ICANN Transcription
IDNs EPDP
Thursday, 06 January 2022 at 13:30 UTC

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DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the IDNs EPDP call taking place on Thursday, the 6th of January 2022 at 13:30 UTC. In the interest of time, there will be no roll call. Attendance will be taken by the Zoom Room. If you are only on the telephone, could you please let yourself be known now?

We do have apologies from Maxim Alzoba. All members and participants will be 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. 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 e-mail the GNSO secretariat.

All documentation and information can be found on the IDNs EPDP wiki space. Recordings will be posted on the public wiki space shortly after the end of the call. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript.

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As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multistakeholder process are to comply with the Expected Standards of Behavior. Thank you. Over to our chair, Donna Austin. Please begin.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thank you, Devan. Welcome, everybody, to our first call for 2022. I hope everyone enjoyed some rest and relaxation over the last couple of weeks and ready to get back into our work here. Can Jeff get promoted, please? There's actually a few attendees that are being moved across, [Jeff, so shortly, you're in that queue.] I'll make sure before we start substantive discussion that we have everyone across.

So just a few welcome and updates. We have been trying to have SSAC—it seems like my audio might be fading in and out. So hopefully I'll try to fix that by speaking up a little bit. We have been successful in organizing to have SSAC or members of SSAC join us on our next call. So that will be the call a week from today. Emily is going to take us through some of the input that the SSAC has provided to us. What I'd really like to ask this group, if there are any specific questions that you have for members that will be attending the call next week based on your reading of the various SSAC reports or the early input that SSAC provided then, could you please provide that to the list? We do have an opportunity here to discuss for a few minutes any questions or issues that you might like to go through with the SSAC during the call next week. But I'm just going to hand it over to Emily now just to refresh our memory on some of the points that were raised in the SSAC early input. I have been asked to remind folks that this is not an engagement with the SSAC proper, it is just an engagement that

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we will have with representatives from the SSAC that have been involved in IDN-related discussions. And I think based on what Ariel just told me is that we have four members of SSAC at a minimum that will be joining the call next week. So, Emily, could I just hand it over to you for a couple of minutes?

EMILY BARABAS: Hi, Donna. Sure. Thanks, everyone. This is Emily from staff. I do apologize I just shared the wrong link, but here it is. Ariel is one step ahead of me. Thanks, Ariel.

So this is the SSAC document that hopefully is not new to anyone. We went through some of the comments on the topic A charter questions previously on the call. Actually, the focus a lot of these comments are on topic A. So rather than going through the text of every single comment, I think what I'll do is just summarize based on the deliberations. So far what we understand from the staff side as the items that will likely be of interest for folks to discuss with the SSAC next week. I won't go in order of the charter questions. I'll start with the stuff that seems the most important.

We know for sure that charter question a5 is going to be a focus based on the previous conversations of this group. So as a reminder, a5 is the question that asks about whether there should be a ceiling value or other mechanism to ensure that the number of delegated TLD variant labels remain small. And that charter question references SAC060 in which the SSAC says that ICANN should ensure that the number of strings that are activated are as the small possible. So in discussing this charter question, the group agreed that it would be helpful to have additional input from

SSAC members about the rationale for its advice on this topic in SAC060.

So that is the first large item. I don't know if it makes sense, Donna, for me to just run through the items we have on the list or to pause and have people highlight any items specifically related to that charter question that they might want to identify.

DONNA AUSTIN: I think do the run through, Emily. If folks want to have input to something that Emily is discussing at the time, just raise your hand. We can discuss it then. But continue to run through, Emily. Thanks.

EMILY BARABAS: Sounds good. We haven't discussed this topic yet. But one of the sort of focal points of the initial part of the comment was that currently there is no DNS protocol solution that enforces equivalence or the same behavior of variants in the DNS and notes that policymakers need to understand this crucial limitation. So this is an item that we're going to be discussing a little bit later in the context of charter question c4a. But staff notes that it may be useful to invite the SSAC if they would like to do so to elaborate any further on this point because it is a core element of their comment.

