Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information PDP Charter DT Meeting
TRANSCRIPTION
Thursday 02 October at 1300 UTC
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The audio is also available at:
http://audio.icann.org/gnso/gnso-transliteration-contact-20141002-en.mp3

Attendees:
Chris Dillon – NCSG
Peter Dernbach- IPC
Pitinan Kooarmornpatana-GAC
Rudi Vansnick – NPOC
Jim Galvin - RySG
Petter Rindforth – IPC
Wanawit Akhuputra – GAC
Mae Suchayapim Siriwat – GAC
Jennifer Chung – RySG
Amr Elsadr – NCUC
Ubolthip Sethakaset – Individual
Emily Taylor - RrSG
Justine Chew- Individual

Apologies: none

ICANN staff:
Julie Hedlund
Lars Hoffmann
Amy Bivins
Nathalie Peregrine

Nathalie Peregrine: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening everybody. And welcome to the Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information PDP Working Group call on the 2nd of October, 2014.

On the call today we have Wanawit Ahkuputra, Petter Rindforth, Chris Dillon, Rudi Vansnick, Jim Galvin, Pitinan Kooarmornpatana, Jennifer Chung and Amr Elsadr. We have a tentative apology from Justine Chew.

And from staff we have Julie Hedlund, Lars Hoffman, Amy Bivins and myself, Nathalie Peregrine. I'd like to remind you all to please state your names before speaking for transcription purposes. Thank you ever so much and over to you, Chris.

Chris Dillon: Thank you very much indeed. And we'll just deal with agenda Point 3 first of all, Statements of Interest, whether anybody has changed their Statement of Interest since we last met.

Okay, hearing nothing and seeing nothing in the chat room I think we can move into the next agenda item which is the draft initial report which is the main reason we are meeting today.

And I would like to start by thanking Lars and other members of ICANN staff, Julie, Mary, for all the work that's recently gone into this report. And also, you know, the fact that it has generated such a lot of good correspondence on the list so the list has been full of very interesting posts. And I'm really hoping that we can get through as much of the content as possible today.

And so what I'm intending to do is to go through the report and as I do so to bring up as many things as I can think of, you know, both within the report itself and from the various comments that people have been sending in recently.

After that I am intending to deal with Justine Chew's email which she sent earlier because basically I promised to her that I would deal with those points. But, and perhaps I should just check whether people are happy that I take this sort of approach with today?

Oh yes, Amr, would you like to ask a question?

Amr Elsadr: Thanks, Chris. This is Amr. I actually have a suggestion. In principle I really like it when a PDP working group reaches full consensus. I think this is really important because PDP working groups are the bottom of the GNSO's bottom-up process.

And it is here on these working groups that policy recommendations should be made. And when these working groups pass on recommendations that do not have full consensus they sort of shift some of the responsibility of policy decision making to bodies that are further up in the bottom-up process. And I personally find this to be unfavorable.

I prefer that policy recommendations come from the working group and these decisions are not made on the GNSO Council or even on the ICANN Board level. so I would recommend that we try to approach some of the issues that we're facing and try to reach a full consensus.

And this might mean that the working group members aren't necessarily happy with the final result but if it's something, you know, that we can live with, that we can all live with and move forward and make this full consensus recommendation. I'm sorry if I'm going on for a bit but it's just something I feel quite strongly about.

And I note Lars's point that we're really - we have a sort of a binary issue here because we have a charter question that's sort of - asks us to give a yes or a no answer. I think we should try as much as possible to sort of take this

binary context out of the equation and try to see if we can't find a middle ground.

And I can think of a few ideas on how we could achieve this. And I would like to try that approach if it's okay with everybody else, especially the Registrars and IPC who have also been vocal on these issues. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you, Amr. I should have stressed, as I gave my introduction, that this is very much a draft document. It's an internal document for us; this is nothing that will be dealt with publicly.

And, yes, you know, certainly what we have here is something which is gray. We have some binary questions which have to be given, you know, white or black effectively but the reality is, you know, almost certainly gray. And I also have some ideas about how we might deal with that but I think possibly it's, you know, it's just easier to show what those are when we come to the relevant parts of the document.

Lars, would you like to say something on this?

Lars Hoffman: Thanks, Chris. This is Lars for the record. Yeah, if I can chime in, I just want to reiterate a little bit what was said on the list and echo what Chris just said, that this is obviously a draft report.

I completely agree with Amr that, you know, full consensus is also something a group should be striving for and that certainly makes the report much more powerful and much more likely to be adopted by the Council and then eventually by the Board. And that's, you know, why we're here.

