Brief and quick summary of the document (SAC055): Blind men and an Elephant, from SSAC, ICANN Security and Stability Advisory Committee.

This document is a comment made by the SSAC to the ICANN Board in order to advise on matters related to security and Integrity of the Internet’s naming and address allocation systems. This document covers three main aspects including operational, administrative, and registration matters.

The Group compares the WHOIS problem to the tale of “the Blind men and the elephant” where each one of them touches the elephant, feels its body differently, and when it comes to comparison, everyone thinks the other is wrong. Consequently, there is a crucial need to understand the purpose of the domain name registration and elaborate an appropriate policy which must address the following questions:

1. Why data are collected
2. What purpose will the data serve
3. Who collects the data?
4. Where is the data stored and how long is it stored?
5. Where is the data escrowed and how long is it escrowed?
6. Who needs the data and why?
7. Who needs to logs of access to the data and why?

The SSAC believed in the formation of an authorized committee to drive solutions to these questions and, then, derive a universal policy from the answers. The SSAC advises ICANN to do so, and a Review team was created.

Although many recommendations have been made to solve those issues, many questions still remained unsolved within the ICANN community. Moreover the creation of the universal policy by the Review Team does not yield to the resolution of the most critical question concerning the purpose of the WHOIS. The review team even remarks that the term WHOIS is used differently by the community to mean different things, and a new taxonomy was proposed. The SSAC reviewed, also, issues related to Public Access to Domain Registration Data, Law Enforcement Access to Domain Registration Data, Intellectual Property Practitioner Access to Domain Registration Data, and Security Practitioner access to domain registration data.

Globally, the SSAC answers to the review team and all their recommendations have been categorized into three categories: high priority, medium priority, and Low priority.

For high priority recommendations which are critical to the successful completion of the medium and the low priority recommendations, we have:

* Strategic priority : ICANN CEO to create a domain name policy committee that includes the highest level of executive management
* Single WHOIS policy : to clearly state that the development of a uniform policy is critical priority
* Compliance : the policy committee to develop clear targets for compliance with respect to registration data accuracy; performance provisions

Medium priority recommendations include:

* Data accuracy
* Data access : privacy and proxy services
* Internationalized domain names

Low priority (can sometimes start at the same time with high priority recommendations) recommendations include:

* Outreach
* Data Access : common Interface
* Internationalized domain names
* Detailed and comprehensive Plan
* Annual Status reports.

Regarding each aspect, the SSAC made a particular recommendation to the ICANN board.

Farell FOLLY, to the Data Privacy Subgroup.