ICANN79 Policy Outlook Report

79 | COMMUNITY FORUM

SAN JUAN

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Welcome to ICANN79

Welcome to the ICANN79 Community Forum in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In preparation for this ICANN Public Meeting, I am pleased to present the ICANN79 Outlook Report written by the Policy Development Support team. This report provides a high-level overview of the planned work and activities of the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees during ICANN79.

ICANN79 will feature a Welcome Ceremony and the presentation of the ICANN Community Excellence Award on Monday, 4 March. There will also be a question and answer session with the ICANN organization executive team, a Public Forum, and a public meeting of the ICANN Board. Throughout the week, the ICANN community will advance policy and advice work in priority areas. There will also be joint sessions between various ICANN community groups and the ICANN Board.

A global community of stakeholders and participants with different backgrounds and points of view help coordinate and support the unique identifiers of the Internet. The Internet functions for everyone because everyone is invited to help make it work. Consensus policies developed through the multistakeholder model are highly effective and have the greatest legitimacy.

Thank you to all of you for making the considerable commitment of time and effort to attend this meeting. No matter if you are an ICANN regular, an occasional participant, or a newcomer, I encourage you to actively engage in this Community Forum.

Best regards,

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Senior Vice President,
Policy Development Support

Managing Director,
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Address Supporting Organization (ASO)

What to Expect

The ASO and ASO Address Council (AC) will convene during ICANN79 for several work sessions, a joint session with the ICANN Board, and an information session about number resources. The ASO AC will conduct ten open work sessions to advance its work and discuss various internal matters.

Background

The ASO is defined in a [2019 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)](#), affirming the relationship between the names and numbers communities. The purpose of the ASO is to review recommendations on global Internet Protocol address policy and to advise the ICANN Board. Global policies are defined in the ASO MoU as "Internet number resource policies that have the agreement of all RIRs, according to their policy development processes, and ICANN and require specific actions or outcomes on the part of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority or any other external ICANN-related body in order to be implemented." The ASO ensures that the policy development process has been correctly followed in each RIR community:

- African Network Information Centre
- Asia Pacific Network Information Centre
- American Registry for Internet Numbers
- Latin American and Caribbean Internet Addresses Registry
- Réseaux IP Européens Network Coordination Centre

The ASO conducts policy development work during Regional Internet Registry (RIR) meetings and on [mailing lists](#).

The [ASO Address Council (ASO AC)](#) coordinates the global policy development work of the Internet number community and appoints members to the ICANN Board, the ICANN Nominating Committee, and other ICANN groups. The ASO AC consists of 15 members, three from each RIR.

ASO AC monthly teleconferences are open to observers. For more information, including the teleconference schedule, observer privileges, and remote participation details, visit the [ASO AC website](#).

Session Details

Session times are in UTC-4. Please refer to the [ICANN79 schedule](#) for the most current information.

ASO Work Sessions
Monday, 4 March | **10:30–12:00, 13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00**
Tuesday, 5 March | **09:00–10:00, 10:30–12:00, 13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00**
Wednesday, 6 March | **09:00–10:00, 10:30–12:00, 13:15–14:30**

Joint Session: ICANN Board and ASO
Wednesday, 6 March | **16:15–17:30**

ASO and IANA Information Session: Let's Talk About Numbers
Wednesday, 6 March | **15:00–16:00**

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

What to Expect

During the ccNSO sessions, the country code top-level domain (ccTLD) community and others interested in ccTLD-related issues will discuss and receive updates on topics relevant to ccTLD managers. Simultaneous interpretation will be available for a select number of ccNSO sessions. The enhanced language support will benefit the ccTLD community by deepening operational exchanges and promoting information sharing.

The ccNSO program will begin on Saturday, 2 March. The Guidelines Review Committee (GRC) will hold a workshop, while the Universal Acceptance Committee (UAC) and the Domain Name System (DNS) Abuse Standing Committee (DASC) will hold working sessions. The ccNSO schedule continues on Sunday, 3 March, when the ccNSO Council will hold a workshop. There will also be working sessions by the Strategic and Operational Planning Committee (SOPC), the Internet Governance Liaison Committee (IGLC), and the Top-Level Domain Operations (TLD-OPS) Standing Committee.

Tech Day will be held on Monday, 4 March. Tech Day is a workshop open to all members of the ICANN community with an interest in technical, operational, and security issues.

The ccNSO program on Tuesday, 5 March, will begin with a welcome session. Next, during the Internet Fragmentation session, the ccNSO Internet Governance Liaison Committee (IGLC) will explore the concept, and how it impacts ccTLDs. Tuesday afternoon is dedicated to policy and related matters, relevant to ccTLD managers: the ccNSO Council will discuss with the ccTLDs present the review of potential policy gaps in the ccTLD post-delegation processes, followed by an update by the Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLD String Selection Working Group regarding its latest proposals. This update is timely, as it prepares the ccNSO membership for the next steps in the ccNSO decision making process, including voting after ICANN79.

On Wednesday, 6 March, the ccNSO kicks off with the ccTLD News Session: ccTLD managers from different regions will share the latest developments relevant to their ccTLDs. The program continues with a session when various ccNSO working groups and committees will brief the ccTLDs present on their latest and upcoming activities, and will seek guidance on the evolving travel situation. Later that day, ccNSO members and others will meet the ccNSO-appointed ICANN Board members for a question and answer session. During the final session on Wednesday, Public Technical Identifiers (PTI) and the Customer Standing Committee (CSC) will inform the ICANN community about their activities regarding the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions.

Finally, the ccNSO Council will meet on Thursday, 6 March. The detailed ccNSO schedule, including highlights of topics to be covered and details on remote participation for ICANN79, is available on the **ccNSO ICANN79 workspace**.

Background

The ccNSO is one of the three Supporting Organizations within ICANN. Created in 2003 for and by ccTLD managers, the ccNSO develops and recommends global policies, such as the retirement of ccTLDs, to the ICANN Board. The ccNSO provides a global platform to discuss topics and issues of concern, build consensus and technical cooperation, and facilitate the development of voluntary best practices for ccTLD managers. Membership in the ccNSO is open to all ccTLD managers.

