

ICANN
Transcription
IRTP Part D Working Group meeting
Monday 12 May 2014 at 15:00 UTC

Note: The following is the output of transcribing from an audio recording of IRTP Part D Working Group call on the Monday 12 May 2014 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-irtp-d-20140512-en.mp3>
On page: <http://gnso.icann.org/calendar/#may>

Attendees:

Barbara Knight – RySG
James Bladel - RrSG
Angie Graves – BC
Avri Doria – NCSG
Bob Mountain – RrSG
Volker Greimann – RrSG
Rob Golding – RrSG

Apologies:

Paul Diaz – RySG
Holly Raiche – ALAC
Graeme Bunton - RrSG
Kevin Erdman - IPC

ICANN staff:

Amy Bivins
Marika Konings
Lars Hoffmann
Berry Cobb
Steve Chan
Terri Agnew

Terri Agnew: (Carol), if you could please start the recordings and let me know when complete.

Coordinator: Recordings have been started.

Terri Agnew: Thank you, (Carol). Good morning, good afternoon and good evening. This is the IRTP Part D Working Group call on the 12th of May, 2014. On the call today we have Volker Greimann, James Bladel, Avri Doria and Barbara

Knight. We have apologies from Holly Raiche, Paul Diaz, Graeme Bunton and Kevin Erdman.

From staff we have Marika Konings, Berry Cobb, Lars Hoffman, Amy Bivins, Steve Chan and myself, Terri Agnew.

I'd like to remind all participants to please state your name before speaking for transcription purposes. Thank you very much and back over to you, James.

James Bladel: Okay thanks, everyone. And as per - I see this - we're still picking up attendees so that's great. As per our usual stand procedures does anyone have any updates to their Statements of Interest. If so please raise your hand.

Seeing none we'll move on to the agenda. Draft agenda was circulated by Lars through the mailing list and is posted on the right hand column of the Adobe chat room. If anyone has any questions, concerns, comments, edits, objections to that agenda. If not we'll consider that adopted.

Okay moving in then to Number 2. We're almost through our review of the public comments received from the comment period. And actually given comparison to previous IRTP working groups there was a healthy bit of feedback on this.

We are down to the last comment which - I'm sorry - the last two comments, am I correct, Lars? That we punt on two of these.

Lars Hoffman: That is correct. The last (unintelligible) just pulled out and (unintelligible) the rest, you might remember very long. I can also pull up the original ones that in on the Adobe Connect as well.

James Bladel: Thanks. Why don't we hold off on that and maybe keep those on back in case we have to refer back to them. But as we last left our heroes we were unpacking a very substantive and lengthy comment from Arthur Zonnenberg. And one of our requests to staff was, before this particular call, if they could please try to condense that into a summary because I think the excerpt from that comment was actually longer than some of the other comments themselves so we wanted to make sure we didn't miss anything.

So the comment then reads - sorry, the summary of the comment reads, Number 28 that ICANN Compliance states that FOAs can help prevent hijacking but with over 250,000 transfers each month is the FOA a proportional burden for those very few problem cases?

The need for the FOA leads to over 500,000 failed transfers each month that's costing time and revenue in registration systems. The FOA adds additional burden on the registrant and that's almost all cases leads to significant delays in the transfer process and very many transfer contacts giving up on the cumbersome transfer process.

A (trust) model is possible - okay so let's pause there for a moment please. So in general, I believe, if I can characterize what the commentor is saying is that FOAs are not necessary; they are required for every transfer. There are a quarter million transfers every month.

They are one of the primary reasons that a transfer operation fails in some failure with the - obtaining the FOA, and that therefore the cost benefit is completely out of whack for those few cases each month or each year where a transfer is challenged and the FOA way has to come in and save the day.

So my first just off the cuff thought is that this in some respects I think that we would have to, you know, say - I don't know where some of these statistics are being sourced.

If there are 250,000 transfers each month, 500,000 failed transfers each month it seems like only 1/3 of transfers part - of attempted transfers are successful and 2/3 are failing due to FOA issues.

