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AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ALAC STATEMENT ON DRAFT FINAL REPORT OF THE SECOND SECURITY AND STABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW (SSAC2)

Introduction

On 15 October 2018, public comment opened for the [Draft Final Report of the Second Security and Stability Advisory Committee Review \(SSAC2\)](#). The At-Large Consolidated Working Group decided it would be in the interest of ALAC to develop a statement on behalf of Internet end users. During ICANN63, members of the working group discussed the comment and assigned penholders to draft the statement.

On 27 November 2018, Seun Ojedeji, ALAC Member of the African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO), drafted an initial draft of the statement on behalf of the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC). ICANN policy staff in support of the At-Large community sent a call for comments on the statement to the At-Large community via the ALAC work mailing list. The At-Large community and ALAC Members began commenting on the topic on its [At-Large workspace](#).

On 01 December 2018, Bastiaan Goslings, ALAC Member of the European Regional At-Large Organization (EURALO), and Hadia Elminiawi, ALAC Member of the African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO) incorporated comments into a revised draft of the statement.

On 02 December 2018, comments from the community were taken into account in revising the statement. The final statement was posted to the workspace incorporating the revisions from the three penholders, Seun Ojedeji, Bastiaan Goslings and Hadia Elminiawi.

On 03 December 2018, the ALAC Chair, Maureen Hilyard, requested that the statement be transmitted to the ICANN public comment process, copying the ICANN staff member responsible for this topic, with a note that the statement is pending ALAC ratification.

ALAC STATEMENT ON DRAFT FINAL REPORT OF THE SECOND SECURITY AND STABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW (SSAC2)

The ALAC appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft Final Report of The Second Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC2) Review (SSAC2). The ALAC has considered the report and would like to make the following remarks:

Recommendation 1:

We very much support the recommendation that the SSAC has a clear continuing purpose within ICANN, and that its existence as an Advisory Committee should therefore continue. As the reviewer notes, and we consider this also applicable to the At-Large community, "Interviewees who self-identified as non-technical members of the ICANN community widely agreed that they rely on and expect the SSAC to proactively help the community, including those without technical backgrounds, on technical issues related to the security, stability, and reliability of processes and decisions regarding the DNS and root zone."

Recommendation 2:

The ALAC supports the intent behind the recommendation to "ensure that each advisory or report provided to the ICANN Board includes a high-level summary that outlines the topic or issue in easily understandable terms and lists the key findings with uniquely numbered recommendations." However, the ALAC would like to note that while it appreciates the SSAC prepares advice in a format to better communicate with the Board, the SSAC should also simultaneously attempt to write advice in such a way that the rest of the ICANN community more easily understands them, too. Again, this applies especially to the At-Large community which has many members who lack a sufficient level of technical background.

Recommendations 3 & 4:

In general terms, the ALAC supports these. In line with recommendation 4, the ALAC thinks it is important that the "Board Action Request Register adequately captures the information required to understand the status of advice from when it is given through its implementation." The ARR should of course allow the ICANN community to quickly and easily understand the status of the advice made to the ICANN Board. Therefore, the final process for updating the ARR should indeed be clear, and each item under implementation should have a known point of contact who can speak to its current status when asked.

Recommendation 5:

It is important that advice from the SSAC is addressed by the Board and that (non) progress is clear. The Board Liaison seems the one who can follow up on this within the Board on behalf of the SSAC. The ALAC agrees with the reviewer's remark that "ultimately, the ARR should be a tool that the SSAC can use to understand what happens to the advice and recommendations that the SSAC has given. While it is not the SSAC's role to implement advice, the SSAC should be able to know that its advice is being duly considered and, when appropriate, implemented."

Recommendation 8:

As indicated by the reviewer, the SSAC has strong technical expertise and almost all interviewees indicated that the SSAC is generally well-prepared for SSR threats that may occur in the future. Less technical interviewees however indicated that they do not have the background to know if the SSAC is appropriately evaluating the security landscape to pick topics of research focus, and these interviewees therefore stated they rely on the SSAC to do so. This goes for the At-Large community, too. This reliance could indicate that there is need to develop more formal procedures geared towards identifying emerging threats as an input to setting research priorities for the SSAC, compared to the existing way that topics of interest are chosen. Therefore, the ALAC agrees with the intent of recommendation 8, but we do not know whether the "lightweight process" described is specific enough for the SSAC to take into consideration.

Recommendation 10:

The ALAC agrees with the idea, if a "lightweight" topic selection or something comparable is implemented, that the SSAC explicitly communicates what the reason for the selection has been and why the topic is of importance for ICANN.

Recommendation 12:

The ALAC likes the idea of the SSAC offering internships to graduate students who can assist with specific topics that the SSAC is working on or intends to work on.

Recommendation 14:

The ALAC agrees with the statement, part of the recommendation, that "the SSAC needs to be aware of policymaking that is ongoing within ICANN." The ALAC thinks the SSAC already does so, but the SSAC having liaisons to each Support Organization/Advisory Committee (SO/AC) might make this more effective and embedded in SSAC's procedures.

Currently the ALAC has a liaison with the SSAC, and we are happy with this. We would be more than open for the SSAC to have a liaison with the ALAC. However, we understand that this might be demanding on the SSAC given limited resources. We would be happy to discuss this with the SSAC, but ultimately it would be up to them.

Recommendation 16:

The ALAC supports the recommendation to have the SSAC explicitly consider who might be affected by documents the SSAC intends to publish and whether these parties should be consulted for feedback or at least be notified in advance. The ALAC would encourage the SSAC to proactively discuss with other stakeholders how they might be affected, and whenever possible to engage them throughout the work being undertaken in stead of sharing the information ex-post when it is published as an advice.

Recommendation 17:

The ALAC supports any recommendation that can help improve how the SSAC provides updates to the ICANN community and the leadership of SOs and ACs before an ICANN meeting. In line with the recommendation, this could be done via email, however we suggest that such communication should also be disseminated copied via the SO/AC liaisons to the SSAC.

Recommendations 21, 22, 24 and 25:

The ALAC supports these recommended actions to improve and ensure the stable influx of new and high quality SSAC members. At the end of the day, it is about what these members can bring for the SSAC and the ICANN community in terms of the expertise and advice they provide, and as proposed by the reviewer ALAC encourages diversity within SSAC membership as much as possible.