# ICANN is Seeking Independent Researchers to Respond to Request for Proposal on WHOIS Misuse Studies –

The first area of study focuses on “misuse” of public WHOIS information, and, pursuant to the above request, ICANN is seeking to engage independent research organizations to undertake one or more proposed WHOIS Misuse studies.

As this references different linked articles I will look at the linked articles separately:

Requirements on the documents/web links: Request for Proposals for WHOIS Misuse Studies and Terms of Reference for WHOIS Misuse Studies

WHOIS Misuse Studies - WSMS

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R1]

WHOIS Misuse studies are designed to determine the extent, nature, and impact of WHOIS data misuse (i.e., harmful actions taken using WHOIS contact information) by surveying Registrants about misuse incidents they may have experienced, and conducting experiments to measure misuse and the effectiveness of WHOIS anti-harvesting measures applied by Registrars.

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R2]

Need to eliminate or limit WHOIS misuse refers to harmful acts that exploit contact information obtained from WHOIS. Those harmful acts may include generation of spam, abuse of personal data, intellectual property theft, loss of reputation or identity theft, loss of data, phishing and other cybercrime related exploits, harassment, stalking, or other activity with negative personal or economic consequences.

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R3]

A key objective of these experiments is to identify factors that increase or decrease WHOIS misuse. To enable this, WHOIS query and response practices applied to each test domain should be examined, looking for relationships between anti-harvesting measures and the frequency harmful acts against published addresses. However, these experiments will only examine measures applied to WHOIS queries. Analyzing the impact of Privacy/Proxy registration services that prevent addresses from being published in WHOIS are beyond this study's scope.

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R4]

Different sources are unlikely to supply the same information about each WHOIS misuse incident or represent those data elements consistently. Inputs obtained from all sources must therefore be normalized to enable aggregation, comparison, and statistical analysis.

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R5]

Because all data elements may not be available from every source, a minimum set of elements must be required for any reported incident.

[WSMS-D1 & D2-R6]

It is essential that every incident denote whether misused information was published exclusively by WHOIS – this element is mandatory. Registrants may not reliably know this, Internet search engines should be used to verify that misused addresses are in fact NOT readily available from sources beyond WHOIS.