I would just - not as a, you know, not in the capacity of cochair but just as a registrar I would question maybe that statistic or at least that proportion. I think that certainly transfers are complicated and they do lead to registrant confusion but I would say having 2/3 of them - 2/3 of attempted transfers fail, you know, I don't know that, you know, registrars as commercial service providers would tolerate a failure level like that.

So I'm not really - I guess just putting these numbers in perspective let's take the actual statistics out and look at the argument or the thesis on its base value that the burden of obtaining the FOA is disproportionate to the benefits that it provides when a transfer is disputed.

So, you know, maybe we can discuss that point before we move through the rest of this comment. Does anyone have any thoughts on the general thrust of the comment which is that these are too burdensome given their limited benefits? Bob. Bob, you may be on mute.

Bob, I don't know if you're speaking but we cannot hear you so okay so Bob's typing in the chat, maybe so we can (unintelligible) and we were just discussing that before you arrived, Bob. So maybe we'll give him a chance to dial in or you can certainly put your contribution in the chat box as well.

Previous to raising his hand Bob noted that the FOA issues are very small percentage of failures that (unintelligible) is involved with and that prior to that Barbara also notes that she is also curious to the source of the data. Volker.

Volker Greimann: Myself I've thinking about removing the FOA for quite some time. I think it still has its points that make it worthwhile having. And the it only for the fact that it is a delay in the transfer process and therefore gives the registrant at the

least some more ability to catch a transfer that's going on that he might not have authorized in case of someone hacking his access to his customer portal and retrieving the auth code.

Still having some form of a two-factor authorization for a domain transfer makes sense. There are disadvantages. I'm personally not sure if these disadvantages outweigh the advantages of having a secondary confirmation requirement that has a time delay built into that.

But unless - I would say that unless there's compelling reasons to get rid of the FOA that would in other ways take care of these benefits. I would say that we leave this alone for a little while.

And as a registrar it would be very easy to get - it would be very much easier for us to get rid of the FOAs because it would make our lives much easier but I still see that there's advantages to them that might be worth protecting.

James Bladel: Thanks Volker. I was going to see if Bob wanted to rejoin here but I'll put my hand up just to weigh in on this as a registrar and just echo a lot of what you're saying that, you know, I think that we would love to skip the step. Perhaps it would streamline the process and eliminate a number of calls into our support team.

However I think we recognize that when someone calls us in a panic and says that their very valuable high-traffic or business-critical domain name has been hijacked and they have nothing to substantiate that claim I think that, you know, we would be very limited in those situations in reversing that transfer.

So I think the FOAs are valuable however I certainly can sympathize with, you know, setting those statistics aside. We can sympathize with the claims that they are - they need to be improved, that they are not well understood by

registrants, that we can probably do more as an industry to streamline the process while maintaining its integrity and security.

And maybe, you know, may be part of that is to move its out of the email - the realm of email. I think that, you know, when some of these processes were developed email was kind of a new thing, you know, but now, you know, everyone has multiple email accounts and mobile accounts and, you know, they're managing all these different channels of communication.

Maybe there's a better way to deliver and obtain authorization that is less likely to be compromised than email. I'm just putting that out for discussion that that's something that could be considered. And I think that the existing policy perhaps even allows for that.

So I'll lower my hand there and see if there's any other folks in queue. Okay well if there are no other thoughts on this issue, going once, going twice we can then move on to the second part - sorry, I'm going to read what Berry has put in the chat here.

Berry, would you like to - before we move on do we want to...

Berry Cobb: Hi, James, this is Berry. Pardon me. I just wanted to point out to the working group last week we had done IRTP-C Implementation Review Team call. And there was some discussion there about the FOA as well and basically taking note that the same deliberations that we've had in this working group that the FOAs are really no longer necessary because everybody is on EPP.

However it's, you know, the findings from this working group that, you know, they're still a necessary component to maintaining the FOA especially in terms of trying to track down abusive transfers and the like.

So one thing and having reviewed some of the IRTP language itself as a result of this particular recommendation from this working group we may want

to have any near-term future - or near-term action item where we review through the language.