Then there were a few items based on our previous conversations that are more clarifications, I think. So starting with charter question a1, as a reminder, a1 is the question that asks about using the RZ-LGR as the sole source to calculate the variant

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labels and disposition values. SSAC responded with a reference to SAC060 which states the root zone must use one and only one set of rules for the Root LGR procedure. I believe this was a question from Dennis. That was also sort of looking in the context of the response from SSAC members to charter question a4, but he was saying that it might be helpful to have some clarification around what the Root LGR procedure is meant to mean specifically in the context of this advice. So I'll actually mention the a4 element as well.

As you may recall, a4 asks in the scenario where an existing RO wants to apply for a variant TLD label whose script is not yet supported by the applicable version of the RZ-LGR, should it be possible for them to do so in which the application will be processed up to but not including contracting? So if you'll recall in our deliberations, the working group noted that since all existing gTLDs are using scripts that are already in the RZ-LGR or will soon be integrated, it may not be necessary to answer this question, although we'll be revisiting. But the comment from SSAC on this question stated that to support the deployment of IDNs as long as the code points are allowed by IDNA, there is no reason to prohibit the application. However, any variant should not be allowed until the script is integrated into the LGR.

I think Dennis's comment here was that it seems like there might be a potential conflict between the point on a1 and the point on a4. But sort of it seems to suggest that perhaps if the label is compliant with the IDNA, it should be processed. But then maybe there's a scenario where it's invalid for the RZ-LGR but valid by IDNA standards. So I think one question maybe—this is for

Dennis to speak to—is given that the group is potentially seeing this as a moot question charter question a4, is it still necessary to explore this particular scenario in relation to the SSAC feedback? So that's when we'd love input on either now or when I'm done talking, and I'll wait for your hand. Oh, Dennis, please.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Thank you. So you gave me a [PS] on my comment here. So I just want to clarify or elaborate a little bit more on my comment on SSAC's response on a4, which goes hand in hand with a1 right there, the one on sole source to or authoritative source to validate TLD labels. But in a4, they kind of suggest—this is maybe just me but I mean I'm open to be corrected here—I'm making a gross interpretation on this response, but it sounds like they are open, they suggest a dual validation method, if you will, where the application as long as it's IDNA protocol valid, then it should be allowed to or there should not be a reason to prohibit the application, [but variants work] because then the Root Zone LGR will not be able to calculate the variant because certain code points are not going to be included in the Root Zone LGR, then it cannot calculate it. I think a4 is in the context of the Root Zone LGR not having the script but it opens up a loophole. The way I see it, the way I interpret SSAC's response here is that not only would allow path for scripts not supported in Root Zone LGR but also single code points not supported in the LGR so long they are IDNA 2008 compliant. So if that's what they're suggesting, then I see a conflict or it's not consistent with having Root Zone LGR being the sole source to validate the TLDs, and that's why I don't

see how these two are [coherent] with one another. Hopefully that makes sense to you. Thank you.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks, Dennis. Maybe I can be so bold as to ask if it might be possible for you to sort of frame the question in a way that we can present it on the call or if Donna prefers that you just speak to it, we can do that too, but it might be nice if we are able to send questions I had just so that they have time to prepare. So I want to make sure that we get the question as correct as possible and complete as possible. So if you're up for that, Dennis, we'd love to work with you on that.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Sure. Absolutely.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks. So if there's nothing else on that one, we'll go into the last item that I think we discussed potentially getting clarification on which was around charter question a2. That one focused on if a self-identified variant TLD label by a former TLD applicant is found to be not consistent with the calculation of the RZ-LGR but it's been used to a certain extent, how should such labels be addressed in order to conform to the LGR procedure and RZ-LGR calculations. Just as a reminder on where we landed on this one, the EPDP team conducted an analysis of the self-identified variant TLD labels from former gTLD applicants and found that it probably wasn't necessary to address such a scenario because of the results of that analysis.

The SSAC provided input on this charter question suggesting that an analysis be done or delegated variant labels in ccTLDs against the most current version of the LGR which it's not immediately clear what the applicability of that would be to this analysis. So I think the group was potentially seeking clarification on whether they potentially meant synchronized TLDs or whether they intended to say self-identified variant TLD labels by the former gTLD applicants. So noting that likely this is still a question that we don't need to answer from the charter and maybe helpful just to make sure we understand the input that SSAC has provided. Those are I think all of the items that we have captured from previous conversations. But as Donna said, this is an open list and folks can suggest more. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Sorry, Emily. I lost track of things there. So can I assume that that is your recap that's been done?

