
ICANN75 | AGM – RSS Governance Working Group Meeting (4 of 6)
Sunday, September 18, 2022 – 16:30 to 17:30 KUL

OZAN SAHIN:

Hello, and welcome to the Root Servers System Governance Working Group session four. My name is Ozan Sahin, and I'm the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. Please note that this session is intended for a discussion among the Root System Governors Working Group members. Other participants will be silent observers.

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BRAD VERD:

Thank you, Ozan. All right. Welcome back. When we left, we were talking about funding source, as ICANN being the funding source.

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And we were talking about essentially where that funding might come from, which was tax or on a domain, which was what Kaveh had mentioned the fee a penny or something whatever the fee is on a per name basis. And we had Wes and Ryan in the queue, and they were nice enough to write down their questions and wait until now. So I will turn the mic over to Wes and let him take it.

WES HARDAKER:

Well, I don't know. I was going to try and rescue my comments, but now I have all the time in the world so I can expand. And actually, during the break, one thought actually occurred to me and there's some interesting aspects of being a nonprofit, which we are as well. We actually have a couple of times accepted donations to run roots. And it interestingly enough, of course, that works out well for people donating because as a nonprofit, you get some tax benefits.

But what that drove me to is, it'd be interesting, I don't know tax law, but could a commercial company, per carve off part of a nonprofit to make something like that easier, which then actually brings the implications of trust of if they're a nonprofit, they're not using it for business because they'd be audited. This is, like, US specific. And Geoff's giving me eyes, so I'll let him answer that in the future.

And as a side, the network management company that I was talking to at that one time never did give us a free service because they didn't know how, to be honest. But what I really was going to say is it seems like we're now at the point of violent agreement to a large extent. We all seem to be saying the same thing in slightly different ways. Like, ICANN is the source of funding that we will certainly likely start with. There's not many other places, and it might be worth writing down the sentences that we can summarize from this, at least the last session, and probably the next one, and saying anybody disagree. And I suspect the answer is going to be no, that we all agree fundamentally on some pretty basic principles.

I will note that the one thing that we haven't quite solidified on is diversity of funding. So we've talked about wall cave, ICANN's it, then it's our capture involved. Interesting enough there's two different time periods where this comes into play. The long term time period of we want to make sure that there is more than one source of funding so that we don't have a single point of failure within the funding stream. Makes perfect sense. Interestingly enough in the near term, we know that there are RSOs today that won't accept funding from ICANN.

So we already have a diversity because if we only have a single source of funding and not everybody's taking it, then there actually already is a diversity to some extent. Now that doesn't

really guarantee the long term future and we should solve it for the long term. But for the experiment and our colleague has left of can we do this for five years? And then see what it's like after five years. What auditing do we need after five years? There's no way that all of the RSOs are going to accept funding within five years.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Wes. Ryan.

RYAN STEPHENSON: So similarly, my comments are almost going to be quite similar to Wes'. So what I hear the group saying is for the initial setup of this root server system governance model, it's safe to look initially to ICANN to either handle the financial function of the RSS governance model or to contribute to the RSS governance model that will handle to the finances, to provide to the RSOs or other areas of that new governance body that needs funding for initial bootstrapping.

But one thing to also keep in mind with that is, and Wes brought this up a little bit with capture, if we want a RSS governance model that can be independent of ICANN, we need to look at ICANN just being one of the contributors and not really the sole source of contributions. So this is where I see corporate even

government funding, and by government funding, I'm not talking about USG, but I'm also talking about other nation member states that want to contribute to the finances of this possibly portable model if this model is going to be portable from ICANN.

This leads to the question, do we want a model that can be separate from ICANN? And I understand with hey, these external sources of funding, the question will rise that, hey from corporate or governments that want to provide funding to the RSS, is there going to be these an addition note upfront? That, hey, when you do give the funding either to this model or to the RSOs via this model, one thing you're going to have to understand is that there's not necessarily that the RSOs are going to write thank you letters, and this is what we did with your funding. That's going to have to be upfront knowing that the money is going to be used, divided out, and so forth. And thank you very much. And that was it. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Ryan. Jeff, you are next. Jeff Osborn is next, then Liman and Ash. Jeff.