I mean, this is really kind of something on the implementation side but at least review through the language and perhaps make some suggestions for updating it to reflect the current state nature of EPP, how it's used and then of course make it possible suggestions as to how the FOA would be used and, you know, kind of creating that breadcrumb trail of a transfer.

So I just want to point that out so that once we review through all the public comments and move into the next stages that we devote just a little bit of time to maybe discuss that further.

James Bladel: Okay thanks, Berry. And I think we all appreciate the update on the IRTP-C implementation. I think that lends with saying what I was attempting to fumble around with in a much better way which is that the industry and the implementation of some of these policies have moved on quite a bit since - not just since these policies were developed but since we began this review process with IRTP-A. You know, things are always moving and we should be open to the idea of rethinking these as the technology improves.

So then moving on to the second part of Recommendation 14 where I believe Mr. Sonnenberg then recommend some possible reforms to the FOA. The first part is that the trust model is possible, gaining registrars are trusted in the transfers they execute with valid auth info code.

In the case of abuse or disputes the process to complain, roll back and find the abusing registrar is simplified. The original registered name holder should be retrievable and verifiable until one or more transfers have been made with the original registrant to improve their identity and have the domain returned to them. FOAs add nothing to this process.

Interesting, okay. I think the general is being here that the auth info code should be sufficient with a robust mechanism to quickly dispute and roll back a transfer.

Bob, go ahead.

Bob Mountain: Yeah, James, this is Bob. Sorry, I switched over to the dial-in I'm now able to participate. Yeah, I think what he says is - I think we all agree that was true for the transfer. I think we all thought though that the FOA's real value was in almost forensically that the, you know, various information about the transfer participants is actually stored, you know, IP address, time stamp, that sort of thing.

So in a case of multiple hops the FOA was a valuable tool in enabling us to, you know, determine what happened in a (unintelligible) recovery where as I don't believe that the auth code was, you know, as helpful or provided that same sort of functionality. So I think in case of the immediate transfer I think he has a point but I think he's omitting the, you know, some of the other value that the FOA has.

James Bladel: Okay thanks Bob. I tend to agree that that's, you know, that's the primary purpose of the FOA is not to - is not necessarily at the beginning of the transfer but when things go wrong is providing that paper trail.

So let's then maybe take a - sorry lost my train of thought there. Let's maybe take a look here than at the next paragraph of Arthur's comment. "Three steps are required for one successful transfer; unlock, FOA plus email address and then auth code. I would actually submit that there is a fourth step if you have a privacy service or other transfer protection services, those would have to be disabled prior to unlock or maybe that's part of the unlock phase."

"Yet beyond the auth code no additional security is provided as all three steps are accessible through the same control panel as it is possible to unlock domain names by default. Locking and unlocking your domain can be a two-step authenticated process, the verification documents, phone calls for identification and unique hardware or software tokens.

This would add security and simplify the process. The more difficult you keep gTLD transfers the less competitive the market will become, the more factors the big registrars and keep in place to prevent transfers away from them the more business revenue they can protect.

And I think the point here being that something that we've emphasized all along is that the ability to leave one registrar for another registrar is an important component of the competitive marketplace. If that breaks down or if that becomes (repeated) then competition and innovation and the general consumer experience suffers.

So I think that - so, you know, where would we want to - let's take a queue on where we want to go with this comment. I think that, you know, in some ways the discussion or the concepts that are raised here were part of our discussions but I'm looking for those things that were may be new to our discussion of the utility of FOAs. Volker.

Volker Greimann: Yeah, he raises a good point and I think we shouldn't just say notice here so we should delve into that a bit more. Like you said there are alternative ways to achieve the same end however, these are not mandatory they are very much registrar specific.

Four example some registrars do not lock domain names, some registrars only lock a domain name when the registrant requests the lock of a domain name. So in that circumstance the unlock step would be missing and therefore only two steps would be required for a transfer from that registrar.

Similarly the method of requesting an unlock are wildly different between and therefore I would argue that there might not be as efficient and well regulated to ensure the same transfer experience across registrars then you would have with the FOA in place.

The FOA is pretty much standardized. It's the same procedure with every registrar and that's, I think there's some safety in that.

