

PUBLIC INTEREST REGISTRY

2020

Annual Report



Message from the Chair

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard said “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.” More than ever, 2020 was a year that needed to be lived forwards but understood looking back. While some parts just needed to be accepted, as I look back on 2020 I remain impressed by:

- How the Internet community and the PIR team are dealing with the global pandemic, especially in a time where we all experience so many uncertainties;
- Staff remaining a strong team and making PIR an even greater registry based on a distinct mission and values;
- Our .ORG Impact Awards and the communications around it, the branding of .ORG and also our Education and Outreach program - with this we are a part of a movement to make the Internet safer and more inclusive;

- .ORG’s continued solid growth, with a clear focus on QPI that puts quality and safety first while also increasing attention on new markets;
- The advances in PIR’s use of business intelligence for decision making and the growth of in-house knowledge on security and technology development;
- How we put in place the Appeal Process and strengthened our anti-DNS abuse efforts; and
- The way PIR dealt with all of the challenges around the Ethos transaction.

Overall, I am impressed by all of PIR’s hard work, resilience, and readiness for change. It’s one thing to lay out a strategy, it’s another to make the vision happen even as things continue to evolve all around you.

It also has been a great pleasure to follow how our business partners, the registrars, have embraced our QPI to help make the Internet safer while at the same time improve their businesses. I am also thankful to all our registrants that keep supporting the mission by using the .ORG domain as a platform for their mission and/or business.

Thank you all, and a special thanks to CEO Jon Nevett. You have built a terrific team at the core of an exemplary registry operator! Being the Chair of PIR is made much more rewarding with a team like this, and it is a great pleasure to be a part of this journey together with all of you.



Lise Fuhr
Chair, PIR Board
of Directors

Message from the CEO

2020 was a year unlike any most of us have experienced. We are still grappling with the global coronavirus pandemic and its related health, economic, and social challenges. We also continue to witness a reckoning of social norms across racial, gender, and socio-economic dimensions. Members of the .ORG Community are doing all that they can to help, and often are leading the fight for social justice and equity. At PIR, we are inspired by and stand with you.

It’s fair to say that these activities to help improve the world are based on many of the same values that drive us to live up to PIR’s high standards in pursuit of its mission. As you’ll see in this Annual Report, I’m proud to report that we achieved or exceeded our goals and strategic priorities for 2020. I’d particularly like to highlight several accomplishments:

- The .ORG Impact Awards and .ORG Stories, and the mission-based organizations that they feature and honor, continue to impress. As showcases of the achievements of exceptional .ORGs, these programs are much anticipated opportunities to recognize the important work being done to help make the world a better place.
- Our continued strong financial performance meant that we were able to increase PIR’s contributions to the Internet Society and its Foundation and help both achieve their important missions. This success was driven in part by the path we set upon in late-2018-19 to refocus our sales and marketing activities on quality .ORG registrations and industry-leading renewal rates.
- Mitigating DNS Abuse remains a key focus for PIR and we’re proud of what we’ve achieved to date. Not only does .ORG remain the cleanest namespace among the largest gTLDs, our thought leadership in the space led to this year’s launch of the DNS Abuse Institute.
- We’re proud that .ORG continues to operate in a safe and secure manner. In addition to working closely with our Registry Services Provider to support .ORG’s back-end, we also completed an independent security assessment and extended our incident

response processes. At the same time our data analytics capabilities have grown and support all key decision making.

- PIR’s Education and Outreach program further demonstrates our own mission to respond to the needs of other mission-based organizations worldwide. In particular, the new .ORG Learning Center is providing free information and tools that every .ORG needs to be successful online.
- We underscored our focus on social responsibility by completing a successful Human Rights Assessment and by upgrading our investment strategy to only include Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) assets that meet socially responsible investment criteria.
- We’re proud of PIR’s enviable organizational culture, and were honored to be recognized as one of the Washington, DC area’s best places to work in 2020. This independent award measures key attributes such as teamwork, trust in leadership, and effective communications, and is a testament to all of the caring that’s reflected in our deliberate work-life balance.

All of these achievements were made possible by the people behind .ORG. That includes PIR’s staff, Board of Directors, and Advisory Council. While all of us contribute to PIR’s success in our unique ways, we do so with a common sense of purpose. We take seriously our mandate to operate .ORG in an exemplary manner. I believe our 2020 results confirm this, invite you to learn more below, and look forward to sharing our ongoing successes in next year’s Report.



Jon Nevett
President & CEO, PIR

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This Is **Who We Are** & **Who We Serve**

.ORG is the original purpose-driven “generic” top-level domain (gTLD) with more than 10.4 million domain names registered worldwide. .ORG is open to everyone and provides a global platform for organizations, associations, clubs, businesses and individuals to bring their ideas to life.

MISSION

As the exemplary domain name registry and industry thought leader, we provide a trusted digital identity and help educate those who dedicate themselves to improving our world.

For over 30 years, .ORG has built an enduring legacy of trust, promoting an open and secure Internet where diverse communities can establish a trusted online identity and freely share ideas.

