
ICANN85 Mumbai | CF – SSAC Work Session: RIDE Work Party
Sunday, March 8, 2026 – 09:00 to 10:00 IST

KATHY SCHNITT

Hello and welcome to the SSAC Work Session Review of Reviews. My name is Kathy and I'm the participation manager for this session. Please be advised this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct, the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy.

Regarding participation today, this session is designed for the internal work and discussion of SSAC members. To join the speaking queue, SSAC members must be logged into Zoom and use the raise hand feature. When called upon, please state your name for the record. For observers, please note that comments or questions in the Zoom chat will not be read aloud. However, the chair of the session may invite questions from an audience at their discretion and time permitting. With that, I'm happy to hand the floor over to Suzanne Woolf and Robert Guerra.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Kathy, can you go back to sharing the slide deck I sent you yesterday? Yeah, I think this is going to be a little bit ad hoc partly because we're juggling multiple presentations, and partly because,

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really, because this is very much work in progress. The Review of Reviews CCG has started with a very aggressive schedule.

People have been doing a lot of work and solidifying ideas about how things should work, but we're kind of winging it. The other big challenge is that we're here to look for guidance from SSAC about how we should sort of steer things, what strong feelings we might be taking from SSAC into the discussions.

And we want to be able to give people the gist of what the Review of Reviews is doing and how people are beginning to think about a replacement for the previous framework. But it's long and complicated, and we have worked hard to extract the important framing issues rather than spend a lot of time on the details. But if it sounds like something is too surface, is too high altitude on a particular decision or a particular piece of the framework, we can go into more detail.

ROBERT GUERRA

Yeah, and what I'll add is given it is a complicated framework that's being discussed and emerged, I think for the discussions with the SSAC this week, I think what would be helpful, as Suzanne mentioned, is kind of like an overview, kind of where we are, what are some of the issues for the SSAC to think about and to feed in, and we could do a larger maybe one of the monthly meetings, do a debrief larger and share some of the documents we have already shared for the last monthly meeting.

I would just review that as kind of the progress. The pacing of the meetings right now, there are usually one or two meetings a week that are taking place of the Review of Reviews, and there will be a couple of different sessions at this meeting as well. Luckily, the Review of Reviews spoke to the RSSAC yesterday, and given that interaction, we have come up with ideas on how to best interact with the SSAC as well.

So, I think that's kind of where we are. So, we have a couple of slides that staff has been gracious to put together for us, and then towards the end, I'll share a couple of slides, which is what the Review of Reviews group has put together in terms of kind of where we are. Suzanne, should we go to the next slide? So, it's -- yeah.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Laptop court. Yeah, we just want to go over the current status, the framework that the group has been using to think about the different types of reviews and the different purposes and outcomes and so on. We do have some idea of what the considerations are for SSAC. There's a lot of stuff in here that is not going to apply to SSAC as an advisory committee with a particular remit.

For instance, we are never going to need a review of our ability to make sound policy because we don't do policy. But we do have some considerations for SSAC that's primarily around the empowered community or other mechanisms for participating in

some of the things that the community has to decide in the new framework.

Again, it's a question of how do we -- this is coming up a lot for SSAC lately, just what part do we want to play and how much of a part do we want to play in sort of the larger community when we're dealing with things that are not necessarily directly within our remit as Security and Stability Advisory Committee, but that is basically part of being an active part of the ICANN community.

And that's things like sending people like me and Robert to some of these things where the immediate impact on SSAC may not be as clear, but we want to show up, we want to be part of the conversation. And part of what the Review of Reviews has to do is sort of institutionalize an expectation of each of these groups and how people want to participate.

So, SSAC is going to have to make some decisions even if it's just, no, we don't really want to be bothered with this. And I hope it's not that because the impacts are not always direct or immediate, but there are impacts on us and our ability to do our work from how these decisions, how it all shakes out.

ROBERT GUERRA

Just in regards to the timeline, before we go to the next slide, is the timeline is a very ambitious one. The Review of Reviews has concluded its fact-finding process. I'm going to be getting -- there's a draft kind of framework for the community to comment on. A

proposal is supposed to be formulated by ICANN86, and a final proposal submitted to the Board by, I think it's August or September.

