RIR Governance Document Version 2 Consultation

Status Report Q1 2026

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Introduction

This document provides an overview of the current status of work being carried out to revise the second version of the draft RIR Governance Document. The goal of this document is to provide transparency and to track drafting progress based on input already received. **It does not open a new consultation or comment period.**

We, the NRO NC, published the second version of the RIR Governance Document on 28 August 2025. This version incorporated extensive community feedback received through the RIR community consultation and ICANN Public Comment process which was held from 14 April until 27 May 2025. We also published a document summarising the major differences between the two versions and explained why certain suggestions, while thoughtful and interesting, did not make their way into the second draft.

A subsequent community consultation and ICANN Public Comment was held from 28 August until 7 November 2025. A summary of the feedback received from the community in this consultation has also been published.

The NRO NC held a workshop from 12 to 14 November 2025, hosted by LACNIC in Montevideo, Uruguay, to review all comments received in detail. These comments were analysed, particularly with respect to whether they added new perspectives or raised issues that had not yet been considered. Following this analysis, we identified a few topics that required further discussion within the NRO NC. These are included in this document with the status "In Progress". In certain other areas, we agreed on an approach to the topic and to amend the text in the next version. These are reflected in the list of topics with the status "Drafting".

As we proceed to finalize the document, we feel it is valuable to highlight the likely modifications in the final version of the document, and to narrow the focus of our discussions to the issues under active discussion and drafting rather than the document as a whole.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to review the first and second drafts and for your continued participation in this process. As always, we value your input on whether we are on the right track with respect to our approach.

Sincerely,

The NRO NC

Note: All article and section numbers included in this document are with reference to the second version of the RIR Governance Document.

Items In Progress

Recognition Review (Independent Third Party)

Background: In the event that the existing RIRs do not unanimously recommend recognition of a new candidate RIR, the candidate RIR may submit a written request to ICANN for a Recognition Review. The Recognition Review process requires ICANN to appoint a qualified independent third party to carry out the review.

Feedback: We received feedback that the document should prescribe minimum attributes of the independent third party. In contrast to this view, there was also discussion on whether the qualifications for the third party should be in implementation details and not included in the draft RIR Governance Document. Further, we understand ICANN may wish to evaluate whether it will carry out the recognition review process itself or use a third party.

Status: In progress

Input required from ICANN clarifying their role in the process, and further discussions on the appropriate level of detail for the RIR Governance Document.

Relevant section: 2.3.(a).(v) Recognition Review

Recognition (Unanimity minus one)

Background: The current version allows for the recognition of a Candidate RIR based on unanimity minus one (i.e. allows for one dissenting RIR under certain conditions).

Feedback: We received feedback that the requirement that recognition of a new RIR requires unanimous support from the existing RIRs (or unanimous minus one as the current mechanism allows for), might not provide sufficient protection against the possibility that multiple existing RIRs may have a conflict of interest. At the same time, we received feedback noting that the existing RIRs will be obligated to work and cooperate with any new RIRs. The global Internet numbering system relies on effective coordination and cooperation between the RIRs, and this needs to be considered in the recognition process. An additional concern is the possibility that an RIR might be unable to act or take decisions on recognition. A question remains as to whether the current mechanisms adequately balance these concerns.

Status: In progress

Discussions on whether the current thresholds and processes are adequate to accommodate a range of scenarios such as multiple recusals owing to conflicts of interest and the inability to take decisions.

Relevant section: 2.3.(a).(iii) Approval

Derecognition and Ad Hoc Audit Thresholds

Background: Both the derecognition process and the ad hoc audit process can be initiated by: 1) any RIR or group of RIRs; 2) a group of Members of the impacted RIR — with the current threshold set at 25% of an RIR's total Members or 2,000 Members, whichever is lower; or 3) ICANN."

Feedback: We received a range of comments on this issue. Some comments suggested lowering the threshold, other comments wanted to see anti-capture mechanisms included so that members from a single country or affiliated group will not be able to trigger a derecognition proposal.

