

SAC116

SSAC Comments on the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review Team Final Report

Preface

The Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC) focuses on matters relating to the security and integrity of the Internet's naming and address allocation systems. This includes operational matters (e.g., pertaining to the correct and reliable operation of the root zone publication system), technical administration matters (e.g., pertaining to address allocation and Internet number assignment), and registration matters (e.g., pertaining to registry and registrar services). The SSAC engages in ongoing threat assessment and risk analysis of the Internet naming and address allocation services to assess where the principal threats to stability and security lie, and advises the ICANN community accordingly. The SSAC has no authority to regulate, enforce, or adjudicate. Those functions belong to other parties, and the advice offered here should be evaluated on its merits.

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1 SSAC Comment on the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency Review Team Final Report

SSAC welcomes this detailed and thorough report from the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review Team.¹ The report highlights some very critical issues for ICANN and the recommendations in the report illustrate some fundamental requirements for timely action to address these issues.

SSAC is of the view that issues of security and stability are of paramount importance in ICANN's role in the Internet's naming system. The SSR2 review process has made extensive calls on the time and effort of review team members, and the report represents the outcome of an extensive, diligent, and broad review of this topic. In general terms, we endorse to the ICANN Board the fundamental conclusion behind the detailed recommendations in this Final Report, namely that responses on the part of ICANN both as an organization and as a community are necessary as a matter of the highest priority.

The SSAC notes the Review Team's evaluation of ICANN org's response to the First Security, Stability and Resiliency (SSR1) recommendations, where it was reported that none of the SSR1 recommendations were fully implemented. The SSAC notes that the SSR2 Review Team found many of the SSR1 recommendations to lack specificity and not be sufficiently measurable, contributing to their difficulty in identifying the degree to which implementation had been achieved. The efforts made to avoid a recurrence by ensuring that SSR2 recommendations are metric-based with measurable performance indicators is appreciated. Further, the intent of the majority of SSR1 recommendations has been incorporated into and expanded upon in the SSR2 recommendations, as detailed and cross-referenced in Appendix D of the Final Report. The SSAC does however have a concern related to the capacity of the organization and community to implement these 24 comprehensive recommendations contained in the SSR2 Final Report in a meaningful and timely way. Irrespective of the details of each of the complete set of recommended actions, the Final Report is clearly indicating that there are some serious and longstanding issues relating to ICANN's execution of its security, stability, and resiliency (SSR) related commitments. The number of recommendations and the scale and set of actions proposed in the recommendations, when taken together indicate that in order to rectify this situation, the organization and community will need to prioritize these issues and the implementation of relevant remedial actions.

While we can agree with the broad conclusion that there are some critical issues that ICANN org should address, there are areas where SSAC wishes to provide further analysis and clarification, as appropriate in the context of followup activities arising from the SSR2 Final Report and in accordance with SSAC's role. In particular, SSAC notes there are some items where the SSR2 Final Report appears to have taken a different stance from the SSAC's comments on the SSR2

¹ See Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review Team Final Report, <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/ssr2-review-team-final-report-25jan21-en.pdf>

Draft Report² and other previous SSAC advice. Alternative opinions on SSR issues are not inherently problematic. Legitimate differences in opinion on how to achieve a goal, informed by individual background and experience, do not necessarily imply lack of support for the goal. The SSAC may comment on such differences in the future. SSAC is committed to supporting the efforts of the organization and community in responding to the SSR2 Final Report and within that context will provide further detailed analysis and commentary as appropriate. Obviously, we would like to play our part in ensuring that the situation improves over the coming months and years.

2 Acknowledgments, Statements of Interest, Dissents and Alternative Views, and Withdrawals

In the interest of transparency, these sections provide the reader with information about four aspects of the SSAC process. The Acknowledgments section lists the SSAC members, outside experts, and ICANN staff who contributed directly to this particular document. The Statements of Interest section points to the biographies of all SSAC members, which disclose any interests that might represent a conflict—real, apparent, or potential—with a member’s participation in the preparation of this Comment. SSAC members act as individuals, not as representatives of their respective organizations. The Dissents and Withdrawals section provides a place for individual members to describe any disagreement that they may have with the content of this document or the process for preparing it. This section also identifies individual members who have withdrawn and recused themselves from discussion of the subject matter of this Comment. Except for members listed in the Dissents and Withdrawals section, this document has the consensus approval of all members of the SSAC.

2.1 Acknowledgments

The committee wishes to thank the following SSAC members for their time, contributions, and review in producing this Comment.

SSAC members

Jaap Akkerhuis

KC Claffy (SSR2 Review Team Member April 2018 - January 2021)

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² See SAC110: SSAC Comments on the Second Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR2) Review Team Draft Report, <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/sac-110-en.pdf>

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Team Final Report

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2.2 Statements of Interest

SSAC member biographical information and Statements of Interest are available at:
<https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/ssac-biographies-2021-01-07-en>

2.3 Dissents and Alternative Views

There were no dissents or alternative views.

2.4 Withdrawals

There were no withdrawals.