's going to the ombudsman. There are many different appeals mechanisms. There's communications and collaborations tools. We use wikis a lot.

Some of us are constantly trying to push the boundaries on that in terms of getting new tools added basically as tools are needed, as they're shown to be useful and as ICANN achieves the ability to sort of standardize and manage the tools new tools are added. And then there's discussion of the various products and outputs of that.

The GNSO Working Group Guidelines is actually an interesting document - and this is sort of an aside - for anybody that's doing a working group anywhere.

The people that wrote it - and I was part of that ubiquitous crowd or I was part of that crowd in a ubiquitous manner - basically brought in a lot of experience from a lot of working groups in other organizations and experience gotten through ICANN and put together a fairly rich set of guidelines that I've seen used in other circumstances and they're useful.

So even if you're not participating in ICANN GNSO working groups but are setting up another working group I suggest that it's something that might be useful as guidelines. Nobody ever has to follow all of them but all of them are useful in some circumstance.

Methodologies for decision making. So, yes, it outlines the available designations for working groups to indicate support. And those go from full consensus to consensus which is defined in a process manner that my definition of it, which I believe corresponds to what's there is that you get to a point where everyone has managed to express the viewpoint they've gotten. Everyone understands all of the viewpoints. Most everybody has come to agreement.

Now this isn't counted or voting, it's most everybody has come to a conclusion. But there may still be, you know, a few individuals or a group that

has a different opinion. That group, though, has to feel that their opinion has been understood.

So basically what happens very often in an iterative process is something that I've done myself as a chair and I've seen other chairs do, is you basically take a chance, you look around and you say, you know, I think we have consensus on A.

There's a couple people that have argued not A for the following reasons. We've responded to the reasons for not A. And after extensive discussion it looks like, you know, A is the consensus.

Then if nobody screams at them and there's basically agreement in the group, even among the proponents of non-A, and I can quite voluntarily say I have often been a non-A, but I have gotten to the point where, yes, I believe that I've explained myself well.

I believe that everybody understands why I'm objecting and they still don't agree with me. At that point I have to admit that the group has indeed reached consensus. It's not full consensus. And I have the ability to attach a minority statement that says, I think they're nuts. I think it should be not a but, you know, this is my position. So that level of consensus of iterative.

If, on the other hand, the chair comes out and lots of people says no, no, no, I don't think this is agreed; I don't think that's agreed; I don't think the other thing, then it's a cue that there's more discussion to be needed. The chair can, you know, collect the open issues and then proceed through them until, you know, she's gotten or he's gotten to the point of feeling safe or taking another chance and calling consensus again.

Eventually, it may take a couple times, you get to the point where none of the issues is new; none of the issues has any corner that hasn't been explored and you move on.

So as I said, there's full consensus, there's consensus, there's strong support but significant opposition and then there's divergence. So the second support but significant opposition is kind of when the group's halfsies/halfsies, you know, that we just - and then there's full divergence when there's many points of view and we just can't come to a conclusion. And that has happened.

And as I've said people can always file minority views. And minority views are supposed to proceed down the line with the recommendations so that they're there and available for the GNSO Council to consider and for the Board and others. And there's further reading for those.

And that's the Working Group Guidelines, as I said, you can get a summary of it or you can read it in gruesome detail. I recommend reading it in gruesome detail.

Tips and tricks; finding your way around. Yes, gnsoicann.org is an essential page for following what's gone in the GNSO. You can find the Operating Procedures there. You can find the Working Group Guidelines and the PDP manual. You can look at GNSO 101 materials. I haven't looked at them.

You can review GNSO projects. You can look at previous charters, for example. I found today while I was wandering around something I didn't know that all the previous charters are there so if you're into building a charter you can read how other people have built it, you can look at it that way.

And there's an acronym helper. And I've even noticed some of the documents online now you just put your pointer over an acronym and you get help. You know, we're inventing them all the time.

I don't think we're particularly worse than other organizations. Some people claim we are. But I think we have a healthy usage of acronyms. Trying to remember all of the full names for things is actually quite challenging.

There's the ICANN Learn. There's a whole new bit of work having been done over the last years to basically put various tutorials and other learning materials in a specific place so that people can actually educate themselves on all of the processes and procedures to a very large extent.

