



21 October 2009

Malcolm Johnson
Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB)

Dear Malcolm:

Arrangements for the allocation of IPv6 addresses: A Fact Sheet.

You will recall that at our last regular meeting members of my team briefed you on various issues where there appeared to be some misunderstanding over the relevant roles of our two organizations. Perhaps most important among these was the manner in which IPv6 addresses were and are being allocated. I asked David Conrad, ICANN's Vice President of Research and an authority on the subject, to explain to you and your colleagues how the system actually worked and why it was inaccurate to suggest that IPv6 addresses were being allocated in a way which was disadvantageous to any group, and in particular to developing countries.

David explained the way in which large (indeed huge) blocks of IPv6 addresses had already been handed out by ICANN to all the RIR's, and that there was no question of ISP's from developing countries being in any way disadvantaged by somehow coming late to make their own requests. At the same time he explained that although large, the IPv6 blocks handed out were by comparison the equivalent of less than one IPv4 address within the whole pool of IPv4 addresses. Distribution was based strictly upon need, but the numbers were so huge, the required addresses would certainly be there when the need was demonstrated. There was and will be therefore no disadvantage to putting in a late application to the appropriate Regional Internet Registry.

Aware that the issues were complicated, and in the hope that we could in future avoid any situation where the representatives of developing countries were uncertain of their interests, technical and financial, I undertook to work with the Executive management of all the RIR's to draw up a common fact sheet describing in layman's terms how the address allocation system works. This I now attach.



My attention has now been drawn to the documentation on these issues that has been prepared for your forthcoming ITU Council. I note that some of these misunderstandings continue to figure in these important texts, which might be interpreted to suggest that either ICANN, or the RIR's had suggested there was merit in the establishment of an additional RIR to somehow protect the interests of developing countries. As my enclosure amply demonstrates this was not, and is not the view of any of these organization(s). It would therefore seem both timely and appropriate to ask you to circulate my enclosed paper among your membership. We shall be doing the same among the ICANN community, including of course to the Government Advisory Committee, and to each of the RIR communities.

I hope that in this way we shall be able to put to rest the idea that either ICANN or the RIR's see any merit in the creation of another layer of bureaucracy in this area. We remain of the view that the most effective way of managing the allocation of IPv6 addresses is by the Internet Community itself, through its multi-stakeholder, bottom-up processes.

I am copying this letter with its enclosure to the Chief Executive Officers of all the Regional Internet Registries, the Chairs of all ICANN support mechanism's and to the Chair of ISOC.

Yours sincerely,

Nick

Nick Thorne

International Relations Advisor
to the CEO and President
ICANN

enclosure