Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG)
Operating Procedures

Preamble

The goal of this document is to provide clarity and insight to all members of the Registrar Stakeholder Group into the SG's structure, processes and subgroups. The ICANN space has increased in complexity and sophistication, and in order for Registrars to participate effectively, the RrSG has concurrently evolved how it works.

In 2020 the RrSG incorporated in Germany as the Association of the Registrar Stakeholder Group e.V., but this did not impact the operations of the RrSG, aside from some administrative obligations.

Much of these operating procedures are drawn directly from the RrSG Charter, the latest version of which was adopted by the RrSG on 27 June 2018 and formally approved by the ICANN Board on 23 June 2019. On all things, the charter should be considered authoritative.   However, the goal is for these procedures to be flexible and responsive where possible.

This should be considered a living document, and it's the responsibility of the current ExCom to keep it up to date, including a comprehensive annual review, and to reflect changing needs herein.

RrSG Groups & Teams

RrSG groups can be formed by the ExCom at any time to address an ongoing or singular issue. Due to their fluctuating nature, the groups are not individually mentioned in the RrSG Charter and rules of operation are thus outlined in these Operating Procedures.

Groups currently in operation within the RrSG:

Group Name	Status	Frequency of Meetings
RrSG Membership	Ongoing	Bi-weekly
RrSG ExCom	Ongoing	Bi-weekly
RrSG Policy Team	Ongoing	Monthly
CPH TechOps Group	Ongoing	Monthly
RrSG Compliance Group	Ongoing	Monthly
RrSG & CPH DNS Abuse Group	Ongoing	Monthly
RrSG Communications Team	Ongoing	Bi-weekly
RrSG Outreach Team	Ongoing	Bi-weekly
RRA Amendment Review Team	Ongoing	Weekly / As required
RrSG Finance Team	Ongoing	As required
RrSG Tech Team	Ongoing	As required
RrSG PPSAI IRT Team	Project Specific, closed to members	As required
RrSG Membership Review Team	Project Specific, closed to members	As required
RrSG Transfers Team	Project Specific, closed to members	As required
CPH Reg Data IRT Team	Project Specific, closed to members	As required
RDAP WG	Project Specific, admin by RySG	As required
RrSG Accuracy Team	Project Specific, closed to members	On pause

RrSG Membership Meeting
Biweekly RrSG Membership calls for all RrSG Members are currently held on Monday at 16:00 UTC

RrSG ExCom
Bi-weekly ExCom meetings are currently held on Monday at 15:00 UTC

RrSG Policy Team
Monthly RrSG Policy Team meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month at 16:00 UTC

CPH TechOps Group
Monthly CPH TechOps meetings are currently held biweekly on Wednesday at 15:00 UTC

RrSG Compliance Group
Monthly RrSG Compliance Group meetings are currently held on every 4th Monday at 16:00 UTC

RrSG DNS Abuse Group
Monthly RrSG DNS Abuse Group meetings are currently held on Tuesday at 15:00 UTC (in alternate weeks from CPH DNS Abuse Group)

CPH DNS Abuse Group
Monthly CPH DNS Abuse Group meetings are currently held on Tuesday at 15:00 UTC (in alternate weeks from RrSG DNS Abuse Group)

RrSG Communications (Comms) Team
Biweekly RrSG Comms Group meetings are currently held on Friday at 15:00 UTC

RrSG Outreach Team
Biweekly RrSG Outreach Team meetings are currently held on Friday at 16:00 UTC

RRA Amendment Review Team
Weekly RrSG RRA Amendment Review Team meetings are currently held on Thursday at 18:00 UTC, when required

RrSG Finance Team
Meetings arranged as required

RrSG Tech Team
Meetings arranged as required

RrSG Strategy Planning Meetings
RrSG Strategy Planning meetings are held as required, at the discretion of the ExCom, usually on the day prior or after an ICANN meeting

Association of the Registrar Stakeholder Group e.V. Meeting
Association of the Registrar Stakeholder Group e.V. meetings are held annually, either during the AGM (the last ICANN meeting of each year), as a part of a RrSG Membership meeting, or shortly thereafter as a part of a regular virtual RrSG Membership meeting

RrSG ExCom Leadership

The RrSG leadership is made up of 9 term-limited elected positions. These include 5 Executive Committee Officers, generally referred to as the ExCom:

Chair - Overall responsibility for the leadership and operations of the RrSG

Vice Chair of Policy - Supports and stands in for the Chair when required and oversees policy related activities in the RrSG

