



Quarterly Report of the usTLD Stakeholder Council – Q1 2015

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Overview

During Q1 2015, the work of the Council focused predominantly on planning for the .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall, to be held on April 22, 2014. Planning included logistics and meeting structure, identification of remote participation tools, establishment of agenda items, publicizing the Town Hall, and development of materials. Further details on the current status of planning can be found below.

The Council also prepared two surveys addressing how respondents believed .US could be improved and evolved, both in terms of policy and promotional initiatives. One survey is targeted, primarily, toward members of the Council and the other toward the public at large. Responses received to surveys will be used as inputs to the Public Stakeholder Town Hall, as well as to guide the future work of the Council.

The Council introduced a new system by which, at meetings, one or more members of the Council would present on issues from the perspective of his or her business or Stakeholder Group. During Q1, 2015, a series of presentations were made by .US registrars participating on the Council: GoDaddy, MarkMonitor, Blacknight Solutions, and EnCirca. These presentations are covered in further detail below.

Council Recommendations

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not provide any formal recommendations to Neustar or the Department of Commerce during Q1 2015.

Other Informal Input Provided

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not provide any other informal input to Neustar or the Department of Commerce during Q1 2015

Membership Update

Linda Kinney resigned from the usTLD Stakeholder Council upon having taken a position as Senior Internet Policy Advisory at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Ms. Kinney's seat was filled by Alex Deacon, Senior Vice President of Internet Technology at the Motion Picture Association of America. Mr. Deacon was approved to join the Council at the March 2 meeting.

Summary of Public Comments

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not open any public comment periods during Q1 2015

Summary of Topics Under Council Consideration.

.US Public Stakeholder Town Hall

Much of the work of the Council during Q1, 2015 centered on planning for the 2015 Annual .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall, an initiative to bring a wider circle of stakeholders in the .US into the discussion of how to improve and evolve the TLD so that it continues to meet the needs of its users.

The Council determined the following logistics for the usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall:

- The Town Hall will take place virtually using Adobe Connect;
- The Town Hall will be held on April 22, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. ET;
- The Town Hall will be segmented into three main topics, each with an opportunity for inter-community discussion;
- The Town Hall will include an “open floor” where members of the broader community may raise additional concerns or input;
- Questions and inputs for the “open floor” may be received in advance of the Town Hall, through email or in responses to the Public Survey, or live during the meeting; and
- The Town Hall may feature additional speakers (e.g. Department of Commerce Representatives, Registrants, etc.) and priority should be given to speakers that can draw in the public.

The Stakeholder Council also identified three principal discussion topics for the Town Hall:

- **Me, you & .US:** the .US brand and how it can support and engage your community or business;
- **Multi-stakeholderism at the local level:** public participation in .US policymaking as a window for participating in Internet governance; and
- **Beyond kids.us:** the next generation of youth engagement and participation in .US.

Each of these discussions will begin with an introduction by a representative of the Stakeholder Council or Neustar, and conclude with a series of discussion questions targeted toward participants.

In order to inform the first discussion topic, Neustar has undertaken a study of the top 200 .US sites according to both Alex and Google Search rankings, to identify trends in high-profile .US registrants and engaged with the marketing team to leverage data on .US registrant profiles from professional surveys. This information, as well as inputs received through the public survey, will be used to provide information about the current branding and target market for the

top-level domain, and whether this aligns with external perspectives on the TLD and visions of how it should be marketed.

.US Policy Survey and Public Survey

Neustar conducted two surveys to garner inputs on what policy changes and promotional initiatives were called for by members of the Council and the public at large.

.US Policy Survey

This survey was targeted primarily toward members of the Council to identify member priorities and concerns, as well as potential topic areas for future Council work. The Council determined that third party input on this survey was welcome, as responses would not be defined as votes per the Council Charter.

Nine responses were received. The findings are summarized below.

Concerns, as well as suggestions for how to improve the namespace, focused on the restrictions for the namespace and on ways to increase the breadth/targeting of .US marketing initiatives. However, there seems to be a strong sense that the namespace should remain strongly associated with the United States and not promoted as generic in the way that has been seen with some ccTLDs. In promoting the name space some respondents called for a better differentiation behind the use cases for .US versus other domain names like .COM or .GOV, and many responses suggested that the TLD could better affiliate itself with specific local markets, such as small businesses or local governments and communities.

Privacy/proxy and Nexus policy were the highest and second-highest interest policy topics. Many respondents had good suggestions for how these processes could be modified, potentially for benefit, without being overhauled. For the Nexus included: better clarifying these policies and consequences of non-adherence at the time of registration, aligning policy requirements with language in other communities (e.g. syncing up with USPTO guidelines that permit TM registration).

With respect to the existing privacy/proxy restriction, there seemed to be general support for relaxing the policy either through carve outs or by instituting a program where designated accredited providers or membership organizations could sponsor registrations. However, concerns related to how to effectively enforce the Nexus Requirements and manage the potential for increased abuse in the namespace were cited and would have to be addressed.

Some suggestions and considerations that emerged, included the following:

- Any recommended policy changes should follow after an assessment of pros/cons and potential negative consequences of the change, for instance (1) what would be the impact of changing the privacy/proxy restriction on trust (2) how could a free registration promotion be targeted toward the right users and not spammers or individuals perpetuating malicious behavior.

