

**ICANN
Transcription
Thick Whois PDP Working Group
Tuesday 18 December 2012 at 15:00 UTC**

Note: The following is the output of transcribing from an audio recording of Thick Whois PDP Working Group on the Tuesday 18 December 2012 at 15:00 UTC. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the proceedings at the meeting, but should not be treated as an authoritative record. The audio is also available at:

<http://audio.icann.org/gnso/gnso-thick-whois-20121218-en.mp3>

On page: <http://gnso.icann.org/en/calendar/#dec>

Attendees:

Marc Anderson – RySG
Roy Balleste – NCUC
Iliya Bazlyankov – RrSG
Amr Elsadr – NCSG
Ray Fassett – RySG
Christopher George – IPC
Alan Greenberg – At Large
Volker Greimann – RrSG
Frederic Guillemaut – RrSG
Caroline Hoover – RySG
Susan Kawaguchi - CBUC
Marie-Laure Lemineur - NPOC
Mikey O'Connor – ISPCP
Susan Prosser – RrSG
Jill Titzer – RrSG
Jonathan Zuck – IPC

Apologies:

Wilson Abigaba – NCUC
Don Blumenthal – RySG
Avri Doria – NCSG
Steve Metalitz – IPC
Tim Ruiz – RrSG

ICANN staff:

Marika Konings
Berry Cobb
Julia Charvolen

Coordinator: The call is now being recorded. Please go ahead.

Julia Charvolen: Thank you. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening. This is the Thick Whois PDP Working Group call on Tuesday, 18 December. On the call we have Marc Anderson, Roy Balleste, Iliya Bazlyankov, Amr Elsadr, Alan Greenberg, Volker Greimann, Frédéric Guillemaut, Mikey O'Connor, Susan Prosser.

We have apologies from Avri Doria, Tim Ruiz, Wilson Abigaba and Steve Metalitz. And from staff we have Marika Konings, Berry Cobb and myself, Julia Charvolen.

I would like to remind all participants to please state your name before speaking for transcription purposes. Thank you very much and over to you.

Mikey O'Connor: Thanks, Julia. And welcome all to our pre-Holiday call of the Thick Whois Working Group. We'll run through the agenda and the statement of interest stuff and then get underway. The big event from last week was sort of getting the subgroups formed so we'll just sort of check in with those and see how that's going.

We might take a look at a template for the questions that the subgroups are developing for the expert group. We'll get an update I think primarily from Marika on how we're doing on assembling the expert group; it's going pretty well from what I've seen. And maybe dive into developing some questions on our own, we'll see about that.

Is there anything that people would like to add or change about that agenda? I'm not hearing anybody? Also if anybody has a change to their statement of interest this would be a good time to tell us about that. All right getting a thumbs up from Volker in the chat so I think with that we'll carry on.

Let's see, of our sub team leaders, not sure we have - oh Alan's on the call. I think Steve and Susan Kawaguchi are no so, Alan, are you on the bridge yet?

Marika Konings: This is Marika. I don't see him yet on the line. He's still waiting to get in.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, okay. Sounds like the bridge is a little congested there. Funny how some days it is and some days it's not. Hey, there he is. Cool. Alan, we just got to the very first agenda item and you are the lucky guy that is the only subgroup leader on the call so when we do the update on the status sub teams you get to go first. You want to just fill is in on what, if anything has happened? I know that we've got some stuff set up for you.

And maybe before I get to Alan swing over to Marika because she's set up email lists and pages for the groups...

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: Mikey, if you were talking to me I missed the first part of that what you said so I didn't know you were talking...

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Alan Greenberg: I didn't know you were talking to me.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, that's alright. Hang in there and by the end of Marika's spiel it'll all become clear I think. Marika.

Marika Konings: Yeah, so this is Marika. So we have already set up mailing lists for the different subteams and people on those groups should have received a confirmation email. If you haven't done so please let me know and we'll make sure to fix that.

In addition the links to the public archives have also been added to the section on the GNSO Website where you have all the mailing list archives. And what I've also done - and Mikey is just pulling that up on the screen - I've created a page on our wiki for each of the subteams. So what is there now for each of those you basically see the link to the mailing list archive and the members that are part of that group.

And of course it's, you know, the wiki is there for each subteam to use as they would like - as they see best fit so if you want to add pages or create information here for the different meetings and also if you need any help in doing so just let us know.

Mikey O'Connor: Cool.

Jonathan Zuck: Marika, Mikey, it's Jonathan Zuck.

Mikey O'Connor: Go ahead, Jonathan.

Jonathan Zuck: Yeah, as somebody who's participating on a later subteam is there - what's the best way to be helpful in this early stage if not to start the research component of that other work or, I mean, what should the rest of us be doing that aren't on these first three subteams? Is that a naïve question?

Mikey O'Connor: No that's a really good question. My focus at the beginning of this was to get these three going just to sort of get a small snowball rolling down the hill that we could, you know, begin to get some things underway. And, quite frankly, I hadn't thought about that.

Do you have any ideas? I mean, you threw out one that doesn't sound too bad to me. One of the things we could do as the first three teams are sort of getting going is we could go through the exercise of forming some of the later ones so that people could at least self identify and begin doing some research on there. I'm all for parallel.

