

RIPE NCC EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIONS REPORT

Introduction

The RIPE NCC Consultations Report 2015 was presented to the Executive Board in February 2015. This report presents analysis from independent consultants Dr. Rob Allen and Dr. John Earls, who held interviews and meetings with RIPE NCC members and others from the Internet community who have an interest in the work of the RIPE NCC.

The full report is available at:

<https://www.ripe.net/consultations-report-2015>

34 participants from 12 countries in the service region gave their opinions to the consultants, who provided the board with the consultation report while providing anonymity for all participants.

These consultations took place 18 months after the last large-scale RIPE NCC survey. They allow us to check on our progress since 2013 and to evaluate the effect of our actions based on that survey.

They are also an excellent way for the board to keep up to date with the issues affecting the membership across the service region and to identify potential action areas for service improvements in the near future.

Key Findings

The independent analysis from Dr. Allen and Dr. Earls identified eight areas in which the feedback from participants can be categorised. The board's response to the report addresses these eight areas.

1. General Feedback

The board is pleased to hear that the RIPE NCC offers good value to its members and that improvements in its service offering have been noted, particularly with regard to Training Services and RIPE Atlas.

That said, the priority for the RIPE NCC remains on the Registry function, which is the core business of the organisation. Also, the board will ensure we continuously improve the service offering beyond the Registry function.

We agree that input from the membership and the community needs to come from a wider and more diverse group to ensure that all views are represented. Activities such as the RIPE NCC Regional Meetings have played a big part in addressing this issue. RIPE NCC outreach on a regional level has helped people understand how to be involved in discussions that affect the wider community.

Participation in the RIPE Policy Development Process (PDP) has increased thanks to several new measures:

- Targeted communication to the regions
- Policy proposal summaries in more digestible formats
- Provision of summaries in English, Russian and Arabic

The RIPE NCC is now [closely tracking where in the service region participation is coming from](#), which allows us to target those areas where there is less involvement in discussions.

The RIPE NCC and the board have also significantly increased involvement in the RIPE NCC General Meeting (GM) in terms of attendance and voting over the past two years. Process improvements and remote participation ease accessibility; smart communications increase awareness of the issues being discussed; and extension of registration and voting timescales raises inclusivity. At the May 2014 GM, over 600 members cast their votes, which is almost twice as many as had ever previously done so.

2. Services and Introduction of Services

Members requested that the RIPE NCC ensures it presents possible additional activities to the membership before they are implemented. To this end, the RIPE NCC Activity Plan and Budget outlines all forthcoming activities and services, and their related costs, for the membership to review well in advance of the Autumn General Meeting. All feedback on the document from members is taken into account when finalising the Activity Plan and Budget for the year ahead.

For 2015, the RIPE NCC has committed to consolidating the current service offering and introducing no new services. The focus for this year is on increasing efficiency where possible and enhancing the current activities. Again, member feedback is always welcome.

3. Rules and Procedures

We note that the wide range of procedures that the RIPE NCC asks of its members can sometimes cause difficulties, particularly for those who are newcomers to the Internet community. The board is always keen to strike a balance between maintaining an accurate registry, which requires a certain degree of bureaucracy, and making it easier for organisations to get the resources they need to carry out their business.

It is also very important to ensure proper measures are taken to verify the identity of people contacting the RIPE NCC. There have been numerous attempts to hijack resources recently, so making sure checks are carried out diligently is vital to ensure that we protect members' resources. The new membership application process will ensure greater security for members while making it much easier to provide their details and use their LIR accounts.

To help address this issue, the RIPE NCC will produce clearer documentation regarding procedures and requirements. For the past year, the RIPE NCC personally calls members who receive their first resource allocation to offer support in navigating the policies and procedures. The RIPE NCC also presents at the RIPE Meetings to inform the community about policies that can cause difficulties for members. The RIPE community can then decide whether it needs to change policy to address the issues.

4. Transparency and Accountability

We have noted for many years now the calls from members and the RIPE community for the RIPE NCC to be as transparent as possible. This led to the development of the current Activity Plan and Budget.

We are now providing much more information to members while working hard to improve its clarity and accessibility.

The board has also worked to be more accountable, and the publication of the Executive Board's roles and responsibilities in 2014 was a good step in this regard. Much effort has gone into increasing participation and improving documentation around the RIPE NCC General Meetings. The board has also worked to increase voting at General Meetings, making it easier for people to register and cast their votes, which resulted in greatly increased voting figures. We will continue to make all efforts to engage with members and to ask for their feedback on, and participation in, RIPE NCC activities.

5. Regional Outreach

There was much praise for the RIPE NCC's efforts to increase engagement and connect with the communities throughout the service region. The RIPE NCC Regional Meetings were noted as success stories, although we note the request for better cost/benefit analysis of these meetings for the membership.

Members said that while regional outreach is important, the RIPE NCC should continue to pay attention to Western Europe. The RIPE NCC already carries out activities in this region, and we have asked the RIPE NCC to document where this outreach takes place. Current examples of where outreach takes place in Western Europe include:

- Support and sponsorship for network operator groups (NOGs) throughout the region
- Representation at numerous forums such as IXP and NREN events
- Member lunches
- Hosting Roundtable events for government and law enforcement
- RIPE NCC Trainings
- Representation of the technical community at OECD meetings, EuroDIG and other Internet governance events

At this point in the development of the RIPE NCC, we believe we are giving our entire membership equal attention. Western Europe is more developed in terms of having structured communities in place that the RIPE NCC can engage with in different ways. In other regions, the structures are less developed and they need assistance in growing their communities in a structured way.

6. Translations

We are well aware that a large proportion of the membership is against the RIPE NCC spending excessive resources on translation efforts. However, another section of the membership has said that it would benefit from translations, especially of key documents and procedures. We believe that that the RIPE NCC

has resources currently available in terms of staff from all over its service region that can provide translations of key RIPE NCC documents on a best-effort basis without needing additional resources.

The Moscow and Dubai offices host native Russian and Arabic speakers who can communicate directly with those who prefer to use their native languages. We also note that RIPE Policies belong to their proposers and the RIPE community and that the RIPE NCC should not provide translations of those documents.

The RIPE NCC will continue to localise some material where it feels that it is beneficial for members and the RIPE community, but we will ensure that the use of membership funds to do this is extremely minimal.

7. IPv4 Transfers

We are in full agreement with the feedback received regarding IPv4 transfers. The RIPE NCC will remain neutral and uninvolved in the buying or selling of IPv4 number resources. The RIPE NCC does, however, prioritise the accuracy of the Registry above all else and will, therefore, do its utmost to ensure that all transfers are accurately reflected in the RIPE Database. To this end, services such as the IPv4 Transfer Listing Service help to ensure that the exchange of addresses takes place in a more transparent manner and is noted in the Registry.

8. IANA Stewardship Transition

We are pleased to note that the RIPE NCC's input into the IANA stewardship transition is appreciated and that the need to have representation for the technical community by a neutral body is supported.

The board is committed to ensuring that the RIPE NCC remains inclusive and transparent throughout the transition process.

Next Steps

The board is encouraged by the feedback it received during this consultation process, and we will ensure that all points made by participants will be investigated and appropriately acted on by the RIPE NCC.

This project was carried out 18 months since the RIPE NCC Survey 2013, and with the next survey scheduled to take place in 2016 it gives us a good check on our progress and helps us to set our strategy in the coming years.

We would like to thank all those who participated in the consultation process, and we would ask that anyone who has comments to make on the content of the report please do so by contacting us directly or commenting on the appropriate mailing lists.

Nigel Titley

RIPE NCC Executive Board Chairman

3 March 2015