



DNS-OARC

Domain Name System Operations Analysis and Research Center

Members Annual Report September 2025

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Status Update

Dear DNS-OARC Members,

It doesn't feel like a year has passed since the last AGM. We're 3/4th of the way through 2025, and this is a status update on what we've achieved since last year, the state of things today, and how the next 12 months look.

Leading OARC means making sure we follow the course we set and the internal functions are present—and funded—to make it happen. What course we follow requires input, in the form our ongoing conversations with DNS-OARC Members, our 2025 Member Survey, and consultation and strategy meetings with DNS-OARC's Board of Directors.

Obviously, financial stability took precedence, and with a reduced staff some things had to be moved to the back burner for a while. However, we also must look forward and define what long-term sustainability looks like for DNS-OARC and, by extension, OARC, Inc.

One of the things I've tried to make clearer since I started is what falls within DNS-OARC's mission (or bailiwick) both in terms of scope—what does OARC *do*—and to what extent.

I delve more into this under “OARC's mission & priorities”, looking at OARC's existing role, and some new initiatives that we think will increase DNS-OARC's relevance and contribute to long-term sustainability, once we're able to prioritize their execution.

This year, reports on our different internal functions (Administration, Events, Membership, Systems, Data, Software) are integrated into this document.

I want to thank our Members for the ongoing support and belief in DNS-OARC's mission and relevance in the Internet ecosystem, the Programme Committee for working hard to make OARC workshops captivating, and the Speakers for submitting content that make it worth attending. Also, thanks to the Board of Directors for providing guidance and helping to set the course for DNS-OARC, without which I wouldn't be able to do my job. Last but certainly not least, thumbs up to the staff of OARC, Inc., who continue to give their best and believe in the value of the mission despite challenges and bumps along the way.

Phil Regnault
President, OARC, Inc.
September 2025

Financial Situation of OARC, Inc. & Outlook

As all of you know, we've focused on reducing expenses while continuing to deliver DNS-OARC's existing activities, services, and obligations towards our members. While this was straining for the staff, we successfully implemented the course correction we aimed for at the last AGM, thus stabilizing the financial situation of OARC, Inc.

Here are some key figures below – all details can be found in the 2024 Financial Statement. This will also be covered, along with the relevant context in the Treasurer's report which will be presented at the AGM. The actual improvements to the administrative and bookkeeping processes are covered under Administration.

FY	Income	Expenses	Result
2024	1,009,000 (*)	1,178,000	- 169,000
2025 YTD	662,000	670,000	- 8,000

(*) income figure of 1,009,000 represents the income shown in the financial statements of 1,384,892, less deferred 2023 revenue of 375,782, and is shown here for ease of comparison with 2025 year to date following change in accounting rules used for revenue recognition.

We are largely on target with 2025 budget projections and expect to close 2025 with a more stable financial picture. But the responsibilities of the departing staff earlier this year had to be reassigned to other members of the team. As a result, we are currently not in a position to initiate new activities unless these are supported by adequate funding and staffing to match.

For certain tasks and projects we will be working with external partners as required on a per-assignment basis, for instance with Event venue selection which is covered under Events.

2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2025 AGM will be taking place next week, on Wednesday, October 8th. As with previous meetings, it will be possible to participate in the AGM either in-person or remotely. This will take place immediately after the last session of OARC 45.

All relevant information can be found here: <https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/agm-2025>

Immediately after the AGM, the Board elections will take place. Voting is done online for all representatives, and we have a total of 7 candidates for 3 seats.

More details: <https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/agm-2025/elections>

Membership

Our Membership Relations coordinator, Steve Sullivan, made a convincing case to 6 new organizations that they should join DNS-OARC as members. Welcome to:

- Taiwan Network Information Center ([TWNIC](#))
- [LK](#) Domain Registry
- [p-square](#) GmbH
- [it.com](#) Domains LTD
- Beijing Zhongke YiAn technology Co., LTD ([YIAN](#))
- [CloudfloorDNS](#), LLC

We also had some members upgrade to a higher tier, both as a result of wanting to increase participation in DNS-OARC, but also as a result of one organization acquiring another and deciding to upgrade in order to maintain the same number of seats/contacts in the Member Portal and continue to support DNS-OARC.

