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Generic Names Supporting Organization

Policy Development Process (PDP) Update

'Thick' WHOIS Policy Development Process

December 2016

Upcoming dates

Following the Public Comment period ending in December 2016, ICANN plans to publish the Summary and Analysis Reports for both Thick Whois Consensus Policy Requiring Consistent Labeling and Display of RDDS (Whois) Output for All gTLDs and the Proposed Implementation of GNSO Thick RDDS (Whois) Transition Policy for .COM, .NET and .JOBS in January 2017.

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

GAC Engagement Opportunity Status

Following the adoption of the recommendations by the ICANN Board, an Implementation Review Team has been formed to work with ICANN staff on the development of the implementation plan.

Additional Information

- Registry Registration Data Directory Services Consistent Labeling and Display Policy: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/rdds-labeling-policy-2016-07-26-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
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