Activity Report: Q4 2019-2020

1.   Introduction

Welcome to this Activity Report for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2020. This report gives readers a sense of what InternetNZ has been working on, and priorities for the first quarter of the business year.

2.   Across the Organisation

The defining feature of the start of 2020, and our final business quarter of the current financial year, has been the rise of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

This is the backdrop for our work this quarter.

We have transitioned the whole Group to working remotely, and have worked that way since 23 March, following a whole-group three day trial earlier that month. Our systems and processes were largely suited to this but quick adjustments had to be made in some areas. My thanks to everyone who has made this work.

The situation also heavily influenced our planning work for the coming financial year, where we have to respond to the pandemic and also advance our broader strategic agenda. Given the centrality of the Internet to the national response to COVID-19, bringing the two together has been achievable.

This transition has had an impact on our planned work for the quarter, and so the 'traffic lights' below are not as positive as usual. That's a function of priorities, and I trust the reader can understand our necessary focus on the pandemic response.

My sincere thanks to all our team who have done incredible work in unparalleled circumstances, to deliver the work set out in this report and to take us into a new world.

My thanks also to the Council, who have been very supportive and clear as we work to adjust to this situation.

Jordan Carter, Group CEO
20 April 2020

3. Strategic Goals 2019/20 - Q4 Progress

This section of the report gives readers an update on the projects related to our five Goals for the year. You can find the plan here.

Goal 1: To fund increased public good investment, drive higher sustainable growth in registrations of .nz domain names. Lead: David Morrison, Commercial Director	Overall Status: Amber, due to flat/negative growth in recent quarters.	Amber
Q4 Progress		
.nz Marketing The two marketing approaches have now come to a close. Both of the approaches tested looked at how to influence .nz preference at, or close to, the point of sale. The results of co-funded campaigns with 6 registrars trialling a range of approaches had no material lift in create activity (some final results are pending). The same held true where .nz was marketed via a short direct campaign to the public. While a fuller review of the marketing is pending, initial insights lead us to consider that the retail/purchase end of the .nz journey is not where we should focus. Work in the 2020/2021 year will develop our approach to telling the .nz story and explore the range of content options and channels that will lead to lifting preference for .nz. Have set status to Amber as results did not deliver to expectations despite the project itself being concluded successfully.		Amber
Registry Replacement Project - During January and February the project evaluation panel completed the evaluation of the REOI responses. After a thorough analysis of all responses, InternetNZ decided to invite three companies to progress to closed tender for the new .nz registry system. The next step for the registry replacement project will be the issuing of a request for proposal (RFP) along with associated technical documents. These will be consistent with the EOI but provide a clearer and more detailed specification of the services we wish to procure. Initial timeframes had the RFP being issued in late Q1 2020 but due to the current situation this timeframe is currently being revised and a short delay to the release is expected. While we are still finalising the detailed requirements for the operating model, we currently envision the registry service running on infrastructure in New Zealand.		Green

.nz website - .nz web content will be included in the new InternetNZ website project.	STOPPED
Domain Sophistication Index - High efficiency from the Research Team allowed significant progress. The DSI can be generated for samples of the register, and the results analyzed and compared.	GREEN

Goal 2: Modernise and improve the policy and security environment for .nz, consistent with our aim of being a globally excellent ccTLD. Lead: Jordan Carter, Group Chief Executive	Overall Status:	Amber
Q4 Progress		
.nz Policy Review - the external Advisory Panel presented its Issues Report to us in early February. The document was made publicly available and stakeholders were informed they would have the opportunity to comment on the issues and how to solve them in a public consultation that will set out options. That consultation was initially planned for April, but the timetable has been slowed down due to COVID-19. We now expect consultation to take place in July, which will push the review work out by three months.		Amber
.nz Security Assessment - This project was revised in Q3, with completion now planned for Q4. Only one further stakeholder interview was completed, and the project is behind. How to progress is under consideration as part of the 2020/21 plan.		Red
Risk Radar - The areas of focus on the Risk Radar are spread over People, Strategy, Financial, Services, Legal and External & Reputation. Over Q4 we have focused on a number of major areas including - Strategy - Aligning and updating Framework/Goals/Business planning/Project Framework - People - Health, Safety and Wellness based on Pandemic plans - Financial - Investment Strategy, Pricing review and 2020/21 Budget		Amber
Domain Abuse Detection - There was no progress on this during the quarter, as it needs a use case from DNC or the Commercial Team.		Green
Security Audit - No work started on this as the focus has been on the Tech Services restructure and role filling. Will be considered for 2020/21.		Not begun

