

RULES OF ORDER AND PARTICIPATION FOR THE MAILING LISTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE GNSO

Version 0.5 - proposed for majority vote to the GA

HISTORICAL NOTE

The General Assembly (GA) was established as part of the DNSO. The original guiding rules for establishment and participation can be found [here](#).

The DNSO has been completely superseded by the GNSO as stated within Section XX.5.1 of the ICANN bylaws as follows:

[Quote]

1. The Domain Name Supporting Organization shall cease operations upon the adoption of this Transition Article, except that the Names Council of the Domain Name Supporting Organization may act for the limited purpose of authorizing the transfer of any funds it has collected to the benefit of the Generic Names Supporting Organization.

[endQuote]

The ICANN bylaws, published February 2006, can be accessed [here](#)

The latest by-laws do not include a charter for the GA. The GNSO responsibilities extend only to the maintenance of the mailing lists as indicated in Section XX.5.9 of the ICANN bylaws as follows:

[Quote]

9. Upon the adoption of this Transition Article, and until further action by the ICANN Board, the GNSO Council shall assume responsibility for the DNSO General Assembly e-mail announcement and discussion lists.

[endQuote]

Section X.3.4 of the ICANN bylaws defines the responsibilities of the GNSO council in relation to the GA mailing lists as follows:

[Quote]

In addition, the GNSO Council is responsible for managing open forums, in the form of mailing lists or otherwise, for the participation of all who are willing to contribute to the work of the GNSO; such forums shall be appropriately moderated to ensure maximum focus on the business of the GNSO and to minimize non-substantive and abusive postings.

[endQuote]

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(a) The General Assembly, hereafter known as the GA, shall be an open forum for participation in the work of the Generic Names Supporting Organization, hereafter known as the GNSO, and open to all who are willing to contribute effort to the work of the GNSO. The participants in the GA should be individuals who have a knowledge of and an interest in issues pertaining to the areas for which the GNSO has primary responsibility, and who are willing to contribute time, effort and expertise to the work of the GNSO, including work item proposal and development, discussion of work items, draft document preparation, and participation in research and drafting committees and working groups.

(b) The GNSO Council shall assume responsibility for the GNSO GA e-mail announcement and discussion lists as designated by Article X Section 3.4 of the ICANN by-laws.

The GA defines itself as a forum willing to contribute to the work of the GNSO and therefore those statements previously made by the GA in relation to the now defunct DNSO have been updated within this document to reflect this.

Understanding the source of the GA list and the continued belief that the best current forum for dialogue regarding Internet issues, the GA adopts and incorporates herein the following ICANN mission statement and principals of the GNSO:

<http://www.icann.org/general/bylaws.htm#X>

<http://www.icann.org/general/bylaws.htm#I>

The following rules of order and participation for the GA mailing lists have been designed to meet the requirements of Article X.3.4, insofar as is reasonably possible, and have been consensually adopted by GA Participants.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the General Assembly mailing list are as follows:

- to ascertain and transmit the views of the ICANN stakeholders as expressed by participants of the GA mailing list
- to identify opportunities to increase communication and effectiveness of the General Assembly with the GNSO and ICANN
- to provide for and act as a conduit of information between ICANN and registrants and users

2. MAILING LISTS

For purposes of its internal operation, the General Assembly has the following mailing lists.

These are as follows:

- announce@gnso.icann.org for announcements from the GNSO
- ga@gnso.icann.org for discussion among GA members on GA business

Both lists are open for public subscription by any E-mail address.

Both lists are archived. The archives are made publicly available at the following online location:

<http://gnso.icann.org/mailing-lists/archives/ga-200709/>

Archives for posts made prior to September 2007 are available at the following online location:

<http://gnso.icann.org/mailing-lists/archives/ga/>

Subscriber details to GA mailing lists are not publicly available.

The Announce list is and should remain solely for the sole use of the GNSO Secretariat for notifying the subscribers of GNSO and other ICANN informational items.

The GA list is open for mail from any subscribed members, subject to section 3. of this document.

The purpose of the GA list is to allow discussion between GA members on GA matters. It is not itself a decision-making body. The GA members may, however, formulate such collective opinions into consensus documents as designated by its members for submission to other bodies.

Note: Neither list claims to be an authoritative listing of the members of the GA, but when a mail is sent to the announce list, it is considered to be published to the GA subscriber list.

In addition, the special list "ga-monitor@gnso.icann.org" is provided for those email addresses that are not

necessarily persons, but only wish to get a copy of GA messages.

