

ICANN Complaints Office Semi-Annual Report

1 January – 30 June 2018

Krista Papac
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About the ICANN Organization's Complaints Office

Purpose, Objectives, and Guidelines

The Complaints Office was established in March 2017 by the ICANN org to help maximize its effectiveness, as well as to provide additional transparency and accountability, all in service of [ICANN's mission](#). As part of the ICANN org, the Complaints Office:

- ⦿ Provides a centralized location to submit complaints about the ICANN org.
- ⦿ Receives complaints, researches them, collects facts, reviews, analyzes, and resolves issues as openly as possible.
- ⦿ Ensures that complainants get responses to their complaints.
- ⦿ Aggregates the data from complaints to identify and solve for operational trends that need improvement.

The Complaints Office handles complaints about the ICANN org that do not fall under existing complaints mechanisms. Examples are complaints about the handling of a request, a process that appears to be broken, insufficient handling of an issue, or an indication of a systemic problem. Wherever possible, the office verifies information to ensure that recommendations and resolutions are based in fact.

The Complaints Office strives to be open, transparent, responsive, and accountable to all parties, and to make recommendations that are constructive and attainable. All complaints and responses are published for transparency and above all, the office acts with integrity and remains neutral in the handling of complaints.

Letter from the Complaints Officer

The Complaints Office, established in March 2017, aims to help the ICANN organization become its very best. This is the Complaints Office's second semi-annual report. The first semi-annual report included information regarding the initial launch of the office and related activities. This report focuses more on improvements that have been made, as well as key statistics and supporting activities, all which have been reviewed by and discussed with ICANN's President and CEO Göran Marby.

Since the Complaints Office started receiving submissions in May 2017, it has received 1,844 submissions, 37 of which were complaints about the ICANN org, and 1,807 related to other processes. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the 37 complaints led to ICANN org improving processes. Several complaints were about issues the org is not permitted to change – such as requests to override Consensus Policy or for ICANN org to renew a registrant's missed domain name renewal. These types of complaints still receive a response, but one that is focused on educating the complainant about the ICANN model and the role of the ICANN org.

The complaints raised regarding ICANN org were great opportunities for the org to research, analyze, and improve upon its work, all in a transparent manner. There was diversity in the complaints received, which led to valuable, collaborative engagement and learning across many functions and teams within the org.

In my role as ICANN's Complaints Officer, I am fortunate to work with such a diverse set of colleagues, inside and outside the organization. Working with various colleagues has given me the opportunity to learn about a myriad of people, processes, and issues I would not otherwise be exposed to. Additionally, I truly enjoy helping people to solve problems when there is a problem to solve and, when there is not, helping to educate stakeholders about ICANN's work. I've also found it interesting to see how having a Complaints Office has changed the "conversation" regarding various issues and has opened up opportunities for improvement.

Looking ahead to the next six months, the Complaints Office will continue its internal and external outreach efforts to raise awareness about the office and its important role in improving processes within the org. While the Complaints Office is still new to the ICANN org, both in function and age, thus far it is working as intended and provides a valuable resource for transparently demonstrating operational accountability for the work that the org delivers.

Sincerely,



Krista Papac
Complaints Officer

Improvements: 1 January - 30 June 2018

Resolving issues, ensuring complainants receive a response, and helping the ICANN org maximize its effectiveness are all parts of the Complaints Office's purpose and objectives. The office measures if and how meaningful improvements are made. There are two types of improvements that result from the Complaints Office's work: improvements resulting from individual complaints, and improvements resulting from the Complaints Office identifying operational trends.

Improvements Resulting from Individual Complaints

Submitted complaints have resulted in raising the ICANN org's awareness regarding new or known issues and enabling improvements to be implemented or scheduled for implementation. Overall, 24 of the 37 complaints received through 30 June 2018 (65%) resulted in improvements being made by the ICANN org. Examples of a few improvements the org made during this reporting period and in response to individual complaints received are:

- ⦿ Complaint C-2017-00016: Improved visibility for contracted parties into what process improvements are being made to ensure timely and accurate invoices, and the identification of additional improvements.
- ⦿ Complaint C-2017-00019: Updated the Terms of Use for the Naming Services Portal.
- ⦿ Complaint C-2018-00013: Corrected an error related to a remote participants statement.

