

At-Large Proposed Bylaws Changes Regarding the Technical Liaison Group Workspace

Comment Close Date	Statement Name	Status	Assignee (s) and RALO(s)	Call for Comments	Call for Comments Close	Vote Announcement	Vote Open	Vote Reminder	Vote Close	Date of Submission	Staff Contact and Email	Statement Number
29.11.2013	Proposed Bylaws Changes Regarding the Technical Liaison Group	Adopted 12Y, 0N, 0A	Rinalia Abdul Rahim (APRALO)	23.11.2013	06.12.2013	09.12.2013	09.12.2013	12.12.2013	13.12.2013	16.12.2013	Samantha Eisner samantha.eisner@icann.org	AL-ALAC-ST-1213-01-00-EN

Comment / Reply Periods (*)

Comment Open Date:

30 October 2013

Comment Close Date:

29 November 2013 - 23:59 UTC

Reply Open Date:

30 November 2013

Reply Close Date:

20 December 2013 - 23:59 UTC

Important Information Links

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Brief Overview

Originating Organization:

ICANN Board

Categories/Tags:

- ICANN Board/Bylaws

Purpose (Brief):

Bylaws changes are proposed in order to increase availability of technical advice to the Board as well as the effectiveness of the Technical Liaison Group as set forth in the Bylaws.

Current Status:

For community consideration

Next Steps:

The Board will consider the community input and determine whether to approve the Bylaws amendments.

Staff Contact:

Samantha Eisner, Senior Counsel

[Email Staff Contact](#)

Detailed Information

Section I: Description, Explanation, and Purpose:

The ICANN Board has recently been reviewing the fundamental question of how it can obtain the advice that it needs. Advice on technical matters is one of those key areas where the existing advisory mechanism, the Technical Liaison Group (or TLG) is not meeting the Board's needs or the mission as stated in the Bylaws. One of the key functions that the TLG is supposed to serve is to form a panel of experts to which ICANN can direct technical questions. To date this expert panel has not yet been formed. The TLG is comprised of four organizations (the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), the International Telecommunications Union's Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB)) and has primarily focused its efforts on the annual appointment of a liaison to the ICANN Board and a voting member to ICANN's Nominating Committee. The need for the operation of the TLG to change has been an ongoing conversation within ICANN, as noted in the review of the TLG that was recently completed.

The proposed Bylaws posted for comment are anticipated to help streamline the efforts of the component entities of the TLG in providing the ICANN Board with technical advice. Instead of focusing their efforts on the appointment of a Board liaison or a Nominating Committee member, the primary task remaining with the TLG entities will be focus on the appointment of the expert panel that the Board can call upon for advice. The liaison role does not offer this more global access to expertise, as the TLG liaison role rotates on an annual basis, and no one liaison is able to deliver a coordinated position representing all of the TLG entities. The existence of the expert group will allow the Board to seek coordinated input, if needed, from all four component entities at the same time.

The Bylaws changes do not represent any change to the role of the TLG, which is to "channel technical information and guidance to the Board and other ICANN entities." Nor is there any change to four entities that make up the TLG. This proposed change is directed only towards simplifying how the TLG operates and delivers technical advice to the Board.

Section II: Background:

The Technical Liaison Group is one of the advisory mechanisms set out in the ICANN Bylaws. It is comprised of four organizations (the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), the International Telecommunications Union's Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB)). Today, three of those organizations (ETSI, ITU-T and W3C) appoint a liaison to the ICANN Board on a rotating basis. In 2010, ICANN, through the Structural Improvements Committee, commissioned an organizational review of the TLG (available at <http://www.icann.org/en/groups/reviews/tlg>), which resulted in recommendations to change the structure of the TLG.

