Transcript
DNS Security and Stability Analysis Working Group (DSSA WG)
17 May 2012 at 13:00 UTC

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http://audio.icann.org/gnso/gnso-dssa-20121705-en.mp3
on page
http://gnso.icann.org/calendar/#may

Please find **the Adobe room presentation recording** here:
http://icann.adobeconnect.com/p2amrleg3nv/

Attendees on the call:
At Large Members
. Cheryl Langdon-Orr (ALAC)
. Olivier Crépin-Leblond (ALAC) (co-chair)
. Andre Thompson (At-Large)
. Julie Hammer (ALAC)

ccNSO Members
. Takayasu Matsuura, .jp
. Katrina Sataki, .lv
. Rick Koeller, .ca (CIRA)

GNSO Members
. Mikey O'Connor - (CBUC) (co-chair)
. Greg Aaron (RySG)
. George Asare-Sakyi - (NCSG)
. Rosella Mattioli (NCSG)
. Don Blumenthal – (RySG)

NRO Members:
Mark Kosters (ARIN); (co-chair)
Arturo Servin (LACNIC)

SSAC members:
Jim Galvin (SSAC)
Warren Kumari (SSAC)

ICANN Staff:

Julie Hedlund
Nathalie Peregrine

Apologies:
Jacques Latour, .ca (CIRA)
Scott Algeier
Nishal Goburdhan (NRO)

Coordinator: ...the conference call is being recorded.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you, (Tim). Good morning, good afternoon, good evening. This is the DSSA call on the 17th of May, 2012. On the call today we have Mikey O'Connor, Cheryl Langdon-Orr, Andre Thompson, George Asare Sakyi, Rosella Mattioli, Ron Kumari, Julie Hammer, Jim Galvin, Takayasu Matsuura, Rick Koeller, Katrina Sataki, Don Blumenthal and Olivier Crépin-LeBlond.

From staff we have Julie Hedlund and myself, Nathalie Peregrine. And we have apologies from (Scott) (unintelligible) and Jacques Latour. I would like to remind you all to please state your names before speaking for transcription purposes. Thank you very much and over to you.

Mikey O'Connor: Thanks, Nathalie and (Tim) and all for this. It's always stunning to me how good you guys are at all this. And welcome the rest of you. Just a quick review of the agenda and then we'll check on statements of interest. The agenda is really simple, we're just going to take a look at the report as it stands, get your reactions to the changes that I've been driving in and that's it unless there's something else.

Does anybody either have a change of their statement of interest or want to add something to the agenda?

Man: I guess I have a statement of interest. Google joined the Business Constituency I guess that means I need to mention that.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh.

Man: Google joined the Business Constituency.

Mikey O'Connor: How about that? That's great because I just left the Business Constituency so now we've got good strong representation from them back in the team. That's great. Anybody else got a change of statement of interest?

Okay well with that we'll leave the world's densest info graphic for a moment and we'll come back to that. But basically today we're just going to work on the current status of the report.

The first thing I'll do is remind Cheryl that you've got a little background section to write and we're getting to the point where it'd be nice to have at least a shot at that in here, Cheryl so a little guilt trip for you late and night; nothing like a late night guilt trip, you know.

What I've been doing is - and I have not pushed this draft up. I will push this up on Sunday because my goal is to get all the way through the report - not the appendices so much but the actual body of the report in this format and try and compress out most of the little notes that I use to start. And so if you're hunting for this draft you don't have it. You have to just follow along on the screen.

But I'm feeling like this is coming together and I want to step you through it again just to make sure that I'm not, as your Secretariat on

this, drifting away from the sense of the group. And so interestingly enough the scope section of this report is starting to have a fair amount of content in it. And the way that I've started to handle that content is to write a little something, put in a little picture then put a little narrative after it.

This is all pretty old stuff. I'm mostly just using this to introduce you to the concept. And then the thing that I've added to this draft is essentially a series of sound bites. I was sort of inspired by the recent release of the SSR RT report and the Whois RT report where I found myself drawn to their recommendations which were little sound bites.

I don't think that these qualify as recommendations since in many cases they're outside our brief. And so the analogy that I've started thinking of us in is that we were sort of sent out on a scouting mission to do this assessment. And we're now returning from our scouting mission and telling the rest of the community about the things that we found along the way.

