| Recommendation | Summary of ICANN’s assessment of implementation including actions taken, implementability and effectiveness | Summary of community input on implementation, including effectiveness | ATRT2 analysis of recommendation implementation (e.g. complete, incomplete or ongoing) |
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| Strategic Priority |  |  |  |
| 1. WHOIS, in all its aspects, should be a strategic priority, form the basis of staff incentivization (including CEO’s) and organizational objectives; Board should create a committee that includes the CEO to be responsible for priority and key actions; issue public updates on progress against targets for all aspects of WHOIS. | WHOIS is deemed to be a strategic focus. Compliance restructured and reports to CEO. ICANN reported that in August, implementation was almost complete. | Most parts of the community have been silent on this. Advocates for At-Large have not been satisfied that the compliance changes are effective and not merely show, supported by the lack of replies to specific queries. | It is unclear how to assess to what extent the changes are effective. There is clearly a focus on long term WHOIS replacement as well as significant ongoing work on addressing the WHOIS-RT’s other recommendations.How effective this will be remains to be seen, but it is encouraging that the issue is no longer being ignored. The provisions in the new RAA along with the registry agreement changes which will accelerate the move to this RAA also provide a far more robust mechanism to enforce WHOIS policy. Monthly Contractual Compliance reports are not sufficiently clear as to create a clear understanding, but even those reports are evolving based on community feedback. |
| Single WHOIS Policy |  |  |  |
| 2. Board should oversee creation of a single WHOIS policy document, and reference it in agreements with Contracted Parties; clearly document the current gTLD WHOIS policy as set out in the gTLD Registry & Registrar contracts & Consensus Policies and Procedure. | The Board Briefing Document noted the lack of a single policy (the WHOIS RT's conclusion) and said "These presently available conditions and policies should be publicly available from one source." The result, which is deemed to completely satisfy the recommendation, can be viewed at <http://www.icann.org/en/resources/registrars/whois-policies-provisions>, entitled "Single Webpage for ICANN Whois-Related Policies and Provisions" but is largely a vast set of pointers to various policy documents and contractual terms. While saying that the implementation is complete, Staff acknowledges that the end result does not meet the desired target of having the WHOIS requirements in an understandable form, and says that the forthcoming various WHOIS portals will serve the purpose. | There was no community input other than from the WHOIS RT which considered the result to not meet their original intent. | The ATRT concurs with the WHOIS RT assessment. The WHOIS RT and the ATRT2 acknowledges that the task was difficult, but that difficulty for staff is multiplied many times for less knowledgeable users who are attempting to understand WHOIS policy. The ATRT2 also notes that the requirement to “clearly document” the current policy in a form that could be understandable to users and at the same time have sufficient specificity and detail to be usable as a contract amendment may not be achievable in a single document.  The future WHOIS portals should go a long way to addressing the user aspect of the recommendation, but the ATRT2 is disappointed in the amount of time it has taken to address this objective. |
| Outreach |  |  |  |
| 3. ICANN should ensure that WHOIS policy issues are accompanied by cross community outreach, including outreach to the communities outside of ICANN with a specific interest in the issues, and an ongoing program for consumer awareness. | Planning is complete and the recommendation was implemented by creation of a detailed communications plan to raise awareness about WHOIS policy issues beyond the ICANN community and to raise consumer awareness related to WHOIS. The plan leverages the regional and industry connections of ICANN staff and regional vice presidents to promote WHOIS awareness through speaking engagements, events, newsletters and blogs. Tools including slide decks, talking points and fact sheets have been developed for their use.  A key component of the communications plan is leverage program milestones to generate news media attention and social media chatter. An example of how this works has to do with Communications’ work on the recommendations of the Expert Working Group on 25 June. A news release was distributed to ICANN’s media list and resulted in more than 25 news articles in publications including IT Avisen, ComputerWorld, TechEye, DomainIncite. Articles appeared in Dutch, English, French, Italian, Norwegian and Russian. Roughly 190 tweets appeared related to the ComputerWorld article alone. Similar efforts are planned for upcoming milestones such as the launch of the portal.  A number of additional activities related to implementation for new WHOIS obligations under the 2013 RAA was implemented, as well as additional Registrar outreach activities (August 2013, Los Angeles and Xiamen), etc.  The Communications team is following the Communications Plan to generate news media attention whenever other WHOIS related milestones are reached. For example, the launch of the various WHOIS portals (educational and Search) will be accompanied by outreach as detailed in the Communications Plan.  This recommendation was also implemented through the work to create the information portal to become the single source of information and data on WHOIS and the development of a blueprint for a new model of delivery data directory services that will be sent to GNSO Council for further policy development. | No input was received other than an overall dissatisfaction with the ICANN efforts by the WHOIS RT. | The new RAA has triggered much discussion and education related to the improved WHOIS terms in the agreement. It is less clear to what extent communications has improved outside of contracted parties and ICANN meeting participants. |
