ANALYSIS GROUP
ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL and STRATEGY CONSULTANTS

ICANN SSAC Review:
Assessment Report
Update by the Independent Examiner

Public Webinar

July 12, 2018

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Introduction

- We have been hired as the Independent Examiner to conduct an independent review of the SSAC, as mandated by ICANN's Bylaws.

- The team has deep practical and research experience in:

  - Domain name operations and internet security.

  - Non-profit governance and volunteer-based organizations.

  - The design of interview and survey instruments.

- Our team is lead by Almudena Arcelus, Dr. Shlomo Hershkop, Christopher Llop, Greg Rafert, and Professor Steven Weber.

Introduction

Dr. Shlomo Hershkop - Director of Engineering, Allure Security Technology, Inc.; Adjunct Professor at Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Professor Steven Weber - Faculty Director of the Center for Long Term Cyber Security, University of California, Berkeley

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Project Scope

- **The goal of our review is to provide an assessment of:**

  - The implementation state of SSAC's prior review;

  - Whether SSAC has a continuing purpose within the ICANN structure;

  - How effectively SSAC fulfills its purpose and whether any change in structure or operations is needed to improve effectiveness, in accordance with the ICANN-provided objective and quantifiable criteria; and

  - The extent to which SSAC as a whole is accountable to the wider ICANN community, its organizations, committees, constituencies, and stakeholder groups.

Project Design

- **Our project is designed as a two-step process.**

- **Phase 1: Assessment**

  – Review of operating procedures, SSAC work product, other documents.

  – Interviews with 42 people during and after ICANN61.

  – A online survey distributed to the entire community.

  – Observation of 2018 SSAC meetings, including at ICANN61.

  – Assessment report submitted for feedback to the ICANN community, and presented at ICANN62.

- **Phase 2: Recommendations**

  – Recommendations report for public comment and session at ICANN63.

  – Final recommendations report.

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Interview Process

- **Interviews are semi-structured, last approximately 45 minutes, and touch on a range of topics that reflect the review criteria, including:**

  – Purpose and the extent to which the SSAC fulfills its purpose.

  – Membership size, structure, and diversity.

  – Methods of setting committee focus and developing work product.

  – Internal and external communication

  – Transparency, accountability, and fairness.

  – Implementation of and developments related to last SSAC review.

- **Interviewees are encouraged to share both strengths and weaknesses of the SSAC, and suggestions for improving the SSAC.**

Interview Process (cont.)

- **Conducted 42 interviews at ICANN61 and remotely after ICANN61.**
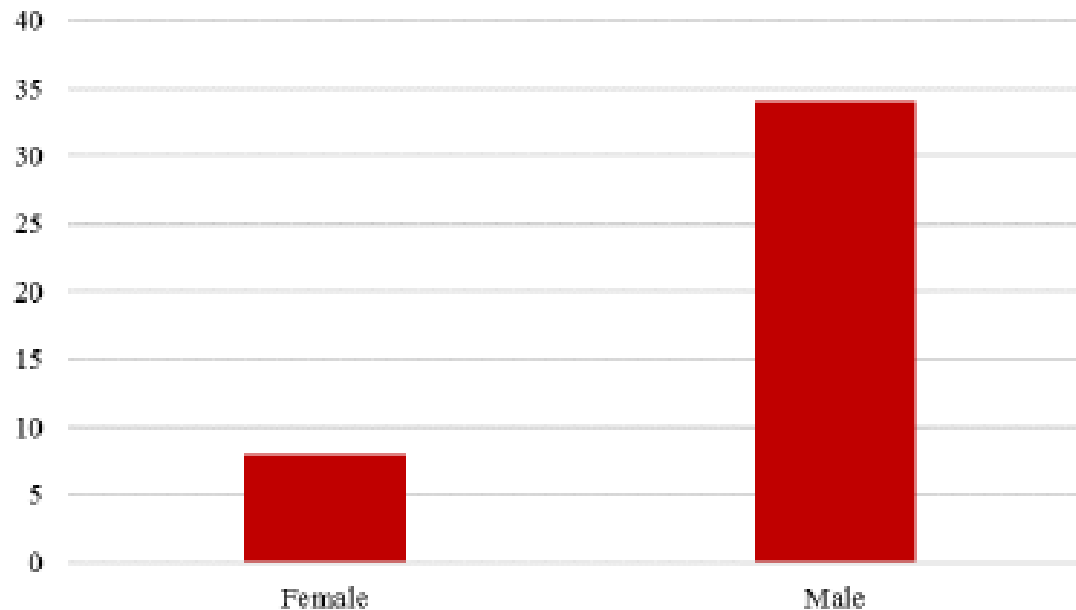- **Interviewees included individuals from the following:**

Figure 1: Current/Former ICANN Roles and Affiliations
Number of Interviewees: 42
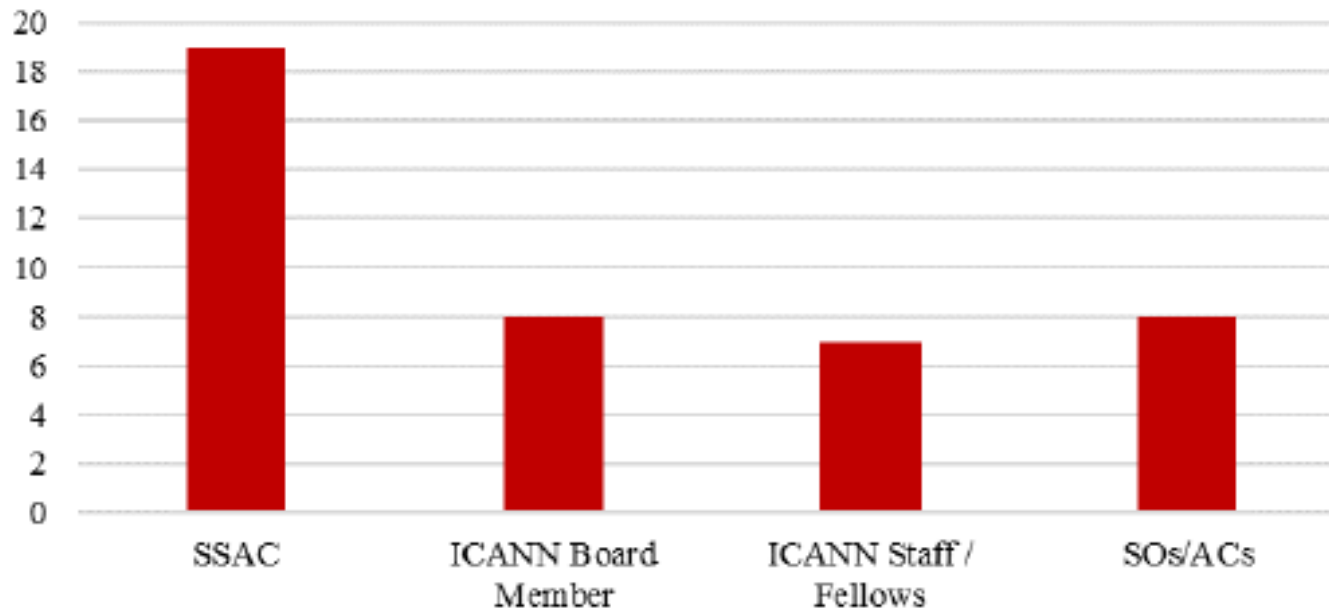
Interview Process (cont.)

