



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

31 January 2017

Dear Chairs of Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees:

We are writing to update you on the latest development regarding the launch of the third Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3).

You may recall that in 2015 the [ICANN Board delayed the start of ATRT3](#) until 2017. In response to concerns raised by NTIA about delaying ATRT3 until 2017, ICANN [noted](#) that the Call for Volunteers to form the ATRT3 Review Team would be launched in January 2017. Since then, ICANN Org has been working with that timeframe, also shared with the community. With the work of the CCWG Accountability WS2, and some topics similar to ATRT3, in August 2016 the [CCWG Chairs communicated to the ICANN Board Chair](#) proposing to delay ATRT3, or limit its scope. In response to the request, the ICANN Board Chair [communicated](#) that this is a community decision, and the CCWG Accountability group should consult with the wider community. As recent as December 2016, the CCWG-Accountability Co-Chairs, in response to the communication from the ICANN Board Chair and the planned January 2017 launch date, [contacted the SO/AC Chairs](#), proposing a limited scope for ATRT3 as well as a reduced-size Review Team to avoid any overlap with ongoing WS2 work. Since the request from the CCWG Chairs, and the communication to the SO/AC Chairs, no community guidance on the scope or timing of ATRT3 has been provided. Please refer to Appendix 1: Context and Chronology for more details and links to the supporting documentation.

As ICANN Org is not aware of any collective community response to the CCWG-Accountability Co-Chair's request, nor has there been any community feedback to ICANN, we must remain consistent with the commitments made to be accountable to the review requirements. While we are acutely aware of the significant number of community efforts currently under way, it is not an appropriate ICANN Org decision to delay the launch of this important review at this late state, taking ICANN out of compliance with our prior commitments and communications on this issue. Therefore, a Call for Volunteers to serve on the ATRT3 will be issued by 31 January 2017. The ICANN Board is supportive of this plan.

While the Call for Volunteers is underway, we encourage you to reach out to your colleagues and inform us of the community's decision regarding any change to the scope of ATRT3. If the community reaches a decision to limit the scope and/or reduce the size of the Review Team after the Call for Volunteers is published, the appropriate adjustments based on community input and consensus can be made. Please note, the ATRT3 Call for Volunteers will remain open until 21 April 2017, providing time for the community to respond to the CCWG-Accountability Co-Chairs and potentially limiting the scope and reducing the size of the Review. We plan to hold an open session during ICANN58 to allow for community-wide discussion on this important subject.

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Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you need further clarifications or any questions you may have.

Many thanks and kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larisa Gurnick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larisa Gurnick

Senior Director

Multistakeholder Strategy and Strategic Initiatives



## Appendix 1: Context and Chronology

The specific objectives for the Accountability and Transparency (ATRT3) Review are to review the effectiveness of ICANN Accountability and Transparency and to make recommendations for improvement.

ICANN Accountability and Transparency Review originated under the Affirmation of Commitments in 2009 and effective 1 October 2016 has been incorporated into ICANN Bylaws.

ICANN [Bylaws](#) stipulate that, “The Accountability and Transparency Review shall be conducted no less frequently than every five years measured from the date the previous Accountability and Transparency Review Team was convened.” That would mean that the Call for Volunteers would take place no later than 4 October 2017. However, prior to the incorporation of this review into the ICANN Bylaws, several events took place leading up to ICANN’s current commitment to launch the Call for Volunteers for ATRT3 in January 2017.

The information presented below provides an overview of events leading up to this Call for Volunteers.

- **October 2012** – [Call for Volunteers](#) for the Second Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT2).
- **February 2013** – Review Team (ATRT2) [announced](#).
- **December 2013** – ATRT2 issued [Final Report](#) and Recommendations.
- **June 2014** - the ICANN Board of Directors accepted all twelve ATRT2 Recommendations and directed the President and CEO of ICANN, through his designee(s), to proceed with the implementation - [Resolution 2014.06.26.14](#). For more information on the status of the implementation activities, please visit the ATRT2 Implementation [Wiki](#).
- **July 2015** - In response to community concerns about workload, the ICANN Board delayed the start of ATRT3 until July 2017 via [Resolution 2015.07.28.09](#). Note that under the Affirmation of Commitments, reviews were on a shorter cycle.
- **January 2016** - In response to concerns raised by The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) about delaying ATRT3 until July 2017, ICANN [noted](#) that the Call for Volunteers to form the ATRT3 Review Team will be launched in January 2017.
- **August 2016** - the Co-Chairs of the Cross Community Working Group on ICANN Accountability (CCWG-Accountability) [wrote](#) to the ICANN Board, presenting possible options of how to combine WS2 efforts and the ATRT3 work, to avoid work duplication. The co-Chairs took this step because as the IANA Stewardship Transition was being completed, and the ICANN Community was engaged in Work Stream 2 (WS2) to address remaining issues, many of the WS2 topics were related to issues expected to be addressed in the ATRT3, i.e. accountability and transparency.

- **October 2016** - The ICANN Board [responded](#) that *“It is not up to the Board to dictate the scope of this important community review. While we share the concerns raised of avoiding duplication of resources, it is essential that the broader ICANN community have a voice in determining how the ATRT3 should be scoped in alignment with the Bylaws. The Board and the ICANN Organization stand ready to support the community’s direction.”*
- **December 2016** - the CCWG-Accountability Co-Chairs [contacted the SO/AC Chairs](#), proposing a limited scope for ATRT3 as well as a reduced-size Review Team. They suggested that, if the broader ICANN Community agrees with the proposal and rationale, the SO/AC chairs issue a public statement or a letter to the ICANN CEO and Board Chair that explains why a limited scope is appropriate and indicate the level of support among the ICANN community for this limitation. ICANN organization is not aware of any collective community response to the CCWG-Accountability Co-Chair’s note.