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REGIONAL AT-LARGE ORGANIZATIONS

RALO Response to: The Independent Review of the ICANN At-Large Community Draft Report for Public Comment

Staff Process Summary

Following the publication of the At-Large Review Draft Report, the At-Large Review Working Party (WP), the At-Large group responsible for overseeing the Review, held weekly meetings to discuss the ways for the At-Large Community to respond. The discussions also took place via various mailing lists, Skype chat groups, and other communications channels of the At-Large Community. Initial input was gathered from the ALAC, the WP and wider At-Large Community through a number of means including webinars, wikis, Google Docs, teleconferences, and later face-to-face meetings.

A decision was made that in response to the public comment, the ALAC and the WP would submit one comprehensive response as an ALAC Statement, and it was suggested to Regional At-Large Organization (RALO) leadership that they should consider jointly submitting a separate response focused on the issues particularly relevant to RALOs.

RALO Chairs developed an initial draft of the RALO Statement based on a wireframe set of responses. Inviting their own community to comment, RALO leaders integrated input provided initially by their members, on behalf of the five linguistically and geographically diverse RALOs.

In addition, on 07 February 2017, Holly Raiche, ALAC Member of the Asian, Australian, and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO) and the WP Co-Chair, developed a table-based input tool to solicit At-Large members' input on each recommendation and implementation in the At-Large Review Draft Report.

On 16 February 2017, the first draft of the RALO Statement was posted on the [At-Large Review Working Party wiki workspace](#) and as a Google doc for RALO leaders and members to comment.

To effectively provide bottom-up input to the RALO Statement and as a parallel effort, the African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO) developed their [own Statement](#), the Latin American and Caribbean Islands Regional At-Large Organization (LACRALO) organized a [working group](#) and submitted their [own comment](#), and the North American Regional At-Large Organization (NARALO) held a [special purpose call](#) on this topic. Both the European At-Large Organization (EURALO) and Asian, Australasian and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO) discussed various versions of the draft RALO Statement on their monthly calls.

During ICANN58, the [At-Large Regional Leadership Meeting](#) on Monday, 13 March 2017 dedicated the majority of its time to review the draft RALO Statement. Outside the formal session and in coordination with the drafting team of the ALAC Statement, RALO leaders and members continued working in person and remotely to incorporate all the comments received in finalizing the RALO Statement. More than 30 contributors, including At-Large Structure (ALS) representatives and individual members, collaboratively brought their input and

comments to make up the present RALO Statement, which has evolved from several drafts. ALS and individual members have also been encouraged to review the ITEMS report and submit their comments in their individual capacity to the public comment proceeding.

On 24 March 2017, a final version of the RALO Statement was posted on the aforementioned wiki workspace. In the interest of time, the RALO leaders requested that the RALO Statement be transmitted to the ICANN public comment process, copying the ICANN Staff member responsible for this topic, with a note that the RALO Statement is pending formal ratification by the members of the five RALOs. Once ratified by all five RALOs, this RALO Statement will be resubmitted incorporating updated ratification information in the Staff Process Summary section.

On 07 April 2017, all five RALOs have ratified the RALO Statement and indicated their support. AFRALO, EURALO, and NARALO each conducted an online vote among its ALSes and Individual Members, which resulted in the endorsement of the RALO Statement. APRALO and LACRALO endorsed the RALO Statement via general consensus on their mailing lists ([APRALO](#), [LACRALO](#)).

Specifically, in the [AFRALO poll](#), 57.69% (30) of the 52 ALSes participate with 30 ALSes in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstention. In the [EURALO poll](#), 61.11% (22) of the 36 ALSes participated with 20 in favor, 1 against, and 1 abstention. In the [NARALO poll](#), 87.50% (21) of the 24 ALSes (the group of NARALO Individual Members was given one vote and treated as an ALS in this poll) participated with 19 in favor, 2 against, and 0 abstention.

Currently, the At-Large Community is consist of 222 ALSes and an increasing number of Individual Members across 100 countries and territories. Our ALSes vary in sizes, some with membership number at hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands. Individually and in a bottom-up fashion, the ALS representatives consulted with their wider membership to determine their votes in the online poll or the consensus call. For more information about the ALS representation across the world, please click [here](#).

At-Large Review Issues particularly pertinent to Regional At-Large Organisations (RALOs) and At-Large Structures (ALSes)

Regional At-Large Organisations (RALOs) and At-Large Structures (ALSes) welcome the independent review of At-Large, and look forward to improving our effectiveness in representing the end user interests in ICANN through adoption of appropriate recommendations made by the review process.

