Root Server System Governance Working Group
Teleconference #11 | 23 July 2020 | 22:00 UTC

ATTENDANCE

RSS GWG
Luis Diego Espinoza   ccTLD Registries Representative
Ted Hardie   IAB Representative
Geoff Huston   IAB Representative
Lito Ibarra   Alternate Liaison from the ICANN Board
Peter Janssen   ccTLD Registries Representative
Lars-Johan Liman   RSO Representative
Kurt Pritz   gTLD Registries Representative
Naela Sarras   Liaison from the IANA
Tripti Sinha   Liaison from the ICANN Board
Brad Verd   RSO Representative
Duane Wessels   Liaison from the Root Zone Maintainer
Hanyu Yang   gTLD Registries Representative

ICANN org
Adiel Akplogan
Xavier Calvez
Paul Hoffman
Carlos Reyes
Mary Wong

Observers
Yaxian Li

Apologies
Joe Abley   SSAC Representative
Hiro Hotta   RSO Representative

MINUTES

Call to Order
Ted Hardie called the teleconference to order at 22:02 UTC and reviewed the proposed agenda.
There were no objections to the agenda.

Administration

Carlos Reyes reviewed the draft minutes of teleconference #10 on 9 July 2020. There were no objections to publishing the minutes.

ACTION ITEM: Carlos Reyes to publish the approved minutes on the RSS GWG workspace.

The RSS GWG reviewed the draft report to the ICANN Board Technical Committee (BTC). Geoff Huston suggested adding more context about RSS GWG progress against the work plan and asked if the report can be shared. Ted Hardie confirmed that the report can be shared; the next report will provide more information about the timeline of RSS GWG work. There were no objections to publishing the report.

Brad Verd reiterated the point that root service and Public Root Services (PRS) (or whatever model the RSS GWG approves) should be tied to the root zone and Public Technical Identifiers (PTI). Geoff Huston asked for more clarity. Brad Verd explained that PTI was created as a subsidiary of ICANN to allow it to move away from ICANN if necessary. Therefore, if PTI leaves ICANN, PRS should leave ICANN as well. Ted Hardie noted there is likely broad agreement with those statements and agreed to discuss this point in the future.

ACTION ITEM: Carlos Reyes to publish the approved report on the RSS GWG workspace and send it to the BTC.

Public Root Services (PRS) Proposal Discussion

Ted Hardie reviewed the current PRS proposal, thanking Naela Sarras for her feedback on the mailing list. The RSS GWG discussed the Strategy, Architecture, and Policy Function (SAPF). Ted Hardie noted that the SAPF will communicate only with the PRS Board. Brad Verd asked for clarification about the "Empowered Community for the PRS". Ted Hardie confirmed that this Empowered Community is not the same as the ICANN Empowered Community; it is the same term in a parallel structure at the subsidiary level. Brad Verd noted that this is a deviation from how PTI is structured, which Naela Sarras confirmed.

Lars-Johan Liman would like to see a potential mechanism that mirrors how the IETF has input about the IANA functions. The organizational home of the IANA has evolved, and Ted Hardie traced this relationship through a Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between ISOC and ICANN, ISOC and PTI, and the IETF LLC and PTI. Lars-Johan Liman noted that this design may be strange because there is no mechanism to create the flow of influence from the members of the PRS Empowered Community into the PRS Board.

Tripti Sinha noted the term "Empowered Community" may be confusing due to its ICANN context. Geoff Huston stated that alternative terms may suggest an advisory function, which the drafting team does not intend for the SAPF. The SAPF should have decision-making capability, and the PRS is where those community-based decisions are implemented. Tripti Sinha reiterated that the ICANN Empowered Community can spill the ICANN Board, for example.

Geoff Huston agreed that once the membership of the PRS Board is determined, the SAPF should have that power. Mary Wong agreed with the potential implications of the "Empowered Community" term. Ted Hardie confirmed that SAPF powers would be enumerated in the PRS Bylaws. The goal is to develop a relationship that is clear and not merely advisory.

Paul Hoffman asked about the composition of the SAPF. Lars-Johan Liman noted that the current RSSAC may not exist, and its evolved version with wider participation and different responsibilities would be reflected in the SAPF.

Duane Wessels asked about the purpose of PRS focusing on the distribution rather than the serving of root zone content. Ted Hardie noted that the intent is to convey that PRS ensures that the system by which the public has access to information in the root zone is robust.

Brad Verd asked Lars-Johan Liman to clarify if the RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus would not exist at all. Lars-Johan Liman explained that some functions of the RSSAC could be assigned to the SAPF. Tripti Sinha noted that any changes to the RSSAC would have to be captured in the ICANN Bylaws. Lars-Johan Liman stated that the RSS GWG work will require changes to the ICANN Bylaws. Ted Hardie noted the concerns about distinguishing between the RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus. The relationship between the PRS Board and SAPF should be community-based. If the PRS Board or even the ICANN Board appointed the SAPF, then there would be other structural issues.

Ted Hardie stressed the need for a simple organizational structure that captures ICANN concerns as it relates to root zone operation, including advice from subject matter experts to decision makers. Lars-Johan Liman said that a new structure could lift some of the responsibilities the ICANN Board feels it has to interact with and worry about the Root Server System, and maintaining a relationship is still important.

Ted Hardie asked for feedback from the RSS GWG. Xavier Calvez asked the RSS GWG to consider providing a rationale for why a separate legal entity is necessary and its desired effect. Ted Hardie agreed to make this clearer. There are two reasons for a subsidiary of ICANN: 1) Focus of purpose and 2) Autonomy of operations to execute the MoUs. Xavier Calvez noted that a separate legal entity could also complicate governance and that there is also no autonomy for a subsidiary.

Ted Hardie pointed to the recent IETF LLC process which considered similar issues. Any changes between a parent organization and its affiliate would be very obvious. This provides more transparency. Ted Hardie encouraged alternative proposals. Xavier Calvez noted the operational realities of the PRS proposal needs to account for specificities such as resourcing to carry out the purpose of the affiliate. Ted Hardie stated that the parallels between existing operations of the IANA functions in the case of the establishment of PTI and global root service and the PRS proposal are not the same because the RSS GWG is inventing new functions and structures.

Luis Diego Espinoza noted that it is possible for an affiliate to operate with some level of autonomy even with funding from the parent organization.

Any Other Business
There were no additional agenda items.

Adjournment
Ted Hardie adjourned the teleconference at 23:04 UTC.