

Stakeholder Group / Constituency / Input Template with Registrar Constituency - 22 Jan 13
'thick' Whois PDP Working Group

Constituency input is shown in [light blue font](#).

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE AT THE LATEST **BY 9 January 2012** TO THE GNSO SECRETARIAT (gns.secretariat@gns.icann.org), which will forward your statement to the Working Group.

If additional time is needed by your SG / C to provide your feedback, please inform the secretariat accordingly, including the expected delivery date so that this can be factored in by the WG.

The GNSO Council has formed a Working Group of interested stakeholders and Stakeholder Group / Constituency representatives, to collaborate broadly with knowledgeable individuals and organizations, in order to consider recommendations in relation to 'thick' Whois.

Part of the working group's effort will be to incorporate ideas and suggestions gathered from Stakeholder Groups, Constituencies through this template Statement. Please note that the WG is currently in an information-gathering phase. Inserting your response in this form will make it much easier for the Working Group to summarize the responses. This information is helpful to the community in understanding the points of view of various stakeholders. However, you should feel free to add any information you deem important to inform the working group's deliberations, even if this does not fit into any of the questions listed below.

For further information, please visit the WG Workspace (<https://community.icann.org/display/PDP/Home>).

Process

- Please identify the member(s) of your stakeholder group / constituency who is (are) participating in this working group
 - o Tim Ruiz
 - o Volker Greimann
 - o Frederic Guillemaut

- Please identify the members of your stakeholder group / constituency who participated in developing the perspective(s) set forth below
 - o Tim Ruiz
 - o Volker Greimann
 - o Frederic Guillemaut
 - o Matt Serlin
 - o Michele Neylon
- Please describe the process by which your stakeholder group / constituency arrived at the perspective(s) set forth below
- If not indicated otherwise, the WG will consider your submission a SG / C position / contribution. Please note that this should not prevent the submission of individual and/or minority views as part of your submission, as long as these are clearly identified.

Topics:

The WG is tasked to provide the GNSO Council with a policy recommendation regarding the use of 'thick' Whois by all gTLD Registries, both existing and future. As part of its deliberations, the WG is expected to consider the topics listed below in the context of 'thick' Whois. Please provide your stakeholder group's / constituency's views, including quantitative and/or empirical information supporting your views, on these topics in relation to whether or not to require 'thick' Whois for all gTLDs and/or provide any information that you think will help the WG in its deliberations (for further information on each of these topics, please see the WG Charter <https://community.icann.org/x/vlg3Ag>):

- Response consistency - a 'thick' Registry can dictate the labeling and display of Whois information to be sure the information is easy to parse, and all Registrars/clients would have to display it accordingly. This could be considered a benefit but also a potential cost. This might also be a benefit in the context of internationalized registration data as even with the use of different scripts, uniform data collection and display standards could be applied.

Your view:

Yes we view this uniform display as a good thing. The introduction of IDNs, and the need of correctly formatted information for transfers will benefit from a standardization of the whois

display. Registrars will have to adapt to one registry's whois format, as they already do and not have to parse hundreds of different formats. The introduction of uniform whois content on the registrar side has in fact already been agreed upon in the 2011-2013 ICANN-Registrar RAA negotiations.

- Stability - in the event of a Registrar business or technical failure, it could be beneficial to ICANN and registrants to have the full set of domain registration contact data stored by four organizations (the Registry, the Registry's escrow agent, the Registrar, and the Registrar's escrow agent), which would be the case in a 'thick' registry.

Your view:

It is always good to have multiple copies of data but in that case the registry and its escrow agent have all the data (securely stored in different places) that is needed for whois purposes. The registrar will have more data (login, customers details) but these data should not appear in the whois. In case of a registry data failure, the registry will have two backup locations: a) the escrowed data, and b) the data on record with the registrars. Therefore Escrowing the registrars data should not be mandatory. Keeping two sets of data at the registry level is fine. Depending on the outcome of this WG's work, ongoing work in relation to whois and any privacy/ proxy accreditation program that ICANN may develop the data escrow program may need to be reviewed.

- Accessibility - is the provision of Whois information at the registry level under the 'thick' Whois model more effective and cost-effective than a 'thin' model in protecting consumers and users of Whois data and intellectual property owners?

