

BARCELONA – RSSAC Caucus Work Session 1  
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BRAD VERD: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the first RSSAC work session of the day. On the agenda this hour is engagement and participation of the work parties. This has been a recent discussion that opened up let's just say a lot of questions and we felt that we should have a larger discussion here in Barcelona and see what we can do to change the direction or the engagement we've had in our work parties thus far. Liman, can I ask you to maybe recap some of your thoughts from ... And that would start the conversation.

WES HARDAKER: Quick point of order, Brad. The ICANN schedule still lists this as an open to observers meeting.

BRAD VERD: Yeah. Absolutely.

WES HARDAKER: We agreed yesterday it was open to participants, right? So, not just observation, but if people have ways they want to participate in the work, they could do so, right?

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BRAD VERD: I don't remember that, but go ahead, Liman.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: My take is that, following this, we have two caucus working group sessions. I thought those were the ones we were talking about with participation.

WES HARDAKER: Oh, my bad. Then I got the topic wrong for this slot because I didn't read the agenda properly, either. Sorry, my bad.

BRAD VERD: Yeah. This agenda is about engagement in the work parties and then we have two time slots following this one regarding the service coverage work party and the resolver study work party. Those work party sessions we were going to open it up to participants.

WES HARDAKER: Yeah. Sorry about that. I'm going to claim [midnight] again.

BRAD VERD: Hey, I did that all day yesterday and I will probably do it again today.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: I am the shepherd for the new work party on service coverage and we had our first telephone conference and that didn't turn out quite well and I felt that this is not the first time it doesn't turn out well and I'm

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not talking about confrontations. I'm talking about lack of input. If I remember correctly, we had roughly ten people sign up for the work party and we had five people roughly turn up for the call, and of those, one person was active in the dialogue, so it was more or less me and one more person who was conducting a two-person dialogue with four people listening in.

I simply think that that's not engaging with the wider audience and I see this conundrum where people ask to have interaction with RSSAC and when we offer interaction, there is none. So, I think we need to address this some way.

At least my experience is that we've seen this in the past as well with several working groups or work parties where there's simply a lack of engagement from others. So, I think we should reflect over that and see what we want to accomplish, what others want us to accomplish, and how we can make these ends meet because I don't think the current situation works well.

So, I had a few thoughts. I sent an e-mail message to the mailing list with some thoughts, but either we should put in some requirements before taking on a certain work item and if there isn't enough interest, there is obviously not interest. Then we shouldn't waste our time on that.

Also, some thoughts about how to encourage engagement from the caucus. A few ideas I tossed out and these were not carefully thought through, so this was just spur of the moment ideas I had when I was writing the e-mail.

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One is apprenticeship. When you are about to enter the caucus, you have a period of apprenticeship or a testing period, and if you contribute and turn out to contribute to what's going on there, we will welcome you. If not, then I don't know. You can have second thoughts about whether that person is a good person to have in the caucus.

We could have a ticking system, [caterpillar] system, for work party leaders and document leaders or work party leaders, so that if you subscribe to the caucus and you're in there that you actually have to step up as a work party leader on a regular basis, and regular doesn't have to be often. It just means regular.

Also, to look at contributions of people that haven't contributed for a very long time. Maybe we should look for others to help us with what we need help with.

Also, some brainstorming to leave time at caucus meetings for work parties to work together and have a dialogue more in the spirit of IETF working groups because I think there's much more dialogue in IETF working groups and I would like to see that seep into the caucus work, because to me, that works better. Not that it always works perfectly well in the IETF – I'm quite aware of that – but at least it's better on my scale. So, there are a few thoughts. I would like to leave the floor open for comments, ideas and other thoughts.

BRAD VERD:

Yeah. I think I'll just expand on that a bit. And thank you for that. That's kind of a catalyst for this discussion, which has been going on for a long

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time. I mean, for as long as I can remember sitting in this role, there's always been a question about the engagement. How do we engage better? How do we do it more effectively, more efficiently?

Most recently it was in our review that we needed to be more open to the community because people wanted to work with us and we are open. We had a conversation yesterday with one of the members of the caucus that's never turned down a membership but yet engagement out of a lot of these members is light, let's say.

So, I've been struggling with this for a long time trying to figure out. There is a sentiment that we need to be more open and engage more and I feel like we've done that. It's not clear that people want that, I guess. Anybody have thoughts on this or how we can ...

WES HARDAKER:

I had one question to Russ, actually, because there's always a question of do we use a carrot or a stick in any motivational scenario. So, I'll make one other point first which is that we noted that face-to-face meetings yesterday worked better and I think we don't do those in the caucus and I think that's partly what's missing. We have general caucus meetings but we don't have work party meetings. This is sort of our first time doing this and I think we ought to hold those at ICANN as well and I think shepherds and work party leaders probably ought to make sure that that happens more or other venues where the participants are [inaudible] together.

