
PANAMA – SSAC Review: Presentation of Assessment Report
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GREG RAFERT: Thank you, everyone, for being here today. We appreciate your time and many of you have provided very thoughtful input and feedback along the way. We were retained by ICANN to conduct an independent review of the SSAC, as many of you know, and our team which the slide indicates up there includes [inaudible], Dr. Shlomo Hershkop, Chris [inaudible] who is just to my right, myself, and Professor Steve Weber. I think [Amadena] is on the phone but I don't know if she can actually talk or not, or at least be heard by all of us. Chris, do you want to give a brief introduction to Shlomo and Steve?

CHRIS: Sure. Thanks, Greg. So, Dr Shlomo Hershkop and Professor Steven Weber are both cybersecurity experts who have been working with our team throughout the review. Dr. Hershkop has worked in a variety of roles. He's currently Director of Engineering at Allure Security, but he helped in the early days of [Colombia's] DNS, getting it set up, assisting with various things that came up in cybersecurity attacks.

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Professor Steven Weber is the Director of the Center for Long Term Cybersecurity out of UC Berkeley. So they are very forward-looking in what they're thinking about. They do scenario planning, threat assessment, and things like that to try and understand what might be coming next and how government systems, people could be reacting to it.

GREG RAFERT:

Great. Thanks, Chris. I think if you could advance two slides, please. That's great. I just want to give you a brief summary of the scope of our project. At a really high level, the goal of our review is to provide an assessment of the implementation state of SSAC's prior review, whether the SSAC has a continuing role within the ICANN structure. I think the answer is yes. We'll talk about that later. How effectively the SSAC fulfills its role and purpose and whether any changes should be made to its processes or internal procedures. Then thinking a little bit more broadly about whether the SSAC is accountable and maybe in what ways it should be accountable to the broader ICANN community. Next slide, please.

Our project was really designed as a two-step process. We are currently towards the end of phase one, which is the assessment report. I think, as a lot of you know, we reviewed a number of internal SSAC documents and operating procedures. We

conducted 42 semi-structured interviews with a range of ICANN community members and including a number of you all in the room. We distributed an online survey to which we received a number of responses from the ICANN community. We've also been sitting on some, but not all, of the SSAC meetings at ICANN 61 and some of the external meetings as well.

Then we submitted an assessment report, which I think a lot of you have seen, as well.

Once we've moved beyond the assessment phase, we'll go to recommendations. That's really what's coming up next. So, next slide, please. Chris, I think it's you.

CHRIS:

Sure. Thanks, Greg. These are just some slides some of you I know have seen before. We'll cover them quickly, just to give everyone a refresher.

As Greg mentioned, we conducted 42 interviews. A lot happened at ICANN 61. Some happened remotely immediately after. A couple happened as survey results came in and we wanted to chat with more people and get more context.

I think about the interviews as one of the heart of what goes into the assessment report because it gives us a sense of what people are thinking and what they're feeling and how they're

reacting to things, which can give some color to the quantitative data and what we see in documents and all of that.

There's some bullets here, what the purpose of those were. I'm not going to recap all of them, but we'll touch base on it as we talk about the assessment report throughout the day or the hour. We won't keep you here all day.

Our goal is to create an open space where people can talk about whatever was on their mind about the SSAC. It's semi-structured. We had question prompts. People were given vaguely the same questions, but as we learned more, we dug deeper into new points, or based on people's expertise, we talked about different things. Next slide, please.

At a high level, broken into four buckets, a lot of people we interviewed were on the SSAC, but we also interviewed a lot of board members, a good amount of ICANN staff including a couple of fellows. Then, SOs and ACs here would include also some more broad community members, but a decent amount there as well. Next slide.

Gender balance. Predominately male. We did have eight or nine females as well. Definitely trying to get both perspectives there. Next slide, please.

Then, geographic region. Highly concentrated in North America and Europe. I think a lot of that was ICANN 61 was in Puerto Rico, so there's an ease of travel. But, also perspectives from other region. Next, please. Greg?

GREG RAFERT:

Great. Thank you, Chris. Moving onto the survey. After we finished the interviews, we developed a survey instrument. We received some feedback from the RSSAC RWP on that, finalized it, got it online, and distributed it as widely as possible across the community. It was definitely informed by our interview experience and I believe the survey was open I believe from April 18th as the slide indicates through May 25th. Next slide, please.

We received 52 complete responses and then about 28 partial responses, so people who started the survey but maybe didn't make it all the way through. Our results were best to including those partial responses from people who just didn't finish the entire survey.