EMILY BARABAS: Correct. Thanks, Donna.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. I'm sorry, Emily. Yeah. Okay. It will be great if folks have questions that they would like to see, discuss with the SSAC, could you please provide those to the list probably by end of day Monday, depending on where you may live, so that we can pass those along to the SSAC members that will be attending. I'm not 100% sure what the expectation is from the SSAC members that will be attending. So I think we probably need to have an

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understanding of that before we get into the call. But I don't think this is our last opportunity to engage with these folks. But I think it is an important one. I'm very mindful that we don't have representation for SSAC on this call. And while we may not all agree with some of the SSAC reports sort of [inaudible] topics certainly have standing within the community that is well understood, so they take the time to provide guidance that matters. So we should respect that, the expertise that they provide. So it won't be the last time but it would be great if we could be prepared. And maybe as leadership, we'll take some time to go through this and see if there's any specific questions that we think would be really helpful to some of the upcoming discussions that we're going to happen and pull something together in the absence of questions from the working group.

Okay. I think we can move on to our next item, Ariel. Thank you. Okay. So what we want to do, we just want to have some continued discussion around a9 and a10. I think we had some good discussion on this during our last call. Ariel is going to provide a recap for us on a9 and a10, and then we can see if folks had time during their holiday break to review the conversation or some of the information that Ariel provided during the call and have reflected on, have any questions, and we can do that. So, Ariel, I'll just provide it back to you for a recap for folks. Thank you.

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks very much, Donna. So just to provide folks a recap of a9 and a10, I'm showing the charter questions here. So a9 is asking about develop a consistent definition of variant labels status in the IDL set. So for this question, staff provided the background

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information about what the variant management staff paper has developed in terms of the definition. There are five of them: it's blocked, withheld-same-entity, rejected, allocated, and delegated. So basically, the EPDP team has discussed this definition and doesn't seem there's really strong opposition to these definitions, but we do hear there are suggestions to further streamline these definitions and make them into an even shorter list. So essentially, it will be blocked and withheld, and then withheld could be withheld by itself or withheld with additional status as allocated, or withheld, rejected. So these are all withheld and then delegated. So that's basically streamlined the five definitions into three, and that's one suggestion we heard.

Also, another information I'd like to clarify is that on the call, Sarmad has noted that allocated—this status has some specific meanings to ccTLDs. So, I think what he provided, an example that ccTLD may remain in the allocated status for quite a period of time until the other procedures are completed before it can become a delegated status. So for ccTLDs, allocated, it may have additional meaning. But for this EPDP team, we're mainly discussing the gTLD-related definitions. So this is something to consider for the group, whether this specific meaning for ccTLDs is within scope for discussion for this group.

Then related to the definition of this label status is the procedure to change from one label status to another. So during the call, we discussed the five different paths from one status to another. And this is illustration on the slide here. It seems that folks didn't really have a strong position to what staff has identified in terms of this transition path. But there's also some additional discussion about

path 5 from delegated back to allocated. We heard there are examples of some gTLDs and ccTLDs, they were terminated, were removed from the root. So this is something we probably need to kind of further discuss and see whether that's a path that we want to highlight as well.

Basically, back to the questions themselves, we haven't really reached a concrete response to the charter questions. So here the task for the team is to review the questions again, and then see whether we can come into agreement with appropriate response to the charter questions. And then with that, we can develop some draft outcome language in terms of recommendation or implementation guidance related to the charter questions. I will stop here and see whether anyone wants to speak or have any questions.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. It looks like we have [inaudible] getting started on the new year. Perhaps if we can go back to the label states and the definitions that were proposed in the paper and see what … Bearing in mind the qualifiers that Ariel put on this particularly as it related to allocated in the discussion we had a few weeks ago, it was pointed out that it does have a different meaning for ccTLDs than gTLDs because of different processes. But for the purposes of this, we're talking about gTLDs. Are there any concerns about the proposed definition that we have up on the screen? Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: I have a question regarding the withheld-same-entity state. It says it's a special case of the withheld condition, but withheld is not a valid state, right? So anything that is withheld-same-entity is also withheld. But what about the cases which are withheld but not withheld-same-entity? Are they covered somewhere? Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. So I guess this could be a different interpretation of what we mean by withheld if it's not withheld-same-entity. Ariel, I see your hand is up. Do you want to respond? And then we'll go to Jeff.

