
ICANN Transcription

IDNs EPDP F2F Workshop AM Session

Thursday, 07 December 2023 at 01:00 UTC

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DAN GLUCK:

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, and welcome to the IDNs EPDP call taking place on Thursday, the 7th of December, 2023. All members and participants will be promoted to panelists. Observers will remain as an attendee and will have access to view chat only. Statements of interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share over the past day, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you need any assistance updating your statements of interest, please email the GNSO Secretariat. All documentation and information can be found in the IDNs EPDP wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly after the end of the call, and I believe they are posted from yesterday. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript. During this session, it's requested that questions are asked verbally. Signal that you have a question or would like to speak. If you're in the room or online, please use the hand raise function in the Zoom toolbar. If you're in the room, please join this meeting

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without audio. If you do join with audio, please mute your microphone and speakers as the audio is being taken care of through our meeting AV support staff in the room. When called upon, you'll be given permission to unmute your microphone. Kindly unmute your microphone at this time to speak. Please state your name for the transcript. As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN will be stakeholder process or to comply with the expected standards of behavior. Thank you. And over to our chair, Donna Austin. Please begin.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Dan. Welcome back, everybody. Hopefully, we'll fill the room up as the morning moves along. I think we made some really good progress yesterday. Actually, I think we got a little bit further than we had hoped, so that's good news. Steve will give us a little bit of a recap in a minute. Just pleased to see that Satish is still with us. Didn't get wiped out by anything last night on the walk to the restaurant. I think an enjoyable evening last night. I think the walk in the rain probably did us all some good. So we'll work through the rest of the agenda today and we'll work through at 5:30. So we'll work through to 5:30 again and then you're on your own this evening to do what fun things you would like to do. So with that, Steve, is that enough time or do I still need to waffle on? Okay. Thanks.

STEVE CHAN:

Greetings, everyone. Good morning. This is Steve Chan from staff. So as Donna noted, I'll try to recap from yesterday, just obviously focusing on outcomes and action items. We'll start from

the beginning, which was about the UDRP and URS. This will sound like a repeat because it mostly is. For the TMCH, the matching rules are fit for purpose still and there's no change envisioned for that. There's definitely no issue with the sunrise and also I don't think as well for the claims aspect. But related to this, the group believes that guidance may be needed for both providers and then also complainants to help them understand the implications from variants. And so especially for complaints, they will need to take into account the impact from variants as it may change how they file the UDRP or URS.

We have an action item to confirm whether or not a registry that only has blocked variants would still be compelled to comply with the elements in the registry agreement. And we have an open, I think, discussion item to talk about whether or not overlapping sunrise and claims periods for different variant TLDs is problematic. So I think we'll take that up in the future. And then in respect of WHOIS RDAP, that was where I was trying to furiously write something still, but I think more or less where we ended up is that there was agreement from the group that there needs to be, it essentially needs to capture not only that the domain names are variants, but potentially, I guess, show the composition of the variant set. And that variant set is across the various variant TLDs and then also the domains within each of those respective variant TLDs. I think that's where we end up.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Yeah, thanks, Steve. I think on that last one, I think for information that can be captured from what Michael showed us yesterday, it's the activated variants that would be visible and maybe make some

connection. But the complete set is a little bit more challenging particularly for Arabic, because it could be many, many, many domains. So I think we need to give a little bit more thought as to how we capture that as a doubt it will be a policy recommendation, but perhaps some guidance in some form. So any other comments about the recap? Pretty comfortable with that. Okay, all right. So with that, Ariel, I think we'll get started on whatever's next.

ARIEL LIANG:

Yeah, this is Ariel. Thanks, Steve, for the recap. And before we go to the next charter question, I just want to make sure we cover the discussion questions for [D8,] which is still about the registration data. And I think we already covered question one and two about data elements with respect to variant domain names. And then we do have a question three regarding how should the additional data elements, how should they be treated? It's a very general way of asking this question. And the idea in our mind is with regard to the collection, how should they be collected, generated, transferred, disclosed? So I just want to get a sense from the room whether you think we need to address this question in this kind of detailed manner, or we just have a very high level kind of recommendation as to what Steve recapped and leave it as is. So I just want to make sure we cover that and reach a conclusion before we move on.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. I think my sense is that we have a recommendation that is related to ensuring that the variants are visible if somebody

does an RDAP or WHOIS query, but the collection and how that's generated or transferred or disclosed, that's at the discretion of the registry. So I think that's how we'd respond to that question. I know people aren't really alert yet and [inaudible], but I think that's kind of where we are. Michael, sorry.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes, Michael for the record. I agree with you that the way they are treated should be decided by the registry, how they perform their business, but just to that they should be visible, at least the ones that exist should be displayed in hopefully some standard way yet to be determined.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. Maxim and then Sarmad.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Maxim, for the record. I think since we face a situation where the RDAP or WHOIS going to potentially deliver a lot of records instead of one record as for the current domains, there should be considered change to SLAs. So the first answer is received within the frame designed in the contract, because it's a quite short timeout and if you need to deliver a few thousand records, it shouldn't take the same time frame as the current one record. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Maxim, I'm not sure what you're referring to. I feel like I missed something.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Example, you have domain in Arabic scripts and you want to see the variants. And since the final answer, I mean, for example, RDAP dumps on you thousands of domains instead of current one domain and it might take more time. And current SLA is designed for the single answer for the single answer of quite short text instead of thousands of records. So it's not going to be possible to fulfill the requirements of the current SLA on RDDS if the answer is, let's say, thousands times more in volume. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks, Maxim. I think what we're talking about here is just activated variants. So we're not talking about the set. We can note that I don't know what the current SLAs are in the registry agreement. We might be able to capture something about that in the notes, but in terms of the recommendation that I think getting into discussion around SLAs is beyond our scope. We would just have a recommendation and during implementation that would the SLA discussion would come into play there. At least that's my take on it. So we have Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Donna. Just, I guess, wondering if it would be useful to also suggest that the primary domain should be identified in the record in addition to the variants. So it should be marked separately just because of its significance.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. I think we should note that, but I guess my concern is that the primary could change. But yeah, I think it's a fair point. Most of the time the primary is going to be the important one. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: One question regarding that comment. Do we have a single primary? I thought we talked about having one primary per TLD. Then we would need to have multiple primaries.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, can we just capture that? There's a question about what do we mean by primary. So we may pick that up when we have the glossary conversation, but I think we understand the intent that the importance of the primary and that should be called out in whatever the query field is. Maxim, is that a new hand? Okay. Nigel and then Satish.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you. Good morning. And thank you to, especially to our support, our wonderful support for arranging an excellent meal last night. Thank you very much. Yeah, it's really nice to get together. And yeah, on this, I think, Donna, did you say that, I mean, it's up to the registry how they do it exactly. But from what we were saying yesterday, we do need this information available in some coherent way so people can understand what's being presented.

So do we need guidance in addition to this implementation guidance? But perhaps I missed that. So apologies.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Nigel. I think there's probably two parts to this. So I think we're agreeing that at a minimum what we want in the query field is connection where there's variants, so that that's called out. So anyone looking at the WHOIS information can actually see that there's a variant. So that's what Michael pulled up for us yesterday. So we will make that a requirement to the, I guess, in answer to question three, how that's collected, generated, transferred, whatever is at the discretion of the registry. But I think the profile, so the RDAP profile or WHOIS is a standard way that these things are displayed, not that RDAP is as good in display as what WHOIS was, but I think that profile will provide the consistency in when you're looking up that information. At least that's my basic understanding. So Michael's nodding his head. So does that answer your question, Nigel? Yeah. Okay, great. Thanks. So Satish and then Edmon.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Donna, Satish, for the record. So in most cases, the input to WHOIS is the primary as of now. So are we saying that in future we can enter any variant and get back the primary, the whole set? Is that what you're saying?

DONNA AUSTIN:

I think that's what the intention is, whether that's exactly how it would be. But I think the intention is based on Edmon's concern

yesterday, is just to ensure that when somebody's looking up a domain name, they can see if there's another, whether it's part of a variant set or not. So the how, not really sure what that is yet, but the recommendation would be that that has to be done. Yeah. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Edmon here and speaking personally. I don't know whether this is the right time to bring it up, but this includes the IANA part, which could be a little bit different. So if this is the right time to bring it up, I'll say it. If not, I'll wait until we talk about the IANA portion of it.

DONNA AUSTIN: So are we done on this part of the discussion?

ARIEL LIANG: I think the IANA portion was part of the question. Yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN: So just let's be clear. I think we've covered off the WHOIS RDAP part. But if you're saying that the IANA is quite different, then we need to start a, I want to draw a line under this conversation before we start that. So are we done with this?

STEVE CHAN: I might be asking a really dumb question because I'm not super familiar with the RDAP profile. But would there be any changes

potentially needed to the RDAP profile itself to accommodate the changes that this group is talking about now?

DONNA AUSTIN: Potentially, but that would be dealt with in implementation. Yeah. The how is not our problem. Well, the best we could do is provide implementation guidance, which would be that it may be necessary to update the RDAP profile. Yeah. So in my mind, it's the output is what's in the RDAP profile. So there would be a change required if there's not provision for that already. So Michael, to the stuff that you displayed yesterday, that's the WHOIS output. So that's something that you do voluntarily with that mapping of variants at the moment?

MICHAEL BAULAND: I'm not 100% sure what the legal status of that is, but I think we checked it with ICANN. I'm not sure whether we got an official. I need to check that.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. But it does display in what you have for WHOIS and what you have for RDAP now. So it is displaying in both those.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yeah. Both in the WHOIS fields and RDAP, we have the—I think RDAP, if I'm not mistaken, it's even possible to add things you want without violating the RDAP profile, but I'm not 100% sure. Maybe someone else knows more about that.

DONNA AUSTIN: All right. So yeah, Steve, I'm assuming that it's already possible because it can be displayed, but it's maybe if you guys want to have a conversation with Francisco. But yeah, but the recommendation for us is that it becomes part of the display, I think.

ARIEL LIANG: And just to clarify as a part of the display, I just want to make sure, is that the minimum data set for publication?

DONNA AUSTIN: Now we're getting into something that I'm not really familiar with. So the minimum requirement is related to GDPR. That's a separate thing. So what we're talking about is adding to the fields the ability to show that there's a variant. Whether that is a minimum display requirement is, I guess, not for us. Okay. So Edmon, do you want to introduce the IANA stuff?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, sure. But just quickly on the RDAP, I guess there are extensions. The structure is a little bit like EPP, so you can have your own extensions or you can have a standardized extension. So either way it is quote unquote possible. It's just that, yeah. So adding on to the IANA part, not a huge difference. It's only that I don't know how this group would create recommendations. Of course, ultimately it would be IANA to adopt it or not. But IANA, of course, also has a WHOIS and also has, well, coming up, I don't

know if it's already, but probably have an RDAP implementation as well. But it also has a website that lists all the TLDs. So the listing part is something of interest. I think the listing part should follow the one application role. So the listing of the TLDs, there shouldn't be multiple entries into that list. If you go to the website, there's a listing of all the top level domains. That should only have the primary exist. And once you click in, then there should be information about the variants and so on. But if you are technically connecting to port 43 or connecting to RDAP, then the same property as we discussed yesterday and earlier today, which is querying the variants, should also return information and also direct to the primary should exist. But the plain listing of all the TLDs should probably follow the one application rule that we set earlier on and not have multiple entries. So there is a slight nuance there because the IANA website does have a listing of all the TLDs. Whereas in the WHOIS or RDAP, I think the same or very similar concept or functionality could be done for the top level as for what we discussed for the second level yesterday.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Can we give Michael co-hosting so that he can pull up the IANA WHOIS, if that's okay? Oh, sorry. I guess you were going to do that anyway. Sorry. Oh, okay. So, Edmon, this is what you're talking about.