- .US should learn from successful initiatives by ccTLDs or ccTLD associations, both with respect to marketing and with respect to policy development and change.
- The Stakeholder Council should look at ways to better showcase its activities, .US and existing registrations in the namespace, through publications, related industry networks and more.
- There was general support for promotions that leveraged the .US registrar and reseller network and an apparent willingness on the part of registrar respondents to participate in low-cost registration promotions for target groups.
- There was general support for introducing new labels to the namespace, such as IDNs or one- and two-character labels, though in both cases some raised questions about the value or interest level that these initiatives would draw.
- Small and medium businesses were identified as the highest-interest target group for promotion of the .US namespace, followed by local governments and community networks, and youth.

.US Public Survey

The .US Public Survey was briefer and tailored to the public at large. The goal of the survey was to get a sense of public perceptions of .US, public interests in the namespace, and ideas on how the .US “brand” could be built up going forward.

The survey has been circulated on industry blogs, social media, and through affiliations and networks of individual Councilors. As of March 30, 2015 fifteen were received. Respondents included ISOC members, ccTLD operators, legacy registrants, and others. Roughly 90 percent of registrants had previously registered domain names, and roughly 50 percent had previously registered in .US. The survey raised a number of recommendations about potential improvements to .US including:

- Improving processes for multistakeholder input;
- Demonstrating policy activism in ICANN;
- Demonstrating thought leadership at local internet-related events;
- Clarifying the nexus requirement;
- Engaging in partnerships with large companies or organizations and highlighting these usages of the namespace;
- Getting involved with associations or organizations with a domestic focus or local chapter presence to emphasize the national character of the namespace;
- Expanding the role of the public in managing the namespace; and
- Engaging in identity campaigns, such as around the value of “buying American.”

Suggestions for the town hall included building awareness of active uses of .US, explaining .US policies, providing information about the role of .US in ICANN policy development, and discussing high-interest topics in the Internet governance space such as the IANA Transition.

Registrar Perspectives on .US

The registrar participants on the Stakeholder Council conducted a series of short presentations on their organizations' experience with .US and impressions on how the namespace could be improved. Inputs from the four presentations are summarized below.

Elisa Cooper presented on behalf of MarkMonitor, a major corporate registrar. Ms. Cooper said that she had conducted some internal outreach, and while there were intermittent issues, the experience working with .US was generally positive and all problems were smoothly resolved.

James Bladel presented on behalf of GoDaddy, a major retail registrar. Mr. Bladel said that GoDaddy representatives had spoken highly of their experience working with Neustar's channel team on .US and other TLDs. He provided three recommendations on the basis of his internal research:

1. Continuing to develop partnerships and promotional activities that aligned with business needs of registries and registrars alike, and strengthening the registry-registrar channel;
2. Exploring issues related to the Nexus Policy and Privacy and Proxy Policy; and
3. Looking at Nominet's experience in launching .UK and rebranding around that, and whether there were similar initiatives that could be undertaken, such as applying for .USA, a more easily-identifiable label for some Americans.

Mr. Neylon presented on behalf of Blacknight Solutions, an Irish registrar with a low volume of .US domain names under management with most qualifying under Nexus Category 3. Mr. Neylon noted that there was a lot of interest on the part of registrants in transacting with the United States and that .US could be a gateway for this. Mr. Neylon suggested that the language of Nexus Category 3 was confusing to some foreign-based registrants, and could be better worded to encourage these entities to use .US.

[PLACEHOLDER FOR TOM BARRETT PRESENTATION]

Principles for Third Party Participation

The Stakeholder Council determined that its regular meetings should be open to public participation. In order to permit full transparency, openness, and participation, without distracting the work of Council, three key guidelines were developed to structure such participation:

- Third Party Participants may not participate in a vote of the usTLD Stakeholder Council ("Council"), which shall be limited to members of the Council.
- Third Party Participants will be expected to identify their name and affiliation prior to participating, and will be expected to provide an accurate email address for future correspondence by emailing stakeholdercouncil@neustar.us.
- Participation by Third Party Participants must occur during specified periods at the end of identified discussion topics, or during open floor periods at the end of each call.

Blogs and Media

In Q1 2015 the following blogs and press were published in relation to the usTLD Stakeholder Council:

- *Circle ID – Bringing Multistakeholderism Home, .US and the Stakeholder Council*
- *Circle ID - Save the Date: .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall*

The full blog contents can be found in the appendices section.

Summary of Meetings

January 5 Meeting

On January 5 the usTLD Stakeholder Council held its third call. On the call, Councilors discussed ideas for promoting the Council, including publishing a piece in Circle ID, blogging on various industry channels, using the Department of Commerce's social media profiles, and leveraging networks of individual Council members.

The Council developed guidelines for structuring participation by third parties in its meetings. The Council confirmed April 22, 2015 as the proposed date for the first usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall, provided that the deadline extension was approved by the Department of Commerce.

Elisa Cooper provided an overview of MarkMonitor's experience as a registrar partner for .US.

February 2 Meeting

The usTLD Stakeholder Council held its fourth call on February 2, 2015. The two primary agenda topics were input into the Council Policy Survey, and planning for the Public Stakeholder Town Hall. The Council confirmed April 22, between 1 and 3pm Eastern Time as the date and time for the Public Stakeholder Town Hall. It was determined that the call would feature three or four substantive discussion topics with the opportunity for an open floor discussion at the end. There was general agreement that the Town Hall should address the branding and perception of the .US namespace and seek input for how marketing can move that forward.