This slide here gives you a sense for the – it's kind of hard to see way down there at the end of the room – but a breakdown based on ICANN organizational role and affiliation. Not surprisingly, the one group that responded the most to the survey were SSAC members themselves, either current or former, but we also received a fair number of responses from the ICANN board,

individuals on the GNSO, and ICANN staff. And a smaller number of responses from ALAC, ccNSO, ASO, and RSSAC. Next slide, please.

Similar to the interviews Chris was just talking about, we also provided a breakdown by gender for the respondents. Most were men, but there were a couple of women as well. Next slide, please.

Then, in terms of the geographical breakdown, it looks similar to the interviews. Most of the respondents were from North America with a scattering of response from the other four ICANN regions. Next slide, please. Thanks.

So, now we actually want to get into what we found. At a really high level, what we heard from both interviews and survey respondents was that the SSAC is performing very well and plays an important role within ICANN. Hopefully, that's not surprising to anyone in this room.

But, as with any organization, there are areas where I think the SSAC can improve its processes and procedures going forward.

For those of you that have had the chance to read our assessment report, there are a total of 22 assessment points that are covered in that report and they kind of fall into a couple of different areas. One is just the effectiveness of SSAC. Then we

also discussed our findings related to, as it indicates up there, the topic selection process, interactions with other SOs and ACs and how those could potentially be improved or whether they're working very well. SSAC's size and membership, transparency and accountability to the ICANN community, and then the implementation state of the prior review.

Now I think I'll turn it over to Chris.

CHRIS:

Great. Thank you, Greg. The setup on these slides, just so you know, we're going to have the assessment high-level point in the [inaudible] at the top. Some sort of figure or little bullets that we'll talk about. For each of these, there's a lot more detail in the report, so we're going to try to give just the highlights here because of time, but please feel free to take a look and there will be ways you can send feedback and comments and all of that to the extent you have more you'd like to talk about. We'll also try and save about 15 minutes at the end for conversation and your questions and all of that.

The way a lot of these bar charts are set up, we stratified the color based on respondent type to give a little bit of insight. In this setup, the blue are SSAC members, the green are members of the ICANN board, the red or orange are people on SOs or ACs

other than the SSAC, and then the gray are people who sort of identified as other community members.

Here, this question which I think we really [inaudible] the answer, the SSAC is really widely acknowledged to be very important to the overall mission of ICANN. This is something we heard in interviews. Almost everyone said it was critically important, very important. And the role of the SSAC is closely aligned with what ICANN needs to be doing in terms of security, stability, and whatnot.

So, of 74 people who answered this question, only one or two did not say it was important and that was a neutral response and a don't know response. So, nobody thinks the SSAC is up to unimportant things. Next slide, please.

There's also a reflection that the SSAC is one of the SO/ACs that just does a lot. That's not a surprise to SSAC members here, but there have been many publications. This was reflected on in the last review and it's continued.

So, here we have a table showing publications per year and this was done before the recent SAC 101. You can see 100 publications. 2016-2017 were especially busy. Then, recently, the SSAC correspondent series has allowed for even more communication from the SSAC. You can see at the time of this,

13 items have come out. I think now it's 16 or 17, or more than that. So, definitely, SSAC is doing a lot. Next slide.

In terms of the effectiveness of the SSAC's advisory process, I think the majority of people said very effective or effective, which is great. There are some neutral responses, some ineffective. We'll talk a little bit more about those, but generally, people feel the SSAC is being effective, which is great, especially for a volunteer organization.

Here we have areas of potential improvement for the SSAC. This is a table people were asked to rank items. This table shows top three. I know it's a little bit hard to read here in the back, but the slides are available.

The top item for improvement was to develop processes to provide advice in a more timely fashion. We'll talk a little more later. We know the SSAC is a consensus-driven body. This is just what people are telling us. Other items mentioned include engaging stakeholders through public meetings and presentations, developing deeper relationships in the ICANN community with other SOs and ACs, soliciting feedback. Things like that. Next, please. Great.

So, one of the tension points that we heard about from a lot of people is this timeliness issue. It came out in a number of ways. A lot of people felt like we send advice to the board and we're

not quite sure what happens to it. We don't know how long they're spending on it. The tracker is great, but it doesn't necessarily track implementation once something has been approved. That's one thing that came out.

The other item that came out was I think there are some people on the ICANN board who wish that SSAC's advice was a little more in line with their decision-making schedule, such that, "Oh, I need to decide something." SSAC's advice is coming in exactly in that moment. That kind of thing.

In this figure, we talk about how often does the ICANN board implement advice given to them by the SSAC. I think that the consensus here is often, very often, a couple board members think all of the time, so they've done everything that's been suggested by the SSAC. A decent amount neutral, a few not often, but generally people feel as though the SSAC's advice to the board is being acted on. Next slide, please.

