

INTERNETNZ BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Status: FINAL

Date: 13 March 2026 / 9:00am

Present:

Stephen Judd (Chairperson), Anjum Rahman (Deputy Chairperson), Richard Hulse, Kate Pearce, Potaua Biasiny-Tule, Anthony Bow, Whetū Fala, Daniel Spector, Dylan Reeve and Jonathan Ayling.

In attendance:

InternetNZ: Vivien Maidaborn (Tumu Whakarae | CE), Catherine Fenwick, Rose Jamieson, Tim Johnson and Michael Elwood-Smith (Pou Ārahi | Board Secretary).

Guests: Ms Egerton, Mr Gray

Members observing: 8 members.

Apologies: No apologies

Meeting opened: 9:50am

Section 1 — Meeting Preliminaries

1.1 Board only (in committee)

1.2 Board and Tumu Whakarae (CE) alone time (in committee)

Section 2 — Meeting preliminaries & Chief Executive's Report

2.1 Open meeting: Karakia, Apologies, Member welcome and Agenda review

Chairperson Judd opened the meeting at 9:50am with karakia.

No apologies were received.

Chairperson Judd welcomed members observing.

2.2 Action Register

The Actions register was reviewed noting progress and completion of actions.

AP13/24 Board to write an annual letter of expectations of DNC. [In progress.] The CE noted that other work with DNC has taken priority and the action will be revisited in future.

AP21/24 Board to review the process of appointing Fellows. [Complete.] Item brought to Board in this meeting agenda.

AP30/25 Governance Committee to review the election process for members prior to the next election. [In progress] Discussed at Governance & CE Review Committee meeting 11 February 2026.

AP33/25 Convene a Board pop up meeting on membership. [In progress]. Scheduled during the first week in April.

AP37/25 Board to complete a skills survey of 5 board members not up for reelection or reappointment. [Complete]

AP38/25 Board to establish an Appointments Panel. [In progress].

AP39/25 Governance & CE Review Committee to discuss a policy framework and process on developing and responding to public policy. [Complete].

2.3 Interests Register

Board Member Biasiny-Tule informed the Board that as Cofounder and owner of Digital Natives Academy, they have received \$300,000 funding from ICANN for a 6 month pilot project to teach 20 young people about DNS, and are working with ICANN and NZQA.

Board Member Fala is appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee for the Whanganui Regional Museum, and is no longer a Council Member of Creative NZ.

Board Member Ayling is no longer Contractor to Free Speech Union.

Deputy Chairperson Rahman has been appointed to an Advisory Group at Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission.

Board Member Reeve noted that his company The Opposition Limited is now trading.

Board Member Spector has resigned his Advisory role at blockidentity.com.

2.4 Chief Executive's Report

Joining the meeting from the ICANN meeting in Mumbai, the CE reported a meeting with the Chair of the ICANN Board who will be travelling to New Zealand in January 2027, and is available to meet with InternetNZ and open to meet with NZ Government officials.

The CE reminded the Board that members were consulted during development of the 2026-31 Strategy, and that although there was limited opportunity for member consultation on the annual goals, the annual goals are derived from the Strategy.

Section 3 — Matters for Decision

3.1	InternetNZ Group Strategy 2026/31 Chairperson Judd invited the Board to comment on the Strategy as presented. The Board requested some changes in layout of the text, and the CE noted that the Strategy document design and layout is still in progress, for example working with Te Puni Māori to create a visual expression of Te Korowai ō Ipurangi Aotearoa. The Board was asked to approve the Strategy text focussing on those things that are most important and impactful in a changing environment; the services delivered with .nz at the heart of the organisation that empower growth and social impact, and that rely upon a capable and long-term sustainable organisation prepared for the future. The Board acknowledged the substantive work, thanking everyone who has contributed to building the Strategy 2026/31. RN01/26 That the InternetNZ Board approve the InternetNZ Group Strategy 2026/2031. (Board Member Pearce / Board Member Fala) CARRIED U
3.2	Annual Goals 2026/27 The CE introduced the Annual Goals, noting that the 5 year strategic goals and strategic pillars are the context for focus in the first year of the new Strategy 2026/31. The CE further noted that service excellence and organisational capability features strongly in the goals, and that social impact includes maintaining an open, interoperable Internet as well as the digital equity and literacy objectives in Aotearoa. The Board reviewed the goal measures, and noted that some measures do not provide sufficient accountability markers for the Board to assess progress of the Annual Goals.

