
DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thank you all for joining. This is the RZERC monthly teleconference held on Tuesday the 17th of January 2023 for that 1900 UTC. First up, we have a roll call. We have apologies from Tim April representing IETF. Carlos Martinez of ASO, I do not see on the call yet. Peter Koch, ccNSO.

PETER KOCH: Apologies. Yes, this is Peter.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thanks, Peter. Representing the ICANN Board, Wes Hardaker.

WES HARDAKER: Greetings, everybody. Good day.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Kim Davies, PTI.

KIM DAVIES: Yeah, present.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Kalina Ostalska, Registries Stakeholder Group.

KALINA OSTALSKA: Hello, everyone.

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DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Daniel Migault, representing RSSAC.

DANIEL MIGAULT: Yeah. Hi, I'm here.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thank you. Geoff Huston representing SSAC, I don't see on the call yet. And Duane Wessels representing Verisign as Root Zone Maintainer.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah. Hi, Duane is here.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thank you. So first up, as the agenda review, you can see the agenda in front of you. Got a couple of administrative items. And then the main point—main discussion topic for today will be an update on the zone and the deployment plan that we talked about a couple of times last year. That's going to be led by Duane Wessels. And then I have a brief update on where we're at in the process of the RZERC charter review. Are there any questions on the agenda? I'm not seeing any. I'm moving along to our administrative items.

First, just a welcome to Wes Hardaker. West was recently appointed last week as the ICANN Board's new liaison to the RZERC. As most of you know, we had Kaveh Ranjbar representing ICANN Board from about late 2016 to present. So

welcome, Wes. Don't know if you want to say anything to the group, but you are more than welcome to.

WES HARDAKER: No, thanks very much. I know this group well.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Excellent. Got a chat message. Okay, so just a brief update and planning for this year. I noticed that Tim's first term—two-year term as RZERC Chair will come to a close in April of this year. So we will be hosting—holding a RZERC Chair Election this year, according to the operational procedures since his term concludes in April 2023.

The next election will begin on April 18th, 2023, which is the normally scheduled meeting for April. Based on that nominee—the nomination period for chair will open on the 18th of March and it will close on the 11th of April at 23:59 UTC. So Tim is eligible to serve a second two-year term as chair.

Technically, everyone on the RZERC at this time is eligible to serve as chair. Duane Wessels has served two consecutive two-year terms, but according to the operational procedures, that eligibility resets after one year.

After the nomination period, for the new members that may not be aware of this procedure, if there is only one candidate that accepts their nomination, the RZERC can confirm the new chair by acclamation on April 18th. If there are two or more candidates, then I will arrange an online anonymous vote that will kick off on April 18th and last for seven days. According to the procedures, it just takes a simple majority, which is half plus one of the

members to establish the new chair. And we've got some contingency plans if a simple majority is not achieved.

Are there any questions about the timeline or about the chair election at this time? All right. I'm not seeing any.

The other administrative item I had to discuss today is the meeting time for 2023. I just wanted to confirm with everybody if the regular scheduled time for the third Tuesday of the month at 1900 UTC if that works for everyone or if anyone on this call has a conflict or a reason why we would need to change the meeting time for 2023. So I open it up but if anyone has anything they want to say here. Not seeing anyone unmute or anyone raise their hand, so I'm just going to go ahead and confirm that everyone has their calendar invites for this year and will continue to keep the same meeting time.

All right. Next up, we have Duane Wessels to share the update on the Zone MD deployment plan. Duane, I can share it on my computer or if you'd like, I can make you a co-host and have you share the PDF.

DUANE WESSELS: I'm happy to have you share it, especially if you can bring up the one that I emailed just a few minutes ago.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Yeah, let me get that real quick.

DUANE WESSELS: And I'll explain why I did that, I guess.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: All right.

DUANE WESSELS: Great, thanks. So I think probably everybody here except maybe Kalina is pretty well familiar with, this document and Zone MD. So Kalina, if you have any questions, please feel free to interject. I might go through things a little bit quick. I'm not going to read the whole document because a lot of us have seen previous revisions of this.

