Draft for finalisation

ICANN Strategic Plan

July 2009 – June 2012

ICANN's Mission

Since its creation, the Internet community has vigorously discussed and reviewed the mission and values that guide ICANN's actions. This extensive, inclusive and bottom up discussion has been encapsulated in ICANN's Bylaws, its Mission and Core Values.

The limited and distinct mission of ICANN is clearly set out in Article I of its Bylaws.

The mission of The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers ("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. In particular, ICANN:

1. Coordinates the allocation and assignment of the three sets of unique identifiers for the Internet, which are:

    a. Domain names (forming a system referred to as "DNS");

    b. Internet protocol ("IP") addresses and autonomous system ("AS") numbers; and

    c. Protocol port and parameter numbers.

2. Coordinates the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system.

3. Coordinates policy development reasonably and appropriately related to these technical functions.

ICANN is an international, non-profit, multi-stakeholder organisation. It has become the globally authoritative body on the technical and organisational means to ensure the stability and interoperability of the DNS, the continued equitable distribution of IP addresses, and accurate recordation of protocol parameters.

ICANN's Core Values

ICANN's Bylaws detail ICANN's core values as part of its Mission. In performing its mission, the following core values should guide the decisions and actions of ICANN:

1. Preserving and enhancing the operational stability, reliability, security, and global interoperability of the Internet.

2. Respecting the creativity, innovation, and flow of information made possible by the Internet by limiting ICANN's activities to those matters within ICANN's mission requiring or significantly benefiting from global coordination.

3. To the extent feasible and appropriate, delegating coordination functions to or recognising the policy role of other responsible entities that reflect the interests of affected parties.

4. Seeking and supporting broad, informed participation reflecting the functional, geographic, and cultural diversity of the Internet at all levels of policy development and decision-making.

5. Where feasible and appropriate, depending on market mechanisms to promote and sustain a competitive environment.

6. Introducing and promoting competition in the registration of domain names where practicable and beneficial in the public interest.

7. Employing open and transparent policy development mechanisms that (i) promote well-informed decisions based on expert advice, and (ii) ensure that those entities most affected can assist in the policy development process.

8. Making decisions by applying documented policies neutrally and objectively, with integrity and fairness.

9. Acting with a speed that is responsive to the needs of the Internet while, as part of the decision-making process, obtaining informed input from those entities most affected.

10. Remaining accountable to the Internet community through mechanisms that enhance ICANN's effectiveness.

11. While remaining rooted in the private sector, recognising that governments and public authorities are responsible for public policy and duly taking into account governments' or public authorities' recommendations.

Letter from the Chairman and the President and CEO

December 2008

Yours sincerely

Peter Dengate-Thrush	Paul Twomey
Chairman	President and CEO

Context for the ICANN plan

This strategic plan sets out priorities for ICANN over the next three years. These priorities have been developed with guidance from the ICANN Board and in consultation with the community in response to what the community believes are the major challenges and opportunities that will face the organization. This planning context is set out here in terms of environmental and organizational challenges.

Key environmental challenges

i. The continued rise of the Internet as a truly global means of communication and the need for ICANN to meet the needs of a truly global stakeholder base

ii. The increasing importance of the infrastructure of the Internet for a broad range of critical commercial and communication applications

iii. Ensuring stability and security of the DNS and other unique identifiers in an environment of more frequent and more sophisticated attacks and the utilization of unique identifiers to facilitate and disguise these attacks

iv. A wide range of abusive and malicious behaviours in the Internet environment that are important, but not within ICANN's authority

v. Maintaining stability given expected increases in scale driven by the number of users and the number of devices using the Internet,

vi. Maintaining stability with the expected growth in the number of domain names brought about by the introduction of IDNs and the new gTLD process

vii. Changes to the makeup of the ICANN community flowing from the implementation of IDNs, including increased numbers of registrars and registrants from non-English speaking areas

viii. The depletion of the pool of IANA unallocated IPv4 addresses to the RIRs by 2011 and the challenges of the adoption of IPv6

ix. Continuous evolution of commercial applications and business models that use the Internet, including the domain name market place, online advertising models and the secondary marketplace.