Further, we agree on several aspects of the analysis carried and some of the recommendations made by the ITEMS Review Team, particularly since we are already carrying out some of the proposed recommendations.

We have strong reservations on some of the recommendations, particularly those that weaken or subvert the existing structure of At-Large (ALSes and RALOs).

We understand that the thinking that prompted the ITEMS team to focus on individual users appears to be as below:

- 1. There are 3.7 billion Internet end users, but the vast majority of them are not interested in names, numbers and protocol parameters (which is ICANN's remit).*
- 2. The very few that are indeed interested and able to meaningfully participate (there may be a few thousand in the whole world) need to be encouraged to participate in ICANN as At-Large.*
- 3. The existing ALS-based participation is a barrier for these few people, as it adds several layers (ALS member -> ALS leader -> RALO Member -> RALO Leaders -> ALAC) for them to participate. Of course, they can participate as individuals, but then we do not need ALAC at all.*
- 4. Therefore, there should be direct, easy channels for these end users to participate as At-Large, which is being provided as Empowered Membership Model (EMM).*
- 5. It does not matter if the current ALS-RALO structure is undermined or even dismantled completely, as the current structures are too heavy-weight and too large for the small number of interested end users.*

We would like to point out that parts of the above analysis are flawed, and therefore the conclusions/recommendations based on it are also likely to be flawed.

In particular, we would like to draw your attention to:

1. At the surface, it might appear that the present RALO-ALS structure creates layers and barriers. However, most active ALSes promote direct participation for experts in policy, a learning environment for newcomers and a collegial atmosphere for interactions between experts and the number of people who are interested in Internet policy and are able and willing to contribute may be larger than a few thousand. For instance, ICANN develops policy for IDNs that may be of interest to a large number of end users (given the large diversity of languages and scripts). It would be important to facilitate their participation in any policy that may impact them, and we would need to ensure that they are provided sufficient capacity and information so that they can get involved.
2. Local ALSes provide a local language home to discussions involving At-Large. This local support is vital for any organisation covering vast regions of multiple countries, cultures and languages, especially when ICANN provides limited language support on policy work. To some regions, local language support is a key element to reach local populations - whilst virtually all work done in ICANN outside At-Large is carried on in English.
3. Individual users may come and go based on their current interests. However, there is no organizational retention of knowledge when they leave. With the ALS structure, individuals provide information that is retained in the ALS and in the RALO so that it gets built and refined over time.
4. ALSes provide additional capacity, even for individuals. For instance an individual may receive capacity building services, additional human resources (through other volunteers) and thereby get more things done. An individual volunteer is limited by their time and resources.
5. ALSes are required to attract newcomers to policy issues, provide them with added capacity through interactions with RALO and other experts, and help them to eventually become experts themselves. Thus, RALOs create, enhance and replenish the pool of policy contributors, while, in contrast, the proposed EMM does not provide any means of creating new experts.
6. The current suggestion of EMMs seems to be based on a few individuals who for whatever reason, are unable or unwilling to operate through the ALS/RALO system and who ignore open participation in working groups. Most RALOs and ALSes provide enabling support for volunteers to contribute, and those that have difficulties in operating through ALSes may opt for direct participation in RALOs as individual members. It may not be appropriate to base a model on outliers.
7. We are of the opinion that the RALO-ALS structure provides a global forum for participants to collaborate on policy, in the process enhancing diversity (for instance, gender diversity, which is enhanced through collaboration amongst women) and plurality.

8. Newcomers are encouraged to join working groups, irrespective of whether they are ALS representatives or individual users. Working groups are open to everyone.

While we support greater direct engagement of Internet end users, the EMM model proposed by ITEMS seeks to promote individual end users at the expense of existing ALSes and RALOs, which would destroy the structures and roles that At-Large has built over the last decade.

We propose measures through this document that would provide enhanced participation of end users *while at the same time preserving and enhancing the current RALO-ALS structure*, (thus a Win-Win proposition rather than the Win-Lose option in the EMM) through the following measures:

1. *Sensitizing ALSes* to the need for promoting interested individuals
2. *Designing a fast-track mechanism* for identifying interested individuals and depending on their capabilities, to add them to appropriate policy structures
3. *Providing outreach for domain name policy* at the ALS level with the specific intent of encouraging individuals
4. *Harmonizing individual membership rules* at the RALO level, noting that different RALOs follow their own distinct approaches
5. *Creating a mechanism at the Regional (RALO) level* to directly reach out to individuals (for instance in regional events and outreach programmes), particularly those from underserved areas, or those that are, for any reason, unable to provide inputs through ALSes.