	Satisfied with the Annual Goals and Priorities, the Board requested further clarity on the measures; seeking more clearly defined qualitative measures, specific quantitative measures as appropriate, while retaining flexibility in reporting as needed. AP01/26 Audit & Risk Committee to review a further draft of the Annual Goal measures at their meeting 1 April 2026. RN02/26 That the InternetNZ Board approve the Annual Goals 2026/27, subject to refinement of the measures in consultation with the Audit & Risk Committee at their meeting on 1 April. (Chairperson Judd / Board Member Ayling) CARRIED U Members observing were asked to leave the meeting during the confidential section.
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Section 4 — Confidential Matters

	The Board discussed confidential matters.
4.1	Budget 2026/27 [Confidential] <i>To allow the Board to consider draft documents before a final version is ready to be released.</i> <i>To protect InternetNZ's commercial interests</i>
4.2	DNC Company Plan 2026/27 <i>Reason document is marked confidential: To allow the Board to consider draft documents before a final version is ready to be released.</i> <i>To protect InternetNZ's commercial interests</i> <i>When the document is no longer confidential: As part of AGM papers 2026/27.</i> <i>Confidentiality status is applicable to: Staff, Public</i>
4.3	InternetNZ / DNC Board meeting report back [Confidential] <i>Reason document is marked confidential: To allow InternetNZ Board to consider a confidential briefing and determine any next steps.</i>

	<i>When the document is no longer confidential: The document shall remain confidential indefinitely until otherwise determined.</i> <i>Confidentiality status is applicable to: Staff, Public</i>
4.4	Next steps aligning with Te Korowai 2026/27 [Confidential] <i>Reason document is marked confidential: To allow InternetNZ Board to consider a confidential briefing and determine any next steps.</i> <i>When the document is no longer confidential: The document shall remain confidential indefinitely until otherwise determined.</i> <i>Confidentiality status is applicable to: Staff, Public</i>
4.5	Enterprise Risk Management Update [Confidential] <i>Reason document is marked confidential: To protect InternetNZ's commercial interests.</i> <i>When the document is no longer confidential: The document shall remain confidential indefinitely until otherwise determined.</i> <i>Confidentiality status is applicable to: Public</i>
4.6	Health, safety, and wellbeing report [Confidential] <i>Reason document is marked confidential: To protect InternetNZ's commercial interests.</i> <i>When the document is no longer confidential: The document shall remain confidential indefinitely until otherwise determined.</i> <i>Confidentiality status is applicable to: Public</i>

Section 5 — Matters for Decision continued

5.1 Domain Name Abuse 5-year strategy

Members rejoined observing. Ms Egerton joined the meeting.

Board Member Pearce introduced the 5-year Domain Name Abuse strategy, prepared in response to increasing malicious use in the .nz domain name space. Noting that InternetNZ's vision for a fair, inclusive and trusted .nz, while ensuring the organisation is not seen as a "weak target" by cyber criminals, the scope of the strategy is narrowly defined to what ICANN considers abuse of the DNS system.

This matter has been discussed extensively by the .nz Advisory Committee, which recommends that the Board adopt the strategy in principle, and notes that any changes to .nz Rules will follow the .nz Policy Development Process and is subject to the outcome of public consultation.

The Board notes the operational key focus for the year is registration checking, which has been shown internationally to be highly effective in reducing harm, and anticipates that the first formal .nz Rules changes will be submitted to the InternetNZ Board at the December 2026 Board meeting.

RN09/26 That the InternetNZ Board **note** that the Domain Name Abuse strategy is recommended for adoption by the .nz Advisory Committee as our 5-year operational strategy to disrupt DNS Abuse.

RN10/26 That the InternetNZ Board **approve** in-principle the Domain Name Abuse strategy.

(Board Member Pearce / Board Member Ayling)

CARRIED U

Ms Egerton left the meeting.

5.2 InternetNZ Fellowship Process

The Chairperson introduced a paper confirming a set of criteria and an updated process for the nomination and approval of InternetNZ Fellows, broadening the recognition to include those who have contributed to the Internet in New Zealand, not just to InternetNZ as an organisation, in line with the constitution.

The Board noted that evaluation of nominations has moved from a committee of Fellows to the Board Governance Committee.

The Board noted that an additional step in the process is required for the Board to appoint Fellows recommended by the Governance Committee, and that this could be achieved with an evote.

RN11/26 That the InternetNZ Board **approve** the criteria for nomination and the proposed process for appointing Fellows of InternetNZ.

(Deputy Chairperson Rahman / Board Member Spector)

CARRIED U

5.3 2026 Board Elections and AGM

Chairperson invited Ms Jamieson to introduce a paper seeking the Board's approval for the plan for the upcoming 2026 InternetNZ Board elections and Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Noting that the process is similar to prior years, the Board discussed the potential for improvements to the candidate information pack (such as including scheduled Board meeting dates and removing the social media check), the process and timing of publishing nominations and Meet the Candidate sessions.

The Board also noted that work is underway on the members portal (including a password reset function) in anticipation of a large number of renewals and potential for new members.

RN12/26 That the Board **approve** nominations for elected Board members to open on Thursday, 11 June 2026 and close on Thursday, 16 July 2026.

RN13/26 That the Board **approve** an online election for elected Board members to open on Friday, 24 July, 2026 and close on Monday, 10 August 2026.

RN14/26 That the Board **approve** the 2026 AGM to be held as an **online format** on **Thursday, 13 August 2026**.

RN15/26 That the Board **approve** the election process and timeline outlined below.