.ORG is powered by **Public Interest Registry** (PIR). Based in Reston, Virginia (USA), we have a clear mission to be an exemplary domain name registry,¹ provide a trusted digital identity, and help educate those who dedicate themselves to improving our world.

Like many in the .ORG Community, PIR is mission-based. Under the United States tax code we are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit registered in the U.S. and are chartered to administer the .ORG registry for the benefit of our end user consumers and the Internet as a whole. This mandate includes operating .ORG in an exemplary manner and being an industry thought leader.

PIR also supports and assists our founder, the **Internet Society** (also a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit registered in the United States), in achieving its important mission. PIR’s proceeds aid the Internet Society’s work to ensure the Internet is for everyone. PIR also supports the Internet Society Foundation, which was established in February 2019 to fund initiatives that strengthen the Internet in function and reach so that it can effectively serve all people. PIR is proud to play its part in sustaining both Internet Society and PIR’s shared vision.

Finally, we use our proceeds to improve the stability and security of the .ORG registry, as well as to deliver a robust Education and Outreach program that enlightens mission-driven organizations—especially those with limited resources or from technologically deprived areas—and provides Internet-based resources that can support their missions.

¹ PIR operates the registries for .ORG, .NGO, .ONG, and Internationalized Domain Name versions of .ORG in Devanagari, Cyrillic, and Chinese scripts. As .ORG represents the great majority of our activity, this Report will focus on .ORG accomplishments.

The .ORG **Community**

While .ORG has long been associated with non-profits—and remains home to the most influential—the .ORG Community is even more. It includes individuals, companies, and organizations of all kinds with a social good mission.

Members of the .ORG Community choose .ORG not only as their digital identity but also as a collective statement about the social importance of the work that they do. The diverse communities they represent come together and make up the .ORG Community, and together we make a positive impact on the world.

PIR takes great pride that our efforts directly support the Internet Society

A global non-profit organization, the Internet Society works to ensure that the Internet remains a force for good for everyone. Through its global community of members, special interest groups, and chapters, the Internet Society defends and promotes Internet policies, standards, and protocols that keep the Internet open, globally-connected, secure, and trustworthy. To learn more about the Internet Society’s work in 2020, we encourage you to read its Impact Report at <https://www.internetsociety.org/impact-report/2020/>.

This Is What Drives Us

PIR is both a mission-based and values-driven organization. In fact, PIR's values are at the core of everything we do. They are what drive us to live up to PIR's high standards in the pursuit of our mission.

Core Values

- 1 Bold Stewardship**
 We are entrusted by millions to operate in the public interest and we take that responsibility seriously. We thoughtfully consider the impact of our actions and work in deliberate pursuit of our mission.
- 2 Unwavering Integrity**
 We are passionate about integrity. We refuse to compromise our ethical standards for the sake of expediency, popularity, or profitability. As a force for good, we will do nothing to undermine the trust the online world places in us.

- 3 Relentless Commitment**
 We are persistent and purposeful in our efforts to get it right and do it well. We recognize that there is always opportunity for improvement and growth, and we continually strive to do so.
- 4 Honoring People**
 We see the value of the person behind the business card. We believe each employee, customer, vendor, partner, and stakeholder is a whole person, and is to be respected and valued as such.

PIR's 2020 Strategic Priorities

Our Core Values are also the foundation for PIR's 2020 Strategic Priorities, which included:

- Deliver effective, trustworthy and secure registry services;
- Responsibly grow the .ORG namespace;
- Enhance .ORG as the most trusted global domain extension;
- Improve and expand PIR's Education and Outreach program;
- Ensure staff are engaged, equipped, motivated, and accountable;
- Promote data-driven decision-making; and
- Meet budgeted commitments to ISOC and approved targets.

As we'll demonstrate in greater depth throughout this Report, PIR achieved or exceeded all of its 2020 goals in pursuit of its strategic priorities and in service to the .ORG Community.

Of course, our values and priorities also extend to the PIR Board of Directors. Each are well-respected members of our community and bring significant technical, operational, and financial expertise to PIR. Sharing their diverse perspectives from across multiple industries, PIR's Board of Directors shape a holistic and global strategic vision for the organization. The Board draws on its wealth of non-profit and corporate sector knowledge to provide best practices for planning, governance, and oversight. All Director bios are available on our website at <https://thenew.org/org-people/about-pir/team/board/>.

PIR Board in 2020

Name	Nationality	Term
Lise Fuhr Chair	Denmark	2016-2022
Jeff Bedser Vice Chair	United States	2017-2021
Narelle Clark	Australia	2018-2021
Jay Daley*	New Zealand	2018-2020
Keith Davidson	New Zealand	2019-2022
Greg Kapfer	United States	2019-2022
Amitabh Singhal	India	2019-2021
Andrew Sullivan Internet Society Liaison	Canada	2018-Present

* Mr. Daley stepped down from the PIR Board in November 2020 to focus his attention as Executive Director of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)..

