A Regional Internet Registry

for the

Commonwealth of Independent States

Robert Blokzijl
Daniel Karrenberg
Alexei Platonov

2 October 1997

1. Scope

This memorandum is intended to focus discussion about the establishment of a Regional Internet Registry serving the CIS and surrounding areas. Public comments are invited. The ultimate aim of this process is to achieve rough consensus about the issue within the region concerned. This memo represents the views of the individual authors only. It has not been endorsed by any organisation.

2. Background

Since the start of the RIPE NCC as a regional Internet registry in April 1991 Russia and the other countries of the CIS (former USSR) have been served by the RIPE NCC.

Developments of the last few years however suggest that it is difficult for the RIPE NCC to serve all parts of this area because in practise there exist a number of practical problems. These problems have to do with circumstances caused by:

- local language problems
- time zone differences
- travel difficulties
- effort necessary to organise coordination meetings

If has been suggested more than once that the countries of the CIS in fact form a separate region from Europe that needed special regional support.

Because of these difficulties the RIPE NCC has cooperated with the Russian Institute of Public Networks, RosNIIROS. RosNIIROS is also known by its english acronym: RIPN. RosNIIROS have acted since 1992, in close cooperation with RIPE NCC, as a Local IR of last resort. They also support the Local IR activities of a significant number of ISPs in the region.

3. Local Service Arrangement

As everywhere else in the world, also Russia and the CIS have seen a rapid growth in Internet activities, including a growth in the number of ISPs. Currently about 100 ISPs are active in the region, of which around 60 are located in Russia. The current growth is about 3 new ISPs per month. Most of the new ISPs are located in the Urals region and further east in Siberia. Because of this growth and the difficulties described above, the RIPE NCC is exploring ways to ensure optimal service for these registries.

The RIPE NCC are currently considering to ask RosNIIROS to provide full local support equivalent to that supplied by the Amsterdam RIPE office to local registries in the region that wish to use it. The NCC would remain fully responsible for operations including service level and quality. The NCC would provide all necessary resources to RosNIIROS. Local registries in the region would continue to have a service agreement with the RIPE NCC but have the option to receive service according to their preference from either RosNIIROS or the RIPE NCC, but not both at the same time. We envisage to start this arrangement sometime during the first quarter of 1998. Of course all this will happen under the guidance of the RIPE Local IR working group and IANA.

The subsequent period can then be used by RosNIIROS to gain experience and increase the acceptance of their service. This time will also be used to get a clearer idea of the exact extent of the region served by the potential RIR. We expect this period to last at least 12 months but not more than 24 months.

4. New Regional Registry

We expect that the above arrangement will work well. Because of that it will eventually be used by the majority of the Local IRs in the region. Steps will then be taken to convert the local service arrangement into its own Regional Internet Registry separate from the RIPE NCC. A prerequisite for this is widespread acceptance, appropriate governance mechanisms and a truly international scope.

This whole process needs active involvement of all ISP's in the region in the governance of the Regional IR. RosNIIROS will actively pursue to gain the acceptance and help to put the appropriate governance mechanisms in place.

5. Next Steps

The authors invite a public discussion about this process especially within the CIS region but also within RIPE in general. RIPE NCC and RosNIIROS will take preparatory steps late this year. If the discussion reveals no serious objections the local service arrangement will start sometime during Q1/1998.

6. Addresses of the Authors

Robert Blokzijl
RIPE Chairman
<k13@nikhef.nl>

Daniel Karrenberg
RIPE NCC Manager
<dfk@ripe.net>

Alexei Platonov
RosNIIROS (RIPN) Director
<plat@ripn.net>