ARIEL LIANG: Yes. Thanks, Donna. So if folks remember the presentation last year, these definitions from the staff paper stem from the definitions originally included in the integrated issues report. So in this slide, we're showing the report in 2012 integrated issues report already proposed these definitions, but then to withheld was one of the older set of definitions. When the staff paper was developed, the withheld-same-entity sort of kind of supersede withheld because as SubPro already have the recommendation that for future gTLDs, the same entity requirement will apply for the variant for future gTLDs. So, withheld has transformed into withheld-same-entity in the later sets of definitions developed in the staff paper. And of course, for this group, we will discuss the same entity principle and its application to existing gTLDs. So I think we probably should still discuss whether withheld-same-entity definition also applies to existing gTLDs and variants for them. So I just want to provide that context what in this staff

definition they say withheld-same-entity has a special case of withheld, but what it truly is saying is basically it's a kind of revolution stemming from what's integrated issues report has noted in the past. Hopefully that provides some context.

DONNA AUSTIN: Michael, does that answer your question or have we missed the point?

MICHAEL BAULAND: I'm not sure exactly. I'm wondering. There are cases of withheld which are not withheld-same-entity. Do such cases exist? If not, then I'm happy. But if there are withheld cases which are not withheld-same-entity, then I'm wondering under which status they are covered. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Michael. Ariel, is your hand still up to answer this? I see it's gone back down. Perhaps Sarmad might be able to—

JEFF NEUMAN: I have a question on this, too.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Jeff, go ahead, and then we'll come to Sarmad.

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JEFF NEUMAN: I think the point from Michael is as well, putting aside whether there is a case where it would just be withheld without the same entity, if this is the list of definitions then you need a definition of withheld. I know, Ariel, you said it's in the 2012 paper, but you also need to put it in here. So you need to actually put all of them together so that when one is looking at the list of definitions, they could see the definition of withheld, followed by the definition of withheld-same-entity. Because right now you're looking at a slide without a definition of withheld but refers to the withheld-same-entity. And I see that here. That's fine. I think Michael's point was you just need to have them all in one place. So if that's the intent for our preliminary report, that's fine. No, I understand, Ariel. It's in that slide. I got it. I guess the point is that when we put it into one place, in one location, all the definitions, it should all be there so one could see because one definition refers to the other.

The other question I had, and then Sarmad may want to comment on this one, too, I see the definition of allocated there, I just think it's confusing with the everyday usage of the term allocated. I think people tend to consider an everyday speak allocated and delegated as kind of the same thing, even though they're not, and I understand that. But we do need to kind of not just approach these from the super techie viewpoint because a techie understands the definition of allocated versus delegated, but we also need to kind of cater to those that may not have as advanced of the technical knowledge. So I would strongly urge us to come up with some other term to differentiate the delegated from the allocated here. I'm also trying to wonder why something would be—well, I mean, I understand why it's allocated, not delegated but I think we need to create this document for the people that

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may not have as advanced of a technical knowledge. Because if you ask the ordinary person in the domain industry what the difference is between delegated and allocated, they will not understand that at all.

DONNA AUSTIN: Jeff, I think that's a good point. I think that might be what Michael was getting to because I think withheld may have a different meaning in other parts of the community or in the domain name business. Perhaps what we need to be really clear about here is that these definitions for a specific purpose and knowledge that the words may have meaning in other context, but what we're doing here is proposing definitions for a specific purpose as it relates to IDN. So I take your point, but I think we are trying to do something specifically related to IDNs here. Hopefully, if we call that out, that will make it clear for folks. I'll go to Sarmad, and then, Jeff, I'll come back to you. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Donna. As Ariel pointed out, I think when the staff report was being done on variants, it was being done, I guess, in the context of earlier work done by the integrated issues report. I do agree that the reference back to withheld may not be relevant in the current context. So, basically, when we're doing the report, one of the recommendations in the variant TLD recommendations paper was that all the variants should go to the same applicant. And therefore, what was done was that instead of withheld, it was made more explicit that it is actually withheld for the same entity. And that was just sort of reinforcing that particular

recommendation. So I guess what I'm saying is that this particular definition can be adjusted to just describe that process, rather than try to also have a pointer back to the original withheld status, which was in the integrated issues report. Some rewriting could, I guess, solve that problem if that is agreeable to everyone.

