Report of the Expert Working Group on gTLD Directory Services Meeting (20-24 March 2014)

Location: Singapore, Singapore

Attendees:

EWG Members:

In Person: Jean-Francois Baril (Lead Facilitator), Lanre Ajayi, Scott Hollenbeck, Susan Kawaguchi, Michael Niebel, Michele Neylon, Stephanie Perrin, Rod Rasmussen, Carlton Samuels, Faisal Shah, Fabricio Vayra, Chris Disspain (Board Liaison)

ICANN Participants:

In Person: Denise Michel, Margie Milam, Lisa Phifer, Alice Jansen

Topics Discussed:

- **Public Workshop:** At ICANN 49, the EWG held an interactive public workshop to provide a brief update on progress made since Buenos Aires, launch the RDS Risk Survey, and answer questions about the proposed RDS. Materials from this workshop are posted here:

  - ➤ Slides presented during this session (PDF)
  - ➤ Virtual Meeting Room stream archival
  - ➤ EWG Public Research Page
  - ➤ EWG Status Update Report
  - ➤ RDS Risk Survey Landing Page

  All parties potentially impacted by the proposed RDS were invited to take the RDS Risk Survey (online survey, closes 15 May 2014) and to join interactive EWG webinars on April 16th and 17th to identify potential RDS risks and benefits. These efforts will gather essential community input to the RDS risk assessment that the EWG expects to recommend to the ICANN board.

  The EWG will carefully consider all input gathered during this ICANN 49 workshop and upcoming webinars, along with public comments received on the EWG's Initial and Status Update Reports, and the results of 1Q14 research on key issues.

- **Community Dialog:** At ICANN 49, the ALAC, NCSG, GAC, and members of the law enforcement community requested meetings to discuss the next-generation Whois replacement described in the EWG's Status Update Report on Next Generation gTLD Registration Directory Services (RDS), published November 2013. Transcripts published by those groups can be found here:

Monday, 24 March	At-Large	http://singapore49.icann.org/en/schedule/mon-rds
Tuesday, 25 March	NCSG	http://singapore49.icann.org/en/schedule/tue-ncsg
Tuesday, 25 March	GAC	http://singapore49.icann.org/en/schedule/tue-0930-gac-plenary

In addition, an extended three month public comment period on the EWG's Status Update report closed on 28 February. During the Singapore meeting, the EWG reviewed a public comment report, published here. The EWG expects to use all community inputs received by 15 May, 2014, including comments already received on this Status Update report, to inform its recommendations to the ICANN Board.

- **EWG Research:** At ICANN 48, the EWG requested that research be conducted in several areas to help the group reach fact-based recommendations in its Final Report. Specifically, research was completed in the following areas during 1Q14:

  - ccTLD Whois Data Validation/Verification Survey
  - RFI on Contact Data Validation/Verification Systems
  - FRI on RDS User Accreditation RFI
  - RDS Model Cost Comparison
  - Whois Privacy/Proxy Service Provider Practices Questionnaire

  The EWG spent its 20 March working session in Singapore reviewing research results, including summaries soon to be published on the EWG's Public Research page, individual RFI responses, and a presentation by IBM estimating initial and on-going costs associated with the core RDS. Results were reviewed to confirm assumptions, discover unanticipated issues, seek opportunities to reuse and build on existing practices, and understand costs and tradeoffs.

- **EWG Work Plan:** The EWG applied lessons learned in its 21 March working session, where the group resumed work on its draft final report. Previously-proposed principles were assessed, taking into consideration comments and research results, with the goal of solidifying areas of agreement, flagging areas requiring further explanation or discussion, and establishing a strong foundation for ICANN Board consideration and future policy-development.

  Given the complexity of the task at hand, the EWG met a third day (23 March) and agreed to continue through twice-weekly conference calls throughout April. To give those possibly impacted by the RDS ample opportunity to identify risks and benefits, the EWG will use two interactive webinars (April 16-17), an online RDS Risk Survey, and a brief introductory video to help Registrants and Internet users consider how the proposed RDS might impact them.

  The EWG plans to deliver its Final Report by June 2nd for consideration by the ICANN Board at ICANN 50. This Report will convey the EWG's analysis and recommendations, based on over a year of intensive research, consideration of questions posed by the ICANN Board, dialog with the ICANN community, and exploration of "clean slate" alternatives to Whois. This Report is expected to be used as focused input to future policy development efforts.