We also had two Members choosing not to renew (54N and Digital Medusa).

What we do want to underline is that despite the current economic trends (with reduced opportunities to travel, industry consolidation, and staff cuts) DNS-OARC's Members have largely chosen to renew.

This shows, if there was any doubt, the value of DNS-OARC to these organizations, their staff, and the DNS community in general—something which is reflected in early results from the 2025 Member Survey.

We are very grateful for this, and we will continue to engage and reach out to you to ensure that our Members are aware of all the services DNS-OARC offers and how to make the best use of them.

Our expectation is that we will continue to see little membership growth for the rest of 2025, and this trend will continue into 2026. We have worked on more targeted value propositions to help different types of DNS operators, developers, and research institutions see the benefit in joining DNS-OARC. While we hope to see some growth there, much of our focus is on retaining the members we have and making sure DNS-OARC's activities stay relevant to them.

Some practical improvements on the membership growth side of things include:

- adoption of a CRM platform to help identify, pursue, and follow-up leads for potential new memberships
- definition of targeted value propositions, aimed at different actors of the DNS ecosystem
- more active outreach and "check-ins" from our Membership Relations coordinator, Steve Sullivan, to our Members, to ensure that they are familiar with our services, that they are aware of the Members Portal, the Contact Directory, and that their contact information is up to date

Member Portal

Through a collective effort by the team, we achieved some long-standing requests for improvement to our Member's Portal. We recently implemented support for a dedicated AGM Delegate contact. Thanks to Rebecca, Steve, and Matt for working on this together and getting the required changes deployed in time for the AGM, and to Jerry for providing feedback as the original author of the Member Portal.

We have a few more ideas to improve the Portal and Contact Directory, and we will also be soliciting input from the Members to increase the Portal's relevance. For instance, we're planning to add the ability to have additional contact methods aside from email and phone.

Speaking of which: It is important to remember to keep your contact information up-to-date, especially phone numbers, which are often neglected. There is real value in having this information available when trying to get hold of someone in another organization when there is a pressing issue. Also, phone numbers are entry points for other communication platforms using them as identifiers.

Events

We're about to head to Stockholm for OARC 45 where, as I write this, 165 participants are registered to attend, 145 of which in-person! It certainly helps that other DNS-related events are taking place that week (CENTR R&D meeting, DNS hackathon and Netnod Tech), but more than anything this shows DNS-OARC's importance in our industry.

Event Cost

OARC events are rarely cost neutral, but we aim to keep cost down and maximize how much of the various event expenditures can be covered by event registration fees (including any socials), and sponsorships.

This year, even with less sponsorship income than in the past, we're expecting to see a break-even balance for the event financials—and maybe a small "positive". Of course, what we include in "costs" is a somewhat subjective choice. As time has allowed, we have been slowly working backward through older events to enhance cost breakdowns, when we have the required data, in order to track the cost of doing events over a given time span, and across spending categories we can reliably compare.

It's of course difficult to compare the cost of running events in different regions, in different types of venues, but this should help us show that we're moving in the right direction and making efficient use of funds.

Event Planning and Venue Selection

Our goal to have an 18 month outlook on the date and location of future events is a work in progress. We already have OARC 46 happening in Edinburgh, Scotland in May of next year, and we currently have a request for proposals out for a venue for OARC 47; before the end of the year

we hope to have the same for OARC 48.

We've found a partner for helping us identify event venues and negotiate contracts in the form of CAPS, LLC. They have experience working with similar organizations in our industry, including CHI-NOG, Team Cymru, and FIRST.org.

Circling back to the cost—there is a trade-off being made for every event we organize between ease of attendance (for participants), ease of logistics/planning (for staff and PC), and cost. Easy to reach, well-connected venues are often more expensive and more in demand, requiring very long advanced planning and commitments. Locations in less expensive markets will sometimes be well connected from a travel perspective, but they might require a much larger effort on the staff side to account for unknown factors, new collaborations, etc.

