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Policy & Implementation

What is this about?
Mainly as a result of discussions stemming from implementation related issues of the new gTLD program, there is increased focus on which topics call for policy and which call for implementation work, including which processes should be used, at what time and how diverging opinions should be acted upon.

Following several discussions by the GNSO Council on this topic, the GNSO Council decided to form a drafting team to draft a Charter for a Working Group which will be tasked to provide concrete recommendations on how to address some of these issues from a GNSO perspective.

What is the current status of this project?
A drafting team was formed which will now deliver a proposed charter to the GNSO Council for consideration. The proposed charter recommends that the WG produce recommendations on:
1. A set of principles that would underpin any GNSO policy and implementation related discussions, taking into account existing GNSO Operating Procedures.
2. A process for developing gTLD policy, perhaps in the form of “Policy Guidance”, including criteria for when it would be appropriate to use such a process (for developing policy other than “Consensus Policy”) instead of a GNSO Policy Development Process;
3. A framework for implementation related discussions associated with GNSO Policy Recommendations;
4. Criteria to be used to determine when an action should be addressed by a policy process and when it should be considered implementation, and;
5. Further guidance on how GNSO Implementation Review Teams, as defined in the PDP Manual, are expected to function and operate.

Why is this important?
While developing a bright-line rule as to what is policy or implementation may not be possible, the hope is that by developing clear processes and identifying clear roles and responsibilities for the different stakeholders, it will become easier to deal with these issues going forward and allow for broad participation and involvement.

Expected next steps
The GNSO Council is now expected to consider the charter for adoption. If/when the charter is adopted, a call for volunteers will be broadly circulated to form the Working Group.

Background
In order to facilitate these discussions, ICANN Staff developed a draft framework for community discussion that identifies a number of steps and criteria that might facilitate dealing with similar questions in the future. The paper identifies a number of questions that the community may want to consider further in this context, as well as a couple of suggested improvements that could be considered in the short term. In addition, a session on this topic was held at the ICANN Meeting in Beijing, which resulted in the formation of the Drafting Team by the GNSO Council.
How can I Get involved
The Working Group will be open to anyone interested. If you want to join the Working Group please contact the GNSO Secretariat to be added to the mailing list (mailto:gnso.secretariat@gnso.icann.org). Furthermore, public input will be sought on the Initial Report in due time (see http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment).

Where can I find more information?

Drafting Team workspace - https://community.icann.org/x/wij-Ag


Beijing session - http://beijing46.icann.org/node/37133

Staff responsible: Marika Konings
Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information
Policy Development Process

What is this about?
The translation and transliteration of contact information were addressed by the IRD-WG in its Final Report, in which it was recommended that the GNSO Council should request an Issue Report on the translation and transliteration of contact information. In this context "contact information" is a subset of Domain Name Registration Data and thus the information that enables someone using a Domain Name Registration Data Directory Service (such as WHOIS) to contact the domain name registration holder. It usually includes the name, organization, and postal address of the registered name holder, technical contact, as well as administrative contact. Translation is defined as the translation of a text into another language and transliteration is the writing of a word using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet.

What is the current status of this project?
The GNSO Council has initiated a Policy Development Process (PDP) on this topic. A call for volunteers to join the Drafting Team to develop a Charter for the PDP Working Group was published on 19 June 2013.

Why is this important?
The continued internationalization of the domain name system in general and specifically of registration data means that there is an urgent need to allow for standardized query of international registration data and to assure its internationalization functionality. The imminent expansion of the gTLD space and the creation of a large number of internationalized domain names, combined with the continued reforms attempts of gTLD Directory Services makes the need to establish GNSO policy for the translation and transliteration of contact information even more pressing.

Expected next steps
Once the Charter Drafting Team is convened and a Charter is drafted the GNSO Council has to approve it and subsequently the PDP Working Group is expected to start its work.

Background
At its meeting on 13 June 2013, the GNSO Council initiated a PDP on the translation and transliteration of contact information. Accordingly a group of volunteers will now be convened to draft the charter for the PDP Working Group, which is to be approved by the GNSO Council.

