RSSAC Review Interviews

Outline of question topics

1   Prefatory Questions and Remarks

Introduction, purpose of the review and of this interview, confidentiality.
Name, affiliation, relationship to RSSAC (and length of time in that relationship), any other pertinent information.

2   RSSAC Institutional Questions[1]

Fulfilment of mission, adherence to policies and procedures, and organizational support

- Who are RSSAC's stakeholders?
- What is RSSAC's mission? Has this changed since the last review and if so, how has it changed? Is RSSAC's mission consistent with ICANN's current bylaws and procedures?
- How has the IANA transition affected RSSAC? Has this changed RSSAC's mission?
- Other than the periodic institutional reviews (like this one) has RSSAC evaluated its engagement with its stakeholders? When? How? What was the outcome of that effort? Explain how that engagement might be improved.
- Other than the periodic institutional reviews (like this one) has RSSAC assessed its effectiveness within the ICANN community? When? How? What was the outcome of that effort? How might RSSAC's effectiveness be improved?
- Do the activities of RSSAC enhance ICANN's mission? Can these be improved? If so, how?
- How (and how well) does RSSAC communicate with its stakeholders and others? With whom ("others") does RSSAC communicate?
- Describe RSSAC's decision-making procedures. Do you consider these to be satisfactory? Why? Could they be improved and, if so, how?
- How would you describe RSSAC's role and responsibilities?
- How well does RSSAC fulfil its role at ICANN? How could that be improved?

Accountability and Transparency

- How are RSSAC and its individual members accountable? Who are they accountable to? How is that accountability demonstrated to relevant stakeholders? Can it be improved?
- Are there any stakeholder groups that RSSAC is currently not accountable to but should be?
- Has RSSAC clearly identified its stakeholders or not?
- How transparent is RSSAC? Is there too much/too little/about right detail of its activities and decision-making? If this could be improved, what could be done and why?
- Is there enough/too much/too little clarity about RSSAC's decisions and how these were taken?

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[1] The question categories are taken from RFP section 2.3.2.

RSSAC composition, membership processes, and participation

- How are RSSAC members selected? Is this process fair and transparent? How could it be improved?
- How are RSSAC Caucus members selected? Is this process fair and transparent? How could it be improved?
- Who confirms or rejects these appointments? Are those decisions taken in a timely manner?
- Are these appointments subject to periodic review? If so, who carries out that review?
- Should term limits be used for RSSAC members? What circumstances, if any, should require an RSSAC member to stand down, for example because of a change of job or affiliation?
- Should term limits be used for RSSAC Caucus members? What circumstances, if any, should require an RSSAC Caucus member to stand down, for example because of a change of job or affiliation?
- Is the composition and structure of RSSAC about right? Could it be improved?
- Does RSSAC have appropriate stakeholder representation? Are any stakeholder groups under- or over-represented?
- How consistent are RSSAC's operations? Do all members have an equal say or is the committee's decision-making unfairly influenced by the loudest or most vocal participants?
- Is RSSAC generally able to reach decisions based on consensus? What happens when there are disagreements or the membership is silent?
- How well does RSSAC meet ICANN's commitment to diversity? Can this be improved and if so how could that be done?
- Could the composition or structure of RSSAC be changed to make it more effective? If so, how could that best be done?
- Does the RSSAC Caucus help/hinder/confuse the work of RSSAC? Why?
- Are the boundaries and responsibilities/roles of both bodies defined clearly enough?
- How does the RSSAC Caucus improve RSSAC's mission and effectiveness?
- Does RZERC help/hinder/confuse the work of RSSAC? Why?
- Are the boundaries and responsibilities/roles of both bodies defined clearly enough?
- How could/should the role of RZERC improve RSSACs mission and effectiveness?
- What is the role of the Root Server Operators Association (RSOA)? Does this have any bearing on the work of RSSAC? How? What impact should RSOA have on RSSAC? Are the boundaries and scope for both bodies clear? How will they be defined and maintained?

