

## IANA TRANSITION: BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

In March 2014, the US government through National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) [announced its intention](#) to transition key Internet domain name functions (IANA functions) to the global multi-stakeholder community. Till date, the NTIA oversees coordination and implementation of IANA functions, through contractual arrangements. This unilateral oversight of critical Internet resources by the US government has been consistently [criticized](#).

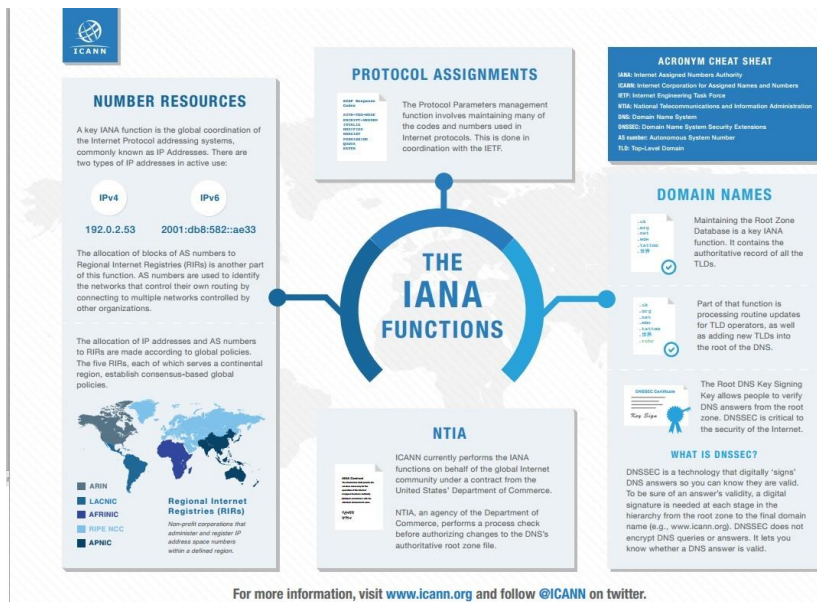
The NTIA will not accept a government-led or inter-governmental organization to steward IANA functions. It requires the IANA transition proposal to have broad community support, and (1) support and enhance the multi-stakeholder model; (2) maintain the security, stability, and resiliency of the Internet DNS; (3) meet the needs and expectation of the global customers & partners of IANA services; (4) maintain the openness of the Internet.

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was charged with developing a proposal for IANA transition. It initiated a [call for public input](#) in April 2014. Lamentably, the [scoping document](#) for the transition did not include questions of ICANN's own accountability and interests in IANA stewardship, [including](#) whether it should continue to coordinate the IANA functions. Public Input received in May 2014 revolved around the composition of a Coordination Group, which would oversee IANA transition.

Now, ICANN will hold an open session on June 26, 2014 at ICANN-50 to gather community feedback on issues relating to IANA transition, including composition of the Coordination Group. This presents an opportunity for the Government, civil society and technical community in India to provide valuable input. ICANN is also seeking extended engagement and outreach by the global Internet governance community at various events in 2014-2015, where India's concerns and positions can be voiced.

## WHAT ARE THE IANA FUNCTIONS?

The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) is a department of ICANN, responsible for coordinating unique identifier resources that form the Internet's backbone. Its functions include:



- **Domain names:** IANA Department [processes](#) changes to the Root Zone File, such as addition or modification of Top Level Domains (TLDs). It makes publicly available Root Zone WHOIS database, with contact information for all TLD registry operators. It also manages the .int and .arpa domains.
- **Number Resources:** IANA [coordinates](#) the allocation of IPv4 and IPv6 addresses and Autonomous System Numbers (ASN) used to route Internet traffic. It allocates these to Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), which further distribute to ISPs within their geographic regions.
- **Protocol Assignments:** Along with Internet Engineering Task Force, IANA [is responsible](#) for maintaining codes and numbers contained in a variety of Internet protocols.

(Source: <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/functions-basics-08apr14-en.pdf>)

Currently, NTIA oversees the IANA functions [by way of contract](#) with ICANN. The IANA Functions Contract expires on September 30, 2015. NTIA also has a [Cooperative Agreement](#) with Verisign, Inc., by which Verisign performs related root zone management functions. These include managing the root zone "zone signing key" (ZSK), implementing changes to the authoritative DNS root zone file, and distributing it to [root servers](#) across the world. The Verisign Cooperative Agreement must be separately terminated, and no transition for this is ongoing. Though NTIA does not generally interfere with ICANN or Verisign in their roles as IANA functions operators, it is undeniable that the US government has unilateral oversight and authority in a global Internet system. Its March 2014 announcement promises to alter this.

## IMPACT OF IANA STEWARDSHIP TRANSITION

By its March 14 announcement, the NTIA intends to withdraw stewardship over IANA functions, and pave the way for oversight by the global, multi-stakeholder Internet governance community. Though at odds with its own role, the NTIA will not favour a government-led or intergovernmental organization to replace its stewardship role. Instead, it favours a global multi-stakeholder model of Internet governance, and will relinquish its oversight only if a multi-stakeholder steward is established. Many states, including India, do not find a multi-

stakeholder model ideal, and have [expressed](#) their reservations in multiple fora. Importantly, the NTIA announcement *does not* mean that IANA functions automatically devolve upon ICANN. A global public consultation convened by ICANN will decide the future of IANA.