In terms of the timeliness of the board. It's a little hard to read the items on the bottom. The one with no selections are the ICANN board responds in a very timely manner. So, nobody is finding the response rate to be very timely. A lot of people are finding it to be somewhat timely or neutral. Then there are a bunch of people thinking it's untimely. In the report, we discuss a little bit more our insights into what might be going on there

and ways that things could potentially ... We'll have recommendations down the line, I guess. Next slide.

The board advice tracker is a relatively new tool. I think, generally, everyone is really glad that it exists. I feel like it brought a lot of transparency to the process. I think people also have suggestions for ways it could be different. It could be used more.

Here, you can see a good amount of people find it to be effective. A lot of people feel neutrally. A couple people feel very ineffectively, but no one is saying, "The board tracker is awful. We shouldn't do this. It's not helpful." Which is nice. Next slide.

One of the things we heard a lot in our meetings, especially with ICANN board members, was just the importance of the role of the liaison to the ICANN board. It's easy talking to people to get a sense for just how busy the board is and how much they have going on, and I think they really rely on the liaison to help them navigate, look at SSAC advice, know what's most important despite everything else in their lives or focus on things, develop questions for the SSAC.

So, people commented very positively on the way that the liaison to the board took SSAC advice, made it something they could digest based on their own knowledge, their own expertise, and technical issues and go from there.

This figure just shows the relationship between the SSAC and the ICANN board and its effectiveness.

Largest impediment, this might not be a surprise. SSAC is volunteer-based and there's a lot to do. Recently, there's been a lot more to do. I think the NCAP project came up quite a bit in this regard as some things were new in scope and scale. The SSAC has been moving forward on that.

The next slide shows a graph related to this. It's going to be hard to read from here. The question was: what are the biggest impediments to the SSAC completing its duties? A little bit different than improvement. What things are currently making things more difficult? We discuss it more in the report, but if you look at the first five boxes, bars, three of those relate to things such as time availability, lacking resources, getting a lot of different requests from different SOs and ACs or the board. Actually, that second one, the one with the highest blue bar, SSAC members reflecting. That's the ones were time availability of volunteers. People are doing a lot and its felt. Next, please.

Finally, on this effectiveness topic, I think it's been really great to be welcome in SSAC meetings and see what's going on. One of the things we definitely noticed is the SSAC is very collegial, seeks to be very effective, very polite, very ... Three bullets here. I think collaboration and consensus is very important to the

SSAC and it's very clearly just watching presentations that everyone has a voice at the table. People are encouraged to speak. There's an effort made to go back and adjust things based on opinions. I think people aren't afraid to disagree with each other, and I think that's really a great sign, because when that can be done [inaudible], you can get to better outcomes.

We've seen that the SSAC works to keep an awareness of its audience and also the big picture. This is everything from in the details. Quibbling about an individual sentence and who's going to read it and how they might interpret it, which is important, up to thinking about does this task still fall within our remit? Where have we ended up as we continue to talk to this? Will there be recommendationable actions out of this? The SSAC doesn't have a problem pulling the plug on an effort that seems like it's going to be pointless, which given the time availability I think is useful.

Finally, I think the other thing that was really clear is just the importance of the SSAC support staff and what a great job they're doing from looking at the way that the meetings we sat in have been organized, the kinds of trackers, the admin committee uses to close things out, to some of the more analytical things we've seen members of the support staff present. There's a clear signal that role is effective and very much appreciated. That's that. Next slide.

I'll talk about the next item a little bit now. So, the next section we mentioned was topic selection and there's only one assessment point here. One thing we were thinking about is how is the SSAC thinking about what to study next? A lot of people comment the cybersecurity landscape seems to be evolving and seeing more in the news. Is the SSAC on top of it?

I think, generally, what we've seen is definitely yes. The SSAC brings a wide range of skills to the table to think about issues and to consider what's next. I think our sense is that the SSAC is inherently interested in the things that are important and dangerous within the remit and focusing on it.

There was also a number of people who indicated maybe we should have a light, formal process around thinking about what comes next, what we should focus on, just to have something a little bit or structured there. If you go to the next slide, there's a bar graph about this. We were sort of just asking how well do you feel the current topic selection process is to identify emerging and future threats? As suggested, a lot of people feel like it's effective, very effective. There are some neutral responses that came with commentary such as, "Well, we don't have a process." Then there are some people who feel like it's ineffective. This question was just asked of SSAC members and members of the ICANN board, people who have a little more insight into what goes on inside the SSAC. Great.

Next general category was interaction with other SOs and ACs. There's a lot of interesting dialogue around this point because [SSR] issues relate to such a wide breadth of what ICANN does. So, when you talk to people, a lot of people have differing opinions on what the role of the SSAC should be within that. So, there are some people, more so in their community, who are saying SSAC members should be involved in PDP processes. They should be there making sure that everything is secure along the way.