Likewise, PIR's Advisory Council reflects and further helps us realize our Core Values. Composed of leaders and activists from a broad spectrum of non-commercial organizations around the world, the PIR Advisory Council represents the voices of the .ORG Community to PIR. It serves as an intermediary between end users and PIR on everything from technical to policy to social issues affecting the Internet. The Council also provides us with input and recommendations for new registry strategies, policies, services, and educational initiatives to meet the needs of the communities we serve. All Councilor bios are available on our website at <https://thenew.org/org-people/about-pir/team/advisory-council/>

The PIR Advisory Council in 2020

Name	Nationality	Term
Olivier Alais	France	2019-2021
Nadira Al-Araj	Palestine	2019-2021
David Allnut	Canada	2019-2021
Jennifer Cordero	United States	2019-2021
Maureen Hilyard	New Zealand	2017-2020
Joan Kerr	Canada	2019-2021
Vineet Kumar	India	2017-2020
Stephanie Perrin	Canada	2019-2021



This Is What We Achieved

2020 will be remembered as a year unlike any other. The global coronavirus pandemic brought unprecedented health, economic, and social challenges. Most countries are still coping with impacts that are likely to be with us for months or perhaps years to come.

While government and private resources remain stretched thin, mission-based organizations are doing all they can to help their communities. Sadly, many are struggling to deliver their services when they're most needed.

The challenges are not just exogenous: 2020 also brought to the fore a long-awaited reckoning of many social norms. Across the globe each of us is being asked to analyze who we are as individuals and what we stand for as human beings. This introspection focuses on race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic disparity, and other structural authority issues. And here too, members of the .ORG Community are leading the way—fighting for social justice and equity.

We are proud to report that PIR was able to meet 2020's challenges head on. In fact, we achieved and often exceeded our goals for the year. Perhaps our most satisfying accomplishment was the 2020 .ORG Impact Awards. All of the categories' applicants and finalists, as well as the array of volunteer judges and others who supported the annual initiative, truly reflect the .ORG Community and how it helps improve the world. PIR also outperformed our financial goals in 2020, allowing us to support the Internet Society and engage the .ORG Community in ways consistent with our mission. Through our anti-abuse efforts and the Quality Performance Index (QPI) initiative we demonstrated PIR's responsibility as part of our non-profit mission to operate for good and manage .ORG as a registry based on trust. We also actively engaged the .ORG Community through a variety of education and outreach initiatives. Finally, PIR continued to improve its operational efficiencies and enhance its culture of excellence.

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Previously Proposed Sale of PIR

In late 2019, a private equity firm entered into an agreement with the Internet Society to acquire PIR for \$1.135 billion. From the outset the deal was actively opposed by many civil society and technology activists. In late-April 2020, the ICANN Board of Directors voted to withhold its consent to a transfer of control after the California Attorney General weighed in against the proposed transaction. This effectively stopped the transaction.

As the CEO of the Internet Society noted, PIR is no longer for sale. PIR will continue its mission as an exemplary registry. We continue to operate with transparency, uphold our anti-abuse principles, and work to expand .ORG globally to broaden its reach for social good. The future of .ORG is vital to our collective future now more than ever.

We look towards the future. Most importantly, we will continue to support the .ORG Community as we collectively build a stronger .ORG.



2020 .ORG Impact Awards

We launched the [.ORG Impact Awards](#) (OIAs) in 2019 with the sole purpose of honoring the incredible achievements of the global .ORG Community. The OIAs recognize those .ORGs that serve as shining examples of how people can achieve great things—often with limited resources and against significant challenges. These individuals and organizations work tirelessly in pursuit of their missions; not for recognition or reward, but simply to make the world a better place.

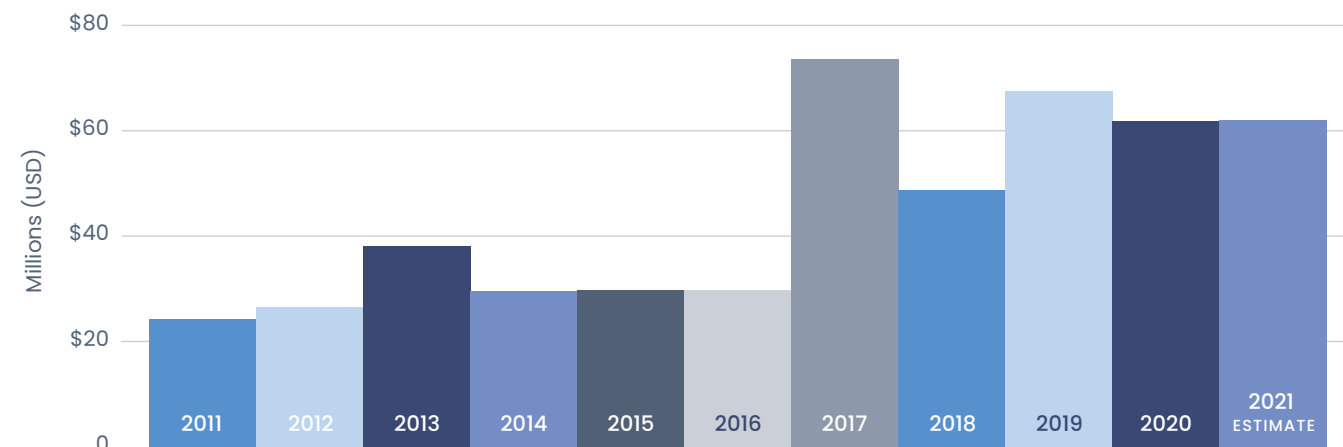
Given the year’s extraordinary challenges, the 2020 OIAs were transformed into a 10-day digital celebration. This enabled us to put more focus on award finalists and provide greater assistance to the winning .ORGs through substantially larger cash donations. As you might expect, the 2020 OIAs highlighted organizations helping to combat the effects of the coronavirus, champion equality and diversity, and provide medical care for those in need.

