

---

## ICANN Transcription

### IDNs EPDP

**Thursday, 08 December 2022 at 13:30 UTC**

Note: Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the proceedings at the meeting, but should not be treated as an authoritative record. Attendance and recordings of the call are posted on agenda wiki page: <https://community.icann.org/x/OYYFDQ>

The recordings and transcriptions of the calls are posted on the GNSO Master Calendar page <http://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/calendar>

DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the IDN EPDP call taking place on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 13:30 UTC. We do have apologies from Anil Kumar Jain. All members and participants will be promoted for today's call, promoted to panelists for today's call. Members and participants, when using the chat, please select everyone in order for everyone to see the chat and so it is captured in the recording. Observers will remain as an attendee and will have view-only chat access.

Statements of Interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you need assistance updating your Statements of Interest, please email the GNSO secretariat. All documentation and information can be found on the IDN's EPDP Wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly after the end of the call. Please remember to state

---

*Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.*

---

your name before speaking for the transcript. As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multi-stakeholder process are to comply with Expected Standards of Behavior. Thank you, and back over to Donna to begin.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks very much, Devan, and welcome everybody to today's call. We are going to delve back into string similarity review a little bit. But there's a couple of other things I'd like to do before we get to that.

Now that the council has approved our revised timeline, I'm very conscious of the fact that I want to make that deadline that we set out that we committed to council of getting out initial report done or at least having the draft initial report done.

So Ariel is going to take us through a timeline today, which is what's the critical path to finalize the phase one initial report so we can get that posted. I would like to ask and I know we're going into a holiday season and I'm moving back to Australia, as I mentioned to people before, and January is traditionally the holiday season in the southern hemisphere, but I'm going to ask for a commitment from everybody to let's do a really good push in these last couple of months so that we make that deadline because I think it's going to be really important for our, I was going to say legitimacy to council but that's not the right word, but for the work that we're doing and to show that we're on track I think it's going to be really important that we meet that deadline. So that's the reason that I wanted Ariel to take us through the tasks that we have left and

how much time we have to get them done in. As your chair, I ask for a commitment that we work really hard to get that done.

We've made some really good progress but we're still a little bit hung up on the string similarity review, so that's a chunk of work that we need to get through, and once we get through that, that will help us get through some of those other ques that we haven't fully looked into yet.

So, with that, I don't think there's anything else I was supposed to update folks on, but if I missed anything, I'm sure Ariel will pick it up for me. So, with that, I will hand it over to Ariel. Are you good to go, Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yep. I'm good to go. And thanks, Donna. I don't think I need to add anything to your updates. So, we developed this critical path graphic to depict the remaining tasks for this group before we can publish the phase one initial report and I just want to give folks a quick reminder, the deadline we set in our project plan is to publish the phase one initial report by April 21<sup>st</sup>, so late April. Although it sounds like a few months away, but if you look at the work still remaining to be done, we really don't have a luxury of time. That's why we should take a look at what's remaining on our plates.

The first [red box]—maybe I should have numbered it—on the top I'm just going to go through the graphic from top to bottom. It's about the remaining charter questions that we need to close our deliberation. So there are quite a few, as you see the charter

---

question numbers here. But it may not be too scary as it's depicted because the main part that's not closed is regarding the string similarity review and the hope is we can get that closed with work input taken into account. And then also the objection process. That's not completely closed, I believe, but I think we're getting there. But then that's also a need to take into account string similarity hybrid model, so they're kind of interconnected in some part.

Also, the other questions that we haven't completed deliberation is the string contention resolution. That's basically E4. That's in that red box. We parked there because it's related to the string similarity review, so that's why it hasn't been closed yet.

And then the other questions that you see in that red box, they're either related to the string similarity and objection process because they're basically charter questions asking a different way, but basically addressing the same question, so they can be answered once the string similarity and objection recommendations are developed, so we can close them off easily.

Then the other part that's not done is basically catchall questions in some topics, such as A8. That's catchall questions for RZ-LGR and then I believe E7 is a catchall question for the new gTLD program implication and [inaudible] issue. So, for example, there is some question such as singular plural issue that was raised in the context of E7 and then also the criteria for evaluating variant of new gTLD applications with restrictions. So, for example, if someone applies for a variant of a brand TLD, what criteria that application needs to meet. So that groups under E7 as the part of the catchall question identified by the group during deliberations.

---

So these are the remaining charter ques that this group needs to complete deliberation on and then the updates on our project plan, we kind of allocated the December timeframe to complete that, but because we are also staring on reviewing the work input on string similarity, at the same time I kind of think we probably need to factor in that as well and then basically the goal is to wrap up the deliberation of the remaining charter questions by the end of January. So that's what you see in the top red rectangular there. So that's the first part. That's probably the most important.