The ccNSO is administered by the ccNSO Council, which consists of 18 councilors (15 elected by ccNSO members, three appointed by the ICANN Nominating Committee). The ccNSO councilors are actively involved in determining the work and direction of the ccNSO. Councilors manage the policy development process, lead and participate in **various ccNSO working groups**, engage with the ICANN community on topical issues, and develop positions based on ICANN community feedback. The ccNSO Council meets regularly during ICANN Public Meetings and at monthly teleconferences. All ccNSO Council documents, minutes of meetings, resolutions, and discussions are published on the **ccNSO website**.

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

Participate in the ccNSO Course on ICANN Learn to find out more about its work and how it is organized. Subscribe to the ccNSO monthly newsletter to stay informed.

Session Details

Session times are in UTC-4. Please refer to the ICANN79 schedule for the most current information.

Please refer to the ccNSO ICANN79 session highlights for detailed agendas and more information.

Working Group and Committee Sessions

Guidelines Review Committee (GRC) workshop
Saturday, 2 March | 09:00–12:00

The ccNSO GRC is organizing a workshop to explore participants' perspectives on the following two topics: firstly, the ccNSO internal procedures with good faith requirements associated with exercising removal of individual directors of the ICANN Board and secondly, a continuous improvement framework for the ccNSO.

Universal Acceptance Committee (UAC)
Saturday, 2 March | 13:15–14:30

Universal Acceptance (UA) refers to the concept of treating all domain names equally and ensuring that they are recognized, accepted, and functional across all Internet applications, systems, and devices. The purpose of the ccNSO UAC is to provide the ccTLD community a platform to interact and share information at a global level and with other groups under the ICANN umbrella on topics related to UA and acceptance of IDNs. The UAC will hold an internal working session to discuss its work plan for the coming year.

DNS Abuse Standing Committee (DASC)
Saturday, 2 March | 15:00–16:00

The ccNSO DASC is the centerpiece of the ccTLD community-driven DNS abuse process at the global level and under the ICANN umbrella. The DASC was created as a dedicated forum for ccTLD managers to discuss the important issue of DNS abuse and to share information, lessons learned, and practices. The DASC will hold an internal working session to discuss its work plan for the coming year.

Registrant Capacity Building
Saturday, 2 March | 16:30–17:30

Members of the ICANN Registrant Program team and ccTLDs continue to explore how further collaboration can benefit both ccTLDs and the Registrant Program.

ccNSO Council Workshop (closed)
Sunday, 3 March | 09:00–10:00

To review potential policy gaps in the ccTLD post-delegation processes pertaining to the delegation, transfer, revocation, and retirement of ccTLDs, the ccNSO Council will hold a closed workshop.

ccNSO Council Workshop (closed)
Sunday, 3 March | 10:30–12:00

To ensure the future resilience and continuity of ccNSO Council's operations, the ccNSO Council annually reviews the distribution of relevant roles and responsibilities.

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

Tech Working Group
Sunday, 3 March | 13:15–14:30

The ccNSO Tech Working Group organizes Tech Day, a forum for both experienced participants and newcomers to meet, present, and discuss technical and operational registry topics, security, and other DNS-related work. The group will hold an internal working session.

Internet Governance Liaison Committee (IGLC)
Sunday, 3 March | 13:15–14:30

The ccNSO established the IGLC to coordinate, facilitate, and increase the participation of ccTLD managers in Internet governance discussions and processes. The IGLC will hold a working session. Topics for discussion include, among others, the United Nations (U.N.)-led review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) being held in 2025 on the twentieth anniversary of the original WSIS, and why it matters to ccTLDs around the world.

Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Workshop (SOPC)
Sunday, 3 March | 15:00–16:00

The purpose of the SOPC is to provide input into ICANN's and PTI strategic and operational planning and related budget processes that are relevant from a ccTLD or ccNSO perspective. It also coordinates, facilitates, and encourages the participation of ccTLD managers in these processes. In December 2023, ICANN published for Public Comment the draft ICANN Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) Operating Plan and Budget and the draft PTI FY25 Operating Plan and Budget and the draft Five-Year Plans. During this workshop, the SOPC will meet with relevant ICANN staff to discuss the recent SOPC submission.

TLD-OPS
Sunday, 3 March | 15:00–17:30

During ICANN66 in November 2019, the ccNSO Top-Level Domain Operations (TLD-OPS) Standing Committee held a workshop to test its draft Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Playbook. It serves as a basic business continuity implementation guide for small ccTLD operators. Planning for the next edition kicks off during ICANN79.

The TLD-OPS Standing Committee is the oversight body of the **TLD-OPS mailing list**. The purpose of the standing committee is to govern the daily operation of the TLD-OPS email list and, when necessary, to develop and implement progress plans for future improvements and developments of the TLD-OPS email list, including its ecosystem. TLD-OPS is the incident response community for and by ccTLDs and brings together those who are responsible for the overall security and stability of their ccTLD. The goal of the TLD-OPS community is to enable ccTLD operators worldwide to collaboratively strengthen their incident response capabilities.

Tech Day

Since 2006, **Tech Day** has been part of ICANN Public Meetings. It provides a forum for both experienced participants and newcomers to meet, present, and discuss technical and operational registry topics, security, and other DNS-related work. During ICANN79, Tech Day presentation topics will include blockchain technology, data collection, and ICANN's Domain Abuse Activity Reporting.

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

ccNSO Members Meeting, Day 1

ccNSO Welcome Session
Tuesday, 5 March | 09:00–10:00

The ccNSO Council chair and Meeting Program Committee chair will welcome participants to the ccNSO Members Meeting. In addition, various ccNSO working groups and committees will brief the ccTLDs present on their latest and upcoming activities.

Internet Fragmentation Session
Tuesday, 5 March | 10:30–12:00

Internet fragmentation is defined in many different ways. The Internet Governance ForumPolicy Network on Internet Fragmentation identified three key dimensions of Internet fragmentation:

- Fragmentation of the Internet user experience,
- Fragmentation of the Internet's technical layer, and
- Fragmentation of Internet governance and coordination.