The Council also discussed best practices for third party participation in regular Council meetings. Recommended practices included publically stating the identity of participants, and leaving a structured time for these discussions, either at the conclusion of a particular agenda item, or at the end of the call. These guidelines were incorporated into a guidelines document by the secretariat, and referenced in the Operating Procedures.

March 2 Meeting

In advance of the March 2 Meeting the Council conducted an electronic vote to approve the proposed Council Work Plan and Operating Procedures. On the call, it was confirmed that both documents had been approved by a majority vote of the Council, with no objections logged to either document.

Alex Deacon, Senior Vice President of Internet Technology was approved to join the Council as a replacement for Linda Kinney.

The Council affirmed its three topics for the .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall:

- **Me, you & .US:** the .US brand and how it can support and engage your community or business;
- **Multi-stakeholderism at the local level:** public participation in .US policymaking as a window for participating in Internet governance; and
- **Beyond kids.us:** the next generation of youth engagement and participation in .US.

The Secretariat provided an overview of inputs received from the Policy Survey, circulated to members of the Council. The highest-interest topics were the .US Nexus Policy and the Privacy/Proxy Restriction. In both instances the general perspective was that the policies should not be done away with, but could be updated to better meet the needs of users.

Michele Neylon provided an update of Blacknight Solutions' Experience using .US. One issue identified in the presentation was a lack of clarity in the current framing of Nexus Category 3, which could discourage foreign registrants eligible for registration due to a commercial presence in the United States from choosing .US.

March 30 Meeting

The Secretariat provided an overview of responses to the .US Public Survey received to date. A summary of responses can be found in the summary of topics under discussion. It was agreed that input would continue to be taken and considered up through the Town Hall meeting.

The council did a run through of the draft presentation for the usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall. Suggestions received included:

- Updating the language on introductory slides to more clearly differentiate the market for .US from that of .GOV and making it friendlier rather than emphasizing restrictions on the namespace;
- Updating the examples of .US users provided to focus on the mission of the namespace rather than upon target markets and featuring current active .US users rather than prospective users;
- Adding direct references to input received through the public survey to drive Open Floor discussion; and

- Introducing a slide that referenced key policies with a link to policy overview document.

As Tom Barrett could not be present for the call, the final registrar presentation was moved to the subsequent meeting.

Deadlines for Q1 2015

| Deadline | Deliverable/Action |
|----------------|---|
| April 29, 2015 | Public Stakeholder Town Hall |
| June 6, 2015 | usTLD Stakeholder Council first Annual Report |

Appendices

Guidelines for Public Participation

The usTLD Stakeholder Council welcomes and encourages active public participation on its meetings by members of the .US community. The following guidelines apply to all participants on usTLD Stakeholder Council Calls that are not a member of the usTLD Stakeholder Council (“Third Party Participants”):

- Third Party Participants may not participate in a vote of the usTLD Stakeholder Council (“Council”), which shall be limited to members of the Council.
- Third Party Participants will be expected to identify their name and affiliation prior to participating, and will be expected to provide an accurate email address for future correspondence by emailing stakeholdercouncil@neustar.us.
- Participation by Third Party Participants must occur during specified periods at the end of identified discussion topics, or during open floor periods at the end of each call.

Third Party Participants are strongly encouraged to propose agenda topics for discussion at future meetings, which may be provided by emailing stakeholdercouncil@neustar.us. The secretariat and Council Chair will consider all agenda topics proposed through this channel prior to the publication of the agenda for the next Council meeting.

Bringing Multistakeholderism Home, .US and the Stakeholder Council

Co-Authored by Scott Blake Harris and Shane Tews

2014 will be remembered as the year of the "multistakeholder model" on the Internet. NTIA demonstrated its commitment to bottom-up, multistakeholder Internet governance by committing to complete the transfer of responsibility for various technical functions — known as the IANA Functions — to the multistakeholder community. NTIA called on ICANN to convene the community to develop a transition plan to accomplish this goal. Both veterans and newcomers to the world of Internet governance met in Brazil for discussions leading to principles and roadmaps for global multistakeholder policy for future development at the Internet Governance Forum and other fora. Meanwhile, the ICANN community continued to break down silos by convening an unprecedented number of Cross Community Working Groups to tackle pressing DNS issues as a community.

Closer to home, Neustar and the Department of Commerce took steps to bring the multistakeholder model to ".US," the country-code top level domain for the United States (the "usTLD"). Neustar convened the usTLD Stakeholder Council, composed of stakeholders with diverse interests in .US's development, including registrars, civil society, locality-based delegated managers, intellectual property interests, law enforcement, registrants and others. The usTLD Stakeholder Council will work with the usTLD community to identify proposals for policy changes, procedural improvements, and other innovative ideas to drive evolution, growth, and positive change in US country-code namespace. Our goal is to make the usTLD a model of industry best practices and the domain of choice for businesses, communities, and Internet users with meaningful ties to the United States.

Broad and active stakeholder participation fuels the power of the Internet to drive economic growth and innovation, facilitate open communication and cultural exchange, and provide a platform for free expression. Each of us has a stake in making the .US TLD a vibrant space for local businesses to thrive and for communities and residents to share and learn from one another.

As Chair and Vice Chair of the inaugural .usTLD Stakeholder Council, we know that the success of our efforts depends not only on the unique knowledge, experience, and perspective that Councilors bring to the table, but even more importantly on our ability to engage usTLD stakeholder communities and the American public at large to realize the potential of the US domain space. We are reaching out to all members of the usTLD stakeholder community to ensure broad and active participation in the work of the Council.

