



CEO Report to the Board

For the Period of 12 May to 14 November 2025

Kurtis Lindqvist, President and CEO

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Executive Summary

Kurtis Lindqvist, President and CEO

During this period, we lost our colleague and interim SVP of Global Human Resources, Henry Meyer, in August 2025. Henry is deeply missed by all of us, and our thoughts are with his family.

ICANN continues to be in a healthy financial position, due to actions taken earlier in FY25 as well as due to a continued strong domain market. Work started on the FY27 Budget and a first version of this was in November shared for Public Comment. The FY27 Budget does not anticipate major cost increases and therefore there are no fee increases for FY27.

Work on the 2026 Round of the New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLD) Program progressed towards the launch of the application period in April 2026. In support of this milestone, the ICANN Board at ICANN84 in October 2025 approved the Applicant Guidebook. In November 2025, the application window for the Applicant Support Program also closed with a relatively high number of applicants. The program team continued to work on developing systems to be ready ahead of the April 2026 opening as well as completing the Registry Agreement to be ready for its expected adoption by the ICANN Board in March 2026. As we get ready for opening the 2026 Round, the ICANN Board also decided to notify unsuccessful 2012 Round applicants of the termination of their application with the process now underway.

Compliance continues to see a growing and high volume of reports. This is at least in part driven by the DNS Abuse amendments and increased scope and authority this gives the ICANN Compliance function. Fighting DNS Abuse is a priority, the Preliminary Issue Report on DNS Abuse Policy Development Processes (PDPs) was produced at the request of the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) and is likely to progress to initiation of PDPs in December. This work will further strengthen policies that help fight DNS Abuse.

Work supporting the multistakeholder model of Internet governance, and explaining and protecting ICANN's role in the lead-up to WSIS+20, continued. We welcomed the co-facilitators to ICANN84 in Dublin and supported outreach and input to the process in support of the multistakeholder model and ICANN's objectives, including a permanent Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

The Board decided to defer the next Accountability and Transparency Review after dialogue with the community and instead initiated the Review of Reviews Cross Community Group, with participation from the ICANN organization (org) and Board. The group will produce recommendations on how to improve ICANN's Review mechanisms to ensure accountability.

In August 2025, ICANN announced that two functions had been reorganized, with the Engineering and IT (E&IT) team reporting to CTO John Crain. At the same time, the Government and Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) Engagement function moved to report to Jamie Hedlund, merging all Government Engagement under one executive together with Contractual Compliance.

The E&IT team has been working on an IT strategy to set out a path for ICANN to have a more cost-efficient, coherent, and production-efficient tooling and systems architecture. This work will also include starting our journey toward achieving ISO27001 certification and ensuring ICANN systems and processes are secure.

Key Indicators

Financials

As of 30 September 2025

	Target	Current
Annual Funding – Forecast vs. Budget	≥ 100%	107%
Annual Expense – Forecast vs. Budget	≤ 100%	97%
Operating Fund and Reserve Fund Balances vs. Investment Policy Minimums	≥ 100%	139%
Corporate Compliance Reporting Up-To-Date	100%	100%
Process Efficiency (DFO*, DPO**, and Payroll Processing)	100%	100%

*Days of Funding Outstanding

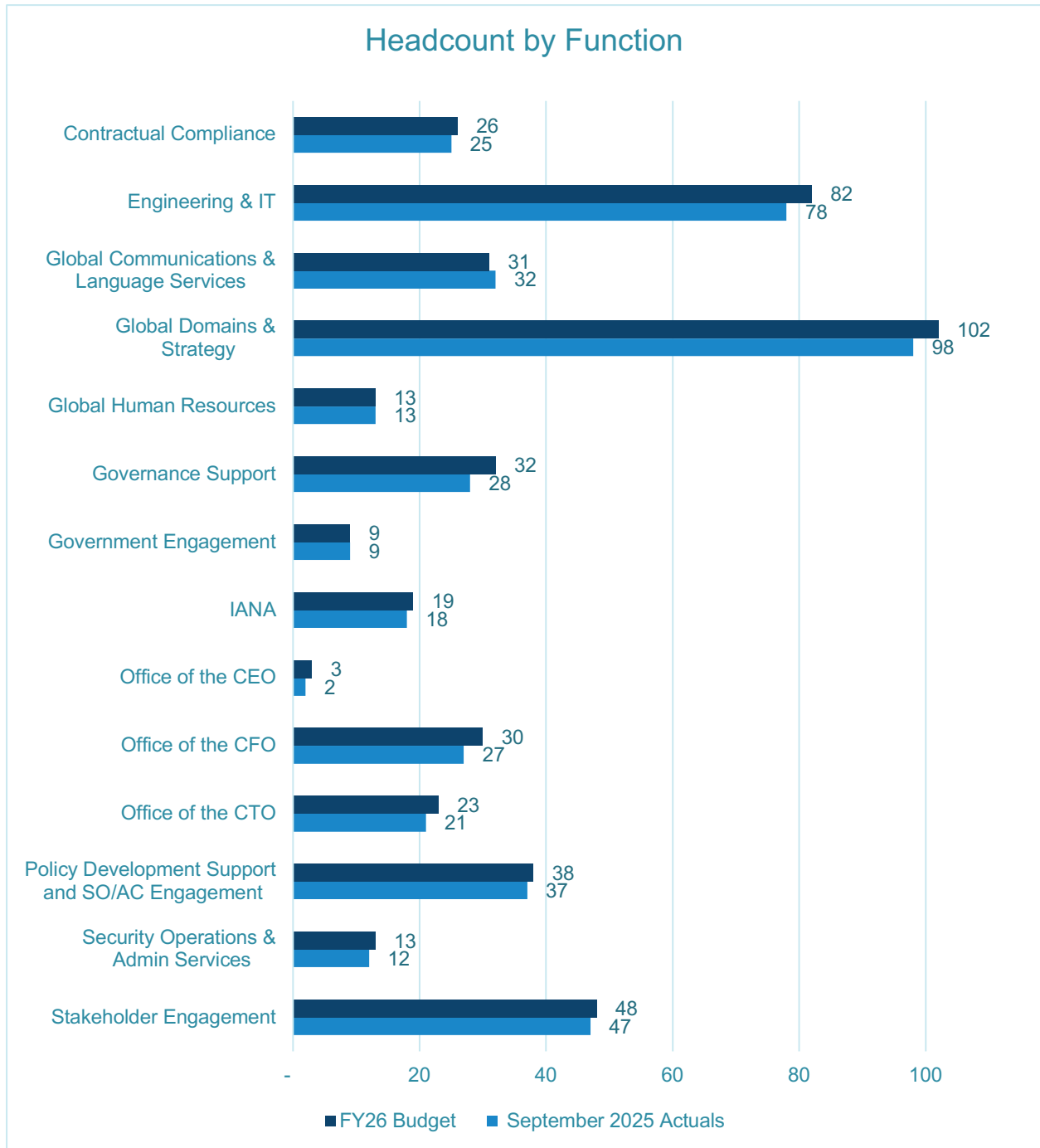
**Days of Payable Outstanding

People Metrics

As of 30 September 2025

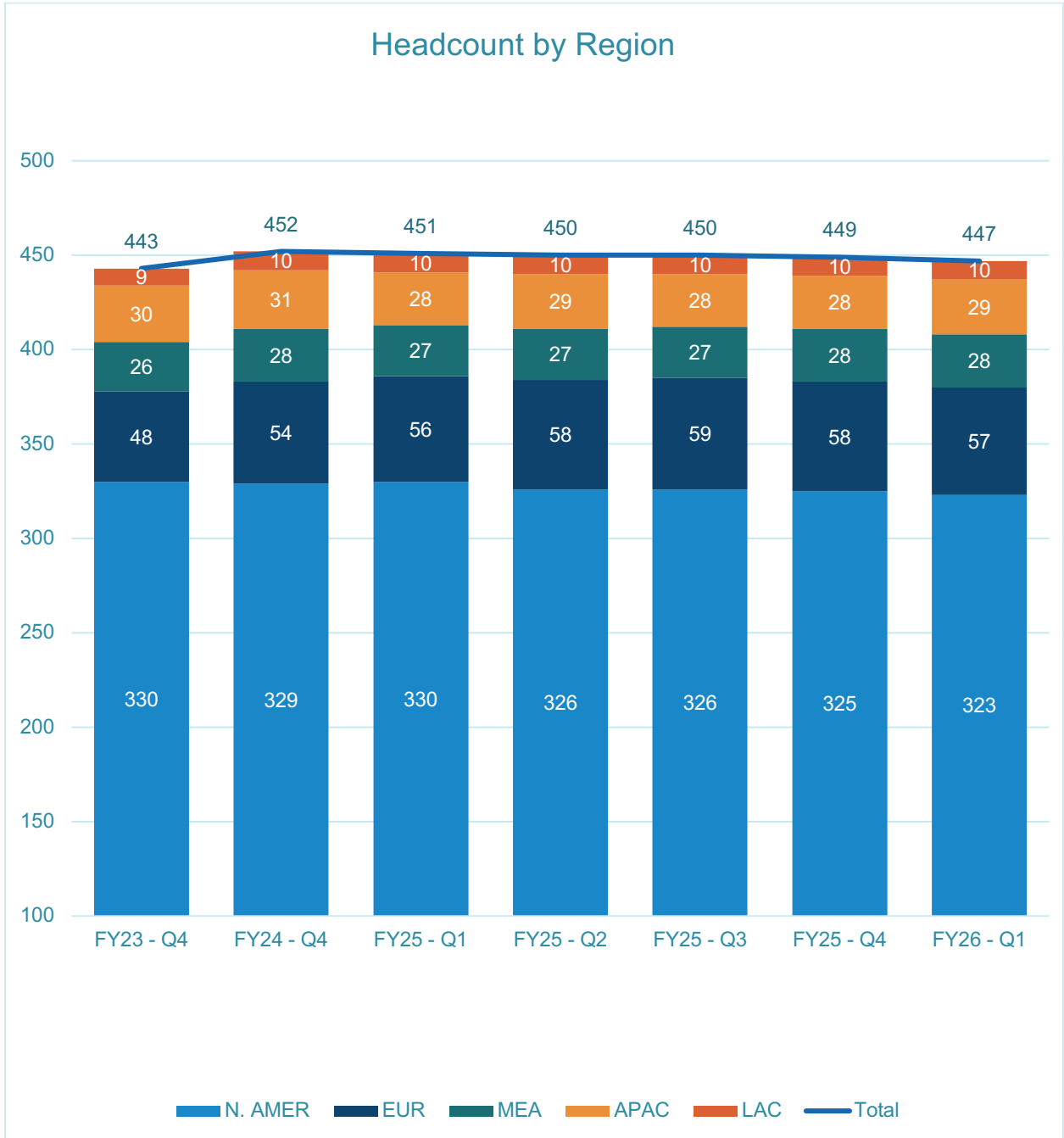
	FY26 to Date	FY25
Headcount	447	449
Roles Filled	10	35
External Hires	7 (70%)	26 (74%)
Internal Hires	3 (30%)	9 (26%)
Time to Fill	2.5 months	2.5 months
% Roles Filled Outside North America	20%	34.3%
Voluntary Turnover	4.23%	3.55%
Years of Service (average)	7.7 years	7.5 years

Headcount: Total headcount of 447 vs. budgeted 460.

