

Verisign, Inc.

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Introduction

As the Registry Operator of .com, .net, and other TLDs, Verisign depends on the secure, stable, and reliable function of the Root Server System. Verisign recognizes and commends the multi-year effort that the GWG and stakeholders took to produce the “The Root Server System Governance Structure” and “Governance Principles for the Root Server System”. These foundational documents are a significant first step in evolving and enhancing accountability and sustainability of the Root Server System (RSS). This effort is a constructive milestone towards formalizing a governance structure that is transparent and accountable to the broader internet community.

Feedback on the Governance Document Draft

The DNS ecosystem and everything relying on it has a critical dependency on the Root Server System. Operational changes to the RSS have historically been approached through cautious and deliberate action to minimize risk. Verisign encourages a similar approach to governance changes as described in these documents. Verisign supports the phased implementation plan and believes that each step is important and should be given proper consideration to ensure thoughtful implementation that results in a successful accountability structure. While this first step may be characterized as not going far enough, Verisign believes it is critical to mirror the successful process that has led to an always-available RSS in an environment with increasing demands while continuing to use cautious and deliberate action as we evolve the RSS Governance.

Additionally, Verisign recognizes “Governance Principles for the Root Server System” as a strong set of guidelines that will serve both the initial implementation of a RSS governance structure and its ongoing evolution. Those principles are the keys for further enhancement and future evolution of the RSS Governance structure and provides the flexibility for the community to make changes in a cautious and deliberate fashion.

The RSSAC advice in RSSAC038 identified three issues to be addressed by a future governance structure including accountability, financial stability, and sustainability of the RSS. While GWG efforts address two of the three issues, Verisign encourages considerations for additional specificity addressing RSS financial stability in future steps of the Governance structure. It is important for ICANN and the community to proactively identify sustainable sources of funding for RSS governance and operations. Funding will ensure that any governance structure has proper resources to execute its defined goals. We echo the documents sentiments that the requirement of transparency surrounding stable funding to instill community confidence in the process and reduce the risk of misperceptions.

Conclusion

Verisign supports the recommendations in the document. Due to the critical function that each RSO and the RSS system as whole plays in the DNS and the broader internet, the continued success of a secure, stable and resilient RSS is paramount to an enduring unified global name space. We look forward to continued efforts towards progress of establishing a deliberate and thoughtful accountability mechanism for RSS governance.