The GA mailing lists, as managed by the GNSO Council, are open and non-discriminatory. New subscriber information can be found at:

<http://gnso.icann.org/mailing-lists/>

The first 3 posts from a new subscriber will be monitored prior to forwarding to the list.

3. POSTING RULES

The following natural persons or entities have the right to post to the GA mailing list:

- Subscribers to the GA mailing list, posting using the email address by which they are known to the GA list, who have posting rights in good standing
- the staff of the GNSO list management (for technical announcements)

The GA Chair will appoint 2 or more List Monitors whose responsibility it will be to monitor the list posts in accordance with the following rules:

1. The messages must be relevant to the business of the GA
2. Messages that are not strictly relevant to the business of the GA but are directly responding to content within a previous post may be posted, on occasion, by using the prefix [OT](off topic). Constant off topic postings MAY result in the List Monitor imposing sanctions [see section 4. Violation of Posting Rules]
3. The messages must observe a minimum of decorum, including:
 - not indulging in what may be perceived as personal attacks or insults
 - not using what may be perceived as or is clearly intended to be offensive and/or disruptive language
 - not indulging in threats of legal action of any kind on list.; Off list threats may also be forwarded to the Chairman or List Monitors who may decide to take action against the perpetrator of such threats. This does not preclude GA members from discussing lawsuits pertaining to the business of the GA as a whole. Such discussion would not constitute a violation of the GA List Rules.
 - not exceeding any limitations on the number of posts allowed within a given time period that may be imposed by the GA Chair at the request of members
 - not exceeding a message size of more than 30KB without exceptional reason

Individual subscribers to the GA mailing list are deemed to post to the list as individual participants unless indicated as otherwise within their post.

The suggested posting limit per 24 hour cycle is to be 5. This amount can be increased to 8 with the letters OT in the header and with strict etiquette content adherence from message 6 to 8. If there is consistent abuse within these limits the list monitor may impose sanctions - a 24 hr cycle is the lists daily cycle. At times of high volume, on topic discussion these posting limits may be waived at the discretion of the Chair and the List Monitor.

Elected or appointed officers to the list or anyone undertaking work on behalf of the list may be, necessarily, exempt from such posting restrictions at the discretion of the GA Chair.

List Monitors are appointed by the GA Chair for a given time period; usually 1 year. List Monitors may be removed by the GA Chair at any time or at their own request. A list monitor may also be removed by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly. See Section 6. for voting rules.

Cross posting to mailing lists are to be avoided. If somebody is member to many lists and wishes to share some topic with any of them he/she shall write to all of them separately. Further, the copying of personal email addresses into the recipient fields of a mail posted to any of the GA Mailing lists unless in direct response to a previous post is to be avoided. The List Monitor or the Chair may impose sanctions for

persistent offenses.

4. VIOLATION OF POSTING RULES

A List Monitor may impose any of the following sanctions for a violation offense:

Monitoring of offenders posts.

This will cause delay of postings from the affected individual until a list moderator approves them as being within the content rules, or rejects them.

Suspension of offenders posting rights.

This will cause mail from that person to be blocked from the GA list.

Both sanctions are imposed for a limited period of time (in the first instance 2 weeks), and are announced on the mailing list.

Repeat offenders may get correspondingly larger sanctions (for instance 4 weeks for a second offence, 8 weeks for a third). The period is decided by the List Monitor.

When a post seems especially egregious or incorporates more than one offence but a first offence then the List Monitor and Chair may agree to suspend posting privileges forthwith for a 48 hour period after which time full rights will resume. There is no appeal available in this instance.

In the event that sanctions imposed by the List Monitor are challenged the GA Chair will act as Arbitrator. The GA Chairs decision is final.

Note that due to technical issues, monitoring one member's postings may cause monitoring to be applied to other members' posts. This is to be avoided as far as possible. List members are asked to be vigilant in these such cases and to not forward private responses from suspended or monitored members.

Forwarding responses to the list for a monitored user, will be considered an offense and will result in monitoring for the user. There is no appeal to this.

5. VERIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The rules above refer to participants posting using the email address (singular) by which they are known.

This assumes that an email address belongs to a person, and that it can be verified that two email addresses belong to different persons.

Given the properties of the E-mail environment, this is not trivial. Hence, the following method is applied:

- In the normal case, any email address capable of subscribing to the list is assumed to belong to a unique person unless the list management is otherwise notified.

