



# **Draft Policy 2017-8**

## **Amend the Definition of Community Network**

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# Problem Statement

- The Community Networks section of the NRPM has not been used\* since implementation in January 2010
- Proposal ARIN-2016-7, to increase the number of use cases, was abandoned by the Advisory Council due to lack of feedback
- Proposal ARIN 2017-2, to remove all mention of community networks from NRPM was met with opposition by the community. Many responded that the definition of “community network” was too narrow, which could be the reason for lack of uptake

\* frequently

# What are Community Networks

## *why are they important*



- The Internet Society says:

*“Community networks, **communications infrastructure deployed and operated by citizens to meet their own communication needs**, are being increasingly proposed as a solution to connect the unconnected.”*

<https://www.internetsociety.org/issues/community-networks/>

# Current Policy Text



- 2.11 Community Network

A community network is any network organized and operated by a volunteer group operating as or under the fiscal support of a nonprofit organization or university for the purpose of providing free or low-cost connectivity to the residents of their local service area. To be treated as a community network under ARIN policy, the applicant must certify to ARIN that the community network staff is 100% volunteers.

# Proposed Policy Text



- 2.11 Community Network

A community network is a network organized and operated by a **volunteer group, not-for-profit, non-profit, charitable organization, or educational institution** for the purpose of providing free or low-cost connectivity, **or other Information Technology** services to persons or entities within their community. **Critical functions may be handled by paid staff, but volunteers play a large role** in offering services available through community networks.

# The Discussion So Far (1 of 3)

- There are community networks that have used the current policy to obtain resources
- One goal of original definition, was the hope this would lead to a fee discount for community networks
  - The board has not carved out a fee differential for community networks, but did create the 3X-Small fee category
- A strictly volunteer-only policy is maybe too limiting
- The definition of a community network has gone from overly specific to overly broad

# The Discussion So Far (2 of 3)

- Is “a volunteer group” an organization? ARIN does business with organizations
- The phrase "volunteers play a large role" is very ambiguous and open to interpretation
- The phrase "critical functions may be handled by paid staff", seems to imply that volunteers shouldn't handle critical functions
- There were several comments regarding Non-profit, not-for-profit or charitable status

# The Discussion So Far (3 of 3)

- The definition is used in section 6.5.9, and allows community networks to qualify as end-users, therefore are not allowed to make re-assignments, this is incompatible with other policy obligations of an ISP
  - Changes in the fee structure, the Registration Services Plan and the restructuring of IPv6 fees, now provides a better option?
    - An ISP in the 3X-Small Service Category (IPv6 /40 or smaller) seems more appropriate than an end-user



# Questions for Discussion

- Is the financial structure (non-profit status or not) of a community network important?
- What other elements differentiate a community network?
- Should this draft policy be limited to the definition of a community network?
- Should Section 6.5.9 (Community Network Assignments) also be included?