EDMON CHUNG:

Yeah, this would be the WHOIS portion. And that could be very similar to what we discussed yesterday.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. So under if the domain NRW, is that the TLD? Yeah. So there will be something under there to capture that. That's the primary and then the variants under that. Okay. Any thoughts? Yeah. Sorry. No, go ahead, Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: But then there's the listing page as well, which is quite different. Yeah, this is the one. And here, I think it should have only one entry, which is the primary. And then after you click into that page should provide additional information. I think at least that's the starting point.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So the IDNs in this database start with xn--. Is that right or not?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: You'll have to scroll all the way down.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. So basically, if people are on board with this, we just have a recommendation that the display in the IANA database would have the primary and then the variants would be linked underneath that so that the set would be kept together. And any new variants would also be linked. Steve?

STEVE CHAN: This is Steve. And just from having survived SubPro, I would just suggest maybe we don't make things quite so prescriptive about how it displays the information and just maybe capture the principle of what you're trying to do.

DONNA AUSTIN: Sorry, Maxim, go ahead.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Maxim, for the record, I suggest we just say that IANA should reflect if the particular TLD has IDN variants and which including its RDDS. That's it. I think it's enough for the implementation team. So they check where the information is and how it's stored. And I think that IANA should contain in this page information about all TLDs, not just primary. And if they want to just move it to the end of the page or somewhere else, it's up to them. But IANA is the source of information. We shouldn't recommend hiding something there. It's a bad, bad idea because it's the source. If you spoil it, it will have many consequences. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Maxim. And I think that goes to Steve's point. Let's not be prescriptive about the how, but just a recommendation that the primary TLD be identified in some way and the variants be connected in some way. So I think that's probably a good way to do it. Sarmad, Edmon and Michael.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Right. So I guess the root zone database reflects what are the records in the root zone, irrespective of whether they are variants of each other or not. So it may be possible to maybe sublist them, but not listing them would not reflect the root zone database, I guess, completely. So again, I think going back to what Steve said, I think if you're interested in showing the relationship between what the primary and the variants are, we should perhaps maybe just recommend it at that level and let IANA figure out what is the best way to, I guess, display it. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Edmon and Michael.

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah. Edmon speaking personally here again. So I agree that we don't need to be prescriptive. I do think having a sublist or drop down or whatever works, but I did want to clarify something I put in the chat as well. I have asked before the question about, I think, Ariel, you highlighted that there are the two dot China and Taiwan as well, because at the time of the delegation, they were not considered variants because there were no variant rules. It was just the IDN ccTLD fast track and it was done on an exception basis. So once the policy is in place, then it should be dealt with as IDN variants in that IANA hasn't come up with the implementation process yet. But I think our recommendations can inform eventually how they implement it.

DONNA AUSTIN: Are we crossing into ccTLD?

EDMON CHUNG: Yes. So we can do our side and the ccNSO will have to do their side.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Being our board liaison as well, Edmon, you can explain why this is different to the CCs. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yeah. Basically, I agree what has been said before, but I also want to emphasize that this root zone database should not just have the primary TLD there, but all for one reason, as Sarmad said, it's a root zone database and the variant in the root zone is exactly the same as the primary. You won't see any difference in the DNS and also this page is for the public and almost all people wouldn't know what a primary TLD is. For them, a primary and a variant TLD look exactly the same and they can't be expected to know, oh, this TLD is not visible in this database because it's just a variant and not a primary.

DONNA AUSTIN: Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON: I just wanted to sort of try and fully understand this because perhaps I'm just slightly confused. But so this IANA database, I always assumed it was administered by IANA. And so it's not something that the man down the street is going to necessarily

look at. I'm not saying they shouldn't or presumably it's a public database, right? It's a public list. But it's maintained by IANA and I thought that it would be the authoritative list of all the names that were essentially listed or delegated or in some way captured. So are we giving advice to IANA and how they should put variants in? Because presumably they do this or they put everything in. Or is it specific guidance we're giving? I just wanted to get that sense.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, thanks, Nigel. I mean, I'm not sure from a policy perspective what weight our recommendations have for something that's related to IANA. But I think what we're trying to do here is account for the fact that there, with the exception of .China, there haven't been variants at the gTLD level. So noting that this is a public database, is it something that we think is worthwhile doing that the variants are called out on what is a public database? And I don't think there's any concern with that. And it will be up to IANA to display it, to determine how they would do that.

MAXIM ALZOBA: I suggest we just request ICANN basically to contact IANA. That's it. And they sort it out somehow magically.

DONNA AUSTIN: Jennifer?

JENNIFER CHUNG: I just want to get some clarity on what we are kind of converging on with the minimum kind of recommendation. I think I'm understanding that everyone wants to show their linkages. But I see in the chat and in certain phrases from what has been said right before, are we also including other items, not just that they're part of a variant set? Are we including whether they're the primary or that? Because I see it in chat and I wasn't sure whether or not we're kind of talking about that now, or are we just leaving it as implementing guidance to see how IANA will implement?

DONNA AUSTIN: To be honest, I'm not sure what the language or the text is going to look like at this point. But I think what we're trying to capture is Edmon's original concern that currently there is no way, if you look at this information, to know that a TLD is part of a variant. And I think there was discussion that it would be helpful to identify the primary. So I think what we're trying to do is just capture some language around that, which I don't know whether we can do a policy recommendation, but just around that idea. And then it's a recommendation that will go to IANA for them to work out how to do it, or whether it is feasible or not, or whether to any concern that it might break the way they currently do things. So I think that's vaguely it. Steve?

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Donna. This is Steve. And I think you more or less sort of made my point, which is that in general, we try to make sure we, as we're deliberating issues, try to come to agreement on what we're trying to accomplish. And then there's still checkpoints within

the process to make sure that what we're actually recommending is actually feasible. And so to Nigel's very valid point, we need to make sure that a recommendation can actually be carried out or made in a way that it's probably not going to compel IANA, but have them do what we want to do and inform the recommendation in a way that it's proper.

DONNA AUSTIN: Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. And again, basically the IANA database list is a list of the top level domains. And that's about it. I'm not sure that it is supposed to give any kind of further information. And again, I'm not sure that we can recommend to IANA to actually reflect primary and variants in their database. It's up to IANA to determine if they can actually do that. It depends on the definition for that database that they have. So again my understanding that it's just a database that lists what's there. It's not about giving any further information. And maybe there are other ways of defining the primary or listing the primary and the variants. The WHOIS server might be a venue for that. But the database, I'm not sure.

DONNA AUSTIN: Hadia, do you have any general opposition to the suggestion that we because we are dealing with variants in this PDP, there hasn't been variants at the top level before for gTLDs, that we make a suggestion to IANA that it would be, we think it would be useful to

capture where TLDs are variants? And we would leave it to them. It's their discretion to sort it out. Yep. Okay. All right. Satish and back to Edmon.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Satish, for the record. From the end user perspective, IANA is the authoritarian source and also a single source of kind of truth of the root zone. So if we're going to not show the relation between the variants and the primary, then there should be an alternative source for that information. And noting that we cannot impose on IANA to do anything that they do not want to do. But then if that's the case, then we need somewhere else where we can get the actual information. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Satish. I know that another possibility is the registry agreements, but that doesn't have the technical information that the IANA database has. It would just simply be that the registry agreement is for a primary and two or three variants or whatever. This seems to be probably the simplest way to do this. Okay. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG:

Edmon here. So I just wanted to add, Hadia had, I guess, a question on the database, but this is exactly where, Ariel, you can scroll down a little bit. There's further information, like the IANA report, some registry information, and so on. So this is where, I guess, the additional information for the variants in primary would naturally reside. And that's why the suggestion. But again, we

don't need to be prescriptive, and we should leave it to IANA to do the actual implementation.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Maxim? And then I think we can draw a line under this after Maxim.

MAXIM ALZOBA: First of all, IANA is a source of information. It's just not reflection. It's where the information is taken by coders, by systems, etc., etc. So the information is about things which are in root. So on IANA level, it's not necessary to know which TLD is variant of which. If it's in the root, it should be reflected. We shouldn't give the recommendation to hide something which is in the root. It might have quite severe consequences on a software level. Because if it's not in IANA, most probably some firewalls will not pass it, information on DNS, etc. So making remarks that this is a variant of that, possibly yes. But saying that, oh, from the design level, it should be hidden, because it's not a primary. On IANA level, it's the DNS zone. There is no difference. So the information should be contained there. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, thanks, Maxim. I don't think there's a suggestion that anything would be hidden. I think all the information for every TLD would still show as currently is the case. But it's just a recognition that maybe three of these TLDs are, one's a primary, two's a variant, and just to reflect that in some way. So all the information about the variants would still appear in IANA as it does now for

any TLD. And Ariel showed that in the case for China. It's just reflecting that these are variants of one another and considered in single set. That's all. Okay. So I think we're okay with that conversation. I think we're in agreement that we make a, whether it's a suggestion or a recommendation that the IANA database in some way reflects where TLDs are variants of one another. And that's pretty much it. Okay. Yeah, Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, this is Ariel just for Dan's benefit of capturing the notes. And I think another agreement is for the IANA WHOIS service for the query of a domain name. It's a similar kind of update, like what we discussed at the second level. So if it does have active or registered variant domain names, somehow it should be reflected in that as well. So that's the two changes for an IANA we're recommending.

DONNA AUSTIN: Is there a distinction there? Because the IANA database is only delegated TLDs. Is it? It's contracted.

EDMON CHUNG: So as Sarmad pointed out, the IANA database in the HTML format contains additional information. Even for TLDs that were like test TLDs that are no longer in the root zone, they're also there for historical purpose, I guess, at this time. And also it contains, again, when you click in, it contains further information that is not included in the WHOIS. So there's a different, slightly different, but I would say it's almost like a superset of information from the

HTML side. And then there's the WHOIS service on the port 43, which is kind of like the second level registry or registrar WHOIS.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. But I think my question was, at what point does a TLD get entered into the IANA database? Is it on delegation?