I'm just wondering whether, for the time being, we should - the group should not focus mainly on the content, go through the arguments of either side because however we want to format the draft - the initial report and the final report, you know, we will have to obviously talk about the various arguments

that have been brought forward. So none of this, you know, will be wasted time.

So if we focus on the (unintelligible) right now and leave the question of whether it should be feeling up the room, whether there should be a formal consensus call for the initial report, whether there shouldn't be any of that but just leave the option open to the group, that's something obviously we can decide at a later point before it goes then to public comment.

You know, people might meet up with their groups in LA and can discuss this issue, you know, to get a feel what other people think as well whether the full consensus call or any other option would be the most beneficial way to go forward in order to eventually achieve full consensus for the final report.

We don't have to achieve it necessarily for the draft report but I think the call should be that by the end of this process we are all - or as many of as possible on the same page.

Those are (unintelligible) and if there's anything clear we can do from the staff perspective to help with that focus to achieve full consensus at the end then, you know, just let us know and we'll be there to help out. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you very much. Yes, I mean, I think, you know, I would totally agree that full consensus is very desirable. And also I liked very much the emphasis on the reasoning rather than, you know, rather than content.

I do feel that one of the results of the recent correspondence on the mailing list is that things have become much more specific so, yes, there was a large volume of correspondence, lots of good points were made. It's actually much easier to answer those various points than to be talking about things in a very abstract way. So, you know, I feel we've, you know, we've recently made a lot of progress.

All right, well in that case I would like to just start to go through the document. And the technique I'm going to use is I'm going to scroll and in fact I gather (unintelligible) Page 6 myself before - there's something I would like to raise. But, you know, what I would like to say to you is if you spot something as we come through it then just let me know and we'll pick it up.

Not much there. Go little bit slower around here. And you see, I get right to Page 6 before there's something perhaps I would like to raise. And you see earlier on in our discussions we, you know, we actually had rather a larger list of questions. And we've really boiled them down to, you know, obviously the two charter questions and then the various questions that the expert working group asked us.

Now the only question I am wondering about is whether, you know, oh this is crazy. I was going to ask basically when should any new policy relating to translation and transliteration come into effect and actually it's been added; I hadn't noticed so we can actually go further.

In fact that is a question which comes some way down the line, you know, it's not an immediate thing, you know, that's the question that becomes clearer, you know, once other things are decided. But I was - I'm glad to see that reinstated, I think it wasn't there in the last version.

Stop me at any time. Keeping an eye on the chat room as well.

Onto Page 7, now the - so the issue here is, you know, if anybody would perhaps like to flag up the specific communities have been underrepresented, that might be something that would be interesting here because, you know, then we can make more of an effort perhaps to involve them.

Emily Taylor: Chris, it's Emily here.

Chris Dillon: Hello, Emily.

Emily Taylor: Sorry to be late to the call; disorganized about the passcode. Yes, I notice in the list of participants that there isn't - is there anybody from the RrSG on there or I think there is - yes, sorry, there is Volker of course as an observer. But...

Chris Dillon: Yoav was there earlier on our meetings, less so recently.

Emily Taylor: Right. And that's a key constituency...

((Crosstalk))

Emily Taylor: ...not more so than others but would be directly affected by any outcomes.

Chris Dillon: Yeah. So that - Jim, would you like to raise something?

Jim Galvin: Yes, Jim for the record. I just wanted to point out that I'm not officially representing SSAC; I'm actually here from the RySG. I said that earlier in the chat room but, you know, for the record here I just wanted to point that out. I'm not sure - I think SSAC keeps coming forward here in this, I guess for terribly obvious reasons.

And just an observation, we probably need to find some way to say something here about Sarmad since he now works for ICANN. You know, he's certainly not representing SSAC which now would not be represented here in this group. And probably need to reflect the fact that he's not participating because of his transition in employment or something. Not quite sure how you would handle that but just wanted to call it out. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you very much for that input. Okay so let us continue to scroll down. I think we get as far as - well I get as far as Page 10, but as I say if anybody else would like to stop this bus then just do so. Most things probably are around about Page 14 and 15 I think.

Okay, yes, so at the bottom of Page 10 we've got this piece on - now let's try and get this right - a key issue that emerged early on in the group's discussion was the agreement that the recommendations should bear in mind that the main purpose of transformed data is to allow those not familiar with the original script of the contact information entry to contact the registrant.

I think that's the sort of sentence where there may be different feelings than just flagging that up. I don't know whether anybody would like to speak to that. I feel it's right to draw attention to that.