Whatever the definition, Internet fragmentation has potentially significant implications for ccTLDs. During ICANN79, the ccNSO IGLC holds a session to explore how Internet fragmentation affects ccTLDs from different regions. What should ccTLDs be aware of, what are the regulatory realities, and what are the approaches being taken by ccTLDs?

Policy Gap Session
Tuesday, 5 March | 13:15–16:00

A subgroup of the ccNSO Council reviewed potential policy gaps in ccTLD post-delegation processes pertaining to the delegation, transfer, revocation, and retirement of ccTLDs. During ICANN79, the ccTLDs present will explore and discuss the tools to address these gaps.

Policy Update: ccPDP4 IDN ccTLD String Selection
Tuesday, 5 March | 16:30–17:30

The fourth Country Code Policy Development Process (ccPDP4) Working Group defines the criteria, process, and procedures for the (de)selection of IDN ccTLDs associated with the country codes assigned to countries, territories, or other areas of geopolitical interest listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard. The results of this ccPDP4 will eventually replace the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process.

The working group expects to have completed its final report by ICANN79, taking into account the assessment made following its recent request for comments. This will include the general policy proposals for the IDN ccTLD string selection process. It will also include proposals for variant management, confusing similarity, de-selection, and review mechanisms. The final report will be presented to the ccNSO Council. Once adopted by the ccNSO Council, it will be subject to a ccNSO membership vote. After the vote, and assuming adoption, the recommended policy is expected to be submitted to the ICANN Board by June 2024.

Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

ccNSO Members Meeting, Day 2

ccTLD News Session
Wednesday, 6 March | 10:30–12:00

Previous editions of the ccTLD News Sessions included case studies, statistics, new developments, trends, and more. The ccTLD News Sessions have been part of the ccNSO Members Meetings for several years. They provide a global platform for both experienced and new people to meet, share experiences, and discuss ccTLD-related aspects. Please refer to the ccNSO ICANN79 session highlights for a detailed agenda.

ccNSO Working Group and Committee Updates
Wednesday, 6 March | 13:15–14:30

Several ccNSO working groups and committees will provide an update on their progress and seek input on the next steps.

Session with ccNSO-appointed ICANN Board Members
Wednesday, 6 March | 15:00–16:00

The ccNSO-appointed ICANN Board members have been invited to attend a question and answer session and to share their experiences as ICANN Board members.

IANA and CSC Session
Wednesday, 6 March | 16:15–17:30

PTI and the CSC will inform the ICANN community, including ccTLDs, about their activities regarding the IANA functions.

ccNSO Council Meeting

Thursday, 7 March | 15:00–16:00

Topics for discussion include: outcomes from the ccNSO session on the policy gaps in the ccTLD post-delegation processes, the roles and responsibilities of the various members of the ccNSO Council, and the election of the ccNSO leadership team consisting of one chair and two vice chairs. Additional topics for the ccNSO Council meeting will be made available on its workspace.

What to Expect

The GNSO is the policymaking body responsible for generic top-level domains (gTLDs). Its members include representatives from gTLD registries, ICANN-accredited registrars, intellectual property interests, Internet service and connectivity providers, business, and noncommercial interests. The GNSO brings these different stakeholders and other parts of the ICANN community together to develop gTLD policy recommendations through a multistakeholder process driven by working groups and teams.

The GNSO Council will make progress on policy development initiatives during ICANN79:

- The Transfer Policy Review Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group will seek ICANN community input on draft recommendations regarding Change of Registrant (COR) and post inter-registrar transfer locks.

- The Expedited Policy Development Process for Internationalized Domain Names Working Group will soon finish its Phase 2 Initial Report, which includes preliminary recommendations pertaining to second-level variant management.

There are recent developments regarding ICANN Board consideration of outputs from GNSO policy development efforts:

- On 16 March 2023, the ICANN Board adopted a majority of the outputs from the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures (SubPro) PDP and placed 38 outputs into a "pending" status. The GNSO Council tasked a small team to comprehend the reasons preventing the ICANN Board from accepting the pending recommendations and to suggest the best mechanism(s) to address the pending outputs. The small team, in collaboration with the ICANN Board, has addressed all pending recommendations. The GNSO Council small team is now considering potential modifications to recommendations that the ICAN Board did not **adopt** and will update the GNSO Council and ICANN community of its progress during ICANN79.

Background

Transfer Policy Review PDP

Following receipt and review of the ICANN staff-developed **Transfer Policy Status Report**, the GNSO Council established a Transfer Policy Review Scoping Team that provided an **Initial Scoping Paper** in April 2020. A **Preliminary Issue Report** for a PDP was published for **Public Comment** on 12 October 2020, with an updated **Final Issue Report** submitted to the GNSO Council on 12 January 2021.

On 18 February 2021, the GNSO Council **initiated** the two-phase Transfer Policy Review PDP. The PDP will determine if changes to the policy are needed to improve the ease, security, and efficacy of inter-registrar and inter-registrant transfers. As recommended in the Final Issue Report, the PDP will address the following topics:

- The Gaining and Losing Forms of Authorization, AuthInfo Codes, NACKing transfers;

- Change of registrant requirements;

- The transfer emergency action contact and reversing inter-registrar transfers, the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy, and ICANN-approved transfers.

The GNSO Council **adopted** the PDP working group **charter** on 24 March 2021, and the working group began meeting in May 2021. The charter initially anticipated that the PDP would be conducted in phases, but the approach has since been changed due to dependencies identified between charter topics. The work is now structured as a single phase.

Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO)

On 21 June 2022, the working group published an **Initial Report** for Public Comment covering the Gaining and Losing Forms of Authorization (FOA), AuthInfo Codes, and NACKing transfers. It has reviewed public comments and incorporated changes into the preliminary recommendations where appropriate. It has also conducted preliminary deliberations on the change of registrant requirements contained in the Transfer Policy.

During deliberations, the working group identified the need to make progress on charter questions related to the Transfer Emergency Action Contact (TEAC), reversing inter-registrar transfers, and the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy (TDRP) before finalizing work on other charter topics. Therefore, these topics have been the working group's focus area. Currently, it is developing preliminary agreements and recommendations on bulk transfers and it plans to discuss the Change of Registrant as the next step.

