**GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House session**
**TRANSCRIPTION**
**Thursday 5 June 2014 2014 at 12:00 UTC**

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Nathalie Peregrine:    Good morning, good afternoon, good evening everybody and welcome to the GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House Session on the 5th of June 2014.

On the call today we have Bartlett Morgan and (Dan Rodgers). We also have our presenter, Thomas Rickert. And from staff we have Marika Konings and myself, Nathalie Peregrine.

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

Marika Konings:    Thanks, Nathalie. Hello, everyone. Thanks for joining us to our monthly open house session. We'll go through the slides and the meeting agenda you'll see this is really intended to be an open discussion allowing everyone to ask any questions they may have in relation to participation in GNSO working groups.

So as we start this meeting I thought it would maybe first be good to have a little introduction on who we are on the policy staff side and then probably hand it over to Thomas to say a little bit about himself and then I think Nathalie will provide a little introduction into Adobe Connect and how we

typically use that for our meetings as well as this session before we dive into some of the meaty subjects of the presentation that we have available.

But as said, you know, in the mean time if you have any specific topics you'd like to hear about or are curious about, you know, feel free to really note that in the chat and we'll make sure to focus on those.

So very briefly, you know, it's not just me and Nathalie that provide support to the GNSO, there are a number of colleagues that provide support from different locations in the world. Our fearless leader, David Olive, is based in Istanbul Turkey. He's the Vice President for Policy Development that's within our team we also support other supporting organizations and advisory committees within ICANN.

And myself I'm based in the ICANN office of Brussels. Glen de Saint Géry who is the GNSO Secretariat, she's based in the South of France. Mary Wong is based in New Hampshire US. Julie Hedlund who also supports the SSAC is based in Washington. Lars Hoffman is also based here in the office in Brussels. Berry Cobb who's a consultant to the policy team is based also in the US. And Nathalie who's also on the call with us today is also based in the sunny South of France.

So maybe, Thomas, I'll first hand back to you so you can have a chance to introduce yourself as well. And thanks again for joining us and co hosting this webinar and then maybe we can first have Nathalie explain a little bit about Adobe Connect and how to use that before we dive into the rest of the presentation.

Thomas Rickert: Sure. Thanks, Marika. My name is Thomas Rickert. I'm a lawyer by profession and I'm based in Germany. I've been working in the domain industry for like 15 years and I've been following ICANN since its very beginning.

Since 2011 I think it is I am on the GNSO Council as a NomComm appointee so the Nominating Committee has picked me and since then I'm on the GNSO Council currently in my second term so I will be remaining on Council for another 1.5 years roughly.

I should also say that next to being a lawyer I'm also working with an Internet industry association in Germany which has more than 700 members from more than 60 countries so it's quite international. And I'm chairing content-wise, the area inside the association that deals with domain and DNS-related questions. So I'm regularly setting up events to inform the community not only companies but also the wider user group to topics that are relevant to the domain industry such as the new gTLD program and other stuff.

And I echo, and I will finish this advertisement slot, momentarily. It's also quite engaged in the Internet governance arena and it will be shortly be hosting the EuroDIG, European Dialogue on Internet Governance in Berlin.

So that's it for me. And I have been asked whether I had any wishes for this meeting and I've heard a couple of the former meetings of this format and I found it very valuable for Nathalie to actually guide the participants through the Adobe Connect which is the technical tool that's primarily used by ICANN for remote meetings.

And without further ado I'd like to hand over to you, Nathalie.

Nathalie Peregrine:     Thank you very much, Thomas. So welcome, everyone. So as you've all been into the Adobe Connect room so that's an excellent first step, well done. I would just like to inform you that you may have noticed that you don't have any other choice to log in as Guest in Adobe Connect room. This is nothing you're missing out on; it's perfectly normal. All members of the community always have to log in as Guest. And the host log in at the staff only.

However, if one day you do wish to present something or to host a meeting, as you can see on here we have Thomas Rickert, our co-presenter on the presenter side on the attendee list so staff can always promote you to a presenter or host if you have that need.

Next thing you might see next to your names on the attendee list that there are microphones there. This means that the microphones in the Adobe Connect room have been activated. This means that you do not need to dial in to listen or to participate into the meeting on the phone. What you can do is simply use a voiceover IP on your laptop and computer.