KALINA OSTALSKA: Sounds good. That's fine.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah. So I forget when we last talked about this, it's been quite a long time that this—the previous version of this plan was presented to RZERC, as you know, for its approval and there were some comments, feedback was received, and so we had to go back and make some changes. And also, Verisign was waiting for some communication from ICANN regarding Zone MD. So we received that late last year and this is the revision. So, Danielle, if you can start to scroll down, I'll just kind of tell you to stop when there's a section that's sort of worth discussing.

Okay. So here's this thing, this new sentence, which I confess I just added today because I'd forgotten about this until the weekend. So as we will discuss it later on in this

document, one of the big changes to the deployment plan is to use—so when a zone is published, when a root zone is published with the Zone MD record, the new plan is to put that into the native Zone MD record format. Whereas previously it was to be in this generic record format and that change requires a little bit more work from Verisign in our implementation.

So previously this section basically said that Verisign is ready to go, that is no longer technically true. We have to make this little update to publish the record in its native format, not expecting that to take a lot of time. But I did want to note that we are waiting on that. The other—Peter, yes, I see your hand up. Please go ahead.

PETER KOCH: Yeah, thanks, Wes. This is Peter for the record. Just asking is this a footnote that you expect to remove once we publish this or is your—

DUANE WESSELS: Yes.

PETER KOCH: —publish it this way? Okay.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, essentially, it's a footnote. Just that. Yeah, once that work is done, I would remove this sentence, I think.

PETER KOCH: Thank you.

DUANE WESSELS: So the next—if you can scroll down, just well, it's fine because the next section I want to talk about is the roots of our operator section. When RZERC had previously reviewed this document, the root server operators had not yet published their statement.

So that did happen in August of 2022. The root server operators published a statement where the URL is in the footnote there and that statement verifies that their systems are ready, says that the RSOs will commit to not enabling Zone MD verification for at least one year following the initial appearance of the Zone MD record. And then it says other things about what the RSOs will or should do once they do start to verify the record, such as, they should document how they will—what their behavior will be if there is a failure and things like that. So I'm hopeful that the statement from the RSOs satisfies some of the concerns from RZERC members when we talked about this previously.

And I hope you all take a look at, that statement as well as the way it is described here. And then I think the next big thing to talk about is farther down in this operational consideration section. So this is where the details are and there's three elements here, one is the hash algorithm. This part has not changed. It is still the plan to use SHA-384 hash algorithm for Zone MD for the reasons I—for the reason given there. And then, go down to the next page, this presentation format.

DANIEL MIGAULT: One question.

DUANE WESSELS: Go ahead, Daniel. Sorry.

DANIEL MIGAULT: Do we intend to have the hash right away, or do we have any steps within the non-existing hash algorithms or something like that? No, we just to move ahead.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, so that point, I believe is in this document comes after—it comes a little bit later down on the next page. But the plan is to have a period of time with a private use hash algorithm that cannot be verified, yes. And that is unchanged from the previous plan.

DANIEL MIGAULT: Yeah.

DUANE WESSELS: Thank you. Okay. So the presentation format, the previous version of this plan said that the Zone MD record when it appears in a sort of a text file version of the root zone, it would use the generic resource record format. And so, this is a change now to use the native resource record format. And the example is given there. The reason for this is that Verisign and ICANN take the position that although there may be some a little bit of short-term challenges, in the long term, it would be a

lot better to have the native format. For example, we didn't want to set any precedents in the root zone or even other zones that introducing new record types should use the generic format instead of their native formats. So that's a pretty significant change to the plan and hopefully you all can chime in on that if you have opinions regarding that.