| Compliance |  |  |  |
| 4. ICANN should ensure that its compliance function is managed in accordance with best practice principles, including full transparency on resourcing and structure; provide annual reports; appoint a senior executive whose sole responsibility would be to oversee and manage ICANN’s compliance function (reporting to Board Committee); provide all necessary resources to manage and scale compliance team’s activities. | 1) People - grow staff in skills and expertise and number; Increase staff to 15 FTEs and contractors based on projects; Compliance led by VP reporting to CEO (100% complete)  2)Processes - build, communicate, implement and publish operational processes (100%)  3) Systems - consolidate and automate the fragmented tools (100% for WHOIS; 50% for the full consolidation of other systems)  4) Communication (100%)  -Annual Report redesigned and published in 6 UN languages to provide data on budget and across all areas  -Monthly Updates published in 6 UN languages  5) Performance Measurement - Metrics published on MyICANN (100%)  6) Audit Program launched (Year one 80% complete) | Relatively little community input was received. Representatives of At-Large expressed concern over the ability of Compliance to address the Whois issue effectively. | The designation of the head of Compliance as a Vice-President reporting to the CEO, although not as strong as what the RT recommended is a step in the right direction.  Staff FTEs were reported as being at 15 in May 2013, but by August/September were down to 13 which is disturbing. Staff lists are at times out-of-date. “including full transparency on resourcing and structure” cannot be said to be the norm.  Monthly updates and annual reports, although they provide a lot of data, lack clarity and numbers at times do not tally in any understandable way. Usage of such terms as “Complaint Prevention” to describe the number of complaints received is at best confusing and at worst deceptive.  These negatives notwithstanding, there does appear to be improvement. |
| Data Accuracy |  |  |  |
| 5. ICANN should ensure that the requirements for accurate WHOIS data are widely and proactively communicated, including to current and prospective Registrants, and should use all means available to progress WHOIS accuracy, including any internationalized WHOIS data, as an organizational objective. | Staff is developing **a WHOIS Information Portal** to   * Provide historical record of WHOIS * Consolidate WHOIS policy documentation * Provide mechanisms to teach people how to use WHOIS * Provide mechanisms for people to submit complaints as they relate to WHOIS data * Direct people to the appropriate channels to become engaged in the community on WHOIS related topics * Educate registrants on WHOIS, their rights and responsibilities * Provide a Knowledge Center where key WHOIS related documents can be located   The Expert Working Group has developed a blueprint for a new model for delivery data directory services that will be sent to the GNSO Council for further policy development. (100% complete). | Little direct input from the community. | Although staff reports much work being done, little has been seen by the community, so it is hard to evaluate just how effective it is.  Classing the EWG work as complete based on a draft report that is in the midst of a comment period and has been subject to much community discussion, not all positive, is far too optimistic.  The Registrant Rights and Responsibilities document referred to as being complete is the one that is now called Registrant Benefits and Responsibilities, terminology that has caused some user representatives to significantly downgrade its importance.  The planned WHOIS Portal, once online (October 2013) should address at least some of the communications need. |
| 6. ICANN should take appropriate measures to reduce the number of WHOIS registrations that fall into the accuracy groups “Substantial Failure and Full Failure” (as defined by the NORC Data Accuracy Study, 2009/10) by 50% within 12 months and by 50% again over the following 12 months.  7. ICANN shall produce and publish an accuracy report focused on measured reduction in WHOIS registrations that fall into the accuracy groups “Substantial Failure and Full Failure” on an annual basis. | To address this recommendation, the Board directed the CEO to:  1) proactively identify potentially inaccurate gTLD data registration information in gTLD registry and registrar services, explore using automated tools, and forward potentially inaccurate records to gTLD registrars for action; and  2) publicly report on the resulting actions to encourage improved accuracy.  