Cross Community Group (CCG) Charter

WG Name:	Review of Reviews Cross Community Group	
Section I: Cross Community Group Identification		
Nominating Groups:		
Charter Approval Date:		
Name of CCG Co-Chairs:		
CCG Workspace URL:		
CCG Mailing List:		
Resolutions adopting the charter:	**Title:**	
	Ref # & Link:	
Important Document Links:		
Section II: Background, Problem Statement, Purpose, Goals and Scope		
Background:		

In April 2024 the ICANN Board deferred the Fourth Accountability and Transparency Review process (ATR4) "for a limited time not to exceed twelve months." Although the ATR4 was scheduled to be initiated in 2024, the Board resolved to defer the review to allow for progress in implementing the ATR3 recommendations, and to minimize the impact on capacity that would be caused by running multiple projects in parallel.

ATRT3 recommended a Holistic Review. As part of the implementation, the Board launched a detailed scoping exercise, titled a "Pilot Holistic Review" in 2024. As part of implementation of ATRT3, the Board also launched a Continuous Improvement Program at that time.

Early in 2025, the Pilot Holistic Review (PHR) Team experienced challenges, as reported by its leaders in their 13 February, 2025 letter[1]. In addition, the deferral of Organizational [Periodic] Reviews, which the Board decided on 12 June, 2022[2], needed to be revisited within three years.

In their 24 March, 2025 letter[3], the PHR Team's leaders acknowledged that the ICANN Board was considering the ICANN reviews as a whole, and offered the possibility of two separate work efforts:
1. One that develops guidelines for the review of SO, AC, and NomCom continuous improvement programs, and

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[1] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/hey-disspain-to-barrett-13feb25-en.pdf
[2] https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2022-06-12-en#2.b
[3] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/hey-disspain-to-icann-board-24mar25-en.pdf

2. Another that focuses on assessing the need for changes to ICANN's structures.

During the ICANN82 Public Meeting (8-13 March 2025) the Board raised questions around the effectiveness and efficiency of reviews, and suggested that prior to proceeding with designing a new structural review, the ICANN community should step back and evaluate why we review, what we review, and how we review. The Board received input from various community groups on these questions at the Public Meeting, and subsequent written input from the Registry Stakeholder Group (RySG)[4], the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)[5], and the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)[6].

The discussions and statements by the various stakeholders suggest that the purpose, need and scope of the current review mechanisms need to be examined.

Some believe that a one off evaluation of the full set of reviews is the best way forward. Specifically, such a one-off review would look at whether ICANN's review mechanisms, in their current form, are still fit for purpose and needed, and whether the methods of the reviews and implementation of their recommendations are still adequate.

Others believe that the current mechanisms (like the Accountability and Transparency Review) do provide a basis for such a review, and that these mechanisms should be used to improve the current state of affairs, and hence also avoid the need for ongoing, extended deferral of Bylaw mandated reviews.

Problem Statement:

It is recognized that every review conducted represents a significant and increasing use of community and ICANN org resources. Many parts of the community have expressed a strong need to look critically at whether the right things are reviewed in the right ways. This is viewed as a larger and more important question than "how would we update Specific Reviews" or ways to make those Specific Reviews more efficient.

Having the experience of almost 20 years of Organizational [Periodic] Reviews, 15 years of Specific Reviews (formerly reviews under the Affirmation of Commitments), and nearly 10 years since the IANA transition, it is time to explore, as a community, how to handle reviews differently for the future.

To find solutions to these existing challenges and to ultimately reinforce ICANN's accountability a community dialogue is required, the outcomes of which should inform how to design effective reviews.

To manage this dialogue, and facilitate the process and report the outcomes to the ICANN community (including the ICANN Board and org), the Review of Reviews Cross Community Group (RoR CCG or CCG) is established.

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[4] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/bacon-to-sinha-14apr25-en.pdf
[5] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/reynoso-to-sinha-15apr25-en.pdf
[6] https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/zuck-to-sinha-15apr25-en.pdf

Purpose, Goals, and scope:

The purpose of the CCG is to manage a fundamental evaluation of the following reviews set out in the ICANN Bylaws, as a whole system, including their implementation, and propose a refreshed system of reviews. The reviews and their past outcomes to be evaluated include:

- Periodic review of ICANN structure and operations (section 4.4),
- Annual Review (section 4.5) and
- Specific Reviews (section 4.6); and
- Previously conducted Reviews; and
- Reviews that have previously been formally recommended.

The CCG will not evaluate the Continuous Improvement Program itself, but will take account of its work and will consider how it can best contribute to the broader system of reviews.