The thing I was concerned about was that we would get so much going on that we wouldn't be able to keep track of it all. And also I was thinking that there was perhaps some sequence to this where we would learn things in these three sort of more technical ones that would feed into the later ones. But I'm making that all up on the fly so...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: ...I'm all ears.

Jonathan Zuck: I don't want to derail your process at all. I mean, if the answer is the subgroups will go work and that we'll use these open calls as a - as just a recording mechanism from the subteams then we should just keep our powder dry, that's fine too. I just wanted to figure out what you had in mind.

Mikey O'Connor: Well, you know, I hate to...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Disperse energy by leaving people idle. You know, at the same time, I mean, one way to view it is the way you said, Jonathan, which is the rest of us sort of coast along. We kind of watch how things go for the subgroups. We contribute as things emerge that we get interested in.

Another is the sort of launch some parallel stuff. So, Jonathan, I think at this point I kind of have to take that and chew on it for a bit rather than blurt out an answer.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Marika, go ahead.

Marika Konings: Yeah, this is Marika. One suggestion I do have because we do have set up on the wiki these pages for each of the topics with the idea of, indeed, collecting reference materials and information. So I don't think anything should prevent those members that already want to start digging and finding information to maybe already start including that there so that, you know, when those subteams kick off at least information is there.

And as some of you may have seen I've already started adding some other things that I have, for example, received from colleagues on some of these topics. And I'm hoping to get more information so - to add here. So maybe that's - if people do want something to do maybe that's one of the things they can start looking at.

Jonathan Zuck: Okay.

Mikey O'Connor: Let me just dig into this and see - remember where they are. Oh there they are. So over here in the wiki you can see - maybe if I make it a little bigger it'll be easier to see - see pages for each of the topics. So, Jonathan, which is one of the ones that you're interested in?

Jonathan Zuck: Competition.

Mikey O'Connor: Competition.

Jonathan Zuck: There you go.

Mikey O'Connor: There it is. Okay so there's a sort of starter page and there are some places that you can fill in sources and the relevant section of the source. And there's sort of two ways that you could do this. One is you could actually dive into the wiki and edit this page directly.

Another would be to send that to Marika and me and we could drop it in for you; it sort of depends on how you feel about all that.

Jonathan Zuck: Okay.

Mikey O'Connor: But that seems like a pretty productive idea. I like that idea a lot so that maybe what we do is - let me just capture that so that I don't forget to - let's see, what do I want to say?

Jonathan Zuck: Future teams.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, future teams, that's a good one. That's a great first idea, thanks, Marika, for that. And, Jonathan, that's a terrific question, thanks a lot on that one. And Roy is in there saying the wiki is helpful and I'm on a future team too.

I would ask everybody in the group to sort of think about that because my goal was not to shut those off; my focus was really on getting something (started). And so if there's some way that we can get some other work done in parallel without distracting ourselves from getting these first three group really underway I like that a lot. And so let's keep thinking about that. Great one, Jonathan.

So, Alan, we were talking about - when you fell into the call - was the first agenda item is to sort of give us an update on the status of those subteams. And I think you are still the only subteam leader that's on the call to actually give us an update on your team.

And so that's what I was sort of leading into for you was if you could just give us a quick update on what's happened and what your thoughts are and any issues that you've got that the rest of us could help with and so on and so forth. So do you want to...

Alan Greenberg: The report is relatively easy. To be quite candid I forgot I was a subteam leader and I have done nothing. I've been up to my ears on a number of other

issues, some ICANN-related; some not. And I haven't done anything. And no one else has stepped forward and done anything either on the group. So we are where we stood with a couple of vague suggestions in the mind map and not a lot more.

Mikey O'Connor: Well that's okay; it's the Holiday Season. And, you know, Marika's done a bunchy of stuff too so I don't want to feel - I don't want people to feel put on the spot or in any way uncomfortable on this...

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: Well I feel put on the spot because I didn't remember I volunteered if indeed I volunteered. But I'm willing...

Mikey O'Connor: You did volunteer.

Alan Greenberg: ...I'm willing to take it on.

Mikey O'Connor: You did.

Alan Greenberg: I believe you.

Mikey O'Connor: And I was really glad you did.

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: I think I volunteered for one of them and then you merged the two together. But in any case...

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, well that's what happened. See, you were on both and then I said oh well there's Alan on both and so there you are, the leader.

Alan Greenberg: It has not happened yet and it probably won't before the New Year at this point.

Mikey O'Connor: That's all right. We'll figure it out, that's what this is all about. And so - and Marika is telling me that Susan Kawaguchi is on the call.

Susan Kawaguchi: I am.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Cool. Well how much of all that did you hear? Do you want to give us a little snapshot of what's going on in your gang?

Susan Kawaguchi: So not much but I did send an email yesterday to the - there's just five of us on the team. And so I sent an email yesterday with my questions because although I volunteered to be the leader I don't know much about the migration and the synchronization so I'm hoping the other members will.

So I don't know - I sent it yesterday afternoon so I haven't checked my email yet this morning. So hopefully we'll get something going on the email thread. But with the Holidays approaching one member has already said that they can't do anything until January, which is understandable. So we'll try to push forward.

