

Chairs Elections Process

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Problem Statement

- Even if this was clear before, recent events demonstrated that the co-Chairs selection is not good enough
- There is not sufficient detail in the actual PDP

Issues

1. How they are selected
 - Who can be a co-chair
 - How is the actual process
 - How much time
 - How to ensure experience
 - And diversity?
2. Who selects them
3. What if they step-down or are recalled
4. Resolution of exceptional situations

Summary of the problem

- The Policy Development Working Group (PDWG) discusses very briefly how the chairs are chosen.
- However, there is not sufficient detail about the candidate requirements, neither a complete process.

Proposed Text (1)

3.3 The Policy Development Working Group (PDWG)

The Policy Development Working Group (PDWG) discusses about the proposals. Anyone may participate via the Internet or in person. PDWG work is carried out through the Resource Policy Discussion mailing list (rpd@afrinic.net) and the bi-annual AFRINIC Public Policy Meetings (PPM). Any person, participating either in person or remotely, is considered to be part of the Policy Development Working Group.

The Policy Development Working Group has two Chairs to perform its administrative functions. The PDWG Chairs are chosen by the AFRINIC community during the Public Policy Meeting and serve staggered two-year terms. The term ends during the first Public Policy Meeting corresponding to the end of the term for which they were appointed. A term may begin or end no sooner than the first day of the Public Policy Meeting and no later than the last day of the Public Policy Meeting as determined by the mutual agreement of the current Chair and the new Chair.

If the Working Group Chair is unable to serve his or her full term, the Working Group may select a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. If the Working Group Chairs are unable to attend the Public Policy Meeting, the Working Group shall nominate a Chair for the session. Anyone present at the meeting, whether in person or by remote participation, may participate in the selection process for a temporary Chair.

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If both Working Group Chairs are unable to attend the PPM, the Board will on-the-spot designate a non-conflictive Chair for the session, that will be assisted by the staff.

Proposed Text (2)

3.3.1 About the PDWG Chairs

3.3.1.1. AFRINIC staff will assist the chairs in their responsibilities, however can't serve as PDWG chair.

3.3.1.2. PDWG chair is incompatible with other roles that are directly involved in the policy development process in any of its phases. If this were the case, the candidate's nomination must specify how they will solve this situation should they be elected. Thus, if they are elected, they will automatically cease in (or not take possession of, as the case may be) such incompatible positions, as specified in their nomination.

3.3.1.3. Diversity (gender, countries/regions, organizations, etc.) is highly encouraged. Consequently, both chairs can't be from the same country, gender or organization (or related ones), except in exceptional situations where there are no other acceptable candidates.

3.3.1.4. Chair position is voluntary and unpaid.

3.3.1.5. To run for the PDWG Co-Chair position, a candidate must be nominated by two resource-holder contacts of an AFRINIC member.

3.3.1.6. PDWG Chairs will each serve staggered two-year terms. PDWG Chairs may only be re-elected for one consecutive term but are eligible to run again after a minimum one-year pause.

3.3.1.7. Candidates must have been part of the RPD List for at least 12 months prior to the start of the election process.

3.3.1.8. In addition to the candidate's biographical information, nomination references, nominations must include specific information that allows assessing their contribution, participation and experience in the PDWG. The candidates must also provide information about what they will like to achieve during their term and possible improvements to the PDWG. A short candidacy presentation video will be provided.

Proposed Text (3)

3.3.2 About the election of the Chairs

3.3.2.1. Calls for nominations will be announced through the RPD List.

3.3.2.2. Voting will be conducted electronically, using mechanisms to ensure, as much as possible, that each voter can cast only one vote.

3.3.2.3. Anyone who has been part of the RPD List for at least 6 months prior to the start of the election process may participate.

3.3.2.4. Any use of the list for electoral purposes, even when by persons clearly supportive of a candidate, may result in their disqualification, if there is evidence of collusion.

3.3.2.5. If at any time during the process there are sufficient indications of fraud, affected candidates may be disqualified. If necessary, the entire process may be invalidated and repeated, in which case a timeline will be set such that the timing of the election results will coincide as much as possible with the following PPM.

3.3.2.6. The election process begins with a call for candidates issued on the 1st day of the month, 3 full months prior to the end of the term of the chair being replaced. This phase will remain open for 28 to 31 days (natural length of that month).

