

Policy Development Process Update

Next Generation Registration Directory Services (RDS) to Replace WHOIS

September 2017

Upcoming important dates

As of 22 September 2017, the WG had reached rough consensus on 41 agreements, subject to further refinement during iterative deliberation (see: <https://community.icann.org/x/p4xlAw>). Further formal and informal input opportunities are expected to occur throughout the WG's deliberations. The WG is expected to receive the input from independent legal counsel to answer questions about the impact of data protection laws on registration data and directory services [previously answered by senior EU privacy experts by the end of September 2017](#). The WG intends to start drafting its Initial Report on phase 1 of the PDP (identifying policy requirements) within the first quarter of 2018.

Summary

In 2012, in response to the recommendations of the first WHOIS Review Team, the Board adopted a two-prong approach that simultaneously directed ICANN to (1) implement improvements to the current WHOIS system based on the [Action Plan](#) that was based on the recommendations of the WHOIS Review Team, and (2) launch a new effort, achieved through the creation of the Expert Working Group (EWG), to focus on the purpose and provision of gTLD directory services, to serve as the foundation of a Board-initiated GNSO policy development process (PDP).

The Expert Working Group's [Final Report](#) contains a proposed model and detailed principles to serve as the foundation for a PDP to support the creation of the next generation registration directory services to replace WHOIS. This [Final Report](#) contains over 160 pages of complex principles and recommendations to be considered in the GNSO PDP. In order to effectively manage the PDP on such a large scale, an informal group of Board members and GNSO councilors collaborated to develop the [framework](#) that was approved by the ICANN Board on 26 April 2015. As a result, the Board reconfirmed 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 EWG [Final Report](#) as an input to, and, if appropriate, as the foundation for a new gTLD policy. The [Preliminary Issue Report](#) was posted for public comment on 13 July 2015. The public comment forum closed on 6 September, with 13 submissions received, including input from the GAC. The [Final Issue Report](#) was submitted to the GNSO Council on 7 October 2015 and the [charter](#) for the PDP WG was adopted during the 17 November 2015 Council meeting, followed by the launch of a call for volunteers for WG participants in early January 2016. The Working Group held its first meeting on 26 January 2016 and is continuing meeting on a weekly basis. The WG's work plan can be found here: <https://community.icann.org/x/olxlAw>. The WG developed a list of possible requirements which will serve as a basis for further deliberations. This list has been triaged to facilitate the review and consideration of these possible requirements in conjunction with [use cases](#) that have been developed.

In the meantime, the Working Group identified key concepts on fundamental questions to assist in finalizing possible requirements on the Working Group’s charter questions concerning RDS users/purposes, data elements, privacy and access, starting with key concepts for a Minimum Public Data Set (MPDS). Most recently, the Working Group has been continuing to deliberate on key concepts and possible requirements for data beyond the MPDS, using the Expert Working Group on gTLD Directory Services (EWG) Final Report as a starting point of discussion.

Additionally, the Working Group has reached out to a number of ccTLD registry operators, and sent them selected questions regarding their policies and practices on compliance with applicable privacy and data protection laws, such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The [feedback being compiled](#) will be part of the Working Group deliberations on key concepts moving forward. Furthermore, the Working Group is obtaining independent legal analysis on the [questions](#) that were originally developed for senior EU privacy experts who participated in ICANN58 to help inform its deliberations. The responses from both the senior EU privacy experts and independent legal counsel will supplement the feedback from the ccTLD registry operators in informing Working Group deliberations concerning the impact of data protection laws on registration data and directory services moving forward.

Engagement Opportunity Status



Following the adoption of the charter for the PDP Working Group, a call for volunteers has been distributed to form the PDP Working Group, which is open to anyone interested to participate. The WG has reached out to GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies as well as ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees to request early input to help inform the Working Group deliberations (see <https://community.icann.org/x/pYxlAw>).

Additional Information

- RDS wiki <https://community.icann.org/display/gTLDRDS/Next-Generation+gTLD+Registration+Directory+Services+to+Replace+Whois>
- Charter for PDP WG <http://gnso.icann.org/en/drafts/whois-ng-gtld-rds-charter-07oct15-en.pdf>
- Final Issue Report <http://whois.icann.org/sites/default/files/files/final-issue-report-next-generation-rds-07oct15-en.pdf>
- Preliminary Issue Report <http://whois.icann.org/sites/default/files/files/rds-prelim-issue-13jul15-en.pdf>
- Public Comment Forum <https://www.icann.org/public-comments/rds-prelim-issue-2015-07-13-en>
- Board Resolution <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2015-04-26-en#1.f>