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ICANN69 | Community Days Sessions – RSSAC Caucus Meeting
Tuesday, October 13, 2020 – 14:00 to 15:30 CEST

OZAN SAHIN:
Please? Hello and welcome to the RSSAC Caucus meeting. My name is Ozan Sahin, and I am the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior.

During this session, questions or comments submitted in the chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form, as I noted in the chat. I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the chair or moderator of the session. If you would like to ask your question or make your comment verbally, please raise your hand.

When called upon, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. Please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a reasonable pace. Mute your microphone when you are done speaking. With that, I will hand the floor over to Fred Baker.

FRED BAKER:
Hello. So, you see the agenda in front of you. Primarily, we're going to be talking about work that's going on in the RSSAC, and then, basically, field questions that come from the caucus. So, does anybody have any issues with the agenda, things that they would like to add? Failing that, Jeff, do you want to talk about the caucus engagement work?

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

OZAN SAHIN:	Fred, I'm not sure if we have Jeff on the call at the moment.
FRED BAKER:	Okay. I'm looking at the participants' list. No, he's not here. Okay. So, filling you in on what he's doing, when you joined the caucus you filed a statement of interest, and … Can I see the next slide, please? Oh. [inaudible] says that Jeff is joining us. I'll let Jeff do this.
OZAN SAHIN:	Fred, I see Jeff joined the call.
FRED BAKER:	Okay. Jeff, we are at the point in the agenda where we ask you to talk about the annual membership survey. Could you do that, please?
[JEFF OSBORN:]	Sure. Hi, Fred. Sorry about that. Ozan, do you have the slides that we presented this to before? Yes, Fred?
FRED BAKER:	Ozan is presenting the slides right now.
[JEFF OSBORN:]	Oh, okay. I'm sorry. I missed one minute of this, and I'm somehow in the middle of something. I apologize for being late. Where am I?

FRED BAKER: Well, we were discussing the annual membership survey.

[JEFF OSBORN:]   And Ozan, are we looking at the slides?

OZAN SAHIN: Yes, Jeff. I'm sharing it. I hope everyone can see these slides at the moment.

[JEFF OSBORN:]   Okay. I'm seeing the title slide. Can you go forward one? There we go. I'm sorry. We did the annual survey and the results were good. They were about what we would expect. We had about a third of the total caucus responded, 34 responses, and of them the vast majority had participated, 94%, in a caucus meeting, and about 85% in a work party. Everybody involved wanted to continue, which we thought was a good result. Again, none of these results were really surprising. Next slide.

There were about 90% of the responses who had been in a discussion. 80% had reviewed text. 40% has written text, and almost a quarter of them had been in a work party. So, these were the forms in which people had contributed. And again, I thought that was pretty solid results, and it was very similar to the last survey. Next slide.

It seems like we're getting the frequency of the meetings right, as well, in that more than three-quarters of the people thought that the current sequence of meetings made sense, and on the next slide we see … the next slide. That the venues seem to be the appropriate one, with it

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being a series of ICANN and IETF meetings. This was fully 80% of people saying where we're doing the on-site meetings, when there are on-site meetings, continues to make sense. Next slide.

Why it was hard to contribute. Again, this, I didn't find very surprising. Most people thought it wasn't difficult at all, and if you take the easy, very easy, and neutrals, it's the vast majority at over 80%. So, the result I took away from this was that this was all … We were meeting about as frequently as we needed to, where we needed to, and it was not difficult to contribute for most people. Next slide, or is that it? I think that's it. Nope.

When people didn't participate, again, it's not a matter of not being interested. It was mostly a matter of not having time, which we can all relate to, or feeling like the topic was not within your technical wheelhouse. That is the last slide, right, Ozan?

OZAN SAHIN: Yes, Jeff. Correct.

[JEFF OSBORN:]   Right. So, again, I apologize for being late. I thought the results of the survey were what we would expect, and they didn't exactly demand any particular changes in how we're doing the frequency of the meetings or the time of them. Were there any questions?