Vice Chair of Technical Operations - Supports and stands in for the Chair when required and oversees technical or operational related activities in the RrSG

Secretary - Responsible for the RrSG voting process and oversees administrative activities in the RrSG

Treasurer - Responsible for preparing the annual budget and oversees spending in the RrSG

Additionally there are 4 positions that represent the RrSG within ICANN and who are also included on ExCom discussion and meetings:

GNSO Council Representatives - 3 positions, normally from 3 different geographic regions, who sit on the GNSO Council and report back activities to the RrSG

NomCom Representative - who sits on ICANN Nominating Committee, responsible for confidential selection of certain SO/AC leadership positions and ICANN Board members

The RrSG leadership is also supported in their duties by an appointed Secretariat, who is employed to perform administration, communication, meeting coordination and bookkeeping functions.

RrSG Subgroup Chairs

- Subgroup (co)Chairs are nominated and chosen by the group members
- Chairs serve 2 year terms, usually for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms
- Chairs are invited to attend ExCom meetings when not closed to ExCom only

RrSG Association Directors

Pursuant to § 26 of German Civil Code, the RrSG Association has a Board of Directors, who are elected by the RrSG membership at the annual General Assembly for the Association. Currently the RrSG Association has two Directors.

Reporting Structure

When a subgroup is agreed to be formed, the ExCom will designate one ExCom officer to act as liaison of the group. This Officer will be responsible for:
- The initial call for volunteer group members on the Member List
- Continued encouragement of other members to join (if required)
- Arranging for the group mailing list to be set up
- Reporting any group issues or key activities at Membership and ExCom meetings
- Leading or supporting the group (co-)Chair(s) or Co-ordinator, as required

The current reporting structure for RrSG, including the primary ongoing groups is noted below:
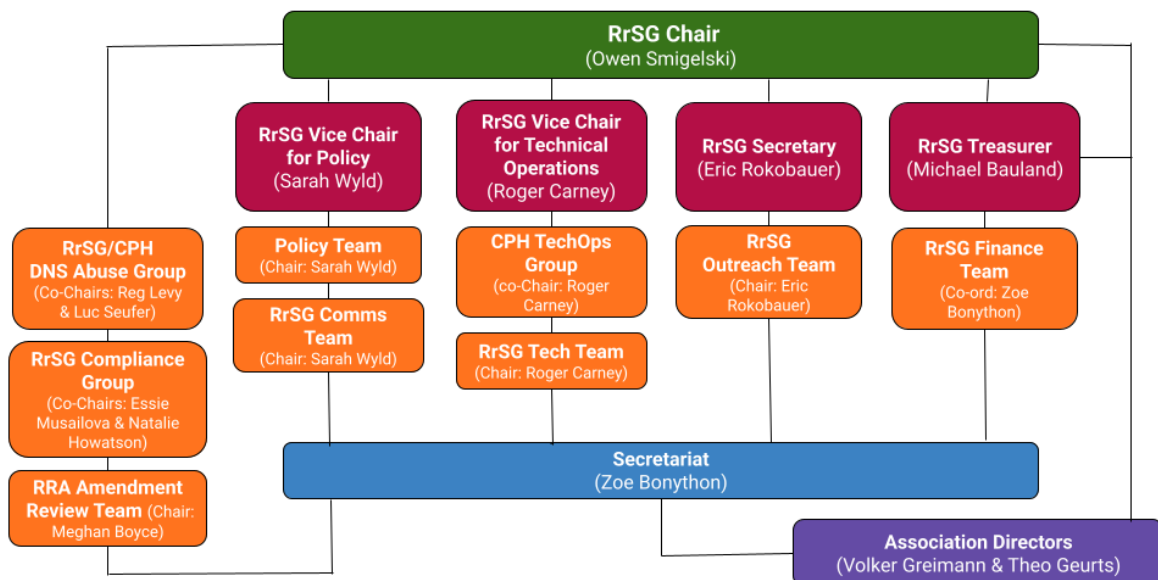
Participation

Participation in any RrSG Group is on a voluntary basis.

