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“If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.” – George Orwell

ICANN Incompetence On Full Display With the RPM PDP Phase 1 Final Report

ICANN holds themselves out as an organization that is highly competent, but that could not be further from the truth. More evidence of their utter incompetence can be seen in the [ICANN RPM PDP Phase 1 final report](#), which has a [deadline for public comments of May 21, 2021](#) (this coming Friday). [Originally the deadline was going to be April 30, 2021, but [I demonstrated how that was unacceptable, and they changed it.](#)] I scanned through the document quickly this afternoon, and was appalled that it is **replete with glaring and obvious errors**. ICANN staff, GNSO Council, and anyone associated with this report should be ashamed that their names are attached to it. Of course, I’m [unfairly banished from all ICANN working groups](#), so I have no responsibility for their obvious errors.

Pages 143 through 148 of the report list names and affiliations of members of the working group, including co-chairs Brian Beckham of WIPO, Philip S. Corwin of Verisign, and Kathy Kleiman. ICANN Staff members involved in this PDP have included Ariel Liang, Mary Wong, and Julie Hedlund, among others. GNSO Council voted unanimously to approve this final report on January 21, 2021 (see page 5 of the

PDF [here](#)). Those folks are expected to have actually read the final report that they've published for acceptance by the Board and the community, and it's clear that they didn't do their jobs adequately. With so many eyes that purportedly reviewed this work, **it should be error-free at this point, given the number of iterations that the documents have gone through over 5 years.**

How long did it take me to find errors? No time at all. I started reading this document from the end (instead of the beginning), as it's often the case that important details are buried in the appendices or annexes. The very last page of the document (page 151), in relation to public comments on the initial report, asserts:

Through online review, sub group processes, and plenary sessions, the PDP Working Group completed its review and assessment of the public comments received and agreed on changes to be made to its final recommendations and Final Report.

In simple terms, **they claim to have actually reviewed the public comments** that were submitted by the public. That should be non-controversial, except that it's dishonest, a deception, an **utter lie**. Some might say "George, that's a very bold claim to make – I want proof." Unlike others, I can back up what I say, and fully document it. Here's the proof.

My own public comments to the initial report can be read in a [PDF](#) attached to a [prior blog post](#), or alternatively in the ICANN spreadsheet [here](#) (my comments are in row 10 of that spreadsheet). In answer to the final question, part of my answer ([page 115 of my PDF](#) or in [cell GK10 of the spreadsheet](#)) stated clearly that:

Starting on page 142, a number of "Affiliations" of members are incorrect. e.g. Cyntia King is listed as an "Individual", even though her SOI shows she's in the IPC:

<https://community.icann.org/display/gnsosoi/Cyntia+King+SOI>

and she's listed on their website as a member:

<https://www.ipconstituency.org/current-membership>

There are others that are wrong, but I leave that as an exercise for staff.

[That submission can even be found in cell C51 of the “General Content Q2” tab of their [summary spreadsheet](#) (pretending to review the public comments).]

The “page 142” refers to the page numbering of the Initial Public Report, of course. So, I was pointing out very clearly back then that there were errors in the report with regards to the affiliations of members, errors that should be fixed. **Had the working group actually reviewed the public comments as they claimed to do, then those errors should no longer exist.**

However, those errors were not fixed. Page 144 of the Final Report still lists Cynthia King as an “Individual”, rather than a member of the IPC.

As I noted in my comment, I knew that others were wrong, but left it to them to fix them. They didn't!

Flip Petillion is listed as an “Individual” on page 144 of the Final Report, when [his own SOI](#) shows him to be a member of the IPC. He's even listed on the [IPC website membership list](#). Amazingly, Mr. Petillion is a GNSO Councillor, one of those who unanimously approved the report (see [page 5 of the voting](#)). Why would such an error exist, if he actually read the report that he voted on?

Similarly, Kurt Pritz is listed as an “Individual” on page 145 of the Final Report, when his [own SOI](#) shows him to be a member of the Registries Constituency. And again, like Mr. Petillion, Kurt Pritz is another GNSO Council Member who voted to approve the report (his name is on [page 5 of the voting](#), and “RySG” is the Registries Stakeholder Group). Kurt Pritz is also on the [RySG website](#)! Why would such an error exist, if he actually read the report he voted on?

Gerald Levine is listed as an “Individual” on page 144, but he's listed on the [IPC Membership page](#). He was also listed on the IPC Membership page on [October 29, 2020 according to Archive.org](#), so it's not a recent membership in the IPC. [the final

report is dated November 24, 2020, so Mr. Levine would have been a member of the IPC at the time the final report was published]

Elisa Cooper is listed as an “Individual” on page 144, but [her own SOI](#) says she’s with the Registrars Constituency.

Mitch Stoltz is listed as an “Individual” on page 145, but [his own SOI](#) says that he’s with the Non-Commercial Users Constituency (NCUC).

I’m going to stop at 6 errors (there are many more), as these were obvious, and I have better things to do.

One error would be sufficient proof that they didn’t review the public comments. But six errors? That should remove any doubt at all that it was an **utter lie** that they reviewed the public comments, or even reviewed their own report. How else can you explain the existence of a document that is replete with errors, errors that they were **explicitly on notice about**?

Now, I could spend dozens of hours producing dozens of pages of additional comments on the substance of the recommendations of this final report, but what would be the point? **It’s clear that those comments will be ignored**, just as the [comments I submitted previously](#) have been ignored. Instead, I **incorporate those same comments previously submitted by reference**. At least the historical record will show, once again, that I was on the correct side with my policy analysis and recommendations, and that ICANN staff and its captured working groups made the wrong choices.

The public interest deserves better than what ICANN has produced. What do you expect to be the output, when you’ve unfairly banished the individual who has the highest standards of diligence from actually participating in the work? **I told you so.**

In conclusion, this final report is garbage, the product of an incompetent and dysfunctional group that only pretends to represent the public interest. Everyone involved with producing such rubbish should be ashamed at the final product.

They’ve only **gone through the motions** of producing a report, but have **not actually**

done any evidenced-based policy work, as I've noted through my many posts on this subject on my blog, e.g. see all posts tagged "ICANN" [here](#). In a perfect world, those responsible for this mess would be held accountable. Let's hope that that happens sooner rather than later.

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