On further probing, the ATRT2 was told: ICANN has completed (but not fully documented) a preliminary assessment of implementing a statistical analysis program following the methodology used in the NORC study. As previously discussed the study calls for phone validation, which is costly to operationalize and we are looking at competitive analysis to find the best rate for this option. In parallel, we are looking at alternative means of verifying and validating WHOIS sample data. To accomplish this we are discussing the issue with businesses and experts in identity verification, but have yet to identify a methodology that will yield acceptable results.  Staff is developing a WHOIS Accuracy Sampling and Reporting System using the methodology of the NORC Study  To accomplish the requested analysis, Staff’s work is focusing on:  1. Statistical methodology  2. Access to WHOIS records  3. Parser to automate contact data extraction  4. Automated address verification  5. Call center to call all sampled records. | No community input other than At-Large expressing doubt that there is any movement in this area. | It would appear that there is progress being made, although extracting that information has been difficult. Despite initial reports to the ATRT2 that the NORC methodology could not be implemented, current reports indicate that it will be (perhaps with some modification). Automated tools are also being developed to aid in uncovering non-compliant WHOIS data.  It is unclear when all of this work will culminate in starting to look at and improve WHOIS accuracy, but it appears that instead of a reduction of 50% in 12 months, we may have the ability to set a baseline some time into the second year after Board action on the WHOIS RT recommendations.  Any discussion about annual reports is premature at this point. |
| 8. ICANN should ensure that there is a clear, unambiguous and enforceable chain of contractual agreements with registries, registrars, and registrants to require the provision and maintenance of accurate WHOIS data; agreements should ensure that clear, enforceable and graduated sanctions apply to registries, registrars and registrants that do not comply with its WHOIS policies; sanctions should include de-registration and/or deaccreditation in cases of serious or serial noncompliance. | Staff went through an extensive internal process to identify areas to improve the registry and registrar agreements. The outcome of this effort led to the additional negotiation topics for the RAA negotiations and the new gTLD Registry Agreements.  ICANN received resistance from the contracted parties during negotiations resulted in language that differed from original proposals.  Added in August, 2013:  New 2013 RAA includes additional enforcement provisions and sanctions applicable to registrars, registrants, and resellers with regards to WHOIS.  New gTLD Registry Agreements include enhanced WHOIS obligations  Renewals of existing GTLDs to include enhanced WHOIS obligations. | Little feedback from the community | The terms in the new RAA are orders of magnitude better than those in previous RAAs, and the RAA combined with terms in new and renewed gTLD agreements, will hopefully move most or all registrars to the 2013 RAA within a year or two.  That being said, it is disappointing that ICANN had to lower its goals in such a critical area.  How effective this will all be remains to be seen. Under the old RAAs, it is unclear whether any enforcement action was possible due to WHOIS inaccuracies (a claim which was not confirmed or denied by Compliance) – certainly none was taken during the first 6 months of 2013. Under the 2013 RAA, enforcement is possible. It remains to be seen whether there will be any. It may be that in many cases, WHOIS inaccuracy is associated with transient domain names and the solution under the current regime is to simply delete the name, a situation that will not be alleviated until sufficient WHOIS validation is done at or immediately after registration time.. |
| 9. Board should ensure that the Compliance Team develop metrics to track the impact of the annual WHOIS Data Reminder Policy (WDRP) notices to registrants; metrics should be used to as per (1) above, the Board will initiate a policy on the purpose of the gTLD WHOIS service, and this will help drive the principles behind privacy/proxy develop and publish performance targets, to improve data accuracy over time; if this is unfeasible, Board should ensure that an alternative, effective policy is developed and implemented that achieves the objective of improving data quality, in a measurable way. | The issue was understood as WHOIS RT believed that there was a need to establish a baseline in order to track whether Staff's implementation of the WHOIS RT recommendations will lead to the desired improvement in WHOIS accuracy. In addition, there is a need for ICANN to collect and provide visibility into whether accuracy rates are improving over time.  ICANN considered that no further action required here per board direction as it relates to the impact of the annual WHOIS Data Reminder Policy.  The WRT recommendation as stated is not feasible. (The policy only requires registrars to send the reminder in a specific form including specific information. The policy does not require registrars to track changes directly resulting from the reminder. ICANN incorporated the WHOIS Data Reminder Policy (WHOIS accuracy) in the Audit Program. As in the past, Registrars must, at least once a year, send a reminder to Registered Name Holders reminding them to verify/update WHOIS data – ICANN to validate that the reminder notices sent and stating consequences for inaccurate WHOIS data.  