We feel that the above steps, taken with the explicit intention of removing any real or perceived barriers in the participation of individuals in At-Large Policy, would help to enhance the quality and magnitude of individual members.

With these general comments, we provide below our opinion on the proposed recommendations.

Recommendation 1:

At-Large Members from each region should be encouraged, and where possible funded, to participate in Internet governance / policy-related conferences / events (IGF, RIR, ISOC) in their region, and to use these events as opportunities proactively to raise awareness among end users about the At-Large and the opportunities to engage in ICANN-related activities.

The RALOs support this recommendation. However, there are some details that may help better understand where RALOs stand.

The difficulty is the term to “participate”. Conferences tend to provide panel discussion opportunities to sponsors and preference for the ‘official and credible’ ICANN staff. A member of the audience is like a single tree in the forest with minimum opportunity to make an impact. First effort has to come from ICANN that automatically provides these opportunities on equal footing. The ALAC and RALOs need to coordinate and collaborate on this topic with ICANN Staff departments. Outreach needs to be focused – specifically targeting people who can do policy work in ICANN. Our community needs to make sure that funded members need to have an impact, e.g. speaking in panels and workshops related to our mission.

Collaborative work with regional & global partners as well as outreach on ICANN At-Large are both useful. In some cases, a delegation that is focused on its outreach (where possible) may be more effective than a single representative.

At-Large Members from each region are already encouraged to participate in Internet governance/policy related conferences/events (Internet Governance Forum (IGF), Regional Internet Registries (RIR), Internet Society (ISOC)) in their region as opportunities to raise awareness among end users about the At-Large and to proactively engage in focused ICANN-related activities. Where possible they are funded for their participation by ICANN.

Under the current model, ALSs are already doing this, with and without ICANN support. Some organizations coordinate with public and private organizations. Their members are normally invited as exhibitors at various local, regional and international events.

To this end, the RALOs have built and maintained a relevant calendar of regional events. Additionally, participation through writing op-eds and contributing on lists/chats etc. should be encouraged.

Recommendation 2:

At-Large should be more judicious in selecting the amount of advice it seeks to offer, focusing upon quality rather than quantity.

RALOs and ALSes would like to know to what extent an amount of advice is considered “too few” or “too many”.

High quality and professional comments requires an in depth knowledge beyond the scope and dedication of most of our members. The workload required of At-Large volunteers is continually of concern, so that it is important to identify and channel member expertise into areas where their knowledge and skills can help to build a strengthened focus for At-Large on specific technical topics. This would also bring quality participation into At-Large working groups and discussions.

Our long term project of a Policy Management Process System (PMPS)¹ seeks to address the serious problem of information overload by involving only those members who have an interest in a topic, tracking issues, providing all relevant information to volunteers when a public consultation takes place, including linking to tracking and history, and providing them with the ability to enhance their participation using better methods than email or WIKI. This is a complex task that would actually be of benefit to all sorts of Multistakeholder governance systems – not just the At-Large Community. But this is likely to still be some years away.

In the meantime, overall, RALOs need to project the positions of their ALSes and individual members on behalf of the larger end user community as and when required. With the diversity of viewpoints and interests, a quantitative cap cannot be put on such advice (assuming, of course, that it is relevant).

Recommendation 3:

At-Large should encourage greater direct participation by At-Large Members (ALMs) in ICANN WGs by adopting our proposed Empowered Membership Model.

RALOs agree in principle about the need for enhanced participation. The At-Large Community - including individuals and organizations, usually participates in WGs subject to their limitations and constraints. Despite At-Large encouragement for members to join Policy Development Process Working Groups (PDP WGs) and other cross community working groups, the uptake among newcomers is low mainly due to significant entry barriers caused by their limited knowledge of the topic and the workload commitment. There are possibly measures that may help in enhancing such participation (including capacity building) but the EMM is certainly not a required factor for this.

RALOs and ALSes do not agree that the adoption of the EMM will automatically solve this problem as there is no substantive evidence that the sole adoption of said model will likely increase individual participation. To impose such a radical and risky change on the RALOs and ALAC with a moderately long implementation time and without any certainty that it will succeed does not seem prudent.