James Bladel: Thanks, Volker. I see agreement from Bob. I agree with you that we should not just check the box here on this comment and move on common that there is substantial - substantive material contained in this feedback and that we should give it a thoughtful and thorough treatment.

I think that, just off the cuff one proposed outline for how we can respond is to perhaps, you know, right out of the gate note that the working group to discuss the benefits of FOA is versus their burden and noted I think in agreement with Arthur, although we perhaps can't reconcile the statistics that were used we do note with agreement that FOAs are used for a very, very small percentage of transfers that fail or are disputed or were illegitimate and that for the vast majority of transfers they are either, at best, any extraneous step or at worst they can actually cause a false positive failure of the transfer when nothing is necessarily wrong with the process so I think that that can probably be be addressing of the first, you know, bit.

I think that the second part is to acknowledge that while, you know, while we can probably, you know, have a long discussion and poke holes in some of his proposed changes, and I think, you know, if Arthur were participating in the working group he might do the same.

I think that we can agree, you know, to summarize, that the registrars should be looking for ways to improve the FOA process, the FOA experience including the overall complexity surrounding transfers.

And Berry noted that there's some opportunities coming up here with the implementation of previous IRTPs including the one that we're working on now, to, you know, perhaps make the FOA a little bit more streamlined, a little bit more secure and less confusing. And I think that that would probably apply to the unlocking steps as well.

So I think, you know, overall that starting - you're starting to see the skeleton of a response for the comment to take shape. Volker.

Volker Greimann: Just one additional point that I was recently thinking about with the FOA. The FOA is currently - in cases where for example a domain provider is switching between registrars the only method where the domain holder actually gains knowledge of such a transfer. In many cases the domain service provider that is not a registrar is able to access the auth codes and would be able to initiate a transfer, unlock the domain name and do everything with the registrar as the registrar's customer and initiate a transfer to another registrar.

The FOA is the only stat where the domain holder actually is involved. So that might be also something to consider when arguing for a replacement of the FOA that there needs to be something where the domain holder actually has to positively take an action to effect the transfer.

James Bladel: That's an interesting point, Volker. So just to summarize - and please, you know, correct me if I'm wrong here, is that you could have a number of intermediary service providers or resellers or web developers or all kinds of other folks in the food chain that could have access to the auth info code but only the registrants - the registered name holder as displayed in Whois - would - the FOA is a way to get to the bottom of that chain quickly without having to rely on a bunch of relays.

And so therefore getting their affirmative approval of the transfer is what the role of the FOA provides whereas the auth info code is really just a key that a lot of people could know the key to that domain name is under the doormat.

Is that a - go ahead, I see your hands up so I was just trying to summarize here.

Volker Greimann: That's exactly my point with one small exception the admin could see - would also be able to do that because he also gets the - at least the outgoing confirmation from the gaining registrar and not the - but still the registered name holder would get the incoming notice from the outgoing - from the losing registrar that's informing him because yeah that had been implemented in the last round.

So basically yes, there is always some information going to the registrar. And I think that this information needs to be protected and the domain registrant or (unintelligible) need to have some form of positive action required to initiate the transfer or confirm the transfer and currently this is done by FOA.

If there is some method of replacing the FOA with something that works better and it's used the same thing I would be all for it; FOAs are a hassle and I'd be glad to see them gone if the safety of the registrant is protected the same way.

James Bladel: Okay thanks. I put myself in the queue because I had a thought here. But let's just note Rob Golding has put some interesting ideas into the chat and I'm wondering, Rob, if you would want to weigh in. Not to put you on the spot here but if you want to speak to some of those points. Rob is typing so I think he's going to tell us - he's dialing in.

So let me maybe just weigh in on another topic here related while we wait for Rob to join. And I've always wondered what some parallel or comparable industries do in terms of ensuring that, you know, security is maintained while certain service contracts or other intangible but valuable are, you know, items exchanged between service providers or, you know.

I think for example Neustar, who most folks know as a gTLD registry, actually a larger part of its business - or a large part of its business is on the transaction of cellular phone number portability. I think that that's one of the, you know, one of the ways that they got started. This idea that you could change from AT&T to Verizon to T-Mobile to somebody else and you could keep your same number.