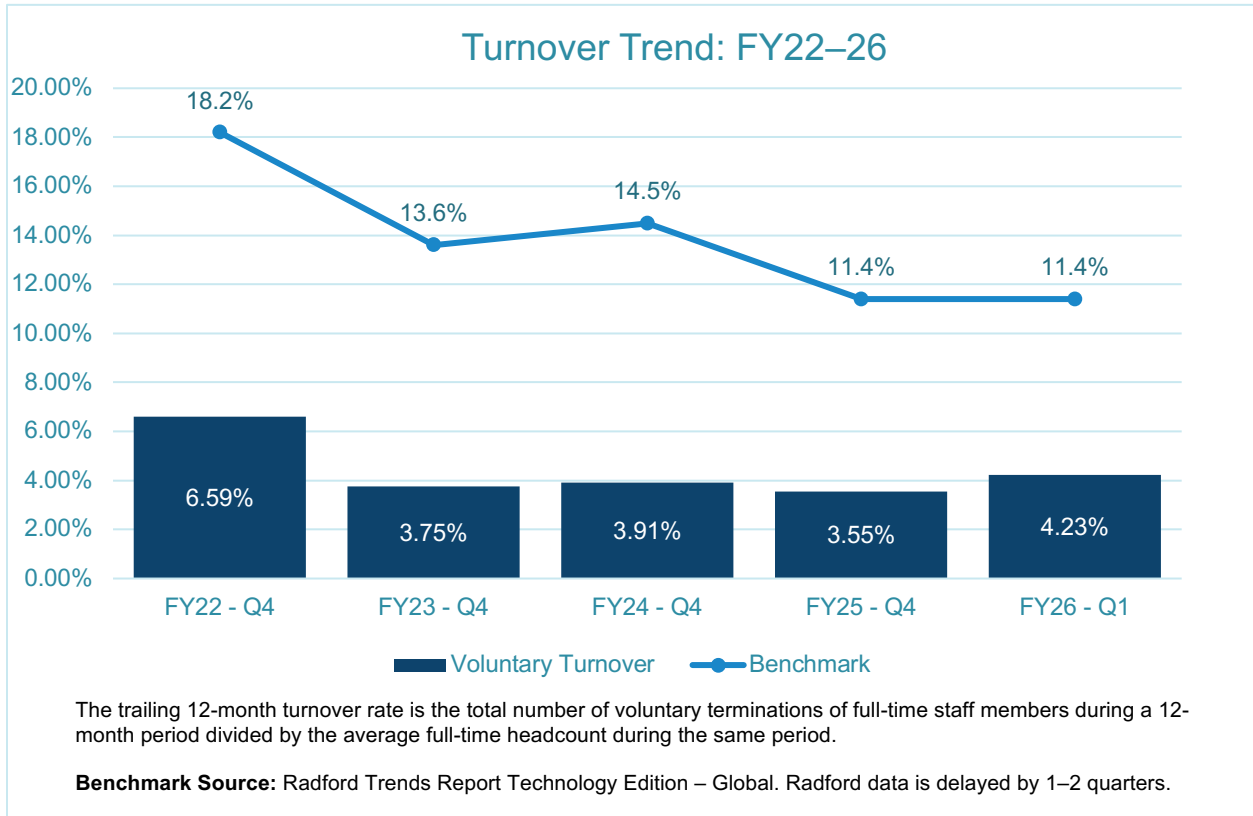


Note: In addition to the budgeted headcount by function, the FY26 Budget includes six unallocated positions for the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round and a natural attrition assumption of 15.

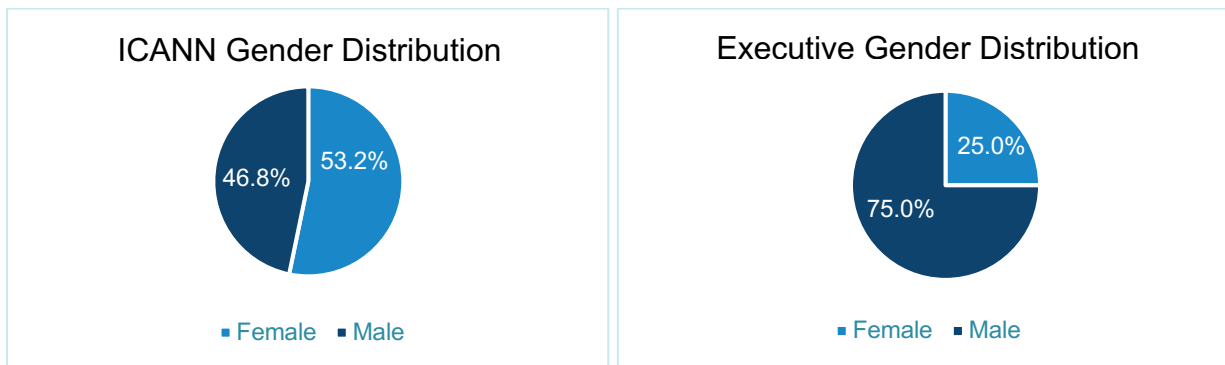
Headcount by Region: Staff distribution by region at the end of Q1 FY26 (30 September) was 323 (72%) in North America, 57 (13%) in Europe, 28 (6%) in the Middle East and Africa, 29 (7%) in the Asia Pacific region, and 10 (2%) in Latin American and Caribbean.



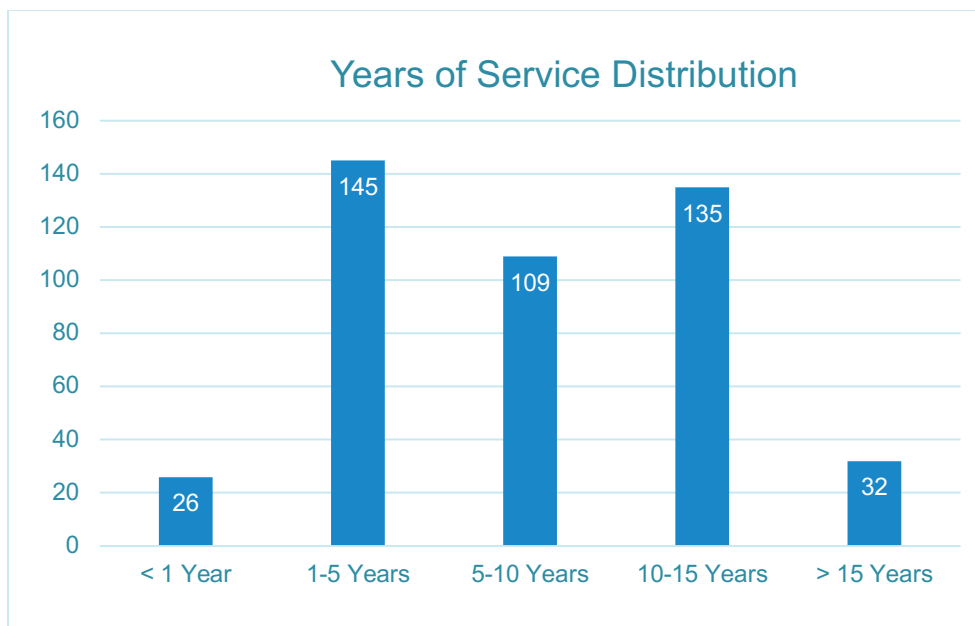
Voluntary Turnover: Rolling average turnover was 4.23% and increased slightly from the previous quarter-end rate of 3.55%. Voluntary turnover has remained substantially lower than the worldwide voluntary turnover benchmark of 11.4%.



Gender Distribution: Gender distribution across ICANN remains well-balanced, with women representing a slight majority at 52.9%.



Years of Service: The average number of years of service is 7.7 years.



New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Progress

Implementation of Adopted Policy Recommendations:

- ⦿ The complete draft New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook (AGB) was [published](#) for Public Comment on 30 May. The team reviewed 29 submissions with the support of the Implementation Review Team (IRT) to inform updates to the AGB. The ICANN Board adopted the AGB on 30 October.
- ⦿ To deliver this version of the AGB, the IRT held 197 meetings, including 32 meetings of the IRT subtracks on the Applicant Support Program and the Registry Service Provider Evaluation Program.
- ⦿ To support readiness for the 2026 Round, the team published [Key Topic Overviews](#) and [FAQs](#), and initiated training development for applicants, the community, ICANN org staff, and vendors. The website team designed Phase 2 of the [2026 Round site](#).

Applicant Support Program:

- ⦿ The application submission period for the Applicant Support Program (ASP) was extended to 19 December. The first three conditionally approved applicants were [announced](#) in August.
- ⦿ The ASP team published a cross-functional [Comprehensive Report on Prospective and Pipeline Applicants](#), documenting all global outreach, support, and engagement activities.

Registry Service Provider Evaluation Program:

- ⦿ The Registry Service Provider (RSP) Evaluation Program pre-evaluation window closed on 20 May 2025. ICANN org plans to reopen the application submission period for RSP evaluation in April 2026, concurrent with the opening of the new gTLD application submission period.

- On 29 October, ICANN [announced](#) a technical issue in the Operational Test and Evaluation environment for Registry System Testing Version 2.0, which resulted in an adjustment to the publication date of the initial list of successfully evaluated RSPs from 9 December 2025 to 30 January 2026.

Registry System Testing Version 2.0 Service:

- Work was [completed](#) to integrate the [Registry System Testing Version 2.0 service](#) with the RSP system. The Operational Test and Evaluation and production environments for RST 2.0 were taken offline to investigate a technical issue reported to ICANN on 7 October 2025. ICANN resolved the root cause of the technical issue and conducted rigorous system testing to ensure that both environments functioned properly before restoring service on 19 November.

2026 Round Base Registry Agreement:

- The proposed 2026 Round Base Registry Agreement (RA) was published twice for Public Comment, with the [second proceeding](#) scheduled to close on 17 November 2025. The second proceeding focused on incremental changes, including those resulting from the feedback received in the first proceeding.
- The ICANN Board is expected to consider the Base RA for approval in March.

gTLD Application Processing:

- The gTLD Application Processing project, which encompasses enabling the gTLD application process from submission to contracting, has improved from red (high risk/blocker) to yellow status (medium risk) with additional resources and scope adjustment. System development for the capabilities necessary to open the 2026 Round remains on track for completion in January 2026.
- TAMS functionality required for the round opening is 95% complete, with 75% of overall TAMS functionality finished.
- All five vendor requests for information were completed: String Similarity, Variant, Geographic Names, Reserved Names, and Auctions. Two requests for proposal (RFPs), including Community Priority Evaluation, also were completed. Background Screening and String Similarity and Variant RFPs are underway.