We’ll provide vignettes of each category winner throughout this Report, but want to offer special mention to the 2020 .ORG of the Year Award: [Days for Girls International \(DfG\)](#). This impactful organization was honored for its efforts to promote health for millions of women and girls and prevent the spread of COVID-19 through its Masks For Millions Campaign. In fact, it also won the “Combatting Coronavirus” award. DfG’s primary focus remains to increase access to menstrual care and education by developing global partnerships, cultivating Social Entrepreneurs, mobilizing volunteers and innovating sustainable solutions that shatter stigma and limitations for women and girls. With regional offices, volunteer-led Chapters and Teams, and locally-owned Social Enterprises worldwide, Days for Girls represents the very best of the .ORG Community and its dedication to improving our world.

Financial Results

As we continue to invest in PIR, making it the exemplary home for .ORG's around the world, we've been able to increase contributions to Internet Society and the Internet Society Foundation in support their work.

PIR Financial Support to Internet Society & Internet Society Foundation

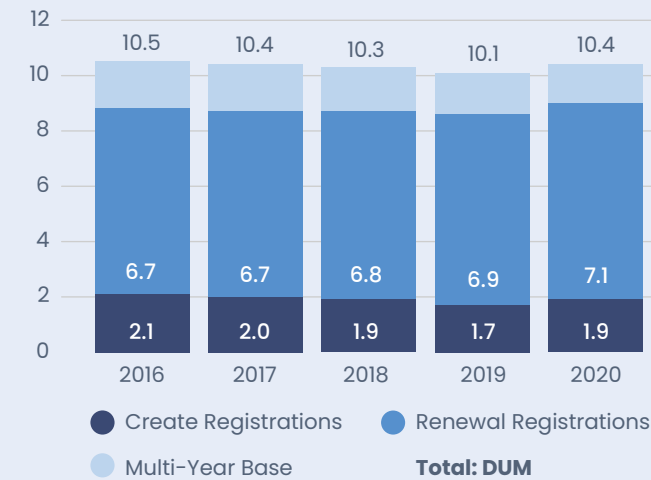


Source: Public Interest Registry

PIR has out-performed its financial goals for several years. Whereas the 2020 Budget anticipated a contribution of \$54.9 million to the Internet Society and its Foundation, the actual amount contributed was \$61.8 million. This meant more funds were available for the Internet Society's global programs designed to grow and strengthen the Internet. You can learn more about all of those initiatives at <https://www.internetsociety.org/>. PIR also helps fund the Internet Society Foundation. In addition to providing over \$6.2 million to support the Internet Engineering Task Force, the Foundation also committed more than \$5 million in grants during 2020. For more detail, please see <https://www.isocfoundation.org/>.

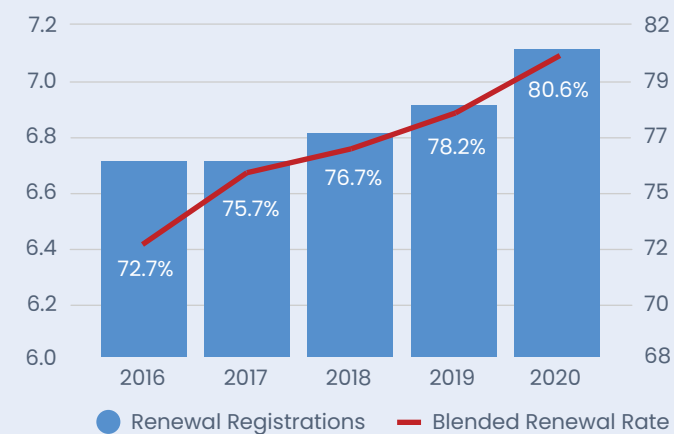
Our financial strength has been driven by continued strong domain registration and renewal volumes. These results are due to our shift, starting in late-2018-19, from simply focusing on the quantity of new registrations to a more sophisticated assessment of the quality of domains. All key metrics improved over the first full year of this innovative approach:

Registrations & Dum



Source: Public Interest Registry

Renewals



Source: Public Interest Registry

Starting 2018, renewal rate info reflects rates reported in December with data through October of the applicable year.

