ICP-2: Criteria for Establishment of New Regional Internet Registries

IMPORTANT NOTICE. The following Internet Coordination Policy is being posted for the information of the Internet community. It contains a statement of policy followed by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) in administering the system for allocation and assignment of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

This document was developed through ICANN's Address Supporting Organization (ASO) with the assistance of APNIC, ARIN, and RIPE NCC, was recommended by the ASO's Address Council, and on 4 June 2001 was [accepted by the ICANN Board of Directors](https://www.icann.org/minutes/prelim-report-04jun01.htm#01.67) as a statement of essential requirements for the recognition of new Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), in supplementation to section 9 of the ASO-Memorandum of Understanding, and acknowledged it as a framework for consideration of applications for recognition of new RIRs.

General comments:

* This policy is stated here as a globally coordinated document, but the ASO AC website mentions it as a Global Policy ([Current Global Policies | The Address Supporting Organization (ASO ICANN)](https://aso.icann.org/policy/global/current-global-policies/)) and the NRO website as well ([Global Policy | The Number Resource Organization (nro.net)](https://www.nro.net/policy/global/))
* RIRs and ICANN feedbacks are important to be got
* To review this document should be a task received from the NRO EC. So ASO AC’s deliverable should be to the NRO EC
* What is missing that was not foreseen 20+ years ago?
  + Certification of what an RIR is on an ongoing basis
  + The process to make sure that an RIR is in good standing
  + The possibility to terminate an RIR

**Criteria for Establishment of New Regional Internet Registries**(accepted 4 June 2001)

**Abstract**

This document details criteria for establishment (or termination ?) of new Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), which may be delegated responsibility for management of Internet resources within a given region of the globe.

The RIRs which currently share global responsibility for Internet resource management (that is, APNIC, ARIN and RIPE NCC) have developed this document cooperatively, in response to a request from ICANN. As requested, this document provides criteria and guidelines specifically for ICANN to take into account when evaluating applications for recognition of new RIRs.

**Introduction**

IP address space is currently distributed by the three existing RIRs that receive address space from IANA and allocate it further to Local Internet Registries (LIRs) or Internet Service Providers (ISPs). These LIRs[\*](https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/new-rirs-criteria-2012-02-25-en#fnstar), in turn, assign addresses to end-users for use in operational networks.

This well established registry system has been developed within the communities that need and use IP address space for their operations and businesses. It has evolved over the past 10 years and is based on structures and procedures that are open, transparent, and now deeply embedded.

At the time of writing, the five existing RIRs cover a service area that spans the entire world, namely the following regions:

* Europe and the Middle East (RIPE NCC)
* Africa (ARIN & RIPE NCC)
* North America (ARIN)
* Latin America including the Caribbean (ARIN)
* Asia-Pacific (APNIC)

It is realistic to assume that new RIRs will be established in the future to serve some of the above regionsica. However, in order to ensure globally fair distribution of IP address space, and to minimise address space fragmentation, it is expected that the number of RIRs will remain small.

According to the Address Supporting Organisation Memorandum of Understanding (ASO MoU) it is the responsibility of ICANN to approve the establishment of new RIRs (or termination ?). This document describes a number of principles for the successful establishment and operation of an RIR. The existing RIRs agree that these criteria are essential preconditions for the approval of new RIRs, and that they provide ICANN with the minimum guidelines needed when evaluating applications for recognition of new RIRs.

(\*) For the purposes of this document, any reference to LIRs can be taken to mean LIRs and ISPs.

**Principles**

The evaluation criteria for new RIRs are listed below. The numbering which is used is not significant – all criteria are considered essential in an organisation which is proposing to establish a new RIR.

**1) The region of coverage should meet the scale to be defined by ICANN, given the need to avoid global address fragmentation**

The proposed RIR must operate internationally in a large geographical region of approximately continental size.

Each region should be served by a single RIR, established under one management and in one location. The establishment of multiple RIRs in one region is likely to lead to:

* fragmentation of address space allocated to the region;
* difficulty for co-ordination and co-operation between the RIRs;
* confusion for the community within the region.

The internal administrative or membership structure of an RIR must also not be such as to cause any of these effects.

**2) The new RIR must demonstrate that it has the broad support of the LIRs (ISP community) in the proposed region**

Clear consensus must be demonstrated within the community that a very substantial majority of the ISPs (not only) in the region are prepared to support the new RIR. The community must state that it is interested in receiving services from this new RIR and that they are convinced the new RIR can and will provide this. The community must also show that it is willing to support this new RIR vigorously, not only with their active participation in its bottom-up development but also financially.

The new RIR must show that every effort has been made to contact and convince existing LIRs in their region to gather support for the establishment of a new RIR in this region (e.g. by way of archives of public mailing lists, web sites, records of contacts with individual LIRs).