Mikey O'Connor: Well I'm liking how far we've gotten. You know, I think it's fine to sort of relax a bit. You know, my style on these things is that I absolutely frantically (create) at the beginning of projects to sort of get the ball rolling and then there's some point at which I go oh the ball is rolling and I sort of relax. And I'm feeling pretty comfortable about how far we've gotten with all this.

So I'm delighted to hear - we may circle around to those questions because we've got an item on the agenda towards the end where we might start

brainstorming some questions in this group and so we might start with those that you've already done, Susan.

Susan Kawaguchi: Please take note that I am driving - we're getting in the car now so this is my commute time so...

Mikey O'Connor: Well that's okay. I think we can probably run out to the archive of your list and dig out your questions so you don't have to worry about that.

Susan Kawaguchi: Okay.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: We got your back. We got you covered.

Susan Kawaguchi: All right.

Mikey O'Connor: Okay well Steve isn't on the call. Is anybody else in the (unintelligible) group on the call and want to just, you know, has there been an email or has it been pretty quiet? Amr and then Marc. Amr, go ahead.

Amr Elsadr: Hi, Mikey. This is Amr. Yeah, we did get our mailing list set up last Thursday I believe. And there have been a few emails going back and forth. Steve set up a Doodle poll to try to work out a time for a first call. I think he wants to get it going quite early, either last Friday or possibly yesterday but that didn't work out. So we did schedule a call for the 21st of December so hopefully we will have more to report following that.

Mikey O'Connor: Spectacular. That's great. I guess you're alone. I thought Marc was in there. Marc must have...

((Crosstalk))

Marc Anderson: I - this is Marc. I lowered my hand...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Marc Anderson: ...the same update I would have so thank you, Amr.

Mikey O'Connor: Cool. Well this is neat. I'm liking this a lot. Okay thanks, all, for those updates and Marika for doing all of the getting ready. I think this is spectacular. Let's move on to the questions template topic. Marika, do you want to wrest the screen away from me and throw something up or just talk us through it because I'll take some notes but I don't necessarily have to...

Marika Konings: Yeah, this is Marika. I actually have nothing to put up. But I was just wondering maybe to help kick start some of these subteams maybe it would help if the working group would identify some questions which they hope or expect the subteams to come back with answer because I'm assuming that some of the questions might be similar for all of them.

And I know that some of the other working groups that are ongoing have been quite successful, I mean, they have really elaborate Excel sheets that I've seen where people are asked to, you know, fill and put responses. I'm not really suggesting that we maybe go down that route. But maybe that is something that will help the subteams and, you know, focusing their work.

And that might maybe help as well doing more work on the mailing list instead of maybe a need to set up a lot of calls or a lot of time like that.

Mikey O'Connor: So in the successful templates that you've seen before, Marika, what kinds of information are generally in there and what was it that made that useful and helpful for the people that used them?

Marika Konings: Well this is Marika. The only one I've seen - and Berry's probably a better fit to talk about that one is the one that they're using for the IGO PDP where I think they've created Excel sheets and basically, you know, asked people to identify for different questions like criteria that would need to apply.

I think for here it might work a different way but it would be, you know, asking the question, you know, I guess it would be on what information, you know, are you basing your findings, you know, please detail what is your finding.

It would be very straightforward questions. And, you know, what have you considered, you know, whether dissenting views within your subteam on, you know, your recommendation. So just basically try to detail a bit.

And I guess what we're - I guess eventually looking for is for each subteam to make a kind of recommendation on where the working group might go and its view on whether it would be a good idea or a bad idea to have takeaways from the perspective of that specific topic. And again to substantiate that with the information they gathered and discussed which then can be considered, you know, by the working group.

Mikey O'Connor: Let me figure out how to do this so that I got them in an order that you actually said them. Berry, could you - is Berry on the call? Yeah, he's on the call. Are those the four big chunks? Are there any to her sort of big chunks in the template that you built for the IGO gang that you'd add to this list that I did?

Berry Cobb: Hi, Mikey, this is Berry. Yeah, just - the template that - I wouldn't even really call it a template, but within respect to the IGO working group we divided into five subteams and each one of those subteams is responsible for analyzing kind of a set of criteria that we have defined.

And so each subteam is offered with an overarching question of what they're trying to resolve and then it's broken out based on the types of stakeholders that are involved with the issues of that working group.

And then there are a series of questions that relate specifically to that topic or issue being addressed by that subteam. So in a sense we've created a column by row matrix for each subteam to fill out. And we just started off with a draft template of what some of those questions would look like and then of course it's up to the subteam to modify their template however they see, you know, the direction that they're heading and the analysis that they need to complete.

Right now we're at the point of just information gathering. We're not really asking the subteams to come up with a list of, you know, pre-recommendations or anything. And we'll probably - once we've gathered all the analysis made a couple of revisions then we'll probably go through and having the subteams form their recommendations and/or prioritize some of their main findings as well.

And if you'd like I can send you an example of that we've sent over - or that we're using in the IGO group to this team just to get a - kind of a rough feel for what we're doing.