Add to this the question of deciding when it makes sense to co-locate DNS-OARC events alongside other industry organizations' events (the answer is: not always—whether from a financial or synergy perspective).

At the end of the day, we look for locations that make sense for most participants in the regions where OARC Members are most present. If we cannot come to your corner of the world this time, hopefully we'll be closer next time! We're always interested in suggestions, offers to host an OARC meeting, and to partner up with other industry events, when it benefits the community.

Committees

Programme Committee

The DNS-OARC Programme Committee is currently composed of Cathy Almond (Chair), Tijay Chung, Marcelo Gardini (NIC.br), Merike Kaeo (Double Shot Security), Raffaele Sommese (University of Twente), Puneet Sood (Google) and Willem Toorop (NLNetLabs), and Board Member Ray Bellis (ISC) acting as liaison to the Board of Directors.

They've done a fantastic job of soliciting, reviewing, and selecting talks and presentations for OARC 45. We've had such an overwhelming number of submissions for this workshop that we could have filled another 2 days of OARC!

A great thank you to the Programme Committee—and all the Speakers—for keeping OARC workshops relevant, highly regarded and well attended.

We'll be looking for candidates for the Programme Committee for 2026! Nominations will be open from the 9th of October to the 7th of November. Keep an eye out for the announcement.

Privacy Committee

The Privacy Committee isn't ready at this stage to deliver an update on progress made since last year's AGM. Later in this report we'll mention some measures intended to help resume movement on this effort.

Code of Conduct Committee

As something new, we're setting up a Code of Conduct committee which will be tasked with receiving and assessing any complaints on the conduct of members of the community, whether it is online (on our mailing lists or Mattermost chat platform), or in-person at an OARC-organized event.

The CoC Committee will be composed of four people: 1 from staff, 1 from the Board of Directors, and 2 from our Members. For this we are soliciting volunteers who are willing to serve on this for a duration of 1 year at a time. Watch the members list where we'll be announcing the call for volunteers. For obvious reasons, the members from the Board and from the Membership should all be from distinct organizations.

Staff Retreat

Back in June, OARC, Inc. staff met up in Toronto, in person, for 3 days to agree on the projects, milestones, and priorities for the coming 6-12 months. Here is a short summary of the outcomes:

1. Create a general Member Survey to assess Members' interests and priorities
2. Work on tailored Value Propositions to attract more actors of the DNS ecosystem to join DNS-OARC, and "anchor" knowledge of DNS-OARC at the management / executive level of existing and prospective members.
3. Plan for a new website that is up-to-date, relevant, and clearer: to better promote our community, the mission, activities, and services.
4. Publicize an overview of what OARC, Inc. makes available in terms of software, services, and tools, with clear statements of expected availability, and support.
5. Review existing software tools maintained by OARC, identify those that might no longer be used, and those we believe could attract external funding to implement requested features and improvements.
6. Continue to improve and streamline membership life cycles, and improve the Member Portal to make it more useful to our members
7. Team up with an Events planning partner to help identify locations, select and negotiate with venues for future OARC events 18-24 months in advance.
8. Rework sponsorship packages to be simpler and more affordable, with a clearer distinction of what's included. Aim to secure more sponsors at a lower price point.
9. Rework the Researchers-Supporter model to make it less cumbersome for applicants to access data if they have a valid research proposal, and lighten the load on Staff to evaluate and follow-up on execution of said proposals, while taking into account existing Data Sharing Agreements.

The last point in particular ties in with a more general discussion about Data Accessibility.

Systems & Software

Systems Update: Data Storage

Missing Data

Some datasets from DITL collections prior to 2012 are only available on two servers; one of which is currently down, with the other being placed on the slow end of a remote link. We'd like to at least attempt to have the down one brought online to shorten the recovery time, and have something to compare against. Other datasets we were not able to recover include the root ZSK roll from 2016, and root KSK roll from 2017, as they are on an unrecoverable server.