Getting Involved

The usTLD Stakeholder Council will operate transparently and will provide a variety of tools to support active public participation in its deliberations, including:

- *Opening all Council calls to the public for real-time participation;*

- *Soliciting public comment before finalizing Council recommendations;*
- *Publishing quarterly reports of all Council activities; and*
- *Hosting annual "virtual town halls" to bring the entire stakeholder community together to identify ways in which the usTLD can support innovation and vibrant user experience.*

The first usTLD Virtual Town Hall will take place in late April. We will provide more information as it develops. In the meantime, we want to hear from you on anything and everything, from the .US Nexus Policy, to youth engagement, to how to bring .US to your local community and make it a key part of your experience as an Internet user.

The time to get engaged starts now. Background information on the usTLD, including information about usTLD policies, is available [here](#). We hope you'll take a few minutes to review the documents, lend us your thoughts, and help shape the future work of the usTLD Stakeholder Council.

And that's just the beginning. If you are interested in getting involved, as we hope you will, please contact stakeholdercouncil@neustar.us for information about additional opportunities for involvement.

Circle ID Blog: Save the Date: .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall (April 22, 1-3 ET / 10-12 PT)

By Stephanie Duchesneau

.US is the top-level domain for the United States of America. As stakeholders in the .US ccTLD, we all share a vested interest in making sure that .US continues to be a vibrant namespace that reflects the diversity, creativity and success of our people. As the Internet continues to grow and evolve, it's important that the .US domain does too.

To meet these needs, Neustar and the usTLD Stakeholder Council plan to hold a virtual .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall Meeting. The Town Hall will take place on April 22, from 1 to 3 Eastern, or 10 to noon Pacific and will provide an opportunity for community-led discussion on how to build and grow the .US domain brand to meet the demands of the future.

We hope you'll take the time to join us for the Town Hall by registering [here](#) and take the time to provide input in advance of the meeting by completing our [survey](#).

In addition to an "open floor," where your thoughts, suggestions and questions can be addressed, we plan to focus on three key topics:

- *Me, you & .US: the .US brand and how it can support and engage your community or business;*
- *Multi-stakeholderism at the local level: public participation in .US policymaking as a window for participating in Internet governance; and*
- *Beyond kids.us: the next generation of youth engagement and participation in .US.*

The meeting will take place virtually, and details will be circulated to all registered participants in advance of the meeting.

usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes January 5, 2014

The Secretariat took a roll call and requested that councilors that had not yet completed their statements of interest do so as soon as possible.

Stephanie Duchesneau described the status of the Council Work Plan and Operating Procedures, which are open for public comment between December 15 and January 14. To date no comments have been received on either document. The group discussed ways to publicize the comment period to further encourage parties with interest in the usTLD to comment on the policies. Becky Burr suggested publishing a blog in Circle ID authored jointly by Scott Blake Harris and Shane Tews describing the onset of multi-stakeholderism within .US and ways that others could become involved. Ms. Duchesneau suggested that the blog could also serve as an initial save-the-date for the forthcoming usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall. Mr. Barrett asked about how the comment periods were being managed. Ms. Duchesneau responded that while management tools were being developed, comments were being provided to a Neustar inbox that she managed, and would be published and circulated to the council upon receipt.

Tom Barrett raised the question of how public participation, as provided for in the Operating Procedures, would be managed to provide for transparency and openness without disrupting council business. Linda Kinney suggested that public participation should require that such participants provide their name and affiliation. Doug Robinson agreed to this premise stating that town halls and advisory council meetings that he had managed in the past had all required that participants disclose their affiliations and identities, with many requiring formal registration as an observer. Scott Harris suggested that some structure could be provided, such as setting aside time at the end of the call for participant input or questions. Bryan Britt supported this suggestion, adding that an opportunity for public input could be provided at the end of each agenda topic. Karen Rose also suggested that if participation on monthly calls was broadened, the calls would benefit from public participation tools used elsewhere in the industry, such as Adobe Connect, to provide greater structure to the calls and additional functionalities such as chat. There was general support for active public participation but with some guidelines and structure to avoid the potential for disruption, as well as for the introduction of additional participation tools. Mr. Harris said that he would work with the Secretariat to implement these guidelines for public participation.

Mr. Barrett asked about the delineation between the upcoming usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall and the regular meetings, if both were to be opened for public participation. Ms. Duchesneau suggested that the distinction was not to discourage participation in other meetings, but rather to provide a chance for stakeholders that could not commit to a monthly meeting the chance to raise input about .US, as well as to provide background information about the usTLD and its policies that could not necessarily be given in each regular meeting. Mr. Harris added that having a separate Town Hall was also a promotional tool to get the word out about the Council through more channels than was possible for each call. Ms. Kinney agreed, adding that promoting each meeting as a Town Hall could actually dissuade participation from stakeholders that were not able to commit to more regular participation.

Ms. Duchesneau provided an overview of the Draft Quarterly Report that was circulated to Councilors the week prior summarizing the two meetings held to date, the current discussion topics, and the open comment periods and welcomed Council input into the report. Mr. Harris said that he reviewed the report and supported its contents.

