GNSO COUNCIL SMALL TEAM – WORK ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

Subject	**DNS Abuse**
Background	The topic of DNS Abuse was revisited during ICANN82 as a potential area for future policy work. It had previously been addressed by a **DNS Abuse Small Team**, which had produced a set of **four recommendations and** identified a gap in enforcement mechanisms under current contracts. Contract amendments between ICANN and contracted parties were negotiated to define DNS Abuse and establish mitigation obligations in cases of evidenced and actionable DNS Abuse. Now that those amendments have taken effect and related data from ICANN Compliance is available, the Council proposed to revisit the issue. **Key Inputs and Developments** 1. **Contractual Amendments & Compliance Report**: ICANN Compliance presented data assessing the effectiveness of the new amendments that enhanced enforcement of DNS Abuse responsibilities in registry and registrar agreements. 2. **INFERMAL Study**: A study (Inferential Analysis of Maliciously Registered Domains) offered insight into attacker behavior in domain name abuse and was considered a valuable input. 3. **Small Team Recommendations**: In November 2022, the Council passed a [motion](#) accepting the recommendations as outlined in the DNS Abuse Small Team [report](#). These had been previously adopted by Council with a motion specifying that Recommendation 1 (discussing a potential issue report on malicious registrations) would proceed only after completing Recommendations 2–4 (focused on collaboration, outreach, and engagement). 4. **ICANN Domain Metrica: A Measurement Platform:** Six years ago, ICANN launched the Domain Abuse Activity Reporting ([DAAR](#)) system. It was intended to stimulate discussion around Domain Name System (DNS) abuse and serve as a reliable and reproducible measurement methodology to help registrar and registry operators to monitor DNS abuse. ICANN Metrica was built as a follow-up system that does a lot more with the data ICANN has available; it forms a new framework and a measurement platform that meets ICANN needs and the needs of the wider community. The first module will include aggregated and non-aggregated data on DNS Abuse concentrations as listed on a set of Reputation Block Lists (RBLs), similar to what DAAR had, but this time for both registrars and registries. This should give users access to more detailed and relevant information about DNS Abuse concentration patterns.
Assignment	The Small Team is tasked to: • Evaluate DNS Abuse mitigation efforts across ICANN (e.g., by the CPH, other community groups, and potentially industry firms focusing on DNS whether briefings from such

groups would aid the small team. Similar to the first iteration of the DNS Abuse small team, conduct outreach to the broader ICANN community, seeking their input on items specifically suitable for policy development.
- Review the recommendations that were proposed by the DNS Abuse Small Team in 2022.
- Assess the impact of the Contract amendments on DNS abuse mitigation efforts.
  - o How have the amendments helped ICANN Compliance enforce DNS Abuse mitigation? Have they empowered ICANN Compliance to undertake proactive (as opposed to reactive) enforcement measures?
  - o Can the requirements outlined in the amendments be further clarified to enable more effective DNS Abuse mitigation by registrars and registries? Can such clarifications be addressed via additional efforts such as focused ICANN policy development, or via other methods such as incremental improvements on industry best practices? What other actions should be taken in order to bring transparency and accountability to the mitigation measures (standardizing "evidenced and actionable" complaints and response rates for example)? Or even, a practice of reviewing portfolios of malicious registrations rather than one by one, for example.
  - o Assess the human rights impact of the DNS abuse mitigation measures
- Discuss with relevant stakeholders and provide a summary on the insights from the INFERMAL study and how these insights can help inform next steps on DNS Abuse.

Expected Outcome:
- A report to GNSO Council including:
  - ○ Findings from review of available data sources;
  - ○ List of gaps the Small Team may have identified;
  - ○ Recommendations to GNSO Council on next steps on what other work (policy, further research, community/industry collaboration etc.) might be needed to address DNS Abuse.

Timing	6-8 months to 1) Review existing data available 2) Perform outreach to the community 3) Consider that input and identify next steps 4) Draft report for the Council.
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Documents	DNS abuse small team final report

	INFERMAL Study
	ICANN Compliance 6-months report on DNS abuse mitigation requirements
Notes	See background section
Next Steps	● GNSO Council to consider the assignment.