



**DNS-OARC**

Domain Name System Operations Analysis and Research Center

## Members Annual Report, October 2024

### Summary:

1. Workshops & other events
  2. 2024 Annual General Meeting
  3. Membership & membership outreach
  4. Committees
  5. Software & Systems Engineering
  6. 2024 Retreat
  7. 2023-24 Financial outlook
- 

Dear OARC Members,

This is my first AGM as OARC President. Quite a lot has happened since I started back in January, and it really doesn't feel like 3 quarters of a year have passed by already!

Two workshops, two Community Days. Some members have left OARC and some new ones have joined. We started a dialog with our members about OARC's mission and value. A prototype data explorer for DITL data was deployed, thanks to a grant by Verisign. The data migration of the last file servers to the CEPH cluster is nearly complete. And we held a long overdue Board and Staff retreat, where some very good discussions were had. More on this further down.

The growth of the team has improved OARC's ability to execute, and expand the organization's reach. But it comes at a cost; 2024 has been somewhat of a rough year so far in our industry, and this has affected our membership and, as a result, OARC's finances. This is something we will be addressing.

## 1. Workshops and other events

[OARC 42](#) (an important number!) took place in Charlotte, NC on February 8 and 9<sup>th</sup>, just before NANOG 90, with over 80 persons in attendance, and packed with presentations (22 in total). Thanks to our Akamai, IBM and Verisign for making this event possible. A sponsored talk by IBM, a first at OARC, was rather well received.

Shortly after OARC 42, several of us headed to [APRICOT 2024](#) in Bangkok, Thailand, to organize our first [DNS Community Day](#) by OARC. Over 30 participants showed up for a loosely structured day of talks, roundtables, and Q&A sessions around DNS security and operations, including some interesting historical retrospectives on the evolution of the protocol. Participants from the AsiaPac region showed up to listen, contribute and present. This was a great opportunity to follow up on OARC 41 and expand awareness of OARC in the region. This would not have been possible thanks to the generous sponsoring of a room by APNOG, and by .TH NIC for providing catering for all participants.

We were initially scheduled to organize our second yearly workshop alongside ICANN's IDS, but due to a late confirmation of the location, and only one day being available for an OARC event, we made the decision to move [OARC 43](#) to Prague, CZ, just before RIPE 89. We still traveled to Santa Marta, Colombia and held our second DNS Community Day just after IDS, during LAC Domain Name Week. This was equally well received, with some serious interest from local participants for hosting an OARC Workshop in the future. Read more in the CRO Report.

OARC 44 is approaching fast - a bit more than 3 months away, our next workshop will be happening in Atlanta, GA, on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of February - co-located with NANOG93.

As usual, opportunities for sponsorship and patronage are available for OARC events - do see:

<https://www.dns-oarc.net/workshop/patronage-sponsorship>

Reach out to [sponsor@dns-oarc.net](mailto:sponsor@dns-oarc.net) if you're interested.

## 2. 2024 Annual General Meeting and Board Elections

The AGM will be taking place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, in hybrid form (in-person and remote participation), just after OARC 43. There have already been many communications about this on email, social media and MatterMost, so here's the short version:

<https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/agm-2024/>

Chances are, if you're reading this, you (or whoever is the OARC contact for the organisation) has already signed up to attend!

Remember the Board elections take place immediately after the AGM. Voting will be this year again done online, and this time we have 4 candidates for 3 places.

[Joe Abley](#)

[Ray Bellis](#)

[Mauricio Vergara Ereche](#)

[Shumon Huque](#)

**Cloudflare**

**ISC**

**DigitalOcean**

**Salesforce**

See the candidate platforms at <https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/agm-2024/elections>

### 3. Membership

#### 3.1 New and departing member

Below is the list of new members, and those have chosen not to renew, since October 2023.

New member	Non-renewing members
DigitalOcean .PT .TH 419 Consulting Internet History Initiative Digital Medusa	DNSFilter CAIDA Telus F5 Networks Charter Communications

#### 3.2 Member outreach

Back in January, we discussed how we best could capture what OARC members saw of value in OARC, including what they liked, or would like to see more of, what they could do without, and what they were missing.