And I think that that was, you know, certainly there is some parallels there to transferring the domain name is transferring a telephone number. I think that there are some similar, you know, some similar parallels to transferring, you know, things that that might be other intangible properties. So just got an echo. I think Rob is on.

So just thinking a little bit about what some of the other mechanisms are, you know, what other options are out there or models that we could follow I think might be something for a future discussion if we talk about actually replacing the FOA for something a little more streamlined while maintaining the security benefits.

Okay at lowering my hands now. And, Rob, you are up.

Rob Golding: Yeah, hi. First I've got one my guys (unintelligible) on the PC. Right, I've got one of my guys to (unintelligible) inquires because this came up in the IRTP-C Implementation group the other day about how (unintelligible) FOAs are (unintelligible) and how many FOAs are expected, how many people actually follow through with them and our ongoing issue with compliance over what the FOA should look like and whether or not you can present the on screen and take (unintelligible).

From a process way you cannot transfer a domain without that auth code. (Unintelligible) standard across all of the registries and things like that you could transfer a name by sending a fax to (unintelligible). So the EPP code really has replaced the need for an FOA because it performs the same job.

Only certain people can get the EPP codes and they were generally the same people that were considered to be transfer contacts and therefore were the same people that could do the FOA.

The numbers I have are that out of 3897 transferred requested by registrants, which is where they placed an order, validated their details (unintelligible) confirmed, paid for the order if it needed payment, provided an EPP code to us because we tend to take it at that point so that we've got it, and check it's correct and everything else, of that 3897 2737 just went straight through.

Twenty nine were actively canceled by one of the transfer contacts. And that leaves 1131 which is, whatever, 20% if not, you know, 25%, that failed because they either didn't get the EPP code correct, of which I've got numbers on those as well. But 986 of them claimed that they didn't get the FOA from the system.

Which we know is nonsense because we can see from the logs where they were delivered to. Of that we know that 108 of those particular customers had it sent at least three times and had it explained to them over the phone because even though it's a standardized formal transfer people don't get it, they mark it as spam, they're not expecting it, they don't understand it. That they all understand unlocking a domain and give you the EPP code.

So my personal opinion is that the FOA is simply a (unintelligible) and a waste of time. There's no difference between logging the issue of an EPP code to logging the sending of an email, you know, it's an entry in a log.

And now that you cannot transfer a domain without a valid EPP code, you can't even start the process without the valid EPP code from a (unintelligible) backwards and forwards to the registry point of view. I really do think the time of the FOA has long since passed and I can fairly throwaway that fax machine.

James Bladel: Okay thanks Rob. Some interesting thoughts there as well as some real world statistics. I'm wondering if you wouldn't mind sending those to the list so that we could - because I think that - while I could hear you I think that the audio quality was a little rough so if you could possibly send those sets of lists.

I think that I could probably go and get some similar statistics as well from our team and then other registrars or even registries would be encouraged to do some of that similarly. I share your desire to throw away fax machines however I think there's just so many different aspects of this and other industries that are unfortunately keeping us change to that technology.

Berry.

Berry Cobb: Thank you James. This is Berry. And, Rob, thank you for those numbers; they are very interesting and definitely intrigued to see that. And to carry on to what you have stated James, perhaps we can take the numbers that Rob has - that he will provide and more or less create a template of sorts that we could go out and maybe ask a number of registrars through the stakeholder group to provide some of that data as well.

And I think the main reason why I'm interested in this is this definitely dovetails to what the Data and Metrics for Policy Making Working Group is wanting to accomplish which is, you know, trying to improve more fact based policy decision-making.

And if in fact, you know, we did see a very high percentage of transfers that are failing because of the way then it definitely does pay credence to the question of yes we still need a trail of the transfer perhaps and maybe it does point to the fact of more conversation around a better alternative to the FOA or something along those lines.

So I definitely would encourage the working group that we, you know, pursue more data around this. I think it might be a good exercise. Thank you.

