ICANN | GNSO

Generic Names Supporting Organization

Next Generation Registration Directory Service (RDS) to replace WHOIS Policy Development Process – Monthly Update – July 2016

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

Following the completion of its work on identifying and summarizing key input documents, finalization of its work plan and a review of the input received on its first outreach message, the WG has now compiled an initial list of possible requirements for gTLD registration directory services, providing a foundation upon which to recommend answers to these two questions: *What are the fundamental requirements for gTLD registration data and directory services, and is a new policy framework and next-generation RDS needed to address these requirements?*

The WG is currently in the processes of organizing the list that spans over 800 possible requirements to ensure that the possible requirements are aligned with the respective phases of its approach (phase 1 – policy requirements, phase 2 - Specific policies the WG will design, based on Phase 1 requirements, phase 3 - Implementation and Coexistence Guidance associated with Phase 2 policies) as well are easily searchable and organisable in different ways to facilitate subsequent deliberations. The WG reached agreement on the proposed approach to achieve consensus which will guide the next steps of its work. To aid the deliberation of these possible requirements, the WG is now in the process of drafting a succinct problem statement for this PDP and identifying example use cases which will look at particular real world scenarios involving registration data and directory services which are intended to identify and better understand today's system and the possible requirements on a next-generation RDS.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

After the WG confirms that this list of possible requirements is sufficiently complete to serve as the foundation for WG deliberation, the WG plans to continue through its work plan to Task 12 where it will systematically consider possible requirements with the goal of trying to reach as strong a consensus as possible as to whether the WG supports each possible requirement, including how it is worded as outlined in this document. Due to interdependencies, WG deliberation will likely be iterative, especially on fundamental questions pertaining to purpose, data, and privacy. As part of this process, the WG is expected to review the input received from GNSO SG/Cs as well as ICANN SO/ACs – a second outreach message was sent to ask for input on the list of possible requirements.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

In April 2015, the ICANN Board reaffirmed 'its request for a Board-initiated GNSO policy development process to define the purpose of collecting, maintaining and providing access to gTLD registration data, and consider safeguards for protecting data, using the recommendations in the Expert Working Group (EWG) Final Report as an input to, and, if appropriate, as the foundation for a new gTLD policy'.

Following the publication of the PDP Final Issue Report, the GNSO Council adopted the charter for the PDP Working Group, which commenced its deliberations at the end of January 2016. During the first phase its work, the Working Group has been tasked with providing the GNSO Council with recommendations on the following two questions: What are the fundamental requirements for gTLD registration data and is a new policy framework and next-generation RDS needed to address these requirements?

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Comprehensive 'WHOIS' policy reform remains the source of long-running discussions within ICANN. Any discussion of the 'WHOIS' system for gTLD domain name registration data – hereafter called gTLD registration directory services (RDS) – typically includes topics such as purpose, accuracy, availability, privacy, data protection, cost, policing, intellectual property protection, security and malicious use and abuse. Although ICANN's requirements for gTLD domain name registration data collection, maintenance, and provision have undergone some important changes, after almost 15 years of GNSO task forces, working groups, workshops, surveys, and studies, the policy is still in need of comprehensive reforms that address the significant number of contentious issues attached to it.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Anyone interested can join this effort at any time. Please complete the registration form at **goo.gl/forms/bb65iIznLv or contact the GNSO Secretariat: gnso-secs@icann.org.**

MORE INFORMATION

- PDP Workiing Group Workspace, including Charter, relevant motions, and background documents and information: https://community.icann.org/x/rjJ-Ag
- Final Issue Report on Next-Generation gTLD Registration Directory Service (RDS) to replace WHOIS: http://whois.icann.org/sites/default/files/files/final-issue-report-next-generation-rds-07oct15-en.pdf
- Board-GNSO Process Framework for this PDP: https://community.icann.org/x/GIxlAw

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to its Resolution on 8 November 2012, the ICANN Board directed the ICANN CEO to launch a new effort to redefine the purpose of collecting, maintaining and providing access to gTLD registration data, and consider safeguards for protecting data, as a foundation for new gTLD policy and contractual negotiations. Moreover, the Board directed the preparation of an Issue Report on the purpose of collecting and maintaining gTLD registration data, and on solutions to improve accuracy and access to gTLD registration data, as part of a Board-initiated GNSO policy development process. The Board then went on to pass a resolution that led to the creation of the Expert Working Group; the Board referred to this as a 'two-pronged approach' that is based on 'broad and responsive action' in relation to the reform of gTLD Registration Data.

To enable effective consideration of the many significant and interdependent policy areas that the GNSO must address, the Board approved a Process Framework, collaboratively developed by GNSO Councilors and Board members, to structure this complex and challenging PDP for success. This phased process includes:

- Phase 1: Establishing requirements to determine if and why a next- generation gTLD registration directory service (RDS) is needed to replace today's WHOIS system;
- Phase 2: If so, designing a new policy framework that details functions that must be provided by a next- generation RDS to support those requirements; and
- Phase 3: Providing guidance for how a next-generation RDS should implement those policies, coexisting with and eventually replacing the legacy WHOIS system.

Throughout this three-phase process, the many inter-related questions that must (at minimum) be addressed by the PDP include:

- Users/Purposes: Who should have access to gTLD registration data and why (i.e., for what purposes)?
- Gated Access: What steps should be taken to control data access for each user/purpose?
- Data Accuracy: What steps should be taken to improve data accuracy?
- Data Elements: What data should be collected, stored, and disclosed?
- Privacy: What steps are needed to protect data and privacy?
- Coexistence: What steps should be taken to enable next-generation RDS coexistence with and replacement of the legacy WHOIS system?
- Compliance: What steps are needed to enforce these policies?
- System Model: What system requirements must be satisfied by any next-generation RDS implementation?
- Cost: What costs will be incurred and how must they be covered?
- Benefits: What benefits will be achieved and how will they be measured?
- Risks: What risks do stakeholders face and how will they be reconciled?

The framework developed to guide this PDP also includes many opportunities for gathing input to inform this PDP and key decision points at which the GNSO Council will review progress made to determine next steps.