JEFF OSBORN: Thanks. Jeff Osborne, ISC. It's not a fully developed thought, but Wes raised the point that was just so interesting. At least a

number of us are nonprofits. We're 501(c)(3). So we're used to asking for money. It's something we just we do. Some of us are US government entities, and as such, can't take money, wouldn't take money, don't want to take money.

It's an interesting thought that if, I'm not sure what the legal structure of some of the other organizations are, Liman, I have no idea if you're for profit, how those work, but it almost seems like if the entities that are looking for money either own or are operators part of a nonprofit, that all we really need is a Jerry Lewis telephone, where if ICANN could just put on an ad and say, by the way, it'd be really nice if you dropped a dime to help the root server system out there.

Because we're just not talking huge amounts of money. And we're talking about mechanisms that I think are used to huge amounts of money. So just a thought to put out there is, I wonder whether we couldn't do this a lot more simply as trying to raise donations for nonprofits doing public benefit work. And if that's completely crazy, I'll admit it.

BRAD VERD:

Oh, just spread a bunch of hands to come up. So Liman on your next and then Ash, and Kaveh.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Lars-Johan Liman here. I wanted to speak to a point which is disappearing under the horizon here, I think, which is, to me, any funding from ICANN or through a central organization would be one source of funding for at least for my server. And I think it's very important that roots of operators can maintain a diversity per operator from where they received their funds. And because that's the only way that we can, so to speak, guarantee the independence that we talk about in other contexts in this framework. So please bear that in mind.

That said, having a central source of money and have ICANN contribute is what I like would use to the operation. Is a good thing. So let's try to create such stream of funds, but by no means, let that be the only one. Thanks.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Liman. Ash.

ASHWIN RANGAN: I have a long string of thoughts, not necessarily all fully baked and connected, but I'm going to try here. Kaveh raised a very important and interesting point about how do we close the loop on who benefits from this. So if you think of it as people who are domain registrants as the final beneficiaries, would it make sense

to add a penny, as an example, every time they renew their domain? I think that's an interesting thought.

However, it's not a mechanism that ICANN the org controls. It's a mechanism that's governed by the community based on the rules that the community sets. And it uses the agency of the registrars to ensure that that occurs. So I think if that is an angle that we as a collective wish to pursue, the prudent step would be to encourage and involve that group to be participants in figuring out whether that is indeed a source.

Because the thought that goes through my mind is that whatever mechanism we choose should have the ability to persist through time and not just be based on the generosity of a funder at a moment in time, because we are talking about sustenance of a system over a period of time. So that's one thought.

And because the mechanism of budgeting that we currently have goes through public comment and is on record as something that the community looks at and blesses, if this gets created as a mechanism, I think it's prudent to look at it as an additional source that's blessed by the community for a bespoke purpose. And that bespoke purpose then becomes a corpus of money in a fund that is available exclusively and only to the RSS. So that's the second part.

When I think then of the potential uses of that fund, the existence of the fund does not necessarily mean that it needs to be deployed on an annual basis. It could be, but it's equally possible that there is no draw on it, because there is no need for it, and therefore, it can continue to grow for multiple periods of time. But is available to the RSS collective. Then it leads to the question of for what purpose is it available, which is something that we discussed earlier.

I can think of three clear and distinct purposes. One says that there is an RSO that is at risk of failing or has failed, and therefore, needs fund to be resuscitated for a lack of a better word. The second one says that there is an RSO with a body of bespoke work that they would like to do if only they have the money. And there is a case to be made whether the case is pre facto or post, facto similar to what Geoff Houston was saying.

The third, I think, will be the hardest one for the community to come together on, which is we're doing this, we need more money, as in sustaining the operation, so to speak. That's perhaps the most difficult case to make. So that's the string of thoughts that I have and I wanted to park it because I want to be sure that I'm thinking about it right. If I'm not thinking about this correctly, please, somebody tell me.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Ash. I thought that was very, very well put. Kaveh, you're next in the queue.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Thank you very much. So I think my read from the room is there are two streams. One is the actual money, the funding, the stream of funding, the other one is the control, that's a separate stream. And I think what I hear is we agree, at least my assumption is we agree that we cannot completely separate those. So what I hear from different participants is when money comes, there is some control. And even if you want to limit that control, we need to control that limitation, which means these two are intertwined.

