
ICANN Transcription

IDNs EPDP

Thursday, 21 September 2023 at 12:00 UTC

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DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the IDNs EPDP call, taking place on Thursday, 21 September 2023 at 12:00 UTC. All members and participants will be promoted to panelists. Observers will remain as an attendee and will have view access to chat only. Statements of interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you need assistance updating your statements of interest, please email the GNSO Secretariat. All documentation and information can be found on the IDNs EPDP wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly after the end of the call. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript. As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multi-stakeholder process are to comply with the expected standards of behavior. Thank you, and over to Donna, please begin.

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DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Devan, and welcome everybody to today's call. We're getting very close to the end of our review of the public comment. Well, we've finished the public comment review, but we still have a couple of recommendations that we need to finalize as a result of that. So I'm hoping that we can get through those today so that we can move on with finalizing the final report and having it ready to hand over to the GNSO Council.

Just by way of updates, some of you, all of you should have seen on the mailing list that the GNSO Council has got back to us about the comments we received through the public comment process about .Quebec and consistent with our thinking that the GNSO Council has agreed that those comments were beyond the scope of what we're doing with this IDN EPDP. So the GNSO Council will be taking that on to consider what next steps should be on that. So the leadership will write to all of those commenters that actually had comments about .Quebec. I think there was four of them and they were pretty similar. Just letting them know that we won't be responding through this process, but the GNSO Council is going to take that up. So that's that one.

I think, Ariel, we put the recommendations language out for folks to consider. The deadline for that, is that past or are we coming up on that?

ARIEL LIANG:

This is Ariel. The deadline was Tuesday, EOB. So it has passed and we received comments only on 3.5, 3.6. Of course, I recognize we only circulated the amendment language to 4.4 yesterday. So folks may not have a chance to react to that. But

other than that, we haven't received any other comments for other recommendations for the red line.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. All right. So it is the case that with the exception of 4.4, what we really want to try to finalize now is recommendation 3.5 and implementation guidance 3.6. So we're going to move ahead with that first and then follow up because I know we've got folks that have to drop off to join another call in about an hour. So we'll go through that first and then I want to finish up with a timeline update so that everybody understands what timeline we're working to get the final report to the GNSO Council. And I also want to go through the consensus call process that we're going to follow. So we actually haven't done any consensus call so far. And understanding GNSO processes, we do need to do that in a formal way. And while it will be done in a formal way, it will be done in a very informal manner. That will make sense when we come to that at the end. So with that, we will try to get through 3.5 and 3.6 and 4.4 in the next hour. So that's my hope. So with that, I think we'll move to 3.5, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes. And I know a lot of a few people have to leave early. So I want to make sure to bring out their comments early as well and make sure everybody got a chance to review it. So 3.5, this is the language that was proposed by leadership team on the mailing list on 14th of September. So that's a new iteration after last week's call. I'm just going to read it because maybe that's better than summarizing.

In addition to explaining the mission and purpose of its supply for primary gTLD string, a future applicant will be required to explain why it has applied for one or more allocatable variant labels of that applied for primary gTLD string. The same requirement applies to existing registry operators who wish to applied for allocatable variant labels of their existing gTLDs. The explanation provided must address the following factors for each and every applied for a variant label. And there are four sub elements under this one, 2.5.1, the meaning of the applied for variant label, and how it is the same as the applied for primary gTLD string or existing gTLD. 3.5.2, the language communities who will be benefit from the introduction of the applied for variant label. 3.5.3, the benefits that introducing the variant label in conjunction with the applied for primary gTLD string or existing gTLD will provide to registrants, internet users, and the online community at large. And 3.5.4, how the applicant intends to mitigate potential user confusion that could be caused by not only the introduction of the applied for gTLD variant label at the top level, but also in combination with the activation of domain names at the second level. So these are the language. And I just want to emphasize the main change to the previous iteration is that the criteria down below applies to every single applied for a variant label. So the applicant is expected to explain for each variant label, how the application meets this criteria. So that's the revised language.

And I just want to quickly mention the comments that we received from—actually we have comments from three people, Dennis, Michael, and also Sarmad. Sarmad, he raised his comment with staff, but I want to make sure the group has seen this. So from Dennis' point of view, I think folks have seen his email, but I'm just

going to emphasize the key points. I think his main concern was 3.5.4 about the mitigation measures for user confusion. And his concern is whatever the applicant answers, it could be subject to a variety of interpretation as to what user confusion might be. And also it could be difficult for an evaluator to determine the score for that response. And also another concern he raises in conjunction to the board resolution regarding the singular plural outputs from SubPro, they decided not to adopt that output because there's a concern about appropriateness of such recommendation. And in summary, applicant may describe its intentions and policies as to how they plan to operate and market the gTLD, but they cannot control how the registrants use the domain name under that gTLD. And also they cannot control how end users interact and react to the content of the website. So in relation to the board resolution for singular plural output, it's kind of similar. 3.5.4 is trying to maybe give that kind of direction, but it could be very hard for implementation. So I think that's the gist of Dennis' concern, and I welcome him to chime in, but I want to quickly go over the other two comments for 3.5.4.

So from Michael, he had a similar concern as Dennis, but I think in general, he kind of felt the subjective wording is okay because he understands the purpose of 3.5 is to make sure the applicant really understands the necessity of activating the variant label and not just because the applicant wants it, it really actually needs it. So this question in the application will help weed out frivolous applications. So I think Michael on the set at that point, he's okay with that in principle. But then for 3.5.4, he has a similar concern, is it could be very difficult to have the evaluator objectively score that answer, and it's hard to decide what mitigation measures is

sufficient. And he gives some examples, and now we already know the group is recommending the same entity principle at the second level. Does that mean it suffices to ensure there's user confusion is going to be addressed using that same entity principle? But if it's not sufficient, what else is needed? If the registry has to actually control the content of the website, that's not feasible. So he has similar concerns to 3.5.4.

And then we finally have a Sarmad's comment. Actually, it's more related to 3.6. So I would just hold for a moment, and I know Edmon has his hand up.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. Go ahead, Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, thank you, Donna, and thank you, Ariel. This is Edmon, and I guess I put up my hand as a board liaison on this. I was frantically trying to look at the board resolution on the plural issue. But I think the board's position on the plural singular issue was that that actually can be dealt with in the implementation and has directed staff to look into the rationale and incorporate some of that thinking into the implementation. So I'm trying to dig up the actual resolution, but I did want to put my hand up before this topic goes through.

