PROPOSED ICP-2 (v2) PRINCIPLES

7 October 2024

Introduction

Internet Coordination Policy 2 (ICP-2) outlines the criteria ICANN uses when evaluating applications to establish new Regional Internet Registries (RIRs). ICP-2, accepted in June 2001, identified ten fundamental principles essential for any organisation seeking to become a new RIR.

In October 2023, the Number Resource Organization Executive Council (NRO EC) asked the ASO AC/ NRO NC to establish and manage a process to update ICP-2. This update will be conducted in consultation with each of the RIR and ICANN communities.

The document presented here marks the first major step in the ASO AC's work of revising ICP-2. It sets forth the core principles that the ASO AC believes should be reflected in the next version of ICP-2. In addition to principles on RIR governance, ecosystem, lifecycle, recognition and operation, the proposed document also provides principles for the potential 'derecognition' of an RIR if it fails to adhere to the criteria established.

The principles are presented here for feedback from the RIR communities and the Internet community at large. At this stage, comments are solicited on the principles themselves, rather than specific amendments to the text of the document. The ASO AC will incorporate the comments received to draft a revised version of the ICP-2 document to present to stakeholders for further feedback.

About the RIRs and NRO

The Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) share the global responsibility for Internet number resource management. The registry system has been managing allocations of IPv4 and IPv6 addresses and Autonomous System Numbers for the past few decades, with the oldest registry dating back to 1992. There are five RIRs – ARIN, APNIC, AFRINIC, LACNIC and the RIPE NCC. The RIRs coordinate their activities under the aegis of the Number Resource Organization (the NRO), and the heads of the RIRs together form the NRO Executive Council.

NRO NC and Its Role

The NRO Number Council (NRO NC), which also functions as the Address Supporting Organization Address Council (ASO AC) under ICANN's structure, oversees the process of global IP address policy development and advises the ICANN Board on policy issues relating to the operation, assignment and management of IP addresses. It also appoints two members to the ICANN Board of Directors and provides recommendations on IP address policies.

Proposed Principles

Governance

- **Authority:** Any proposal to recognize a Candidate RIR or to derecognize an RIR must originate from the NRO EC after a majority vote in favor of the proposal. ICANN shall have final authority to decide whether to adopt the proposal, subject to ICP-2, provided that ICANN has first consulted with and given substantial consideration to the input of each RIR.

- **Amendment:** ICP-2 may be amended upon the agreement of ICANN and all RIRs.

- **Rectification:** If an amendment to ICP-2 conflicts with an RIR's existing policies, practices, or bylaws, the amendment shall prescribe a reasonable but specific grace period for the RIR to bring its conflicting policies, practices, or bylaws into conformity with ICP-2 before the RIR may be considered non-compliant.

RIR Ecosystem

- **Coverage:** All RIRs shall jointly ensure that all areas on the globe continually receive RIR services.

- **Service Region:** The Region for which an RIR is responsible shall cover a large multinational geographic area and shall not overlap with that of another RIR.

RIR Lifecycle

- **Recognition:** A Candidate RIR must meet or demonstrate that it can meet all the requirements of an RIR specified in ICP-2 to be recognized as an RIR.

- **Operation:** An RIR, once recognized, must continually meet all the requirements specified in ICP-2 in an auditable fashion.

- **Derecognition:** An RIR that does not continue to meet all the requirements specified in ICP-2 may be derecognized as an RIR.

Recognition

- **Community Support:** Resource Holders in the Region that the Candidate RIR proposes to serve must broadly support recognizing the Candidate RIR as the RIR responsible for serving that Region.

- **Community Commitment:** A Candidate RIR must demonstrate that its community is willing to support the RIR, both financially and by actively participating in its governance.

Operation

- **Independence:** An RIR must be financially stable and independent.

- **Not-for-Profit:** An RIR must operate on a not-for-profit basis.

- **Corporate Governance:** An RIR must follow corporate governance procedures consistent with best practices in its jurisdiction.

- **Member-Controlled:** The majority of an RIR's governing body must be elected by the RIR's Members, and the governing body must maintain effective control over the RIR.

- **Community-Driven:** An RIR must maintain a community-driven policy development process that is open, transparent, neutral, and publicly documented.

- **Neutrality:** An RIR must operate and apply its policies in a manner that is neutral and consistent.

- **Transparency:** An RIR must maintain and publish comprehensive records of its governance, activities, and finances.

- **Audit:** An RIR must participate in regular audits by an external and independent auditor to ensure that it is continuing to comply with ICP-2.

- **Service:** An RIR must provide stable, reliable, secure, accurate, and accountable allocation, registration, and directory services, as well as related technical services, using standard protocols and specifications for cross-RIR compatibility.

- **Continuity:** An RIR must maintain continuity procedures and redundancies and participate in record sharing that would enable another RIR to perform its RIR services, if necessary.

- **Anti-Capture:** An RIR must maintain governance rules and controls to prevent itself from becoming captured.

- **Ecosystem Stability:** Each RIR must cooperate to ensure the ongoing operation and stability of the global Internet number registry system and must not operate or fail to operate in any manner that threatens such stability.

Derecognition

- **Remedial Bias:** ICANN and all other RIRs must provide all reasonable support, if requested, to assist an RIR to cure any failure to comply with ICP-2 before derecognizing the RIR.

- **Handoff:** A Derecognized RIR must cooperate with ICANN and other RIRs to ensure the smooth transfer of its operations to a successor or interim entity designated in any derecognition decision.

Glossary

- o **Candidate RIR:** An entity that is applying to become an RIR
- o **Derecognized RIR:** An entity that has been derecognized as an RIR pursuant to ICP-2, whether the derecognition process has completed or is in progress
- o **ICANN:** The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
- o **ICP-2:** The amended and restated document that will emerge after the current revision process
- o **Member:** An entity that is entitled to participate in the governance of an RIR
- o **Number Resource:** An Internet protocol (IP) address or an autonomous system number (ASN) that exists as a distinct resource within IANA's registry system
- o **Region:** A multi-country area that is served by an RIR
- o **Resource Holder:** An entity that holds Number Resources registered with an RIR
- o **RIR:** An entity that has been recognized as an RIR pursuant to ICP-2 and is currently functioning in that role