Unit Volumes

	2019	2020
New Creates	1,713,206	1,898,989
Renewals	6,899,872	7,052,293
DUM	10,126,938	10,357,403

Source: Public Interest Registry

Renewal Rates

	2019	2020
1st time	55.0%	58.6%
2nd time	74.2%	75.8%
3+ time	87.2%	88.2%
Blended	78.2%	80.6%

Source: Public Interest Registry

Renewal Rates Continue to Compel

Already at gTLD-leading levels, .ORG renewal rates continued to improve in 2020. We believe that these strong results reflect our deliberate focus on promoting quality domains in the .ORG base. The very high second and third-year renewal rates also make clear that registrants and end users value .ORGs or else they wouldn't drive the traffic necessary to justify their continued use. It seems likely that over time these impressive metrics will lead to even higher actual usage rates-to the general benefit of the .ORG Community.

Financials

This chart summarizes PIR's strong 2020 financial results. We'll never take anything for granted, and will continue striving to exceed our budgeted results so that we can provision the financial means to fulfill our mission and serve the .ORG Community in 2021 and beyond.

¹ Net income normalized to exclude additional contributions to ISOC of \$12.6M and \$6.9M in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

ORG only	2019	2020
Net Revenue	\$94,720,000	\$95,374,000
Cost of Revenue	\$21,543,000	\$19,536,000
Gross Margin	\$73,177,000	\$75,838,000
Total Functional Expenses	\$13,095,000	\$13,753,000
Depreciation/Amortization	\$379,000	\$284,000
Total Expenses	\$13,474,000	\$14,037,000
Operating Income/(Loss)	\$59,703,000	\$61,801,000
ISOC Education & Programs	\$67,506,000	\$61,818,000
Other Inc/(Exp)	\$1,811,000	\$1,835,000
Net Income/(Loss)	-\$5,992,000	\$1,818,000
Normalized Net Income/(Loss)¹	\$6,613,894	\$8,736,395

Anti-Abuse Program

PIR operates .ORG as an exemplary non-profit registry that supports a free, open, and safe Internet. We also embrace the trust placed on us to operate .ORG in the public interest. At PIR we believe that more and stronger .ORGs make the world a better place.

Over the last few years it has become increasingly clear that abuse of the Domain Name System (DNS) is placing many at risk. Whether it comes in technical forms like malware, botnets, phishing, or pharming, illegal activities such as child sexual abuse materials (CSAM) or the distribution of opioids, or even spam when it serves as a delivery mechanism for these forms of DNS Abuse, such threats can undermine trust in the Internet.

PIR has long been committed to combating DNS Abuse. We employ a robust abuse detection system and promptly address abusive domains in the namespaces that we manage. Don't just take our word for it: you can see how well we operate .ORG as a clean namespace based on data published by [The Spamhaus Project](#). Spamhaus identifies both the percentage of "bad domains" in a gTLD as well as their "Badness Score" which takes into account both the percentage of "bad domains" as well as the raw number of "bad domains." Averaging Spamhaus' weekly scores, you can see how .ORG continues both to improve and to significantly outperform other legacy gTLDs.

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Days for Girls International

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **COMBATING CORONAVIRUS**
 2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **2020 .ORG OF THE YEAR**

Based in Mount Vernon, Washington (USA) and with local presences worldwide, Days for Girls International increases access to menstrual care and education by developing global partnerships, cultivating social enterprises, mobilizing volunteers, and delivering innovative, sustainable solutions that shatter stigmas and limitations for women and girls. Days for Girls was honored for their Mask for Millions and Periods Don't Pause for Pandemics campaigns, which delivered more than 1 million masks to frontline workers and provided menstrual supplies to more than 1.7 million women and girls worldwide. To learn more about the 2020 .ORG of the Year, visit <https://youtu.be/-1zE8KPX37Y>.

Spamhaus Average Scores

	2018		2019		2020	
	Bad Domains	Badness Score	Bad Domains	Badness Score	Bad Domains	Badness Score
.org	4.1%	0.41	3.4%	0.29	2.16%	0.18
.com	6.4%	0.84	5.6%	0.71	4.17%	0.52
.net	9.8%	1.09	5.0%	0.51	5.53%	0.56
.info	19.2%	2.08	11.6%	1.05	7.68%	0.68
.biz	40.8%	4.52	25.5%	2.36	16.40%	1.38

Source: The Spamhaus Project and Public Interest Registry

We're also thought leaders when it comes to fighting DNS Abuse. We helped spearhead the [Framework to Address Abuse](#) that sets forth registries' and registrars' DNS Abuse responsibilities. The definitions contained therein have become de facto standards for ongoing policy work, to include being the adopted operating definitions for Registries and Registrars. In addition, PIR's [Quality Performance Index \(QPI\)](#) program and its innovative use of key performance indicators and data analysis have helped identify ways to promote and incentivize quality .ORG registrations while discouraging abusive ones. We also remain active in the CSAM Referral Discussion Group for registries and registrars. This group—which has been joined by various law enforcement and CSAM watchdog groups—shares knowledge and improves our collective practices at finding, addressing, and removing CSAM from the domain name space. All of these activities help mitigate DNS Abuse and make the Internet a safer space.

PIR's Anti-Abuse Principles

We publicized the core principles that guide our anti-abuse efforts in October 2019. We believe that these seven principles help to create an even cleaner, safer, and more trusted space for the .ORG Community. It's critical to note, however, that these principles do not serve as a mechanism for PIR to become a content regulator. In fact, of the almost 3,100 .ORGs that were suspended in 2020 for violating our Anti-Abuse Policy, only 20 were because they were dedicated to limited categories of website content abuse that was so egregious that we were compelled by our principles to take action (e.g., distribution of CSAM, specific and credible threats to human life).

