
RSSAC (Root Server System Advisory Committee) Co-Chairs Briefing to the GAC

Session 6 - RSSAC Co-Chairs Briefing to the GAC

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Session Objective

The Co-Chairs of the GAC will share with GAC members an update on progress regarding a proposal to effectuate an evolution of the governance of the Root Server System.

Background

The RSSAC

The Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) advises the ICANN Board and community on matters relating to the operation, administration, security, and integrity of the Root Server System, as outlined in the [ICANN Bylaws](#). The RSSAC consists of representatives from the organizations responsible for operating global root service.

The RSSAC Caucus

The RSSAC Caucus is comprised of DNS experts who have an interest in the Root Server System, broadening the base of diverse, technical expertise available for RSSAC work. The Caucus of DNS and root server system experts will be responsible for the essential work of the RSSAC. The primary role of the Caucus is to perform research and produce publications on topics relevant to the mission of the RSSAC.

A Proposal For Evolving the Root Server System

Following the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) stewardship transition, the RSSAC developed an initial framework to evolve the Root Server System (RSS). In June 2018, RSSAC presented its proposed governance model for the RSS in “[RSSAC037: A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System](#)” (RSSAC037) and three recommendations for next steps in “[RSSAC038: RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the Root Server System](#)” (RSSAC038) to the ICANN Board and ICANN community. Both documents presented detailed proposals that addressed various aspects of the structure and organization of a new system of governance of the RSS.

As part of the ICANN Board’s consideration of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038, ICANN org prepared a “[Concept Paper on a Community-Driven Process to Develop a Final Model Based on RSSAC037](#)” (Concept Paper). The Concept Paper outlined a community-driven process to develop a final model for the RSS to be led by the RSS Governance Working Group (GWG).

The Concept Paper asserted that supporting the evolution of the RSS contributes to the commitment of ICANN to strengthen the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS. It is also within ICANN’s role of facilitating and coordinating the evolution and operation of the DNS RSS per ICANN’s mission and it is in the public interest because it supports the enhancement and evolution of the DNS.

The Concept Paper also noted that evolving the RSS would enable direct interaction between the ICANN community and the Root Server Operators (RSOs). The inclusion of the RSOs in the ICANN community and the evolution of the RSS will ensure global root service remains accountable and sustainable into the future, according to the RSSAC

The paper noted that, evolving the RSS will result in significant changes to the ICANN community and ICANN org and that any budgetary and financial implications will be handled through ICANN processes that ensure accountability and transparency.

Recent Developments

RSSAC leaders provided an informal briefing on the proposal to GAC leaders during the ICANN65 meeting in Marrakech and it was thought that the entire GAC would benefit from an explanation of the proposal in Montreal.

A Public Comment proceeding on Evolving the Governance of the RSS opened on 23 May 2019 and closed on 9 August 2019 (see <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/rss-governance-2019-05-23-en>)

There were nine comment submissions from the community:

- Six from ICANN community groups: At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC); Business Constituency (BC); Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG); Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG), Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC); and the Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) itself.

- Three from outside the ICANN community: One from the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), one from a Chinese registrar—Chinese Organizational Name Administration Center (CONAC), and one from an individual—Paul Muchene (PM).

Overall, the submissions support evolving the governance of the RSS. There are four general themes to the submissions:

1. Definition of stakeholders – explicitly including end users (ALAC, SSAC, PM); a more inclusive definition of “ICANN community” (NCSG).
2. Structural clarifications – description of coordination roles in Secretariat Function and appeal path for decisions about designation/removal of Root Server Operators (IAB), conflict of interest concerns (BC), representation and selection mechanisms for functions/groups (CONAC, NCSG).
3. Funding questions – sourcing and costs of operating the final model (ALAC, NCSG).
4. Future work – composition (SSAC) and transparency/reporting requirements (SSAC, BC) of the RSS GWG.
 - ICANN org modified the charter, operating procedures, and work plan of the GWG to incorporate Public Comment feedback.
 - ICANN org prepared areas one, two, and three for the consideration of the RSS GWG.

Agenda and Outcomes

In Montreal, the RSSAC Co-Chairs will provide an overview of the RSSAC’s proposal for evolving the governance of the Root Server System and provide an update to the GAC on the status of the work.

Key Reference Documents

RSSAC Web Page - <https://www.icann.org/groups/rssac>

ICANN Public Comment Proceeding- [Evolving the Governance of the Root Server System](https://www.icann.org/public-comments/rss-governance-2019-05-23-en) - <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/rss-governance-2019-05-23-en>

RSSAC037 - [A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System](https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rssac-037-15jun18-en.pdf) - <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rssac-037-15jun18-en.pdf>

RSSAC038 - [RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System](https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rssac-038-15jun18-en.pdf) - <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rssac-038-15jun18-en.pdf>

Concept Paper - [A New Cooperation and Governance Model for the Root Server System / Concept Paper on a Community-Driven Process to Develop a Final Model Based on RSSAC037](https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rss-governance-model-concept-paper-23apr19-en.pdf) - <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rss-governance-model-concept-paper-23apr19-en.pdf>

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