
MONTREAL – SSR2 Meeting with Board Caucus Group
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 – 15:45 to 16:45 EDT
ICANN66 | Montréal, Canada

KAVEH RANJBAR: So let's start the Board caucus meeting with the SSR2 review team.

Russ, with your permission, I will open up the meeting. Okay.

So, welcome, everybody. Thank you for joining us. Basically we are here to -- we had one session with the Board caucus.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: This meeting is being recorded.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you.

The Board caucus-SSR2 had one meeting prior to this with the review team. And, yeah, that meeting -- that was found useful both by the Board and by team members, at least the few I've heard from. And we thought it was good to have another meeting. I think there was some mention in the team, but there was also interest from the Board.

For today's meeting, at least from the Board side -- and I will welcome any addition from the SSR2 team, we are looking to cover two items. One is the request for additional funding, which came from the review team to the Board. And we have Xavier here who will cover it with Danko.

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And the second one is high-level update from the team, like, the direction you're going and if there's any huge impediments or anything that the Board can facilitate.

In the Board, we did -- we made a conscious decision not to comment on the specific recommendations at this point because we thought this is your space. You have to basically go -- do your work and then you submit. We'll comment.

Of course, if we see something which is completely wrong, we will point it out. But we haven't observed anything like that at least so far.

So let's start with -- I think it's best -- because we might go over time when we talk about direction of the work, I think it's best to start with additional funding request.

And with that, I will pass to Danko to open the discussion, except if Russ or anyone else from the team has -- so let's open up the discussion.

In short, the team asked for additional funding and we discussed it in the caucus and Board Finance Committee and with the CFO.

Danko, please.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

Okay. I was still starting my notebook so I will take this good luck with timing to ask Russ to tell us a bit -- a few words about the request and how did you actually come to this estimation that we discuss later. Then I will come back from the Board side.

RUSS HOUSLEY: Let me just make sure I understand the question. You want to know what's the basic work plan that led to that?

DANKO JEVTOMIC: Well, we had some information. But I presume that you had some assumptions behind that you used to come to this exact figure that you asked for.

RUSS HOUSLEY: Yes. I can walk through that. I mean, we didn't do the costing. We laid out what has to happen for the team to finish, and then it was costed from that.

So basically we looked at where we are. We have a draft set of recommendations now. In fact, those were shared with the community on Sunday as part of the engagement session. We think that we can get from here to a report that is available for public comment, if we're very efficient, in January. There are a few people in the team who think that's more aggressive than we can actually meet but we will try to be aggressive. We do want to be done. I promise you that.

[Laughter]

And then if you just take that as the place where the comment period starts and you go through all of the steps for the public comment, turn it over to the Board, address the comments, produce the final report, turn that over to the Board, that's where that number comes from,

assuming that we will need one face-to-face interim meeting to deal with those public comments.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

Okay. Thank you. We -- from the Board side, we had a discussion about this request at the Organizational Effectiveness Committee and both the Board Finance Committee, that I happen to be on both of them as the liaison to review team. So we took this very seriously.

We definitely want to this review to be successful and to support it in any way we can because we see it as extremely critical for the SSR2 remit of ICANN. Thank you for taking this I would say more -- as you said, more aggressive time line and approach to doing that.

So we -- from Board's perspective and from the finance way of trying to make things more prudent, we did try to have an understanding for the history of the review and how things came to be.

We also saw that more effective work is done in the face-to-face meetings. And this is probably one of the reasons why looking at this table of the costs and where the money was spent, where the most of the additional request for money is coming from. It's for that. So we kind of have an understanding for that, and this is how we supported it.

But having said that, it is very important for us that review really gets to be done within the new financial envelope. So we need to -- it is a complicated process to go behind a preapproved budget. So we have to go through all the steps from the Board side.

So we can recommend it to be done, but I think I need Xavier's help, if he's there. We included some additional language in the proposed resolution. I don't have it here. Maybe...