3.3.2.7. AFRINIC will communicate the names of acceptable candidates to the RPD List, announcing where candidate information will be published.

3.3.2.8. A period of 10 calendar days will then begin during which the community will be able to contribute relevant information on the candidates. This information, if confirmed, might be published simultaneously for all candidates on the first working day following the end of the 10-day period. As a result of that information, the Board could disqualify any candidate.

Proposed Text (4)

3.3.2.9. Voting will begin on the first working Monday after the period specified above and will remain open for 4 calendar days.

3.3.2.10. In case of tie, runoff voting among the candidates with the highest number of votes will begin the following working Monday and will remain open for 7 calendar days.

3.3.2.11. AFRINIC will announce as soon as possible, the results of the first voting round as well as those of the runoff vote, if applicable.

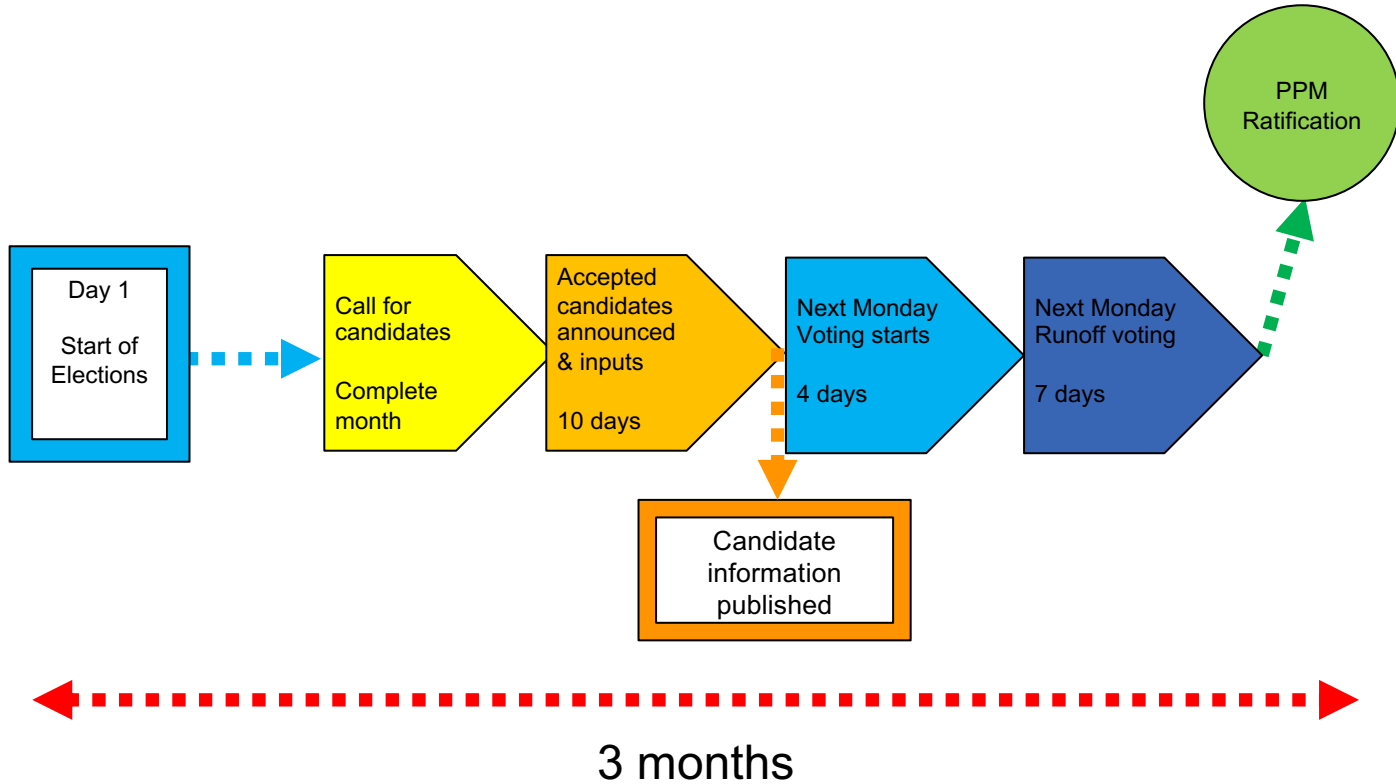
3.3.2.12. If any objections are raised by a member of the community, such objections must be communicated to the Board within 7 calendar days of the announcement of the results. The Board will then assess whether such objections are significant and have been proven. If no objections are raised, or if those aren't considered, will proceed to ratify the winning candidate.