Jim, would you like to say something about it?

Jim Galvin: Yeah, for completeness I think that we should go back and look at the director services expert working group because I'm pretty sure it has more to say about the purpose of data. And I'm sure we can add to this context or maybe we just want to make sure we refer back to that document for complete information and indicate that we're just making a particular assessment for our purposes in this document. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you very much. I've got that. Okay so let us continue down. Yes, and in fact I think things may be just about...

((Crosstalk))

Emily Taylor: Sorry to interrupt, Chris.

Chris Dillon: Yeah.

Emily Taylor: I just wanted to - just had my hand raised to respond to the point that Jim has just raised if that's okay.

Chris Dillon: That's fine.

Emily Taylor: Just to - I think that the text seems fine, the point that you paused at, and thanks for drawing attention to it. I think in my reading of the expert working group report is that they do indeed go into a lot of detail about different purposes for making contact.

Their consideration of internationalized registration data is quite light. It doesn't really tackle this point at all as far as I could see. I might have missed it.

Chris Dillon: No, no you're right, we read that document slowly and that was exactly the conclusion we came to.

Emily Taylor: And so I - although I'm very much in favor of trying to, you know, radiate out in different directions and not repeat other work that's been done and refer to work that's been done, I think that's sensible. But I'm not sure how much the EWG report helps on the purpose of transliterating and translating.

Chris Dillon: No, no, no...

((Crosstalk))

Chris Dillon: There's very little. I think it's basically saying - I'm misquoting but...

((Crosstalk))

Emily Taylor: We should really do this sort of thing.

Chris Dillon: Yes, yes more or less that, yes.

Emily Taylor: Okay thanks. Sorry to interrupt.

Chris Dillon: No, no not at all, I missed your hand. Okay. Well okay so here we are. And this is the - so here we have two sets of arguments; one set of arguments say that transformation should be mandatory and then the next set of arguments say that it should not be mandatory.

So for those of us remembering the straw man basically the straw man was saying that transformation should not be mandatory but that there were situations where it was quite legitimate for it to happen. So look in chat. Okay.

So we've moved effectively from the situation in the straw man where one side is not mandatory and then, you know, in some situations, you know, it would be required and we gave some suggestions about how it should happen when it was required.

Now instead of that we've got the two sets of arguments and the reason for that is just so that we can really look at these arguments and think, which of these are strong arguments; which are weak? And I think there are both sorts. I think there are strong and weak arguments on both sides of this.

Amr, would you like to say something?

Amr Elsadr: Thanks, Chris. Yeah, I still feel that this might be a - that still that binary approach of which arguments are stronger so what should we decide to make them mandatory or not.

Well what I'm really hoping we can explore, and I think we might need to answer some questions before we can do this. One question I had in mind was - and I was hoping maybe, Petter or Peter could help with this, is is there any awareness of - I'm not sure that there are any internationalized forms of domain name registration data currently. But I would hope that there will be in the future.

So I don't know if there's a baseline on the need to transform contact information or not right now. But I'm willing to conceded that there may be a need in the future and move forward on that - under that assumption.

But what I'm hoping is that we could possibly create a different sort of recommendation where you would say that no, we're not recommending a policy that requires a sort of blanket transformation of all internationalized registration data and contact information but perhaps maybe give a policy recommendation on sort of - maybe perhaps criteria on a case by case basis.

So we say, okay, we're not recommending that all internationalized registration data is transformed but on a certain case by case basis someone could request that a specific registrant's contact information is translated and/or transliterated and maybe sort of take that approach.

And I'm hoping that this will also solve some of the cost issues because then you won't need to - there won't be a need to pay for transformation of all the contact data that is internationalized that is not in Latin-based script at least and then maybe move forward with something like that. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Okay thank you very much for that. That's a very - it's a very interesting idea. Yeah, if we go - if we were to go down that kind of line I think we may need a rather different structure. And, you know, obviously I'm open to suggestions.

Petter, would you like to say something about that?

Petter Rindforth: Yes, thanks. Petter Rindforth here. I made a couple of notes at the same time that you spoke, Amr, so I didn't really - got anything what you said about the costs.

But just a quick reply when it comes to disputes, now I talk from a panelist point of view also, no, there is no general system today. And I think that's

actually a problem because it is from time to time really difficult to identify the holder of a domain name from - in certain disputes.

And, I mean, sometimes you get claims from a complainant that these domain names are in fact held by the same owner. And you see something that is not really readable from a European/English point of view, if I may say so.