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But, in particular, SSAC has always had a quota and measurement system for people participating in work efforts. Am I correct? And I think that there's agreement or disagreement about how well that works and what the opinion of the SSAC members are in terms of I think you actually measure when people actually call into meetings and stuff like that. So, can you provide us any guidance on how well that works there?

RUSS MUNDY:

Sure. SSAC has used a mechanism of that nature for probably ten years and it's been ... I would describe it as moderately effective. One of the challenges in terms of mechanisms of that nature is what are the right things to measure because if you're not measuring the right things, then it's kind of a hollow metric, so to speak. But, it has been useful in terms of just getting a general participation bar set. Some of the things that are measured is when a person raises their hand to be a member of a work party in SSAC. The ICANN support staff that supports SSAC actually keeps track of how many of those people are on the calls, how many people call in to say, "Apologies, I can't make it," and how many times people just don't show up.

With the cycle that SSAC uses is a three-year membership cycle, so as part of the renewal process, if a person wants to continue on SSAC, the SSAC membership committee considers – there's no hard, fast thing built around it, but the membership committee looks at that as one factor to consider about whether or not a member should be continued. So, that's generally the way it works.

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Person opinion here – there is a lot of variation within SSAC about how much people think this is a useful and effective thing – moderately useful would be my opinion.

WES HARDAKER: Do you know if a membership has ever been not renewed specifically c of that weighting system?

RUSS MUNDY: It certainly has been a significant factor in a couple cases. Not frequent, but it has been used, yes.

BRAD VERD: I will add that the membership committee is currently putting data together on caucus engagement. How many people have signed up for work parties? How many people have attended work parties? How many people have contributed data? It's unclear what we're going to learn from that other than the obvious and it's unclear if any action will be taken. Short of maybe this becomes something that is publicly available to the work party members is like who's there and who's not type of thing.

But, short of that, I'm not a big fan of the negative motivation with the stick. I feel like if you want to be here, you should be wanting to participate and contribute, but I don't know. You can't force people to do that. Carlos?

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CARLOS REYES: Russ, I was wondering if you could comment on the three-year cycle that you mentioned and how that came about within SSAC.

RUSS MUNDY: Thanks, Carlos. My best recollection, because I've not ever ... One of the things I've not done with SSAC is be on their membership committee. So, I was not directly engaged in it, but I've seen it, watched it from a regular member perspective. When SSAC was established, there wasn't any term lengths or anything and I think that as a result of the initial review process that SSAC has, and in the midst of doing the second review now, but I believe it was a result of the initial review process that said, "You guys need to figure out how your membership activity works and document it." It was because of that the membership committee became a reality, the process became a reality. Of course, all the process manual is public and it is available. But at the time it was established, it was people were put into slots and the members that were members at that time, some of them had a one-year slot, some of them had a two-year and then we started the three-year cycle at that point.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible] also from SSAC as well. Being in the membership committee, what a big difference is, is that the SSAC is actually appointed by the board, the members of SSAC, and [inaudible] by SSAC. But the SSAC caucus is not really at that status, so there's a big difference in that as well.



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Another thing, how the [inaudible] works is that it's also being used for some self-assessment by the people itself. I mean, what you will note is that some people [inaudible] and do you really want to continue, and if people don't want, this is a nice opportunity to step out and to make place for a new [inaudible]. So, that's the difference between how the SSAC works and the RSSAC caucus.

BRAD VERD: And nobody is forced out. If they say, "I still want to be a member, even though I'm not contributing."

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It has been proposed that somebody should really be forced out and that causes quite a turmoil. But, the self-assessment round [inaudible] seems to [inaudible] establish practice actually helps for people realizing whether or not they are really engaged or don't have the time.

BRAD VERD: Got it. Okay. We'll take note of that and start figuring out we want to start having conversations, reminding them of their tenure and their contribution. Fred, I'm sorry.

FRED BAKER: I think at least part of this might be a scheduling issue. I'm the work party leader for the other work party this afternoon and we have eight people in the work party. One of you – Carlos, Mario, somebody – put up a Doodle poll and said, "Can we have a meeting?" So, we had a

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meeting and the people that were on that call said, “Well, we’re not actually planning to be at ICANN. We think we might be at IETF.” So, fine. We’re scheduling a meeting this afternoon because staff has schedule it, but we’re planning to have a meeting at the IETF.

Now, the call that we had, there were I think three or four people out of the eight in the work party that didn’t make the call. So, I sent e-mails to them saying, “What’s up? Are you dropping out? Are you interested? Are you not interested? Tell me what’s happening.”

