

**GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House session
TRANSCRIPTION
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Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you ever so much, Tony. Good morning/good afternoon/good evening everybody and welcome to the GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House session on the fourth of September, 2014. On the call today, we have James Bladel, Glenn McKnight, (Michelle Foking) and participants who remain on (unintelligible) at the moment. From start, we have Mary Wong, (Ben DeVuer), (Mariam Baccaci) and myself, Nathalie Peregrine.

I'd like to remind you all to please state your names before speaking for the purposes of the transcript. Thank you ever so much and over to you, James.

James Bladel: Oh, thank you, Nathalie. And welcome, everyone, to this GMSO Working Group Newcomer Open House Session. My names is James Bladel and my day job is I work for GoDaddy, which is a fairly well-known registrar. We're very active in the ICANN community and work very closely with ICANN, ICANN staff and other members of the community to develop policies and advocate for our customers.

And I think you'll see that there are a number of different slices of the community that participate as well. Also joining the group is Mary Wong. She

is - I'm probably going to mess up your title, Mary. What is - you are a Senior Policy Director/Consultants/Advisor.

Mary Wong: I can be any and all of the above but I'm a Senior Policy Director with ICANN. And my day job is to primarily support the GNSO and I've had the pleasure, therefore, working with James and many of our tireless community volunteers and council members like him. And in fact, I think we have some photos here of some of my colleagues. Our boss, if you like, is David Olive. And some of you may know and if you're at the IGS, he's running around there somewhere.

As I mentioned, I'm a senior policy director as is Marika Konings here who also happens to be the GNSO team leader. So you'll be seeing quite a lot of e-mails from her and others including (Glen) (unintelligible) who is the veteran of the GNSO secretariat. If there's one person that you need to know out of this whole roster that you see on the next couple of slides, James, I think you agree with me, it should well be (Glen).

James Bladel: Absolutely. But - well I would put you and Marika in that bucket as well but definitely, (Glen) is someone to - that you need to know.

Mary Wong: That's very kind and, you know, there I am. And we see on these slides that, you know, Nathalie has kindly put in where we're located. Some of us are actually in offices or engagement centers such as (Lars) who's an analyst in the Brussels office. Other folks like myself and Berry Cobb - our consultant and Nathalie, who you heard at the beginning of this call, we work remotely from home.

And so this is just so that you seem some of our faces. If you are in an ICANN meeting or an event and you see us, please say hi. We love the face-to-face contact. And if not, you know, you'll get a sense that this is a team that's about as globally spread out as many other community members. So...

James Bladel: And just to comment on that, the staff is really amazing. I mean, you'll hear a variety, I think, within the community both verbally and written. And, you know, there will be frequent questioning or even criticism of ICANN as an organization, but never directed at the policy staff. They are the folks that are really - are guides through a lot of this process. And without them, you know, I think we would all be a little bit lost.

So - and I do appreciate that they cover so many different time zones and languages as well.

Mary Wong: Thanks, James. And before I hand it back over to you to go through some of the, I guess, topics which would include a focus on the policy development process that we engage in in GNSO as well as the guidelines the working groups abide by. A reminder that obviously, since this session is really for you and we have a number of these. So whichever one that you attend, we want to make sure you have the opportunity to interact with us and the speaker and as well as to ask any questions that you might have.

In a former life, I was a university professor and I meant it and I still mean it when I say there are no silly questions. So that's why the agenda here is flexible. Before I hand it back over to you, James, as well, I'd just like to have Nathalie speak a little bit about, I guess, the use of Adobe Connect and similar tools in such light that we would use for our meetings and certainly if you participate in a working group, you would become very familiar with if you haven't already.

So, James, if you don't mind, I'd like Nathalie to take a minute or so.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, Mary. So this is Nathalie. I'd like to run you through a few tips to help you more comfortable using the Adobe Connect room. And if you just - you've all made it in here so well done. And the first piece, however, there might be worth some new few moments on is the login page.

And a lot of you have used the first and last name to log in so that's great. A few of you have gotten confused by the password welcome.

So when you do get e-mail invitations, the password welcome is only for purposes of the audio groups. So this means when you use a telephone to connect via the phone only, then the Operator will pick up the phone and you would provide the password welcome. To connect to the Adobe Connect room - so this conference room where we're at at the moment - all you need to do is to log in as a guest and put your first and last name in.

