

Review of GNSO Liaison to the GAC Pilot Project – FINAL – 29 February 2016

Background: As part of the discussions within ICANN between the GNSO and GAC, on how to facilitate early engagement of the GAC in GNSO policy development activities, the option of appointing a GNSO liaison to the GAC proposed as one of the mechanisms to explore. As such, the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group (CG) on GAC Early Engagement in GNSO policy development activities proposed to implement this option initially as a one-year pilot program in FY15 (starting 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015) and subsequently to extend it for a second year in FY16 (starting 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016). This mechanism will be evaluated at the end of FY16, by both the GNSO Council and the GAC, to determine whether or not to continue either in the same form or with possible adjustments based on the feedback received, and as such, the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group has been requested to provide its feedback and recommendations.

Overarching Question for CG: Has the GNSO Liaison contributed to facilitating GAC early engagement in the GNSO Policy Development Process? If yes, see additional questions below. If no, should the pilot project be discontinued and other mechanisms explored instead?

CG Response / Recommendation

The CG is of the view that the GNSO Liaison to the GAC, in conjunction with the other improvements recommended by the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group, has positively contributed to the GAC engagement with the GNSO, and recommends that the GNSO Liaison to the GAC is transformed from a pilot project to a permanent role.

Original Objective

Is the original objective still relevant and if not, how should it be revised: The GNSO liaison to the GAC (hereafter “the Liaison”) will be primarily responsible for providing timely updates to the GAC on GNSO policy development activities in order to complement the existing notification processes as well answering questions in relation to these (GNSO) activities that GAC members may have. Furthermore, the Liaison will be responsible for providing the GNSO Council with regular updates on progress, including on GAC activities, specifically in so far as these relate to issues of interest to the GNSO. The objective of the liaison mechanism, in combination with some of the other mechanisms that the CG is exploring, as well as existing early engagement tools, will be to facilitate effective early engagement of the GAC as well as generally assist with flow of information between the GAC and the GNSO.

CG Response / Recommendation

The CG is of the view that the original objective is still highly relevant, and recommends that in addition to the existing engagement tools, regular co-ordination calls are scheduled between the GNSO Liaison to the GAC and the GAC Secretariat to ascertain that all the relevant information has been received by the GAC and progress is being made, following which a regular status update is provided by the Liaison to the GNSO Council.

Original Responsibilities

Are these responsibilities still relevant and current? If not, how should these be revised?
<i>Original Responsibilities</i>
Attend and participate as required in GAC meetings during ICANN meetings and possible intercessional meetings (Note: travel funding is available for the ICANN meetings in FY15 should the Liaison otherwise not be able to attend an ICANN meeting)
Represent and communicate the policy work of the GNSO in a neutral and objective manner
Liaise with ICANN policy staff who may assist, as needed, in the preparation of briefing materials and/or responses to questions
Liaise with relevant working groups, utilizing GNSO Council liaisons where required, in order to be continuously current and knowledgeable on work in progress
Provide regular updates to the GNSO Council
Guide the GAC in opportunities for early engagement
Keep the GAC updated on how its early input was considered by the GNSO
Assist in the facilitation of GAC-GNSO discussions in cases where GAC early input is in conflict with GNSO views
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the responsibilities as originally formulated are still highly relevant and should become part of the description of the 'GNSO Liaison to the GAC' role.

Original skills and experience required

Are these skills and experience still relevant and current? If not, how should these be revised?
<i>Original skills and experience</i>
Significant experience in and knowledge of the GNSO policy development process as well as of recent and current policy work under discussion and / or review in the GNSO
Availability to travel to and participate in GAC meetings during the course of ICANN meetings and also, where applicable, intercessional meetings (via teleconference)
An outgoing or recently departed GNSO Councilor is likely to be well-qualified for the position but this is not a necessary criterion for the Liaison.
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the skills and experience as originally formulated are still highly relevant and should become part of the description of the 'GNSO

Liaison to the GAC' role, noting the modification suggested to change 'outgoing' to 'former'.

Practical Working:

Practical Working: Does this match how the GNSO Liaison to the GAC has operated to date? If not, how should this be updated?
<i>Practical working</i>
Attend all GAC open meetings and be allowed to request the floor
Attend GAC closed meetings discussing GNSO related topics and be allowed to request the floor
Attend GAC conference calls by invitation and accordingly be allowed to request the floor
Will not be on the GAC mailing list but may send to it through the mailing list admin and receives replies by being cc'd
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the practical working as originally formulated is still highly relevant and should become part of the description of the 'GNSO Liaison to the GAC' role.

Removal:

In the case of significant issues identified with the performance of the liaison, the GNSO Council Leadership, in consultation with the GAC Leadership, may decide to remove (and possibly replace) the Liaison at any point during the Liaison's term.

Should this removal clause remain as?
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the removal clause as originally formulated remains relevant and should become part of the description of the 'GNSO Liaison to the GAC' role.

Original selection process:

1. The leadership of each Stakeholder Group / Constituency may submit the application of its candidate(s), which should include at a minimum a link to a completed and current statement of interest as well as a brief note explaining why the candidate has applied for this role and how the candidate meets the specific requirements **by 31 July 2014 at the latest** to the GNSO Secretariat (gnso.secretariat@gnso.icann.org).

2. The GNSO Council Chairs will review the applications received and rank these taking into account the skills and experience required as outlined in this call for volunteers by 15 August.
3. Based on the outcome of the ranking process, the GNSO Council Chairs will contact the nr 1 candidate to confirm the selection by 20 August.
4. GNSO Council Chairs will submit motion for confirmation of GNSO Liaison to the GAC to the GNSO Council by 25 August at the latest.
5. Consideration of motion and approval of candidate by GNSO Council during GNSO Council meeting on 4 September.
6. Confirmation of candidate to GAC leadership (by 10 September).
7. GNSO Liaison to the GAC officially takes up its role (by 20 September).

Are there any concerns about the selection process as it was conducted for the pilot project? Any changes / enhancements that should be considered?
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the original selection process is adapted to reflect durations and periods instead of specific dates so it can be used as a reference for a future selection process.

Other issues to consider:

Should there be a term limit for this role?
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that there is no term limit for the liaison, but that the role is reviewed and reconfirmed by the GNSO Council in its position every year.

Should the role of the Liaison be formalized in the GNSO Operating Procedures?
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the role of the liaison is formalized in the GNSO Operating Procedures as outlined in the other recommendations in this document.

Is the GNSO Liaison to the GAC considered to be a non-voting member of the GNSO Council?
CG Response / Recommendation
The CG recommends that the liaison is invited to attend GNSO Council meetings and is considered an observer to the GNSO Council.