To do this it's extremely simple; you click on the telephone icon at the top toolbar of the Adobe Connect room and follow the instructions. So you'll know this has been successful when the telephone icon turns into a microphone icon. And then to mute and unmute your microphone you would simply click on the white arrow on the right hand side of that microphone icon.

I know sometimes a few people have hits and misses at the beginning of conference calls. If you do realize that you're having technical issues with this please don't hesitate to drop me a quick email and we can always do a few trial runs before the next conference call.

You can see that Dan and I have written in the chat pad at the bottom and please be aware that much of these conference calls are recorded. We also keep the content of the chat pad to serve as archives as often there are parallel conversations going on the side as well as the main conference call conversation.

You can however initiate a private chat be it with another participant of the conference call, a member of staff or the chair, for instance. To do this you would highlight the name of one of the participants or hosts or presenters in the attendee list and you will have the option to start a private chat.

This will therefore create another pad at the bottom of the chat pad as well as the everyone tab you can see now. The content of these chat however, those do remain private (unintelligible) made public.

One of the traditions in ICANN conference calls is the raise hand option. The raise hand option is essential when taking part in a conference call to be able to voice your opinion.

You simply can't unmute your microphone or your telephone and interrupt the chair, for instance; we have protocol demands that you raise your hands to do so. The raise your hand option is pretty much where you found the telephone icon at the top toolbar, it's the hand raise (unintelligible) the last icon on the right hand side.

If you click on that you can raise your hand. This does not give you automatic right to speak; this simply signals to the chair that your - that you have a comment or maybe a question to ask. Once your question is asked please remember to go back to that same icon and to put your hand down otherwise it still gives the impression that you're asking further questions.

In the same little icon you can also express your agreement or disagreement with the green tick or the red cross. This can be very handy for instance if the chair is taking a quick survey regarding for example you're available for next week for another conference call you can quickly next to your name mark a cross or a tick saying whether you'll be available or not.

Equally, without being prompted by a question, you can always use these to express your agreement or disagreement for whatever comment is being made.

And that I think is all for the basics of the Adobe Connect. I guess a few of you knew all of this, others maybe not. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask them on the chat or via email (unintelligible).

And I'll hand it back to you Thomas. Thank you very much.

Thomas Rickert: Thanks very much, Nathalie. That's been very helpful. And let's now dive into the substance of this session, unless you have any questions or pause for a second to see whether you have any questions before we move on?

Hearing and seeing none in the chat I think we're good to go. As Marika mentioned earlier the agenda for this meeting is flexible. Also we're quite small group so please do make yourself heard or do write comment in the chat so that we can interrupt the presentation and have a discussion.

The goal, as you can read on the slide in front of you, is that we share informally a little bit of experiences so if you have experiences, good ones, bad ones, connected to our topic please make yourself heard. I think that might be interesting for everybody to learn.

Again, ask questions and we will try or I will try my best to provide you with some more background information, also some tips which - to navigate through this GNSO working group process.

Now we are going to listen to your questions, certainly, but in order to answer them you would need to ask them in the first place, which again I encourage you to do. And then we have some standard questions that newcomers would usually ask which we've provided some answers on the subsequent slides. So you'll be learning shortly about the GNSO policy development process, or the acronym for that would be PDP. That's something that you're going to be hearing during this call quite some time.

We're going to talk about consensus policies and the associated term of the picket for long-time the picket fence has been a mystery to me. I'm sure that I'm not the only one in the community who's been struggling with that concept. But I hope that I'll be able to shed some light on that.

We're going to talk about the Working Group Guidelines, the guidelines that working groups try to adhere to. I mean, it's good to have volunteers working on something but it's even better if they know and what format they can work and to have something that guides them to go through the sometimes cumbersome process.

We're going to talk about the mechanics. We've already touched upon the Adobe Connect. We will be alluding to the wikis as we move on. And hopefully we'll be able to give you some tips and tricks.

Before I move on to the PDP process as you will surely have heard the way I speak and as I mentioned in my introduction earlier I'm not a native speaker and I'm sure that some of you are not either. So please let me know if I say something that you don't understand or if you want me to move slower I'm trying to be slow enough for everybody to understand but certainly I can't say exactly whether you can follow me. So please don't hesitate to let me know if you want me to slow down and I will do my best to do so.