There is the option to log in as host. That's, however, only concerns staff so you don't need to worry about it. The important thing here regarding the login with first and last name is that we take attendance at all working group calls. This is why (unintelligible) and details are sent out weeks in advance so you can also provide apologies if you can't make it to a meeting. So once you do log into the meeting, (unintelligible) the last name, ensure that, you know, attendance to the meeting is correctly taken.

Still in the attendees pod - we call the little things pods and you'll be able to connect to - you might see that you have microphone icons under your name. This is because, if you can't dial in for various reasons, you could listen to the streaming as many as you are now by just switching on your laptop speakers. There is an inquiry takes part over the audio by using your laptop's microphone. So to do this, you look at the top of the toolbar.

There'll be a connect tune and there's a telephone icon there. If you hit the click on that telephone icon, you will have a set of instructions which you could accept - or you should accept in fact - without really reading what they are. I want to (unintelligible) this will take a couple of seconds. The telephone icon will turn into a microphone icon. Now if your laptop microphone is enabled, you can take part over these audio over voice-over IP.

If you do have issues doing that during a call, please don't hesitate to e-mail me. I want to schedule a few minutes of tests. It's normally very declarifying. If your microphone does work after having done this, please remember to click on the little white arrow there is to the right-hand side of the microphone. This will allow you to mute and unmute your microphone.

It's crucial during conference calls whether you connect with wireless phone or by Adobe Connect, but if you do have your audio enabled, that you mute yourself - you know, avoid all that background noise echoes or maybe embarrassing side conversations. The next thing that you might need to know is that once you have enabled the microphone or the voice-over IP, this doesn't mean that you can interfere in any working group even if there's a comment or question you need to ask.

There's certain protocol within I-10 working group meetings. That's the raise hand icon. You might see to the top of the Adobe Connect toolbar is the line (unintelligible) with his hand raised. The minute you want to intervene in a conference, you need to raise your hand. Now this does not give you the automatic light for speaking to the conference call. This simply shows the chair that you are put in a queue to ask a question or make a comment.

You must then wait for the chair to call you out by name, hence equaling the advantage of logging in correctly. And then you can ask your question. Once you finish asking your question, it's a good idea to click the same icon again and put your hand down. If your hand remains raised, the chair or the participants think you still need to comment. You'll hear an expression in many working group meetings where the chair calls out someone with their hand raised.

And that person would say oh, sorry that's an old hand. This means they forgot to bring their hand down. Also, regarding the chat pods, which I forgot to mention earlier, is that you may be aware that all these meetings are recorded. So we have an empty fee recording which are post- (unintelligible)

calendar. And I'll put the link in the chat next to your name. And we have transcripts of all the working group calls.

Equally, we save the Adobe Connect chat transcript. So it's very important to abide to certain rules and behavior there. However, if you do need to correspond with someone regarding technical issues or phone number business (unintelligible) if you need to dial out, you can always private message someone in the attendees. If, for instance, you have a technical issue they wanted to talk to me, you could highlight my name with your mouse.

So my name becomes blue and you have a drop-down menu with start private chat. Those private chats are not recorded. They remain completely private. But if there's any question you need to ask or a comment you want to make - that's always the staff with other participants - it's always a good idea to make it in the private chat, otherwise, the main chat whether this is everyone in (unintelligible) or would be the (unintelligible).

Another way of communicating in Adobe Connect room - and this one you might not know about - is by a emoticons. So if you click on the right-hand arrow on the same raise hand icon that we were talking about a few seconds ago, you have a drop-down menu with a green tick, a red cross, I think a hand clap and other. These can be used if you don't wish to write in the chat. So you simply wish to express agreement, you are very welcome to click the green tick any moment during the meeting.

And this shows the chair or whoever is talking - thanks Mary - she's doing it right now - that you express agreement. Alternatively, the red cross is to be used also. This can be used functionally whenever you feel like expressing agreement. It can also be used by some chairs for a quick poll. So, for instance, if you're in a working group which was arranging a meeting in the following week with their (unintelligible), the chair might ask are - is everyone okay for the Thursday date?

And you could be able to show your agreement like that rather than typing a lengthy sentence in the chat. And just to make sure that you're all keeping up with me and I haven't lost you already, could you please, then, use the drop-down menu of the icons indicate if you agree or think that this is going well or if you'd rather have some more information. Excellent. Thank you ever so much.

And Michele has raised a hand. Go ahead, Michele.

(Michele Neylon): Yes, I got confused. Can you give the instructions again about how to do the okay - the check mark? I couldn't figure out how to do it. I'm sorry.