Ms. Burr added that Councilors were highly encouraged to also circulate information about the Council and its activities through each of their networks and channels. Karen Rose said that she was looking into how the Internet Society could circulate information about the Council through the ISOC Chapter Network. Several councilors suggested that a baseline blog post or narrative about the council would be a beneficial starting point. Mr. Harris agreed adding that he and the secretariat would coordinate to have a baseline draft circulated in the next few days. Doug Robinson added that he would be presenting on .US and the Stakeholder Council at a NASCIO meeting in mid-January, and would plan to get further information out to his network in tandem with that meeting. Mr. Robinson added that the Council could also reach out to the community for suggestions on best practices or use awards as a means of encouraging participation. Chris Mead also suggested that a briefing including background about .US, FAQs, and overviews of key policies would be useful in getting stakeholders up to speed; Mr. Harris endorsed this suggestion.

The Council discussed scheduling and for the usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall. April 22 was suggested as the best possible date, to allow time for scheduling and planning, while avoiding holidays and local vacation periods. Ms. Burr and Ms. Duchesneau stated that they would confirm whether the Department of Commerce was amenable to the date, as it was past the April 12 deadline provided in the .US deliverables schedule. Mr. Harris suggested that the call should be held midday to facilitate participation by parties on either coast. Ms. Burr suggested that the upcoming ICANN Public Meeting in Singapore in February would provide a good opportunity to get the word out about the Town Hall. Mr. Harris asked about what networks Neustar might be able to leverage and, given that .US is owned by the United States Government and managed by Neustar under contract, whether the Department of Commerce had tools at its disposal, such as the Federal Register, that could be used to promote the Council and its activities. Beth Bacon said that she would have to research internally to see whether the Federal Register could be used for these purposes, but that information about the usTLD and the Stakeholder Council could and previously had been published on the NTIA website and twitter feed. Mr. Harris affirmed that these tools should be used and requested that Ms. Bacon check whether the activities could be published in the Federal Register as well.

Mr. Harris suggested that the formulation of an agenda for the usTLD Public Stakeholder town hall be moved to the next meeting and that, in the meantime, the secretariat would circulate an email asking each councilor to suggest topics that could be placed on the agenda for a public meeting.

Discussion moved to the Report of the usTLD Education Advisory Committee. Mr. Harris stated that he had reviewed the report and thought the primary recommendation, to maintain the current suspension, was well-substantiated. Bryan Britt supported this position adding that unless serious changes could be made to the space, which would likely require a revisiting its

overall framework, the suspension should be maintained. Mr. Harris polled the Council and all voiced their support for maintaining the suspension.

Mr. Harris brought up an email that was circulated to registrar representatives on the council the week prior soliciting input on .US. James Bladel responded that he was still preparing internal feedback, and would be able to provide an update on the following call. Elisa Cooper said that she had conducted some internal outreach, and while there were intermittent issues, the experience working with .US was generally positive and all problems were smoothly resolved. Ms. Burr welcomed feedback from the range of .US registrars going forward, by raising any issues as they arose.

Ms. Burr and Ms. Duchesneau provided a quick update about one-on-one calls and a policy survey that would be coordinated in the coming weeks to help set the agenda for future Council work.

Mr. Harris asked whether there was any other business and the call was concluded.

Action Items

- Secretariat to work with Scott Blake Harris to draft a blog in Circle ID
- Secretariat to coordinate one-on-one calls with members Councilors
- Secretariat to circulate Policy Survey to members of the Stakeholder Council
- Secretariat to coordinate with Department of Commerce to finalize the date for the usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall
- Secretariat to identify tools to facilitate participation in the Stakeholder Council (e.g. Adobe Connect, Confluence)
- Council to finalize Quarterly Report to the Department of Commerce no later than January 31
- Secretariat to draft briefing and promotional materials for circulation at ICANN Singapore Meeting
- Additional registrars to provide update about input into .US Policies and Operations at next meeting

Attendees

Councilors:

- *Karen Rose, Internet Society*
- *Bryan Britt, Beltane Web Services*
- *Chris Mead, American Chamber of Commerce Executives*
- *Tom Barrett, Encirca*
- *Elisa Cooper, MarkMonitor*
- *Doug Robinson, National Association of State Chief Information Officers*

- *Chris Mead, ACCE*
- *Phil Corwin, Virtulaw LLC*
- *Linda Kinney, Motion Pictures Association of America*
- *James Bladel, GoDaddy*

Neustar Participants:

- *Becky Burr*
- *Jeffrey Neuman*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau*
- *Terri Claffey*

Department of Commerce Participants

- *Elizabeth Bacon*

usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes February 2, 2015

The secretariat took a roll call.

The Stephanie Duchesneau ran through administrative items for the council. The modified Stakeholder Council Quarterly Report was provided to the Department of Commerce and published on the Council website on Friday, January 30, 2015.

Next Ms. Duchesneau gave an overview of the status of the Stakeholder Council Work Plan and Operating Procedures. At the close of both comment periods on January 14, 2015, no comments were received on either document. The documents were to be provided to the Department of Commerce for review and approval by February 11, 2015. Scott Blake Harris asked the Council whether any further revisions should be made to the documents before they were provided to the Council. Karen Rose suggested that the date for the .US Public Stakeholder Town Hall be modified from April 12, to reflect the agreed-upon change to April 22; Ms. Rose also suggested that the procedures for public participation be updated to reflect the output of the last discussion regarding how to structure participation. Becky Burr asked whether a formal structure had been determined for how third parties could participate in Stakeholder Council discussions. Bryan Britt rearticulated the discussion around structured participation, with opportunities for third party commentary in between agenda items or at the end of the call. Ms. Duchesneau suggested that to maintain flexibility in the Operating Procedures, that general language regarding structured participation be inserted, with a separate guidelines document referenced in the Operating Procedures that could be published and provided to third parties, and updated as needed with greater flexibility. Mr. Harris also raised the point that third parties should be required to identify themselves on the Stakeholder Council calls and suggested that this be included in the Operating Procedures. The secretariat agreed to make the requested changes and recirculate the Operating Procedures to the Council.