EDMON CHUN: Right. Yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN: So that was my point. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: I was just wondering for the second level, for the TLD WHOIS, we said that probably we want the WHOIS to be able to answer also queries for non-existing variants and display the list of existing variants. Do we want something similar for the IANA WHOIS that if you query a TLD that is not existing, it will still display the existing variants or is it out of scope and it's up to IANA to decide? It might be complicated for them to implement that because they would have to essentially implement the root zone LGRs to get that information.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. I think it might be out of scope a second bit. Yeah. Okay. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. This is Hadia for the record. And I just raised my hand to comment on what Edmon just said with regard to the IANA database, having entries that do not exist and are there for historical reasons. And this is actually not my understanding. If the listing is there, that means that it was never actually removed from the database. Maybe it's not used. Maybe it does make sense to remove it. But for me, if I see it on the list, that means that it exists in the database. That's at least how I understand the list to be. If it's in the root zone, it's in the database. If it's not in the root zone, it's not in the database. Sarmad? Do you have the answers for us?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yes. So the other link which I shared is actually the normative link from IANA, which lists the current status of the root zone, not the DB, which we are, I guess, looking at. This does contain. So this is the normative version. And as you can see, at the top, the first line says that it is when it is last updated. I think it's updated on daily basis. So the other database will have historic data because it's not updated. Its design is different. It's not supposed to reflect the current status of root zone DB. The other list also contains historical data and other kinds of data. So this is really the normative reference. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks, Sarmad. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: If Ariel can click on my link, then you can see what's in there. And Hadia, if you take a look at that. So this is a .test IDN test domain, and it's still in that database. But it says this domain is not present in the root zone at this time.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: So I guess what really matters is the database that we, that Sarmad actually pointed out. Yes. Right. Exactly.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So are we all good? Can draw a line under this one? Yay. Thanks, guys. Okay. So implementation guidelines? Yeah. Okay. All right. So we're going to move into the implementation guidelines discussion, which I think is going to be pretty challenging. So I'll hand it over to Ariel to get us started.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Donna. So for the IDN implementation guidelines, we have two charter questions. And I'll just quickly remind folks how they look like. First is G1, what should be the proper vehicle to update the IDN implementation guidelines? And the second question, and also I wish Dennis was here because we did have a little difficulty just unpacking this question. But it says, given that the contracted parties are contractually bound to adhere to the IDN implementation guidelines, is there a need for a separate legal mechanism specifically for the implementation of IDNs among gTLDs as well as a general guidelines for any registry, including ccTLD registries that wishes to implement IDNs? So my understanding of GA1 is basically should there be a replacement

of IDN implementation guidelines? Just make it clear. It's a legal document has contractual obligations and make it this extra apparent. That's my understanding of G1A. But before we talk about G1A, we need to talk about G1 first. And that's the focus. And also we're not talking about the exact substance of implementation guidelines, even we will kind of touch on that. But we're talking about the vehicle of updating that going forward.

So I did some research, but I'm sure there are plenty of people in the room that are very expert in this and actually have a hands-on experience in developing previous versions. I know Admin for sure and Satish, I think, too. And then Dennis, but he was not here. I'm not sure who else, but even Serman and Pitinan has a pretty strong experience in this, too. So please stop me. Feel free to chime in if you have additional information to share.

So this is the basics of this implementation guidelines. What it is, is basically a best practices document that includes standards for registries and registrars that deploy IDN registration policies. And a lot of these guidelines reflect, for example, protocol updates through the IETF. And they also address IDN registrations and practices in order to minimize risks of cyber-squatting, consumer confusion, and also respect the interests of communities around the world that use their local languages and script. So I guess on the bottom line, it is a best practice document, but it also has legal implications, too. And the reason why it was established, I think that's just based on my personal research, but happy to hear from the group whether I got it right. So basically, it started in the early, I think, 2000. We'll check the dates exactly when we go to those slides. ICANN start to need to authorize registries that could allow

IDN domain name registrations at the second level. So they need to be based on certain guidelines to allow that to happen. And also, it helps to provide a coordinated approach to improve the IDN registration practices and the usage at the second level among registries. Another purpose is that it aims to be used deeper into the DNS hierarchy and also within TLDs where ICANN has lesser of a policy relationship. So I think that's particularly pertaining to ccTLDs. And then finally, it helps contribute to the openness, interoperability, resiliency, security, and stability of the DNS. So these are some of the general goals and rationale why this is coming to existence.

And in terms of who the guidelines are developed for, so they're mainly developed for gTLD registries and registrars that offer IDN registrations. And in fact, the guidelines are contractually required for them to implement, but that's not the exact setup at the beginning actually evolved into this way. And then also, some of the ccTLDs, they voluntarily kind of follow that too. It's encouraged for ccTLD managers to follow those guidelines as well as a support document, but they're not required to follow them.

And in terms of who developed the guidelines, my understanding is this is a joint effort between community experts as well as ICANN staff. And the community experts are involved registry registrars are experienced with implementing IDNs, as well as linguistic and language experts and maybe other technical experts as well. And it's done usually through a working group mechanism over the years. So I will stop here and see whether there's any comments, questions. Edmon, please go ahead.

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here. Just one slight, I guess, correction. For ccTLDs, you're correct. That's where ASCII ccTLDs, but for IDN ccTLDs, they're committed to be compliant with the IDN implementation guidelines through the IDN ccTLD fast track process. And I think that is still uphold. I haven't checked the latest ccPDP, but for IDN ccTLDs, they're not only encouraged, they have to actually click to commit to it when they submit the request for the IDN ccTLD.

DONNA AUSTIN: Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much. Thanks, Ariel. I just wondered before we sort of go through this in detail, whether anyone's got the historical perspective of why they were called guidelines in the first place, if they're contractual obligations. If the gTLD actually has to implement them, then they must be called guidelines for some reason at the beginning, rather than requirements.

DONNA AUSTIN: Excellent question, Nigel.

EDMON CHUNG: Edmon here. Yeah, Edmon here. So I think Ariel touched on that a little bit as well. So initially, it was encouraged for the ccTLDs, so it wasn't required. And then for gTLDs, prior to the guidelines, there were gTLDs that, quote unquote, bad word, but jumped the gun to

offer. And I think that at that point, it wasn't appropriate to rein it back, if you will, but at least to sit together and talk about putting together guidelines. I will also add that this is a document that is the best way to think about it is probably somewhere between GNSO, ccNSO policies and IETF, because it is a combination of policies and technical standards in some ways. So that's why it's called an implementation guidelines. It wasn't neither anticipated to be policy in a big P, nor a standards like an RFC. That's also called a request for comments, by the way. So that's why it was, quote unquote, called guidelines. But eventually, in the 2012 round, when the discussion of the registry agreement came about, this was then included in the agreements. That was the time when the guidelines were formally included in the agreements. Hope that helps.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. Let me share a link to IDN guidelines version 1.0. We're currently at 4.1. And just read a bit from its introduction. I think that may provide some of the historical context. But let me share the link first. And if you can display that, I think that may be useful. So these guidelines came about and I think the second paragraph here is a bit reflective of that kind of commitment by the people who were involved. It came about in 2003 when IDNA 2003 standard was actually developed by ETF. And there was interest by the registries, both CC and gTLDs to implement internationalized domain names following that IETF standard. And

so they basically came together. And as you can see, the initial list contains both CCs and Gs and developed how to implement IDNs. And there was, I guess, some level of commitment from them to abide by these guidelines from the start. So that's from the version, first version of the guidelines as documented. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks so much. So it has a long history and the evolution and the purpose, I suppose, has developed during that time as well. And as Edmon said, it was 2012 when it kind of became relevant to gTLDs and bundled up into the registry agreement. And I think at that time it was probably at version three, 2012. Not sure. Yeah. And with version four, I think the board has approved some of the recommendations or components which are now part of the registry requirement as well. But any other questions on Ariel's first slide here? Satish?

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Satish, for the record. This is a question for Edmon. When the board deferred certain sections of 4.0 and created 4.1, one of the deferred sections is actually our same entity principle. I'm not sure why the board should have deferred it, because for us, it's a very key principle. Do you have any answer to that?

EDMON CHUNG:

Yeah. So Edmon here. Sarmad can probably add to this, but the reason is because this working group was coming into existence and it has that as part of the deliberations and the board didn't want to preempt that discussion. And that was raised from the

GNSO, especially from the contracted parties, a number of items that called on the board to have weighed up and that's the only reason. So, yeah, hopefully that's useful.

DONNA AUSTIN: Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yes, just to add to Edmon, the list of deferred guidelines was actually suggested by GNSO and not initiated by the board. The board just accepted that list of recommendations from IDN guidelines version 4.0 to be deferred on the request of GNSO.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, that's great. And I think Ariel's going to cover that in slides to come. So we'll get to that. So back to you, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, thanks everyone. I appreciate the abbreviated history and I have expanded history on this slide. So actually my plan is to go through each version. I will talk about the background and then see how the mechanism, whether it's appropriate. But actually I did find the contractual language that's reflected in the registry agreement and also registrar accreditation agreement. I believe these versions were following the 2012 round, so it's not before. And I think as a result of the 2012 round, those implementation guidelines become contractually bounding for registry registrar that implement IDN registration policy. And I bolded the part so

you can see it. It's in, for RA, it says specification 6, section 1.4, and you will see this line, registry operator shall comply with the ICANN IDN guidelines. And there's a link to that as they may be amended, modified or superseded from time to time. So there is a general sentence here saying they shall comply with the guidelines and they're also subject to update down the road too. And a similar phrase or sentences in the 2013 RAA, and it's basically for registrar, it's the same expectation. They shall comply with IDN guidelines and they also may be updated from time to time. So that's the contractual language.