Any Member Participant wishing to join a group should:
- Email the group's designated ExCom Officer, Chair/Co-ordinator, or the Secretariat to request joining the group and confirm the email address to be used
- Submit or update their ICANN SOI

Each group shall either elect a (co-)Chair or nominate a co-ordinator.   The Chair(s)/Co-ordinator shall:
- Decide the occurrence and frequency of meetings
- Agree an agenda for each meeting
- Co-ordinate with the Secretariat to ensure support functions are carried out
- Chair meetings to encourage focused discussion and participation from all members
- Report key activities and issues to ExCom, as required
- Communicate key activities or requests directly at RrSG Membership meetings or on the Member List as required
- Encourage other members to join the group, if required

The RrSG Secretariat is available to provide the following support to any RrSG group as and when required:
- Set up the group mailing list
- Set up and run polls on group member availability for regular or specific meetings
- Send call requests for a teleconference room (currently Zoom) to GNSO Secretary mailing list and forward meeting invitation and reminders to group members
- Request and organise a face-to-face meeting at any ICANN meeting
- Draft agendas
- Record key notes and actions during the meeting and send to group list after the meeting
- Forward any transcript, recording, attendance and chat to the group list on receipt from GNSO Secretary after the meeting
- Be the nominated Co-ordinator

RegiSTAR Program

RrSG offers a one year mentorship program for Member Participants who are new to RrSG, the registrar or the industry. The program is tailored to the mentee's needs and is designed to increase knowledge and participation. The program starts every year at the AGM.

RrSG Observer Pilot Program

In an effort to increase membership, the RrSG is currently running a pilot program that offers non-member registrars the opportunity to participate in the RrSG in a limited capacity for up to 6 months. RrSG Observer benefits include a view of the Member list and attendance at membership meetings.

Communication

Internal Communication

Communication to RrSG membership is primarily done via the Member Distribution List. Regular meetings are held via teleconference or face-to-face at the 3 ICANN Meetings each year (unless the ICANN Meetings are required to be virtual).

Identification

For the sake of transparency within the RrSG, it is important for meeting and discussion participants to be identified. Any participant joining a teleconference should identify themselves with both their name as well as their registrar name when logging in to the room (eg: Jo Blogs - RegistraR). Likewise anyone posting to the Member Distribution List should also identify themselves in the signature, particularly if posting from a generic company email address.

Confidentiality

Comments from the RrSG on any issue will be made public (i.e. published on the ICANN website) only after consensus has been reached, or in the case where a vote was required, an affirmative vote has been passed.

Records of internal RrSG discussion or draft documents should be considered confidential and not be shared with any external parties or other ICANN groups/constituencies, unless permission has first been given by the ExCom.

Inappropriate Content

Members of the RrSG are expected to participate in line with ICANN's Expected Standards of Behaviour:
https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/expected-standards-2016-06-28-en.
Violations of the Expected Standards of Behavior may result in temporary or permanent removal from the RrSG or a sub-group.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of content that would be deemed inappropriate within the RrSG or the Member Distribution List:

- Unsolicited bulk e-mail;
- Discussions of subjects wholly unrelated to ICANN policy, meetings, activities, technical concerns, or other Internet policy matters;
- Postings that are libellous, make personal allegations, speculate on personal motives, or are designed to harass, abuse, stalk, or threaten individuals or groups;
- Derogatory or defamatory content about RrSG officers, members, employees or contractors;
- Postings that are knowingly false, ad hominem, or misrepresentative of another person's statements or positions;
- Postings that violate an obligation of confidentiality;
- Content which constitutes a commercial solicitation;
- Content that is prohibited under anti-trust laws;

- Content which is harmful to minors, is obscene, or otherwise objectionable;
- Content which infringes the intellectual property or privacy of third parties; and
- Content which intentionally interferes with any due processes of the RrSG such as an election or vote.

Updates on the GNSO Council Activity

The GNSO Councillors will report all relevant activities and issues to the ExCom and provide regular updates to the wider membership. This includes forwarding both the agenda and the action items for every Council meeting to the Member List.

Messaging Docs

The RrSG Comms group periodically produces 'messaging' documents on key topics of interest to registrars which provide a topic overview, talking points, RrSG position on issues of contention and answers to difficult questions for internal reference (not for external distribution).

External Communication

Communication made outside of the RrSG is done primarily through its website hosted at https://rrsg.org/. The RrSG will publish information about the stakeholder group including but not limited to; a list of its current members, brief biographies of its leadership team, and links to documented resources (Guidance and Information) drafted by RrSG/CPH.

ExCom, with consultation of the RrSG Communications Group, determines what is published on the website.

Explainers

The RrSG Comms group produces 'explainer' documents that provide a summary and RrSG perspective on a given topic (including policy) that are for external distribution and published on the RrSG website.