Nathalie Peregrine: Sure. No problem at all. So you have the - in the hand raise icon that you have at the top of the toolbar you used just now, if you click on the right-hand arrow there...

Michele Neylon: I see it.

Nathalie Peregrine: ...underneath the raise hand option you have agree and disagree with a six.

Michele Neylone: I - yes, I saw it. I did it. Thank you.

Nathalie Peregrine: There you go. There you go; no problem at all. Thanks for your questions. And are there any other questions regarding the Adobe Connect room? If you do have questions, please feel free to write them in the chat or to private message me and I'll put the relevant links I was talking about in the chat right away. Thank you very much and back to you, Mary.

Mary Wong: Thank you, Nathalie and thank you everybody for joining us today. As I mentioned, we have James Bladel who is a council member on the GNSO council and a representative from the Registrar Stakeholder Group with us.

So this session is really for you to hear from a fellow community member. And as I mentioned earlier, feel free to stop him or me to ask any questions at all at any point in time during his presentation. With that, James, I'm going to turn it to you.

James Bladel: Thank you, Mary. And thanks, Nathalie, for the tour of Adobe Connect. I just want to mention that this is something that is used extensively within the ICANN. It is a very - I think, powerful and flexible tool for collaborative work both, you know, remotely for people who are maybe distributed throughout the globe and it also helps to organize what otherwise might be a disjointed or chaotic conversation. And many of you, I'm sure, are veterans of a number of conference calls that have perhaps lacked for some organization and structure. And I think Adobe Connect gives us that.

So let's just play with this tool for one second here. How many of you will plan to attend the next ICANN meeting in Los Angeles next month? If so, could you please check your green agree button so we can get an idea. And it looks like we have - not (Mariam) - but almost unanimous - okay - of folks. Thank you. So if we can clear those agree checkmarks, then my next question, using the same tool would be how many of you will Los Angeles be your first ICANN meeting?

You can click agree if that's true or you can click disagree if that's not true. We can get an idea of how many folks will be attending their first ICANN meeting in Los Angeles. Okay, Volker, I know that's not true. I saw you in London. Okay, great. Alright, looking forward to it and hopefully, you know, that will be an excellent experience and we can get you to hit the ground running a little bit by covering some of the materials this (unintelligible).

So as the - Mary and Nathalie mentioned - I'm - I am with the Registrar GoDaddy. I am a member of the Registrar Stakeholder Group and a counselor on the GNSO council for that stakeholder group. And I've been doing this now for approximately seven years and I can tell you that I am still

learning. There is so much going on. It seems like the amount of materials, issues and information just continues to grow. And so it's excellent to have, you know, the fast support that we have as well as the collaboration with colleagues from around the community to keep - just to keep up really and then also to hopefully make a positive difference.

So let's dive right into the materials. Here's the agenda. We're very flexible. I want to share some of the experiences that I have observed during my time working in ICANN and specifically in GNSO working group. I want to make sure we leave plenty of time for questions and give you some tips and guidance to help you navigate ICANN which can be maybe a little intimidating at first.

So here's where we're going to - here's what we're going to cover here. The - in addition to Q and A and specific questions, we want to cover the policy development process. You will hear the acronym PDP quite frequently and that usually means the public development process as a formal effort to make new policy - or I suppose revise existing policy within ICANN. You will hear the term consensus policy picket fence. We will cover what that means.

We'll talk a little bit about the working group guidelines. Working groups are the structure that ICANN uses to deliberate and examine and analyze issues and come up with the recommendations for policy. So that is the - that is the primary structure that accomplishes that task. We'll talk a little bit about the mechanics. I think Nathalie covered the Adobe Connect fairly well, but there are other tools available such as community wikis in the ICANN webpage.

And then we'll talk a little bit about some of the other sources of information and helpful materials that will help you find your way around ICANN. So let's dive right into the policy development process. I'm going to spend a lot of time on this slide so bear with me. But I believe it is important and we will refer back to it fairly frequently. So let's just - you know, let's make sure we give this the appropriate level of attention.

But this is a simplified flowchart of how an idea or an issue becomes ICANN policy. For those of you who, you know, maybe are familiar with the legislative process in the, you know, various countries or other governments. You know that there's a step-by-step process that has to be followed. And this is not completely removed from that in that there are certain milestones in the process - certain required elements in order for an issue to translate into a new policy. And it all starts with an issues report.

