

Draft Proposal

Annual ICANN Strategic and Operational Planning Process

Prepared for discussion by:

Marilyn Cade, Maureen Cubberley, Grant
Forsyth, Chuck Gomes

Building on discussions in:

The Amsterdam Strategic Plan Consultation

Assumptions

- The Strategic Plan is dynamic and therefore should be refreshed at least annually, always extending out at least three (3) years.
- The Strategic Plan is developed through a bottom-up consultative process.
- The purpose of the Strategic Plan to set the long-range direction of the organization.

Note: Printed copies of this proposal are available.

Purpose of Process

- Continuous improvement of ICANN's Strategic Plan.
- Support preparation of ICANN's Yearly Operational Plan, which flows from the Strategic Plan but is more tactical in nature.
- Support preparation of the Budget for ICANN's next fiscal year, which is developed from the Operational Plan.

Proposed Process

- The following slides outline a 10-step process that would be applied annually.
- Note that some steps could be performed concurrently.

Step 1: Environmental Analysis

- The Staff and/or an independent consultant should undertake an annual environmental assessment of current and future factors likely to impact ICANN's fulfillment of its mission.
- Such an assessment should include derived conclusions, identified potential consequences or scenarios, and suggested strategic responses.
- This report should accompany an evaluation of the current Strategic Plan and be circulated to the ICANN Community for comment, as noted in Step 4 of this process.
- Target timeframe: June/July

Step 2: Review of Previous Year Expenses

- The actual expenditures for the previous fiscal year should be evaluated relative to fulfillment of strategic objectives in the current version of the Strategic Plan
- A report should be prepared including:
 - Goals achieved and not achieved (monitoring achievement)
 - Shortfalls and excesses in budgeted funds (gaps and opportunities)
 - Goals that need to be continued into the next fiscal year
 - Adequacy of funding levels budgeted (adequate resources?)
 - New goals introduced after the budget was finalized
 - Any other information that may be useful in revising the Strategic Plan.
- Target: June/July

Step 3: Analysis of Previous Year Expenses

- The report produced in step 2 should be analyzed with the intent of identifying any possible modifications to the Strategic Plan.
- The report should be distributed as widely as possible including public posting on the ICANN website and an online comment forum should be made available.
- Whenever the timing of an ICANN public meeting coincides with the posting of this report, an in-person comment period should also occur.
- Timeframe: August

Step 4: Strategic Plan Evaluation

- Separate and independent evaluations of the current Strategic Plan should be obtained from at least the following groups:
 - ICANN Staff and Directors
 - ICANN Supporting Organizations (either consolidated into one evaluation or separate evaluations from constituencies)
 - ICANN Advisory Committees as applicable
 - Interested community members (organizations and/or individuals).
 - The evaluations should be in a standardized format to facilitate both their preparation and the ease of review and analysis; this may take the form of written questionnaires, online surveys or whatever tools deemed most effective and efficient.
 - Timeframe: June/July

Step 5: Compilation of Strategic Plan Evaluations

- The evaluations received in step 4 should be compiled and analyzed.
- The results should then be summarized in a report.
- The first draft of this report should be reviewed by a small, representative group of Staff and Board and the stakeholders identified in Step 4 (Strategic Planning Council), the purpose being to identify as many areas of consensus as possible before posting the report for wider comment.
- The report should then be distributed as widely as possible including public posting on the ICANN website and an online comment forum should be made available. Each member of the Strategic Planning Council should take the report back to his/her constituency for further comment.
- Whenever the timing of an ICANN public meeting coincides with the posting of this report, an in-person comment period should also occur.
- Timeframe: August (Public comment in September)

Step 6: Draft Revised Strategic Plan

- Based on the information received from steps 1-5, ICANN Staff, should prepare a red-lined, revised version of the Strategic Plan for public comment.
- Prior to preparing this, ICANN Staff may arrange for additional consultations with members of the community if deemed helpful, including re-convening the Strategic Planning Council to help identify future strategic directions.
- The Draft Revised Strategic Plan along with a brief explanation of how decisions were made regarding where to make revisions relative to input received from steps 1-5 should be distributed as widely as possible and posted to ICANN's website for public comment for at least 30 days prior to an ICANN public meeting in the fourth quarter of the calendar year.
- Public comments should also be solicited during the Public Forum of that public meeting.
- Timeframe: October (Public comment in November)

Step 7: Final Revised Strategic Plan

- After the online public comment period has ended and after the Public Forum during which comments are requested, ICANN staff should prepare a final revised version of the plan for Board approval.
- After Board approval, the plan should be posted on ICANN's website.
- Timeframe: December

Step 8: Draft Operational Plan

- Once revisions to the Strategic Plan are completed, ICANN Staff should prepare a draft Operational Plan for the next fiscal year.
- This plan should contain tactical plans for the next fiscal year, in contrast to the broader strategic (longer term) objectives in the Strategic Plan.
- To the extent possible, the Operational Plan should be organized so as to make it easy to correlate Operational Plan details with Strategic Objectives.
- The draft operational plan should be posted on ICANN's website for public comment.
- Timeframe: January (Public comment in February)

Step 9: Final Operational Plan

- Based on input received from step 8, ICANN staff should prepare a Final Operational Plan for the next fiscal year.
- The final operational plan should be posted on ICANN's website.
- Timeframe: March

Step 10: **Budget Preparation**

- The ICANN budget development process for the next fiscal year should be started immediately after step 9 if not sooner.
- Timeframe: March - June

There is no intent to describe that process here.

Methodology

- Throughout the process, methods should be employed to accomplish the following objectives:
 - Make providing input into the process as easy as possible
 - Make review, analysis and reporting as easy as possible
 - Provide opportunity for participation in the process available to the widest possible audience of interest parties (individuals and organizations).

Methodology (Cont'd)

- Requests for input should be clearly defined for general audiences including non-English speakers.
- Wherever possible standardized forms should be used for input. (e.g., questionnaires, online surveys, response templates, etc.)
 - Whatever forms are used, they should clearly guide participants in terms of what expected input is desired.
- Wherever possible objective data should be requested to allow for easier compilation of the results
 - For example: rating how well an objective was achieved using a numerical rating system or a simple yes/no response.

Methodology (Cont'd)

- A couple of approaches for defining specific methodologies to be used include:
 - Forming a task force of stakeholders, ICANN directors and ICANN staff with expertise in this area
 - Hiring consultant(s).

Final Process Recommendations

- Ongoing appropriate resourcing of the Strategic Planning process is essential.
 - The aim should be to ensure that the ICANN organization develops and retains appropriate skills within its staff ranks.
- The use of properly skilled and experienced independent consultants should be provided for.
 - The use of both staff and independent consultants can bring the best balance between institutional knowledge and unencumbered fresh thinking.
- While ICANN is fortunate in being able to draw on its diverse and highly knowledgeable Community, Community consultation is expensive and needs to be facilitated with quality analysis and proposals to form the basis for informed input and response.