IANA SLA Performance

	2024	2025 YTD
Naming Functions	99.6%	99.7%
Protocol Parameters	100%	99.9%
Numbering Services	100%	100%
Customer Satisfaction	95.7%	96.9%

Contractual Compliance

Jamie Hedlund, Senior Vice President, Global Government Engagement and Contractual Compliance

KEY INDICATORS

- ⦿ Contractual Compliance enforced ICANN's requirements using a multifaceted approach: investigating external complaints via internal monitoring, conducting audits, and promoting compliance through outreach activities. Information about these activities can be found in the team's [monthly reports](#).
- ⦿ Compliance continued to participate in policy development, implementation, and review teams, providing data and input on enforceability.
- ⦿ Detailed monthly [enforcement metrics](#) include the enforcement of [DNS Abuse mitigation requirements](#) and new enhanced reporting on the enforcement of [disclosure of gTLD registration data](#) obligations.
- ⦿ The main challenges are the high volume of new complaints that add to ongoing investigations at any given time, along with the complexity of the matters handled.

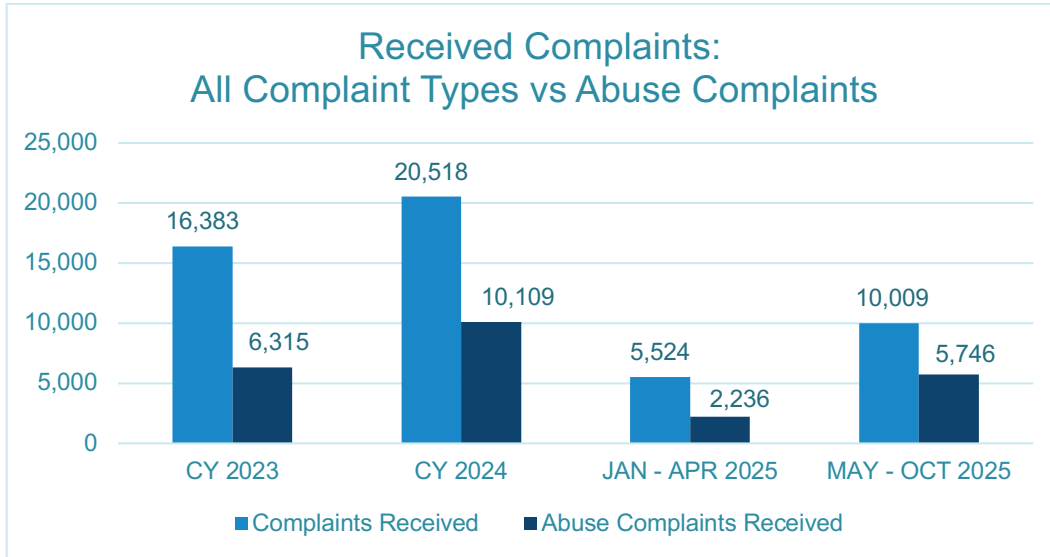
Enforcement Through External Complaint Processing and Internal Monitoring

From May through October, Compliance:

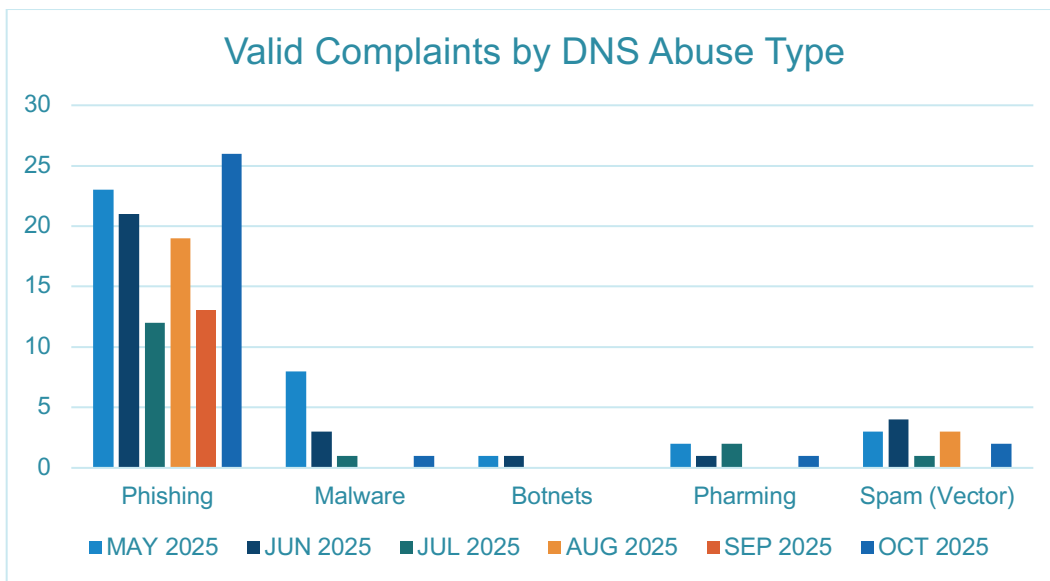
- ⦿ Received **10,009 new complaints** across multiple areas of the agreements.
- ⦿ Initiated **1,630 new investigations** with contracted parties.
- ⦿ Issued **four Notices of Breach** and **three Notices of Termination**. This brings the year to date to nine Notices of Breach and eight Notices of Termination.

Complaint-Driven Investigations and Internal Monitoring Details:

- ⦿ The average monthly volume of new complaints received was 1,668. The averages for years 2024 and 2023 were 1,710 and 1,365, respectively.
- ⦿ Approximately 57% of all new complaints received were related to abuse; in 2023, abuse accounted for 39%, rising to 49% in 2024. Abuse complaints increased 60% between 2023 and 2024. This upward trend began even before the DNS Abuse amendments took effect.



- Compliance initiated 1,630 investigations with contracted parties. By volume, the top three obligations were related to: 1. Per-Registrar Transactions and Registry Functions Activity reports that registry operators must submit to ICANN each month per TLD; 2. registration data accuracy; and 3. DNS Abuse and other forms of abuse.
- Compliance continued to enforce DNS Abuse mitigation requirements and report on it. In the first 16 months since taking effect, Compliance launched 400 investigations into these requirements (mostly related to phishing) and a registry and a registrar audit, delivering clear, lasting outcomes.



- Compliance continued to enforce requirements for contracted parties to implement Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) services, ensuring continued public access to registration data. Noncompliance was mostly detected via internal monitoring. Two Notices of Breach issued during this period included RDAP noncompliance; one case resulted in Registrar Accreditation Agreement termination.

Enforcement Through the Audit Program

- ⦿ In October 2024, Compliance launched a registry audit that included DNS Abuse mitigation requirements. A final report is being prepared.
- ⦿ In July 2025, Compliance began a registrar audit targeting those with the highest levels of reported DNS Abuse over 13 months. This audit is ongoing.

Participation in Policy and Working Groups

Compliance collaborated on various recommendations from policy development, implementation, and review groups. These included the implementation of the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 1 recommendations, the Transfer Policy Review, and the drafting of the 2026 Round Base Registry Agreement, among others. Compliance assigned at least one subject-matter expert to each initiative to provide data and input on the enforceability of obligations and share other information to support the group's work.

Government and IGO Engagement

Key U.N. Activities:

- ⦿ Led ICANN's engagement in the WSIS+20 Review Process.
- ⦿ Organized and delivered a WSIS+20 briefing for U.N. Member State delegations
- ⦿ Coordinated and facilitated visit of the WSIS+20 co-facilitators to ICANN84.
- ⦿ Collaborated with the ICANN community and beyond, including the WSIS+20 Outreach Network, I* organizations, and Technical Community Coalition on Multistakeholderism to share information, gather feedback and align messaging.
- ⦿ Represented ICANN in U.N. General Assembly First Committee Discussions of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG 2021–2025). See [ICANN's Report](#).

Results: Early WSIS+20 outcome document drafts reflect ICANN's key objectives, including recognition of the technical community, support for the multistakeholder model of Internet governance, and extending the IGF mandate. ICANN successfully [submitted written contributions](#) across WSIS+20 stakeholder consultations, ensuring ICANN's positions were consistently reflected.

Key IGF Activities:

- ⦿ ICANN represented by the CEO and included Board members and org staff at Global IGF.
- ⦿ 30 bilateral meetings with government officials, businesses, civil society.
- ⦿ Participated and presented at opening ceremony, workshops, open forums, and other sessions.

Results: ICANN's participation in the opening ceremony, high-level panels, workshops, open forums, and multiple panel discussions highlighted its role as a trusted technical coordinator in the global Internet ecosystem. By maintaining a strong presence and showing deep engagement across sessions and bilateral meetings, ICANN demonstrated consistent support for the IGF as the main, multistakeholder, global forum for Internet governance.

Key ITU Activities:

- ⦿ ICANN had a significant delegation participate at the WSIS+20 High- Level Event.
- ⦿ Held 15 bilateral meetings with government officials, businesses, civil society.
- ⦿ Participated in the ITU WTIS-25 to initiate the integration of UA and IDNs metrics into established global measurement frameworks.
- ⦿ Participated in Regional Preparations for the ITU WTDC-25, ITU Council Working Group, Expert Group meetings, and other activities.

Results: ICANN's visibility and role in Internet governance has been elevated.

Key Legislative and Regulatory Activities:

- ⦿ Submitted the [ICANN Contribution](#) to the European Commission's Call for Evidence on a Joint Communication on an International Digital Strategy.
- ⦿ Informed the community of Opportunities for [Policy Contribution](#) for the European Commission's planned revision of the Cybersecurity Act and the Call for Evidence for a Joint Communication on an International Digital Strategy.
- ⦿ Reported on relevant legislative and nonlegislative initiatives in the EU during the Europe Space at ICANN83.

-
- ⦿ Participated in the Council of the European Union’s Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society Meeting in preparation for the Council Conclusions on the Joint Communication on an International Digital Strategy.
 - ⦿ Drafted legislation and regulation in the U.K., Canada, Russia, China, and Viet Nam with possible impact on ICANN’s mission.
 - ⦿ Held bilateral meetings with: Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU, European Commission, upcoming Cypriot Council Presidency, Members of the European Parliament, Ireland’s national delegation for the upcoming Council Presidency.
 - ⦿ Participated in EuroDIG 2025; CENTR Jamboree; AFNIC Annual Dinner; Smart Africa ICANN83 Policy Forum side event; Third Meeting of the Internet Governance Working Group; oriGIn Expert Meeting on the latest global developments, challenges, and strategies for effective geographical indication protection and enforcement; the European Commission’s High-Level Expert Group on Internet Governance meeting; and Europol’s E-Governance Workshop and Cybercrime Conference.

Results: ICANN’s engagement with EU policymakers ensured clarity on its technical remit and strengthened understanding of the boundaries of its mission across policy-planning processes. Participation in public forums and expert groups has reinforced ICANN’s relevance on issues such as DNS Abuse, cybersecurity, and new gTLDs, while providing early insights into regulatory trends, enabling GE to identify risks and coordinate timely response strategies.

Governmental Advisory Committee

GE supported Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) leadership to address participation gaps and strengthen government engagement. GE provided regular briefings on major U.N., IGO, and global policy developments; organized capacity-building workshops for African GAC representatives; and convened APAC GAC Network meetings focused on the 2026 Round, DNS Abuse, and WSIS+20. GE also supported Francophonie coordination discussions on topics such as the Coalition for Digital Africa and Universal Acceptance. Alongside GSE, GE advanced a targeted strategy to boost GAC participation by identifying regional priorities and linking them to potential GAC discussions.