Mikey O'Connor: I think that would be neat. And maybe circulate it to the whole list but subteam folks probably will want to take kind of a harder look at it than the rest of us. Because I think that helps in several ways. One is it maybe gives a little bit of a framework on which the team can work but it also helps, you know, aggregate the results.

And I'm all for sort of self documenting work where we can pull big chunks of the work that people do out and push it out first to the rest of us and then into the report. That'd be great.

One of the things that we're going to want to contemplate at some point is, at least in my mind, I'm not thinking that the subteams come up with the final recommendations; they do the work and maybe come up with preliminary recommendation then the rest of us need to digest and agree to. Is that sort of the cycle that's going on in the IGO grant, Berry?

Berry Cobb: I'm sorry, Mikey, can you repeat that please?

Mikey O'Connor: Well in the IGO work are the subteams responsible for the final recommendations that go into the report or are they doing preliminary work that then the rest of the working group refines and comes to consensus on?

Berry Cobb: Yes, this is Berry. I'd say that we haven't made that decision yet but most likely the subteams will be responsible just for collecting the data and coming to a point where there may be a series of recommendations but all of which will be rolled back up and reviewed by the overall working group before entering into the final report.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, okay. Well that's a cool idea. Oh look, there's my dental appointment. Isn't that nice? Now you all know that after this call I get to go get my teeth drilled.

I've got a cool idea; why don't we go ahead, Berry, and if you could send that template with sort of a little introduction that summarizes part of the conversation to the list so that those who weren't on the call today aren't bewildered by this thing.

And then if somebody could sort of give Steve Metalitz a heads up since he's not on the call - he's the only leader that's not on the call - just to sort of fill him on what that's all about. I think that would be helpful for the groups. Anything else about this template agenda item? That was pretty useful I thought.

Okay on to the update on the expert panel. And again sort of throw the ball to Marika first on that.

Marika Konings: Yeah, so...

((Crosstalk))

Marika Konings: ...this is Marika. Following last week's call I went back to the different names that were suggested by different people on, you know, forming kind of ad hoc expert panel to provide some feedback on their experiences in relation to some of the recent or maybe not too recent transitions from thin to thick Whois. So I think the DotOrg one and I think DotUS has been discussed as well.

So from the people that were on that list I've received confirmation from Greg Aaron, Michael Young, (Howard Aland), Andrew Sullivan, Chuck Gomes and Chris Brown and (Sedik Shanduwalla) that they would be willing to help out.

I basically indicated to them that I think the idea is that we would come up with a list of questions that we would circulate to all of them beforehand and then hopefully try to schedule a call where they would be able to respond or even, you know, provide written feedback to those questions.

One of the suggestions I did receive back from Chuck Gomes was that maybe it would be worth, as well, reaching out to some of the registrars that were - or registrar representatives that were involved in that process, some of the big ones. And he has sent me a list of registrars that were, you know, the main plays at that time.

And I'm trying to see if, you know, first of all someone with ICANN might be able to identify who those people might be unless of course there are people on the call that might be able to help out with names so we can also have the registrar perspective on those transitions represented as part of the panel.

Mikey O'Connor: Anybody on the call want to answer to that question from Marika as the registrars - was anybody - let's see, who have we got on the call that's a registrar?

Marika Konings: Yeah, because - this is Marika, if I can add to that the list that Chuck suggested or the registrars we should be looking at is Network Solutions, Two Cows, Register.com, Go Daddy, eNom, Melbourne IT, Bulkregister.com, DirectNic.com, (Shoont) and Partner and DotRegistrar.com.

Mikey O'Connor: Cool all right well certainly Tim then will be able to get us to the Go Daddy gang. I think I'm going to let that one run right along the tracks that it's running, not take a lot of our time on this because I think that finding those folks is probably best done the way you're doing it; sort of following the network of people that you've already contacted.

That's, you know, just as an observer standing on the side of all that it seems to be coming along really well. And we've certainly got a powerhouse team already that have volunteered. And if we could get a couple three, four more from the registrars I think we'd have a killer team to aim these questions at.

And I have a feeling it's going to take more than one call because I think what we'll have is a really rich set of questions aimed at a very strong group of experienced folks that will produce a lot of really helpful information for us. So I'm liking how this is going too. Thanks a lot for that, Marika. Anybody want to comment on any of this?

Okay that gives us a little time for the rest of the call to, you know, maybe start developing some questions on our own. And since Susan's - let me just get to the archive of Susan's email list here. Let's see. You're doing this one, right? Yeah. All right so there we go. Let me see if I can find Susan's - oh I went the wrong - I'm reading the archive backwards, sorry.

There, okay Susan, I've got your questions here. I'm going to read them to you and I'm going to steal them and...

Susan Kawaguchi: Okay.

Mikey O'Connor: ...staple them into my little document as we go so that I continue my tradition of self documenting work here. So the first question is, "Does the registrar retain the full Whois (reg) for thick Whois registries currently or do they only retain the customer information which may include all of the thick Whois information?"

I'm going to circle back to these. I just want to read them into the transcript really quick.

The second one is, "Since the registrars are already sending some Whois information to the registry for DotCom and DotNet how would this impact synchronization if we require that they send the whole record?"

