

# The RIPE Chair Selection Process

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## Scope

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This document describes the selection of the RIPE Chair and the RIPE Vice Chair. This is an invoking RIPE Document for the purpose of [ripe-728](#). The role of RIPE Chair is described in [ripe-714](#).

## Background

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The first Chair of RIPE, Rob Blokzijl, was selected informally. Until the time of writing the RIPE community had not established a formal process for the selection of RIPE Chairs. When Rob asked Hans Petter Holen to assume the role of RIPE Chair, he suggested that RIPE should establish such a process. This document describes that process. For more details on the background and genesis of this document see Appendix G.

## Principles

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The following broad principles emerged from an extensive community discussion:

- A RIPE Vice Chair role should be re-established.
- The RIPE Chair and the RIPE Vice Chair are selected as a team and their terms are linked.
- The persons selected for the roles of RIPE Chair and RIPE Vice Chair must both be suitable for the role and have the support of the RIPE community.
- A nominating committee drawn from the community selects persons to fill the role of RIPE Chair and RIPE Vice Chair for a term of five years with a two-term limit.
- The nominating committee is selected randomly from community volunteers and is closely modeled on the IETF NomCom.

For details about the community discussions see Appendix G.

# Definitions

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- **The RIPE Chair:** The role of RIPE Chair is described in [ripe-714](#). This document describes the selection of a person for that role. We also describe the tasks of the current RIPE Chair in the process.
- **The RIPE Vice Chair:** This document re-introduces the role of RIPE Vice Chair. The purpose of that role is to provide continuity in case the RIPE Chair resigns or is not able to perform their role. The RIPE Chair may also delegate some of their duties to the RIPE Vice Chair as described in [ripe-714](#).
- **The RIPE Nominating Committee:** The RIPE Nominating Committee (NomCom) selects persons for the RIPE Chair and RIPE Vice Chair roles. The nominating committee consists of randomly selected community volunteers. The NomCom is closely modeled on the IETF NomCom as described in [BCP10](#). The RIPE Nominating Committee and its procedures are described in [ripe-728](#).
- **RIPE NCC Executive Board:** The governing body of the RIPE NCC association. This document calls for the RIPE NCC Executive Board to appoint the NomCom chair and to confirm the selections made by the NomCom. This provides an independent check that the NomCom has followed the process described both here and in [ripe-728](#). This is closely modeled on the confirmation of IAB candidates by the Internet Society Board of Trustees as described in [BCP10](#). The process is described in [ripe-728](#).
- **The Working Group Chairs Collective:** The RIPE WG Chairs Collective consists of all RIPE Working Group Chairs. In exceptional circumstances, this document calls on the RIPE Working Group Chairs Collective when timely action or consultation is needed.
- **RIPE Meeting:** A RIPE Meeting is an event where Internet Service Providers (ISPs), network operators and other interested parties gather to discuss issues of interest to the Internet community. This procedure assumes that there are two RIPE Meetings each year.
  - **Nominations RIPE Meeting:** The RIPE Meeting at which calls for nominations and NomCom volunteers are made. This is normally two meetings before the Transition RIPE Meeting.
  - **Consultation RIPE Meeting:** The RIPE Meeting during which the NomCom consults the community about the nominees. This is normally one meeting before the Transition RIPE Meeting.
  - **Transition RIPE Meeting:** The RIPE Meeting during which the RIPE Chair and RIPE Vice Chair take on their role. This is normally the RIPE Meeting closest to the fifth anniversary of the current RIPE Chair taking on their role.

For an overview of the selection process timeline see Appendix T.

## Eligibility and Term Limit

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Any natural person is eligible for selection unless they have already been selected twice for the role they are nominated for. It does not matter whether the terms are consecutive. Any time a person has served as

"RIPE Chair Ad Interim" does not count towards the term limit. In other words: a person can serve a maximum of two terms in each role in any order and with breaks between terms.

## Term

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The RIPE Chair and RIPE Vice Chair serve until the RIPE Meeting closest to the fifth anniversary of taking on their role, the Transition RIPE Meeting. The terms for both roles start and end at the same time.

## Selection

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This document invokes [ripe-728](#) for the selection procedure.

In summary:

- The NomCom chair issues a call for nominations at the Nominations RIPE Meeting.
- The NomCom checks the eligibility of the nominated persons, confirms whether the nominated persons wish to serve and publishes the list of nominees willing to serve no later than 15 days prior to the Consultation RIPE Meeting.
- During the following period which includes the Consultation RIPE Meeting the NomCom actively solicits input from the entire community. It does so as much as possible in an open and transparent manner while adequately protecting personal information about the candidates.
- The NomCom then selects one person to serve as RIPE Chair and another person to serve as RIPE Vice Chair.
- The RIPE NCC Executive Board establishes that the NomCom has followed proper procedure for each candidate and confirms each candidate.
- The NomCom announces the confirmed candidates before the Transition RIPE Meeting.

## Transition

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At the Transition RIPE Meeting the newly selected persons take on their roles.

## Continuity

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In case the RIPE Chair resigns, the RIPE Vice Chair takes on the role of RIPE Chair and promptly initiates this selection procedure. In case the RIPE Vice Chair is not available either, the RIPE WG Chairs Collective promptly initiates this selection procedure and selects a person to act as RIPE Chair Ad Interim.