Response: The NRO NC reviewed the different governance practices at the RIRs as well as their membership numbers. Derecognition is a final recourse, and the threshold to trigger it is deliberately high. If a Member proposal reaches a high percentage but falls short of the actual 25% threshold it can also serve as a credible basis for the other RIRs or ICANN to take action. Therefore, there will be no change to the derecognition thresholds.

Status: In progress

Discuss whether the threshold for an ad hoc audit should be lower than that for a derecognition proposal. If so, ensure that ad hoc audits cannot be continuously triggered by disgruntled parties by adding waiting periods between audits.

Relevant Sections: 2.3.(b) Derecognition and 2.4 Ad Hoc Audit

Emergency Continuity Initiation and Renewal Procedures

Background: The initiation of Emergency Continuity procedures requires the unanimous agreement of all other RIRs and ICANN in case an RIR is unable to provide RIR services to its region.

Feedback: We received feedback that the requirement of unanimity among the remaining RIRs might be too high, particularly when the situation requires urgent action. We further discussed the need to add criteria to justify the extension of an Emergency Continuity procedure. In practice, 90 days might not be adequate to identify a successor entity. At the same time, it is important to retain oversight over any extensions. There was an additional concern that the Emergency Continuity procedures could be renewed or extended without adequate oversight.

Status: In progress

Discuss whether the thresholds for initiating and renewing Emergency Continuity need to be lower than unanimity. Further, the text will be edited to provide more clarity on procedures for initiating and extending an Emergency Continuity procedure and ensure transparency in decision-making for affected communities.

Items Under Drafting

Document Structure

Background: As the document has evolved, the same issue is addressed across multiple sections.

Feedback: The document has a complex structure and would benefit from restructuring.

Status: Drafting

The document will be restructured for improved flow and clarity.

Transition and Continuity

Background: Article 6 requires a Derecognized RIR to ensure and facilitate the smooth transfer of its RIR services and operations to an interim or successor entity as directed by ICANN.

Feedback: We received feedback that the article should address the transition in more detail, specifically to ensure that communities remain engaged during the transition and to protect the rights of the affected resource holders.

Status: Drafting

The NRO NC will add text outlining requirements for a transition plan that ensures the continuity of service and protection of resource holder rights.

Relevant Section: 6.3 (a) Handoff

Audit Obligations

Background: Section 2.4 allows for ad hoc audits and section 4.2 requires an RIR to be audited no less than once in three years. However, the document does not specify the actions to be taken following an audit.

Feedback: We received feedback that the document does not explicitly oblige an RIR to take action following the publication of an audit report.

Status: Drafting

The NRO NC will amend the text to clarify RIR obligations regarding audits.

Relevant Sections: 2.4 Ad Hoc Audit and 4.2 Audit

Derecognition (Audit as a part of derecognition)

Background: The derecognition process does not include an audit as one of the necessary steps.

Feedback: We received feedback suggesting that an audit be a mandatory part of the derecognition process.

Status: No change

The document requires all RIRs to be audited no less than once in three years. It is possible that the derecognition process is triggered after an RIR has already failed one or multiple audits. Including an audit requirement could further delay the process. Article 6.2 Rehabilitation already creates an obligation to provide assistance and rehabilitate an RIR prior to any derecognition processes. Therefore, the NRO NC decided that no changes were needed.

Relevant Sections: 2.3.(b) Derecognition and 6.2 Rehabilitation

Derecognition (Rehabilitation as a part of derecognition)

Background: Article 6.2 requires efforts to be made to rehabilitate a non-compliant RIR prior to derecognition, which is seen as a last resort.

Feedback: Rehabilitation is not listed as a step under the derecognition process under Article 2.3(b).

Status: Drafting

The NRO NC discussed the need to include rehabilitation as a step in the derecognition process. The derecognition process text will be amended to include the obligation to attempt to rehabilitate an RIR before further derecognition steps are taken.

Relevant Section: 2.3.(b) Derecognition