And so, just given how some of these processes sometimes take, we are at a critical juncture right now where our feedback, our guidance, specific issues or challenges that we see in what's emerging are very key to identify, but the pace will greatly accelerate, so which is why we want to spend time now to talk about some of the issues. So, Suzanne, if you wanted to talk about the framework.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, I think we went through all of these. One of the things that's a little bit challenging here is that it's hard to compare the existing or previous framework because reviews were paused a couple of years ago as people were realizing, but the primary problems that the community had run into were that it wasn't clear that the reviews were working very well in terms of producing actionable recommendations, and there were some situations where a review was done, it took longer than planned, it cost more than planned, and there was starting to be a traffic jam, basically, of different types of reviews where nothing was getting finished on time and people were trying to start things anyway.

And it became a very confusing picture around both what reviews were trying to accomplish, structural reviews of how does SSAC work versus reviews of does the GNSO do a good job producing

policy versus are the various constituencies being responsible with budget? And it got very confused and confusing.

So, what we're supposed to be doing now is simplifying and sort of streamlining without losing what was valuable, because in the other words you hear a lot are transparency and accountability of all the assorted groups. And of course, any engineer knows that you don't want to spend more time talking to the boss about what you're trying to fix than you do trying to fix it.

And to a certain extent, that was what we had run into, and I think the primary task here is to come up with something that meets the accountability and transparency requirements but doesn't involve people spending more time on that than on the real work. And I think that's kind of the touchstone that people have been working to.

ROBERT GUERRA

Yeah, I'll just kind of mention in terms of kind of two specific reviews that the SSAC was kind of involved in. So, there was a review of the SSAC itself, which we had an external reviewer kind of look at our processes to see if our processes met the operations of ICANN in our mission. Some of our operating procedures got updated. A lot of our processes kind of got streamlined.

And another review process that we were involved in was also we commented on the review of the NomCom. And the review of the NomCom was particularly significant in the sense that it changed

the status of SSAC's member on the NomCom to be a full voting member, and that required bylaws to- to be changed for the organization as a whole. And so, when we comment on things, it might change our engagement with other bodies, and it'll change the organization as a whole.

The thing is with some of the other SO/ACs, the process processes as Suzanne mentioned would just instead of just taking like the year and a half sometimes would end up taking years and then the recommendations would never be implemented. And that was that frustration because there's so many SO/ACs it just started building up.

And there is a requirement for ICANN to actually do improvements over time, and so there's a critical process where the board said, well, this existing process isn't working We have to take a look at not just the reviews of each SO/AC, but the reviews that are taking place, which is what this group is constituted to do as well.

And so, that's kind of where we are, and I just wanted to cite those examples because I don't know if everyone's got the history to remember the different reviews that we had participated in recently.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, in a second we can go on to the -- are we ready to go to the next one? Yeah, I would go back to -- Yeah, that one. Because I can never remember what all the buckets are without something in

front of me. Yeah, there's a lot of references in here, too longer documents, and there are voluminous documentation of what we've heard from the larger community and how, for instance, this high-level summary came about.

All of the discussions are recorded, all of the documents are publicly available, but this is sort of the distillation of the categories people have sort of agreed are necessary to cover the things that are most important. Bucket A is closest to what seems like the most straightforward way to do this, which is, review what's required in the bylaws, in the ICANN's bylaws and, let's see, there's the strategic plan, operating plan, and the code of conduct and the various fundamental documents.

Gee, how closely are we sticking to those, are there gaps in our ability to meet those obligations, and so on. We've talked a little bit in SSAC before about the continuous improvement process, which is self-evaluation by the SOs and ACs, and that's supposed to replace some of the things that didn't work as well for having external reviewers.

But there's an open question about whether we want some provision for external based reviewers to come in just because there are limitations on people reviewing their own structure and performance. There's a lot of...