And then the third question is, "Other than the magnitude of the number of records that a registrar would have to submit to the DotCom registry how would requiring the whole record be any different than what they are already doing with the other gTLD registries?"

And just - I'm going to throw open the introduction that this subgroup is working on. What are the implications of a thin registry possibly becoming authoritative for a registrant - Whois data following the transition from a thin registry model to a thick registry model. A working group should consider the term, "authoritative" in both the technical, i.e. the repository of the authoritative data, and the policy, i.e. who has authority over the data...

((Crosstalk))

Marc Anderson: This is Marc. Can I interrupt you for a...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, go ahead, Marc; jump right in.

Marc Anderson: This is - so Susan's post is for the synchronization...

Mikey O'Connor: Oh, bah, you're absolutely right.

((Crosstalk))

Marc Anderson: ...speak for Susan but I think her questions are intended more as starting points for discussion for the working group not necessarily questions for the ad hoc expert panel.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh okay so those are misplaced even in - if I put them in the right place in the list. All right then so never mind. Thanks, Marc, for reigning me in.

Marc Anderson: No problem.

Mikey O'Connor: I love it when I gallop off into the field, you know, through the fences and knock things down and stuff like that. Alan, go ahead.

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, it dawns on me as you were reading those questions that really we need to preface it by asking what are the current practices for thick registries; for how do registrars handle thick registries?

I suspect the answer is going to be - are some actually maintain a Whois and display that when asked and some just go fetch it from the registry and there may not be uniformity. But I think we need to know before we worry about how does a registrar change - or registry - well the registrar in this case - how does it change from thin to thick? We need to know is there any uniformity in practice with current registrars and thick Whois.

Mikey O'Connor: Now when you're talking about practices are you talking about all practices or some subset of practices?

Alan Greenberg: I'm talking about regarding - the questions that were posed wherever they go were does the registrar retain the full Whois record or just part of it? And the - but the question can be asked not in the context of the transition from thin to thick but just the current thick registries that exist today and there are many of them, what are the registrar practices?

I mean, I'm sure that they retain the customer phone number in their own, you know, client files but do they retain it as a Whois entry for a particular domain or do they rely, when asked to display Whois, rely on what is in the registry.

When we were talking earlier one of the concerns was what may happen if the registrar retains the Whois record and displays a different one for whatever reasons they've gone out of sync from what the registry will display.

So I think first we need to do a level set to find out does that kind of problem already happen? And if it does adding one more to the group is not our business; it's not our concern. Am I just blathering or...

Mikey O'Connor: No, no, you're blabbering in a way that as you blabber I am growing clearer on what you're saying.

Alan Greenberg: I mean, we need to know what the current practices are with thick registries; we're not inventing the concept of a thick registry however - or at this point, there's plenty of them and we need to find out is there uniformity in how registrars handle them? If not then there's not going to be uniformity, you know, when DotCom does the transition. And we don't need to worry about it. I think we're inventing worries that don't exist because each registrar already has practices; they may all be the same, they may be different.

Mikey O'Connor: That's a good start. Volker, go ahead.

Volker Greimann: A lot of folks answers are already in the current RAA, Section 3.3 and the following where it says that the data that we provide in the Whois currently - and this does not differentiate from thick or thin Whois - references of the following element as contained in the registrar's database. And then it lists all the elements that are in the Whois already.

So basically we are required to provide a Whois for thin or thick registries under the current RAA which contains all the data that we also provide to the registry who is also providing Whois. So basically we're doubling up the effort, which is something that we're trying to negotiate out of the current RAA version.

But at this stage every registrar provides the same data themselves from data in the database as the registry would in the thick registry because the RAA does not differentiate between thin or thick.

Mikey O'Connor: So in - and I think where Alan's question was going is if we stay away from thin and only look a thick for a minute is there any data synchronization issues where - with a thick registry the registrar also has to maintain a copy of the data at the registrar. Am I getting that right, Alan?

Alan Greenberg: Well I guess I'm working from a position of ignorance that based on what Volker said he is implying that the registrar must keep a full copy of Whois. I'm sure they keep all the information; they're their clients and they're not going to rely on someone else to retain their client information.

But when I go to a specific registrar and do a Whois on a domain which they sponsor I don't know whether they get it out of their local database or they query the registry.

Mikey O'Connor: Volker, what's the...

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: And I'm not sure the RAA is specific on which they must do.

Volker Greimann: The second - this data shall consist of the following elements as contained in the registrar's database. So basically the RAA assumes that we are querying our own database for the Whois.

Alan Greenberg: Then if indeed everyone interprets it that way then if DotCom becomes thick you would do the same thing.

Volker Greimann: Correct.

Alan Greenberg: And for every thick Whois registry there is the potential that your database and the registry's get out of sync.

Volker Greimann: Well we've had that case already with DotOrg.

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, no, no, I'm not saying, you know, I'm saying for any thick Whois registry there is a possibility that you make a change in your Whois, it does not get reflected in the registry and they're out of sync; that's a reality we live with, so be it.

Volker Greimann: Well usually it's the other way around; the registry makes a change that we are not aware of.

