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Wiki Wiki means "quick" and "easy" in Hawaiian. A Wiki is a set of pages that are open for anyone to edit as they wish. Wiki also has "Automagical Linking" that handles all of the messy details of cross-referencing hyperlinks between the pages in the Wiki. The result is a very rich reading experience.

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Consensus Polling

Consensus Polling is about winning together or refusing to play the game. It is only really appropriate when a group of individuals desire to collectively solve a problem that affects them all. It seeks to avoid voting for candidate options when such a vote would generate winners and losers and thus divide the community that must support the result of the collective decision.

Rather than a menu of candidates to choose from, the entire process is controlled by an evolving YES/NOT YET barometer or acceptance meter. The acceptance meter reflects the suitability of a single community-owned community-developed collaborative solution. All participants are free to change their status at any time. A YES status says "I believe the current articulation of our solution is good enough." A NOT YET status says "I have concerns that haven't been adequately addressed by the current solution." Only when the YES number passes some high, pre-specified threshold (e.g., 90%) can the solution proposed be considered to reflect the consensus of the community.

The 4 Parts of a Consensus Poll

There are four parts of a Consensus Poll. Each part is critical. The following sections describe the mechanics of each of those parts and illustrate them using the following "Odor Mess" example:

Tillamook Oregon is a small dairy farming community on the Oregon Coast. Dairy and tourism are the main drivers of the local economy. The "mess" that the community cares about is this: An odor of cow manure hangs over the town year round.

Handy, the local owner of a hardware store decides to create a Consensus Poll around the "odor mess".

Part 1. Static Only If Contract

This part is created BEFORE the poll begins and describes exactly what levels of participation, commitment of resources, and consensus of those involved must be achieved in order for the "action plan" to become binding (also specifies any other preset conditions such as a cloture threshold that might be needed for larger scale polls). The only way to change the static "contract" is for the owner of the poll to cancel it and start an entirely new poll. This guarantees that the meaning of pledges and YES/NOT YET status never change: "I agree, but only if the minimums in the static contract are exceeded."

Often the language in a consensus poll will include a statement such as "This poll cannot make a negative statement. The results of this poll become meaningful only if the minimums in the static contract are met. Failure to reach the minimums should not be construed as making a statement of any kind."

Odor Mess Static Contract

- Participation Threshold: At least 50 adult residents of Tillamook must participate
- Consensus Threshold: 95%
- "Go" Timer Threshold: 72 Hours
- Closure Threshold: 80%

When I participate in this poll I am essentially saying "I'll agree that we as a community are 'done' and have reached a decision if the Consensus Poll as stated succeeds. If the Consensus Poll withers on the vine and nothing ever comes from it, it doesn't mean anything.

Part 2. YES/NOT YET Acceptance Meter

A "temperature" reading that allows everyone to see whose status is currently NOT YET and whose is YES, and to track progress toward the "go" thresholds. Any participant can change their status from YES to NOT YET or from NOT YET to YES at any time.

Odor Mess - YES/NOT YET Yes Meter

Yes 30% ... Not yet 70%

Handy	Yes	Bill	No yet
Beatrice	Yes	Patricia	Yes
Ward	Not yet		

Part 3. Dynamic Action Plan

The group of participants/pledgers works on the ActionPlan together until it satisfies enough pledgers to pass the "go" thresholds that were laid out in the Static Contract.

Odor Mess - Dynamic Action Plan
Excavate the three acres that the Wilson farm is willing to donate to the project. Then use the nitrogen extraction process that the community in Denmark has used to extract the ...

Part 4. Public Forum

A place for members with NOT YET status to explain their concerns, and for members with YES status to listen to and address the concerns of those who are currently NOT YET.

Odor Mess - Public Forum
Beatrice: "I don't want any cows in the valley!"
Handy: "Is it fair to say that ..."
Beatrice: "No, the thing that really matters is ..."
Ward: "Okay, so is this a better restatement of your interests? You want for ..."
Beatrice: "No, I guess I don't really care about the cows, it's the smell and ..."
Ward: Is it a fair restatement of your interests to say that you "don't want the bad smell because it drives away tourism?"
Beatrice: Yes, thanks Ward. That is a fair restatement of my interests ...