Security Governance - new Group established as planned last quarter. Less progress than planned on its work due to the pandemic.	Amber

	Overall Status:	
Goal 3: InternetNZ will have two new non-.nz services delivering annual recurring revenue and each on a path to profitability. Lead: David Morrison, Commercial Director		Green

Q4 Progress

Innovation Pipeline - with Covid19 we have slowed our list of ideas to explore and are focusing on only one new area at present in relation to Digital Identity. We have been developing a prototype identity wallet that we can use in co-design experiments (later in 2020) with other organisations to explore a range of use cases.	Green
Broadband Map Our new version of the website went live this quarter and had a seamless transition. The focus has been on developing a platform from which we can more easily control the costs of operation and enable ongoing continuous improvement. We are delighted with the outcome and looking forward to evolving services from this.	Green
New Product One Defenz-DNS Firewall is operational. Whilst a strong pipeline of interest has been established during the quarter, predominantly with ISPs, much of this interest has halted while organisations grapple with COVID-19 responses. The team is pivoting focus to market sectors that have critical networks that would benefit from additional security.	Amber
New Product Two Work on Registry Lock continued this quarter with focus on navigating the .nz policy landscape. The project has moved to a detailed design stage which will inform any required policy consultation to allow Registry Lock to become a .nz service	Green
ANZSIC Classification of the Register - This has been set to be a secondary priority for Q1. It can be restarted once a infrastructure dependency is completed.	HOLD

	Overall Status:	
Goal 4: Support NZ's online community safety, inclusion and wellbeing while ensuring the essential openness of the Internet's governance, tech and architecture is taken into account. Lead: Andrew Cushen, Engagement Director		Green

Q4 Progress

Christchurch Call & Related Matters - This stage of work on the Christchurch Call relates to responding to changes in the domestic policy environment. Much of this work is still emerging from the Government. InternetNZ notes with sadness the Anniversary of the Christchurch attacks. Further progress on these matters is hampered by the COVID-19 situation, as this has disrupted the Government policy making process.	Green
Define/explain Internet openness - Discussion document completed (Link: PDF).	Green
NetHui - 2019 completed. Further reporting on NetHui 2019 is available here: (Link: PDF) 2020 event commenced planning before the emergence of the COVID-19 situation. NetHui 2020 will take place in a new online format, in Q3 of this year.	Green
Public Opinion Research - Public opinion research was commissioned with Colmar Brunton. This includes information and perspectives on a range of long running topics tracked by InternetNZ, alongside some specific questions and measures relating to Christchurch Call issues. The research is available here: (Link: Website)	Green

Goal 5: Collaborate with others to identify, agree and effect significant progress on four interventions to bridge different digital divides. Lead: Kim Connolly-Stone, Policy Director	Overall Status:	Green
Q4 Progress		
Government Engagement - we: ● Met with Minister Faafoi to discuss our proposals for government investment in digital inclusion. The Minister indicated he wanted to progress four out of five of our proposals: affordable connectivity through public housing, support for digital inclusion intermediaries, a network model that supports communities to grow digital inclusion, and grant funding for devices. ● Provided advice on an early draft of the Government's digital inclusion Action Plan. This plan is now being adjusted to take account of priorities from the COVID-19 situation. ● Joined the Department of Internal Affairs steering group for the next Digital Connect Forum.		Green