ROBERT GUERRA

So, one of the points of conversation that's taking place in the review of reviews, both comments that Suzanne and I are making, is while we appreciate and want a continual improvement process to take place in different SO/Acs, it being an ad hoc process for each SO/AC is a problem in that the metrics are going to be different, the approach will be different, and so having some sort of framework and comparable results can then identify if the continual evaluation process is actually, there's like a checklist or a list that one can go through but also then track what they identify that needs improvement whether that's taking place or not.

And so, there is I wouldn't say heated conversation, but I think we're pushing that there needs to be a standard process because in an external person or the board or another community, because all these documents are public, can then be able to compare, for example, the GNSO self-improvement process with the SSAC one. We're very different bodies, but there should be points of, for example, governance and other things like that that can be compared.

SUZANNE WOOLF

We have a hand up. Maarten.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

So, this bucket was where Greg made a comment about like the value he saw of having an independent facilitator or involved in review, right? Just trying to connect what you have previously

shared, which I much appreciate with what we are now walking through.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, there's some aspects of that with what they're calling Bucket B, which is the Continuous Improvement Process, but also what Bucket C, which has been called Structural Reviews, which are the questions of is this body sufficiently representative of various pieces of the community. Do we need to set up a new advisory committee? Do we need to set up a new constituency in the GNSO? So, yes, and there's actually multiple places where that comment applies.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

So, I was just curious, I understand from at least Greg's reaction that currently there is talk about not having a facilitator, and I was wondering like what makes people propose such a change.

ROBERT GUERRA

So, that's an excellent question. I think one of the recent calls always mentioned that because ICANN is a very specialized kind of body and some of the SO/Acs are, the time it takes for an external reviewer to actually understand how ICANN works, how an SO/AC works, and then figure out how to do the questionnaire, the surveys, and the recommendations take longer than the period that's envisioned for the review that's there.

And then some of the criticisms also in the past is that it's very easy, even though for some bodies the recommendations were actually appropriate, one of the points of criticism was like, well, this reviewer doesn't really appreciate the dynamics of the group, and so it's sort of like a middle ground. And so, what we're pushing is like, okay, well, then if you're going to do it yourself, don't make up the process yourself, have a common framework that can be assessed and maybe an external reviewer can take a look at that.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

Right. Thank you.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, that question worries me a lot because it's very hard to say you're just going to do a structural review of does SSAC work. without getting into questions of what is SSAC's remit and, y are we leaving gaps, are we leaving important issues unloved? But because this is such a unique environment, it's very hard to get external reviewers who are comfortable commenting on within the larger community.

ROBERT GUERRA

And then there's the independence requirement as well. So, if you are familiar, then it's...

SUZANNE WOOLF

Absolutely, because if you're familiar enough with how this community works, it's probably because you're part of it. And that was one of the real -- would you rather just say, yeah, this is largely a self-revealing mechanisms as opposed to saying, well, we try to have independent factors, independent reviewers, but we don't really.

ROBERT GUERRA

So, one thing that would be helpful for us is in terms of this being a feedback session not only for us but perhaps for the SSAC to feed into the process as well to complement our work is actually this very conversation we're having about some of the challenges of the Continuous Improvement Process.

We may want to have the SSAC send a communique to the Review of Reviews saying we heard everything that was taking place this week this is an issue where we see some challenges that you guys need to try to address, and that would support our view. So, that would be one comment that would be helpful for us to kind of back us up, but also to add a bit more weight to that view.

SUZANNE WOOLF

It's also worth pointing out that one of the things people feel strongly about is that the frequency of reviews, and this is indicated in the table here. We're not talking about every three to five years for most of these, we're talking about a longer cycle than has been

previously established just to avoid the traffic jam problem and frankly the budget challenges that come with that.

ROBERT GUERRA

Yeah, so just to Suzanne, I think you mentioned about structural reviews, so then, assessing how everything is then working is every 10 to 12 years. Now the problem with that is that internet speed, a lot can happen in here. And one of the things that we talked about yesterday and the SSAC's gonna be talked about this year is that sometimes there are external things that happen in the world that change.

Just like 9/11 created the SSAC, there are other things that are changing. And so, there sometimes might need to be a flexibility on the dates. And so, one of the other questions that have come up as well is that maybe there are some kind of default timings for reviews, but there may be triggers where a process in the community or something happens that can expedite a review.