The Charter should reflect the fact that the WG is expected to address the following issues:
1. Whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script.
2. Who should decide who should bear the burden translating contact information to a single common language or transliterating contact information to a single common script.

In addition, the Charter should include, at a minimum, the following elements as specified in the GNSO Working Group Guidelines: Working Group identification; Mission; Purpose and Deliverables; Formation, Staffing and Organization; and Rules of Engagement. The proposed Charter will be submitted to the GNSO Council for its consideration and approval.

Where can I find more information?

Issue Report - Final Issue Report on Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information

PDP Workspace - https://community.icann.org/display/tatcipdp/Translation+and+Transliteration+of+Contact+Information+PDP+Home


Staff responsible: Julie Hedlund
Thick WHOIS Policy Development Process

What is this about?
ICANN specifies Whois service requirements for generic top-level domain (gTLD) registries through the registry and registrar agreements. Registries and registrars satisfy their Whois obligations using different service models. The two common models are often characterized as “thin” and “thick” Whois registries. This distinction is based on how two distinct sets of data are managed. One set of data is associated with the domain name, and a second set of data is associated with the registrant of the domain name. A thin registry only stores and manages the information associated with the domain name. This set includes data sufficient to identify the sponsoring registrar, status of the registration, creation and expiration dates for each registration, name server data, the last time the record was updated in its Whois data store, and the URL for the registrar’s Whois service. With thin registries, registrars manage the second set of data associated with the registrant of the domain and provide it via their own Whois services, as required by Section 3.3 of the RAA for those domains they sponsor. COM and NET are examples of thin registries. Thick registries maintain and provide both sets of data (domain name and registrant) via Whois. INFO and BIZ are examples of thick registries.

‘Thick’ Whois has certain advantages e.g. transfers, but there may be negative consequences that should be explored in order to determine whether ‘thick’ Whois should be required for all. As a result, the GNSO Council tasked this Working Group to provide the GNSO Council with ‘with a policy recommendation regarding the use of thick Whois by all gTLD registries, both existing and future’.

What is the current status of this project?
Following its analysis of the different elements, as outlined in the WG Charter, the Working Group has now published its Initial Report for public comment (see http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/thick-whois-initial-21jun13-en.htm). In this report, the WG concludes that after review of all the issues identified in its charter, it considers that there are more benefits than disadvantages to requiring thick Whois for all gTLD registries. As a result, the Working Group has arrived at the conclusion that: The provision of thick Whois services should become a requirement for all gTLD registries, both existing and future.

Expected next steps
A public comment forum on the Initial Report was opened on 14 June 2013. After the respective closure of the Comment (14 July 2013) and the Reply Period (4 August 2013) the Working Group will review all submitted comments, amend the Initial Report as appropriate and submit the final version to the GNSO Council for its consideration.

Why is this important?
From a technical perspective, a thick Whois model provides a central repository for a given registry whereas a thin Whois model is a decentralized repository. Historically, the centralized databases of thick Whois registries are operated under a single administrator that sets
conventions and standards for submission and display, archival/restoration and security have proven easier to manage. By contrast, registrars set their own conventions and standards for submission and display, archival/restoration and security registrant information under a thin Whois model. Today, for example, Whois data submission and display conventions vary among registrars. The thin model is thus criticized for introducing variability among Whois services, which can be problematic for legitimate forms of automation. It is this problem that prompted the IRTP B Working Group to recommend requiring thick Whois across incumbent registries – in order to improve security, stability and reliability of the domain transfer process. A thick Whois model also offers attractive archival and restoration properties. If a registrar were to go out of business or experience long-term technical failures rendering them unable to provide service, registries maintaining thick Whois have all the registrant information at hand and could transfer the registrations to a different (or temporary) registrar so that registrants could continue to manage their domain names. In addition to these issues, the WG was also asked to consider topics such as privacy and data protection; authoritativeness, and cost implications as part of its deliberations.

With the imminent launch of the new gTLD program and the requirement of all new gTLD registries to operate a thick Whois, the question of why a uniform thick Whois regime across all generic top level domains might not be desirable has become an important discussion point within the wider context of GNSO’s ongoing reform process of domain name registration data services.