There are other people saying, "Hold on a second. That's not reasonable. That's impossible." The SSAC really should be playing this technical advice audit verification guidance role and not getting into the weeds of policy making, but rather making sure that the systems in place are such that policy making can be made soundly and it's something that [inaudible] to go wrong, people can know about it and do something about it.

The next slide is a bar chart and there are a couple of different cuts of this in the report. This one is looking at how often is SSAC advice incorporated into the policy development process of SOs and ACs? This version shows all respondents. We have a version of the report with just people on SOs and ACs. The top yellow bar here is an I don't know. A lot of people – and this might make sense, especially if they're focused on their SO or AC – aren't

completely sure how the SOs and ACs are implementing SSAC advice.

That said, if you look at the other colors, the dark blue, the green, the light blue, these are very [inaudible] sometimes. So, of the people who feel like they have an opinion, a lot of them are saying this stuff is used. The gray is not often. The orange-red are rarely. Next slide, please. Great.

I think a lot of people want to hear more from the SSAC or want to feel more involved with the SSAC. It's something we heard a lot. I know on Tech Day, the SSAC did the emerging security threat presentation that was very well attended, and at the end there were some questions asked about would you be interested this? Would you be interested in that? A lot of hands in that room went up. I think that matches what we heard. People think security is important. They want to be thinking about it and they're looking at the SSAC to help guide that process in certain ways.

The other part in this note is I think the SSAC is aware of this. I think over the past meetings, the SSAC has been doing more. The SSAC was at Tech Day presenting something. There were a lot of combined. We saw the ALAC SSAC meeting in ICANN 61. There was the RSSAC-SSAC meeting just the other day. We think this is something that's not a surprise. Great.

This question is how satisfied are you with the current level of Internet. This one asked about the ICANN community. There are SO and AC ones in the report. I think a lot of people are somewhat satisfied, are very satisfied. But there is this bit of somewhat unsatisfied, neutral, of people wanting more.

I think now I'll turn it over to Greg to talk a little bit about the size and membership of the SSAC.

GREG RAFERT:

Great. Thank you, Chris. I think one thing that we heard loud and clear in both the interviews and from one of the survey respondents was just the wide range and really breadth of technical expertise that the SSAC members have. I don't think there were any complaints there, and I think it kind of leaves you well-positioned to deal with a lot of these emerging security threats as they're coming down the line.

I think the one thing we heard from some people was an interest in, given the inter-disciplinary nature of SSR issues, there certainly was some interviewees in particular noted in interest in having people with less of a technical background on the SSAC. I actually know that there are a number of you here today, but that was something that we did here in the interviews to come at it from a slightly different perspective, but still have enough

technical background to actually know what you're talking about. Next slide, please. Thanks.

With respect to the actual size of the SSAC, what we heard from interviewees and survey respondents as well was that the current size of the SSAC seems about right. There's certainly a tradeoff between having a larger versus a smaller group, but most people thought that the SSAC was kind of in the right place given those tradeoffs.

We also asked a question in the survey which is how effectively does the SSAC cover all areas of expertise, and what the bar chart up there shows is most people thought it effectively does, although there were some survey respondents – not many, but some – who thought that it doesn't quite cover all of the areas that it should. Next slide, please.

With respect to recruiting, the SSAC tends to rely on more of an informal recruiting process, relying on its members networks. I think there were some interviewees and survey respondents who thought that perhaps there should be a little bit more structure around recruiting for new members for the SSAC. That said, I think everyone who came across or said that did also recognize that you guys are already really busy, so adding more structure to the recruiting process, especially if it takes more

time from SSAC members, could be something that might just be too much time. Next slide, please.

This is a set of responses from the survey to the question of how effective or ineffective do you believe the SSAC's recruiting operations are? We received about 50 responses from this. Most people thought that they were neutral. Some people, a relatively small number, thought they were very effective. There were about six people who said effective. Then there were a number of people said ineffective or very ineffective with respect to how effective the recruiting operations are. Next slide, please.

I think we heard this from a number interviewees and it also came across in some of the open-ended survey responses to our survey, that the SSAC is perceived to lack diversity along geographical and gender diversity lines.

That said, I think everyone who said that immediately indicated, well, we just don't want to have diversity for diversity's sake. So, there is that tension there in terms of thinking about what the SSAC should look like. Next slide, please.

This is kind of a busy bar chart, but this is a question from the survey which is how diverse is the SSAC along the following dimensions? So, there are seven of them up there. I think what you see here is what I mentioned previously and what we heard in the interviews, which is if you go look at geography and

gender, that's where people tend to identify the SSAC as being less diverse. Next slide, please.