And you have to, based on the facts you got, where different kinds of the address (SSO), try to identify; is this really to be considered one and the same holder or are there domain names that actually are held by a number of different companies or physical persons depending on how you actually read out of this, I mean, in more or less the local language. So that's actually something that, from that point of view, was the seat to be sold in the future.

I would say that one thing that we may not have specifically concluded from the IPC point of view is the costs and what we have pointed out is that the important is that we have the translation and transliteration but when we made our initial reply we didn't actually point 100% on how to divide the costs for this. So this may be something that we can try to discuss and solve it when we discuss it in the future aspects. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Okay yes, thank you. Now I've missed the order of when the hands went up but Rudi, would you like to go next?

Rudi Vansnick: Thank you, Chris. Rudi Vansnick for the transcript. Well I'm following the point and the arguments that Amr and Petter have been bringing up but still I think we need to recall that the implementation of what we will recommend will, at the end, only have effect on new gTLDs.

And the whole problem, if I may say, the problem of having no translation or transliteration for the existing ones will still remain except if we want to push it so far that we ask for implementation of the recommendation on all the TLDs.

And then we enter into, I think, a very large discussion that will probably take some years before everybody will agree on.

So taking in the notion of the fact that it's only for the new gTLDs maybe it's something that could be worked out in a sense that in the RAA there could be an indication of when it should be really at the higher level of mandatory and in other cases where it is less important if there is standard application is only in the ASCII script. That's something I was just thinking about.

Chris Dillon: Thank you very much. Now if we go to Emily.

Emily Taylor: Thank you very much for the floor. I think - I can't recall - was it Amr who asked the question. My understanding of ICANN policy is that it currently requires registration data to be filled in in ASCII script.

The reason why I think this is that I was listening to representatives of one of the new gTLDs that's in non-Latin script describing their business proposition as being end to end in the particular language and that the - and that they've managed to do that except that the filling in of registration data has to be done in ASCII at the moment. So that's my understanding.

Chris, you asked for, you know, an analysis of the arguments on the paper. And my reading of these - of the arguments supporting mandatory transformation is that there's an underlying assumption there that everybody in the world speaks English. And it's - yes, it would be very convenient for English speakers if everybody else spoke English and that they could understand everything.

But I think part of what we're trying to consider is the convenience of people who are non-English speakers. So I think that the important thing for everybody is to understand what the labels mean, you know, so that if you've got a sort of a bunch of what looks like to you to be squiggles but you know

well that is the registrant name, so and that is the address that that is an important means of navigating through.

I think the whole proposition that it will enable contact with the registrant I think is dealt with very well in the paper later on is that if you've actually got somebody writing their contact details in a different language, if you write to them in English you're not going to probably get a very clear reply.

And similarly in the UDRP where you do have, you know, registrants and complainants from all across the world I believe that the providers do make a lot of effort to make sure that they've got panelists who are speaking the language of at least of the registrant. And so this would in fact be a good signal.

So I think that the cost - I think Rudi raised a really important basic issue, which I must say being late into the group I hadn't fully appreciated that we're talking here about implementation only in the new gTLDs.

But when you look at how the new gTLDs are going compared to the rest of the gTLDs I think we should be asking ourselves is this the right moment to add further costs and complexity into the lives of the new gTLD registries and registrars given that they're not actually (unintelligible) out of the (unintelligible) at the moment.

You know, these are not the uptick that we're seeing, we've got less than 1% of the total global domain names are in new gTLDs at the moment, adding more mandatory cost and complexity at this time I would argue would further hamper those new gTLDs in reaching their market. So that's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

Chris Dillon: Thank you. Yes, I think that was certainly one of the - or at least the latter part of it was one of the original arguments in the - on the non-mandatory side in the straw man I think.

Lars, sorry for keeping you waiting for so long.

Lars Hoffman: No problem. Thanks, Chris. Just a couple of thoughts. So first thing the - what Emily just referred to just to clarify there's no consensus policy under data input in the Whois system, it's just for technical reasons I believe it has to be done in ASCII at the moment. But that's just as a side note.

I've been thinking about what Amr and Petter said as well in their comments. And starting with Amr I think the suggestion of trying to find the middle ground obviously sounds very appealing and, you know, essentially, you know, is a consensus-based effort and the consensus normally meets in middle ground.

The question is here though the group needs to then - or should maybe bear in mind that creating a policy that is not particularly clear and will leave a lot of wiggle room to implementation and then to overseeing by maybe Compliance or others might not be overly beneficial.

I've just been working on the IRTP working group and one of the biggest (ones) of the policy is that it's very difficult to understand and not particularly clear especially to users.