Coalition for Digital Africa

GE organized a capacity-development workshop on African ccTLDs in Kigali in October 2025 to raise awareness about the importance of ccTLDs and the support ICANN and some Coalition for Digital Africa partners are providing to some African ccTLDs.

Global Communications and Language Services

Sally Newell Cohen, Senior Vice President, Global Communications

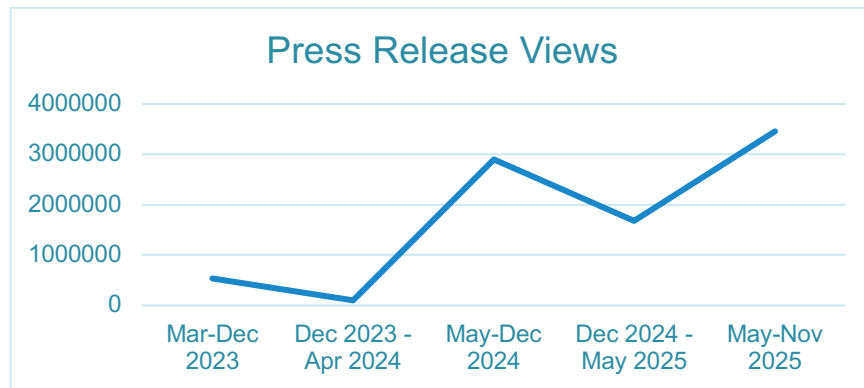
MEDIA COVERAGE

Paid Media

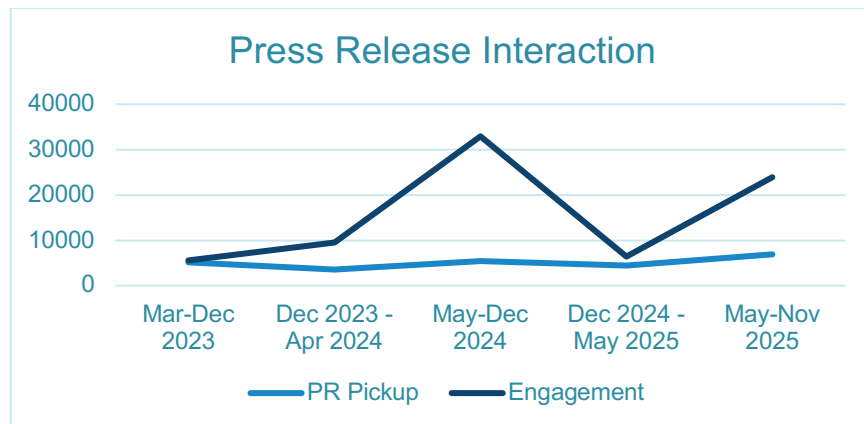
Paid Media results include press release pickup and engagement (including downloads) as well as unique articles published.

ICANN Press Releases

Global Communications published six press releases in support of the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round, ICANN83, the joint report from ICANN and the Internet Society on the IGF and the multistakeholder model, ICANN84, Board Chair and Vice Chair appointments, and Web Summit sessions.



Since ICANN reinstated press release distribution over the wire service in fiscal year 2023, media views have steadily increased, with interest reaching its highest level during this reporting period.



While press release pickup by unique outlet remains steady, engagement with the content in this reporting period has increased over the previous period, in part due to the interest in the WSIS+20 review and the New gTLD Program.

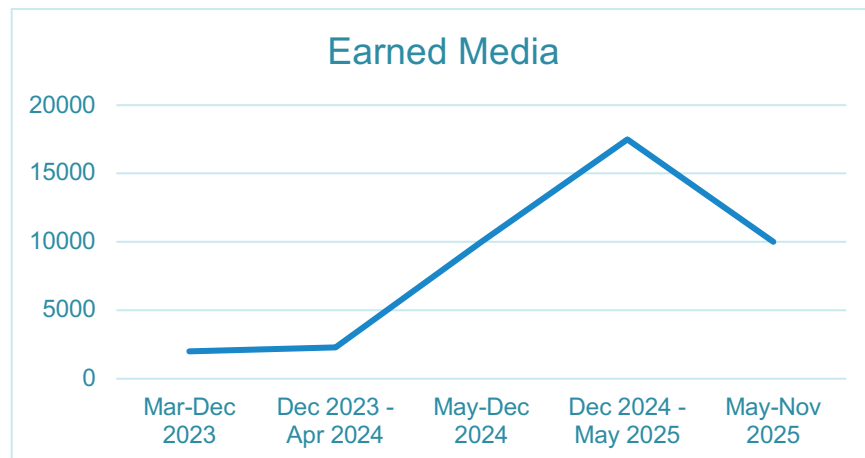
Two specific media campaigns were implemented in the reporting period.

- ⦿ Web Summit 2025 attendance in support of Internet governance and the New gTLD Program resulted in coverage in:
 - ⦿ AFP global news syndicate – resulting in coverage in 29 unique outlets, reaching a potential audience of 3.8 billion.
 - ⦿ Rádio e Televisão de Portugal broadcast network TecNet segment reaching a potential of 50,000 viewers.
 - ⦿ Forbes – reaching a potential audience of 150,000,000.
 - ⦿ Expresso newspaper with a potential audience of over 70,000.
 - ⦿ Valor Econômico, the largest Brazilian financial newspaper with an audience of over 100,000.

- ⦿ New gTLD Program: 2026 Round: As a result of targeted media campaigns conducted in local markets and global media outreach, ICANN received coverage on the program.
 - ⦿ Articles published: 216
 - ⦿ Unique articles published: 25
 - ⦿ Podcast interviews: 5
 - ⦿ Potential reach: 1.5 billion-plus

Earned Media Coverage

In addition to paid opportunities, ICANN benefits from organic mentions in articles related to Internet governance, the domain name industry, and other topics. In the reporting period, ICANN was mentioned more than 10,000 times.



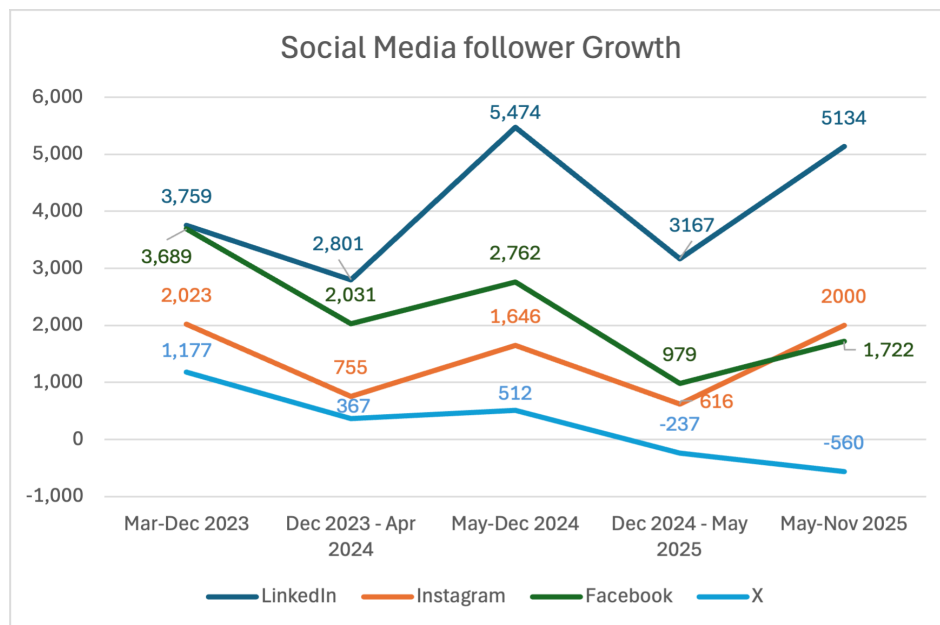
Over time, media mentions have continued to grow. Consistency in public relations creates momentum, and the increase in press release-related activities, media campaigns in support of the 2026 Round and other programs, and other events have resulted in greater awareness and therefore increased coverage of ICANN.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Global Communications manages ICANN’s social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X each day. These channels are used to amplify blogs, announcements, events, and other key message to followers on each channel. Messages are tailored to each platform, based on the audience profile and preferences. Current number of followers by platform:

Facebook: 94,122 followers
Instagram: 12,263 followers
LinkedIn: 59,741 followers
X: 103,488 followers

Follower growth continues to increase steadily, except for the X platform, which directly correlates with the decline in active platform users. A snapshot of growth by platform, from March 2023 to November 2025:



Platform Engagement

Platform	ICANN Engagement Rate	Industry Benchmark	% Above Industry
LinkedIn	8.2%	2.1%	+6.1%
Facebook	5.5%	3.8%	+1.7%
Instagram	7.0%	5.6%	+1.4%
X (Twitter)	4.0%	3.7%	+0.3%

Paid Campaign Performance Totals

- 🕒 LinkedIn: 25 million impressions, 309,900 clicks
- 🕒 Facebook: 62.9 million impressions, 910,000 clicks
- 🕒 X: 5.8 million impressions, 18,000 clicks

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BLOGS

Global Communications is responsible for proofreading all blogs and announcements. During this period, ICANN published **80 announcements** and **55 blogs**.

LANGUAGE SERVICES SUPPORT

ICANN83 and Prep Week

- ⦿ Simultaneous interpretation for 55 sessions
- ⦿ Real Time Transcription (RTT) for 18 sessions
- ⦿ 25,000 minutes transcribed

ICANN84 and Prep Week

- ⦿ Simultaneous interpretation for 107 sessions
- ⦿ RTT for 41 sessions
- ⦿ 40,000 minutes transcribed

Translation Projects: 431 projects (2,820,362 words total)

Teleconference Interpretation: 81 calls (13,235 minutes total)

Teleconference Transcription: 335 calls, including RTT for 48 calls (30,201 minutes total)

INFORMATION TRANSPARENCY PLATFORM

Global Communications launched updated [ICANN Data Protection Practices](#) pages with improved layout and a new user experience to access content.

WEBSITE METRICS

Website Visits Per Month¹

May	June	July	August	September	October
408,942	389,743	691,501	638,739	812,983	988,773

¹ Due to the General Data Protection Regulation, ICANN cannot track unique visits.

Global Domains and Strategy

Theresa Swinehart, Senior Vice President, Global Domains and Strategy

The Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) team marked several key milestones this reporting period, including the [continued operation](#) of the Registration Data Request Service for up to two years; launching the [Review of Reviews Cross Community Group](#); marking the effective date for [Registration Data Policy](#), concluding a multiyear implementation project; conditional approval of the [first candidates](#) for the New gTLD Applicant Support Program; and the Board's adoption of the [New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook](#).

OVERVIEW OF KEY ACTIVITIES

New gTLD Program

2026 Round

- ⦿ *In support of Strategic Objective 3.1, Facilitate Digital Inclusion; Organizational Objective 10, Digital Inclusion; and Strategic Initiative 25, New gTLD Program.*
- ⦿ See [Key Indicators](#) on Page 4.
- ⦿ More details on the project are available in the [ICANN84 Status Update](#).