We also asked about the membership review process of the SSAC. This question from the survey reads: how effective is the membership committee in reviewing current SSAC members? Basically, everyone said it was it was very effective or ineffective. There were a couple of respondents, actually – I think, one – that said it was neutral. But no one said that it wasn't working well. So, I think that bodes well.

One thing that we heard from interviewees well is that it's improved a lot over time. The SSAC is continually looking at the membership review process and thinking about how it should be improved going forward. Next slide, please.

This is another question from the survey, which is does the membership committee follow its own procedures? Basically, yes. That's a good thing to hear. I think we can go on to the next slide.

Finally, we had two other findings related to the size and the membership of the SSAC and these relate to term length of SSAC members, both leaders and non-leaders, and whether there should be term limits.

So, the thing that we heard relatively loudly and clearly is that three-year term for SSAC members, whether they're leadership – sorry, for non-leadership members is appropriate.

We also heard that a three-year term for leadership members is also appropriate. Most people were on board with that concept and idea.

With respect to term limits, it was a large consensus that there should be no term limits for SSAC non-leadership members. But, we heard from a number of people that there should potentially be term limits for the chair and the vice chair of the SSAC.

CHRIS: Yeah. And as written in the report, we're aware that the chair is currently term limited by the ICANN bylaws. We [counted on] that as well.

GREG RAFERT: Next slide, and I think I'll turn it back over to Chris.

CHRIS: Perfect. I'll keep talking. Thank you, Greg. The next broad section of items we were looking into is transparency and accountability of the SSAC and the questions around those items.

I think this slide demonstrates the SSAC is generally seen to be less transparent than other parts of ICANN. That's not necessarily a bad thing. You don't want a whole bunch of bad actors watching what the SSAC is starting to do and then trying to race them to figure out if there's actually a problem and do negative things as a result.

The bar chart here, on the left, it's saying that the current balance between transparency and competing values such as confidentiality is correct, that the middle bar says that there's a desire for the SSAC to be more transparent.

As you can see here, the majority of SSAC members and the ICANN board, all respondents, are saying that things are right now. A lot of the SO/AC members and people at large are saying, "I wish there was more going on and more transparency."

No one feels like the SSAC is too transparent, which is good, especially considering the potential risks there of security issues. So, that was nice to see.

The next one, in terms of conflict of interest, bias, these kinds of things, naturally the SSAC members have very deep expertise on what they're doing and you have to get that somehow, which involves having a day job and supporting yourselves and your family and being lovely volunteers here.

So, really, the types of things we were looking at are disclosures of conflict of interest being updated? Are they done? Are the refusal policies working? Do people feel comfortable with them? That kind of thing.

Generally, we found there's this process for disclosure of conflicts that's on the website. That's kept up to date. People seem to be taking that seriously, so anyone who is interested can go and look.

There is the ability to recuse yourself and let that be known in SAC documents. Here we can see ... This question is asking about satisfaction of that process and most people on the SSAC are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied.

Something else we've heard in meetings were that – sorry, in interviews with members of the SSAC is people feel comfortable calling each other out and saying you might be biased on this. And I think people also take it upon themselves to say that. We've seen meetings where people say let's all go around and state our preconceived bias first, which this is definitely something that people are focused on and take seriously. Next slide, please.

This was just a question about the perceived conflict of interest in the SSAC with one being low and five being high. So, you'll hear sort of in the middle are three which sort of fits what was

said about needing to have expertise to be able to comment on these things. I think the general consensus is a lot of people say, “This is unavoidable. What else we could do?” There were a couple of people who had ideas of things that could be done. For example, is part of recruitment thinking about if there are academics who would know this but not have been in industry or that kind of thing? We are aware there are some people with that background on the SSAC already as well. Next, please.

In terms of accountability, what we’ve heard here is that the SSAC is directly accountable to the ICANN board. The ICANN board has control over who joins the SSAC. [inaudible] the SSAC makes recommendations, but we feel – talk about the assessment report. I think the feeling is that this is widely appropriate. The SSAC needs to be able to say things that might be uncomfortable so that security can be prioritized over other items. And because the SSAC is an advisory body, it’s not as though the SSAC is deciding things and implementing it on its own. The board is in charge of thinking about it, implementing, and other organizations act accordingly. So, the SSAC is accountable to the ICANN board.

Then, the last little note here is that the [inaudible] website, we looked through the materials there. I think there’s a lot there that assists with transparency, and in the report, we talk about some other things that members of the community flagged as,

“Hey, maybe the SSAC wants to think about putting this on their website as well.” Great.

The last section of what we looked at was to review the prior review of the SSAC which took places in 2008 and 2009. There was an assessment report released in 2009. So, if you look at our assessment report, we go through each of the 33 recommendation and we talk about what was done. The vast majority of them have been implemented and I think none of the ones that are still in progress seem to strike us with concern.