- **Conducted 42 interviews at ICANN61 and remotely after ICANN61.**
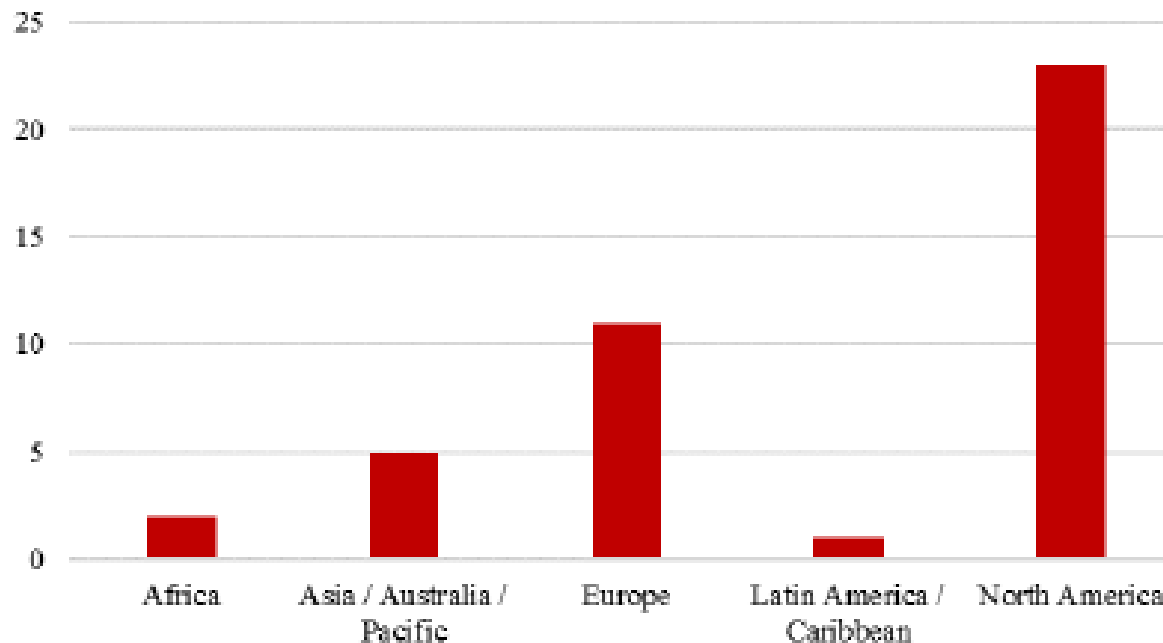- **Interviewees included individuals from the following:**

Figure 2: Gender Composition
Number of Interviewees: 42

Interview Process (cont.)

- **Conducted 42 interviews at ICANN61 and remotely after ICANN61.**

- **Interviewees included individuals from the following:**

Figure 3: Region in which Interviewees Reside

Number of Interviewees: 42

Survey Process

- **The survey is designed to elicit feedback on the SSAC's strengths and weaknesses from the community.**

  – The survey is an information gathering tool and is not analyzed in a statistical manner. But, the Assessment Report provides a quantitative analysis of the survey results.

  – Supplements interviews and casts a wider net in the ICANN community.

- **Informed by interview experience.**

  – The survey also provides an opportunity for free-form responses.

- **Open from April 18th through May 25th.**

Survey Process (cont.)

- **52 complete responses, 80 partial or complete responses.**
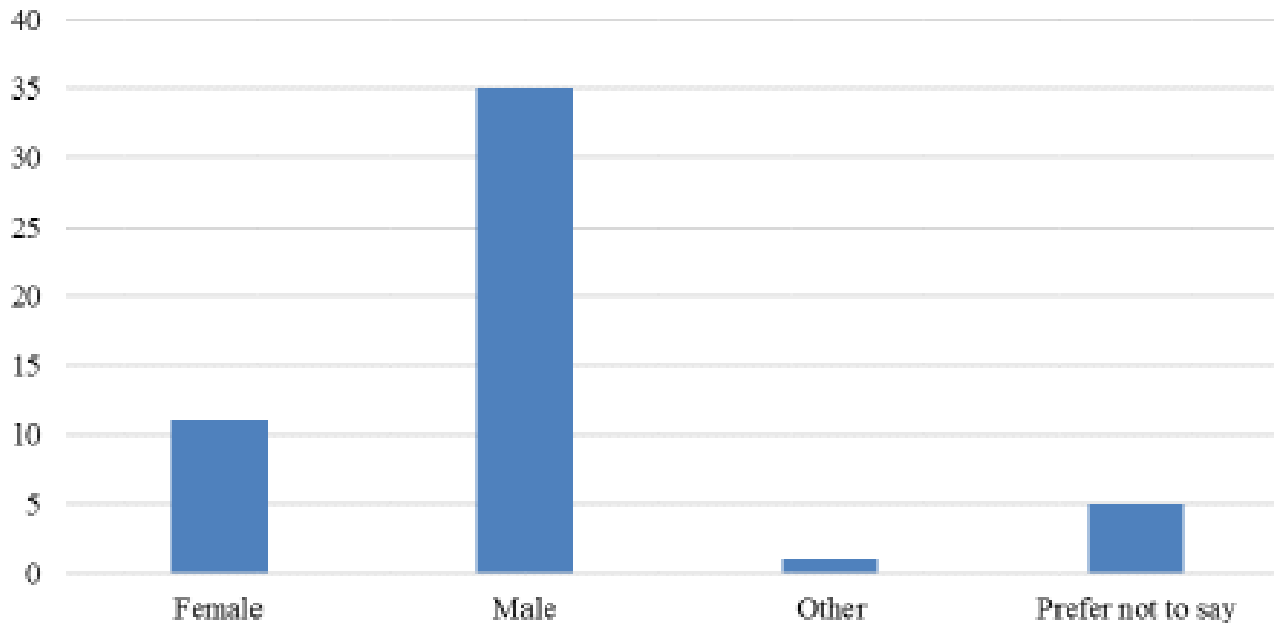- **Results robust to both groups of responses.**

Figure 4: Current/Former ICANN Roles and Affiliations
Number of Survey Respondents: 80
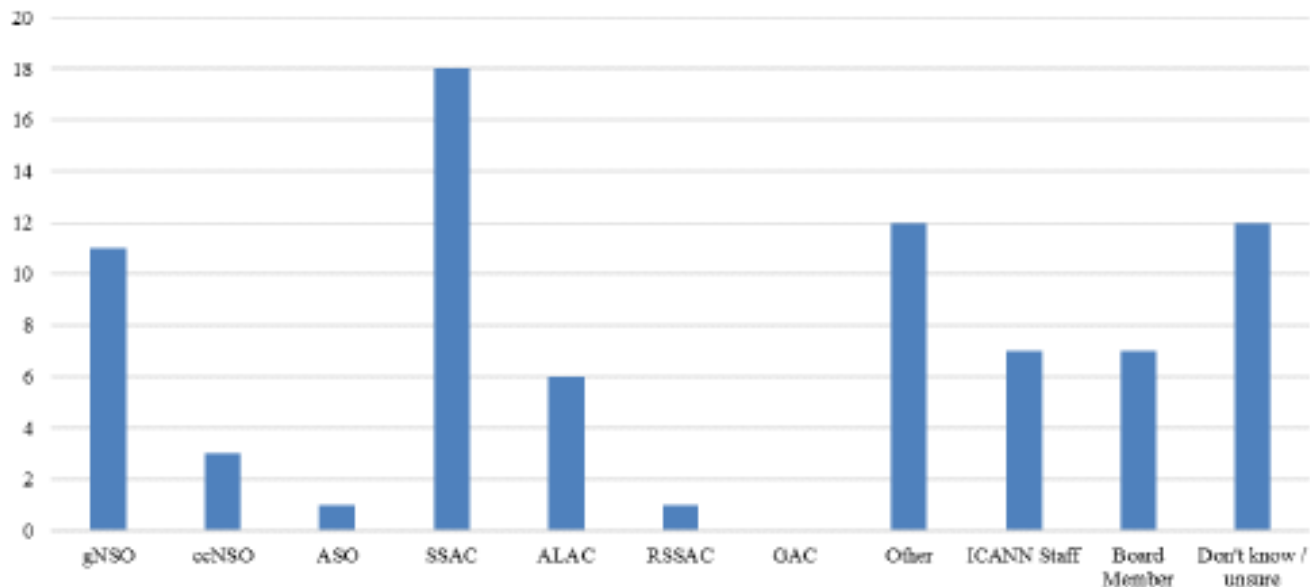
Survey Process (cont.)