ICANNWiki Welcomes Dan Mendell to the ICANNWiki Team

ICANNWiki would like to welcome Danton (Dan) Mendell to the dedicated staff of ICANNWiki where he will be heading up the Management and Development of this important ICANN and Internet technologies Community Resource.

Dan is currently the President & CEO of Neutral Space, Inc. a start-up company whose focus is refining and deploying new collaborative technologies such as Wikis and Blogs into a multitude of newly enabled markets.

He comes to ICANNWiki from emark Solutions, a B2B Outreach and Event Marketing firm. Before that, he Founded 1-800 Support, a leading CRM call center and outsourcing company which was acquired and ultimately sold to ACS.

Dan holds a BSEE from Clarkson University and MSEE from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and an MBA from the school of hard knocks. Dan loves to travel, he is also an avid snow skier, water skier, certified scuba diver, and a real nice guy.

A Concise Guide to the Major Internet Bodies

By Alexander Simonelis

This article originally appeared in The Association for Computing Machinery's Ubiquity, Volume 6, Issue 5, (February 15 - February 22, 2005).

The bodies responsible for the Internet's protocols and parameters can be said to steer the Internet in a significant sense. This document, by Alex Simonelis of Dawson College in Montreal, is a summary of those bodies and their most important characteristics.

1. **Introduction**

Who steers the Internet? "The Internet, a loosely-organized international collaboration of autonomous, interconnected networks, supports host-to-host communication through voluntary adherence to open protocols and procedures defined by Internet Standards." [1]. While this definition is essentially correct, its emphasis might give the reader the impression that no one is at the helm of the Internet. That conclusion would be wrong. Certain protocols, and the parameters required for their usage, are essential in order to operate on the Internet. A number of bodies have become responsible for those protocol standards and parameters. It can be fairly said that those bodies steer the Internet in a significant sense. This document is a summary of those bodies and their most important characteristics.

The bodies belong to three major nexuses. Links, both formal and informal, exist between the nexuses.

Almost all Internet technological standards are developed and set by the group consisting of the Internet Society (ISOC) and the units operating under the auspices of ISOC: the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG), the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the Internet Research Steering Group (IRSG), the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF), and the RFC Editor. It is important to note that, while these units are responsible to ISOC, ISOC allows them a large degree of independence in their technical work.

Internet domain names and IP addresses are the province of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and its Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA).

World Wide Web standards are developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

It should be noted that the direction of the Internet's physical network structure is not addressed in this document. That structure is essentially determined by a large number of mainly commercial network operators, ranging from small to intercontinental, that build and join their infrastructures in response to market forces, in order to provide them to subscribers on a paid basis. These networks that form the Internet are linked in a topology similar to that of a large, well-developed highway system.

2. **ISOC**

ORGANIZATION: In 1991, the large growth of the Internet, including its commercial sector, and the Internet community's need for a formal organization to provide a legal home for the standards bodies of that time (IETF, etc.) led to the formation, under the auspices of the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI), of the Internet Society. In January 1992, the Internet Society was chartered as a U.S. District of Columbia non-profit corporation.

GOVERNANCE: ISOC is governed by its Board of Trustees.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: ISOC welcomes individuals and organizations as members. Individuals in the Internet community have ample opportunity to participate in ISOC and its component bodies.

MISSION/GOALS: ISOC's mission is "To assure the open development, evolution and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world." [2]. As one of its most important tasks, it "facilitates open development of standards, protocols, administration and the technical infrastructure of the Internet" [2], and so it is the organizational and legal home for most of the groups that are responsible for developing Internet technical standards.

FUNDING: ISOC is funded mainly from organization member fees.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: IAB, IESG, IETF, IRSG, IRTF, RFC Editor.

3. **IETF**

ORGANIZATION: The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) held its first meeting in 1986. It is a loosely self-organized, large, grass roots technical group consisting of network administrators, designers, researchers, vendors, users, etc. In its broader sense, IETF is used to refer to IETF, IAB, IESG, IRSG, IRTF and RFC Editor as a collective.