Mr. Harris asked whether, given the seven-day turnaround, the Council was supportive of approving the Final Operating Procedures via electronic vote. With no objections, the secretariat agreed to facilitate an electronic vote using Survey Monkey or Google Forms once the Work Plan had been agreed to.

Mr. Harris provided a recommendation coming out the chair's meeting: that calls feature regular presentations by Councilors about expertise areas such as presentations by registrar members, a discussion about the legacy locality space, or suggestions for business engagement. Ms. Duchesneau added that presentation topics could be raised by the secretariat or Chair, but also that Councilors should feel free to propose topics to the secretariat that they would be interested in presenting on. Several councilors supported the suggested and stated their willingness to present downstream.

Mr. Harris described the purpose of the Policy Survey that had been circulated to Councilors the week prior, which was to provide a formal means of input on policy priorities for agenda-setting going forward and opened up the floor for any questions. James Bladel asked whether it would

be appropriate to circulate the survey to other members of GoDaddy's product team. Mr. Britt added that he planned to raise the survey questions with a close contact who was a major web developer with several .US names. Mr. Harris responded that because the survey was informational and not meant as a vote, circulation should be welcomed. Ms. Duchesneau suggested that other parties should simply clearly identify their name and affiliation, in line with the procedures for open participation and supported the suggestion of opening up the survey to additional respondents.

Ms. Rose suggested that while the existing survey could be appropriate for well-informed respondents that a version for broader consumption could also be prepared to facilitate wider input into the Public Stakeholder Town Hall. Ms. Duchesneau suggested that this document could accompany the background materials being prepared, and asked whether any of the councilors had suggestions for how this type of document could be focused. Ms. Rose suggested that the survey could raise questions, such as what opportunities users saw in the space, what needs were not being addressed, and how to increase reach and visibility. Tom Barrett added that the survey could raise perception-questions, such as what people regarded the .US brand to be versus how they thought that it should be marketed. Mr. Britt supported this suggestion and added that a possible target for these materials could be the web developer community. Ms. Burr supported these suggestions. Shane Tews suggested that there was a possible opportunity to reengage the public around .US as the new gTLD program rolled out and people became more comfortable with domain extensions other than .COM.

Ms. Rose suggested the unique relationship with the Department of Commerce in light of focus on the IANA transition and ICANN as a possible topic of interest to a particular community, as well as the question of whether the existing Nexus policy was properly serving registrars and registrants.

Ms. Duchesneau raised the topic of what time the call should be scheduled for, suggesting 1:00 ET to facilitate participation by both coasts. Mr. Harris asked how long the call should be. Ms. Duchesneau suggested two-hours. Bryan Britt believed this time frame to be too short when roll call and other procedural items were accounted for and considering that Councilors could come and go. Doug Robinson said that he participated on Advisory Councils whose meetings would last a whole day, with a substantive agenda of lasting several hours. Ms. Burr expressed concerns about fatiguing participants due to the broader participation aimed for on this call. Ms. Duchesneau suggested publishing an agenda with assigned times to all flexibility to participation. Mr. Britt added that time should be left at the end for open questions. Mr. Harris suggested coordinating with the team that manages Neustar's shareholder calls to find a solution for taking attendance that minimizes time spent on administrative matters. Ms. Duchesneau said that she would research this possibility.

The Council discussed whether to have a few long-topics or several short presentations. There was general support for having shorter topics of fifteen or so minutes apiece provided that enough time was given to "open floor" discussion at the end of the call. Ms. Burr and Ms. Rose both emphasized that a key part of the success of the town hall would be to be able to identify

clear ways that interested parties could continue the conversation after its conclusion, and that the Council should be prepared to answer how that could take place.

Mr. Harris asked the secretariat whether the draft promotional blog had been circulated. Ms. Duchesneau said that it was finalized and could be circulated shortly after the call; she added that the goal was to provide a template with key information that councilors could feel free to modify to put in their voice or tailor to their particular communities.

Mr. Harris asked whether Mr. Bladel or Michele Neylon would be able to provide updates on the call. Mr. Bladel stated that he could do a quick overview but that Mr. Neylon was not available. Mr. Bladel identified three key items from discussion with his internal teams:

4. Continuing to develop partnerships and promotional activities that aligned with business needs of registries and registrars alike, and strengthening the registry-registrar channel;
5. Exploring issues related to the Nexus Policy and Privacy and Proxy Policy; and
6. Looking at Nominet's experience in launching .UK and rebranding around that, and whether there were similar initiatives that could be undertaken, such as applying for .USA, a more easily-identifiable label for some Americans.

Mr. Harris echoed the concerns raised regarding Privacy and Proxy adding that he thought exploring these policies should be on the top of the council agenda. Mr. Bladel said that in the 2012 Round these prohibitions were a pass-fail issue. Ms. Burr provided context that while the policy was initially intended to help with Nexus and WHOIS Accuracy requirements that the market had significantly evolved since 2004; Mr. Harris added that there should not be opportunities to verify identity while addressing concerns around privacy of registration data.