Well, the call for Geoff Huston was at midnight and he forgot about it. The call for the guy in New Delhi, well, he never replied. The guy from New Delhi didn’t reply. The guy from Japan, from Tokyo, was very apologetic. The guy from Benin said, “Well, I was at that particular instant driving from point A to point B and I hadn’t gotten there yet.” I’m like, “Okay, fine. Let me know next time.”

So, now, in setting up this meeting at the IETF in two weeks, which will of course be in whatever time zone they’re in, [inaudible] time, the Doodle poll was set up with a certain set of times and we saw an e-mail on the list saying, “Well, if you pick a time that I’m awake, I might make the call.” Kind of comments like that.

The day before the end of the Doodle poll, we had three people that had indicated that they would be there. That was Mario and myself, work party leader or work party shepherd, and Paul Hoffman work party leader. Now, the meeting this afternoon, I expect we’ll have Mario, Paul if he’s here, you, and me. Nobody else is here.

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So, then, I sent a note around on the caucus list saying, so I looked at timeanddate.com and kind of asked myself what time of day are people likely to be awake. Can we schedule the meeting other than between midnight and 6:00 AM in all of these time zones? Mario added dates to the Doodle poll and we got three more people. It looks like we've picked a time where at least five people can be present out of eight, can be present on the call.

I wonder. This is something that I have struggled with since the mid-1990s because I've been scheduling worldwide meetings since the mid-1990s. Taking a look, when you're thinking about when should I offer for times, taking a look and making sure that everybody is awake at the particular time. It's a novel thought, but it might be something to consider.

BRAD VERD:

It's not a novel thought. While I appreciate the comments, I feel I don't have a lot of sympathy and here's why. Let me just put this out there. One, we have engaged the caucus. Actually, at every caucus meeting, we've sat down with them and asked, "When do you want to have your caucus meetings?" and they've stated, "We want to do one at the AGM and one at every even IETF." Their choice. Great. We've supported that.

As far as work parties go, the work party members schedule their meeting, just like you said. You guys were figuring out when to have it. Regarding the meetings today, the meetings today were not meant for the work party members, though we opened it up to them. That was the meetings today, which will come later, were for the discussion that

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happened here and the work party shepherd or leader if they were here in the room to take that back to the work party. It was to have a bigger dialogue on that topic with this group since engagement had been light thus far.

So, the meetings today were not necessarily schedule with those members schedules taken into account. It was for the people in attendance here. Does that make sense?

FRED BAKER:

It does. That's not what I was told.

BRAD VERD:

Okay. Sorry about that. But, as we said yesterday, we opened it up to a much larger audience, the next two meetings, so that we could try to get more data or more useful information to take back to the work parties. [inaudible]?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

I'm just wondering, regarding the experience I have at the IETF where it could be kind of similar. You have a group and you have to keep that group focused on one topic. Someone introduced the notion of deadline for a draft, saying if the draft is not ready to be shipped after this time, it is expected to be dropped. I'm wondering if it would help to say, well, the work party should be finished at this time, because maybe – what I experienced at the IETF is when the draft is ... You don't have comments and no one is really commenting on that, people start

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shifting to all the problems. So, having a deadline might help to have the people really focused on something and the necessary commitment to which [inaudible]. Maybe ... It's just a suggestion. I'm not ...

BRAD VERD: Thank you. Any other thoughts, comments? Duane?

DUANE WESSELS: So, I wanted to share some of my experiences working work parties as a shepherd and a leader. One of the things I think we struggle with is we sort of default to having monthly work party meetings, calls, and in my experience, on such a call, we spend half the time sort reminding ourselves where we left off last time. I think that was ... To the extent that if the work is to be done phone calls, I think generally we're not meeting often enough. I think there's too much time between calls.

But I also think maybe, like what Daniel was saying about taking some cues from IETF where, in the IETF, the idea is that you do all your work on the mailing list and the in-person meetings are not really where the work is supposed to be done. Maybe that would help if we could focus more on working on the mailing lists, then you don't have so much of an issue with people's sleep schedules. And leave the calls for, I don't know, only those discussions that need more [inaudible] with communications. But try to focus on getting work done on mailing lists.

BRAD VERD: Alright. We'll take that note. Carlos?

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CARLOS REYES: I'm just curious if anyone around the table has thoughts or observations from work parties that went well or work parties that produced the intended publication and if we can compare those experiences with what's not going well.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I guess the work parties that I've been on that went well seemed to have probably maybe a higher percentage of participants from the main RSSAC group, people who were motivated to do writing. I think that's one of the things that I observed in the parties that didn't go well was that no one would step forward to do any actual writing. People were willing to talk a lot, but when it came time to write, that was hard.

So, in work parties that went well, there was sort of a clear division of labor in the writing and people were interested and motivated to do that work.

BRAD VERD: Yeah. It's always easier to tear something apart than it is to create something. Liman?