DONNA AUSTIN:

So that becomes pretty important as we discuss this question about what's the vehicle to update or whatever that language is for the guidelines, because I guess prior to becoming codified in the registry agreement, they were guidelines. And now they are requirements in the registry agreement. So when we talk about the vehicle, it's whether the way that the guidelines have been developed as a community thing, whether that still is the way to do it or is there another way given that now these are becoming requirements for registry operators? So that's really the discussion we're trying to have here, whether that community discussion is still okay or whether it needs to be something more formal like a PDP or maybe there's another possibility. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Right. I think one thing to keep in mind as we discuss this is that these guidelines are applicable to both ccTLDs and gTLDs. And if

it is, for example, brought into a PDP process, then there is no singular vehicle to do this for both gTLDs and ccTLDs. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Sarmad. And also, I just want to show the language in the ccTLD fast track process. And also, I looked at the ccPDP for initial report and kind of reference what they say about the IDN implementation guidelines. So I just want to read out a couple of sentences here. So in the fast track process, what they said is, I guess, for the IDN ccTLD managers, they shall comply on an ongoing basis with the IDN guidelines as updated and published from time to time on the ICANN website, all subject to and within the limits of relevant applicable national law and public policy. I guess that's the commitment part that Edmond mentioned. And then there's another bullet point, is they shall use its best endeavors to adhere adherence to relevant IDN standards and guidelines with the IDN guidelines as updated and published from time to time. So the key phrase here I saw is use their best endeavors. So it's not a hard requirement, but it's highly encouraged, but happy to be corrected if the understanding is not right. And then I also look at the ccPDP for initial report. This is what they mentioned about the guidelines. What they say is, it is strongly suggested that IDN ccTLD managers are expected, but not required to be guided by the guidelines for the implementation of IDNs applicable at time. So they kind of emphasize they are not required to do it, but they're expected to be guided by the

guidelines. So that's kind of a softer requirement, but indicates some kind of commitment as well. So Hadia, please go ahead.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Ariel. This is Hadia. So my understanding, the reason for which it's not a must is that actually you cannot put any musts on any ccTLD managers. So you cannot actually tell a ccTLD what they must do. And I think that's the reason behind that kind of language. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Hadia. Maxim.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Since we are creating effectively something going to be a policy in the end, and it's a legal obligation for registries and registrars. And for ccTLDs, it's just a guidance. Yes. So we can mention that ccTLDs should try to stick to these guidelines, but it's not going to have any legal consequences for them. So we shouldn't hard code it into the documents. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Maxim. While I don't disagree, I think for the purposes of what we're trying to discuss here, we can kind of acknowledge that there are differences in the ccTLD and gTLD landscape, but let's try to focus on the question at hand and what we can find as a potential solution for the gTLD space. And then if we think we need to have a discussion about how that would reflect on the

ccTLD space, we can do that. So let's not get too hung up on the differences. I think we all understand and know that they're there, and we'll see if we can find a solution that primarily works for Gs, understanding that landscape, and perhaps it will expand to Zs. So we have Nigel, and then Edmon.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, Nigel Hickson for the record. But yeah, no, this is very interesting. Sorry, obviously we can only do what we can do, although just reflecting on what Hadia said, is that completely right? Because ICANN, doesn't it have some MOUs with some ccTLDs? So there are some ccTLDs that are more bound than others. And if we look at some of the requirements in the ccTLD fast track, it does say they shall comply. So there seems to be a variance across the different areas, but I'm not suggesting that we should craft something that says that ccTLDs should [inaudible] the guidelines. But there is a sort of consistency element here, which we probably need to reflect on.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Nigel. And I think that's something that Edmon picked up on as well, is that I think in developing policies or guidelines around IDNs, the intent is to try to have some uniformity across the ccTLD and the gTLD landscape. And I think that's an important principle that we need to keep in mind. So Edmon and then Maxim.

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here. So I was just wondering if, Ariel, you haven't looked at the deck of slides. So are there more slides to talk about how the last iteration of the update looked like? Because that might be useful for us as we think about in the future, is that process acceptable or not, or how we want to tweak it?

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks, Edmon. Maxim, and then we'll hand back to Ariel to keep going.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Actually, since ccTLDs represent somehow their respective jurisdiction, and those are independent, we don't have many agreements between ICANN and ccTLDs. And here we see a situation where our remit of our group is limited to gTLDs. And speaking about ccTLDs and Fast Track, it's just a trigger event. If a ccTLD after going via Fast Track and being deployed in this zone changed something, ICANN will not be able to do anything because it's going to cause a huge international scandal. If, for example, ICANN send a letter saying that you're not following these guidelines, we're removing you from the root. So it's just a procedure and it doesn't have ongoing effect. So yes, we might mention it, but no, it's not an obligation they have to stick to. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Maxim. And to Nigel's point, I think there are maybe two or three ccTLDs that actually have a sponsorship agreement with ICANN. I don't know whether AU still has one, Neeraj used to

have one, and a whole raft of ccTLDs have a looser agreement, which is the accountability framework or the exchange of letters, but I don't think it has anything specifically about IDNs in it. So those arrangements are in place. And I think if there was any concern about IDNs, then soft diplomacy would probably be the way for ICANN rather than letters. But anyway, that's off track. Back to Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, everybody, for the discussion. So that's exactly the slides that Edmon is waiting for, but this is the beginning slide about the update process. I just want to provide folks a big picture of how it looks like. So the first version came into existence in 2003, and the last one, or the latest one, 4.1, was published in 2022. So in between, I guess, a span of 20 years, there are seven versions of IDN implementation guidelines that are published, but there's an exception one, which is the guideline 4.0. It was published, but it was not adopted by the board. And this is also based on my personal reading of the history, so happy to be corrected if it's not accurate. So what I understood is the guidelines were revised and updated, not on a regular basis, but due to certain circumstances. For example, if there is a major or significant change to the relevant protocols for how IDNs are managed, then there could spur an update, and also it could be a request or demand from the ICANN board or the community for an update. And I think another major impetus for the update is because the IDN registration kind of rolled out over the years, and as experience has accumulated, then it also becomes a reason for updates just to reflect those experiences and try to improve IDN registration. So these are

some of the reasons why the guidelines are reviewed and updated, but they're done on a necessity basis, not on a regular basis.

And another item I kind of spotted when I was reading one of the guidelines is that when they do the update, they try to follow two principles, but maybe they're more just not captured. One is to maximize the ability of the registry to support IDN in all regards, where it is reasonably needed. And then second is to minimize the ability for abuse of IDN for deceptive purposes. So it's a lot of security stability in mind for the update principle. And generally, they go through some procedure steps that are very consistent over the years. I think one major step is basically public comment on the draft version. It could be usually one, but sometimes two could happen. [inaudible] And also, the final [inaudible] update process, and each version is published on the ICANN website, and that is what Sarmad pasted in the chat earlier that link. Year and the date they were published. So the first one is March 2003. The version 4.1 [inaudible]

EDMON CHUNG:

Just adding a little bit in terms of the time you mentioned, they're more frequent in the beginning and then a little bit less. That also reflects the maturity of IDNs and also the dates are a bit reflective of the development of the IDN standards. You can see the run up to the 2008 version, which is the final version that continues to be some updates. And then towards 2011, that was when the IDN ccTLDs were then in place in 2009 and 2010 and also running up to the 2012 round. And 2018 was right after the LGR process as well. So the root zone LGR started and the LGR process at the

IETF was standardized and that triggered another round. So those are, I guess, just an added historical perspective.

DONNA AUSTIN:

So, Satish, you asked previously about why the board only approved some of the recommendations and not all. And Sarmad was right that that was an intervention from the GNSO based on the fact that this PDP was going to cover some of that. But I suspect looking at the timing of this that version three was what most gTLDs were okay with once because it was becoming part of the registry agreement. And then moving seven years down the track, there might have been some concern from registries about what was in what were guidelines and now would become a requirement in the contract. So I think it's a little bit of a different nuance. So when there are guidelines and there's no expectation that it would become mandated in an agreement, you think about things differently. Moving forward, understanding that these will now be part of the registry agreement, then I think you might have a different perspective about what must and what's a must and what's a shall or whatever. So I think that and I should know because I was actually in the registry stakeholder group at the time, but I can't. That's the foggiest memory I have. Back to Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you. Also, thank you, Edmon. You helped me preview some of the slides I've prepared for later, but we can talk about this again and just reinforce everybody's understanding. So this is what I found for version 1.0 on the website that Edmon, sorry, not Edmon, Sarmad pointed to, but please chime in if I missed some

points here. And the reason for actually developed version 1.0 is that it's to help ICANN to begin authorizing registries to deploy IDN registrations. So they do need some guideline to enable that and prevent people from, as what Edmon put, jumping the gun and without knowing what is expected. And it's definitely using the mechanism of community plus staff of developing the first version. And the community contributor at that point is the Internationalized Domain Registry Implementation Committee. Although I don't know who the people are, but this is the title I saw for the group. And in terms of some procedural notes I learned is that when they developed the draft, they presented in ICANN 16 public forum in March 2003. And then following the public forum, they submitted for adoption. And also what they noted in that version is the content there is subject to further edits and communication with the Internet Architecture Board. Although I don't know what the detail is, but they did note that. And in terms of implementing the guidelines at that time was a few registries, .cn, .info, .jp, .org, and .tw registries they committed to abide these guidelines. So that's version 1.0. Any other additional historical context or details that may be interesting to share? Happy to hear.

EDMON CHUNG:

Edmon here. So I don't know whether you have the composition of the group, but it was drawn from different constituencies back then, from the registrars, from the registries, from ccTLDs. So the representation early on has been thought through that it needs to cover the different constituencies. And also technical expertise from IAB, IETF. That was the thinking behind it. I think that was the thinking that continues to guide the process.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you, Edmon. I know you will know something about this.

EDMON CHUNG: I was actually the registrar representative into that group, elected from the registrars.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you. So moving on to version 2.0, version 2.1, version 2.2. So I kind of put these three together because I understand they were updated in a more frequent manner due to a strategic direction to do the update incrementally. And each version were effective for a relatively short period of time, but happy to understand more the background and the reason why it was set up this way. But going to the reason for update from version 1.0 to version 2.0 that was published in November 2005, it was a result of a detailed review of version 1.0 at an IDN workshop in July 2005. And I think during that workshop, there was funding with regard to the increased spoofing attacks in relation to IDN domains. And there's a belief that the guidelines need to be updated and help those registries to combat that kind of spoofing attacks and limit the deceptive use of visually confusable characters from different scripts in the IDN labels. So that's some of the reasons version 2.0 was created. And in terms of the community contributors at the time, there was this working group called IDN TLD working group that was established and is comprised of TLD registries with IDN experience. So that encompasses both gTLD registries and ccTLD managers. And for

the gTLD ones, these are [inaudible] Verisign and Afilias at the time. And for ccTLD is JPRS, I think it's .jp and then .sd registry. I saw Sarmad has his hand up.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Yeah, I think if we can possibly go back to version 1.0, I just wanted to make a comment that I think we've been sort of discussing on whether these were guidelines which were more, I guess, voluntary in nature to start with. Initially, I think what happened was that when these guidelines were developed, there were, if you go back in 2003 and 2004, I'll share a link in the chat here. So there were a series of letters which were issued by ICANN to different registry operators who had requested to offer IDNs. And if you look at the first sentence, basically the authorization was from day one based on their commitment to abide by IDN guidelines version 1.0. So it has been, I think from an ICANN side and from the community side, IDN guidelines have been in some ways sort of part of the package from day one. They've not been sort of optional or voluntary, but sort of a requirement which were eventually, I think, integrated into the contractual agreements. Thank you. And you'll see many of these letters at that time issued, I guess, on one-on-one basis between ICANN and different registry operators. So this is just one of the examples.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you. Definitely important historical evidence there and appreciate that you're sharing. We have two minutes left for this session. Maybe I'll just quickly go through the slide and we can

pick back up after the break. And what I noticed about version 2.0 in the version itself is that it's effective for nine months or something indicating a short period of time because the ICANN board at the time when they adopted version 2.0, they also requested some additional specific IDN improvement recommendations to be developed and then they requested that to be delivered before ICANN 26 in June 2006. So I think that's part of the reason why 2.0 was effective for a short period of time and it was already envisioned that 2.1 needs to be created after this short period and then kind of the guidelines needs to be improved. So that's 2.1 was adopted in February 2006. And then shortly after 2.2, that version was adopted in April 2007. And I think based on my reading is the reason to have that version is to basically prepare for the introduction of IDN at the top level. So some additional technical or policy factors need to be taken into account for developing guidelines. And then in that version, what was noted is that the earlier guidelines written for the second level can be applied to the top level. And then in addition to that, it recognizes the need for periodic review for relevant issues and make corresponding modifications. And another thing I noted in version 2.2 is regard to the aim of seeking formal IETF status for the guidelines. But I don't know whether there was a follow-up or other historical evidence that Sarmad could help share, but that's what I found in the guidelines themselves. But happy to hear more about these history. But unfortunately, we're at time. Maybe take a coffee break and then we can come back.

