



**ICANN STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**JULY 2011 – JUNE 2014**

**DRAFT**

One World. One Internet.

# ICANN

## *One World. One Internet.*

ICANN is a global organization that coordinates the Internet unique identifier systems for worldwide public benefit, enabling a single, global interoperable Internet. ICANN's inclusive multi-stakeholder model and community-developed policies facilitate the billions of computers, phones, devices and people connected into one Internet.

ICANN's **vision**: *One world. One Internet.*

ICANN's **mission**:

- coordinate, at the overall level, the global Internet's systems of unique identifiers; and
- ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems.

The unique identifier systems are comprised of the Internet's: domain name system (DNS), Internet Protocol (IP) addresses, autonomous system (AS) numbers, and protocol ports & parameter numbers. Additionally, ICANN affirms its commitment to work for the maintenance of a single, global interoperable Internet.

ICANN's vision and mission encompass four strategic focus areas addressed in this plan.

## ICANN's Mission Statement

Four Strategic Focus Areas to support the Unique Identifier Systems (UIS)

The **mission** of ICANN is to coordinate, at the overall level, the global Internet's systems of unique identifiers, and in particular to ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems.

Source: ICANN Bylaws as amended 5 August 2010

One World. One Internet.



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Key themes for this strategic plan are: global coordination of the security, stability and resiliency (SSR) regime; internationalization of ICANN and its relationships; formulation of policies and enforceable agreements; and serving internet users through renewal of the IANA contract and launch of the New gTLD Program. ICANN is a non-profit, public benefit corporation with approximately 140 employees globally and supported by thousands of volunteers. Primarily through contracts with gTLD registries and registrars, ICANN receives approximately \$64M in annual funding. ICANN works for the maintenance of a single, interoperable Internet. One World. One Internet.

# DRAFT ICANN Strategic Plan 2011 to 2014 – Four Strategic Focus Areas

*Supporting... One World. One Internet.*

	DNS stability and security	Consumer choice, competition and innovation	Core operations including IANA	A healthy internet eco-system
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain &amp; drive DNS uptime</li> <li>Enhance DNS risk management</li> <li>Broad DNSSEC adoption</li> <li>Enhanced international DNS cooperation</li> <li>Improved DNS resiliency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain single authoritative root</li> <li>Increased TLD options in more languages</li> <li>New gTLDs including IDNs</li> <li>Lower registration abuse</li> <li>Increased industry competition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flawless IANA operations</li> <li>Resilient L-Root operations</li> <li>Continual improvements (TQM)</li> <li>Internationalization</li> <li>Long-term IANA functions responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing role in internet governance</li> <li>Stakeholder diversity</li> <li>World-class accountability and transparency</li> <li>Enhanced trust in ICANN's stewardship</li> <li>Focus on global public interest</li> <li>Cross stakeholder working groups</li> </ul>
<b>Community Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local DNSSEC adoption</li> <li>Whois Internationalized Registration Data</li> <li>Develop solutions for DNS security</li> <li>IPv6 rollout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IDNA protocol implementation</li> <li>New TLD rollout</li> <li>Registrar Accreditation Agreement amendments</li> <li>gTLD Registrant Rights Charter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of performance</li> <li>Key committee participation</li> <li>Engagement within technical community</li> <li>Final IPv4 address allocation</li> <li>Root Zone Management (RZM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased multi-stakeholder participation</li> <li>Contributing to international fora</li> <li>Review SOs and ACs</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DNSSEC propagation</li> <li>Facilitate work on DNS security</li> <li>Full business continuity planning</li> <li>IPv4 exhaustion risk management</li> <li>Advocate IPv6 adoption</li> <li>RPKI deployment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internationalized Domain Name (IDNs) expansion</li> <li>Implement new gTLDs</li> <li>Whois program improvements</li> <li>Improve policy processes</li> <li>Registrant protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IANA infrastructure upgrade</li> <li>IANA services outreach</li> <li>Monitoring root zone performance</li> <li>IANA excellence efforts</li> <li>Organizational Effectiveness Initiative (OEI)</li> <li>Strengthening regional presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affirmation of Commitments &amp; organizational reviews</li> <li>Retain &amp; support existing community while attracting new &amp; diverse community members</li> <li>Build global support for single authoritative root</li> <li>Enhanced cooperation in Internet Governance</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative business continuity planning (BCP)</li> <li>Collaboration with RIRs &amp; technical groups</li> <li>DNSSEC operations &amp; propagation</li> <li>IPv4 &amp; IPv6 engagement</li> <li>Cooperative TLD training in developing countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance improvements</li> <li>Support SO &amp; AC work</li> <li>Global outreach</li> <li>IDN ccTLD Fast Track</li> <li>New gTLD implementation</li> <li>ICANN regional footprint</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IANA request processing</li> <li>Board support</li> <li>Security and contingency operations</li> <li>L-Root operations</li> <li>Improve financial system and controls</li> <li>Staff retention and engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thought leadership</li> <li>Wider international engagement</li> <li>Strengthen corporate, government &amp; other stakeholder partnerships</li> <li>Decision impact analysis &amp; reporting</li> <li>Enhance communications &amp; better accessibility via improved web site</li> <li>Enhanced translation strategy</li> </ul>

