

RSSAC2 Organizational Review Implementation Progress Report

Submitted on 13 December 2021

Background

- On 28 September 2017, ICANN appointed [Interisle Consulting Group, LLC](#) to conduct an independent review of the Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC).
- The independent examiner published its [final report of the second RSSAC review](#) on 2 July 2018.
- On 2 October 2018, RSSAC Review Work Party published the [Feasibility Assessment and Initial Implementation Plan](#) (FAIIP).
- The ICANN Board accepted the final report from the independent examiner, and the FAIIP on 3 May 2019. The ICANN Board also directed the RSSAC to convene an RSSAC review implementation working group that drafts a detailed implementation plan of the recommendations, as detailed in the FAIIP, including appropriate implementation costing.
- The RSSAC approved the RSSAC2 Review Detailed Implementation Plan in its meeting on 7 January 2020.
- On 12 March 2020, the ICANN Board accepted the [RSSAC2 Review Detailed Implementation Plan](#) and directed the RSSAC2 Review Implementation Work Party (RWP) to continue implementation, and to provide updates to the Organizational Effectiveness Committee of the ICANN Board (OEC) through written implementation reports on progress every six months. The first report will be submitted by 30 June 2020.
- The RSSAC2 RWP submitted its [first implementation progress report](#) to the OEC on 24 June 2020.
- The RSSAC2 RWP submitted its [second implementation progress report](#) to the OEC on 9 December 2020.
- The RSSAC2 RWP submitted its [third implementation progress report](#) to the OEC on 3 June 2021.

Overview of the Implementation Progress

RSSAC Review Implementation Work Party (RWP) notes that the RSSAC accepted and provided a detailed implementation plan for six recommendations that came out of the second organizational review of the RSSAC.

The RWP determined that the following two recommendations have been implemented:

- **Recommendation 3:** Formalize the responsibilities of the RSSAC to the ICANN Board and Community in a work plan that is periodically reviewed and published; and hold the RSSAC accountable for work plan deliverables.
- **Recommendation 4:** Develop and implement a leadership training and succession plan.

The RWP determined that the implementation of the following two recommendations is ongoing:

- **Recommendation 3a:** Engage in ongoing threat assessment and risk analysis of the Root Server System and recommend any necessary audit activities to assess the current status of root servers and root zone.
- **Recommendation 5:** Engage more actively with the rest of ICANN and its Community.

The RWP determined that the implementation of the following two recommendations is dependent on the progress of Root Server System Governance Working Group:

- **Recommendation 1a:** Extend RSSAC membership by invitation to any qualified person.
- **Recommendation 6a:** Develop a more effective and transparent process for defining RSSAC Caucus projects, engaging its members and managing its membership, managing its work, and promoting its output.

Detailed Implementation Progress

Recommendation 1a	
Recommendation	Extend RSSAC membership by invitation to any qualified person.
Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation	Whatever governance model the Root Server System Governance Working Group develops will likely contain a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus. Therefore, this work will determine how RSSAC implements this recommendation.
Implementation timeline	Per the work plan of the Root Server System Governance Working Group, it will take roughly a year (2020) to develop the final governance model for the Root Server System and then another year of review and approval (2021). Therefore the implementation of a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus (of their successor structures) could take place in 2022.
Detailed implementation steps	<p>Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG) develops a final governance model, which includes a new membership model for the RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus.</p> <p>Root Server System Stakeholders approve the final governance model.</p> <p>New membership model takes effect.</p>
Implementation progress to date	In the Feasibility Assessment and Initial Implementation Plan (FAIIP) and RSSAC2 Review Detailed Implementation Plan , RSSAC Review Work Party (RWP) anticipated that the new governance model being developed by the Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG) would contain a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus. The direction of the RSS GWG work currently shows that Recommendation 1a may not be addressed by the new governance model being developed. In the event that this recommendation is not addressed by the RSS GWG work, RWP will not take any actions in order to implement this recommendation. RWP will continue to monitor the

	progress of the RSS GWG work, which has been on hold since mid-2021.
Implementation costing	Costs for supporting a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus are already assumed in standard community support from the ICANN org Policy Development Support function. ICANN org has committed to support the work of the RSS GWG.

Recommendation 3	
Recommendation	Formalize the responsibilities of the RSSAC to the ICANN Board and Community in a work plan that is periodically reviewed and published; and hold the RSSAC accountable for work plan deliverables.
Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation	The RSSAC reviewed the work plans of the SSAC and various other community groups including policy development process working groups for models of what to adopt.
Implementation timeline	The RSSAC first published its annual work plan in March 2019 and reviewed it in December 2019. The implementation effort was roughly three months (January - March 2019).
Detailed implementation steps	The RSSAC would develop a work plan template and share with the ICANN Board/community for feedback. The RSSAC would publish its work plan and regularly update it.
Implementation progress to date	The recommendation has been implemented.
Implementation costing	N/A

Recommendation 3a

Recommendation	Engage in ongoing threat assessment and risk analysis of the Root Server System and recommend any necessary audit activities to assess the current status of root servers and root zone.
Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation	Implementation of this recommendation is ongoing.
Implementation timeline	Implementation of this recommendation is ongoing.
Detailed implementation steps	<p>Upon realizing the need for focused efforts on specific issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The RSSAC would develop a statement of work and launch a work party. 2. The RSSAC would review the outcomes of the threat assessment and develop a document. 3. The RSSAC would publish the document.
Implementation progress to date	<p>The RSSAC continues to engage in threat assessment and risk analysis and looks forward to receiving potential work items where the ICANN Board and community believe increased focus is needed.</p> <p>The RSSAC Caucus had a work party studying the effects and mitigations of a rogue Root Server Operator (RSO). After more than a year's work, RSSAC published an advisory in July 2021 as the output of this work party. RSSAC056: "RSSAC Advisory on Rogue DNS Root Server Operators" aims to inform future RSS governance bodies on types of RSO activities that might be considered rogue.</p> <p>With the previous RSSAC publications noted in the previous implementation progress reports (RSSAC045: RSSAC Statement on Threat Mitigation for the Root Server System and RSSAC052: Statement on Recommendations for an Early Warning System for Root Zone Scaling) implementation of this recommendation is considered done.</p>
Implementation costing	Costs for supporting ongoing RSSAC threat assessment and risk analysis are already assumed in standard community support from the ICANN org Policy Development Support function.