2012 Round

- ⦿ As of 14 November, 25 applications remain in the 2012 round. Per the Board-approved [Termination Procedure for Remaining 2012 Round Applications that were not Successful](#), ICANN org notified 15 applicants, who had a total of 19 applications, of termination procedures.
- ⦿ During this period, two new registry operators actively worked toward delegation, one application completed contracting, and two applications withdrew.

Data Protection and Privacy

- ⦿ The [Registration Data Policy](#), a multiyear implementation effort, went into effect on 21 August. The policy requirements are now in force for registries and registrars.
- ⦿ GDS concluded a series of calls to facilitate discussion on timeline requirements for urgent requests and [published proposed language for Public Comment](#) on 22 October.
- ⦿ The Board took [action](#) to direct ICANN org to continue to operate the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS) for up to two more years, until December 2027 or until community discussions on related policy work is complete.
- ⦿ The GNSO Standing Committee [released its Findings Report and received Public Comment feedback](#), and plans to finalize its recommendations to the GNSO Council following ICANN84.
- ⦿ The Board published the [RDRS Policy Alignment Analysis](#), seeking [Public Comment](#) on a proposed road map to help inform discussions between the ICANN Board and the GNSO Council.
- ⦿ GDS worked with the Implementation Review Team (IRT) to draft responses to a set of threshold questions to guide the policy implementation of the Privacy/Proxy Services Accreditation Issues policy recommendations and delivered these to the GNSO Council in August. The Council discussed these at its ICANN84 meeting and is expected to deliver its guidance in November.

DNS Abuse Mitigation Program

In support of Strategic Objective 4, Strengthen the Security and Stability of the Internet's Unique Identifier Systems; Strategic Initiative 31, Security Risk Identification and Mitigation; and Organizational Objective 12, DNS Abuse Mitigation.

- ⦿ GDS continued to lead the cross-functional DNS Abuse Mitigation Program efforts to coordinate the org-wide strategy to ensure ICANN is recognized as a trusted source of information, provide tools to the community to mitigate DNS Abuse, and enforce related contractual provisions.
- ⦿ As part of ICANN's efforts to contribute data and expertise to fact-based discussions, GDS supported the DNS Abuse Workshop for Europol and the U.K. Government, which focused on a one-year review of enforcement of existing DNS Abuse requirements and identified near-term opportunities and risks for ICANN org.

Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance Programs

In support of Strategic Objective 3.1, Facilitate Digital Inclusion; Organizational Objective 10, Digital Inclusion; and Strategic Initiative 24, Universal Acceptance.

- ⦿ The Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) Program team continues to support the Latin Diacritics PDP and conduct analysis of IDN EPDP Phase 2, the Fourth ccNSO PDP on IDN ccTLDs, and the development of Second-Level Reference Label Generation Rules for communities in Indonesia (Javanese and Pegon) and for first languages of Canada in Latin and Unified Canadian Aboriginal Syllabic scripts.
- ⦿ The team published the [IDN Annual Report](#).
- ⦿ ICANN [celebrated](#) 10 years of support for the Universal Acceptance Steering Group at ICANN83.
- ⦿ ICANN announced the [launch](#) of the Universal Acceptance Expert Working Group, which aims to publish guidelines for ICANN org's work on UA adoption by early 2026.
- ⦿ ICANN issued a [call for proposals](#) for 2026 UA Day events.

Global Support

- ⦿ Answered a total of 1,329 phone calls (down 30% from the same period last year) and closed 7,086 general inquiry cases (down 8%). Case volume consisted of 17% contracted party cases and 83% registrant and community cases.
- ⦿ The overall customer satisfaction score for contracted parties was 4.6 of 5.

Service Delivery

- ⦿ Completed 1,174 service requests (down 16% from the same period last year).
- ⦿ Accredited eight new registrars in three regions: 25% in Asia, Australia, and the Pacific; 50% in Europe; and 25% in North America. This brings the total number of registrars to 3,011.
- ⦿ Renewed 135 Registrar Accreditation Agreements (RAAs) and 470 Registry Agreements (RAs).
- ⦿ 15 RAAs (12 voluntarily/three involuntarily) were terminated (up 88%) and four RAs (all voluntarily) were terminated (no change).
- ⦿ 28 RA assignments (up 367%) and 10 RAA assignments were completed (up 43%).

Reviews Program

In support of Organizational Objective 3, Continuous Improvement, and Strategic Initiative 2, Continuous Improvement Program.

Continuous Improvement Program:

- ⦿ Published the Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) Framework. This concludes the framework development work and moves the community to the next stage.
- ⦿ Established reporting methodology with Policy Development Support team to coordinate operationalization of the CIP Framework.

Review of Reviews Cross Community Group:

- ⦿ Supported Board deliberations for 19 May [decision](#) to initiate community dialogue and 5 September [approval](#) of Review of Reviews Cross Community Group (Reviews CCG) charter.
- ⦿ Convened the Reviews CCG for its first meeting in September.
- ⦿ Published background and analysis [report](#) on Specific Reviews to support Phase 1 fact-finding.
- ⦿ Held Reviews CCG plenary sessions and cross-community discussions on Statement of Purpose for ICANN Reviews at ICANN84.

Global Human Resources

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

- ⦿ Completed the FY25 Semester 2 Performance Review process for 434 eligible staff on schedule, supporting timely feedback, recognition, objective-setting, and development and
- ⦿ Completed FY26 annual compensation and merit review process for eligible ICANN org staff. Also reviewed and processed staff ACMR promotion requests. New salaries and promotions were effective 1 July.
- ⦿ Launched annual staff engagement survey on 18 August with a 92% participation rate.
- ⦿ Completed a thorough records audit for all U.S. employees across the org to ensure full compliance to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services requirement for U.S. employers to maintain a correct and complete Form I-9 (the U.S. employment eligibility).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Talent Acquisition

- ⦿ Filled 24 open roles – 18 externally and six internally, with 25% of the placements being outside of the U.S. Key hires included associate general counsel, E&IT compliance senior director, and stakeholder engagement senior manager.
- ⦿ To support initiatives such as the New gTLD Program, maintained a focus on hiring efficiency, with a year-to-date average time-to-fill of 2.4 months per role (an improvement from 2.7 months in FY24).

Learning and Development

- ⦿ Launched the Manager Toolkit series in July to further educate people managers on the tactical aspects of leading people. Delivered workshops on the hybrid working model, relocations, and employer of record.
- ⦿ As a follow-up to the annual staff engagement survey, the Executive team and managing directors received training from DecisionWise on how to deliver the results to their respective functions. Senior leadership is using insights for improvement actions.
- ⦿ Launched a new leadership program on 3 November called “The Leadership Academy” that is designed to inspire and grow leaders at every level of the organization.
- ⦿ Continued staff development by delivering sessions on Effective Communication and Interaction, Five Behaviors of a Cohesive team, Procurement Policy Awareness, Getting to Know ICANN With Kurtis Lindqvist, Tech Talk on DNSSEC 101 for Non-Technical Staff, Tech Talk on AI’s Impact on the Engineering Discipline, Tech Talk on IPv6 101 for Non-Technical Staff, and Tech Talk with Marty Cooper, inventor of the cell phone.
- ⦿ Onboarded 18 new hires, with three- and six-month check-ins completed for recent new staff – supporting a smooth transition, early engagement, and retention.

Compensation and Benefits

- ⦿ Completed FY26 ACMR process for eligible ICANN org staff. Also reviewed and processed staff ACMR promotion requests. New salaries and promotions were effective 1 July.
- ⦿ Processed FY25 SR2 at-risk payments on 30 June for eligible staff, reflecting their achievements and impact as determined through the FY25 SR2 performance review process.
- ⦿ Worked with global and regional broker, reviewed and renewed Singapore staff group benefits in August, remaining with current carrier for healthcare with no plan design changes. Enhanced the total rewards package while ensuring cost-effectiveness and competitiveness.
- ⦿ Completed U.S. benefit renewal and obtained approval by the end of August.
- ⦿ In June, informed Türkiye-based staff that ICANN would transition from the previous market gap review mechanism and instead manage compensation through ICANN's established salary review process. This approach was taken as inflation in Türkiye had begun to stabilize and is expected to remain on a moderating path. To assist with the transition, HR and Finance continue to monitor Türkiye market inflation and exchange rate change on a six-month cadence.

Compliance

- ⦿ Provided Workplace Violence Prevention and Active Shooter training to continue ICANN org's commitment to maintaining a safe and secure working environment for all staff members.
- ⦿ Staff members' required training remains up-to-date and aligned with compliance expectations.

Governance Support

John Jeffrey, General Counsel and Secretary

The Governance Support function – which includes Legal, Board Operations, the Complaints Office, and Nominating Committee Support – continued to strengthen ICANN’s accountability, transparency, and governance effectiveness. This includes work to provide legal and strategic guidance across all the Organizational Objectives. This reporting period focused on embedding improved accountability mechanisms, advancing governance reforms, supporting Board efficiency, and managing legal and policy risks to maintain the integrity of ICANN’s mission.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Improve Policy and Advice Process (Organizational Objective 5)

The Governance team led the update of the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct on Statements of Interest to address Public Comment submissions and align with best practices. The revised Code was approved by the ICANN Board in September, marking a major step in improving transparency and reinforcing trust in ICANN’s processes. Following its approval, the team partnered with the Policy Development Support function to help the community prepare for implementation of the new framework. This collaboration will ensure that community participants better understand and disclose interests, fostering a more open and accountable environment.

Continuous Improvement (Organizational Objective 3)

The Governance team played a central role in launching the Review of Reviews Cross Community Group, coordinating the Board’s participation and ensuring alignment with ICANN’s broader governance objectives. The team also supported the Government and IGO Engagement and Stakeholder Engagement functions in developing and finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding with ALETI, ensuring that the agreement reflected ICANN’s mission and governance standards. These initiatives strengthened ICANN’s governance ecosystem by promoting transparency and collaboration across functions and community groups.

Strengthening Internet Infrastructure and RIR Governance (Organizational Objective 6)

The team continued to advance governance within the Root Server System and Regional Internet Registry (RIR) environments. Active participation in the Root Server System Governance Working Group helped shape ICANN’s positions on maintaining system integrity and operational stability.

In the area of RIR governance, the team remained deeply engaged in the AFRINIC matter, managing regional legal and litigation strategies to safeguard the stability of the numbering system. Ongoing collaboration with RIRs continued through monitoring the development of the RIR Governance Document and participating in ASO AC discussions as the community moves toward a third version of the framework.

Board Operations: Strengthening Decision-Making and Efficiency

During the reporting period, the Board Operations team facilitated four Board workshops, focusing on enhancing Board effectiveness through policy, operational, and educational sessions. These workshops provided opportunities for knowledge exchange with community groups and deeper understanding of critical topics, such as DNS Abuse.