Issues reports may be raised by various stakeholder groups. It can be raised by groups outside of the GNSO -- for example, the board or the governments, the GAPP or the at-large. The issue report is typically generated by staff so ICANN staff will publish an issues report and that will be posted along with some questions or some preliminary conclusions, you know, that will be presented as part of the issues report and then that will be posted for public comment.

The various structures within ICANN as well as individuals and organizations from the general public will be invited to submit their comments on issues reports. And then those will be incorporated into a final issues report which is, you know, may or may not have been modified based on the comments received. The issues report then goes to the GNSO council - or I guess we would call it the chartering organization, generically - but in this case, the GNSO council.

And the GNSO council would, you know, put the - make a motion that the issues report should or should not proceed into becoming a PDP. There are various thresholds for - voting thresholds depending on the nature of the PDP and its origin. But generally, the PDP has to pass with support in both the contracted party's house and the non-contracted party's house. So that would be - contracted parties being registries and registrars and non-contracted parties being other stakeholder groups that do not directly have a contract with ICANN.

So presuming that that policy development process is approved and it is launched, then the first step is that ICANN staff will form a working group. They will be a call for volunteers. They will be a rough - there will be a - I want to say a rough chartering document that I could probably change as well. And that working group would self-organize around some staff members and the council liaisons.

The first thing that the working group would do is - you know, once it's completed some administrative tasks - would be to ask for stakeholder group statements or constituent the input on the specific issues of the PDP. And then this would essentially form the initial positions or - you know, in some cases could even include some questions about what sort of issues should be discussed or analyzed.

Perhaps, they could even include data if data - if it's a technical or a, you know, statistical problem that needs to be solved. So working group - one of the first major milestones is that the PDP working group will publish an initial report with some preliminary policy recommendations. And this will promote anywhere from, you know, a few months to perhaps even a year after the working group is launched - it really depending on the volume and complexity of the issue.

And this is also published public comment with the goal of checking in with the community to see how well the working group's efforts have tracked the problems or the issues or the topics that are identified as part of the PDP. And it also will allow us another opportunity for members of the general public that maybe don't follow ICANN on a continuous basis to weigh in on policy issues that will affect them.

Working group will analyze these public comments, will modify their report and recommendations perhaps based on the comments that were received. And then, finally, it will publish a final report. And this final report will include

some policy recommendations saying, you know, we think there should be new policy in this area or we think existing policy should be changed.

This final report is submitting to - is submitted to the GNSO council and the councils will then deliberate on the report. They will presumably package that into a motion to approve the - you know, some or all of the recommendations although most of them are offered as a collective set of recommendations because there are interdependencies presuming that the council - and based on their voting thresholds - approves the recommendations from the final report that is then submitted to the ICANN board.

The ICANN board may also put out a call for public comments particularly if it feels that some of the issues in there might affect parties or stakeholders that weren't included in the previous public comments. The board will vote and then presumably, if it's approved, they will turn it over to ICANN staff to implement the new policies specifically that would include a new language that would become part of the contract that govern registries and registrars and as well as the requirement advisories on how they might meet those requirements and obligation and dates that those will begin to go into enforcement.

So that's kind of a mouthful. I'm going to take a drink of water here and catch my breath. But generally, the whole process here from the request of an issues report until implementation can take - you know, it's not a rapid process. It should be noted that this is more on the time scale of, you know, anywhere from 8 months to 24 months to get through this entire process. But the key is to be thorough, to involve all affected stakeholders, and to give anyone with an interest in this multiple opportunities to participate or contribute their views. So I'm going to pause here for just a moment and see if anyone has any questions specific to this chart or staff wants to, you know, point out any of the areas where I got something wrong or maybe over-simplified some of these steps.

Mary Wong: James, this is Mary. And no, I don't have much to add at all because that was a very thorough but precise description. I've noticed that (Glen) is typing a question which I supposed could relate to what you just said.

James Bladel: Let's wait for (Glen) here and what is the success indicator of GNSO policies accepted by the board? I believe the success indicator - by that, (Glen), do you mean what is the indication that the board has approved the policy that was submitted by the GNSO council? Yes, well, you know, generally thinking, the board is required to vote on those recommendations. So they would have a motion before the board to accept the policy recommendation.

There - I believe they may have differing thresholds as well besides just the simple majority or super majority. And then the board will take a formal vote to approve those policies.

(Mary): James and (Glen), if I can add to that. This is Mary from staff. And you're right, James. There are voting thresholds. And particularly, we're talking about the policy development process - the PDP - recommendations that come out of this process that James has explained and you see through this chart that there is a lot of effort at various points along the way to seek community and public input.