Alan Greenberg: Whatever.

Mikey O'Connor: Well that's a fascinating thing.

Alan Greenberg: I mean, we're not reinventing the wheel here.

Volker Greimann: No.

Alan Greenberg: We're just doing it again. And that sounds like something which should be fixed but it should be fixed generally for gTLDs and not - it's not a problem we need to solve.

Mikey O'Connor: Right.

Volker Greimann: Maybe just one more point that you should add to the - look at the RAA, the Section 3.4 where we are required to maintain our own electronic database of the data that's mentioned above. So it makes it more clear that we have that data. We generate the Whois from that data and we must maintain that data even though the Whois is also provided by the registry we are providing it as well and we are keeping it as well.

Mikey O'Connor: Wow, that's fascinating.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: So that's...

Volker Greimann: ...we're negotiating it so.

Mikey O'Connor: So that's great. I think what I want to do is see if we can pick off - what would be really cool - let's see if we can do this. Let's leave synchronization and migration for just - for now and (unintelligible) come up with a starter kit question for either authoritativeness or stability and data escrow sort of along the ones that - along the lines of the one that Alan did before.

And then have a little bit of a discussion like we just did just to give each of the three groups sort of a toe hold of, you know, one question and a little bit of

a discussion. You know, sometimes I find it easier to think about and write about things if I have just one starting example.

So is there a good one for either of these two, stability and data escrow or authoritativeness that people want to throw out as a starter? You know, just if you had a panel of experts (unintelligible) good panel like the one that seems to be assembling under Marika's guidance - what would you think of as a question to ask them in either of these two areas?

Volker, is that an old hand or a new one?

Volker Greimann: That's a residual hand, yes, sorry.

Mikey O'Connor: Okay. Marc, go ahead.

Marc Anderson: Hi, Mikey. It's Marc. I was thinking - just thinking out loud here but maybe we could piggy back on the synchronization question we just had. What happens when the registry and the registrar are out of sync? Who's authoritative in that situation?

Mikey O'Connor: Oh that's a good one.

Marc Anderson: I guess there's some overlap there but, you know, I think it's, you know, maybe important to look at them in both, you know, from an authoritative and from a synchronization standpoint.

Mikey O'Connor: Let's throw the ball to some of you like Volker to give us a little bit of a starting point to think about this. Volker, if I marched into your office and said - and asked you the question what would your answer be?

Volker Greimann: Registry; definitely the registry because any change they make is what goes. If a registry changes the registrar and the registrants then the registrar

database can no longer be authoritative because they're no longer the sponsoring registrar even if they don't know it.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh right. Okay cool. Everybody gets a gold star. How about one for Alan's group just to even out the...

Alan Greenberg: It's Alan. I'll give one for this one. In the context of another working group that I'm on I'm wondering for UDRP which - where does the dispute provider do the query to find out who the - the registrant of record is? Do they do it differently if it's a thick and a thin Whois? Interesting question. I'm not sure. You can ask them on Thursday.

Mikey O'Connor: Let's see...

Volker Greimann: Well from my experience they don't ask different questions. They always come to the registrar to confirm what's in the Whois.

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: Even if it's a thick Whois?

Volker Greimann: Yes.

Alan Greenberg: So now you're saying - you're giving me opposite of what you just said. You said the registry is authoritative but...

Volker Greimann: Usually that's the case.

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: ...dispute providers may use the non authoritative one.

Volker Greimann: No they look at the Whois at the registry level but then they come to the registrar to confirm that that's the correct data that they have on file as well. It's a procedural step.

Alan Greenberg: And if they find a difference what do they do?

Volker Greimann: Then they ask the registrants to explain the data - the difference or they go back to the...

((Crosstalk))

Volker Greimann: ...to the - no the complainant and ask him to figure it out. The authoritative question comes from the effect that any third party may go to a court and ask the registry to make a change which may include changing registrars. There is nothing a registrar can do so I wouldn't assume that we are authoritative if the registry can do that with a court order.

Because effectively the registry makes the authoritative change that overrules anything that the registrar can do. But the dispute provider still has to work through the registrar to effect all the changes because the registrar is the party that is - the responsible party under the UDRP not the registry. The registry does not enter into the UDRP proceedings at any point.

Alan Greenberg: Interesting.

Mikey O'Connor: That is interesting. You know, from sort of a classic text book data design perspective this would make a great case study.

Alan Greenberg: Well I think it's an interesting question that it will come up - actually it's not Thursday it's tomorrow this week. So come back tomorrow and we'll have...

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: ...the dispute providers think.

Mikey O'Connor: We'll leave it in the pile and that ought to give the authoritativeness group a good starting point for a question. Frederic, are you in on this particular point or do you have another question that you want to lob out there?

Frederic Guillemaut: Hi, this is Frederic. No I just wanted to back up some point - this point from what Volker said earlier. Most of the time we have contacts in the Whois and we, as registrar, we have customers who are managing the accounts. And sometimes these people are different for why some courts - some lawyers would come to us and ask who is in charge of the domain name.

So sometime we have the owner was in the Whois and who doesn't even know - who doesn't even want to manage the domain name. And we are the only ones who have, you know, the contact - the managing contact of the domain name. So that's sometimes a difference; sometimes our customer is different of the owner.