Public Comments

The RrSG Vice Chair of Policy and the RrSG Policy Team perform an initial review of any requests by ICANN to receive public comments, assessing if the RrSG should provide a formal response. If a decision is made to put forward an official RrSG comment, the RrSG Policy Team will share their proposed response with broader membership to review before posting.

Whether or not a public comment is made on behalf of RrSG membership, that should not prevent or discourage any individual RrSG member from publishing a comment in their own capacity if they wish to do so.

Abuse Contact IDentifier (ACID) Tool

The RrSG Tech team oversees a free to use online lookup tool designed to provide contact details for applicable parties associated with a domain name (e.g., registrar of record, hosting provider). The ACID Tool will search for publicly available details (from

RDAP/WHOIS) that an end user can then use to report suspected abuse associated with the submitted domain name. The ACID Tool is available online at https://acidtool.com/ and linkable through the RrSG's website.

Additional Publications

The RrSG may publish additional materials (e.g., blogs) to help promote membership activities, provide resources, etc. This will be done likely through RrSG Leadership with consultation of the RrSG Communications Group. All RrSG members should refer to and support the position of the RrSG made within these publications when applicable.

RrSG Funding and Expenditure

Annual Budget

The Treasurer shall:

- Prepare and present an annual budget to the Members, normally one month before the end of each Fiscal Year, unless circumstances require a delay and it is approved by ExCom
  - A vote of the Members to approve the budget shall be taken no later than ten calendar (10) days following presentation of the budget.
- Routinely manage budgeted expenditures; however, expenditures in excess of ten percent (10%) of the approved annual budget should be subject to approval by ExCom and Membership (by vote, if required)

Membership Fee

The Treasurer, in liaison with the Secretariat, shall:

- Issue an annual invoice to all members requiring 30-day payment terms
- Ensure a list of Members whose membership fees are outstanding at the end of the 30-day invoice period is available to the ExCom.
- Allow a grace period of 45 days after the 30 days stipulated by the payment terms before any any action is taken to revoke membership privileges
- Have the possibility to apply a 10% late fee, as per article 2.4.2. of the Charter, to payments made after 30 days

Membership Application

Any prospective Member must complete and submit a membership application, available on the website and by request.

The application shall provide the following information:

- Applicant Registrar Name (as listed with ICANN)
- Registrar IANA Number
- Geographic Region that the applicant Registrar represents
- Country(ies) the applicant Registrar operates in
- Where the applicant Registrar is incorporated
- Member Representative
- Member Representative Email
- Proposed Voting or Non-voting Member Status
- Alternate Member Representative
- Alternate Member Representative Email
- Billing Contact Email
- List of email addresses to be added to the RrSG Member Distribution LIst
- If the applicant Registrar is owned by or affiliated with another entity
- If yes, the name(s) of the owner/affiliated entity(ies):
- If the owner/affiliated entity(ies) are members of the RrSG
- If the applicant Registrar or owner/affiliated entity(ies) are members of any other ICANN stakeholder group or constituency
- If yes, whether the applicant Registrar or affiliated entity votes in the other stakeholder group or constituency
- Primary language
- Primary business focus
- Approximate Number of domains under management
- Any further questions

When a member application is received the Secretariat shall:

1. Record all information provided
2. Check ICANN accreditation
3. Check for affiliations with:
   - Other Members of the RrSG
   - Other ICANN SGs (ie: RySG)
   - Other entities who are members of other ICANN SGs (ie: RySG)
4. Advise ExCom of key prospective member details and proposed voting status.
5. Confirm approval of application and voting status with ExCom
6. Prepare invoice (charged pro rata after 6 months of the financial year)
7. Email prospective Member with the invoice attached and advise that the application has been approved pending receipt of payment.

Member Onboarding

When payment has been confirmed as received from an approved prospective Member, the Secretariat shall:

1. Update membership records
2. Add all nominated Member Participants to the RrSG Member Distribution List
3. Update the List of Members page on the RrSG website
4. Send Welcome email the Member (& Alternate) Representative(s)
5. Post announcement of the new Member on the RrSG Distribution List

Meetings

Teleconferences

Meetings are normally held via teleconference, even when in addition to a face-to-face meeting. The platform Zoom is currently used and co-ordinated by ICANN staff. Participants are expected to identify themselves by their full name and registrar affiliation.