And then the—as Daniel just asked, the next section talks about the phased approach where there would be a period of time where we use the private use hash algorithm and yeah, like I said that's unchanged from previous. So that's pretty much all I wanted to cover for this document. I'm not really looking for—I'm not really expecting feedback at this point since everyone's only had really a few days to look at this. But hopefully, you can take the time between now and our next meeting to go over this and come up with questions and we can discuss it again at the next meeting.

If you do have questions now, I'm happy to take them as well. I just didn't want there to be pressure to resolve everything right today. So I'll be quiet for a minute and see if there's any questions.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Duane, I have a question. Are you looking for explicit approval from the RZERC on this document or are you just looking for a lack of objections and concerns? Does that make sense?

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, I've been working under the assumption that we need explicit approval, I guess a vote. We might have to go back to what the language in RZERC003 actually says. But I do believe it uses the word approval in

that document. So I'm expecting there to be essentially a vote on the plan. If other Committee members think no vote, that's fine with me. All right.

DANIEL MIGAULT: And so, since the root server operator are concerned, do we expect this document to be sent for review at RSSAC, for example?

DUANE WESSELS: So, Daniel, I think RSSAC is already well aware of this and in terms of the root server operators, most of those discussions happen at the root server operators' meetings versus RSSAC. Yeah, that's my thought.

DANIEL MIGAULT: So I'm taking as a—I don't need to bring that to RSSAC?

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, well, if you're asking me, I'd say yes, but you're the liaison, so you can decide, I guess. So, Kim, your hand is up. Go ahead.

KIM DAVIES: Yeah. Thanks, Duane. I do not believe this requires further formal approval by RZERC. If I recall correctly, the intent in recommendation four from RZERC003 was that a plan would be developed and it would be, "Make the plan available for review by RZERC." And if I recall the discussion correctly around that aspect of the recommendation, I think Verisign and ICANN both wanted to be fully transparent with this group,

keep you in the loop and obviously if you have additional perspective that is useful for this, we'd be happy to integrate that perspective. But in terms of the formalities, I don't believe any further ratification or endorsement from RZERC is necessary. Anyone, please correct me if I'm wrong, but that's where I'm operating from. Thanks.

DUANE WESSELS:

Okay. Thanks, Kim, for looking up the actual language. I forgot to do that before the meeting. So I appreciate that. Peter?

PETER KOCH:

Thanks, Duane. Actually, two points. One in response to Kim. I'm not sure that this is a formal distinction, but when this is made available for review by RZERC, then of course, it also means that the review needs to be conducted and if there's any input that should be considered/addressed.

And if there's no input, then that's essentially kind of an approval. The question is—the difference is only useful, I think, or makes sense if there is something that RZERC comes up with that the proposers of the plan do not agree to change. And I don't think we're getting there. So I thank you for that updated document. I think that one idea needs a bit discussion, but you mentioned that already.

And other than that, whatever we come up with, we would probably write something and say we reviewed this and we have no comments or we reviewed this and we have comments, or maybe we do the—we have comments quite informally before that. But I do think that we

need to have an RZERC document or a communication. We don't have these formal documents always that goes out and says, we reviewed this and we are fine with that. That's my one opinion on this.

The other part is that change in the Zone MD format and I'm trying not to dive into all the technical details. My question is, you said that you felt and I'm hopefully not putting words in your mouth, you felt that it was not a good idea to set a precedent with this particular format. We introduced this, if I remember correctly, because we are dealing with an unknown set of customers, people who copy the root zone and then run it on their own systems other than the root name server operators. Is there any information that informed this change or is that something that we need to look into later?

DUANE WESSELS:

There is no information in terms of like if you're suggesting maybe we learned that certain versions of software behaved one way or the other, there's nothing like that. No, this was just part of the discussion that Verisign and ICANN had with each other about this particular choice to be made here and so we discussed with each other and this is what we settled on.

PETER KOCH:

Okay. Yeah, fair enough. But you just presented this and you also offered that we discussed this over email, and I think that's a great idea. And thanks for that information.

DUANE WESSELS:

Sure. Yeah, Kim.