And so I think by creating a compromise we'd certainly would be running a risk I believe to creating maybe something that is not as beneficial as it maybe should be or not easy to use as it should be.

But moving on from there and relating to that, Petter speaking about the domain names in different languages, you know, that you can't understand and Emily replied to that very well pointing to the point in the report that obviously yes, if you, you know, what is the issue with Russians or Chinese or Arabic lawyers or law enforcement officers who'd like to contact somebody.

So it might be beneficial to reach out to people on the - and even the group and ask them explicitly how they would feel if everything was translated into ASCII, you know, would that help them or would that essentially it's the status quo for them anyway because if the data is available in ASCII only at the moment. So is that an improvement for people from other regions then the dominant Latin ones that happen to be on this call, I believe, or on this group anyway.

And then finally there could be also (unintelligible) with Petter said in the beginning that, you know, he had problems where people could not contact - could not be contacted because of the script and the difficulty of understanding the Whois or for other particular reasons.

And that possibility is always also for this group to make a recommendation one way or another and then put a list of use case and say, look, this is what we decided, however, we also come across these cases, specific ones, that have not been addressed or that we believe are not addressed by our recommendations but we believe that there should be future work done on this.

So, you know, what Petter just said maybe it would beneficial if we started to collect concrete examples of where the Whois, as it is right now, is not working and how that then could be addressed either by this PDP or we can't find a way out have the (unintelligible) for future edits.

Sorry for taking so long. Back to you, Chris.

Chris Dillon: Not at all, some very interesting points there. It's not working. Yes, thank you. Amr, would you like to say something?

Amr Elsadr: Yeah, thanks Chris. I also wanted to respond to the point that Petter raised on sometimes someone who wants to contact the registrant having difficulty because they find that there might in fact be one registrant who registers

more than one domain name but provides different forms of contact information.

And if I'm going to assume that this contact information is all in ASCII form at the moment then I would somehow think that this is a bit out of scope of what we're trying to discuss right now because - I'm guessing that the different forms of contact data that are provided are either all or somewhat inaccurate and this is not really a question for transformation then; it's just a matter of accuracy of the information and that is not really what we're trying to tackle.

If a registrant is providing inaccurate data on how to contact him, her or it, then that's a different story and I'm sure that does need to be handled but it seems to me to be out of scope of this PDP.

As far as the point that Lars raised in the end as well as making confusing recommendations that might not be very easy to implement, yeah, I do appreciate that this could be a possibility if we do try to reach some middle ground.

But what I am hoping is, as opposed to giving a recommendation, that no implementation is necessary because we're recommending that no contact information should be mandatorily transformed or the other form, which like all contact information in internationalized forms need to be transformed. I'm hoping we can come up with some sort of lightweight middle ground solution that doesn't require extreme versions of one or the other.

I - even if the policy recommendation in itself is confusing we can work together to try to make it less so. But what is really important is that we set up a guide on how to implement this in a way that makes all the - that gives all the stakeholders or parties involved what they want.

So if, for example, IP lawyers want to contact a certain registrant and the contact data is not provided in ASCII form then there needs to be a way for

them to get what they want. And if we, as a working group, don't want it to be mandatory for all contact data that is internationalized form it doesn't have to all be transformed and we should also try to get that done.

I personally feel that there has to be a way that we can reach this middle ground and it might take a little work on sort of fine tuning the details of a model like this one but I can't see why it can't be done. And I would hope that we could do it and reach full consensus. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you. Certainly the approach I took when I wrote the straw man was very much like that. It was, you know, suggesting that things would not be mandatory but that there would be things that could be done in cases where transformation was required.

As regards what you were saying about quality of data I agree. I mean, strictly speaking it's well beyond the limits of the - of what this PDP is doing. Obviously we hope that the replacement system for Whois will contain more accurate data but it isn't really what we're doing.

Jim, would you like to raise a point?

Jim Galvin: Yes please. Jim Galvin. Thank you. Going back to build on what Emily started to say you asked us, Chris, about talking about these arguments either for or against transforming contact information.

So in looking, for me, in looking at these arguments in favor of mandatory transformation I don't find that these arguments, you know, have a firm technical standing, a good solid foundation on which to make these assertions.

I think our information and understanding today is a little different than the origins of these arguments. Assertions along the line that translating the data improves your ability to contact I really do not agree with that at all.

In point of fact, contact information should be in its original form if you expect to be able to send postal addresses. There's no transformation that occurs in a telephone number or anything of that sort so, you know, none of these arguments apply for that particular issue.