Now this graphic that you see in front of you is a simplified version of the course of the policy development process for the Generic Name Supporting Organization. As you well know there are other groups inside ICANN or outside ICANN which also have policies that they develop and that they're working on so this one might be similar to other policy development processes but this is the one that is tailor-made for the needs of the GNSO.

And you should also know, and I should take this as a preface, I mentioned that I'm on the GNSO Council and sometimes people think that the GNSO Council would be the, let's say, leadership team that ultimately defines policy. And that is very serious misconception of how the Generic Name Supporting Organization works.

All policy is done by the GNSO community. The GNSO Council, as a group, is the steward of this policy development process. So the Council needs to make sure that due process is followed. They can ask questions if they think that working groups are not going their work properly but they do not substitute or alter policy that is being made by the community.

And therefore I think this is maybe the most important takeaway message from this, the work that you're interested in doing or doing already in working groups, that's the vital part of what makes the (hard) cord of ICANN.

ICANN's reason to be is primarily, at least that's my view, I'm sure that others will object to this, but it is my firm belief that the policy development, i.e. setting the framework for generic names, is the main substance of what ICANN does. And the working groups that are developing policy for that are the integral part of that.

So we have to make sure that this part of ICANN is strong and gets more and more volunteers that are interested in participating in this process. But at the same time we have et ensure that those that are donating their private time to engage in policy development are actually appreciated by the Council effectively working with their results but also by the Board and the wider community acting swiftly so that you can see rather sooner than later that the results of your work are actually operationalized.

So if we look at this graph now that's the - that's sometimes called the snake. As I mentioned that a simplified version of what the - what a PDP entails. Everything is spelled out in the policy documents that we're going to refer to later on and you can certainly read those. But I think that as a starting point this snake covers the most important parts.

So if you look at the upper left section of this graphic you see the request for an issues report. So before we start the PDP actually we need to find out whether there is an issue. So usually we do not do PDPs out of a blue but

there is an issue in front of the community that needs to be resolved and also that needs to be resolved in the fashion that it would become a binding solution for everybody in the community to adhere to.

And therefore, we need to see whether the task that we're working on is actually in the scope of the GNSO. So we can't suddenly try to impose policy for let's say sports or some other areas of life. So is this inside the scope of the GNSO?

Then we take a look at whether there is research already being done. You know, do we have empirical data on the issue at hand? Do we know whether people have been working on this issue before? So is there any documented position on that or maybe multiple documented positions on the issue.

And further are there other considerations that we need to put into the equation before we start the work? And that issue report is then published and you will see that gathering public comments is something that you find quite often in this graph and that's for good reason because it shall not only be parts of the community.

I mean, certainly the working group members will have an awful lot to do during this process but it is very important that the wider community is embraced at multiple stages of this process to ensure that the working group, which certainly has a lot of expertise on board, but to ensure that the working group which might not have all expertise or all knowledge at its fingertips actually doesn't forget anything to look at.

So the preliminary issue report is published. Then it's posted for public comment. Usually those public comment periods are 21 plus 21 days; that's the public comment plus the reply period. So even if you have lost the chance to comment during this first period you can still comment during the second period.

And the public comments will be analyzed and they are really being analyzed. I can assure you there were times when ICANN has been accused of not really taking into account public comment but that it's rather a black hole that you throw your comment in and it will never resurface to sunlight.

But having worked in this process for quite a bit I actually can confirm that each and every public comment is being reviewed. It is analyzed for whether there is something in there that is not yet in the document that is being commented on whether anything has been forgotten, whether it's on topic or not and then it's actually being summarized so everything is being encapsulated then in a review report of the public comments.

And after tweaks to the preliminary issue report have been made based on the public comment that has been received it's published for the final report is published. And subsequently the policy development process is initiated.

The section starting at the lower right side of the top and (unintelligible) is that a working group is being formed. So a request to all stakeholder groups, which we call SGs, constituencies are - is sent out to solicit volunteers to participate in the working group.

And I see a hand up so, (Carlos), please move on.

(Carlos): Yes, Thomas. Thank you. Sorry for being so - not so sure. Who produces the initial - the issue report? Because you just said the working group is formed after the - after it has taken a decision about the policy development. Is this a pre-working group, is this less official or the same working group?

Thomas Rickert: Yes, so thank you very much for the question, which is a very good and relevant one. The phase of creating an issue report is the phase where we try to find out whether there is smoke or there is fire. And this report is usually produced by ICANN staff.