GOVERNANCE: The IETF is not a formal body, and has no board of directors. It operates as an activity of ISOC and is responsible to it. For its technical work, it is divided into broad units called areas, each led by the Area Director(s) (ADs). ADs are proposed by the nominating committee (the Nomcom) of the IETF, and appointed by the IAB. The areas are divided into more specialized working groups (WGs), each with chair(s). WG chairs serve at the pleasure of the appropriate AD. IETF has a chair who is proposed by the nominating committee of the IETF, and then appointed by the voting members of the IAB, not including the incumbent IETF chair. The IETF chair is also the chair of IESG. WG and AD decisions are subject to appeal to the IESG.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: There is no formal membership. Generally, attendance at IETF meetings and subscription to IETF mailing lists is open to all volunteers. Participants are expected to contribute as individuals, rather than as representatives of companies or organizations.

MISSION/GOALS: The IETF concerns itself with the engineering and architecture of the Internet. It is the principal body that develops, tests and implements new Internet technological standards, including protocols. The IETF proposes standards to the IESG.

FUNDING: The IETF, including its small Secretariat, is largely self-funded via IETF meeting attendance fees. A relatively small percentage of IETF's budget is contributed by ISOC.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IAB, IESG, RFC Editor, ICANN, IANA, W3C.

4. **IESG**
ORGANIZATION: Formed in 1989, the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG) is the management group of the IETF.

GOVERNANCE: The IESG operates as an activity of ISOC and is responsible to it. The IESG is led by the IETF/IESG chair. IESG decisions are subject to appeal to the IAB.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: The members are the Area Directors of IETF, the chair of IETF/IESG and a small number of ex-officio and liaison members.

MISSION/GOALS: The IESG vets and approves IETF standards, and generally manages the standards process according to the policies and procedures ratified by the ISOC Trustees. The IESG creates IETF working groups, etc.

FUNDING: The IESG is largely self-funded. ISOC contributes.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IAB, IETF, RFC Editor, IANA.

5. **IRTF**
ORGANIZATION: Formed in 1989, the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF) is a self-organized research group.

GOVERNANCE: The IRTF is divided into research groups (RGs), each with chair(s). RG chairs may be removed by the IRTF chair, subject to appeal to the IAB. The IAB appoints the chair of the IRTF. The IRTF chair reports to the IAB.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: Since RGs are expected to be long-term groups, and to encourage the kind of working relationships such groups may need, membership in RGs may be open or closed, in contrast with IETF WGs, which are always open. Participants are expected to contribute as individuals, rather than as representatives of companies or organizations.

MISSION/GOALS: While the IETF focuses on engineering and standards, the IRTF focuses on research. The IRTF investigates Internet topics that are too uncertain or too advanced to be standardized at the moment. When IRTF produces a specification that is suitable for standardization, it is processed via IETF.
FUNDING: The IRTF is largely self-funded. ISOC contributes.
ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IAB, IRSG.

6. **IRSG**
ORGANIZATION: Formed in 1989, the Internet Research Steering Group (IRSG) is the management group of the

IRTF.

GOVERNANCE: The IRTF chair leads the IRSG. The IRTF chair reports to the IAB.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: The IRSG consists of the chairs of the IRTF research groups, the chair of IRTF, and possibly at-large members from the research community.

MISSION/GOALS: The IRTF chair manages the IRTF in consultation with the IRSG.

FUNDING: The IRSG is largely self-funded. ISOC contributes.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IAB, IRTF.

7. **IAB**
ORGANIZATION: In June of 1992, the Internet Society chartered the Internet Architecture Board (IAB) as one of its components. The ancestor of the IAB was the Internet Configuration Control Board (ICCB), a technical advisory group formed by Vint Cerf of DARPA in 1979. The ICCB was replaced by the Internet Advisory Board (IAB) in 1984, which became the Internet Activities Board in 1986, which was chartered as the Internet Architecture Board in June, 1992.

GOVERNANCE: ISOC has jurisdiction over the IAB but allows it a large degree of independence in its operations. With respect to technology, the IAB is considered to be a committee of the IETF.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: IAB voting members are proposed by the nominating committee of the IETF, and are then appointed by the ISOC Board of Trustees. The IETF chair, who is chair of IESG as well, is also a voting member. The voting members select one of themselves to serve as chair of IAB. Non-voting members, mainly from associated bodies, also exist. Members serve as individuals, and not as representatives of companies or organizations.

