

RSSAC Statement on the Distinction Between RSSAC and Root-Ops

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RSSAC and Root-Ops are names for two separate communities that relate to the Internet's DNS Root Server System. They have different missions and scopes. RSSAC provides this document to help explain the differences between the two functional bodies, as confusion between the two has been noted.

Terminology

This document assumes the reader is familiar with the Root Server Operators (RSOs), the Root Server System (RSS) and the root service as defined in the RSSAC Lexicon.¹

Root-Ops: Technical Operations of Root Server Operators

Status

Root-Ops is an informal community of all the RSOs. It has no affiliation with other organizations, such as ICANN or IETF.

Scope

Root-Ops is the community where technical coordination of the root service occurs. The community discusses sensitive engineering and operational details and events. Root-Ops is not aimed at providing statements that represent consensus among the RSOs.

Members

Root-Ops is composed of technical staff from each individual RSO. Further information about the Root-Ops group can be found at its website, which also contains additional links to each RSO's individual website.²

Meetings

Root-Ops meets regularly to discuss operations, statistics, and events associated with the operations of each individual RSO and the collective RSS. These meetings are private, as sensitive engineering information is almost always discussed. Although Root-Ops meetings are generally co-located at IETF destinations for convenience, they are actually organized outside of the scope of any organizations (such as ICANN or IETF). The agendas for Root-Ops meetings are published post-facto on the Root-Ops website.

¹ See RSSAC026: RSSAC Lexicon

² See the Root-Ops website, <http://www.root-servers.org>

Interactions

To interact with Root-Ops, the individual members can be reached through contact information available on the Root-Ops website, or questions about the RSS as a whole can be directed to the Ask-RSSAC e-mail address.³ Root-Ops itself is not a formal body, and thus there is no formal way to directly interact with the entire Root-Ops as a group except through the Ask-RSSAC email address.

RSSAC

Status

The Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) is an advisory committee, and a formal body within ICANN.

Scope

The RSSAC advises the ICANN Board and community by publishing documents in collaboration with the RSSAC Caucus, "on matters relating to the operation, administration, security, and integrity of the Internet's Root Server System."⁴ In addition, the RSSAC also offers a public interface to provide education about the RSS and provide an opportunity for the community to ask questions about the RSS. Though RSSAC has no role in making technical and operational decisions about how the RSS is run or maintained (this is within the scope of Root-Ops: Technical Operations of the Root Server Operators), it does create technical and policy advice documents for the ICANN board and the ICANN community (including the RSOs) in the form of RSSAC publications regarding to the definition, operation, administration, security, and integrity of the RSS as a complete system. The RSSAC relies on a body of technical experts in the RSSAC Caucus to create the majority of its technical advice. The technical day-to-day operation of the RSS is performed by the RSOs using the root zone content provided by the Root Zone Administrator and the Root Zone Maintainer.

Members

The RSSAC has representation from each of the RSOs. It also has liaisons to and from various bodies within ICANN (Security and Stability Advisory Committee, Root Zone Evolution Review Committee, Internet Assigned Numbers Authority, Nominating Committee), as well as from bodies outside ICANN (Root Zone Manager, Internet Architecture Board). The RSSAC structures also include the RSSAC Caucus, a wide body of volunteer subject matter experts that is relied on to provide knowledge and experience, and which adds to the work capacity of the RSSAC. The RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus receive valuable support from the ICANN

³ Ask RSSAC <ask-rssac@icann.org>

⁴ See ICANN Bylaws, section 12.2(c), <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/governance/bylaws-en/#article12>

organization staff. Further information about RSSAC, its structure and methods of operation can be found in the RSSAC Operational Procedures.⁵

Meetings

RSSAC meetings are coordinated by the RSSAC Co-Chairs and supported by ICANN staff. More information on the types and frequency of RSSAC meetings can be found in the RSSAC Operational Procedures.⁶

Interactions

The RSSAC interacts with other ICANN groups via liaisons described above. The RSSAC interacts with the wider community through RSSAC Caucus work parties, published documents, public sessions at ICANN meetings, tutorials, and the Ask RSSAC e-mail address.

Comparison between the RSSAC and Root-Ops

RSSAC and RSSAC Caucus	Root-Ops: Technical Operations of Root Server Operators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Advises the ICANN Board and community on matters relating to the operation, administration, security, and integrity of the RSS.● Creates RSSAC advisories, comments, statements, procedures and reports.● Organizes and shepherds RSSAC Caucus work parties.● Engages in the ICANN Community via liaisons, joint meetings, open and public meetings, and tutorials.● Channels communication regarding issues that pertain to all RSOs from the wider community.● Some RSO staff members participate in the RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus, but may or may not be the staff members that have operational responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Implements technical advice from the RSSAC, IETF, and other forums.● Performs day-to-day management and operations of the infrastructure that makes the DNS root zone available to Internet users in accordance with RFCs.● A collaboration forum for the RSOs to preserve the integrity and reliability of the RSS.● Shares DNS statistical data with the Internet Community.● Some RSO staff members participate both in Root-Ops and in the RSSAC and the RSSAC Caucus, albeit in different roles.

⁵ See RSSAC000: RSSAC Operational Procedures

⁶ *id.*