

## **Frequently Asked Questions – Public**

March 14, 2014

### **1) What does this announcement mean?**

The U.S. government is announcing its intention to transfer its stewardship of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) Functions to the global multistakeholder community and is requesting a proposal from ICANN on how to achieve the transition.

### **2) What are the IANA Functions?**

The IANA functions involve the coordination of unique Internet identifiers. These include: 1) maintenance of the protocol parameter registries on behalf of the IETF; 2) allocation of Internet Numbers in cooperation with the Regional Internet Registries; 3) management of the .ARPA and .INT domains; 4) administrative responsibilities of the DNS root zone; and 5) coordination of root zone management. The IANA functions are administered by ICANN.

### **3) What is ICANN's role in the IANA Functions?**

As administrator of the IANA Functions since 1998, ICANN has been responsible for coordinating unique Internet identifiers – names, IP numbers, and protocol parameters – through a contract with the U.S. Department of Commerce.

### **4) Why are the IANA Functions under consideration for transfer?**

The IANA functions are not under consideration for transfer. The IANA functions will continue to be administered by ICANN.

### **5) Why is a transition plan being requested and what does it mean?**

The transition from the U.S. government has been envisioned since 1997 as reflected in “Framework for Global Electronic Commerce” and the subsequent “Statement of Policy” in 1998. The US government always envisioned its role as transitional and this is the next step in the concept of globalization of the IANA Functions that was called for and begun sixteen years ago.

### **6) Who is being asked to carry out the process?**

The U.S. government is asking ICANN to lead a process for a global multistakeholder community dialogue about how and what this transition will entail.

### **7) Why is ICANN being asked to do this?**

ICANN, in its role as the administrator of the IANA Functions, has performed these functions since 1998, ensuring the continued security, stability, and resiliency of the Internet.

### **8) What does the process entail?**

The multistakeholder-designed process that is consensus-driven, participatory, open, and transparent will launch at the ICANN 49 Meeting in Singapore in March 2014. Subsequent to this meeting, input from the community discussions will be compiled and put out for public comment and community feedback. The feedback from the community will inform the process going forward.

### **9) What are the core elements of the process?**

As outlined in the U.S. government's press release, ICANN anticipates that the transition process of the U.S. government's stewardship of the IANA Functions will be determined by a proposal developed by the multistakeholder community and will not be replaced with an intergovernmental solution. The process will meet the following criteria:

- Supports and enhances the multistakeholder model
- Maintains the security, stability and resiliency of the DNS
- Meets the expectations of affected parties
- Maintains the openness of the Internet

### **10) Is there a target date for when the oversight transition from the USG will be complete?**

Depending on the progress of this process and flow of community consultation, ICANN and the community could be ready to complete the transition before the renewal of ICANN's contract with the U.S. government in September 2015.

### **11) If ICANN no longer has a contract with the USG how will it continue to afford to fund and offer the IANA functions?**

The contract between the U. S. government and ICANN is a zero cost contract. This means that ICANN has been providing this service for the benefit of the community for sixteen years without compensation from the U.S. government. ICANN's financial stability and statements are publicly available.

### **12) Will the results of this process affect Verisign's contract to operate the .com registry?**

No. That is a separate contract between Verisign and ICANN. For Verisign, the only potential change will be the maintenance and publication of the Root Zone, which Verisign has performed as a community service spanning three decades, and we thank them.

### **13) What are the accountability mechanisms in place?**

Currently ICANN has Service Level Agreements with the IETF for the maintenance of the protocol parameter registries. In addition, ICANN has had a third party auditor audit DNSSEC as well as the Security of the IANA functions systems. Performance Standards for timeliness and accuracy of processing stakeholder's requests are also published on a monthly basis. This information is published on ICANN's IANA website. The accountability mechanisms for post-transition will be determined and informed by the dialogue in Singapore and subsequent feedback from the global multistakeholder community.

### **14) What does this announcement not mean?**

This announcement does not call into question the role of ICANN, IETF, and the RIRs in the IANA Functions. These bodies continue to hold policy authority for the protocol parameters, IP addresses, and name spaces, including responsibility to ensure the faithful registry administration by ICANN according to those policies.

### **15) Should the transition take place, will this affect the way the Internet works?**

No, this will not affect the status quo. ICANN will continue to administer the IANA Functions in coordination and cooperation with the IETF and the RIRs. For nearly sixteen years, ICANN has performed the IANA Functions with increasing autonomy, demonstrating in the process both operational excellence and maturity in organization – as illustrated by the findings of the [IANA Functions Satisfaction Survey](#) of December 2013.

**16) How does this announcement affect the individual Internet user?**

This announcement does not affect Internet users and their use of the Internet. However, all Internet users have a stake in how the Internet is run, and it is therefore important to get involved: <http://learn.icann.org/>