DAN GLUCK: All right. We'll begin a 30-minute break and I will pause recording. Hey, everyone. Welcome back to the second session of day two of the IDNs face-to-face meeting. And to get started, I'll pass it back off to Donna.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dan. And I'll pass it back to Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, everybody. So we quickly talked about the versions 2.0, 2.1 and 2.2, their backgrounds, why they were developed and who were involved in the development and some additional notes about the procedure and other interesting things I found in the archive. But I just wanted to quickly stop here and see whether there's any additional historical context or background anyone wants to share about these three versions. Okay, seems this is covered and we'll move on to the next one, which is version 3.0. So if you recall version 2.2, it was published in 2007. And after four years, version 3.0 was created. And based on my research, what I understand is that at that time, the IDNA 2008 protocol was created. Everybody knows it's a technical standards for the implementation of IDNs. And then registry registrars, software developers, they all need to follow that. And also, that's the time when I think FastTrack process started in 2009. And as a result, there are some new IDN ccTLD registries were launched through the FastTrack. And this version is created to also help them align their IDN practice with gTLD registries and kind of learn the best practices and such. So these are some of the reasons why version 3.0 come into existence. And again, the community

contributors to this version is still the IDN Guidelines Revision Working Group. It's from gTLD registries. They are the same folks. It's [inaudible] Verisign, Afilias. For ccTLD, it's the same, I think, .jp. And then Qatar Domains Registry, even it's a different registry, but it's the same person that I learned. Yeah. So yeah. Yes, yes. And another, I think, note I found in that version is that this version supersedes version 2.0. So this is the general background of version 3.0. And anyone who wants to chime in and provide—Yes.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Just a question. So all of these versions were ratified by the board? Is that correct?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes, except for version 4.0. Yeah, yeah. And now seeing hands or comments, I can move on to the next one, which is version 4.0. That's the controversial, I guess. So you will notice from 2011 to 2018, there are seven year periods. And after seven years, this version become official. And the reason it was developed, there are many, actually. But I think some of the main reasons is because of the 2012 round new gTLD program. Basically, since the program launched, there has been significant experience accumulated on IDN implementation. And also as a result of the IDN ccTLD fast track process. So it's to reflect a lot of the learning through these experiences. And some of the sub bullet points you see here are some major kind of progress made during that period. So there's for example, definition and formal representation of IDN tables through the RFC 7940. And then there's also analysis and data with regard to maximum starting

repertoire. So some of the terms you see here are kind of familiar because in our charter, we mentioned them or use that in the context of our deliberation. And another major progress is the work that was made by the RZLGR and the generation panels, as well as the development of the reference LGR. And these are really important work for the variant management or definition. And then also SSAC issued their advice with regard to variants. And that's something we also touched on earlier. It's the one developing or published in 2013, SSAC 60. Also, I think another reason for version 4.0 is that ICANN Board explicitly advised the version update. And ICANN Board also had a variant working group. So they actually requested this update in 2014 and then kicked off the process. So it's actually not a very short kind of process to update this version. If you look at the procedure related to this, I think, well, I think at the beginning, there was a call for volunteers and a working group was formed. And then in the call for volunteers, there was some specification in terms of the number of appointees that can be made through the ALAC, the ccNSO, GNSO, and SSAC. I think for ccNSO and GNSO, that's kind of similar to the previous working group setup. There are the registries, registrars ccTLD managers that have experience with IDN implementation. And I think for ALAC and SSAC, that's like a special thing. Although I don't remember, or maybe I have seen the reason, but happy to hear how they were involved. And I see Sarmad has his hand up.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Ariel. So I think eventually as IDNs, as we learned through the process that IDNs, there is a very significant

community aspect to IDNs because they're eventually the end users. So it's always good to have a lack perspective on this. And then from a security stability perspective, especially with SSAC, SSAC 52 and SSAC 60, it was good to have SSAC input into the process as well. And I also recall that when we actually reached out to ccNSO and GNSO for the call for volunteers and recall that I think GNSO requested to nominate more people than we were requesting. And that's why the GNSO numbers were higher. But of course, we took on board all the nominees coming in from GNSO. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

The way that this is set up and the way that this has been convened more recently is probably pretty important to our discussion. So Sarmad, is it your department that leads or convenes this effort? And how did the call for volunteers start? Was that as a result of a board resolution or how did that come about?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So we were advised as is noted in the last point, ICANN in a way was advised by the ICANN board variant working group. I still remember we actually had a meeting with GNSO between GNSO and board variant working group. This was at the ICANN 50 London meeting. There was a sort of a closed group meeting from—there was some people coming in from GNSO and the board variant working group. And they had, I guess, a series of discussions on some different points around IDNs, which I think was being mutually discussed. And based on that, there was, I

guess, an ask from board to staff to initiate this process. And Edmon was in that meeting and I see Edmon's hand up, so maybe he can add to that.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here. Just to add to what Sarmad said, as he said, I was in those few meetings and I think there were multiple meetings with both the GNSO, probably at the GNSO working sessions, as well as dedicated sessions that the board IDN variant working group convened and also meet up with the registries. I'm guessing they probably met with others as well. And that led to, I guess, the board directive. I don't know whether that was an actual resolution that started, but it was definitely, from what I understood, it was a board directive to get it started.

What I wanted to add also is that the working group is kind of like an EWG, like an expert working group with enough technical knowledge from it, and also there was an emphasis to have a dual chairs, basically from the ccNSO and one from the GNSO. I served on the GNSO side and Matt served from the ccNSO side. So the whole setup was understood that this is a document that has implications across the ecosystem with emphasis on GNSO and ccNSO as well.

DONNA AUSTIN: Was there a charter for the group?

EDMON CHUNG: Was there a formal charter or was it just a set of issues note? And then there was the version three. And so we need to move from version three to include these issues notes. That's what I remember, but Sarmad probably has better.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay, Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yeah, so Pitinan shared the link in the chat for the announcement which was made. But I think we also reached out. So at ICANN, I recall because I think it was one of my first ICANN meetings as staff. So the memories to some extent still vivid for some reason. But there was a meeting between the GNSO council and the ICANN board where there were some discussions around IDNs. And because of that, I think the board IDN working group chair at the time, Ram had proposed that as there was not sufficient time to discuss all that matters, board variant working group members meet with GNSO relevancy members afterwards to discuss more details. And that led to that meeting between the board variant working group and some of the GNSO members. So we sort of organized that meeting as a follow up between the board meeting and the GNSO council meeting. So that sort of what led into that discussion. Eventually through that discussion, board variant working group asked us to organize this group, the call we've shared with you. And so we reached out to the SOs and ACs for the nominations. And I think that's how it started. As far as the

charter is concerned, if you look at the slide which Ariel was sharing earlier, as a first step, what we did was actually the group once it was formed, it actually developed a set of issues which should be addressed. And those were actually taken through, I think, if I recall, there may actually have been also a public comment process through on them, but they were presented to the community publicly. And first, the issues list was drafted based on, I guess, an open process. And once issue list was drafted, then the team worked on addressing those issues. So in some ways, the charter was developed as part of that process or through that process. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you, Sarmad. Great to have a living history in the room to explain all these details. And I was just looking at the procedure steps. What I found interesting is that the version 4.0 went through two public comments. And the first one was a public comment published in March 2017. And then there was a second public comment in March 2018. So I was just wondering whether you can share any details or background, how come there were two public comments on the version?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: I'll have to look that up. Just give me a...

EDMON CHUNG: Just adding to that, I guess it must have meant there were some substantive changes from the comments received. And then we probably updated it. I don't recall the exact ones. I think it has to do with something in terms of the security side and probably a comment from SSAC, but I can't be sure.

ARIEL LIANG: So yeah, thanks, Edmon and Sarmad. And I think that's all I have for version 4.0. And if it's good for moving on, I can go to the next one. And now we have the latest version, which is version 4.1. And so if you recall, the version 4.0 was published in May 2018. And then version 4.1 was published in September 2022. So that was four years plus later, this version coming to existence. And indeed, between these two versions within that four years, there was quite a bit of a conversation in the community, especially between the GNSO, in particular, the registries stakeholder group with the ICANN board with regard to version 4.0. I think I actually was involved in some part of this. And also that was my early involvement in IDN topics. I don't recall everything precisely, but I think the general sentiment, what I understood from registries' responses that they felt some of the guidelines or requirements in the version 4.0 were quite, they're mandatory, and also they kind of go beyond guidelines per se, they're kind of in the realm of policy. And they felt some discomfort in terms of these policy recommendations that have contractual implications were developed in this guideline manner rather than going through, for example, a PDP. So there was quite a bit of resistance I understood from registries to adopt the guidelines. And then there was quite a bit back and forth between registries and the GNSO

council and then council with the board about these kind of problematic were the guidelines that are concerning. And then I think in this process, the GNSO council in 2021 August requested the board to officially consider deferring version 4.0 in its entirety. So the entire guideline just deferred consideration or adoption. And one of the kind of arguments then was made is because a lot of the guidelines overlap with the subject matter that our group is working on. And in addition, the [inaudible] analysis is that some of the new requirements, they do not actually impact security stability. However, I got this general understanding, but happy to hear from our registries friends to elaborate on that, what that was this analysis. And then there was some compromise made. I think it's through some concrete progress by identifying the specific guidelines that are more problematic than others. And these were 6A, 11, 12, 13, and 18 that was identified by the GNSO council in January 2022, because they indeed overlap with the topics that the EPDP team is working on. And after that submission, and there was some another back and forth, but eventually the board approved the guidelines, but agreed to defer the items that GNSO council identified as overlapping. And that's created version 4.1. So the official adoption for that is September 2022.

So that's kind of an overview of the history of version 4.1, but happy to hear if there's any significant gaps that were not mentioned. And then another additional notice that I know that Sarmad and Pitinan's team already leading the implementation of version 4.1, and there are two phases of implementation. So phase one is ongoing and it's focusing on the non-deferred guidelines from version 4.0. And I'll stop here for a second and see whether there's, yes, Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here. Just two points to add. Very good summary, by the way. Just one thing is that from version 4.0 to 4.1, Sarmad, remind me if I'm wrong, but I don't think the working group actually met. It was really all about the GNSO and the ICANN board back and forth. I don't think it actually met. That's one thing. But the other thing is I would add a little bit, I think there is also a question from registries and registrars about when the implementation guidelines are updated, when does it actually come into play? Because there were some complaints about that some of the things that in 4.0 is already implemented by ICANN staff at that time, and there was some confusion. I think that the clarification there from the board was that, of course, it's from the board adoption as the official. But then the critical discussion that we probably need to have is whether the councils, both of the GNSO and the ccNSO council, should play any role in this whole process. Because right now, besides the call for volunteer process, the council doesn't get involved. Even for the volunteer process, the council is just involved in more of a promotion effort to draw in the volunteers. So I think that was brought up and therefore part of the charter here for discussion.

