

# Preamble for SSR1 Recommendations

In 2012, the ICANN Board found *“that the 28 Recommendations in the [SSR1] Final Report are feasible and implementable,”* and unanimously accepted and instructed staff to implement all 28 SSR1 recommendations. One of the SSR2 tasks was assessing *“the extent to which prior SSR Review recommendations have been implemented and the extent to which implementation of such recommendations has resulted in the intended effect.”*

The SSR2 review team performed this assessment from its inception until the end of 2018 (exclusive of suspension by the ICANN Board of the team’s work that occurred Oct. 2017 — June 2018). This preamble contextualizes the team’s process and methodology. The “process and methods” section outlines the assessment process, the types of evidence and data used, and finally the methodology adopted in reaching a conclusion on the level of implementation of the recommendations. Each review is a learning opportunity and the “takeaways” section describes our lessons learned. Most importantly, SSR2 recognises the necessity to provide recommendations that are metric-based with measurable performance indicators.

## Process and method:

The assessment process of the SSR2 review team outlined below is based on: briefings from, and discussions with, ICANN Org staff responsible for implementation; the systematic review of a substantial amount of relevant ICANN documents and implementation reports created by ICANN Org; and additional research and Interviews. The team also used outreach sessions in Barcelona and Kobe to liaise with relevant community stakeholders. The assessment was both quantitative and qualitative, wherever possible, depending on the specific recommendation.

Many SSR1 recommendations were high level and lacked specificity. The SSR2 team also had no authority to access and analyze the internal workings of ICANN, and thus asked ICANN Org to provide their implementation plans and evidence of successful implementation to the review team members. The recommendations themselves, and the documentation provided by ICANN Org lacked defined KPIs and targets, measurable objectives, and implementation plans. This made the measurement or tracking of the implementations challenging. Furthermore, the wording of some of the recommendations left room for interpretation. This occasionally led to a different

understanding of the recommendation by the SSR2 team from the one used by ICANN Org staff.

For each recommendation, ICANN Org staff provided initial answers on implementation to the team in 2017, reporting on how they implemented the SSR1 recommendations, and providing evidence and documentation to convince the team that implementation had been completed successfully. ICANN staff cited web pages or documents, arranged presentations from various departments within ICANN Org and also provided the team with briefings on the recommendations over nine months. The team also reviewed a substantial number of background documents relevant to this review. For each recommendation, the report provides a list of all documents used by the SSR2 team and answered questions by ICANN Org staff.

In order to allocate its time and resources efficiently, the team first performed research and investigation based on these available or provided materials in 2017. Then, the team focused its further efforts on specific SSR issues and open questions identified by this initial review. The team conducted interviews with ICANN Org staff, requested additional information, and used the input of relevant stakeholders and its own research to conduct further analysis where appropriate.

After receiving replies to the questions submitted, and completing its research and due diligence to the best of its ability, the team drafted strawman assessments for each recommendation in mid to late 2018, which were discussed online, on the team's weekly calls, and in face-to-face meetings. The team edited text as needed, and approved the conclusions and findings for each SSR1 recommendation with the intention for inclusion in the draft SSR2 team report, with the team's approved consensus protocols, and noting minority objections where applicable.

After discussing online and on calls, and going through multiple iterations, the team decided to structure their assessment draft according to the following methodology, which focused on task completion, relevance, and further work required:

1. What was done to implement the recommendation?
2. Was the recommendation fully implemented?
3. Did the implementation have the intended effect?
4. How was the assessment conducted?
5. Is the recommendation still relevant today?

6. If so, what further work needed? If not, why not?<sup>1</sup>

- The first question speaks to what ICANN Org did to implement the recommendation.
- Question two gives the team's assessment of the level of implementation as of the "fully implemented date" provided by staff. The team encountered many recommendations that seem to have been only partially implemented or where implementation plans were missing. In these cases, the team identified specific areas for improvement. In some cases, it was difficult to establish clear preconditions and targets necessary for successful implementation due to missing implementation plans, documentation, and missing performance indicators.
- The third question addresses if and to what extent the implementation had the intended effect.
- The fourth question speaks to how the SSR2 team conducted the assessment. Readers can trace documents and other evidence used by the team on a per-recommendation basis.
- Based on question five, the team also evaluated whether each recommendation was still relevant in 2018.
- Finally, the team then decided whether current circumstances warrant additional work to implement a form of this recommendation, informing the SSR2 team's own set of recommendations.

## Takeaways:

In order to allow easier implementation going forward, the review team will strive to phrase its own recommendations according to the *SMART* criteria. This means that wherever possible, recommendations will be *specific, measurable, assignable, relevant, and trackable*. It is the review team's belief that clearer and action-oriented recommendations will simplify implementation, tracking, and the assessment process to be undertaken by the next SSR review.

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<sup>1</sup> This structure was first outlined by Russ Housley on the 10th of September 2018 and agreed on by the team after trying it out on several of the SSR1 recommendations.