Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG)

This is the workspace for the Root Server System Governance Working Group (RSS GWG).

- Charter and Operating Procedures
- Composition
- Resources
- Teleconferences and Work Sessions
- Work Plan

RSS GWG teleconferences and work sessions are open to observers.
To observe an RSS GWG teleconference or work session, please contact carlos.reyes@icann.org for remote participation information.

Background
Following the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) stewardship transition, the RSSAC developed an initial framework to evolve the Root Server System (RSS). In June 2018, RSSAC published its proposed governance model for the RSS and the Root Server Operators in “RSSAC037: A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System” (RSSAC037). The RSSAC037 Model calls for five functions to provide governance, accountability, and transparency for the RSS. The RSSAC concurrently published “RSSAC038: RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System” (RSSAC038). In RSSAC038, the RSSAC makes three recommendations for next steps to the ICANN Board.

Since then, the ICANN Board, through the ICANN Board Technical Committee, oversaw the development of a “Concept Paper on a Community-Driven Process to Develop a Final Model Based on RSSAC037” (Concept Paper) as part of the ICANN Board’s consideration of RSSAC037. The Concept Paper proposes a model (Concept Model) based on the RSSAC037. The Concept Model establishes three new groups: the Root Server System Governance Board, the Root Server System Standing Committee, and the Root Server Operator Review Panel. In addition to these groups, ICANN org would manage Financial and Secretariat Functions.

The Concept Paper also outlines a community-driven process to develop a final governance model for the RSS. This is in response to recommendation one from RSSAC038, which calls on the ICANN Board to “initiate a process to produce a final version of the Model for implementation based on RSSAC037”. There are three phases in the community-driven process: Design, Consultation, and Implementation. During the implementation phase, there are two tracks. The Root Server System Governance Working Group (GWG) will lead the Structural Track to develop a final model, and ICANN org will lead the Administrative Track to plan for implementation of a final model.

The ICANN Board Technical Committee directed ICANN org to develop a draft charter, operating procedures, and work plan for the GWG. RSSAC037; the Concept Paper; and the GWG draft charter, operating procedures, and work plan were available for Public Comment from May to August 2019. Nine submissions were received during Public Comment. ICANN org summarized the submissions and proposed next steps to the ICANN Board Technical Committee. The ICANN Board Technical Committee reviewed the Public Comment submissions, amended the charter and operating procedures of the GWG, adjusted the work plan timeline of the GWG, and recommended the convening of the GWG.

RSSAC037; the Concept Paper; and the GWG charter, operating procedures, and work plan provide a starting point for discussions in the ICANN community about evolving RSS governance. By convening the GWG, the ICANN Board completes its consideration of recommendation one from RSSAC038. Furthermore, the ICANN Board continues its evaluation and consideration of recommendations two and three from RSSAC038.

This action is within ICANN’s mission and within its role of facilitating the coordination of the operation and evolution of the RSS. It is in the public interest because it supports the enhancement and evolution of the DNS. Supporting the evolution of RSS governance contributes to the commitment of ICANN to strengthen the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS. Evolving RSS governance will result in significant changes to the ICANN community and ICANN org. The community-driven process to develop a final model envisions considerable work and commitment of resources. Any budgetary and financial implications will be handled through ICANN processes that ensure accountability and transparency.