James Bladel: Thanks, Berry. And, yeah, I think that, you know, if we can do that without, you know, I think if we can get some decent participation from registrars to contribute some stats that would be helpful, it would be interesting.

So let's maybe take a look at that. And, Rob, thank you for raising that and taking us off. And I think that the general consensus however that, you know, more could be done to simplify the FOAs so that whatever burdens they create two more friction in the transfer process can be reduced such that whatever benefits they offer can be preserved.

Okay so that is this comment from - Comment Number 28 from Arthur. A fairly lengthy one but I think fairly useful one so I thought it was a good use of our time to unpack that one.

The next comment is Number 29 - I'm sorry, any final thoughts on that before we move on to Comment Number 29? Okay.

Okay, Comment Number 29 is a submission from ICANN Compliance to weigh in on the concept of unauthorized - (unintelligible) unauthorized transfers. So, you know, I'll just read through this here and we can unpack this as we go.

The losing registrar is requested to provide evidence that - so this is I guess - that these are all triggered when ICANN Compliance received a complaint data transfer was unauthorized.

They then go and ask the losing registrar to provide evidence that the auth info code was sent to the registered name holder or retrieved from a control panel and that the form of authorization was sent to the registered name holder. And this is a new requirement for one of the previous working groups.

The gaining registrar is requested to provide evidence that the FOA was sent to a transfer contact and that the FOA was confirmed by the transfer contact. So obviously they have the auth info codes or the transfer wouldn't have happened.

Next paragraph. Concerning the auth info code, the vast majority of registrars provide timestamp logs of when it is retrieved from the control panel. Still, sometimes registrars state that their systems provide the code instantaneously upon request and do not retain time stamped data for the release of the auth info code.

Without the FOA the only evidence available for Compliance to determine whether registrars comply with the IRTP would be logs that do not include registered name holder or administrative contact identifying information from Whois from the domain name or no logs at all.

Let's pause there for just a moment. I think what Compliance is saying is that there is no standard of evidence that the auth info code was provided to the appropriate party when they requested it except for in some cases internal and proprietary log information which the registrar provides to them, I guess, which we can assume is correct and accurate but, you know, I guess there is no way to independently verify that that log data is correct and accurate.

So, Volker.

Volker Greimann: Yes just one question to you, James, with regards to the addition of the - for for sending by the losing registrar. I mean that was something on the previous working group as you correctly said, that I think you were a member of and there must have been some reasoning for adding another FOA responsibility to the registrars' responsibilities at that time for the losing registrar as well.

So maybe you could just give us one or two sentences about the reasoning back at that time quite the FOA requirement was at that time even expanded upon from what it was previously and what the reasoning there was.

James Bladel: I will do my best. I'm probably going to have to lean on staff a little bit. But if memory serves this was part of IRTP-B, so two hops ago in this chain of transfer working groups.

That previous to that working group the auth info code would always be required to be sent by the gaining registrar and was an optional step by the losing registrar. The working group changed that to make that a required step for both parties.

And I think - I'm stumbling here a little bit so I'm kind of looking to staff because this memory is now going back to 2011 or something like that - that the difference being that the FOA sent by the losing registrar can only go to the registered name holder while the FOA sent by the gaining registrar can go to the transfer contact of the registered name holder or the admin contact.

And so the thinking from the working group was that the required send of this FOA to a narrower set of recipients was to ensure that any disputes or even just lack of visibility between the admin and the registered name holder would be understood in time to stop the transfer before it started as opposed to trying to untangle it after having it.

Now that's a very rusty memory on my part. I'm sure it's going to go into the transcript and someone can pick apart, you know, the inconsistencies but, you know, that's how I remember it. And I would welcome anyone else who remembers that working group to please weigh in as well.

I don't see any - I don't see anyone jumping in to rescue me so I'm assuming that that's roughly correct. Oh, Berry. Berry's going to set me straight.

Berry Cobb: Thank you, James. I think you are roughly correct but you're right, that was quite a while ago. I'll take the action to do some homework and pull out the specifics because I think we need to make sure we get our hands around his comments and make sure that we got it right.

