ICG Communications Strategy
draft v5
(6 July 2015)

PURPOSE & CONTEXT

At its 5th face-to-face meeting (Buenos Aires, 18-19 June 2015), the ICG recognized its need for a Communications Strategy, and set up a Working Group (CommWG)[i].

This Communications Strategy aims at setting out guidelines, tools and an operational plan for the ICG, enabling it to provide information on "Transition", whether at the instigation of the ICG itself, or in response to requests from the global Internet community or from the media. The tools and operational plan shall be developed, on an ongoing basis, with the Communications Team of ICANN (ICANN/Comm) and with other partners[ii].

The current draft Communications Strategy, prepared by the CommWG, was approved by the full ICG at its meeting on (insert date).

All matters concerning "Transition", whether sent directly to ICG or through another channel (viz. ICANN Communications) shall be referred to CommWG.

GUIDELINES

Based on experience gained since the formation of the ICG, its communication requirements fall roughly into two categories:

- Official statements (e.g. public declarations, prepared interviews, public affairs testimony) shall be made on behalf of the ICG by its Chair, who may delegate this duty to a Co-Chair or another ICG Member, depending on circumstances and availability;
- Informal contributions (e.g. seminars, webinars, panel discussions) can be made by ICG Members, who must then stipulate that they do not speak on behalf of the ICG.

Whether in an official or informal context, all interventions shall seek to

- provide the wider picture in which Transition is situated,
- where necessary, recall the NTIA conditions upon which Transition is predicated;
- respect the integrity of the proposals received from the operational communities, while making them understandable to the general, non-specialist public;
- point out the independence of the ICG, as stipulated in its Charter, while recognizing its valuable cooperation with ICANN and other partners.

In order to ensure the desired impact, ICG's messaging shall, whenever possible, be tailored to each event or target, for example:

- a brief note for high-level policy circles (2-3 pages, plus attachments),
- educational material for a large public (slide deck, videos...).

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

In carrying out its Communications Strategy, the ICG may use all resources available, provided they are up-to-date, and that they have been checked for consistency.

TOOLS

In order to ensure the homogeneity of ICG's message, interventions shall be based on a set of tools, already available or yet to be developed with the help of ICANN/Comm or other partners:

- material which has been reviewed for consistency (slide decks, videos, infographics, animation, and in general any material to be used in a public setting);
- attention shall be paid to specific geographic or cultural contexts (e.g. in some countries, the public is not allowed to access certain social media);
- advice on the context of each individual request for information, or opportunity to communicate (nature of the

event, target audience, characteristics of a particular media outlet, regional or local context).

Requests for information, interviews or statements may come directly to the ICG, through ICANN/Comm, or through other channels. In all cases, professional communication techniques shall serve as a guide:

- outreach and openness shall be preferred to a defensive attitude;
- all messages must be delivered accurately, the style being adapted to the target audience and the circumstances;
- useful material and/or advice (media monitoring, context, material, presentation techniques, social media) may be sought from ICANN/Comm and other partners.
- Requests coming through ICANN or another partner, will be addressed to ICG Secretariat, who will inform CommWG.

COLLABORATION

The ICG has the ability to collaborate with and leverage communications expertise and resources within members' organizations and ICANN. In particular, ICG may seek ICANN resources and advice in producing materials, developing messaging, providing platforms and channels that support the ICG strategy where appropriate, and helping to support the "multiplier" effect of ICG members. Other partners may wish to cooperate in the same way with the ICG. Some of the areas of collaboration between ICG and ICANN, or other entities, are appended.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

The communications demands surrounding the ICG's work, on the general theme of "Transition", are likely to peak at four periods:

- the launch of the "public comment" period;
- the submission of the final Transition Proposal by the ICG to the US authorities (NTIA);
- during the U.S. Government review process;
- when the contract expires.

The ICG shall strive to have an operational communications plan for each of these junctures. The public comment period launch provides a first test of the efficiency of the Operational Plan, which will be further developed as the other periods are approached.

DURATION OF THE ICG COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

This Communications Strategy will remain in effect, and the CommWG will remain in activity, for the whole duration of the ICG itself.

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i) Established by a decision of the ICG on 19th June 2015, the Working Group was constituted with the following ICG Members: Joseph ALHADEFF, Jari ARKKO, Alissa COOPER, Mohamed EL BASHIR, Patrik FALSTRÖM, Jandyr FERREIRA DOS SANTOS Jr., LEE Xiaodong, Jean-Jacques SUBRENAT. This Working Group is supported by the ICG Secretariat: Jennifer CHUNG, Yannis LI, Sherly HARISTYA.

ii) An initial joint meeting between ICG-Comm and the ICANN Communications Team was held on 20th of June 2015. The ICANN side was represented by Duncan BURNS, Hillary JETT, Emily PIMENTEL, Jim TRENGROVE.