

This document contains respondents between 9 and 9 inclusive.

1. Do you support the idea of placing relevant stakeholders at the heart of the policy advisory process?

Yes

No

2. Do you support the PAB's proposal for the creation of issues groups to develop policy recommendations in response to stakeholder proposals?

Yes

No

3. Do you agree with the PAB's outline for issues groups (open membership, stakeholder led, time-limited, with a requirement to prepare an impact assessment, and working by consensus)?

Yes

No

Do you have any comments on the way that issues groups might work?

The proposals are opaque as to who decides who creates an issue group. One of the historical problems with the PAB has been that the PAB "work programme" was seen as a document for negotiation between the PAB and the Board. Neither of these parties should really be involved. The PAB should be there to advise Nominet, and the executive can react far more dynamically than referring everything to the board. In my view, Nominet is in the best position to know on what matters it needs advice, Nominet will be paying for the running of the body, and Nominet should thus decide on what it wants to be advised. Ultimately, Nominet should decide on what groups are created, and what their remit is. However, i would expect them to take stakeholder input on this, e.g. through the standing committee.

4. What mechanism should there be for selecting members of issues groups?

In particular, how might we ensure effective participation from Nominet members to bring necessary expertise into the discussions?

This partly depends how the issue groups work. If they are going to work by physical meetings around a table, there is a limit on the number of attendees that work. It would be good if discussion on issues primarily relevant to people with an industry background could take place by mailing list, but I recognise this is not a preferred medium for people outside the industry. Therefore, whilst I would welcome as wide input as possible, I would suggest that in practice it will be necessary to select members, partly to limit numbers, partly to ensure an appropriate balance of expertise and input, and partly to ensure that those concerned have the necessary time to turn up to meetings. However, the experiment with policy working groups in the past suggests that the problem may be insufficient number of people interested.

I would suggest that once it is decided that a new group should be created, Nominet members should be emailed by the secretariat, asking for those interested in participating; this information should also go to other interested communities. If insufficient people reply (or too few people with appropriate backgrounds reply - e.g. no-one with a policing background on an e-crime issue), the secretariat should try and actively recruit. If too many volunteer, a decision will need to be made on the basis of expertise. I would suggest there is some input from the standing committee on this.

5. Do you agree that "permanent" groups might be needed in certain cases?

Yes

No

What issues might benefit from this approach?

Ones that come up regularly and frequently. A cursory examination of past PAB agendas should answer this question.

6. Do you agree that "closed groups" (i.e. groups with invited membership) should be set up when this is necessary?

- Yes
 No

What issues might benefit from this approach?

I think all groups should potentially have some "invited" membership. The question is surely whether the group should have *only* invited members. I think this is probably to be avoided where possible (though I recognise this may not always be possible). An alternative would perhaps be meetings which are closed (but the members might be volunteers) where the person concerned has signed an NDA.

7. Do you agree that a standing committee is necessary to provide some form of independent assessment of, and support for, the issues groups?

- Yes
 No

8. Do you agree that the tasks identified by the PAB for the standing committee are appropriate?

- Yes
 No

9. Do you agree with the range of stakeholders identified by the PAB for the membership of the standing committee?

- Yes
 No

How should members of the standing committee be identified?

In particular, how should Nominet member participation of the standing committee be chosen, bearing in mind the importance of ensuring balance representation?

I am unconvinced the standing committee is necessary. My support for it would depend on how it is constituted.

If it is the case that the executive feel that selecting a subset of stakeholders (from the membership and outside it) is useful for them, then I can see how this might work *if* it is possible to select a committee that actually turn up. But if the idea is to replicate the current PAB election process and PAB appointed member process to generate a committee that is meant to carry out no functions bar those set out above, I think the result will be to replicate the current PAB but worse, i.e. you will have little appointed member attendance, few people standing for election, but the committee will have even fewer things to discuss beyond the administrative.

10. Do you support the proposal for an enhanced secretariat taking an active role in the standing committee of stakeholders and for engaging with external stakeholders?

Yes

No

11. Do you have any further comments on the proposed new policy advisory process?

I am confused by the proposals. Perhaps I read them too quickly, but they don't appear to describe who takes the decision on the selection of issue groups, who selects the chairs of them, how the standing committee would be selected/elected, who chairs it, whether any of these functions are paid or return expenses, how many meetings there would be, and so forth. All these could completely change the nature of the body.

Questions like Q1 of this consultation are "mother's milk and apple pie". The new structure has the possibility of being a great improvement. However, I don't think there is sufficient detail given to tell whether or not this will be the case.

12. Please give us your contact details

Name

Alex Bligh

Company name/Organisation name

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