The expectation was set to have these datasets available and online—assuming no complicated data recovery process—in the first half of 2025. We've had to down prioritize this in light of reduced staff capacity and cost conservation measures (eg, avoiding travel to perform hands-on work unless strictly necessary).

Data Capacity

We're also working on expanding capacity for the CEPH cluster; we have additional servers delivered and ready to be brought online that will bring available capacity up to where we have enough space for DITL 2026 and 2027. However, we will need additional capacity to copy over data from the servers currently offline. This will require acquiring another 2-3 servers in 2026.

Additional Data Contributions

We also receive one or two offers of other types of data each year, which we currently don't have capacity to accept.

All of this points to the need to reevaluate our data storage strategy, something we cover in part in the "Data, Access, and Researcher-Supporter Model" below.

DITL 2025 Update

DITL 2025 is missing cleanup on one individual contribution that was submitted outside the standard collection process, which means it hasn't been processed similarly to other contributions submitted through the DNS-OARC tool-set. The data in question is sufficiently relevant and interesting that it was decided to hold off until the issue was resolved, then make the data available all at once. OARC 45 and the AGM planning took precedence, and we plan to have this finalized in November.

Software Update

Crunchy-DITL

Jerry's been working over the past few months to import all DITL data up to and including 2024 into the ClickHouse cluster (Crunchy DITL). This was completed recently, and the cluster is now ready

for queries. Talk to Jerry if you're attending OARC 45 and/or the AGM in person! This represents 2.15T messages, processed from over 100 TB of compressed PCAP data as input.

Software Repositories and Release Engineering

Software repositories maintained by DNS-OARC have been migrated to [Codeberg](#). Issues and merge requests should now be done there, although a mirror of all projects remains at GitHub for the foreseeable future.

Also, the continuous integration (CI) pipeline was rebuilt using docker for Linux distros, and SourceHut for BSDs.

AI Code Contributions

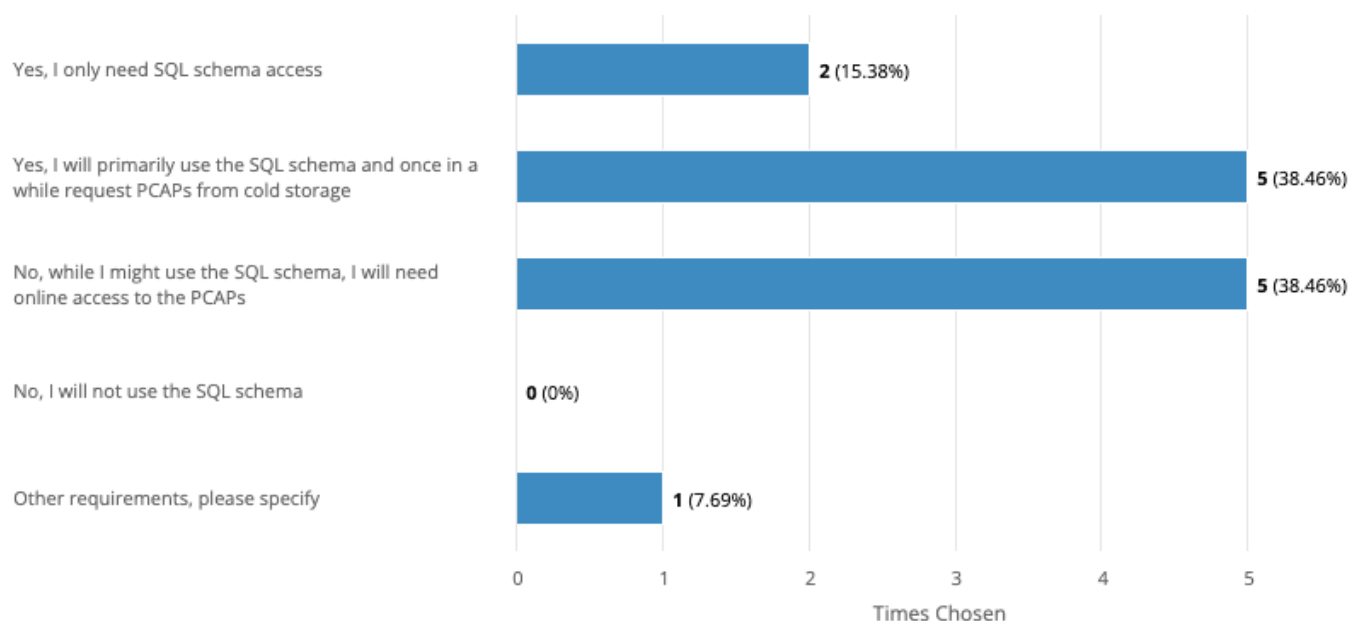
Similarly to what several other Open Source projects have done, DNS-OARC now has a software contribution policy regarding AI/LLM generated code. See the policy at <https://www.dns-oarc.net/oarc/software>