How can I get involved?
The Working Group is open to anyone interested. If you want to join the Working Group please contact the GNSO Secretariat to be added to the mailing list (gnso.secretariat@gnso.icann.org). Everyone is also encouraged to submit their views on the Initial Report to the public comment forum: http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/thick-whois-initial-21jun13-en.htm. The Working Group is hosting a public session at the ICANN Meeting in Durban (see http://durban47.icann.org/node/39777).

Background
In its Final Report on 30 May 2011 the IRTP B Working Group recommended to the GNSO to seek an Issue Report on the requirement of thick Whois for all incumbent gTLDs, which the GNSO Council then requested at its meeting on 22 September 2011. The PDP was initiated on 14 March 2012.

Where can I find more information?
Working Group Workspace
Thick WHOIS PDP Initial Report
Thick WHOIS PDP Initial Report Public Comment

Staff responsible: Marika Konings
Locking of a Domain Name Subject to UDRP Proceedings
Policy Development Process (PDP)

What is this about?
The “locking” of a domain name registration associated with UDRP proceedings is not something that is literally required by the UDRP as written, but is a practice that has developed around it. As a result, there is no uniform approach, which has resulted in confusion and misunderstandings. The GNSO Council initiated a PDP on this specific topic in December 2011 and tasked the WG to make recommendations to the GNSO Council to address the issues identified with the locking of a domain name subject to UDRP Proceedings.

What is the current status of this project?
Following review of the public comments received on its Initial Report, the Working Group has now finalized its report for submission to the GNSO Council. The Final Report includes 17 recommendations, which are intended to clarify and standardize the process for locking of a domain name subject to UDRP Proceedings, including:

- Definition of ‘locking’
- Requiring registrar to apply lock within 2 business days following request for verification
- Removing obligation for complainant to notify the respondent at the time of filing, but add automatic extension of 4 days to response time upon request
- Step by step clarification of requirements of parties
- Development of educational and informational materials to assist in informing affected parties of new requirements and recommended best practices

Why is this important?
Currently there is no requirement to lock names in period between filing complaint and commencement of proceedings and no definition of ‘status quo’, which has resulted in different interpretations and confusion of the policy.

Expected next steps
The GNSO Council is now expected to consider the report and its recommendations.

Background
To address this issue, the GNSO Council decided to initiate a Policy Development Process on 15 December 2011. As part of its deliberations, the WG was required to consider the following questions:
1. Whether the creation of an outline of a proposed procedure, which a complainant must follow in order for a registrar to place a domain name on registrar lock, would be desirable.
2. Whether the creation of an outline of the steps of the process that a registrar can reasonably expect to take place during a UDRP dispute would be desirable.
3. Whether the time frame by which a registrar must lock a domain after a UDRP has been filed should be standardized.
4a. Whether what constitutes a "locked" domain name should be defined.
4b. Whether, once a domain name is 'locked' pursuant to a UDRP proceeding, the registrant information for that domain name may be changed or modified.
5. Whether additional safeguards should be created for the protection of registrants in cases where the domain name is locked subject to a UDRP proceeding.

Where can I find more information?

Locking of a Domain Name Subject to UDRP Proceedings – Final Report

Locking of a Domain Name Subject to UDRP Proceedings – Initial Report

Public Comments received on Initial Report - http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments-locking-domain-name-15mar13/
Working Group Workspace - https://community.icann.org/x/xq3bAQ

Staff responsible: Marika Konings
Inter-Registrar Transfer Policy (IRTP) Part D Policy Development Process

What is this about?
The Inter-Registrar Transfer Policy (IRTP) Part D PDP Working Group is chartered by the GNSO Council to answer six questions in relation to the IRTP: 1) whether reporting requirements for registries and dispute providers should be developed; 2) whether to amend the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy on how to handle disputes when multiple transfers have occurred; 3) whether dispute options for registrants should be developed; 4) whether registrars should be required to make information on transfer dispute resolution options available to registrants; 5) whether additional penalties for IRTP breaches should be introduced, and; 6) whether the universal adoption and implementation of EPP AuthInfo codes has eliminated the need for FOAs.