This evaluation will exclude the following:

- Review of the Independent Review Process (IRP) (section 4.3)
- Review of the Reconsideration Request (section 4.2)
- Review of the Community Mediation (section 4.7)
- Review of the Empowered Community processes related to the Empowered Community powers as listed in section 6.2 (for example the Rejection Action and Approval Action Processes, and Board Recall and Director Removal Processes)
- Reviews established through the IANA Stewardship Transition:
  - the Customer Standing Committee Effectiveness Review (section 17.3), and
  - the IANA Functions Review (section 18) including the Special IANA Function Review (section 18.12).

In the first phase of its work, the CCG is responsible for fact finding, facilitating dialogue, and reporting the outcomes of these discussions to the broader community, the Board and the org. The main community engagement arising from this initial work is expected to happen at ICANN84. For more details see deliverables Phase 1.

In the second phase of its work, the CCG will use the insights from this engagement to design a refreshed system of reviews that meets current and future needs. This initial proposed design should include recommendations on purpose, need, scope and frequency of future reviews, if any, and ensure that reviews as a system and implementation of Board-adopted recommendations thereof will be effective and efficient and inspire trust. While not an absolute requirement, the first, initial design of this proposed future system of reviews should be presented to the community by ICANN85 (Mumbai) for further dialogue. For more details see deliverables Phase 2.

In the third phase the CCG will finalize its design, taking into account the feedback and comment from the community, and (if possible) present its proposals at ICANN86.

The fourth and Final Phase includes the public comment period, finalizing the recommendations and presenting them to the Nominating Groups for their consideration (see Section V: Decision-Making

Methodologies. External - ICANN SOs ACs and Board).

The CCG will have to work expeditiously, and in close cooperation with ICANN org (through ICANN org's nominated member(s)) to identify proposals that are fully implementable in a reasonable timeframe (preferably no longer than a year after adoption of recommendations, if any, by the Board).

Section III: Deliverables, Timeframes, and Reporting

Deliverables:

In working towards its deliverables, the CCG will, as a first step, establish and adopt a high-level work plan and tentative associated schedule, which should be publicly available. Both work plan and associated schedule, should take into account the deliverables through ICANN84, ICANN85 and ICANN86. In addition, the work plan and schedule should include indicative time frames and methods for public consultation and expected dates for submission of Draft Proposal(s), Final Proposal(s) as well as revisions and should establish an expected date for submission of a report to the Board. In those cases where there are incompatibilities in timeline and/or deliverables, the CCG should inform the Nominating Groups, the Board and ICANN org and suggest ways to address the incompatibilities.

In the course of its work the CCG should update and refine its work plan and schedule regularly, and make the amended work plan and associated schedule publicly available.

The following non-exhaustive list of areas of work shall guide the group in establishing a work plan for the 4 phases. The CCG may add additional tasks at its sole discretion:

Phase 1 - Fact Finding
- Review of the guidance given in this charter.

- Provide a timeline of key dates and target date of proposal(s).

- Provide an overview of definition/description of purpose, scope, and background of current reviews listed in the ICANN Bylaws.

- Provide an overview of duration, resourcing of reviews to date, including duration of Board consideration, duration and scope of implementation of recommendations, non-implemented recommendations, number of recommendations.

- Provide an overview of methodologies and tools (surveys, etc. used for reviews) and costs involved

- Fact Finding with respect to existing reviews, including efficiency and effectiveness of the current set of specific, and periodic reviews.

- Provide an overview of the interrelation between reviews and other accountability mechanisms.

- Develop an articulation of the purpose of the ICANN reviews system to guide further discussion.

- During and around ICANN84 (Dublin) facilitate broad community consultation on issues around the purpose of and need for the ICANN reviews system, and of current and future reviews.

  At ICANN84, the CCG will engage with the community in these ways:

- Discuss with the community its initial fact findings and articulated purpose for the ICANN reviews system (shared at least 1 week prior to ICANN84)
- Foster dialogue on whether ICANN's review mechanisms in their current form are still fit for purpose, and if the methods of the reviews (including Board response and implementation of Board adopted recommendations) are still adequate (during the meeting).

Phase 2 - Analysis and development of proposals
- Analysis of core issues based on the fact finding, and the input collected from the ICANN84 and ongoing community consultation in relation to the CCG's goals.

- Identification of priorities to focus work on such issues with highest potential to enhance ICANN's accountability and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of review mechanisms.