Other updates

- 8 releases were made for OARC maintained tools (since the last report)
- The Crunchy DITL import process exposed some bugs that have been fixed with dnscap's compressed PCAP handling - this will be included in an upcoming release
- Other improvements include adding PCAP link-type Linux cooked v2 (SLL2) support in several projects

Finally, a survey was sent out to researchers: "DITL - PCAP vs SQL schema access", to assess if those researchers accessing DITL data would find it sufficient to do so through an SQL schema, or whether access to raw PCAPs would still be preferred.

The results showed no clear consensus:



A minority of responders indicated being satisfied with only having access to the data through the SQL

schema, but some would still like to have the ability to pull PCAPs from near line storage. And an equal number responded always needing access to the PCAPs without having to make a special request to make them available.

Our conclusion to the above is:

- people that answered Yes are likely looking at simple DNS query statistics
- people that answered No are looking at specific bits or things not necessarily related to DNS, such as IP fragmentation, etc.

With a majority always requiring PCAP at some point, this has to be taken into account when discussing changes to our storage model.

Data Access and Researcher-Supporter Model

We hope to be able to soon circulate a draft document describing how access to the DNS-OARC data repository can be streamlined for Researchers interested in accessing it.

There's a side objective to produce metrics on actual use of the data repository (primarily, but not only, [DITL](#)), and by whom, and to promote ways in which the data's usefulness can be maximized. This is one of the stated goals of the Privacy Committee that we believe would make more sense as part of a more targeted "Data Governance" initiative and tied to the reworking of the Researcher-Supporter program.

Incidentally, one of our members has offered a grant to help answer some of these questions, especially around DITL: who's using the data; what are the access barriers that prevent researchers from using it; and, how do we make it more attractive, useful, and accessible?

One of the outcomes of such an undertaking would be to establish a normalized catalog of existing datasets, with associated metadata (provenance, origin, format, privacy considerations, and any context information) that can be of use to those consulting the catalog.

Cost constraints and the availability of Crunchy DITL could help fast-track a discussion to define which data should be online at all times, which could be moved to cloud/cold storage, and what changes to data sharing agreements (if any) would be required to allow this.

Finally, the idea of having a Research Committee (at least one person expressed interest) to field, evaluate, and follow-up on requests to access the data) has been considered (cf. point 8 under Retreat Outcomes). More on this soon!

Administration

Behind the scenes a lot of work has been done by our Administrative and Operations Coordinator, Rebecca, working to modernize, streamline, and automate administrative and bookkeeping processes at OARC, Inc. Since Fall 2024, she has taken over most bookkeeping, invoicing, and bill payment.

In addition to this, Rebecca took on most of the event planning functions for Events: for OARC 45,

she is the primary contact person and project lead, engaging with external vendors and partners, and providing logistical support for the Programme Committee, all the while coordinating internally with the rest of the team.

Below are some of the improvements to the administrative and financial internals.