I don't know if I make myself clear. But that's why some - at some point the registry would come to the registrar and say, look, we have an issue with this domain name; who is in charge of this domain name? Because the owner doesn't answer the emails because he doesn't want to deal with it because he has got a reseller, he has got a webmaster, he has got someone else managing the domain name and this someone sometimes doesn't appear on the Whois.

So that sometimes make them come to us. And that's - and I also particularly agree on what Volker said and the registry - the registry should be the only authoritative - well the only reference for the database because it makes a double work for us to keep a database for Whois.

And if the registry has got already so I think we really should remove that obligation from the RAA at some point. We really should simplify the process

and have only one database with the registry once it becomes thick. And that would simplify many, many things for many people. That's my point of view.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, and I think that one of the interesting - let me just finish typing here...

Frederic Guillemaut: Yeah, and I could also add one thing about the (double) work - (double) work is also for data escrow. What's the point of escrowing data if you have a thick Whois?

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah and that's one that's somewhat down the line in our - I can't remember if that's in this one? Yes, that's - so maybe that's one of our...

Volker Greimann: Maybe just one point to that - point to that - I don't think it should be our goal to remove the obligation to keep that data from the registrar. And we also should not remove the data escrow function, in my view, because there have been cases in ccTLDs where the authoritative ccTLD registry who provides the Whois has had a database crash and asked all the registrars to provide the data to them again to make sure the most current data set is available .

Now this was a very small African TLD where that last happened. There was another one - I don't remember where that was where something similar occurred so it's always helpful to have the registrar have a database of data available to be able to help the registry recover.

That said I still stand by what I said before that the registry should be the authoritative...

Frederic Guillemaut: Yes, but, Volker, we - the - it's not the registrar's role to act as a backup for registries is it?

Volker Greimann: I think that's debatable. But currently that's the case and it has its advantages so I'm not sure if we should remove that entirely.

Frederic Guillemaut: Okay.

Mikey O'Connor: So do you do - the question I'm taking out of this is do registrars do data escrow even when the registry is thick today?

Volker Greimann: Yes. Yes.

Man: Yes.

Volker Greimann: Definitely.

Frederic Guillemaut: Yes, we love it.

Volker Greimann: But for us it's free...

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Oh it is, okay?

Volker Greimann: ...have to pay for it; we don't. It's part of our ICANN contract and the fees that we pay to ICANN.

Frederic Guillemaut: Yes, it's free but if we - we have to manage the system. And if you have to manage the system for only two TLDs it's better than to revolve 17 TLDs.

((Crosstalk))

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah. And to a certain extent then we get into the scope boundary that Alan alluded to earlier which is that we don't really have to worry so much about the number of TLDs but we do probably have to think about the impact of - well but you already escrow DotCom. So, yeah, all right so never mind; never mind.

Clearly, Alan, you get to run - edit the heck out of all this after, you know, this is just sort of a kicker-offer. Go ahead, Alan.

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, a couple of things. First of all on the scope that you just alluded to our job is not to say how thick registries are handled.

Mikey O'Connor: Right.

Alan Greenberg: You know, we are not going to impact how DotBiz and DotInfo work on the registrar side or the registry side. So whatever the common practice is if it is a uniform practice and we recommend transitioning to thick then that is the practice; if there's variable practice then it will still be variable over different registrars.

So, you know, it's tempting to try to fix all the problems in the world related, you know, that have some implication on thick versus thin but, you know, it's not our job and let's not make the scope more difficult than it is.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Alan Greenberg: A question I had - and it's a question for registrars because I haven't checked and I don't know the answer - is where is the information regarding resellers kept? If I do a Whois query at the registrar on data that is - on a domain which is done through a reseller there is information there that says who the reseller is or I can query it somehow.

There's an RAA provision in the new RAA to specifically say the registrar must provide that information. If it is a thick Whois is that information also somehow encoded in the Whois or is that something that is only resident in the registrar's database? That's my question.

Volker Greimann: Well, I would like to answer to that. The current RAA doesn't - does not mention resellers in the Whois specifications at all. It has (resellers) some different positions mentioned. But...

((Crosstalk))

Volker Greimann: ...something that...

Alan Greenberg: If I may interrupt? It does say that the registrar must be able to tell the registrant who the reseller is.

Volker Greimann: Actually the...

((Crosstalk))

Alan Greenberg: ...not necessarily through Whois.

Volker Greimann: Yes, correct. Basically the way the registrar displays or if the registrar displays who the reseller is entirely voluntary on the basis of the registrar.

Alan Greenberg: Okay.

Volker Greimann: Some do; some don't. Some just use the handle of the reseller at the registrar. Because at the end for the registrant the only party that is responsible to what ICANN - for maintaining all the obligations of the RAA is the registrar not the reseller.

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, no I understand that. Okay so right now if it's the registrar somehow embeds it in the registry's Whois, they do but there's no obligation to it and we don't need to worry about it.

Volker Greimann: Correct.

Mikey O'Connor: Marika, go ahead.

