
New Models of Governance – The Roles of Federal Agencies, Advisory Committees, Advisory Groups, Standards Bodies and More

Douglas C. Sicker
Chief Technologist
Federal Communications Commission
and
Associate Professor
Department of Computer Science and
Interdisciplinary Telecommunications Program
University of Colorado at Boulder

The views expressed in this talk are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of FCC or its Commissioners.

Setting the context

- Why adopt new models?
 - Timeliness, Expertise, Correctness (to name a few)
- Is this really that novel?
 - Numerous advisory committees with varying levels of success
 - NANC, NRIC, TAC ...
 - Some having associated groups outside the FAC
- What makes for success?
 - Or why do some fail?
- What makes this hard?
 - Difficult topics, many players, many incentives, weak leadership, failure to engage agency, slow response, lack of trust, capture ...

Consider the many players (Open Internet)

- Federal Agencies (FCC)
 - Internal advisory group (TAP)
- Advisory Counsels
 - Open Internet Advisory Committee
- Advisory Groups
 - Broadband Internet Technical Advisory Group (BiTAG)
- Standards Bodies
 - IETF, IEEE, W3C...
- User Groups
 - NANOG ...
- Others
 - Carriers, vendors, content providers, consumer advocates ...

FCC Open Internet Advisory Committee

- Federal Advisory Committee
 - With an accompanying set of legal conditions
- Membership
 - Internet engineering experts; content, application, and service providers; network equipment and end-user-device manufacturers and suppliers; investors; broadband service providers; and others...
- Mission
 - Aid the FCC in tracking ... openness of the Internet
 - Track technical standards ... mobile broadband and specialized services
 - Will report to the Commission and make recommendations it deems appropriate concerning our open Internet framework

Broadband Internet Technical Advisory Group (BiTAG)

- Mission

- “bring together ... technical experts to develop consensus on broadband network management practices”
- “address specific technical matters ... minimize policy disputes”
- “craft engineering-based solutions in a more flexible, responsive, and efficient manner.”
- “educate”

- Technical Working Group (TWG)

- Review requests and agency referrals

- Important operational characteristics

- Independent, Composition, Qualification, Shot clock, Consensus reporting and Weighted voting
- Carefully designed

Concluding Remarks

- The opportunity
 - For timely, consensus-driven, expert advise
 - Relevant regardless of what happens to the OI order
- The concerns
 - Legal (avoid appearing as a FAC)
 - Participation
 - Trust
 - Operation (e.g., leadership and interplay)
 - Continuity
 - Adoption
- Ultimately
 - An experiment in new models of Internet governance