Improvements Resulting from Identified Trends

In addition to receiving, researching, analyzing, and resolving complaints, the Complaints Office also aggregates data from submitted complaints to identify and solve for operational trends. The [Semi-Annual Complaints Office Report from the previous reporting period](#) identified five possible areas for improvement. Once discussed with the ICANN CEO, two areas were selected for improvement:

- ⦿ Recommendation 1 - Navigating the ICANN Org When You Have a Complaint
- ⦿ Recommendation 3 - Submitting a Contractual Compliance Complaint

Recommendation 1: Parties who come to the ICANN org for help or with a complaint often end up at the wrong department, which results in additional, unnecessary touch points and a frustrated stakeholder. With the creation of the Complaints Office, this problem became even more apparent, as each month hundreds of issues were being incorrectly submitted to the Complaints Office. To address this issue, in late May 2018 a catchall "[Click Here to Submit a Complaint](#)" web form was implemented at the top of the [Complaints Office webpage](#). The web form requires basic contact information, identifying what your complaint is about from a drop-down menu, and providing details. When the web form is submitted, the complaint is then auto-routed to the correct complaints process within the ICANN org. This implementation reduced the number of incorrect submissions of 100-300 per month to 2-10 per month.

Recommendation 3: It is difficult for parties to identify which [Contractual Compliance Complaint Form](#) to submit when they have an issue related to an ICANN contracted party. This issue is currently under discussion with the Contractual Compliance department to identify areas of opportunity for improvement.

Key Statistics and Supporting Activities

This section provides statistics for both this semi-annual reporting period and since the inception of the Complaints Office, as well as key supporting activities.

Complaints Office Statistics for the Reporting Period: 1 January - 30 June 2018

Each month, a cumulative update regarding in-scope and out-of-scope submissions is published. The monthly report can be found on the [complaints report webpage](#). This page is a centralized location where submissions and relevant data are aggregated and includes:

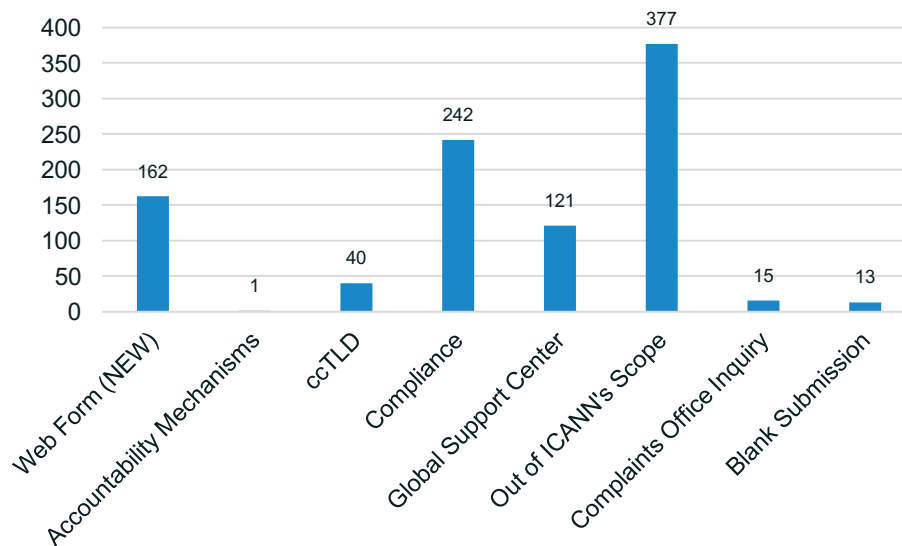
- ⦿ Basic data regarding in-scope complaints, a published version of each complaint, and its corresponding response.
- ⦿ An aggregated summary of submissions that were outside the scope of the office.

The monthly report is typically updated five business days following the end of a month. The publication of this information provides increased operational accountability and transparency.

During this reporting period, fifteen new in-scope complaints were submitted, five were closed within the reporting period, nine were closed after the reporting period, and one remains open.

