

Next Generation Registration Directory Services Board-GNSO Process Working Group

What is this about?

Following the publication of the Expert Working Group's [Final Report](#) on Registration Directory Services (RDS), the ICANN Board and GNSO are now considering how to use this report as input to a GNSO Policy Development Process (PDP). As a result, a process working group (EP-WG) consisting of Board and GNSO representatives was formed to recommend how to best structure the PDP(s) for success.

Why is this important?

Comprehensive 'Whois' policy reform remains the source of long-running discussions within ICANN. Any discussion of 'Whois' – hereafter called gTLD registration directory services – typically includes topics such as purpose, accuracy, availability, privacy, anonymity, cost, policing, intellectual property protection, security and malicious use and abuse. Although ICANN's requirements for domain name registration data collection have undergone some important changes, after more than 12 years of GNSO task forces, working groups, workshops, surveys, and studies the policy is still in need of comprehensive reforms that address the significant number of contentious issues attached to it.

What is the current status of this project?

The EP-WG has been meeting on a monthly basis since the ICANN meeting in Los Angeles. Based on these deliberations, the EP-WG recommends a [3-Phase PDP WG approach](#) which sequence and group principles of the EWG Final Report:

- Phase 1: Policy Requirements Definition (WHY)
- Phase 2: Policy Functional Design (WHAT)
- Phase 3: Implementation Guidance (HOW)

Expected next steps

The EP-WG expects to discuss this proposed approach with the GNSO on Saturday 7 February from 10.00 – 10.45 local time (<http://singapore52.icann.org/en/schedule/sat-gnso-working>) as well as during the All Things Whois Session which is scheduled for Monday 9 February from 14.00 – 15.15 local time (<http://singapore52.icann.org/en/schedule/mon-whois>). After having reviewed the input received, the next step in this process is expected to be the publication of a new Preliminary Issue Report which would include a draft PDP WG Charter for public comment.

Background

Pursuant to an [ICANN Board Resolution](#) during a Special Meeting on 8 November 2012, the Board directed the CEO to launch a new effort to redefine the purpose of collecting, maintaining and providing access to gTLD registration data, and consider safeguards for protecting data, as a foundation for new gTLD policy and contractual negotiations. Moreover, the Board directed the preparation of an Issue Report on the purpose of collecting and maintaining gTLD registration data, and on solutions to improve accuracy and access to gTLD registration data, as part of a Board-initiated GNSO policy development process. The Board then went on to pass a resolution

that led to the creation of the [Expert Working Group](#); the Board referred to this as a ‘two-pronged approach’ that is based on ‘broad and responsive action’ in relation to the reform of gTLD Registration Data.

With regard to the PDP, the Board specifically called out two topics in its request: **purpose** and **accuracy**. With regard to purpose, at a minimum the most basic purpose, which is commonly accepted, is that gTLD registration data allows domain name holders to be contacted. However, who would be granted the right to access the data under what circumstances and contact the holder and by which means, is a set of difficult follow-up questions that need to be answered. In relation to accuracy, there are many data elements in the Whois database required under the Registry Agreements and the Registrar Accreditation Agreements; if only one of these data fields is incorrect, does that mean the Whois information is inaccurate? And how can the accuracy of data be verified and/or measured, especially considering that, if data is not accurate, the purpose of gathering the data might be questionable in the first place.

How can I get involved?

To provide input on the proposed approach, please attend one of these two sessions and provide your feedback: GNSO Working Session on Saturday 7 February from 10.00 – 10.45 local time (<http://singapore52.icann.org/en/schedule/sat-gnso-working>) and All Things Whois Session on Monday 9 February from 14.00 – 15.15 local time (<http://singapore52.icann.org/en/schedule/mon-whois>).

Where can I find more information?

- EP-WG wiki: <https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=49359349>
- EP-WG proposed approach: <https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/49359624/RDS-PDP-Process-v8.pdf>
- EWG Final Report: <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/final-report-06jun14-en.pdf>

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