So I don't think it calls a concern as in that it's not implementable. In fact, it's the other way around. It is actually possible, and that there are issues that could be dealt with in implementation and

therefore could be dealt with. So I just want to highlight that critical point.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. So Edmon, sorry, just to be clear, are you specifically talking about the board's resolution on single versus plural or the applicability of how 3.5.4 here could be dealt with?

EDMON CHUNG: Yeah, I wanted to put my hand up. I'm actually looking at it, and if you give me a few more minutes, I will be able to dig it up and respond further. But I think Ariel mentioned that this was a concern because there were evaluation processes that needed to be in place for these issues, and because the board rejected the plural singular thing, then it causes an issue. I want to highlight that that's not the case. The board actually resolved and said the GNSO recommendations for plural and singular is more an implementation issue and should not be a policy issue, so let's deal with it on the implementation, and therefore we rejected it as a policy recommendation. So that was what I want to highlight. But give me five, six minutes, and I might be able to give an even better answer. And Alan is probably going to come to my rescue.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Go ahead, Alan.

ALAN BARRETT: Thanks, Donna. This is Alan. So for an authoritative answer, I think you would have to consult the records of the board's discussion with the GNSO Council and the board resolution. But from my memory, the issue was mostly that that particular recommendation was fairly complex. It did not only address singular versus plural. It had more to it. It said something about you must use a dictionary to determine whether something's a singular or plural, and the board had a concern that there are acronyms that don't appear in the dictionary but that nevertheless have plurals. And also the same recommendation talked about the use of words with the same spelling but different meanings. And the example that was in the recommendation was .spring and .springs, where one's a singular and one's a plural, but also one refers to elastic objects, things that bounce or stretch, and the other one refers to the season of the year. And the board had a concern that accepting that would get too close into content regulation. So it was a complex recommendation. The board doesn't have a formal way of accepting only part of it. The board can only accept the whole thing or reject it. And so the board decided to reject, but it did give a rationale. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Okay, thanks, Alan. I'm assuming that Dennis is going to explain a little bit the applicability of how he's read the board resolution on the singular versus plural and 3.5.4. So go ahead, please, Dennis.

DENNIS TAN: Thank you. Yeah, thank you. Yeah, it's not that I was suggesting that it's a one-to-one application of the board resolution, but it was

interesting to note this one component. Those recommendations were a number of items that they wanted to address. One were applications where might be deemed confusingly similar, singular, plural, that is, that they will be allowed to continue so long they were intended as different meanings. So the applicant defines how they intend to market, focus that extension. And even to the extent of the recommendation went to, that should be put into a, I think the word is commitment, public commitment or something along those lines. So baked into the registry agreement. And so the board rationale on that specific subject says, doesn't matter if—the concern is that independent of the intentions of the operator to focus market the TLD in a way, once that's available for registration, then the registrant is free to use it the way they want. Otherwise, if I've intend to use, citing the example that was put in the recommendation, spring as a season, as springs, as the item, the registrant can use whatever they want. And so the only, I mean, how does the applicant make sure or ensure some force that their registrant is using, other than regulating the content that is in the website, right? Policing that content. So that's the gist of that rationale that I think applies to our conversation here. We are, and again, I put that in the chat box, but I want to clarify my reservation is to the fourth question, 3.5.4. I mean, the other three, I think those are reasonable to get information from the applicant as to why they think the internet users will benefit of the variant labels, but 3.5.4 goes beyond. We're not just asking the applicant how they intend to use it or how it benefits. We're asking them how they intend to do something to prevent other things from happening, user confusion, which is very open ended, or it's open to interpretation. What is user confusion? So I think we can

perhaps suggest the way we can talk about these more is what are exact examples of this user confusion? What exactly are we trying to solve for? Then think about can we measure that kind of problem that we want to solve and can it be enforced? The problem with the question as the existing form today is a very, again, very open ended, ambiguous. How is the evaluator going to assign a score whether it's going to pass or fail? That's important, right? Because this set of questions in terms of variant labels is going to be consequential for the applicant. If they don't score well here, then okay, so what does that mean? Does that mean that they don't deserve to be delegated the variants? And so because of the importance of this set of questions is that I think we need to be thorough in our analysis, what we are asking for, and it's achievable, right? Again, it can be measured in a consistent, predictable manner that really addresses our concerns, specific concerns, not just open ended. And I want to end this because we are focusing on IDNs and we're looking through the lenses of IDNs, but I don't see that happening in other TLDs, right? Applications, ASCII. You're not asking the ASCII applicants how they intend to minimize confusion by the launch of their extensions, right? Because as new extensions are delegated, go to the market, users might be confused. Why is this extension? Is this real, not real? Can I use it, not use it? Other item, right? Universal acceptance. Registrants, they sign up for a new domain name, a new TLD. They set up services, email address, and they cannot use it. They are confused as well. And we're not asking those questions. We're not qualifying these qualified gTLD applicants on the merits of addressing user confusion in those instances, for example. So do we want to really put more burden

on IDN TLD applicants, making harder and potentially discourage applications because of these type of questions? So I think that's it for me. I think, again, the way we can move forward from this discussion, looking at the same thing is let's think about... ALAC posed this question. So maybe they were thinking about specific user confusion cases. Can we focus on those ones? And maybe we'll find a way to move forward. I'll stop there. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Dennis. So one of the things in Dennis's comments that he brought to the list is what are we trying to solve for? So I think that's probably something we need to get a bit of a handle on is, what's the problem here that we're trying to solve with 3.5.4? So it would be good to hear from... I think this is primarily ALAC language, but I'd like to hear from others on what with 3.5.4, what are we trying to solve for? Edmon and then Justine.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you, Donna. Edmon here now speaking personally. So with Dennis's intervention, I think I have a much clearer thought on this. The issue with the singular plural and the issue here with the variants is actually not all but significantly different. One is in the case of spring and springs, it is that it asks for the policy in the ICANN to guarantee non-confusion, which is impossible. Spring and springs could be used different way. But in this case of variant is actually to enhance connectivity to potential confusion. It is subtle but significantly different because the point is that the variant should not be added if it was just to expand marketplace at all. This is pretty cute and this happens to be a variant and it could

mean something else or it could work well in this particular marketplace. Then the variant is not applicable. But if it supports the prevention in the sense of certain confusion but not a guarantee on non-confusion, that is, it supports someone who might be confused but still gets to the site, that's a significantly different situation. So the registry needs to demonstrate that the reason we applied for this variant is because there are this subset of users who may use this variant and confused when they could not access the domain when they think it is actually this one. Whereas the spring and springs situation is the GNSO request was that to the board that says, "Oh, we're going to guarantee that there is no confusion because we're going to market it as spring in the season and springs in the springy thing," which then, wait a minute, you can't enforce that. So it's significantly different in the concept. So that's why I want to hopefully make it clear that in the case of variants to justify that this is not to expand the market but actually to protect registrants and so on, that's completely applicable. Whereas to guarantee non-confusion is not.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Edmon. Justine?

