14 April 2020

Statement of the Non-Commercial Stakeholders Group on

Revised Community Travel Support Guidelines

The Non-Commercial Stakeholders Group (NCSG) highly appreciates the opportunity to comment on the *Revised Community Travel Support Guidelines* published in February 2020 and based on the feedback received during the first phase of the community consultations between September 2017 and January 2018; as well as and the subsequent submissions received as part of the Public Comment proceedings conducted from May to July 2018.

About Us

The NCSG represents the interests of non-commercial domain name registrants and end-users in the formulation of Domain Name System policy within the Generic Names Supporting Organisation. We are proud to have individual and organizational members in over 160 countries, and as a network of academics, Internet end-users, and civil society actors, we represent a broad cross-section of the global Internet community. Since our predecessor - the Non-Commercial Domain Name Holders Constituency (NCDNHC) - inception in 1999, we have facilitated global academic and civil society engagement in support of ICANN's mission, stimulating an informed citizenry and building their understanding of relevant DNS policy issues.

NCSG will structure its comment around thematic blocks as they are separated in the Revised Guidelines.

Part I: Responsibilities of Supported Travelers

The *Trip Cancellations* section outlines the conditions under which ICANN-booked trips can be cancelled and these include immediate risk to health, life, property, or environment. NCSG recommends that these conditions be expanded slightly to include the death of a close family member.

In the *Medical Care While Travelling* section where it states that supported travellers are responsible for their medical care and expenses incurred while traveling, we suggest that this includes a recommendation that ICANN-supported travellers acquire travel insurance. This should be purchased before leaving their home countries and which would provide a certain level of medical care while travelling.

We recommend that the *Immunization and Medications* section should advise that supported travellers check any mandatory immunizations and additional travel health documents (such as Yellow Fever Cards or Immunization Records) that would be required to enable entry to the country.

There should be clarity about ICANN's responsibilities if a traveller is denied entry into a country based on not having mandatory immunizations or the travel health documents.

Part II: Travel Support Information

The *Cancellations and Substitutions* section states that ICANN will cancel its support of a traveller who misses two consecutive days of an event once it has started. However, we recommend that an exception be made for cases where this is due to no fault of the traveller, e.g. if the late arrival is due to delayed or cancelled flights. This section should more clearly outline what the traveller is expected to do in such circumstances.

Part III: Travel Guidelines

In the 1st line of the 2nd paragraph of the *Travel Visas* section, we suggest an edit: "ICANN Travel Support assists supported travelers whenever possible, but it cannot apply **for** any visa on the supported traveler's behalf" instead of "ICANN Travel Support assists supported travelers whenever possible, but it cannot apply **to** any visa on the supported traveler's behalf".

Having said that, we recommend that the ease of visa applications be factored into the selection of future destinations. For example, ICANN could ask the host country to reduce the time and conditions for obtaining a visa for participants. For the ICANN65 policy forum in Marrakech - Morocco, members of the ICANN community were able to apply for a visa on arrival.

In the *Special Circumstances* section, we recommend that the document states that the supported traveller must inquire whether reimbursements will be made and receive approval from the ICANN Travel Support team for obtaining visas under these special circumstances **prior to** embarking on the visa application process.

The *Forced Overnight Stay* section should clarify that ICANN Travel Support will reimburse any costs if a transit visa is required for leaving the airport for the booked hotel. Some countries will not require transit visas for passing through the airport, but may require one if the traveller needs to leave the airport.

The *Meals* section states that: Supported travelers cannot submit for reimbursement any meal expenses incurred because they have declined the travel meal allowance, ICANN-catered meals, or complimentary hotel catered meals.

However we recommend that there should be exceptions made in cases where the traveller is unable to eat the provided meals due to religious or cultural reasons.

Once again, we would like to thank you for inviting us to provide our input on this matter. The NCSG hopes that the collected contributions would help to make ICANN Community Travel Support more efficient in serving the needs of the ICANN community and organisation.