1 Domains either suspended or seized by LEA via court order

2 Domains seized in a criminal, non-botnet case

We're proud of the work we're doing to combat DNS Abuse. To demonstrate our transparency and accountability, we regularly publish our .ORG Anti-Abuse Metrics on our website at <https://thenew.org/org-people/about-pir/resources/anti-abuse-metrics/>. A combined chart with yearly totals appears below:

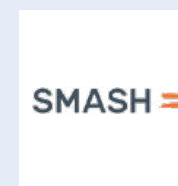
Abusive Domain Take Downs by Type

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Technical Abuse Totals	7,120	17,692	9,103	41,430	26,446
Phishing	320	54	2,696	22,959	6,677
Malware	92	8	114	900	505
Botnet C&C	3	1	73	550	350
Other Hacking, DDoS, etc.	10	25	12	30	53
Spam as abusive domain delivery mechanism	6,695	17,604	6,208	16,991	18,861
Total Suspensions		10,761	2,193	6,634	4,981
Suspended by Registrar		1,601	384	1,652	1,887
Suspended by Registry		9,160	1,809	4,982	3,094
Other Enforcement Types					
Botnet Domains¹	16,320	30,267	13,927	13,694	86,240
LEA seizures²	5	30	2	1	2
Civil IP Enforcement	1,247	534	1,128	391	91
Carding Take Downs				0	3
Incitement to Violence					2
CSAM Referrals					
URLs referred from IWF			447	834	1,327
Domains included in those URLs			41	54	63
Domains where abusive content was removed			28	46	55
Suspensions by PIR			13	8	8

Our commitment to serving the .ORG Community also can be seen in the development and launch of our [Anti-Abuse Appeals Process](#) in September 2020. This created a new registrant right to appeal to a neutral third party about the suspension of their PIR-managed domain as a way to underscore our commitment to due process and the right to redress—a fundamental freedom. PIR believes that this timely and transparent process appeal mechanism, combined with our foundational anti-abuse principles, demonstrates our operational excellence as it strikes the necessary balance to give the .ORG Community confidence in a safer, strong DNS.

Delving Into the Numbers

A natural question from these statistics is: what is the difference between the total number of domains flagged as abusive and the number of domains PIR or the registrar acts upon? In many instances, flagged domains are “compromised cases” where the domains are registered for non-abusive purposes but the registrant’s domain is put to abusive purposes without its consent. Additionally, sometimes domains are flagged as abusive by Reputation Block Lists (RBLs) but then “un-flagged” for a variety of reasons. It’s not uncommon for a portfolio of names to be flagged as “abusive” but when a subset gets delisted for some reason doubts then arise about whether all of those domains should be actioned or not. In any event, PIR endeavors to avoid false positives.



SMASH

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **PROMOTING EDUCATION**

Based in Oakland, California (USA), SMASH (Summer Math and Science Honors) empowers dedicated students of color with an intensive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, culturally-relevant coursework, and access to resources and social capital that allow them to be successful in college and in their careers. SMASH was honored for their SMASH Academy and SMASH Rising programs which provide STEM enrichment and career development support and aid to low-income students from under-represented backgrounds.

Education & Outreach

Since its inception PIR has engaged in a variety of Education and Outreach (E&O) activities. They are designed to uphold PIR’s commitment to operate .ORG as an exemplary domain name registry service that is responsive to the needs of mission-based entities worldwide.

Perhaps E&O’s most significant recent undertaking was the launch of the .ORG Learning Center in October 2020. In addition to publishing new articles every other week, the .ORG Learning Center also produced animated videos on an introduction to the DNS and understanding the domain name lifecycle.

We focus our E&O efforts on two overarching priorities: enhancing the online presence of the global mission-driven community, and strengthening the DNS by leveraging PIR’s attributes as an exemplary registry operator. All of our E&O efforts address at least one of our four key issue areas: anti-abuse, technology & security, policy & privacy, and end-user & online support. During the global pandemic, extra emphasis has been given to online learning and collaboration initiatives that bring value to broader audiences.

Perhaps E&O’s most significant recent undertaking was the launch of the [.ORG Learning Center](#) in October 2020. This educational hub provides a variety of free information and tools that every .ORG needs to be successful online. Launched with an 8-part “Bootcamp for Mission-Driven Organizations” that introduced the essentials for establishing and growing an online presence, we’ve since published articles on networking, team building, branding, fundraising, and compliance. In addition to publishing new articles every other week, the .ORG Learning Center also produced animated videos on an introduction to the DNS and understanding the domain name lifecycle. Additional “learner” videos on key issues are planned, as well as other interactive educational events.