As far as the technical side of allocated and delegated is concerned, I again totally agree this could be simplified in a way that they become less technical. Obviously, they were written to be more technical. And if that's, again, useful, that can actually also be done. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: I think it's kind of a stated in the chat, but I think it's good to have skeletons of definitions now. But really, definitions are the kind of thing you finish at the very end when you have all of your concepts down because there may or may not be a need for that withheld versus withheld-same-entity, and there may or may not be situations where you need to differentiate between allocated and delegated. So, I mean, I think it's good for now to have these as sort of skeletons but it's sort of that type of thing you come back to at the very end to see if they're actually used in any way in the report.

DONNA AUSTIN:	Thanks, Jeff. I take your point. And I think this goes to a lot of the recommendations we're working on. We need to ensure that. When we find a report that there's not anything that's inconsistent and definitions make sense to those well, I would note that these definitions have evolved over time and had some quite a bit of discussion, no doubt, over the years to try to come up with what's been identified in front of us. So significant work has been done on this previously and we need to recognize and acknowledge that as well. So I just want to get a sense from other folks whether there are any other concerns around these proposed definitions or conversely whether folks are more than comfortable with these definitions moving forward.

Okay. Satish is saying that "Agree on removing the reference to withheld if withheld-same-entity is the only case possible." Okay. So based on the discussion, I don't think there's any reason why we wouldn't go forward in principle that these definitions are appropriate for the purposes of the reasons that we're trying to define them and taking into account Jeff's point that it is something that we should revisit when we're getting to the end of our work. But for the purposes of drafting a draft recommendation, I don't see any great objection to these definitions as proposed. So I think we're okay on that.

To Justine's point, mindful of whether these definitions also have meaning in the wider process of contracting with ICANN, it is an important consideration but we just need to be really explicit about what these definitions are intended to be related to. It is tricky to get consistent meaning across the community. So let's just be

explicit about why we're creating these definitions. Hadia, go ahead.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you so much. I do agree that it is—

DONNA AUSTIN: Hadia, you're breaking up for me. I'm not sure whether you're breaking up for others.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: They have definitions. I just wanted to ask if—okay, I'll try to speak closer to the mic. So my question is, are we at any point in time going to discuss the implications of any of these statuses? Like, for example, what does allocated mean or implicate? Is it associated with, for example, fees that are going to be paid annually? Or are the fees only going to be paid with the delegated? What are the implications of each of these statuses? And are we going to discuss this? Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Hadia. I think we will pick up on some of those issues throughout the rest of our work. But I'm not 100% sure whether it's within our scope. But I think the implications of having these definitions is that as we work through these, the other questions, we understand, at least from our perspective, is that the working group has an understanding of what we're talking about, which will help our further deliberation but it's also important in the context of

future IDN work. So I think these things have been outstanding. And what we're trying to do is verify previous work. Sarmad, I saw your hand go up and then come down. So if I've got something wrong, please correct me.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Nothing wrong. Thank you, Donna. I just wanted to just share that when we were drafting these, I guess, terms in the paper, the idea was or intention was to make sure that when, I guess, the community is talking about the reason for defining them was that when the community is talking about the different statuses, we have a common understanding of what each of those means and we can use a similar set of vocabulary to refer to these states, just so that it's just better to communicate that way.

I also wanted to just point out that there's one more word which we actually do use. It's not here because I guess this was more suggested in the context of variant labels. But the one missing word is the reserved status, which is for reserved words. And that is also in addition to the states. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Hadia, is that an old hand?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Old hand. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thank you. Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks. Sarmad almost beat me to the punch there. I was going ask if there was a definition of reserved and whether we needed to differentiate things like withheld versus reserved in that kind of context. I do think that we do need a definition for that or at least distinguish between when one sees reserved versus withheld or blocked, even. I think that's important, too, because one might confuse the term reserved with the term blocked or the other way around.