Communication

- How well does RSSAC's advice satisfy the needs of the ICANN board? Is this advice communicated clearly?
- How well does RSSAC's advice satisfy the needs of other stakeholders? Is this advice communicated clearly?
- How well does RSSAC's advice satisfy the needs of the broader Internet community? Is this advice communicated clearly?
- Could RSSAC's communications be improved? How? Are the methods of communication used by RSSAC satisfactory?
- How do stakeholders communicate with RSSAC on matters relating to the root server system and ICANN's role in co-ordinating the DNS root? Are these communications channels

clear and open? How often do they get used? Who uses them? Has anyone expressed dissatisfaction with these channels or the responses which are returned?

- Is RSSAC's role in the ICANN community clearly communicated and understood? How could communication of this role be improved?
- How well does RSSAC provide information to stakeholders on the procedures and operations of the committee? Is the level of information adequate and how could/should it be improved? Is this sort of information readily available or not? How much of this information is public and how much is "too sensitive"?

Governance

- Is there a code of conduct for RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus members, for instance covering conflicts of interest or participation and behaviour at meetings? If not, should there be one? Who should be responsible for developing/maintaining/enforcing this?
- How are RSSAC leaders (e.g. chair) selected? Is this process fair and transparent? How could it be improved?

Evaluation and measurement of outcomes

- Does the composition and structure of RSSAC ensure that ICANN is properly informed about root server system matters? If not, what should be done about that? Can the composition and structure be improved? How?
- Do RSSAC's procedures and processes ensure timely and appropriate advice is provided? If not, how can that be improved?
- Has RSSAC received any feedback on the advice it has provided? If so, what was the nature of that response and who provided it? Has the ICANN board or other stakeholder group expressed disappointment with the advice from RSSAC? If so, what was done about that?
- Does the composition and structure of the RSSAC Caucus ensure RSSAC gets satisfactory and timely information that's relevant to its work? If not, what should be done about that? Does the RSSAC Caucus serve a useful or meaningful purpose for RSSAC? Why?
- To what extent does the output from the RSSAC Caucus inform the work of RSSAC? Is this needed/valuable/relevant?

Effectiveness of implementation of prior review recommendations

- What was your impression of the previous RSSAC review and its findings?
- Have the recommendations of that review been acted on? If not, what were the reasons for that?
- Which of those recommendations have been completed or are still in progress?
- Of the recommendations that have been completed, have they had the desired/expected improvements? If not, why have they not had the expected outcome(s)?
- Do the findings of the previous review have any impact on the current review, either in terms of how the current review is carried out or in its likely results? What lessons can/should be learnt by the current review team from the previous RSSAC review?
- Are the recommendations from the earlier review still valid today or not? Why?

3   RSSAC / RSO Questions

RSSAC and the Root Server Operators (RSOs)

- Is RSSAC (as currently instantiated) an effective vehicle for interaction between the root server operators and ICANN? This question has two parts, corresponding to the two-way nature of the interaction: (a) is it effective from the viewpoint of the root server operators? and (b) is it effective from the viewpoint of ICANN?
- In the context of the answer to that question (whether positive or negative), what changes to RSSAC would make it more effective (in either direction)?
- If the answer to that question is "there is no change to RSSAC that would make it an effective vehicle for interaction between the RSOs and ICANN," (a) is there a need for a vehicle for interaction between the RSOs and ICANN, and if so (b) what might that be?

RSO relationships

- From the RSO side: is it important for the RSOs to have a relationship with ICANN? If so, what are the elements of such a relationship that would benefit the RSOs?
- Similarly, from the ICANN side: is it important for ICANN to have a relationship with the RSOs? If so, what are the elements of such a relationship that would benefit ICANN?
- What other relationships (internal or external) are important to the RSOs?
- Is RSSAC mostly (or entirely) a way for the RSOs to satisfy externally imposed requirements for interaction with ICANN, or does it (perhaps "also") satisfy internal requirements for communication and interaction among the RSOs?

RSO obligations

- What obligations (if any) do the RSOs have to the Internet community? How should those obligations be defined, and by whom? Is ICANN the right focal point for these RSO obligations? If not, is there another organization (either one that currently exists, or one that could be created) that would be the right (or a better) focal point?