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: I just tickle the thought. Do we need to look for people to whom the outcome actually is important? It's important in their day job or so on. That will give them a bit of motivation to actually chip in some hours.

WES HARDAKER:

So, that actually brings one of the things I've been thinking to possible light, which is that it's entirely possible that we've had work party topics that people were interested in, so there's a high degree of interest in seeing it get done and they want to be a part of the work party because they want to follow it and then see what's going to happen. But it's entirely possible that some of the participants that still want to see it get done really can't contribute. Maybe it's not a problem that they know how to solve. Maybe they don't have the time. That's another issue that we've talked about.

But I kind of wonder if some of the problems that we're trying to bite off are difficult enough that they're ... Like the anonymization one. That's a high degree of math and a high degree of complexity and choices and things like that, which I know there was participation in that one, but from what I understand, it was only a couple of people. And I don't think it's because there wasn't interest. I think it's because people really didn't know how to contribute. It's not an easy problem. And I wonder how many times that comes up.

BRAD VERD:

But, if that's the case, shouldn't the work party come back and say, "We need help and we need help in this form?" And maybe that means a request going back to something where we get funding and somebody to do that study. But that should be part of the output or a request from that work party. I don't know. It's just how I viewed it. I think I've stated that in a number of the output from a couple of the different reviews. If

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more work is needed here, we need to state that and we should be clear that this requires a study that maybe we don't have all the expertise for or the funding to put together maybe an environment to do the test that would come up with the answer that we're really looking for.

WES HARDAKER:

Yeah. I think that's spot on and we've had two work parties lately that came forward with that sort of result. One of the root names where they narrowed it down to two, which is progress from four to six. And the other one was the anonymization one where they could do an evaluation but actually selecting one was beyond the scope of what a simple caucus, a work party, could accomplish.

And I think that you're right. I think one of the issues is that for some of the harder, bigger problems ... I think the resolver behavior study is going to be similar. That's not an easy problem. I'm looking forward to helping and I can contribute in some areas that I'm an expert in, but I can't do the whole thing and we don't have a source to go to and say, "Look, this is a hard problem. Can we get some funding to pay industry academic, whoever, in order to really beef up staff participation to really go after it." And I think there's probably some way. We could ask the board or something like that [inaudible].

BRAD VERD:

Right. I think we do have a source. I mean, maybe it's not us going to ask for money because we're not in a position to spend money and do that, but the position is the advice that could be given is that a study



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should be done and lets define the scope of that study [inaudible] we believe that the output should be. Essentially, what you would for a statement of work for a work party but a statement of work for what we want out of an effort that we believe somebody should go spend money on doing because it can't be done here.

WES HARDAKER:

So, after I actually finally let Daniel speak ... My bad. I'm sorry. I'd love to hear about NCAP but I think it's too early to ... It's a similar experience, right? So ...

DANIEL:

So, my experience with a work party that I think it went really well – well enough – was that there is different level of contribution and probably we should make clear before the work party starts who is going to contribute and to what extent, because in my case, the topic I was interested to, I could contribute but not lead the work. The problem is that ... I mean, if someone is not taking the leadership of the work, then it's hard for me to do something and if I took the lead, it was worth less because I didn't have the expertise for that. It was a little bit of a shame of my contribution in that work party.

WES HARDAKER:

So, I actually think that's a really good idea. If you ask people ahead of time, "How are you going to participate?" not just, "Do you want to participate?" that may be a very quick indicator that we don't have the experience. If people are like, "Well, I want to participate but I don't

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know how,” and we only have one person that says, “I directly have a plan.” That’s hard, though, because we also want to make sure that we leave the problem definition open to the work party, too, so I’m sort of torn there. But I like the idea. If people just want to join and they don’t have an expectation for how to help, then that’s an indication of a problem. Not that they shouldn’t help, but ...

RUSS MUNDY:

So, that’s an approach of the designation or identification of people that are going to fill certain roads in a work party before work gets underway. For a while, the SSAC was doing that with the work parties there. And in some work parties, it was successful. In others, it was not, but basically the separate roles that were used was someone to lead, be willing to actually take the leadership role of the work party and hopefully different people would be what were referred to as contributors and they would be the ones that would be the expected people to write text, actually get words on paper that other people could review.

And then what was called the reviewer role was someone who had an interest and had some knowledge in the space and wanted to contribute in a different way that they didn’t have the depth or they didn’t have the time or whatever, but they could look at and review what was done.

That was maybe a couple of, one to two years we actually used that and didn’t necessarily work all that well and now, at least within the SSAC work parties, it’s gone back to without having the designated roles.

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But I think it is useful to lay out something of that nature, especially with group the size of the caucus. It's, what, 80-plus people we have now? 87, 88. How many? 100. We have 100, okay.