Instead of doing a traditional survey, we began reaching out in the spring to some of our members and had individual conversations with them about OARC. This was a mix of prepared questions, and informal discussions about OARC -- the community and the organization -- and its usefulness to our members, ranging from the services, workshops and other activities that OARC arranges or offers.

We are still ongoing with this, and will summarize when we have had more interviews. This was an enlightening process: some of the answers we got were expected, others less, and some feedback, suggestions and comments were truly insightful. Conversely, we also found that not all members were aware of OARC's activities and services, so this was a great occasion to recalibrate our value proposition - and improve our communication around this.

### 4. Committees

#### 4.1 Programme Committee

Our Programme Committee, responsible for selecting and soliciting content for our workshops, is 9 strong this year. Each volunteer serves for up to 3 one-year terms. They are appointed by the Board shortly after the AGM, and before the end of each year.

Once nominations are open, we will call out for interested candidates to submit their information.

You can find more details about how the Programme Committee operates at:  
<https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/programme>

#### 4.2 Privacy Committee

**Joao Damas**, Chair of the privacy committee will be presenting a progress update at the AGM.

## 5. Software & Systems Engineering

There isn't any reason to duplicate here what is already covered in the [Software & Systems Engineering Report](#) but it's worth mentioning the prototype DITL Data explorer project, aka Crunchy DITL, which Jerry Lundström has been leading, and will be talking about during OARC 43.

Do read the report to catch up on various improvements to our network infrastructure, our progress towards virtualizing workloads, the growth of the data storage cluster, and release updates to the (many!) software tools that OARC maintains.

## 6. 2024 Retreat

Highly anticipated was our first Board and Staff retreat since 2019! It finally took place in May - slightly later than planned, as we had to accommodate the time constraints of all those involved.

NLNetLabs generously invited us to use their meeting room for a full 5 days in their Amsterdam offices, during the Board and Staff brainstormed and mapped out current challenges facing OARC, including how to grow our membership, and expand awareness of OARC's mission and activities beyond Europe and North America. We identified general areas to be addressed, which included:

- Define, publish and promote a clear value proposition about the benefits of becoming an OARC member, including the events we organize, the services and tools that OARC maintains and makes available to member and to the DNS community ;
- Reduce costs as long as OARC's ability to execute its mission isn't affected ;
- Diversify our income, exploring opportunities to generate revenue to supplement membership fees, within the frame of the organization's bylaws ;
- Reach out to new regions

The retreat was a fantastic opportunity for Staff and Board to meet, exchange ideas, and generally strengthen the cohesion of the organization, with all too few opportunities to meet in person. These meetings are critical for the continued success of OARC, and we hope to be able to do a Staff retreat yearly, and a combined Board + Staff meeting every other year.

A more detailed report on the retreat's outcome is still in the works, where we will outline a strategy to achieve the above, although this has been delayed to account for the current economic climate, as is describe in the next section.

## 7. 2023-24 Financial outlook

As mentioned above, one of the areas of focus during the retreat was income diversification: the primary source of revenue for OARC are the member fees, sponsorship, patronage, and grants.

The number of members not having increased significantly over the past years, we agreed to explore new ways of generating income, as well as work to identify potential new members - in regions where OARC is already known, and others.

However, determining what services could potentially attract new income -- that is, market research, prototyping services, and seeking out feedback, is time consuming and costly.

So does reaching out to communities outside Europe and North America, and building the awareness and relationships required to attract new members.

We had already started the year with a planned deficit due to the increase in staff (in hours and headcount), the rising costs of services, goods and travel, and higher external consultancy fees (finding a new president).

Add to this the non-renewal of several members, and the gloomy financial outlook for 2024, and it was clear by the middle of this year that we needed a course correction and reevaluate the current strategy.

To clarify: the strategy we'd articulated during the retreat, and the goals to achieve it were still relevant for OARC's future, but the priorities didn't track with the realities of 2024's financial outlook vs OARC's projected evolution. Cost reduction was now front and center, before any expansion or diversification plans.

This prompted me to start a discussion with the Board about OARC's long term financial well-being: how do we ensure that OARC continues to fulfill its mission, to thrive and provide the value that it does today to the DNS Community, not just a year from now, but over the next 5 years and beyond?

The past months, I've been working to identify and prioritize changes to the organization that go in this direction, and we will be putting forward a plan to that effect.

Phil Regnault  
OARC President  
October 2024