MISSION/GOALS: ISOC mandates the IAB to oversee the architecture of the Internet, including its protocols and other standards. IESG decisions may be appealed to the IAB. IAB rulings are final, with the exception that claims that the IAB proceeded unreasonably may be appealed to the ISOC Board of Trustees. The appointment of an organization as RFC Editor is subject to IAB approval. The IAB claims, on behalf of the IETF, to appoint the organization which is to act as IANA (see sections 9 and 10 below). The IAB appoints the IETF Area Directors and the IETF chair on recommendation of the IETF, as well as the IRTF chair. The IAB advises ISOC's Board, and carries out technical external liaison on behalf of ISOC.

FUNDING: The IAB is largely self-funded. ISOC contributes.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IESG, IETF, IRSG, IRTF, RFC Editor, ICANN, IANA.

8. **RFC Editor**
ORGANIZATION: The RFC document series was initiated by UCLA's Steve Crocker in 1969, and maintained originally at the SRI Network Information Center, then at USC ISI. Jon Postel of USC ISI headed the RFC Editor for decades until his passing in 1998. The RFC Editor is currently a small department operated by USC ISI for ISOC.

GOVERNANCE: ISOC appoints an organization as RFC Editor on the recommendation of IAB. The IAB vets the general policy followed by the RFC Editor.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: ISOC appointees.

MISSION/GOALS: The RFC Editor is the organization that edits, manages, publishes and maintains the authoritative archive of the Request For Comments (RFC) documents, which are the Internet's documents of record.

FUNDING: ISOC funds the RFC Editor.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ISOC, IAB, IESG, IETF, IANA.

9. **ICANN**
ORGANIZATION: In the late '90s, the U.S. government was completing implementation of its decision to privatize

the Internet. The implementation called for the continued operational stability of the Internet, including its Domain Name System. In 1998, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was chartered as a California non-profit corporation for this purpose. It can be regarded as a technical coordinating and regulatory body.

GOVERNANCE: ICANN is governed by its Board of Directors. The majority of Directors are selected by ICANN's nominating committee. A number of others are appointed by ICANN's supporting organizations. Directors are expected to serve as individuals, not as representatives. The U.S. Department of Commerce gives ICANN authorization to perform the IANA function via a renewable contract which contains a number of reporting requirements. For the more technical aspects of its operations, ICANN and its Board rely on the IETF and the IAB for information and guidance.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: ICANN has neither individual nor organizational members in the ordinary sense. Its supporting organizations and advisory committees generally provide a great deal of feedback to the Board on the issues of the day, and ICANN regards them as its constituents. They span the globe and cover a broad range of interests: technical, commercial, governmental, academic and user-oriented. Individuals in the Internet community have some opportunity for participation in ICANN, mainly through its advisory committee structure.

MISSION/GOALS: ICANN's revised articles of incorporation state that "... the Corporation shall, except as limited by Article 5 hereof, pursue the charitable and public purposes of lessening the burdens of government and promoting the global public interest in the operational stability of the Internet by (i) coordinating the assignment of Internet technical parameters as needed to maintain universal connectivity on the Internet; (ii) performing and overseeing functions related to the coordination of the Internet Protocol ("IP") address space; (iii) performing and overseeing functions related to the coordination of the Internet domain name system ("DNS"), including the development of policies for determining the circumstances under which new top-level domains are added to the DNS root system; (iv) overseeing operation of the authoritative Internet DNS root server system; and (v) engaging in any other related lawful activity in furtherance of items (i) through (iv)." [3]. The articles further state that ICANN "shall operate for the benefit of the Internet community as a whole, carrying out its activities in conformity with relevant principles of international law and applicable international conventions and local law and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with these Articles and its Bylaws, through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets. To this effect, the Corporation shall cooperate as appropriate with relevant international organizations." Among ICANN's most demanding responsibilities are the creation of top-level domains and the (re-)delegation of domain registries.

FUNDING: ICANN is funded mainly from domain name and IP address registries and registrars. Its budget includes funds for a number of staff, headed by a President/CEO and including an Ombudsman.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: IANA, U.S. Department of Commerce, IAB, IETF, W3C.

10. **IANA**

ORGANIZATION: The tasks that the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) performs began in the early '70s. Those and ensuing tasks were performed, and the organization was led, by Jon Postel for decades. Formally, IANA is said to be a service or set of functions. In practical terms, it is a subsidiary organization of ICANN.

GOVERNANCE: In March, 2003, the U.S. Department of Commerce awarded its most recent contract to ICANN to perform the IANA functions. ICANN operates IANA under the authority of the U.S. government. IANA works collegially with the IAB, IESG and IETF in carrying out its mission.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: ICANN appointees.