RN16/26 That the Board **approve** the appointment of Electionz as the Returning Officer for the 2026 InternetNZ Board Elections.

RN17/26 That the Board **approve** the appointment of Grant Thornton as Scrutineer for the 2026 InternetNZ Board Elections.

(Board Member Spector / Deputy Chairperson Rahman)

CARRIED U

Section 6 — Matters for Discussion

6.1	Product Standing Report The Board noted that for the reporting period, the total domains under management (DUM) have seen growth more than similar periods in recent years. Further analysis on this growth will be undertaken, however it is estimated that approximately 25% of the domains registered in this period may not renew in 12 months time. This is due to the nature of the domains registered not being considered “quality registrations”. The Board expressed interest in including JumpStarter data in future reports. RN18/26 That the Board receive the report. (Board Member Reeve / Board Member Ayling) CARRIED U
6.2	Chairperson’s Report The Chairperson reported on his recent attendance at ICANN85, Mumbai, noting: • Recognition of the significant work done in the TCCM (Technical Community Coalition for Multistakeholderism), where InternetNZ has substantially contributed to the preservation of the multistakeholder model, democracy and freedom of expression. • The impression that InternetNZ is doing a lot with a little despite the complexity and slow motion nature of ICANN processes, and that progress is often dependent on personal relationships. • InternetNZ is perceived as handling the Policy on DNS Abuse, resilience, and the trajectory of DUMs (Domain Under Management) as well as other registries, who are facing similar challenges. Further, the Chairperson reported on the valuable experience joining with Te Komiti Whakauru Māori to be welcomed onto Pūtiki Marae and meeting the Whanganui business chamber. On behalf of Te Komiti Whakauru Māori, Chair Fala and Board Member Biasiny-Tule thanked Chairperson Judd and Board Member Spector for their visit to the Marae and Whanganui.

6.3	Report Back from Committees: 6.4.1 Audit & Risk (Chair, Deputy Chairperson Rahman) The Committee has not met since the last Board meeting. 6.4.2 Governance Committee (Chair, Chairperson Judd) Noting that a Committee discussion clarified that board members can disagree with public policy positions of the organisation, the Board discussed how this applies during elections and confirmed that; Board members in their personal capacity may enter discussions about public policy positions (and should declare it is their personal view), but are reminded of Board Member collective responsibility for decisions of the Board. 6.4.3 Komiti Whakauru Māori (Chair, Board Member Fala) Board Member Fala reported on the successful visit of Te Komiti Whakauru Māori to Pūtiki Marae and attendance at Pākaitore events in Whanganui. The two external independent advisors have now been appointed to Te Komiti and this was an opportunity to meet. Board Member Spector noted the value of the meeting and encouraged the Board to seek similar opportunities. 6.4.4 .nz Policy Committee (Chair, Board Member Pearce) Board Member Pearce reported that the substantive work of the Committee was discussed under item 5.1 Domain Name Abuse 5-year strategy. RN19/26 That the InternetNZ Board receive the reports back from the Committees. (Board Member Biasiny-Tule / Board Member Spector) CARRIED U
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Section 7 — Consent Agenda

7.1	Minutes of the previous meeting RN20/26 That the InternetNZ Board ratify EVOTE 18122025 - Approve Board meeting minutes 5 December 2025. (Deputy Chairperson Rahman / Board Member Spector) CARRIED U
7.2	Quarterly and Operational Reports
7.2.1	Quarterly Report Q3 2025/26

7.2.2	Group Financial Report The Board discussed the overspend on legal fees and noted this was to mitigate costs that may have otherwise arisen.
7.2.3	DNC Quarterly Report: Q3 2025/26 The CE noted the additional challenge for DNC in high legal fees, and an overall efficient operational cost savings to stay within budget. The Board noted the upward trend of the Brand Impersonation type of domain name abuse, and that complaints are being received mainly from Government brands and entities, highlighting the need for the Domain Name Abuse strategy approved in-principle by the board in item 5.1. The Board noted that in Q3 68% of domain name holders in the proactive sample did not validate their registration information (an increase from 64% from the previous quarter) and 53% did not verify their identity (an increase from 33%), and the domain names were suspended.
7.2.4	Membership update The Board noted that although there have been 8 new members since November 2025, 20 new members have signed up in the last few days. RN21/26 That the InternetNZ Board receive the Quarterly Reports. (Board Member Bow / Board Member Fala) CARRIED U

Section 8 — Other Matters

8.1	CONTINGENCY (for any overflow)
8.2	Incoming correspondence Board Member Spector asked a question of the Board on behalf of a member: “What is the strategy for developing a pipeline of Internet Governance people to replace Board Members whose term ends this year and keep the organisation healthy over the next decade?” AP02/26 Chairperson will compose a reply to the question.

8.3	Matters for communication — key messages
8.4	General business
8.5	Meeting review
8.6	Meeting close (karakia or waiata) The Chairperson closed the meeting with karakia at 3:37pm.