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Internet Governance Project Newsletter
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...current events in Internet Governance and the activities of the Internet Governance Project.
<http://www.internetgovernance.org>

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[1] Free expression in the name space
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ICANN's policy development process for adding new top-level domains (like .info or .mobi) is marching forward. But when ICANN creates new top level domains, should it try to make sure that no one is offended by them? Should it try to make sure that any attempt to appeal to a community of users, for example a .jesus, has no objections from all the world's Christians? If you think ICANN's attempt to do such things is outside its scope and a recipe for global censorship, a heckler's veto and burdensome restrictions on what people can do with domain names, then you should support the "Keep the Core Neutral" campaign. Keep the Core Neutral (KTCN) is an attempt to impose a reality check on ICANN's increasingly bizarre and disturbing attempt to become a global regulator of acceptable expression on the Internet. Public comment on the objectionable parts of the new gTLD policy will be required in September. Stay in touch with the campaign at <<http://www.keep-the-core-neutral.org>>, also read a rebuttal by IGP Partner Milton Mueller to some who say censorship of the name space is no big deal:

<http://blog.internetgovernance.org/blog/_archives/2007/8/6/3142881.html>

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[2] Comment period on new TLD process begins August 9
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Speaking of new TLDs, ICANN's policies to introduce new generic top-level domains to the Internet is currently at the draft final report stage. The GNSO Committee will review it in the first week of August 2007 and then a public comment period on the report will be opened up on 9 August and run until 29 August (21 days, as per ICANN bylaws). Comments will be available for viewing here <http://www.icann.org/public_comment/>.

GNSO draft final report <
<http://gns0.icann.org/drafts/PDFPDPDec05FRPartA30July07.pdf>>

Non Commercial Users Constituency comments on draft final report <
<http://www.ipjustice.org/ICANN/drafts/PDP-Dec05-NCUC-CONST-STMT-JUNE2007.pdf>>

ICANN staff discussion point paper <
<http://gns0.icann.org/drafts/pdp-dec05-staff-memo-19jun07.pdf>>

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[3] Is the DNS a "critical Internet infrastructure?"
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In the process of drafting its revised charter, someone in the IETF's DNS Extensions Working Group (DNSEXT) described the Domain Name System as "a critical Internet infrastructure."

Calling the DNS "critical Internet infrastructure" got some in the IETF pretty worried. Especially after the IGP blog called attention to it <<http://blog.internetgovernance.org/blog/archives/2007/7/8/3079342.html>>. One non-US based working group member warned his colleagues that attaching the label "critical infrastructure" to the DNS would raise flags among governments everywhere, who would have to be reassured that their "critical infrastructure" wasn't under the control of the US government, and may encourage discussion (horrors!) in venues like the Internet Governance Forum.

So in its revised charter the IETF group avoided the term "critical infrastructure" and merely said that the DNS, which resolves billions of queries per day in support of global communications and commerce, "has a large installed user base and repertoire of protocol specifications" for which they are responsible. Yawn. Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.

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[4] GigaNet Symposium at the Rio IGF
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If you are planning to submit a research paper to the Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet) Symposium, August 1 was the original deadline, but the Program Committee has agreed to accept applications until August 14. The call for papers can be viewed here <http://internetgovernance.org/events.html#GigaNet2007_071307>.

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[5] DNSSEC: ICANN tests a signed root zone
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Over the last few months much has been made of the digitally signing the root as a critical step in widely deploying DNSSEC. At the Symposium on Internet Governance and Security in May, one panelist wondered aloud if ICANN/IANA would ever sign the root like they agreed to do in 2006. Similarly, RIPE's recent letter <<http://ripe.net/news/icann-root-signing.html>> urged ICANN/IANA publicly to act, lest RIPE go ahead and create its own trust anchor repository as one large European ISP suggested <http://www.ripe.net/ripe/meetings/ripe-54/presentations/DNSsec_resolving_service.pdf>.

Well, it now seems that some of the pressure has started to work. At the informal IEPG gathering <<http://www.potaroo.net/iepg/index.html>> prior to the 69th IETF being held in Chicago in July, an IANA representative explained some technical specs and operational details behind its recent deployment of a DNSSEC testbed that includes a signed root zone <<https://ns.iana.org/dnssec/root.zone.signed>>. From the limited minutes available, a few paraphrased highlights:

IANA is generating new zone signing keys (ZSK) monthly, using a script based upon Public-Key Cryptography Standards #11 as published by RSA. IANA maintains it is committed to make the sources of the system public. IANA's approach is to generate 3 overlapping ZSKs, one of which is "active" at any point and used to sign the root zone. The ZSKs are signed using one of 2 overlapping key signing keys (KSK), both of which sign the bundle of 3 ZSKs. In the event of emergency rollover, IANA relies upon a scripted procedure that migrates from the compromised key to the new, already "socialized" key. A status page for the testbed is available <<https://ns.iana.org/dnssec/status.html>>.