DONNA AUSTIN: Which is pretty much the question that we have in front of us. So what's the proper vehicle to do this? So whether it's an enhancement of the current process, or whether it has to be a PDP, or I don't know what other options are available. But I think that's the question we're dealing with.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Right. So I think the update to the IDN guidelines from version 3 to version 4, I guess, was the first time at least I've been involved as staff to do. And I remember just digging out and following the same process which has been followed for previous versions of the guidelines to update it. So I guess the current process has been sort of ongoing for last, I guess, more than around 20 years. So that's sort of been the process. Of course, certainly, if that needs to change, that should be changed. But we're just trying to follow the process which was already in place. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Nigel and then Manju.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much. Just reflecting on this working group, and we can come back to this after we've looked at version 4.1 and its implementation and the implications of our work in this. But I noticed that the working group has ALAC, ccNSO, GNSO and SSAC. Presumably those are the ones that volunteered. But it doesn't have anyone from the GAC. And whether that was just because no one volunteered or whether it was a conscious decision. So that's something that we could perhaps reflect on. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: So, Sarmad, do you know when the call for volunteers went out, whether—I assume it would have been community wide and the people that you've got in the group were those that responded?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: So I'm just looking at the call and it lists ccNSO, SSAC and ALAC. But it does not list GAC actually. So I think it was perhaps announced that way. And I guess it could have been an omission. Maybe GAC should have been invited. But at least in the call, it's the four SOs and ACs which are listed. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Manju?

MANJU CHEN: Thank you, Donna. So I've been hearing people discussing whether to involve council or like because you guys are deciding whether this should be a PDP thing. And in that case, is council, GNSO council is going to play a role here. So I guess my question is, do you guys think this is like a mutual discussion thing, which I will bring back to council for council to consider if they want to be involved in the future when you guys, well, when the IDN implementation guideline should be revealed? Or do you think this is like we decide here when we inform council thing, so we just wait for being informed about whether we should be involved? Because if it's the former, I guess I'll do my job and bring it back to the council. But if it's the later, I can just quietly wait until within the working group, we decide whether to do it. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, thanks, Manju. I guess we have to see how this conversation plays out and which way we want to take this forward. I mean, as a council liaison, I guess you can inform them of the conversation, but we don't really have an answer until we've considered the question, decide which way we want to go. So Steve and then Jennifer.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Donna. This is Steve. And just going back to the observation from Nigel earlier, and so maybe a little more history is that the participation of GAC members in the working groups, I think is, it's increased over the years. And so active participation by GAC members in working groups, I don't think it was as nearly as prevalent as it is now. So that might be part of the rationale for why they were not explicitly invited in that call for volunteers. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: It's just a legacy history anomaly. Jennifer.

JENNIFER CHUNG: Thanks, Donna. Reacting a little bit about Manju's question as well, looking through the very expertly prepared summary through the history of how the IDN guidelines were called for and then implemented. I think if we're looking at whatever vehicle that we're going to discuss and decide on later, one thing that, I mean, as a new councilor, please correct me if I'm wrong, because you've

been in the council for longer than I. For the GNSO, our remit, it's more if we were to charter for such a thing, it would be within the GNSO community. That's my understanding of it. But this seems to me the participation, at least for this part of the work for the IDN guidelines, it's much broader. So I remember we were talking about what kind of remit really that the GNSO has over some things like a cross-community working group or expert working group and where does that go? So I think at least from my first thoughts, I think we should probably see how this discussion pans out before we kind of try to involve the council in any kind of deliberation, or maybe it's more of an informative role at this point.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Yeah. So I think if this group decides that in the future, the best way, and it may be that the word guideline goes out the window and in favor of a PDP process. So in that case, the GNSO has a pretty specific role. If we want to think that it's best to stay with the guideline approach, the current approach, which has community representation, seems to be working okay, but the rub seems to be particularly for registries or contractor parties is that the way that you make a change to the registry agreement is through policy development or through contract negotiation. So there are your two options. So I think the rub here is that the guideline path is not the preferred option for, well, I shouldn't make that assumption, but I think that's the rub because the guideline approach, it is only guidelines, but in recent times it's become a contractual requirement. So it's how do you update that from here? If it's going to be contractual requirements, is it PDP or is there some way to continue with the current process, but enhance

it in some way so it's got more checks and balances in some way that is acceptable for contractor parties? So that's how I'm thinking about it. And maybe there's a third option that we'd really have to think out of the box, but the current approach is certainly one that involves the community and covers off that conversation we had about CCs. So this approach I think probably works okay for the CCs, but for contracted parties, there's a little bit of a rub with it's not a policy process. So yeah. So Manju?

MANJU CHEN:

Just to briefly respond, I think so after the PDP, I mean, of course I'm not procedure expert like Jeff or whatsoever, but after the PDP 3.0, the working group actually involved community members. So for example, the EPDP on the registration data, well SSAC was in it, GAC was in it, ALAC was in it. So it's a GNSO chartered working group, but the community members while chartering the council, it was before my time, but I was observing the council meeting, they kind of deliberately involved the community because they expressed their wish to be involved. And of course this working group too, we have GAC, we have ALAC, we probably invite a ccNSO or I don't know, and they just declined, but it's okay because they offered the spot and they're upon this decision to join or not. So I don't think if we do this in a PDP way, which I'm not suggesting we do it in a PDP way, just if we do it, it's not going to carve out any other members from the community. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Yeah, thanks Manju. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon speaking personally here. So building on what Manju said, yes, the current PDP is much more inclusive. However, if you think about it, I would caution against kind of thinking about it down the path of a PDP because reconciling a ccPDP and a G PDP is going to be hugely difficult. But if we look at the current process, which is really an EWG, how the council can then weigh in at the beginning, which is the issues process and that was discussed in the chartering process. And then at the end, how it adopts might be something more interesting to think about. So it is down the path where Donna, you said a third way, but today there are other ways as well. I mean, IETF can have new standards that would be immediately incorporated into the contracts as well. So as I began this part of this conversation is that we are looking at something in between an IETF standard and a PDP. So yeah, I think that's the way that we probably should think about it. Because it has a very strong technical component to it, which leans towards an IETF, but IETF had already said that they're not going to deal with this. You guys need to deal with it on your own. And therefore that was the impetus of the IDN implementation guidelines. And it's also not strictly speaking kind of PDP because it also involved ccNSO and also it's a bit more technical. So yeah, that's kind of where I think we probably should think.

DONNA AUSTIN: So Edmon, you mentioned an expert working group. Is that a formal construct?

EDMON CHUNG: I see that it's used in the past many times. I don't know whether it's in the in the bylaws or anything. Is there a formal? Okay. It is being used a number of times for even for the adoption of the there was a report on how we use the root zone LGR. And I know there was an EWG on internationalization of the registration data as well. And that was also—So yeah, maybe it's time to formalize it.

DONNA AUSTIN: It's not our job. I think that's definitely outside our remit. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: The cross community working group is also a vehicle which is used in the community. I'm not sure how formal that is, but just sharing. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: So my understanding of the cross community working group is it's very clear. It's not a policy making body. And it's fraught with peril. If we recommended that, I think we'd get some serious comments back from folks. So yeah. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, I was just doing search quickly. I saw this definition of EWG. But this article is published in 2013. So it seems pretty dated. But it says that EWG was formed by ICANN's president and CEO at the request of ICANN board to help resolve deadlock

within the ICANN community. Well, this is a specific one on registration data or something. But it seems to be something created on an ad hoc basis or by demand basis. And it's something can be created via ICANN CEO and board. So yeah, just for reference, but I will put the link in the chat.

DONNA AUSTIN:

If I remember correctly, this was an initiative when Fadi was the CEO. And it wasn't very well received because it was not done according to ICANN processes. So we'd need to be careful with this too. Not to say we couldn't say this is a great idea and a good way to do this, but it does have a history. Jennifer?

JENNIFER CHUNG:

I guess just briefly, thanks Ariel for bringing that up. I was trying to look for it when this was suggested. The only thing I really wanted to note, and Donna already mentioned, the cross community working group has a lot of criticism aimed at it. And I want to say whatever we decide in the end, we have to make sure the processes that flow out of it is consistent, can be interpreted consistently, and the board reaction to it is consistent and within the expectations of especially the contracted parties when we're looking at implementing it into our contracts. I mean, not to belabor the point, there's already a lot of criticism right now on certain reactions of the board on certain things that don't come out of PVP. So whatever we recommend here, I don't want it to be a problem down the line when we're looking into compliance and implementation. So even if we create something completely new,

we need to make sure that it's very clear going forward, especially for contracted parties, because it will impact our contracts.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Jennifer. So in terms of implementation of the guidelines once they're adopted by the board, what's the process with that, Sarmad? That's a staff responsibility, but it's different to what we'd expect with an IRT.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So once the board directs ICANN staff to implement a version of IDN guidelines, so in the current case, for example, we are analyzing each of the guidelines which have been approved. And based on that, we plan to communicate with the contracted parties. We did an initial outreach at ICANN 78 during the IDN program update session. We also intend to do further communication at the CP summit as well as in the interim. And eventually what happens is that as per previous guidelines, once the analysis has been done internally and we've also in some ways communicated with the contracted parties, we then issue what is called an implementation notice where we actually communicate a date at which those guidelines become applicable. And I think we're currently for 4.1, for example, we're thinking of a timeline towards the end of next year. But we'll obviously work towards that to make sure that it doesn't come as a surprise to anyone on the contracted party side. So we have to do all the communications and discussions beforehand before the implementation notice goes out. But that's sort of the process which is being followed at least this time. And the implementation

notice is something which was also issued for the previous version. So that's again the same process which we approved.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay, thanks. Okay, so we'll get Ariel to go through the last of her slides. And then I think what we have under discussion is probably two possible options. So we stay with the existing one, but we think about potential enhancements to come over any problems that we might identify. And maybe the only other option I can think of at this point is a PDP that would be done by the GNSO. So we can talk about that for a little while and see where we get to. And then once we've had the discussion about the two, maybe we, and if anyone has an idea for a third, we could talk about that. But it seems like this process does have some credence to it from the fact that it's been working for so long. So why change it? I really can't think of a third option. I think that's what we've got. So we'll get Ariel to go through the rest of the slides and we'll come back and think about enhancements to this process or whether a PDP is the appropriate vehicle. Thanks, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

This is Ariel. Before I go to the next slide, I think I have maybe two questions or comments. I think question one is when we talk about 4.0, there are guidelines that are overlapping with the topics of IDN EPDP. But the truth is, the IDN EPDP didn't get chartered until 2020. And the guideline 4.0 was finished in 2018. So it was before. And the topics didn't get into EPDP until later. So I think when we talked about this among staff, we're just wondering like whether there's a sequence issue. Like some of the guidelines

maybe they're more appropriate to be discussed in the PDP context, but then it was kind of discussed in advance, like in the guidelines mechanism. So I'm just curious like how that kind of become that situation, you know. And then also I was thinking about what the overlapping topics are mainly about. A lot of them is the same entity principle and that was in the staff paper on variant implementation. So it seems to be that the board has an idea how to push that to GNSO, ccNSO for consideration. But then that got kind of considered first in the IDN implementation guideline mechanism. So it's just that's a gap in terms of the background that I don't have. But also Steve has his hand up.

