

ICANN Contracted Parties Satisfaction Survey – May 2018 Review of Findings

Background

In 2017 the Global Domains Division (“GDD”) of the ICANN organization presented the Contracted Parties Satisfaction Survey which asked respondents from the Registrar and Registry Operators community a range of questions regarding GDD’s performance over five key categories: Integrity, Dependability, Competence, Commitment and Satisfaction. Scores were calculated for each category and combined into a weighted average known as the Trust Score. The purpose of the Trust Score, in addition to providing an encapsulated view of the year’s average score, was to provide a metric for on-going comparison from year-to-year and for GDD to determine areas for growth in the coming year.

Methodology and Survey Structure

As with last year, the 2018 survey was conducted anonymously to allow respondents the greatest level of privacy in presenting their responses and opinions. GDD sent survey invitations to 542 registry operators and 453 registrars and the survey was active from 7 March 2018 until its close on 13 April 2018. Responses were received from 63 registry operators and from 109 registrars. This represented a total participation rate of 17.3% which is a significant increase from the 2017 survey’s participation rate of 12.7%.

This year’s survey saw the respondents’ roles within their organizations spread across a wider variety of functions with: General Business (25%) and Operations (24%) being the largest categories. Other organizational roles included: Technical/IT (16%), Legal/Policy (14%) and Marketing (11%).

The global regions serviced by the 2018 respondents also saw a larger distribution with Europe (53%), North America (40%), Asia/Pacific (30%) and Latin/South America (10%) as the leading constituencies.

The heart of the survey focused on the respondents’ organizations overall satisfaction. As noted above, these questions were broken across five categories: Integrity, Dependability, Competence, Commitment and Satisfaction. As with the previous year’s study, respondents were asked to “grade” GDD’s performance within each category on a five-point scale – from 1 = Strongly Agree (most favorable view of GDD) to 5 = Strongly Disagree (most unfavorable).

Therefore, when viewing the scores, it is important to note that a score below 1 is not possible and, based on survey methodologies, is practically impossible to achieve. The median (neutral favorability) score for each question and category is 3. For purposes of evaluation, scores in each category below 3.0 are considered to be Favorable and scores closer to a 2.0 are considered to be Moderately to Strongly Favorable.

Findings and Year-over-Year Comparison

As with 2017, the results of the 2018 study indicate that the respondents are strongly to moderately in favor of GDD’s performance of its mission. Specifically, the respondents identified that the GDD is a trust-worthy organization with high marks in its commitment to and competence in fulfilling its mission. Respondents also indicated that they were generally very satisfied with GDD’s performance again this year.

The average score across all questions and categories for 2018 is 2.50 with a standard deviation of 0.13 (see *Figure 1*). This represents a gain in favorability over 2017’s average of 2.58. Additionally, the lower standard deviation (0.13 in 2018 vs. 0.28 in 2017) shows that there were fewer outliers in any of the surveyed areas of performance and satisfaction. The 2018 results show that GDD is performing its mission favorably and presenting fewer “pain points” for the Contracted Parties within its performance.

The summary Trust Score for 2018 is also favorable although the score is nearly identical to the 2017 score. This year’s Trust Score is 2.58 which is only a minor improvement over the 2017 Trust Score of 2.59. As with last year, the Trust Score shows that the respondents are giving GDD largely favorable grades across all categories.

The greatest changes in scores from 2017 to this year’s results were in the scores within the individual categories themselves. The chart below (*Table 1*) shows a side-by-side comparison in the categories and their rankings from 2017 to 2018.