So, especially because of that size. I think we ought to be having more than just six or eight people for each of these work parties and I think, as you and Wes have both mentioned, if we don't get enough people raising their hands, that's an indication of either the topic isn't of that importance to the caucus overall or the group overall, or maybe the people just don't feel that they can contribute and this is where maybe keeping track of who is doing what might be a good factor to put in.

DANIEL:

Yeah. The conference so far has kind of focused on how can we make small adjustments to the caucus and work parties we have. But I would like to open up to ideas [inaudible] abandon the caucus. Are there other ways to interact with the wider audience than the caucus? I'm not sure.

WES HARDAKER:

We have to propose a replacement now that's going to work.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

So, if we're proposing crazy ideas, I have a crazy idea. Do away with work parties and imagine the caucus as an analog for a single IETF work party. Just imagine that for a second. And imagine caucus participants proposing documents, kind of championing as you would do in an IETF work party.

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So, instead of having a statement of work work flow where we establish work parties and then have a common cadence for that work party when work follows a work flow cadence, imagine just having caucus members coming forward with ideas that they have in maybe groups of one, or two, or three and just putting out Internet draft type things, caucus drafts, whatever, that would then expire after six months if no one worked on them. But would allow people to ... It would kind of be like strawman that people throw their rotten vegetables at in the caucus and generate a lot of discussion in the caucus on these documents that already existed. So, we'd have a working document essentially before you'd have a work party, and if there was no document, then there would be no discussion. Just an idea.

BRAD VERD:

Really quick, Fred. I'm just going to ask kind of a clarifying question here. Do we have a backlog of issues or topics from the caucus that haven't been addressed? Because you're implying that there are people caucus who want to write these drafts and submit them. And what I believe the question at hand is, is the engagement ... I mean, we just heard from Duane that people don't like to write stuff. So, I feel like ...

To be perfectly honest – again, I'm supposed to facilitate this, but it feels like we're a bunch of engineers that are used to the IETF, so therefore I keep ... I mean, if we had a drinking game going today, the word would be IETF. So, I don't know if that's the right answer. Maybe it is. This is a technical advisory committee and the IETF obviously technical body. I'm just ... It's an observation.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, if caucus members weren't interested in writing documents, then I guess no one would propose anything and there would be nothing to do. I mean, anyways, that's the quick response.

FRED BAKER: Okay. I am actually moderately familiar with the IETF. The terms you're looking for are working group and design team. The thing that if you take the entire caucus as a working group and then you have subsets going off and doing those things, in the IETF we call those design teams.

In the IETF, what we primarily do is write documents. In the caucus, what we primarily do is run experiments. So, the work party that I'm working on, for example, is working with Paul Hoffman as a lab at ICANN looking at how different resolvers work. We're going to be talking with [inaudible] who's going to be working with it. Looking at how to configure things, how to ... What software is used. In fact, there's a wide variety of software that's used by the resolvers. And collecting information.

Yes, at some point, it has to get written down, but what we're mostly doing at this point is collecting information and figuring out how reality goes around that information.

So, I don't see how this starts out as lets post an Internet draft or equivalent. First, there's an experiment and then we'll write up the experiment.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you, Fred. I would like to point out, just from the previous conversation, that in 000 in our procedures document, we have defined document leaders, contributors, reviewers, and observers. That's already in our procedures document and there was a bit of a discussion about that earlier, so I just wanted to remind people of that. Liman, I think you ... It was Fred, then Liman, no? So, crazy idea and the current caucus. Anything else, any other ideas?

WES HARDAKER:

So, let me split [Andrew's] thing in half because I think, actually, you bring an interesting idea, but there's really two components of it and we might want to consider one and not the other, for example. So, component number one is how do documents start. So, you were talking about championing it and ... Essentially, it would eventually get to the point of approval to become an official document or whatever. That's the IETF document flow where it's very bottom-up driven. One of the things we've talked about lately is staff constraints in terms of ability to ... How many documents can we officially produce at once? Then we would still have a prioritization issue if there is more being written.

But, I think that the other important part – and actually, the part that attracts to me even more is that by having all of the discussion on a full caucus list, we get greater visibility and that will actually attract more people to the problem to pigeonholing it off into a separate mailing list with only six or seven people.

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So, I think that you may increase participation by having it more widely visible where people suddenly jump in and go, “Hey, that’s not right,” because that happens all the time where you don’t follow it for a while and then halfway through you begin participating because all of a sudden it does fall within your area of expertise.

BRAD VERD: Andrew’s [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can I ask a clarifying question? So, would the idea be to just kind of do away with work parties and have all work party activities just take place on the main caucus list, so all meetings would be open to the whole caucus and all mails for work parties would go to the entire caucus?