Based on that assumption that these two streams are intertwined, then I think since we are talking about control, there is no other way than the actual registrants to be part of this whole story. And to me, that limits any other source than ICANN because ICANN somehow, again, indirectly, but via all the agreements and everything, represents why are there multistakeholder model, the registrants.

If you are talking about further sources adding on, as Ryan mentioned, adding different sources in next to ICANN, then I think we in the GWG and then whatever governance structure become a bit, we should basically then account for how the registrant will

be plugged in because I really don't think we can have any sustainable model where someone who is actually paying for the service and once the service doesn't have a voice in how the service is run, money is short, money is too much, there is some, it's going in a way that I don't like, whatever.

So for us to design a sustainable model, I think we have to make sure that we factor in the registrants. We can either use if we go only for ICANN, then we can count on ICANN and MSM being representation of the registrants. If not, I have no problem with that, but then I would strongly suggest that we think about how we can count in the registrants' voice somehow into that whole model.

Because I don't think any model that registrant doesn't have a say in how the funding works, although it's very far from them, will be a sustainable one. That will always have room to raise questions and why vice and things like that. We know how this word works. We have seen it right in there.

ICANN is a good example of that, differences in political views to all different views and that will cause problems. So I don't think that will be sustainable. That's why I think the easiest is to go for one source. But if we want to go for multiple sources, then we need to factor that in. Then Ash went to more details about execution of that will be hard, not only on how much, but also

how we get that from the registry system, registrars, then registry and all of that. And I agree, CC is also another country codes basically. CC is another example where they don't have direct relationship financially, at least some of them with ICANN.

But again, I think us sitting around this room, that's not our problem. That's a big problem, and we know that, but that's not our problem. We are basically, if you look at the software chain model, we are a software to the ICANN. ICANN provide the service or the whole domain name system. We are sitting on top, we are supplying a service that this model can operate. And as suppliers, we can basically demand that the registrant or whoever wants the system to work, a, pays for it, and b, has a voice in how it's how it's done.

So I think for the purpose of this discussion, I would keep the problems of executing that in mind, but I really won't design a system around the current limitations. I would demand that we need that. We need disclosed loop, and then people need to do and go back and do their work to see how. And that it might not be us, this other constituents as well. That yes, that's how a rational system and sustainable system will work, do your homework and see how you can make realize that. That's my two cents.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Kaveh. Mr. Huston.

GEOFF HUSTON: Mr. Verd, thank you all. I think to try and get this back into more generic principles rather than to solve the minutiae of detail, I think there are a number of principles out there that we are working around and a few that I think we're assuming that maybe we should make explicit.

One of those ones that are just in the background, that nevertheless has been a feature of the model, so far is RSOs are free to raise whatever funds they want to do, under whatever terms and conditions they see as appropriate to fulfill their function. And we should not compromise that in any funding mechanism that is across the system. In other words, funding in a systemic fashion to RSOs should be an option for an RSO to avail themselves on, not a mandatory requirement.

But oddly enough, the RSS itself as a service function, whatever, is not optional. It must be funded somehow in some way. So there is a subtle distinction there in terms of the RSOs and the RSS as to which part is optional in terms of RSOs, may or may not by themselves, in which part is necessary for the root services system, which is the RSS itself. That's the first point.

The second point, I think, is whatever funding is used for both the RSS and the RSOs is systemic and collective. It's not funding to help the root service in Fredonia, full stop, or to help the root service on this particular application or style as distinct from the common use of the root service. Funding should not have agendas and outcomes that are particular and specialized. It is for the RSS itself working with the RSOs and in consultation with the RSOs to determine how it is spent. There are more principles that are put in comments in the document, but I'd like to quote the up level a lot of this conversation, to think about these as principles rather than going for specifics. Thank you.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you, Geoff. Robert, you have something to add?

ROBERT CAROLINA:

Yes. Thanks, Brad. I'd like to take the conversation into a slightly different territory. It's something that was touched on earlier, and it's something I've been thinking about ever since. And that some of the earlier points made touch on the problem of the difficulty of audit, the difficulty of oversight, the difficulties created by that. One of the comments was that RSO operations are not separately delineated. I mean, this isn't one of the draft candidates for principles where these aren't settled. They're just for discussion, for further evaluation, for expansion.

