



18 August 2017

Tony Holmes  
Vice-Chairman ISPCP Constituency

Dear Mr. Holmes,

Thank you for your letter dated June 23, 2017, titled "Continued Awareness of relevant technology developments and their potential impact on the ICANN community", on behalf of the ISPCP. The Office of the CTO appreciates your positive feedback on the session at ICANN58 in Copenhagen on emerging identifier technologies. Considering ICANN's role in coordinating the Internet's system of unique identifiers, we believe it is important to keep the multi-stakeholder community informed about technical developments related to emerging identifiers that might have an impact on or interaction with the identifier systems within ICANN's remit.

The Office of the CTO intends to continue its investigation and research into emerging identifier systems, including those based on blockchain technology that you referenced in your letter. An important part of our research into an emerging identifier technology is a full risk analysis to understand that technology's potential impact on the DNS, not only from the technology itself but also from parts of its greater ecosystem, such as its developer and user community, commercial interests, and related technologies.

We plan to hold additional sessions on emerging identifier technologies at future ICANN meetings, including at ICANN60 in Abu Dhabi. We feel it is important to offer the perspective of experts in the identifier technologies discussed at such sessions as a valuable additional source of information to the community. We are aware that such presentations give those with a vested interest in the technology an opportunity to advocate for it. It is not our intention to give such representatives a platform for unfettered promotion and we will ensure that presenters understand the purpose of such sessions is an objective discussion of a technology's technical merits and not an opportunity to advance a particular agenda. We will also continue to work to provide a neutral and unbiased analysis of those technologies in order to provide some balance to the presenters vested in the technologies on which they are presenting.

At the upcoming session on emerging identifiers in Abu Dhabi, we plan a focus on identifier systems based on blockchain technology, including a general, high-level risk analysis of such identifier systems. We would be grateful for additional suggestions of other emerging identifier systems of interest to the ISPCP as possible areas of research for the Office of the CTO.

Thank you again for your letter and I look forward to seeing you in Abu Dhabi.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Conrad", written over a light blue horizontal line.

David Conrad  
CTO, ICANN