Section III: Document and Resource Links:

[Proposed Bylaws Amendments](#) [PDF, 69 KB]

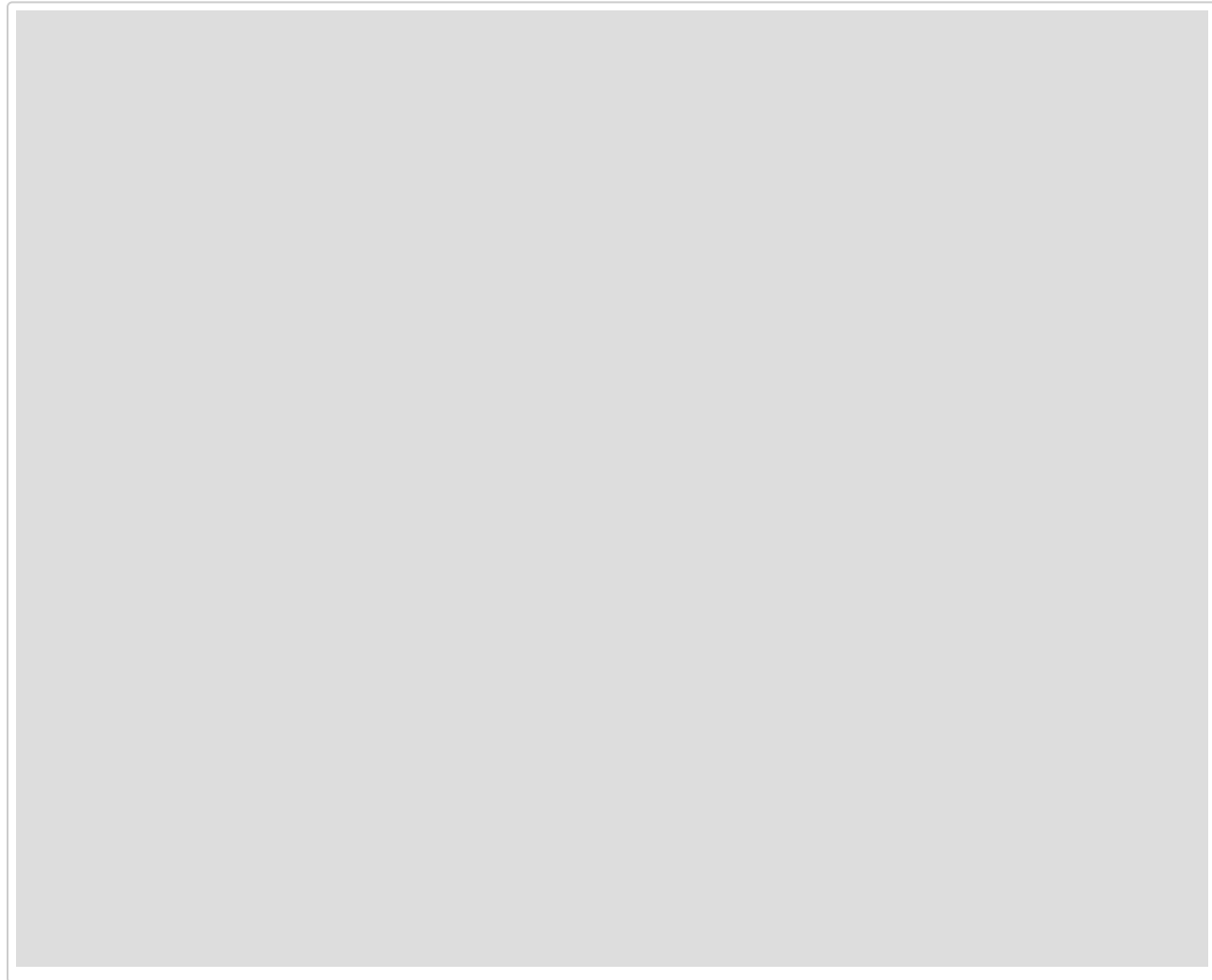
Section IV: Additional Information:

None

(*) Comments submitted after the posted Close Date/Time are not guaranteed to be considered in any final summary, analysis, reporting, or decision-making that takes place once this period lapses.