To improve efficiency, the team implemented a new Board materials management process, ensuring timely delivery and better alignment with Board decision-making cycles. Ahead of ICANN84, the team managed the onboarding of three new Board members, providing comprehensive administrative, technical, and governance training. Close collaboration with org teams ensured a seamless Board Prep Week and Board-stakeholder engagement sessions in Dublin, while maintaining a fiscally responsible approach through optimized travel and scheduling.

Nominating Committee Support: Accelerating the Selection Cycle

The Nominating Committee (NomCom) Support team delivered the 2026 NomCom Delegate Onboarding Workshop in October, offering inclusive leadership, governance, and platform training sessions. The team also supported the acceleration of the 2026 NomCom timeline by one month, a strategic change designed to increase accountability, transparency, and community participation in the leadership selection process.

Dispute and Legal Risk Management

Throughout the period, the Legal team managed several key accountability, dispute, and contracting matters.

Independent Review Processes and Reconsideration Requests

- ⦿ Three Independent Review Processes (Altanovo, Namecheap, and GCCIX) remained active.
- ⦿ Managed two Reconsideration Requests and one Documentary Information Disclosure Policy requests.

Litigation Matters

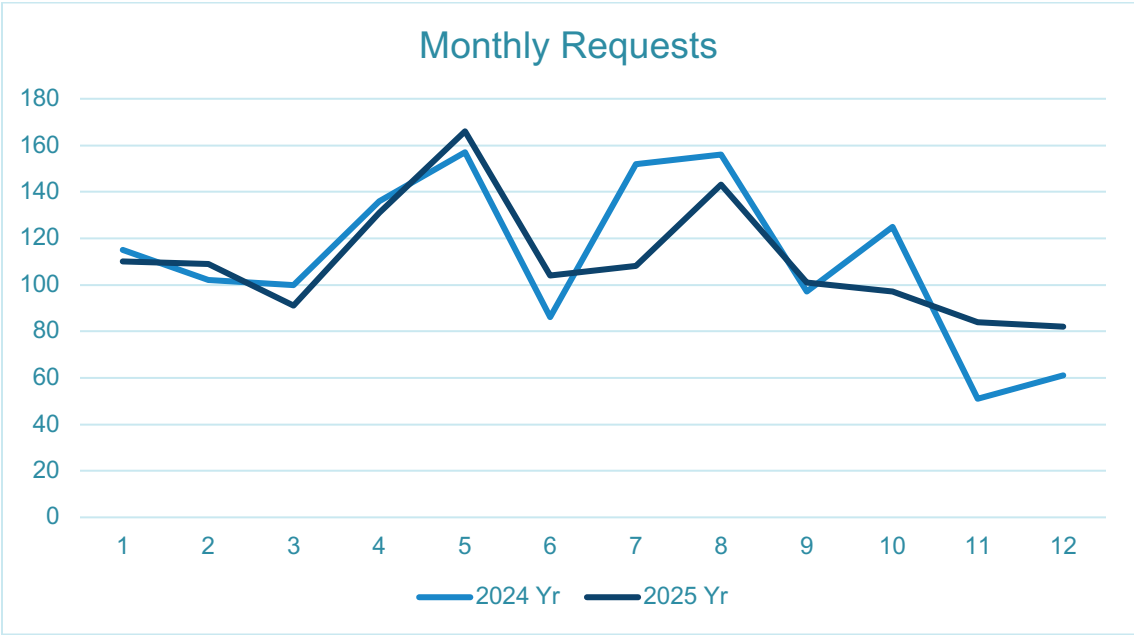
- ⦿ Six California lawsuits (three active; three concluded)
- ⦿ Four trademark lawsuits in India (all active)
- ⦿ One employment-related lawsuit (concluded)
- ⦿ Two Mauritius applications (one active; one concluded)

Legal Contracting

- ⦿ Processed approximately 725 new contract-related requests during the reporting period. For the same period in the previous year, there were 751 new contract related requests processed, which amounts to a 3.5% decrease.

Below is a comparative analysis of contract-related requests processed on a month-over-month and year-over-year (YoY) basis:

Month and Year	Requests	Month and Year	Requests	YoY Change
Jan 2024	115	Jan 2025	110	-4.3%
Feb 2024	102	Feb 2025	109	+6.9%
Mar 2024	100	Mar 2025	91	-9.0%
Apr 2024	136	Apr 2025	131	-3.7%
May 2024	157	May 2025	166	+5.7%
Jun 2024	86	Jun 2025	104	+21%
Jul 2024	152	Jul 2025	108	-29%
Aug 2024	156	Aug 2025	143	-8.3%
Sep 2024	97	Sep 2025	101	+4.1%
Oct 2024	125	Oct 2025	97	-22.4%
Nov 2024	51	Nov 2025	84	+64.7%
Dec 2024	61	Dec 2025	82	+34.4%
Total 2024	1,338	Total 2025	1,326	-0.9%



- Executed 23 grant agreements, totaling approximately \$10 million disbursed.
- Proposed 2026 Round Base gTLD Registry Agreement underwent two Public Comment proceedings in June and September 2025.

By maintaining strong coordination with external counsel and internal stakeholders, the Governance Function mitigated both legal and reputational risk while keeping the Board informed through privileged updates.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the coming months, the Governance Function will focus on embedding the new Code of Conduct on Statements of Interest across community operations, supporting the implementation phase of the Review of Reviews Cross-Community Group, and advancing RIR and Root Server System governance. Board Operations will continue to refine governance processes, streamline Board workflows, and prepare for upcoming strategic engagements leading into ICANN85. Across all areas, the function remains committed to delivering governance excellence – anchored in accountability, transparency, and integrity – to advance ICANN’s mission and strengthen the trust and stability of the global Internet ecosystem.

Identifier Research, Operations, and Security

John Crain, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer

Engineering and Information Technology

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

Organizational Objective: Digital Transformation and E&IT Maturity

- ⦿ Delivered E&IT Strategy, Vision, and Organizational Design document in October. The three-year execution road map also delivered to support the execution of said strategy. E&IT strategy is underway and on-track, prioritizing security and infrastructure posture, compliance through ISO27001, staff tooling, rebuilding Enterprise IT, and improving engineering discipline.
- ⦿ Parallel execution on enterprise architecture and tech rationalization is estimated to deliver additional reduction in run rate by \$2 million in 12–14 months in addition to initial \$2 million in savings delivered. About \$500,000 of the additional reduction is materializing in FY26.

Development & Delivery Across Products and Services	# Release	Percentage
New Capabilities – Drive Business	1,352	35.1%
Quality Improvements – Improve Business	1,261	32.8%
Keep the Lights On (KTLO) – Running the Business	789	20.5%
Internal Productivity – Running the Business	447	11.6%

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Infrastructure and Security

- ⦿ Delivery of new firewall solution is on track, supporting Zero Trust network infrastructure.
- ⦿ Implementation of new VPN service to support distributed workforce access securely is on track.
- ⦿ Delivered new and revamped cybersecurity training platform and initial training.
- ⦿ Completed comprehensive assessment of information security of ICANN meetings infrastructure based on recommendations on track for implementation prioritized and scheduled for next few meetings.
- ⦿ Selected a new security and network packet capture solution to enhance observability, with implementation expected to kickoff mid-November.
- ⦿ Initiated ISO27001-certification program with defined scope and road map including resource planning, and execution is set to begin in December.
- ⦿ Cloud infrastructure build with Amazon Web Services is advancing E&IT maturity by leveraging Infrastructure as Code and automation.

2026 Round

- ⦿ ASP and RSP Evaluation Systems remain in operational maintenance with minimal active support requirements.

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- ⦿ RST 2.0 is in the final stages of development but remains under maintenance due to a critical issue. Since the initial RST release in March, resolved 93% of critical issues, with another 5% development complete and currently in review.
 - ⦿ TAMS MVP is progressing on schedule. The team is currently building the fifth and final MVP scope, with development expected to conclude by mid-January.
 - ⦿ LGR Tool API and String Similarity tool have completed development and successfully passed user acceptance testing. Deployment is planned in coordination with the TAMS release.
 - ⦿ Name Collision Observatory implementation began in June and remains on track for an early 2026 release.

Community Services and Contracted Parties

- ⦿ Expanded OneTrust Cookie Consent Management on ICANN Account and gTLD subdomains in early November. This continues to strengthen ICANN's data privacy compliance.
- ⦿ ICANN Account/CES opt-in continues to be the centralized record for contacts and communication management. 46% of new contacts and prospects opt in, a 2% increase this semester.
- ⦿ Launched ICANN Account Email Address Internationalization to increase accessibility for Universal Acceptance standards.
- ⦿ Deployment of the Data Protection pages was completed, along with the completion of taxonomy updates for over 43,000 Registry Agreements.
- ⦿ Expanded the use of web analytics platform to several additional ICANN web properties, including At-Large, ccNSO, CZDS, GAC, GNSO, and New gTLD (2012 Round).
- ⦿ Delivered training to NomCom delegates and documentation for the new Submittable platform, concluding the first cycle at ICANN84.
- ⦿ Domain Metrica V1.5 was released to ICANN community members and contracted parties. The uptime module design solutioning is in-progress.
- ⦿ Delivered 162 reports in support of business insights to measure stakeholder activity and trends.
- ⦿ 2026 Round Variant Support in NSP completed in November, allowing NSP to accept and process new contracts with TLD variants.
- ⦿ RDAP/Registrar Watch was delivered in November with NSP and SLAM integration to enable real-time automated feed of registrar data and RDAP monitoring details to monitor adherence to the RAA.

ERP and Staff Services

- ⦿ Registrar pricing updates completed for billing.
- ⦿ ERP-TAMS integration for the 2026 Round project development completed, integration testing is currently in progress to be completed by December.
- ⦿ Open enrollment 2026 testing completed for new Redwood user interface. Staff members will use the new interface starting 10 November.
- ⦿ Oracle Learn and Performance Management project kicked off, business requirements sessions completed. Configuration and Development currently in progress.

TOP ISSUES AND MITIGATION

RST remains in maintenance mode due to critical issue. Completed root cause analysis and code fix with testing in progress. Improvements in development and testing discipline in progress.

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority

PERFORMANCE

Key measures of performance of IANA are meeting the requirements of the contracts, which stipulate many service-level agreements (SLAs) that govern how the functions are to be performed. Customer sentiment is also measured through surveys sent during transactional processing, annual surveys of key stakeholders, and periodic reviews performed by community oversight bodies.

	May 2025	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct
DNS Root Zone						
SLAs Met	100%	100%	98.4%	100%	98.4%	100%
CSC assessed satisfactory or higher	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request Volume	280	270	194	167	186	1041
TLDs in Root Zone	1441	1440	1440	1439	1439	1438
Ceremony KPIs Met	—	—	12/12	—	—	—
Protocol Parameters						
SLAs Met	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Met MOU requirement (90%)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Met internal target (95%)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request Volume	303	253	300	306	316	335
Number Resources						
SLAs Met	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Metrics Met	4/4	4/4	4/4	4/4	4/4	4/4
Met SLA requirement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Request Volume	0	0	0	0	0	0
.INT Top-Level Domain						
New registrations	0	0	0	0	0	2
Modifications	1	0	2	0	2	1
Request Volume	14	14	28	21	19	19
Label Generation Rulesets						
New registrations	0	4	3	2	657	0
Modifications	83	52	6	538	3628	1
Request Volume	7	9	4	18	9	1
Transaction Satisfaction						
Customer Satisfaction	100%	100%	86.4%	100%	95%	92%
Survey Response Rate	31.8%	43.5%	32.8%	28.8%	36.4%	26%
General Enquiries						
Request Volume	184	142	69	58	79	94

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ⦿ Commenced a limited beta of adding JSON support for protocol parameter registries. This approach is being validated with community members before a comprehensive rollout across the IANA registries.
- ⦿ Following customer engagements, began conducting a new post-event survey to measure effectiveness of IANA's engagement and identify topics of interest for future speaking commitments.