WES HARDAKER: Yeah, because then you have the entire caucus able to participate when they can and in pieces, and if somebody didn’t participate in the discussion, then we add them to the acknowledgement section, just like ... Actually, that’s very IETF-like as well. Every time somebody sends me comments about a draft, I make sure their name goes into the acknowledgement system. So, yeah. That’s another mechanism that lets people ebb and flow in terms of participation a little bit better and ensures that everybody is involved with the greater visibility from start to end.

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Then they don't miss the discussions, too. The other thing that happens is, eventually, there's discussions that happen that later get questions. "Well, why did you do that?" Well, we put a long discussion on that and you missed it because you weren't on the list.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

I think that as long as it's manageable on a single mailing list, it's valuable and it avoids also the step to, "Do you want to commit to the work party?" "Yeah, but I don't know who is, what the expectation." People really be able to see what a commitment to work party means. So I think it would help to engage the people, as long as we don't have 100 work parties on the same mailing list, of course, but I don't think that's the case. Or 100 work parties very active.

BRAD VERD:

Regarding opening, moving away from the practice of having a separate mailing list and moving to the general ailing list, certainly not opposed to that. Obviously, I'm all about transparency and opening things up. I think it maybe puts a little more burden on the document leader because they've got to manage that and people coming in from out of the blue maybe who haven't been involved all of a sudden see something and start asking questions. There's probably a little bit more of a management question there. But, that's manageable.

The other thing that maybe we need to think about if we do something like that is changing the procedures on how we go about that because



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it will be a catch-all, so we'd need to define a standard subject line so you know what work party you're talking about. There's just ...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Over-engineering.

BRAD VERD: Well, I don't know about over-engineering, but you've got to think about that when you've got a mailing list with 100 people on it and somebody's talking about the resolver issue and somebody is talking about the other work party list, but the subject lines don't make it clear that that's what we're talking about.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It works in the IETF.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I was going to say I get dozens a day leading up to the IETF and you just scan your line and you cleverly mailbox it and the stuff that goes into the boxes, you follow. I don't think it's that hard.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: With a current combined mail flow of all work parties and the [inaudible] caucus list, I think the one per week we get we can handle. Again, if it turns into a problem, we can just file them off into a separate mailing list. I certainly hope that creating a separate mailing list is not an overly expensive task.

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WES HARDAKER: And in terms of the level of effort for the document leader, if they're having to do all the writing now because there's only one or two participants, that won't be more work for them in order to make sure that it's managed. It will hopefully be less because more people are participating.

BRAD VERD: Andrew, does that relieve the GDPR requirement for the new mailing list? What issues are involved there if you just left the current mailing list as where all the stuff went? These are new territories. That's why I'm asking the question. Just so everybody knows, the new mailing list, when people sign up for a work party, there's a whole new GDPR process that each member has to go through before that mailing list can be completed and turned on.

CARLOS REYES: So, for the existing mailing list, we haven't yet gone to retroactively get that approval. I think a lot of community groups and working groups are struggling with this now that were in place before GDPR went into effect. So, if we somehow hit a reset button, just to ensure we're compliant, we would probably go through that. But as long as you're on the list now, nothing is going to change.

BRAD VERD: So, that would relieve that burden, then. Burden that currently is ...

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CARLOS REYES: Right. Because nowadays, whenever we have new caucus members, through the membership process, they consent to that.

BRAD VERD: Okay. Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Would pressing the reset button be a way to weed out some less interested people?

CARLOS REYES: Yes, and I think ultimately a reset is probably where the membership committee might be going in terms of once we have all the data, and it's something that this group has discussed, or the RSSAC and the caucus has discussed in the past I think maybe in Abu Dhabi when we did the membership survey because we learned some things from the membership survey and some people actually did say, "I don't want to be in the caucus anymore." So, I think there are enough data points where we probably will hit a reset at some point and we can manage that for the mailing list.

BRAD VERD: Alright. Well, I think we have some, let's call them, a few action items we can take as far as the mailing list. We can document these and share them back out to the group and make sure that we got them right and

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make changes if everybody agrees that that's what we want to do. What else? Changing where mail goes so it's more transparent is great. Is that going to ... If that helps with engagement, that's even better. What else can we do to encourage people? I'm trying to think of the right word.

The reason I keep asking the same question is we keep being criticized about this and I don't know where the criticism is coming from other than some people in the community are saying, "We want to be able to be a part of RSSAC and participate more," and we have an open door policy on that and you can't force people to drink from the well if they don't want to. So, what else?

WES HARDAKER:

So, I'll bring out the thing that has been mentioned in the last year is that the distinction between when the documents come out, the difference between what was done by the caucus and what was an RSSAC document has been confusing to people. I've heard multiple people mention to me that this is an RSSAC document, but yet it was written by the caucus and they're never quite really sure where the path to get there was. So, people are like, "How come you don't have to labels? How come you don't have an RSSAC caucus stream and an RSSAC stream that are independent, depending on who it's written by?"