- If the identity behind some email address set is challenged, the list monitor may ask the challenged party for proof of identity. The list monitor has discretion in deciding whether to take action upon a challenge, and to decide what proof of identity is acceptable in each particular case. A notarized copy of a civil identification (such as a driver's license or passport) is always acceptable.

- The claimed identity belonging to the email address is recorded by the list monitor, and the finding is announced to the list. The challenged party may ask the list monitor not to publish his civil identity; this shall be respected.

- In the case where it is not possible to prove distinct identities for 2 mail addresses, the posting right of the email address whose distinct identity could not be proven is permanently suspended.

6. VOTING RULES AND ROUGH CONSENSUS

As stipulated in the GA Objectives, the Chair will, to the best of his/her ability, record and transmit all views and rationales for such views to the GNSO and ICANN in relation to the business of the ICANN stakeholders as represented by subscribers to the GA mailing list.

However, on occasions, it may be deemed reasonable to ascertain and transmit either rough consensus or an absolute majority view. To this end, the presiding Chair may call any consensus or voting activity deemed necessary. Further, a participant may propose for the Chair to employ a voting mechanism if 4 individual participants, excluding the proposer, support the call.

Such voting mechanisms will be decided by the Chair or the proposing participants. Where 5 individual participants support a proposed voting mechanism the Chair is duty bound to employ such voting mechanism.

7. TECHNICAL MATTERS

Addresses are removed from the mailing list if:

- delivery of mail to that address is impossible over a period of at least 7 days
- delivery of mail causes disruptive automatic behavior (such as bounce messages sent to the mailing list, causing loops)

These matters are handled by the list maintainers, and no notification is given.

A list of addresses removed for technical reasons can be viewed at the GNSO website.

In the case of illegitimate actions that may harm the function of the list, such as denial of service attacks, the list maintainers are authorized to take appropriate action. Appropriate notification of such action will be given to the list as soon as it is reasonable.

8. ELECTION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CHAIR

The Chair shall be elected for a term of one year and may be re-elected for a further one year term but must not serve more than 3 terms in succession.

An election is usually held near the end of the term of office for the chair of the General Assembly. The exact time is decided by the outgoing Chair. Before the start of the election, the (outgoing) Chair selects at least 3 people who are not candidates to act as an Election Oversight Committee (EOC) and Secretariat. The watchdogs agree with the Chair the voting mechanism to be employed and receive full details of the voting mechanism and oversee all votes. The names of the EOC and Secretariat are to be made public.

The election process starts when the GA Secretariat announces that nominations are open.

All nominations and endorsements are made public.

Nominees for the Chair are sent to an email address provided by the Secretariat.

The nomination period shall be at least one week.

After the close of the nomination period, endorsements for the candidates are sent to an email address provided by the Secretariat.

The endorsement period shall be at least one week.

Before the end of the endorsement period, candidates that wish to be considered for the post must have sent in an acceptance of the nomination.

All candidates who have accepted the nomination, and have at least two endorsements from subscribers to the GA mailing list are considered candidates.

Note: Candidates are allowed to endorse themselves. Members can endorse multiple candidates.

Voting is secret; only the Secretariat and the EOC will be allowed to see the votes.

Each subscriber to the General Assembly mailing list receives one vote.

Subscribers must have been members with at least 3 postings to the list, at least 90 days prior to the call for an election. The election period shall be at least 14 days.

The elected Chair shall act as the titular elected head of the GA. The Chair shall serve as both exterior and interior spokesman for the GA.

The Chair shall act as arbiter of any disputes that are not directly governed by the list rules.

The Chair can be removed by a majority of those voting for the GA. A new Chair may be elected by a majority of those voting for the GA.

The Chair shall post in one of two capacities.

The first and foremost, by obligations agreed to and undertaken, is, as Chair. Administrative matters shall be thus posted:

Centering arguments within threads.

Steering a posting individual if there is ambiguity or obvious matter left out in the post.

Routinely setting forth areas of concern and formulating and implementing phraseology to assist in the GA objectives. Interacting assertively with other bodies within ICANN.

Secondly, as an individual. It shall be assumed the Chair is posting as an individual. So the Chair will have to make open and clear designations to any posts made as Chair.

9. AMENDMENTS TO GA RULES

These rules may at anytime be amended by a majority of voters to the GA list. The call for a vote maybe by any elected officer or 5 members of the list. The vote may be held on list or as designated by the requestors.

These rules were adopted by subscribers to the main GA mailing list on the 10th of September 2007.