

Public Policy pillar progress against commitments report for 2006

Summary:

The Public Policy pillar commitments vis-à-vis the substantive program work areas for 2006 will, with the exception of one program area, be met. In particular, ISOC built on its WSIS Internet governance success by further establishing its central and leadership role in the broadening Internet governance discussions. The roll-out of the Regional Policy Advisory Groups is the exception – the commitment will only be partially met.

2006, through the broadening focus of Internet governance and ISOC's other policy work focus areas, presages the deepening and widening of the policy programs envisioned for the period 2007-2009.

Sub area: Public Policy Education and Advocacy

The Policy pillar will meet commitments in Public Policy Education and Advocacy for 2006. The Public Policy team has realized and built upon ISOC's growing policy role through most notably the extensive engagements vis-à-vis Internet governance, where our activities clearly were aligned with and supportive of our vision, mission and core values. The Policy Pillar also supported the Education pillar in a range of activities.

The Internet governance activities were supplemented by our broad and varied advocacy from presentations at the at the OECD on the future of the Internet and at the ITU on NGNs and multilingualism, to working with a range of organizations on WIPO Web-casting issues, to addressing Internet governance, the future of the DNS and other policy matters.

Further, and not foreseen specifically in the 2006 commitments, is the new focus on Network Neutrality, its international variants and the future of the Internet. Work is underway, as asked by the board, to produce a white paper, briefings and an outreach plan on disseminating ISOC driven and produced educational materials. This work item will be merged with a major new program focusing on Network Neutrality, NGNs and the future of the Internet for the 2007 – 2009 period.

Sub Area: ISOC leadership in the Internet governance debate

The Policy pillar has clearly met its 2006 commitments with regards to ISOC playing a central and leadership role in the Internet governance discussions. This has been achieved through ISOC's ongoing and increasing relationships with key government officials involved in governance matters and through its role in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Advisory Group, WSIS follow-up activities and a range of other engagements. Further, ISOC's contributions to the discussion on the future of the DNS transition and the USDoC-ICANN MOU reinforced ISOC's role in both Internet governance matters and broader policy issues related to the Internet,

The 2006 commitments covering the subset of tools supporting ISOC's role in the Internet governance discussions – such as topical INETs, technology policy webcasts and policy primers – have been mostly met. A further INET with a policy focus segment on governance-related issues will occur in Mauritius at the end of the year. However, we are unlikely to meet the technology policy webcasts tool commitment but will be implementing webcasts in 2007,

We would add here a tool that was not in the commitments for 2006 that takes considerable effort and but reaps considerable rewards and that is the Internet Pavilion. This was unveiled in WSIS in 2005 with great impact and is being rolled out again at the ITU Telecom 2006 in Hong Kong in December.

Sub area: Regionalizing and globalizing ISOC's Public Policy

The Policy pillar, along with the Education and Membership pillars, has met its 2006 commitment with regard to the establishment of ISOC Regional Bureaus. The Africa Bureau is up and running and the Regional Manager for Africa is fully engaged. The pillars are engaged in the process of evaluating the CVs for the Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau.

However, the commitment vis-à-vis the Regional Policy Advisory Groups (RPAGs) will not be fully met. These RPAGs were intended “for all regions, introduced on a staggered basis.” Unfortunately getting the RPAGs off the ground has taken longer than anticipated. By year end we will have in place two RPAGS, the North American RPAG and the African RPAG. The call for expressions of interest and candidacy process will be underway for the Latin American and Caribbean RPAG by year-end, and we will seek to do the same for another RPAG. The roll-out will continue in 2007.

Sub area: Enhancing and strengthening the Public Policy team

The Policy pillar is pleased to report that 2006 commitments with regard to expanding the Policy team have been met. Ms. Constance Bommelaer joined ISOC in the Policy Manager position on October 1. Constance is already providing a significant boost to our Public Policy activities.

Sub area: Trusted source on Internet policy – policy pages, etc.

The commitments related to the Policy Portal and Influencer Database were largely dependent upon the addition of additional resource, which occurred, albeit late in the year. By year end we anticipate further reworking of the Pubic Policy website (it has already undergone considerable change) including adding Africa Bureau related pages, building on existing issue areas of relevance to our program work (Internet governance, for example).

We do not anticipate a “policy portal” (we will find another name for it) until CY 2007 and the Influencer Database is on hold pending an ISOC-wide review of database needs more generally.