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FRED BAKER: Well, Jeff, one thought. There were some people that felt that the caucus was too difficult or too complicated to contribute to. I'm just curious what the issue is, there.

[JEFF OSBORN:] Ozan, do you have the open question/answers conveniently in front of you somewhere?

OZAN SAHIN: If you can give me a minute, I will pull it up, Jeff.

[JEFF OSBORN:] Okay. There was the opportunity for people to write, not in a multiple-choice format but an open question. There were three out of the survey who said it were complicated, and I don't recall the specific answers. let's see if we can find them there.

FRED BAKER: Well, if we're not quickly coming up with that, Ozan and I can talk about that later. I certainly don't want the caucus to be hard to contribute to, so that's basically the question I was asking and what I was thinking. Ozan, let's move onto the next step in the agenda. Oh, I'm sorry. Here you are. So, the concerns that are raised are the dynamic energy of the work parties. I'll tell you what. Let me take this to the Admin Committee, which is myself and Jeff, my vice-chair, so the ICANN staff, and we can talk about what the issues are. Thank you, Ozan. Take us back to the agenda, if you would.

[JEFF OSBORN:]   Thanks, Ozan.

FRED BAKER: So now, recent publications. We updated the operational practices, or operational procedures, which we do roughly annually, what is not working, and we ask ourselves what's not working and then do something about that. With the operational procedures at this particular time around, the questions were … What's here?

Ozan, do you have the [diff] handy? If not, that's fine. We're basically twiggling changes. Here we go. Twiggling changes around to deal with the term limits for people that participate as officers in the committee. What if nobody wants to do a particular job?

One of the problems in the RSSAC is that it's a fairly small group. And so, if there isn't a volunteer, we have to kind of rattle the bushes and see what we can find. So, we looked at term limits for the liaison to the Nominating Committee and a few others in order to try to address that. So, this is basically trying to help us find candidates to do the job. So, next page.

ICANN CSC. Liman from NetNode is filling that job for us. In this particular case, since he's the chair of the CSC, there was something a little [ticklish] there. We renewed him with the RZERC somewhere. Next slide, please.

And we looked at meetings. The RSSAC was, at one time, a very closed group. We have been working the last few years to make it a more open group. So, we needed to identify the way meetings work; if they are intended to be open, say what the word "open" means, and if they're intended to be closed, then say what the word "closed" means. So, we did some adjustments here on meeting identification and that sort of thing. So, next slide, or next page.

So, once again, informational meetings. One of the things that came up is some of the people would like to commit the work that they do into GitHub, or some similar project space. So, we added a paragraph about a project workspace. So, you can see that there. Is there another? There must be another page. Oh.

And one of the concerns about the work parties is that we're in the midst of working on something and it may not be done. If people go talking about it then it isn't necessarily useful to the people that they're talking to because it's not done yet. We had an issue with, on a recent work party, a person forwarding information about it from the caucus list to other parties.

So, we needed to say something about, "Okay, we ask you to keep it confidential until we're done. Here's what we mean, and here's why." So, this is what we wrote. Let me throw this open to questions. Do people have questions about how the RSSAC works or why we do things in the way that we do? I'm looking for hands in the participants' list. Paul.

PAUL MUCHENE: Okay. Thank you, Fred. I have a question about the RSSAC meetings. One of the questions in the survey asked our participants, "How often should the RSSAC meet with regard to the IETF and ICANN?" Do you think the frequency of meetings of the RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus in the IETF and ICANN is likely to increase or it's going to maintain the same?

FRED BAKER: Well, it's likely to stay the same, but the question is there to give people the opportunity to say that they'd like to see it changed. From the responses that we got, we don't plan to change it. Okay. Is there another question? If not, I'm going to move on. Ozan, take us back to the agenda if you would. Okay. So, we have three activities going on in the RSSAC right now. Ken, would you like to talk about the rogue RSO work party?