This recommendation is trying to improve something with the wrong solution, resulting in exactly the opposite result. A direct membership model alone would significantly hinder the ability for the ALAC to develop bylaw mandated advice as it would make it far more difficult to coordinate views that could lead to a consolidated piece of advice on a given topic.

We consider that the Empowered Membership Model is not consistent with the consensus-based collective construction model from the bottom-up. We also consider it important that our

¹ A proposal of the Outreach and Engagement Sub-Committee that is currently submitted to ICANN for its evaluation and funding. This proposal was designed by the At-Large Community during its face to face ATLAS II meeting in London (June 2014) and been developed by the At-Large Technology Task Force.

volunteers have sufficient time to actively participate and commit. The Empowered Membership Model is imprecise in showing how it would solve the challenge of greater participation.

Taking each EMM implementation guideline in turn:

EMM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Implementation # 1: Adopt the Empowered Membership Model (EMM) as proposed to bring a greater number of end users directly into ICANN policy making processes, and or engaged in At- Large outreach activities (Section 11).

RALOs and ALSes welcome the idea of bringing more end users into ICANN's policy making process, but they do not believe that the EMM, in its entirety, is the right solution.

First, "direct" participation by end users is not a necessary requirement for At-Large to function.

Second, more of such "direct" participation does not guarantee a commensurate qualitative enhancement in participation. There is no way 3.6 billion end users can be directly represented in At-Large or RALOs by increasing the number of individual members. At-Large represents end user interests, and there is no indication that such an indirect representation has been ineffective.

Third, while we fully agree that individual membership should be encouraged together with ALSes, we think that ALSes well established in their countries are the guarantee that At-Large is really reflecting the interests of end users, as they are able to perform outreach, coordination and sourcing of input at a local level.

Ultimately turning At-Large into an individual member (only) organization may convert it into an organization whose members use the At-Large to campaign for vested issues. This also will reduce diversity since individuals in the developing countries are not as connected and as informed as those of the global north.

Implementation # 2: Engage more end users directly in ICANN Working Groups by adopting the Empowered Membership Model described in this document (See Section 11).

The response for this Implementation recommendation is identical to that for Implementation #1.

Implementation # 3: Adopt the Empowered Membership Model described in this document to engage more end users directly in ICANN work. (Section 11).

The response for this Implementation recommendation is identical to that for Implementation #1.

Implementation # 4: In the Empowered Membership Model individual users will be encouraged to participate in At-Large. Within this context there should be scope for further cooperation with the NCSG (Section 12).

Sadly, this implementation recommendation is ignorant of how people work within and across the ICANN ecosystem. People have specific interests that compel them to seek out individuals who share the same interests. I.e. DNS for Women, Technology for Humanity etc.

RALOs welcome cooperation with the Non Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG). This is already happening in the civil society engagement and many At-Large members are also members of the NCSG. There is no need to change to the EMM to accomplish this goal. RALOs have been co-operating with Non- Commercial Users Constituency (NCUC) and other parts of ICANN in the past (such outreach activities during ICANN58), and this should continue.

Implementation # 5: Any individual from any region should be allowed to become an “At-Large Member” (ALM). The ALM is what the Empowered Membership Model identifies as the atomic element of the new At-Large model (Section 11).

RALOs strive to have unaffiliated individuals to become At-Large members. NARALO, EURALO, and APRALO are already open to direct membership by individuals. AFRALO and LACRALO are in the process of incorporating this in their bylaws. Through the ALS Criteria and Expectations Task Force, ALAC and RALOs are working on increasing the ability of ALS members to engage in the At-Large/ICANN policy work.

RALOs operate in different social and cultural environment. For northern part of the world atomic elements might be active individuals with “ready to go” experience. While in other environments, being a member of organization (ALS) is an instrumental, and the only, way to be engaged with community. EMM is not universal.

Experience has shown that unaffiliated membership cannot replace the ALS membership but provide an access point for individual participation. If the EMM is implemented it does not guarantee to produce an active and engaged community.

The presence of individual members help RALOs to get direct feedback from the grassroots, but so far the quantity of such feedback has been minimal, although it is recognised that some individual members have made outstanding contributions to the community. The number of individual members has been quite small although growing. Whether individual members will

form a countervailing influence compared to ALSes is an open question, and it is likely that the community of individual members will take time to show significant strength.

