Origins

In 2013 the GNSO Council determined that the current GNSO Working Group Guidelines, which form Annex I of the GNSO Operating Procedures, did not contain a mechanism for Working Groups (WGs) to self-assess their work. Accordingly, the Standing Committee on Improvements Implementation (SCI) was tasked to develop and test a WG self-assessment questionnaire, as a result of which the SCI recommended that procedures for administering the self-assessment be added as a new Section 7.0 (see relevant section below) to the GNSO Working Group Guidelines. The revised GNSO Operating Procedures were put out for public comment, with no comments received in the public forum, leading the SCI to deem that no further changes were necessary. At its meeting on 26 March 2014 the GNSO Council approved a motion adopting the revised [Operating Procedures](#) that included the Working Group self-assessment section.

From the GNSO Operating Procedures: Section 7.0: Working Group Self-Assessment

The GNSO Council or any of its sub-groups may decide to utilize a WG anytime they think that community wide participation is advisable for resolving issues. It should be emphasized that WGs are not intended to apply to policy development processes solely.

A WG Self-Assessment instrument has been developed as a means for Chartering Organizations to formally request feedback from a WG as part of its closure process. WG members are asked a series of questions about the team's inputs, processes (e.g., norms, decision-making, logistics), and outputs as well as other relevant dimensions and participant experiences. Screenshots of the questionnaire have been assembled into a PDF (see link below) so that WG participants can review, in advance, how it is designed and what specific information will be solicited.

During the WG's closure process, coordinating with the Chair, Staff will provide a unique link (URL) to the online questionnaire along with open and close dates and any specific instructions. Staff will then perform the following actions:
- *Monitor the online process providing status updates to the WG Chair;*
- *Provide technical assistance to WG members if requested;*
- *Notify the Chair when all team members have completed the questionnaire; and, following the close date,*
- *Summarize the feedback in a written report to the Chartering Organization*

The Final Questionnaire is available here: https://community.icann.org/x/nTXxAg. At a high-level, the elements in the questionnaire include 4 sections that seek to consider the overall effectiveness of the WG.

Section 1-Inputs *...includes the charter/mission, team members, tools, and resources.*

- A) <u>Charter/Mission</u> of the WG; B) <u>Expertise</u> of WG Members; C) <u>Representativeness</u> of WG Members; D) External <u>Human Resources</u> (e.g., briefings, experts, consultants, liaisons) provided to the WG; E) <u>Technical Resources</u> (e.g., systems, tools, platforms, templates) provided and utilized by the WG; and, F) <u>Administrative Resources</u> (e.g., support, guidelines, documentation) provided and utilized by the WG.

Section 2-Processes *...includes norms, operations, logistics, and decision-making.*
- A) <u>Participation</u> climate within the WG; B) <u>Behavior</u> norm of WG members; C) <u>Decision-Making</u> methodology (e.g., consensus); and, D) <u>Session/Meeting</u> (e.g., agendas).

Section 3-Products and Outputs
- A) WG's primary <u>Mission</u>; and B) <u>Quality</u> of the WG's outputs and/or deliverables.

Section 4-Personal Dimensions
- A) Personal <u>Engagement</u> in helping the WG accomplish its mission; B) Personal <u>Fulfillment</u> considering the time, energy, and work efforts contributed to this WG; and, C) Assuming all other conditions are suitable (e.g., subject, interest, need, fit, availability), personal <u>Willingness-to-Serve</u> on a future ICANN Working Group.

Recent Practices / Questions

For WGs that have completed since the Council adoption of the self-assessment survey requirement (i.e., 26 March 2014), carrying out surveys has not always been consistent (e.g., surveys are not all deployed at the same stage, may not be deployed at all, results are not always shared in the same manner). The GNSO Operating Procedures refer to 'as part of its closure process', which has typically been understood as meaning following the delivery of the Final Report, but in certain cases a WG may remain active or on standby long following that action. Similarly, although a self-assessment as part of the closure of a WG may provide valuable information that can inform future efforts, it is obviously too late to address this for the WG in question which could have benefited from improvements should these have been identified earlier.

Given the uneven nature as well as in light of the PDP 3.0 discussions in relation to more effective oversight and review, it may be worth considering several questions to determine if improvements might make sense:
- *At what stage should the survey be deployed? At delivery of the Final Report? Upon adoption (or other final action) by the GNSO Council? Should this be left flexible, or is there value in establishing a consistent practice here?*
- Instead of a single survey at the end of the WG's lifecycle, would it make sense to do periodic surveys (e.g.,annually), especially where the PDP operates for multiple years? Would periodic check-ins help surface issues earlier that could both assist PDP leadership and the Council to address these? Similarly, could the survey be adapted to also cover PDP 3.0 Improvement #13 - Review of Working Group Leadership?

- Are the survey questions still fit for purpose? Do any need to amended, added, or removed? Should a decision be made to move to period surveys, should these be different depending on where the WG is at in its lifecycle?
- Should the survey results be consolidated in a single space? How and who will be responsible for reviewing the survey results and possible course corrections?

Considering and Enacting Changes

The Council can elect to consider the questions above, or others in conjunction with the PDP 3.0 conversations. The manner in which it does so is then also subject to Council discussion, with options including establishing a drafting team, working group or Council directing staff to develop proposed changes.

If through whatever mechanism, any changes are suggested, the type of change may affect how they are deployed. For instance, if the changes are limited to changing the survey form, it is within Council's remit to make these changes on its own (or direct staff to do so), with additional consultation optional. However, if changes are proposed to the GNSO Operating Procedures, a public comment will be necessary, followed by Council adoption and implementation.