- An initial design to be presented to and discussed by the community during ICANN85

During the first two phases, the CCG might want to consider the following questions to guide part of its work. For each of the reviews evaluated:
- What is the purpose of the review? What is the review trying to accomplish?
- Does the review have a continuing purpose? Are the needs met by the review?
- Is the review necessary? If so, what changes can be made to make an improvement? How do we know such change will be an improvement?
- What are the minimum requirements for a review that is deemed as necessary?

Phase 3 - Finalization of Proposals
- Review of comments received around ICANN85

- Selection of preferred solution

- Draft Final Report to be presented by ICANN86 [note time between ICANN85 (7-12 March 2026) and ICANN86 (8-11 June 2026) is very limited]

Phase 4 - Public consultation, finalization of proposals and decision-making by ICANN SOs and ACs
 For details see Section V: Decision-Making Methodologies by ICANN SOs and ACs[7].

The process will be concluded by submission of the CCG's Final or Closure Report[8] to the Board.

Reporting and updating the community:

The Co-chair(s) of the CCG will brief the Nominating Groups on a regular basis as well as the Board.

To ensure comprehensive community engagement, the CCG will complement in-person sessions with additional webinars, thereby facilitating broader and more accessible participation.

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[7] Section V: Rules of Engagement. Decision-Making Methodologies. EXTERNAL - ICANN SOs ACs and Board. Support for the Draft Proposal(s) by SOs and ACs
[8] Section V: Rules of Engagement. Problem/Issue Escalation & Resolution Processes

Section IV: Membership, Staffing and Organization

Membership:

The participants of the CCG will include:
- Members
- Observers
- Expert Advisors

The participants in the CCG will be listed on the CCG's wiki. The mailing list of the CCG will be publicly archived. All participants are required to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) following the procedures of their Nominating Group, or, alternatively a short bio should be provided which at a minimum should include name, affiliation, and whether the participant is representing a certain organization or company as part of their participation in this effort and primary country of residence. If this SoI is not provided, the person is not eligible to be a participant.

Members and Observers

The CCG is open to members nominated by Nominating Groups. The Nominating Groups are:
- ICANN SOs and ACs
- ICANN Board members and
- ICANN staff (to be nominated by the President and Chief Executive).

The total membership is limited to a maximum of eighteen (18) members.

Each of the Nominating Groups may propose nominees for membership in the group in accordance with their own rules and procedures, on the explicit understanding that there will only be a maximum of two (2) members from each Nominating Group. To the extent that an ICANN SO or AC nominates more than two (2) candidates, the final selection from each group will be made by the SOAC Chairs, the ICANN Board Chair and the ICANN President and CEO. Reasonable efforts should also be made to ensure that the CCG has representation from all of ICANN's five regions.

By nominating members to the CCG, a Nominating Group will be deemed to support the charter.

Best efforts should be made to ensure that the group as a whole has:
- Knowledge of performance assessment, audits, and organizational reviews.
- Expertise in good governance.
- Understanding of performance measurement.
- Knowledge of process improvement and review methods.
- Understanding of principles of accountability applicable to organizations broadly similar to ICANN.

In addition, each of the individual members are expected to:
- Have sufficient expertise and understanding of the ICANN reviews to participate in the discussions
- Commit to actively participate in the activities of the CCG on an ongoing basis; and
- Where appropriate, solicit and communicate the views and concerns of individuals in the group that nominates them.

Members act in their individual capacity and do NOT represent their Nominating Groups. Members will be expected to keep their Nominating Groups updated, and, where appropriate, present their Nominating Groups' views to the CCG.

In proposing their members, the Nominating Groups should note that the CCG's decision-making methodologies require that CCG members act by consensus, and that polling will only be used in rare instances and with the recognition that such polls do not constitute votes. The Nominating Groups should also take into account that the appointed members act in an individual capacity, while the final decision on support of the proposals of the CCG remains with the ICANN SOs and ACs[9].

The CCG will be open to any interested person as an observer. Observers may only attend calls and will be subscribed to the mailing list, but are not expected to participate actively in the deliberations and work of the CCG. The co-Chairs will determine if, when and how observers may participate in the discussions.

Members of the CCG will nominate and appoint two (2) co-Chairs. The co-Chairs will preside over CCG deliberations and ensure that the process is bottom-up, consensus-based and has balanced participation.

Expert Advisors

(Members of) The CCG, through the co-Chairs, may identify additional external advisors or experts to contribute to its deliberations and/or undertake specific tasks, for example professional facilitators of community meetings or tools, or advice about review processes. Should additional costs be involved in obtaining input from additional advisors or experts, prior approval must be obtained from ICANN org. Such a request for approval should at a minimum include the rationale for selecting additional advisors or experts as well as expected costs.

