RrSG response to Short-Term Options to Adjust the Timeline for Specific Reviews

The Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG) is pleased that steps are being taken by ICANN org to address the increasing pressure and workload on community volunteers that has resulted from an ever greater number of ICANN Reviews needing to be run at the same time. ICANN org is right to be looking for areas where cost reductions can be made in each fiscal year as there are plenty of areas where it is appropriate to do so. Certainly reducing the number of Reviews in general would offer ICANN org budget savings in the short-term and relieve volunteer workload. However, the RrSG does not believe that <u>Specific</u> Reviews are an appropriate target for adjusted timelines, as will be explained below, and so do not advocate for any change to the ATRT3 timeline.

Specific Reviews are convened to address a single issue of current importance to the ICANN community. Thus they do typically require volunteer participation and so allowances need to be made for this with regards to timelines. Cutting down the length of a volunteer-led Specific Review (ie to a maximum of 1 year) would in fact be impossible. It would place too much pressure on volunteers, particularly as the first half of a Specific Review is usually taken up by understanding the scope and applicable bylaws. In addition, the total annual budget for Specific Reviews is decided in advance by ICANN org. Whilst the leadership of Specific Reviews do subsequently work with ICANN to establish how it needs to be spent, it is not within their power to set the budget. Therefore, when it comes to cost savings, ICANN org should look to their own budgeting rather than at how Specific Reviews spend it.

By comparison, Organisational Reviews are typically planned for well in advance and have a narrower scope that is simpler to address, which make them much better candidates for timeline adjustments. For Organisational Reviews, independent external experts are subcontracted to work within a pre-established scope, as opposed to Specific Reviews which require volunteers across the ICANN community with differing interests having to both understand and then work within their scope. There is more flexibility, and efficiency, when you are paying someone.

With regards to the ATRT3, another reason for this Review to proceed as planned is because the final report should then be ready 3 years after the IANA transition and this will be of key importance and interest to the ICANN community. As a mechanism to ensure the ATRT3 Review proceeds in a timely (and therefore budget friendly) manner, the RrSG would further suggest that it be led by experts rather than the whole community.

In summary the RrSG believes that the timelines for Specific Reviews should remain as they are and that ICANN should instead look to Organisational Reviews for opportunities to adjust their timelines to relieve volunteer workload and make budget savings. With this in mind, regarding the ATRT3 Review, of the three (3) options ICANN Org has proposed, the only option that RrSG supports is A) No change.