Actually I'm not aware of any instance where community members have produced an issue report but Marika might wish to chime in and correct me if I'm wrong. So that part is usually done by ICANN staff but certainly community input is solicited, as you can see in the middle section of the upper side of the graph, by incorporating public comment.

But these issue report are triggered by sometimes the Council and sometimes by the ICANN Board. It can be asked for by individual councilors and also by other supporting organizations. But Marika has raised her hand so please, Marika.

Marika Konings: Yeah, thanks Thomas. And this is Marika. Just to add, yeah, you're indeed completely correct. The development of the issue report is a staff responsibility. But as Thomas noted the idea is that the request for an issue report is pretty detailed or already provides what is the issue supposed to look at, what are you trying to address, which problem are you trying to solve, you know, what is the information that the requestor may already have about the issue.

The whole idea of the issue report is that staff basically goes out and gathers as much information as possible around the issue, like Thomas said, to be - for the Council to assess is there just smoke or is there really fire.

So we don't make any recommendations on how the issue may be addressed or voice an opinion or whether it's a good or a bad issue. What we usually do is indeed scope the issue, provide as much information as possible as we can find either, you know, from studies or maybe from positions that groups have expressed.

There's also a section in the report that deals with the scope question, is this really within scope for the GNSO Council to consider, and it looks at certain questions in that regard. And then we typically also provide a recommendation on whether we believe the PDP should be initiated or not

and that typically looks at issues that, you know, should first additional research be undertaken or, you know, should the PDP - should the Council decide to initiate a PDP what kind of questions may the PDP need to address in order to come to - to get to recommendations at the end.

So it really deals with a kind of scoping and if the PDP is initiated how that may best be organized in order to address all the issues they have (unintelligible) as part of the issue report.

I'm getting a bit of echo.

(Carlos):          And may I jump immediately. And it is addressed to the council?

Marika Konings:   Yeah, so this is Marika. So the preliminary issue report is actually published for public comment so that goes out to the whole community. And the whole idea is to ask the community, "Did we miss anything?" Is there any information that we actually haven't included in the report that should be there in order for the Council and the subsequent working group, you know, to have the information they need to actually start looking into, you know, potential recommendations or solutions for the issue that has been identified.

So once those public comments have been processed and they may also, you know, provide guidance to the GNSO Council on whether or not parties believe that the PDP should be initiated or not we update the report to reflect, you know, any changes that we believe are within the scope of the issue report and then submit that final issue report together with the report of public comments to the GNSO Council so they can make a decision on whether or not to move ahead, you know, with the next step which would be the formal initiation and then forming of a working group.

Thomas Rickert:   So, (Carlos), I hope that answer the question, otherwise please do jump in and ask a follow up question. Thank you, Marika, for this additional information. And I'm very thankful for the question because it allows us to

respond and make the section a little bit more vivid and interactive for all of us.

I would like to add that both the preliminary issue report as well as the final issue report are brought before the GNSO Council and they are being discussed there. So the Council in its mandate to manage the policy development process looks at that and also gives some input and has additional questions sometime of what should go into this report.

And the voting threshold if the initiative for an issue report comes from a GNSO councilor it's being voted on by the GNSO Council but the threshold is very low. And I think that that's also an important signal basically to say that we don't need much to take a look at an issue, whether it's present or not, and do some desk research and see whether we have to do some further work on that.

And then the threshold for adopting the final issue report and kicking off the formal PDP is then a little bit higher.

(Carlos), I'm not sure - as well as Marika, whether the hands that are raised are old hands or new hands so if they are new hands please speak up and if it's an old hand you might...

((Crosstalk))

Thomas Rickert:    Not to worry. Not to worry.

(Carlos):    Old hand.

Thomas Rickert:    So then the working group is now being formed. And hopefully there's broad representation from the various groups in the GNSO but also we encourage more participants to join.

And then every group in this ecosystem is formally asked for input to ensure that, number one, everybody in the community or every group has this new project on its radar; to solicit volunteers to participate as working group members but also to get some guidance and some initial reaction and suggestions on how to tackle the issue that's being - or that is attempted to be resolved with the working group.

And after the working group has deliberated and usually the deliberations take place on a weekly basis and the meetings usually take an hour I've seen PDPs where there have been weekly meetings that take two hours but I think that the general rule of thumb is that you should factor in an hour's phone calls every week during ICANN meetings, sometimes there are face to face meetings.