**Multi-stakeholder – Collaborative – International – Transparent - Accountable**

## DNS stability and security

**Focus Area Definition:** ICANN is chartered to: (i) ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems, (ii) facilitate international participation in the DNS technical coordination, and (iii) coordinate operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system. This area focuses on external security and stability activities (cf., the IANA & Core Operations address internal activities).

**Environmental Scan:** The stability, security and resiliency (SSR) of the internet's global unique identifier systems (DNS, IP addresses & AS numbers, Parameters & Ports) are important priorities for ICANN, industry and Internet users globally. SSR form the core elements of ICANN's mission. Misuse of and attacks against the DNS and other Internet infrastructures challenge overall unique identifier security. Cyber security attacks continue to grow in size and sophistication, targeting individuals, corporations and governments. Business continuity planning (BCP) is gaining traction as more organizations plan and perform business interruption simulation testing. Additionally, new TLDs (including IDNs) and overall growth of domain names will continue to provide opportunities and challenges as ICANN and new TLD cooperate to maintain stability, security and resiliency. The last IPv4 address blocks are being allocated in an ICANN / RIR guided manner while the international community is adopting IPv6 addresses. To ensure the security, stability and resiliency that are crucial to the unique identifier systems, ICANN must work in partnership with others on these issues.

**Strategic Objectives:** ICANN has identified four strategic objectives in the focus area Stability, Security & Resiliency. Each objective has related projects, staff and community work to support the achievement of the strategic objectives over the life of this plan. The strategic objectives are:

Maintain and drive DNS uptime. Since its inception, ICANN has been working with the community to ensure the security, stability and resiliency of the DNS. Of course, this is an area where ICANN has a strong strategic objective (maintain 100% DNS uptime) without the means to assure its achievement. There are certain aspects that ICANN controls, certain aspects ICANN can materially affect, and certain areas where we have the bully pulpit. For example, ICANN can work to ensure stable, continuous L-root operations. ICANN also has contractual and other strong relationships with TLDs and registrars to leverage in this area. Strategic projects to support DNS uptime include Business Continuity Planning for Registries and Registrars, IPv4 Exhaustion Communications and facilitation of IPv6 Adoption. ICANN will work for RIR interests to advocate (through its constituency groups) for IPv6 adoption by ISPs, and consumer and business entities. Staff and community work will focus on building DNS capacity and better integration of global efforts.

Increase security of the overall systems of unique identifiers. Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) implementation will continue to be a strategic objective for ICANN. DNSSEC provides a mechanism for authentication of DNS requests and reduces the risk of some malicious behavior. ICANN will continue to work with the community for DNSSEC deployment at all DNS levels with a goal that 30 TLDs in developing countries will have signed their zone by the by the end of calendar year 2011 and DNSSEC will be broadly adopted by the end of this plan period. Also, ICANN will develop a Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI) as a means to increase Internet Protocol (IP) security.