And I'd also like to see—I don't know if these are just pick certain definitions that we picked out because we needed to define or whether this was supposed to be sort of the exhaustive list. But I think we do need to define terms like variant and also defined terms like bundle, because that's a common term that's used in connection with at least the allocation—now I'm using the term allocation in a different way—but allocation at the second level. So there's going to be more terms I think we need to find. And as we go through this, it might be good. As we go through the topics, it might be good to kind of take notes and put it in the parking lot of, "Oh, we really should define what that means." So reserved is one of those and bundled is probably another one. I'm sure there's many more. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Jeff. I think that's a really good point. We've already had that issue of what does variant mean come up in our discussion. It's a good suggestion that if there are other words that we seem to be using interchangeably or somebody seems to have a

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different meaning to what somebody else is thinking a word means, let's identify those and see if we can at least get some common understanding within this group of what we mean by that. So I think that's a good suggestion and we can take that on board.

All right. There's been some good points raised during this discussion. I think we can still pull something together that achieves the objective of what this question is trying to get to. And it does highlight for me that there seems to be maybe 20 words that are used within the ICANN community that have different meanings for different purposes or different processes. So let's just be really clear about what the purpose is here. Propose the definitions that are consistent with that purpose, reach some agreement on it, and move on. And if we do want to put a note in where allocated has a different meaning elsewhere and try to clarify that then, by all means, let's try to do that. But I think I want to draw a line under the proposed definitions. And then perhaps, Ariel, if we can go to the state transitions and see if there's any discussion around these items that folks want to discuss or raise or whether we think we're okay. Jeff, go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks. I was just going to say that I think for now they're okay. I think the rest of our work is going to be considering all of this and how it relates to each other. So I think for now, this is fine. And what we're really discussing for the rest of the time is how one gets from one to two to three to four to five, or whatever. I think I'm not sure where there is much to input to provide now. Because as Hadia was saying, we can't really see the implications until we

actually do the rest of the work. But I think to get us all on the same page, I think this is a good start.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks. Any comments from folks? I'm not seeing any other hands but we're in reasonable shape on this. So, Ariel, I think we can go back to the agenda. I probably am a bit choppy. Jeff, I do have some Internet issues and some audio issues so I apologize for those.

Okay. So I just want to go back to charter question a6 which was around updates to the Root Zone LGR and in the event that backward compatibility is not possible, whether the existing gTLD should be grandfathered or not. So we did have some good discussion around that and we have been working on a draft recommendation. I think I had promised that we would have some discussion about that today, but we're not quite there yet with the draft recommendation. But I do hope that we'll have something to the list—I was going to say by the end of the week but that's tomorrow here. But we will have something on that next to the list for review during next week.

For a7, which was related to single character TLDs, Ariel, I'm just going to throw back to you on this one to provide us with just a recap and then let us know where we are.

ARIEL LIANG: Yes. Thanks, Donna. Just to recap, the question itself is asking what mechanism or criteria should be used to identify the scripts and languages appropriate for single character TLDs and what

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mechanisms or criteria should be used to identify a specific list of allowable characters that can be used for single character TLDs. So, for this question, we had some discussion in the EPDP team. What folks have recognized that perhaps Han scripts is the only applicable script that can be candidate for single character TLDs, and the languages that are concerned will be Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. So for this work, in terms of identifying the specific list of allowable characters in these languages, it may not within the skillset per se for this group to tackle and it may become a task that needs to be outsourced to the Generation Panels that work on these languages. So based on staff's confirmation and tracking of the script proposals for these languages, we haven't seen any specific recommendations or criteria per se for single character TLDs what will be the candidate characters for these. And indeed, this is not some work that's required for the Generation Panels to work on. So during their deliberation, they didn't work on this item. So if the EPDP team intends to develop a recommendation to outsource this work and ask the GPs to do that, then perhaps some prior communication is needed to ensure that the GPs are willing and able to take on this work and there may be other implications to the Integration Panel because that's the panel that eventually decided what to integrate into the RZ-LGR. So I think that's kind of a basic recap and then some proposed path forward for this EPDP team to consider.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. Jeff and then Sarmad.