Recommendation 4

Recommendation	Develop and implement a leadership training and succession plan.
Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation	Amending ICANN Bylaws
Implementation timeline	After the ICANN Board and Empowered Community processes concluded, implementation took less than two months and concluded in December 2019.
Detailed implementation steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The RSSAC would discuss its leadership structure and agree on revisions to current model or on a new model.2. If the RSSAC revises current model, the RSSAC would implement it.3. If the RSSAC approves a new model, the ICANN Board would adopt Bylaw changes, then the RSSAC would implement the new model.
Implementation progress to date	The recommendation has been implemented.
Implementation costing	N/A

Recommendation 5

Recommendation	Engage more actively with the rest of ICANN and its Community.
Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation	N/A
Implementation timeline	Implementation of this recommendation is ongoing.
Detailed implementation steps	The RSSAC will continue to engage with the ICANN community via its established liaison relationships, open work sessions and meetings, publications, and tutorials about the Root Server System. The RSSAC leadership will also continue to work with ICANN community leaders as necessary.
Implementation progress to date	<p>In the reporting period, The RSSAC appointed its representative to the NextGen@ICANN Mentoring Committee. The RSSAC Chair conducts liaison review meetings with each of its incoming and outgoing liaisons every six months. Most recently these liaison review meetings were held in September 2021.</p> <p>The RSSAC continues to engage with the ICANN community by organizing joint meetings. At ICANN72 the RSSAC had a joint meeting with the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC) and another joint meeting with the ICANN Board of Directors. RSSAC continues to engage with the Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG). RSSAC recently published two documents to provide input to RSS GWG process: “RSSAC058: Success Criteria for the RSS Governance Structure” and “RSSAC059: RSSAC Advisory on Success Criteria for the Root Server System Governance Structure.”</p> <p>Implementation of this recommendation is considered done.</p>
Implementation costing	Costs for supporting ongoing RSSAC engagement with the ICANN community are already assumed in standard community support from the ICANN org Policy Development Support function.

Recommendation 6a

<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Develop a more effective and transparent process for defining RSSAC Caucus projects, engaging its members and managing its membership, managing its work, and promoting its output.</p>
<p>Activities, if any, on which implementation is dependent, or that are dependent on implementation of this recommendation</p>	<p>Rather than modifying the membership model and work processes of the RSSAC Caucus now, the RSSAC will closely follow the work and output of the Root Server System Governance Work Group. Any changes to the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus as a result of this work will be reviewed by the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus.</p>
<p>Implementation timeline</p>	<p>Per the work plan of the Root Server System Governance Working Group, it will take roughly a year (2020) to develop the final governance model for the Root Server System and then another year of review and approval (2021). Therefore the implementation of a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus (of their successor structures) could take place in 2022.</p>
<p>Detailed implementation steps</p>	<p>In early 2019, the RSSAC modified how RSSAC Caucus work is conducted. All substantive work party discussions, including draft and final report reviews, occur on the RSSAC Caucus mailing list rather than on individual work party mailing lists. This promotes broader engagement of the RSSAC Caucus members. The RSSAC continues to involve the RSSAC Caucus in determining its work projects and priorities.</p> <p>The RSSAC Caucus Membership Committee is assessing the individual engagement of RSSAC Caucus members. The output of this effort will provide the RSSAC with a better understanding of the levels of participation and contributions in the RSSAC Caucus.</p> <p>These two developments are incremental steps to improve RSSAC Caucus operations as the RSSAC marks six years since the establishment of the RSSAC Caucus.</p> <p>Any changes to the membership model of the RSSAC</p>

	<p>and RSSAC Caucus and the structural relationship between them as a result of Root Server System governance evolution will be reviewed and carefully considered before modifications to charters and operational procedures.</p>
<p>Implementation progress to date</p>	<p>The RSSAC Caucus Membership Committee continues to periodically assess the individual engagement of RSSAC Caucus members. RSSAC approved an RSSAC Caucus Member Recognition Program in July 2021. The Membership Committee is in the process of identifying RSSAC Caucus member(s) to recommend to the RSSAC for this recognition. Also, the Membership Committee conducted an RSSAC Caucus membership survey in September 2021. Findings from this survey were shared during the RSSAC Caucus meeting that was held in conjunction with ICANN72. Prior to the RSSAC Caucus meeting, support staff conducted an onboarding webinar with the new RSSAC Caucus members.</p> <p>Lastly, The RWP understands that the full implementation of this recommendation is dependent on the progress of the RSS GWG to some extent. RSSAC Review Work Party (RWP) anticipated that the new governance model being developed by the Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG) would contain a new membership model for the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus. The direction of the RSS GWG work currently shows that this anticipation may not be true. RWP will continue to monitor the progress of the RSS GWG work.</p>
<p>Implementation costing</p>	<p>Costs for supporting ongoing RSSAC engagement with the ICANN community are already assumed in standard community support from the ICANN org Policy Development Support function.</p>