Implementation # 6: Adopt the Empowered Membership Model which changes the function of RALOs so that they are primarily an outreach and mentoring mechanism for engaging new entrants (Section 11)

This is a significant change to what the ALAC does, and is against the mandate of the ALAC as an advisory committee. RALOs contribute significantly to the bottom-up input to the ALAC from the ALSes. Removing RALOs' advice input functions will break the bottom-up multistakeholder model. This also requires a complete rewriting of all MoUs between ICANN and the RALOs which state the two functions of the RALOs: Outreach and Policy.

This recommendation seeks to limit the role and stature of RALOs, which are presently integral components of the ICANN At-Large Ecosystem. Limiting RALOs to outreach/mentoring will reduce the capacity of the At-Large to sustainably provide consensus policy advice over the longer term. This risks making At Large fragmented and reduces cohesion (on account of a multitude of opinions/positions of individuals).

Implementation # 7: As part of the Empowered Membership Model, elected RALO representatives become ALAC Members who not only deliberate on advice to the Board but also serve as mentors to newcomers to At-Large. (Section 11)

This recommendation has been rejected outright by all RALOs.

This recommendation seems to assume the work of the ALAC is to solely deliver advice to the Board whilst the ALAC does not only deal with policy but also monitors ICANN wide activities that may impact end user interest.

In a volunteer organization, it is unrealistic to expect volunteers to handle both policy and outreach activities, as we have found that volunteers have different interests and very few that have interest, skills and time to do both policy and outreach.

Managing the RALOs requires significant work regarding outreach and capacity building besides channelling inputs from the ALSes and individual members to ALAC and Vice Versa.

Combining these tasks with direct policy input creates unreasonable overloading of work. This has the potential to deliver mediocre service in both RALO leadership and RALO roles.

Implementation # 8: The ALAC Members should have a maximum of (2) terms, each of a

2-year duration (see Section 11).

In principle, RALOs support term limits for all key At-Large roles including ALAC representatives, WG Chairs, and RALO Leadership.

Implementation # 14 [later renumbered to # 9]: The proposed Empowered Membership Model (Section 11) conflates many of these roles and consequently frees up travel slots for new voices. For example the 5 RALOs are now part of the 15 ALAC Member list and 5 Liaison roles are also taken by NomCom appointed ALAC Members, leaving 2 for the Council of Elders and up to 10 slots for Rapporteurs for CCWGs and regular WGs (to be decided openly and transparently).

The response for this Implementation recommendation is identical to that for Implementation #7.

Recommendation 4:

At-Large Support Staff should be more actively involved in ALM engagement in policy work for the ALAC, drafting position papers and other policy related work.

From a RALO perspective, this recommendation would strengthen staff facilitation of ALS policy work in the region. RALOs support this.

Recommendation 5:

At-Large should redouble efforts to contribute to meetings between ICANN Senior Staff and Executives, ISOC (and other international I* organisations) to engage in joint strategic planning for cooperative outreach.

RALOs support this recommendation. However, the following caveat must be understood: discussions between senior ICANN staff and other organizations does not at always imply any role or involvement for At-Large.

- There has already been collaboration, especially with the ICANN Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) department.
- ICANN Staff can certainly meet with ISOC and other I* organizations; there has already been work underway.
- There have already been MoUs between RALOs and Regional Internet Registries (RIRs). Through the MoUs, there are activities and sponsorship opportunities, e.g. NARALO General Assembly (GA) in ARIN
- We welcome the redoubling of efforts and look forward to receiving more allocated staff resources to focus on this effort.
- ALSes promote I* events all over the world, being a part of them. At-large will channel the information inflow/outflow by the calendar.

RALOs have already established good relations with I* and other regional organizations apart

from ICANN GSE Hubs. For instance, NARALO has signed an MoU with the American Registry for Internet Numbers (ARIN) and will hold their upcoming General Assembly in conjunction with an ARIN meeting; APRALO works closely with its regional partners (APNIC, ISOC, APTLD, DotAsia) and has MoUs with several of them. Further, it is an active participant in the programmes of Asia Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG) and Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF). LACRALO is in the process of signing an MoU with LACNIC. AFRALO signed the first MoU with a RIR (AFRINIC), a few years ago and they occasionally hold their meetings during AFRINIC public policy meetings. Another MoU with AFRINIC is underway. EURALO is a founding partner of EuroDIG and negotiations are taking place to sign a MoU with RIPE.

Overall there is relatively limited funding from ICANN in support of these activities.