STEVE CHAN:

Thanks, Ariel. This is Steve. And just to sort of build off of your comments, I think there could be a possibility that it might depend. And so why I say that is because what you see is that version 4.0 has been adopted by the board and is going forth with implementation. So what that means is that part of the guidelines was okay to continue forward. And there's a part of that was carved out. And so there might be a differentiation between certain elements that can maybe be pursued in the current format. And maybe there's another mechanism that needs to be pursued for other things. And so it might be worthwhile looking at what the dynamics were, what the characteristics were of the parts that could not march forward as they're developed in version 4.0. And so that might be another way to look at it is it might depend on the nature of the changes. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah. So Edmon here, adding to the conversation just now. So yes, the case was that the charter for the IDN Implementation Guidelines group was quite wide open. So it worked on issues that might have kind of include, overlapped with the scope of what a PDP would be. And in this case, I guess it was caught between the board actually adopting 4.0 and it being implemented. And the registries, especially registries, and I guess the registrars also responded and brought it up to the council and say, wait a minute, this needs to be looked at. So I guess part of the consideration then is if we go down the path of improving the process, then there needs to be kind of checkpoints where this connects back to this GNSO council and probably the ccNSO council as well to check off both maybe at the beginning and also in midterm and later terms to identify these issues and to take it out before it becomes a final recommendation. I think that this is the learning as you point out from the development of the versions 4.1 and then leading into 4.0 and then leading into 4.1.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON: Yeah, sorry, I think I might have answered the answer to my question. Sorry, the question was as well as process, which in terms of our recommendations, obviously we need to look at that, but we also presumably needed to look at these guidelines that

the council deferred, but we're going to do that later, I think. So I'm sorry, yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay, thanks, Nigel.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, everybody. So moving on, this following set of slides, I have to give credit to Pitinan because that's her slides, and I think she presented version 4.1 in several different venues, and these are the slides I don't plan to go into the weeds, but I just want to give everybody a kind of overview or have a flavor in terms of understanding what is in the guidelines, and I think this slide is basically showing the difference between version 4.1 and version 3.0, but actually I'm not going to talk about the difference here, but the parts I want to highlight is that in the guidelines, some guidelines are mandatory, some guidelines are non-mandatory, and they actually use some specific language to reflect that expectation. So for example, guidelines 1.1 to 3 in version 4.1, they say TLD registries that support IDNs must do so in strict compliance with IDNA 2008, blah, blah, blah. So you see must here, and then you also see bullet point, like exceptions are not allowed. So these are pretty strict kind of guideline language, and then this slide also shows some mandatory guidelines, but also you see guideline 4, it says no label containing hyphens in both the third and fourth positions may be registered unless it is valid. So I think the word may, but also happy to be corrected if you think this is a mandatory guideline or non-mandatory, but in my

mind, it doesn't seem to be a mandatory one, but happy to be corrected if I'm mistaken, and then Pitinan, please.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you. Yeah, for this one is no label may be registered, so it's actually a must. Yeah, and that's right. Thank you.

ARIEL LIANG: Yeah, I think I was just looking at the word may, but thank you. Now I realize I got this wrong, but then you look at the other guidelines on the slide related to terminology topics, you see must, must not, these verbiage, so these are mandatory ones, and then if you look at guideline 8, it says TLD registries may use second level reference LGR as is or as a reference, and IDN tables may deviate from reference LGRs, so these are non-mandatory ones, but more like, I guess, best practice kind of guidelines, so here these are still pretty mandatory languages, but if you see guideline 15, there is a second sentence, exceptions are permissible for languages with established also [inaudible] and conventions, blah, blah, blah, so there's some flexibility to even in the guideline that may appear mandatory, so it's just a mix of guidelines in terms of the level of requirement, I guess some are really strict and hard requirements, some may be softer, and we will have a chance to take a look at the deferred ones from 4.0 because that's one of our general item, and you can see some additional language reflected in there.

So I guess the reason I brought this point up is also just to think in terms of future update, maybe one way to think about is if it's really truly best practice and something non-mandatory, but it is something registry registrars should consider doing, then perhaps the line in the guideline is indeed the right place, but if something that's hard requirement, especially with contractual implications, maybe these are the ones that as what Edmon put, it should be particularly highlighted during the checkpoints with the GNSO council, ccNSO council during the development of the guidelines and not wait till the last minute. So these are the some of the things maybe for our group to consider, so I will stop here.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. Would it be fair to categorize the guidelines as primarily technical? So it's not really policy in the sense that is developed by the GNSO, but this is quite specifically technical, is that a fair characterization? Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Yes, they are intended to be technical in nature and not only technical, but specifically trying to address just the security and stability aspects of IDNs and not more generally, so they're really sort of implementation kind of guidelines, that's what the intention is.

EDMON CHUNG:

Yeah, and that's where I meant, so these are not intended to be the kind of consensus policies that we envision, and that's why, and this is building on the protocol level output from the IETF, and

the IETF has said, however, this part is a little bit more on the implementation side, so it's not appropriate to be issued at a protocol level standard, so instead of that, then therefore, that was the impetus of the implementation guidelines.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay, seems that's a kind of important distinction to make that this, what we're talking about here is technical implementation of what's come out of IETF, and it's not the consensus policy that we think about in the GNSO. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, this is Hadia, and I was thinking, so is it actually useful to define the main purpose of those guidelines, or maybe it is defined somewhere?

DONNA AUSTIN: What the main purpose of the guidelines is?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Yes, right, because so Sarmad said now it's mainly about the security and stability of the of the DNS, and as also discussed, and for that reason, it's mainly very technical in nature, so I guess defining the main purpose of the guidelines is important, or maybe it is again, defined somewhere.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah, thanks, Hadia. Ariel's brought up the slide about the basics about the why, so I think that probably is captured. Yeah, so Satish and then Sarmad.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Satish, for the record. I think it's useful to think of the IDN implementation guidelines as the kind of glue that connects the protocol layer to the consensus policy layer, and perhaps the reason why, as you mentioned earlier, that what is deferred is largely because it is policy embedded into this technical kind of a standard. So if you pull out the policy part, then what is left is the pure technical set of things, and that in my personal opinion, the former model of the experts working group is perfectly appropriate. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Satish. Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Just to respond to Hadia, if you go to the ICANN pages on IDN guidelines, you could go to ICANN.org/IDN, and then if you scroll down, there's a page for IDN guidelines. It does describe the purpose of the guidelines, and that's also, I think, in some ways included in the actual guidelines document, at least the 4.1 version, but yes, that's documented on the webpage. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay, thanks, Sarmad. Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAMI: It's Hadia again, and I do see in the why, the third bullet, it says, aim to be used deeper into the DNS hierarchy and within TLDs where ICANN has a lesser policy relationship, and I guess this is very important, that third bullet is very important, as well as the fourth bullet as well, because based on the why and the main purpose, I think this kind of guides us and informs us about the kind of working group that needs to be actually working on those guidelines. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Hadia. So I guess we'll start the conversation on options. Jennifer, if you want to just give us a readout of registries thinking on this, it'd be really helpful. Thanks.

JENNIFER CHUNG: Thanks, Donna. So the registries do have a call every two weeks to discuss on certain things, especially that impacts this EPDP, and in the last call we had last week, we looked at G1 and G1A about the formats and the vehicles and when, and I think we didn't really come to any kind of consensus, but we did brainstorm certain ideas. We did have a discussion about how it impacts the contracted parties, but I think, in fact, when we go back to this call again, I think I have to re-emphasize to the stakeholder group that even though it is noted as guidelines, it is baked into our contracts in spec six. So there is an obligation there, but then when you then jump through that link to the guidelines, as Ariel went through, there's varying degrees of how you need to enforce and

comply in that way. So we talked about having this best practice document as a good thing, but I think I need to re-emphasize that the reach is further than we initially discussed. There is general consensus we need to have adequate representation from the registries, and I'm going to be assuming it's for the contracted parties too, because it impacts us a lot. Some of us talked about because it's best practices and requirements, clear language is preferred, and there was a suggestion about having separate documents for the Gs and the CCs, but I don't know how far down of that we're actually going to discuss, because right now we're discussing the vehicle with which to, or the process, how this is triggered. And then the final point is, I think this might be a third option, I think it was either suggested by Jim Galvin or Dennis, is to look at how the RDAP protocol profile implementation was done. And when I clicked through, and I am by no means an expert on this, when I clicked through to see what is done with the RDAP profile, it says that ICANN org worked with a discussion group of registries from the Gs and registrars, and it's pretty much like a working group between the contracted parties and ICANN, but flowing through from the discussion right now, it seems to me that there needs to be a requirement for, let me see what it is, a more technically based expert on this as well. So I don't know if this is completely a third option or if it's kind of a hybrid when we're looking still at some kind of cross-community or expert working group, but people who might be in this room who are more well-versed in what happened with the RDAP profile implementation or RDAP profile process can probably weigh in a little more on how that works and if this is applicable for us to consider. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Jennifer. So I do have a little bit of knowledge about the RDAP profile, but not specific technical detail about it, but I think that the RDAP profile, there was a version initially developed by ICANN. The contracted parties weren't particularly happy with it, so they formed a working group that kind of put that profile into shape and was acceptable to both ICANN and the contracted parties. So that's the profile that is currently codified in the registry agreement. If there is an update to that, then the way to update that is through a registry agreement negotiation or through a policy process. So I guess there's some similarities here that maybe as we have some discussions, we might be able to bring those in.

The other thing that you mentioned about, is there a little bit of a rub here that these are the term guidelines or best practice. So if the terminology was different, would that be more acceptable? Okay, so that's maybe something we need to think about as well, that because this becomes a requirement in the registry agreement, then they're not really any longer guidelines. There's something that has more weight, so we've got a terminology problem there at a minimum, I think. Okay, so Hadia and then Satish, sorry.