And in addition to that there's the possibility to exchange thoughts and positions on a mailing list. And sometimes people are requested to do some work in sub groups to deal with specific items and then go back to the whole working group and present the results because sometimes it's difficult to deal with difficult tasks as a group so sometimes it's good to split up to sub groups which the according procedures allow for.

And if this work is being done and if according to the working group charter, which spells out the request an initial solution has been crafted, if the working group thinks okay this is something that we could present to the wider audience, we're not yet completely sure whether this is the ultimate solution but this is something that we think is good for presenting then the working group with the assistance of staff produces the working group initial report. And that's being put out for public comment again to get input from everybody virtually.

And this public comment is then analyzed and the working group will then give everything a second thought and refine its recommendations if need be and then a final report is being produced.

And again the initial report as well as the final report are also being discussed in the GNSO council. So once we have the initial - the final report adopted the - this goes to the GNSO council.

And usually we can try to fill this with some real life examples the questions that are being asked to the working group result in recommendations on how to deal with specific issues.

So there are recommendations and these recommendations are then being transformed into a draft motion that is being put before council so that the council then is asked to resolve that the working group recommendations are being adopted.

And if that happens if after the councils deliberations working group recommendations are being adopted they are being presented to the ICANN board, which analyzes and looks at the recommendation, which again solicit for public comments and then the board votes on these recommendations.

And if they are adopted if the GNSO recommendations are being adopted then they go to the implementation phase i.e. then contract document technical procedures are altered in a way to reflect the outcome of the PDP working groups work.

And I should also say that sometimes it's not really easy to implement what has been recommended by a working group. Maybe in - an example that makes it easy for everybody to understand are the new gTLD recommendations that have been made by the GNSO way back when.

And as you all know the new gTLD program is working on the basis of the applicant guidebook that was sort of the - that spelled out the rules for applicants to apply and that is a book worth of 350 pages.

So if you add consensus policies and further documents to that an applicant has to follow some 1000 pages of paper. And certainly the recommendations that have been made by the GNSO at the time can't possibly reflect each and every detail that needs to be spelled out when operationalizing something.

And there's often the question what is policy making and what is implementation. So we have vivid discussions at times when ICANN operationalizes GNSO recommendations and sometimes it's been felt by certain community members that they are going to far there.

That they're making their own policies so it's very difficult to sometimes separate policy from implementation. And at this point I'd like to highlight and I think that this is sometimes forgotten, the work of the PDP does not end when the working group passes on its working results to the council but actually implementation oversight is something that's smithed into the whole TDP lifecycle.

And I think we're not making enough use of this implementation oversight to ensure that the spirit and the original thinking and the ideas, the wealth of knowledge that a working group has built over time when discussing for a year or so that this actually goes into the implementation.

So I think I'll leave it at that I have to check I think there are - there has been a question in the chat but I think that Marika has responded to that already. Okay so I will then move on.

So part of that we've already covered so as I mentioned during - at the start of the working groups work constituency and stakeholder group statements are asked for.

So we also - we're also looking for opinions of AC's and SO's those are acronyms often used for advisory committees and supporting organizations

very early in the process in order to ensure that we have everybody's thinking on our radar when conducting the work.

You've heard about the initial report, you've heard about public comment, which is in fact influencing the outcome of the work. We spoke about the review that is conducted with the public comment review tool that ICANN staff is supplying for those purposes and we've talked about the final report upon which adoption the recommendations are being sent on to the GNSO council.

So you find links on this slide, if you are interested in the details of how this is all governed. So there is the ICANN by laws, it's the PDP manual and the PDP overview.

So I would recommend that if you think you are feeling to good if your mood is to good and you think that you should feel a little bit more moderate then you can read that. It will certainly be a good sedative.

Also if there is a rainy day and you have nothing better to do then you should go and read those documents. I'm not saying that they're not interesting and that they're not important but that's legal language that pretty much encompasses the whole process.

And these documents at least as far as the GNSO part is concerned are constantly being reviewed. There's actually a standing committee on improvement, which constantly looks at the flaws or needs for alterations of these documents in order to improve them in order to make the process as transparent as possible.

So if you can go have a look at those documents and read them, that would certainly be very instructive but apart from that if you have questions ICANN staff as well as your working group colleagues that are more experienced will be more than willing to assist you with this.

