



13 February 2024

**Subject:** Timing and Potential Deferral of ATRT4 and Upcoming Engagement with the ICANN Community

Dear SO/AC Chairs,

I am contacting you to seek your constituency's input on the timing of the Fourth Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT4) and whether there is a need for a deferral of the ATRT4 for a limited time. We are initiating a community consultation that will include various engagement activities leading up to and during ICANN79. We kindly request your constituency's input by Friday, 22 March 2024. This consultation follows the ICANN Board's discussion on this issue at the [Montevideo Board Workshop](#), where the Board agreed in concept to proceed with the Pilot Holistic Review.

A consultation approach is being used because it will allow SO/AC Chairs to have targeted conversations with their constituencies. While ATRT4 is of general interest to the entire ICANN community, it is important for the Board and org to understand whether the SO/ACs would be available to come together to populate, perform and deliver the recommendations within the ATRT4 while carrying out their other work. We encourage you to reach out to your constituents to discuss this topic specifically, so you can help inform the Board's decision on this issue.

Community consultation and engagement activities leading up to and during ICANN79 include:

- ICANN79 Prep Week Webinar (Thursday, 22 February)
- ICANN79 Community Session on ATRT4 Deferral and Pilot Holistic Review (Tuesday, 5 March)
- ICANN79 session briefings (at the request of your community group)

The ATRT4 is a community-led review that is mandated by the ICANN Bylaws to convene by April 2024. The Pilot Holistic Review is a recommendation from the Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3). The ICANN Board Organizational Effectiveness Committee (OEC) plans to recommend that the Board initiate the Pilot Holistic Review as soon as feasible (targeting September 2024), which would overlap with the currently scheduled ATRT4. The ATRT4 and the Pilot Holistic Review each require significant community attention and participation.

Your constituency's views on the potential deferral of ATRT4 will inform planning to ensure efficient use of community resources and ability to carry out ATRT4 to deliver optimal results.

Key areas of consideration include:

- **Community directive:** ATRT3 recommendation states that the launch of any other review activities should be suspended while a [Pilot] Holistic Review is active, due to concern about the community's ability to take on multiple reviews at the same time.
- **Community resources/priorities:** A 29-person community coordination group (representing 21 of 22 community groups) was just convened to evolve Organizational Reviews into a Continuous



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Improvement Program. The Pilot Holistic Review - set to begin work in September 2024 - also will require the assembly of a community-led 21-member team.

- **Precedent:** Bylaws-mandated reviews have been deferred in the past with support from the community when needed.
  - Organizational Reviews were deferred in June 2022 to accommodate work on ATRT3 recommendations.
  - The timing of Affirmation of Commitment Reviews (subsequently transitioned to Specific Reviews enumerated within the Bylaws) were changed in July 2015 to accommodate the community's work on the transition of the stewardship of the IANA Function.

ICANN org and Board acknowledge the significance of the Bylaws-mandated reviews and their timely start. The reviews and improvements that can come from them are important, and we take our commitments to accountability and transparency very seriously.

The "Background Information" section annexed to this letter provides further detail to demonstrate potential timing impacts. Thank you in advance for your timely input. We look forward to working with you toward a predictable and manageable schedule of these important reviews.

Theresa Swinehart,

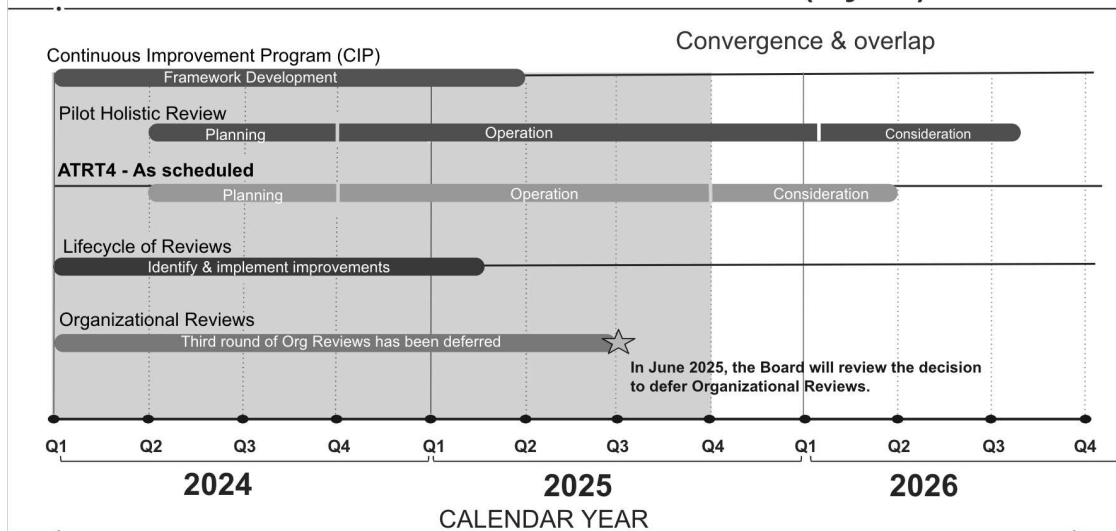
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Swinehart".

Senior Vice President, Global Domains & Strategy  
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## Background Information

### 1. Convergence of review-related work (forecast)

#### ATRT4 as scheduled: Reviews work streams (3-year)



2. ICANN Bylaws section 4.6(b)(i) states, "The Board shall cause a periodic review of ICANN's execution of its commitment to maintain and improve robust mechanisms for public input, accountability, and transparency so as to ensure that the outcomes of its decision-making reflect the public interest and are accountable to the Internet community ("Accountability and Transparency Review")."
3. ICANN Bylaws section 4.6(b)(vi) states, "The Accountability and Transparency Review shall be conducted no less frequently than every five years measured from the date of the previous Accountability and Transparency Review Team was convened." ATRT3 convened and held their first meeting in April 2019.
4. Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3) Report issued in May 2020:
  - "The launching of any other review activities should be suspended while a Holistic Review is active." (page 72).
5. Deferral of Organizational Reviews in June 2022 - Board Resolution states:



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“Resolved (2022.06.12.11), the Board accepts the comprehensive plan developed for the timing and conduct of the next Organizational Review cycle. The Board directs ICANN's President and CEO, or his designee(s), to provide periodic updates to the Board on progress of the plan, including a report on the status of the deferral and continued need for deferral within three years of this resolution.

Resolved (2022.06.12.12), the Board is deferring the initiation of the next round of reviews of ALAC/At-Large, ASO, ccNSO, NomCom, RSSAC, and SSAC, with the support of each of the impacted groups, in alignment with the comprehensive plan for the next cycle of Organizational Reviews.”

6. Continuous Improvement Program Community Coordination Group (CIP CCG) [workspace](#) and [membership](#).