The working group is expected to deliver a second Initial Report covering all charter topics, including revisions to the recommendations contained in the first Initial Report. During ICANN79, the working group will hold two working sessions on Saturday, 2 March to seek ICANN community input on the draft recommendations regarding COR and post inter-registrar locks.

EPDP on Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs)

The October 2020 **Final Report** of an IDN Scoping Team recommended an EPDP as the desired approach to address work related to IDN policy. In November 2020, the GNSO Council established a team to prepare a draft charter and initiation request for the EPDP-IDNs. In developing the EPDP-IDNs charter, the drafting team built on the existing body of work related to IDNs, such as IDN-related **recommendations** from the GNSO New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP, **IDN variant TLD implementation**, and **recommendations for the Technical Utilization of the Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR)**.

On 10 May 2021, the drafting team submitted its deliverables to the GNSO Council for its consideration. The EPDP-IDNs is expected to:

- Determine the approach for a consistent definition of all gTLDs; and

- Develop policy recommendations that will eventually allow for the introduction of variant gTLDs at the top-level.

On 20 May 2021, the GNSO Council approved the initiation request for the EPDP-IDNs and adopted its charter. The EPDP-IDNs Working Group held its first meeting on 11 August 2021.

In November 2022, the GNSO Council approved the **project change request** from the working group, which plans to complete its work in two phases, with Phase 1 focusing on topics related to top-level IDN gTLD definition and variant management, and Phase 2 focusing on topics related to second-level IDN variant management. The working group believes that this two-phased approach will help prioritize the current implementation planning of the SubPro PDP Outputs that are focused primarily on the top-level.

On 24 April 2023, the working group published its Phase 1 Initial Report for **Public Comment**, which closed on 19 June 2023. The Initial Report included 68 preliminary recommendations covering issues pertaining to gTLD variant definition and management at the top-level. The EPDP-IDNs Team received input from **12 submissions**, which did not raise any significant concerns or many new issues that the EPDP-IDNs Team had not previously considered. The EPDP-IDNs Team sought guidance from the GNSO Council with regard to four submissions related to the ".québec" string. The GNSO Council agreed with the EPDP-IDNs Team assessment that those submissions were outside the scope for the EPDP-IDNs to address. Following the Public Comment process, the EPDP-IDNs Team finalized its 69 recommendations and submitted its Phase 1 Final Report to the GNSO Council in November 2023.

Meanwhile, on 16 March 2023, the ICANN Board requested the working group to deliver an updated project plan by the last day of ICANN77 that identifies all charter questions that would impact the next Applicant Guidebook (AGB), as well as a timeline for the delivery of relevant recommendations to the GNSO Council. During ICANN77, the GNSO Council submitted this **deliverable** to the ICANN Board, noting the working group's unchanged project plan and timeline estimation as nearly all of its charter questions may have an impact on the next AGB. On 25 July 2023, the GNSO Council submitted a **revised timeline** after the working group considered several factors, including the progress made on Phase 2 deliberations ahead of schedule as well as the approval of its request to hold a dedicated face-to-face workshop in December 2023. The working group shortened the Phase 2 timeline by 13 months, with the estimated delivery date of the Phase 2 Final Report in October 2024.

On 21 December 2023, the GNSO Council **approved** the **EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report**, including all 69 policy recommendations.

During ICANN79, the EPDP-IDNs Team may hold one working session on Saturday, 2 March, to finish its Phase 2 Initial Report, which includes preliminary recommendations pertaining to second-level variant management.

New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP

The New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP Working Group began its work on 22 February 2016. Over the course of several years, it convened several subgroups and undertook extensive deliberations on the list of topics in its charter. This work included numerous opportunities for input, including Public Comment on its **Initial Report**, **Supplemental Initial Report**, **Additional Supplemental Initial Report from Work Track 5**, and **Draft Final Report**. The working group submitted its Final Report to the GNSO Council for its consideration on 18 January 2021, with over 300 outputs for 41 topics. Only two outputs did not receive consensus or full consensus support from the working group.

On 18 February 2021, the GNSO Council unanimously **approved** the outputs achieving consensus or full consensus contained in the Final Report. On 24 March 2021, the GNSO-adopted outputs and the **Recommendations Report** were sent to the ICANN Board for its review. On 12 September 2021, the ICANN Board directed the ICANN organization to initiate an **Operational Design Phase (ODP)** for the Final Report outputs. The ODP began on 3 January 2022. On 12 December 2022, the ICANN organization delivered an **Operational Design Assessment (ODA)** on the outputs produced by the SubPro PDP, which served as an important input for the ICANN Board's consideration of the SubPro outputs.

On 16 March 2023, the ICANN Board **adopted** the majority of the SubPro PDP outputs and began implementation efforts to prepare for launching the next round of the New gTLD Program. The ICANN organization has established the **Implementation Review Team** (IRT) to support the implementation of policy recommendations for future rounds of new gTLD applications.

In the March 2023 resolution, the ICANN Board also designated 38 SubPro PDP outputs as "pending". As a result, the GNSO Council convened a small team tasked with performing a triage exercise to suggest the best mechanism(s) to address the pending outputs. The small team completed a number of actions, including working with the ICANN Board to identify which pending recommendations can be resolved during implementation or through a GNSO Council clarifying statement. The small team, in collaboration with the ICANN Board, resolved all pending recommendations. The small team is now focused on determining what modifications are needed, if any, for the recommendations that the ICANN Board **did not adopt**. Representatives from the small team will update the GNSO Council and the ICANN community on its proposed Supplemental Recommendations during ICANN79. The small team is also scheduled to meet during ICANN79 to determine whether input received may necessitate amendments to its Supplemental Recommendations.

EPDP on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data

On 17 May 2018, the ICANN Board approved the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data (TempSpec) to allow contracted parties to comply with existing ICANN contractual requirements, while also complying with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The adoption of the TempSpec triggered the requirement for the GNSO to complete a consensus PDP within the expedited time frame of one year.