Now, consensus policy and the picket fence, if you go and register a domain name let's say a dot com domain name you have a couple of parties involved. That's the registry that does the work in the background that maintains the central database with all the registration data or part of the registration data in some cases but let's not go there.

That would be in this instance a company called (Verizon) and what authorizes (Verizon) to run dot com? They have a contract with ICANN, which is the registry agreement that they've signed with ICANN.

You might go to a registrar of your choice because ICANN prescribes that domain names cannot be bought or registered directly with the registry so you have to go to a registrar.

And all these registrars need to have an accreditation granted by ICANN. And so these two parties that you directly and indirectly are in contact with when doing a domain registration they are called contracted parties.

So they have contracts with ICANN and there is an area in these contracts that is open to ICANN policy that's crafted by the ICANN community i.e. that is crafted in GNSO PDP's.

And why is that? Now imagine there is a contract between two parties and part the contract have commercial impact, how much can the registry increase their prices for the next couple of years.

That's something that is open to a commercial negotiation between contractors and therefore this - these items, these merely commercial items are being discussed between the two parties i.e. the registry or the registrar and ICANN.

But then there are other areas, which should be the same for everybody so when it comes to transferring a domain name all the registrar's technically need to play by the same rules.

So if we wanted to change the way domain names are being transferred because there might be a specific need for that we need to ensure that all parties offering generic names are actually playing by these rules because otherwise let's say one registrar had its contract only expiring in seven years and you wanted to transfer your domain to that registrar.

I'm sure you wouldn't want to wait for seven years until during the renewal of the contract that registrar is required to follow the new rules. So basically a consensus policy is something that is binding for all contracted parties instantly.

And in the contract you always have this provision that the registries or registrars as the case may be have to follow consensus policies both existing consensus policies as well as new consensus policies.

So if now a consensus policy is adopted then all the legacy TLD operators and as well as registrars have to follow that and also our - talking about new gTLD's for example all new TLD operators have to follow that without the requirement of re-negotiating their contracts.

And I think that's a very, very nice concept that ensures that there is consistency throughout the whole community. I'm a big fan of that and sometimes it's forgotten, you know, people sometimes claim that GNSO policy development is cumbersome, it's taking far to long.

But this is as the word says consensus policies the communities trying to find out what is broadly accepted, what everybody can live with. And if we have standards that are broadly accepted and that are thoroughly contemplated by the community with input from the outside world then you have acceptance

and it will actually sustain and that reduces the risk of participants wishing to gain the system that also increases transparency.

So even though consensus policy making is a cumbersome process at times I think it's the best we can have and I think that what we have shows that we are doing quite a decent job with this.

Now I think I've covered pretty much of this but I think it's good to remind ourselves of the main points and this is why I think the code from the agreement is quite helpful.

That means that consensus policies are such policies that do not have unreasonably restrain competition and that the policies need to be related to one of the three issues spelled out on - in the middle of the slide.

And that's issues for which uniform or coordinated resolutions reasonably necessary to facilitate inter-operability, technical reliability and or stable operation of the Internet or domain system.

You will remember my example of the transfer of domain name that just must work regarding - regardless of what operator you go to. Registry, registrar policies reasonably necessary to implement consensus policies relating to registries, registrants.

And resolutions of disputes regarding the registration of domain names as opposed to the use of such domain names. The dispute resolution part that alludes to UDRP the uniform dispute resolution policy.

So regardless where you register a domain name and where the rights holder sits this is an online process that can be used to resolve domain name disputes, trademark infringement cases, which are particularly defined in this policy.

And the UDRP is now many years old I think it's celebrating it's 15th anniversary. Shortly Marika will be able to help out but I'm not trying to put you on the spot but that's one of the big success stories because it made lives much easier of rights holders not to have to do litigation at the global level.

Now picket fence, now you see a picture now you know what the picket fence is and I now see a question in the chat. What was UDRP again? That's the uniform dispute resolution procedure and we now have two of those mechanisms.

One is the UDRP, which is already existing and which is binding for all TLD's. The aim of that is for somebody whose rights are infringed upon to obtain a domain name.

And then we have another mechanism, which is the URS the uniform rapid suspension system that doesn't aim at getting a domain name because in many cases the rights holders don't want a domain name that they have to pay registration fees for.