- **52 complete responses, 80 partial or complete responses.**
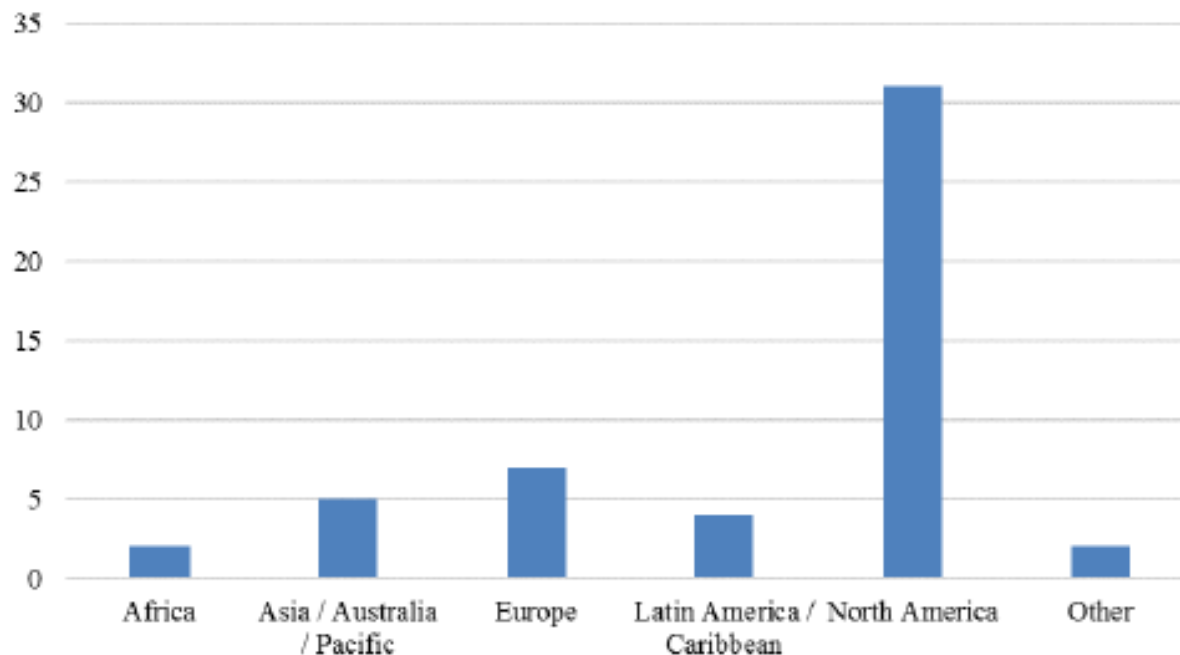- **Results robust to both groups of responses.**

Figure 5: Gender Composition
Number of Survey Respondents: 53

Survey Process (cont.)

- **52 complete responses, 80 partial or complete responses.**
- **Results robust to both groups of responses.**

Figure 6: Region in which Survey Respondents Reside
Number of Survey Respondents: 52

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Assessment - Overview

- **At a high level, the SSAC is performing very well and plays an important role within ICANN.**
  - As with all organizations, there are places for continued refinement.

- **Our 58-page Assessment Report contains 22 assessment points:**
  - Effectiveness of the SSAC (#1-6)
  - Topic Selection Process (#7)
  - Interactions with SOs/ACs (#8-9)
  - SSAC Size and Membership (#10-16)
  - Transparency and Accountability (#17-20)
  - Prior Review Implementation and Self-Improvement (#21-22)

Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

*1. The SSAC is widely acknowledged to be very important to the overall mission of ICANN.
The role of the SSAC is closely aligned with ICANN's mission.*

Figure 7: How important do you perceive the SSAC is to the overall mission of ICANN?
Number of Survey Respondents: 74
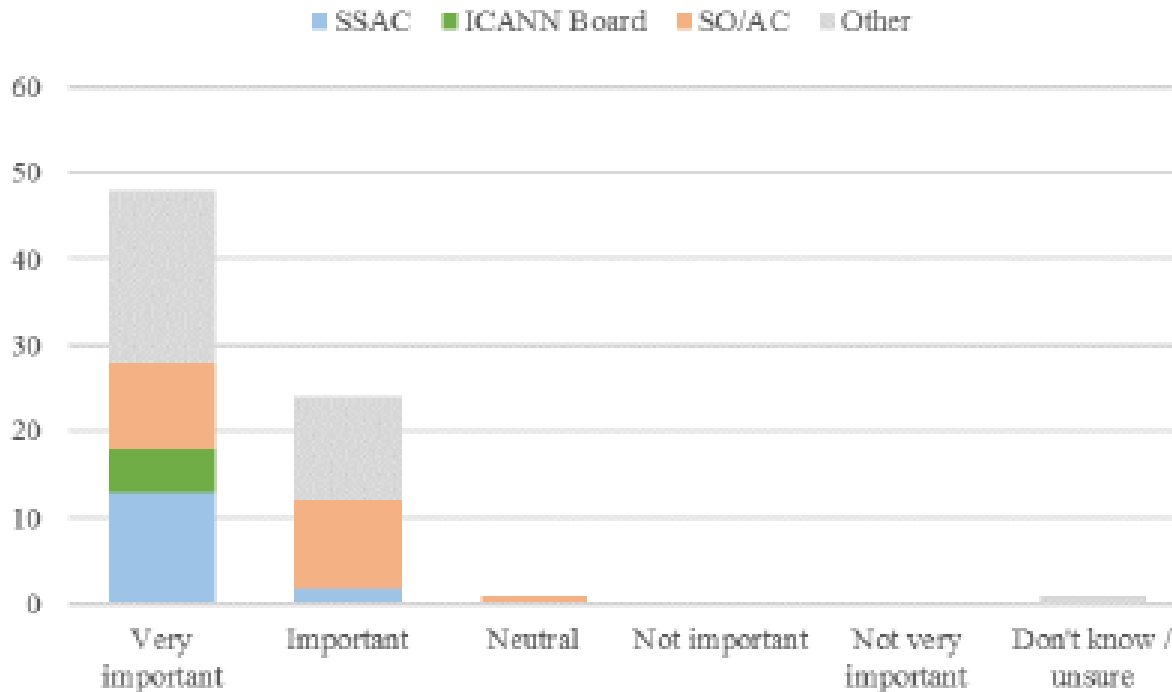
Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

2. Individuals throughout ICANN largely agree that the SSAC is successful in providing high quality advice on a broad variety of relevant SSR issues.

Figure 8: SSAC's Published Documents through May 10, 2018
*Number of Documents*

Year	Report	Advisory	Comment	Letter	Total	SSAC Correspondence
2001	1				1	
2002	3				3	
2003	1				1	
2004	1				1	
2005	1				1	
2006	6		2		8	
2007	5	1	2		8	
2008	5	3	4		12	
2009	4	1	2		7	
2010	3		1		4	
2011	2	1	2		5	
2012	2	2	1		5	
2013	1	3	2	1	7	
2014	2	3	1		6	
2015		2	5		7	
2016		2	11	1	14	
2017		2	7	1	10	
2018					0	13
Total	37	20	40	3	100	13

Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

2. Individuals throughout ICANN largely agree that the SSAC is successful in providing high quality advice on a broad variety of relevant SSR issues.