In addition to the above, discussions between ICANN At-Large Staff and ISOC Chapter Support Staff have made the following proposals, which are currently under consideration:

1. Scheduling of a common Webinar - Introduction to At-Large and ISOC (this would include speakers from At-Large and ISOC and ALSes/Chapters).
2. At-Large Capacity Building Webinars – At-Large staff to send ISOC Chapter Support invitations to be sent to Chapters, so ISOC Chapters could participate more effectively in ICANN policy.
3. IETF – fellowships - for the At-Large community to be given regular details of IETF fellowship offerings, for At-Large people who are interested in Technical Issues.
4. Collaboration of At-Large and ISOC. This could include joint outreach activities during ICANN Meetings such as a common table. In some cases, this could include a joint reception.
5. CROPP Program / ISOC fellowship travel funding – the need for a reciprocal coordination. This process, would focus on improvements to CROPP program but also ISOC travel fellowships, as well as coordination between the two.
6. Coordinated reporting in Internet Governance, for instance at the ITU Plenipotentiary conferences - including a joint debrief and/or joint webinar.
7. Cross-pollination of the online learning platforms including an online course on ISOC about ICANN, but most particularly, about the ALAC, At-Large, RALOs, etc.
8. Formation of a Leadership Team for closer collaboration - this could include one ALAC representative that has the mandate to keep regularly in touch with ISOC Chapters leadership, or go as far as forming a small committee that could coordinate

activities, in lieu of the current very informal system where several interested people who are also ISOC members perform this "liaison" ad-hoc - with sometimes duplicated results.

Recommendation 6:

Selection of seat 15 on ICANN Board of Directors. Simplify the selection of the At-Large Director. Candidates to self-nominate. NomCom vets nominees to produce a slate of qualified candidates from which the successful candidate is chosen by random selection.

The At-Large Board seat is the responsibility of the whole At-Large, and the current process highlights the degree of ownership that At-Large has over the seat. By transferring this very organic selection process to the NomCom, the At-Large community will be disenfranchised and isolated from the process (and consequently, the Board Member), making the appointee just another NomCom appointee. This is not a desirable state. It doesn't add anything to the process, but reduces the community ownership. It also removes the possibility/certainty that issues important to At-Large are raised at the Board level. Finally, it is unclear if this recommendation is relevant to the At-Large Review.

Recommendation 7:

At-Large should abandon existing internal Working Groups and discourage their creation in the future, as they are a distraction from the actual policy advice role of At-Large.

The At-Large community, as every Support Organisation/Advisory Committee (SO/AC), has policy and process activities that must be addressed for the effective functioning of their organization. At-Large Working Groups are instrumental to At-Large as an organization in order to address its policy and process issues. Open Working Groups are the backbone of At-Large in reaching consensus by providing bottom-up, grassroots input. We have policy oriented WGs, as well as process and organization building oriented WGs. There are also WGs internal to RALOs set up to respond to ALAC policy and process. RALO WGs are the primary mechanism for individual members and ALSes to develop and provide input.

The RALOs and ALSes therefore reject this recommendation. The lack of any questions in the survey illustrates the lack of understanding of the role and contribution of the Working Groups. Working Groups cross cut the RALOs providing an awareness of regional diversity of approaches and taps into the skills and interest in membership to contribute. Not everyone is a policy wonk.

The working groups are an opportunity to participate in the bottom-up ICANN ecosystem. We have members in ALAC, ICANN and inter-community groups. ALSes in their meetings, events, courses with end users, bring ICANN's knowledge to them and receive the necessary feedback.

If the internal working groups no longer exist, who will provide this necessary feedback?

In conclusion, this recommendation does not appear to have any merit. ALAC WGs are useful for specific purposes, and should be dismantled when they turn irrelevant, but doing away with them is uncalled for and it is worth noting that other organisations in ICANN, including the ICANN Board have been encouraged to use working groups.

Recommendation 8:

At-Large should use social media much more effectively to gather end user opinions (Twitter poll/Facebook polls, etc.).

RALOs and ALSes support this recommendation, and would like to point out that measures are already being developed to further improve the use of social media.

ALSes, RALOs and the ALAC have been using social media extensively to encourage At-Large members to provide comments via wiki and other established channels. The response has been poor. However, social media, especially Twitter, is not an effective tool for people to provide thoughtful and substantive input on policy.