James Bladel: Thanks, Berry. Definitely appreciate that. Volker, I don't know if that was helpful in addressing your specific question but in general that was the background that led us to that outcome for IRTP-B which I think became part of the IRTP policy was implemented sometime in the summer of 2012 so about two years ago.

Okay so any thoughts - thank you, Berry, for offering to do that; I saw a green checkmark from Volker. So any other thoughts on this paragraph here about the Compliance saying essentially that if we were to go to and auth info code-only environment they would have no - nothing else to go on besides the log files from the registrar and that some registrars are in fact not even logging this information because they're doing this on an instantaneous - or an on-demand basis. And as far as I know there are no requirements to logging so.

Rob, go ahead.

Rob Golding: Hi, which part of it do they want most? Because, I mean, if it's an unauthorized transfer then somebody must have been supplied the EPP code because otherwise it couldn't have transferred. So, while I'm - aside from Compliance wanting it why would you need a log of when the code was provided if that code has been used because you know it must have been provided. What is it they're trying to get compliance of?

James Bladel: So I think the question at hand would be did they provide it in a timely manner to the party that was requesting it? And I think that is, you know, I think certainly you can tell when an auth info code has been used but I think that, you know, the question is was it used by the appropriate party, retrieved and then submitted by the appropriate party.

Rob Golding: Right, so they're looking for - the person authorized to handle the code, got the code, not that there has actually been the issue of a code. I mean, I see no problem with making it mandatory to log it but that's just me.

James Bladel: Okay thanks, we'll capture that. Some thought that if we're going to stick with the auth info code or if we're going to stick with the FOA, you know, there should be some audit trail requirements in terms of - or at least and standards for registrars to track that information so they can demonstrate - that - Avri's pointed out, you know, evidence of - that they're, you know, following the procedure properly.

I think that the note here from compliance does kind of raise the question of what's the - what's the independently verified - are FOAs independently verified? Are we assuming that registrants or registered name holders are keeping a copy of the auth - sorry, FOA. Something else to note here.

So let's move to the next paragraph. I see that we've got 15 minutes left and we definitely want to get through this comment. As a consequence ICANN's - Compliance will not be able to properly investigate unauthorized transfer reports considering that TDRP proceedings are only to be initiated by registrars. Users will be left with no other option than to initiate legal proceedings to dispute a transfer.

So, I think what Compliance is saying here is that if we take away the step that we leave the registrant with fewer and fewer options, either go to court or hope that your registrar will initiate a TDRP on your behalf.

Further ICANN notes the registrant is often not the only one with access to the control panel. Many times control panels are managed by a third party, such as a Website developer or a reseller. I think this is going back to a comment that Volker made earlier.

In these cases without the FOAs, the auth info code could be retrieved and transfer completed without the knowledge or permission of the registrar. I think that is exactly the point that the Volker was making earlier.

Position FOAs are also used as evidence by registrars when working amongst each other to resolve the matter by registries and dispute solution providers while investigating TDRP proceedings.

So I think in general if I can summarize this statement from Compliance is that FOAs serve an essential purpose in providing some means to address an unauthorized transfer and work through those as opposed to leaving it just in an auth info code only which could be retrieved by individuals and other parties not known to the registrar or ICANN that could execute transfer.

Okay, and so that is the end of that comment. Any other thoughts on where we should go with the Compliance comment? I believe the comment from Compliance tracks very closely to our deliberations and recommendations in our initial report but does anyone spots any, you know, huge departures from that? I see an empty queue but a busy chat window so - discussion of auth info codes.

I agree with Volker, I think registrars generate the auth info code and then submit that to the registry. Okay, Volker, go ahead.

Volker Greimann: Not a dispute or something that's missing I just would like to underline the last comment made by Compliance. First thing that we ask for - or are asked for when we're dealing with a complaint of a fraudulent transfer or an unauthorized transfer by the new registrar or by the old registrar is to provide the FOAs as evidence and show that we have - where we got the permission to do the transfer.

The auth info code is more or less the key but the FOA is kind of the passport that you need to get into the country. So I still think that this two-factor

authorization is important and like Compliance summarized very well here, we need it as evidence as well at this time at least, to at least have some clue of what went wrong when we are faced with a complaint.