The global pandemic took its toll on international travel and face-to-face meetings. This also impacted key learning events like the specialized Schools of Internet Governance and regional DNS Forums that PIR has historically supported. Fortunately, the need to shift to virtual offerings presented additional opportunities. PIR was the founding sponsor of a new [Virtual School of Internet Governance](#) (VSIG). Designed to complement,

not replace, existing SIGs, this bandwidth-friendly compendium of self-paced tutorials and interactive modules with subject matter experts provides students a baseline understanding of the relevant terms and issues before they engage in traditional governance activities. VSIG has been a resounding success, fully subscribing the 100 positions per four cohorts run throughout the year.

We also continued to collaborate on learning opportunities with regional partners. For example, we were an early supporter of the Latin America and Caribbean Top-Level Domains (LACTLD) Association’s workshops to help law enforcement authorities learn about the DNS, the organizations that make up this ecosystem, and mechanisms to address objectionable content online. This remains a unique opportunity to educate non-domain industry actors about DNS abuse and mitigation efforts—and the limits of what a registry can do. We also supported the [Network Startup Resource Center](#) (NSRC) and its long-standing programs that provide DNS-related network and security technologies training to engineers and system administrators. In fact, a successful program for Latin America-based participants last summer provided NSRC the opportunity to restructure its hands-on training as a virtual program of instruction—thereby opening the possibility of reaching even more students in future offerings.



Kayla Cares 4 Kids

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER**

Based in North Palm Beach, Florida (USA), Kayla Cares 4 Kids helps sick children to have a better time during hospitalizations by delivering boxes of joy that contain donated educational and entertainment items. Kayla Abramowitz was honored for her outstanding efforts in helping sick and hospitalized children in more than 450 children’s hospitals across all 50 U.S. states.

Human Rights Impacts at PIR

PIR's dedication to operate as an exemplary domain name registry includes a commitment to uphold human rights and related fundamental freedoms. These include, but are not limited to, foundational principles involving freedom of expression, access to information, and access to effective remedy. As an Internet infrastructure provider, we believe that we have a solemn responsibility to respect human rights.

To more fully gauge PIR's level of achievement on respecting human rights, early in 2020 we collaborated with the Danish Institute for Human Rights and ARTICLE 19 on a human rights assessment. We evaluated potential human rights impacts specific to our actions and operations as a registry operator, including the provision and maintenance of domain names, transparency, privacy, and engagement with third parties such as law enforcement agencies. We also reviewed PIR's policies, operations, and safeguards as an employer and as a procurer of goods and services, as well as the company's relationship to the environment and local communities.

PIR grades well in each of the assessment sections. Of course, we identified a few areas for improvement. These included incorporating an explicit commitment to international human rights in our existing policies, creating a right for registrants to appeal a suspension of their PIR-managed domain names, and publicly setting out our expectations that those who provide us goods and services will conduct business responsibly, transparently, and with integrity. Each of these was promptly addressed.

By identifying and assessing real and potential impacts, PIR took an important step in exercising due diligence and realizing our responsibility to respect human rights.

Culture of Excellence

As noted above, PIR's Core Values are at the heart of everything we do. Our steadfast focus on stewardship, integrity, commitment, and honoring people has forged an enviable organizational culture, i.e. the beliefs, values, and behaviors that we have adopted over time to succeed.

We are very proud of our achievements. Of course, we also recognize that our culture of excellence should never be taken for granted. It needs to be nurtured so we're ready for whatever new challenges may arise.



This has not gone unnoticed. In fact, PIR was honored by the Washington Business Journal as one of the [Top 10 Best Places to Work for 2020](#). This award was determined based on a third party-administered quantitative survey of Washington-area employees. Respondents were asked to rank their organization on qualities such as team effectiveness, trust in senior leaders and coworkers, manager effectiveness, communication, work-life balance, and alignment with company goals. PIR was selected because of its culture of caring and respect, its deeply held mission, and its commitment to honoring its people.

We are very proud of our achievements. Of course, we also recognize that our culture of excellence should never be taken for granted. It needs to be nurtured so we're ready for whatever new challenges may arise. The global pandemic certainly has been a significant one. Like many organizations ordered to lock down, our employees were sent home in March 2020. Working remotely for such an extended period has been a test. We believe, however, that a fully engaged workforce is crucial to delivering the best possible service in everything that we do. So we've made a conscious effort to stay connected—both to our work colleagues and across the broader community we're part of and serve. We've even tried to have fun doing it, especially with some online social events that included our families. We also pooled our resources with a PIR match to donate to worthy local, national, and international causes working to support those in need and alleviate hunger. While we're all looking forward to "returning to normal"—whatever that may mean post COVID-19—we'll continue to make the best with everything we have and strive to deliver exemplary service to help all .ORGs make a positive impact on the communities they serve and in the world.



Change Labs

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **CHAMPIONING EQUALITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Based in Tuba City, Arizona (USA), Change Labs was created to foster the creation of successful Native American small businesses that provide social benefits to tribal communities. Change Labs was honored for its website, [nativestartup.org](#), and for the team's incredible efforts at creating successful Native American small businesses that benefit the Navajo and Hopi Nations.