Implementation of this recommendation involved (1) Staff seeking amendments to the RAA and the Registry Agreements to enhance the contractual framework for WHOIS, (2) the creation of the Expert Working Group to create a new policy framework to better address the inadequacies of the current contractual framework; (3) Staff to initiate a process to create an accreditation program for privacy/proxy providers, and work with the GNSO to develop a policy framework for these services, and (2) establishment of the online portal and proactive monitoring to be able to establish some metrics on accuracy over time. | Little feedback from the community | The Board’s Resolution addressing the WHOIS Review Team Recommendations questioned whether this recommendation was actually implementable, a possibility that the WHOIS RT foresaw, and the ATRT2 concurs. Alternative approaches to achieving the intended result of this recommendation are being pursued.  The ATRT agrees that the issue can be further addressed in course of EWG activities. |
| Data Access – Privacy and Proxy Services |  |  |  |
| 10. ICANN should initiate processes to regulate and oversee privacy and proxy service providers; processes should be developed in consultation with all interested stakeholders and note relevant GNSO studies; a possible approach to achieving this would be to establish an accreditation system for all proxy/privacy service providers, and consider the merits (if any) of establishing or maintaining a distinction between privacy and proxy services; goal is to provide clear, consistent and enforceable requirements for the operation of these services consistent with national laws, and to strike an appropriate balance between stakeholders with competing but legitimate interests -- including privacy, data protection, law enforcement, the industry around law enforcement and the human rights community. A list of objectives for regulation is provided for consideration, including: labeling WHOIS entries made by a privacy or proxy service; providing full WHOIS contact details for the privacy/proxy service provider; adopting agreed standardized relay and reveal processes and timeframes; Registrars should disclose their relationship with any proxy/privacy service provider; maintaining dedicated abuse points of contact for each provider; conducting periodic due diligence checks on customer contact information; maintaining the privacy and integrity of registrations in the event that major problems arise with a privacy/proxy provider; and providing clear and unambiguous guidance on the rights and responsibilities of registered name holders, and how those should be managed in the privacy/proxy environment. | As reported by the Staff in August 2013:   * Adopted 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement includes many new obligations related to privacy/proxy providers, and commits ICANN to create a privacy/proxy accreditation program * GNSO PDP to be commenced shortly to examine policy issues related to privacy/proxy services * Staff Implementation work to develop the operational aspects of the Privacy/Proxy Accreditation Program to be conducted in parallel with GNSO PDP.   Most of deliverables are expected by end 2013 – first half of 2014. | Little input from the Community so far | The process of regulating and overseeing privacy and proxy services after being ignored for so long is a complex and lengthy one. The new RAA addresses some issues and a forthcoming GNSO PDP should complete the process. That PDP may have a difficult time in bridging the privacy needs of end-users with the needs of both law enforcement and trademark owners, but the fact that the discussions will be starting is promising. New policies are not likely to be in place before 2015.  The ultimate result of the EWG and its follow-on PDP may reduce the need for privacy and proxy services, but they will not disappear completely. |
| Data Access – Common Interface |  |  |  |
| 11. It is recommended that the Internic Service is overhauled to provide enhanced usability for consumers, including the display of full registrant data for all gTLD domain names (whether those gTLDs operate thin or thick WHOIS services); operational improvements should include enhanced promotion of the service to increase user awareness. | WHOIS Inaccuracy complaints migrated by the Compliance Dept. and automated  ICANN is currently working on a comprehensive WHOIS Portal, with development to occur in two phases to overhaul the Internic service:    Phase 1- Launch of WHOIS Informational Portal  Phase 2- Launch of WHOIS Online Search Portal  to offer a place where people could initiate a search of global WHOIS records  Communications Plan to be coordinated with launch of each phase | No specific input on the issue has been seen | The implementation of the recommendation is limited to the contents of the new WHOIS portal. “A place where people could initiate a search of global WHOIS recorded’ is not exactly what was recommended substantially; moreover EWG preliminary report offers totally different approach to the search of WHOIS records.  The recommendation thus cannot be considered implemented until the beta/formal launch of WHOIS portal is expected later in September, 2013  [Comment to Michael: the whois portal seems to be more that just search. What part of the Rec do you believe to be lacking once the portal is fully deployed, coupled with the new FAQ and related compliance stuff?] |
| Internationalized Domain Names |  |  |  |
