

10 April 2009

Via email to: new-constituency@icann.org

ICANN Board of Directors
Peter Dengate Thrush, Chair
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330
Marina Del Rey, California 90292

Re: Consumers Constituency Petition and Charter

Dear Chairman Dengate Thrush and the ICANN Board:

Pursuant to the processes established by the ICANN Staff, please accept the attached Petition and Charter for the Consumers Constituency to join the Non-Commercial Stakeholders Group (NCSG). As the original Notice of Intent to Form (NOIF) the Consumers Constituency explains:

The intended purpose of the Consumers Constituency is to serve as the conduit for consumer interests as they relate to the safety and stability of the Internet at the juncture where they fall into the remit of ICANN. The major areas of consumer interest related to the Internet are issues such as fraud, spam, phishing, and identity theft; network neutrality, privacy and free speech are also, of course, issues of major consumer concern but are already addressed by other ICANN participants. While “cybercrime” issues do not directly fall within ICANN’s remit, none of this activity is possible without using the DNS for abusive and fraudulent activity. Thus, the focus of the Consumers Constituency will be to ensure that consumers’ safety, security and stability concerns regarding the DNS are adequately represented within ICANN policy development.

The Consumers Constituency fills a significant gap in the breadth of representation within the NCSG. The NOIF explains:

Mainstream consumer organizations are widely recognized as very important representatives of the public interest in areas of (amongst others) product safety and liability issues. In the development of many areas of public policy, it has become customary (and in some cases even obligatory) in many countries for governments to consult their national consumer representatives as a matter of routine with respect to certain classes of decision that is unique. The addition of a Consumer Constituency is a unique element that has not yet been adequately addressed in ICANN policy development. Thus, having a place in the GNSO for a discreet group that is very widely recognized for being one of the most legitimate representatives of consumer interests will contribute to increasing the legitimacy of ICANN’s policy development activities.

Participation of the Consumer Constituency within the GNSO will be clearly different from consumer participation within the At-Large network. At-Large is by its nature meant to represent individual Internet users as a whole. This means that all voices must

negotiate with each other, using a lingua franca and decision processes that are unique to ICANN and by their nature produce a blend of viewpoints.

To date, the NCUC has tended to focus on representing the perspectives and interests of those advocating free speech, often but not always from a US-centric perspective. The Consumers Constituency believes that there are important additional public interest concerns for consumers that the GNSO should hear, including DNS safety, security and stability concerns that have not been represented as much as they might. For example, many consumer organizations are particularly concerned with upholding RAA compliance requirements.

The perspective of mainstream consumer organizations on ICANN issues will add substantially to the ability of the GNSO to carry out its policy development.

The Consumers Constituency is committed to broad outreach and recruitment in addition to those who have already become involved. The NOIF explains:

Members will actively seek to expand the number and geographic reach of this constituency to ensure that all regions within ICANN are well-represented. One of the first actions the constituency will take is to approach consumer organizations that have previously indicated an interest in becoming active in contributing to the development of ICANN policy issues. These groups include Consumers International, the Consumer Federation of America, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and other groups affiliated with the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue.

On behalf of those who have expressed an interest in being involved in the Consumers Constituency, I request your acceptance of our petition and proposed charter.

Very truly yours,

Beau Brendler
Holly Raiche, Director, Consumers' Telecommunications Network (Australia)

Attachments:

Consumers Constituency Petition and Charter
Consumers Constituency Notice of Intent to Form (NOIF)