JUSTINE CHEW: Thanks. This is Justine. Ariel, can you scroll back up to the recommendation proposal text? Yes, thank you. Okay, so I'm speaking in my own capacity. I'm not speaking on behalf of ALAC. My colleagues can jump in if they wish. So the question was asked, "What is the intention for 3.5.4?" The way I see it is, firstly, we were talking about the conservatism principle. All this started

because of the comment that we were being inconsistent with the conservatism principle. On the one hand, we said that we would comply but we're not showing that we are. It also derived from recommendation 8.1 where we said no ceiling. So from my perspective, if you're not going to place a ceiling, if you're going to introduce four free variants at a go, with the possibility of four free variants, then I would love to see some effort put into possible risk of confusion due to the increased permutations if someone were to get four variants plus the primary. This is what SSAC was talking about as well. It's the permutation because of the number of variants. As you increase the number of variants, the permutations grow exponentially and that's what I'm concerned about. As you have increased the number of things that are supposed to be similar, that would naturally lead to some risk of confusion. I don't necessarily want to get into what you're defining as confusion. It can be confusion to the registrar, it can be confusion to the end user. I think that's something that we ain't going to be able to define satisfactorily because if I focus on end user confusion, then the registrar is going to say, "Well, we don't have a direct link to the end user." That's going to be a circular argument. My point is a little bit similar to what Edmon was saying. If you're going to get variants and you're going to operate it, then I believe you have a responsibility to the end users at the end of the day, regardless of the fact that you don't have a direct link to end users, to protect them from unwarranted confusion due to the number of permutations that would be introduced if you have so many variants. We're not talking only about the top level, it's also the second level. That's number one.

Number two, Dennis talked about 3.5.1 and 2.3.5.3 being reasonable. My retort to that would be, well, you said that 3.5.4 is a subjective thing. I can argue that 3.5.1, 3.5.2, and 3.5.3 are also subjective things. We've said before that in the scheme of the application process itself, many of the questions are subjectively evaluated. I don't see how you can differentiate it and just pick out 3.5.4 as being subjective.

Third is, we like to look at it from two sides of the coin. If you talk about the benefits, then you have to look at the risks as well. That's where I'm coming from. There's no guarantee that whatever benefits that the applicant is submitting is good or bad. It's going to be a judgment call also by the evaluator. What the applicant thinks is a benefit may not necessarily be a benefit to the evaluator. We're looking at evaluators with linguistic expertise. They should be able to tell whether it is really going to be what the applicant says is true.

So two sides of the coin, you look at benefits, you have to look at risks somehow. We're not talking about preventing or totally guaranteeing the prevention. We're talking about mitigation of potential confusion. If you want, we can, I don't know whether it will make a difference, but instead of saying intending, we could say propose. It's always going to be a case-by-case basis. If it's so clear-cut that there's not going to be a high risk of user confusion, then it really doesn't matter what the applicant says because it's going to be determined by the evaluator anyway. Mind you, all these are being evaluated on a general reasonableness basis. We're not even asking for a very high standard of evaluation. We've already said, we've already conceded the fact that this is

going to be rare. I'm having a little bit difficulty accepting the pushback, but I'm still open to proposal as to how we could compromise and come to an agreement. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Justine. Just to mention that from a leadership perspective, when we were rewording, 3.5.4, reconsidering how we could change the language. To be honest, I can't remember what we originally had for 3.5.4. I think the important point that Justine makes is that this was, how do we not have a ceiling? We had a lot of conversation around 8.1. It was very clear that nobody in this group wanted a ceiling. How do we find another way to address the concerns that were raised by some in the comment process about not having a ceiling? This is one of the ways that we thought we could do that, have more specific criteria within the recommendation 3.5. With 3.5.4, we have changed the language a little bit about intends and to mitigate potential user confusion that could be caused. It's not only about the top level, but it is about the second level as well. I think with 3.5.4, the intention was to elicit a response that demonstrates that the applicant understands that there is such a thing as permutation and some of the challenges that will arise as a result of that. I think that was the intent of 3.5.4. If we haven't managed to capture the language appropriately, then, as Justine says, open to compromise. How do we get to that point and what would help? I'll go to Michael and then to Dennis.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yes. Thanks, Michael for the record. I would like to reply to Edmon's comment, although it's already a while ago. He said that one of the reasons might be to avoid misuse, so to say, as marketing opportunities. But for this, I think the basic requirement of the same entity should already suffice. We don't need 3.5.4 because if you ensure that every variant registration belongs to the same entity of the main name, then you're obviously not using it for a marketing purpose. So, I really have difficulties to see examples. Could we maybe look at examples of what would be enough mitigation so that this would allow to go through and what would not be enough mitigation where the registry would have to do more? Because, as Dennis said, there's so many things potentially you could do, but people could cause confusion because they send emails with a standard domain of a variant and certainly you won't expect registries to check emails or whatever. So, maybe we can make this more understandable to everybody to look at some examples. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Dennis, go ahead, please.

DENNIS TAN: Ah, thank you, Justine. Yeah, a couple of points. So, variants, as we are discussing in this working group, in this context, is a policy construct. They don't exist in the DNS. Okay? I think we all know that, but I think we're missing here one important point. Variants do not exist in the wild. It's just a policy construct. Equivalency, on the other hand, that's a problem that everyday users have to deal with, with domain names and registrants and brand owners and

what have you. Right? So, there are many domain names that are deemed equivalent to one another just because purely coincidence or because registrants decide to register multiple domain names that point to a single website or they use it in a manner that they are equivalent to each other. So, variants is a policy construct. I mean, we talk about the permutation issue. Yes, but that's in theory, right? That's on paper. At the end of the day, the only domain names that matter are the ones that are registered. So, the thousand names available because they are calculated by the variant tables, they exist on paper, in theory. At the end of the day, the only ones that matter are the ones that are registered. And so, I think a good way to move forward, at least one suggestion, and I plus one to Michael, let's look at examples. What would be a good answer? What would be a bad answer? What would we qualify the applicant to continue? What would disqualify the applicant to continue?