x. Possible fracturing of the current system perhaps brought about by dissatisfaction with perceived restrictions imposed by technical protocols or through actions of a government or governments

xi. ICANN taking an appropriate role in the broad group of international and other global governance entities involved in Internet functions

xii. The uncertain global economic and financial environment

Key organizational challenges

i. With the end of the JPA, maintaining an appropriate organizational entity structure to serve ICANN's increasingly globalized technical coordination functions

ii. The organizational commitment as set out in the Bylaws to regularly review ICANN structures and the volume of work required of the community to complete the current round of reviews

iii. Developing and maintaining IT systems and tools to meet the needs of a multilingual volunteer organization and a globally distributed staff

iv. An ongoing obligation to review and renew ICANN processes in order to operate efficiently and effectively

v. Maintaining high standards of transparency and accountability

vi. Significant increases in the volume of policy and management work that needs to be done

vii. Successfully managing timely and responsive development of policy in a largely volunteer organization

viii. Maintaining effective communication with a global audience of ICANN stakeholders with different levels of knowledge about how the DNS works

ix. Effective management of a large, globally distributed and culturally diverse staff

Strategic Priorities July 2009 – June 2012

Having considered the challenges and opportunities that are most likely to present themselves over the next three years, the following priorities have been developed by and for the ICANN community. These priorities reflect the organization's ongoing role and responsibilities and also the particular opportunities that present themselves at this point in time.

1. **Implement IDNs and new gTLDs**
2. **Enhance security, stability and resiliency of the Internet's unique identifiers**
3. **Monitor the depletion of IPv4 address space and provide leadership towards IPv6 adoption**
4. **Improve confidence in the gTLD marketplace**
5. **Strive for excellence in core operations**
6. **Strengthen processes for developing policy**
7. **Strengthen ICANN's multi-stakeholder model to manage increasing demands and changing needs**
8. **Globalize ICANN's operations**
9. **Strengthen accountability and governance**
10. **Ensure financial accountability, stability and responsibility**

Details of key initiatives and timelines for each of these priorities can be found on the following pages.

1. Implement IDNs and new gTLDs

A major priority for ICANN over the next three years is to continue with the implementation of two of the most significant changes that have been made in the name space: the introduction of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) at the top level and the implementation of a process for the introduction of new gTLDs, with a special additional focus of new IDN ccTLD names. The introduction of IDNs could open the door for billions of people in the global Internet community to use top level domains in their native script. The new gTLD process will significantly increase competition and choice for consumers in the gTLD marketplace and, offer the potential of innovative, creative and valuable applications of TLDs for Internet users.

The principal objective for this priority is to have new gTLDs (including IDNs) and IDN ccTLDs functioning in the root, with the processes to support them embedded in standard operations.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Complete the policy process for IDN ccTLDs associated with the ISO 3166-1 two-letter codes (IDNC) domains within this plan period, and support the fast track process with a goal to get first country code IDNCs in the root by mid-2009.	◆					◆
b. Launch the new gTLD application round by mid-2009.	◆					
c. Review first round process and implement identified improvements; ensure processes for approving and implementing new gTLDs (including management of objections) are routine and run according to a published process map with predictable time frames that are acceptable to the community by 2011.	◆				◆	

2. Enhance security, stability and resiliency of the Internet's unique identifiers

The secure and stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems is a core part of ICANN's mission. As the frequency and sophistication of attacks and other malicious behaviour increases, ICANN and its community must continue to improve the resilience of the DNS and strengthen its capability to deal with these events. Further, ICANN must work with other stakeholders in this arena to clarify ICANN's role and to work together to find solutions to problems that are broader than the mission of any one entity.