KAVEH RANJBAR: Xavier, if you start, I can make sure --

DANKO JEVTOVIC: I think we included in the proposal some specific language on the way how we --

XAVIER CALVEZ: Yes, thank you. So during -- so just back up for the members of the team. The process that we're applying to the additional request for budget for the review is to have a Board resolution that enables that additional amount of funding. And for that, there's a preliminary review by the Board Finance Committee and a recommendation that is formulated by Board Finance Committee to the Board. That's the standard process for either budget approvals or additional budget requests.

So the Board Finance Committee has done that work and has recommended to the Board, which will consider it on Thursday, to extend that additional amount of funding to the review.

As Danko was indicating, during the conversation, the BFC has reconfirmed the fact that it made sense to give that amount of money to be able to finish the review.

I think everyone, as Russ indicated, wants the review to be finished. And the Board Finance Committee's insistence was we need to have high chances that this is going to be the only time that we need to extend the envelope, is the point.

So the formulation of the recommendation from the BFC in the Board resolution as currently drafted that is submitted for Board approval is including the language to strongly encourage the team, this team, to ensure that it carries out the work plan as intended, despite the aggressivity of the time line that you were pointing out, Russ, so that it is finished by the timing that is -- and with the work plan that is suggested. So it's simply -- it's simply saying try to adhere to the work plan that you have developed so that you can effectively finish on time and within that additional envelope. That's basically what it is saying. Thank you.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

In the meantime, I managed to turn on my notebook. So the additional Whereas is: Whereas, the Board desires to emphasize (indiscernible) its duty of care that ICANN resources need to be utilized with fiscal prudence and responsibility, encourages the SSR2 Review Team to work diligently according to its revised work plan and time line so that additional resources requested are sufficient to complete its work. It's a formal document for the Board paper that we plan to accept at the full Board level.

KAVEH RANJBAR: You will see that full resolution tomorrow.

So any comments from the team or from the Board?

RUSS HOUSLEY: Like I said, it's a fairly aggressive one. We understand that. And I can say that we're all working and we'll do our best. Best we can do.

There's a fair amount of work ahead of us, but we are at the same time not just beginning.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Fair enough. And I think the incentives are aligned. Everybody wants to finish the work.

But -- and I know it's impossible to say we 100% commit to that, but is it -- because I was in the Board caucus meeting with the Board Finance Committee and because of all the budgeting issues and other restrictions, basically -- and Xavier, Danko, please correct me if I'm wrong. From the BFC side and from basically org finance, this is restriction we can make. The last one would be close to impossible, very hard.

So my question is: Should we explore that scenario? Let's say you cannot make it and we cannot provide additional funding for whatever reason, just as a scenario, hypothetical, should we explore that? Because that will put us in a deadlock. And I think it's good to at least think about that, what we can do about that.

Yeah.

RUSS HOUSLEY: I'm not sure what you're asking. Are you saying: What if there's another surprise?

KAVEH RANJBAR: Actually, from a process -- process point of view, maybe Xavier knows. So let's assume we are in such a deadlock that the review team is not able to deliver and they still need additional funding, but there is no way to provide additional funding at least in a fiscal year. At least there would be -- to be some weight, what would happen in such a scenario? A hypothetical.

RUSS HOUSLEY: I'm trying to understand what you mean by "deadlock." Are you saying we get another surprise like the three that we've talked about in the letter to the Board that causes us to not have the energy to finish or are you saying we're not able to achieve consensus?

KAVEH RANJBAR: No, no, for me it's like not having enough resources. You can't finish based on the work plan so you will need, let's say, two more meetings, which is additional funding, correct?

RUSS HOUSLEY: I see. I don't have an answer for that. If we're not done, we're not done, right?

KAVEH RANJBAR: I know. That's what I'm calling a deadlock. I just want to see --

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Can I make a suggestion? That might be a bridge we might like to jump off when we come to it rather than --

KAVEH RANJBAR: Okay.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: -- necessarily discuss it right now.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: At this moment I have confidence in the team. And I'm closely following their work, and I have the confidence that it will be done. In just short communication here with Denise, we concluded maybe we don't need a plan for something that we really hope that we will not come to.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Fair enough. Thank you. That's what I wanted to hear because what I heard from Russ was we hope to be able to finish. But yes, okay. Thank you. I think we have enough certainty in the room that we don't need to explore that possibility.