In a PDP, when the vote of the board comes up, it's very difficult in the bylaws for the board to simply reject the GNSO's policy recommendations. And that's for one very simple reason which is that these policies are developed with a full community input feedback and (unintelligible) as James has mentioned. So in that sense, you know, the adoption rate, if you like, it's constrained by the bylaws due to the very inherent nature of ICANN policy-making.

The other thing I want to mention - go ahead, James.

James Bladel: Oh, just to...

(Mary): Oh, I was just going to say that...

James Bladel: ...address the percentage that (Glen) is asking for, I would say if it would be extraordinary for the board to reject something that would pass by the GNSO council, particularly if the GNSO council approved it with a super majority or even a unanimous vote because that is specifically mentioned in the bylaws that it requires a super majority of the board to overrule the GNSO council. And one other situation would be that, you know, it's important to remember that ICANN is not a government - non-governmental organization, it is a corporation.

And the board has a judiciary responsibility to ICANN, the non-profit California corporation. So if any policy were to come through this process that the board felt would present material harm to that corporation, then I believe it does also have a responsibility to reject that process. I don't know that that's ever happened, but, you know, I've only been around for about seven years. It might have happened previously in the past. So yes, I think that it would be extraordinary for the board to go against those policies.

What we're seeing now, there's particular issue where the board is receiving conflicting advice because there's another group (unintelligible) demonstrates the governance that provide advice to the board on various policy issues. And I think that that's - sometimes makes this not such a clean chart because the board is constrained in what its obligations are to that organization as well as what it can and cannot do under this policy process.

So I think that that's - that may be something that you may be hearing about, (Glen), but for right now in just the cleanest and most abstract sense, the board almost always approves the outcome of this process. Okay, I'm sorry, (Mary), I think you had something else to add.

(Mary): No, no. I am just going to add - not really pertinent to the point you've just discussed, James, but - and I'll put the link in in a minute. But one of the projects that the GNSO has started engaging in is to start to think about the sort of metrics or data that could be gathered and utilized to gauge the effectiveness of the policies that are developed and then implemented. Obviously, this is not just a case of counting how many months it took to get to from point A to point B for reasons, James, that you noted that's, you know, just not possible given the nature, breadth and complexity of this issues.

But there is an ongoing effort that if you're interested in these, I can certainly point you to that group. Thanks, James. And I guess you can move on.

James Bladel: Yes, thanks. Okay, so if there are no other questions, we will begin to move on to the next slide here. But just be kind of thinking about this process and all the different steps required. And I think the key takeaway here is that as this process - the issue takes shape, it's a bottom-up process starting with the working group moving to recommendations to the council and then moving to recommendations to the board.

And then it's staff that initiates the process by developing the issue reports. And staff is also the caboose at the end of the train here that actually implements the process into the contract. So there key involved at the beginning and at the end and, of course, every step in between. So let's move onto the next slide here and talk a little bit about some of the key elements or - you know, I think of them as milestones or required elements as part of a PDP working group.

First off, that all PDPs working groups are required to seek stakeholder feedback or input of the various constituent data stakeholder groups into their issues. It's a template form for this. Certainly the working group may feel that it's appropriate to modify that or tailor to those specific issues or their needs.

They have to ask for input, but the stakeholder groups unfortunately are not on the hook to provide input.

So sometimes these - this is a - doesn't receive a full or comprehensive response from around the community and maybe only those stakeholders that have a very poignant interest in the issue. Other stakeholder groups, supporting organizations and advisory committees - sometimes, you'll hear the term SOACs. Those are supporting organizations and advisory committees like the country code supporting organization, the at-large advisory committee, the government advisory committee or the S SAC -- the security and stability advisory committee.

All these other groups that are outside of the GNSO may also be consulted if, you know, it's - they need to explicitly ask for their opinions or to weigh in on some of these issues that may touch on their specific areas of expertise. The initial report and receipt of public comments is also a required step. Working groups are not - you know, in the interest of expediency, working groups are not permitted to just kind of get to the end and say well, we know what we want the answer to be - here it is. It has to be developed and published as part of an ongoing consultative effort that receives feedback from the general community.

And those comments should be thoroughly reviewed and incorporated into the initial report so that the final report reflects the initial report as well as the comments received. And sometimes those comments can be very, very extensive. You could receive hundreds or thousands of comments from groups and individuals that are well-known within ICANN or even just the general public. And you know, it - once in a while, an issue will - you know, maybe the term is go viral or it'll just touch on the nerve outside of the ICANN community.