MISSION/GOALS: IANA oversees IP address allocation, manages the DNS (this includes root server system oversight and top-level domain delegation), and coordinates protocol parameter assignment. All Internet domain names and IP addresses are allocated from IANA, either directly or, much more likely, indirectly through IANA's delegation of authority via a worldwide system of Internet registries and registrars.

FUNDING: ICANN funds IANA.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: ICANN, IAB, IESG, IETF, RFC Editor.

11. **W3C**

ORGANIZATION: The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) was founded by Tim Berners-Lee in October, 1994 at

MIT in collaboration with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN).

GOVERNANCE: The W3C is a group hosted by MIT in the U.S., the European Research Consortium in Informatics and Mathematics (ERCIM) in Europe, and Keio University in Japan (the Hosts). The W3C is responsible to the Hosts, who maintain a Steering Committee that sets general policy and strategy for W3C from time to time; the majority of the Steering Committee are either from, or appointed by, MIT. W3C calls its technical tasks "Activities", and groups them into broad units called domains. Activities are carried out by Working Group(s) (for technical work), Interest Group(s) (for general work) and Coordination Group(s) (for group coordination). Groups have a chair and consist of member representatives, Team representatives and invited experts. The Team is the Hosts' technical and staff corps that leads Activities and manages the W3C. The Team includes the Director, the Chief Operating Officer, the W3C Chair, W3C Fellows, and others. The Director: has responsibility and authority for overall direction of W3C, is the chief technical architect, chairs the Technical Architecture Group (TAG), appoints group chairs, hears appeals of working group decisions, is appointed by MIT and reports to the Director of MIT's Lab for Computer Sciences. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for worldwide operations and general management of W3C. The W3C Chair, appointed by MIT, is responsible for member relations and external liaison. The Advisory Committee (AC) is the general assembly of the membership, with one representative from each member; it reviews proposed Activities and recommendations, and suggests future directions for the W3C. The Advisory Board, elected by the Advisory Committee, is the representative council of the membership; its chair is appointed by the Team; it is not a board of directors; it gives guidance to the Team on legal issues, strategy, administration, structures, process, etc., and can do so in between Advisory Committee meetings, which are infrequent.

MEMBERSHIP/COMPOSITION: The W3C is structured, and membership is priced, to have organizations as members. Individuals in the Internet community have limited opportunity for participation in W3C, mainly via those W3C mailing lists that are public.

MISSION/GOALS: "The mission of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is to lead the World Wide Web to its full potential by developing common protocols that promote its evolution and ensure its interoperability." [4]. The W3C develops, tests and implements new Web technological standards ("recommendations" in W3C parlance). The W3C is similar to the IETF in that it develops technological standards, but its focus is more tightly directed, at the Web and associated technologies.

FUNDING: W3C is funded mainly from organization member fees, and some grants. Its budget includes funds for a number of staff and collaborative resources.

ASSOCIATED BODIES: IETF, ICANN.

12. **Acknowledgments**

Thanks to Dawson College. Thanks to Tim Berners-Lee, Bob Braden, Vint Cerf and Ian B. Jacobs for their constructive reviews of major portions of this document.

13. **References**

[1] Internet Activities Board, "The Internet Standards Process" - RFC1310, RFC Editor, March 1992.

[2] ISOC, URL http://www.isoc.org/isoc/mission/, February 2005.

[3] ICANN, URL http://www.icann.org/general/articles.htm, February 2005.

[4] W3C, URL http://www.w3c.org/Consortium/Process, February 2005.

14. **Author Information**

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Author's Note

The reader should be aware that this document was submitted to the RFC Editor as a proposed RFC, and rejected, essentially because it contains some points that were judged to be too controversial. For example, this paper describes ICANN as a technical coordinating and regulatory body; the senior leadership of ICANN, however, maintains that ICANN is definitely not a regulatory body, which is clearly contrary to reality. On another point, some groups described herein have contradictory views on which body has jurisdiction over IANA. Furthermore, there are differences of opinion regarding the degree of independence of the IETF from ISOC, and therefore any statement that takes a position will be considered controversial by some. And so it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a document to treat this subject matter in a concise and accurate way, and at the same time avoid controversy. In any case, it is the author's conviction that this document does achieve objectivity by using historical and legal facts as its basis.