Action Items

- Councilors to complete Policy Survey by February 20
- Councilors to circulate promotional blog to relevant communities
- Secretariat to follow up regarding outstanding Statements of Interest
- Secretariat to circulate draft promotional blog for councilors
- Secretariat to draft public-facing background document and survey for input for usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall
- Secretariat to update language in Work Plan and Operating Procedures to reflect updated Town Hall Date, process for modifying contract dates, and processes for public participation
- Secretariat to circulate reminder to complete Policy Survey in advance of February 20 deadline

Attendees

Councilors:

- *Karen Rose, Internet Society*

- *Bryan Britt, Beltane Web Services*
- *Tom Barrett, Encirca*
- *Elisa Cooper, MarkMonitor*
- *Doug Robinson, National Association of State Chief Information Officers*
- *Phil Corwin, Virtulaw LLC*
- *James Bladel, GoDaddy*
- *Shane Tews, American Enterprise Institute*

Neustar Participants:

- *Becky Burr*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau*
- *Terri Claffey*
- *Cory Lancaster*

Department of Commerce Participants

- *Elizabeth Bacon*

usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes March 2, 2015

The Secretariat took a roll call, and noted regrets from Karen Rose, Doug Robinson, and James Bladel.

Scott Blake Harris turned to the Stephanie Duchesneau to provide an update on the status of the Draft Work Plan and Operating Procedures. Then Ms. Duchesneau stated that both documents had been approved by the Department of Commerce, and subsequently by the Council in a majority vote, with no Councilor voting against approval of either document. Mr. Harris gave the Secretariat an action item to publish both documents on the Council site as official documents.

Mr. Harris noted that since the last meeting former Councilor Linda Kinney had taken a position with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and as such was ineligible to continue her participation on the Council. Mr. Harris added that the MPAA had recommended that Alex Deacon take up Ms. Kinney's role on the Council. Mr. Deacon provided information about his background which currently focused on the interaction of technology and policy. Mr. Deacon previously worked at Verisign for nearly 15 years and was involved in the launch of initiatives including Verisign Labs, and Ultraviolet. In his 18 years working in the technology sector, he has been involved in various forums including the W3C and the IETF. The Secretariat asked whether anyone had concerns about Mr. Deacon joining the Council, or about conducting his approval on the phone; with no objections raised, Mr. Deacon was approved to join the Council by acclamation.

Mr. Harris turned to Michele Neylon to provide an update on registrar's interactions with .US, noting that these updates were an important part of the Council's work due to the unique perspective and relationship that registrars have with .US. Mr. Neylon noted that, as a foreign registrar, Blacknight's registration volumes in .US were relatively low and that the registrar profited more greatly from add-on services than from the actual sale of domain names; most of this registration base comprised on non-US entities, qualifying under Nexus Category 3. Mr. Neylon noted that there was a lot of interest on the part of registrants in transacting with the United States and that .US could be a gateway for this. Mr. Neylon suggested that the language of Nexus Category 3 was confusing to some foreign-based registrants, and could be better worded to encourage these entities to use .US. Mr. Neylon also noted that the restrictions on the space had a somewhat chilling effect on registrars' ability to profit from the namespace. Mr. Harris gave Mr. Neylon a recommendation to suggest some language for Nexus Category 3 that would better fit this need.

Mr. Harris asked whether Tom Barrett would be able to provide an update on the next call, as the final registrar participating in the initiative. Mr. Barrett responded that he would. The Secretariat was asked to provide a reminder to Mr. Barret in advance of the next call.

Ms. Duchesneau provided an update on the Public Survey, and the input from Karen Rose and Mr. Neylon, which was incorporated into the most recent version of the Survey. Mr. Harris asked that all councilors provide any additional input no later than Wednesday, March 4, by close of business, with the goal of finalizing the survey for circulation by the end of the week.

The Council turned to a discussion on the upcoming Public Stakeholder Town Hall. Ms. Duchesneau provided an overview of some of the agenda recommendations to date. The group tentatively decided upon three principal agenda topics: addressing light adoption of the country-code and what could be done from a marketing perspective to drive usage; promoting positive experiences for kids and/or younger users; and participation in the Council as a local avenue for participation in the multi-stakeholder model and Internet governance and policymaking. Roughly thirty minutes will be allocated to questions. Shane Tews emphasized that in the Town Hall the Council should look to learn how adoption could be given from a marketing perspective, as well as to discuss the restrictions on the namespace and how they interact with its usage.

Mr. Harris asked whether there were suggestions for possible speakers on during the Town Hall, recommending Secretary Lawrence Strickling as a potential speaker. Beth Bacon said that she would be happy to work with Secretary Strickling to try to arrange his participation in the Town Call. Mr. Neylon asked whether Secretary Strickling would have a pull beyond the preexisting Internet governance community and suggested that the group look to find a speaker with cache that would drive attendance on that basis alone.

Mr. Neylon asked how this would be promoted, and Ms. Duchesneau provided an overview of some possible avenues including industry press, social media (using personal, Neustar, and Department of Commerce presences), and listservs and individual memberships using the public blog template previously circulated. Mr. Neylon added the suggestion that the channel network also be engaged and requested that the blog template be recirculated.

The Council also discussed some logistics for the meeting. The current plan is to use Adobe Connect to run the meeting, as well as future Council meetings. The Secretariat will work to prepare an initial splash page in the next week to provide the basic information, and allow people to register for the Town Hall. Questions from the public could be provided in advance of the meeting or during the meeting, through an Adobe Connect “pod” or by Twitter. Ms. Tews volunteered to help manage twitter input, and recommended that the group quickly identify a hashtag that could be used in promotional efforts to track engagement.