Outcomes and Evaluation Framework - we provided feedback to the Department of Internal Affairs in an earlier quarter. This action is now complete.	Green
Collaboration with Community Organisations - we: ● Were unable to launch the Online Home for Digital Inclusion, due to time frame changes with the InternetNZ website project (which is a connected project). Work continued with 20/20 Trust on the design, and with digital inclusion providers to get up to date information for the Online Home website. ● Engaged with BNZ on a proposal for an annual digital inclusion survey, which would provide data on how digitally included New Zealanders are. ● Presented to the Westpac Innovation Fund on opportunities for digital inclusion investment. ● Supported the Citizens Advice Bureau to release its digital inclusion report.	Green
Community Access Collaboration - we: ● Ran a community funding round dedicated to digital inclusion ● Continued to work with our Expert Evaluation group to develop an approach to evaluating digital inclusion initiatives that can be used by community organisations. The plan is to test this with organisations we are funding.	Green

5.   Ongoing Business - Q4 Achievements

This section of the report covers ongoing business projects that form part of our work, as outlined in the annual Activity Plan.

Organisational Services Catherine Fenwick - Director	Overall Status:	Green
Q4 Achievements		
Health, Safety and Wellness - In January we made the decision to form a Pandemic response group - this started as a subgroup of the HSW committee. As the scale of the issue grew we then extended this to be a larger group from across the organisation. The group did some excellent work to make sure we were ready to make decisions as the environment changed, keep the staff and management well advised and that we had strong communications plans internal and external.		
Business planning and Budgeting 2020/21 This has been a major piece of work for the Finance team over Q4. They worked with all areas to ensure we capture all committed costs for 2020/21 and also build a budget that will support the work plan and projects as outlined in the Our Plan 2020/21. The Budget was approved in March and the team continues to refine and update the forecast over Q1 and will look to represent and review at the August Council meeting.		Green
Security - Provided review and advice to new product development. Stood up Security Steering Group. Drafted the new IT Security Risk Register and register of information assets. Engaged with vendors of Governance, Risk, and Compliance software for potential tools for IT security and enterprise risk management. Scoped two projects for new security detection capability. Supported COVID-19 working group and SLT subgroup.		Green
We have also been busy supporting the organisation with areas such as ● Auditor tender process - shortlist prepared and panel met with 3 organisations. Final recommendation in progress ● Preparation for Financial year end. ● Introduction of new online tool for staff engagement. ● Move credit card approval process to online app. ● Development of a number of options for the office fitout ● Recruitment and induction of new staff		Green

IT Operations Dane Foster - Director	Overall Status:	Green

SRS backup Project - Hardware and software all acquired. Currently on hold as this project requires travel and physical setup next.	Amber
Confluence Cloud Move - Has been completed from previous in-house solution.	Green
Centralised Logging (.nz) - Project scoped, awaiting resource within the .nz Operations Team. On hold during COVID-19 situation	Not begun
Staffing - .nz Sysadmin started 30th march, IT Coordinator starting April 22nd. DNS Specialist - conversations on-going, but slowed down.	Green
Registry Augmentation Platform - working with the Research Team and on-track.	Green

Technology Strategy Dave Baker - Director	Overall Status:	Green
Q4 Achievements		
Registry Replacement project - see update under goal 1		

Engagement Andrew Cushen - Director	Overall Status:	Green
Q4 Achievements		
Brand architecture deployment - Completed.		Green
Ongoing development of new funding approach - including: - new grants approach now operational, with the Funding Panel recruited, inducted and operational for the final rounds of the 2019/20 year. - Conference Attendance Awardees yet to travel communicated to and variations offered if applicable. - Sponsorship budget fully allocated and contracted, with a focus to leverage more members. - Follow-Up fund fully allocated in response to support essential service agencies with additional funding		Green
Māori engagement - Significant progress made on the internal capability plan, with the first phase of pronunciation training undertaken with the majority of staff.		Amber