And I want to also just do a final remark. Questions one through three are asking for information and it's a statement, basically, right? What's the meaning? What's the language? And what are the benefits? And you can find within reason, good answers there, right? What's the meaning? What's the language? You can objectively process those questions, if you will, right? But four, the question 3.5.4 is asking a how, a method, potential policies. And so, that's where I think we need more detail to process this question. If you're asking the how, and Justine, I think you're saying it's going to be a judgment call from the evaluator. That's a lot to leave it to chance, basically. If one evaluator is going to decide, oh, this is just a confusion and not because potentially they understand the script or the language or how you put others

on, we don't know, right? And I think what we want is to present a predictable process. So the applicant knows what's the best way to answer the question. Because, again, I think I put this example into the document, user confusion, again, open to interpretation, I can see a scenario where the registrant or the end user is trying to get to a domain name that he thought is equivalent to what I've seen in paper on a billboard or what have you. This should be the same thing. This should be the domain name, but it's not working. And the user is confused. The registrant chose not to activate those variant domain names. So in order to address that user confusion, you have to activate every single variant, and that's not what we want.

So end user confusion can go both ways, not having the variants activated and having the variants activated. So which ones, and you know, from those two big groups, what are we trying to solve for here? And I think let's discuss those scenarios. If we cannot come up with concrete scenarios, then we are setting this very much for subjective evaluations from the panels. And I don't think that's where we want to be. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

So Dennis and Michael, and I know Jennifer has mentioned in chat that examples of good answers would be helpful, but I don't think we can go there, right? So the challenge for us is to have the question. So I wonder, having just told Ariel in the chat, maybe we shouldn't raise this, but what if the question was more focused on the permutation issue rather than user confusion? So how does

the applicant intend to mitigate the challenges that could arise from the permutation issues of introducing the applied for gTLD variant label and the activation of names at the second level? Would that fly with the registries? I accept that there is no definitional abuser confusion and that in itself is very subjective, but I'm really struggling with this idea that we have to come up with examples of what would be a good answer. That kind of goes against the grain of having a question. So I'm struggling with that idea a little bit. So Satish and then Steve.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Donna, Satish for the record. So first of all, I'd like to apologize on behalf of the ALAC team that we haven't had the time to study this particular 3.5.4 issue in detail. There have been so many events happening. I just arrived today after 10 days of travel. But we take the feedback. 3.5.4 was proposed as a countervailing kind of a measure for 8.1. And as Justine put it earlier, our thinking as ALAC is substantively the same as Justine's. But we see that we have to perhaps reword this particular proposal and 3.5.4. And I am also in support of focusing on the permutation angle rather than very hard to define user confusion so that we can arrive at something that all of us can agree on. And we'll be happy to work with the leadership team and staff to kind of help reword this particular 3.5.4. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Satish. Steve?

STEVE CHAN:

Thanks, Donna. This is Steve from staff. And I'm going to try to reframe things. And that might be a dangerous thing to do at 5:49 a.m. But I'm still going to try. So Donna was talking about the permutation element. So I'm going to try to provide a use case for how there might be user confusion. So in my mind, so if there is a domain registrant that comes ready to register a domain, and instead of getting the one that they might be used to, they are now handed, let's say, 16 variants, because there's four top level variants and then there's also variants within each of those spaces. And so now instead of getting one, they're getting 16. And so now there's a potential confusion of that registrant not knowing how to use all those variants or what they're for, or having the full context and understanding of what they mean. And so Dennis had mentioned user universal acceptance. And that might be a helpful analogy, which is there's not a requirement for applicants when they apply to do something specific for universal acceptance. But it's awareness, essentially. So gTLD applicants have a sense of the risks that they might encounter when applying and when they're deploying their new gTLDs. And so maybe it is sort of a similar thing that for registrants, they should have awareness of what registrant variants are, what they represent, the challenges that might arise. And so maybe it's not so much something that needs to be enforced by compliance, or something like that, or evaluated at application level. But it's more about ensuring that registrants upon considering applying for getting a domain, they have awareness, they understand what the variants are, and the implications of getting 16 instead of one domain. So maybe just a different way to think about it. It's maybe more in the awareness elements. Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Steve. Okay, so Dennis is okay with Steve's example. So I'm not sure how to take this forward. I'm actually wondering whether it's, Satish has said that ALAC still needs some time to think about this. And I appreciate that folks have been traveling, so they need more time. So I'm okay to provide a bit more time to allow that to happen. And Dennis, I wonder whether the registries and perhaps with the registrars, you could go back and look at this and see if you can find a way to thread the needle that's going to work for the registries and registrars in the context of understanding what it is we're trying to achieve by 3.5.4. So I wonder if I could ask the registries and registrars perhaps to work on that. And we'll come back to this next week and see where we end up.

The other thing that I'd also like to encourage is if there's an opportunity for ALAC and the registries and registrars to have a conversation before we come back to the full group. I know that doesn't give you a lot of time, but it might be helpful if you're having a direct conversation about the problem without me being in the middle of it. So that's something that I'd also like to encourage if that's possible. And I'm sure the GNSO secretariat can help us facilitate that. Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: I agree very much with Dennis in terms of the approach, but I want to identify a significant difference as then when a registrant gets a domain and gets actually a number of variants and they get confused, it's actually a good confusion. It's okay. You know, they