And so, we've had a whole conversation in terms of how do we codify that, how does that get triggered in a process, is there a checklist, and one of the things it'll come to later is just then who in the community might be able to trigger that an expedited review or a review to take place that hasn't been normally scheduled.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, and looking at these main categories, there's default timing suggested for three of them. The Continuous Improvement

Process is supposed to be that. And there is this notion after the idea of repeating this process, this meta process, ten years sounds about right. I'll be retired by then. But you laugh, you laugh, but in all seriousness, it's important to have some idea.

Going into this part of the proposal has to be what those cycle times should be. But if you look at the last category, that's a different one that fits it. That's basically the everything else, the ad hoc reviews, and that's where what's the decision mechanism for when to do that? What type of issue or activity justifies the ad hoc review with all the challenges of putting something together that has to be comprehensive over a set of issues, but tailored to the situation?

So, the idea there is you do this under unforeseen circumstances requires community-wide review high threshold but on demand, not tied to a schedule. And that's where the Discussion about how is that decision made is that a thing for the empowered community?

Is that a thing for how else could that that set of decisions be made about do we have a situation or a problem or an issue in front of the whole community that is serious enough that we need to undertake what's probably going to be you know a major effort?

ROBERT GUERRA

One thing I'll add as well too is where that could be triggered as well and there's been some discussion is that if for instance a continuous improvement process that an SO/AC is doing and it's

not working or the recommendations that are not being implemented.

There needs to be a fallback mechanism that then just goes whether it's the Board, whether it's the community just like, well, this SO/AC just can't deal with it, can't do their improvement. And so, then there's like another process that gets spin up that can implement their recommendations. And so, it's sort of like a, that's a kind of like a backup to the faulty process taking place.

SUZANNE WOOLF

But the scale of something like, at least to me, in the way we're thinking about this, and it would be useful to have feedback on this, to me, at least, it's obvious that with ad hoc reviews you're talking about something of the scale of how the community was going to handle the end of the IANA contract or the attempt to review after the fact a new gTLD process, particularly if there were major issues that people didn't anticipate.

You go back and you do the root cause analysis of what problem do we really have and how did that happen. And to me at least that implies a significant level of community commitment of resources, people's time, money, staff time. This is not envisioned as a small decision.

ROBERT GUERRA

Next slide. So in terms of... and we've mentioned some of these already, some of the considerations that we want to think about

are the definition of scope. What are elements that would be in scope or out of scope that would require our input? We've talked about the continuous improvement process. It might be some other process-related items that we are familiar with or some governance-type comments that we might want to put in.

Conversation I think we'll have a little bit later is, there is a special set of SO/Acs that are deemed the empowered community of which the SSAC opted out of being, and they are being mentioned in this Review of Review process. And so, one of the conversations that was in the last meeting notes is reviewing, that do we want to opt into this process?

It would put an additional burden on SSAC, their pluses and minus, but there's a role and if we wanted to comment on that. And in terms of technical expertise, a little bit to your comment, Maarten and others is that whether it's a continual movement process, part of that framework, or some of the ad hoc reviews or others?

Are there technical expertise requirements, and if not, are there guidance requirements in terms of how certain reviews or assessments are done? And then the most important thing is tracking all this too. So, this will also generate a lot of documentation that feeds into the community, and what are the processes the community has to have?

It's like, okay, it's out there, like a government white paper, it's out there, are people actually going to care and read about it. And so, I'm just like the SSAC like really cares how the Board takes up our

advice. I think one of the comments that we may want to take from that experience from us is, okay, if this process is going to start pushing documents out, particularly recommendations on how changes need to take place in the SO/AC, how is that being tracked and how is that being reviewed so the timelines are being met.

And so, we may want to comment on that more so there's a time, so this is timely. This is a lot of effort for Review of Reviews and to put in all this effort to then it's like okay, recommendations are out there, no one's going to care, it's important.