Not so much as recommendations but just as observations for subsequent teams. And so in the DNS definition some of these observations are mostly just clarifications that say look, we were defining the DNS not to be the definition of the DNS but strictly as a way to frame our own work. And so people should be careful using this definition for anything beyond really what we did. So that's sort of the summary of those.

The next scope conversation is sort of about the functional context that we found ourselves in. And let me get a little more landscape. This is the picture, you know, these pictures you've seen before but they are

every so slightly changing every week. So, you know, we are no longer at the bottom of this picture Atlas holding up the world; we're off aside just a little bit.

This is actually not the current version I just realized. Let me show you the current version.

I've put a little piece in here that says this is not a complete model. This is just the things that we've tripped over so far. I'm not sure that other stuff will make it into the final draft but when I'm tired and in a hurry I sometimes use shorthand.

But along the lines of this picture several - actually quite a few observations emerged as I started writing these down. And I'm starting to highlight the fact that these are not recommendations; these are good intelligence brought back to the community by a really energetic team that went out into the world and found out a bunch of stuff.

But they're not recommendations. This may not be the way the world looks. It may be that the world looks some totally different way. And so the rest of these observations are just a picture of the future but may not be the picture of the future.

And so I couched these recommendations in words that try to avoid boxing anybody in. You know, we're really not trying to tell the rest of the community how to do stuff; we're really just trying to share the knowledge that we gained.

And so I'm not sure I want to drag you through all these line by line because that would take quite a while and probably better if you read these and contemplate them and - at your own speed.

But I did start writing down some possible roles for some of these layers. You know, the role for the core, the role of the glue and the roles at the edge. And those are probably things that you should look at but recognize that I'm always trying to use the word could rather than should or will in these because it really wasn't our mission to go and define all this stuff.

But the reason I put this in is because if these things were defined it would make it easier and more effective for groups like us to do what we are chartered to do. So the first one that I really want to highlight is that struggle that we've had over the information that we use to do our work.

If this model were in - or something like it were in full gallop and really going then for the most part the assessment group, the DSSA-like group, would not develop the information on which it does its assessment. That information would instead be developed by some sort of - and again this is the wrong picture, I've got to toggle back. These are harsh words; we probably need to be careful with these. And I'd be interested in different words.

But in that sort of traditional risk management, not risk assessment but risk management model there's a whole part of that function that gathers information about risks, about, you know, current responses, mitigation and all that kind of stuff.

And it's from there that the assessment or - team gets its data. And one of the things that I think we've been struggling with a bit in our work is that we've had to develop the data on our own.

And as a result I think that somewhere else further down I'm making the point that most of this assessment is probably going to be based on the information and knowledge that we the team members have as individuals rather than on a deep and intrusive look into the frontline operations of the many stakeholders in the ecology.

I think that's a really important point that only kind of became clear to me as I was drawing this picture and thinking this through. So it may be something that the rest of you don't agree with. And this is the kind of thing I want to highlight today. And if people want to push back that's fine.

Another thing that's emerging for me in this writing is that it would be nice if there was some sort of portfolio of tools and techniques, maybe standards is too harsh, maybe best practices, I don't know. But anyway kind of a portfolio of things that we could incrementally improve - we and our successors as assessment teams - rather than having to do so much inventing ourselves.

We had to invent a lot of stuff not only for the work that we did but, you know, we had to invent a much broader context in which we did the work. And wishful thinking maybe but it would be nice to have a repository of these things in place that we could be improving rather than inventing.

And then finally another thing that we've struggled with a little bit is the whole idea of - well how good is the, you know, one of our charter questions is how effective is the mitigation that's in place. And we'll get around to this in another drawing in a minute.

In a way that's a very difficult question for us to answer because we don't know what the strategy is for these risks. We don't know whether we're accepting these risks, whether we're shifting these risks to others, whether we're doing insurance against them, etcetera.

That whole risk strategy piece hasn't been put together yet. And that too makes it difficult to evaluate whether the mitigations that are in place are on target because there isn't a target.

So there's a little wistful thread that's sort of evolving in this section on the report that says, you know, I think we did the best we could but there was a lot of stuff that surrounds this effort that's missing. And so as scouts going out into the world this is part of the report we're bringing back to the community is that we were given a job that's difficult to do and I think we did a darn fine job but it would be done better if some of this stuff were in place in the future.