Figure 10: How effective, or ineffective, are the outcomes from SSAC's advisory process?
Number of Survey Respondents: 51
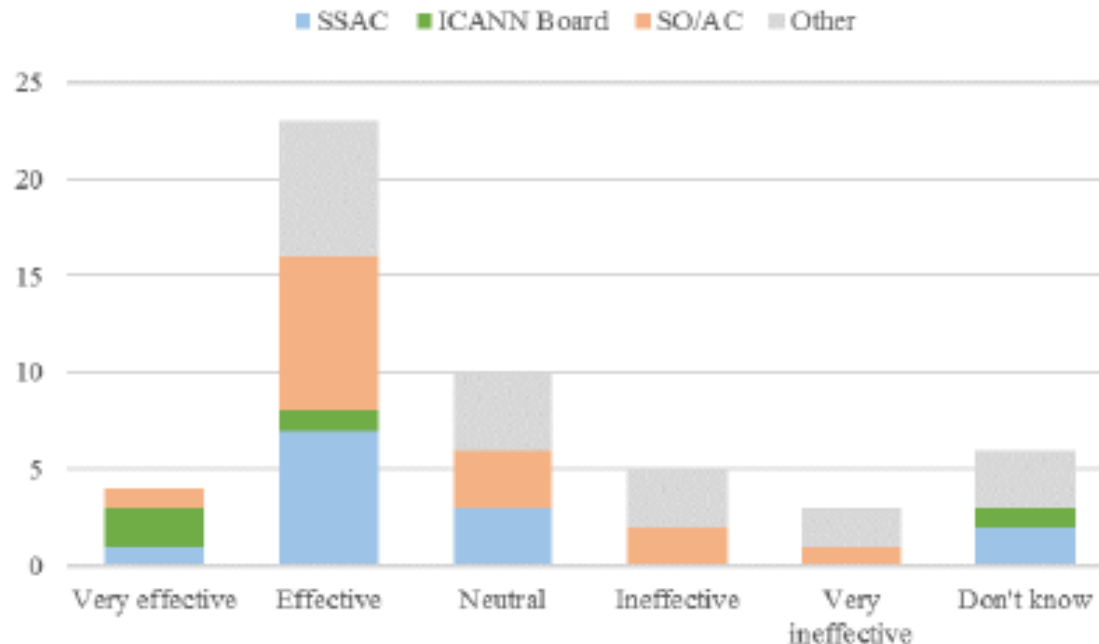
Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

2. Individuals throughout ICANN largely agree that the SSAC is successful in providing high quality advice on a broad variety of relevant SSR issues.

Figure 12: What would you consider the most important areas for the SSAC to improve on?

Number of Survey Respondents Who Included Response in Top Three Selections

Response	Total
Develop processes to provide advice in a more timely fashion	17
Engage stakeholders through public meetings and presentations	12
Develop better relationships with ICANN community (such as SOs/ACs)	12
Solicit feedback from ICANN community and third parties as part of work party process	11
Improve delivery process of relaying advice to the ICANN community	10
Develop better relationships with third parties outside of ICANN	10
Participate in ICANN community public comment periods	10
SSAC recruiting	9
Develop better coordination with the timing of priorities for other SOs/ACs	8
Better tailor writing styles based on audience of advice	8
Incorporate outside expertise into the SSAC advisory process	7
Topic selection	6
Improve SSAC work party efficiency and coordination. Establish formal coordination processes	6
Technical writing	6
Incorporate support staff into WP	3
None	2

Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

3. There is some concern among members of the SSAC that advice provided to the ICANN Board is not acted on in a timely manner. Similarly, there is some concern among members of the ICANN Board that the advice of the SSAC cannot be provided quickly.

**Figure 13: How often does the ICANN Board implement advice given to them by the SSAC?**

Number of Survey Respondents: 19
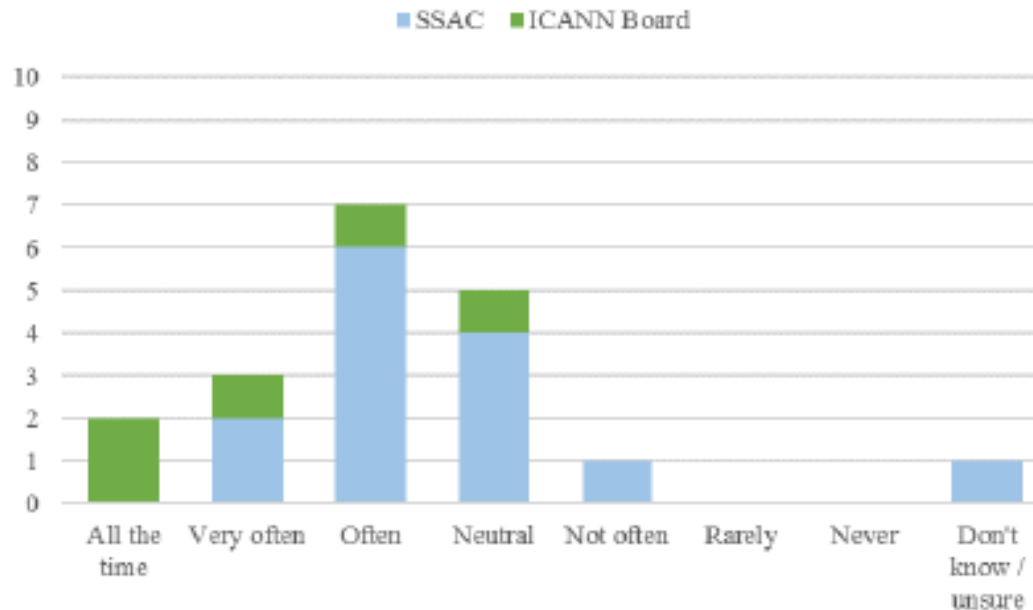
Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

3. There is some concern among members of the SSAC that advice provided to the ICANN Board is not acted on in a timely manner. Similarly, there is some concern among members of the ICANN Board that the advice of the SSAC cannot be provided quickly.

Figure 15: How timely, or untimely, is the ICANN board in reacting to, and potentially incorporating, SSAC advice?
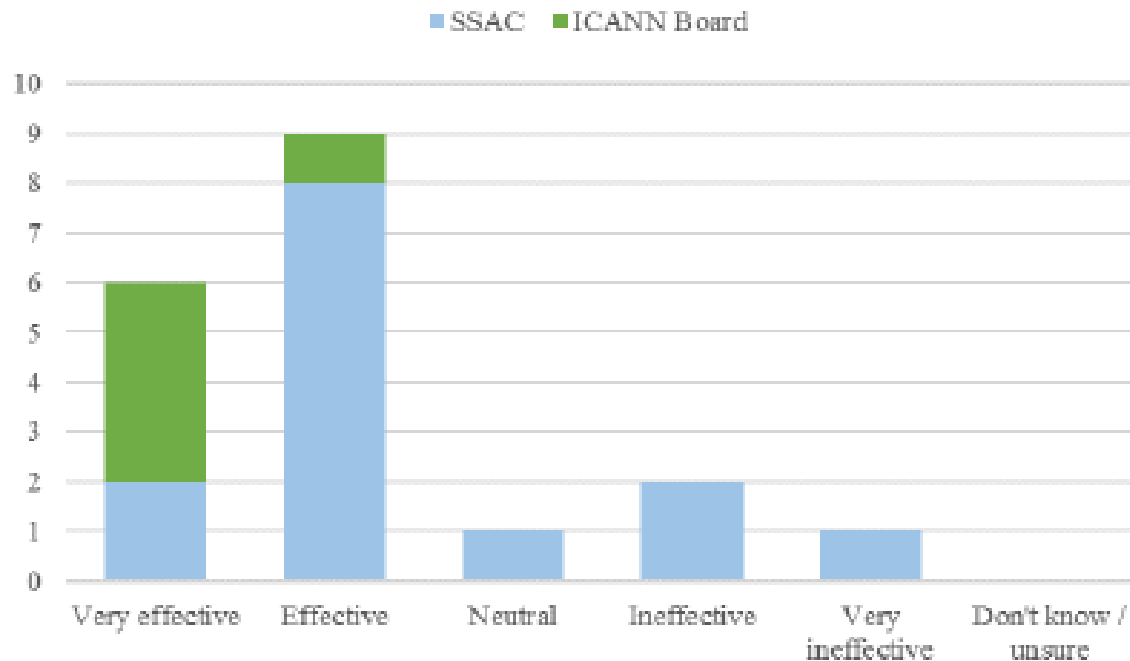*Number of Survey Respondents: 19*
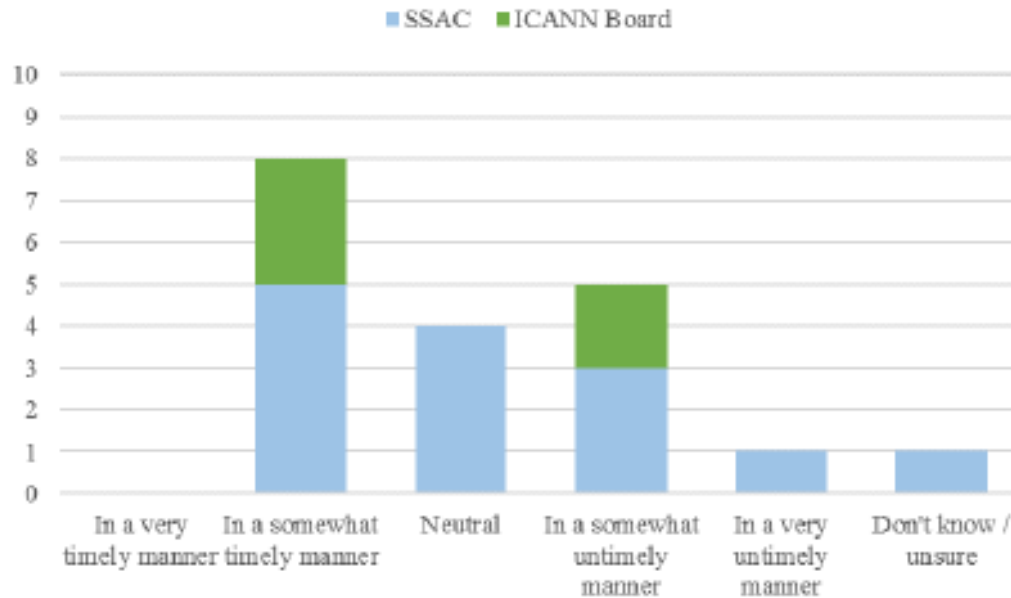
Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