SUZANNE WOOLF

This is the how do we know when we're done problem. And I see your hand, Maarten, if you want to.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

Yeah, with respect to bullets one and three, can you help me understand how this worked in the past? Like if you look at current reviews or the one that was conducted last, that revision of the operational policy procedures, yeah, like were technical matters or evaluating our role in providing technical input, were these part of the review in the past or were they not?

ROBERT GUERRA

I'll comment, and maybe Suzanne will want to comment as well too, is that because this is a Review of Reviews, so for example if the Board -- if you can go back a slide. So for this one, so for example for the structural reviews, or more important Bucket A, which is the

strategic plan operating procedure review that will take place every five years, then the security element, because it is a core role of ICANN, do we want to make sure those type of things are included in the review that takes place every five years for things like that?

So those are the type of comments, so forward slide. Nope. Back one. There we go. So, that's in terms of for the scope. So, we'll show a table at the very end. So, of the different types of reviews, are there particular security or stability issues that we would like to tell the Review of Reviews that it's important that they be considered when certain type of reviews are going forward.

Or technical, so for example, if an external reviewer for ad hoc, so my personal view is if you're doing an ad hoc review because it is a extra serious process, then maybe you want to get an external reviewer for that to have the independent view and things like that.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

Thank you for the clarification. I think I misunderstood the slide, and this helped.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, it turns out that it's kind of difficult to tell if ICANN is carrying out its mission without understanding did the mission is to take this particular role within the operational internet.

Next, please. Ah, perfect. So, we did we did cover I think a little bit about the empowered community. The original idea behind the empowered community was that this was the decision-making

mechanism for some very big decisions that we hope we don't ever have to make.

It was invented as part of the community response to the end of the IANA contract with the United States government, and it was meant to replace the United States government function of being able to decide, for instance, that IANA had gotten seriously off track. So, it's a mechanism that was created for making big decisions, and the idea currently is to reuse that mechanism for the kind of decisions that we've been talking about here.

And because we didn't expect that SSAC, that the empowered community would be making decisions that SSAC really wanted to get involved in, as an advisory committee, we want to play an advisory role, not a decisional role. SSAC at the time decided we don't really want to be part of that mechanism. We're glad it exists, we're happy that ICANN has it and the community has it, but we didn't think it was appropriate for SSAC, which exists entirely as a creation of the ICANN Board and bylaws to be part of that decision.

There's no reason why we can't reevaluate that now that it's taking on this set of responsibilities, or, well, it might be taking on this set of responsibilities. So, the practical impact of the current state, we couldn't vote on how some of these things might go forward, how reforms might be needed again at some point in the future.

We have to decide if that's really still where we want to be with respect to reviews as it was with respect to IANA. I will add one other item. There has been some discussion in the group that

personally I think I'm more comfortable with. Again, personal and moment in time. But there's also the idea that the decisions about how ad hoc reviews should go forward belongs to the SO/AC chairs, which the idea would be that that's a lighter weight set of mechanisms and a clear, it doesn't have to be spun up.

You're not going to end up spending spinning up an ad hoc group to make an ad hoc decision about some major issue. The current challenge with the SO/AC chairs as a group is that it's not really a group. And Tara participates as our vice chair, so tell me if I'm going off the trail here or if you want to add something. But basically, the SO/AC's chair apparently has begun over the years to serve a useful advisory role as a group, but there's no formal structure to it.

It does not exist in the sense of, gee, is this a good transparency and accountability mechanism, because it has no transparency and accountability mechanisms of its own. So, the group did agree that that might actually be an alternative to using the empowered community in this decisional role, but we would have to be able to recommend or suggest or put in motion some way of creating more formal structure and more accountability around the SO/AC chairs as a group. So, that's the other question is we can advocate for that, it's very much a live issue, it's a live question.

ROBERT GUERRA

Yeah, and I think one of the issues is that increasingly that group meets prior to every meeting and they discuss issues. And so, there are some in the community, not only as a lightweight alternative to

this too, but they're also seeing kind of this body being an ad hoc body that requires perhaps some resources.

But then if it does, then it requires some sort of accountability so people actually have a sense of what's taking place. I support Suzanne's view on this as well, because if any community meets regularly and does input in the process, then it should be blessed in some way and be described, but it should be lightweight at the same time. And then maybe it could be reviewed as well, just to make sure it's meeting its scope.