It must be demonstrated that when established the new RIR's membership will include a significant percentage of the existing LIRs within the new RIR's region of coverage, specifically including those LIRs already receiving IP address registration services and/or other related services from an existing RIR.

This point is critical, as it may be difficult to "force" an LIR to go to a new RIR, if they are already being served by an existing RIR. At the same time it would not be logical for some LIRs to be getting address registration services from an existing RIR and others from a new RIR.

Eventually, the entire region should be served by the new RIR and the existing RIRs must be able to propose to their customers from this region to migrate existing service agreements to the new RIR.

**3) Bottom-up self-governance structure for setting local policies**

The new RIR needs to have and to clearly document defined procedures for the development of resource management policies which may be implemented regionally, as well as those that may be recommended to the Address Council for consideration as global policies. These procedures must be open and transparent, be accessible to all interested parties, and ensure fair representation of all constituencies within the region.

These procedures should include holding at least one annual policy development meeting that is open and accessible to all interested parties.

In addition to public meetings, the new RIR needs to maintain public archived mailing lists to discuss policy development.

Further, the new RIR should have the capability to undertake its responsibility to host an Address Council General Assembly Meeting, as described in section 5 of the ASO MoU.

**4) Neutrality and impartiality in relation to all interested parties, and particularly the LIRs**

All organisations that receive service from the new RIR must be treated equally. The policies and guidelines proposed and implemented by the RIR need to ensure fair distribution of resources, and impartial treatment of the members/requestors.

The new RIR should be established as an independent, not-for-profit and open membership association.

**5) Technical expertise**

The new RIR must be technically capable of providing the required allocation and registration services to the community in its region. Specific technical requirements include provisioning by the RIR of:

* production grade global Internet connectivity, in order to provide access to all services offered and for exchange of registry data to and from the other RIR-whois database server(s);
* DNS servers to support Reverse DNS delegation;
* suitable internal infrastructure for operational purposes; and
* enough technically capable staff to ensure appropriate service levels to the LIRs, and to the Internet community.

**6) Adherence to global policies regarding address space conservation, aggregation and registration**

Policies of the new RIR must be established to ensure that the main goals of the registry system, in particular conservation of IP address space and aggregation of routing information, are respected. Furthermore, local policies that are developed in addition to established global policies need to be consistent with these and other global policy goals. All RIR policies need to be fully documented and publicly accessible.

**7) Activity plan**

With its application for recognition, the new RIR should provide a published activity plan containing activities that are clearly within the purview of an RIR, and which is explicitly supported by the community of organisations supporting the new RIR.

It is recommended that new RIRs should not restrict activities exclusively to IP address allocations and assignments (registration services). Traditionally, the neutral and independent nature of RIRs have encouraged their use by their communities for wider support, communication, education and/or co-ordination purposes. Activities provided by existing RIRs in addition to registration services include: technical training, public mailing list maintenance, information services, database maintenance, meeting organisation, and general liaison and co-ordination tasks. However, any such additional activities should always be supported by the RIR's membership as consistent with both the basic operating principles of RIRs and the interests of the members.

However, it is strongly recommended that the new RIR should not be involved in forward domain name assignment or administration, due to the entirely different user communities, geographic boundaries, policy environments, and business models which are involved. So different are the requirements of DNS and Internet resource related functions, that where located within one organisation, they would compete destructively for resources, or else be eventually partitioned into separate independent organisations.

**8) Funding model**

As mentioned, the new RIR should be established as a not-for-profit association. A budget related to the activity plan must be drawn up and published, and should demonstrate explicit support from the community of organisations supporting the new RIR.

Initial sponsorship, government grants and private grants and/or donations are perfectly acceptable, but the RIR must be demonstrably independent and autonomous in its operations. For this reason, it is seen as inevitable that a new RIR would eventually be financially independent, and financially supported entirely by its membership.

**9) Record Keeping**

All RIRs must maintain proper records of all registry activities, including the archiving of all information collected from LIRs in the process of making IP address space assignments. This data is needed for internal purposes (namely, the evaluation of subsequent requests from the same customers), and also to maintain the auditability of RIR operations, essential in demonstrating responsible and neutral operations.

English is considered the official language of the registry system. Therefore, core registry documentation and records which may be subject to frequent review by (or exchange with) other RIRs, IANA or ICANN must be available at all times in English. In addition information which may be required for operational audit of RIR procedures must be able to be provided in English within a reasonable timeframe.

This policy document does not detail precisely which information may be classified as "core documentation." The Emerging RIR should propose in its application an auditable procedure for Registry Record Keeping in English.

**10) Confidentiality**

Information collected by a RIR in the registration process must be kept in strict confidence, and used for registration purposes only. It must be transmitted only to another RIR or IANA upon request, but will not be transmitted to any other party unless explicitly agreed to in writing by the LIR/ISP served.

RIRs may establish their own local standards and policies for confidentiality, providing that the basic confidentiality provisions are maintained.