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

V01 – 15 February 2-17

Introduction

Either here or at end, comments on problems regarding methodology and difficulty in following logic leading from analysis to conclusions.

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.

ALAC Response: The ALAC supports this recommendation and notes that this is effectively today's status quo, although "where possible funded" is not often the case. Other than CROPP funding which is extremely limited, if "outreach" is listed as a motivation for other funding, the likelihood of the funding being approved decreases markedly.

Recommendation 2: At-Large should be more judicious in selecting the amount of advice it seeks to offer, focussing upon quality rather than quantity.

ALAC Response: The ALAC supports this recommendation and notes that it is the status quo. Records over the last five years demonstrate this.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ICANN Public Comments	62	59	53	51	46
ALAC Responses	35	32	28	20	16
% Responded	56%	54%	53%	39%	35%

Recommendation 3: At-Large should encourage greater direct participation by At-Large Members (ALMs) in ICANN WGs by adopting our proposed Empowered Membership Model.

ALAC Response: The ALAC supports the analysis indicating that we would like and in fact need more participation from the periphery of At-Large. Moreover, this was clearly stated to the Review Team. The issue has been the subject of an ongoing Task Force within At-Large over the last year (one of the frowned-upon inward-looking activities). It is unfortunate that the Review Team was aware of this effort and chose not to

mention that it was ongoing and was at the stage where a framework for addressing the issue was adopted by the ALAC in Hyderabad, well before the issuance of this report.

The ALAC strongly disagrees with the proposed recommendation, not because, as characterized in the report, we are defending our privileged positions and afraid of any change, but rather because the proposal has a number of apparent critical flaws that the Review Team were asked to address and have chosen not to.

Some of these will be addressed later in this comment, but the most important one is that there is no explanation of why, the announcement of the Empowered Membership Model (EMM) will result in greater participation. The EMM is roughly equivalent to the Individual Member class of participation in three of the five RALOs. The only substantive difference is that upon successfully completing and initial period (with no methodology presented for judging completion), Empowered Members will have the right to vote for leaders or on other actions, should a vote ever be initiated.

No evidence is presented as to why the vote-empowered membership will be orders of magnitude more attractive to users world-wide, or why the ongoing potential to vote will encourage people to actively participate in what has been acknowledged as a complex, and time-intensive space. Moreover, many of these users are not fluent in English which is the language used for most of these activities and no proposal is presented on how that might be overcome.

As noted, this document will return to these questions when addressing other Recommendations and Implementations.

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.

ALAC Response: The ALAC agrees with the recommendation. In fact, the ALAC has started doing this over the last year. Utlizing the relatively limited resources available, an ICANN At-Large Staff member has edited and "cleaned up" documents drafted by volunteers and in several cases have created the initial draft based on instructions from community members. Similarly, but on a larger scale, staff will be the main content creators of the planned regular messages outlining policy activity to be sent to individual and ALS members. This is of course dependent on ICANN management making the appropriate resources available, as volunteers have no direct control, but we are optimistic that this will be done.

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.

ALAC Response: As desirable as such an approach sounds, it is not known to At-Large when and where ICANN Senior Staff and Executives, ISOC (and other international I* organisations) meet, and although I am sure At-Large leadership would be delighted to participate in such events, we are not typically invited. Certainly at the last know enclave of these organizations, At-Large did not have a presence.

===============

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.

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.

Recommendation 8: At-Large should use social media much more effectively to gather end user opinions (Twitter poll/Facebook polls, etc).

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.

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.

Recommendation 11: At-Large should replace 5-yearly global ATLAS meetings with an alternative model of annual regional At-Large Meetings.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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).

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

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

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).

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).

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)

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)

Implementation # 8: The ALAC Members should have a maximum of (2) terms, each of a 2-year duration.(see Section 11).