What is the current status of this project?
The Working Group started its deliberations on 25 February 2013. In addition to outlining its approach and work plan, the WG requested input from the GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies, as well as other ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees. The review of the comments received has now been completed. Currently the Group is discussing each of the charter questions in view of preparing a first draft of the Initial Report which is expected to be published in August 2013.

Why is this important?
ICANN's Compliance Department received a total of 3816 valid IRTP-related complaints between January 2012 and February 2013 alone, making it the most common issue of community complaint. However, at the same time, the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy (TDRP) is hardly ever used by registrars, which appears to be a contradiction in view of the number of complaints relation to the IRTP. The WGs recommendations are expected to address this dichotomy, which may result in a reform of the TDRP or other measures that would address the issues encountered in relation to the IRTP.

Expected next steps
The WG is expected to publish its Initial Report for public comment in August 2013.

Background
The IRTP is a 2004 consensus policy developed through the GNSO's policy development process (PDP) and is currently under review by the GNSO through a series of PDPs. The IRTP provides a straightforward procedure for domain name holders to transfer domain names between registrars.

On the recommendation of the IRTP Part C WG, the GNSO Council agreed to combine all the remaining IRTP issues into one final PDP, IRTP Part D, in addition to one issue that was raised by the IRTP Part C WG in its Final Report. The GNSO Council unanimously adopted the request for
an Issue Report on IRTP Part D at its meeting on 17 October 2012. And so, this PDP is the forth and final policy development process of different aspects of the Inter Registrar Transfer Policy.

How can I Get involved
The Working Group is open to anyone interested. If you want to join the Working Group please contact the GNSO Secretariat to be added to the mailing list (gnso-secs@icann.org). Furthermore, public input will be sought on the Initial Report in due time (see http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment).

Where can I find more information?


Staff responsible: Lars Hoffmann
Cross Community Geographic Regions Review – Final Report

What is this about?
The Geographic Regions Review Working Group is a community-wide working group (including GNSO representatives) established by the ICANN Board to (1) identify the different purposes for which ICANN's Geographic Regions are used; (2) determine whether the uses of ICANN's Geographic Regions (as currently defined, or at all) continue to meet the requirements of the relevant stakeholders; and (3) submit proposals for community and Board consideration relating to the current and future uses and definition of the ICANN Geographic Regions.

What is the current status of this project?
The Working Group has nearly completed its work developing recommendations to the ICANN Board for the continued use of the ICANN Geographic Regions Framework. The Working Group has produced those recommendations in a Final Report document that has been shared with the community – see http://www.icann.org/en/news/announcements/announcement-22jun13-en.htm.

Why is this important?
Geographic diversity is a fundamental component of the ICANN organization. The ICANN Bylaws (Article VI Section 5) currently define five geographic regions as Africa, North America, Latin America/Caribbean, Asia/Australia/Pacific and Europe. The Bylaws require the community to review the geographic regions framework at regular intervals.

The Final Report review process outlined in the Working Group Charter includes a comment opportunity from the communities that contributed members to the Working Group. Thus, the GNSO – if it so chooses - now has until mid-October to review and prepare comments regarding the recommendations in the Final Report.

Expected next steps
The Working Group’s Final Report has been formally shared directly with the leadership of the SOs and ACs participating in the Working Group. They will have a full 90 days after the conclusion of the Durban meeting to discuss the Working Group's recommendations with their communities and, if they choose, to submit written statements back to the Working Group. Later this year, after that exchange has taken place, the Working Group will formally submit its Final Report recommendations to the ICANN Board for consideration.

Background
In a September 2007 Report to the ICANN Board¹, the ccNSO highlighted a number of concerns about the current definition and use of Geographic Regions and recommended the appointment of a community-wide working group to study these issues. The Board requested the ICANN

Community, including the GNSO, ccNSO, ASO, GAC, and ALAC, to provide ICANN Staff with input on the ccNSO’s recommendation.