TARA WHALEN

Yeah, just to give, I guess, a little bit of a background, even I'm just figuring some of this out myself as Vice Chair with it. That's right. And so, I think it's helpful because Rob has sort of more continuity and some of the, I guess, institutional memory around some of these things. So, this, I think, feels like something where we need more, I guess, conversation or sometimes.

I think your point about, I guess, with great power comes great administrative and more things you need to do. But yes, there are times when it makes sense to decide that you want that power, but you are going to have to work that out. And I think clearly this is a place to kind of flag for more conversation. But what happens is just before each of these meetings, where you're sort of mentioning that we do have these conversations, is we do get together collectively. There's some planning about what are the common

challenges that we're facing? Are there things that we want to discuss together?

There's a mailing list that's available, so it's not just that we have the ability to talk to each other before the meeting, we can also have things between to plan. But it gives us also the ability to come together and say what collectively do we want to bring to another group, this is something that we want, because then we will meet with -- then that meeting happens after that, so there's a little bit ahead of time.

I know a lot of this is invisible to people, I know it's not the most exciting thing to tell you about, but just that's kind of what happens. But exactly as you've said, this is very much a thing that we've done that is useful, but in terms of having, as you say, this, here's exactly what you can do, here's the powers you have, here's is very, yeah, it's more convention than it is anything that's formal. So, that may be something to say, is this something that we feel we should formalize or that we would find useful? So, thank you for pointing that out.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, it does have the advantage that SSAC does already participate through Ram and Tara.

ROBERT GUERRA

Next slide. So, this is something that we just kind of mentioned in terms of the empowered community. There are more I think in the

notes. I think I'll start with the negatives. The problem is that then it would be something more for the SSAC would have to do. And so, when empowered community decisions come up, I think it can vet bylaw changes, it can vet annual budget, and so this would be a task and we're busy as it is.

So the question is, we'd have to figure out a scope, so we'd need some time to figure out how this would involve our existing governance and probably change our operational procedures to define the role. So, I wouldn't say they're negatives, but they're just a burden it would put on the SSAC.

And the benefits of joining is, we would have a more direct voice, we would be able to have broader oversight of some of the key things that SSAC, sorry that ICANN does. However, it would shift us from being purely advisory to perhaps not commenting on policy but our processes but we could have a veto, and so those are typical things that SSAC has not done, and so it's more a conversation the empowered community role has changed.

And so, if that's changed, do we not want to be in the room, or do we want to be in the room? And so, that's kind of the question. And so, I think the right decision was made at the time, but I think now as the empowered community role is changing, which is why we're suggesting an alternative, which is another group do that, and so, we can opt out of that. So, next slide.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Okay. So, I think this is sort of the summary because I think we've actually talked about all of these at this point. We have tried in this presentation but also in some of the materials we circulated to SSAC before the last monthly meeting to sort of summarize where the situation is at. So, some feedback on are we reinventing the same problems?

Are we reinventing different problems? Or does this look like we can make an improvement? Opinions on that. These other questions, as much or as little as people want to go into the details, but these are all things that the Review of Reviews CCG has to consider. Some of this is going to be specified, some of it's going to be kept as part of what we discussed but is not necessarily going to be formalized. It's just insight we can offer to our successors.

But these are the issues that the group is kind of wrestling with as part of forming this proposal. We're very close to a working proposal. Now, of course, I say that, and suddenly people are going to stop being able to talk to each other. It's not good. But there has been an awful lot of progress made and people are trying to meet an aggressive schedule, so comments, questions, issues, this is why we asked for this time.

ROBERT GUERRA

Next slide, I'm not sure if you guys added, or I can share my screen in regards to the table.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD

Kathy's got the extra file so she can just switch.

ROBERT GUERRA

Okay.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD

Yeah, we do have a hand from Maarten real quick though.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Oh, okay.

ROBERT GUERRA

All right, so if we could make this -- Okay, so there's three slides, basically everything that we've talked about, the proposal that the Review of Reviews has put together, it's summarized in a table. And the table doesn't fit on one page, so it's going to be on multiples.