Information on Zoom Room use:
https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/article_attachments/360000448543/ZRUserGuide_0218.pdf

To book a teleconference, send an email request to the Secretariat with the following information on the meeting:
- Date
- Time (in UTC)
- Number of lines required (ie approx number of participants)
- Name of person(s) chairing the call

The Secretariat will then arrange the call with the GNSO secretaries and forward the call in details and a calendar invite when confirmed.

Face to Face Meetings

The following information should be confirmed in advance and submitted by the Secretariat as a meeting request to the GNSO Secretaries by the specified deadline.

1. Preferred Date, Time and Length of Meeting
2. Session Title
3. Session Description
4. Type of Meeting (open or closed to public)
5. Estimated number of attendees
6. Preferred Room set up (normally u-shape)
7. Audio Visual Requirements (normally table microphones, Wireless hand microphone(s) and microphone stand(s), Presentation laptop, Zoom with audio, Teleconference bridge with dial in capability, Recording, Transcript)
8. Language services (normally no interpretation - Chinese translated transcripts provided for membership meetings)
9. Communication services (ie photography)

Voting

Elections

The following process should be followed in the event of an ExCom Officer, GNSO Council Representative or NomCom Representative election:

1. **Announcement:** The Secretary makes an announcement on the Member Distribution List that an election will be held
2. **Nominations:** Within 7 calendar days of the election announcement, the Secretary publishes on the Member Distribution List a nomination period of between 2 - 10 calendar days. Any Designated Representative of a Voting Member may be nominated for ExCom Officer or NomCom Rep positions and any Designated Representative of a voting or non-voting member may be nominated for Council Representative position. If eligible, a candidate may also self nominate. If no nominations are received, or if the nominees are all from the same geographic region, the nomination period may be extended for up to 21 calendar days.
3. **Nomination Seconding**: A nomination must be seconded by at least 1 other Designated Representative who is not in the same Registrar Family.
4. **Nomination Acceptance**: In order for the nomination to be valid, the candidate must accept the nomination within 2 calendar days or before the end of the nomination period and submit (or update) an ICANN Statement of Interest (SOI). The acceptance should include a declaration of any potential personal conflicts of interest (i.e. contracts of employment or personal services to another Member of the RrSG, RySG or other ICANN group. Such positions shall include, but not be limited to: officer, director, consultant, or employee). The ExCom will review and confirm the candidates' eligibility to stand.
5. **Candidate Discussion:** At the close of the nomination period, the Secretary will publish the list of candidates on the Member Distribution List. A candidate discussion period will then be open from 3-7 calendar days. The Secretary will publish on the Member Distribution List the opening and closing dates for the candidate discussion period.
6. **Election Period**: Within 3 calendar days after the close of discussion period, the Secretary will arrange for an electronic ballot to be sent to the Member Representative of all Voting Members and the election will be open for voting for between 5 - 10 calendar days.
7. **Winning Candidate**: The winner(s) will be the candidate(s) who receive the largest number of votes.
8. **Publishing Result(s):** The Secretary shall publish the voting results on the Member Distribution List, including the number of votes and the names of Voting Member Representatives who cast the vote.

Elections for any open ExCom, GNSO Council or NomCom position should be held concurrently and at the same time each year (normally in May/June, to meet the GNSO and travel funding deadline for the AGM), unless there has been a mid-term resignation or removal from the post. (From 2021) Any new ExCom, GNSO Councilor or NomCom rep will subsequently be seated at the AGM towards the end of the year.

Election Example:

Announcement: 18 May
Nomination Period Open: 18 May
Nomination Period Close: 25 May
Candidate Discussion Open: 25 May
Candidate Discussion Close: 1 June
Election Period Open: 1 June
Election Period Close: 8 June

General Membership Voting

The following process should be followed in the event of a general membership vote (a vote on issues):

1. **Announcement:** The Secretary publishes a Notice of Vote announcement on the Member List that a general membership vote will be held and confirming the opening and closing dates for the vote
2. **Voting Period**: Within 3 calendar days after the Notice of Vote, the Secretary will arrange for an electronic ballot to be sent and the election will be open for voting for between 5 - 10 calendar days
3. **Affirmative vote**: An affirmative vote will be decided in accordance with the majority required for the vote (simple or super majority).
4. **Publishing Result(s):** The Secretary shall publish the voting results on the Member List, including the number of votes and the names of Voting Member Representatives who cast the vote.

General Membership Vote Example:

Announcement: 28 June
Election Period Open: 1 July
Election Period Close: 11 July