Increase international participation in unique identifier security. Attacks on the unique identifier system can come from anywhere around the globe. Strong international security systems and skills are first line deterrents to bad behavior. Staff and community work will focus on global security outreach and collaboration with Regional Internet Registries (RIR) operators to improve overall security. ICANN will follow the lead of its community working groups to develop an approach to the establishment of solutions such as coordination of an emergency response team (DNS CERT) to address one of the issues of Internet security. Also, community work needs to facilitate the acceptance of internationalized registration data in the Whois database.

Coordinate DNS global risk management. ICANN will coordinate improved global DNS risk management through registry and registrar continuity planning and performance of business interruption simulation exercises. ICANN will work with others to protect the integrity of the global DNS through initiatives such as training for TLD operators. ICANN will also enhance collaboration with the global computer security and incident response community to improve BCP and testing to address risks and threats. ICANN will seek to work with others to develop objective risk management models.

## Core operations including IANA

**Focus Area Definition:** ICANN is chartered – through its IANA function – to (i) coordinate the assignment of Internet technical parameters to maintain universal connectivity, (ii) perform and oversee functions for coordinating the IP address space and operation of the authoritative Internet DNS root server system, and (iii) coordinate allocation and assignment of three sets of unique identifiers (DNS, IP, Ports & Parameters); and also to: (iv) adhere to transparent & accountable budgeting & operational processes and (v) publish annual report of progress against Bylaws, strategic and operating plans.

This focus area provides for continuous improvement and excellence by, in each area:

1. Assessing the current environment
2. Creating a plan for specific improvements
3. Measuring the value of those improvements when implemented

**Environmental Scan:** ICANN's core operations are focused on building the capacity and ability to provide services and coordinate the Internet DNS. ICANN operates the L-root sever and has significant skills and documentation to share with the international community. Operations excellence is required to support the IDN Fasttrack and New gTLD Programs. As the Internet continues to grow and evolve, technical advancements (e.g., RPKI, new standards) should be considered as they relate to the evolution of ICANN services and operations. Over the life of this plan, there are many factors that will increase the load on operations, among them: the introduction of new top-level domains, an increasingly connected global community, and the rapidly growing number of devices. ICANN began performing the IANA operations in 1998 through an agreement with the US Government. The current multi-year contract expires September 30, 2011. ICANN will submit a proposal for the IANA contract renewal or its replacement, is well positioned to compete for the award, and expects to continue to operate the IANA function. ICANN, including its IANA function, also effectively participates with other global organizations to work for the maintenance of a single, interoperable internet.

**Strategic Objectives:** Below are the strategic objectives for the IANA and Core Operations focus area.

Continued flawless IANA operations. ICANN is committed to continued excellence in the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function and other core operations. The continuation of neutral delivery of IANA services will be secured through the anticipated award of a long-term IANA functions contract. ICANN continues to invest in the IANA infrastructure, and process improvements through the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model to support meeting or exceeding IANA service level agreements. During the term of this plan, the IANA function will develop advancements in security (specifically, deploy RPKI) and continue to upgrade its processes through automation (specifically, the root-zone management tool). The IANA function will remain focused on the timely processing of unique identifier requests and DNSSEC management. We will respond to community monitoring of IANA performance but also implement our own measurements and feedback mechanisms.

L-Root operational excellence. Enables ICANN to lead by example and provides the international Internet community a transparent and collaborative model for root server operations. ICANN will look for opportunities to share this knowledge through international outreach. ICANN will be recognized as a top-tier root zone manager.

Efficiency and effectiveness of operations. ICANN is implementing a long-term, culturally embedded operational effectiveness initiative to drive process, system and documentation improvements across core operations. ICANN is committed to improving the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of policy

development and implementation processes and the multi-stakeholder model that engages the global community. It will support the ongoing GNSO initiative to improve the PDP and also encourage and support additional initiatives. ICANN will continue to strengthen the security, stability and continuity of its own operations through an Operational Effectiveness Initiative to ensure: continual operational improvement, and staff retention and engagement.