4. The role of the SSAC Board Liaison is key in ensuring the Board is able to interpret and understand the advice provided by the SSAC.

Figure 16: How do you describe the relationship between the SSAC and the ICANN Board?
Number of Survey Respondents: 19

Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

5. Individuals suggested that the largest impediment to the SSAC's success is the fact that the organization is volunteer-based, yet has a large amount of work to do. SSAC volunteers express they have been subject to an increasing requests, both in number and in scope.

Assessment - SSAC Effectiveness

6. The SSAC's process of generating advice is collegial and is generally effective. Some best practices and suggestions for improvement have been gathered as part of the review process.

- The SSAC makes a sustained effort to provide a collaborative environment.

- The SSAC works to keep an awareness of its audience and the "bigger picture".

- The SSAC Support Staff effectively assists the SSAC.

Assessment - Topic Selection

7. The SSAC is well prepared to deal with emerging security threats. It was noted that the SSAC does not have formal procedures geared towards identifying emerging threats as an input to setting research priorities. Some interviewees indicated that as threats continue to increase in number and in complexity, there could be value in developing processes by which the SSAC could more formally review the security ecosystem as part of its topic selection.

Figure 19: How well do you feel the current topic selection process is able to identify emerging and future threats?

Number of Survey Respondents: 17
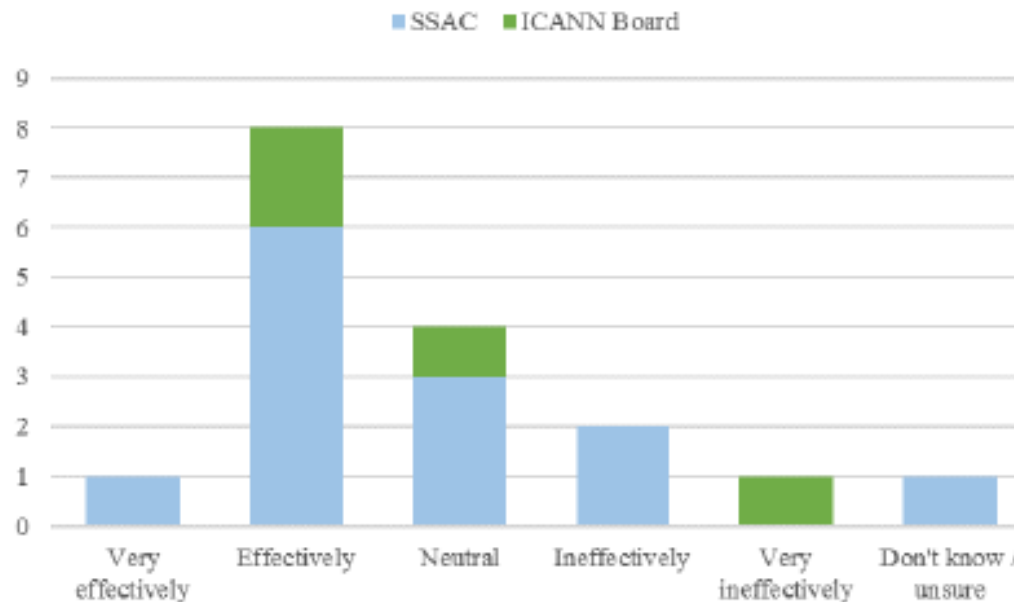
Assessment - SO/AC Interaction

8. There is a need for individuals with an understanding of SSR-related issues to take part in policy development, and some members of the community suggest the SSAC or its members (as individuals) should play that role. Others state that the SSAC should play a technical advice, audit, and verification role, and that assisting more directly in policymaking itself is not the point of the SSAC.


Figure 21: How often is the advice given by the SSAC incorporated into the policy development process of the following SOs/ACs?
Number of Survey Respondents: 51
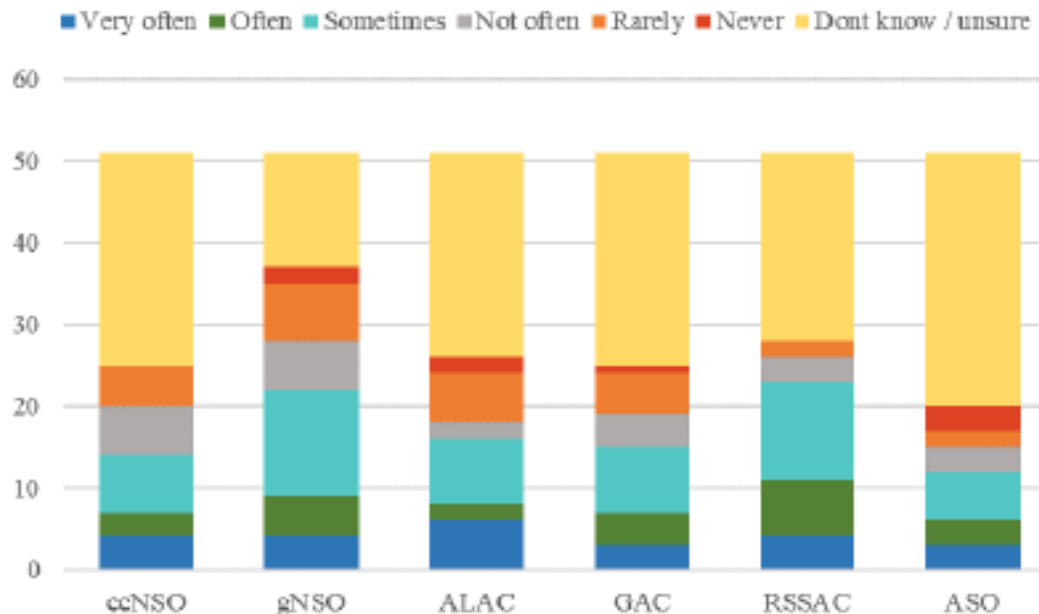
Assessment - SO/AC Interaction

9. *Many individuals both inside and outside of the SSAC identified that creating more interaction with other ICANN SOs/ACs should be an area of focus for the SSAC. The SSAC has been making strides to communicate more frequently and to forge stronger relationships with other SOs/ACs.*