But they're interested in just stopping certain scenarios of abuse i.e. selling of fake goods, fake pharmaceutical products and stuff like that. And for that the uniform rapid suspension system is in place, which just helps to shut down domain names by sort of compromising the DNS.

So the picket fence is this part that I tried to describe earlier in this presentation where everybody needs to play by the same rules that's what doesn't affect the commercial details of a contract for example.

So inside the picket fence that's where the GNSO and its policy making can take place. Outside the picket fence there is no such option. Certainly the GNSO can make policy outside the picket fence that would be non-PDP work.

So we're sometimes asked as a council to provide policy advice on certain issues so we can offer advice outside of PDP and sometimes for this type of advice even non-consensus policy PDP working groups are established but the main purpose I should say of the PDP working group is for the outcome to result in consensus policies that have to be followed by everyone.

At the link that you see on the slide you find a more detailed presentation about consensus policies and I think that's worthwhile reading. Working group guidelines I think we've covered some of that and I know that we're approaching the top of the hour rapidly.

So I will make sure that nobody has to spend more time then until - then for the next nine minutes but let's go through these points swiftly. The working group guidelines are basically there to optimize for activity and effectiveness.

I think everybody will understand that it's difficult to work remotely, it's difficult to manage a very - sometimes very diverse group of working group members.

You know, the working group chairs are not managers, you know, they are not moderators, they are not facilitators they have their own day jobs. And their expertise, which might not be being the shepherd to a herd of working group members with very diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds so and also different expertises.

So the working group guidelines shall help to frame this a bit. So they something about the first meeting of the working group what shall be done there. They say things that might be obvious to you but I think it's an important thing though that they say we have to do an introductory round.

So everybody should say who they are, who they're working for, what interest they are representing and that is also, you know, it's not only a team building

exercise but it also helps the working group chair to see who has what expertise.

Whom could we ask best to deal with certain items and thereby maximize the outcome of the working group? So it also speaks about what members should do, the responsibilities.

We spoke about the possibility to split into subgroups earlier. It's about participation and representativeness we even have something on I think it's been called netiquette way back when but there are rules on how you should behave when acting on working groups to keep the process integrity.

The methodology for decision making, you know, it's not the working group chair just putting his finger into the wind and say okay I think we all agree that this or that is the case but there is a methodology on how the will of the working group is actually being determined.

And if people are not happy with the chairs determinations then they can even appeal against that. It also says something about the tools that we're using and speaks to the products and the output of what a working group does.

I mentioned earlier that working groups that are working on consensus policies are working consensus drive. So in an ideal case everybody would agree and everybody would be happy with the outcome of working group work.

And for that to happen it is one exquisite and challenging task for the working group chair to determine the consensus level. So we don't vote in working groups I think that's very important.

We don't count noses but the working group chair actually tries to test the water every now and then it's an iterative process to see well do you like this,

who likes this, what do you not like with this specific proposal, are there alternatives that we could work on.

You know, to see how the group as a body thinks and then based on that the working group chair makes a determination whether there is full consensus inside the group, which means that everybody is in favor of recommendations, whether there is consensus or rough consensus, which means that there are only a few that are against specific recommendations.

Then we have strong support but significant opposition and that's where, you know, it's a little bit more than a majority if you would vote but as we don't vote it's, you know, less than rough consensus or consensus but still substantial enough for a recommendation to be put before the GNSO council.

Then we have divergent, which means that we have different positions but they're not - they can't be harmonized so there's nothing - they are positions that are not strong enough of that don't get enough support to be presented to the GNSO council.

And then we have minority views, which can go with all of the above except for full consensus where everybody agrees. So if let's say there is a consensus situation where you - where the position that you support is not recommended then you can see okay I'm not in favor of this and I would like to put in writing why I think this is not a good idea.

And this the minority view is published with the respective report so everybody can take a look at it and you might be able to influence the next round of decision making with that.

Again some links for you to follow to get some supporting documentation. Tips and tricks and I think we've almost reached the end of the slide deck so you can go to gnso.icann.org that's the main results of information about the GNSO.

You'll find the projects list there, which is referred to at the end of this slide. You find a full calendar with upcoming meetings but you also find slide decks, MP3's and transcripts of many meetings so if you're interested in the history of decision making you can really go back and find out an awful lot about how things came into existence.

Then we have the GNSO 101, 101 may not mean anything to you and your linguistic environment and it didn't mean to much to me as well but basically that's starting information. That's very basic material for you to quench yourself with the niceties of how the GNSO works.