ICANN Staff: Support of CCG, subject matter experts (SMEs) and participants

ICANN org will assign sufficient staff to support the activities of the CCG. ICANN org is expected to provide day-to-day project administration and secretariat support. ICANN org support may also include document drafting, editing and distribution of documents.

At the suggestion of members, the co-Chairs may request ICANN org to appoint SMEs or members of staff who can make substantive contributions on relevant matters.

ICANN staff, in a coordinated effort with the CCG, will also ensure that there is adequate outreach to the global multistakeholder community - with an interest in ICANN - to ensure the community is aware of and encouraged to participate in the process.

The CCG is encouraged to identify any additional resources beyond the staff assigned to the group it may need, at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that such resources can be identified and planned for. Prior approval must be obtained from ICANN org.

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[9] Section V: Rules of Engagement. Decision-Making Methodologies. EXTERNAL - ICANN SOs ACs and Board. Support for the Draft Proposal(s) by SOs and ACs

Section V: Rules of Engagement

Decision-Making Methodologies:

INTERNAL - CCG

In developing its Proposal(s), work plan and any other reports, the CCG shall seek to act by consensus. Consensus calls should always make best efforts to involve all members. The co-Chairs shall be responsible for designating each position as having one of the following designations:

a. Full Consensus - a position where no minority disagrees; identified by an absence of objection.
b. Consensus – a position where a small minority disagrees, but most agree.
c. In the event no consensus is reached, refer to *Section V: Rules of Engagement. Problem/Issue Escalation & Resolution Processes* below.

In the absence of Full Consensus, the co-Chairs should allow for the submission of minority viewpoint(s) and these, along with the consensus view, shall be included in the report.

In a rare case, the co-Chairs may decide that the use of a poll is reasonable to assess the level of support for a recommendation. However, care should be taken in using polls that they do not become votes, as there are often disagreements about the meanings of the poll questions or of the poll results.

Any member who disagrees with the consensus-level designation made by the co-Chairs, or believes that her/his contributions are being systematically ignored or discounted should first discuss the circumstances with the co-Chairs. In the event that the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the group member should request an opportunity to discuss the situation with the Chairs of the nominating groups or their designated representatives.

EXTERNAL - ICANN SOs ACs and Board

Support for the Draft Proposal(s) by SOs and ACs

Following submission of the Draft Proposal(s) each of the ICANN SOs and ACs, irrespective of whether they are a Nominating Group, shall be asked to review and discuss the Draft Proposal(s) and decide, in accordance with their own rules and procedures, whether to support the recommendations contained in it. The Chair of each of these ICANN SOs ACs shall notify the co-Chairs of the CCG of the result of the deliberations of their group as soon as feasible.

In the event two or more of the ICANN SOs or ACs do NOT support the recommendations, the chair of the ICANN Board and the SOs and ACs Chairs shall be informed accordingly and the process is closed, and a Closure Report shall be submitted to the Board.

Supplemental Draft Proposal

In the event that an ICANN SO or AC does not support a limited set of the recommendation(s) contained in the Draft Proposal, the co-Chairs of the CCG shall be notified accordingly. This notification shall include at a minimum the reasons for the lack of support and a suggested alternative that would be acceptable, if any. The CCG may, at its discretion, reconsider, post for public comments and/or submit to the ICANN SOs ACs a Supplemental Draft Proposal, which takes into account the concerns raised and alternative proposed.

Following submission of the Supplemental Draft Proposal, the ICANN SOs ACs shall discuss and decide in accordance with its own rules and procedures whether to support the supplemental recommendations contained in the Supplemental Draft Proposal. The Chairs of the ICANN SOs ACs shall notify the Co-Chairs of the WG of the result of the deliberations as soon as feasible.

Submission of Report to the Board ("CCG Board Report")
After receiving the notifications from all ICANN SOs ACs, the co-Chairs of the CCG shall, within 5 working days after receiving the last notification, submit to the Chair of the ICANN Board of Directors and Chairs of all the ICANN SOs ACs the CCG Board Report, which shall include at a minimum:
   a. The (Supplemental) Proposals as adopted by the CCG; and
   b. The notifications of the decisions to support from ICANN SOs ACs
   c. Documentation of the process that was followed, including, but not limited to documenting the process of building consensus within the CCG and public consultations.

In the event one or more of the ICANN SOs ACs do(es) not support (parts of) the (Supplemental) Proposal(s), the CCG Board Report shall also clearly indicate the part(s) of the (Supplemental) Final Proposal(s) which are fully supported and the parts which not, and which of the ICANN SOs ACs dissents, to the extent this is feasible.