This one I recommend very much, find an experienced working group member either from your stakeholder group, constituency or others or a staff person sometime, to help you; to answer questions. Almost anyone will answer questions graciously. Some will do it more clearly than others.

Lots of people are willing to help. My recommendation for anybody that's getting involved is find a working group that interests you, sign up, participate in the meetings. Don't feel an obligation to talk unless you really feel comfortable talking and have something to say. But listen to it for a while, read the mailing list. Follow the documentation and jump in when you're ready.

It's not as scary as it sometimes seems. The people are mostly nice. All of us say stupid things from time to time. I do it as much if not more than some of my colleagues. And, you know, the policy staff are really nice, helpful people. And anybody that knows me knows that I'm not quick to say nice things about staff but these are really nice staff. And, you know, they're really always willing to help people. And, you know, they helped all of us many times over the years.

And I guess that puts me at the end of my talking except for answering questions.

This is actually a good chance, this webinar is a good chance to experiment with raising your hand and actually speaking if either you're on the phone bridge as I am or if you have set up your microphone using the little Connect My Audio phone icon thingy at the top that lets you use your microphone. So,

you know, do talk. This is a great time to talk since it's not even a working group.

Man: (Unintelligible).

Avri Doria: Okay, I hear somebody talking.

Man: Okay.

Avri Doria: Was there a question from the person talking? Okay I guess not. Okay. So I don't see any hands yet, does that mean everything is crystal clear? There's no questions? That's impossible. Oh I see a raised hand, yes (Ann). Oh you raise your hand by going to the little icon at the top that looks like a raised hand and you click on it.

And in fact the cool thing you do if you click on the little arrow beside it you see you can raise your hand, you can agree, you can disagree, you can say you stepped away. You could tell me to speak louder. You can tell me to speak softer. Speed up, slow down. You can actually even laugh at me.

So there's all kinds of cool things you could do with that but that's how you raise your hand. So, yes, I see two hands. I see (Shawn) and I see (Farsineh). So, (Shawn) first. You have your microphone on or do you wish to speak? Are you mute?

Okay perhaps you want to type your question in. And I'll move to (Farsineh). And I'll come back to (Shawn) again later. (Farsineh), are you able to talk? Have you activated your microphone and have you unmuted?

That's a question one hears often in a call because very often we forget to unmute and we start rambling on about our very important point to make and nobody has heard us because we've been on mute.

Okay I see questions. I don't hear anybody talking. I see (Shawn) has his microphone muted. I see (Farsineh) has a microphone unmuted so maybe she could talk. No talking. Okay.

Let me read the question I have. I have a question from - oops, just moved off of my screen. (Unintelligible). "Avri, just to clarify my earlier point. Some PDP is required intricate understanding of the ICANN," it keeps bouncing, "As also expertise in policy, for example ATRT, cross constituency. But there are certain other policy topics that are relatively lighter and relatively general. I was suggesting that newcomers to PDP could be given a preference to such lighter PDP and non-PDP groups."

Now I don't know what you mean by a preference because anybody and everybody is allowed on any working group. So it's really - now certainly if you come and ask me for invites on, you know, what's a good PDP for you to be involved in I'd probably not look at ease; I'd look at what are you interested in. Are you interested in the intricate details of how registrars work? IRTP.

Are you more into sort of the philosophical and theoretical spaces between policy and implementation and how all that works? Well in which case there's the policy and implementation team.

Are you interested in how registries would stop a certain (unintelligible) bad behavior, so I would really not look in terms of what's easy because I find them all equally difficult or equally hard. If I pay attention to the reading they're easy. If it's a subject that's new to me, that I'm not interested in, that I don't do the reading on and I don't keep up they're hard.

You know, and in terms of the process they're all pretty much the same. If it's a PDP it's a PDP and it's going to follow a certain track. If it's a GNSO working group it's going to work pretty much the same. It's really the subject matter that will define the difficulty. And as they say there's absolutely nothing

wrong with listening until you're comfortable with asking questions on an email list.

I've had people send me their question before they send them on the email list to make sure that the question wouldn't get laughed at. I don't think they have to worry about that but it's a service many of us provide. We'll check your questions before you ask them and if we can't answer them but, you know, so there's many ways to go.

I tend to recommend being brave and a brazen but I know that's not everybody's attitude in life.