SATISH BABU:

So I note that although CCs and Gs are very different, if you keep aside the contractual obligations at the IANA level, they're completely equivalent. There is no difference at all. So all the security stability challenges are the same for both, which is why we should have a process that integrates both these rather than have silos. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Understood and agreed Satish. Okay, so the discussion question. So are the triggers for a new version development update appropriate? So Ariel took us through for every version of the guidelines, there was a trigger or triggers that resulted in that. And they all seem pretty reasonable. So should the EPDP IDN team recommend any specific trigger for future updates? I think it would be hard to specify a specific trigger, but we could recognize that to commence a new version, then these could be possible triggers for that. So new things that come out of the IETF or RFCs or whatever the case may be. So I don't know. So I'm going to ask a question up front here. Does anyone think that there's value in pursuing a PDP for the IDN guidelines? Do we think there's value in pursuing a PDP to replace the current process for developing the IDN implementation guidelines?

EDMON CHUNG: You're asking, I guess, the group, whether we should, in the future, when we update these guidelines, we should actually initiate a PDP instead of what was done before? That's the question, right?

DONNA AUSTIN: What I'm trying to do is get an option off the table is basically what I'm trying to do, get it out of the way early. But if anyone thinks there's it's valid to pursue a PDP to update the guidelines, then we'll leave it on the table and we'll talk about it.

SATISH BABU: I'd rather prefer an inclusive process that includes both parties than a PDP, which is specific to GNSO. Thanks.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: I guess it's just a clarification question. This is Hadia. So are we suggesting a PDP to decide how to develop guidelines in the future? Or are we asking if we need a PDP to actually develop the guidelines? Because those are two different things. So we could establish a process through which guidelines need to be implemented. That's one thing. And actually establishing a PDP to develop the guidelines, that's another thing.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. So it's a PDP to develop the guidelines. We're the PDP that's deciding what the mechanism is, the vehicle is. Okay. Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much, Nigel Hickson. Yeah, well, I think the answer is no, fundamentally. I mean, it's difficult from a sort of a knowledge base that isn't expert here. But there does seem to be a fundamental issue that we need to get to grips with here, in that we had a version four. And I recognize looking through the dates, I mean, there was obviously the pandemic came into this, into this process. But essentially, you had an expert group sort of went over some of this. You had an expert group working in good faith. A call went out for experts. This is a technical process. The experts were, they came up with the draft. And then the GNSO Council just said, yeah, I don't like this. Now, I know that wasn't essentially what happened. But essentially, the GNSO Council

decided that certain elements should not go forward, and those elements did not go forward. And certain elements were, if you like, transferred into this group for this group's consideration, which is fair enough, although this is a PDP process, rather than the implementation guidelines. So I think we have to be fairly clear in our recommendations, because there seems to be a sort of disconnect in procedure and process here. So you had this expert group that was set up that the board approved. It developed guidelines. Part of the GNSO Council said they didn't like the guidelines. Therefore, the guidelines weren't implemented. And instead, part of those guidelines were then put into this, into this PDP process. So why was not the process for, if the GNSO Council had problems with those specific elements of version four, why wasn't the group asked to look again at those elements? Why were those elements then put into this PDP? That seems to me a misprocess.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks Nigel. I don't have the answer, but I think it's a good question. And I'm not going to comment. Edmon and Maxima?

EDMON CHUNG: In response to, Nigel, your question, the way I see it is that the group produced a set of recommendations, but the GNSO, especially from the contract parties looked at it and said these few things seems to be more appropriate as a consensus policy. So it should go into a PDP rather than through the IDN implementation guidelines. And I think that's in my view what actually happened. And we're going through that process. Now, looking back in the

future, I think how do we improve it such that in the process, this, these type of issues could be identified earlier is what needs to be improved. Because throwing these issues back to that group and coming back will still come to the same issues when contractors say this looks like more of a consensus policy than an implementation guidelines scope thing. So yeah, I hope that that makes sense.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks Edmon. Maxim and then Ariel.

MAXIM ALZOBA: If I'm not mistaken, the PDP group is effectively finished and dismissed after the PDP is done. So there is no PDP group after, but by the moment where the result of the work is rejected or changed. Also, the GNSO council acts under GNSO procedures, which explicitly describe the ways could be taken with the document, what could be done, what shouldn't be done. And as I remember, the path taken was the result of the consultations with the parts of GNSO. And it was something which didn't violate the GNSO procedures. So speaking to group wasn't possible because there were no group by that moment in time. And effectively it was something compliant with the GNSO procedures. That's it. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks Maxim. Satish.

SATISH BABU: I think one way to look at Nigel's question is to note that the expert working group charter was not really solid. It was kind of fluid. So it is possible that they have strayed away from purely technical areas to consensus policy areas which the GNSO has obviously pulled out. So there is some reason why GNSO did that. Perhaps it is overreach to some extent on the part of the expert working group.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks everybody. So I just kind of brainstormed on the spot. And I was thinking, even if the group recommend not to use the PDP, it doesn't mean we can't reference how a PDP is working because the PDP has a lot of steps building. And I just want to quickly share a slide. And I'm sure a lot of you have seen this. Okay. I'm not going to show that slide. But you are aware the steps involved is quite rigorous and have a lot of checkpoints where important issues can be raised. So for example, there's this issue report. I think it's very similar to what Sarmad said at the beginning. There's identification of issues that should be included in the implementation guideline. And then at that stage, perhaps some can be identified as purely technical issues, stem from IETF work or whatever protocol update. And some could be identified as consensus policy issues. So that could be a checkpoint of kind of make the split. And then for working groups for example, our PDP working group have also the call for volunteer. And then PDP 3.0 has made it very clear that stage is important by specifying the criteria and expectation for who will be an eligible member to participate and also the structure of the working group that needs to be clarified and expectations need to be spelled out. So some

of these are good reference. So even if it's not a PDP, but a lot of the learnings from the PDP can be implemented for the IDN implementation guideline future update. And the mechanism can copy a PDP but not call it a PDP. So that could be a way of thinking.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. That's a good suggestion. So providing a little bit more robustness to the current approach of a working group approach. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here speaking personally now. I very much agree with what Ariel said. And I think number one, I know, Donna, you kind of dismissed it, but I think the triggers is not so much when we were talking about the charter was not so much the external triggers. It's how currently what happens is that the board engages with the community and decides, oh, I think it's time for us to update. And that was how the process of triggering the working group. So in the future, maybe the trigger needs to involve—Could be triggered by the GNSO or the ccNSO or the board. But in the triggering process, there needs to be some checkpoints like issues identified, charter identified and adopted by the councils for example, like that. And I think that's what number one in terms of the trigger it kind of meant.

DONNA AUSTIN: I wasn't dismissing the idea of a trigger. I think you need a trigger. But yeah, I was just trying to get the idea of a PDP off the table.

Okay. So I guess that leads us into the second question. So should the working group mechanism continue for developing future versions? If so, what improvements should be made? So which I think Ariel has given us a good starter to that. One question I have for maybe Sarmad and Edmon. So the GNSO is the structure that gives some cover to a PDP. And I'm not sure what structure you operate under. I guess it's from the board has that role to oversee that working group. So it's from a governance perspective who's the master, for want of a better word. And is one required or is it okay? But Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So I think if you see the announcement, the number of members for GNSO were requested to be three and then two for ccNSO. Those were based on the numbers or the members which actually developed version 3.0. So there were three Gs and two CCs which were involved. So that's where that was coming from. And then in addition, we included one ALAC member and one SSAC member. So I think that's sort of the history of how that structure was, I guess, proposed. As far as the oversight is concerned, at least in the current process, there is constant update to the board IDN UA working group which actually had asked that work to be undertaken. So they were continuously updated on the progress and eventually the final product. So that work has been overseen by the board IDN UA working group. It used to be called board variant working group, but now it's called the board IDN UA working group.

DONNA AUSTIN: Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, Edmon here and I guess still speaking personally. But in kind of response to your question, I think in the past, it was the board owned kind of the initiative. In the future, I think one of the ways to think about it, and I'm thinking out loud here, might be the case where the board still kind of owns it, but there are veto aspects where the GNSO council and the ccNSO will have. As in, through the chartering process, the two councils are encouraged to identify which part, which, wait a minute, this is a PDP item, so it should be taken off the table. So the approval of the charter might actually be an acknowledgement that, okay, this doesn't overstep on our work, rather than an approval in a sense that a GNSO PDP is approved, if that makes sense. So it's looking at it. So the board probably still has the role because of the unique implications on both Gs and CCs, but both council will have a say before it's actually put forward.

DONNA AUSTIN: Right. So similar to kicking off a cross-community working group, all the SOs and ACs have an opportunity to provide representation and approve, I think, or have some say in the charter or whatever it is.

EDMON CHUNG: Just quickly on the last round, actually, as Sarmad mentioned, a little bit of this happened as well in the early stage where GNSO

asked for a few more seats, and that's, but we should maybe formalize it through what we're talking about here. Yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. And the GNSO seats, there's always that tension about contracted parties within the GNSO, so some consideration of that as well. So it sounds like the structure just needs to be formalized or recognized in some way and enhanced, and perhaps deal with the fact that what's being developed are not necessarily guidelines. It's a little bit, although probably guidelines for ccTLDs, but they're not really guidelines for gTLDs, so framework seems to be a word that people are comfortable with. So maybe we need to deal with the terminology a little bit. So any other kind of governance or structural things to enhance the current process, Sarmad? Actually, I'll go to Nigel.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, two points in terms of moving forward. So I think the working group is the vehicle that we should be focusing on. I certainly don't think it should be a PDP process, and the cross-community vehicle is also problematic. So this approach and its developed guidelines in the past seems to be quite appropriate. I assume that, as before, when those guidelines are published, they go for community, they go to the board, but they obviously go for community endorsement as well. Therefore, the GNSO council has its ability to look at them, as does the GAC and other organizations. But certainly in terms of the membership, I mean, I think it needs to be extended to the GAC, I mean, perhaps other groups as well. I mean, so it has SSAC, but not RSSAC. I'm not

saying that RSSAC would want to be involved, but that's a consideration. So yeah, so that's two points. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Nigel. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: I think we're seeing at least two checkpoints, right? One, when the issues are drafted so that GNSO and ccNSO can comment directly on the scope. And then, of course, there'll be more opportunities in the middle, but at least one opportunity at the end, before anything's presented back to the board, it comes to GNSO council and ccNSO council to review, to make sure that what is in there is aligned with their expectations. And if not, it can go back to the working group for that realignment before it actually goes to the board. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks, Sarmad. So we're almost at time for our next break. So lunch, I guess, is at the same place it was yesterday. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: I just want to get this idea out of the way is it's also possible to have liaisons too, just like working groups and maybe boards can have liaisons to this working party or whatever, and then ccNSO, GNSO council can have liaisons and watch the process. So I think a lot of learnings from PDP can be used in this vehicle too.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Another one that just comes to mind for me is the Customer Standing Committee because it's something that I was closely involved in, but the membership of the CSC was very particular. So there was actually, if you submit an expression of interest to be seated on the Customer Standing Committee, you needed specific expertise. And I think for this working group, there would be some value in actually describing what expertise is required. So this isn't just anyone can come and listen in, you do actually need the specific technical expertise to contribute to the discussion. So I think that might be valuable as well. Okay, so we're going to take a break for an hour and a half.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]