Based on this scant information, it does appear IANA is trying to move the

ball forward on signing the root. However, the critical DNSSEC policy issue of who controls the root keys is still unresolved. It appears from the information above that control of both ZSKs and the KSKs (aka the "keys to the Internet kingdom") may reside with a USG contractor, just as suggested in the November 2006 DHS-sponsored root signing technical specification. This is sure to raise an eyebrow of some ccTLD and root server operators and others who see DNSSEC as just one more way of solidifying the dominance of the ICANN/IANA root, and with it USG political oversight.

The above approach also goes against a basic tenant of Internet architecture of diversifying critical infrastructure in order to improve security and reliability (e.g., similar to how anycast technology diversifies some of the Internet's root servers). Maintaining all root zone signing activity with one root key operator (RKO) (as opposed to the IGP proposal <<http://internetgovernance.org/pdf/SecuringTheRoot.pdf>> of spreading it across a few non-governmental RKOs) seemingly violates this tenant, and certainly increases the probability that ICANN/IANA would be liable should it falter in performing it's DNSSEC related duties. Of course, this assumes that ICANN/IANA is willing to offer some level of reliability for signed DNS responses it provides. And if they're not, it's unclear why any other organization would be willing to stick it's neck out to provide DNSSEC based services dependent on the ICANN/IANA trust anchor.

<http://blog.internetgovernance.org/blog/_archives/2007/7/25/3118003.html>

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[6] New IGP paper: "Money and Advice for the Internet Governance Forum"
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The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is now moving through its second year and two institutional issues have emerged in the open-ended consultations and in the discussions among stakeholders: how is the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) that is supposed to provide advice on management of the IGF to be structured and how is stable, long-term financing of the IGF Secretariat to be arranged. Given the innovative status of the IGF, resolving these issues will set important precedents for similar initiatives, as well as for the long-term success of the IGF.

IGP Partner John Mathiason's recently drafted paper suggests approaches to both issues, showing how the MAG is consistent with past practice and its composition can be adapted. Additionally, he argues that the funding for the IGF Secretariat should be built into the assessed budget of the United Nations in order to ensure continuity and permit medium-term planning. Please visit IGP Blog to download the full paper and submit your comments:

<http://blog.internetgovernance.org/blog/_archives/2007/7/10/3083236.html>

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[7] OECD: Public Consultation on Future of the Internet Economy
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[Source: EPIC Alert 14.15]

The OECD has launched an online public consultation process to receive input on the proposed themes and issues of the upcoming OECD Ministerial to be held in Seoul, Korea on June 17-18, 2008. The theme of the Ministerial is the "Future of the Internet Economy." The Ministerial represents an opportunity for high-level stakeholders from government, business, the technical community, and civil society to consider broad social, economic and technical trends shaping the development of the Internet Economy, and to discuss policies that can respond to evolving societal needs.

The questionnaire is available here <http://www.oecd.org/document/9/0,3343,en_21571361_38415463_38985417_1_1_1_1,00.html>. It seeks comments on four policy areas:

First, how can the Internet be used to improve future economic performance and social welfare?

Second, in order to benefit from technology convergence, what overarching principles are needed for the transition to the next generation of high speed networks, what guidance will help consumers navigate the transition, and what policies should be in place for evolving RFID and sensor networks?

Third, how can the OECD encourage creativity in areas such as e-science, enable innovation and encourage growth and employment, and enable maximum access to public sector information and content and its re-use by the private sector?

Lastly, the OECD requests comments on the kinds of policies that are needed to ensure the security of critical information infrastructure and combat malicious software, to address digital identity management, to ensure multi-stakeholder, cross-border co-operation for privacy, security and consumer protection, to empower consumers online, and to ensure fair mobile commerce transactions and combat online identity theft.

Answers should be brief, i.e. between 350-400 words, but the OECD welcomes any supporting documents that individuals may wish to attach to their comments.

The OECD states that the participation of all players in the dialogue is important to ensure that the Ministerial is able to benefit from a wide range of viewpoints and expertise. This important online outreach tool provides an excellent opportunity for civil society members to contribute comments, suggestions as well as papers and reports that may aid in the formation of the Ministerial agenda. The comments will be published online, and will be made available for consideration to the OECD Secretariat, member countries, and participants at the next preparatory OECD meetings in October, where the agenda for the Ministerial will be discussed.

The Online Public Consultation is one of a series of initiatives aimed at involving non-governmental stakeholders in the OECD Ministerial meeting and in its preparation. The public consultation will be open until Friday, September 14, 2007.

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[8] Upcoming Events
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3 September 2007, Geneva, Switzerland
IGF Consultation
<http://intgovforum.org/>

3 October 2007, Ottawa, Canada
OECD-Canada Technology Foresight Forum on the Participative Web: Strategies and Policies for the Future
<http://www.oecd.org/futureinternet/participativeweb>

11 November 2007, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
GigaNet'07 - Global Internet Governance Academic Network 2nd Annual Symposium
Deadline for submissions: 1 August 2007 (extended to 14 August 2007)
<http://www.igloo.org/giganet>

12-15 November 2007, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
The Government of Brazil will host the second Internet Governance Forum meeting.
<http://www.intgovforum.org/>
<http://cgi.br/igf/>