And so, this goes across the different type of reviews that Suzanne and I were talking about at the top and then the different type of questions in regards to what is that type of review and we talked about that, the methodology and outcomes of each review, and so we'll share this with the group if you can go to the next slide, the cadence which was the timing that we talked about as well. What prompts that is it an ongoing process, and then we mentioned for the ad hoc then there are mechanisms that trigger it or not, and then the next point here is the trigger or the initiation process.

The group thought that trigger was not an appropriate word, so we're using initiation process instead. And so, these are the different types of things that if those of you that are here, those of you that are remote, those of you that are watching this afterwards, have any specific comments on this table specifically, which is the proposal that's going out to the community for review, feel free to share your comments with the SSAC, share them with us and then we can see if we can put those together and collate them and then send them from the SSAC to the Review of Reviews saying, hey, we looked at all the proposal that's out there and here's some comments or some challenges that we have.

And I know some of the SSAC members have said, hey, but this makes it worse. Like, if you're evaluating yourselves, then you're always going to do a great job, and that's a problem. So, we've said that, but I think if we put that in some sort of comments, that would be as well. And I think there's one more slide after this.

Next slide. There you go. And this is just the different scope, who reviews it, the outputs, what happens to when that's done, and the different type of questions and comments and stuff like that, too. So, that's kind of the proposal that kind of Suzanne was talking about. And so, one of the things that we saw yesterday when the Review of Reviews presented it to the RSSAC is this is a complicated process, we've tried to distill it as best we could for an SSAC audience, but there's a lot of different things.

But this is kind of the essence is that these three pages of the comment, and again this is right, are there challenges, are there issues, is there something missing? We've tried to comment, but you're the extra set of eyes, and we would really appreciate your feedback during the week so we can share that with the Review of Reviews.

SUZANNE WOOLF

So, I see Maarten's hand. Go ahead. Anybody else, feel free to raise your hand in Zoom.

MAARTEN AERSTEN

Yeah, so first of all, thank you for doing all this work, summarizing it and doing this session. So, I also really appreciated the strategic analysis document on the empowered community. And I have two questions on that document or on that decision specifically.

So, in the document, it says with respect to resource commitment, it says as a mitigation option limit SSAC empowered community participation to security and stability relevant matters, which in my mind is like some kind of intermediate option where you say, yes, we want these powers, but we will only exercise them in these circumstances.

And I was wondering to what extent this is actually possible or plausible. And my second question is related to the thinking in RSSAC. They seem to be in a somewhat similar boat with respect to this decision, and I was wondering if you had conversations with

them, and if there's any thoughts we should consider on this aspect.

SUZANNE WOOLF

I can go to the second question first. And full disclosure, I'm an alternate representative for one of the root server operators in RSSAC. They have had some of these discussions. Their chair and vice chair are participants in the Review of Reviews CCG. I suspect that asking that question in the open meeting that we will be having with them so that they can speak for themselves. Frankly, I'm not comfortable doing that, but you're right, there's a similar analysis that has to be done of how does all of this fit with their role in the community.

ROBERT GUERRA

So, I think to your first question, I think there are different elements to that. So I think if we want to be part of the empowered community, then to my earlier comment is then, I think we could take on the role as other communities are doing it or we could scope how we want that to be. And so, I think just like the AC liaison to the Board, role has changed, they're a full member even though they officially don't get to vote, and so that role has changed.

The issue could be one of scope creep. We could say, you're only gonna comment on these issues, but over time that might change because it is a body with more power, politics could get involved. And so, I think there, I hate to use the term for SSAC, it is a political

decision that SSAC has to make. And then if we scope it, the other thing for me is it's yet another body that someone from SSAC, and maybe an SSAC and an alternate would need to be part of.

And so, we would then need to get more details, and we could maybe do this between now and the next meeting is okay. Because we're not part of the empowered community, I've not looked up, okay, what's their cadence of their meetings. If they just meet once a year, it's one thing. They do have to review all bylaw changes, and the Board occasionally does do that. And they do, I think, have to give the green light for the budget as well, because they can say no. And so, that would just take up that time.