So, the minor caveats here. Item 10, there was a call for the ICANN board to study the issue of paying a stipend or [inaudible] SSAC leadership and members. We have not been able to see evidence that this was done. We haven’t been able to quickly figure out why that is, but that just is what it is. It’s not like the SSAC could have done that on its own.

13, providing a professional head’s up when uncomfortable situations are foreseeable. I think, for the large part, the SSAC has done this. There are a couple of people in interviews who said this advice caught us off guard or we’re working on this process, we wish we had SSAC input earlier. So, I don’t think this is a really negative thing. This is something to keep in mind.

Then, 16, publishing meeting minutes on the SSAC website. I think this is not being done for good reason, similar to the

transparency comment. But, I think what is happening, reviewing the SSAC Wiki, the SSAC is keeping a very good record of everything it is doing and it's thinking about when the appropriate times to publish things online are and we are aware that there have been further conversations about can we default to open more, can we publish more? And that stuff has been on people's minds. That all seems appropriate to us.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Greg, could I just pause for a second? We've got a bunch of non-native English speakers that might not be tuned in.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Microphone, please.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Just to request to maybe slow down a little bit and pace a little bit more slowly for the benefit of people whose native language is not English. I understand that one of your first findings was that we have very few of those folks that were all North American or European males, but there are a bunch of people who would have trouble following a very, very fast-paced presentation. I know the tendency is to do that when you have a lot of material to cover, but I think it would be helpful to try and slow it down and pace it a little better. Thanks.

to do stuff and we need the board to act more quickly because it takes us a long time to get stuff to the board. Is there any more of a sense that you can tell us about how the conversations about this particular slide went?

GREG RAFERT:

I can certainly start. Actually, we'll address your first point first I guess that you made. So, we do have that information, both for the interviews and the surveys and I think that would be an interesting cut of the data to see whether or not someone had a universally, slightly negative view or whether it was much more scattered based on the topics.

My sense from the interviews that we conducted and looking at the survey response is that you're not going to see really anyone – maybe there are a couple – who had kind of a universally negative or slightly negative view. Or it was much more just in this one area we would like to see a little bit of improvement but I think it's a really good point. Chris, do you want to start on the effectiveness point?

CHRIS:

Sure. So, if I understand the question, it's is there more [inaudible] to understand what's going on?

BARRY: I'm looking at from the point of view of what we could do about it, if there's anything that you can drill down a little bit more to tell.

CHRIS: Yeah. I want to be careful not to get too much into the recommendation phase of things just before we take the time to really think to critically about it.

But I think one thing that came out is the ICANN board being exceptionally busy. I think it is, in a way, just getting this information on the fly and trying to figure out where to focus, and I think the liaison can play a key role in helping to do that. I think that can continue to happen.

I think the other bit is communicating information back from the board in saying the board has this decision-making schedule. If things get in by this time, it will be in, and then people making a concentrated effort to get things in by that time. So, it's sort of just an awareness of what's going on. I don't know, Greg, do you have other thoughts?

GREG RAFRET: No, I think that covers it. I don't know if it answers your question or if you have any follow-up, though.

WARREN KUMARI: One of the things that I might have missed in there is is there stuff in there saying about whether people can actually understand our advisories and whether they communicate what we think they communicate?

CHRIS: Yeah. I can take that, Greg. I think both in the interviews and in the survey responses – so, in interviews, everyone we asked that question said I can understand it or said I’m not technical, I don’t try to understand this stuff, but I feel like the people who I talk to who are technical do.

So, our take has been the SSAC is effective in communicating and wording things in a way that people can understand. I think a lot of people indicated that the support staff is very helpful in thinking about that, members of the SSAC saying that that was the case.

In terms of survey responses, we did ask some questions around do you find the level of technicality to be appropriate and the reason it didn’t escalate to this level is because people felt that it did. So, that was our take. Who is next?

WARREN KUMARI: Follow-on from that. Oh, okay.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: You can follow-up. It's fine. I'll hop in after you.

WARREN KUMARI: It does concern me slightly that some people said, "I'm not technical, so I don't really read them." I think that potentially means that we're failing to communicate the recommendations, or at least the introductory stuff, in a way that non-technical people can get.

CHRIS: Just to comment on that quickly, I think that makes sense. One thing that was mentioned was that the items - that the packaging the board liaison does for the board is very effective in making things understandable. So, one potential thought had been maybe that packaging can be delivered more broadly or there's something to talk about there. But, that wasn't a lot of people saying that point.

TARA: Hi, Tara [Wayland]. You had a slide about expertise and there seemed to be a spread there about one of the bars about not having coverage on some topics. I was curious if you had detail

in any way about what things people felt were missing from our areas of expertise that might want to address?