Following input and support from the GNSO, ALAC, and GAC, the ICANN Board authorized the formation of the proposed working group. The Board subsequently approved the Working Group’s Charter on 26 June 2009. ²

The Working Group Charter outlined a three-stage process to include a thorough review of the geographic regions framework, effective community collaboration between various supporting organizations and advisory committees, and production of final recommendations that had community support.³

**How Can I Get Involved?**

Read the Final Report and either contribute your insights at the ICANN Public Meeting in Durban or share your thoughts during GNSO community discussions of the recommendations. There is also likely to be an opportunity for community review and comment regarding the working group recommendations after the report is formally submitted to the Board.

**Where can I find more information?**

Working Group Confluence Wiki Space - https://community.icann.org/display/georegionwg/Home+Page+of+Geographic+Regions+Review+Working+Group


Durban Workshop Information - http://durban47.icann.org/node/39833

**Staff responsible**: Robert Hoggarth

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² Copies of the Charter, in all six UN languages, are posted in the Public Comment Forum Box on the ICANN Public Comments web page (see - http://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/public-comment-200909.html#geo-regions-review.

³ This operational structure manifested itself in the expected publication of three separate but related reports – an initial report, an interim report and a final report.
IGO/INGO Identifier Protection PDP

What is this about?
Providing special protections for the names and acronyms of the RCRC, IOC, IGOs and other INGOs from third party domain name registrations at the top and second levels of new gTLDs has been a long-standing issue over the course of the New gTLD Program.

The Board has requested the GNSO Council to provide policy advice on whether to protect IGO, Red Cross, IOC and other INGO names at the top and second levels in new gTLDs; the GNSO Council initiated a PDP on this topic in October 2012. Current set of protections for RCRC and IOC names are indefinitely in place until any GNSO policy recommendations require further and/or different action; current set of protections for IGO names and acronyms are in place pending further dialogue between the NGPC and the GAC; also subject to any GNSO policy recommendations that would require further and/or additional action.

What is the current status of this project?
On 14 June 2013 the WG published it’s Initial Report which includes policy recommendation options for the protection of IGO and INGO (including the RCRC and IOC) identifiers in all gTLDs. These options do not represent a consensus position by the WG members; rather, they constitute options being considered by the WG. The objective of the Initial Report is to solicit feedback from the community on these policy recommendation options. The comment period closes 17 July; the reply period closes 7 August. In order to solicit feedback from the community on the policy recommendation options that would help the WG move forward in reaching consensus, a public discussion session will be held in Durban on 17 July.

Why is this important?
This is a high-profile issue for both the Board and the GAC, and continues to be followed closely by senior officials at the Red Cross, IOC, and IGOs including the UN and OECD. Failure to properly address this issue may raise criticism that the ICANN multi-stakeholder model is deficient.

Expected next steps
• WG to review input received during public comment forum in view of reaching consensus on a set of policy recommendations.
• Publication of draft Final Report which will include specific policy recommendations for which there is at least strong WG support for public comment

Background on Developments Since Beijing Meeting
• The GAC in its Beijing Communiqué advised that the IOC/RCRC names be permanently protected at both the top and second levels in all new gTLDs. The NGPC accepted the GAC advice and current protections for RCRC/IOC names adopted by the NGPC for the top and second levels (in Specification 5 of the approved Registry Agreement) are indefinite until the
GNSO provides policy recommendations that would require further and/or additional action.

- The PDP Working Group published its Initial Report on 14 June for public comment which includes policy recommendation options that are currently being considered by the WG, but do not represent a consensus position. The Initial Report public comment forum is directly soliciting community feedback on the policy recommendation options.

- In its Beijing Communiqué the GAC reiterated its advice that “appropriate preventative initial protection for the IGO names and acronyms on the provided list be in place before any new gTLDs would launch,” while noting the outstanding implementation concerns particularly related to acronyms. In response to this GAC advice, the NGPC adopted a motion on 2 July providing temporary protections for the names and acronyms of 192 IGOs listed by the GAC at the second level (in Specification 5 of the approved Registry Agreement), pending further dialogue between the NGPC and the GAC; also subject to any GNSO policy recommendations that would require further and/or additional action.