We have a Social Media Working Group that includes the use of effective tools such as Mattermost, Slack, Eno, Skype and the standard Twitter and Facebook. Some people communicate that they like these tools while others prefer a simple phone call to keep the community connected. Other ignored tools are the use of FLICKR and YouTube. The documentation of At-Large meetings by volunteers have shared with creative commons licence thousands of photos and videos of the community membership which is far in excess to the paid ICANN photographers and videographers. These photos have been used by staff and other organizations i.e. ISOC and Diplo in their online blogs and publications.

To summarise, RALOs strongly support the enhanced use of social media such as Twitter. ALAC, At-Large / RALOs should encourage social media discussion and interaction with the individual Internet users out there. But the results are not as easy to achieve as the reviewers might think and there certainly is no social media silver bullet short of actually spending money to buy “Trending” – as done by all big Internet communicators. We do not advocate that.

Recommendation 9:

At-Large should consider the appointment of a part time Web Community Manager position. This member of the support staff could either be recruited, or a member of the current staff could be specially trained.

RALOs welcome this recommendation.

A Web community manager should also work with the RALO's on their community newsletters i.e. Constant Contact. However, it must be noted that currently, this is not at the discretion of At-Large. What staff to deploy is purely a staff decision.

Recommendation 10:

Consider the adoption and use of a Slack-like online communication platform. An instant messaging-cum-team workspace (FOSS) alternative to Skype/Wiki/website/ mailing list.

This discussion has taken place for many years in the At-Large Community.

The At-Large Community, via the At-Large Technology Taskforce (<http://bitly.com/Technology-Taskforce>) have been aware of, and have tested and used group chat applications like Slack since 2014. At the ICANN58 March 2017 meeting, the Technology Taskforce reported on how At-Large should use group chat applications after reviewing several types of group chat applications (<http://bitly.com/TTF-reports>).

We believe that the current system works reasonably well. However, we acknowledge that there is always room for improvement. Our Technology Task Force (TTF) has been actively looking for new systems: <https://community.icann.org/x/CxlnAw> and <https://community.icann.org/x/QaM0Aw>. Besides the technical limitations of access in some countries requiring low bandwidth solutions, we need to be aware of benefits and costs of implementing a new communication system. There is also the additional challenge to break people's habit to switch to different software and for this software to be available and comfortably usable on different hardware platforms. In order to be compatible to communicate with members of other parts of the ICANN Community, we should continue using Skype/Wiki/web/ mailing list, instead of adopting a new tool. There is uneven popularity of online tools at global perspective. But the number of social networks and messengers is observable. Major events and news must be casted to these platforms as RALOs activity in coordinated manner.

All RALOs support improved communication, less redundancy, and cutting down on voluminous amounts of information.

Again, it feels like the right location to mention the plans for the Policy Management Process System (PMPS) which will interface with social media tools to bring an intuitive, productive, welcoming and helpful environment for end users to take part in all aspects of Policy work.

Recommendation 11:

At-Large should replace 5-yearly global ATLAS meetings with an alternative model of

annual regional At-Large Meetings.

RALOs and ALSes see significant value in the current 5-yearly ATLAS meetings, and hence do not support this recommendation.

Many hours of ALAC and RALO work have been invested in coordinating the various ICANN meetings. A timeline has been generated and it has been accepted. We consider the Face to Face At-Large Summit (ATLAS) meetings to be necessary because of the experience of working in Inter-regional groups: these have more linguistic, geographical and gender diversity.

The current 5 year rotation of five General Assemblies and one Global At-Large Summit has been co-designed and approved by the RALOs. The current system is effective in encouraging the development of a global end user perspective.

These meetings are the only occasions when the identity of a global At-Large is manifested as a single entity. Right from the preparations, through the actual meeting as well as the post-meeting implementation, the entire global At-Large works as one. This is very helpful in building personal and organizational relations and in strengthening the At-Large branding, particularly for newcomers. Doing away with ATLASes does not benefit anyone. Indeed, not having a summit will result in losing RALOs learning and working together, and will result in regional silos and strictly regional end user perspective.

Regional meetings should be increased, but not at the cost of ATLAS.

We don't need to have either or solutions. Once every five years when everyone joins together is important and an annual local meeting is also a good idea. We suggest to do both. In addition to this, At-Large local community meetings operated and coordinated through RALOs and cooperation with I* activities is a good tool for engagement. It doesn't contradict with the idea of summit.

