

Policy Development Process (PDP) Update

‘Thick’ WHOIS Policy Development Process

20 July 2017

Upcoming dates

Following the publications of the Thick WHOIS Consensus Policies in February 2017 for the Consistent Labeling and Display of RDDS (WHOIS) Output for All gTLDs and the Thick RDDS (WHOIS) Transition for .COM, .NET and .JOBS, the implementations work began. On 1 May 2017, the affected registry, Verisign, opened its Operational Test Environment (OTE) for registrars to test Thick data transfers from registrars. As of 13 July 2017, forty-nine registrars have made over 85,000 sample Thick WHOIS transactions in the Verisign OTE. The production environment will open on 29 November 2017, following the extension of the 1 August 2017 deadline. By 1 August 2017, all gTLDs will be required to comply with the Consistent Labeling and Display of RDDS Outputs.

Summary

ICANN specifies WHOIS service requirements through its agreements with gTLD registries and registrars. Registries have historically complied with their WHOIS obligations under two different models, characterized as “Thin” and “Thick” WHOIS registries. In a Thin registration model the Registry only collects and publishes the minimal information associated with the domain name from the registrar (such as DNS technical information). All of the registrant’s contact information is maintained by the registrar, which publishes it via their own WHOIS services. In a Thick registration model the registry collects both sets of data (domain name and registrant) from the registrar and in turn publishes that data via WHOIS.

GDD and the Thick Whois IRT have identified two steps for the Thick Whois Policy recommendations and agreed that their implementations could be decoupled:

- Consistent Labeling and Display of WHOIS output for all gTLDs
- Transition from Thin to Thick for .COM, .NET and .JOBS

Both policies were published on 1 February 2017 consisting of three effective dates:

- Consistent Labeling and Display of Whois output for all gTLDs by 1 August 2017.
- Transition from Thin to Thick for .COM, .NET and .JOBS (for new registrations) by 1 May 2018
- Transition from Thin to Thick for .COM, .NET and .JOBS (for existing registrations) by 1 February 2019

On 20 June 2017, ICANN received a request for an extension of the start date for the registry operator, Verisign, to begin accepting Thick WHOIS data from registrars, because the necessary Registry-Registrar Agreement amendments are not yet completed. This request clarified that the policy effective dates of 1 May 2018 and 1 February 2019 are not affected by this request. The request was granted by ICANN on 29 June 2017, with a new deadline for the start date of 29 November 2017.

GAC Engagement Opportunity Status



Following the publication of the policies, the Implementation Review Team is working with the ICANN organization on the implementation of the policies.

Additional Information

- Thick Whois Transition Policy for .COM, .NET and .JOBS: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/thick-whois-transition-policy-2017-02-01-en>
- Registry Registration Data Directory Services Consistent Labeling and Display Policy: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/rdds-labeling-policy-2017-02-01-en>
- PDP Documentation: <http://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/thick-whois.htm>
- PDP WG Final Report: <http://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/whois/thick-final-21oct13-en.pdf>
- Thick Whois Implementation: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/thick-whois-2016-06-27-en>
- Thick Whois IRT Workspace: <https://community.icann.org/display/TWCPI>
- Public Comment period on Consistent Labeling and Display implementation proposal: <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/rdds-output-2015-12-03-en>
- Public Comment period on Transition from thin to thick for .COM, .NET and .JOBS <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/proposed-implementation-gnso-thick-rdds-whois-transition-2016-10-26-en>