The Complaints Office continues to receive out-of-scope submissions. However, due to improvements made within the reporting period, the number of out-of-scope submissions have shrunk significantly and ~99% of these submissions are now being auto-routed to a more appropriate department as described in the *Improvements Resulting from Identified Trends* section of this report.

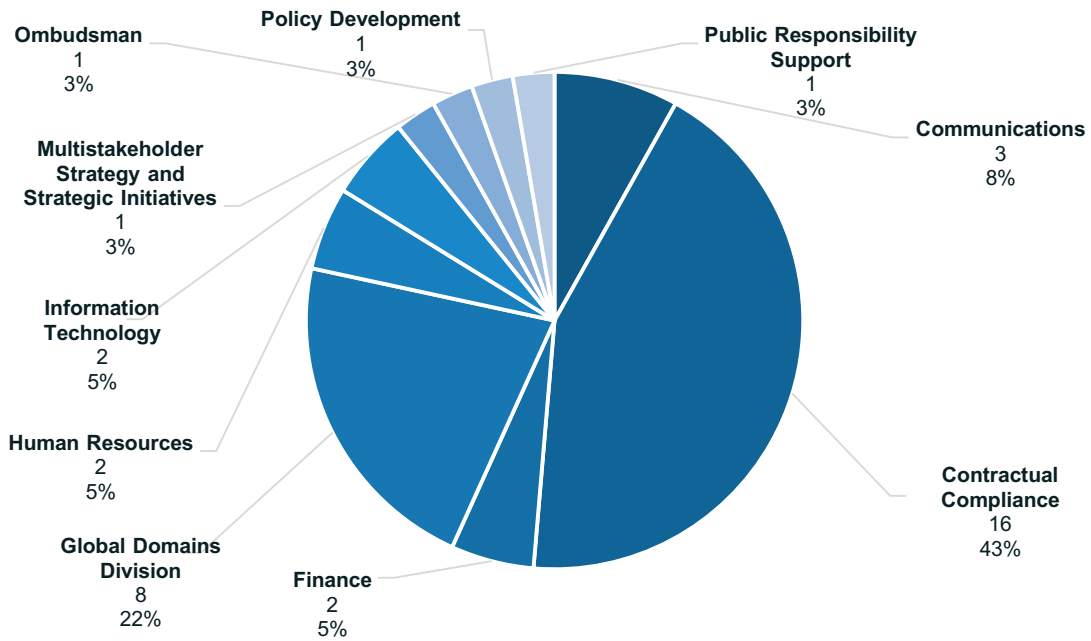
Out-of-Scope Submissions, by type, for the Reporting Period



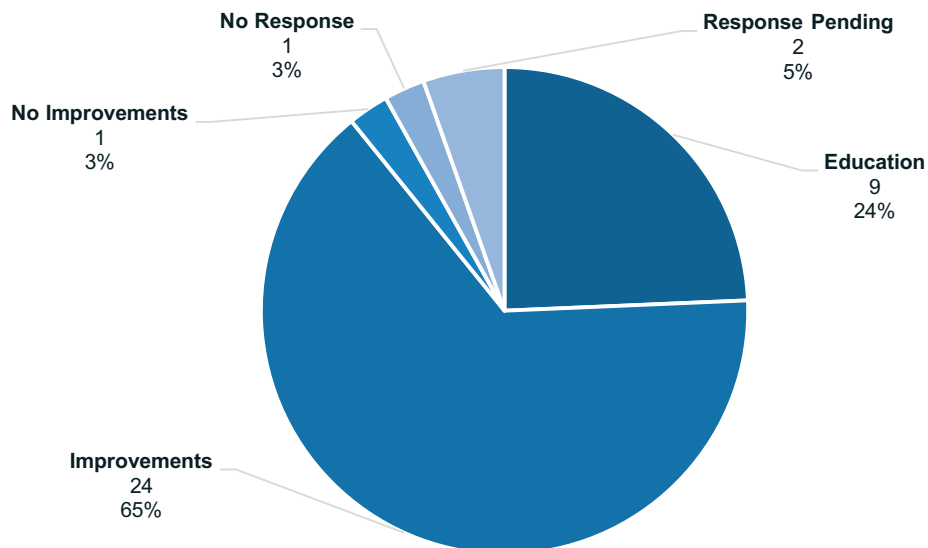
Complaints Office Statistics Since Inception: 15 March 2017 – 30 June 2018

In addition to statistics for the reporting period of 1 January - 30 June 2018, below are statistics for the Complaints Office since its inception in March 2017.