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- ⦿ Made additional improvements in systems, including incremental upgrades to the Root Zone Management System.
 - ⦿ Launched annual stakeholder survey, where key community leadership groups are invited to provide feedback on IANA to inform longer-term planning. This year's approach is significantly streamlined to promote a higher response rate.
 - ⦿ IANA subject matter experts have made significant progress leading work in the IETF to review and evolve key procedures relating to how IANA processes transactions as part of the standards development process.
 - ⦿ Kicked off the IANA website modernization activity with a broad review of how IANA delivers its services online with a view to creating an improved user experience. It is expected the website will evolve to better surface much of the data-driven content that is currently available but not easily discoverable on the IANA website.
 - ⦿ Held virtual workshop sessions with the PTI Board, principally to review the activities that contributed to the completion of PTI's first five-year strategic plan.
 - ⦿ Engaged with IANA's main customer groups, attending regional events around the world, in addition to providing customary support of ICANN and IETF meetings. At these meetings, the IANA team has provided a mix of community presentations as well as one-on-one engagement with current and prospective IANA customers, as well as contributions to capacity-building activities.

Office of the Chief Technology Officer

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

- ⦿ The Second IANA Function Review (IFR2) was completed, and the report was submitted to the Board for review and action.
- ⦿ The Technical Engagement (TE) team continued to work with DNS operators globally to support a secure DNS ecosystem. Two new ccTLDs signed their zones, many ISPs enabled validation, and more than 518 operators used KINDNS to self-assess their practices because of TE's engagement and support.
- ⦿ The SSR Research team has been working on decommissioning DAAR. In addition, the team continues to work on a method for measuring "uptime" of domain names and recently submitted an academic paper on this topic.
- ⦿ The OCTO Research team was active in the DELEG working group in the IETF, supported the 2026 Round name collision assessment process, and continued research into recursive resolver behavior.

Operations

In September, the ICANN Board [approved](#) the IFR2 [Final Report](#) and directed ICANN org to implement the four recommendations within the report. The recommendations focus on three areas:

- ⦿ Presence of specific DNSSEC policy details in the IANA Naming Function Contract and identifying DNSSEC policy authority
- ⦿ Transparency and availability of contract amendments
- ⦿ Frequency of reviews

Technical Engagement

The TE team continued to focus on awareness and capacity building around DNS ecosystem security among operators and government officials involved with technology policies (in collaboration with GE). KINDNS, Universal Acceptance, and Advance DNS operations made up the majority of the capacity-building program. TE also concluded a 12-month joint capacity-development program with the ISPC tailored to its members. Some other indicators during the period:

- ⦿ The team conducted 129 capacity-building engagement events during the period under review (compared to the 120 total for the period Dec-May): 23 in APAC, 22 in Europe, 41 LAC, 33 in MEA, and eight in North America.
- ⦿ Two ccTLDs signed their zones during the period (.bi and .et) as the result of TE's outreach, support, and hands-on capacity-building workshops. The level of validation measured by APNIC Labs has also continued to improve with Europe and Africa leading with validation rates of 46% and 43%, respectively.
- ⦿ TE has continued to integrate KINDNS as a one-stop framework for DNS operation best practices to the overall capacity-building program. More than 518 operators took the self-assessment test (compared to 240 for the previous similar period), and five new operators have formally enrolled to join the program. The major challenge with the program remains resources allocation to accelerate its uptake and further engage the operator community.

Security, Stability and Resilience Research

The SSR Research team has been enhancing Domain Metrics with new features, including the integration of ccTLD data and the creation of ccTLD-specific personas. This enables ccTLDs participating in DAAR to access a personalized view of DNS Abuse data, similar to what contracted parties currently receive. In addition, the team is defining the specifications for the upcoming uptime module, which will measure “time to mitigate.” The metric is being designed to provide greater robustness than existing approaches.

In parallel, the SSR team has conducted research on **identifying batch domain registrations** and submitted a paper to the APWG eCrime 2025 conference. The team is pleased to share that the paper has been accepted and will be presented in November. Further research in this area is ongoing and will soon be shared with the community for discussion.

Research

The Research team is actively participating in the DELEG working group within the IETF. DELEG is an enhancement to the semantics of DNS delegations that allows additional information to be relayed to resolvers. It represents a significant addition to the DNS protocol and would require changes to registry and registrar systems to implement if it becomes a standard.

The Research team has continued prior work on the DNS Magnitude technique, originally developed by NIC.AT, for assessing the popularity of domain names. A proof-of-concept research-quality implementation that calculates DNS Magnitude scores for TLDs based on query traffic to L-root is being extended to a production-quality system that will calculate TLD scores using DNS query traffic from L-root and likely other root servers, as well. The Research team is supporting this wider ICANN org effort, which will be used as part of the 2026 Round name collision assessment process.

Research is continuing a fine-grain explorative analysis on DNS resolvers all over the world in collaboration with APNIC Labs. Results will ultimately be published as a paper in the OCTO document series.

Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Xavier Calvez, Senior Vice President, Planning and CFO

Finance

See [Key Indicators](#) on Page 4.

Implementation Operations

Key Indicators	Expected Completion Rate as of 14 Nov	Current completion Rate as of 30 Oct
Implementation of the ICANN org-owned recommendations from Work Stream 2 of the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability	90%	88%

During this period, Implementation Operations started to oversee the implementation of the IANA Naming Function Review recommendations that the Board approved on 14 September.

Grant Program

Key Indicators	Expected Completion Rate as of 14 Nov	Current completion Rate as of 30 Oct
Implementation of the first cycle of the Grant Program (based on the Board resolution on the final slate of applications and grant agreement negotiations)	100%	100%
Disbursement of the first Grant Program installment	100%	100%
Review of the first cycle of the Grant Program	100%	90%

Planning

Key Indicators

On-time plans development (target is 100%): **100%**

Bylaws-Mandated Plans	Objectives and Key Results
ICANN's FY26–30 Strategic Plan	Adopted by the ICANN Board on 13 March and in effect since 1 July.
ICANN's FY26–30 Operating and Financial Plan and FY26 Operating Plan and Budget	Adopted by the ICANN Board on 3 May and in effect since 1 July.
IANA FY26 Operating Plan and Budget	Adopted by the ICANN Board on 3 May and in effect since 1 July.
PTI Strategic Plan for FY26–30	Adopted by the PTI Board on 14 April and in effect since 1 July.
PTI FY26 Operating Plan and Budget	Adopted by the PTI Board on 14 April and in effect since 1 July.
ICANN's FY27–31 Operating and Financial Plan, and FY27 Operating Plan and Budget	Community-led FY27 Planning Prioritization completed in June. Draft plans are scheduled for Public Comment in December.

Planning continued to work on the Management Framework program, which includes a progress measurement and reporting project. The project is progressing toward building a framework that strengthens accountability and transparency and enhances the effectiveness of the planning process.

Procurement

Key Indicators	Current Value (Baseline of FY25)	Median Value	Best-In-Class Value (Target)
Addressed Spend*	42.5%	44%	60%
Managed Spend**	83.7%	70%	90%

*Percentage of addressable spend that is competitively sourced through RFIs, RFQs, and RFPs (e.g., contributions or sponsorships are not addressable).

**Percentage of the addressable spend that is actively managed.

Risk Management and Internal Audit

Risk Management	KPI	Status as of 12 Nov
Risk Management Maturity Assessment	Completion by December 2025	In progress
Annual Risk Register Update	Completion by March 2026	In progress
Risk Appetite Statement Development and Adoption	Completion by March 2026	In progress

Internal Audit	KPI	Status as of 12 Nov
Internal Audit Function Charter	Approval by BRC	100% Completion
Selection of Internal Audit Service Providers	Approval by BRC	100% Completion
Internal Audit Methodology Overview	Approval by BRC	100% Completion

Policy Development Support

Russ Weinstein, Senior Vice President, Policy Development Support

The Policy Development Support function offers a range of support to the ICANN community. Its subject-matter experts have a deep understanding of DNS policy and technology. They advise ICANN community leaders and facilitate discussions, focusing on developing consensus-based outcomes. The team's operations professionals work closely with ICANN community leaders on administrative matters such as agenda development, fair elections, membership management, and remote participation. The function fosters a collaborative working environment and supports every policy development milestone and advisory activity of 25 ICANN community groups and their projects. This update focuses on areas of progress within ICANN's FY26–30 Strategic Plan, particularly the FY26 Organizational Objectives as they relate to the function.

Organizational Objective 3: Continuous Improvement

Review of Reviews

ICANN's Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs), with support from ICANN org staff, aligned on the concept of a "Review of Reviews," produced a charter, and seated a cross-community group (CCG) to conduct the review. From initial discussions with the SO and AC leaders at ICANN82 in June, the charter was submitted to the Board for approval before the end of August and was adopted by the Board in early September. Since kickoff, the CCG has focused on Phase 1 of the work to define a shared purpose for reviews.

Continuous Improvement Program Implementation in the Community

The SOs and ACs are currently in different stages of initiating their Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) work. The ASO, SSAC, and RSSAC are generally gaining awareness of the CIP Framework exercise; the GNSO's standing continuous improvement leadership team met at ICANN84 to agree on a work plan, and the GAC is surveying their members to help initiate CIP efforts. The ccNSO and ALAC have formally initiated development of their CIP Frameworks, identifying their key criteria and indicators, and plan to identify and prioritize their desired improvement activities for implementation.

Organizational Objective 5: Improve Policy and Advice Processes

Generic Names Supporting Organization PDP Improvements

The GNSO Council has chartered a project aimed to improve the "readiness" of PDP Recommendations for the Board. This project was conducted by a small team of GNSO Councilors, and was delivered to the Council in September, with consideration expected in the near future. The report contains reflections on prior PDPs that found friction at the point of Board consideration and recommendations for improvement.

Community Participant Code of Conduct Regarding Statements of Interest

This project was conducted in partnership with the Governance function. The Code of Conduct was [adopted by the Board](#) at their September workshop. Following Board adoption, [ICANN](#)

[published a blog](#) and ran other promotional activities to create awareness that the new code was now in effect, and all community members should review the code and make updates as appropriate to their various statements of interest. At the ICANN84 meeting, the SO/AC leaders confirmed that their constituencies are using the new code for their statements of interest.