I think, at this point, within RSSAC, we really expect almost everything to be written by the caucus and we're sort of finally turning to that point where that's the case now that 037 and 038 are out in particular.

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BRAD VERD: I don't mean to interrupt, but are these the same people complaining about they want to participate?

WES HARDAKER: No. I'm trying to remember who I even had the conversation with. I had two conversations in the last ICANN about it independently. So, I don't know. That's a procedural change that's massive, but there is some confusion with respect to that process, and how to clean up the confusion I'm not sure. If there's anything to do there, I'm not sure. I'm throwing it out because I did hear about it.

BRAD VERD: Is the confusion leading to lack of engagement, which is what obviously ... I don't want to conflate issues here, so ...

WES HARDAKER: No. And I think the answer to that question is yes, but I can't tell you how because my conversation was not in depth enough to ... It was a hallway conversation while walking. I should have stopped them and had a good 15-minute discussion and I didn't do that.

BRAD VERD: I guess I'm more of the mind, the train of thought, kind of going to what [inaudible] said earlier. If we were producing 100 documents and there were two different labels and there was some confusion, I would

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understand it, but the quantity of documents we're putting out is, to me, not that confusing. Kind of going to the e-mail comment. We can figure this out. But, if there's a problem, we should certainly address it.

WES HARDAKER:

Actually, I'm remembering one other comment that came out of that discussion because some of it was credit-oriented. If it was a caucus effort, then it should be very clear at the top of the document that it wasn't RSSAC that did the work and that it was a group of experts from the industry and from within the caucus that did the majority of the work, so they got credit where credit was due and I think that's a fair comment. It's sort of at the very bottom who actually did the work and things like that.

BRAD VERD:

Can you help me understand the issue? Names at the top, would that be better?

WES HARDAKER:

People want credit. I think that's a motivation.

BRAD VERD:

That's an easy thing to fix.

WES HARDAKER:

That's an easy thing to fix and I think that we can do that going forward much more strongly, that this was ... At the very top, explain the

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background. This was a caucus work party effort that came under this work party with these people. That does make it more clear where it came from, that it's not RSSAC itself that wrote it. I don't know.

BRAD VERD:                      Alright. We've got about 15 minutes left. Anything else?

WES HARDAKER:                Would you mind if I asked if there's anybody else that ... We've heard from a small set of people, which is the exact same problem that we've had. Is there anybody else—

BRAD VERD:                      You took the words out of my mouth.

WES HARDAKER:                Any participants in the room, please, we would love to hear opinions on what you think works well, what doesn't work well. When do you participate? When don't you participate? What gets in your way? What's demotivating or motivating to you?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:           And do you feel any obstacles towards participating?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:           As someone who's been a long-time observer of the root system and certainly someone who has been working in that space in an individual

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capacity, I must admit I find working in the context of the caucus to have been somewhat frustrating. It's slow. It's unbelievably slow. To be perfectly frank, the defensive position that many of the operators at the root services actually makes it difficult to get clear analytical data about the way they do operate – that's hard. And the committee structure doesn't seem to help me. So, I find that faster, more efficient, and I suppose more aligned to my own timetable to simply do the work myself. That's the wrong answer. We shouldn't have wedged ourselves at the caucus and its supporting infrastructure becomes a barrier rather than a facilitator.

There are a whole new set of issues coming up with encryption, with HTTPS push, with the emerging work on resolverless DNS which are fundamental I think to the way the DNS works. Is this relevant to the root system? God, yes. Is it possible to phrase this in a way that the caucus can work collectively to be of assistance? Oh, I don't know. I really don't know.

And here's one of these sort of existential questions flying around and my own gut reaction is it's easy just to do what I would like to do myself. Wrong answer, but I don't know how to make the right answer work. I suppose that's where I'm coming from and it's not a case of individual credit. I don't think that really makes much of a difference. It's more if I bring a question into the caucus, will I get other folk bringing data, views, and assistance so that collectively we do a better job? So far, the experience hasn't been enlightening in that way and I kind of wonder if we're not able to bring the collective capabilities and data from around the table onto questions, it gets frustrating.



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So, I'm sorry to have a largely negative message. I don't have clear answers. But I simply observed when I looked at packet sizes that working largely founded. The problem is real. The problem is very, very real. Getting the caucus to do something materially productive to assist in this real issue has been frustrating.

So, come January when you [revoke the old key] you're going to find a [few folks who won't]. How many? Well, none of us know. Could we know? Yeah, but we're not going to do it. Those are the kinds of things that frustrate me, and I said, if there was a bit of willingness and spirit to help with data, to help with more analysis and so on, I think we'd be better off, but I don't see how to facilitate that. Thanks.