On 19 July 2018, the GNSO Council initiated the two-phase EPDP-TempSpec:

- Phase 1 aimed to decide whether the TempSpec should be confirmed by 25 May 2019. Phase 1 of the EPDP-TempSpec concluded in March 2019. An **Implementation Review Team** is tasked with implementing the **ICANN Board approved** Phase 1 policy recommendations.

- Phase 2 focused on the discussion of the System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) and additional topics held over from Phase 1. Phase 2 work concluded in September 2020, with GNSO Council **adoption** of its recommendations. The EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2 Final Report sets recommendations for the SSAD as well as for the "Priority 2" topics (e.g., data retention and city field redaction).

The GNSO Council consulted with the ICANN Board on the financial sustainability of the SSAD, and the concerns expressed within minority statements, including whether a further cost/benefit analysis should be conducted before the ICANN Board considers all SSAD-related recommendations for adoption. During ICANN70, the ICANN Board directed the ICANN organization to initiate an **Operational Design Phase for SSAD-related** recommendations. On 25 January 2022, the ICANN organization delivered the **Operational Design Assessment** to the ICANN Board.

The GNSO Council formed the EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2 Small Team, tasked to analyze the ODA and provide the GNSO Council with feedback. The small team submitted its **preliminary report** to the GNSO Council on 4 April 2022, expressing the view that the ODA does not provide sufficient information to assess the cost/benefit of the SSAD. The small team also recommended the implementation of a "proof of concept" approach to gather data and test assumptions, aiming to help assess the financial sustainability of the SSAD.

Subsequently, the ICANN Board directed the ICANN organization to design such a "proof of concept," which is now known as the "WHOIS Disclosure System." The ICANN organization published the **Whois Disclosure System design paper** in September 2022 and presented it to the GNSO Council and the EPDP-TempSpec Phase 2 Small Team during ICANN75. The small team subsequently reviewed the design paper and continued its consultations with the ICANN organization, resulting in an **addendum** to its preliminary report. The GNSO Council accepted the addendum and **communicated** to the ICANN Board its support for the request that the ICANN Board proceed with the implementation of the Whois Disclosure System, provided that the updates identified by the small team in the addendum are made.

Furthermore, the GNSO Council confirmed to the ICANN Board that, pending the implementation of the Whois Disclosure System for a period of up to two years, the ICANN Board considerations for the SSAD recommendations should remain paused unless the data resulting from the implementation of the Whois Disclosure System would warrant a decision at an earlier stage.

In February 2023, the ICANN Board **directed** the ICANN organization to develop and launch the WHOIS Disclosure System (System), now called the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS), within 11 months and continue engagement with the GNSO Council on the implementation. The ICANN Board also requested the GNSO Council to consider a Policy Development Process (PDP) or other means to require registrars to use the System and to establish success criteria for the RDRS. In response, the GNSO Council updated the **assignment** of the EPDP Phase 2 small team to reflect these new work items. The small team met with the ICANN organization during ICANN76 and ICANN77 and met regularly to work on its assignment. In accordance with the recommendation from the small team, the GNSO Council **communicated** the proposed success criteria to the ICANN Board on 1 June 2023.

Further engagement and consultation are expected to continue between the ICANN Board, ICANN organization, and the GNSO Council. The GNSO Council small team is expected to address open issues and collaborate on the successful implementation of the System. The GNSO Council recommends that the RDRS run for a period of up to two (2) years; sufficient information should be available to make a determination on how to proceed with the SSAD recommendations. Furthermore, the small team put forward a proposed charter to the GNSO Council for a RDRS Standing Committee to help inform the next steps on the SSAD policy recommendations. This Standing Committee will supersede the small team following the launch of RDRS to review the data that will be produced by the ICANN organization on a monthly basis and advise the GNSO Council accordingly.

The RDRS Standing Committee will meet twice prior to ICANN79 to discuss the monthly metrics from the first two months of RDRS operations. The Standing Committee will not meet during ICANN79.

gTLD Registration Data Accuracy Scoping Team

The GNSO Council adopted the formation and instructions of the gTLD Registration Data Accuracy Scoping Team during its meeting on 22 July 2021. The scoping team has been tasked to consider a number of accuracy-related topics, such as current enforcement and reporting, measurement of accuracy, and effectiveness. These considerations are expected to help inform its deliberations on whether any changes are recommended to the GNSO Council to improve accuracy levels and how these changes would be developed (i.e., a recommendation to change existing contractual requirements may necessitate a PDP or change through contractual negotiations).

The scoping team began its deliberations in October 2021, focusing its efforts on the assignments that the GNSO Council provided in its instructions. The scoping team submitted its write-up for two assignments to the GNSO Council in September 2022. During its November 2022 meeting, the GNSO Council decided to adopt recommendation #3 in the write-up but deferred consideration of recommendations #1 and #2 regarding registrar survey and registrar audit.

As a consequence, the scoping team's work that requires access to generic top-level domain (gTLD) registration data is paused. The GNSO Council encouraged the ICANN organization to conduct outreach to the European Data Protection Board and proceed with the Data Protection Impact Assessment in connection with the scenario(s) in which the request and processing of gTLD registration data takes place as a matter of urgency.

The GNSO Council requested that the ICANN organization and Contracted Parties finish negotiations on the Data Processing Agreement (DPA) as soon as practicable. The absence of a completed DPA may act as a roadblock for additional policy work.

The ICANN organization provided an initial update to the GNSO Council in March 2023, which provided details on four scenarios that were identified to review the accuracy of registration data. This update was considered by the GNSO Council during its meeting in April 2023. The GNSO Council resolved during its July 2023 meeting to extend consideration of the scoping team's recommendations until certain dependencies are met or six months elapse.

The ICANN organization conducted a comprehensive assessment of the four scenarios and data protection impact assessments on scenarios two and four.It identified several deficiencies and challenges in pursuing them, which the GNSO Council discussed during its November 2024 meeting. In recognition of the current challenges in pursuing the scenarios, GNSO Councilors noted that, barring (i) completion of the Data Processing Agreement, (ii) implementation of the European Union's revised Network and Information Security Directive (NIS2), or (iii) publication of the Inferential Analysis of Maliciously Registered Domains Study, it may not be the appropriate time to reconvene the scoping team and plans to defer consideration for another six months.

Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO)

More Information

Read the GNSO Policy Briefing to prepare for ICANN79.

Session Details

Session times are in UTC-4. Please refer to the ICANN79 schedule for the most current information.

PDP Working Groups and Scoping Team Work Sessions

EPDP-IDNs
Saturday, 2 March | 09:00–10:00

Transfer Policy Review PDP
Saturday, 2 March | 13:15–14:30
Saturday, 2 March | 15:00–16:00

GNSO Council

GNSO Council Working Sessions
Sunday, 3 March | 09:00–10:00
Sunday, 3 March | 10:30–12:00
Sunday, 3 March | 13:15–14:30

GNSO Council Meeting
Wednesday, 6 March | 13:15–15:15

Joint Sessions

ICANN Board and GNSO Council
Monday, 4 March | 15:00-16:00

GNSO and GAC
Wednesday, 6 March | 09:00–10:00

What to Expect

During ICANN79, the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), Regional At-Large Organizations (RALO) leaders, At-Large liaisons, and other At-Large community members will hold 19 sessions in the three At-Large work tracks of policy, engagement, and operations. The sessions will include two plenary sessions, individual sessions focused on the three At-Large work tracks, three joint sessions, five RALO sessions, an At-Large welcome session, and a wrap-up session.

Background

At-Large is the community of individual Internet users who participate in the policy development of ICANN. Currently, more than 250 At-Large Structures (ALSes) and over 160 individuals organized into five RALOs that represent the views of individual Internet users.

The ALAC consists of 15 members and serves as the primary organizational home within ICANN for individual Internet users. The role of the ALAC is to consider and provide advice on the activities of ICANN as they relate to the interests of individual Internet users.

The work of the At-Large community takes place primarily in working groups divided into three tracks: policy; outreach, engagement, and capacity building; and operations. At-Large conducts its work through regular teleconferences and active participation during ICANN Public Meetings.

Learn more about the At-Large community, its activities, and how to join on the **At-Large website** and **At-Large workspace**. Also, **two ICANN Learn courses** provide additional information on how to start and sustain involvement in the activities of the At-Large community.

Session Details

The Role of Internet Infrastructures in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Internet governance institutions, including the International Telecommunication Union, have increasingly focused on their roles in achieving the 2030 U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. During ICANN79, At-Large will hold a session to discuss negative and positive impacts of the information and communications technology (ICT) industry in relation to achieving the SDGs.

- The goal of this session is to update the At-Large community about the environmental impacts of the ICT industry, in general, and the DNS sector, in particular.

- Participants will include representatives from the ICANN community and the ICANN organization.

The Network and Information Security (NIS2) Directive

This ALAC-hosted discussion will focus on ways in which the DNS industry is evolving to comply with the implementation of new legislation, specifically focusing on the NIS2 Directive passed by the European Union in 2023.

- This session will have three parts:
    - A business, legal, and policy panel to discuss existing registrant verification business practices
    - A technical panel to provide a high-level overview of the technical aspects of NIS2 compliance
    - A question and answer session

- Participants will include representatives from the ICANN community and the ICANN organization.

At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)

In addition, At-Large will be holding the following discussions during ICANN79. The **Consolidated Policy Working Group** meeting will include updates from ALAC-appointed representatives and alternates on specific policy matters, discussion of ICANN Public Comment opportunities, and other issues of importance to end users. The **Operations, Finance, and Budget Working Group** meeting will include updates about the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) ICANN Operating Plan and Budget and the Continuous Improvement Program.

The At-Large community will continue to participate in several Generic Names Supporting Organization policy development processes, such as the Transfer Policy Review, and engage in discussions about the Next Round Implementation Review Team and the IANA) Naming Function Review. ALAC-appointed representatives will be engaged in the respective working group sessions and report back to the ALAC. The At-Large community will also hold a session on the **ICANN Grant Program**.

Joint Sessions

- The ALAC will have a **joint session with the Security and Stability Advisory Committee**, which will include discussions about DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) for end users, an At-Large campaign, and a review of the ICANN Open Data set.

- The ALAC will hold a **joint session with the Governmental Advisory Committee**, which will include a discussion about the Applicant Support Program for the next round of the New gTLD Program.

Regional At-Large Organization (RALO) Activities

The five RALOs have several priority activities for ICANN79. The RALO leaders will hold a **Regional Leaders Coordination Meeting**. Topics include issues which require joint RALO strategies and actions, including a discussion with ICANN organization Global Stakeholder Engagement regional vice presidents on the RALO Partnership, an opportunity to review the implementation of FY24 strategic plans and discuss FY25 strategic plans, and developing a unified onboarding process for new At-Large Structure (ALS) and individual members.

Two RALOs will hold sessions during ICANN79. The **African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO)** will discuss the statement on the topic of "artificial intelligence (AI) & AI-powered tools on the service of DNS management in Africa: opportunities, challenges, and impacts". The AFRALO community will present an overview of the topic and make recommendations.

The **North American Regional At-Large Organization (NARALO)** will hold a series of sessions during ICANN79. The NARALO Town Hall will bring together NARALO members and others from the ICANN community to discuss policy, engagement, and operational issues relevant to the region. A NARALO roundtable on the topic of "DNS and Domain Abuse in the Digital Economy" will discuss how these forms of abuse affect both end users and the digital economy. Finally, NARALO will hold a networking event for NARALO members, ICANN Fellows, and ICANN community members to meet and share ideas, projects, concerns, thoughts, etc.

Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)

What to Expect

During ICANN79, the GAC plans to conduct more than 28 hours of programming featuring a combination of substantive policy discussions, joint sessions with other ICANN community groups, capacity development opportunities, and preparation of the GAC Communiqué.