*Strengthen international operations and presences.* By providing adequate levels of service to stakeholders around the globe, working in multiple languages and in multiple time zones. The introduction of new IDNs and TLDs during the life of this plan will continue to require ICANN to build capability and presence. Another important aspect of strengthened operations is to maintain or improve service standards in all key operational measures during the life of this plan, including managing the impact of new gTLDs and new IDN ccTLDs. ICANN will also engage effectively with the technical community, e.g., the IETF and root server managers.

Improve the financial system and controls to realize: increased capacity and scalability of operational workload, increased operational efficiencies, reduction in operating costs, improved data integrity and availability, faster generation and publication of reports, better accessibility to financial information, improved customer service (both internal and external), greater sustainability of the base technology.

# Consumer choice, competition and innovation

**Focus Area Definition:** ICANN is chartered to: (i) operate through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets, (ii) develop policies for determining circumstances under which new TLDs are added, (iii) introduce competition in the registration of domain names where practicable and beneficial in the public interest and (iv) promote consumer trust and choice in DNS the marketplace.

**Environmental Scan:** 2009 ended with an estimated 192,000,000 domain names, growing over 8% above 2008. Country code top level domains (ccTLDs) presently represent the fastest growing segment of this environment. In 2009, several internationalized top-level domain names were added to the Internet: for the first time, new language characters are “right of the dot”. The .com generic top-level domain (TLD) was established in 1985; total TLDs have grown to over 290 in number. The Internet registry and registrar markets are still maturing and comprised of many different and evolving business models. Many new potential TLD (including IDN) operators have innovative businesses models and high expectations. As with any maturing market, some business models will survive and be emulated, while others will fail and fade away; importantly, ICANN has focused significant attention on continuity and registrant protection as new processes are implemented. Comments indicate the increasing importance of DNS security, improved compliance mechanisms, and earned consumer trust. By the end of this plan, over 100,000,000 new names may exist, in many innovative areas.

**Strategic Objectives:** ICANN has identified five strategic objectives in this focus area.

More TLDs available in multiple languages (IDNs). ICANN has a strategic goal to continue to open the Internet up to more languages and cultures around the globe. Strategic projects are to continue the implementation of IDNs, through the Fast Track, new gTLDs, and IDN Policy Development Process currently conducted in the ccNSO. New gTLDs offer the opportunity for more communities and languages to be represented on the Internet and for expanded customer choice for domain name registrations. ICANN will provide effective program management for the successful deployment of IDNs through the New gTLD and ccTLD Programs.

Increase regional participation in the industry. Expanding the global DNS skillset for technology and operations is a key goal for ICANN. The IDN and New gTLD Programs will result in more registries and registrars across all international regions. ICANN will build capacity to serve contracted parties and the interests of registrants and users across all regions. Specific strategic projects include conducting education and training programs in partnership with ISOC, local TLD operators, and the local Internet communities.

Mitigate malicious conduct. ICANN’s goal is to reduce the incidence and impact of malicious conduct as it relates to the ICANN mandate. Related projects are to improve the contractual compliance regime for registrars and registries and pursue the implementation of an expanded Whois program and secure, predictable environments for users through a registrants rights charter and incorporation of Registrar Accreditation Agreement amendments. Staff and community will continue to work with WIPO and other authoritative bodies to protect and enforce intellectual property rights on the Internet.

Foster industry innovation. The Internet is a target and source of significant business and technological innovation. ICANN has a goal to see similar innovation brought to the stable evolution of the unique identifier system.

Promote fair opportunities for open entry to internet-related markets around the globe. ICANN’s projects related to this objective are to continue to support the development and implement of open and transparent policies and processes that will enable competition. ICANN will promote the



implementation and deployment of the IDNA protocol to ensure that IDNs operate as expected. ICANN will work with the community to address potential assistance for disadvantaged organizations. Staff and community work will focus on capturing, evaluating and incorporating input for open entry programs such as IDNs and new gTLDs.