The principal objective for this priority is to ensure that the Internet's unique identifier system remains robust over the life of the plan.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Deliver a plan for consultation that sets out ICANN's role in Internet security; identify appropriate partners and commence joint work. Define ICANN's role so that scope, costs and deliverables are well understood and initiate a process that leads to agreement by the community and the Board in 2009. Effectively work with partners to pursue multi-stakeholder approaches and conduct programs that contribute to the global security, stability and resiliency of the Internet						
b. Provide mechanisms that will allow users to validate the authenticity of the Internet identifiers that ICANN publishes and contribute broadly to technical efforts to provide more securable Internet naming and addressing systems						
c. Conduct focused programs to enhance the understanding of risks and enhance the security and resiliency of organizations associated with the TLD community; work with partners to establish an effective approach to sharing best practices across the community by end of 2009 and conduct on-going regionally based training and exercise programs for this community.						
d. Work with stakeholders across the ICANN community to orchestrate on-going collaboration to enhance the security and resiliency of the DNS against a full spectrum of threats over the life of the plan.						

3. Monitor the depletion of IPv4 address space and provide leadership towards IPv6 adoption

During the life of this plan, the pool of IANA unallocated IPv4 addresses will be exhausted. Some parts of the Internet community have already begun to adopt IPv6. The Internet must soon fully support both IPv4 and IPv6. ICANN will need to work with the Internet community to manage the depletion of IPv4 addresses, encourage the uptake of IPv6 addressing and facilitate the interoperability of IPv4 and IPv6.

The principal objective for this priority is to use influencing skills to promote broad deployment and adoption of IPv6.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Work with appropriate partners to facilitate a smooth transition past the completion of the IPv4 freepool depletion.						
b. Provide leadership regarding IPv6 adoption, including making all ICANN services available via IPv6.						
c. Encourage appropriate standards bodies to develop tools and protocols to facilitate interoperability of IPv4 and IPv6.						
d. Work with stakeholders to investigate the implications of the models for IPv4 transfer and develop an appropriate ICANN response to such models by the end of 2009.						

4. Improve confidence in the gTLD marketplace

ICANN has the responsibility to build user confidence in the gTLD marketplace by ensuring that Registries and Registrars operate in accordance with their contracts and with ICANN policies, including the protection of registrant data in the event of Registry or Registrar failure. The introduction of new gTLDs and IDNs will provide the opportunity for growth of Registries and Registrars around the globe. ICANN must ensure that its business processes are adapted to meet this growth and to provide confidence for registrants in new markets.

The principal objective for this priority is to have all registries and registrars in full compliance and to create a system where no registrant data is lost during the life of the plan.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Encourage discussion in the community to clarify ICANN's role in relation to consumer protection; develop a clear consensus position by the end of 2009.	◆					
b. Continue outreach and compliance work to ensure all Registries and Registrars are in full compliance and successfully completing audits by the end of this plan period (and non-compliant registries and registrars have been deregistered).	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→					→
c. Develop a well defined and publicised process for reviewing Registry agreements by 2010.	→→→→→→→→→◆					
d. Continue business continuity testing of registries and registrars and implementation of other measures to protect registrant data with a goal of not losing any registrant data during the life of this plan.	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→				→	
e. Through outreach and reviews of policy and processes, increase the global diversity of registries and registrars over this plan period, with a goal to contract with at least 50 entities outside North America during this plan period.	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→◆					◆

5. Strive for excellence in core operations

Although significant improvements have been made in performance of core operational activities in recent years, ICANN is committed to seeking continual refinement of processes to achieve further improvement in the performance of its core functions