KENNETH RENARD: Sure. Thank you, Fred. I am the work party leader for the Rogue Operator Work Party. So, this topic came out of RSSAC037, which is the Proposed Governance Model. In that governance model, there is the concept of a designation and removal function. So, focusing on the removal, how do you get rid of an RSO that is doing something bad?

So, the term that was used in there to describe something bad is an operator going rogue. So, this work party is examining what a rogue operator would look like, or trying to define rogue operator, and discussing the topics around that. I'll give a quick sales pitch for the next

meeting of this work group, which is at 14:00 UTC, in about an hour-and-a-half from now. Please join us and have some fun with it.

So, a little bit more about the work party. I just posted to the chat a link to a working document. So, that document starts to look at the definition of a rogue operator, which is generally a deliberate or repeated violation of some key principles of Root Server Operator.

So, the four forming principles here are, basically, taken right out of RSSAC037, the governance model, and the ones that are important with respect to defining a rogue operator are principle number two, that states that IANA is the true source of DNS root zone data.

So, anything other than that root zone, if you're a rogue operator, would be changing records or removing records. Another guiding principle that defines a rogue operator is that the IETF is the one that defines the technical operation of the DNS. So, operators should not be changing protocols or violating the protocols as defined by the IETF.

The third principle is that RSOs must operate with integrity and, ethos, demonstrating a commitment to the common good of the Internet. So, these are things, subversive, or detrimental, disruptive behavior, to the root server community. This is one of the only non-technical guiding principles. And the last principle that's important here is that RSOs must be neutral and impartial. So, with respect to governments, legal proceedings, things like that. So, that's a basic working definition that we have got in a document.

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Other things we're looking at in this document and this work party are how to detect and mitigate rogue behavior from an RSO. How do we determine if an RSO is rogue? The thing that we're going to be discussing this afternoon, or in an hour or so, are a couple of scenarios that go around describing potential examples of rogue behavior by an RSO.

So, again, I invite you to participate. The meeting is, again, in an hour and a half. The link is available, I believe, in the ICANN schedule. You can participate in a call, in the Zoom session, today. You can participate by contributing and commenting in the Google Document, as well as sending an e-mail to the RSSAC Caucus list.

I invite you to do any of those, and share your thoughts and ideas, and help us better define this document and contribute to the overall definition of "rogue" here. I will do … I'm going to promise here to do a better job posting summaries of our meetings to the mail list so that, if you're not able to join, you can still follow along. Go ahead and hold me to that. Call me out if I forget. I think that's it. I hope to see you online and in one of the meetings. Thanks.

FRED BAKER: Okay. Thank you, Ken. I'm probably to blame for the word "rogue." I was one of the authors of that particular section of RSSAC037. So, the question there was, under what circumstances would we have an operator/would an operator get added to the list? Or would an operator be asked to please not serve the root zone and have their information taken out of the root zone files?

And so, the context there was, if somebody was really egregiously wrong, that that would imaginably happen. Not that we expect that to be a common occurrence or whatever, but that's where the word "rogue" came from, an operator operating improperly. Abdulkarim, can you tell us about the local perspective tool?

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE: Yes. Thank you very much. We so far had a monthly meeting, since the inaugural meeting of the work party in April 2020. The aim of the work party is to develop tools and metrics needed in measuring the local perspective in order to help improve internet services in general and in the Root Server System in particular.

And the tool would help in measuring and identifying inadequate infrastructure, identifying a location for a new RSS instance. This would also help give the end-user a measurement of their perspective of the RSS.

During our early meetings, we had different presentations from ongoing and previous similar work and presentations about tools that can potentially be adopted by the work party.