## A healthy internet eco-system

**Focus Area Definition:** ICANN is chartered to (i) operate for the global public benefit of the Internet community as a whole, (ii) coordinate cross-community deliberations and policy development that germane to ICANN's mission, (iii) cooperate as appropriate with relevant international organizations, (iv) ensure that DNS technical coordination decisions are made in the public interest and are accountable and transparent, and (v) operate as a multi-stakeholder, private sector led organization with input from the public for whose benefit ICANN shall in all events act.

**Environmental Scan:** ICANN is charged to operate for the benefit of the Internet community as a whole. The public is a diverse and disparate collection of communities knitted together by the Internet and operating as a complex eco-system. As the Internet continues to be a greater enabler of gross domestic product, government daily operations and global security activities, the profile of Internet governance has also elevated. In September of 2009 the US Department of Commerce and ICANN signed the Affirmation of Commitments (Affirmation) that affirmed the transition of technical coordination of the Internet's DNS to a private sector led organization – ICANN. Over the past few years, the United Nations and other global bodies have also increased their participation in Internet governance.

**Strategic Objectives:** ICANN has identified four strategic objectives in the focus area of *A healthy internet eco-system*. Each objective has related projects, staff work and community work to support the achievement of the strategic objectives over the life of this plan. The strategic objectives are:

One unified, global internet. To deliver on ICANN's vision of "One World. One Internet." Strategic projects supporting this objective interweave this entire strategic plan. With the potential growth of ccTLDs, IDNs and new gTLDs, continued internationalization of ICANN is crucial to maintaining a single, global interoperable Internet and a single Internet zone file used globally. Staff work will include development of thought leadership on key issues in this space. In particular, preserve the stable management of the naming and addressing system.

Building stakeholder diversity. ICANN commits to ensure that the many global stakeholders are heard on Internet related issues. Strategic projects include continued refinement of the inclusive multi-stakeholder model that encourages and manages the active collection of views from the global community. ICANN will also actively participate in a wide range of constructive Internet governance-related debates in partnership with other organizations. ICANN will continue efforts to increase community participation utilizing more remote participation technologies. Importantly, ICANN will work to retain and support existing community members and build upon recent efforts to formalize a cross-stakeholder model (i.e., across the GAC, Supporting Organizations and other Advisory Committees). The multi-stakeholder model recognizes the influence of governments, corporations, not-for-profits and how they fit into the naming and addressing system. Starting with the new Board seat representing the At-Large community, we will also work to formalize input from the At-Large community into Board discussions.

Improve communications and accessibility through, among other things, web page improvements that facilitate the objectives set out in this strategic plan and addresses community concerns regarding translations, introductions for newcomers, and ease of access to information.

Ongoing accountability and transparency. ICANN is charged with fact-based policy development and decision making. Strategic projects related to this are the implementation of the Affirmation of Commitment reviews, implement impact reporting based upon the results of the reviews, provide Internet governance education to an expanding group of international participants and promote programs that enhance global participation. ICANN's Bylaws mandate ongoing review of its respective Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees to ensure continued improvements to the

organization's structure and responsibility to the stakeholders. Staff work will focus on providing a thorough and reasoned explanation of decisions taken, the rationale and sources of data.

*International engagement.* While preserving the stability of the unique identifier system, recognize the authority and participation of different actors with different remits such as law enforcement and democratic access to information. In order to achieve its goals, ICANN will: participate in constructive IGF fora, collaborate with international organizations such as the EC and OECD on standards and best practices, engage in offline discussions, write papers, and otherwise engage with industry participants.

*Trust in ICANN's stewardship.* Contributing to a healthy Internet eco-system. The ICANN Board has created the Board Global Relationships Committee to support ICANN's global capacity-building efforts. Staff work will provide thought leadership contributions to international forums and discussions on Internet governance, including the United Nations-organized Internet Governance Forum and other intergovernmental forums. Additionally, the ICANN Fellowship program provides training in partnership with other organizations to support the DNS needs in developing countries.