Mr. Harris asked that the Secretariat prepare minutes and action items form the call, and the meeting was wrapped up.

Action Items

- Councilors to respond provide input on Public Survey by March 4
- Councilors to respond to Policy Survey by March 4
- Michele Neylon to suggest changes to simplify nexus language for foreign entities
- Stephanie Duchesneau to recirculate public blog post
- Stephanie Duchesneau to provide background information to Alex Deacon
- Stephanie Duchesneau to provide a reminder to Tom regarding update
- Stephanie Duchesneau to prepare splash page contents for usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall
- Stephanie Duchesneau to pull top .US trafficked sites

Attendees

Councilors:

- *Tom Barrett, Encirca*
- *Elisa Cooper, MarkMonitor*
- *Phil Corwin, Virtulaw LLC*
- *Shane Tews, American Enterprise Institute*
- *Scott Blake Harris, Harris, Wiltshire & Grannis LLP*
- *Chris Mead, ACCE*
- *Alex Deacon, MPAA*
- *Michele Neylon, Blacknight Registrar Solutions*

Neustar Participants:

- *Becky Burr*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau*
- *Cory Lancaster*

Department of Commerce Participants

- *Elizabeth Bacon*

usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes March 30, 2015

The Secretariat took a roll call, and noted regrets from James Bladel, Tom Barrett, and Doug Robinson.

Scott Blake Harris turned to the Stephanie Duchesneau to run through general business items. Ms. Duchesneau stated that the usTLD Stakeholder Council Quarterly Report would be due at the end of April. The council agreed that input on the Quarterly Report could be provided through the Council List. Ms. Duchesneau said that she would circulate a draft report to the Council by end of week to collect input.

Ms. Duchesneau provided a summary of the fifteen responses received to date to the .US Public Survey, noting that most of the responses indicated that the respondents had come across the survey through circulation on the Internet Society Chapter listservs by Karen Rose. The respondents included ISOC members, ccTLD operators, legacy registrants, and others. Roughly 90 percent of registrants had previously registered domain names, and roughly 50 percent had previously registered in .US. In responding to why they had or had not previously registered .US domain names the domestic orientation of the namespace was flagged as both a pro and con. The survey raised a number of substantive recommendations about potential improvements to .US including:

- Improving processes for multistakeholder input;
- Demonstrating policy activism in ICANN;
- Demonstrating thought leadership at local internet-related events;
- Clarifying the nexus requirement;
- Engaging in partnerships with large companies or organizations and highlighting these usages of the namespace;
- Getting involved with associations or organizations with a domestic focus or local chapter presence to emphasize the national character of the namespace;
- Expanding the role of the public in managing the namespace; and
- Engaging in identity campaigns, such as around the value of “buying American.”

Suggestions for the town hall included building awareness of active uses of .US, explaining .US policies, providing information about the role of .US in ICANN policy development, and discussing high-interest topics in the Internet governance space such as the IANA Transition.

Ms. Rose suggested that the survey remain open through the end-of-week due to a short delay in circulating it through the Internet Society lists. Ms. Duchesneau supported the suggestion adding that input received through the survey would continue to be considered up through the date of the town hall.

Discussion turned to a run-through of the draft deck for the usTLD Public Stakeholder Town Hall. Ms. Duchesneau provided a synopsis of each slide and members of the Council discussed improvements to the slides and slides that should be added or removed. Suggestions received included:

- Updating the language on introductory slides to more clearly differentiate the market for .US from that of .GOV (Bryan Britt);
- Making introductory language friendlier rather than emphasizing restrictions on the namespace (Shane Tews);
- Updating the examples of .US users provided to focus on the mission of the namespace rather than upon target markets (Becky Burr);
- Adding direct references to input received through the public survey to drive Open Floor discussion (Karen Rose);
- Updating the examples to feature organizations and associations that were currently using .US rather than prospective users (Karen Rose); and
- Introducing a slide that referenced key policies with a link to policy overview document (Becky Burr).

Mr. Harris volunteered to cover introductory slides for the presentation. Becky Burr suggested that additional assignments be made over email. Ms. Duchesneau said that she would make the necessary updates to the deck and recirculate a version to the Council, as well as prepare possible topic assignments and a script for the Town Hall dialogue. Ms. Duchesneau confirmed that she would be finalizing details for the virtual meeting room.

The Council briefly discussed plans for publicizing the survey. As a baseline Ms. Duchesneau said that she planned to publish an additional Circle ID piece when the participation details were finalized, leverage the social media handles of Neustar and the Department of Commerce; reach out directly to .US registrar partners and delegated managers, and conduct personal outreach. Participants were encouraged to engage in their own outreach to the extent possible.

Mr. Harris asked that Ms. Duchesneau circulate minutes including action items.

Action Items

- *Stephanie Duchesneau to update the Town Hall Presentation on the basis of 3.30.2015 meeting input;*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau to circulate draft Q1 2015 Stakeholder Council Quarterly Report;*
- *Councilors to provide input on Quarterly Report via email;*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau and Becky Burr to assign presenters for Town Hall Topics; and*
- *Shane Tews and others to brainstorm hashtag for the Town Hall.*

Attendees

Councilors:

- *Bryan Britt*
- *Shane Tews*
- *Scott Blake Harris*
- *James Bladel*

- *Phil Corwin*
- *Karen Rose*
- *Peter Roman*

Neustar Participants:

- *Becky Burr*
- *Stephanie Duchesneau*
- *Cory Lancaster*

Department of Commerce Participants

- *Elizabeth Bacon*