

Protecting RIRs from bad actors.

A Request by members of APNIC to hold an extraordinary meeting and vote on extending and amending the by-laws to provide additional requirements and protections of the EC council from bad actors.

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Outline

The APNIC Executive Council (EC) serves as the governing board of APNIC, as defined in the APNIC by-laws. Each member of the EC serves a two-year term of office but is eligible for re-election at the end of each term. As part of the APNIC EC's role, it manages the activities, functions and affairs of APNIC, including the establishment of the basis for APNIC's budget and activity plan.

Under the APNIC by-laws, the power for establishing the membership dues/fees for APNIC Members rests with the APNIC EC. The payment of such dues is a condition precedent to effective membership of APNIC.

Over the last few years, certain organisations have been attempting to act in bad faith to secure and control RIRs including AFRINIC and now APNIC through the use of methods that are currently within the rules as outlined within the APNIC constitution and by-laws, including (but not limited to) board stacking and vote influencing.

By stacking the board, these companies aim to restructure how the RIR's operate and profiteer from reselling/leasing of finite resources such as IPv4 addresses and 2-byte/4-byte ASNs.

We've already seen examples of these actors attempting to gain these finite resources. ARIN, who rarely comment on disputes between RIRs and members, issued this release:

<https://www.arin.net/blog/2021/08/27/afrinic-and-the-stability-of-the-internet-number-registry-system/>

Over the last few years, companies like Cloud Innovation, LARUS and the more misleading organisation “Number Resource Society (NRS)”(<https://www.nrs.help/>) have been pushing the narrative that RIRs serve no purpose, and that the democratic process of number assignment and control should be replaced with a more corporate-style structure.

NRS has been instrumental in developing propaganda videos and other media content to paint RIRs in a bad light, removing their importance and undermining the value they provide in the democratic protection of the global internet.

To give a little more context to the NRS’ works, here’s a whistle-blower thread from the RIPE mailing list DEC

2022.(<https://www.ripe.net/ripe/mail/archives/ripe-list-unmoderated/2022-December/001832.html>) you should also review their website [nrs.help](https://www.nrs.help/)

Recently, APNIC has become the new attack target for these actors.

A review of the APNIC EC candidates shows four candidates are directly endorsed by NRS and 5th candidate Kashif Nawaz is indirectly supported by Lu Heng (Kashif has since updated his bio to remove Lu Heng’s reference of support.). All five candidates plan to enact the NRS policies should they gain control.

Should these people be elected to the EC, it will be very hard to stop them from slowly eroding the controls and protections we currently have, and eventually this would spell disaster for the RIR and its members.

Proposed Solution

After consultation with APNIC EC, I have found that the current EC has its hands tied by the current set of by-laws; there’s nothing stopping these people from being elected. However, a change to the by-laws to provide better safeguards and stricter requirements for eligibility could stop them in their tracks.

If enough members lodge a similar request via their portal/EC contacts requesting an extraordinary meeting and amendments to the by-laws, we can force the hand of APNIC to hold a vote.

By-law amendment 1:

To ensure that the EC has a diverse set of representatives, there can be no more than one EC member or EC candidate from any given organisation. This one candidate rule, includes but not limited to any associated Company or Corporation of a member, or any associated NGO. This would be deemed a conflict of interest.

By-law amendment 2:

No EC member or EC candidate can be found to be compensated by a third party, financial or otherwise for election to the EC. This would be deemed unethical and not in the spirit of the Internet.

By-law amendment 3:

No EC member or EC candidate may be found to be vote influencing, purchasing votes or providing incentives through financial or commercial favour.

By-law amendment 4:

Any persons who currently are in litigation with an RIR shall not be at the time eligible to stand for election.

By-law amendment 5:

Any companies currently in litigation with an RIR may not endorse or provide a candidate for EC nomination, until such time as the litigation is resolved.

By-law amendment 6:

Any persons or companies that have been found at fault through litigation will no longer be eligible to participate or nominate in the EC elections.

I welcome feedback on these amendments, I believe these would be instrumental in providing safeguards to our RIRs and members.

It is important that we work together to garnish the numbers necessary to put this to a vote and to communicate with other members and alert them of the dangers this situation poses.

Do your part and help protect the RIRs from these corporations.

Template to send to EC

Dear EC.

Recently it has come to my attention that there are EC candidates who have been involved in underhanded tactics within other RIRs and/or are currently in litigation for practices that go against RIRs current rules.

Our membership feels it's important we hold a vote to strengthen the eligibility requirements for EC candidates.

I am asking EC to hold an extraordinary meeting and membership vote to amend the by-laws for the following:

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Thank you,
<company name>