BRAD VERD:

Yeah. I think you echo my sentiment. So, yes, I'm trying to figure out how to do that. We've tried all these different things over the last couple of years and we haven't found that secret recipe yet, so we're asking.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

If I only get one day of data from the root, I don't really get anything useful. It was actually materially of assistance when I became a contractor to ICANN, OCTO, and had some visibility to the OCTO data sets that I was actually able to look at data on timings that [inaudible] one day of the week. That was extraordinarily valuable. What you see at the roots is not what everyone else sees. Even that sentence is astonishingly difficult to get to with data, but it's true. Why? I don't know. No one around this table knows. Why do you spend all of your

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time shoveling NX domain out the door? And literally, that's what you do. Again, "Why?" is a really good question and once you understand the why, you can start to understand how do we stop doing NX domain at the intensity we're doing?

My plea, I suppose, is: is there a way to satisfy a whole bunch of requirements? And it may include some form of [inaudible] which [inaudible] worked on to get some of this data more available more consistently. And even if OCTO is the gatekeeper, I don't mind. But, having consistent access more than one day a year makes my kind of work incredibly easier. Not having that access leaves me working largely with probing into the roots and seeing what they answer, but that's not the big picture.

So, one thing that could really help me is measures that allow researchers some form of better access and continuous access into this data. Thanks.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Have you approached the root server operators individuals [inaudible] I would like to have this data for this purpose?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: In Copenhagen, I did such an approach to a number of operators, including I, and got nowhere, unfortunately. It's a difficult question and many root server operators naturally go, "It's easier to say no than to say yes." K root, same issue. It's easier to say no than yes.

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And I appreciate all of the problems around exposing that data, but you've got to admit, as a researcher, working blind is just as frustrating. Thanks.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

I can confirm that it's even worse in my experience, that although it was [inaudible] ICANN just before OCTO. I need to say that. [inaudible] we had actually [inaudible] could get data for some of the root servers and then ICANN itself [inaudible] get you the data and then [inaudible] follow that better and there it was stuck again with only a very small bite of data from the [inaudible]. It's very frustrating.

BRAD VERD:

Well, thank you for sharing that. Again, I don't want to conflate too many issues here as far as engagement with the caucus and having people contributing versus not having data to do – what Fred said earlier. We do experiments and then we write about them. It's an interesting challenge, I guess, or maybe something we should identify or talk about is the reason ... Fred, maybe your working group has an opportunity is because one of your members has a lab that you can go do this in, whereas ...

FRED BAKER:

[inaudible].

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BRAD VERD:

I understand. That's why I pointed out. Whereas RSSAC doesn't. We don't have a lab. But, I think that obviously we're here for ICANN and if we need a lab it seems like OCTO would be the obvious place to point to, to say that they should be helping and enabling us around that, but I guess we should figure out what our requirements are and what we need. But then there's going to be time. That's going to be ... It takes time to set up a lab and to get things to work right, and based upon what your requirements are and what experience you're going to run. So, these are all things that need to take into consideration and that slows things down and adds to the frustration. Liman?

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN:

I would argue that a lab probably doesn't give you all the information you need because, in Geoff's case, you need access to real data in many cases. Running beta tests in a lab gives you different information than you get from real data.

And one more thing. I would like also to argue that at least in NetNod's case, bringing large continuous sets of data is a major undertaking, so we would have to change a lot of our operations to provide that. Doing these samples of one, two days collections is something that still interrupts operations. It's nothing [inaudible] as an everyday thing.

So, if there is a legitimate request for having access to data in a more continuous fashion in a different way, I guess we'd be open to discuss that, but it's something that would actually mean a major change to the way [we] operate.

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WES HARDAKER: We're back to cost again. I mean, it's expensive to do DIDL. It's not cheap, just in terms of man hours and things like that. We do it for good, but it's hard.

BRAD VERD: Well, and we're also off topic from engagement. Alright. With that, it doesn't seem like there's much more to add here from the group, unless somebody else has got something to say. Carlos?

CARLOS REYES: So, I just want to clarify the mailing list discussion. Is this something ... Should we propose something to the mailing list? Because we have two work parties that ...

BRAD VERD: I wouldn't suggest changing anything. I think we need to come up with a proposal and send it out to the people and see what the feedback is.

WES HARDAKER: I was going to say it would be good to have a summary of the things that we did here today, like should we go down to one mailing list and that kind of stuff, and then see what the caucus wider membership that aren't in the room today, think about which ones that they think are good and see if we can generate even a discussion about that. If we can't generate a discussion about that, then we're probably really sunk.

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BRAD VERD:

Well, maybe we bring it up, we share the in the caucus meeting tomorrow or day after tomorrow, something like that. Great. With that, I will adjourn the meeting. Have a wonderful day.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**