In case the RIPE Vice Chair resigns, the RIPE Chair consults the community on how to proceed. They may either select a person to fill the role for the remaining term or decide to initiate this selection procedure.

## Recall

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A serving RIPE Chair or RIPE Vice Chair may be recalled according to the procedure described in [ripe-728](#).

## Pragmatism

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This document is a guideline that explicitly allows ad hoc deviations both for pragmatic reasons and in unforeseen circumstances without having to change this document each time. Any such deviations and the appropriate community involvement should be clearly documented each time.

## References

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### Normative References

[ripe-728] "[The RIPE Nominating Committee](#)", Hans Petter Holen, Mirjam Kühne, Daniel Karrenberg, Anna Wilson, July 2019

### Informative References

[ripe-714] "[The RIPE Chair](#)", Daniel Karrenberg, January 2019

## Acknowledgments

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The authors acknowledge the contributions and efforts of everyone who participated in the community discussions that form the basis on which we were able to build this document. In particular Bijal Sanghani, Randy Bush, Sander Steffann, Brian Nisbet and Jim Reid offered detailed suggestions and comments. Antony Gollan checked our orthography and improved our style.

## Appendix A - About the Authors

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Hans Petter Holen is a RIPE participant since RIPE 22 and the present RIPE Chair. Rob Blokzijl asked him to ensure that the community establishes the procedure described here.

Mirjam Kühne is a RIPE participant since RIPE 19 and a member of the RIPE NCC staff. She took on the task of supporting the community and Hans Petter in this effort.

Daniel Karrenberg is one of the RIPE founders and a member of the RIPE NCC staff. He took on the job of editing this document and writing the bulk of the text.

Anna Wilson is a RIPE participant since RIPE 31. She has led several fairly intense community discussions about this procedure.

## Appendix G - Document Genesis

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In 2014, during the closing plenary at RIPE 68, Rob Blokzijl announced that he would be stepping down as RIPE Chair and handing the role over to the current chair, Hans Petter Holen.

This decision was well supported by the RIPE community. However, it was clear that the process for selecting a future RIPE Chair should be open, transparent and endorsed by the RIPE community as a whole. At the time of the handover, Rob urged the community to establish such a process under its new chair.

In 2016, Hans Petter started the discussion by publishing an article on RIPE Labs:

[https://labs.ripe.net/Members/hans\\_petter\\_holen/draft-ripe-chair-election-procedure](https://labs.ripe.net/Members/hans_petter_holen/draft-ripe-chair-election-procedure)

At the same time an open discussion mailing list was set up: <https://www.ripe.net/mailman/listinfo/ripe-chair-discuss/>

At RIPE 76 in May 2018, Anna Wilson (HEANET, Ireland) led a community discussion (<https://ripe76.ripe.net/archives/video/155/>) to gather input on the elements that form the basis of a proposal which was published on RIPE Labs in July 2018: <https://labs.ripe.net/Members/mirjam/proposal-for-a-ripe-chair-selection-process>

Based on the discussion on the ripe-chair-discuss mailing list, another RIPE Labs article was published documenting the consensus at the time: <https://labs.ripe.net/Members/mirjam/ripe-chair-selection-process>

After that, more people shared their input on the mailing list which led to another face-to-face discussion, again led by Anna Wilson during the closing plenary at RIPE 77 in October 2018:

<https://ripe77.ripe.net/archives/video/2329/>

During that meeting, it was decided to first establish consensus on a description of the role of the RIPE Chair. This was published as ripe-714: <https://www.ripe.net/publications/docs/ripe-714>

The text of this document has been discussed and revised based on community discussions on [The RIPE Chair Discuss List](#) between March 2019 and May 2019.

A final BoF during RIPE 78 concluded without major suggestions for changes and the RIPE Chair announced to the community that he intended to call for consensus on both this document and [ripe-728](#) soon after the meeting. On 4 July 2019, he made [this call](#) on the ripe mailing list; on 30 August he [declared consensus](#).

# Appendix T - Timeline

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This is an overview of the timeline. It is provided for illustration only. The document texts are normative. Some of the deadlines are specified in [ripe-728](#).

The timeline includes a "nominal month" based on the assumption the transition RIPE Meeting will take place in May of year two.

Event	Deadline	Nominal Month
<b>Nominations RIPE Meeting</b>	Two meetings before transition RIPE Meeting	May / 1
Call for nominations	During nomination RIPE Meeting	May / 1
Nominations close	60 days after call for nominations	August / 1
Nominees announced	15 days before consultation RIPE Meeting	Sept / 1
<b>Consultation RIPE Meeting</b>	One meeting before transition RIPE mMeeting	Oct / 1
NomCom makes selection	90 days before transition RIPE Meeting	Feb / 2
Selection Confirmed	30 days after NomCom makes selection	March / 2
Selection Announced	15 days before transition RIPE Meeting	March / 2
<b>Transition RIPE Meeting</b>	Closest to 5th anniversary of previous transition	May / 2
NomCom Report	During transition RIPE Meeting	May / 2
Transition	During transition RIPE Meeting	May / 2