The principal objective of this priority is to maintain or improve service standards on all key measures during the life of this plan, including managing the impact of new gTLDs and new IDN ccTLDs.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Maintain IANA service levels during the life of the plan, including managing increasing workload coming from new gTLDs and IDNs						→→→
b. Develop a process framework and robust systems for the delivery of e-services, including tools for electronic applications, processing and data management for Registry and Registrar tasks by 2010.			◆			
c. Strengthen industry knowledge and expertise of the Registry staff by the end of this plan period.					◆	
d. Complete the Registry Services Evaluation Policy review by the end of 2009.	◆					
f. Continually improve community reporting on financial and performance measures. Make clear those aspects of the operational plan completed, and those that have not been completed on a year-by-year basis. Provide more detailed functional financial reporting on a regular basis to the community, beginning in 2009.					→→→	
g. Ensure effective implementation of ICANN security, business continuity and risk management plans by September 2009 and conduct a successful audit of security plans every two years beginning in 2009.	◆				◆	

6. Strengthen processes for developing policy

Developing policy is one of the most important aspects of ICANN's role. The introduction of IDNs and new gTLDs will present new policy challenges. Those developments and implementation efforts related to the ALAC and GNSO independent reviews will also bring a larger and more diverse community to the ICANN policy table. ICANN will need to continue to review and improve its policy processes to meet the needs of this broader group for the timely development of effective policy.

The principal objective of this priority is to engage relevant stakeholders in the policy process in a manner that produces effective policy in a reasonable timeframe.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Develop metrics for evaluating policy development processes by mid-2010; benchmark performance and set improvement goals for the remainder of the plan period.						
b. Establish a process for evaluating the effectiveness of policy by mid-2010; use knowledge gained from this process to establish a mechanism for regularly reviewing and evaluating policy outcomes by mid-2011.						
c. Continue to enhance professional support to the policy process, particularly as it applies to the new models of policy development being implemented by the GNSO						

7. Strengthen ICANN's multi-stakeholder model to manage increasing demands and changing needs

ICANN is always striving to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Over the period of this plan, ICANN will face additional challenges as it seeks to refine and strengthen its processes to deal with the changes flowing from the introduction of IDNs and new gTLDs. Important areas of focus will be the strengthening of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model through the completion of reviews and implementation of agreed changes, and increasing participation in ICANN.

The principal objective of this priority is to maintain the validity of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model in the eyes of internal and external stakeholders over the life of the plan.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Develop metrics for evaluating participation in ICANN and establish targets for improving participation by late 2009; implement plans to achieve these targets over the remainder of the life of this plan.						
b. Participate in IGF and other international forums during the life of this plan to improve knowledge and reinforce the legitimacy of ICANN's multi-stakeholder model and to contribute to Internet governance debates.						
c. Conduct outreach, education and awareness activities to develop a fuller and more equitable global participation in ICANN's Supporting Organisations and Advisory Committees by the end of this plan.						
d. Complete reviews according to schedule and implement changes.						
e. Design and implement a development program for ICANN participants by late 2009; train 20 community members for leadership positions by the end of 2010.						

8. Globalize ICANN's operations

The Internet is already a global means of communication and Internet usage is growing quickly in many markets that previously had low penetration rates. As interest in Internet issue grows and with the introduction of IDNs and new gTLDs, more of that global audience will become involved in ICANN and its processes. This ranges from the growth of registries and registrars in new markets opened up by IDNs to the organizations that will now be stakeholders in the policy process through their interests in new gTLDs. To deal effectively with these audiences while maintaining its transparent and consultative multi-stakeholder model, ICANN will need to globalize all aspects of its operations.

The principal objective of this priority is to have in place an organisation that can appropriately service the needs of a multilingual global stakeholder base.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Fully implement an agreed translation policy by the end of 2011.						
b. Develop the ability to work globally (including the availability of relevant business information and processes) in the languages indentified by the translation plan by the end of 2010.						

9. Strengthen accountability and governance

Over the life of this plan, ICANN will implement further improvements in accountability and transparency and consider structural changes that are part of the next phase of its evolution as an organization.