Figure 1

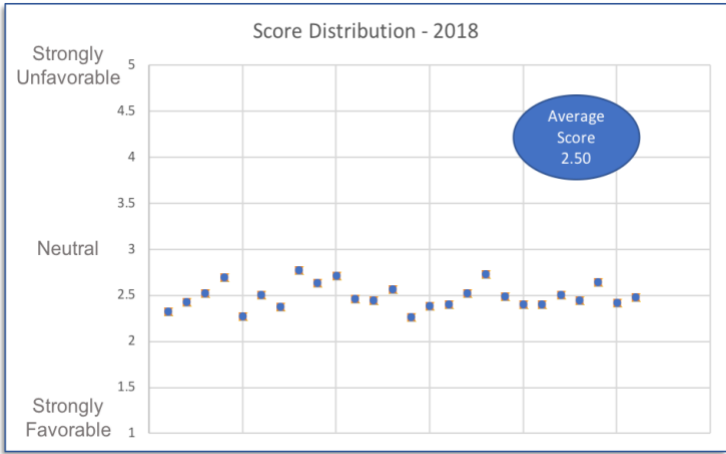


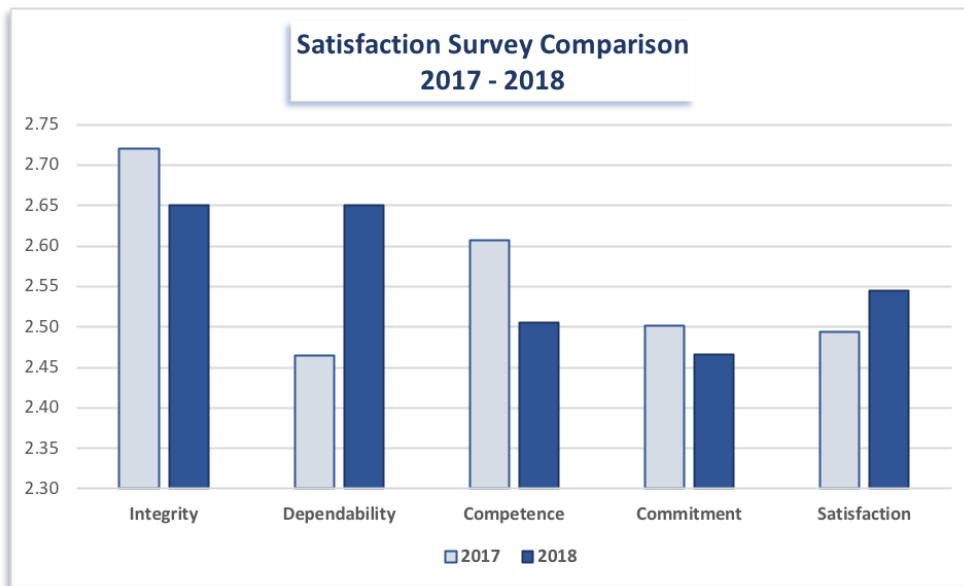
Table 1

Category	2017 Survey		2018 Survey	
	Relative Rank	Score	Relative Rank	Score
Trust Score		2.59		2.58
Commitment	3	2.50	1	2.47
Competence	4	2.61	2	2.51
Satisfaction	2	2.49	3	2.55
Integrity	5	2.72	4	2.65
Dependability	1	2.46	5	2.65

As the data reflects, respondents believed that largest positive change was in the Competence score (from 2.61 in 2017 to 2.51 in 2018) and the greatest relative gain was in both GDD’s Commitment and Competence which each rose two spots to first and second overall, respectively.

In contrast, the greatest negative change was in the Dependability score which rose to 2.65 (from 2.46 in 2017). This category also saw the greatest relative change in rank as it dropped from the best ranked category in 2017 to the lowest ranked category in this year’s study.

Figure 2



A summary of the respondents’ rationale for each category’s score and ranking is presented below (see *Table 2*).

Table 2

Category	Score – 2018	Summary of Findings
Trust Score	2.58 – Moderately Favorable	Contracted Parties give ICANN’s GDD largely favorable grades and an overall score consistently in line with 2017’s results. The biggest change in scores was in Dependability – which went from the strongest category in 2017 to the weakest in 2018. Commitment and Competence went from the bottom of the scores in 2017 to first and second overall in 2018.
Commitment	2.47 – Favorable	Contracted Parties believe that ICANN’s GDD understands the domain name industry, has a clear and consistent mission and is a highly valued Internet governance organization that compares well with similar organizations.
Competence	2.51 – Favorable	Respondents gave GDD’s staff strong marks for their responsiveness to the needs of the registry/registrar community and noted confidence in GDD’s abilities to address concerns raised within the industry. Weakest grades in this category were for innovation and communication.
Satisfaction	2.55 – Moderately Favorable	The Contracted Parties generally have favorable working relationship with GDD. GDD should note with concern that the Parties’ belief that “nothing of value” has been accomplished has increased to a nearly Neutral ranking.
Integrity	2.65 – Slightly Favorable	This category saw pleasant gains this year (from 2.72 in 2017) but also saw the second worst individual score for the survey as respondents still believe that GDD tends to “push its own agenda.” This trait scored a 3.47 (past Neutral) which is actually an improvement over the 2017 score of 3.79.
Dependability	2.65 – Slightly Favorable	This category saw the greatest change from 2017 – from first to last place – and had the highest score for an individual trait for the survey that was also the highest swing year-over-year. Respondents noted concern with the value of their time investment in GDD work (from 2.03 in 2017 to 3.73 in 2018!).

Having noted these changes in rank and scoring by category, it is important to note that while the distribution has changed from 2017 to 2018, the overall satisfaction of the Contracted Parties with GDD’s fulfillment of its mission remains quite favorable as does the trust the respondents and their organizations place in GDD. Additionally, while Integrity and Dependability received lower rankings their scores stayed in the Favorable range (2.65 for both) – well below our Neutral median of 3.0.