The work party had a discussion on the desire for a tool to measure direct perspective of the RSS versus measuring perspective via a configured recursive resolver. We desire to look for tools that may be run on a wide variety of platforms, such as mobile devices, desktops, data centers, servers, enterprise recursive resolvers, and also direct measurements to the RSS would be interesting for potential placement

of new RSS instance. But location of measurements, such as end-points, need to be considered. Measurements via the configured recursive resolver would be useful for anyone to get a perspective of the enterprise ISP configuration.

So far, the work party has been able to identify similarities, which we have now reduced to five. [Similarities] will help us in identifying the possible scenarios, thereby identifying the relevant metrics or measurements that are needed in each of the identified scenarios. This would also allow us to identify the two that would be used in measuring metrics, new metrics identified, and those that the data collected will be useful to, and as they are also … Especially to those that we have identified.

We also hope to determine if the repository will either be located in a centralized database or stored locally, depending on the scenarios and appropriateness. So far, we have identified the following scenarios.

Number one, evaluating proposed locations for new root server instances. Number two, identifying [correct on the subbed] areas. Number three, recursive resolver operators wanting to better understand the RSS. Number four is the RSS data in support of research, and number five is improve general Internet connectivity/access.

The work party is grateful to all those who have been contributing to the work, and we also encourage more participation, especially from other caucus members. We are getting to a stage now that the few individuals actively contributing are getting overwhelmed.

The work party will be progressing to actively writing the output report after discussing it during our meeting on Thursday at 2:00 UTC. We are at a crucial stage of the lifespan of the work party. We shall also be seeking volunteers during our meeting on Thursday at 2:00 UTC. Please, we encourage you to volunteer.

At the moment, we also have some open questions that we hope to resolve as we go on, such as we are trying to develop who would develop the tool, then, would it be an open source or be fixing the bugs in the tool? And we have an existing tool that we can also adapt. These are some of the open questions that we still have to resolve in the work party. So, I want to encourage us to please join this work party, and also help us as much as you can. Thanks very much.

FRED BAKER: Thanks, Abdulkarim. And now, let me talk about the proposed MOU, or letter of intent. The situation here is that the RSOs are encouraged to come into some sort of a contractual relationship with ICANN, or with the contracting organization identified by ICANN. And that is being specified by an organization called the GWG, which we'll be meeting with later on this week.

So, we had a work party look at and structure a proposed memorandum of understanding, or letter of intent. Now, this is not the final version, so we're not issuing it as a numbered document in the usual sense, but we're submitting it to the GWG, which, per a meeting we had with the GWG a couple of days ago, I understand from Ted that they're simply going to pass this along to the contracting party, which

is likely to be—they're not quite done with us—an LLC, very similar to PTI.

So, there is a proposed MOU. It's based on the MOU that ICANN and ISC exchanged in 2007 or 2008 and letters of intent that have been put forward by several different RSOs covering, essentially, that information.

So, we're proposing that … Well, what I said to the RSSAC in starting this work was that, "Okay, so, we have said that we're going to come into contract or come into a formal relationship with ICANN," and the GWG could come up with that for us or we could say what we have in mind. And if we don't say what we have in mind, what we get is probably our fault.

So, we have been discussing, I think, for the last year, what that would look like. And so, there is a proposed MOU, and that work is essentially done. So, we won't be reporting on that in the future, but the RSSAC has agreed to the proposed MOU. Do I have any questions on any of the work parties at this point? Paul.

PAUL HOFFMAN: Hello. Fred, you has said something in the proposed MOU/LOI thing just a moment ago that I wasn't sure on, which was you said that what you gave to the GWG was not a formal document yet, and I'm not sure what you meant by "yet." Is it planned to be a formal document in the future, or is this pretty much the entire expected output for the letter?

FRED BAKER: Well, it's the expected output from the RSSAC. We don't plan to change it any further. On the other hand, the GWG possibly … They tell me that it's actually going to be the contracting entity could change terms in agreement with the RSOs that it's talking with. So, the final MOU is that which two companies sign, or a final LOI would be something that a company issues as letter of intent.

