

## Purpose, scope of activities and planning GRC 2.0

### 1. Introduction & Background

In 2019 the Final Report of the ccNSO review was published and the WS 2 Accountability Recommendations were adopted. Related, the ccNSO Council has been focusing on what needs to be done to increase the level of interest and participation in the ccNSO to remain to be able to deliver value to the community and get the work done.

As part of the process, and over two Council workshops “ How to Strengthen the ccNSO” (Montreal, November 2019) and “ Strategizing about the ccNSO” (Virtual workshop, June 2020), the ccNSO Council reviewed the purpose and value of the ccNSO and how to improve the delivery on work items.

With respect to purpose and value of the ccNSO, the Council agreed in July 2020 on the following statement:

The ccNSO provides **a global platform** for country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) Managers to:

- Undertake policy and policy related work,
- Nurture technical cooperation and skill building, share practices and discuss topics of mutual interest and concern,
- Engage with and be informed about other stakeholders in the ICANN environment on topics of mutual interest.

In addition, the ccNSO is one (1) of the three (3) ICANN Supporting Organizations and (1) of (5) Decisional Participants and is required to carry out related responsibilities required and mandated by the Bylaws.

Mapping the ccNSO activities against the various components of the statement resulted in the following “buckets” of work:

- Policy and policy related work
- Cooperation and discussion
- Engagement with other stakeholders
- Maintain and Improve platform function
- Organisational & Administrative Activities

After concluding its review of the role and function of the ccNSO, the ccNSO Council empathized the need for a coherent process to strengthen the roles and functions of the ccNSO by, but not limited to, balancing workload and resourcing and improving the governance of the ccNSO. This resulted in a request to the GRC to review its role as the group to continuously improve the working methods and governance of the ccNSO.

### 2. Review of the role of the GRC

In September 2021, after the request of Council and in anticipation of a leadership change, the GRC started its process of self-reflection on its future role, by conducting various workshop sessions.

Initially the discussion focused on the question whether the role of the GRC should change (expand or close) or other different aspect of its role be emphasized?

Expansion of GRC mandate could include:

- Working with other committees to discuss implications of those committees work on the guidelines
- Review with the chair (council chair) and make suggestions on an annual basis
- Perform such additional duties as delegated to the GRC from the Council

Another option may be to close the GRC after completing the current work-plan.

Based on the discussion the proposed future role and function of the GRC will be:

**Amended purpose statement GRC.** The purpose of the ccNSO Guidelines Review Committee (GRC) is to review the Guidelines (Operational Procedures) against the practices and working methods of the ccNSO and whether they match and/or identify potential gaps in the Guidelines and/or practices and working methods. If based on this analysis changes are suggested, propose these changes to the Council of the guidelines and/or practices and working methods for their consideration.

In addition, the GRC should advise and assist the ccNSO in matters relating to governance of the ccNSO

Compared to the current (from December 2014) charter<sup>1</sup> the role of the GRC will expand in the following areas:

1. Review working methods of groups against Guidelines (Operating Procedures)
2. If there is a gap between Guidelines (Operating Procedures) and working methods, propose changes of the working methods & practices and/or Guidelines (Operating Procedures)
3. Advise and assist the ccNSO in matters relating to governance of the ccNSO

**Work Item 01. The 2014 Charter of the GRC will need to be updated to reflect the proposed expanded role of the GRC.**

### **3. Outcome Strengths, Opportunities, Aspiration and Results Analysis**

Since the September 2021 meeting the GRC has conducted several additional workshops to discuss options to meet its restated purpose. These discussions resulted in the following aspirations, and adjusted working methods.

**Aspiration 1.** The GRC has a proactive advisory role to the ccNSO Council

**Result.** Smart Approach ( specific, measurable, agreed/achievable, realistic and timely)

**Result.** Broad support for the work of the GRC, people want to be engaged

#### **How to achieve result?**

1) **Review Notes and minutes as standing item GRC.** GRC to review the Council meeting notes as a standing agenda item at every GRC meeting. To ensure being aware on upcoming work items, and ensure follow-up. General review and see where work items fit into the revised purpose of the GRC. Impact is considered high, but effort as well.

