

Policy Development Process (PDP) Update

'Thick' WHOIS Policy Development Process

15 April 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 registries plan to open the Operational Test Environment for registrars to test the thick data transfer to registries. On 1 August 2017, all gTLDs will require Consistent Labeling and Display of RDDS Outputs.

Summary

ICANN specifies WHOIS service requirements through its agreements with gTLD Registries and Registrars. Registries have historically satisfied 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. The Council initiated a Policy Development Process (PDP) to consider a possible requirement of "thick" WHOIS for all gTLDs. This issue is one that also affects access to WHOIS data, which is a law-enforcement-related issue. The GAC has indicated its interest in both WHOIS and law enforcement-related issues in previous GAC Communiqués. The Thick WHOIS WG finalized its report and submitted it to the GNSO Council on 21 October 2013. The GNSO Council unanimously adopted the recommendation to require Thick WHOIS for all gTLD registries at its meeting on 31 October 2013. Following the public comment forum and the notification of the GAC, the ICANN Board considered the recommendations and [adopted](#) these at its meeting on 7 February 2014.

ICANN Staff and the Thick Whois IRT have identified two outcomes for the Thick Whois Policy recommendations and agreed that their implementation 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 have been published with implementation notes 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

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>