Figure 25: How satisfied, or unsatisfied, are you with the current level of interaction between the SSAC and the ICANN community (outside of SOs/ACs)?
*Number of Survey Respondents: 57*
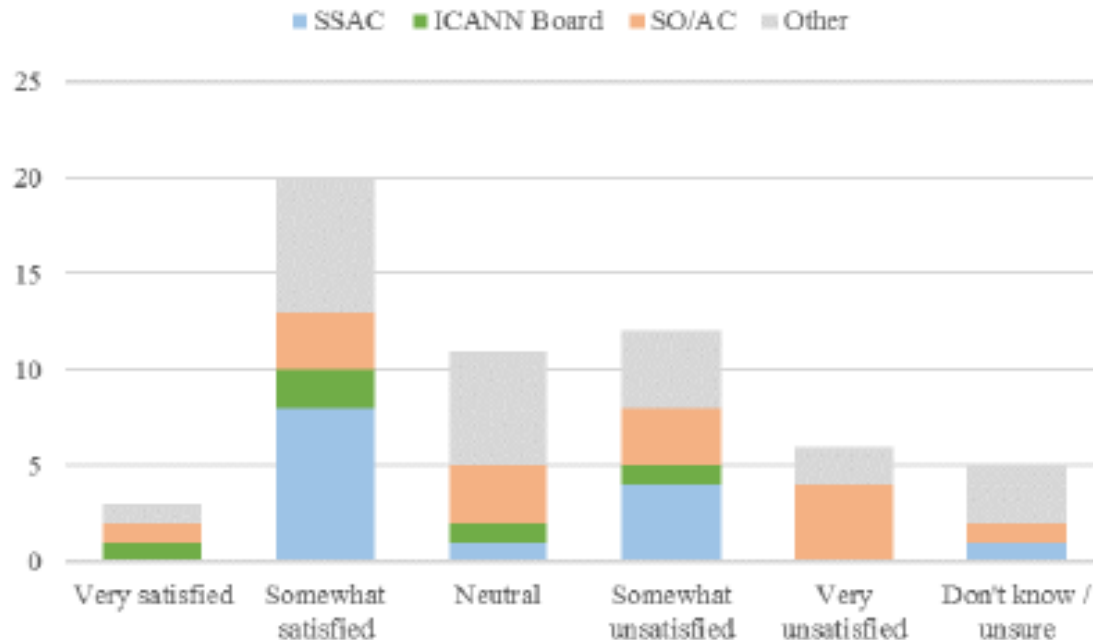
Assessment - Size and Membership

10. The SSAC has wide-ranging and deep technical expertise. The SSAC does not compromise its high technical requirements when vetting potential members, though some interviewees caution that the SSAC should avoid defining "technical" too narrowly, as SSR issues can be both technical and interdisciplinary.

Assessment - Size and Membership

11. The SSAC's size of roughly 40 members appears to be appropriate given tradeoffs in the size of the SSAC, though some thought that additional members with additional perspectives would be valuable.

Figure 27: How Effectively Does the SSAC Cover All Areas of Expertise?
*Number of Survey Respondents: 17*
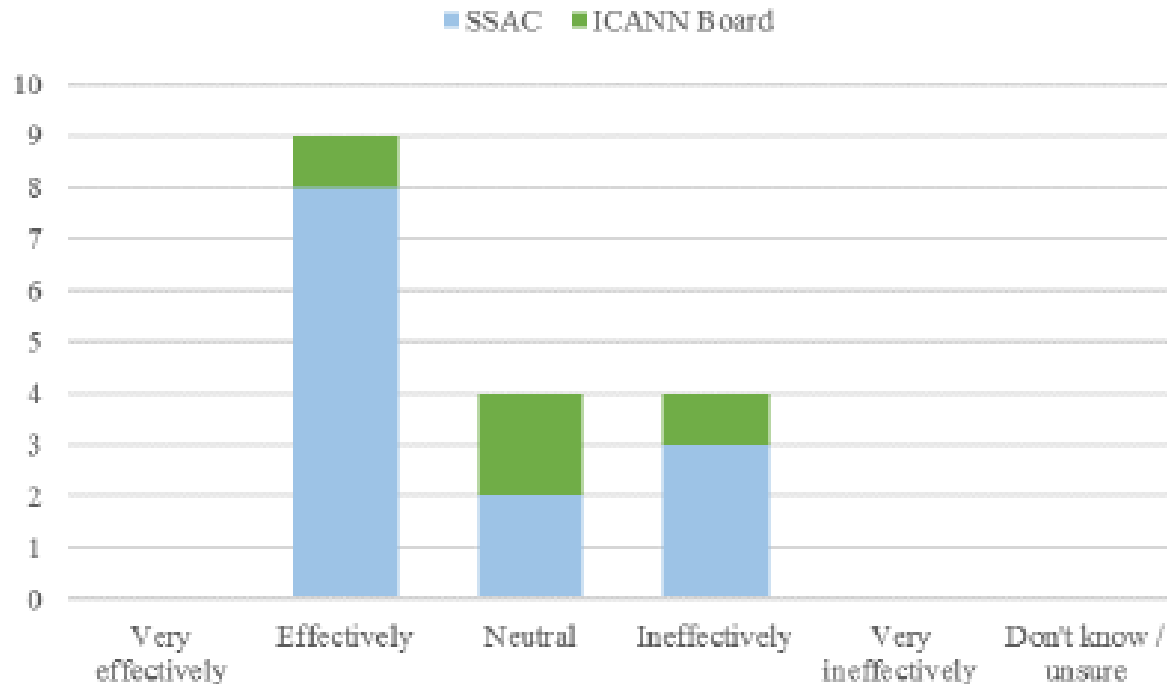
Assessment - Size and Membership

12. The SSAC does not undergo active or targeted recruiting, but rather recruits informally based on need and the existing network of SSAC members. Many interviewees would like to see improvements in the SSAC's recruiting process, but they are cautious about the burden such processes might place on the SSAC's volunteers.

**Figure 29: How effective, or ineffective, do you believe the SSAC's recruiting operations are?**
Number of Survey Respondents: 49
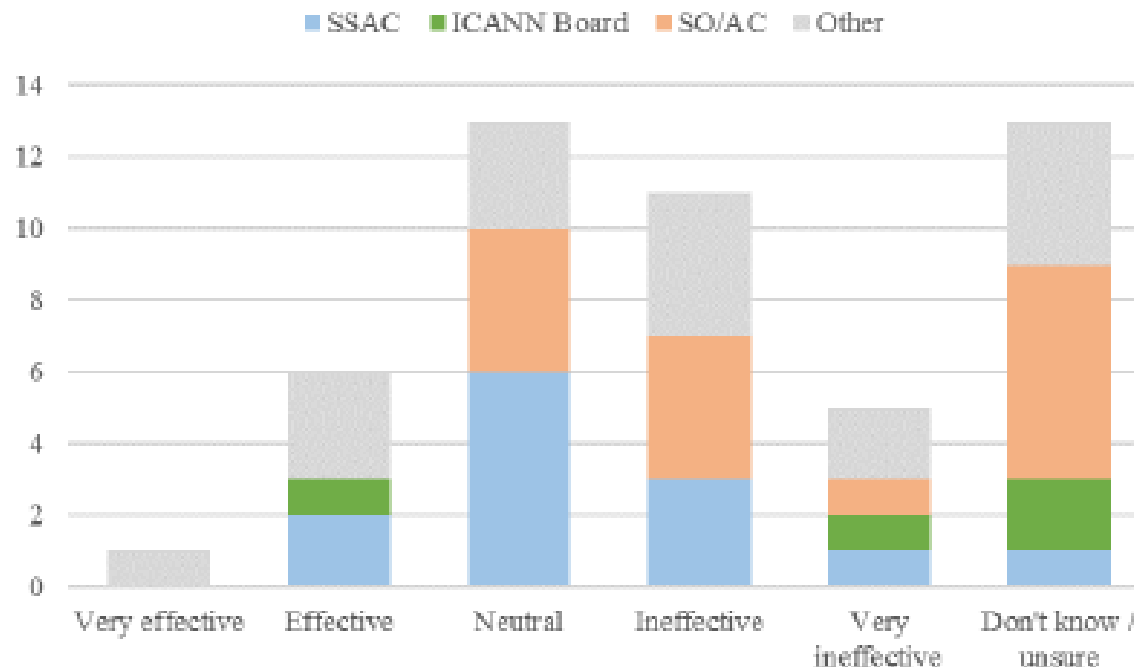
Assessment - Size and Membership

13. The SSAC is perceived to lack geographical and gender diversity and is comprised mostly of male individuals from the U.S. and Europe. While many individuals do not feel it is appropriate for a technical body to have "diversity for diversity's sake" at the expense of technical skill, several SSAC and non-SSAC members indicated that perspectives from other regions and types of individuals would be beneficial.