And then I highlight - I think one of the things that's also emerging at least for me is that we need to start making a distinction between ICANN the corporation, which has a whole bunch of frontline jobs to do with - in terms of its DNS root provider and (errand) provider type functions as opposed to ICANN the community which is a much different broader group of people.

And this is sort of a note to us, I think, as well as the rest of the community that says oh in the future we've got to start making a distinction between these because I think we get our skis crossed when we don't.

Then there's this one; you've seen this picture before. But there's some observations about this as well. First is that this is a picture that is much more relevant at the operational level for a provider at the edge. These are things that almost every technical information systems delivery organization either does or should have some kind of set of this in place. And again this is highlighting the ICANN the corporation thing.

But we can't replace that. We can not - and this is a point that Bart often makes is that there is no one size that fits all. And we cannot be the risk assessor for every organization at the edge partly for scope reasons and partly for authority reasons.

And because of that we may want to focus - and this is the theme that's starting to emerge for me - that we may want to focus more on making everybody - making tools available for people that makes it easier and better for them to do this themselves rather than being the total answer that encompasses every organization at the edge.

I think one of the lines that I'm starting to draw in terms of our charter is that it may be almost impossible to answer the question what are the actual risks and their severity to the DNS in a unified way. We talked a bit about that last week. So anyway that's starting to creep into these.

And then finally I did a fair amount of refinement to the relationship to the Board Risk Management Framework Working Group. That's their charter. This is the picture that I think we had in there for your viewing pleasure last week. It's refined every so slightly but nothing dramatic.

But I have started writing these observations. You know, last week this was in notes form; it's starting to get - and this is more final form in which trying to draw the distinction between what we're doing, which is risk assessment, which is the thing at the top there and risk management which is a bigger thing and includes risk assessment but also includes the other two functions at a minimum. And so I just spell that out in words.

And again a little whining; I may back this off a little bit. But it would have been nice to have this in place because not having it in place I think made our job much more difficult. This is also where I'm bringing in the personal knowledge experience theme.

So - and the only other thing is that, you know, we were going first and so we came up with a methodology. And those may be very useful. But the Board committee and their work preempts, I think, what we do. And they may choose to use what we do or did and came up with or they may not. And I wanted to leave them a clear path to come to their own conclusions on that.

I think this is the final section in which I just very briefly highlight the way that we're going to do this in the future. This is the very - my goal with this is to come up with a set of tools which if you are in an emergency you might be able to run through this whole process in an

hour or two. And you might even be able to do it in a situation where the Internet was actually down.

And I'm not going to go into any detail about that in this report because I still have some pieces of that to build and we'll test it on our first iteration next time. But I - I just sort of wanted to document that here in this summary part of the report.

Then we go into findings. This is - this first chunk is still in draft form because it's got the, you know, you can tell because it's got those little square brackets around it.

But one of the things that I wanted to highlight is just how much work we've done. I know that some people are frustrated with us because it seems like we haven't done anything. But, you know, we really have done quite a bit. And I think we needed to do all that stuff in order to perform the job we were given. And so I just wrote those things down.

You know, we built one of the first and certainly the largest cross constituency working group to date. And that's tricky. There are a lot of things that we had to learn and do in order to get that to work.

We did a whole bunch of stuff on scope; just talked quite a lot about that so I won't repeat it. We did a lot of work on confidential information, which I think we may never use but other people may. And we may still use it too it's just not clear. But I think having this done represents a pretty substantial deliverable. And it certainly took a lot of time and effort. And the methods and etcetera.

So I mostly was doing this for us as much as for the rest of the community because I know we've been at it a year and I know some of you feel like we haven't done much but I think we really have. And I think that the next phase will actually go fairly quickly and produce lots of assessments of lots of scenarios.

And hopefully by the end of that cycle we may even have a set of tools in place that can get really close to that target of being able to be done not with the Internet down and still do it within an hour. That's sort of the goal that I'm betting - at least for myself as tool builder on that.

