



24 July 2014

Heather Dryden
Chair, Government Advisory Committee (GAC)

Dear Heather and ICANN GAC Colleagues,

COMPLETION OF GNSO WHOIS STUDIES

I write to inform you that, with the completion of all the WHOIS studies that had previously been approved by the GNSO Council, the Council resolved to formally close the study phase of the GNSO's WHOIS policy work at its meeting on 5 June 2014.

As you and the members of the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) are aware, between 2010 and 2011 the GNSO Council approved the initiation of three studies and a pre-study feasibility survey on several identified aspects of the WHOIS system. The three studies were on WHOIS Misuse (performed by Cylab at Carnegie Mellon University), Registrant Identification (performed by NORC at the University of Chicago), and Privacy & Proxy Service Abuse (performed by Dr. Richard Clayton of the University of Cambridge and the National Physical Laboratory in the United Kingdom). The pre-study feasibility survey, performed by Interisle Consulting, related to Relay and Reveal practices in connection with Privacy & Proxy Services. In addition, a WHOIS Technical Requirements Survey was conducted amongst members of the ICANN community in 2012. All of these topics and the hypothesis tested for the studies were identified, developed and refined by the ICANN community, including the GAC.

On behalf of the GNSO community, I would like to convey our thanks to the GAC for contributing valuable expertise and suggestions during the process of development of the WHOIS studies. The GAC's contributions greatly assisted in the formulation and selection of the eventual hypothesis and topics approved for the studies.

The GAC may wish to note that the results of the studies were used by the Expert Working Group on gTLD Data Directory Services (EWG), in developing its recommendations for a next-generation Registration Directory Service. The EWG also reached out to the various research teams in the course of its work. In addition, the GNSO's Working Group for its Policy Development Process in relation to Privacy & Proxy Services Accreditation Issues (among others) is relying on the results of some of the studies in developing its recommendations for ICANN's forthcoming accreditation program for such services.

The GNSO Council is pleased that the studies and their results are proving useful to the ICANN community as it continues to work on refining and improving the WHOIS system. We hope that the data gathered through these studies, their results and the research teams' observations and conclusions will continue to be of assistance in this regard.

The final reports of all the studies and surveys that were conducted as well as further information can be found [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Robinson
Chair, GNSO Council