FINAL VERSION TO BE SUBMITTED IF RATIFIED

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FINAL DRAFT VERSION TO BE VOTED UPON BY THE ALAC

The ALAC supports the intent of the proposed bylaw changes to increase the availability of technical advice to the Board as well as the effectiveness of the Technical Liaison Group. It is clear that the current *modus operandi* is not working and that it has not brought any benefit to ICANN in terms of advice.

However, the ALAC is concerned that the order in which the changes are presented is out of line with the original recommendations of the Board technical relations WG findings, published on (<http://www.icann.org/en/groups/reviews/tlg/board-technical-relations-wg-final-report-22aug11-en.pdf>)

This report specifically recommends:

*"Recommendation: ICANN should work to strengthen and better institutionalize the mechanisms for obtaining technical advice and input, including at the Board level. It is the recommendation of this Working Group that, given the ICANN Board's current mode of operation, the organization continues to need technical advice and expertise within the Board's deliberations, **such as the expertise and advice that has been provided by liaisons appointed by the TLG.** A decision to disband the TLG should be made only in conjunction with simultaneously addressing this issue."*

The ALAC understands that the proposal is not to disband the TLG altogether but to remove the TLG position from the ICANN Board. We call on the ICANN Board to make sure, in the substitution of the TLG position in the Board, that it be structurally replaced by constant access to the necessary technical competence, not only through a structured, distance consultation.

Therefore, the ALAC considers the actual elimination of the position of a technical liaison to the ICANN Board should not occur until, at least, a mechanism to seek regular advice from the Technical Liaison Group (TLG) be founded. This capability should be a permanent one and, provide for the ability of the technical constituencies to provide advice to the Board on an ongoing basis and not merely when requests are made.

The areas that are in perpetual need of advice center on the DNS, both operationally and strategically. Operationally, advice is continuously required on issues related to DNS security, stability and resiliency as they are affected by developments in ICANN's area of work such as TLD expansion, IDN TLD and upcoming Variant TLD delegation. Strategically, advice/information is needed on how competition and complements to the DNS may be evolving as a continuous viability assessment for ICANN and its future.

The primary technical constituencies are often thought of as the RSSAC and the SSAC, but it should also be noted that the ALAC, given its broad remit, is able to comment and advise on any aspect of ICANN and can thus offer technical advice should the expertise to provide such advice be readily available in the At-Large community. Moreover, competency in technical matters is not limited to these three groups: it also includes the ASO, which includes the different RIRs, the ccNSO and the IETF, which has a permanent seat on the Board.

Designated technical experts/groups should serve both the watchdog (proactive provision of advice) function as well as provide advice upon request and any request should be allowed to come not only from the Board, but also from the community.

The ALAC also notes the absence of the criteria of reciprocity between the ICANN Board and the Boards of some organizations, specifically the W3C, ITU-T and ETSI, that are part of the Technical Liaison Group (TLG). The ALAC recommends that mechanisms for reciprocal advice be explored for ICANN to improve its links with these organisations.

Nominating Committee

On the subject of removing the TLG Liaison from the Nominating Committee, the ALAC is concerned that the proposed changes in the bylaws removes the TLG from appointing a delegate to the Nominating Committee. Yet the recommendation in the final report of the Board technical relations working group (<http://www.icann.org/en/groups/reviews/tlg/board-technical-relations-wg-final-report-22aug11-en.pdf>) says:

"The Nominating Committee is designed for broad participation. The TLG provides for participants in the Nominating Committee who are connected to the broader technical community. ICANN should maintain this connection, and should continue the TLG's role of fulfilling it."

A significant part of the Nominating Committee's work is outreach. The TLG Liaison has provided a significant outreach component to technical communities. Given the concerns of having persons on the Board with sufficient technical expertise, this change should NOT be supported and the TLG should continue to be able to select a delegate to serve on the Nominating Committee. Removing this position is likely to hinder the Nominating Committee's Outreach component.

FIRST DRAFT SUBMITTED

The ALAC supports the Bylaws changes that have been proposed to increase the availability of technical advice to the Board as well as the effectiveness of the Technical Liaison Group. It is clear that the current modus operandi is not working and has not brought any benefit to ICANN in terms of advice.

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