Bookkeeping & Accounting

Streamlining and integration

- tighter integration of our financials/bookkeeping, banking, and budget platforms
- reduction or outright elimination of manual entries
- improvements to the chart of accounts to increase the detail and transparency in budget tracking.
- improved workflow for producing estimates and turning them into invoices

2024 Accounting and Bookkeeping Review

With generous support from ISC, their accounting team helped us review 2024 bookkeeping processes and accounting practices, suggesting adjustments and corrections where necessary. This resulted in a change in the recognition of the revenue from membership dues, which greatly simplifies our bookkeeping and end-of-year financial review.

Process & Portal Improvements

- conducted a comprehensive review of internal procedures to identify redundancies and improve efficiency
- portal changes implemented to reduce administrative overhead during the Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- additional portal enhancements are planned to further simplify future operations

Collaboration, project planning and communication

- started process to find external hosted solutions for email, project planning and document collaboration
- researched and adopted Zoho One for integrated project management, collaboration, and communication
- OARC 45 used as a pilot project to define tasks, timelines, and (in the next phase) project costs

OARC's mission & priorities

Something I've been regularly asking when discussing OARC, Inc's strategy and goals, is: What do we mean when we talk about DNS-OARC, or OARC? In the 2025 Member Survey, we included the following clarification:

- **"DNS-OARC"** refers to the community behind the membership organization, sometimes shortened "OARC"
- **"OARC, Inc."** refers to the non-profit corporation tasked with carrying out DNS-OARC's mission, including but not

limited to managing technical resources, organizing events, supporting the PC, maintaining software and services, collecting and sharing DNS data, for the benefit of DNS-OARC members and the wider DNS community.

From a broad perspective, DNS-OARC's mission rests on the following "pillars":

- Community
- Events
- Data
- Software & services

The mission, in its simplest form, is to enable peer-networking, collaboration and information sharing to support and improve the security, stability understanding of the DNS.

These pillars—or areas of interest—represent a mix of community-driven engagement, and staff-facilitated initiatives, projects, and event-planning.

Our community of DNS operators, researchers, and developers thrives best when there is alignment between: the stated goals of DNS-OARC's mission; the interests of the DNS community and DNS-OARC Members; and the objectives set by OARC, Inc.'s Board of Directors for the staff to implement.

Some key questions we ask ourselves, to guide our strategy:

- What are the current interests of DNS-OARC Members, and by extension, of the wider DNS community?
- What are the priorities? At what cost?
- When is it time to revisit long-standing precepts and principles, if not when the economics (that is, the intersection of benefits/relevance, and cost) urge us to reevaluate previous priorities?

Assuming DNS-OARC's mission and the interests of the DNS community are still aligned, our objectives boil down to:

1. Reduce cost
2. Increase relevance
3. Diversify income

It would be naive to conclude that reducing costs is simply a matter of reducing the scope of our activities.

We owe it to ourselves to determine, through dialog and research, the relevance of our activities, not only to our Members but to the rest of the DNS community. If an activity is no longer relevant (to whom?), then it's not a difficult decision. But when the sustainability of an activity, however important it is perceived to be, is in question we must find acceptable trade-offs that satisfy current expressions of interest.

Reaching sustainability also requires us to explore ways to increase OARC's relevance, provided it doesn't contradict OARC's core mission or jeopardize its neutrality. Some of these new initiatives take the form of pre-existing, ad-hoc activities within the community that would gain prominence by

being elevated to a more visible, official status—for instance, Best Practice recommendations, and Collaboration and Coordination around DNS Incidents.

This ties into the last objective: securing funding—from Members and others—to facilitate the above—and other opportunities we believe can increase OARC's visibility and relevance.

Next Steps

Over the coming weeks, once the dust settles down, I will be working with the Board of Directors to review our strategy and evaluate achievements for 2024-2025. I will then work with the rest of the team to set priorities for the rest of 2025. As we get closer to the end of the year, and we have a better idea of the expected results for FY 2025, we'll put together our 2026 budget, and a timeline for the objectives for the coming year. I am looking forward to another year serving the DNS-OARC community, with the help of my team.