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<sup>1</sup> **Purpose.** The purpose of the ccNSO Guidelines Review Committee (GRC) is to review the current guidelines and to ascertain whether they reflect current practices and working methods, identify potential gaps, and based on this analysis propose changes to the current guidelines to the Council.

2) **Monitor developments in community.** Council may not be aware of items ongoing in community, that may have an impact. If GRC is aware, GRC should make sure to bring them to attention of Council. There is a monthly written report as reporting into Council, but additional notification might be necessary. Although considered relatively easy to implement, benefit considered to be lower than other initiatives.

3) **Identify areas of interest for GRC and ask members to monitor developments in these areas.** Based on the purpose statement, GRC to identify areas of interest, and identify individual GRC members to monitor those areas of interest. Method is considered to be very beneficial, and relatively easy to implement

4) **Knowledge Elicitation.** GRC members to ask questions during a GRC meeting, for knowledge transfer purposes, to experienced individuals. Suggestion is to start with Bart, continue with ICANN legal, WS2 experts etc. This method is expected to have a high impact, but needs more planning and work.

5) **Subgroups GRC.** Use sub-committees of GRC members and others for particular sub-topics, to get broader support and to be seen to be more reactive. Caution: several sub-groups in parallel becomes too overwhelming, and the information flow between sub-groups, the GRC and Council needs to be clarified. As a sub-task: GRC to identify the topics that could be addressed by sub-groups. This method is expected to have a high impact, but needs more planning and detailing.

**Aspiration 2.** The GRC monitors how the guidelines develop over time, and whether they serve their purpose

**Result.** Broad support for the work of the GRC, people want to be engaged

**How to achieve the result?**

**Identify areas of interest for GRC and ask members to monitor.** Based on the purpose statement, GRC to identify areas of interest, and identify individual GRC members to monitor those areas of interest. Method is considered to be very beneficial, and relatively easy to implement.

Based on the initial impact & benefit and effort analyses by the GRC the following additional high impact work items are proposed to prepare the GRC for its future role:

**Work item 02: Develop & document method and ensure that the Council Notes and Minutes are reviewed as standing item GRC.**

**Work Item 03: Identify and document areas of interest for GRC and ask members to monitor developments in these areas.**

**Work item 04: Knowledge Elicitation.** The GRC is to develop and document a method to define a structured approach to solicit (historical) knowledge & Expertise, initially specifically for purposes of the GRC.

**Work Item 05: Develop and document method to establish sub-committees of GRC members and others for particular sub-topics, to get broader support and to be seen to be more active**

#### 4. Planning GRC 2.0

A. The GRC is expected to continue its regular work on developing (new) ccNSO Governance documents. In order of priority:

1. Complete update the 2004 Rules of the ccNSO (to be concluded by ICANN73)
2. Develop Conflict of Interest “policy” focusing on the Council, to be expanded to membership and WGs. Start early 2022, first step to be concluded in May 2022
3. Review and update current Guidelines and develop new procedures to reflect inclusion of IDNccTLD Managers in ccNSO (upcoming amendment Article 10 and Annex B). Propose by June 2022.
4. Complete proposals Board recall and Director Removal Guideline. To be concluded in August 2022 and introduce to membership in September 2022.
5. Review & update current Guidelines Rejection & Approval Action to align and simplify as much as possible. Introduce in September 2022.
6. Review and update Guidelines and practices.

B. In addition the GRC will need to complete the following work items to ensure it will meet its envisioned role, again in order of priority:

1. Develop and document method to establish sub-committees of GRC members and others for particular sub-topics, to get broader support and to be seen to be more active ( start with conflict of interest call for volunteers (to be completed by early 2022)
2. Update the 2014 Charter of the GRC to reflect the proposed expanded role of the GRC and adjusted working methods (to be completed by ICANN73).
3. Develop & document method and ensure that the Council Notes and Minutes are reviewed as standing item GRC.
4. Knowledge Elicitation. The GRC is to develop and document a method to define a structured approach to solicit (historical) knowledge & Expertise, initially specifically for purposes of the GRC.
5. Identify and document areas of interest for GRC and ask members to monitor developments in these areas

It is proposed that a small group of GRC members with support of the secretariat will focus on various work items under B.