

## **RrSG response to the Process Proposal for Streamlining Organizational Reviews**

The Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG) is pleased to be able to comment on the proposal to streamline Organizational Reviews. Generally, the RrSG would like to see Organizational Reviews evolve to include implementing processes for continuous self-review and improvement, along with the periodic evaluations.

### **1. Does your organization agree with the proposed list of issues that should form the focus of the streamlining process? If not, which do you disagree with and what would you like to add?**

#### ***i) Purpose and scope of organizational reviews***

The RrSG proposes that Organizational Reviews be utilised to identify the processes within an organisation that are appropriate for continuous lightweight self-review. At the same time, each reviewed body should identify elements that would be considered foundational to the reviewed body and thus external or out-of-bounds to the scope of the review (“ring-fencing”).

#### ***ii) Limited pool of suitable independent examiners, and selection of independent examiners***

The RrSG does not agree with the current approach to selecting independent examiners. The pool is limited only because of the requirement that consultants must have certain knowledge of ICANN. The predominant requirement is an expertise in organisational reviews; thus examiners could be industry agnostic and still be able to effectively review an ICANN body. There may also be benefits to deploying reviewers with outside and cross-industry experience.

#### ***iii) Whether or not recommendations issued by independent examiner should be binding or non-binding***

The RrSG believes that the organization being reviewed should be motivated to implement the recommendations received. That said, the reviewed body should retain some flexibility to tweak the recommendations as appropriate; with the proviso that a rationale should be provided in cases where the recommendation is rejected or adapted. The recent ALAC review illustrates an extreme outcome where the reviewed body completely rejected the reviewer’s recommendations without suggesting alternatives — this should not be allowed. The reviewed body should always recognise that recommendations have at least partial validity and should not completely ignore them. Thus, the RrSG is reluctant to call for fully binding recommendations, because there should be some flexibility for how and when the recommendations are implemented, but this should be balanced with a responsibility to deeply consider the validity of the recommendations.

#### ***iv) Length of the entire review process including implementation***

Processes in ICANN are too often excessively lengthy due to the size and complexities of the multistakeholder model and ICANN itself. The RrSG suggests looking at previous Organisational Reviews and identifying where the bottlenecks normally occur. It typically takes 12 months for the independent examiner to do their review work, often followed by a slower implementation period (in GNSO, around 3 years). Ideally, the examiner review work should be time-limited over 3 ICANN meetings (i.e. 9 months) and completed by the 4th meeting (12 months). Where possible, examiners should attend the face-to-face meetings of the body under review in order to gain a clear understanding of how it operates. To enable better use of the time spent on the review process, the examiners should also provide a

prioritised list of recommendations that are based on value and validity, which the organisation can then effectively triage and implement the most beneficial recommendations.

ICANN could also consider options for an Organisational Review to conclude with no recommendations or propose that no further review is required (for X period of time).

**2. Does your organization agree with the proposed underlying principles that should guide the solutions? If not, with which do you disagree and what would you like to add?**

The RrSG supports the proposed underlying principles of ‘Accountability, Timing, Consistency and Industry-Wide Best Practices’ and in keeping with the comments above, would further like to add ‘Implement Processes for Continuous Self-Review and Improvements’. To this end, clear metrics should be defined by the examiners or implementation team for measuring and reporting subsequent implementation and outcome. Otherwise, organizations can often get so wrapped up in internal processes that a lot of the improvement work that should come out of an Organizational Review doesn’t actually get done. .

**3. Does your organization agree with the community role in the streamlining process? If not, what would you propose?**

The RrSG response to this question really depends on the meaning of “community”, which must first be defined for each review. For example, notably in the case of ALAC, is community defined as ALAC only or all SO/ACs? The SO/ACs should be involved in streamlining its own review process. The RrSG would also ask whose consensus is required to agree on whatever the streamlined review process will become for each body. The question of who gets to decide is linked to the issue of binding vs non-binding recommendations noted in 1iii). The body subject to the review should certainly have consensus on how to implement recommendations, but should follow any streamlining process that is agreed upon by the community.

**4. Do you/your organization agree with the proposed high-level timeline? If not, what would you propose?**

Subject to the comments above (ie including a ring-fencing of key organizational elements in the process), we would agree with the proposed timeline.