Long-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline of Reviews

**Open date: 14 May 2018**

**Close date: 31 July 2018**

**Publication of Public Comment Summary: 14 August 2018**

See below or here for more information

**Brief Overview**

**Purpose:** This public comment proceeding invites feedback on long-term options to provide more reasonable scheduling across ICANN reviews (Specific and Organizational), with the goal of meeting ICANN's accountability and transparency obligations in a more practical and sustainable manner.

**Current Status:** The timing of Specific and Organizational Reviews mandated by the Bylaws has resulted in multiple reviews occurring at the same time. Currently, there are eleven Organizational and Specific Reviews, in various phases of the review process. This is in addition to policy development work and other work across ICANN community. This high level of activity strains both community volunteer and ICANN resources. The number of reviews running simultaneously, and the fact that frequently there is not enough time to test out the effectiveness of implemented recommendations before the next review cycle begins, have been ongoing themes of discussion within the community. During ICANN61, the ICANN community discussed the heavy demand of reviews, together with the policy development work and other activities, flagging concerns about the impact on the volunteer community and ICANN resources. Based on discussions with and feedback from the ICANN community, the ICANN organization analyzed options for both immediate (short-term) and long-term approaches to solve the challenges associated with the multiple reviews occurring at the same time.

**Next Steps:** After this public comment proceeding closes, ICANN organization will analyze the comments received and coordinate with the Organizational Effectiveness Committee of the ICANN Board (OEC) in identifying recommendations to the ICANN Board on paths forward.

**Report of Public Comments**

**Section I: Description and Explanation**

The large number of Specific and Organizational Reviews taking place at the same time has strained volunteer and ICANN resources and prompted a discussion during ICANN61. Based on feedback from the ICANN community, the ICANN organization analyzed options for both immediate (short-term) and long-term approaches to solve these issues in consultation with the community.

The options offer various ways to address the mandates from the Bylaws that have resulted in multiple simultaneous reviews. The options also address the inability to modify the mandated review cycles in order to address unforeseen developments. Depending on the options chosen, certain sections of the Bylaws would need to be modified. The options are rooted in several key principles that aim to rationalize the review schedule to make it more practical for the community. These principles include:

- Staggering the reviews to have no more than one Specific Review and two Organizational Reviews running concurrently;
- Adding timing criteria in order to initiate the next cycle of a Specific or Organizational Review, which could include factors such as a requirement that prior review recommendations be fully implemented and possibly operational for a period of time before the next review is initiated;
- Adding requirements that, like the Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT), other Specific Review teams complete their work within 12 months. This requirement could also be applicable to Organizational Reviews (although because Organizational Reviews are conducted by independent examiners based on contractual agreements, timing considerations are already incorporated into the process);
- Focusing Specific Review teams’ work on topics of highest priority to the community; and
- Adding scheduling flexibility for Specific Reviews to the Bylaws, with appropriate checks and balances.

The proposal in Section III provides details on the challenges with the existing schedule of Specific and Organizational Reviews. This includes the constraints under which ICANN organization must conduct these reviews in line with the mandate from the Bylaws and a discussion on the principles and related options that the community may wish to consider. The goal is to develop a more realistic and sustainable review schedule for the future.

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1 This is not a consultation on future Bylaws changes. This is a consultation to consider if any Bylaws changes might be needed in the future in order to address the issues posed through the current Review mandates.

**Section II: Background**

There are seven Organizational Reviews and four Specific Reviews mandated by the ICANN Bylaws. All reviews (other than the Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review, which is mandated to take place after a New gTLD round has been in operation for one year) are triggered by an action related to the prior review cycle. The proposal in Section III includes an overview of the reviews currently underway and provides a schedule of reviews for the next cycle to illustrate the ongoing challenge of multiple simultaneous reviews.

**Short-term Options to Adjust the Timeline for Specific Reviews:** Concurrent with this public comment proceeding, there is also a public comment proceeding related to short-term options, which provides options to adjust the timeline for two Specific Reviews in order to alleviate existing strain on volunteers and ICANN resources. The two reviews potentially impacted are the third Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3) and the second Registration Directory Service Review (RDS-WHOIS2). For more information, please see the public comment proceeding: "Short-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline for Specific Reviews."

**Section III: Relevant Resources**
• Long-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline of Reviews [PDF, 116 KB]
• A redlined version of the Long-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline for Specific Reviews to highlight the changes made to the original document.

Section IV: Additional Information

• ICANN Bylaws: Specific Reviews
• ICANN Bylaws: Organizational Reviews
• Short-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline for Specific Reviews Public Comment Proceeding

Section V: Reports

• Report