One of the things I'm wondering is, to the extent that funding is provided, I think it's been said by a lot of people in this room that that funder has or some words to the effect that that funder has a reasonable expectation of some degree of financial accountability for how the funds are applied. And that accountability for how the funds are applied is part of maintaining trust in the system.

Well, one of the things that I'm trying to figure out is does this mean or should this mean that one of the principles for RSO operations is that they should be, to some degree, financially transparent. In other words, should there be a principle that each of the RSOs should be required to make some type of statement that reports, roughly speaking, how much money they spend on RSO activity.

Now if I've heard people correctly, the suggestion seems to be that at the moment, that would be difficult or possibly impossible for some, perhaps, many of the RSOs. And what I'm thinking is that if that intermingling of finances, if that lack of clarity about what's being spent or what's being invested in the operations of an RSO, in other words, supporting the RSS, I don't see how we can fulfill the criteria of helping people understand that investment is taking place. I mean, if you look at the RSS, I'm sure that somebody who knows the statistics will say that it's six nines,

maybe even seven nines availability because of multiple [00:22:52 -inaudible] and the other thing.

Well, sometimes things work really well because of careful investment in monitoring, and sometimes it's just good luck if there's been underinvestment. And one of the things that I'm concerned about, and I'll actually choose this point to disagree with the point that was made earlier, and that is the fact that we have some RSOs who will not or perhaps even cannot accept funding, doesn't actually solve the diversification of funding sources problem because we don't have that transparency.

We don't know how much RSOs are actually dedicating to the function. So I'd like to put on the table for the discussion debate reporting, coming back when we meet again, this idea that perhaps transparency is a critical aspect to make all this work. Some type of financial transparency is critical to make this work.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you, Robert. Peter, you are next in the queue.

PETER KOCH:

Yeah. Thank you. So this is Peter for the record, if we have one. I am one of the two ccNSO appointed members of the committee, and I wanted to follow-up a bit on what Kaveh had mentioned even at the risk of not following Rob's suggestion at the moment.

So the idea of domain text that came up, which is probably a minor detail, but is, as Kaveh suggested, I could imagine it is a bit what would be contentious everywhere, but also in the ccNSO.

And this is not a formal ccNSO position because I would have to go back and consult, so I'm just making things up as I go, especially if that would channel money for ICANN. If there's funding needed from various actors, and I'm not say that colleagues would agree, then there's probably no reason to channel that through ICANN rather than putting it on the table in other ways.

Another question that might come up is that of competition. Because if there are actors in the field that need or signal that they need additional funding, then the idea might come up that there might be other alternative providers of the same service if you allow that abstraction level, who would do it for less or nothing, as has been the tradition for the last number of decades.

That is something that we might want to take into account. And not only a question that could come from the ccNSO, of course, but from commercial actors all over the place. At least a concern or an aspect that we should weigh in when it comes to funding and then recovering the funding from somewhere in the community through means of taxes donations, or you name it. It would easily provoke or motivate actors, state actors, non-state

actors to say, we're doing it for nothing and here you go. That's just a thought. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Peter. Kaveh.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Yes. Thank you, Brad. So I have three points. One is a clarifying question for Geoff because I heard Geoff in the previous session mentioning, at least in my understanding, maybe I was wrong, that money, there will be always a string attached to money. And then in his last suggestion what I understood was we can basically make it a principle that money should come with no agenda. Because personally, I agree with the former. That there is no way that we can practically do that. So maybe a bit of clarification on that from Geoff.

To Robert's point about transparency, I think, yes, of course, we should have that type of transparency, but I think transparency on its own is not incorrect, it's a mechanism which is used for different things including accountability. So if it's transparent, then I don't know. Government A is paying for the root service system fine, but what can I do about it? I don't want it or I want more of it. What can I do about it, correct? I think transparency

should be used as a mechanism in a larger system, not just as on its own. So I think we need to think more about that.