So if we want to do that, then we have to then -- it's an investment for the SSAC in terms of people. So, a larger conversation that the SSAC is taking is like what's the optimal size of the SSAC? So, if the SSAC is big enough that we have members that can deal with it, maybe that'll work. But if we already have a lot of work, we want to allocate that time to more matters that are more scoped for us as opposed to more political processes that can be a big-time suck sometimes.

SUZANNE WOOLF

So, I'm not seeing any other questions in the Zoom. So, I have a question, whether anybody has an opinion on. In the second row of the current table, review conducted by, as in who will carry out the review effort, and for almost all of these, the answer that the

group has so far, cross community group with the option to be assisted by expert.

To me, that goes directly to the question of what sort of technical, when and how much and how do we want to see technical expertise or understanding brought into a review. Is there anything else we can say beyond, I mean, given that this is a framework, not the 500-page instruction manual.

Given that we have limited control over what people do in the future with whatever we write down, is there more guidance or more we need that the Review of Reviews CCG should be saying about who does reviews, well, should we go beyond saying a cross-community group with the option to be assisted by the option to be assisted by expert.

ROBERT GUERRA

That has X, Y skills for instance.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Any thoughts on that from SSAC members?

MAARTEN AERSTEN

So, this goes back to the earlier comments or questions I had about the empowered community. Like with the very little prep that I did, just reading the document, listening to you, reading the emails, which seems very fractional compared to the effort you spent, I, at

this point in time, feel more comfortable to remain in the advisory space.

And then if you go that direction, maybe it is more sensible to insert some hooks into the thing you're now asking to say, yeah, assisted by experts, maybe considering topical expertise of the very, yeah -- I see a lot of risks by going the empowered community route, and I'm not sure if I see all that many benefits. But I read the document, yeah, it's not that you didn't describe them.

ROBERT GUERRA

Another aspect, just going through this now and kind of going through my memory, is that one word that doesn't come up in this proposal is conflict. And so, we may want to add some wording in regards to when a review takes place or the assessment takes place, that issue of conflict, it can't be a conflicted party reviewing the summary findings or something like that, or if it's assisted by an expert that is not conflicted.

I mean, that's what we think about it when we go it this way, but that if we don't put in those words there, then people might take advantage of that afterwards. So, we may want to flag that as a separate comment. It's just saying great, here are some changes, we recognize the word conflict doesn't appear, and it's really important that that be there especially when it comes to reviews.

And as long as that's there, I think that's an issue that increasingly, that's why independent experts were being used in the first place,

because they would be completely removed and could be seen in a different light and not be conflicted. And so, we're losing that, and so that's something that has not come up as much in our conversations, but increasingly in my head is like why is this not coming up?

TARA WHALEN

To be clear, you were talking about sort of interests. So, I guess some people hear the word conflict. Like I'm sure there is conflict, but it's not conflict resolution. It's vested interests and bias, just to be clear. And is there a conflict of your interests? And yes, we're pretty much coming to time. So, you have a minute?

SUZANNE WOOLF

Yeah, conflict, we're not referring to people punching each other in the nose. The urge might arise, but that goes back to the code of conduct, and is it adequate? In fact, I am realizing that actually, we should probably talk about this a little bit more, that think about what assumptions we're making, because things that should go without saying sometimes need to be said, and how explicit should we get, how prescriptive should we get, is actually sort of one of the difficult parts about this.

ROBERT GUERRA

So, recalling a gesture I just saw from Danielle, I'd like to thank everyone for participating in this session just now. We thought, this might take like half an hour, and it's taken a while to go through it,

and this is a summarized version. So, I appreciate everyone's feedback. And Maarten, to your point, this material is going to be available for those to review later, for staff to review, for other members who aren't here.

And hopefully we'll have a great set of notes that we can use to talk with SSAC later in the week in terms of how we want to feed into the process as well. So, again, thank you for joining us this morning at the 9 a.m. session. Thank you.

SUZANNE WOOLF

Thank you for all the work. With that, we will close the session. Thanks.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD

Scott, please stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]