Then onto the - I've started calling this the current state of our assessment. And this is the picture that we drew and we talked a bit about that - this one last week. This one hasn't changed much except for the huge improvement in that we've got much better representation of the diversity of that community at the edge in the clouds across the bottom. I really like those - Cheryl and I had a great talk after the call last week. I really think those clouds are cool.

But I think this graphic has a lot going on. And I try in the observations to highlight what's going on in here. There's the conversation about sort of the core versus the edge, the strategic to tactical continuum and then from left to right the long term versus immediate sort of timeframe continuum all with our five big risk topics overlaid on top of it.

And so I've started drafting, you know, I list the topics and then I go into the observations. I actually may expand these a little bit. But that's sort of the current state of affairs. And then I'm - this is the point at which I am right now in my re-drafting. That's part of the reason I didn't want to push this out to the wiki is because I want to get through the

rest of this before - because it's sort of half-done and it won't make sense to people who parachute in from the Net and read it - what's going on.

So I think at this point I'm going to stop my little rant. I'm sort of on schedule. I sort of wanted to spend about half the call going through what's going on. The only other thing I want to do is just spin through one last picture. This is the where are we going picture which has changed a bit too.

And, Olivier, what do you think of my arrowhead? I like those arrowheads a lot. We were talking about this on the ops call on Monday and I think those arrowheads are pretty good without making it a whole lot busier.

But, you know, this is I think where we're going. I think what we're going to do is, in Part 1, we're going to hammer on these tools some more. Just before the call started Julie Hammer and I were having a little conversation. One of the interesting puzzles in doing this report is that that worksheet that we've built is so dense and conveys so much information on one page that when you - (unintelligible) - oh man. Well that's a problem. I don't know what I'm going to do about that, Warren.

Anyway, you know, some of this stuff that we've done is so dense that when you unpack it and put it in an appendix it explodes in size. So taking those five topic scenarios and exploding them into words takes 15 pages which does present a sort of interesting summarizing puzzle. So if anybody is great at summarizing stuff please do take a look at the appendix where the scenarios are laid out because it's just overwhelming.

Yeah, and maybe a diagram. That's a thought. Thanks, Julie, that's a good idea.

Anyway so that's - I think that's the only other picture that's changed dramatically. So with that I think I want to stop and just sort of roll back to the top and get those visceral reactions that say holy cow, Mikey, where have you gone? You have drifted so far off the path because that's, you know, that's clearly the thing that I always worry about is that I've invented things out of whole cloth that you all don't agree with or don't reflect what we've done.

And holy cow, Mikey, where did you get the energy to write all this? Well I don't do it all at once, Warren, that's for sure. But I'm glad to hear that you think I'm still on the path. I have sort of two good hours a day; they're sort of in the morning and I sort of take the morning walk and have the morning cup of coffee and then I bash on this for two hours and then I go do other stuff that doesn't require as much brain power and sort of iterate away.

Julie Hammer: Mikey, Julie Hammer here.

Mikey O'Connor: Go ahead.

Julie Hammer: I really like your pie chart diagram with the different functions and the core and the glue and the edge. When I was looking at that earlier this evening I'm not sure whether it's appropriate for the report or if it's feasible but one of the things I wondered was whether it is possible to represent some of the other activities that are going on in that space within ICANN and within the community more broadly such as the

Board working group, perhaps such as the SSR Review Team, those sorts of activities.

You've got DSSA represented there and where it's looking. Just to really try and discriminate the space that this group is working on against what other groups are doing.

Mikey O'Connor: I think that's fabulous. Let me get a dot - just grab me a dot.

Warren Kumari: So this is Warren.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Warren Kumari: My concern with that is we're going to (fix) someone during this. We're going to then have their nose out of joint and assume we didn't think they were important or something. So...

Mikey O'Connor: Well, you know, the beauty of having me as the author...

Warren Kumari: I'm cool with people having their nose put out of joint at you.

Mikey O'Connor: Well, no it's that you have this - I don't know how many of you know the song, Blame Canada...

Warren Kumari: Yeah.

Mikey O'Connor: But you have a blame Mikey for anything like that. So if somebody's nose gets out of joint all you have to do is say well that's...

Warren Kumari: We suggested it but Mikey was...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, Mikey...

Warren Kumari: ...no matter, it's all good.

Mikey O'Connor: It's Mikey's fault that that's not on there or it's in the wrong place. That's the solution to that.

