

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEWS PROCESS OVERVIEW

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Introduction

Organizational reviews consist of seven phases: Pre-Planning, Planning, Selection of the Independent Examiner, Conducting the Review, Board Consideration, Implementation, and Ongoing. The first six phases of an organizational review lasts from six months to two years, depending upon the constituency or committee under review. The reviews are mandated to occur no less frequently than every five years, as mandated in the [ICANN Bylaws](#), Section 4.4.

Process Phases and Descriptions

Phase 1: Pre-Planning

Targeted timeframe¹: 2

months

Pre-Planning for an organizational review consists of the ICANN organization appointing a project lead, the Supporting Organization or Advisory Committee (SO/AC) forming a Review Working Party (RWP), and the ICANN Board passing a resolution to initiate the review.

Phase 2: Planning

Targeted timeframe¹: 6 months

In the Planning Phase of an organizational review, the RWP of the SO/AC under review selects and appoints its leadership team. Then, the RWP begins organizing and planning for the review.

Also in this phase, ICANN organization drafts elements of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to find an independent examiner to conduct the review. The elements drafted include the review scope, the selection criteria for the independent examiner (IE), and the timeline for review outputs. These elements of the RFP are agreed upon by the RWP, and confirmed by the Organizational Effectiveness Committee (OEC) of the ICANN Board.

Phase 3: Selection of the Independent Examiner

Targeted timeframe¹: 4 months

Following OEC confirmation, ICANN organization finalizes and posts the RFP, along with an announcement at <https://www.icann.org/news/announcements>. Parties interested in serving as the IE for the review submit proposals over the course of the open period of the RFP. The RFP is open for a minimum duration of four weeks.

Upon closure of the RFP, ICANN organization collects and analyzes proposals, identifying a group of finalist candidates. A process including presentations, interviews, and evaluation results in the identification of a single finalist. ICANN organization then presents the selected finalist to the OEC, along with details of the selection process and selection rationale. The OEC confirms compliance with the selection procedures and the finalist is confirmed.

ICANN organization and the selected IE then execute a Professional Services Agreement in alignment with the RFP. ICANN organization then formally announces selection of the IE at <https://www.icann.org/news/announcements>.

Phase 4: Conducting the Review

Targeted timeframe¹: 12 months

Generally this is the longest phase of the organizational reviews process. The IE conducts the review according to the scope and timeline mutually agreed upon in the executed Professional Services Agreement, and in ongoing cooperation and coordination with the RWP. ICANN organization project-manages the review, including providing support such as physical and virtual spaces, tools, templates, and other resources for conducting the review.

A kickoff session with the RWP and ICANN organization, led by the IE, start the review process. These sessions occur shortly after execution of the Professional Services Agreement.

The review process itself may consist of many elements, not all of which are necessarily present in every review. Regardless of data collection methods and sources, it is the mission of the IE to gather and analyze enough quality information to understand fully all relevant input to conduct a factual assessment. This allows the IE to make sound and implementable recommendations at the conclusion of the review.

Data collection methods include interviews with current and past members of the ICANN community, the SO/AC under review, relevant ICANN organization employees, and members of the ICANN Board. Other methods include observations of proceedings, focus groups, surveys, and review of documents and processes, among others. IE presents preliminary data it collected and analyzed to the RWP, which provides input and feedback to inform the IE's initial output: the draft assessment report. Frequent communications between the IE and RWP are encouraged throughout this process, and the IE solicits and considers RWP's comments and suggestions.

The Assessment Report

The assessment report, the IE's first formal output, is drafted and initially shared with the RWP for input following the period of data gathering and analysis. The assessment report is intended to present facts about the state of the SO/AC under review, including its documentation and processes. The assessment report will not propose recommendations for improvements. The IE shares the draft assessment report with the RWP. Then the RWP informs the IE about nuances, potential misconceptions, needed corrections and clarifications, or gaps in information discovered in the draft assessment report.

Using feedback and input from the RWP, the IE makes any necessary changes to the draft assessment report and then publishes its final assessment report. Publication of the assessment report is accompanied by a public comment period. ICANN organization will facilitate the public comment and, if needed, webinars, presentations during an ICANN Meeting (subject to timing), and outreach to other ICANN SO/ACs. During and after the public comment period, the IE considers all feedback, including data and opinions.

The Recommendations Report

Then, the IE has the option to conduct further research and, based on the findings in the assessment report, present a draft of recommendations to the RWP for feedback. Once the RWP has provided its input, the IE is free to make further updates to its recommendations. The IE then issues its draft final report, which includes both assessment findings and recommendations.

The draft final report is then posted for public comment, after which the ICANN organization compiles a Comment Report. The IE reviews and considers public comments including any additional RWP input. Publication of the final report concludes Phase 4 of the organizational review process and the IE's participation in the review.

Phase 5: Board Consideration

Targeted timeframe¹: 6 months

The RWP reviews the final report and checks the IE's recommendations for usability, feasibility, prioritization, resources, budget, and timeline. After its analysis, the RWP develops a feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan which is shared with the SO/AC under review for its review and approval.

Following the SO/AC's approval of the feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan, ICANN organization collects relevant materials. These include the final report, staff report of public comments, and feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan, and sends them to the OEC for consideration. Both the IE and the leadership of the RWP present their findings (final report and feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan respectively) to the OEC. The OEC reviews the submitted materials and agrees on a recommendation to the ICANN Board. The OEC communicates its recommendation to the Board together with any relevant material such as the final report, Staff Report of Public Comments, feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan, and other relevant documentation.

Upon review of all relevant materials, the Board accepts or rejects the RWP's recommendation contained in the feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan.

Following an acceptance, the Board directs the SO/AC under review to form an Implementation Team. Once formed, that team will proceed with implementation activities, including regular progress reporting to the OEC. After Board action, the SO/AC confirms Implementation Team members.

There is no clear process established in the event the recommendation is rejected.

Phase 6: Implementation

Targeted timeframe¹: 18 months

The culmination of the work of the review is the Implementation phase. Using the Board-vetted feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan as its blueprint, the Implementation Team, made up of members of the SO/AC under review, plans the implementation in detail. Considerations for implementation include budget, resources, and time required, based on prioritization documented in the feasibility assessment and initial implementation plan, and recommendations approved by the Board. The Implementation Team, using the detailed implementation plan, begins implementing the recommendations and provides progress reports to the OEC semi-annually.

Publication of the final Implementation Report, produced by the Implementation Team, is reviewed and adopted by the SO/AC under review. Next, the OEC reviews the Implementation Report and agrees on a recommendation to the Board. The Board reviews the OEC's recommendation and enacts a Board Resolution to adopt the final Implementation Report and close the review process.

Phase 7: Ongoing

At completion, the SO/AC under review and ICANN organization incorporates outcomes of implementation into standard operating procedures, as applicable. Tracking, monitoring and measurement of effectiveness continues on an ongoing basis, where applicable.