Then after we complete the deliberation of these remaining charter questions, of course staff will draft the draft recommendations along the way and the group also needs to review the draft language related to these remaining charter questions, so there you see the second rectangular, the lighter red one. In February, I think the goal is for the group to complete review the draft language for these remaining charter questions, so that's the second task.

And then the third task, the blue box in the middle. This is just a quick reminder that the group has already completed deliberation on these charter questions, but we haven't got a chance to send out the draft text to the group for review, because on the leadership and staff discussion we haven't completely finalized the draft text yet. But they're getting close. Then the hope is that we can distribute this draft text to the group ASAP but hopefully in the beginning of January. So that's during the January timeframe we could get the group review these draft texts related to these charter questions in the blue box. So that's the third task.

---

---

And then the fourth task, which is the orange box right under the blue one, is to review the Org input, and as everybody knows, Michael has sent the work input to the group before Thanksgiving holiday last month and basically the Org provided input on the charter questions noted in the orange box. So the ones that doesn't cover, for example A2 or A6, it doesn't mean the Org didn't review the draft text. They have reviewed it, but they didn't have input for that, so I guess seems okay. But then the ones that Org did provide input, this group is tasked to review them and then also decide whether and how to incorporate the [inaudible] draft text and potentially revise or adding additional draft recommendations.

So that's a pretty important task for us to get to the initial report, and currently in the plan we have allocated three month period but also taking into account that we do have the holiday and ICANN office closing in December, so we don't really have the full three months to work on that, but hopefully some of the input can be tackled rather speedily and perhaps we don't need the whole time to get this done. But it's still a significant task and a very important one and we need to take care of. So that's the fourth task.

Then once we've completed these four tasks, basically I think the draft initial report for phase one is in good shape in terms of the substantive recommendations and then the rationale related to recommendations. And in the time period in March, that's where you see the yellow box, coming to play as to consolidate all these preliminary recommendations. Also, this is the time period ICANN76 will take place in Cancun and we already requested two working sessions for the group, and my expectation if we work

physically tracking this timeframe we have set for ourselves is to use that two sessions in Cancun to make sure the group is all okay with the preliminary recommendations based on all deliberation of the charter questions and also the review of the working part.

And at the same time, we also need to build out the initial report. So the initial report is not just about the recommendations themselves, but also we need to create the front and the back I guess for the initial report, so it means we need to put the background, the context, and some other standard content based on the initial report template the GNSO uses. So that's some kind of parallel process the staff can take care of that and then build out these contextual sections to complement the draft recommendations. So that's the lighter yellow box you see on the graphic. So basically the March month is an important month for the group and the staff to build out the draft report.

And then finally we get to April. That's where you see the purple box come into play. We have tentatively allocated two weeks period for the group to approve the draft phase one initial report content. That means we will share the draft on the mailing list and the group will get to review it for every single section, and if there's any significant issues, this is the time to raise that. But hopefully we won't have that and this will just be a review of the text and make sure there's nothing really wrong that was recorded or something missing. But we have allocated two weeks period for doing this work, and then finally we get to the finishing point of publishing the phase one initial report by April 21<sup>st</sup>, so late April.

---

---

So that's basically a simplified depiction of the critical path for the group to get to publishing the phase one initial report, and I will stop here and see whether there's any comments, questions from the group or from my colleagues in the ICANN staff team. So I will stop here. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks for that, Ariel. So hopefully everybody now has a reasonable understanding of the work we have in front of us. I would just highlight what I put in chat, that in order to get through this we may, at some point, need to extend our 90-minute calls to two hours, particularly as we start reviewing language or we may have to have some additional meetings. But that's a TBD.

The other thing I want to remind folks is that we will be having a call on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December and that's in recognition of the work that we have in front of us and trying to meet that deadline and that we'll lose the following two weeks because of the holiday season.

Satish, to your question about is there any time allocated in the schedule for consultations with our respective AC/SOs, if you could expand on that a little bit, let me know what you mean so that I can properly respond. I guess our assumption is that, along the way, you will continue doing your consultations as you currently do. But if there was a specific ask there, if you could state it that would be good.



---

SATISH BABU: My Internet is a little bit flaky today, apologies. I was wondering if we should ... I mean, we have been consulting our [inaudible] intermittently but the whole report as one whole unit, is there any reason to discuss with them or is it that we can comment on it during the public comment period?

DONNA AUSTIN: So, that's a question for the way that your group decides to organize the work. I can't really answer that, but I guess there will be the opportunity for ALAC as a group to respond to the public comment period when the draft report is published. But if I could just add a personal observation that you and Hadia and I don't know who the third member of your team is.

SATISH BABU: Justine.

DONNA AUSTIN: Justine, sorry. I wasn't sure whether Justine had that crossover or not. But I'd have to say that you guys have been really good in being able to process and review work along the way. So I shouldn't think that would change, but we'll certainly be mindful of that as we go through this.