Organizational Objective 6: Strengthen the Root Server System Governance and Regional Internet Registry Support

Root Server System Governance Working Group

The Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG) completed its work on a draft of the Functional Model and [conducted a Public Comment proceeding](#) in August and September. Feedback centered on four themes: Representation, Accountability and Transparency, Relationships, and Funding. The working group is now reviewing the feedback and updating its draft report. When complete, the RSS GWG will publish its final report.

Supporting Regional Internet Registries

The Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) have been working on an update to the nearly 25-year-old Internet Coordination Policy 2, which describes the policy for recognizing RIRs. The proposed successor document is called the “Governance Document for the Recognition, Operation, and Derecognition of Regional Internet Registries.” The RIRs conducted consultations in their communities on the second draft, while the Address Supporting Organization (ASO) conducted an [ICANN Public Comment proceeding](#) from August to November. The ASO Address Council gathered in Montevideo, Uruguay, in November to consider all the feedback and develop the next draft. It is likely that another round of consultations will be needed before the ASO considers the new policy for approval.

Organizational Objective 12: DNS Abuse Mitigation

Potential Policy Development Related to DNS Abuse Mitigation

At ICANN83, community discussions continued about what more should be done in the gTLD space to mitigate or prevent DNS Abuse. At that meeting, consensus began to emerge that narrowly scoped policy development procedures would be the right way to proceed. In the ICANN83 Communiqué, the GAC advised the ICANN Board to urge the GNSO Council to undertake all necessary preparations prior to ICANN84 toward starting targeted and narrowly scoped PDPs on DNS Abuse issues, prioritizing bulk registration of malicious domain names and the responsibility of registrars to investigate domains associated with registrant accounts that are the subject of actionable reports of DNS Abuse.

Since ICANN83, the GNSO Council, supported by ICANN’s Policy team, has made strong progress toward launching narrowly scoped PDPs, evidenced by the following milestones and activities:

- ① The GNSO Council requested an Issues Report from ICANN org in August.
- ① ICANN org published the Preliminary Issues Report for Public Comment in September.
- ① The GNSO convened a cross-community session at ICANN84 for further scoping discussions, with the purpose of setting up any Policy Development efforts for success.

The GAC seems to agree, as noted in its ICANN84 Communiqué: “The GAC recognizes the extensive efforts made by the ICANN community, prior to ICANN84, to proactively initiate DNS Abuse policy work. Swift progress should continue.”

The Preliminary Issue Report, with the Public Comment Summary and Analysis Report expected to be published in mid-November. The GNSO Council will consider the Final Issue Report and may initiate one or more PDPs related to DNS Abuse as early as the December GNSO Council meeting.

The ccNSO DNS Abuse Standing Committee continues its work to explore issues and share best practices and experiences. At ICANN84, the ccNSO conducted a productive joint session with the GAC exploring DNS Abuse and Domain Name Abuse and a session on the use of tools to identify Domain Abuse during Tech Day.

ICANN83 and ICANN84

ICANN Public Meetings continue to be the most visual demonstration of the Policy function’s work, where it coordinates with the community to define the meeting agendas, design Prep Week, and produce the sessions.

- ⦿ ICANN83’s Prep Week featured seven webinars, including updates about Policy and Advice, IDNs and UA, the New gTLD Program, and ICANN Reviews.
- ⦿ At the ICANN83 Policy Forum, the Policy Development Support function facilitated 71% (104 of 147) of the total scheduled sessions.
- ⦿ At ICANN83, ICANN recognized 53 chairs and vice chairs of ICANN working groups during a reception.
- ⦿ ICANN84’s Prep Week featured 11 webinars, including updates on 2025 NomCom, Universal Acceptance, Contractual Compliance, RIR Governance, Grant Program, and Review of Reviews.
- ⦿ At the ICANN84 Annual General Meeting, the function facilitated 71% of the sessions (156 of 220).
- ⦿ During the ICANN84 welcome ceremony, the ICANN Board presented the Dr. Tarek Kamel Award for Capacity Building to Alfredo Calderón. The Board and org also took time to recognize the community leaders who have completed their terms of service during the closing ceremony as an expression of appreciation for their efforts.

Security Operations and Administrative Services

Simon Garside, VP, Security Operations and Interim Head of Administrative Services

Security Operations

Organizational Objective: How We Work (Enhance and Improve ICANN Meetings)

- ⦿ Key Result 6: Create a Safe and Secure Meeting Environment.
 - Provided successful safety and security support to ICANN83 in Prague, Czech Republic, and ICANN84 in Dublin, Ireland.
 - Completed a site inspection in Mumbai, India, in preparation for ICANN85 in March 2026. Commenced event security planning and resourcing.
 - Conducted pre-inspections for ICANN meetings in three other locations.

Administrative Services

Strategic Initiative 22: Evolving ICANN's Hybrid Working Model

- ⦿ Successfully launched the new org-wide hybrid working policy on 1 September.
- ⦿ A six-month feedback review of the policy will take place in February and March.
- ⦿ In the process of aligning offices with the needs of hybrid working. This includes adapting existing offices and moving to new, hybrid-working-ready offices during the lease renewal process, when appropriate. Research and analysis of the latter is currently being conducted in Singapore and Istanbul.

Successfully moved the Engagement Center in Nairobi, Kenya, to a much-improved space and area.

Stakeholder Engagement

Sally Costerton, Senior Advisor to President and SVP, Global Stakeholder Engagement

ICANN org's Stakeholder Engagement function leads engagement and outreach around the world about ICANN and its mission. Through local coverage in ICANN's regions, this function is a globally networked point of contact for ICANN org and the ICANN community.

The Stakeholder Engagement team facilitates ICANN-organized meetings, events, and travel, and supports engagement programs and capacity-development initiatives to encourage diverse participation in ICANN's technical and policy work. The team also provides subject matter expertise and global good practices advice for public responsibility initiatives within ICANN's remit in the areas of diversity, human rights, anti-harassment, and the global public interest.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

- ⦿ The Meeting Operations team is actively working to confirm future ICANN triannual meetings for 2027, 2028, and beyond. In October, several upcoming locations were announced for upcoming Public Meetings: Muscat, Oman, for ICANN87, Sevilla, Spain, for ICANN86, and Vancouver, Canada, for ICANN89. In April, the team conducted a site visit in Spain and conducted a preparatory visit in Mumbai.
- ⦿ Building on the success of the initial engagement session with ICANN leadership and newcomers, ICANN org held another engagement session with participants in the Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN programs and the ICANN Board and Executive team at ICANN84. This initiative aims to encourage deeper understanding of ICANN's work and promote long-term participation in the community.
- ⦿ ICANN Org engaged an [independent third party](#) to conduct an environmental sustainability audit, in line with the Strategic Plan for FY26–FY30 ([Strategic Objective 2.2](#)). Multiple ICANN org teams have gathered data on ICANN's Scope 1, 2, and 3 greenhouse gas emissions, which the vendor will use to calculate ICANN's emissions and identify emission hotspots and potential reduction opportunities. More information about this initiative can be found on the [community workspace](#).
- ⦿ In October, ICANN conducted the ICANN84 Annual General Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, with 2120 attendees, 1594 participating in-person and 526 registered to attend virtually. For more context on historical meeting data trends, see the [By the Numbers Report](#).

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Meetings

A significant achievement for Stakeholder Engagement was the pivot from Muscat to Dublin as the host for ICANN84. The delivery of this meeting – in 119 days – by the Meetings Operations and Meetings Technical Services teams involved substantial cross-functional efforts and the support of an enthusiastic and capable local host and Irish Internet community.

The Stakeholder Engagement function produces a [Meetings by the Numbers](#) report following each ICANN Meeting, and the team is reviewing historical data from meeting participation to understand regional dynamics, engagement patterns, and trends.

Regional rotation of meetings is vital for engaging participants from the host region and nearby areas. Without this rotation, the level of community participation and contribution observed today would not be possible. The data reveals clear regional spikes in attendance during meetings, highlighting the importance of location-specific engagement.

Engagement Programs

ICANN org prepared new training for ICANN Learn, including a skills-building course on objective-setting; updated existing courses, including the popular course on unconscious bias; and launched a new accessible audio format, which provides a more cost-effective solution to offering more courses in translation. The platform contract was successfully renewed with Absorb through November 2028 and will continue to provide accessible self-paced learning opportunities for lowering skill barriers to participation in ICANN community processes.

ICANN welcomed 34 fellows from 28 countries at ICANN83 and selected 40 fellows from 35 countries to participate at ICANN84. In addition, ICANN welcomed 12 NextGen@ICANN Program participants from nine countries to ICANN83, and 11 participants from seven countries to attend ICANN84.

Global Stakeholder Engagement

Global Stakeholder Engagement facilitates dialogues to reach new stakeholders and represent ICANN org at events around the world. During this period, the team participated in events such as the Web Summit in Lisbon; the Caribbean Telecommunications Union's ICT Week; Internet Measurement Day Tunisia; Cybersecurity Nordic in Finland; ANUIES in Merida, Mexico; LAC-IX; CSIRT training in Colombia; the Webrazzi Summit; Empowering Women in Cyber in Saudi Arabia; the Africa Internet Summit; Bread and Net 2025; REGULATEL 2025; LA Tech Week in ICANN's Los Angeles Headquarters; the Indigenous Connectivity Summit; the Netnod Tech Meeting 2025; the LAC DNS Forum in Montevideo, Uruguay; LACNIC44 in El Salvador; and academic engagement events, capacity-development trainings, and many others.

GSE also supported many 2026 Round and Applicant Support Program engagement events globally between May through November, including World Cities Day in Bogota, Colombia; and events in Kuwait, Türkiye, Brazil, China, Republic of Korea, Canada, Morocco, Jordan, Mongolia, Costa Rica, and others.

The team has also successfully piloted "ICANN Near You" events in the LAC region, smaller, more targeted events aimed at local stakeholders who do not typically travel to the larger ICANN Public Meetings.

Travel

From June through November, ICANN Travel supported 729 funded travelers to 13 locations.

Meeting Start	Meeting Name	Location	No. of Unique Travelers
9 Jun	ICANN83	Prague, Czech Republic	325
19 Jun	TNW Conference	Amsterdam, Netherlands	2
23 Jun	IGF 2025	Lillestrøm, Norway	3
15 Jul	KSK Ceremony 58	Los Angeles, USA	7
5 Aug	Technical Workshop on DNS, DNSSEC, Peering, and IXP	Quito, Ecuador	3
30 Aug	ITU Global Symposium for Regulators	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	1
12 Sep	September Board Workshop	Madrid, Spain	1
15 Sep	SSAC Workshop 2025	Mexico City, Mexico	27
22 Sep	CDA Capacity-Development Workshop	Maputo, Mozambique	7
29 Sep	African Internet Summit 2025	Accra, Ghana	1
25 Oct	ICANN84	Dublin, Ireland	342
1 Nov	IETF 124	Montreal, Canada	4
12 Nov	KSK Ceremony 59	Culpeper, USA	6
Total			729

The Travel team has successfully onboarded all travelers into the AmTrav system, including funded travelers, ensuring consistent access and streamlined booking across ICANN. In parallel, the team introduced the new ICANN Travel Support Portal, which provides a single hub for travelers to access their travel support details – improving both traveler experience and administrative efficiency.



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