So is that enough for the finance additional funding request? Is there any comments from the team or -- yeah? Okay.

So with that --

RUSS HOUSLEY: Is there anyone on the team that wanted to follow up on that, just to make sure?

ZARKO KECIC: Thank you. I am the one who thinks that the work plan is very aggressive. I don't know how request is made, so I cannot comment on this exact request.

But in my belief, we won't be able to finish that till January actually before the meeting in Mexico, Cancun. Yeah.

LAURIN WEISSINGER: So this is Laurin. Question to the Board: Would it be simpler for you that we edit this and you approve a contingency funding in case something goes wrong? because if you say this would be easier for you to essentially not us spending the money and you just take it back into budget -- because -- as Russ, I'm not quite sure where this would otherwise go. Yeah.

KAVEH RANJBAR: I understand. I know we have Chris who wants to make a comment.

I don't think it's about how easy it is. Yes, there are complexities. It's about more financial discipline as I understand with that conversation with the BFC.

Chris, did you have a comment?

CHRIS DISSPAIN:

Let me just say that I think we've had a proposal. We've accepted the proposal. We are passing a resolution. I'd hate to see us taking that resolution off the agenda to play with it.

So my strong recommendation -- my strong recommendation would -- let's reconsider, no. So my strong recommendation would be that we stick with what we've got. We rely on -- you got the plan, you've asked for it, whatever.

And the only thing I would ask of you is that if you think there is -- if it appears that there are difficulties or if it appears that you may have underestimated or it appears that you then -- the sooner you tell us, the better. And we will deal -- we'll deal with that when it happens, I think. Thanks. If it happens, I apologize.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

Merike.

MERIKE KAEQ:

I would just echo what Chris said. I like the plan. And I feel confident and I'm usually an optimistic person also.

[Laughter]

But I like my optimism. And so just, you know, if you see in a few months that, you know -- that there might be some added challenges, just to please let the Board liaisons know and then we can handle expediently.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much.

Xavier.

XAVIER CALVEZ: I think that the message that simply the Board wanted to be able to convey is that it trusts the team to have a work plan that you guys have proposed and that you have ascertainment of confidence in that you simply want to make sure you can carry out as it is planned. And that's what the encouragements are about. And I think that if it doesn't happen like that, as everybody else has said, then we'll look at it again and see what it takes to finish and that's it. Thank you.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much, Xavier.

RUSS HOUSLEY: I think based on what you guys just said, I think it's an important observation that we will know at the end of January whether a draft

report is ready for public comment. And if it's not, you'll know that early in the year whether there's an issue or not.

XAVIER CALVEZ: Just to be clear, should that be the case, then you will then decide what the best ways to mitigate that and conclude in a different fashion that may not trigger that much more resource requirements, et cetera.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Yes.

XAVIER CALVEZ: That's why I think Chris's point about let's see if it happens is probably the best approach.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Okay. Any additional comment on that from the team?

Okay. So the second point -- and I had a short chat with Russ about that. There was an engagement session, and the slides are out there. And I think it was already shared with the Board but if not, I will make sure it is shared with the Board, the deck.

But in the meantime, I think it was good to have a high-level overview of the direction the project is going, the review is going and, also, if there's any feedback for the Board, that we can provide specifically. Because now we have the Board caucus members, so if there's anything

we can specifically do to provide support, I think it's just the best opportunity to hear about that.

So, Russ.

RUSS HOUSLEY:

Sure. There's four work streams that we have. The first is the bylaws-mandated review of the implementation of the SSR1 recommendations. And we found that most of those were not fully implemented. So we also observed that the way some of them were written, it was very difficult to tell what -- how to measure looking back, whether something was implemented or not. So what we tried to do is say what we were looking for in that implementation so that you can complete the job. And we just basically are writing one recommendation that says, Go ahead and finish those and here's the yardstick you can use.