Julie Hammer: Julie again. Warren, perhaps some - the course of the way in which this report is going to be circulated and one of its prime focuses is going to be to receive feedback from the community perhaps it could be presented in the context of well this is where we understand these groups are working or this function is being undertaken. Please either validate or correct that view and tell us if there's something else that we've missed.

And possibly that can get around that, you know, people having their noses out of joint because they're not shown on the diagram. We actually go out saying what have we missed on this diagram.

Warren Kumari: Sure, that'll work.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, and I...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: ...think that we've got that in one place but we could certainly move that statement up right at the front; probably put it in the executive summary actually.

Julie Hammer: Because I have to say one of the things the I had struggled with is trying to understand where all the - whether all the different groups overlap and exactly what each different focus is trying to achieve because there are a lot - it's so much work going on in very similar spaces.

Mikey O'Connor: Let's make a list. So I've got the Board working group and the SSR RT. Certainly we've got...

Julie Hammer: The...

Mikey O'Connor: Go ahead, Julie.

Julie Hammer: I was just going to say the SSR framework although it's not really a group but it's an activity it sort of fits onto this diagram as well I think.

Mikey O'Connor: Now is that different than the Board SSR...

Julie Hammer: Yeah, it's the SSR - the annual framework.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, right. Annual - right. Presumably the SSAC...

Julie Hammer: Yeah, that was on my list.

Mikey O'Connor: And probably there's a - actually in the SSR framework is a whole list of organizations and activities that...

Julie Hammer: Yeah, perhaps the (RSAC) as well.

Mikey O'Connor: What are other ones? People just shout them out on the phone or type them into the - into the chat. We won't beat this to death; that's a great idea and I'll take an initial stab at it for the draft. I'm making notes for myself here.

Because I think it would be useful to sprinkle those across this just to sort of see - I mean, I'm thinking of even things like the NANOG list could go on here because, you know, there are - there are lots and lots of participants in this. That's a great idea, okay, duly noted. Any other cosmically great ideas like the one that Julie just came up with?

I maybe set the bar too high. You could even come up with medium to so-so ideas. They don't have to be cosmically good. I'll just roll backwards. I mean, and also critiques. I am really, really, really interested in hearing reactions and critiques because I did inject a bunch of things in here, folks.

I did it all by myself. All this stuff about the whining about how helpful it would be to have this stuff in place for example; are people okay with that kind of observation? You know, this notion of going out into the wilderness and coming back with stuff like that. If you're okay with that that's great but if you're not that's also fine.

Now one of the things - oh that's one of the things that I neglected to mention is - let me just go into outline mode here for a minute. Sorry, you all. Bear with me.

One of the parts of the report that's likely to disappear is this one - just get back to it. You may recall that there's a whole section in the report about an ongoing organization and it's got all these cute little topics and stuff like that.

I have cooled to this idea as a section of the report. And part of the reason that I'm driving so much whining up into that earlier section is that I'm alluding to it rather than describing it. I brought this up with the ops group on Monday. I think that this is getting just a little bit out ahead of our skis.

And it's certainly well beyond our remit to start describing stuff like this at this stage. And what we instead may want to do is raise these issues and get a reaction from the community and then participate in an effort to come up with something like this if that's decided to be a good thing.

So part of the motivation for moving some of that discussion up higher in the report is so that we can delete this section. And I want to make sure that doesn't break anybody's heart because it just seemed a little bit of a stretch for us to be - you know, in a way it's a solution looking for a problem.

And I think that, you know, the Board working group and the SSR framework and so on is really - and the SSR Review Team is really where that problem and its eventual solution should get defined. And

we can contribute to that with the observations that we make but to propose one seemed a little bit like we were overreaching.

So that section is kind of doomed at the moment unless somebody just throws their body on the tracks and says no, no it's really good; we've got to keep that in there. I'm not seeing anybody throwing their bodies on the tracks.

Oh Don's got an interesting question in the chat. That's - I presume, Don, that's back to Julie's idea about arraying organizations across that pie chart, right? And at least for me that's a really interesting question. I'm - Julie's typing. I'm sort of waiting to see what Julie's - people can speak. I don't get this - is my rhetoric so cool that nobody likes to speak on these calls - he said grumpily.