I think the acronym helper, which is now incorporated on the ICANN Web site as well to make it easier for everybody. Then we have a couple of Wiki's that you can navigate through that also have various documents in them that are constantly updated so that you have one place where you can see the status of various projects.

We have this learning initiative that I recommend going to and I think the best way for you always rather than navigating Web sites is talk to your colleagues. You know, I've met so many friends during my time in ICANN and I've never seen anybody refusing to help out.

So I think that you will find people helping you as well as I did and rest assured that even those that are looking so very experienced don't know everything. So there is no such thing as stupid questions and I think everybody will be forthcoming providing the answers to the questions that you surely have.

And also contact the excellent policy staff I think that the team that Marika introduced earlier is just awesome. The turnaround times are frighteningly short they work 24 hours if you need them to. So they are excellent and you can tap their expertise as well.

And with that I'd like to hand back over to our host Marika, thank you.

Marika Konings: Thanks Thomas it's a - I think it was a great overview I hope everyone agreed with that and I don't see many hands going up yet so I think everyone - everything was probably pretty clear but I think now is the moment to raise any questions you may have either about things that Thomas explained or spoke about or maybe issues that he didn't cover or didn't address but you're still interested to hear about. Okay Dave has raised his hand please go ahead.

(Dave): Thank you (Dave) (unintelligible) I'm currently serving on the ALAC. So a question then going back to the accessibility of the working groups, okay so the transcripts are available but let's say if you reviewed the transcripts and, you know, pose some questions or seek clarification from the working group can an observe do so or is siloed and closed off?

Marika Konings: Yes you can do that.

Thomas Rickert: Marika go ahead.

Marika Konings: Thomas go ahead, no Thomas go.

Thomas Rickert: No I think everybody will be wholeheartedly invite you to ask questions. I think each and every feedback is more than welcome.

Marika Konings: Yes and this is Marika to add to that the way that sometimes happened is indeed that someone either sends an email to the chair of the working group asking for questions to be shared or works with another representative in the working group that may come from the same community asking to forward or communicate those questions.

So as Thomas said there's no - I think any input or any feedback is always welcome to working groups. So either you that to your working group or, you

know, certain questions you may want to ask as well to individual members if it's more a question of getting clarification or further information on what the working group is looking at.

But as Thomas explained as well there are also of course formal steps in the process by which formal input is requested either from stakeholder groups, constituencies, supporting organizations and advisory committees at the start of the process.

But also at the moment of an initial point or a working group at any point may also decide to open a public common forum or put forward questions that they may want to have input on.

It may also be important to point out that most GNSO working groups tend to meet face-to-face during ICANN meetings as well. So that would also be a great opportunity for anyone that has questions or just wants to observe what's going on to attend those meetings.

They're typically open to, you know, anyone interested and I think most working groups will structure the meeting in such a way where the first hour they may just, you know, do their usual business and continue deliberations but then open up the last half hour of such a meeting, you know, to answer questions or solicit input from observers that are attending that meeting.

So I think there are different ways in which that can be done and I think the more information they gather is a typical motto of these working groups. Are there any other questions at this stage and I think as Thomas already indicated, you know, from the policy staff side we're always available and willing to try and answer your questions.

And there are also a lot of experienced community members around and, you know, I think Thomas has already given you a great example on the knowledge and experience that they have in house. So feel free as well to

reach out to any I think of the GNSO community members if you have any specific questions on for example what it entails to, you know, participate in working groups.

And, you know, how much time you should be expected to spend, you know, what are some of the topics that are under consideration and all of that information I said is also in the links that we've provided on the Web site.

And so then there is a monthly recurring call so, you know, should between now and then you have any further questions you would like to come back once more and hear some further information about some of these items of course you're more than welcome to join.

I'm not seeing any further hands at this stage and I'll pause here for a second. I think we'll probably just go ahead and close up the meeting. I don't know Thomas if there is anything further you would like to say or share?

Thomas Rickert: No I'd just like to thank you for the opportunity to do my bit in trying to encourage more people to join working groups. It's been a pleasure thanks for your questions to our participants it's been an enjoyable hour and I hope to see you face-to-face probably in London or in some other location bye-bye.

Marika Konings: So thanks everyone very much for joining and hopefully see you around either online or in person thank you very much.

END