GAC leadership and membership will continue their work on several topics that have attracted attention from governments:

- The next round of the New gTLD Program, including how to ensure a commitment from ICANN to substantially reduce or eliminate application fees and ongoing registry fees to expand financial support for applicants from underrepresented or underserved regions

- Registration Directory Services (RDS)/WHOIS and data protection policies

- DNS abuse mitigation measures

GAC members will also discuss various operational issues, including a focus on strategic planning matters that will help the GAC confirm goals and priorities. At the end of ICANN79, the new term of the GAC leadership team (chair and vice chairs) will begin.

Onboarding and Capacity Development

Over the past several ICANN Public Meetings, briefings for the onboarding of new GAC members have been migrated to webinars. New GAC delegates can learn about the basics of GAC operations and information needed before they attend their first GAC meeting (virtually or in-person).

The GAC continues to evolve its approach to capacity development. Several onboarding and introductory webinar opportunities are available to GAC members throughout the year. Still the GAC will provide more than three hours of capacity development time during ICANN79 focused on informing participants about the importance of the function and operations of the numbering aspects of ICANN's unique identifier work, among other matters.

The primary capacity development component of GAC programming emphasizes discussions of fundamental structural or policy development. This approach expands the knowledge of all GAC participants and enables a more level-playing field for substantive GAC discussions. In turn, this helps assure the ICANN community that GAC advice on public policy matters and input on other operational matters is informed and based on commonly understood facts.

During ICANN79, the theme for GAC capacity development will focus on the numbering aspect of ICANN's unique identifier work. There will be three sessions on Saturday, 2 March, designed to offer perspectives and enable discussion about how IANA coordinates the Internet's globally unique identifiers, how that work is carried out a, and how it underlies and complements other aspects of identifier management on a global scale, including particular efforts of the ASO and ccTLD managers.

Agenda

GAC sessions will begin on Saturday, 2 March with an overview of the week and introductions by all attending GAC representatives. Time permitting, the GAC chair will also review recent work progress and accomplishments since ICANN78, including GAC public correspondence, the ICANN Board's scorecard response to the GAC ICANN78 Communiqué, and plans for its joint session with the ICANN Board during ICANN79.

Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)

Throughout ICANN79, the GAC public meeting agenda will feature GAC strategic planning for the next year and discussions on several government priorities such as recent developments and expectations regarding preparations for the next round of new gTLDs, DNS abuse mitigation matters, progress on RDS/WHOIS and data protection matters, and drafting of the GAC ICANN79 Communiqué. The GAC plans joint sessions with the ICANN Board, the ALAC, and the GNSO Council.

GAC members look forward to holding the next GAC High-Level Government Meeting (HLGM) in Kigali, Rwanda, on Sunday, 9 June 2024. Time will be devoted during ICANN79 to finish many aspects of the HLGM agenda. This will ensure an effective HLGM program that will help GAC representatives to:

- Reaffirm the critical role that governments play in providing advice to the ICANN Board on public policy issues as it relates to the secure and stable functioning of the DNS

- Enable all parties to gain a clearer understanding of the role of governments in ICANN processes, including the GAC

- Discuss current public policy issues and challenges at senior levels

- Expose senior administrative officials and senior elected officials, such as ministers and members of legislative bodies, to ICANN, allowing them to gain a greater understanding of it and its mission

- Reach out to administrations and governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented in the GAC or in other ICANN forums.

Background

GAC membership consists of national governments and distinct economies recognized in international forums. Multinational governmental and treaty organizations as well as public authorities participate in the GAC in an observer capacity. There are currently 182 GAC members and 39 GAC observer organizations.

The GAC provides advice on the public policy aspects of ICANN responsibilities with regard to the DNS. GAC consensus advice has a particular status under the ICANN Bylaws. Such advice must be duly taken into account by the ICANN Board, and if the ICANN Board proposes actions that would be inconsistent with GAC consensus advice, it must provide reasons for doing so and attempt to reach a mutually acceptable solution with the committee.

Further information about the GAC and its various work efforts, processes and operating principles can be found on the GAC website.

Session Details

All GAC sessions will be open to the ICANN community and will feature simultaneous interpretation in the six United Nations languages. This principle of openness will be particularly evident during the GAC Communiqué drafting sessions. Details regarding specific GAC sessions can be found on the GAC ICANN79 agenda webpage where all session briefings, descriptions, materials, and presentations will be published.

Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC)

What to Expect

The RSSAC will conduct five work sessions to advance its work and discuss various internal matters. The RSSAC will hold a joint session with the Security and Stability Advisory Committee and another joint session with the ICANN Board to discuss priority topics of interest. The RSSAC will also continue to engage with the ICANN community by offering a tutorial on the root server system. Finally, the RSSAC will conduct its monthly meeting and will continue to raise awareness about its recent **publications**.

Background

The **RSSAC** advises the ICANN community and the ICANN Board on matters relating to the operation, administration, security, and integrity of the RSS. The RSSAC consists of representatives from the root server operator organizations and liaisons from the partner organizations involved in the technical and operational management of the root zone.

The **RSSAC Caucus** is composed of DNS experts who have an interest in the RSS, broadening the base of diverse technical expertise available for RSSAC work. The primary role of the RSSAC Caucus is to perform research and produce publications on topics relevant to the mission of the RSSAC.

The RSSAC Caucus Membership Committee appoints members of the RSSAC Caucus. In addition, all RSSAC members are members of the RSSAC Caucus. Currently, there is one active **work party** in the RSSAC Caucus to study root server system security incident reporting.

The next RSSAC Caucus meeting will be held during IETF 120 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Session Details

*Session times are in UTC-4. Please refer to the **ICANN79 schedule** for the most current information.*

RSSAC Work Sessions
Sunday, 3 March │ 09:00–10:00, 15:00–16:00
Tuesday, 5 March │ 10:30–12:00, 13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00

How It Works: Root Server Operations
Sunday, 3 March │ 13:15–14:30

Joint Session: RSSAC and SSAC
Sunday, 3 March │ 10:30–12:00

Joint Session: ICANN Board and RSSAC
Tuesday, 5 March │ 09:00–10:00

RSSAC Meeting
Tuesday, 5 March │ 16:15–17:30

Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC)

What to Expect

The SSAC will hold a workshop on Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) and Security during ICANN79. DNSSEC continues to be deployed around the world at an accelerating pace. Now that DNSSEC has become an operational norm for many registries, registrars, and Internet service providers, this workshop will provide the opportunity to hear about what the SSAC is learning as it deploys and manages DNSSEC.