It'll get picked up by the mainstream press for example and ICANN will find itself, you know, on the receiving end of tens of thousands of comments, you

know, or something that's particularly, you know, a lightning rod for some issue on the internet. And I don't envy staff when that happens but it does occasionally occur. And then, the final report with the recommendations, it also - a required element of the PDP.

So moving on here, here's some links that will substantiate - and perhaps even, you know, run counter to some of the statements that I've made here. But the bylaws which the step is the PDP process, the PDP manual, and an overview of the PDP process. And Mary and Nathalie, I believe these slides are available at all times, right.

Woman: Yes, they are posted and as will be the recording from today later on.

James Bladel: Fantastic, thanks. Okay, now moving on to a couple of other terms that you'll hear -- consensus policy and the picket fence. Consensus policy is - well, generally, ICANN registries and registrars have signed very interesting contracts with ICANN that essentially says that these contracts are binding obligations but that they can change and that the registrar or registry agrees to those changes in advance so long as they are of upper - you know, created under the authority of this consensus policy development process.

So generally, consensus policy is a new or an amendment or an addendum to that contract that is binding on ICANN's contracted parties - typically registries and registrars. So, for example, we have as a registrar signed the registrar (unintelligible) agreement which is the RAA. Now, there are various other policies attached that they're not in the RAA but they're equally binding upon us like the inter-registrar transfer policy - the IRTP.

In this case, a PDP would change or alter or add to the inter-registrar transfer policy would have a affect as if it were in our contracts itself. So here's some background here which is that in this original agreement of ICANN registries and registrars agree to comply in advance (unintelligible) policies. And there are a couple of exceptions here where that would not necessarily apply.

I'll leave you to read that but I think it generally just echoes my previous statement. And then there's this term that you will hear called the picket fence. And the picket fence is the establishment that some topics are explicitly noted to be within ICANN's per-view or agreement to conduct policy-development activities - some, presumably and anything that is not within the picket fence is sort of outside the bounds of ICANN policy.

And I think that this is not - I'm going to speak here - Mary, you're probably going to cringe - but this is not as black and white, perhaps, as some might believe it to be or wish it to be. But it is, I think, a general guideline that certain topics do or do not fall within ICANN authority to make new policy. Now, it is worth noting, however, that just because something is outside the picket fence doesn't mean that ICANN can't conduct any activities at all.

But it can certainly work within the community to develop non-binding industry best practices or coordinated industry efforts to address an issue that might admittedly or acknowledge to be outside the picket fence. Okay, and here's some further reading on consensus policy. Let's pause here for a second. Any questions?

I haven't been keeping up with the chat, but I see mainly it's Mary providing some helpful links and background information so I'll just kind of keep going unless someone stops me. So here are the GNSO working group guidelines. The goal, of course, and you know, we're all veterans of meetings and teleconferences of - regardless of your industry or organization so we know how these things can go off of the rails if they're not closely managed or if they don't have, let's say, a shared cultural expectation for how those groups will operate.

And with working groups - particularly ICANN working groups where individuals and organizations participating have very different views (unintelligible). You know, it's important to keep everyone pulling in the same

direction so that the work can continue, you know, in a productive fashion. So here are the main elements of the working group and these are sometimes referred to as just sort of the administrative approaches.

So the group will, as itself, organizing will usually coalesce around a member of staff and a member of the GNSO council who is identified as the council liaison. And for the first meeting, that - those two individuals will likely organize the group, introduce the topics and then begin the process of selecting the leadership of that group which usually - and we've seen a lot of innovation in this area - but usually consist of a chair or co-chairs and perhaps a vice-chair or other co-chairs.

And - with the goal of some degree of diversity of interests and stakeholder affiliation as well as, perhaps even, you know, some geographic or language diversity as well. The working group members will also establish their different roles, responsibilities. Some may be a task to, for example, produce some, you know, technical data or gather statistics or to investigate a specific sub-topic. And that moves to the next bullet which is the use of sub-teams.

If there's a particularly - complex issue that is a functional component of the working group, the chair or the leadership might decide to establish a sub-team to go off on a separate inter-sessional effort to work on that issue and come back to the larger working group with some recommendation. This could be - you know, once again, it could be investigating something that has a technical or a rather complex issue that needs further specific analysis.

Subject matter experts, for example, might also be called in if the issue is something that requires some specific expertise and they can present to the working group. Like, for example, a number of working groups that I participate on frequently call on ICANN compliance to make a presentation on how this issue is affecting registrants or their complaints that they're receiving from the general public.

