



Marrakesh, June 2019

The First Few Months on the Board
Your newest CANN Board Member reports back to our Community

Dear Colleagues, dear friends,

Election

The ccNSO chooses its nominees to the ICANN Board by an election of our entire Membership. This is in our DNA and it the way we have done this since the foundation of ICANN. I'm very grateful for your confidence in me

We do our elections a long time in advance, so while you might possibly think I've been on the ICANN Board forever, I actually joined the Board on October 25th, 2018 at Barcelona.

So here's a brief update, to keep you informed, on what's happened since.

“On-Boarding”

The on-boarding process started with an informal chat with the Board Chair, Cherine Chalaby, not long after I was elected, but the real work began about a month before my formally joining the Board, when I was invited to take part (along with my other four colleagues who were joining the Board) at a Board Workshop which was held in Brussels in September. Autumn workshops is where the work of planning who will be doing what part of the coming year's work is done, and when the membership of Board Committees is decided upon.

This year's Board is fortunate to have a higher-than-average number of Board Members with serious technical skills, so quite unexpectedly, I was in the unexpected but fortunate circumstance whereby, instead of joining the Technical Committee as might have appeared obvious, I was asked to join the Board Audit Committee as well as the BAMC (ICANN Accountability Mechanisms). The latter deals with Reconsideration Requests - someone filing an appeals against ICANN decision (*This does not include any decisions relating to delegation or transfer of ccTLDs*)

My Board Colleagues

This year is somewhat exceptional in that over a quarter of the Board (five in total) were new to the Board at Barcelon. We quickly got to know each other, even coining a nickname of 'the Freshmen' for ourselves and supporting each other.

The existing Board members welcomed us very cordially, and involved us as equals from the very beginning, offering considerable help and encouragement where needed.

What's it like within the Board?

You might be forgiven if you think there might be a lot of argument within the Board, and possibly even , on occasion, ill-tempered argument.

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Whilst that might have been the case at some time in ICANN's past history, it is certainly not the case now. The by-word on the Board is 'collegiality'. We recognise our different styles and experience, and not only respect them, but work with them to produce better outcomes.

This is due, in no small part to the 'tone at the top'. Cherine's ability, as Chair, to get the best out of the whole Board is quite remarkable.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Something that is probably not well-known outside the Board, is the Board's commitment to continuous improvement and growth – not just the Board as a body, but actively supporting individual members. ICANN arranged for me to take three training courses so far this year with at least one more scheduled before the end of the year. One of them was an internal audit course, and the other two were modules of a formal qualification in Company Direction from the *Institute of Directors* (Finance for Non-Financial Directors and Strategy completed so far).

The Work of the Board

As a multistakeholder organisation, the role of the ICANN Board is somewhat more involved than the Board of a commercial company; in addition to the traditional Board role of the oversight of the organisation's business affairs (a financially large organisation). The Community also regard the Board as an important part of the multistakeholder organisation, so we are expected to get involved with the work of the Community – and of course those of us who are elected by our SO/ACs still have our roots in our own Community – I remain an active member of our PDP process on ccTLD Retirement (although I passed over the Chair to Stephen Deerhake immediately on being elected by you to the Board).

Board Seat 11.

Our other Board Member, Chris Disspain, has served the ccNSO community for almost 8 years. He has one full year left on the Board, and will leave the Board at ICANN's *Annual General Meeting* in Hamburg, at the end of October 2020. We will therefore need to find a replacement for him.

His is a very hard act to follow, since not only has he kept his connection and key role within the work of the ccNSO and the ccTLDs, but has also been a keystone on the Board itself, currently serving as our Vice-Chair.

I would like strongly to encourage anyone who may consider they could serve as our elected Board Member for seat 11 to contact either Chris or me, and we can give you whatever information or assistance you might need.

Questions?

Finally, I am available to you at any time if you have specific questions about our work on the Board, or just want general background.

My full contact details are at the bottom of the first page.

Kind Regards and Best Wishes

Nigel