So I think where you probably would welcome a little bit of review time is as we post documents for review and that's probably where you go back to ALAC and seek broader input. So we will try to be conscious of that but I can't guarantee that we are going to

---

have a huge amount of time available to us to allow for that. Ariel and then Justine.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Donna. I just want to add if you look at the graphic, the second and third box for review draft language, we allocated one-month period for reviewing these batches of draft language, so that's basically hopefully can accommodate the review among individual groups, so that you can gather the ALAC input during that period. So that's the draft language that we'll hopefully incorporate input from your group. So that's one way to look at it.

Then, also for the purple box approval of draft phase one initial report, that's a two-week period and I think the presumption is that each individual group will also take advantage of this time to look at the report and then you can gather the input you need, so that's when it's published, also gather input—incorporate input and feedback from your group as well. So we have allocated these weeks of time to conduct these reviews and hopefully each group can take advantage of that.

I also saw I think Nigel had a question about January 5<sup>th</sup>. I think we haven't decided whether that needs to be cancelled. I think the assumption is that meeting will go forward but I'm happy to be corrected.

DONNA AUSTIN:

I agree, Ariel. I guess I wasn't focused on January, but my assumption is we're meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December and we will

---

meet again, that will be our first meeting back on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January if that's the Thursday. So, Nigel, we'll be there.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Nigel, I guess while I've got you there, I know that sometimes getting feedback from the GAC can be challenging, so if there's any problems that you see with this timeline, please let us know and we'll see how we can respond to that.

I think when we had the one-on-one sessions that we had with you and Manal, there was some suggestion that we provide a bit of—that the leadership team provides a bit of an update to the GAC on the work that we're doing here and that is still open to you, if maybe it makes sense to do that in February now because we may have lost too much time during this [inaudible] but the invitation is still open, so we'd be able to do that.

NIGEN HICKSON: Yes. Just to say thank you very much for that. This is a complicated issue, I'm not saying just for the GAC. Governments are not unique perhaps. I think the public consultation will help a lot. Obviously, before then, we'll be able to brief the GAC on what's going on. I think there's also the session in the diary for the March meeting as well or just before that for some sort of discussion with the GAC on these issues. So that's very helpful, thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: All right. Great. Thanks, Nigel. Okay. So any more questions on this? Any comments on this? I guess from our registry/registrar colleagues, does this look like it's doable? I'll take silence as it's doable. All right. So, Ariel, let's kick on to the next discussion which will be an interesting one.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Donna. Actually, I will hand over the floor to Pitinan who will present on the work input on the hybrid model. So, over to you, Pitinan.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you, Ariel. In this, we [caught up] the analysis on the operational effect on the different models, especially for the hybrid models. So, in overview, we conduct this by determining the number of potential comparisons of the labels between all the models being discussed by the working group. So there's the level one, level two, level three and of course the hybrid.

For the [inaudible], we randomly selected 20 gTLD strings based on the actual string in the 2012 round. It's a little bit [skewed] to what IDNs because we want to see the effect of the variant, so we picked about 65% IDNs, so then these can generate the allocatable and blocked variant.

For simplicity, we assume that [inaudible] primary string is the one that's being applied and on those, we calculate the allocatable and blocked variant levels of these 20 strings. Using the mechanism,

---

[inaudible] only listed the [inaudible] level, so the invalid mix script won't be in the consideration.

With this, then we study calculation of the comparison in each model. So just the terms here we use compare the source level and the target level. So the first level in this context is the levels in inspection, like the levels we are looking at and it will need to be compared with the [others] levels in the set. So that we call target levels for comparison, like if the level one we compared the primary against the primary, so if you have 20 gTLDs in the round, if you look at the level number one, then it has to compare with the remaining 19 levels, for example.

So, with this, for level one, we calculate the number of comparisons for primary against primary. For level two, it's the primary plus all allocatable against the target of primary and all allocatables. For hybrid, it's actually similar to level three but we don't include the blocked compared with the blocked, so it's the primary plus all allocatable comparing with all the primary allocatable and all blocked for the target levels.

Then we also need to compare the all blocked from the source level with the primary and all allocatable from the target and leave the blocked versus blocked out.

For level three, of course we compare all the [inaudible], so primary plus all allocatable, plus all blocked versus primary plus all allocatable and all blocked. So that's the [model] that we calculate. Maybe let me pause here a little bit. Is there any question or any feedback on this before we move on to the actual levels and the table of calculation? Dennis, please go ahead.

DENNIS TAN: Hi, Pitinan. Thank you. Just a quick question. I think this is faster than me finding the slides. So I thought level two was primary plus requested allocatable, not all allocatable. I was trying to find all the slides that we worked on these levels. I just want to make sure this is the right way because I don't see how we move from a primary [reverse] to one label but what about the requested? I mean, there is [tension] between requested allocatable labels versus all the set of allocatables.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you. Ariel, would you like to respond?

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Dennis. As you note on the slides, for simplicity purpose, the assumption is that only the primary label is being applied for. So, basically, level one is what is being applied for as compared to the other applied-for labels, because when the group needs to work on the calculation, it's a little bit hard to say for string two, one or two of its allocatable variant is also being applied for, now you need to factor in that calculation. It's just a little bit too complicated. So just for the demonstration purpose, we just say level one is only the primary being applied for. But if we want to say it more accurately, it's that [compare] the applied-for [inaudible] against the applied-for target label, that could include allocatable variant, too. Hopefully that helps to clarify this a bit.

---

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Ariel. For the purpose of this exercise, for simplification, yes, okay. And I found the other slides. So level one is the one that includes primary and only requests allocatable variant. I understand the purpose of this. Thank you.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: I think I saw Justine's hand briefly. Justine, would you still like to come in?

JUSTINE CHEW: No. Please, go ahead.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Okay, thank you. Then next slide, please. So this is the levels, the 20 random selected levels of the [inaudible]. So there are 13 individuals and we also include some of the ASCII as well, so as to see the effect.

So just going through the left column, D, and E, and F is the calculation of the number of allocatable, the number of blocked variant based on the [inaudible]. So the numbers are there.

Then the [inaudible] columns, the G, S, and I is the target levels. So let's take the first one. Let's say the [Chinese] label one, if it has to compare with the rest in the set, there are 19 string labels left to compare. So that's why in column G, H, and I we call it the number of remaining primary or remaining allocatable or remaining blocked.

---

And when the 19 comparison is done, if the string similarity panels move to the second level, then they have 18 primary labels left to be compared because the comparison of the level two and level one was already done when we look at the label one.

So this is to reduce the duplication of the work as well. So if we move forward down the list, then eventually when we look at the 20th labels, it shouldn't have to be compared anymore because this will be covered in the previous comparison. So in this way, this is how we set up the remaining labels to compare.

Then moving on to columns J, K, and M, those are the calculations for each model. So if it's the level one, it will be the column D times column G which is the compared only primary source level against the number of remaining target levels. So it will be 19 there and then do the math down the list. And so the total number of comparison for level one, if you see the bottom of the table is 190 times of comparison.

Then if we go to column K for level two, then that's the number of the primary plus the number of allocatable of the source level times the number of remaining primary plus the remaining allocatable. So it becomes [15] and then in the same way, calculating down. So the total number of comparison is 343 and we do this the same, so based on the formula in the table on the previous slide, for hybrid model, the number of comparison is 13,000; and for the level three, it will be 95,144 times.

So this is the actual, the estimation for this random 20 strings. Let me move on to the next slides. Or do you have any questions? Maybe we can ... Ah yes, Sarmad, please go ahead.



SARMAD HUSSAIN: Just to add one small piece of information, that the number of TLDs we selected are in approximately same ratio as were received in the previous round. So you'll see more Chinese labels versus fewer Arabic ones and then so on. So we tried to capture approximately the same ratio to sort of mimic that as much as possible within of course a number of 20. Thank you.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you, Sarmad. Then let's move on. Okay. So as a result, this is the summary of the number of comparison with level one and level two hybrid and level three. And also this we have a caveat as well. So, basically, this is the theoretical limits of the number of comparison. This is because based on eventually what would be the procedure of the string similarity panels. Some of the labels may not need the comparison or not be the full comparison as others.

For example, if we look at the Chinese labels against Arabic, it might be quite obvious and can move on quickly, comparing to looking at the Arabic versus the [Arabic] string itself.

So this is we are assuming that the comparison of Chinese and Arabic has to be done equally with other pairs. So that's the caveat.

And then a few texts over here. The mitigation of [inaudible] risk will be enhanced from level one to level three. So level one, we have most of the risk and relative of mitigate, most mitigating the

---

risk. But also the cost of operation will likely to be increased from level one to level three as well.

The added cost will likely to be passed on to applicants given the recovery principle. And for the hybrid model, the comparison between is the compromise between level two and level three, it's similar to level three but remove the complexity of comparing the blocked variant against blocked variant. But based on the data we studied here for 20 TLDs, the number of comparison is much more reduced. It's left to be around 15% of what has to be done in level three.

So that's the end of my presentation. I'm happy to take any questions. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Pitinan. Pitinan, would you mind going back to the previous slide, please? I'm squinting as I read the numbers. Just a comment that Edmon had made in chat. He said it certainly looks like a hybrid model is more favorable. And based on the numbers, that's true if you consider it against level three, but you could also say that level two is quite favorable when you consider it to what the hybrid model could potentially look like.

So it just depends on how you want to read the information that's available in front of us. And just to mention also that's indicative only and it's certainly really helpful to have this as a reference point and I appreciate that Pitinan and Sarmad have been able to do this work for us. But please bear in mind that it's inductive only.

---

So are there any questions or comments that folks want to make on this? And I guess a question for the group is, seeing these numbers, what's your initial reaction to the proposed, the recommendation we had for the hybrid model is the way forward? Maxim, go ahead.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Do you hear me?

DONNA AUSTIN: Yes.

MAXIM ALZOBA: The thing is, without examples, and as I see the lower part of the page has not many words, it's not very informative. For example, if you change all digits by five, nobody will understand what happened because it's not verifiable.

So, having a page or a couple of pages of examples, just even strings separated by a comma, I think might be helpful just to remove some questions. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: So, Maxim, when you say examples, you're saying you'd like to see the ... So, for Chinese number one, you'd like to see the allocatable variant and primary variant, allocatable variant and block variant that go with that applied-for TLD, so that you can see some of the potential ramifications. Is that what you're getting at? I'm not really understanding [inaudible] information.

MAXIM ALZOBA: I'm speaking about lower part of the page, because we have a lot of examples with Chinese. It would be nice to see [inaudible] in Cyrillic and also the numbers there is not that horrible as a top side of the page. So, all we will need is a page or two for those words. It's less than 100 in many cases. And without it, we will have lots of nice presentations with Chinese and Arabic script but not very informative on Cyrillic and [inaudible]. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: So I guess the sample was based on applications from 2012, so that's where the sample came from. So I think the 20 selected are fair. I take your point that sometimes it's hard to extrapolate based on the information you have in front of you, but hopefully folks can get a sense of what the likelihood of comparisons would be. Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thanks very much. I suppose I found it informative because it just gives some numbers in terms of ... And I know these are indicative, but clearly the number of variants blocked is one can compare that.

I mean, the question I had is what I don't quite understand—and sorry if I'm just being dense—if you take number one, then the differences between the L1 and the L3 are very stark in terms of ratios, but if you take the Arab one at 6 or 7—7 I think it is—then the ratios are quite different. I just wanted to understand why. Is this because of the type of script or whatever? Thanks.

---

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Nigel. It's a good question. Pitinan?

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you for the question, Nigel. So for the level number six, that's the Arabic, that's the levels that have quite a number of blocked variant, and with that, the comparison between the blocked variant of the level six with the remaining of the blocked variant from six down to 20, that's where the spike in numbers kicks in. So 65,000 is just so at the addition of 268 times 226 pair of comparison. If we add in the blocked variants comparing this, the blocked variants. Sarmad, if you have something, please go ahead.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Right. Thank you. So when we are picking up these labels, we actually had a choice that we could pick some labels which have potentially very high number of variants or we could pick labels which will have a low number of variants. But if we went into that kind of analysis and made arbitrary choices as perhaps Nigel is also indicating, one could sort of influence the total numbers. But that would also bring a bias in that process.

That's why what we did was that we selected the ratios, so out of 20 we said that okay 5 have to be Chinese based on the number of IDNs which were applied for in the previous gTLD round and the ratios of different scripts are gTLDs.

---

And then once we knew that we are to pick 5 [inaudible] picking out ones which have a lower or higher number of variants, what we said was that we don't want to create a bias, so from the Chinese we will just pick randomly five labels, whichever five turn up.

Similarly, we'll pick five or three, if we fixed based on the ratio three Arabic TLDs, then we just said we'll just pick randomly three. So it was a random exercise so that we don't bring a bias. Totally agree that if it was another set of labels versus the set of labels, the numbers could be different. But again, as it's been pointed out that this is just an indicative exercise just to sort of see how many comparisons occurred between I guess the four models, the larger sample we do, the better estimation it would create, but of course that requires a much more significant exercise as well. So that's just a bit of a background. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. So you selected five Chinese labels, but do you recall how many Chinese applications there were in 2012?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Around 80 I think.

DONNA AUSTIN: I'm testing you here. For Arabic?

---

SARMAD HUSSAIN: I would probably ... I don't have an exact number but I think it was ten or around that number. I don't have exact numbers right now.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So if the Chinese was around 80, and we did a simple times everything by 80, I guess that's just something for folks to keep in their head. I can't do the math and I don't know how this table would extrapolate if you multiplied things by 80 but it just gives you a bit of a sense of when these strings are evaluated for string similarity that that could be the quantum [inaudible] comparisons that we're looking at. All we have is the 2012 data. We can't really forecast what it's going to look like in any future round. So, anymore questions on this?

All right. So, what we're going to move to next is the process for the string similarity review and also in the context of the lifecycle of an application through the application process. So, Ariel, can I ask you to run through that? I think that's where we're at, right?

ARIEL LIANG: Donna, yes. That's where we're at and I think the purpose to look at this process is to understand where the potentially hybrid model will come into play and then that could help enhance our understanding why it could have operational or cost impact to the program. So I think that's at least one of the purpose for running through the process.

Then this flow chart is also viewed based on the 2012 rounds, AGB that basically showcases how contention sets are picked out based on the algorithmic checking and also the string similarity

panels review. So it's indicative in a way that for future rounds the similar process would happen and then we have included some additional notes where the hybrid model could be part of the process. So that's just a quick background on this.

Then I would just quickly run through the chart from top to the bottom. So the first row is basically the application and administrative checking [stop] is the applicants will begin the application process, and then also the applicant will elect whether the application is a community TLD or not. So that's relevant to contention resolution that we won't discuss in detail here, but I just want to note that this is part of the process. So you apply either a community TLD or not.

Then the third step is applicant submits the application into the system and then ICANN publish all the complete applications at the end of this administrative process or step.

Then you go into the initial evaluation, so we kind of discuss this in quit detail and then you probably remember we had this much bigger chart to show the entire process, but this is more a condensed version of that by focusing on string similarity review related steps.

So the fifth step is ICANN will run an algorithm for all applied-for gTLDs against all other applied-for gTLDs. So in this step there are two significant things will happen. So the first one is that if two applicants apply for identical strings, then this algorithmic checking should be able to detect that and then those identical matches should be added to contention sets for the resolution.

---



Then the second significant thing that could happen in this step is that if Applicant A applies for string A and Applicant B applies for string B, and A and B are variants for each other based on the RZ-LGR calculation, then those strings should be also added into contention sets in this algorithmic checking. So that's the two significant things that could happen in step five and this should be more a systematic thing that can be quickly detected by application system. So that's something to keep in mind for.

Then step six is that the string similarity panel in the initial evaluation process will perform analysis based on the results from the algorithmic checking to group similar and identical strings into contention sets. So if you recall earlier, the first step and second step identifying identical strings and strings that are variant to each other, even that's done by a machine, the string similarity review panel should still review the results from the machine detection and make sure it's correct. So they have to review that as a manual step.

Then another very important manual step is basically the panel needs to review similar strings based on visual similarity and then add them to the contention steps. So here you see step three is basically if two applied-for strings that are visually similar to each other, they need to be added to the contention set.

And then step four is where the hybrid model will come into play is that even the applicants, they didn't apply for strings that are in direct contention with each other, it could be possible that the unapplied-for variants or blocked variant of applied-for string could create visual similarity to another applied-for string or the variants of another applied-for string. So naturally step four is some

---

---

contention sets could be created because of visual similarities among strings due to the variant relations and that's what the hybrid model comes into play in this step.

There is also a very important thing here is that the string similarity panel have to make that determination and then create those contention sets based on manual review of the string. So that's why the operational related costs could increase here if we used the hybrid model because that's involving the manual review by the panel. And I see Donna has her hand, maybe I'll stop here quickly. Donna?

DONNA AUSTN:

Yeah. Thanks, Ariel. So I just wanted to make that, just focus a little bit on that point that Ariel just made. In the identical string scenario, it's a technical or a mechanical test so you can run that through a computer and it does the checking for you about whether there's another string that's identical to yours that's been applied for. But with string similarity that's not the case. It's a visual review done by people. So that's where when we think about those numbers that Pitinan just took us through, that's where, just bear in mind that that visual string similarity review will be done by a panel of people. So it will take longer than the identical string situation because that's just run through a program, whereas the string similarity review is done by a panel of people.

I just want people to understand that there's a difference here between a mechanical review and a manual people actually looking at script review. Thanks, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Donna, for emphasizing this point. So, we'll just keep going and go through the rest of the graphic. Step seven is for ICANN to communicate the results of the string similarity review including publishing the contention sets.

And then you go into step eight. That's related to the extended evaluation. It may happen to some applications. And also that's where the objection process comes into play. We want to include this point is because we want to mention that, because we also have the string confusion objection which is different from string similarity review and this potential result could alter the contention sets because maybe additional contention sets could be detected based on the results of a successful string confusion objection, for example.

Then another point I want to mention is that the hybrid model could also come into play in step eight here, because based on the hybrid model that the group is leaning towards at this point, the string confusion objection is also going to utilize the hybrid model. So a potential objector could use the hybrid model to make a case for objecting a string.

And although this is not a direct cost that could impose on the program itself but basically the burden is on the objector to identify these strings based on the hybrid model, so that's why step five is highlighted here.

And then we will go into step nine. It's about string contention. It's a resolution of the contention sets, and basically applicants are

---

encouraged to self-resolve string contention anytime prior to the contention resolution process; and then if the contention cannot be resolved by the applicants themselves, then they will go into contention resolution, so if one or more of the applications is a community TLD, and also the applicant elects to use the community priority evaluation to resolve contention. Then they go into step 11 and if it's not community TLD and then the community priority evaluation was not elected, then they can use auction to resolve contention. But we won't talk about this in detail. That's covered in another charter question.

So once the contention is resolved, we will see step 14, where the successful application will enter transition to delegation phase.

So that's a simplified process flow, but just to go back to the purpose of going through this chart is that we want to showcase where the hybrid model could come into play is basically step six where the string similarity panel will potentially use the hybrid model to detect similar strings. And then also step eight where objector could use the hybrid model in the string confusion objection process to include additional contention sets. So that's where the hybrid model would play in the process.

And as we discussed earlier, if it's used, then definitely for operational perspective, it will be higher than just comparing the requested strings where the primary plus all allocatable, it will incur additional costs because that has to be done in a manual process and it cannot really be detected via machine.

---

---

That's all I think I intend to cover here and I'll stop here and see whether Donna, Justine, or Steve or Emily have any additional comments to make about this graphic.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. Thanks for taking us through that. I don't have any additional commentary or comments to make for folks but I'm really interested to hear from ... We're trying to understand where we go, whether we're still comfortable with the hybrid recommendation based on the information we have heard from Pitinan and Sarmad and also understanding the process, whether we're comfortable with the hybrid model moving forward.

The one thing I would ask, and I don't think it's been covered here, is in the feedback we got from ICANN Org I think there was—Ariel you might be able to help me out or Michael will be able to help me out about what the commentary was from ICANN Org about the string similarity review. And I think the baseline was that it has the potential to not drag out the process—that's the wrong word. But if someone has that language available as to what was in the ICANN Org document I think that would be helpful to have a look at as well.

So, any initial thoughts from folks? Ariel, go ahead.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Donna. Just to respond to your question, and I think in the ICANN Org document, it basically says the complexity for the hybrid model will be higher compared to definitely level one or

---

level two, but it didn't have additional commentary beyond that. But I see Sarmad has his hand up.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. Michael has actually put the text in the chat as well, so thanks for that, Michael. Go ahead, Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Donna. I think as ICANN, of course, we are not making a recommendation but just noting that as the number of comparisons increased, it increases, it has an impact not just on the cost but also the time it will take for the string similarity to be [inaudible] to complete the task. That is actually being pointed out because one of the feedback which was received on string similarity panel review process in the previous round was that it took longer than was initially I guess allocated for that panel; and of course the reason was that a number of comparisons of course have an impact. And in this case, we actually also have increased comparisons because of variants and that will also impact the timeline and alters the cost. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. So there's some important points there that Sarmad has identified. The challenge for us is understanding those complexities and potential added costs that may come from the hybrid model. Is that something that still—and maybe this is where we need to do that risk assessment. Do we think that on the balance of things that the risks that was identified with misconnection and that denial of service—not to be confused with

a DDoS attack—are those risks really, how prevalent are they? And does it warrant a hybrid model, understanding the added complexity and potential costs that may incur for applicants during our process? So that’s the balancing test that we need to do.

I know there’s a bit of new information that folks have seen today, but if anyone has any initial thoughts, it would be great to hear them now. Dennis, go ahead.

DENNIS TAN:

Hi, Donna, thank you. I’m thinking, I’m just putting this out there since ... Would this be a good case to put through a risk analysis process to ... I think in the variants, and I think you just said we have new information, cost likely to be higher. Those costs likely to [inaudible] to the applicant who is going to be IDN applicant.

I think the question is does the risk that we are discussing here outweigh the cost or is it the other way around? What are we trying to solve here? Because the most cost we put onto the applicant, the higher the barrier, it’s higher for those applicants to enter to the market and is this something that we want to do?

So I think we need to be conscious of that balance, that tension between trying to mitigate risk in the future and what have you, but on the other hand we also want to promote the use and adoption of IDNs. And the applicant might not be aware of all these variants being calculated by an algorithm. But nevertheless, they are going to be used for all these evaluation processes which will add costs to their application. So just a few thoughts there just for consideration.

---

DONNA AUSTIN:

Sorry, I was having a nice chat to myself there. So, thanks for that, Dennis. And I note that Jennifer is suggesting that we need to do a risk assessment here as well. And I think now that we've got a little bit more information to help us work through whether the risk of misconnection and denial of service are actually at a level that it warrants the hybrid model or whether that risk can be contained maybe in [little too] because we do have some data that Pitinan and Sarmad has suggested which suggests that for [inaudible] strings, it could be ... There's a lot of review that needs to be done, so if we took that to the 80 that applied in 2012, one can only assume that those comparisons are going to be more.

The other thing I am aware of is that I don't know ... I think it was only one string similarity panel last time and I don't know what kind of script or language expertise that panel had, but I would think that, given the ... It doesn't matter whether it's the hybrid model or whether it's the level two option that we move forward with, I think the string similarity panel probably will need additional expertise to account for the fact that allocatable and blocked variants may be part of the review.

So there's a few layers to this that adds to the potential complication and whether that is worth the added value or not. So they're the things that I think we need to work through and we'll need to ... I think it may take us a little bit of time to set that up. But if folks ... Are we all on the same page to think that this is where we need to think about that risk assessment now that we had this additional information?



---

The other thing that I've been thinking about is when we put the initial report out for public comment, maybe there's a way to identify ... I don't know that we would, as a group, think that the level one option is where we want to go with the variants but I think probably something between two and a hybrid model is where we want to get to. So maybe we put those options out in the initial report but it has to be pretty detailed about—I don't want to use pros and cons but that's all I've got at the moment. But the pros and cons for either option and see what feedback we get back.

So there's a couple of ways we can do this but I think this is our biggest hurdle is overcoming this string similarity review and what's the best path forward, from a process perspective, from an applicant perspective and from a risk perspective. So that security technical piece.

Okay. So it looks like we have agreement on doing the risk assessment and that may take us a bit of time to set up, but I appreciate that it's something we're going to have to do pretty quickly because this is getting in the way of us being able to do a lot of the other work.

Ariel, was there anything else we were going to discuss today?

ARIEL LIANG: This is it.

DONNA AUSTIN: This is it?

ARIEL LIANG:                   Yeah.

DONNA AUSTIN:               Okay. So a lot to take in. If folks want to share their thoughts on the list once you've had the opportunity to go back to your groups and have a bit more discussion about this, please share it on the list. I think moving forward it would be really good to use the email list a little bit more for discussion purposes, given that we can relax and so we've got four months until we need to get the initial report out but that time is going to go really quickly. I think we need to use the email list.

Alrighty. I don't want to keep any folks any longer than need be, so I think ... Anyone else have anything they wanted to add, any questions about moving forward or what the plan is? This is an opportunity. I'm not seeing any hands, so thanks everybody.

So Michael has asked about extending a meeting to two hours. That will be kind of on a case-by-case basis, but a question for ... And actually that's something that we might as well discuss now. I have flagged with folks that I'm moving back to Australia and that will happen—I'm actually leaving LA on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December. So our first meeting in January I will be back in Australia and we talked about the possibility of moving the time of this meeting. What I would like to do is just start it 30 minutes earlier, if that's okay with folks.

And to Michael's point about extending to two hours, potentially what we could do, if people are able to move this meeting 30

---

minutes earlier on their calendar, then maybe we keep the end time the same. Would that be UTC 13:00 to 15:00? Then we can keep that two-hour block in the schedule. But on the understanding that we would use 90 minutes of it, and if we think we need two hours, we would flag that ahead of the meeting. Is that one way to go about this?

Thanks, Nigel, on rotating. It was something we looked at, but unfortunately the spread of time between the leadership team ... So, Justine and I, and in particular Ariel and Steve in the US, it becomes really difficult if we try to look for another spot. So we would ... If we manage to get Ariel, Steve, Justine, and I on a call, we would probably lose most of folks in Europe and that's not something we want to do. So the only thing that we're proposing at the moment is 30 minutes earlier.

Devan, can you just remind me, that would be UTC 13:00 to 15:00, is that current?

DEVAN REED: Yes, that's correct.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. So we'll put that on the list and that will be captured in Emily's notes, but that's the plan at the moment. We would intend to use 90 minutes of that, but if we felt that we needed the two hours, then we would extend it for the 30 minutes.

---

Okay. So it looks like the 30 minutes earlier is going to work for most folks. I think we'll just say that that's the plan as of January 2023.

Alrighty. I think that's all for this week. Ariel, do we know—the leadership team will have a call later today, but Ariel, do we have any idea of what next week might bring?

ARIEL LIANG:

I just [inaudible] brainstorm, and if we could do some really quick work of setting up the risk analysis model, it would be ideal, but we have to discuss that internally how to set up that model. I don't know whether next week we could work on that yet, but we do have some remaining charter questions in the first box that we showed here. For example, there are some catchall questions under E7 maybe the group can look at again or we can set up some preliminary discussion for the string contention resolution since we already sort of touched on that today.

So, if we don't have the risk analysis model ready, then potentially E4 and/or E7. That's my preliminary thinking.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. That sounds good, Ariel. I agree. I don't think we're going to be in a position to have the risk assessment discussion next week, but hopefully we'll have it ready for the week after, which would be our last meeting of the year I guess.

Okay. Also, I don't know what other expertise this group has, but if anybody has any experience with risk assessment and have any

---

thoughts about how we could go about doing the risk analysis, then please feel free to share that on the list. It would be really helpful for the leadership thinking about how to go about this. So if you have any thoughts, please share them on the list and we can take that into account when we're developing the session for when we have it in a couple of weeks' time.

Alrighty. So, with that, I think we're good to end the recording. So, thanks, everybody. We will see you next week.

DEVAN REED:

Thank you, everyone, for joining. Once again this meeting is adjourned. I'll end the recording and disconnect all remaining lines. Have a great rest of your day.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**