The principal objective of this priority is to establish ICANN as an exemplar not-for-profit organization, with respect to accountability and governance.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. Pursue transition to private sector management during the life of this plan.						
b. Continue the President's Strategy Committee consultations and implement the Committee's recommendations.						
c. Complete successful annual audits of accountability and transparency during the life of this plan.						
d. Continue to strengthen governance mechanisms by implementing changes identified through the Board review process						

10. Ensure financial accountability, stability and responsibility

ICANN has a responsibility to its community to continue to manage its finances in a transparent and responsible manner. This means that planning and budgeting should be open and transparent to the community. It should be clear what work is being planned, what the outcomes of this work will be and what this work will cost. Further, ICANN should work towards a robust financial future with a diverse range of revenue sources and a financial reserve to ensure ongoing execution of its mission in the face of financial challenges.

The principal objective of this priority is to manage ICANN's finances in a sustainable way and to the highest levels of transparency and accountability to meet the requirements of the community.

	2009	2010		2011		2012
	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun	Jul - Dec	Jan - Jun
a. As a strategic goal, continue towards path of fully funding a financial reserve equivalent to one year's operating expenses within three to five years. Commencing in 2010 and then every other year, review the ongoing strategic relevance of this goal with the community.						
b. By the end of this strategic planning cycle, and with a more complete understanding of the financial impact of the new gTLD program, develop a long-term financial model for ICANN, including frameworks for steady-state core spending (both costs and functions), appropriate revenue sources and revenue mix to fund this core expense and processes by which incremental projects to this core be considered, approved, and funded.						

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Appendix 1: Links between challenges and priorities

This table links the environmental and organisational challenges identified at the beginning of the plan with the area of the plan where those challenges are addressed.

Key environmental challenges		Addressed in plan priority
i.	The continued rise of the Internet as a truly global means of communication and the need for ICANN to meet the needs of a truly global stakeholder base	1-10, esp 7,8,9
i.	The increasing importance of the infrastructure of the Internet for a broad range of critical commercial and communication applications	1-10
ii.	Ensuring stability and security of the DNS and other unique identifiers in an environment of more frequent and more sophisticated attacks and the utilization of unique identifiers to facilitate and disguise these attacks	2
iii.	A wide range of abusive and malicious behaviours in the Internet environment that are important, but not within ICANN's authority	2
iv.	Maintaining stability given expected increases in scale driven by the number of users and the number of devices using the Internet,	5
v.	Maintaining stability with the expected growth in the number of domain names brought about by the introduction of IDNs and the new gTLD process	5
vi.	Changes to the makeup of the ICANN community flowing from the implementation of IDNs, including increased numbers of registrars and registrants from non-English speaking areas	7,8
vii.	The depletion of the pool of IANA unallocated IPv4 addresses to the RIRs by 2011 and the challenges of the adoption of IPv6	3
viii.	Continuous evolution of commercial applications and business models that use the Internet, including the domain name market place, online advertising models and the secondary marketplace.	4
xiii.	Possible fracturing of the current system perhaps brought about by dissatisfaction with perceived restrictions imposed by technical protocols or through actions of a government or governments	1,7
xiv.	ICANN taking an appropriate role in the broad group of international and other global governance entities involved in Internet functions	7
xv.	The uncertain global economic and financial environment	10
Key organizational challenges		
i.	With the end of the JPA, maintaining an appropriate organizational entity structure to serve ICANN's increasingly globalized technical coordination functions	9
ii.	The organizational commitment as set out in the Bylaws to regularly review ICANN structures and the volume of work required of the community to complete the current round of reviews	7
iii.	Developing and maintaining IT systems and tools to meet the needs of a multilingual volunteer organization and a globally distributed staff	5
iv.	An ongoing obligation to review and renew ICANN processes in order to operate efficiently and effectively	5,6
v.	Maintaining high standards of transparency and accountability	9,10
vi.	Significant increases in the volume of policy and management work that needs to be done	6
vii.	Successfully managing timely and responsive development of policy in a largely volunteer organization	6,7
viii.	Maintaining effective communication with a global audience of ICANN stakeholders with different levels of knowledge about how the DNS works	4,7
ix.	Effective management of a large, globally distributed and culturally diverse staff	8