Participation and representativeness is a goal for the working group. You'll see that some members are very active participants; some are perhaps more joining the working group to monitor the mailing list and to just kind of be more on a reserve. That's really - I don't know that there are any hard fast rules over either one. But we also try to strive for representativeness and each of the various segments of the community and stakeholders and constituencies represented on the working group, particularly those that may have a direct stake in the outcome.

There's a desire to keep to the integrity of the overall process. Certainly, behavior has to be - and decorum has to be observed to some extent. I think that people can be friendly and not necessarily, you know - what's the word I'm looking for, Mary - not necessarily overly-formal. But things should not devolve to the point where - to just become chaotic or particularly an issue that might be controversial.

Certainly don't want to allow the group to, for example, get into any kind of - you know - we don't want debates to get so heated, let's say, that they boil over. I'll just leave it at that. There is a standard methodology for making decisions. Usually this falls to the chair and/or vice-chairs to determine the level of consensus on the group to decide which issues or which proposals have broad support and perhaps which ones do not enjoy broad support.

There is an appeals process. If someone believes, for example, that the chair has made the wrong decision or made a wrong determination for the level of support. And then, you know, just a couple of other points here about the communication collaboration tools and which - you know, Adobe Connect as well as the wiki and the output which usually results in a final report with some policy recommendations. But that's - I mean, I'm running through this stuff fairly quickly and it is a very complex process.

But I think the general thing is here is that this - the groups are all working towards a shared goal but with perhaps a different ideas of how to get there

and what the end result looks like. And so it's important to maintain a productive and professional and structured approach. And I think the first thing that goes out the window when you start putting this stuff together is any kind of time frame. So you'll often hear, you know, the lamentations about how slowly ICANN works.

But I think it's because it is true to the integrity or the legitimacy of the output and less so the timeline. So moving here, we're talking about the standard methodology for decision-making. And I covered most of this already but determining the level of support and level of consensus is the responsibility of the chair. There are a varying levels of consensus there on the last bullet point - full consensus, strong support but significant opposition, divergence, minority viewpoints.

All of those would be attached to a recommendation. Personally, in working groups that I've chaired or participated, I don't believe anything that, you know, comes through a working group PDP with divergence has much hope of becoming a policy. So it's important to continue working to bridge those differences on the working group until you can reach some degree of consensus and, you know, as universal of support as possible.

Here are some useful links for further reading. And that brings us to the last section -- tips and tricks. Here's, you know, some well-known webpages that will help you navigate. I would say that the gns0.icann.org is an excellent page that's updated frequently. What my favorite link that's not shown on here - maybe it's on a subsequent slide - is the calendar. There's a master calendar that shows all the events, working group calls, and, say, that are coming up in the future but also references the transcripts and recordings of events and meetings that have taken place in the past.

So I think it's a good starting point as well. There's a link here for the GNSO council procedures and GNSO 101 and then a list of current GNSO projects

with their outstanding action items. Yes, Mary, can you - do we have a link to the calendar? I don't know if it's on the next slide here. I guess not.

Mary Wong: James, this is Mary.

James Bladel: Yes.

Mary Wong: I don't think so. But I believe that Nathalie may have put one in the chat early on in possibly response to an early question. I'll check and if she hasn't, I'll put that in the chat here.

James Bladel: Okay, great. Oh, and there it is. Now, everybody's going to click on that and skip the last slide. So - but that calendar I think is an incredibly useful tool. It's something that I recommend to all newcomers. Just go ahead and bookmark that now because you'll be - you'll find yourself coming back to it frequently. Acronym Helper, you know, or what we love and we refer to as the ICANN Decoder Ring - there's an official one at the GNSO homepage to help folks unpack the more commonly used acronyms and abbreviations.

I'd say that there are some others as well that are produced by third-parties and other community organizations that are useful as well. You just have to Google and they're out there and they're great. There are wikis located at this community link here. And those are usually repositories, not only for meeting notes and agendas but also other supporting materials like the composition and membership of various working groups and efforts.

The working documents such as the charter for a working group as well as some of the documents that may be working on and, of course, some various drafts of its initial and final reports. If you can, you know, make friends with an experienced working group member, you'll find that they will be glad to share their knowledge and expertise with newcomers because, you know, we're always welcoming the help because they're just so few of, you know, participants that are actually working on the policy issues.