And with respect to email addresses, you know, you're got technology issues because whether or not you have an internationalized email address you've got to have technology that supports it and deals with it. So, you know, that argument is specious because it simply doesn't even work and won't work in the foreseeable future here for right now. I think that the - and so that's my comment.

Oh, the other piece I want to add is going back to - there is this other expert working group which is looking at requirements for internationalized registration data. And I do want to put on the table, again, that this group is going to follow the - and repeat the recommendation that came from the first internationalized registration data working group that a registrant should be permitted to use a language or script in which they're most skilled.

So our question here if we're going to answer the question about whether data should be transformed or not I think it needs to be based on the assumption that there is going to be other data. And I feel like that's not actually part of this discussion either.

We need to be accounting for the fact that there's going to be other data visible and start from that point as opposed to - I still feel like this is suggesting that a user is going to enter their data in US ASCII and I don't think that that's a valid assumption and I'm concerned about starting from that assumption in this process. So thank you.

Chris Dillon: Thank you, Jim. Thank you very much for your arguments with many of which I personally agree. However, to be strictly correct, I would like to just draw the

group's attention to the last two bullet points where I think the mandatory arguments are strong and that's, you know, this thing about transformation would, to some extent, facilitate communication.

Because if, you know, in the Internet of the future, you know, even in the Internet of the future where there are fewer people able to speak English, you know, theoretically if there were some language that we could all use as a lingua franca, you know, that would facilitate communication.

I mean, I guess the problem is that, you know, I think we need to sort of say, well, there may not be that language; if there were it would be wonderful. It's sort of quite a hypothetical argument it's actually.

The last argument, searching contact information is easier in one language, I think this is true because, you know, if you're searching across all the languages you're going to have to switch keyboard numerous times. It's easier to do it, you know, if you're just using one keyboard. So, you know, that seems to be a strong argument. But, you know, a lot of the other points you were making I agreed with.

Basically some of the wording which we wanted to adopt in this report from the expert working group on, you know, registrants permitted to use the language or script, that sort of wording I think got slightly lost. That was one of the things I was going to raise. But, I mean, you know, my recommendation would certainly be that we follow the Expert Working Group on that one.

Okay, Lars, would you like to say something? I think you're on mute. No, okay, technical problems I think. Okay, Peter, would you like to raise something?

Peter Green: Yes, I just think - perhaps I have a slightly different reading. When I was looking at the charter and my understanding here is there's nothing in our

questions that discourages in any way the entry by a registrant of the original information in their native language.

The question is, what I understood, is that the existing Whois protocols about the domain name registration data services, never explicitly said it was limited to US ASCII but that is the only script for which standards and conventions have existed to date for the Whois protocol implementation.

So I thought, my assumption, my working assumption here is still we're going to have internationalized domain names, we're going to have registrants entering contact information, which is this subset of the domain name registration data including name, postal address, technical contact, admin contact, in their native language which is not US ASCII.

And the question is, is it desirable that that contact information be translated or transliterated? So I never - it seemed to me that in what I was just hearing from Jim that it was suggesting that we would be requiring that the registrant enter information in ASCII, which I do not think is my understanding of the situation that our charter anticipates.

I think the situation it anticipates is we're currently going to have a new situation which we've not faced before of people entering contact information in all sorts of languages and scripts which do not have existing protocols from the earlier Whois, which was limited to the US ASCII.

And the question is, is it desirable that those all be translated or transliterated into a single script for which there would be those protocols? So I just wanted to make that distinction where I don't think the question about transformation is a question about increasing the burden on the new registrant registering an internationalized domain name and using their own native language to provide the accurate contact information.

Chris Dillon: Thank you for that. That is the situation as I understand it as well. But I would like to add that at the moment possible replacement systems don't seem to have the necessary fields for internationalized data so that, you know, that is - that is something rather strange but that's the situation as I understand it.

Now, I'd like to ask Jim whether he would like to say something. After Jim we really should do Justine because we're just slightly running out of time and I promised her that I'd raise her points so I need to do that. Jim, would you like to say something?

Jim Galvin: Thank you, Chris. This is Jim Galvin. A quick comment to Peter just that the Whois protocol itself is explicitly US ASCII by definition. But moving back to, Chris, your comments about the last two bullets in the mandatory transformation, I'm not sure I agree with those bullets as stated.

And I guess I'll just quickly state here - say here to leave you some time, maybe we can talk about this at another time here. But taking the last bullet first, searching contact information is easier in one language, I don't believe that it's the one language that makes searching easier; it's the fact that searching is more difficult in languages other than English because variance becomes a big issue and on a technical level being able to normalize the index that you're using to search becomes difficult.