KIM DAVIES:

I think just to add to some of the thought that went into a long discussion that we had, part of the reason for using the generic resource record type was an assumption that Zone MD might not be broadly deployed and therefore the unknowable set of devices or software that are consuming the zone data might struggle with it. But I think there's a similar concern that the generic format may similarly not be broadly deployed. I don't believe it's ever been used in the root zone before.

We kind of assume that there's probably some bespoke consumers of root zone data out there and it potentially contains the same risk, but then also adds an additional downside, which is that you then have that as legacy that I think the original proposal suggests that down the road, we would then switch to Zone MD, which would mean that you'd have a second event to plan around.

So in a sense—it seems that both approaches, the previous one and this one have similar concerns of lack of software support. Which one is more broadly supported? It's really hard to know, but I think we fell down on just going straight to Zone MD because that reduces that additional complexity down the road. I think, in both cases and all cases, really, part of it is ensuring that when we're on a timeline for deployment and we have dates, for example, that we're very communicative about what's forthcoming and we engage operational communities as best we can so that they can be armed and ready for this.

But part of the challenge with the root zone, as always, is that we just don't have good instrumentation of all the people that are using it and how they're using it to be able to predict this well in advance. I don't know if that adds some additional insight into some of the discussions that we had. Thanks.

DUANE WESSELS: Peter?

PETER KOCH: Yeah, thanks, Duane, and thanks, Kim, for that additional information. And again, I would want to form an opinion one way or another. That was very helpful input and maybe at the bare minimum we could try to capture this rationale at some points when we publish the report. But again, not preempting the discussion that we might have on the list. Thanks.

DUANE WESSELS: So I actually have a question, I guess, for Danielle. Since it's been a long time since we talked about this and previously there were some ICANN Board action register items, I think around RZERC003. I don't remember the status of all those, but this was one of them, right? And I guess we should make sure that all those have been sort of checked off appropriately.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Okay. I'll take an action item to follow up with that. Do you think that the implementation can now be considered complete now that this has gone to RZERC, or is this an implementation update just to keep it open until Zone MD is deployed? I think it can be considered complete given that the recommendation just says it needs to be made available for review personally.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, I suppose. I do want to—there are Committee members who are not here and people need time. But I do expect there to be maybe follow-up discussion about the plan either over email or at our next meeting.

And then I think—I heard Peter suggest that RZERC should produce some communication or some statement that the plan has been presented and that the RZERC has had a chance to review it. So I guess we need to decide about how that would look if it's a letter or statement or whatever. Assuming that's what other committee members also want to do.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: All right. So I'll take the action item to look at the action request register and see what updates need to be made there. And then it sounds like between now and maybe our February meeting, RZERC members will be reviewing the deployment plan, writing any feedback on the list, and be prepared to discuss it at the February meeting. And I'll work with Tim to think about different methods of public or approval, whether it's a

statement or a letter from the RZERC signaling no objections on the deployment plan.

DUANE WESSELS: Yeah, I think that's good.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Okay. Any other questions or comments on this topic? Not seeing any hands or unmuted microphones. So thank you, Duane, and we will pick this discussion up back in February.

The final item for today's discussion is an update on the RZERC charter review. So at this time—actually, now all of the current RZERC members have signaled their support for the current draft of the initial report of the RZERC charter review. So now that we have full consensus on the draft initial report, next is to reach out and schedule—offer feedback sessions—individual feedback sessions with each of the appointing organizations as stated in the RZERC charter review process.

As a reminder to the members on the call, this was kind of an additional accountability step so we will still be posting the initial report for public comment, and the intention is to have a public session presenting this report at ICANN76. But we wanted to offer feedback sessions with each of the appointing organizations just as an additional accountability step since the RZERC conducted a self-review. So I will begin reaching out to each of your organizations' Secretariat or leadership functions to schedule a feedback session.