Figure 30: How Diverse is the SSAC along these Dimensions?
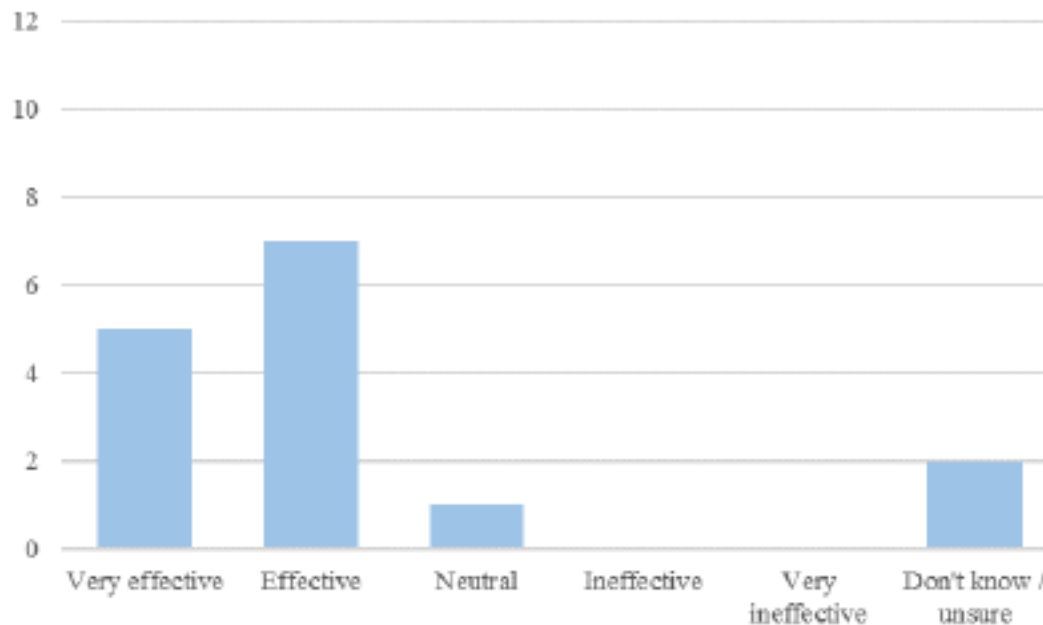*Number of Survey Respondents: 48*
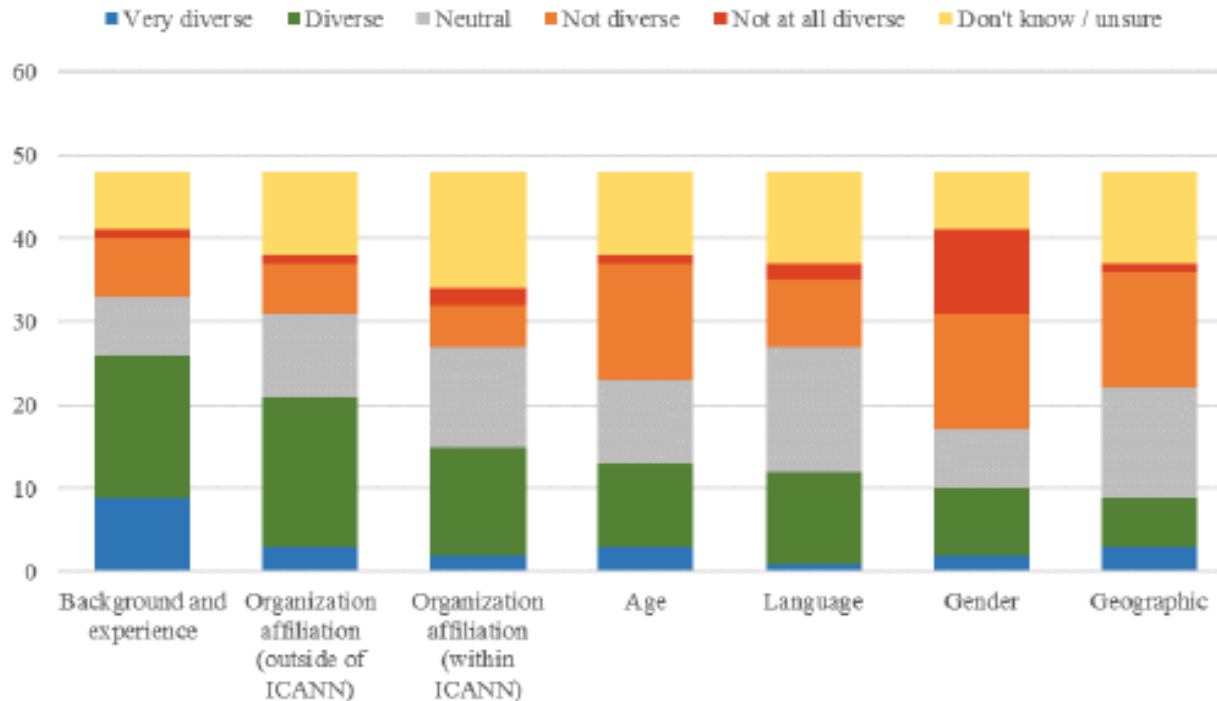
Assessment - Size and Membership

14. The membership review process used by the SSAC today is clearer and more transparent than it had been in the past, and when flaws have been identified, the process has undergone (and continues to undergo) improvements.

Figure 31: How Effective if the Membership Committee at Reviewing Current SSAC Members?
Number of Survey Respondents (SSAC Members): 15

Assessment - Size and Membership

*15. The SSAC's term length of three years for **non-leadership** members is generally considered to be appropriate, and almost all interviewees and survey respondents indicated that there should be no term limits for SSAC's non-leadership members.*

*16. The SSAC's term length of three years for **leadership** members is generally considered to be appropriate (Chair and Vice Chair). There exists much more variation in individuals' views as to the appropriate term limit, if any, for SSAC leadership.*

Assessment - Transparency and Accountability

17. The SSAC is generally seen to be less transparent than other parts of ICANN. While most interviewees understand this to be necessary given the sensitive nature of security risks, many would like to see a more transparent SSAC.

Figure 38: How well do you feel as though the SSAC's level of transparency balances with competing values (e.g., the importance of confidentiality in security issues)?
Number of Survey Respondents: 48
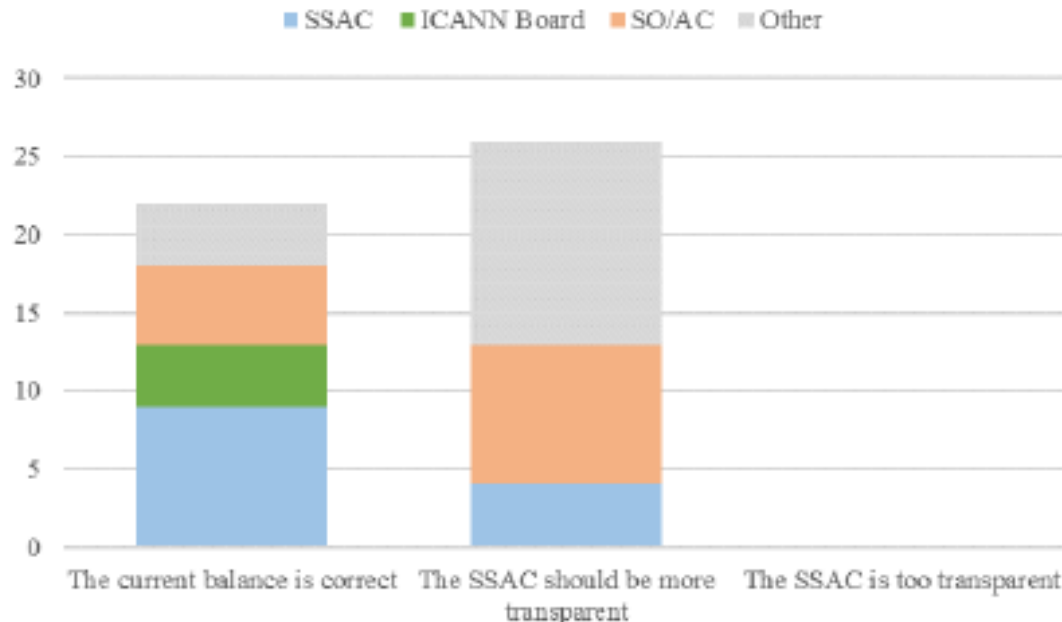
Assessment - Transparency and Accountability

19. The SSAC has mechanisms to allow for the disclosure of conflicts of interest, and members seem comfortable identifying other's potential conflicts of interest. Some SSAC members indicated that, by nature of the technical expertise required to contribute to the SSAC, limited conflicts of interest are unavoidable. Other SSAC members believe more can be done to limit potential conflicts.