Recommendation 12:

As part of its strategy for regional outreach and engagement, At-Large should put a high priority on the organisation of regional events. The five RALOs should, as part of their annual outreach strategies, continue to partner with well-established regional events involved in the Internet Governance ecosystem. CROPP and other funding mechanisms should be provided to support the costs of organisation and participation of At-Large members.

RALOs welcome this recommendation. RALOs support CROPP and want to see it expanded to provide more opportunities of engagement with other organizations. This outreach will need to have a particular focus on building policy synergies. At-Large outreach will need to increasingly focus on ensuring an expanded volunteer base that will be able to contribute to policy

development.

Often, involvement with regional events requires substantial funding, i.e. sponsorship, in order to obtain panel placement and speaking opportunities. We lack the financial support and influence, we are also in competition with ICANN staff which are the first choice. We need to be piggy-backed with ICANN staff at these events. Sponsorship of event, booth space etc. requires serious financial analysis to achieve the desired results. ICANN rarely funds At-Large for these events. Perhaps GSE funds the event itself, but rarely to send volunteers to them.

But in some RALOs, circumstances and external sponsorship has allowed for such activities to take place without ICANN support.

Across all regions, in practice, unless there is financial support for participation in meetings, this cannot be implemented - unless ALS(es) run the project with existing regional ICANN activities with appropriately increased regional budgets.

Recommendation 13:

Working closely with ICANN's Regional Hubs and regional ISOC headquarters, At-Large should reinforce its global outreach and engagement strategy with a view to encouraging the organisation of Internet Governance Schools in connection with each At-Large regional gathering.

RALOs would support this on the premise that IG schools are in line with the ICANN mission and mandate.

IG School initiatives such as the South School of Internet Governance, African School of IG, and the 1st Indian School of IG (inSIG), have had numerous At Large members providing their volunteer time and personal expenses for presentations and panels. In line with the recommendation, we suggest that ICANN support these efforts.

IG schools have also enhanced inter- and intra-community engagement. For example, inSIG received significant support in terms of resource persons from other ICANN entities (including the Board, ALAC/At-Large and NCUC) with both the present EURALO and NARALO Chairs participating as resource persons. Wherever possible, we will continue to organize SIGs at ICANN meetings, but financial support is a major constraint.

Recommendation 14:

In the interests of transparency, all At-Large travel funding should be published as a "one stop shop" contribution to the At-Large webpage.

There is already an ICANN dashboard for travel support to ICANN meetings for all supported

travellers across the SO/ACs. Travel to other Events is not available publicly.

RALOs agree to this level of transparency, assuming similar transparency from other parts of ICANN. It would also be insightful to release details of the disclosure of any contract work of any member.

Recommendation 15:

At-Large should be involved in the Cross-Community Working Group on new gTLD Auction Proceeds and initiate discussions with the ICANN Board of Directors with a view gaining access to these funds in support of the At-Large Community.

RALOs cannot lay claim on the auction proceeds, as there is a CCWG working on this.

RALOs already have members in the Cross-Community Working Group on new gTLD Auction. But this WG will not define how these funds will be invested; it will focus on how the procedures for funding allocation will be structured. Surely when the Cross Community Working Group agrees to have access to the funds, RALOs will participate.

RALOs will respect the decisions made in the CCWG. CCWG will design the proposal(s) on how to use the auction proceeds. ALAC representatives and At-Large participants are taking part in the CCWG discussions and work.

Recommendation 16:

Adopt a set of metrics that are consistent for the entire At-Large Community to measure the implementation and impact of the EMM and track the continuous improvement of the At-Large Community.

RALOs are in general agreement with the need for metrics to measure all activities.

Metrics are important for the continuous improvement of performance for all entities in At-Large, viz., ALAC members, RALO leaders, ALS representatives and individual members. When it comes to the RALOs, ALSes, and individuals, we support the development of a set of metrics that will show the strategic development of the regions in line with the mission of At-Large as well as the impact of regional policy advice to the ALAC.

The collection of the agreed metrics must therefore be automated as much as possible. But it has to be remembered that over reliance on metrics can be an issue.

The problem with this recommendation is the lack of any tracking tools by staff to measure results. The tracking of policy statements and comments is an important metric asked by senior staff.

In general, metrics for operations/activities/participation are welcome.

Conclusions

Finally, we would like to express our deep concern about the future of the At-Large community if this report was accepted and implemented “as is”. We hope that the suggestions made through this document will be considered by the Review Team for suitably amending their proposals.