Man: Mikey, can you hear me?

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, welcome, go ahead.

Man: Okay. I wasn't sure if my mic was working which is why I was using the chat room.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh okay. No, it works fine.

Man: No, what called to mind was - well Julie just posted, I mean, there's some things, for example, concerning (unintelligible) going on in the IETF. So for that matter there's even the - some of the ICANN DNS efforts so there's a lot of things concerning security and stability that are happening outside of ICANN.

Mikey O'Connor: I'm thinking that one of the plaintive cries that we want to raise is this - it echoes what was said in the SSRT report which is the need, you know, not for - it's the need for coordination rather than control and sort of cross communication, etcetera.

And I think in a way it's useful to sprinkle a whole bunch of dots on this diagram partly to highlight how many organizations there are and partly to identify the need or the usefulness of better communication between them and partly to identify places that are a little light.

You know, for example I would say that we're a little light on the - I'm going to go back to the real (unintelligible). You know, I don't know where the DNS community would go right now to get a definitive pile of education, training and awareness type materials. I don't know where we would put our tools. You know, I don't know where that pile is.

There may be a whole bunch of separate piles that we are totally unaware of. I don't know if there's any group that's helping organizations structure their own internal audits and compliance work so that they can do self assessments. And I, you know, so it's like...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: ...all these things seem to be happening kind of at the core and at the edge but there's no glue in between. And so I think it would be useful to have a lot of dots on this thing and then start describing some of the issues that that might raise.

Julie Hammer: Julie again, Mikey. I think it would also be interesting to see if any of the circles - or the dots actually overlap which would highlight, you

know, a really strong need to collaborate and coordinate as well as identifying, you know, areas where there is nothing as you've just said that - where there's a gap.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah. Because, you know, I think there's a bunch of stuff - that's why I thought of the NANOG list, which I used to be on back when I was an ISP and I should probably get back on it again. You know, there's a lot of stuff going on that's largely at the edge there because that's where a lot of the front line folks hang out.

But I don't know that there's a good mechanism - maybe it's the IETF where those lessons get aggregated and transmitted into some sort of sharing middle zone.

Warren Kumari: Yeah, this is Warren. I don't really think the IETF for that.

Mikey O'Connor: No...

((Crosstalk))

Warren Kumari: ...that sure about NANOG anymore either. It's become less.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh really? Okay.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Because that used to be the place that, you know, when things...

Warren Kumari: Yeah, I mean, now it's stuff like - I would think things like OARC would be more...

Mikey O'Connor: Oh, OARC, yeah, for sure we want OARC on there.

Warren Kumari: I mean, that's sort of already the folks who are paying attention largely.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Warren Kumari: ...(unintelligible) would need to reach as much.

Mikey O'Connor: Right. And, you know, one of the things that's interesting is that this picture right now doesn't have the front line response listed on it. This is all the risk management kind of stuff. And I don't know if that's a good idea or not. Because, you know, a lot of the activities are reactive. And it might be good to sort of highlight that. Think about that. Cool. Good point, I like that one, kind of like a pony. Good pony. Sorry, interjecting stuff from the chat.

Anything else that, you know, again sort of in the broader not just this one diagram context but the whole thing. It sounds like I'm on the right track which is good. But I'm not going to release this until Sunday because my goal is to get through - I'm not going to touch the appendices but my goal is to get through the rest of the report and bring it at least to the stage that you see the stuff that I've reviewed with you.

Julie Hammer: Mikey, it's Julie again - Hammer. Just one thing in looking through version 7 I understand why you've put the sort of actions by governments and nation state players in the adversarial list. But I'm just wondering about the optics of actually doing that and using the term adversarial.

I know that you've thought and talked about this before but it sort of - it jumped out at me again. And I'd just - to call gaps in policy management leadership an adversarial risk I'm just wondering whether there's some other way we can represent that. It might not go down well with some parts of the organization.

Mikey O'Connor: Good question. Let me just write myself a note so I don't forget to think about that. I think that the...

Don Blumenthal: This is Don.

Mikey O'Connor: Go ahead, Don.