And so many folks from the ICANN meeting perhaps for business opportunities and not necessarily the roll up their sleeves and get into the working groups. So when someone comes in and says I want to get involved and I want to participate, I think that they'll find that they're usually a very - a warmly reception for those types of inquiries. And of course, the policy staff that was introduced at the beginning of the slide that not only do they know everything as they are everywhere and they can help anyone.

So it's just I can't emphasize enough how lost we would all be without those teams. So that brings me to the last bit of the slide. And if I'm not mistaken, do we have four minutes or do we have 34 minutes?

Mary Wong: I think you have four minutes, but if people want to stay on, there's no reason they can't.

James Bladel: Well, let's leave it there and let's - I know we picked up some questions as we went along. But do we have any questions on any of the information we've covered thus far? I know it's a lot to take in but I think, you know, keeping a copy of this slide deck and referring to it as you go along or keeping it bookmarked for Los Angeles I think will help you hit the ground running.
Mary.

(Mary): Hi and thanks for seeing my raised hand, James. While folks are thinking about possible questions - and I apologize if you covered it in your comments - but I don't think it was actually called out in any of the slides - being one of the more recent innovations in the working groups. And we're always looking to improve, you know, the outcomes of the working groups as well as maximize people's time and contribution is, you know, the possibility of joining a working group as an observer as opposed to a fully-fledged member.

And we thought that this might be one way where by newcomers especially could start to feel comfortable within the community, get used to the dynamics of particular groups, or, you know, get immersed in the issues. And if one were to join a working group as an observer, you'd follow all the mailing list and the recordings; you just wouldn't participate in the meetings. But the point would be that at any point in time, certainly, you can drop out. But at any point in time, you can, certainly, alter/change your status to a participating member.

So I thought I would highlight that for folks to know.

James Bladel: Thanks, (Mary). That's an excellent point and certainly, I think there are varying levels of participations open to newcomers. Two other items that might also be attractive to newcomers or people who are just getting their feet wet in this area: sometimes you will see a call for volunteers for something that is not a PDP but maybe a drafting chain that is looking at an issue or seeking help to research, you know, a topic that might later become a PDP.

So it's sort of a preliminary step that might be a less formal way of getting engaged. And another step is sort of the new animal that's come onto the team in the last year to 18 months is something called an implementation review team. So after PDPs have been approved, staff will work with some members of the community to actually draw up the rules around the recommendations. I think that's helpful because you've got the - recommendations are done, completed, approved. You know, they've got the board's seal of approval on them.

The only catch is that those implementation review teams typically like to include primarily - or at least focus on people who participated in the previous PDP. But I'm certain that if someone were to show up to one of those implementation review teams that, you know, I want to help; I want to pitch in. You know, at a minimum, they would be welcome to observe the process.

So, (Mary), those are two other areas that newcomers could get involved.

James Bladel: I still don't see any questions or hands. So I don't have anything else to add.

Mary Wong: James, this is Mary. And folks, as James mentioned at the beginning, feel free to contact any of us if you have questions that you think of after today. As James said, you know, keeping the slide deck could be helpful as you find your way around. James, I was thinking of putting Volker on the spot, but I guess we've hit five o'clock. So unless Volker has anything to add to what we're saying, maybe we could just wrap it up if you have any concluding remarks.

James Bladel: I'm fine. I'm good. I would say not to put Volker on the spot. It's very late where he is and I know yesterday was his birthday. So he may be a little hung-over or something like that from all the festivities. Or maybe he's already gone to sleep and just forgot to log out of the...

Mary Wong: Well, he's still active on the Adobe so past his late person but - and he's just notified me that he doesn't have his microphone connected. So I think he's here for moral support - to provide moral support...

James Bladel: Okay.

Mary Wong: ...to you, James, and to us staff. Thank you very much, Volker. That's very sweet. And so if there's nothing else, James, I guess we can bring this webinar to a close noting that Nathalie has pointed out we will be posting the recording and the slides. And she's listed the secretariat's e-mail address in the chat as well. So I think all that remains for us to do and certainly for me to do is to thank everyone for taking the time to come to this webinar and particularly to thank James for taking time out of your schedule to do this for the newer members of our community.

And, of course, thanks, Volker, for your moral support. And I guess we will look forward to seeing everybody in LA if you're coming and if not, then online in a working group or any of the other events online or face-to-face. Thank you, James; thank you everybody.

James Bladel: Thanks. Bye-bye.

Woman: Bye. Thanks.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, Tony. You may now stop the recordings. Have a good day. Bye-bye.

END