Ongoing delays in Māori engagement research. Being refactored into a different delivery model, with the Komiti Whakauru Māori of Council.	
New web platform - now in the build phase.	Green
Partnerships - full slate of Partnerships aligned to the goals to September 2020 created. Operationalisation of these relationships now underway in the Community team.	Green
Content strategy - new content pipeline developed to increase thought leadership opportunities and tell our brand stories	Green
NZNOG - supported NZNOG in the delivery of their annual event for the New Zealand networking community.	Green

Policy Kim Connolly-Stone - Director	Overall Status:	Green
Q4 Achievements		
Work programme for digital inclusion - see update provided under goal 5.		Green
Domestic policy - we engaged in the government policy process designed to address violent extremism online. This included: ● Commenting on the exposure draft of the Bill that will make changes to the Films Videos and Publications Classification Act 1993. ● Commissioning an international comparison of the regulation of social media. This will be one of our contributions to the upcoming review of media regulation. ● Updated our discussion document on a legal "duty of care" for platforms (based on comments from stakeholders in the Google doc we shared). Public release of this has been put on hold as part of the COVID-19 re-prioritisation, but it will be shared with officials in the meantime.		Green
.nz Review - see update provided under Goal 2.		Green

Technical Research Sebastian Castro - Chief Scientist	Overall Status:	Green

Q4 Achievements		
Data Scientist recruitment - We started the process in collaboration with Org Services. Of our short list, the first two candidates declined our offer and the third was considering it when the COVID-19 reaction happened. Currently on hold as organization wide recommendation, will resume when things go back to normal		Green
Registry Augmentation Platform - We saw great progress in testing the framework thanks to the invaluable help of the IT Operations team. We have successfully completed testing with 10% of the register.		GREEN
Hadoop Hardware Replacement - The migration is completed. All our valuable datasets are now in AWS, and all data analysis and most of the data collection workflows are now fully automated. The Hadoop hardware phasing out process was interrupted by COVID-19.		GREEN

Commercial David Morrison - Director	Overall Status:	Amber

Q4 Achievements		
Broadband Map 2.0 is live The new version of the Broadband Map is live and it is exciting to have full control over the functionality for the site and can now embark on a path of continuous improvement.		Green
.nz activity Whilst the results of the .nz marketing activity did not meet expectations we were able to confirm the channel's commitment to supporting .nz with 6 registrars committing effort and money to .nz campaigns.		Amber
Team Our team focus this quarter has been to develop our processes to increase visibility of our work and improve the flow of work. As a team we have now adopted a Kanban approach to our practice and look forward to maturing this over the coming year.		Green

Staffing Catherine Fenwick - Organisational Services Director	Overall Status:	Green

Q4 Update

New Starters included
- Jodi Anderson came on board in February as a Principal Advisor in the Policy Team. Jodi filled a vacancy created by Ben Creet earlier in the year.
- Sam Marsh joined as a Community Advisor in Community team with Vanisa and Ciara, good to have a full strength team.
- We also had two new starters in the IT Operations team. these were position vacant since the new structure was put in place in October:
    - Pooja Narang joined us as a Systems Administrator
    - Sailendhran Paramanandhan as the Product Operations Lead.

The following staff left
- Kesara Rathnayake left the Commercial team in January.
- Maryann Robertson left the Communications team in March (replacement Jessie Sefulu-Tosswill started mid April)

Other Changes
- Megan Baker left on parental leave in January.
- Sarah George is acting in the role of Communications Manager in Megan's absence.
- Dave McCreery started in January to fill the vacancy left by parental leave in the Engagement team, as a fixed term Content Specialist.

The following roles are roles that are in the recruitment phase at present
- IT Systems Coordinator.
- DNS Specialist.
- Developer to replace Heiko and Kesara who has recently left.
- Data Scientist to replace Huayi Jing.

This is an InternetNZ report. Matters related to DNCL are covered in the report from the company to InternetNZ as shareholder, or in the joint .nz report.

Jordan Carter
Group Chief Executive

20 April 2020