| 12. ICANN should task a working group within six months of publication of this report, to determine appropriate internationalized domain name registration data requirements and evaluate available solutions; at a minimum, the data requirements should apply to all new gTLDs, and the working group should consider ways to encourage consistency of approach across the gTLD and (on a voluntary basis) ccTLD space; working group should report within a year. | IETF WEIRDS Working Group currently evaluating technical protocols.  Once adopted by the IETF, new gTLD Registry Agreement and New 2013 RAA include commitments to adopt new protocols.  ICANN is also in the process of tasking a team to work on the Internationalized Registration Data (IRD) requirements, the final product will be dependent upon the conclusion of the GNSO PDP on translation/transliteration described in #13 below.  ICANN is commissioning a Study to Evaluate Available Solutions for the Submission and Display of Internationalized Contact Data | Little input is received in writing, however oral discussions on this matter were numerous within the communities affected by the current WHOIS/IRD situation | The implementation of the recommendation is different from what was intended and the deadlines are also far from the initially expected time frame. Given the complexity of the issue, it can be admitted that satisfactory results may be achieved by the estimated date of final report of IRD (June 2014). That notwithstanding, it is disappointing that the creation of the IRD group is still in the process of being created and is not expected to meet before September/October 2013.  Moreover, it is also disappointing that ICANN has not proposed any interim implementations for internationalized registration data, leaving registrar and registries to have to develop these on their own. |
| 13. The final data model, including (any) requirements for the translation or transliteration of the registration data, should be incorporated in relevant Registrar & Registry agreements within 6 months of Board adoption of working group’s recommendations, or put explicit placeholders in the new gTLD program agreements, & in existing agreements when they come up for renewal. | Issue of Translation/Transliteration is being explored as a policy matter within the GNSO Council .  Consensus policy, if produced out of the PDP would become binding upon contracted parties, when adopted by Board  This output of this PDP work is required to inform the rest of the IRD related implementation work being supervised by Staff (# 12 – 14). Conclusion of this aspect of the implementation is dependent upon the speed in which the PDP can be completed once the working group is formed.  The current completion estimate is 2015. | See as above. | Given that the methodology of the implementation of recommendations 12-14 is slightly different from the proposed one, little can be expected until the PDP initial/final report is due to compete (June/December 2014).  Such delays seem unnecessary and could have been avoided if the proposed WHOIS RT methodology is accepted and implemented.  [Comment to Michael, let’s talk about this one. Although I think that ICANN has delayed this process, I am not sure what else could have been done oter than the interim recommendations I mentioned in the previous item.] |
| 14. Metrics should be developed to maintain and measure the accuracy of the internationalized registration data and corresponding data in ASCII, with clearly defined compliance methods and targets. | IDN WHOIS Records to be proactively identified once the work referenced in #12 and #13 is complete. The current estimate is 2015. | See as above. | Since this recommendation is largely contingent on the two previous ones, it is not surprising that it as yet untouched. The end result, however, is that this recommendation will arguably not even be started when the next WHOIS RT begins (or finishes its work). |
| Detailed and Comprehensive Plan |  |  |  |
| 15. ICANN should provide a detailed and comprehensive plan within 3 months after the submission of the Final WHOIS Review Team report that outlines how ICANN will move forward in implementing these recommendations. | ICANN Staff developed and published its proposed plan, which was adopted by the ICANN Board. | No substantial input from the Community, except for the criticism on how the WHOIS RT final report was perceived and evaluated by the Board (Nov.2012) | The ATRT acknowledges that ICANN is in the process of implementing the WHOIS RT recommendations. However, the contents of a staff briefing paper linked to in a Board resolution is not an optimal ways to make bring such a plan to the community’s attention. Moreover, the referenced briefing document bares a title different from the one list in the resolution, and although it was updated to remove contents which were no longer deemed relevant, the title of the section on actions to take remained “*Proposed* Board Action and Rationale”. |
| Annual Status Reports |  |  |  |
| 16. ICANN should provide at least annual written status reports on its progress towards implementing the recommendations of this WHOIS Review Team. The first of these reports should be published one year, at the latest, after ICANN publishes the implementation plan mentioned in recommendation 15, above. | ICANN plans to publish first Annual Report one year after the Board’s approval of the WHOIS Review Team Final Report recommendations (Nov.2013). | N/A | Deadline not yet reached at the time of writing. |