Don Blumenthal: I agree and I'd even take a step further. I'm sure it won't go down when (unintelligible) parts of the organization. It's important to differentiate. And I know if - I don't know if we can do it in writing. And sometimes public pronouncements by those groups don't necessarily mesh with the attitudes of the people doing the work.

(Unintelligible) very often law enforcement has been very helpful on some of these issues apart from any public pronouncements which I guess is just a long way of saying I agree and adding a reason why I'm a little uneasy.

Mikey O'Connor: I think the only - here's the reason why we would put them in one place or another and maybe that's the way out of this. Where in the dickens is the - oh hell with that, go over here.

The only reason that they go into those two categories - I'm now toggling back and forth so that you can see the only difference between an adversarial and a non adversarial risk is because a non adversarial threat source only has a range of effects when we evaluate it whereas an adversarial one has capability, intent and targeting.

Warren Kumari: Yeah, but perhaps explaining that fairly prominently and loudly might be a good idea because otherwise (unintelligible) technical differentiation but it's not going to take away the sting from (folks) who do see it and wig out.

Mikey O'Connor: And so one way to...

Julie Hammer: Julie Hammer again, Mikey. Would it - is there a word like deliberate rather than adversarial? Something like that that's not quite so negative that might be able to be woven into that context? One is a deliberate action and another is an unintended action. Would that work?

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah and I think that actually the - where I was going - well here are a couple of directions that I was thinking. One would be not to make the distinction in the report at all between adversarial and non adversarial because the difference between the two is so small.

And so rather than put them in piles simply skip that and say - because on - for example on this diagram we don't make the distinction between adversarial and non adversarial; we just list them. And maybe that's the way to sidestep the issue because I think that there may be circumstances where we, you know, in the case of a government inadvertently doing something we want to use that model.

In the case of a government that's, you know, closing its borders to the Internet, for example, we might want to use that one. But maybe we don't poke people in the eye with it at this stage of the game and we - when we do the analyses it will become clearer what we're talking about. So maybe we just don't make that distinction at all in the report. That's one way to do it.

Another would be to just move them. You know, I think what we've got is two kinds of threat sources in a way. We've got, you know, I think in the case of something like Egypt that was essentially an adversarial threat to the DNS. And, you know, the optics aside at some point there is an issue there.

Now when you get to the discussion of SOPA in the US - that legislation that threatened to break the DNS I think the argument could be made either way that it wasn't really an intentional action to bring down the DNS; it was an inadvertent non adversarial threat. But I think that it would be...

Warren Kumari: But I - (unintelligible) might not be the place to get into such political stuff.

Mikey O'Connor: Right.

Warren Kumari: Because I suspect you're then going to end up in these huge - no it wasn't adversarial it was for the good of the nation, blah, blah, blah.

Mikey O'Connor: Right.

Warren Kumari: And, you know, you have to then separate all of the emotion from, you know, (unintelligible) DNS it wasn't and then it turns into this pointing fingers at each other.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Warren Kumari: Which is often fun to watch at least. We could view it as a source of entertainment.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah. Well point taken. Let me have a go at redoing this. You know, my inclination is to essentially sidestep the issue by not making the distinction in the report. The methodology still would and we can still use it but I don't think at this stage in the analysis we need to take on that battle.

And I think Julie's point is correct that without some care the optics could get, you know, the last thing we need is a headline that says DSSA categorizes governments as adversarial threats to the DNS. That's...

Warren Kumari: Yes, although it would at least make people pay attention and read it.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Sure. I'm not sure we want...

Warren Kumari: As you say we can always blame Mikey.

Mikey O'Connor: Blame Mikey, that's right. You know, I might have to wear my brown pants on that one. Okay good point. Let me take a crack at that and we'll - I'll drive it into the draft and see how I do.

Oh it's after the top of the hour. Sorry, folks, I lost track of time. I think unless there's something equally urgent and stellar to Julie's last comment we'll wrap it up and call it a day. And my goal is to publish something late in the day Sunday here in the US so I'd say, you know, look out there around 2000-2200 GMT on Sunday for the next draft and then we'll have another go at it next week.

Thanks, all. This was terrific help and have a great week. I'll see you on Thursday next. Nathalie, you can wrap up the recording and as always thanks a million for your help.

((Crosstalk))

Nathalie Peregrine: (Tim), could you please stop the recording? Thank you.

END