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks. I'm wondering if that's too much work at this point. Is it possible that another option would be that if someone proposes a single character in one of these languages—Chinese, Japanese, Korean, maybe in Vietnamese—then couldn't that be part of the evaluation that they would pay for at that point in time? It seems like right now because we don't know if someone's going to apply for a one character. It just seems like a lot of work, pretty expensive, unbounded. I think that those are my concerns at this point.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Jeff. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. One more consideration which we should have is that this work can spread across two parts. Potentially, the Root Zone LGR, that's what we're saying, but also string similarity review. I think if this is something EPDP Working Group wants to send back to the Generation Panels, it would actually require some exercise to actually define the bounds of this work. Otherwise, it can actually also not be very clear for the Generation Panels to actually take that up. By bounds, what I mean is that we need to be clear on what we're asking the Generation Panels to do. I guess making it clear where we divide the work between them and the eventual process which is more focused on string similarity review. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. Does anyone have any thoughts on Jeff's suggestion about whether there's another way to go about this rather than try and to outsource it? I don't know if anyone wants to speak to the outsourcing. Go ahead, Dennis.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Thank you, Donna. Here in building upon Jeff's comments and Sarmad's as well, it seems to me—I'm trying to rationalize what I'm hearing—we don't have the expertise. This group doesn't have the expertise to define the work that we would want the Generation Panel to do and it's going to be difficult to define it, the scope and the output. I'm kind of leaning towards what Jeff suggested. This may be something that it's embedded or included in the application process in some way, shape, or form with ad hoc fees or what have you more to recover the cost of ad hoc committee or panel or what have you that reviews single character TLDs in the sense of visual similarity like Sarmad pointed out and any other risk to security or stability if that's anything there. Again, because we don't have the expertise in order to go through the entire Han script and define what are the appropriate code points that will be used for single characters.

Also going back to—I think Jeff used this term—registry operator could be or rational organizations that they're going to apply for something that is going to be useful. Us trying to come up with a list of what a single character could be used as a top-level domain name, maybe it's not for us to decide. Again, I'm leaning towards this be something to be included incorporating the application process that a panel could be an expanded function of the DNS stability if they're going to decide whether a single character is

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suitable for the root zone or not. That's my two cents there. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks, Dennis. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Donna. I think this is certainly possible to do after the application as well, though I was actually thinking that if this is done beforehand, it makes it a slightly more predictable process for the applicants. Because then they know that the application they're making is more likely to go through, obviously, still other checks and conditions may apply. But if the homework's not done, it opens up the applicant, I guess, to a little more unpredictable process. That would be the only difference because they will know whether they may be applying for a character, which is probably just not feasible for some reason. That's just one, in a way, implication of doing this afterwards rather than before for something for us to consider. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: I did have a question for you, Sarmad. So has the cc Fast Track had any experience with this understanding that whenever single character would have to be related to the ccTLD or the country name? I'm just wondering whether there's any previous experience we can draw from with the ccNSO? Dennis, go ahead.

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DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Thank you. I just wanted to add an observation, maybe a question. I think that there are two questions on this item. One is to identify the scripts that are suitable for single characters, and then the second layer is whether there is a way to pinpoint or determine which exactly code points could be appropriate for single characters, not on the script. I don't want to use decide, but are we leaning towards the first item? Are we comfortable determining which are the scripts suitable for single character TLDs? Or we're not even considering that and that would be a function of this third party doing application process? I think that was my comment. I just want to put in context my comments were on the assumption that we are comfortable with determining that, for example, Han script is one that is suitable for single character TLDs. But the specific code points would be a task for this application review process that they can decide finally whether visual similarity and other issues that might come across with the specific application, which applies to anything. I mean, going back to Sarmad's predictability concern, that even happens in non-single characters. An application could be put into a contention set or what have you and found to be not eligible to move forward. So this would add a different layer or a different dimension to the predictability concern, but it will not be new. I think that's what I'm going to. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. I do get the sense from conversations that we've had that it is possible for this working group to identify the scripts and languages appropriate for single TLDs. What we're grappling with is that the mechanism or criteria that should be used to