I mean, would argue that what you're really talking about here in this last bullet is about comparing contact information. I want to know if this registrant is the same as this registrant, you know, that's not about searching. I have to, you know, pull that information out to use it. So I wonder what's really being referred to here. And that might be worth some discussion.

In the second to last bullet, you know, transformation, you know, improves communication, I'm not sure, again, what's meant by that; how that facilitates better communication. You know, the data is the data; it's just someone's name and address.

You know, how does having that in one language or another improve my ability to talk to you, Chris, in one language or another? So I think there's something else going on there that I'm not quite understanding. Thank you.

Chris Dillon: Okay thank you for that. I think that, yes, that's an interesting point. I mean, the key thing is, you know, if we all, you know, if at the stage after that, you know, after we've got the address, if we then had a common language then, you know, that would make things easier. But, you know, the reality of the situation is that we don't.

As regards the last bullet point, I think I would have to admit that that is, for me that is a strong argument, I'll be honest.

Okay now I am now intending just briefly to bring up Justine Chew's various points that she put to the list earlier on. And so this was about the Latin script. And here - so really she was asking, "Are we talking about the Latin script or the English language being used as a sort of lingua franc?"

And the answer to that is that we are talking about the Latin script. You know, that's the Roman alphabet that's used by many European languages - and many other languages in fact.

There is one certain exception to that if our recommendations that followed and that is the country name is definitely in English, but that's a short list, you know, a few hundred countries probably. You could easily switch that into any o there language.

The only other thing that could come up would be organizational names in English, you know, they could be there but may not be. So that's the answer to that one.

Then there is a question about desirable or mandatory. And the answer to that is that, you know, the question that we have been asked is whether it is desirable to transform so that's really the one that we have to answer.

However, you know, it may be possible as Amr and other people were saying earlier on, that, you know, it may be conceivable that we go back to a position - maybe not the straw man but some situation where you would say that, you know, for example, you know, it, you know, it is not desirable for everybody to have to transform but there are cases where transformation should occur and then, you know, probably ending up talking about other work in the future about how that transformation should take place.

Then there is a point about the use of language and this is actually some of the language in the bullet points on the next page. And we've got words like "consistent" and "accurate" being used. And I think the point that I would like to raise here is that, you know, I think "accurate" and "consistent" these are both quite easy to demonstrate, you know? Is this an accurate translation? Is this is an accurate transliteration? We can, you know, we can answer questions like that.

Also, you know, is this transliteration being done in a consistent way? You know, there are ways of saying yes or no, that's quite black and white. We have avoided using words like "reliable" I think that, you know, that is no longer - that's probably no longer in there.

Just double checking that there is nothing else. Oh yes, and then again in this final bullet point there is the use of the word "accuracy" and the suggestion that it would be turned to "accessible" so provide greater accessibility than transformation. Quite a major - that's quite a major change in meaning. It may well be both. I don't know whether anybody has strong feelings about that suggestion. Okay I think perhaps that's something that we just need to think about in slow time.

I mean, oh yes so Amr is actually typing in the chat room, "I'm not sure what accessibility means." I'm guessing that it's just making it easier for more people to gain access to the data, that's the way I'm reading it. So I suppose, you know, that could be a - oh yes, and actually Emily - oh yes, okay.

Oh, Emily is making the interesting point that accessibility is often used in terms of disability. And I'm not totally sure that that was what was being meant here but that is actually the case, that word is often used in that context.

Okay, we have only a few minutes left in this meeting and I think what I would like to do is to ask people whether they have any other business or any major thing that they would like to bring up because I think that's - those - the important things should take precedence over any smaller things that we may use the few remaining minute to talk about.

And, Emily, yes would you like to bring something up?

Emily Taylor: Hi, it's Emily Taylor here. Just to really bring up in the call - and just joined the dots between our conversations on the mailing list and this call where we seem to have gone from a position where I had thought there was quite a level of agreement and in the paper to one where we seem to be just completely proposing to alternatives.

And I'm not - I'm very ready to acknowledge that I'm late to these discussions and it may well be that there has been a lot more disagreements than I have sensed in the last few months since I've been involved.

But I think that it seemed to me that we had a very sensible position where we were saying, well look, you know, there were things that I had learned about translation and transliteration processes from reading these papers and being involved in these discussions about that it wasn't always accurate, that it's not necessarily going to be that helpful.