And to Peter's point, I agree, but just to maybe clarify a bit more why I think that the only way to have a sustainable system is to have end user have a say in that or the registrant in this case to be more specific. I would like to maybe compare it to public transport, right? Like you pay for your public transport ticket, you get on a bus, you get from point A to B, which is fine. You're paying for the service, but then someone tells you, yep, you're paying for the whole thing except the tires are funded by someone else.

So someone has paid for the tires for the past 30 years, they bought you the best tires for the bus, you don't need to worry about that, you pay for the rest of the service. That's fine, but still as a rider, I want to make sure a, bus is will get tires all the time and b, they won't explode or kill me just because they don't put the right tire in or they didn't have funding. So that's why I think a sustainable system will really need control and basically closed loop from the actual end user of the system. Thank you. Thank you.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you Kaveh. Suzanne?

SUZANNE WOOLF:

Sure. Thanks, Brad. I'm trying to synthesize some of what has gone around the room here. Another way of saying, there's a number of things people have said that could possibly be put together as both for the health of the people getting the money and the health of those offering it. It's really important to remember that people dislike starting to pay for something they're already getting. So one way of looking at this is what is it that people are getting for providing funding.

And we've talked about a couple of things, transparency, stability, which is also an additional complication with the funding. Anybody here who's got nonprofit experience knows that it's quite difficult to sustain stable funding, but that's how you bring stability into the system as an attribute of having funding. So I'm thinking that both transparency and stability and possibly other attributes of the system ought to be explicit as what we're trying to add by bringing in funding that we haven't asked for before.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you, Suzanne. Mr. Huston.

GEOFF HUSTON:

Hi. Let me respond to two things. Firstly, from Robert Carolina around the financial transparency of RSOs in undertaking the RSO function, I would really caution that that principle on the basis of the law of unintended consequences. Is it cheaper RSO in terms of cost per query answered? Better or worse? Are we trying to drive the cost down or we're trying to find gold plating? Is this even relevant? And once you start to open that out and to look at this service as a cost-based imposition inside an economy of the DNS where no one charges for queries or answering them, this seems to be a gigantic step in a totally novel direction that I'm not sure is a productive place to head.

And I would caution us against any mechanism that exposes HRSO in terms of the finances in running it at a level of detail that allows that kind of comparison, because that kind of comparison will be inevitable. So while I hear what Robert said, I find it extremely difficult to agree with that as a principle.

Secondly, in direct response to Kaveh, I've been arguing that all money has an agenda and that's true. I was arguing in favor of a principle that I would call single collective funding. Each RSO is certainly free to get whatever funding it wants under whatever condition it seems deems appropriate as an individual RSO. But in terms of the collective system where you're trying to use an intermediary, the RSS, together an additional source of funding that can be used optionally by an RSO, you really want to try and

remove the agenda of the source of the funds from the way it's going to get dispersed.

And this is why looking at ICANN as an intermediary that can sustain single sourced collective funding from the RSOs perspective, the RSS, sorry, so the RSS gathers funds from ICANN in a negotiation. It's not that ICANN is an infinite backup. It's not that there's a madly huge amount of money out there.

It's certainly how much is ICANN willing to spend on the RSS and to think from how much would the RSS be able to improve both the trust and performance models of the root service as a system. By making that money available to RSO should be the way that we should approach this. So I hope that's not too much of a contradiction there, Kaveh, in looking at single collective funding rather than multiple sources that are directed to particular agendas as the alternative principle. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Jeff. Liman you're on.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Lars-Johan Liman here. To somewhat counter what you said, Suzanne, about people aren't happy to start to pay for something that was for free, that's, of course, absolutely true. But there's a flip side to that, which is they're also unhappy to lose a service.

So maybe they are happy to pay a bit if the alternative is that it will lose that service. So again, as always a balance. When it comes to transparency of the finances, there is merit to that idea. I do agree, but it will probably be problematic, at least for us, I would guess for several roots server operators to provide a clear transparency of how specifically money through this future stream is used.

In our case, we have mixed operations with the root server and other DNS services. And I cannot tell you, and I don't see even see a way how to tell you how various streams of revenue are used in that combination because the DNS operations is one set for us. The root service is not separated out as a specific, what is this called? A cost item in our finances. Of course, we could probably work with that and make that happen, but it would be a major undertaking to separate those out. And I'm not quite sure that we would like to do that.