Finally, as part of our own introspection on the race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic disparity, and other structural authority issues that drove the push for greater social justice and equality in 2020, PIR has embarked on its own diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) journey. This process of reflection, learning, change, and leadership will explore the many dimensions of race, power, and privilege that perpetuate social inequities. Ultimately, we want to promote institutional change, create a more inclusive work environment for all staff, and better serve the .ORG Community. We look forward to reporting updates on our accomplishments in the future.

Operational Excellence

Operational excellence is achieved when the component parts of an organization work seamlessly to attain the company mission. For PIR, that means collectively working to the best of our abilities so that our output may help those who dedicate themselves to improving our world.

While it may not be readily apparent to some observers how certain parts of PIR engage with the .ORG Community, our success in delivering value to our stakeholders is the result of teamwork and a shared commitment to our core values.

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A great example of this in action is our QPI program. Our Channel Services team could not successfully implement QPI without the data analysis and insights provided by our Business Analytics team. Nor could they effectively manage the program's administrative complexities without the active support of our colleagues on the Finance, Legal, and the Registry Services and Customer Operations teams. Only by working together is the goal achieved.

The unveiling of our [Vendor Standards of Behavior](#) was another example of team effort. An outgrowth of our Human Rights Assessment, the Standards were co-developed by our Policy, Legal, Registry Services and Procurement teams. These Standards set out our expectations that those who provide PIR with goods and services will conduct business responsibly, transparently, and with integrity. They focus on business ethics, compliance, worker rights, occupational health and safety, and environment and land rights. By combining the perspectives and expertise of multiple teams, the Standards extend our operational excellence beyond PIR.



Crisis Tracker

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **INNOVATION**

Managed by Invisible Children, a Washington, DC (USA)-based NGO, Crisis Tracker is a tool that aggregates data about armed group activity, provides rapid alerts to at-risk communities, and delivers reliable up-to-date information to stakeholders throughout the remote border region encompassing northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo and eastern Central African Republic. Crisis Tracker was honored for its geospatial database and reporting project that enables aid workers and more than 150 communities to respond to conflict-related incidents in remote regions in Africa.



Mangrove Action Project

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Based in Seattle, Washington (USA), Mangrove Action Project (MAP) partners with mangrove forest communities, grassroots NGOs, researchers, and local governments to conserve and restore mangrove forests and related coastal ecosystems while promoting community-based, sustainable management of coastal resources. MAP was honored for its long-standing efforts to conserve and restore our planet's threatened coastal mangrove forests, which are critical to maintaining ecological balance and preserving our planet.



INARA

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **.ORG NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR**

Based in Beirut (Lebanon), INARA (International Network for Aid, Relief and Assistance) provides life-altering medical care for children from conflict areas who have catastrophic injuries or illnesses and are unable to access treatment due to war. Arawa Damon, co-founder and President, was honored for INARA's work in helping injured and ill refugee children by providing them with much-needed medical treatment and support.

Looking Ahead

We trust that this Report has made clear that we continue to operate .ORG as an exemplary domain name registry. As trusted stewards and on behalf of our non-profit mission, in 2021 and beyond we will responsibly manage the unique resources entrusted to our care.

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Of course, that includes providing financial support to the Internet Society and its Foundation so that it can carry out its own important and significant charitable mission. We'll also continue to support a variety of initiatives that help those who dedicate themselves to improving our world.

By the time you read this we will have launched the DNS Abuse Institute. This initiative will bring together leaders in the anti-abuse space to fund research, publish recommended practices, share data, and provide tools to identify and report DNS Abuse. We also will have expanded our QPI program by making it available at no cost to all registries. This free roadmap and toolkit will help other registries and their registrars improve their domain name space quality, reduce abuse, and increase renewals—and thereby help improve overall trust in the DNS.

We're also planning to expand the .ORG Learning Center significantly through partnerships that will provide additional free educational content and tools for mission-based organizations seeking to establish and improve their online presence. We're particularly excited about launching an interactive "Making of a .ORG" program designed to share the learning experiences of mission-based organizations at various stages of their development, and providing a trusted space for the .ORG Community to learn from one another.

PIR also intends to drive growth in certain global markets (India and Southeast Asia) since more and stronger .ORGs make the world a better place. Finally, we will continue to honor extraordinary .ORGs from around the world through the .ORG Impact Awards.

Stay tuned for details about these exciting and impactful new initiatives and others in next year's PIR 2021 Annual Report. Of course, you can follow our developments on the PIR [website](#) and through all of our social media channels.



Food for Free

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **FIGHTING HUNGER AND POVERTY**

Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts (USA), Food for Free improves access to healthy food within its community by rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste and creating new distribution channels with an emphasis on utilizing school systems to reach those in need. Food for Free was honored for its extensive programs that provide healthy food and nutrition support to underserved and needful populations in Massachusetts.



Child Rescue Coalition

2020 .ORG IMPACT AWARD FOR **PROMOTING A SAFER INTERNET**

Based in Boca Raton, Florida (USA), Child Rescue Coalition (CRC) is a non-profit organization that rescues children from sexual abuse by building technology--delivered free of charge--that helps law enforcement agencies track, arrest and prosecute child predators. CRC was honored for its development of technology that has enabled global law enforcement agencies and organizations identify and prevent more than 600,000 child sexual abuse material (CSAM) cases.



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