And that we'd gone into a position of saying well we don't think it should be mandated at this time, much more of a wait and see and see how people respond, some people (unintelligible) some won't. And I'm just not - I'm just curious really about how we've got ourselves into this situation without sort of wanting to, you know, not really to try and revisit what we did but I just sort of - I'm not quite sure I've understood how we've got to this point really so I'd be grateful for that. Thank you.

Chris Dillon: Well, as I understand it when the straw man was written the argument - you know, the argument was basically that transformation should not be mandatory however, some people may require it and then actual practical help was given, you know, for such people, you know, if it is required then this is what we would suggest you do. That was the original standpoint in all versions of the straw man, you know, 1-8 all the way through.

When I presented the straw man to the group it became clear that there were people who felt that actually that transformation should be mandatory. And so really in order to clarify this situation to work out, you know, how does it, you know, what are the arguments on both sides, who, you know, who believes which argument?

Effectively that's what we're using this draft initial document, it is an internal document, it's a way of encouraging debate and oh boy has it done that. I mean, as such it's been brilliant. The, you know, we've had lots of very good input on the list. And people are taking a very active interest in the various arguments, that's something I'd really like to continue.

And I think basically this is a way of really getting people to talk these various things through, that's really what it comes to. And I actually think that we are possibly closer to making decisions than it may now appear.

You know, because everything has become very much more specific than it was earlier on. Perhaps we weren't, you know, we weren't out of aware of what these various things are. Now it's all out in the open.

Amr, would you like to add something?

Amr Elsadr: Thanks, Chris. This is Amr. And, yeah, I agree with what you've said because - and I would like to stress the word "may" when you said that some people said that it may be necessary to translate or transliterate certain contact information because so far the reasons we've been given, and these were presented fairly early on, if you recall the comments submitted by the IPC as well as ALAC at the very beginning when we started reaching out to the broader community they both said that they think it's a good idea that internationalized contact information be transformed.

But as far as I could tell none of these reasons were based on empirical data. There's no data to actually suggest that this is or will be necessary. But we're just foreseeing that it might be necessary in the future. And I think this is a very strong argument against recommending a blanket policy that requires all internationalized registration data to be transformed.

But to sort of reach some kind of middle ground perhaps in our recommendations we could take some safeguard in the event that - and it might be a very unlikely event - that transformation is required then there are certain steps that could be taken.

But this should, in no way, be applied as a blanket policy to cover all forms of - there's just really no reason to do that right now, to sort of recommend that everything be transformed. It's a big job, it's a big burden. I'm guessing it's going to be a financial burden as well, a huge one.

And there's no empirical data to justify recommending a policy like this. But like I said, I think it would be a good idea the we do reach full consensus and

in doing so we need to give the parties that do feel that transformation will or may be necessary we need to give them the reassurances that in the event that it is necessary there is a way to do it. Fine tuning what this way involves is something we can discuss further.

And in answering the question of who will carry the burden of this it's - we could discuss this too but I would like to point out that the whole structure of Whois is very likely to change and we might be faced with a nightmare of centralizing the Whois database as per the Expert Working Group's recommendation. And if that happens, that's just my personal opinion that it's a nightmare.

It might also affect the answer to our second question of who do we think should bear the cost or the burden of doing this. But we should talk about it further. And I do feel that perhaps we can reach full consensus and maybe we should postpone the consensus call until we've done some more work on this. Thanks.

Chris Dillon: Thank you. That is almost precisely my own position at the moment. You've just expressed it much more eloquently than I have myself. Yes, I mean, I think it is very much a matter of, you know, to some extent, you know, being in it for the longer haul and just saying, you know, there could be, you know, there could be stakeholders who will need to do it and if there are then, you know, there may be additional work needed in the longer term and that's, you know, that's work that some of us may be interested in doing.

But, yes, I mean, that is, you know, that is very close to, you know, certainly to what I - to what I feel myself at the moment. So we'll just have to see, you know, exactly how it develops. But, yes, that's a very nice summary.

Okay, we are rather over the hour. And I think the best thing to do is to continue what we've been doing, you know, in recent days on the mailing list. And I think we did manage to cover most issues. But for anything that's been

left out please continue and we'll do the same on Monday in LA. So, you know, very much looking forward to doing that whether you're in LA or attending remotely.

And, you know, just, you know, round it by saying thank you to everybody, staff and those who've been attending the calls and have been using the list so intensively. You know, I feel that this is, you know, that this is really - actually really good progress and I feel very happy about it.

Anyway thank you very much for today's meeting.

Lars Hoffman: Thanks, everybody, and see you in LA. Safe travels.

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