A couple of them we found that at least looking from today's vantage that more should have been asked by SSR1 so we have follow-on recommendations that say, Finish what was proposed but also do these things.

Work stream 2 was about the SSR of the ICANN organization, and that's leading to some recommendations that basically say we need someone in the C-suite responsible for security and exclusively focusing on security, CISO, CSO. We are trying not to give it a name to the position, but you get the idea. And then risk management, continuity

management, and disaster recovery all are responsibilities that fall there.

And the DNS -- the SSR for DNS, which is the third work stream, we have more recommendations that are a little bit more diverse, easier to summarize, than that approach. But it has a lot to do with the compliance and DNS abuse-related things.

And the fourth work stream is the future challenges, those we are taking a look at things like cryptography that are coming along, the impact of DoH on the ecosystem, and those kinds of things so that people are -- can be prepared for those.

And we are also putting forward suggestions very much different than the way that the ATRT3 team is using that term.

We don't want to call them recommendations because they're not about SSR at all. They're about making the job easier for future review teams. So we had four of those.

So that's a summary of what we're doing. There's far more in the slides from Sunday. What we did is we put kind of a bulleted approach to summarizing each of the recommendations. And then there's a hidden slide. So if you download them, you can unhide it, that has the current draft of that text so you can actually see what we're -- a snapshot of where we are.

So now that we've basically laid out what the recommendations are, we're now working on putting together the flow of a report that puts together the findings followed by the recommendation. And we're

trying to make them very measurable so that when SSR3 comes along, however many years that ends up being, that they're built in -- they have a yardstick built into them so they can more quickly assess whether the implementation had the intended effect.

Is that helpful?

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much.

Yes, Danko.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Well, if you are starting comments first, I would like to thank Dean for the great work you're doing. It is very important for ICANN. And I was there for the engagement session. It was a very good presentation.

Personally, I'm a bit sorry that there were no more contracted parties there to maybe listen to those important stuff you were saying and maybe give a bit of feedback. So I was kind of expecting that, and in that way it didn't happen at the level I was expecting. But it's -- there were calls to come, so they knew about it.

I think that this team is in a bit challenged position because the SSR1 recommendations were not given in such a way that could be fully measured and in a way that lots of time has passed so you have a bit of large chunk of work in your plate and it's not easy.

Overseeing -- and what I see sitting on the OEC and overseeing reviews, I would generally review them as an evolutionary process. So one review team should do things that are possible to do and then lead to another.

But somehow, it happened that on your plate is something that is more of a bigger chunk than normal evolution is coming. So this is one of the reasons why you probably have so much work. And in doing that, you, I think, take a good approach.

Then one of the things that is also was discussed in the previous meeting with the caucus group was about the number of recommendations and the number in general. But I would say that number itself is not so important but, like, how to map those recommendations into something that is going to be an implementation plan. And in doing that, you are doing good work in creating them in a way that they could be measured.

Well, the document is -- the structure of the document now with the a technical writer is coming up fine, so it is -- it is a much better read and something that can be worked on. But I saw that probably because of the length of time that the review took, some of the recommendations -- the current formal recommendations is also going -- this is something that's related to the current work. For example, the recommendations about the IDN recommendations. And we have IDN Version 4 that has been on the agenda for the Board and then under request of the GNSO that is developing that bottom-up policy and communication with the citizens. So it was communicating -- it was taking away from the

agenda for additional work. So there is a recommendation that is directly related to that document, but it's coming somehow in the middle.

So this is something that probably cannot be avoided. It's probably a similar situation also with the NCAP review that is currently being implemented, and you have recommendation on that. That is also important and part of the sub pro PDP.

But I noticed the one thing also -- also during the calls, it's discussion about policy and contracting. So some of the recommendations related to the DNS abuse that we have this high-interest topic cross-community session today are giving specific recommendations that are -- I think I read are addressed to the org and to the Board that are actually, in my understanding of the way how we are doing ours, should be addressed in the PDP process.

So, for example, it is also about DNS abuse. It's rather easy to define it. But the more important question is what is inside the ICANN remit and how it can be implemented and what -- and in what way could it be done.