suddenly realize that, oh, actually the domain name system and the IDNs process have these issues and they have to deal with it. But that is very different from when a registry asks for a variant to be delegated, whether it's knowingly to try to protect versus knowingly trying to just pretty much expand their market and doesn't care about the confusion. So that's two very different things. I understand that to the end user, it might end up some confusion one way or the other, but one type of confusion is a good confusion as in we are trying to protect this for you. Now you know and therefore this is a set, versus the other one, whereas, oh, I got this variant and we're going to assign it to different registrants and therefore, ha ha, it's actually pretty cool. But it doesn't really go to the heart of the variant issue. And that is the significant difference. Therein lies a subtle but substantial difference. Whereas one is we are helping to protect, the other is, oh, this is just a cool name. If it's just a cool name that happens to be a variant, it should be a first come first serve rule. The first the first one comes in and the other one is rejected. If it is for protection for end users, that should be a variant and that should be used. But because the variant processes themselves, it's very difficult to technically and algorithmically determine that. Registries are tasked to make that distinction. And that is where 3.5.4 says as a registry, you need to tell us what you're trying to do. That's, I think the significant difference.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Edmon. So good discussion, a lot to digest. So, what I'd like to do is come back to this this time next week and see where we are. So, if Dennis, I can put it on to you to have a conversation

with the registries and see where we can get to with this. And Satish on ALAC side, if you could do the same, and if there's an opportunity for the two groups to have a conversation in between, I'm sure we can make that happen. I think what's important here is to just remember that what we're trying to do is address a gap that's been created through the public comment process, because we haven't created a ceiling policy. So, we're saying no ceiling. And because you can have up to four variants for the price of one gTLD. So, again, that there's an element of this is all free up to four. So, what we're trying to address is the potential for frivolous applications because of the fact that you can have four for nothing. But I think what we're trying to get to here in 3.5.4 is for the applicant to demonstrate that they understand the consequences, some of the potential consequences that are going to arise from introducing a gTLD and up to four variants, and how they intend to manage that. And I don't think it's unreasonable to think that an applicant should think that stuff's true, and they should have some idea and some answer to a question along that line. But I don't think it's within our purview to have a potential application question with an answer, because that's all that will be given. The other point I'd like to make too, is that, and I don't want to belittle, that might be the wrong word, but an applicant, my understanding is, once it gets into the registry agreement, isn't going to be held to much that was in their application, with the exception of maybe who the applicant is, and paying their application fee. So, that's something to keep in mind as well. Although, if we look at 3.6, which we'll do now, I think some of the concern was how do we assign a pass/fail to individual variant labels. So, we'll leave it there for now, but we're going to come

back to this, because this is the only sticking point currently that we have to finalizing the final report. So, Ariel, can we go to 3.6? And I appreciate that there's, I know Justine has to, [inaudible], she'll be having an ear in both camps. So, and I know there's others. So, let's get into 3.6.

ARIEL LIANG:

All right, sounds good. Thanks again for all the discussions. 3.6, I will also just read the language. A panel of evaluators with relevant expertise should review the explanation submitted by an applicant for each applied for variant labels using criteria based on a general standard of reasonableness. In other words, the submitted responses should be reasonably legitimate and address remedy concerns arising from the factors set out in final recommendation 3.5, additional criteria may be included, provided any additional criteria is pre-identified during implementation. Evaluators may ask clarifying questions of the applicant on the submitted explanation, but the evaluators are not obliged to take the clarifying information into account. Consistent with recommendation 27.2 from the SubPro PDP final report, each applied for variant labels evaluated against the identified criteria will be scored on a pass/fail scale, zero to one points only. Applicants will be presumed to have carefully considered whether the applied for variant labels are necessary to achieve the stated mission and purpose of the primary gTLD, and as such, receiving a score of zero should be rare. However, in the event that an applied for variant label receives a score of zero, zero point, that variant label will be ineligible to proceed further in the application process. A variant label that receives a score of one point can

proceed to the next stage of the application process. The same applies to existing registry operators, such that only their applied for variant labels that each receives a score of one point can proceed to the next stage of the application process.

So, I just want to mention two points regarding this implementation guidance. Actually, I placed the comment in the wrong place earlier. So, we did receive one comment from Sarmad. Unfortunately, he has to jump to another call, but I will raise the point on behalf of him. So, he had an editorial comment regarding the text in the language. It says, it's this one about if an applicant should be presumed to have carefully considered whether applied for variant labels are necessary, and then as such receiving a zero score should be rare. So, he had a bit of issue with this sentence in the middle, if you look at my cursor here, because it seems to predict the outcome of the evaluation, and it seems a strange thing to do in the recommendation language. So, maybe we shouldn't predict the outcome of the evaluation here. And I think just to let folks know that staff and leadership team discussed this prior to the call, and this could be addressed by explicitly stating the intent of this implementation guidance. The reason we think it should be rare to get a score of zero is because if the applicant really intends to applied for a variant label and goes through the trouble to answer all these questions, then it should be pretty rare to receive a score of zero. And the intent of the recommendation is to filter out frivolous applications. So, if we just explicitly state the intent here instead of this sentence of predicting the outcome, then it seems to be an okay way to address Sarmad's concern. So, just let folks know that leadership and staff team had a discussion about this.

And then the second point I want to mention is also, Justine, please feel free to chime in, is in terms of the scoring, we probably need to be clear about whether any of the questions receive a zero score would disqualify the variant label application. Or does that mean if the applicant answers all these questions, all of them receive a zero score, they cannot move forward? So, we need to understand whether the zero means—if any one answer receives zero, it disqualifies or it has to be aggregated zero in some extent that disqualify application. So, that's another issue we probably should have clarity on. And make sure to clarify that in the 3.6 language. So, that's the two points I want to mention to the group.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. So I wouldn't say the language in 3.6 is clumsy, but it is difficult to understand how an evaluator would consider the variant labels on a one to one basis. And then the consequence if one of those labels fails. So, we've [inaudible] with this so much that it's a bit challenging to come up with a clearer way forward. The only thing that strikes me is that we could have something in here about the intent of what the scoring is supposed to achieve. But if anyone has any recommendations on all these. Dennis.

DENNIS TAN:

Thank you, Donna. I don't have an answer. But I think when we come back with a revised or a proposal how to untangle 3.5, then 3.6 also should be somehow in there, right? Thinking about how implementation guidance as well. So, the two are connected. So, if we change 3.5, 3.6, obviously, is going to be change. So, let's expand the action item that we have and think about the specifics

of 3.5, but also thinking ahead of what the implementation guidance would be.

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. Okay. Thanks for that, Dennis. All right. So, we're going to postpone 3.6 until we come back next week. All right. So, I think, Ariel, we'll go into 4.4.