3.3.2.13. Elected chairs will begin their term immediately after the closing of the next PPM.

3.3.2.14. If it were not possible to ratify a candidate, the Board will appoint a chair to fill the vacant position until the following PPM. The next time an election and ratification process can be conducted, the person elected will only fill the position for the remainder of the original term. This same mechanism will apply, if necessary, in case either of the chairs resigns before the end of their term or for any reason fails to meet their responsibilities.

3.3.2.15. The Board is the highest instance of appeal in matters relating to the election process. The board may delegate some or all of the required functions into the Election and Nomination Committees.

Process Flow



References

- Similar policies or procedures defined by the community, for the same purpose, also exist in the other regions.
 - In the case of APNIC, in order to be elected by the community, candidates must have specific knowledge and expertise that varies depending on each specific working group.
<https://www.apnic.net/community/participate/sigs/sig-guidelines/chair-elections/>
 - In the case of ARIN, instead of chairs, they have an “Advisory Council” (AC) whose members are elected through a NomCom. This NomCom assesses candidates based on a set of skills and considering their expertise and prior participation, using a candidate qualification questionnaire.
<https://www.arin.net/participate/oversight/elections/>
<https://www.arin.net/participate/oversight/elections/procedures/>
 - In the case of RIPE, the chair selection process is established by the participants of each working group. These processes are generally similar and share a common link, with expectations of the work to be done, knowledge of this work, etc.
<https://www.ripe.net/participate/ripe/wg/ap/address-policy-wg-chair-selection-process>
<https://www.ripe.net/publications/docs/ripe-692>
 - In the case of LACNIC, an equivalent proposal is under discussion.
<https://politiclas.lacnic.net/politiclas/detail/id/LAC-2019-7>

Responses to Impact Analysis (1)

3. AFRINIC Staff Clarification Requests

- “Authors to clarify what are the roles that are directly involved in the PDP”
 - This may change over the time. Right now it is clear that this is the case for a board member, an appeal/elections committee member, ICANN board and NRO/ASO AC.

Responses to Impact Analysis (2)

- “Section 3.1 of the current CPM states, that "Internet number resource policies are distinctly separate from AFRINIC general business practices and procedures. General business practices and procedures are not within the purview of the Policy Development Process." Nomination criteria and selection (by-election) of co-chairs are usually handled by the NomCom & Election Committee which are organs of the Board of Directors in accordance with Bylaws Section 9&10 and outside the purview of the PDP.”
 - This is wrong interpretation, because the 3.1 clearly indicates “Internet Number Resource Policies”, not the PDP. The ICANN ICP-2 indicates that the PDP must be consensus-based with bottom-up approach, and the mission of AFRINIC in the PDP is oversight, and that imply following the community decision also regarding the elections.
 - Bylaws (9) indicate “for the election of the directors of AFRINIC”, no mention of the PDP co-chairs.
 - Bylaws (10) are trying to overrule (“all elections held by AFRINIC”) the community, but doesn’t specify the PDP, which is an Internet Community matter, not an AFRINIC matter, unless stated by the PDP, which can be amended by the community at any time, no matter what the bylaws indicate. The bylaws have NO EFFECT over the community, only on the membership matters.

Responses to Impact Analysis (3)

- “Can the authors clarify what "The board may delegate some or all of the required functions into the Election and Nomination Committees." means in Section 3.3.2.15.”
 - If this proposal reach consensus, then the community is empowering the board to follow the community decided procedure to do the elections and even to delegate some of those processes.
- “Section 3.3.2.15 also states that "the Board is the highest instance of appeal for matters related to the election". Does this mean that conflicts related to election shall not be handled in accordance with Section 3.5 of the CPM?”
 - 3.5 is related to “actions taken by the Chairs”, it doesn’t mention anything about elections of the co-chairs, so this proposal clarify that as well.