Figure 39: How satisfied, or not satisfied, are you with the SSAC's current recusal policies (e.g., allowing for recusals or withdrawals in each published document)?
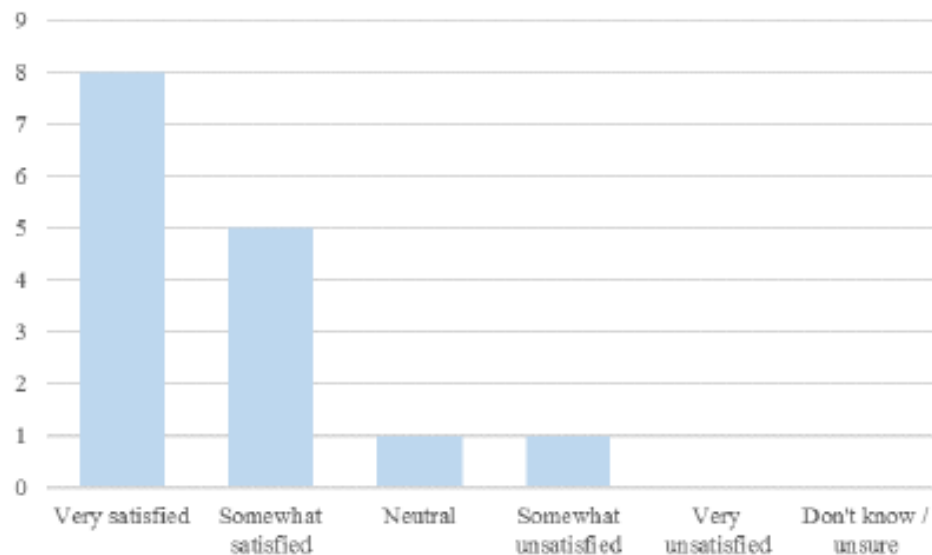*Number of Survey Respondents (SSAC Members): 15*

Assessment - Transparency and Accountability

19. The SSAC has mechanisms to allow for the disclosure of conflicts of interest, and members seem comfortable identifying other's potential conflicts of interest. Some SSAC members indicated that, by nature of the technical expertise required to contribute to the SSAC, limited conflicts of interest are unavoidable. Other SSAC members believe more can be done to limit potential conflicts.

Figure 40: Do you perceive the current level of conflict of interest on the SSAC to be low, moderate, or high, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being low and 5 being high)?

Number of Survey Respondents (SSAC Members): 15
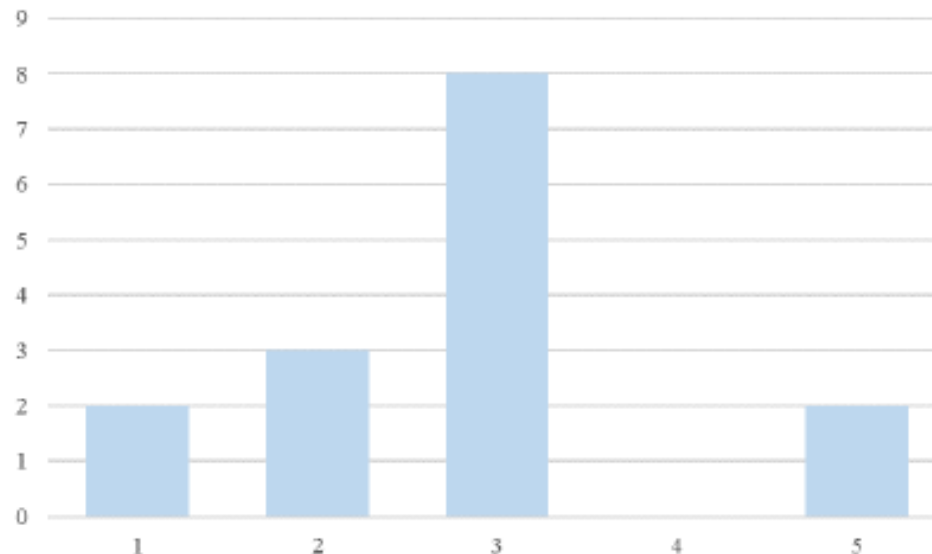
Assessment - Transparency and Accountability

18. The SSAC is accountable directly to the ICANN Board, and through it to the wider ICANN community.

20. The SSAC's website includes important information that assists with transparency. Community members suggested other items that may be useful to include.

Assessment - Prior Review / Improvement

21. The SSAC has taken clear steps to implement the recommendations that were accepted after its prior review. With minor caveat, the SSAC has been successful in these implementations.

- **JAS Communications LLC performed an external review of the SSAC in 2008-2009 and released its assessment on May 15, 2009.**

  – 33 recommendations aimed at improving the SSAC

  – Each discussed in Appendix A of our Assessment Report

- **With minor caveat, all have been implemented:**

  – 10. ICANN Board study the issue of paying a stipend or honorarium to SSAC Leadership and members.

  – 13. Provide advance notice in the form of a professional "heads-up" when uncomfortable situations are reasonably foreseeable. Avoid the perception of "blindsiding" individuals and entities.

  – 16. SSAC keep and publish meeting minutes on the SSAC website in a timely fashion.

Assessment - Prior Review / Improvement

22. The SSAC values self-improvement and makes clear efforts to continually improve even outside of the formal review process.

- The SSAC often updates its Operating Procedures

- The SSAC's Annual in-person meeting polls attendees and reports back on effectiveness

- The SSAC RWP conducted a proactive internal analysis outside of this assessment

- The SSAC is proactively updating its skills matrix

- The SSAC is engaged in internal conversations regarding how it might be more transparent

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Project Timeline

Milestone	Estimated Date
1. Review relevant background documents	February
2. Develop interview questions and solicit RWP interview question feedback	Finalize by March 5
3. Interviews at ICANN61 (and remotely as needed)	March - Late April
4. Process interview notes, design survey, and solicit RWP survey feedback	March - Mid April
5. Survey period	Mid April - Mid May
6. Send Draft Assessment Report to RWP for discussion	Late May
7. Assessment Report published	June 20
8. Present Assessment Report at ICANN62	June 25 - 28
9. Deliver Recommendations to RWP	August
10. Draft Final Report published for public comment	Sept. 12 - Oct. 22
11. Public Session at ICANN63	October 20 - 26
12. Final Report published	November 21

Next Steps - Public Feedback

- **There are additional opportunities for your feedback prior to the release of the Draft Final Report.**

  - The public consultation period is open through July 27, 2018.

  - There is a public participation mailing list.

  - Email mssi-secretariat@icann.org for information or to sign up.

- **The Draft Final Report will be released on September 12, 2018 for further public comment. The comment period will end on October 22, 2018. The Final Report will be published November 21, 2018.**

Agenda

Introduction to the Independent Examiner

Scope and Design of the Review

Interviews and the Survey Instrument

Assessment Report Results

Next Steps

Q&A

Thank you for your time!

Questions?