You could compare it to, in Netnod's case we have customers who pay for DNS service. They don't expect us to tell them exactly how we use the money that they pay for the service. They pay for service. They measure the service they get and as long as they're happy with the results and the amount of money they pay, they're okay. So I would hope that some similar principles could be used in the case of root service.

And I would also compare the input stream of money. Like, if I donate money to a charity or the Red Cross or even the church, I don't really expect them to tell me detail how they use that money. Oh, yes. We used it for 500 portions of food for homeless. No, I give them the money, I trust them to do good with that. And I would hope that again similar principles could be applied in this case.

I have thought about the sustainability about in this case as well, and we need to have money stream. And I think there are two sources. This this is a client service system, the DNS. So you can have a money stream around the server side of it and you could potentially have a money stream around the client side of it, but the general principle in the DNS world as we know it is that money revolves around the server side. The clients don't pay a fee for using the service, at least not a pay per view thing. So I think we are right in discussing how money revolves around the server side, which means that--

And if you go further down the DNS tree, the typical design is that the registry operator for a registry at any level in the DNS system pays for the service for that zone in some way either by providing their own servers or by buying service from someone else. And we need to apply some level of that principle at the root as well.

And that means that the registry for the root zone should be involved in paying for the service, the DNS service that's provided for the root. And that, in this case, means ICANN through IANA, if you wish, and then further down. So by thinking like that, I have dry that, that's the right stream for money. But again, I will augment that with saying, but it's not the only stream. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Liman. Kaveh, you're on the queue.

KAVEH RANJBAR: Yes, thank you. So very quick. Geoff, thank you. That was clear. Thanks for the response. Actually, also what Liman said, I 100% agree. I mean, it was said that nobody has always paying for the resolution service, but actually they are, I mean, it's post vacuum of course, but the domain cost includes the registry cost and course, if the registries has to spend 10 times more for the services they provide, of course, that will be indicated in the domain price. So the end user at the end is paying for that. So I fully agree with that.

But I take a bit of issue with the analogy you use, Liman, on the other hand, because the services you mentioned, for example, Netnod services or other services. There is a big difference here.

Root service, you don't have a choice. It's one word, one Internet, single roots, and then also goes also to the resolution. So you don't have a choice to change.

So the two examples you used, a customer, if they're not happy, also for paying for the charity, they go to find another one. They don't think they do the right work. But here, there is only one way of doing things and you cannot wait design, you cannot to others. So that's why I think sustainable model necessarily needs a close feedback loop from the end user who would be the registrant. So thank you.

LARS-JOHAN LIMAN: Just a quick response to that that is a valid comment. You are right.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Liman. Thank you, Kaveh. Siva, you raised your hand. Do you have a quick question?

SIVASUBRAMANIAN MUTHUSAMY: Yes. That could be an alternate model for a registry operator being asked to pay for root server resolutions. There could be scenarios where ccTLD registry or a gTLD registry may go through bad times and may have viability problems. And what

happens if they can't afford to pay the root server fee as proposed by the previous speaker, would you stop resolving that TLD or ccTLD?

That cannot be the case, but the alternate model could be that registry operator with hundred million names could be asked to contribute to a certain level of certain share of the cost of root of operations or it could be in proportion to the profits that the registry generates. Combined with that, the end user fee that is being paid by the end user to ICANN could even go up to one dollar. That's not really much. So these two together could combine to contribute and cover root server costs. Thank you.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you. Appreciate that. All right. There's nobody in the queue. I have a couple comments that I wanted to, just observations that I made through this. Peter, you had made a comment about the funding coming in and going to ICANN. I think you had missed our earlier session because of a conflict.

One of the things that we had talked about just for your edification that the fees or funding or whatever we want to call that for the RSS government system would come into the government system and controlled by the government system. Though you might have an outside banker, call it, ICANN, or somebody else, but the rules around that money or the

governance around that money would be strictly with the governance system.

I think, Ash, you were the one that said that that fund could be used when necessary or not used at all. It could just keep growing, basically. But it would be for the use of the government system. So hopefully that brings some clarity to that in your absence.

