

RrSG response to Long-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline of Reviews

The Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG) appreciates ICANN's efforts to think strategically about how to handle review timelines in the long term, in order to alleviate the pressure on volunteer and staff time and resources. In particular, the RrSG would like to show their support or opposition to the following:

Staggering the reviews

The RrSG supports the proposal to stagger reviews to have no more than one Specific Review and two Organizational Reviews running concurrently, provided that doing so puts limitations primarily on Organizational Reviews and not Specific Reviews, as outlined in the following sections.

Adding timing criteria in order to initiate a new review and adding scheduling flexibility for Specific Reviews to the Bylaws

The RrSG supports the proposal to require a cooldown period of at least 12-18 months after implementation before a new review can be initiated. Logically there should always be a sufficient gap between implementation and the the next review in order to assess the impact of implementation. The last SSR2 implementation didn't happen until after the following review had already started. This delay may have been necessary for the right work to be done, but it makes no sense with regards to the point and effectiveness of a review. The need for implementation and time to see its impact should take precedence over fitting in with a review cycle. Therefore the RrSG further supports adding scheduling flexibility for Specific Reviews to the Bylaws to enable this to happen.

Adding timing criteria in order for the duration of a review

The RrSG supports the proposal to limit the duration of Reviews, but predominantly for organizational Reviews. As noted in our response to Short-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline of Reviews, Specific Reviews are generally not suitable to have to work within short time limitations as they are community led. ICANN community volunteers, with their differing perspectives and interests, will always need more time to figure out and work on Specific Reviews than the independent subcontractors working on Organizational Reviews that are given a narrow scope from the offset. So the requirement to provide an initial report within 1 year is likely to be unworkable for Specific Reviews. Conversely, Organizational Reviews could certainly have limitations on their duration as subcontractors are paid to keep deadlines. However, the RrSG does support limitations being placed on the amount of time allowed to select volunteers, as well as how long the Board has to act on review assessments/plans and the independent examiners (who are subcontractors) have to produce a final report.

Organizational Reviews

The RrSG would like to take the opportunity to highlight that ICANN org needs to be careful with Organizational Reviews and how their handling and response is perceived within the community. Particularly when the review has resulted in a significant number of recommendations, it's reasonable that the community expect a certain amount of subsequent change and implementation of those recommendations within that organization.

If ICANN org is seen simply to accept, and endorse, only amendments or rejection of those recommendations, it lessens the purpose and value of Organizational Reviews in general.

Summary

In summary, the RrSG supports ICANN orgs proposals to stagger reviews, require a minimum time between implementation and the next review (and the Bylaw amendments required to enable this) and to limit the duration of Organizational Reviews. Having more control and limitations will help ICANN org and community volunteers to be more and better focused, which in turn should help reviews be more efficient, on time and on budget.