Marika Konings: Yeah, this is Marika. Just coming back on the data escrow because I know that you said there might be a non issue. Maybe for, indeed, the discussion of balancing, you know, whether it has an impact but I think the working group should feel free to consider related recommendations.

For example, if there would be a recommendation that, you know, thick Whois should be required. I think if there are any recommendations that flow from that saying like well - and that if, you know, if there's recommendations adopted at the same time the data escrow requirements should be reviewed or should be changed or should be kept in place I think that kind of - those kind of recommendations will be very helpful as well if they are to be considered as part of, you know, the overall conversation if they come out, of course, of our deliberations.

Mikey O'Connor: Give me the example of the related recommendation to this one again, Marika? I was lagging.

Marika Konings: It was on the discussion on the data escrow. I think you put there it may be a non issue...

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah.

Marika Konings: My point is just that it may be a non issue from reflecting on whether it's a, you know, good or bad idea to have thick Whois but if there is - it may be an issue as a related recommendation if there would be a requirement for thick Whois if the working group says well in that case there's no need to escrow at the registrar level that might be a related recommendation, that's just what I meant.

Mikey O'Connor: Yeah, and I think that's where we go in to Alan's scope point, which is that we have to be careful not to make specific recommendations that actually apply across all TLDs because that's way beyond our scope.

And so if the current practice is the way that Volker and Frederic have described it where both the registry and the registrar escrow the data I think we may run into a scope issue if we say in this particular case we also recommend that they not be required to do that because now we're colliding with a much broader issue. Is that a good summary of your position, Alan? I don't want to put words in your mouth.

Alan Greenberg: I'm more flexible than - I think I'm flexible on it. I think it is not within our chartered scope to make a recommendation on all gTLDs and thick Whois in general. We certainly have the ability to say in passing that we recommend the GNSO or ICANN review the need for escrow in a registrar for a thick registry. That's, you know, that's certainly within our means.

It is even within our, you know, we could certainly make a recommendation that due to the work that we've done and the fact that we're talking about what essentially is the vast majority of TLDs of registrations, since we're looking at the two largest ones, among others, it is certainly - we can make a recommendation that we no longer - that ICANN no longer needs escrow for - at the registrar side for these TLDs.

I would object strenuously if we put that in a package and tell the GNSO not to separate it from the more specific recommendation of, you know, to transition or not to transition. And I would expect the GNSO to pass that onto the board separately, you know, for something that can be rejected or accepted.

But nothing stops us from making the recommendation even if it's out of scope.

Marika Konings: Yeah, and this is Marika. If I can just clarify as well indeed I think that's something the working group would need to have a closer look at because the recommendation could indeed be as well in a separate effort this should be considered now that we're making this recommendation.

But just coming on the scope if you look at the charter itself it does talk about, you know, a policy recommendation regarding the use of thick Whois by all gTLD registries both existing and future. So I think you might even argue that there could be recommendations coming out of this group on how thick Whois should be applied across the board looking at the charter question as such.

At least that's how I personally read that but...

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, I...

Marika Konings: ...again I think that's maybe a separate discussion we need to have.

Alan Greenberg: Yeah, I - Marika, I think I agree with you that it could be deemed to be within the scope. On the other hand we have what may well be a simple question to dispense of one way or another and get this PDP done.

Marika Konings: Yeah.

Alan Greenberg: And I think we want to keep it as narrow as we can to allow us to do our work. You know, we don't need extra work; there's enough other work going on that is absolutely crucial, you know, to the long term, you know, success of the organization. And I don't think we want to make this one wider than we need to other than to say let's look at it even if it could be construed as within scope.

Mikey O'Connor: Okay I'm going to put a check back to the charter.

Marika Konings: And, Mikey, just to note I think some people have started dropping off the call...

Mikey O'Connor: Oh, it's after 10. Gracious, I got so entranced with all this. My apologies to all. Clearly we'll wrap it up right now. Volker, you've got your hand up; do you have anything you want to lob into this before we cut this off? I'm sorry. Nope, residual hand.

Okay, well thanks all. I think a terrific call. And I'll wrap up all these little questions that we've come up with and see you after the Holidays.

Marika Konings: Just to confirm that's the 8th of January, right?

Mikey O'Connor: Yes. Yeah, I think January 2 people would have headaches, it's probably a bad idea.

Marika Konings: I think it's January 1 actually that is a Tuesday so it makes it even harder.

Mikey O'Connor: Oh January 1, even worse. Then a severe headache and football matches to watch and parades.

Volker Greimann: Well happy holidays to you all and I think it was a productive meeting today. See you all after the Holidays.

Mikey O'Connor: Thanks, Volker. Yeah, bye-bye.

Marika Konings: Same to you all.

Mikey O'Connor: Bye, gang.

((Crosstalk))

Man: Merry Christmas.

Marika Konings: Bye.

Man: Bye.

Mikey O'Connor: Julia, I think we can wrap up the recording and call it quits. Thanks ever so much for your help. Marika, thanks a lot; you're definitely performing up to your usual superstar standards here. Have a great Holiday.

((Crosstalk))

Marika Konings: You too.

Mikey O'Connor: Okay.

Marika Konings: Bye.

Mikey O'Connor: See you later.

END