So I would generally like also in your further refined process to have a more precise addressing of the recommendations in a way that they can really be efficiently implemented so we can hopefully in a realistic time come back to doing them and going back into the nature of our constant improvement review processes.

Sorry for this long reply.

RUSS HOUSLEY:

It's okay.

You know, with so many moving parts, right, different parts of the community moving, my expectation is we will deal with much of it because we're aware of it. And if we miss anything, the part of the community that's working on it will tell us so at public comment and then we can fix it.

It's a problem when you do an assessment and you write your approach down and things keep moving even after that. So you do your best and that's why it's really bad when things take too long.

But I think you are aware of this as well, having watched it yourself. So we're trying to be helpful, not just, you know, create a laundry list. We also took the approach that we were not going to make any recommendations that didn't align with the strategic plan. So that was a good filter.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

Thank you very much.

I have Merike.

MERIKE KAE0:

Thank you for the update. I mean, being on the Board caucus, I'm trying to keep up a little bit as I can from what's publicly available on the website because I know that once the review actually comes out, right,

I mean, the Board does want to make sure that we have a very timely response to the review.

And it is a lot of work and very much appreciated. And I very much appreciate also that you are paying attention to structuring it in such a way that any ongoing reviews will have a much easier job to, first of all, take a look at, well, what was implemented in the past, right? And you have continuity moving forward. So I very much appreciate the thoughtfulness for that particular topic.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much. I have a question -- I don't know if someone knows bylaws by heart.

The charter for the SSR3, will it start from the start of SSR2 or when the (indiscernible)? Does anyone know that?

DANKO JEVTOVIC: If I remember -- oh, please.

SAMANTHA EISNER: I believe it starts from the kickoff of the review.

KAVEH RANJBAR: It's kick-off of the SSR2.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (off microphone).

DANKO JEVTOVIC: If I might jump in, we had a discussion about prioritization of streamlining of the reviews. But more importantly, currently we have ATRT3 review that is going through all the structures and how the processes are done. But we are trying also to prepare this prioritization document to see what is happening.

And one of the general issues that we are a kind of bottom-up organization that is flexible in doing community's bidding. But on top of that, we have these bylaws that were made by the community that are very strict in some senses, especially when it comes to the reviews. It's five years from the start of the review. So in a way, it would mean that it is almost impossible to finish this review due to implementation, see what are the results of doing the implementation -- implemented work for some time and then going to another review.

But this is something that the work on that has been done, and I would not lay that problem on top of the bulk of this review team.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Of course not. I would just asking for clarity. So now it's clear that not only you have a moving target but you have a moving source as well.

[Laughter]

Yes.

Okay. Yes?

RAO NAVEED BIN RAIS: This is Naveed for the record. I want to put a number of things in front of everybody to consider.

There's a significant amount of work that the review team had to do in many aspects. First of all, due to pause, there was -- it was like the previous work was almost lost. And we lost half the members. New members came in and they had to take some time in learning what is available. Things change within that period and all that.

Second, there was -- as Russ put it, the recommendations of SSR1 were not as measurable. And we all agree on that.

The third one is that sometimes it took a lot of time in getting the data about the particular recommendations to see where is their current implementation status. They might be there. But because the data is not available, we are not in a position to say whether they are fully, partially, or not implemented.

So one of the interaction that I had this week with the ATRT3 team, I suggested to them to recommend something like a dashboard that allow the implementation status to be maintained of all these review teams. I think if we have something like this, that would allow the future review team to automatically have the status of where each recommendation is in terms of its implementation. And that can be graphically maintained, like, start or middle or end or wherever it is. And you click on that and it gets you the data exactly where it is. So something like this, I think, if considered, would be really helpful.

So all that, again, is tied to our financial kind of thing. So because of all these three aspects that I highlighted, we -- of course, we have -- we consumed more than what was required. So that is one of the things to consider.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

Thank you very much. Thank you. That was understood, and that was considered when accepting additional funding.