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identify a specific list of allowable characters. I think that's what we're grappling with. Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you, Donna. I was actually thinking maybe there is also a possible middle way where the group or some other group who has that, I guess, technical capacity, for example, the GPs could suggest some explicit clear rules of things, for example, with just shouldn't be allowed like they're blatantly out because of particular reasons. Then characters which are still possible then can go through this follow-up process. Just thinking out aloud, for example, single stroke characters could be, for example, much more confusable than multi-stroke characters in Han script. So maybe there is a possible middle way where we can have some rules up front and then some process which can then help. But that will help the applicants at the end of the day to maybe get closer to application which they can go through rather than get blocked later on. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Sarmad. I think we've got a little bit to try to unpack here and see if we can find a way forward. We've had a few suggestions about—I think we're accepting that outsourcing this would be an effort that probably isn't—I don't want to use the word worthwhile but it probably may not be the most efficient path forward. I think we need to explore some of the other suggestions that we've had today. And if anyone building on those suggestions, if you want to explain a little bit more on the mailing list, I think that would be really helpful. I think what we're looking

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for here is a reasonable path forward that isn't too cumbersome or difficult to implement is one of the issues. Those that have suggested possible other paths forward, if you want to expand a little bit on that on the list, that would be great. At a minimum, we can actually identify the scripts and languages appropriate for single character TLDs.

Any more discussion on this one? Justine, is there anything I've missed that you wanted to bring back on this? Okay. It doesn't seem so. Okay. Thanks, Justine. All right. Where does that leave us, Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: We have covered all the items on the agenda.

DONNA AUSTIN: We're off to a good start in 2022. But I think we've created more work for ourselves, so maybe I shouldn't get too excited. All right. Just to recap, some more good discussion today. It seems to me that having a conversation and then coming back and doing a recap or a review is really helpful. It gives folks time to think about what we've discussed and then build on that a little bit. So I think it's been helpful to go back to a9 and a10 today. a6, hopefully we'll have something to the list by early next week and we can discuss any concerns. Probably not next week because I expect that SSAC is going to take up most of our time next week. Please, if you do have any specific questions that you would like to discuss with members of the SSAC next week, can you put those to the list by Monday so we can collect them and get them to the SSAC

members who will be attending? I'm being really specific in saying SSAC members because Rod Rasmussen has reminded me that this will not be an engagement with the full SSAC. It will be an engagement with members of the SSAC that have been involved with IDNs.

Then I think there's a little bit we have to unpack on a7 and see if we can find a reasonable path forward. And as I said, those that want to expand on some suggestions around a7, please do that on the list. It will be greatly appreciated. And we can try to wrap that one up as well.

I would just like to mention that every month, we provide an update to the GNSO Council. And that update has been provided to the GNSO Council list. I think in terms of our project plan that we had identified based on that early survey that we did on how long we thought it would take to get through some of these discussions, we are probably a little bit behind schedule. But what the leadership team is doing and what we hope to have by the end of the month is—thanks to some input from Dennis, we are reviewing the—what's the word I'm looking for? The order in which we're considering these questions. I know that we've had some discussions that we—thanks, Justine, sequence. We have had some discussion about, "Well, we can't discuss that because we need to resolve this other question first." So we are actively reviewing that to see whether we need to reorder the sequence of the questions.

We're also going to look at what are our targets throughout the next 12 months. We do intend to have a session at ICANN73. In my mind, that will just replace this weekly meeting that we have.

So I don't think it's going to be anything new. If ICANN74 is going to be a policy meeting, then I want to have maybe four sessions if it's a four-day meeting. So it may be just an hour each, but try to get some concentrated time together in the absence of being able to meet face to face. I am assuming that ICANN74 will not be face to face. We are looking to look at what our plan is over the next 12 months and set target dates and have a discussion with the team about whether what we're proposing is achievable and whether it makes sense. So that's some work that's happening in the background with the leadership team.

I don't think we have any other business. Let me get back to chat. I don't see any hands. Unless anyone has anything else that they wanted to add, I think I'm going to call this meeting closed with 15 minutes to spare. Thanks, everybody, for your input and we look forward to receiving your questions for the engagement that we have with the SSAC members next week. Bye all.

DEVAN REED: Thank you all for joining. Once again, the meeting is adjourned. I will end the recording and disconnect all remaining lines. Have a wonderful rest of your day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]