Board consideration and interaction with CCG and SOs and ACs
It is assumed that after submission of the CCG Board Report, the ICANN Board of Directors will consider the Proposal(s) contained in the CCG Board Report in accordance with their own rules and procedures, also taking into account the following principles:

   1. If the Board believes it is not in the global public interest to implement a recommendation from the Cross Community Group, it must initiate a dialogue with the CCG. A determination that it is not in the global public interest to implement a CCG Recommendation requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Board.

   2. The Board must provide a rationale to accompany the initiation of dialogue.

   3. The Board shall agree with the CCG on the method (e.g. by teleconference, email or otherwise) by which the dialogue will occur. The discussions shall be held in good faith and in a timely and efficient manner, to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Modification of the Charter:

In the event this Charter does not provide guidance and/or the impact of the charter is unreasonable for conducting the business of the CCG, the co-Chairs have the authority to determine the proper actions. Such action may, for example, consist in the suggestion of a modification to the Charter in order to address the omission or its unreasonable impact, to the Nominating Groups. A modification shall only be effective after adoption of the amended Charter by all Nominating Groups, in accordance with their own rules and procedures within a reasonable timeframe.

Problem/Issue Escalation & Resolution Processes:
All participants are expected to abide by the [ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior](10)[10].   The co-Chairs are empowered to restrict the participation of someone who seriously disrupts the working group. Generally, the participant should first be warned privately, and then warned publicly before such a restriction is put into place; in extreme circumstances, this requirement may be bypassed. This restriction is subject to the right of appeal as outlined above.   In the event that no consensus is reached by the CCG, the co-Chairs of the CCG will submit a Report to the Nominating Groups. In this Report the Chairs shall document the issues that are considered contentious, the process that was followed to address the issue(s) and include suggestions to mitigate the prevention of consensus. If, after implementation of the mitigating measures consensus can still not be reached, the co-Chairs shall prepare a Closure Report documenting the processes followed, including requesting suggestions for mitigating the issues that are preventing consensus from the nominating groups. This Closure Report will be submitted to the ICANN Board and the ICANN SOs ACs, and the co-Chairs will request closure of the CCG by the Nominating Groups.
Closure & Working Group Self-Assessment:
The CCG will consult with the Nominating Groups to determine when it can consider its work completed. The CCG and any sub-working groups shall be dissolved upon receipt of the notification of the Chairs of the nominating groups or their designated representatives**.**

Section VI: Charter Document History

Staff Contact:		**Email:**	

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[10] http://www.icann.org/en/news/in-focus/accountability/expected-standards

Annex A **Roadmap for Review Process Discussions**

Roundtable – Prague (ICANN83 | 12–15 June 2025)
- Confirm the involvement and roles of SO/ACs.
- Agree on core design principles: open, multistakeholder, bottom-up.
- Define the Community Coordination Group (CCG):
    - Purpose, scope (e.g., managing/oversee the process, defining the problem statement, meetings)
    - Composition (e.g., 1-2 Experts from each SO/AC + ICANN Board members + ICANN Legal)
- Establish process phases:
    - Explore and define the problem statement
    - Solicit views on purpose and scope
    - Plan consultations:
        - *Dublin (ICANN84)* – focus on divergence around the problem statement
        - *Mumbai (ICANN85)* – work toward convergence on proposals

Intermeeting Work (Post-Prague)
- Develop and approve the CCG Charter
- Seek community membership and staff support for the CCG
- CCG:
    - Drafts the Problem Statement (focused on purpose, scope, and necessity of reviews)
    - Organizes a session for *ICANN84 (Dublin)* to consult the community on the Problem Statement

Dublin Public Session – ICANN84 (25–30 October 2025)
- Conduct professionally facilitated community consultations on the Problem Statement – focus on divergence around the problem statement

Intermeeting Work (Post-Dublin)
- Analyze and synthesize outcomes from the Dublin session
- CCG to begin drafting proposals for managing reviews, based on community input
- Plan a consultation session for *ICANN85 (Mumbai)* on these draft proposals

Mumbai Public Session – ICANN85 (7–12 March 2026)
- Present and discuss proposals with the community – work toward convergence on proposals

Intermeeting Work (Post-Mumbai)
- CCG to refine proposals based on feedback from Mumbai
- Conduct a formal public comment period
- Update proposals accordingly

Conclusion of Consultation – ICANN86 (8–11 June 2026)
- Present final proposals to the community for review and consideration