Feedback sessions are optional, but we will leave that decision to each of the appointed organizations whether or not they would like to schedule that. So the current plan is to conduct these feedback sessions between now and the end of February and open up public comment on the initial report two weeks prior to the beginning of ICANN76. Does anybody have any comments or questions on that process? I'm not seeing any hands or unmuted—

DUANE WESSELS: Sorry, Danielle. Just Duane jumping in. I guess I can look at my calendar. But what is the date that is two weeks before ICANN76?

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: I believe it is—it might be February 28th, but I didn't want to commit to that.

DUANE WESSELS: This is right at the end of February. Yeah, okay.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Right. It's right at the end of February. The unofficial guidance is to give people plenty of time before ICANN meeting to have something open for public comment so that things aren't opening while people are on planes and kind of finalizing their own agenda. But we'll open up prior to ICANN76, have a public session, a short information session during ICANN76 and then leave it open for six weeks after ICANN76 for any possible comments from anyone in the community.

So I will begin—I will take an action item to begin reaching out to orgs. [I'd ask—] I might be emailing some of you to confirm the correct point of contact today, so please be on the lookout for that so I can send out those invitations.

And then when it comes to scheduling, I've talked to Tim about who needs to be in each feedback session and for scheduling purposes, we would let the appointing organizations like RSSAC, SSAC, IETF, kind of to determine who they think is important to be in the feedback session. But then having Tim and the appointed rep, kind of putting those two people as the priority for the scheduling, but all of the sessions would be open to every RZERC member to attend.

Pausing for comments or questions one last time. I'm not hearing or seeing anything. So that's it for today, if anybody has any other business they'd like to raise for the Committee, please do so now.

KALINA OSTALSKA:

Yeah, I have a question. So this is about plan for our meeting or our agenda during ICANN76, right? The one in Cancun just coming up in March. All right. So I'm hearing we will have the public session for a charter review. I was wondering if there is anything else that we are planning as the group.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD:

And that's a great question. I was not planning on doing a regular RZERC meeting. We don't normally at the first meeting of the year. One option would be if most of the people are planning on being in attendance in

Cancun, is we could delay the discussion on the deployment plan until we're in person. The only downside to that is a lot of you have very full schedules and agendas during ICANN meetings, so that might inhibit conversation with this group of people. So I put that back out to the rest of you. If you'd like to meet in person in ICANN76, we could do our monthly meeting during—but that has not typically been the expectation.

KALINA OSTALSKA: I would be up for that, depends on other people.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thoughts or comments from anyone else? Okay. I'll take that back to Tim and look at agendas and see about scheduling that and I might put something out on the mailing list this week to see who plans on being in attendance during 76. And I'll work with some of my colleagues on the Policy team to see if there would be a time that would work for such a meeting if there's interest for it.

KALINA OSTALSKA: I have one follow-up question. So there will be this public session on the charter review, are we expecting ourselves to be present there in person? So there is a good presence from our group or it's not necessary?

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: I would expect, yes, if you if you don't have any pressing conflicts with your appointing organization or whoever is funding your travel, that I will be trying to schedule it where there are minimal conflicts for the people—for the members of RZERC. But there is no funding for RZERC members to travel to ICANN meetings. So I think it's understood that if, however your source of travel is funded, if you have priorities and conflicts there ... Steve, would that be a correct characterization of expected attendance of RZERC members?

STEVE SHENG: Yeah, Danielle, I think so.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Okay.

STEVE SHENG: I think, traditionally, the RZERC is a fairly small community and not all members come to ICANN meetings. And traditionally, there's no funding for RZERC members. Which RZERC members generally for those they come, they have funding through other means. If this is an issue or if RZERC decides that it needs to host a meeting at ICANN meetings, we can discuss funding. But at the moment, no, there's no funding for members.

DANIELLE RUTHERFORD: Thanks, Steve. Any other questions or topics for today? All righty. Well, I'm not seeing anyone unmute or anything in chat, so I'm going to go ahead and adjourn this meeting. Thanks, everyone, for joining.

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