Where can I find more information?

- Initial Report

- Public Comment Box

- Additional Information

**Staff responsible:** Brian Peck, Berry Cobb
Whois Survey Requirements Working Group

What is this about?
The WHOIS Survey Requirements Working Group (WSWG) drafted, implemented, and analyzed the results of a survey measuring the level of support for various technical requirements of a possible future WHOIS system as outlined in the ICANN staff report on the Inventory of WHOIS Service Requirements Final Report in 2010.

What is the current status of this project
ICANN staff completed a draft version of the Final Report that consolidates the survey results and the WSWG is now reviewing the latest draft to determine additional actions and when to submit the report to the GNSO Council.

Why is this important?
The results of the survey will help estimate the level of agreement with various “requirements” among the GNSO community by offering the community a voice as to technical features of a future WHOIS system. The results may also be of benefit to the larger WHOIS efforts currently underway.

Expected next steps
Gain approval from the WSWG that the report is ready for delivery to the GNSO Council.

Background
- In May 2009 the GNSO Council asked ICANN Staff to compile a comprehensive set of requirements for WHOIS that included known deficiencies in the current service and “any possible requirements that may be needed to support various policy initiatives that have been suggested in the past”.
- ICANN Staff produced a report compiling an Inventory of WHOIS Service Requirements on 29 July 2010 and delivered the report to the GNSO Council. The report essentially distilled policy discussions and other activities, into technical requirements that would be necessary to correct deficiencies and implement various policy proposals.
- On 6 October 2011 that the GNSO convened a Working Group to draft, implement, and analyze the results of a survey measuring the level of support for various technical requirements as outlined in the final Inventory of WHOIS Service Requirements Report of 29 July 2010.
- After eight months of drafting effort, the WG produced a draft version of the technical requirements survey and opened a public comment forum to solicit feedback from the community. All feedback was submitted through the draft survey itself as hosted by the open-source survey software of Lime Survey. After consideration of community input and the implementation of the Lime Survey software within the ICANN IT infrastructure, the survey was made available to the community on 13 September 2012.
- The survey consisted of 15 sections around the 11 technical requirements defined in the inventory report, and it was made available to the community until 31 October 2012.
Further Information
• WSWG Web Page – http://gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/active/whois-requirements
• WSWG Wiki: https://community.icann.org/display/WSDT/WHOIS+Survey+Working+Group+-+Home

Staff responsible: Berry Cobb, Steve Sheng
Metrics and Reporting Drafting Team

What is this about?
This effort allows a review how the community can collaborate with contracted parties and other service providers in the sharing of complaint and abuse data that may also further educate Registrants and Internet users in submission of complaints to the appropriate party.

What is the current status of the project?
- ICANN Staff completed the Final Issue Report for delivery to the GNSO Council for their deliberation at the Beijing meeting.
- A call for volunteers has been announced to form a Drafting Team to develop a charter for the WG, but given the lack of volunteers, the announcement will be extended through the Durban meeting.

Why is this important?
The effort is expected to investigate more formal processes for requests of data, metrics and other reporting needs from the GNSO that may aid in GNSO policy development efforts.

Expected next steps
- Form Drafting Team to create the GNSO Metrics & Reporting WG Charter
- Form the Working Group upon approval by the GNSO Council of the proposed Charter

How can I get involved?
Sign up as a volunteer for the Drafting Team (see call for volunteers - http://gnso.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-04jun13-en.htm).

Background Information on the Issue
- On 9 May 2013, the GNSO Council approved the Final Issue report’s recommendations to await any further action regarding Contractual Compliance metrics and reporting until the conclusion of their three-year plan towards the end of 2013.
- The GNSO Council also adopted the recommendation to form a non-PDP Working Group tasked with exploring opportunities of reporting and metrics recommendations that might better inform policy development via fact-based decision making, where applicable.

Further Information

Staff responsible: Berry Cobb, Lars Hoffmann