(Shawn), you have your hand up again with your mic blanked out. I don't see anybody talking. Actually just spending time doing this part, this comment learning how to get your microphone working, learning how to raise your hand and answer and then put your hand down are probably some of the most basic skills that one needs in terms of functioning during a working group call.

So I would like somebody to give it a shot and raise your hand and use your microphone and ask a question.

Avri Doria: (Farsineh), please go ahead. Unmute your microphone and speak. So speak. I don't hear you. Maybe there's something on my side because I don't hear. Hello? That was me that caused the echo. Just want to make sure that I am getting the sound. Does anybody else want to take a chance at just saying something so we know that you have raised your hand and gotten experience using the microphone?

(Kathy):   Can you hear me?

Avri Doria: Yes I can.

(Kathy):   Hi, this is (Kathy). I just want to test it so everyone can see that it does work.

Avri Doria: Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

(Kathy):   No problem.

Avri Doria: And I see that you had your hand up too which is great. And it normally once you have finished speaking you would then which are hands down and possibly even mute your microphone. One puts their hand down either by clicking on their hand again, that puts it down, or you can open up the drop-down menu and say Clear Status. Thank you.

See? That was easy. Are there any questions? If not maybe we'll just cut the call. I don't want to keep boring you all with my silly prattle. I believe, (Shawn), that the presentation document is available online. In terms of what group you would join for a starter a really depends on what you're interested in.

And you might be interested, if I have followed your writing accurately, in policy and implementation while that group is underway. And that's the point actually I should make about groups that are underway when you join a group midway.

Any of us can join a group midway. You basically request to join and unless it's at a very sensitive time the working group chairs will usually say guess. That is somewhat at the discretion of the working group chair. But I've never seen it be a problem.

But what they request is that you take the time to read the mailing list up until that date, that you take the time to listen to the recordings of all the calls because a lot of issues will have been discussed already. A lot of points will have already been brought up, dissected and discussed.

This is not to say that you can't bring up something new or that if the explanation that went before was not adequate that you can't ask the question again. Of course you can. But it becomes a real impediment to a working groups progress when somebody joins in the middle of the group and has not done the prep work of making sure that they have caught up to all the people that are already working.

And so it's really a politeness. It also helps in terms of your integration into the group because after about the 10th time that someone says, "We covered that during our first two weeks, you know, please check that out and then come back with any further questions," then it perhaps does create a rough patch.

But groups are very amenable to people coming in as long as they've done the work to catch up to where everyone else is at. And that's the same thing, reference I give since nobody's asking questions I'll just give advice. That's the thing that if you miss a meeting, if you missed two meetings, for example I was away in Brazil and Geneva the last two weeks and so I missed two meetings of various groups that I'm a member of.

I had to read, I had to catch up on transcripts or I had to keep my mouth shut during the meeting because I was behind. And until I've caught up it's my responsibility to, you know, catch up to them; it's not their responsibility to bring me up. The information is all there. There's archives. Those recordings. There's transcripts.

Recordings are great for flights. Now they help some people sleep but they also are a good place to, you know, fill up an hour or two listening to meetings that you may have missed. I recommend them highly. They work on iPads and Android phones, they work great.

Anybody have any questions? In which case I suggest, with nine minutes to go until the hour, that if no one has any more questions that, you know, we can end this call and go on.

I hope - Olevie is typing so maybe there's a question. I see (Shawn) is typing so maybe there's a question. I'll wait those out. But I hope to see you in working groups. And as I say, feel free to come to me with questions. I'm usually fairly good about answering except for when I don't know what to answer and then I'll usually tell you.

Go to the staff, they're friendly, they're helpful. They're overworked but that's okay. Probably beat me up after this but hey. Is there anything else I can offer? Multiple attendees are typing. Yay.

Okay maybe I'm missing something. Okay, that's right, Olevie, you're a co-chair for Policy and Implementation so you're already deeply steeped in all of this.

Okay well then thank you all - thank you for thanking me. And it's been a pleasure. Oh yes, so bye-bye all.

Terri Agnew: Good bye.

Woman: Thank you.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, (Elan). You may now stop the recordings. Bye.

Avri Doria: Bye. Thank you, Nathalie.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you, Avri. Bye bye.

((Crosstalk))

Coordinator: And this does conclude today's conference. You may disconnect at this time.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, (Elan). Bye-bye.

END