The question of diversity, I think one of the messages that the RSOs have said for years now is that diversity builds trust and reliability or organizational diversity leads to increased trust, again, which we're after here. I think organizational diversity means diverse business models and areas of focus. And if you have diverse business models and areas of focus, then you might have different financial needs.

So I think that's an outstanding question of, like when we think about funding, like how does the allocation work? Is it to the RSOs? I know we've talked about it before. As far as how much people get, I think that is an outstanding question that we need to talk about. Who makes the decision to get more or less? That's an outstanding question.

Something I thought was really super important that I've heard it touched on a couple different ways here is if we all agree ICANN is the source, then that needs, as I think Ash said, or Kurt said, and I

think a couple others said, that was this needs to be accepted by the community. So it's incumbent upon us that we need to justify that to the community in our in our messaging. So I think the question of why is it important to fund the RSS is paramount.

And I've touched on this in previous meetings a couple of times. This comes to the messaging of our stakeholders. And who needs to ultimately sign off on the functional documents this group are going to produce. Ultimately, this comes down to the messaging and getting buy in from these different stakeholders.

In this case, we're talking about where the funding is coming from, but it is all the same if the people who agree that it's paramount that the RSS is funded, they agree that where it comes from and how it's managed, then we've done our job in messaging. So I want to make sure we touch on that.

And then I had one here. This was just a question. I thought was just worth asking, should the root server governance system step in as a backstop to an RSO that's having issues. I know people touched on it, but didn't really word it in such a way that if there was one having a financial issue or something that the governance system is the backstop for all of that. I want to call that out. All right. Those are my observations. Anything more from people? I know it's getting late again. Ash.

ASHWIN RANGAN: This is Ash for the record. I think there's been a subtle, but a quantum shift in the discussion today. And the reason I say that is until this round of discussions, we were talking about the RSS as an insulated group. But today's conversation has taken the discussion to a community wide level.

Given that, I think one of the things you may wish to consider, Brad, is how to involve the community sooner. Because the aspect of funding if that is central to how the RSS operates as a collective that may become the long pole in the tent, and everything else could become subordinate to that. So getting that sorted out somehow sooner rather than later, I think could dictate the pace at which this group is able to move forward. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Great. Good feedback. Mr. Huston.

GEOFF HUSTON: Yes, Mr. Verd. Both your comment and Ash's comment actually raises in my mind a fundamental question of who are we, this group, and what is our role? Because I thought at least when we had started, this was a group chartered by the board of ICANN to effectively create a plan of moving forward with an RSS structure. Now if we decide to go to community, to actually start doing

active consultation, to sell this plan prior to reporting to the board, and effectively, are we then presenting the board with a fait accompli that the board is almost cornered in having to accept because the community has already been sold on it.

At some point, this needs to be more of a conversation. And if it does require a plan's success to have active community engagement and support, that is certainly true, but that, in my mind, necessarily, has to have the informed consent of the board to do so where it's appropriate. So this group isn't given the charter to do it.

In my mind, this has been given the charter to plan it. And those are quite different verbs in my head. So my cautionary note here is if we are thinking about broader engagement, then I think there's a bit of a flag to raise with the board about how that might take place and how the board might be involved in that. Because it necessarily, to my mind, pre-supposes the board's acceptance of whatever outcome this group provides. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Thanks, Geoff.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: [00:49:38 -inaudible] for GWG. Thank you very much. I just appreciate Geoff Huston's comment that the board will need to

have some quite good understanding on the plan itself, especially for this financial part that is quite relevant for the ICANN'S business. That's very good point raised by Geoff. Thank you very much.

BRAD VERD:

Thank you. So really quickly, I'll just give my thoughts on it, and then hopefully people have some comments. A quick time check. We got nine minutes left. So in the Hague, Geoff, we had talked, it was our first face to face. One of the things that we had talked about or that I had presented was that this was the end goal, which we're not at, we're still just in the early stages of these discussion. So nobody's going to run out and talk to the community about any of this. This is talking about ideas and principles on how we can ultimately build what will be the functional document.

Again in the end we're chartered to deliver is a recommendation of the board. And that's it. That's the end. And that recommendation to the board in theory could include those functional documents. And the success of our recommendation will be based upon how well it's received by the board and the community.