The NTIA announcement DOES NOT:

- **Frame a model** for governance of IANA functions once it withdraws its oversight role. It leaves this administrative structure to be decided by the global multi-stakeholder Internet governance community, with ICANN facilitating the process.
- **Limit discussions** for and participation in IANA transition to the ICANN community. ICANN will work collaboratively with directly affected parties, including IETF, IAB, ISOC, RIRs, TLD operators, Verisign and other interested global stakeholders. ICANN also encourages stakeholders to engage in other Internet governance fora.
- **Prevent modifications** in ICANN's role as IANA functions operator. IANA oversight does not automatically devolve upon ICANN. Though ICANN's scoping document sought to limit this discussion, the question remains open. Many stakeholders call for separation of ICANN's roles in policy-making and execution of IANA functions.

IANA FUNCTIONS	IANA POLICY / SPECIFICATION		IANA IMPLEMENTATION	
	DEVELOPMENT	OPERATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	
			CURRENT	FUTURE
PROTOCOL PARAMETERS	GLOBAL	IETF	IAB/USG	Mechanism
GENERAL PURPOSE IP ADDRESSES	GLOBAL	ASO	RIRs/USG	Mechanism
GENERIC DOMAIN NAMES	GLOBAL	gNSO	gTLD Registries /gNSO/USG	Mechanism
COUNTRY CODE DOMAIN NAMES	GLOBAL	ccTLDs ccNSO	ccTLDs/ccNSO/GAC/USG	Mechanism

Transition from USG/NTIA Stewardship Requires Global Public Consultation →

(Source: <http://domainincite.com/images/ianatransition.png>)

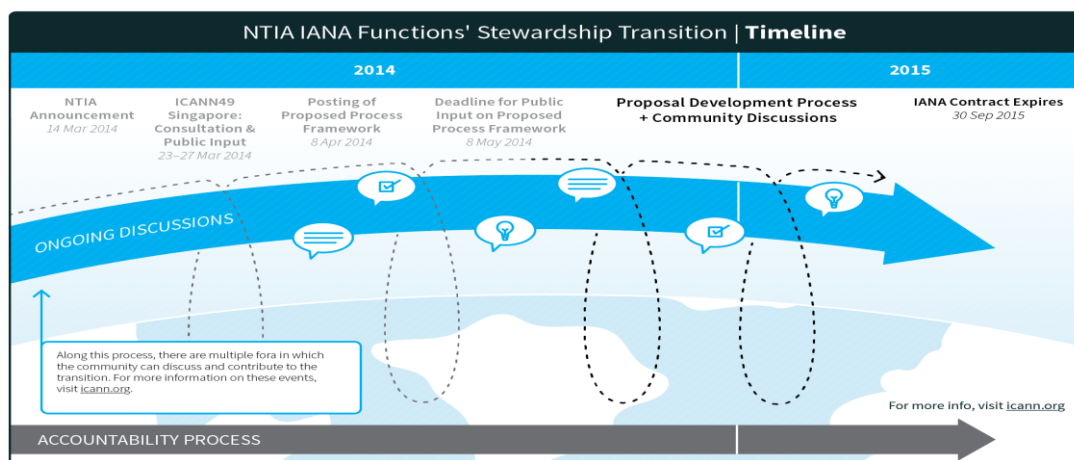
## VIEWS OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

The Indian Government [provided its comments](#) to ICANN's call for public input in relation to IANA transition. In an initial response dated April 16, 2014, the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY), India considered the NTIA announcement "a first step in the right direction aimed at attempting to reform" an aspect of Internet governance. Committed to maintaining an open, safe and secure Internet, India advocated a "representative, democratic and transparent" proposal for IANA transition.

In its response, India expressed its discomfort with the NTIA's insistence on multi-stakeholder processes. Stating that Internet governance institutions need to be "internationalised" (a word associated with multilateralism in Internet governance), India reserved its right to participate in multilateral fora involved in Internet governance. Such fora include the ITU and other UN organs, though the WSIS+10 Multi-stakeholder Preparatory Process – a multi-stakeholder group that drafted the Outcome Documents for the WSIS+10 High Level Event – is a divergent development. India's stated preference for multilateralism has long been an unbroken thread, with its support of graded roles and responsibilities for stakeholders (paragraph 34 of the [Tunis Agenda](#)), and proposal for a multilateral Committee on Internet Related Policies. This position was [reiterated](#) at the NETmundial, April 2014.

India's civil society organizations have diverse views on IANA transition and ICANN's role in the same. While [some](#) advocate a multi-stakeholder model, [others](#) have expressed concern over permitting all stakeholders to be on 'equal footing' at the multi-stakeholder table. At ICANN-50, hosted in London from June 22-26, 2014, the Indian government and civil society will have an opportunity to voice concerns and offer suggestions for IANA stewardship transition.

## IANA TRANSITION AHEAD



<http://cis-india.org>

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(Source: <https://www.icann.org/sites/default/files/assets/transition-timeline-2157x1305-1220pst-06jun14-en.png>)