But in general, if we want to fix this problem systematically, the right way is exactly as you mentioned, ATRT3, which you can engage as a review team and also individually because each one of you going through this process, you have a lot of experience which is very useful and shouldn't be lost for the next review of this kind, SSR3 or other ones. You might not want to be able to participate, but it's still very good to have -- to make that knowledge, incorporate that into the system.

And the ATRT3 is the way to do that. So please use that process. There will also be public comment through the whole process. Please use that to document that because then there will be actions. Or if there's nonaction, it will be documented that this is requested. So it's very valuable. My suggestion is to follow ATRT3.

Danko.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Yes, thank you. That's very important. But in addition to that, this is a great idea. It was partly also -- only we had similar idea but it can be improved with your feedback. The idea was to create recommendations registry that will actually follow all the recommendations so now we have lots of them from the Work Stream 2, CCT, and everything. Also follow them through and for the next review team that you can really verify that they have been implemented.

So for the community on one place on the website somewhere we can follow the whole, how to say, the life cycle of recommendation.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much.

Any other comments or questions related to that or anything else? Yes.

DENISE MICHEL: Thank you. Denise.

Coming back to your point about evolving activities and ongoing work, it's a bit of a moving target in some areas. One of those areas is that there are intersections between the CCT review recommendations and the RDS review recommendations and our report.

In fact, we have a recommendation that addresses and endorses some of the recommendations coming out of the CCT review and the RDS review.

Can the Board at this point give us some indication since a majority of the CCT review recommendations were not approved -- many were put on pause -- can we get an indication of what your plans are for at least for the paused recommendations?

And then, also, whether you plan to pause any of the RDS review recommendations and what type of time line you anticipate working on for those reviews so we can factor that into our recommendation that relates to both of those review recommendations. Thank you.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

I think Danko is the best because you are on OEC as well.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

Thank you for that question. I might not be the ideal person to answer about the CCT review because I'm only here for a year and that mostly happened before. But I'll try. And so you will correct me.

So one of the things I was also noting in some of the draft text recommendations there is a timing for implementation of some of them built in. But we are in quite a complex situation with the number of recommendations we are having and amount of part of the work that is happening. So CCT recommendations were not -- not accepted, some of them were directed to the proper SO/AC that they have to be happening. Some of them would require some PDP. But my understanding, so you correct me, I'm sure that you know it more precisely by heart, is that work on implementation is started. So we had implementation proposal documented, has been put out for the public

comment, and most of the recommendations from the CCT are about getting the data that is actually needed. And the main finding by the team, if I remember correctly, was that actually the CCT work was very difficult to do without appropriate data and that ICANN org should start collecting data that will enable another CCT review to work more effective.

So we started this process by implementing the implementations. We could start immediately without further analysis and we plan to pause because there have -- linked with some work that has to be done before that. We don't plan to pause any recommendations we are getting from this team, but we have to understand how prioritization of the work can be done because the work by the people in the org and the budgets and all the resources we have are limited and unfortunately not growing any more at the rate that happened before.

So we as the community have to do prioritization, and this is something that we will -- we are discussing now with the community and we don't see that as a top-down draw by the board to decide. We see that as something that community has to decide from all the work we have, all the recommendations that are coming from different sides.

Also recommendations are coming from the review teams, but there is also policy development process. This is actually foundations for the way how the ICANN works. So policy development process is something that is stronger than particular recommendations.

DENISE MICHEL: So the board will keep us posted on the 17 recommendations that were pending with no -- if deadlines are created or any type of --

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Absolutely. There is current implementation plan for the ones that are started, and the paused ones are not forgotten, absolutely.

KAVEH RANJBAR: So to add to that, because I know that was requested from technical writer (saying name) to basically do a comparison of the overlap between the current recommendations of the SSR2 and CCT. That document was since released, and I think I also shared that with the board which is I think that will be useful document because we can look at these ones have overlaps so they might be higher priority. We will also look into that, I guess, when we're going through the reviews and that can also have an effect on okay, prioritizing which CCT recommendations we want to revisit.

So any other comments or questions? If not, we'll conclude this meeting. Thank you very much. Thank you. Cheers.

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