The SSAC will hold a public session and provide updates on topics currently under examination by the SSAC including Delegation Signer record management automation, the Name Collision Analysis Project, and unintended consequences of registrar name server management practices. The SSAC will also present its recent publications, "SAC122: SSAC Report on Urgent Requests in the gTLD Registration Data Policy," and "SSAC123: SSAC Report on the Evolution of Internet Name Resolution." In SAC122, the SSAC examines four aspects of the gTLD Registration Data Policy: fitness, transparency, reputation, and process. The SSAC makes recommendations on the eventual policy for Urgent Requests and recommends that ICANN begin collecting data on Urgent Requests. SAC123 discusses the evolution of Internet name resolution and its implications for the trust users have in Internet endpoints and services offered on the Internet.

Background

The SSAC advises the ICANN community and the ICANN Board on matters relating to the security and integrity of the naming and address allocation systems of the Internet. This includes operational matters such as those pertaining to the correct and reliable operation of the root name system; administrative matters such as those pertaining to address allocation and Internet number assignment; and registration matters such as those pertaining to registry and registrar services like WHOIS.

How Do I Participate in the SSAC?

For information on how to participate in the SSAC, see the **SSAC Operational Procedures** and the **SSAC Introduction**.
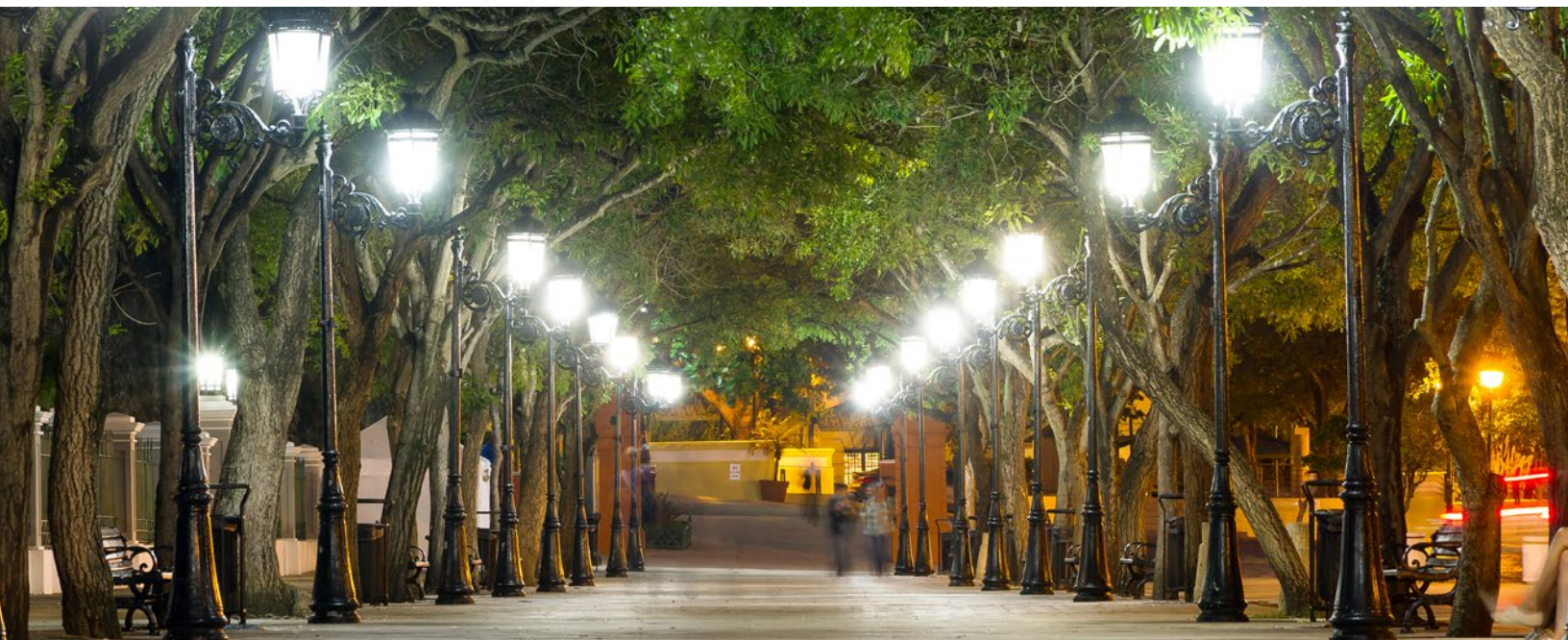
Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC)

Session Details

Session times are in UTC-4. Please refer to the ICANN79 schedule for the most current information.

SSAC Open Work Sessions
Sunday, 3 March | **09:00–10:00, 10:30–12:00, 13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00**
Tuesday, 5 March | **09:00–10:00, 13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00, 16:15–17:30**

The SSAC will hold several work sessions that typically include work party meetings, joint sessions with other ICANN community groups, and examining topics for future study. These sessions are open to observers but do not include question and answer sessions with observers.

SSAC Information Session
Wednesday, 6 March | **10:30–12:00**

The SSAC will review its recent publications and ongoing work for the ICANN community. The session includes the opportunity for direct engagement with SSAC members. The SSAC invites anyone interested in its work related to the security and integrity of the naming and address allocation systems of the Internet to participate.

DNSSEC and Security Workshop
Wednesday, 6 March | **13:15–14:30, 15:00–16:00, and 16:15–17:30**

This session is a public presentation and discussion with those actively engaged in the deployment of DNSSEC. The DNSSEC and Security Workshop also focuses on various emerging security-related issues such as DNS over TLS/DNS over HTTPS impacts and potential abuses, impacts of Resource Public Key Infrastructure deployments, Border Gateway Protocol hijacking, and other Internet-related routing issues.

Anyone interested in the deployment of DNSSEC and DNS security, particularly registry, registrar, and Internet service provider employees with technical, operational, and strategic planning roles may want to attend.