James Bladel: Okay, thanks Volker. And Barbara has weighed in on the chat supporting the earlier statement. Okay Bob, go ahead, you're next.

Bob Mountain: Yeah, I would support Volker's comment as well. I think the two factor is important and it seems to me that some of the alternate solutions that have been bandied about all involve some element of logging and creation. And I think the FOA, you know, as currently constructed and used, you know, it does a lot of that so I think, you know, the current approach, you know, definitely provides some service, definitely provides enhanced security for domain owners.

And I do think we just keep coming back to that. I think, you know, we've, you know, had this discussion several, you know, numerous times over whether there's, you know, whether the FOA should be continued. It always seems we come back to the fact that it provides the enhanced security, as Volker said, the two-factor security which definitely has a benefit.

So, you know, I just keep coming down that it makes sense to keep it. And it may not be perfect but it definitely provides a, you know, the enhanced security that everyone seems to be looking for.

James Bladel: Thanks Bob. I put myself in the queue to weigh in as a registrar and to support your statement and Volker's.

You know, it's - it reminds me of what I think some folks said about democracy. Once, you know, the FOA is probably the worst possible security mechanism for domain names except for all the alternatives. That's probably a sweeping statement that's overplayed here.

But I think that we, you know, as you mentioned, Bob, we keep coming back to this. We keep circling around well what can we do? Can we try something else? Can we try something differently?

And I think, you know, given the importance for the FOA in untangling the transfers that do go bad, you know, I think the benefit is that we need to keep it.

However having said all that I think that there is a clear message coming from not just the statistics provided by Rob - and perhaps we'll see something similar reflected in statistics from other registrars - but also the comment from Arthur is that the FOA needs to be approved, it needs to be streamlined, it needs to be unconfused as far as what's presented to registrants and what we're expecting them to do.

And I think that certainly, you know, as a working group we can recommend that a further efforts both, you know, with ICANN and within the industry target this as something that is necessary but extremely messy and complicated and needs to be cleaned up in its implementation. So that's my parting shot on this, on the topic of FOAs.

Okay just noticing that we are very near the top of the hour here. We have about six minutes remaining. so we have finished the comments so congrats to everyone. And really thanks - formal thanks to Arthur and Compliance, I know staff weighed in from a couple of different angles.

And everyone, the registries, the Business Constituency, and all the folks that - and ALAC - I'm sure I'm leaving folks out, but if we can just make sure that we have formally acknowledged that there was a very healthy bit of feedback from various numerous segments of the community and individuals and organizations. And we had been lacking that I think Ian IRTP so I think it was really good that we have that.

Next up, beginning next week we'd like to do is circle back through these comments and talk specifically about how we are - we're just going to put a button on each one about what we're going to do with them in our final report.

Either, A, authority in the final report and it will just note that the comment is aligned with our initial report. You know, B, that it introduces something new and that we've discussed it and here is how we're going to modify our final report or something, something, you know, along those lines.

So we'll just make sure that we're in agreement through each comment and then moved our way through that list. We'll also review and list of definitions which was prepared and we had some kind of standardized definitions that I think we wanted to present as a working group.

And then I would ask also, Lars, that we add a couple of items to our agenda which is to review any sort of statistics on FOAs they can be shared by registrars, that are shared between here and the next meeting and that might be a standing item for the next two or three calls; and then also we revisit our work plan to see how we're tracking for London going to the due date here and see, you know, what modifications we need to make to our final report.

So that's a pretty healthy agenda for next week. And then just looking at the, you know, I think that we've got maybe two maybe three solid weeks here; we run into a holiday in a couple weeks but we want to get through these so that we can come to London if not ready to publish a final report but at least being very, very close to that at a minimum.

So thanks everyone for your time. Really great discussion, really appreciate everyone's picking through all these comments. There were a lot of them and some of them were fairly long and complex and really great group to unpack all of the thoughts and contributions here so really appreciate everyone's help.

And with that say thanks and have a good day.

((Crosstalk))

END