ARIEL LIANG: Okay. Sounds good. So, 4.4, we made some amendment to this recommendation by taking into account the comments Sarmad brought up last week, actually two weeks ago. So, he had a question about two scenarios. One is regarding if applied for a gTLD string is found confusingly similar to another requested ccTLD string, how to resolve that conflict. And given that if both strings are in process, which one get the priority? I think that's one of the scenarios that we need to develop language for. And then the second scenario is regarding if applied for a string is in conflict with another gTLD string that was applied for in a previous round, but still hasn't been officially contracted or, like, finished evaluation, what to do in that scenario? Because in the future, we know there will be future rounds. So, that situation could happen. So, that's the two things we need to address. And that's why we proposed some amendment language based on that. So, I'm not going to read 4.4.1 and 4.4.2, because these remain the same. There's no change to that. What's changed is 4.4.3. So, that's to address the first scenario regarding conflict with the requested ccTLD string. It's quite long. And I understand it may not be a great thing, actually. But the reason is because we checked with

the 2012 rounds' applicant guidebook, they actually have a pretty extensive language regarding how to resolve the conflict between requested ccTLD string and primary gTLD string. And the agreement between staff and leadership team is that we basically replicate that language. Especially, SubPro didn't really talk about changing that standard. So, our presumption is we're using the same standard to resolve such a conflict. And I realize the numbering needs to be updated. But I will address that later. So I'll just quickly read through this whole page here.

If an applied for primary gTLD string or any of its variant labels is confusingly similar to a requested primary ccTLD string or any of its variant labels, ICANN Org is expected to take the following approach to resolve the conflict. So, point one, if one of the applications has completed its respective process before the other is lodged, that primary TLD string and its approved variant labels, if applicable, will be delegated. So, actually, the two points below, there are sub points to 3.1. And I need to kind of indent this further. Just let folks know this is something I will fix. So, one sub point is if a gTLD application, including the applied for variant labels, if applicable, that has successfully completed all relevant evaluation stages, including dispute resolution and string contention, if applicable, and is eligible for entry into a registry agreement, will be considered complete, and therefore would not be disqualified by a newly filed ccTLD request. And the second sub point under 4.4.3.1 is a ccTLD request, including applied for variant labels, if applicable, that is validated, will be considered complete, and therefore would not be disqualified by a newly filed gTLD application. And validate is a special term here. It's defined in the IDN-ccTLD fast track process. And also, the recently

published ccPDP4 initial report provides further explanation of what validation means for ccTLD space. So, it's basically just to note that we need to have a footnote here to indicate where to find the meaning of validate for the readers. So, that's the first segment of this 4.4.3.

The second segment of this is in the case where neither application has completed its respective process, where the gTLD application, including the applied for variant labels, if applicable, does not have the required approval from the relevant government or public authority, the validated ccTLD request will prevail, and the gTLD application will not be approved. So, this is the exact language we borrowed from the AGB. And the only addition that we included here is to the phrasing, the parentheses, including the applied for variant labels, if applicable. So, that's what we added there.

And then the third segment here, we say, in the case where a gTLD application, including the applied for variant labels, if applicable, has obtained the support or non-objection of the relevant government or public authority, but is ineligible to proceed due to contention with the ccTLD request, a full refund of the evaluation fee is available to the gTLD applicant if its application was submitted prior to the publication of the ccTLD request. So, again, that's the same language that we borrowed from 2012 round AGB. So, just let folks know, based on the staff's reading, it seems if neither ccTLD or gTLD application has completed this process, it seems to us that ccTLD string requests will take priority in the evaluation. That's how we're reading the 2012 AGB. We didn't intend to change any of that, just by following the same

standard. So, that's the first scenario regarding conflict with an in-process ccTLD request.

And I'm just going to quickly go through the last bit of the amendment for 4.4. So, that's to address the second scenario where a conflict is found between an applied for string, gTLD string, with another string that's applied for in a previous round, but still in process. So, what we're proposing here is this. If a applied for primary gTLD string or any of its variant labels is confusingly similar to an applied for primary gTLD string or any of its variant labels that has been held over from a previous application round and still in progress, the newly submitted application will be put on hold until the outcome of the application from the previous round has been determined. So, basically, say, this newly applied for string will be put on hold. And there are two sub-elements for that. The first one is if the application from a previous round successfully completes the evaluation and is eligible for entry into a registry agreement, the entire variant label set of the newly applied for primary gTLD string is ineligible to proceed in the application process. And the second sub-element says if the application from the previous round is withdrawn or fails to complete evaluation, the newly submitted application can proceed to the next stage of the application process. So, just to recap, for this scenario, basically, the new application will be put on hold until a resolution is determined for the application from a previous round. So, that's the gist of this amendment. And I will stop here. I understand there's a lot of information to digest, but welcome input and questions from the group.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. And as Ariel mentioned, this was only put to the list, I think, yesterday. So, it is a lot of information. So, if you have initial thoughts, that'd be great to hear them now. Otherwise, we'll give a week or two to let this sink in and we can come back to this next week. Dennis?

DENNIS TAN: Thank you, Donna. And this is an initial reaction, again, because it was posted yesterday. But nevertheless, my initial reaction was that the majority of language is a duplication of what's in the AGB. And I think, Ariel, you mentioned that. So, that's good. My concern or my question is, is our intention to create a version of this such that this is what we want, regardless of what new version in the AGB is going to look like and then we create a fork, an alternate version of what we want, how variant labels need to be treated? In the sense, if we are going to, because the other way I was thinking, if we want to subscribe to whatever process all the TLDs are going to be subject to, then we should state that, right? We're taking this as a template, but we are going to subscribe to the process that is going to be established in the future. For variant labels, these are going to be the consideration that you need to take. So, in that way, we're not repeating, duplicating the language at the risk of creating a parallel version of how variant sets are going to be treated. I hope that makes sense.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Dennis. I'm not sure I completely understand. One of the reasons that we've replicated this language, and it will be policy recommendations for us, is that this is language from the 2012

AGB. So, we don't know whether that language is going to follow through. So, that's why we've explicitly duplicated it here. But I'm not sure about your second part about whatever happens with, I guess, whatever implementation is going on for SubPro now, and whether the intent is that this would fit in with that. I'm just not sure in that second part. Thanks, Dennis.

DENNIS TAN:

Thank you, Donna. Yeah, I guess that's too far ahead that we cannot see, right? And we can only provide what we have in front of us. But I think that was my, again, initial reaction. I mean, we know what we want today. We don't know what the future holds in terms of the next version of the AGB. So, I'm not sure we were going to subscribe to that for variant set. So, okay. I see the merits of that too. So, let's have our version and maybe in the implementation guidance, for our time guidance. I think we don't want to create different versions of parallel processes. I think that was my just reaction. Having different processes for variant sets and then TLD, right, where the only difference is the variant labels being applied. I think we'll continue to process. Thank you.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Yeah. So, this was in the 2012 guidebook. It's the same language, but in the 2012 guidebook, it only related to a gTLD application because there were no variants. So, it may be that that language will hold going forward just for the gTLD, but now we're including variants. So, I think the intent is that they would be compatible or pretty much the same. It's just that we're ensuring that variant labels are added to it. Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG: Thanks, Donna and Dennis. And something I just want to add to this is basically 4.4 is to reconfirm the outcome of string similarity review is consistent with what was in the 2012 AGB. So, adding the variant consideration doesn't change the outcome of string similarity review. What it changes is that when we add a variant, you may find more pairs of confusingly similar string because you have to also consider confusing similarity between their variant labels. So, it basically increased the pool of strings that may be in contention with each other, but then how they're treated as an outcome of that finding is still the same. So, basically, 4.4 is to reaffirm the outcome of string similarity review is still consistent with what was written in the 2012 AGB. And then we're adding 4.4.3 and also 4.4.4 is to basically reiterate what that outcome is, because that was not previously addressed in our previous language. So, that's just something I want to add here. And that's why we thought replicating the language here should not be an issue. And we're not creating new language, basically.

DONNA AUSTIN: Thanks, Ariel. So, we don't have any more comments on this one. I think we'll move on, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG: Okay. Sounds good. So, should this be taken as the group needs to get back to us next week to reconfirm?

DONNA AUSTIN: Yeah. So, we'll come back to this and just see whether folks have any thoughts on it next week and whether they're cool with it and we can use it.

ARIEL LIANG: Okay. Sounds good. Okay. Finally, we're going to little lighter kind of part of our call to talk about our timeline. No pressure at all. So, yeah, this is a table that jointly developed by Steve and me. And this is basically to give folks a sense where we are in the process, what's coming up and what's our goal for actually delivering the final report to the GNSO Council. So, I would just go over this table. And you may have questions about the consensus call element and then we will talk about that next.

So, today's date is 21st of September. What we're doing here is to basically reconfirm the red line. There's no final concerns and also talk about 3.5, 3.6 and 4.4. And we know we haven't reached a conclusion yet for 3.5, 3.4, these three outstanding recommendations. So, we'll go back to these. And the goal is to get final agreement from the group on these three outstanding issues and close them off next Thursday, which is the 28th of September. So, our hope is the group, please take this homework seriously and so that we can really reach agreement on this. Because if we don't, it could potentially impact the timeline of the following steps we have to do before finalizing the actual report. And another item we thought it could be also included in next week's call is to review some selected sections of the final report and just let folks know that in the background, leadership and staff already basically completed every single section of the final report. And what we did is to propose red lines to the existing content in

the initial report so that you can see where it has been updated exactly because the structure is basically the same and a lot of content is repurposed. So, we can review some selected sections we believe that will benefit from broader input from the group next week if time allows.

And then, presuming that we can close off these three outstanding recommendations, the next important step is to initiate the consensus call process on all of the final recommendations. And so, just to let folks know, before ICANN 78, we have about four weeks. And our goal is to initiate the process between next Thursday and next, next Thursday. And we really cannot do that any later than next, next Thursday, which is October 5th, to start a process because it takes about 10 days to complete. And once we start the process, our goal is to conclude—consensus call is on Monday, 16th of October. That will give folks ample time to go over all of the final recommendation languages and then provide your support or objection to these and conclude that process in about 10-day period.

And then we're going to ICANN 78, basically, after that. Just remind folks that we have three sessions scheduled. Two sessions will take place on Saturday, 21st of October. And then the third and final session is going to take place on Monday, 23rd of October. And what we plan for is that if there's any challenge to the consensus designation of any of the recommendation, we have to resolve them no later than the final session at ICANN 78, which is on 23rd of October. But that's really a big if there, if the group has any problem with the consensus designation for the recommendations.

Another big, big goal, basically, is for the EPDP team to report to the GNSO Council that we have completed the phase one final report during the council public session on Wednesday, 25th of October at ICANN 78. Although we in our project plan, we keep telling the council November, that's our projection of completed report. It will be very good if we can deliver this sooner. And then especially informing the council on the completion of this huge milestone at 78. So that's a goal that we're working towards. And that's why we have this kind of timeline and deadlines in mind for all the relevant process.

So after that, there's another point we want to mention is, for example, if any of the recommendation didn't receive the full consensus from the whole group, then there's opportunity for members to file minority statement, basically stating their views, why they do not support the recommendation and whether they have alternative proposal. Oh, sorry. So if that is needed, we have this deadline, which is Monday, 30th of October, which is the Monday following ICANN 78 for members of this team to submit minority statement. That's actually a hard deadline here. But our hope is this is not necessary. And we hope through this two years of deliberation, we don't have to go there for any of the recommendation.

And finally, the last line in this table is what we have in the project plan, which is the deadline for us to submit the final recommendation, a final report to GNSO Council, which is Thursday, November 9. But our hope is to beat that date. But this is our commitment to the council in the project plan with the hard, hard deadline is.

So that's a kind of quick overview of this table. And I will stop here for a moment and see whether there's any question from the group. And I will talk about the consensus call question.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. So we thought it was a good idea just to provide folks with a kind of a backward—Well, it was it was it's backward in the sense that my goal is to inform the GNSO Council that the phase one final report is complete at ICANN 78. So we wanted to see what steps we needed to complete between now and then to achieve that goal. So this is the timeline. I'm hoping we can meet it. And you know, some of it is a little bit of theater, just to be able to tell the council that we've reached that milestone. And then we can deliver that report to them. You know, it'll be maybe a week or two ahead of time. But given the interest in our phase two work at ICANN 77, I just thought it would be good if we could say during ICANN 78 that we're done with phase one, I think that would be significant for us.

So hopefully, I think this is achievable. You know, with the exception of 3.5, 3.6, I don't see that the consensus call is going to be problematic. So I think we're in pretty good shape. And the final report itself, you've all seen the recommendations now, but the final report itself, as Ariel said, we've been working on that in the background, and it's in pretty good shape as well. So we'll share that with the team as soon as we can. Just so you can go over it as well. So any, any comments to folks, folks on board that we think we can do this? Give me a thumbs up or tell me. But I think it's absolutely doable. So that's the time we're working to. Okay, great. The thumbs are up. Alrighty, so Ariel is going to take us

through the process that we're going to use for the consensus call now. Back to you, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Okay, sounds good. And then just a quick reminder, including today's date, we have four meetings before ICANN 78. So just a reminder how much time we have left. So to consensus call process, and I understand a lot of you have heard of this, but I'm not sure how many of you have experienced consensus call process in other PDPs. So we think it may be a good thing to just provide kind of a summary or overview how it's done and what it entails. And it sounds pretty scientific or formal, but the process itself is not super scientific. It's a lot based on the judgment call of the group.

So the first step is basically for the leadership team to propose consensus designation. And we think this is an appropriate first step because the group has deliberated for about two years period and a lot of issues have been erased along the way and we reached the preliminary recommendations and then went through the public comment process. So those issues that need to be raised should have already been raised and understood and discussed. Therefore, we believe the leadership team should have appropriate starting point to actually propose consensus designation for each one of the final recommendations.

So we will just give you the kind of overview what the different levels of consensus designation are. The top one is full consensus. Second one is consensus. Third one is strong support but significant opposition. Fourth is divergence. And fifth is

minority view. I'm not going to labor the points of what they mean exactly but full consensus means there's literally no objection to any of the recommendation and then minority view basically means there's a ton of objection and there's a lot of different views regarding recommendations. So this is basically the extremes of a spectrum. And if you're interested in reading the actual definition of these, this slide provides that and also in our EPDP team charter, there's a whole section that provides further information on that and I will drop a link in the chat shortly. So that's what the consensus designation means. And then the leadership team will propose that for each one of the final recommendation for that. And our hope is that every single one will achieve full consensus, but we'll see.

And then following that proposal of leadership team, basically, we're going to start, initial initiate the consensus call process. And the starting point is basically the leadership team publish their proposed consensus designation on the mailing list for the whole team to review. And I just want to emphasize this consensus call is not a vote. It's not a poll and it's not a voice vote or anything. It's really just publishing the designation on the mailing list because everybody is on it and will have a chance to review and react to that. So it's done offline on the mailing list. So that's the start of the consensus call process.

And then during this process, what I want to emphasize here is we have different levels of participation in this group. We have members, we have participants, and we have observers. So for the consensus call process, only members are eligible to participate. And that's clearly indicated in our charter because

members, they're appointed by their representative groups and they carry that responsibility for consensus call process. But participants, they cannot participate in that. And also, of course, observers, they cannot. And then what the members, they have to do is they need to indicate via the mailing list, whether they accept or do not, do not accept the proposed consensus designation for the final recommendations. And if no objection is raised, then the consensus designation is considered accepted by the members. If any objection is raised, then the leadership team has to re-evaluate and publish an updated designation. And another key point I want to clearly mention here is if there is no response received, it will be taken as non-objection. So silence is non-objection in this particular process. So that's how members confirm the consensus designation proposed by the leadership team. And we will have about a 10-day period to let members do this work.

And then finally, after the conclusion of the consensus call process, we have this deadline for submitting minority statement. And you probably recall seeing that in the timetable, which would put us the 30th of October. So that means members can submit their minority viewpoints or any recommendation that did not receive full consensus designation. And they can do that as individuals themselves, or they can form a group and submit a joint minority statement. So our hope is this step can be omitted for this group because so far we haven't had a lot of contentious discussions. So that's a minority statement view point.

And the final step is basically for staff to document the consensus designation in the final report. We will have an annex to document

that. And then also if there's any minority statement submitted, we will also document that as a part of the annex in the final report.

Another thing I want to mention here is in the annex for consensus designation, no member's name will be associated with any recommendation that receives full consensus or consensus designation. So there'll be no names, if that's the case. But if there's any recommendation that receives a minority statement, for example, then the members name must be linked and explicitly mentioned. That's the expectation for how it's going to be reflected in the final report.

So that's a kind of summary of the consensus call process. As you see, it's not very, very scientific, but at least it's clearly spelled out what to expect. And it's in our charter, and also in the PDP Working Group guidelines of the GNSO Council. And now I'm going to drop the link in the chat, which is what's in the charter regarding our process. And you will see it's page 32 and in the following pages, they talk about this whole decision making process. But you can take a look at this after the call. And I will stop here for now to see whether there's any comments or questions from the group.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Thanks, Ariel. So just one question from me. Given I think we're a hybrid representative model of the EPDP team, I assume that when we refer to member, what we're expecting is for each representative group to essentially be one voice. So I don't think that we would be expecting three members from each group to respond, but where we have individual representatives on the

team, then they can put forward their own responses. Is that correct?

ARIEL LIANG:

This is Ariel. I think you're correct. But others, please correct me if I'm not correct. Yes, I believe it's the case that each representative group will have a single voice and that needs to be agreed by the appointed members of that group. But it's not needed or it could be kind of confusing to have three members saying different things. They have to reach a joint agreed decisions among themselves and have one voice for their representative group. So that's my understanding. And then Steve just kind of pinged me and I think there's something else I want to emphasize, is that the consensus call is only for the final recommendations, including the implementation guidance. The consensus call is not for the final report. That means you do not have to do consensus call for executive summary and other glossary, that kind of sections. These are not for consensus call. So only for the recommendations. And that's another point I want to highlight.

DONNA AUSTIN:

Okay. Thanks, Ariel. I don't think we have anything else, do we? That's it for today?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes, that is for today. And I'm just going to go back to the table and make sure everybody review that again to understand the deadlines we're working against. And our hope for the group is we

can close off the outstanding items no later than next week, so that we can initiate the consensus calling in a timely manner.

DONNA AUSTIN:

All right. So we'll come back to 3.5, 3.6 and 4.4 next week with the hope that we can agree on a path forward. And with the registries and ALAC, if you did want to have a conversation together before we come back as a group, then I'm sure to just reach out to Ariel and I'm sure she can facilitate that for you. And what I mean by that is just arrange a time for you to get on a call. Doesn't have to be the case that Ariel or leadership or anyone else has to be on the call. Just those that want to have a chat. All righty. With that, Devan, I think we can call it a night and we'll talk to everybody next week. So thanks, everyone.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]