Your view:

As the whole concept of whois is subject to a study and could be reformed completely, this question could become out of date. However having a centralized whois for a TLD as it is already the case (and will be) should not have any impact on the whois users and IP rights holders. If migrating existing thin registries, the IP holders might find it easier to use a common format and location to find the information.

- Impact on privacy and data protection - how would 'thick' Whois affect privacy and data protection, also taking into account the involvement of different jurisdictions with different laws and legislation with regard to data privacy as well as possible cross border transfers of registrant data?

Your view:

As most registrars have already been dealing with this matter, and included in their T&Cs the right to transfer data to other jurisdictions or entities in accordance with ICANN and/or registry policy, we do not think this is an issue.

- Cost implications - what are the cost implications of a transition to 'thick' Whois for Registries, Registrars, registrants and other parties for all gTLDs? Conversely, what are the cost implications to Registries, Registrars, registrants and other parties if no transition is mandated?

Your view:

If no change is mandated : Unless the requirement to provide whois services is changed in the RAA as well, registrars will have to carry on supporting port 43 whois services and escrowing data at their cost (and risk as failure to have these services running can result in being de-accredited) and will have to find ways to collect data from multiple whois formats in order to transfer domains. The current RAA actually makes no difference as to the provision of whois services and needlessly requires registrar to provide ghost whois services even for thick TLDs. If a change is mandated : registrars already know how to deal with thick registries. The cost will be a one off cost, mitigated by the benefits to come after : no whois port 43, no escrow, uniform data.

- Synchronization/migration - what would be the impact on the registry and registrar WHOIS and EPP systems for those Registries currently operating a thin registry, both in the migration phase to 'thick' WHOIS as well as ongoing operations?

Your view:

The impact has to be researched in depth as the number of transactions is very important and the users expect real time and stability. In order to describe this impact, the WG should work on schemes based on former experiences taking into account the growth and size of the actual thin-whois registries.

- Authoritativeness - what are the implications of a 'thin' Registry possibly becoming authoritative for registrant Whois data following the transition from a thin-registry model to a thick-registry model? The Working Group should consider the term "authoritative" in both the technical (the repository of the authoritative data) and policy (who has authority over the data) meanings of the word when considering this issue.

Your view:

In a thick whois registry service, the data from the registry is authoritative regarding the public information. However, proxy services details will remain stored at the registrar or provider level. (as well as data which is important for the management of the domain but not public to the whois and the registrar will still be required to collect and maintain the whois data under the RAA, effectively providing the data that the registry uses for its authoritative database.

- Competition in registry services - what would be the impact on competition in registry services should all Registries be required to provide Whois service using the 'thick' Whois model – would there be more, less or no difference with regard to competition in registry services?

Your view:

All registries know how to operate thick whois. There should be no impact.

- Existing Whois Applications - What, if anything, are the potential impacts on the providers of third-party WHOIS-related applications if 'thick' WHOIS is required for all gTLDs?

Your view:

This change will impact Whois related applications to adapt the application, but the long term benefits of stability and uniformity should cover this impact. We further estimate that ultimately such providers will benefit from having to implement and parse only one authoritative data source instead of one per registrar.

- Data escrow - 'thick' Whois might obviate the need for the registrar escrow program and attendant expenses to ICANN and registrars.

Your view:

Yes, there should be not need for data escrow. The RAA would need to be amended.

- Registrar Port 43 Whois requirements - 'thick' Whois could make the requirement for Registrars to maintain Port 43 Whois access redundant.

Your view:

With thick whois registries online, the need for Port 43 access on the registrar level is becoming null. The RAA should therefore be amended. It does not make sense to provide this data if it is not referred to by the registry and the duplication of the services from multiple data sources may lead to inconsistencies in the results displayed. If the whois data is displayed by the registry, and therefore the registry no longer points to the whois server of the registrar, that server becomes redundant.

Based on your assessment of these topics, you are also encouraged to indicate whether you think there should or there shouldn't be a requirement for 'thick' Whois by all gTLD Registries.

Your view:

Yes, there should be a requirement for thick whois. It will ease registrars', registrants' and third parties' work.

If there is any other information you think should be considered by the WG as part of its deliberations, please feel free to include that here.

Other information: