

Dear fellow GNSO Councillors,

I am deeply honoured by the nominations from the NCPH and CPH to serve as GNSO Council Chair and would like to thank both groups for their nominations. Serving on Council has been a truly rewarding experience during the last three years, with the whole team working collaboratively and treating each other with genuine respect and friendship, regardless of our SG and C backgrounds.

My Background

My involvement in the domain name industry goes back over a decade. Prior to joining Com Laude as Head of Legal Policy in 2014, I was Head of Brand Protection at BBC Worldwide. In that former role, I was responsible for the management of BBC Worldwide's domain portfolio, which included supporting the application for .BBC in 2012.

Since 2014, I have participated in a number of PDPs, including the Rights Protection Mechanisms (RPMs) Phase 1 PDP and the Subsequent Procedures for New gTLDs (SubPro) PDP. I have also participated in and chaired the IRP IOT – Independent Review Process Implementation Oversight Team, seeking to update the rules for the IRP after the IANA Transition. Before joining Council as a representative of the IPC, I served as the IPC Secretary between 2018 and 2022, where I contributed to ICANN meeting planning, supporting outreach and engagement and overseeing membership. I have also participated as a CSG representative to ICANN's Planning and Prioritization effort.

Since joining Council at the 2022 AGM, I have participated in a number of Small Teams, including on DNS Abuse, Board Readiness, SubPro Pending Recommendations and RPMs Phase 2 Next Steps. I have also served as Council Liaison to the RPMs Implementation Review Team (IRT) and the SubPro IRT (co-liaison). I was a member of the CCOICI, and I have regularly contributed to the GNSO responses to GAC Communiqués.

Role of Council and the Leadership Team

During my time on Council, I have been fortunate to experience cohesive leadership teams that fully utilise the skills of the Vice Chairs to support the Chair. In addition to sharing the workload and allowing for more robust decision making, we have seen the additional benefit with Nacho and Tomslin being able to step in to take over from Greg. I would be remiss not to also take the opportunity to thank Nacho and Tomslin for leading us in the last few months. If elected as Chair, I intend to continue this approach. I will ensure that my Vice Chairs are kept fully informed and involved and would expect us to operate as a leadership team.

The role of leadership team is not to be the only mouthpiece for the GNSO to the rest of the community, however, but rather to manage our interactions and ensure that the best-placed person takes the lead. This means continuing to ensure that we field the right Councillors when speaking with other SO/ACs and the Board by ensuring that relevant topic leads are included in planning and are responsible for leading on agenda items.

We seem likely to have a heavy workload over the coming year, and I would like to use my term to help encourage and empower all Councillors, including the incoming members, to dive in and take up the leadership opportunity by volunteering to lead small teams and drafting efforts. The best way to learn

the role is by doing. Further, more experienced Councillors have the opportunity to develop their own skills by supporting newer Councillors stepping up.

I have been reflecting on the role of Council a fair bit recently, as a result of issues which have come up. Firstly as a result of the work of the Board Readiness Group, which has made some really interesting findings and recommendations. We still need to have a full presentation and decide whether to adopt this report, but I was really struck by the feedback from one of the PDPs that requests to Council for assistance went unanswered – possibly due to those requests not being perceived as such, or being lost amongst various other information being conveyed at the same time. I'd like to look at the cadence and content of reporting from the Liaisons to PDPs and IRTs to ensure not only that the whole Council remains informed and that we're better able to provide assistance when the PDP needs it, but also to provide a solid foundation for handovers between Liaisons.

Secondly, the discussion that we are currently having on the IGO/INGO protections has raised questions about what exactly is Council's role, on which reasonable Council members have differed. These questions have included

- When and how far should Council step in when asked to provide input
- Whether our written procedures reflect and cover the issues that we encounter, and
- Whether or not there are somewhat inconsistent instructions in different procedural documents.

Our upcoming Strategic Planning Session in January could be a good opportunity to explore these questions further.

Upcoming Work

Aside from these more "internal" issues, once again the GNSO Council has a busy workload for the upcoming year filled with issues that inspire strong opinions in people: PPSAI, DNS Abuse, Accuracy, and the future of ICANN Reviews. I hope to maintain the momentum the current Council has on pushing forward with these issues. In particular, chartering and initiating a PDP(s) on DNS Abuse and setting the privacy and proxy work on a clear path forward are key focuses identified by this Council, and are at a crucial point at this AGM.

While the GNSO is not the only chartering organisation for the Review of Reviews, that does not make the work any less important to the GNSO. I hope to facilitate the GNSO's contributions to this work, by making sure we receive regular updates from our GNSO participants and stand ready to contribute to their work.

Thank you once again for the nominations, and I hope to serve you as Chair for the next year. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions for me.

Susan Payne

Councillor for the IPC

Country of Residence: United Kingdom