So in theory, I don't know if outreach is the right term, Geoff, but in theory, the members here are part of members of the

community. We're talking through that. But I think that we as a group, if we believe that our success is based upon how well those functional documents are received by the community and the board, then we need to be crystal clear and well versed on our messaging to hopefully get it right. Thought from anybody? Kaveh.

KAVEH RANJBAR:

Yeah. Also, I mean, let me speak as ICANN's liaison to board with my interaction, my understanding of the process in that is exactly what you said, Brad. Basically the expectation from the board is a design that they can execute and the need is maximum buying basically. And we have this diverse group. The idea is this group represents enough stakeholders and whatever this group designs will be accepted by the larger community. Let's say, a larger ICANN and then the board can work with that and continue on that.

But if we think or the group thinks, and that's my read of the charter and also understanding of what the Board expects, is if we think we need to reach out more to make sure that there are more people socialize this basically where we are going, make sure that there is more support for that. Of course, that's given. And I think that's within powers and limit of this group to do that. Checking with the board never hurts, but I fully agree with what you said.

The idea is we come up with a design that has maximum buying acceptance by the larger community. This set up for diverse setup of basically GWG Group is a best shot at having a manageable number of people in the room to get to such a plan. But if we think we need to talk to more people via whatever means, my thinking is that's always encouraged and I'm sure letting the board know helps. But yes, I think that's what we should do if we feel there is the need for that.

BRAD VERD:

Yeah. I just don't want to get the cart in front of the horse that's down the road. Robert, you've got it. We've got six minutes left.

ROBERT CAROLINA:

I can do it in less than that. I just wanted to agree with what I've heard on this last exchange. And just to follow-up the point that Kaveh made about finding a way if we need to, if it's necessary to reach out certainly to keep the board informed is critical, obviously. But to put people's minds at ease that were not straying beyond the boundaries of what's expected, I just wanted to point out that in the charter of the GWG, which the text which available on the site states that the deliverable of the GWG is meant to be presented by this group too. Quite a large number of people.

The responsibility of this group is to report to quite a large number of people. So just reading them out to the RSSAC, to the ICANN board, I'm reading them out of order now, to the IAB, to the RSOs, and the one I've left for last, to the ICANN community. And there's no specific restriction on ICANN community. So it doesn't need to be next week or next month or immediately. I don't think anyone seems to be suggesting a massive consultation exercise, but just as a reminder, the responsibility of this group is to a very, very large constituency, and that very large constituency will need to buy in for any plan to be successful.

BRAD VERD: Thank you, Robert. Ryan.

RYAN STEPHENSON: Sorry. Double muted there. So I'm looking at the purple notes there and it's the third bullet up from the bottom. Right there, yeah. Engendering trust relies on some reasonable degree of financial transparency/accountability with respect to RSO operations. I would like to have Geoff Huston's comments that countered that bullets noted, and we'll probably have to go back through the transcripts for that. But because I think that's going to be very pretty much almost impossible to do. And so, yeah. Thank you.

GEOFF HUSTON: If I could very quickly interject, it's not just the impossibility, but I think it's also a deeper issue of is that the right thing to do for the health and continued health of the root server system. Even if it were possible, you may not want to do it. Thank you.

RYAN STEPHENSON: Thanks, Jeff. Yeah, that was good. Thank you.

BRAD VERD: Okay. Great. Thanks, Ryan. All right. We are at the end of our hour pretty much. So I'm going to close the queue unless there's somebody who really wants to jump on the mic? Thank you. This has been a wonderful conversation. Very thanks for the engagement, everybody. I really do appreciate it and look forward to seeing everybody tomorrow. Ozan, are we in this room?

OZAN SAHIN: Tuesday.

BRAD VERD: Tuesday. I'm sorry, Tuesday. But are we here Tuesday?

OZAN SAHIN: Let me quickly check, Brad.

BRAD VERD: I don't want to lie to you guys again.

OZAN SAHIN: You'll go back to the first day's room.

BRAD VERD: So we're not in this room. We're in the room we were in the first day, which is across the hall. All right. So see everybody on Tuesday, and have a wonderful meeting. Thank you.

GEOFF HUSTON: Thank you. Bye.

BRAD VERD: Thanks, Geoff.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]