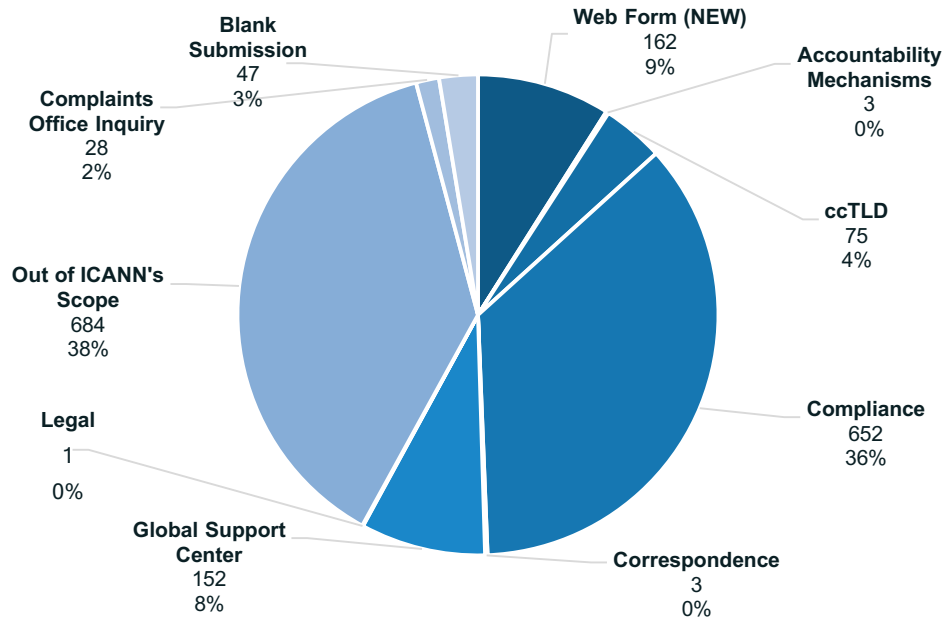
In-Scope Complaints by Function, Since Inception



In-Scope Complaints, by Response Type, Since Inception



Out-of-Scope Submissions, by Type, Since Inception



Supporting Activities for the Reporting Period: 1 January - 30 June 2018

In addition to the day-to-day activities of receiving, researching, and responding to complaints, there are several other key activities that occurred during the reporting period.

Like all functions within ICANN org, the Complaints Office also strives to optimize operational effectiveness and communications. During the reporting period, an automated ticketing system was developed, tested and implemented to track complaints in a centralized location, and to make it easier and less time consuming to generate reports. The implementation of the ticketing system reduced the report generation time from approximately six hours to less than one hour, and centralizing the tracking improved the Complaints Office's visibility into what complaints are open and where they are in the process.

The format of the published reports and the Complaints Office webpages were updated several times to increase navigability and readability. Early in the reporting period, the Complaints Office worked with the intra-ICANN org General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance team to review and update internal and external processes to achieve compliance with the regulation.

It's important that all ICANN stakeholders, including ICANN participants, registrants, end users, etc., and ICANN org members have access to the Complaints Office and understand how it can be helpful to them. Relevant activities that were executed during the reporting period include:

- ⦿ Updating the Complaints Office outreach and communications plan based on observations from the previous reporting period;
- ⦿ Dedicated one-on-one meetings with individual ICANN org departments and teams;
- ⦿ Attendance and availability at all ICANN meetings, as well as the GDD Summit;
- ⦿ A dedicated information webinar for the Governmental Advisory Committee; and
- ⦿ Increased visibility via communications materials such as banners at ICANN meetings, content in monthly regional newsletters, blogs, and outreach to the leadership teams of ICANN's Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees (SO/ACs).