GREG: Yeah. One thing that came up in the interviews was the feeling that – this was we only heard this from a couple of people – that that it would be helpful for individuals on the SSAC to have more legal expertise, for example, or more policy expertise.

CHRIS: Yeah. I think the other thing that came up there is a reflection on the SSAC skill survey, which I think is recently being updated. There was some sort of, okay, this is a new topic not covered by our skill survey yet. We should make sure we're on it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Let me manage the queue. I have [Mary Kay], Jay, and then Robert. Sorry. And the gentleman in the back. Thanks.

[MARY KAY]: So, one item that within the SSAC that over the years we've been discussing is metrics of how successful we are, and really, the slide that I really paid attention to was one that said how many groups actually follow SSAC's advice. So, I am a little bit concerned about how many people do not or are neutral about

it. So, I'm wondering if you have any more context around that because it might also relate to how we communicate the advice and whether or not they actually understand what it is.

CHRIS:

Yeah. So, thinking about that in two parts. I think the ICANN board is definitely listening, acting, understanding. I think through interviews, responses from members of SOs and ACs were a little more broad and I think a lot of people said, "I don't know," or, "I'm not always focused on it." So, that strikes me as the place to think about a little bit more. And there are some people who said the SSAC gives advice to the ICANN board, and if it's important to me, then I'll know about it from that process. So, I think there is a little bit to focus on there. It hasn't necessarily come out that it's because the documents can't be understood. It could just be a matter of getting people thinking about this stuff a little bit more. That's just my take.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Thank you, Jay?

JAY DALEY:

Can we go back to slide two, please? Sorry, the question two. It's one that's marked slide two.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Not the one that is actually slide two.

JAY DALEY: Yeah, that one, thank you. No.

GREG RAFERT: Was it page 21, perhaps?

JAY DALEY: Sorry, can we just try the one after? Right. It's another two. Look, the question is there was one there which was about the outcome effectiveness, and it was not clear whether it was talking about the way that the reports are interpreted, as whether that's effective, or the way that we convey the information in our reports is effective. I was wondering if we had that clarity around that. It came before three. So, if you can find three and then go back one, I think you might find it.

CHRIS: Yeah. I think our goal with this question was to be sort of a little bit higher level and just say, "Are you seeing this process as effective?" I think what I'd want to do is go back and sort of look at the correlation of this and some of the questions about how it's being used on the SO/ACs along with the level of clarity of

publication which is the other question that was asked. So, I think that might be a spot that's digging into [inaudible] might give us more context.

JAY DALEY: Okay. So, outcomes is intended to be how its used rather than anything to do with the content of the report, then? Okay.

CHRIS: I think people could interpret this question either way. I think that's the sort of intended interpretation. The first one that you said is the intended interpretation.

GREG RAFERT: But in terms of the content and whether it's clear and understandable, we definitely have context from the interviews from a number of people that we talked with. We can go back I think to the more detailed information and interviews and we can follow-up with you.

JAY DALEY: If you go to slide 19, the one that says 19 in the numbers there. Yeah, that one. Lovely. Right. Was the same question asked of non-SSAC members? Because this is us telling ourselves that we

think we're very good at these things, but I was wondering what other people thought of it.

CHRIS: For the conflict of interests, the survey question was not asked of others. The transparency question was.

GREG RAFERT: We did, however ... Obviously, we don't have the level of quantitative data that one gets from a survey, but we did ask at least some non-SSAC members this in semi-structured interviews as well.

CHRIS: Yeah. And thinking about the free text fields, the question of transparency and people commented on it, I think there were non-SSAC members who reflected on potential for bias. But I also feel like there wasn't a whole lot of that. My take isn't that this story would be different from what I've heard from people, but to answer your question, we didn't have the survey question for those people.

JAY DALEY: Alright, because this one and the previous ones are two really big [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There's a queue. Do you have a quick follow-up? I have two people in the queue. Okay. The gentleman in the back.

MARK: Mark [inaudible] from Microsoft. I've recently been doing a stint in customer [and partnering] advocacy at Microsoft. There were some techniques that used for measuring satisfaction. So, a lot of this are satisfaction measurements. If you could move forward a few slides to the effectiveness slide because that was a pretty good example. Next one. Yeah.

Here's the slide. There was sort of a trend in the commentary that neutral scores weren't so bad, but really, if you're seeking excellence, you would want to take the very top box and subtract the two bottom boxes and that generates what's called an NSAID score.

In this case, you've got six in the top box and only three in the bottom two boxes, so that's a positive score. That's pretty good.