So, I have to leave that hanging in that sense because I'm not either of those contracting parties in the all-ICANN sense. But the proposed MOU/LOI was sent to the caucus a few days ago—last week, I think. And so, if you have comments on it, I'd be interested in them. Ken, you have your hand up.

KENNETH RENARD: Thanks, Fred. I just wanted to … Hopefully I'm not stealing your thunder, Ozan, but I put a comment in the chat just about the two work parties. They started in April of 2020 and are expected to go through April of 2021, just to let people know that there is plenty of time to join in and contribute, and it would be appreciated.

I also put in the chat the link to the working document of the Local Perspective Tool Work Party. So again, feel free to take a look at that and comment on the list and in the document, or, better yet, join the meeting later this week. Thanks.

FRED BAKER: Thank you, Ken. Okay. So, do we have any more discussion on the proposed MOU? Hearing none, let me move onto future work of the

caucus. At this point, we don't have a list of future jobs for the caucus. That said, what I would expect is that the caucus might identify work that it wants to do. So, let me encourage people to post to the caucus mailing list work that they would like to see the caucus engaged in/they would like themselves to engage in, and we can have that conversation about what future work there might be. Paul.

PAUL HOFFMAN: Is there current work going on in RSSAC, not the caucus, similar to the work that you folks did on the MOU/LOI, that will be coming out later? I know that that took a whole lot of work on RSSAC's part. Are there other things happening in RSSAC similar to that that the caucus might need to know about?

FRED BAKER: Not at this point. Not to say that we can't create one but, at this point, no. So, I'm going to leave that as it stands. We're happy to have the caucus do work. We're happy to have work parties in the RSSAC itself. We need to identify those things. Kaveh.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Yes. Pursuant to Paul's question, I just wanted to reinforce something. I know we have discussed it before, but I know we have also some, maybe, new caucus members since that was discussed in-depth. In general, RSSAC really doesn't—RSSAC, not the caucus—have any intention to produce work which is of operational nature or anything.

So, generally, all of that happens in caucus, so we really try to keep RSSAC a very administrative body which does the formal voting and then discusses, basically, administrative stuff, producing advice to the board and community, but their actual work is done by a caucus, and all of RSSAC members are a part of caucus.

This specific document was done outside of caucus, within RSSAC, mainly because the idea was to give the position of current and incumbent Root Server Operators with who are also have … Or expectations of Root Server Operator representatives in RSSAC to GWG. That was the purpose and that's why it was done within RSSAC and not in caucus.

But otherwise, in general … And I just wanted to repeat that. I know almost all of us know here. The idea and the plan is RSSAC, all of the operational work of RSSAC, will be done in caucus. At least, that is my understanding, and I would like to have corrected if I'm mistaken.

FRED BAKER: Well, Kaveh, you're correct as far as I know. For those who don't know, Kaveh is a representative of a Root Server Operator in Amsterdam, the RIPE community, and he's also our liaison to the ICANN Board. So, Kaveh is kind of smack in the middle of whatever it is that we're doing and how that fits in ICANN. Okay.

Any other questions? Hearing none, let me move onto AOB. We often have listed here one or two things that we need to discuss that don't fit into the formal agenda that we have set up. And at this point, we don't

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have any identified AOB items. Does anybody have anything that they would like to bring up as a possible AOB? Paul.

PAUL MUCHENE: Okay. I just forgot to ask, concerning the proposed MOU or LOI, are you open to comments in the mailing list, or it is final?

FRED BAKER: Well, yes, we're open to comments. Like I say, at this point, we don't really expect to change it, but if we forgot something or screwed up in some way, then the earlier we know, the better I like it. So, if you have comments on the proposed document, then yes, please post them to the caucus list. Okay. I don't see any more hands at this point and we have run out of agenda, so the time has come to end the meeting. And so, with that, Ozan, let's close the recording and close the meeting. Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you, Fred. [inaudible], can you please stop the recording and disconnect all lines?

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]