In a subsequent slide, though, you had a huge amount of either effective or neutral and neutral should not be perceived as ... If you're looking for excellence, neutrals are not considered to be positive. So, that one was actually a net negative. So, I think as you look at these charts, you should keep that in mind, that

really all that matters is the top box minus bottom boxes if you were really trying to measure satisfaction.

CHRIS: Thank you for ... Greg, did you want to?

GREG RAFERT: No, I think it's a really good point and it's something that's definitely been on our minds as we've been looking at these results and thinking about how to interpret them and really identifying some of the areas where there might be bigger areas for the SSAC to think about improving.

CHRIS: Yeah. So, a bit on that. A lot of the survey questions, if you had a negative response, it would give you the chance to say a little bit more. That was triggered by the neutral response as well as the ineffective responses. We do have that information and are definitely planning to keep thinking about that as we move toward the recommendation phase.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Sounds good. Time check. We have five more minutes and we have two persons in the queue. How do we want to proceed? Okay. Barry and then Warren.

BARRY: Okay. This is just quickly something touched on by [Ace] and [Marika]. The people being technical enough to understand or people saying, “I’m not technical, so I don’t read them,” during the admin stuff this morning, we talked about external communication. I think that’s probably the answer to that is the sense is that our reports are fine as they are. We need to distill the executive summary even tighter and start putting that out through social media and things to get people aware of the general recommendations. I think that fits in fine.

CHRIS: Also, you just made me think of this. One SAC document that lots of people comment on to us, even the non-technical self-identified folks, was the emoji paper. I think obviously it’s a fun one. People want to read it. But, that did come up a number of times as a recent thing that a lot of people had actually read and thought about.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Warren?

WARREN KUMARI: Noting that we're low on time, if you could only recommend one thing that we could do to make ourselves more effective, and then also one thing to make other people happier or think we're more effective, what would those things be?

CHRIS: So, actually, if we go to the one slide we didn't get to, there was the 20-second bullet, if we could go to that real fast, not to answer with a question. A 20-second recommendation point down below the JAS effectiveness. Page 49. And one below this.

I think the last bit is this is the thing that really stands out to me the most interacting with the SSAC is that everyone that we've talked to has taken this process very seriously, been very excited about it, and then thinking about it. So, even your question is getting at what can we do now to start doing things about this.

Our general take is that while the contracting for us was going through the SSAC, [RDAP] did not wait. They did their own report. They've been thinking about these issues.

A lot of the things that we're noting and finding are things that they had commented on to us as well. So, I think one of my thoughts is that the instincts of the SSAC seem to be good in this regard and I think that the leadership of the SSAC seems to be very focused on how can we take advantage of this time in the

SSAC of new leadership to think about how to do things differently, and not in a drastic way, but how to continue improvement.

I don't want to say what the central recommendation or the recommendation report will be, but I think my thought is that the processes that have been going on seem to be working quite well and I think continuing that is really the best way to do it. I know that's not as clear as an answer if you want. Greg, do you want to ...

GREG RAFERT:

I agree with everything that Chris just said. I think one of the things that stood out was the timing of SSAC advice, both to the board and SOs and ACs. So, I think ... We don't have a specific recommendation there. Maybe sets of recommendations. But I think that's one of the areas we'll hone in a little bit on in the recommendations report.

CHRIS:

Yeah. The other one that stands out for me is this question of how does ICANN ensure the SSR expertise gets into the PDP process and how does that happen in a way that does not completely overburden the SSAC and create these unrealistic expectations of what a consensus-driven organization can do.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you. Robert, you had a question, and you have the last word.

ROBERT: I had two questions, but I'll just ask one. And just following up on Jay's comment on effectiveness and communication. Given the challenges and given the advice that's needed by the board and the community going forward, any additional nuance and recommendations you can make to us in regards to how well our advisories are understood, particularly the subject matter, what isn't and what we can do to improve our communications plan going forward would be very helpful for you to recommendation to us. Thank you.

GREG RAFERT: Thank you for raising that. I think that's a really good point and we'll be sure that's included in the recommendations report.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Although this is really your session, Rob had to leave for another commitment, but I'd really like to thank you for presenting the report. We do have a couple of extra people in the room but primarily SSAC members and you can see how well-received

your report is. We really do appreciate your very, very clear presentation and the way in which you've engaged with us and the rest of the community. So, thank you very much, and we look forward to continuing working with you over the coming months and very much looking forward to receiving your recommendation, so thank you all very much.

JENNIFER BRYCE:

It's Jennifer Bryce here from ICANN Org, I just wanted to remind everyone that the assessment report right now is out for public consultation, so comments are welcome until the 20th of July. There's some information on the Wiki page and on the ICANN website about that as well and I believe a webinar on the 12th of July. Thanks very much.

CHRIS:

Thanks. We'll be around if anyone would like to speak further.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]